

Toronto

Toronto is akin to a teenager: energetic, fickle and unwieldy at times. But while Canada's largest city may suffer from the odd growing pain, it's transforming in beguiling ways. Since its founding, waves of immigrants from around the world have flocked here; today more than half of its 2.7 million residents were born elsewhere. This diversity reveals itself in a thrilling mix of restaurants, hotels, cocktail bars, independent clothing shops and much more.

Need to know

Get to grips with the basics

- 01 **Village people:** Toronto has 140 official neighbourhoods but in practice there are hundreds more. Torontonians often refer to streets as districts and have a penchant for colloquial names.
- 02 **Get your skates on:** Few things bring Canadians together quite like ice hockey. Its players are national treasures and victories become part of the country's psyche. The regular season runs from October to April.
- 03 **The party's over:** Torontonians often feel more engaged with the politics of their city than their nation. The city operates a "weak mayor/strong council" system, which means the figurehead cannot rule by decree.
- 04 **Service not included:** Like US cities, Toronto is a town where tipping is essential. The minimum is usually 15 per cent of the total cost of a meal.
- 05 **Last orders:** Bars and clubs are required to stop serving alcohol at 02.00. Most Torontonians are happy heading home after the call for last drinks; those who want to party on head to after-hours (but dry) clubs.

Hotels

At home in Toronto

- ① **The Drake Hotel, West Queen West**
Creative hub

The Drake has been drawing visitors and residents to the city's west end since it opened. It has a full programme of events, ranging from yoga workouts to trivia nights and gigs.
1150 Queen Street West, M6J 1J3
+1 416 531 5042
thedrakehotel.ca

- ② **Shangri-La, Entertainment District**
Glass-and-marble getaway

The interior is thoughtfully designed, with accents of Italian white marble in the bathrooms and lithographic works by Wang Xu Yuan on the walls.
188 University Avenue, M5H 0A3
+1 647 788 8888
shangri-la.com/toronto/shangri-la

- ③ **The Hazelton, Yorkville**
Former folk focus

This boutique hotel is located on the site of the Riverboat Coffee House, where Neil Young and other folk legends performed in the 1960s.
118 Yorkville Avenue, M5R 1C2
+1 416 963 6300
thehazeltonhotel.com

Food and drink

Table talk

- ① **The Federal, Little Portugal**
Quiet achiever

This low-key venue is open for brunch and dinner but no matter the time, diners clamour for its famous burger: Four Guys. It's all in the technique: a ball of freshly ground beef is flattened with a steak press, sealing in the juices and creating a rich brown crust.
1438 Dundas Street West, M6J 1Y6
+1 647 352 9120
thefed.ca

- ② **Union, Trinity Bellwoods**
French fare

At Union, a rustic-chic take on a Parisian bistro, ingredients for favourites that include the Union Salad and steak tartare are sourced from nearby farmers.
72 Ossington Avenue, M6J 2Y7
+1 416 850 0093
union72.ca

- ③ **Sud Forno, Trinity Bellwoods**
Idyllic Italian

Sud Forno features an Italian-style bakery on its groundfloor, offering takeaway options and fine imported produce; upstairs is a long table for communal dining. Try the Pizza Così with porcini mushrooms and prosciutto di parma.
716 Queen Street West, M6J 1E8
+1 416 504 7667
sudforno.com

- ④ **Kinka Izakaya, Church and Wellesley**
Share nicely

Kinka Izakaya's first location introduced Japanese tapas-style dining to Toronto in 2009. The innovative menu of sharing plates – including indulgent deep-fried brie – fuses modern and traditional cooking methods.
398 Church Street, M5B 2A2
+1 416 977 0999
kinkaizakaya.com

- ⑤ **Midfield Wine Bar & Tavern, Little Portugal**
Best cellar

This pared-back bar is home to one of the city's most extensive wine lists. Its cellars are fully stocked with a bias towards vintages from heritage vineyards and smaller boutique wineries around the world.
1434 Dundas Street West, M6J 1Y7
+1 647 345 7005

Retail

Top shops

- ① **Souvenir, Little Portugal**
Stripped-back showcase

Now in a permanent location, Souvenir has a fervent following thanks to the pop-ups previously operated by owner Danielle Suppa. The whitewashed interior is a deliberately blank canvas on which to show products.
1232 College Street, M6H 1C2
souvenir-studios.com

- ② **Monocle Shop, Little Italy**
Drop in to our place

Our Canadian home follows the same shop-bureau format as our outposts in Hong Kong, Tokyo and Singapore. Observe our team members as they busy themselves with stories for forthcoming issues (do feel free to drop in with any tip-offs) and browse the full range of products and collaborations with our favourite partners.
776 College Street, M6G 1C6
+1 647 694 2626
monocle.com

- ③ **Type, Trinity Bellwoods**
Tome capsule

Type Books is one of the city's most beloved indie bookshops. It has a warm living-room feel and the shop's friendly staff – many of them writers and artists – are accessible and helpful.
883 Queen Street West, M6J 1G5
+1 416 366 8973
typebooks.ca

- ④ **Want Apothecary, Rosedale**
Form and function

Want Apothecary was co-founded by twins Byron and Dexter Peart, the designers behind Montréal-based accessories brand Want Les Essentiels de la Vie. "Our products and solutions will always respond to the modern traveller's needs," says Byron.
1070 Yonge Street, M4W 3V7
+1 416 924 8080
wantapothecary.com

Vocabulary

Local lingo

- 01 **Eh:** Most Canadians punctuate their questions with this clipped syllable
- 02 **T'rono:** No native would be caught dead enunciating the second "t"
- 03 **Touque:** A beanie (hat)
- 04 **Double-double:** Coffee with two creams and two sugars



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