

## 10 Good Reasons to Study in Ontario, Canada

PEOPLE from all over the world come to study in Ontario, Canada. Home to 40% of the country' s population and more international students than any other province, Ontario is the most populous (and popular) part of the country. Perhaps this is because of the sheer number of options for people studying in Ontario: it borders the wilderness and Great Lakes, but also major US cities; it has big well-known universities and small, specialist colleges. It has every kind of weather you can think of, too. If you are still stuck on which Canadian province to choose, it' s hard to go wrong with Ontario.



*A view of Lake Ontario from Toronto, Canada*

## 1. The best universities in Canada

The entire Canadian education system **is famed for** its quality, but Ontario **holds the crown** when it comes to having the most top-notch schools within its borders. Out of the top 10 Canadian universities, 6 are in Ontario including the University of Toronto, McMaster University, the University of Waterloo, Western University and Queen' s University. Out of the entire QS ranking, Ontario also has the most entries with 11 institutions ranked, versus 6 in Quebec and 3 in British Columbia. You can' t argue with that.

## 2. Familiar territory

Students in Ontario have one significant benefit over those in other provinces: they can take trips across the Canada/US border **at the drop of a hat**. This is great news if you want to see the sights while you study abroad; even better if you want to maximise your chances of getting an internship at a major company. Its close proximity to New York, Pennsylvania and Michigan also means cultural crossover - cities in Ontario **are likely to** be more familiar than those in the more 'European' Quebec.

Kate: I think if you were to compare the university experience across Canada, the one in Ontario but more closely resemble the stereotypical "North American movie" representation of university life, with all the sororities and fraternities.

### 3. Dramatic weather

Yes, Canada gets cold in winter. Ontario, in particular, gets *really* cold in some areas. But the extreme temperatures are matched by some equally extreme weather at other times of the year. In the summer, central and eastern Ontario suddenly heats up, with consistently warm summers; July temperatures in Toronto average at 17-27 degrees Celsius. If you like seasonal variety, Ontario certainly has it.

Kate: Ontario has lovely, hot, humid summers, with my personal favourite - magnificent lightning storms - and colourful, crisp autumns.

### 4. Take the PATH

While Ontario can be chilly, there' s an alternative to walking around in the cold in Toronto: PATH. It' s the longest underground pedestrian walkway in the world, taking you through 30 kilometres of shops, movie theatres, and other services in total comfort. PATH also connects numerous hotels, government buildings, subway stations and office buildings.

Genius.

In addition to being able to get around easily in Toronto on-foot, Ontario is also well-connected by road and rail where other provinces are not.

Colin: It was nice to be able to travel relatively easily between different cities - it' s easier and quicker to get between Toronto, Kingston, London, and Ottawa than it is to get from Vancouver to pretty much anywhere.

## 5. Diversity

Did you know that a crazy 50% of Toronto's residents were not born in Canada? In fact, Toronto is one of the most diverse places in the world, representing 200 nationalities and 160 languages. This is a big advantage for international students as it's likely you'll not only find people from your home country and culture at your university, but in various neighbourhoods too. Toronto is home to significant populations of Greek, Chinese, Indian, Polish, Italian and Filipino people among many more.

## 6. Great food

Of course, one of the benefits of having such a diverse population is the food that comes with it. Toronto was once mainly known for its oysters, but now it has eateries famous for everything from organic juice to ice cream sandwiches. The annual 'Taste of Danforth' food festival is living proof of the great local cuisine brought over by immigrants, showcasing the best of Chinatown, Little Italy, Portugal Village and Greektown among others. And, if you want something other than street food, you could always eat in the iconic 360 Restaurant at CN Tower.



## 7. The Great Lakes

As we've covered in our guides to places like Michigan and Minnesota, the Great Lakes are a big reason to study in this part of the world – figuratively and literally. Lake Ontario is over 300 kilometres long and has 1020 kilometres of shoreline, not including its islands. It truly makes Ontario a unique place to study, especially as many of its cities are right on the lake bank. There's also plenty of opportunity for lakeside sports and activities, and the chance to visit Niagara Falls, one of the seven wonders of the natural world.

## 8. Culture

Artistic students might think of New York, Santa Fe or San Francisco as cultural hotspots in North America, but Ontario has its own thriving arts scene. Case and point: in Toronto there are 70 film festivals, Broadway musicals, and over 200 public works of art and historical monuments. The city is also North America's third largest movie production centre.

Outside of Toronto there's also Hamilton, another student city with a burgeoning reputation for creativity.

Colin: I majored in theater at university and Ontario has some great theater companies around the province. There's the Stratford Shakespeare Festival, the Shaw Festival, and some good companies in Toronto like Soulpepper.

## 9. Become a Canadian citizen

If you like studying in Canada so much that you want to stay there, good news - you can! In Ontario, graduates can become full Canadian citizens through an initiative called the Provincial Nominee Program. This means that if you are an undergraduate with a job offer, or a postgraduate student (with or without a job offer) there's a clear, relatively straightforward process by which you can live in Ontario permanently. There is an application fee, but as Canada also lets you work as an international student, you can get help there too.

## 10. Careers

And what about those jobs? Well, Ontario is home to many of Canada's most productive cities, and hosts 50% of the country's finance, tech and knowledge-intensive employees. Despite some other provinces **struggling** **with** job growth in recent years, Ontario has also been consistently stable. So, if you can get into a Canadian university, studying in Ontario may well change your life.

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