

ful autumn, famous throughout the world. The arrival of Christmas and winter means lots of snow in the north and an abundance of freezing rain in the south. While Niagara Falls shudders at the thought of five centimetres of snow and Toronto grumbles at the freezing rain, Ottawa shares the delightful mixture of both. However, the five centimetres are, more often than not, the same 25 centimetres of snow the Vancouverites see Montrealers shovelling just before their golf game.

Quebec's Christmases are highlighted by family gatherings, the strong attraction to home and the renewal of friendships. But, once again, like the rest of Canada, the joys of halted traffic, snow-plows loading up the entrance of a newly-cleared driveway and snowmobile rescues, make winter in Quebec a daily adventure.

The Atlantic provinces in winter offer

families the chance to get to know one another. Blizzards from the ocean provide continuous family entertainment and enforced togetherness. The addition of foreign fleets sheltering in maritime ports gives the region a distinctly cosmopolitan flavour, particularly during Christmas as customs from round the world are brought to the harbours by seamen away from home.

The rigours and joys of Christmas and winter are exemplified in northern Canada, where the sun barely breaks the horizon. Despite the harsh conditions, the warmth of the people grows as the thermometer drops.

The sharing of Christmas and the difficulties of winter are common denominators for Canadians, even if everyone wants to live in B.C. in January and golf while the rest of the nation "digs out".



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*The silence of the ski slopes (left) contrasts with the giggles of tobogganing children (above) and the roar of snowmobiles (upper right) during the Christmas season.*

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Doug Frame

*With visions of balmy Vancouver and a game of golf, Tom Donoghue battles an Ottawa snowfall just before Christmas.*