

Home to the seventh largest stock exchange in the world, Toronto has emerged as the "head office" location for more than half of Canada's financial institutions, insurance and real estate companies, and publishing houses. It is also the principal centre of conventions thanks to the excellent facilities the city provides. Toronto, in fact, recently hosted the 14th annual Economic Summit of major industrialized nations held at the Metropolitan Toronto Convention Centre.

Those familiar with the city in the 1950s will find it greatly changed today. Of the essentially English provincial city there remain few traces. The most notable demographic change in Toronto has been the increase in non-European immigrants. In 1987, the number of people of British origin in Toronto stood at 28 per cent, and of Italian origin, 12 per cent (the largest settlement outside Italy). These two biggest groups are followed by large Scottish, Irish, Jewish, Chinese, Portuguese, Greek, Caribbean, French, Indo-Pakistani, Ukrainian and Polish communities. During the late 1980s, Toronto's sizeable increase of immigrants clearly established the city as one of the most racially and culturally varied in the world.

Among the noticeable effects of this increased immigration is the *mélange* of languages one hears in the streets, on radio and on television. Today, Toronto's rich multicultural composition is reflected in the performing arts as well as in ethnic newspapers and magazines.

In addition, city streets are lined with numerous ethnic shops and grocery stores and a great variety of excellent ethnic restaurants. The famed Kensington Market — where foods from all over the world can be bought in a European setting — shows that Toronto comes honestly by the description "cultural mosaic."

There is more to Toronto, however, than ethnic diversity. One of the city's most exciting dining and shopping spots is in the Bloor/Yorkville streets area, known for its high-fashion boutiques, movie theatres, and fashionable restaurants. Yorkville, a hangout for hippies in the 1960s, is now a focal point for antique and art dealers, designer clothing, trendy bistros and chic nightlife.

Kensington Market:
a cultural mosaic of
people and foods
from around the
world.



© Derek Caron/Masterfile

In recent times, culture and entertainment have flourished in Toronto. The era has produced new radio and television stations, a burgeoning film and video industry, more than two dozen professional theatres and an increase in both the number of private art galleries and merchants specializing in some aspect of service to the various cultural industries.

Toronto is also the centre for English Canadian media. Home to the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation), the city is also headquarters for national newspaper chains such as Southam Inc. and Thomson Newspapers. The latter's *Toronto Globe and Mail* is considered Canada's most respected English-language daily newspaper and maintains regional editions across the country.

Undoubtedly, Toronto is the main urban cultural focus of English Canada. It is home of the largest Canadian post-secondary institution — the University of Toronto — and the more recent York University and Ryerson Polytechnical Institute.

Toronto is home to
the largest Chinese
community in
Canada.

The Toronto Symphony and the National Ballet of Canada, which are two of the country's most eminent artistic groups, the numerous museums, the innovative Ontario Science Centre and the world-renowned Royal Ontario Museum, all make Toronto an important cultural centre.

Perhaps the most common comment Torontonians hear from foreign visitors is what a clean, safe city Toronto is. In fact, some say it is one of the most admired in North America.

By international standards, however, Toronto is still quite a young metropolis. It is, nevertheless, growing into a legitimate cosmopolitan centre, and more and more, people the world over are realizing what the city has to offer.

