

## **The Canadian regions**

Canada's geography has discouraged, as well as attracted, settlement. There are six major geographical regions. East to west, the first includes the Atlantic provinces and southeastern Quebec and consists of hills and undulating plains—a terrain which allows for good fishing harbours and small farms as well as for forestry.

The St. Lawrence lowlands of southern Quebec and Ontario border the St. Lawrence River, the historical entrance to Canada, and the Great Lakes, the largest bodies of fresh water in the world. This area, which is among the most fertile, was easily accessible to European settlers and is today the most densely populated and industrialized part of Canada.

Almost half of Canada is covered by the Canadian Shield. It is a vast area of ancient rock which sweeps around Hudson Bay from the northern shores of Quebec to the Arctic shores of the Northwest Territories. It is a region of rounded hills, tens of thousands of lakes and muskeg or swamp. The Shield, although uninviting to settlement, contains

