



Toronto City Hall

as part museum and part funfair, and it is one place where visitors are encouraged to touch the exhibits. The accent is definitely on participation. Here you can play a fire-fighting computer game, simulate a moon landing, or experience an electrostatic generator that makes your hair stand on end.

The exterior of the centre is equally striking with buildings that are built down the side of a ravine and linked with glass-enclosed ramps and escalators.

Modern architecture

Exciting modern architecture has been a feature of Toronto since the construction of City Hall with its twin curved towers in 1965.

In front of City Hall is Nathan Phillips Square, a vast plaza which serves as a focal point for the local community, with band concerts and art exhibitions. Shoppers are well catered for by another modern complex, the Eaton Centre between Queen and Dundas Streets, which boasts 302 shops and 17 cinemas on four levels.

In recent years much thought has been given to the development of Toronto's greatest physical asset – its lakeside setting. Harbourfront, which stretches 1 miles along the shore, is a unique outdoor/indoor recreational complex linked by a lakeside walkway. Here you will find parks, galleries, art studios, restaurants, children's playgrounds, an antiques market and much more besides, while a short ferry ride away there are the beaches and parkland of Toronto Islands.

Along the lakeshore itself are three manmade islands with an array of summer attractions including a floating museum (HMCS Haida), a marina, an open air concert hall and Cinesphere –

a geodesic-domed cinema with one of the world's largest, curved film screens. Ontario Place, as the area is called, covers 96 acres and many of its designers worked on Expo 67 in Montreal.

Visitor's dream

When dusk falls, the curtain goes up on Toronto's vibrant nightlife. The range of restaurants is truly enormous thanks to the ethnic diversity of the city's population. The city also has theatres to suit every taste. The doyen of these is the Royal Alexandra Theatre, restored to its former baroque grandeur by businessman Ed Mirvish, who bought and restored London's Old Vic. 'Even if the play is a flop, an evening at the Royal Alex is still one of North America's outstanding theatrical experiences,' claims one local guide book.

Another important entertainment venue is the O'Keefe Centre with its 3167-seat auditorium. The largest concert hall in North America when it opened, it is now the Toronto base for the Canadian Opera Company and the National Ballet of Canada. The city's finest concert hall, the Roy Thomson Hall, was opened in 1982, and apart from featuring concerts by international celebrities serves as the headquarters of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra.

From the practical point of view, Toronto is a visitor's dream. It is easy to get to since its international airport is served by 32 airlines; it is easy to get around thanks to a public transport system that is modern, clean, safe and cheap; and unlike many other fast-growing cities it is a pleasure to live in and to look around. Toronto is a city of superlatives in the best sense of the word.

All of this makes Toronto a strong contender not only for the 1996 Olympics but also for Expo 2000.



RIGHT:
The world famous Eaton Centre is one of the largest shopping complexes in the country, containing 302 shops and 17 cinemas.

Photo: Ontario Tourism