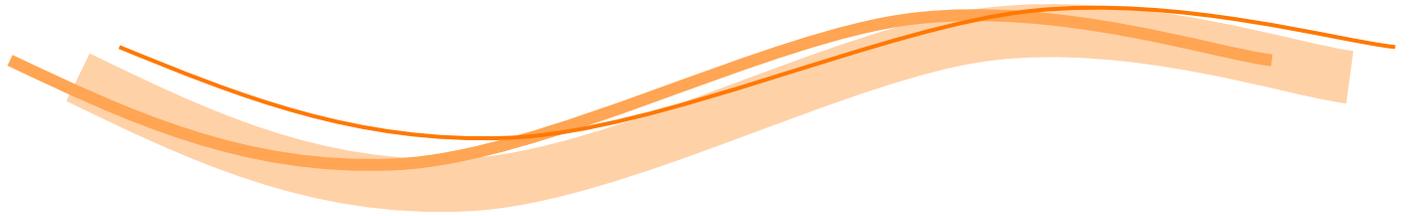




# EDMONTON





## EDMONTON

Edmonton offers a diverse range of attractions and experiences for travellers of all ages - including the famous West Edmonton Mall, Telus World of Science, Fort Edmonton Park (Canada's largest living history museum), the Royal Alberta Museum and the award-winning Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village.

Greater Edmonton is home to a wide dining selection. Many restaurants mirror the diversity of Edmonton's ethnic groups, while Alberta's world famous beef is a star attraction for restaurant-goers. Edmonton has a thriving nightlife and there is something for everyone including bars, clubs and pubs.

Edmonton also regularly hosts major international athletics competitions and sporting events in track & field, curling, soccer, rugby and more – including the Canadian Finals Rodeo and the Edmonton Indy.

### Canada's Festival City

Edmonton hosts more than 30 annual festivals that celebrate arts, culture and sports. Throughout the summer festivals are held for blues, bluegrass, folk, jazz and symphonic music. Winter festivals focus on ice sculptures, skiing and skating. In-between, there's something for everyone. From the Canadian Finals Rodeo to the Freewill Shakespeare Festival – and five distinct arts festivals that focus on art, design, storytelling and film – you'll find it all in Edmonton, Canada's Festival City.

With so many festivals – here are just a few highlights. You can find out more about these and all of Edmonton's festivals at [www.edmonton.com](http://www.edmonton.com)

- Capital EX** (July 22-31, 2011) is Edmonton's oldest summer festival. Since 1879, Capital EX has also been Edmonton's biggest summer celebration with the widest array of entertainment activities.

- The Servus Heritage Festival** (July 30 - August 01, 2011) is a three-day showcase of Canada's vibrant multicultural heritage. It will feature more than 60 pavilions representing over 85 cultures from all over the world.

- For 11 spectacular days, life is truly a stage in Edmonton's Old Strathcona District as the **Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival** (August 11-21, 2011) unfolds its multi-coloured curtain! This is the largest and oldest fringe festival on the continent. There are festivals

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for all ages and interests - and family-friendly Edmonton does the kids proud. Here are two examples that the kids will love!

•One of the longest running children's festivals in North America, the **Northern Alberta International Children's Festival** inspires and ignites children's creativity. Performances and activities expose kids to arts and culture through music, dance, theatre, acrobatics and visual arts. Welcome to a world where kids rule, May 31-June 04, 2011.

•**Edmonton International Street Performers Festival** has roving clowns, magicians, jugglers, unicyclists, super-balloon artists, face-painting, circus skills and more - with many free outdoor shows from July 08-17, 2011.

### **Family-Friendly Attractions**

**West Edmonton Mall** is a "must see". Where else can you experience the thrills of an amusement park, explore the depths of the sea, make a splash in a giant wave pool, glide on an NHL-sized skating rink, play a round of golf, and shop till you drop ... all under one roof? West Edmonton Mall is North America's largest shopping and entertainment centre and Alberta's No 1 tourist attraction!

**Jurassic Forest** is a 40-acre prehistoric preserve where gigantic, life-sized and startlingly realistic dinosaurs live and breathe. Watch dinosaurs in action, dig for ancient remains, and camp and picnic in a land populated with plants and animals that ruled the planet 250 million years ago. The park has been designed to minimize the impact on the forest and to provide an opportunity to experience and learn about some of the flora and fauna indigenous to the Edmonton area.

This year's **Edmonton Attraction Pass** is a great buy for visitors and families. With the U-Pick Pass, visit any four attractions within one week for under \$30. The Ultimate Pass gives you access to each attraction within the calendar year for under \$60. There are even better rates for children aged three to 17. Edmonton Attractions available with an Edmonton Attractions Pass include:

Alberta Aviation Museum  
Alberta Legislature  
Art Gallery of Alberta  
Devonian Botanic Garden  
Fort Edmonton Park  
Leduc #1 Energy Discovery Centre  
Muttart Conservatory

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Northlands Capital EX  
Old Strathcona  
Prairie Gardens and Adventure Farm  
Royal Alberta Museum  
TELUS World of Science  
Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village  
Valley Zoo  
West Edmonton Mall  
Sea Life Caverns

### **Celebrating Culture and the Arts**

Edmonton was named as a Canadian Cultural Capital for 2007. Edmonton area's wealth of visual art is displayed in over 60 galleries and public exhibits. In early 2010, the **Art Gallery of Alberta** opened with over 30K sq ft of museum quality space. The gallery offers education, instruction and hosts international and local art exhibits year round.

**Old Strathcona** has a variety of unique shops. Old Strathcona is both a Provincial Historic Area and a grassroots arts, music and theatre district. It has a renowned Farmers' Market, more theatres in a few square blocks than any other place in Alberta, and a thriving night life.

**The Gallery Walk** - the first of its kind in Canada - focuses especially on work by Canadian artists. Eight galleries participate in two formal tours a year in a 12 block area around 124th Street.

### **Gateway to Nature**

Edmonton is a perfect base for nature exploration. It is your gateway to **Jasper National Park**, and the nearby **Elk Island National Park** - beautiful oasis home to herds of bison, moose, deer and elk. Second only to Africa's famed Serengeti for wildlife viewing, Elk Island National Park, established in 1906, is Canada's first federal wildlife sanctuary for large mammals. Also boasting over 250 species of birds, the park is a bird watcher's paradise.

Canada's largest urban park, **Edmonton's River Valley**, offers 150 km of trails on which you can enjoy walks, bike rides, picnics, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and more. Just outside of Edmonton, Kalyna Country is Canada's largest eco-museum, home to more than 40 designated informal natural areas.

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<b>Location</b>	The city is located on the North Saskatchewan River in the central region of the province of Alberta, an area with some of the most fertile farmland on the prairies. It is the second largest city in Alberta after Calgary, and is the hub of Canada's sixth-largest census metropolitan area.
<b>Geography</b>	Edmonton is located near the geographical centre of the province, at an elevation of 668 m (2,190 ft). The terrain in and around Edmonton is generally flat to gently rolling, with ravines and deep river valleys, such as the North Saskatchewan River valley. Despite the fact that the Canadian Rockies come as close to Edmonton as 220 km to the southwest, the city is too distant for any of its peaks to be seen from even its tallest buildings. The North Saskatchewan River bisects the city and originates at the Columbia Icefield in Jasper National Park. It empties via the Saskatchewan River, Lake Winnipeg, and the Nelson River into Hudson Bay. It runs from the southwest to the northeast and is fed by numerous creeks throughout the city, such as Mill Creek and Whitemud Creek; this creates numerous ravines, many of which have been incorporated into urban parkland. Edmonton is situated at the boundary between prairie to the south and boreal forest to the north, in a transitional area known as aspen parkland.
<b>Name</b>	The name "Edmonton" is a Latinized version of a Saxon word meaning "Happy Hamlet," and was used to honour the home of HBC governor James Winter Lake who was from Edmonton, England.
<b>Population</b>	Today, Edmonton is home to over 780,000 residents and with its neighbouring communities comprises a metropolitan region that is home to slightly more than one million residents at 1.034 million.
<b>Language</b>	English
<b>Currency</b>	Canadian Dollar
<b>Tipping</b>	In restaurants and bars with table service, a tip of about 15% is customary if service is cheerful and efficient. If service is exceptional, a 20% tip shows strong appreciation.
<b>Government</b>	Edmonton is represented by a mayor and 12 councilors
<b>Documentation</b>	None required for Canadian citizens.
<b>Time zone</b>	Mountain Time Zone, two hours behind Montreal and Toronto.
<b>Health</b>	Canadian travelling out of their own province should ensure that they have appropriate travel insurance.
<b>Safety tips</b>	Edmonton is considered a very safe city.

<b>CLIMATE</b>	
<b>General climate</b>	Edmonton is also one of Canada's sunniest cities with about 2,300 hours of sunshine per year. In June, the city enjoys up to 17 hours of daylight per day. Winter, with snow, generally lasts from November

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	through mid-March. A warm parka and winter footwear make the cold weather reasonably comfortable.
<b>Today's weather</b>	Sun and clouds and 20 Centigrade (28 May 2011)
<b>Best time to visit</b>	Edmonton is truly a year-round destination.

<b>GETTING AROUND</b>	
<b>Getting There</b>	Air Canada and WestJet have frequent service from Eastern Canada to Edmonton and the flight duration is approximately 4.5 hours. The airport lies 29km south of the city on Highway 2, about 45 minutes away. By cab, the trip costs about \$35; by Airporter bus ( 780/465-8515 and website <a href="http://www.edmontontaxiservicegroup.com/skyshuttle">www.edmontontaxiservicegroup.com/skyshuttle</a> ) it's \$10.
<b>Cities</b>	Edmonton, which traces its roots back to 1795, started out as a fur-trading outpost. Just over 100 years later, during the 1897 Klondike Gold Rush prospectors boosted Edmonton's fortune as they stopped in Edmonton for supplies en route to the Yukon. Many would also make Edmonton their permanent home increasing the population to six times its previous size. It is the capital of the province of Alberta, Canada's sixth-largest city, and has the longest stretch of urban parkland in North America, which is 22 times larger than New York's Central Park and eight times larger than Vancouver's Stanley Park.
<b>Distances</b>	45 km west of Elk Island National Park - 30 minutes drive 294 km north of Calgary - 3 hours drive 362 km east of Jasper National Park - 4 hours drive 404 km northeast of Banff National Park - 5 hours drive
<b>Car</b>	Edmonton is a key point on the Yellowhead Highway, western Canada's east-west interprovincial highway. Just west of Edmonton, the Yellowhead is linked to the Alaska Highway.
<b>Trains</b>	Edmonton is served 3 times per week by VIA Rail Canada's "The Canadian" route, east to Saskatoon, Winnipeg, and Toronto, and west to Jasper and Vancouver. The VIA Rail station, at 12360 121 Street, is located about 10-15 minutes drive (6 km) north of the city centre. You can also take the Snow Train Express to Jasper. It departs from Edmonton on Friday and returns on Sunday during the winter season.
<b>Car Rental</b>	In addition to the following downtown locations, National (10133 100A St. NW; tel. 800/CAR-RENT), Budget (10016 106th St. tel. 800/268-8900), and Hertz (10815 Jasper Ave.; tel. 780/423-3431) each have a car-rental bureau at the airport.
<b>Buses</b>	Greyhound buses (tel. 800/661-8747 <a href="http://www.greyhound.com">www.greyhound.com</a> ) link Edmonton to points in Canada from the depot at 10324 103rd St.
<b>Passes</b>	The new <b>Edmonton Attractions Pass Ultimate Pass</b> offers access to 14 attractions for a year for under \$60 OR U-Pick Pass for any 4 attractions in 7 days for under \$30. Both have youth prices as well. Participating attractions include: Art Gallery of Alberta, Valley Zoo,

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	<p>Devonian Botanic Garden, Leduc #1 Energy Discovery Centre, Fort Edmonton Park, Muttart Conservatory, Northlands, Old Strathcona, TELUS World of Science, West Edmonton Mall, Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village, Alberta Legislature, Festival City, Prairie Gardens and Adventure Farm, Alberta Aviation Museum.</p> <p><a href="http://edmontonattractions.com">http://edmontonattractions.com</a></p>
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<p><b>ACCOMMODATION TYPES</b></p>	<p>Edmonton's choice of hotels gives new meaning to the term 'a room with a view,' with spectacular vistas from downtown properties overlooking the city's majestic ribbon of green – its River Valley parks system. For something completely different, choose from 12 different theme style rooms and stay in one of the world's most unique hotels. Or book a room in the hotel that is home to Canada's number one dinner theatre. Sound tempting? Well, those are just a fraction of the possibilities with more than 13,000 guest rooms to pick from. With a wide sampling of major hotel brands, suite hotels, trendy boutique properties and motels, Edmonton puts the fun into being sent to your room!</p> <p>Personally recommended from my last trip to Edmonton is the <b>Sutton Place Hotel Edmonton</b></p> <p>Address: 10235 - 101 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5J 3E9  Toll Free Reservations 1.8663.SUTTON  Website: <a href="http://www.edmonton.suttonplace.com">http://www.edmonton.suttonplace.com</a></p> <p>This hotel is connected to five major office towers and over 400 stores, businesses and services in the Edmonton City Centre Mall, so every convenience of downtown Edmonton is at your fingertips: Sir Winston Churchill Square and its plethora of annual international festivals, The Shaw Conference Centre, City Hall, Provincial Law Courts, the Art District – comprising of the Edmonton Art Gallery, Citadel Theatre, Winspear Centre for the Performing Arts. Facilities include over 300 rooms, an indoor pool, sauna, casino, and entertainment.</p>
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<p><b>LIFESTYLES</b></p> <p><b>Kids</b></p>	<p>Fort Edmonton Park and the Telus World of Science would be my top picks for children in Edmonton.</p> <p><b>West Edmonton Mall</b> holds records for the world's largest indoor amusement park (26 rides and attractions), the world's largest indoor triple loop rollercoaster (1,285 metres of track), the world's largest indoor lake (complete with a replica of Christopher Columbus's Santa Maria), the world's largest indoor wave pool (12.3 million litres of water), and the world's largest indoor permanent bungee tower (30 metres up and 30 metres down). Where else can you experience the thrills of an amusement park, explore the depths of the sea, make a splash in a</p>
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	<p>giant wave pool, glide on an NHL-sized skating rink, play a round of golf, and shop till you drop ... all under one roof? At North America's largest shopping and entertainment centre and Alberta's #1 tourist attraction – West Edmonton Mall! <a href="http://www.westedmontonmall.com">www.westedmontonmall.com</a></p> <p><b>Jurassic Forest</b> is a 40-acre prehistoric preserve where gigantic, life-sized and startlingly realistic dinosaurs live and breathe. Families, school children and corporate guests will watch dinosaurs in action, dig for ancient remains, and camp and picnic in a land populated with plants and animals that ruled the planet 250 million years ago. The park has been designed to minimize the impact on the forest and utilize the natural setting to enhance the display of our dinosaurs and to provide an opportunity to experience and learn about some of the flora and fauna indigenous to the Edmonton area. <a href="http://www.jurassicforest.com">www.jurassicforest.com</a></p>
<b>Teens</b>	<p>An <b>Oilers or Eskimos</b> game would go down well and there are a number of soft adventure opportunities in and around the city as well. The Segway tours in the river valley are good for teens too.</p>
<b>Romance</b>	<p>How about <b>The Edmonton Queen Riverboat</b>, a great opportunity to ride the fast-running waters of the North Saskatchewan river through the lush and scenic valley right in the middle of downtown? <a href="http://www.edmontonqueen.com">www.edmontonqueen.com</a></p>
<b>Seniors</b>	<p>As befits the “Cultural Capital of Canada”, there are many options for Seniors to get the most out of their time in Edmonton – it is such a civilized city destination!</p>

<b>UNIQUES</b>	
<b>Surprising</b>	<p>Normally I list just one entry here, but Edmonton has more than its fair share of surprising attractions!</p> <p>A Waterfall higher than Niagara Falls? Yes. Edmonton's <b>Great Divide Waterfall</b> is 210 feet high (about 24 feet higher than Niagara Falls). The High Level Bridge, which connects downtown Edmonton to the city's south side, contains a waterfall that sends approximately 11,000 gallons of water out per minute for a distance of 300 feet along the exterior expanse of the bridge. The man-made waterfall, which is turned on for holiday weekends, cascades into the North Saskatchewan River.</p> <p>Ride the <b>High Level Streetcar</b> (spring through fall) and enjoy a trip from the top deck of the world's highest streetcar bridge – the High Level Bridge – built in 1912.</p> <p>West Edmonton Mall's <b>Fantasyland Hotel</b> features 12 different theme rooms for guests to stay in including: African Safari, Arabian, Canadian Rail, Hollywood, Igloo, Polynesian, Roman, Truck, Victorian Coach,</p>

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	<p>Sports, Waterpark and Western.</p> <p>For a little vacation quirkiness, Edmonton also offers the Silly Summer Parade, Old Strathcona Ghost Tours and the Mount Pleasant Cemetery Tour. Other different events include The Stroll of Poets, The Sourdough Raft Race and during Christmas check out Candy Cane Lane, a small community that goes all out to decorate their houses with colourful light displays and unique decorations.</p> <p>Edmonton's impressive <b>Chinatown Gate</b> was built as a symbol of friendship between the Edmonton and its sister city, Harbin, in the People's Republic of China.</p> <p>Some of the world's biggest <b>roadside attractions</b> can be found in the scenic countryside northeast of Edmonton. Find the world's largest Easter Egg (Pysanka) in Vegreville; the biggest Mallard Duck in Andrew; giant mushrooms in Vilna; the largest perogi in Glendon and an oversized sausage in Mundare. You'll also find the world's first UFO Landing Pad in St. Paul.</p> <p>Mural, mural on the wall, which is the biggest one of all? Both Stony Plain, just west of Edmonton, and Legal, north of Edmonton, feature outdoor art walks focusing on more than a dozen impressive murals depicting the history of each area.</p>
<b>History</b>	<p>The first inhabitants settled in the area that is now Edmonton around 3,000 BC and perhaps as early as 12,000 BC, when an ice-free corridor opened up as the last ice age ended and timber, water, and wildlife became available in the region.</p> <p>In 1754, <b>Anthony Henday</b>, an explorer working for the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), may have been the first European to enter the Edmonton area. His expeditions across the Canadian Prairies were mainly to seek contact with the aboriginal population for the purpose of establishing the fur trade, as competition was fierce between the Hudson's Bay Company and the North West Company. By <b>1795, Fort Edmonton</b> was established on the north bank of the river, as a major trading post for the Hudson's Bay Company. The name of the new fort was suggested by John Peter Pruden after Edmonton, London, the home town of both the HBC deputy governor Sir James Winter Lake, and Pruden.</p> <p>In the late 19th century, the highly fertile soils surrounding Edmonton helped attract settlers, further establishing Edmonton as a major regional commercial and agricultural centre. Edmonton was also a stopping point for people hoping to cash in on <b>the Klondike Gold Rush in 1897</b>, although the majority of people doing so chose to take a</p>

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	<p>steamship north to the Yukon from Vancouver. Incorporated as a city in 1904 with a population of 8,350, Edmonton became the capital of Alberta as the province joined Confederation a year later, on September 1, 1905. In November 1905, the Canadian Northern Railway (CNR) arrived in Edmonton, accelerating growth.</p>
<b>Books</b>	Frommer's Alberta
<b>1000 Places to See Before You Die</b>	<b>Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival:</b> North America's largest fringe theatre festival takes over Strathcona with a huge selection of theatrics and performance.
<b>Must Sees</b>	<p><b>Edmonton International Street Performers Festival</b></p> <p>Since 1985, for 10 days every July, a smile is put on the face of Edmonton audiences, as the best street acts from 'just around the corner' to 'all over the world' are presented at the annual Edmonton International Street Performers Festival. The 27th annual Edmonton International Street Performers Festival will run July 8th – 17th, 2011. The first of its kind in North America, the Edmonton International Street Performers Festival was created to celebrate the art form of street performance. The festival presents the highest calibre professional street performers in over 1500 focused outdoor pass-your-hat performances with many other opportunities for the non-busking type performances.</p> <p>The 2011 festival will be presented at Sir Winston Churchill Square in downtown Edmonton. The Festival is often dubbed a 'best loved' and 'favourite' of the city's festivals in audience surveys and media reports – a grass-roots popularity fueled, no doubt, by the affordability and accessibility of our programming. The core programming consists of artists that include musicians, magicians, dancers, clowns, jugglers, acrobats, face painters, comics, circus artists, stilt walkers and puppeteers from Alberta, Canada and around the world.</p> <p>The Edmonton International Street Performers Festival mandate is: To encourage and contribute to the evolution of the street performing tradition; To enrich the lives of the people of Edmonton and area by producing accessible, populist events that honour and present street performing excellence; To bring national and international attention to the city of Edmonton as a street performing centre; To promote the development of local and regional street performing talent.</p> <p>The primary site is Sir Winston Churchill Square programmed from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily. The site is divided into five focused performing areas and scheduled continuously with 30 to 60 minute shows. All outdoor performances are 'pass the hat' - available to all, with voluntary donations accepted by the performers. These shows are</p>

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	<p>augmented by roving performers and interactive characters that entertain audiences on an individual, close-up basis and create a welcoming animated atmosphere at the festival.</p> <p>Late Night Madness (2 'adults only' shows in the Downtown Library Theatre) are variety performances where artists are encouraged to work together to develop original material. Tickets for the Late Night Madness performances are \$15 or \$17 at the door.</p> <p>In addition to the core programming, the Street Performers Festival presents special programs and is active in Edmonton's cultural community. Some of these programs include Be Your Own Busker, Kids' World, the Comedy Cares program that visits hospitals and community institutions and at various corporate and business events and celebrations.</p>
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<p><b>SPORTS ACTIVITIES</b></p>	<p>Edmonton has developed a well-deserved reputation as the City of Champions. In the sporting realm this encompasses:  <b>Edmonton Eskimos</b> of the Canadian Football League (CFL)  <b>Edmonton Oilers</b> of the National Hockey League (NHL)  Other Edmonton sport franchises include the Edmonton Capitals (Golden Baseball League); Edmonton Rush (National Lacrosse League); and the Edmonton Oil Kings, a junior hockey team in the Western Hockey League.</p> <p>Edmonton also has a rich history in successfully hosting world-class events such as the World Triathlon Championships, the 2001 IAAF World Championships in Athletics, the 2002 FIFA U-19 Women's World Soccer Championship Canada Cup, the 2005 Tim Hortons Brier (Curling) and the 2005 World Masters Games. The Ford World Men's Curling Championships called Edmonton home in 2007, when the city also hosted the FIFA Under 20 World Cup Canada.</p> <p>Motor sport is revving its engines with the recent addition of Edmonton to the Indy Racing League circuit. In 2007, the <b>Grand Prix of Edmonton</b> attracted over 167,000 spectators while injecting over \$25 million into the Edmonton economy. In its inaugural year in 2005, Edmonton set the record for a Champ Car event in Canada with attendance of 200,000 spectators.</p>
<p><b>Golf</b></p>	<p>Golfers will also find Edmonton of championship calibre. There are more than <b>70 courses</b> in the region and during summer, with up to 17 hours of daylight, golfers can enjoy extended hours on the links. In 2007, Edmonton's <b>Royal Mayfair Golf Club</b> played host to the LPGA CN Canadian Women's Open.</p>

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<b>Fishing</b>	<b>Get Hooked Fishing Adventures</b> offers a variety of fishing packages designed to meet the thrills and challenges of fishing the waters of the Edmonton area. <a href="http://www.gethookedfishing.com">http://www.gethookedfishing.com</a>
<b>Horse riding</b>	<b>Whitemud Equine Learning Centre</b> offers recreational horse riding lessons for children and adults in Edmonton. <a href="http://www.whitemudequine.org">http://www.whitemudequine.org</a>
<b>Hiking</b>	Enjoy the Great Outdoors in the North Saskatchewan River Valley. Edmonton offers the largest expanse of urban parkland in North America with its gorgeous river valley and vast system of parks and natural areas. There are 22 major parks and over 160 kms of maintained trails on which you can enjoy walks. In 1984, Edmontonian <b>John Stanton</b> opened the first <b>Running Room</b> , a small shop located in the living room of an Edmonton home. Since the opening of his small athletic store offering a variety of running shoes for the avid runner, the word has spread quickly of Stanton's passion for quality running shoes that met the specific needs of those who required them.
<b>Cycling</b>	Edmonton has a bike path network of about 150km, including more than 100km worth of paths running through the river valley. This is scenic and lovely, but not terribly practical in terms of actual transportation. If you're willing to take to the city streets, be prepared for the main obstacle to Edmonton city cycling: incredibly long, painfully steep slopes into and out of the deep river valley. If you're game, you can rent a bike from the <b>People's Pedal</b> (tel. 780/686-5399; <a href="http://www.peoplespedal.org">www.peoplespedal.org</a> ), a community based non-profit where you can pay \$25 for four hours, or work off your bike rental fees in exchange for volunteer time. Bikes are available at 25 hubs around the city; visit the website for locations.
<b>Rodeo</b>	The <b>Canadian Finals Rodeo</b> calls Edmonton home. It's Canada's biggest money rodeo and the season-ending championship competition of Canadian professional rodeo. Held annually in mid-November at Rexall Place, it's the largest annual indoor sporting event in Western Canada. The rodeo is held concurrently with Farmfair International and various other citywide western activities.

<b>CULTURE</b>	With a thriving downtown arts district, a lively art, music and theatre scene, it is no wonder that Edmonton was named as a <b>Canadian Cultural Capital for 2007</b> . Arts and culture are the very soul of Edmonton creating an oasis for creativity, exploration and accomplishment that are vital in supporting and sustaining this community.
<b>Arts</b>	The Edmonton region is home to more than <b>60 art galleries</b> . Twice a year, in the spring and fall, the <b>Gallery Walk</b> offers advertised, unguided events promoting the member galleries, all of which are within a nine-block walking distance. Located just west of the downtown core

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	<p>in the 124th Street area, the Gallery Walk is the first of its kind in Canada. It was formed in 1981 to promote art and artists of merit, focusing especially on work by Canadian artists. <a href="http://www.gallery-walk.com">www.gallery-walk.com</a></p> <p><b>The Art Gallery of Alberta</b> is Alberta's longest running cultural institution, with a growing collection of more than 5,000 works of art, including historical and contemporary paintings and sculptures by Canadian and international artists. Currently undergoing a major renovation and expansion program, a striking new 85,000 sq. foot facility is expected to open in early 2010. Designed by renowned Los Angeles architect Randall Stout, this signature building will become a downtown landmark and promises to be one of the leading influences in visual culture in Western Canada. <a href="http://www.youraga.ca">www.youraga.ca</a></p> <p><b>Downtown Arts District:</b> A revitalized Sir Winston Churchill Square anchors the Downtown Arts District. Redeveloped into a cultural centrepiece in 2004, the square has become an entertainment destination for more than one million visitors as it hosts a wide number of events and festivals throughout the year. On the square's exterior boundaries, visitors will find the Art Gallery of Alberta, the Francis Winspear Centre for Music, the Citadel Theatre, and the main branch of the Edmonton Public Library.</p>
<b>Music</b>	<p><b>Folkways Records</b>, which began in a small New York City office in 1948, set out to document and preserve people's music from around the world. Moses Asch, Folkway's founder, would come to develop a connection with Edmonton's University of Alberta and the city's lively folk music scene. A complete set of the Folkways recordings at the University of Alberta, the Moses and Frances Asch Collection of Folkways Recordings, now provides a crucial reference for world music study and research.</p> <p>The <b>Francis Winspear Centre for Music</b> is a 1,900-seat concert hall that features the largest concert organ in Canada. Designed with acoustical needs in mind, it is home to the Edmonton Symphony Orchestra, a 56-piece professional orchestra that is one of Canada's foremost orchestral ensembles. Since its inaugural concert in 1920, the ESO has played with the world's greatest artists including Itzhak Perlman, Yo-Yo Ma, Ben Heppner, Frederica von Stade among others. During the summer, the ESO goes outdoors with its annual outdoor festival, Symphony Under The Sky.</p> <p><b>TIX on the Square</b> in Churchill Square is the place to find discounted same-day performance tickets as well as tickets to a wide variety of upcoming shows.</p>

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<p><b>Performing Arts</b></p>	<p><b>Opera:</b> Edmonton Opera, established in 1963, is a regional opera company recognized as a leader in the production and promotion of innovative, challenging and audience-driven opera. Beverly Sills made her Canadian operatic debut in the Edmonton Opera performance of Lucia di Lammermoor and today the opera company performs in the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium.</p> <p><b>Theatre:</b> With distinguished drama programs at the University of Alberta or the demanding visual and performing arts programs at Grant MacEwan College, Edmonton has become home to 20 theatre companies and dozens of acting co-ops. Alternative, collective, community based, improvisation and dinner theatre are just part of what a theatre lover will find in this city. Eight theatre companies can be found in the historic Old Strathcona district.</p> <p><b>The Citadel Theatre</b> is Canada’s largest regional theatre and the only classical theatre in western Canada. Its three stages, the Maclab, Rice and Shoctor are adjacent to the Lee Pavilion, which houses an indoor waterfall and lush exotic plants.</p> <p><b>Dance:</b> Edmonton's only complete season of contemporary dance, presented by the Brian Webb Dance Company, is recognized as the largest dance season west of Toronto. Guest artists, meanwhile, do more than perform – they take part in workshops and artist talks.</p> <p><b>Ballet:</b> Alberta Ballet, which performs in Edmonton, in addition to Calgary, is Canada’s third-largest dance company. It consists of 26 classically trained professional dancers from Canada, Australia, Colombia, England, France, Japan, Spain, Taiwan, Ukraine and the United States. Edmonton performances are in the Northern Alberta Jubilee Auditorium.</p>
<p><b>Museums</b></p>	<p><b>Royal Alberta Museum:</b> The Royal Alberta Museum takes visitors on a journey through time and space to explore the human and natural history of western Canada. Wild Alberta takes visitors on a journey across Alberta’s diverse landscapes and is a centre for environmental education. The Natural History Gallery features spectacular minerals and gems, dinosaurs, Saber-toothed Cats and Mammoths! The Bug Room offers visitors the opportunity to meet some of the biggest insects in the world – alive and up close. The Syncrude Gallery of Aboriginal Culture tells a story spanning 11,000 years, tracing an extraordinary history from the arrival of the Ice Age to the present day. Film, sound, light, more than 3,000 artifacts and Aboriginal interpreters combine to bring the story of the First Peoples to life.</p>

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	<p><b>Reynolds Alberta Museum:</b> More than 350 vehicles, over 70 vintage aircraft and another 1,000 pieces of agricultural equipment celebrate the spirit of the machine. This world-best facility, south of Edmonton in Wetaskiwin, is also home to Canada’s Aviation Hall of Fame. And be sure to check out the 1929 Duessenberg Model J automobile – the only one in a public collection in Canada.</p> <p><b>Rutherford House Historic Site:</b> Experience the warmth and charm of a beautiful 1911 brick mansion. Once the home of Alberta’s first premier, Alexander Rutherford, Rutherford House now offers guided tours, afternoon tea and light lunches.</p> <p><b>Ukrainian Cultural Historical Heritage Village:</b> Catch a glimpse of what life was like for Ukrainian immigrants between 1892 and the 1930s at the Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Village. Just 25 minutes east of Edmonton along Highway 16, the village was established in 1971. Costumed role-players re-create the lives of pioneers and bring history alive on a site that includes more than 30 restored heritage buildings.</p> <p><b>Alberta Aviation Museum:</b> See nearly a quarter century of aviation in Western Canada at The Hangar on Kingsway where you’ll find detail perfect re-creations of some of the most significant aircraft in Western Canadian aviation history.</p> <p><b>TELUS World of Science – Edmonton:</b> Home to Canada’s largest planetarium, the TELUS World of Science – Edmonton also has six exhibit galleries and two theatres, including an IMAX. All are part of this interactive science centre which has a mission to motivate people to learn about and contribute to science and technology. The Body Fantastic, Mystery Avenue, The Greens' House, Space Place, Explorer Gallery housing rotating exhibits, and DiscoveryLand all put a new spin on learning about the world we live in for both children young and old.</p> <p>There are many more museums of interest worth checking out such as the Alberta Railway Museum, the C &amp; E Railway Museum, Canadian Petroleum Discovery Centre (Leduc No. 1 Oil Derrick), Edmonton Public Schools Archives &amp; Museum, John Walter Museum, Loyal Edmonton Regiment Museum, Multicultural Heritage Centre and Oppertshouser Gallery, Strathcona County Heritage Museum, Telephone Historical Centre, Ukrainian Canadian Archives &amp; Museum of Alberta and the Ukrainian Museum of Canada.</p>
<p><b>Festivals 2011</b></p>	<p>Edmonton hosts more than 30 annual festivals that celebrate arts, culture and sports. Throughout the summer festivals are held for blues, bluegrass, folk, jazz and symphonic music. Winter festivals focus on ice</p>

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sculptures, skiing and skating. In-between, there's something for everyone. From the Canadian Finals Rodeo to the Freewill Shakespeare Festival – and five distinct arts festivals that focus on art, design, storytelling and film – you'll find it all in Edmonton, Canada's Festival City!

**Capital EX**, Edmonton's oldest summer festival. Since 1879, Capital EX is Edmonton's biggest summer celebration with the widest array of entertainment activities. [www.capitalex.ca](http://www.capitalex.ca)

**Edmonton Indy:** Start your engines, the race is on! With a newly designed course, this much anticipated return engagement brings an exciting new dimension to motor sports. [www.edmontonindy.com](http://www.edmontonindy.com)

**Servus Heritage Festival:** 2011 marks the 36th annual of this premier three-day showcase of Canada's vibrant multicultural heritage. They will feature more than 60 pavilions representing over 85 cultures from all over the world. Sample culinary delicacies, see creative performances, shop for crafts, artwork, and clothing, or chat with people eager to tell you a little about their cultural roots and their present-day communities in Canada. <http://heritage-festival.com>

**Family-Friendly Festivals:**

Celebrating 30 years in 2011. May 31-June 4, Welcome to a world where kids rule! One of the longest running children's festivals in North America, the **Northern Alberta International Children's Festival** inspires and ignites children's creativity. Performances and activities expose kids to arts and culture through music, dance, theatre, acrobatics and visual arts. [www.childfest.com](http://www.childfest.com)

July 8-17 **Edmonton International Street Performers Festival** With magical clowns, the strongest woman alive, super-balloon artists, bizarre stilt walkers, face-painting, circus skills and more, there are so many free outdoor shows your budget will have its own vacation. It features an international cast of jugglers, acrobats, hip hop dancers, sword-swallowers, musicians and more. This is Shelley Switzer's 27th Festival (first 11 as a volunteer, 16 as the Artistic Producer).

[www.edmontonstreetfest.com](http://www.edmontonstreetfest.com)

Also celebrating 30 years in 2011. August 11-21, For 11 spectacular days, life is truly a stage in Edmonton's Old Strathcona District as the **Edmonton International Fringe Theatre Festival** unfolds its multi-coloured curtain! The largest and oldest Fringe Festival on the continent features more than 170 un-juried and un-censored shows

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	<p>from around the world. <a href="http://www.fringetheatre.ca">www.fringetheatre.ca</a></p> <p>For more information on Edmonton's festival connection, check out the Edmonton Festival City website at <a href="http://www.festivalcity.ca">www.festivalcity.ca</a> .</p>
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<b>ATTRACTIONS</b>	
<b>Wildlife</b>	<p><b>Elk Island National Park</b> - beautiful oasis home to herds of bison, moose, deer and elk. Elk Island National Park, established in 1906, is Canada's first federal wildlife sanctuary for large mammals. My encounter with a huge bison standing astride the road just inside the park gate sparked me to include this in my Chris' Top Ten Canadian Wildlife Experiences:  <a href="http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/content.asp?page=traveltips/Top10_Canadian_Wildlife">http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/content.asp?page=traveltips/Top10_Canadian_Wildlife</a>          My travel blog of my visit in 2009 can be found at:  <a href="http://christalkstravel.blogspot.com/2009/10/edmonton-elk-island-national-park.html">http://christalkstravel.blogspot.com/2009/10/edmonton-elk-island-national-park.html</a>          The park is a bird watcher's paradise, boasting over 250 species of birds  <b>Valley Zoo:</b> Located in Edmonton's River Valley Park System, the Valley Zoo, established in 1959, is home to more than 100 exotic, endangered and native species.</p>
<b>Parks</b>	<p>Edmonton, home to a massive river valley and park system, is a great starting point for tourists who love to experience the outdoors. The gateway to Jasper National Park and the majestic Canadian Rockies, the city also offers access to stunning botanic gardens, Alberta's northern lakes and a variety of wildlife in their natural habitat.</p> <p><b>Edmonton's River Valley:</b> Nature in the middle of the city. North America's largest urban park, stretching along Edmonton's river valley, encompassing 7,340 hectares (18,348 acres), is 22 times larger than New York's Central Park. It's also eight times larger than Vancouver's Stanley Park. Residents and visitors enjoy year-round access to more than 22 major parks and over 160 kilometres of maintained trails for walking, jogging, bike riding, picnicking, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing.</p> <p><b>Elk Island National Park:</b> Second only to Africa's famed Serengeti for wildlife viewing, the park, established in 1906, is Canada's first federal wildlife sanctuary for large mammals. Less than an hour from Edmonton, Elk Island National Park is home to large herds of plains bison, wood bison, deer, elk, moose, and a variety of smaller mammals (including beavers) along with some 230 bird species. The Living Waters Boardwalk is a favourite activity for children. Nature walks and</p>

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camping are other popular family activities. Elk Island also appears in Chris' Top Ten Canadian National Parks:

<http://www.chrisrobinsontravelshow.ca/images/upload/ChrisFavouriteNationalParks.pdf>

**Blackfoot Recreation Area:** Renowned as the winter home of Canada's largest cross-country ski festival, The Canadian Birkebeiner Ski Festival, the Blackfoot Recreation Area's charms don't melt away with the snow. The 24,000-acre provincial recreation area offers 171 kilometres of equestrian, hiking and cycling trails on the rolling Cooking Lake Moraine with trails wandering through aspen parkland, meadows, bogs and spruce forests. The diverse habitat is home to an amazing variety of wildlife including coyotes, deer, elk, fox, moose and porcupines. Birdwatchers enjoy trekking through the undisturbed woods on hunts for unique species. Access to Blackfoot's extensive trail loop system begins at four staging areas dotted around the park – each offers warm-up shelters, washrooms, picnic tables and fire pits. Three backcountry shelters are also provided in the park, which is open year-round.

**Jasper National Park:** Celebrating its centennial in 2007, Jasper National Park is the largest and most northerly Canadian rocky mountain national park. The Sunwapta Falls, Mount Edith Cavell, and the Columbia Icefield Glacier Experience are just some of the scenic highlights this region offers. Jasper National Park is 370 kilometres west of Edmonton.

**John Janzen Nature Centre:** In the heart of Edmonton's River Valley, the John Janzen Nature Centre is a focus for programs, events, exhibits and information to help raise awareness and understanding of nature in an urban setting. In addition to interactive exhibits, there are also two self-guided interpretive nature trails.

**Kalyna Country:** Canada's largest eco-museum, home to more than 40 designated informal natural areas, is three times the size of Prince Edward Island and located just outside of Edmonton.

**Strathcona Wilderness Centre:** Enjoy hiking, canoeing or bird watching and explore 500 acres of parkland on the shores of Bennett Lake, east of Edmonton, near Sherwood Park. The centre has trails for exploring willow-lined shorelines, beaver crossings and Bennett Lake. A boardwalk takes you right into the black spruce bog. Groups and families can rent the modern pine lodge, bunkhouses and campgrounds for social events, retreats and camp.

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<p><b>Gardens</b></p>	<p><b>Botanical Beauty:</b> Four spectacular glass pyramids means paradise can be found at the <b>Muttart Conservatory</b> – from a jungle setting to a desert oasis see the wonders of the plant world no matter what the temperatures are outside. Just west of Edmonton, the Devonian Botanic Garden consists of 80 acres of display gardens and 110 acres of natural areas. Part of the University of Alberta’s Faculty of Agriculture, Forestry and Home Economics, it’s Canada’s most northerly botanic garden. Special features include the Kurimoto Japanese Garden, an extensive alpine garden, a native people’s garden, a sensory and healing garden and much more.</p>
<p><b>Historical Sites</b></p>	<p><b>Alberta Legislature Building:</b> Adjacent to downtown Edmonton, find one of Western Canada’s best remaining examples of classic, ornate architecture. Free, informative guided tours start at the Interpretive Centre &amp; Gift Shop on the Alberta Legislature Grounds.</p> <p><b>Fort Edmonton Park:</b> Canada’s largest living history museum features more than 70 period buildings – from four different eras in time – on 58 acres of land. Experience life as if you were in the Hudson’s Bay Company fur-trading fort in 1846 or see what it was like to actually be on the streets in 1885, 1905 or 1920. Ride a steam train, streetcar or horse-drawn wagons. A historical reproduction of a 1920s midway also includes a carousel with 32 hand-carved and hand-painted horses, and midway rides, giving new meaning to the term old-fashioned fun. You can also dine or stay overnight 1920s style on site at the Hotel Selkirk.</p> <p><b>Musée Heritage Museum:</b> Discover the history of one of the oldest communities in Alberta. Built in 1861 by Father Albert Lacombe and his Métis helpers, the original log chapel and the Mission Hill Historic Site in neighbouring St. Albert provide an insight into the past of the Canadian West.</p>

<p><b>OTHER ACTIVITIES</b></p>	
<p><b>Shopping</b></p>	<p>If shopping is a passion, Edmonton is your destination. Both <b>Old Strathcona and West Edmonton Mall</b> are two excellent shopping meccas, each with a selection of exclusive and one-of-a-kind stores and well-known retailers to choose from. While no shopper should miss either, other local gems to consider are the High Street area (minutes from the downtown core) where you’ll find distinctive jewellery, giftware, home decor and fashion items, or Chinatown – a great place for specialty items and fresh produce markets.</p> <p><b>Old Strathcona:</b> The historic hub of Edmonton, Old Strathcona dates back to 1891 when the Calgary and Edmonton Railway completed its tracks to the south side of the North Saskatchewan River. Today, this</p>

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	<p>revitalized neighbourhood, with a section of Whyte Avenue designated a Provincial Historic Area, contains many diverse elements and special events. Enjoy the feel of a small town along Whyte Avenue with unique shops, heritage buildings, brick sidewalks, several theatres, and a thriving social scene – there are more than 100 coffeehouses, restaurants and pubs to choose from. Just off Whyte, you’ll find a busy Farmer’s Market with exceptional choices in fresh food that is open year-round.</p> <p><b>West Edmonton Mall:</b> Much more than a mall, West Edmonton Mall boasts world-class attractions and is described as the greatest indoor show on earth. Spanning the equivalent of 48 city blocks, there are more than 800 stores and services, over 100 eating establishments, along with nine outstanding attractions (Galaxyland, an indoor amusement park; a National Hockey League sized skating rink and the World Waterpark among others). You’ll also find the Fantasyland Hotel that is known for its unique themed rooms, a casino, a dinner theatre, movie theatres and an IMAX 3D venue on site.</p> <p>Other hot spots to consider: <b>South Edmonton Common</b>, Canada’s largest power centre with big-box stores to fill the needs of any shopping list; and downtown Edmonton where Edmonton City Centre transforms three city blocks into a retail destination of more than 170 stores and services. Adjacent to Edmonton City Centre are Commerce Place and Manulife Place, where you’ll find a selection of high-end retailers such as Escada and Holt Renfrew.</p>
<b>Markets</b>	<p>There are <b>eight farmers’ markets</b> within the city of Edmonton, and another eight more surrounding the city, all approved by Alberta Agriculture (<a href="http://www.agric.gov.ab.ca">www.agric.gov.ab.ca</a>). Approximately 80% of the product is made, baked, or grown in Alberta.</p> <p><b>Old Strathcona Farmers’ Market:</b> The Old Strathcona Farmers’ Market has been a popular Saturday tradition for residents and visitors for over 20 years. Open year-round, the market boasts 130 vendors, offering everything from fine hand-crafted furniture to wild game, to fresh fruits and vegetables. Old Strathcona is a unique historical area located on the south side of the North Saskatchewan River. Its beginnings date back to 1981 when the Calgary and Edmonton Railway arrived. The Old Strathcona district is known for its shopping, theatre, and more than 100 restaurants and nightclubs. Old Strathcona was recognized by Air Canada’s EnRoute magazine as one of Canada’s top five coolest neighbourhoods.</p>
<b>Nightlife</b>	<p>Edmonton has three active night life areas: Whyte Avenue, downtown and The New Jasper (between 107 and 109 Streets). There is</p>

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	something for everyone including bars, clubs and pubs.
<b>Casinos</b>	Greater Edmonton is one of Canada's gambling hot spots. With <b>seven casinos</b> , it currently has the highest number per capita of any Canadian metropolitan area. Five casinos are located within Edmonton proper, one can be found in neighbouring St. Albert, and the River Cree Resort and Casino, a full-service state-of-the-art gaming, hotel and entertainment establishment open since 2006, is located on the outskirts of Edmonton at the Enoch Cree Nation reserve. If the Northlands Spectrum (horse racing and slot room) is included, that gives Greater Edmonton eight key locations for a gambling excursion.

<b>CUISINE</b>	<p>Some culinary highlights include:</p> <p><b>A Taste of Edmonton</b>, held every summer, provides culinary delights from the city's leading restaurants.</p> <p><b>Edmonton Heritage Festival</b> is an annual opportunity to sample the ethnic foods from more than 50 different cultures in an unmatched outdoor experience.</p> <p><b>Dine Alberta</b> pairs Alberta chefs with local producers each September to create a series of unforgettable dining experiences with the spotlight on locally grown products. A provided passport is your guide to finding these sizzling regional flavours.</p> <p><b>Downtown Dining Week</b>, held in March, promotes the downtown area's best restaurants.</p> <p><b>FARE</b>, otherwise known as Food and Restaurant Entrepreneurs, puts some of the city's top independent restaurants – known for helping to give Edmonton its unique flavour – at the forefront.</p> <p><b>FEASTival of Fine Chefs</b> is an annual culinary experience where Edmonton restaurants get to showcase their gastronomic talents to more than 1,300 people. All foods featured are Alberta grown or processed in Alberta.</p>
<b>Food</b>	Alberta specialty products will be found on Edmonton menus including locally grown bison, beef, deer, elk, deer, lamb and pork. Fresh fruits and vegetables from area growers along with the province's world-renowned honey are also worth savouring.
<b>Beer</b>	<b>Alley Kat Brewing Company:</b> Alley Kat Brewing Company produces hand crafted, award winning micro-brewed beers in Edmonton. This brewery is locally owned and operated and produces six high quality beers such as Aprikat, Charlie Flint's Original Lager, Full Moon pale ale,

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	<p>Alley Kat Amber, and Olde Deuteronomy barley wine. Telephone: 780.436.8922 Website: <a href="http://www.alleykatbeer.com">www.alleykatbeer.com</a></p> <p><b>Amber's Brewing Company:</b> Amber's is dedicated to creating the world's best beers and beverages. It all started with a trunk full of black and white pictures from the 1920s and 30s, pictures from all across North America... Dedicated to these people's stories, the drinks Amber's produce are based on flavours "discovered" for us. Telephone: 780.628.2305 Website: <a href="http://www.ambersbrewing.com">www.ambersbrewing.com</a></p> <p><b>Brewsters Brewing Company:</b> Brewsters offers handcrafted ales and lagers that are brewed using the most superb products; Alberta barley and imported specialty grains from Great Britain. Each brew is produced on premise within a pub and restaurant in small batches by skilled brewers. Sample the array of featured premium beers while enjoying an extensive menu designed to compliment the handcrafted beers. Several locations in Edmonton. Website: <a href="http://www.brewstersbrewingco.com">www.brewstersbrewingco.com</a></p>
<b>Restaurants</b>	<p>Greater Edmonton is home to a wide dining selection with more than <b>3,500 eating establishments</b>. Many of these restaurants mirror the diversity of more than 50 ethnic groups. Many of these feature regionally inspired menus while Alberta's world famous beef is a star attraction for restaurant-goers. For a comprehensive listing, see: <a href="http://www.edmontondining.com/edmonton-restaurants.php">http://www.edmontondining.com/edmonton-restaurants.php</a></p>
<b>MORE INFO</b>	<p>It's easy to plan an Edmonton itinerary based on your interests. There are lots of great ideas for using your time to best advantage, whether you've got just a few hours or several days. Spend an afternoon in Edmonton's gallery district. See the past come alive at Fort Edmonton, Canada's largest living-history park. Shoppers must not miss West Edmonton Mall. Explore your choices by clicking this link: <a href="http://www.edmonton.com/for-visitors/itineraries.aspx">http://www.edmonton.com/for-visitors/itineraries.aspx</a></p>
<b>Vacation Packages</b>	<p>Vacation-themed packages are ready to go making it easier to plan your next getaway this winter. Take your family's holidays to a whole new level. Check out their spectacular savings at this website: <a href="http://www.edmonton.com/for-visitors/vacation-packages.aspx">http://www.edmonton.com/for-visitors/vacation-packages.aspx</a></p>
<b>Brochures</b>	<p>1-800-463-4667 <a href="mailto:gateway@edmonton.com">gateway@edmonton.com</a> or email all enquiries to <a href="mailto:Info@edmonton.com">Info@edmonton.com</a></p>
<b>Website</b>	<p><a href="http://www.edmonton.com">www.edmonton.com</a></p>
<b>CURRENT DEALS</b>	<p>There are money-saving coupons available on Edmonton 's website at: <a href="http://www.edmonton.com/for-visitors/coupons.aspx">http://www.edmonton.com/for-visitors/coupons.aspx</a></p>

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**PERSONAL  
EXPERIENCES**

I broadcast the radio shows on location from Edmonton in September 2009 and you can find my Travel Blog of this trip at:  
<http://christalkstravel.blogspot.com/2009/10/edmonton-city.html>

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