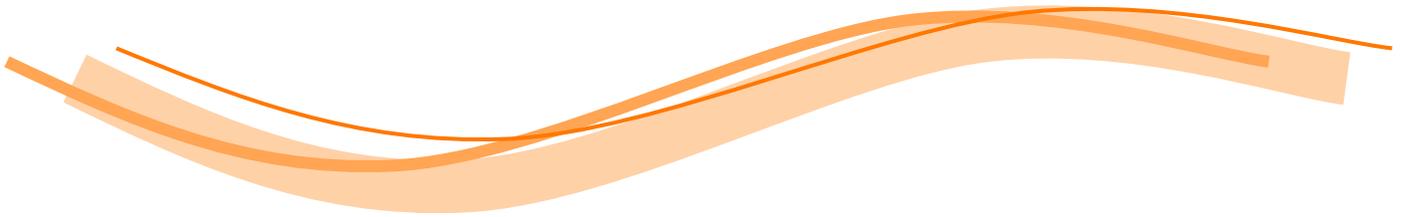




NUNAVUT





NUNAVUT	<p>Nunavut - Untamed, Unspoiled, Undiscovered!</p> <p>Nunavut is 1/5th of Canada's landmass and home to polar bears, muskox, whales, walrus, caribou and over 100 bird species. And Inuit culture and traditional ways are very much alive.</p> <p>It has has seven territorial parks, eleven bird sanctuaries, and many historical parks and sites. Certified guides can be hired to tour these remote locations.</p> <p>Great ecotourism lodges offer cultural experiences, wildlife viewing, canoeing, hiking and trips to visit ancient campsites. Adventure travel flourishes in four National Parks - of which the busiest, Auyuittuq, has just 400 visitors a year!</p>
Location	<p>The Territory covers about 1.9 million km² of land and 161,000 km² of water in Northern Canada including part of the mainland, most of the Arctic Archipelago, and all of the islands in Hudson Bay, James Bay, and Ungava Bay (including the Belcher Islands) which belonged to the Northwest Territories.</p> <p>This makes it the fourth largest sub-national entity in the world. If Nunavut were a country, it would rank 13th in area. Nunavut has land borders with the Northwest Territories on several islands as well as the mainland, a border with Manitoba to the south of the Nunavut mainland, and a tiny land border with Newfoundland and Labrador on Killiniq Island. It also shares aquatic borders with the provinces of Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba and with Greenland.</p>
Geography	<p>Formerly part of the Northwest Territories, the expanse of Nunavut stretches across Canada's eastern and central Arctic, nearly two million square kilometres of land and water comprising about one-fifth of the area of Canada. The territory's size, slightly larger than Mexico, and characteristics make it an incredibly unique cultural and environmental region</p>
Name	<p>Nunavut means "our land" in Inuktitut, the native language of the Inuit (once known as Eskimos). The Nunavut Territory was created in 1999 to recognize the traditional homeland of the Inuit who have lived there for millennia. The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, which created the territory, was the result of decades of negotiations between Canadian Inuit and the Government of Canada.</p>
Population	<p>Nunavut's approximately 30,000 residents (about 85 per cent Inuit) live in 27 remote communities separated by some of the last untouched wilderness areas on the planet. Nunavut's capital and its largest community, Iqaluit, has a population of about 6,000.</p>
Language	<p>Inuktitut, the native language of the Inuit. Along with Inuktitut (70%), Inuinnaqtun, English (27%), and French are also official languages</p>
Currency	<p>Canadian Dollars</p> <p>Almost every Nunavut community has a bank branch, an ATM, or</p>

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	banking services at the Co-op or Northern Store. VISA is the most widely accepted card in Nunavut, though others may be honoured; many stores have Interac (bank card) service. Bring some cash, especially if you're arriving on a Sunday.
Tourism	Much of Nunavut's economy is still based on the harvesting traditions of Inuit. Improved air travel options, though, have allowed the territory to become an increasingly popular destination for tourists. Searching for a slice of what was previously accessible only to explorers and adventurers, about 18,000 people visit the territory each year to engage in eco-tourism activities, sport hunts and cultural tours.
Government	Nunavut's head of state is a Commissioner appointed by the federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. As in the other territories, the commissioner's role is symbolic and is analogous to that of a Lieutenant Governor. The members of the unicameral Legislative Assembly of Nunavut are elected individually; there are no parties and the legislature is consensus-based. The head of government, the premier of Nunavut, is elected by, and from the members of the legislative assembly
Taxes	There is no provincial sales tax in Nunavut!
Time zone	Nunavut has three time zones. Baffin operates on Eastern Standard Time; Kivalliq and Kitikmeot on Central Standard, and Kitikmeot (from Cambridge Bay west) on Mountain Standard Time.
Health	<p>Medical Services If you need medical attention, check the phone book under Health Centre or ask at your hotel. Iqaluit has a well-equipped hospital. Smaller communities have Health Centres staffed by specially trained nurses. The larger regional centres like Cambridge Bay and Rankin Inlet also have a community doctor. There are dentists in some communities.</p> <p>Air ambulance Medevac service can be arranged through the local Health Centre. However, the Nunavut Health Care Plan does not pay for non-residents who need ground or air ambulance services. If you require these services during your stay, you will be billed for the full cost – which can be substantial. You may have coverage under your own insurance; check terms before you leave home.</p> <p>Health care coverage If you need medical services, present your identification card for your provincial or territorial health plan. Most costs will likely be covered and will be billed back to your plan, or you can claim them back (usually within 6 months). If you are travelling from outside Canada, check the details of your coverage at home before you travel. Separate short-term policies to cover medical emergencies and transport are available</p>

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	through many travel agents but usually must be bought before you leave home.
Safety tips - Bears	<p>Bears can be a problem almost anywhere in Nunavut, especially if encouraged by poor camping practices. It is highly recommended that you request the following brochures: Safety in Grizzly and Black Bear Country, and Safety in Polar Bear Country, available at Visitor Centres or from wildlife officers in Nunavut communities.</p> <p>If you have questions, or encounter a bear problem, report it to the nearest Parks officer or the Nunavut Department of Environment. Visit Parks Canada's website (www.pc.gc.ca) to locate their excellent Keep the Wildlife Wild pages. On the Nunavut Parks website (www.nunavutparks.com) look for Polar Bear Safety on the Visitor Centre menu.</p>

CLIMATE	
General climate	Generally the weather in Nunavut is typical of the Arctic regions, but over such a huge area, it can vary widely. The warmest months are July and August when it can be t-shirt weather, but always be prepared for cold conditions
Today's weather	Today is a pleasant 14 degrees Centigrade and sunny day in Iqaluit (26 July 2008)
Best time to visit	Depending upon the community, 24 hour sunshine is enjoyed between April 22 and August 20 every year

GETTING AROUND	
Flying time	Three hours from the two Eastern Canadian gateway cities, Ottawa and Montreal, to Iqaluit on the direct flights.
Communities	<p>The 26 communities range in size from tiny Bathurst Inlet (population 25) to Iqaluit, the capital (population almost 6,500). Grise Fiord, the northernmost settlement, lies at 78 degrees north: the hamlet of Sanikiluaq in the Belcher Islands is actually further south than Ontario's northern border.</p> <p>Iqaluit - Population: 6,200 The capital of Nunavut is located on Frobisher Bay on Baffin Island. A legacy of the fact that the community was originally a military airbase built during WWII is that the Iqaluit International Airport is the nexus of a thriving air passenger and cargo industry. Since being named the capital, infrastructure has grown at an amazing rate. Iqaluit offers all of the modern conveniences you could need, from fine dining to shopping, as well as cultural experiences and outdoor adventures. The best place to start off is the Unikkaarvik Regional Visitor's Centre, which will acquaint you with all the attractions Iqaluit has to offer.</p>

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	<p>In town, visit Nunavut’s Legislative Assembly for architecture that is sure to impress. View the permanent exhibit of Inuit sculpture, prints and artifacts at the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum. Or shop to your heart’s content for specialty art and jewelry, traditional clothing and colourful parkas.</p> <p>Just outside the city you will find a wealth of natural attractions. The picturesque Sylvia Grinnell River is just a 30-minute, one kilometre walk from Iqaluit, where you’ll find Thule archaeological sites, a variety of rare plants, several species of wildlife and some 40 species of birds. The river is a great spot to catch arctic char and the falls make a beautiful backdrop for a picnic.</p> <p>Local outfitters offer a wide variety of trips to the Qaummaarviit Territorial Historic Park, which is rich in archeological artifacts dating back to the Thule culture. On-site interpretation and a snack are often included.</p> <p>Iqaluit also hosts a number of festivals and activities. The Snow Challenge is a snowmobile race from Iqaluit to Kimmirut and back that takes place in March. In April, celebrate the spring at Toonik Tyme, a weeklong festival of traditional Inuit activities. In June, enjoy the Nunavut Arts Festival, and Alianait!, the newly formed multicultural arts festival that a variety of film events, art displays, theatre productions, and concerts. July hosts both Canada Day and Nunavut Day celebrations.</p>
<p>Distances</p>	<p>Distances in Nunavut are huge and there are no roads, so flying between communities is required. For instance it takes over 2 hours on a B-737 jet to fly between Iqaluit and Resolute</p>
<p>Cruises</p>	<p>Book your Nunavut cruise early. These wildly popular excursions are some of the most relaxed and luxurious encounters Nunavut has to offer. Several routes are offered and each one is special.</p> <p>Wake up to fantastic fiords. Watch for whales – including narwhal with their 3 m (9 ft) tusks. You may even see polar bears swimming in the open sea. Never unpack as you explore the wildlife and waterways of Nunavut. See the notes below for Cruise North Expeditions which I have personally experienced and recommend.</p> <p>High Arctic Cruises Travel north of the magnetic north pole – in one of the world’s most luxurious icebreakers. Depending on your package you can visit as far north as Tanquary Fiord on Ellesmere Island. Popular stops include Pond Inlet, Cambridge Bay and the islands of Beechy and Somerset. It’s the most dramatic way to experience Canada’s Northwest Passage.</p> <p>South Baffin Cruises The islands and seas of the Hudson’s Strait are different, but just as</p>

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	thrilling as the more northern routes. Akpatok Island is an undiscovered bastion of birds. You'll find the world's largest colony of murres there. Plus, there is a healthy population of polar bears attracted by this source of easy prey.
Airlines	Calm Air, Canadian North, and First Air offer scheduled air service to communities in Nunavut from gateway cities. Inuit Air, Unaalik Aviation, Air Nunavut and Ken Borek Air offer chartered and scheduled service throughout Nunavut
Go North!	<p>Grise Fiord - Population: 163 The northernmost civilian community of Canada, Grise Fiord is located in the High Arctic on Ellesmere Island, some 1160 km north of the Arctic Circle. Picturesque and remote, it is surrounded by high hills and, for most of the year, sea ice. In fact, the Inuktitut name for Grise Fiord is Aujittuq, "the place that never thaws out". From April to August, it is also bathed in 24-hour sunlight. Tourism is a growth industry with visitors coming to witness the spectacular landscapes and plentiful wildlife. It is also a stopover for researchers traveling either to Ellesmere Island or to the "Frozen Forest" on Axel Heiberg Island.</p>
Resolute	<p>Resolute Bay - Population: 230 The second northernmost civilian community in Canada, Resolute Bay is located on the south coast of Cornwallis Island. The Inuktitut name for Resolute Bay is Quaasuittuq, "the place with no dawn". Resolute's history has the most European influence of all the Nunavut communities. The site was a critical junction along the Northwest Passage, the famed route to Asia sought by European explorers in the 18th and 19th centuries. The community is named after the HMS Resolute, a British ship that was sent in search of the lost Franklin expedition. Resolute Bay is the major stopover for expeditions to the North Pole and to Quttinirpaaq (Ellesmere Island) National Park. The newly developed Tupirvik Territorial Park campground, in Resolute Bay, offers facilities for adventure travellers as well. While in the community, watch for whales in the bay, or hike along an old seabed to discover fossils dating back 400 million years. The community is also home to a weather station, as well as the Polar Continental Shelf Project research camp.</p>
The Three Regions of Nunavut	<p>1. Kitikmeot You can follow in the footsteps of seagoing explorers who came here in search of a Northwest Passage to Asia. The people of the Kitikmeot have always navigated the Passage in skin boats, schooners and motor vessels. In winter they travel the sea ice by snowmobile. Kitikmeot's mainland tundra is dotted with millions of ponds and lakes that are ideal habitat for nesting waterfowl. On a river journey in the barrenlands, you</p>

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can see wolves, grizzly bears, musk-ox, foxes and caribou.

2. Kivalliq

There is so much to do in this nature-lovers paradise. You can whale watch from land or sea as pods of belugas play in the rivers running into the bay. Spot polar bears as they prowl the shore waiting for winter ice to form. Visit caribou birthing grounds and huge bird sanctuaries. Everywhere you go the fishing is spectacular. You can hike for hundreds of kilometres along rivers unchanged since the ice age. If this is your first tundra experience, you'll be amazed at the ocean of rolling hills that seemingly never end. Mark your adventure by building your own inukshuk. It's a little more work than you might think. However, this monument to your Kivalliq visit could very well last until the next ice age.

3. Baffin

In April, experience the Arctic from a qamutik (sled) behind an eager team of dogs. You can tour deep fiords or the tundra feeding grounds of Peary caribou. On some tours, you set up a winter camp, then watch the amazing Aurora Borealis

A sledding expedition takes you across the sea-ice of Frobisher Bay to Meta Incognita Peninsula and into Katannilik Territorial Park. Your unforgettable journey ends in Kimmirut, where you can visit the Katannilik Park Visitor Centre or view jewellery and stone sculptures at the Soper House Art Gallery. Every community in Nunavut has air service. You'll fly back to Iqaluit from there.

From the capital (Iqaluit), local travel outfitters can take you to Illaulittuuq Outpost Camp, located approximately 112 km southeast of Iqaluit. This place of seal pups has been a traditional Inuit home for hundreds of years, and is the perfect setting for explorations of the land and culture.

Set out from Pond Inlet to see mountains, glaciers, icebergs, and marine wildlife. Outfitters offer snowmobile trips to Thule sites, the floe edge or to bird cliffs on Bylot Island. Other activities include cross-country skiing, sea kayaking, sport fishing, narwhal watching, and exploring journeys in Sirmilik National Park.

ACCOMMODATION TYPES

Hotels

The main communities each have a travellers hotel and Iqaluit has several to choose from.

Lodges

Relax and enjoy nature in the comfort of full service wilderness lodges. These lodges are located in some of the most pristine environments in

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	<p>the world and are havens for arctic wildlife and many species of birds.</p> <p>Camping Camping can be as soft or as rugged as you like. Picture yourself at the great caribou birthing grounds outside Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet. Set up camp in Polar Bear Pass on Bathurst Island. At Whale Cove, pitch your tent at the river, teeming with chirping white whales. Sleep next to a bird sanctuary full of 10,000 noisy birds. It is recommended that even experienced campers hire a guide or outfitter. Camaraderie of a group enhances the experience and it is safer.</p>
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TARGET GROUPS	
Children	A trip to Nunavut can be an immensely rewarding experience with children, both for the kids themselves and the parents. We took our boys, then aged 10 and 15, on a Cruise North Expeditions trip to Baffin Island – and it remains one of the most memorable and talked over family trips we have ever taken.
Romance	Never-ending summer evenings, remote wilderness lodges, the silence of the vast Arctic...if Nunavut doesn't appeal to the romantic in you, then no place on the planet will!
Seniors	Active seniors will find great joy in exploring the magnificent scenery and culture of the Territory. The small boat cruises are an excellent way of seeing the land in some comfort, and several of the lodges can also work well for the young at heart.

UNIQUES	
Surprising	Jericho Diamond Mine started operating in 2006, producing significant numbers of diamonds, located 400 km NE of Yellowknife
History	<p>The region now known as Nunavut has supported a continuous population for approximately 4,000 years. Most historians also identify the coast of Baffin Island with the Helluland described in Norse sagas, so it is possible that the inhabitants of the region had occasional contact with Norse sailors.</p> <p>The written history of Nunavut begins in 1576. Martin Frobisher, while leading an expedition to find the Northwest Passage, thought he had discovered gold ore around the body of water now known as Frobisher Bay on the coast of Baffin Island. The ore turned out to be worthless, but Frobisher made the first recorded European contact with the Inuit. The contact was hostile, with both sides taking prisoners who subsequently perished.</p> <p>Other explorers in search of the elusive Northwest Passage followed in the 17th century, including Henry Hudson, William Baffin and Robert Bylot.</p>

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	<p>More recently, the steps that led to Nunavut territorial status were:</p> <p>1960s - Intense oil and gas exploration in Canada's arctic illustrate to Inuit how little control they have over their traditional homeland.</p> <p>1971 - Founding of Inuit Tapirisat of Canada (now Inuit Tapirisat Kanatami, or ITK) to represent the interests of Inuit at the national level.</p> <p>1982 - Tunngavik Federation of Nunavut (now Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.) is incorporated to pursue land claims negotiations on behalf of the Inuit of Nunavut.</p> <p>1984 - under pressure from oil exploration in the Beaufort Sea and an expected oil pipeline down the Mackenzie Valley, Inuvialuit (Inuit) of the western Arctic break away from Nunavut negotiations to sign the Inuvialuit Land Claim Agreement.</p> <p>1990 - after years of intense and detailed negotiations, an agreement-in-principle for Nunavut is reached.</p> <p>1992 - final agreement is signed then ratified, by 84.7 per cent of Inuit beneficiaries, in a plebiscite</p> <p>1993 - \$1.1 billion Nunavut Land Claims Settlement proclaimed at a special ceremony in Kugluktuk, on July 9.</p> <p>April 1, 1999 - Nunavut Territory is established.</p>
Books	<p>The Bible for travellers to Nunavut is The Nunavut Handbook, published by Ayaya Marketing and Communications, website: www.nunavuthandbook.com Don't plan a trip to Nunavut without this guide!</p>
1000 Places to see before you die	<p>Bathurst Inlet Lodge – 50 km north of the Arctic Circle and one of the Arctic's foremost lodging, outfitting and naturalist programs</p>
Must Sees	<p>Pangnirtung - Population: 1,276</p> <p>Nestled at the bottom of a mountain, at the mouth of a river, and surrounded by spectacular fiords, Pangnirtung, or "Pang" to locals, is located on Baffin Island, in Cumberland Sound. Known as the gateway to the famous Auyuittuq (eye-you-ee-tuk) National Park, there are many attractions for visitors to this community, including two National Historic Sites and one historically significant whaling station.</p> <p>Auyuittuq (the land that never melts) National Park offers a variety of wilderness experiences. Activities include hiking and backcountry camping in Akshayuk Pass, ski touring on the icefields, travelling along the fiords, and climbing the park's challenging peaks. Visit the Parks Canada Interpretive Centre in Pang for help with travel arrangements.</p> <p>Piskutinu Tunngavik Territorial Park, located at the edge of town, is a great campground for adventure travellers, and the starting point for day-treks in the area. One trek, the Ukuma Trail, skirts the Duval River and heads toward Kingnait Fiord, which parallels Pangnirtung Fiord over the mountains behind the community.</p> <p>The history of whaling and Thule culture in Cumberland Sound and Pangnirtung is interpreted at the Angmarlik Visitor Centre, the Hudson's</p>

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	<p>Bay Blubber Station and Kekerten Territorial Park - a three-hour boat ride from town. The Angmarlik Visitor Centre also functions as a library and elders' centre. The staff there will help arrange guides and outfitters for trips in the area.</p> <p>Pang is well known for its woven tapestries, art prints, and unique clothing items. One of the great attractions is the Uqurmiut Inuit Arts Centre, where visitors can view Inuit weavers and printmakers in their studios as they shop.</p>
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SPORTS ACTIVITIES	
Canoeing & Rafting	<p>Whether a casual daytrip or a well-planned journey, canoe trips are spectacular. Nunavut has a vast network of exceptional canoe rivers. Carved deep in the hinterland, many routes create protected areas where local plants and animals thrive. Be prepared to encounter musk-ox, caribou, or even grizzlies. The Thelon Heritage River is one of the most famous and least strenuous routes. In season, travel 200 kms without a portage. On Baffin Island, have a charter drop you and your rented canoes next to the Soper River. The waterfalls, caribou herds and micro-climate habitats will leave you breathless.</p> <p>Talk to local outfitters about paddling adventures near Bathurst Inlet, Cambridge Bay, Igloolik, Rankin Inlet, Repulse Bay, Resolute, Iqaluit, and Kimmirut.</p> <p>Guided trips are recommended; groups offer greater camaraderie, while guides increase safety and enhance your connection to the land</p>
Fishing	<p>Arctic Char are the hardest hitting, most dominant fish in the crystal clear waters of Nunavut. Fighting a 9 kg (20 lb) char on a fly or light tackle will take all your skill and patience. Char – both sea-run and freshwater – can be found virtually everywhere in Nunavut. Their seasonal fiery red colouring and fabulously rich-red meat make them the premier Arctic fish. Outfitters in almost every community can lead you to these magnificent fish</p>
Marathon	<p>The Northwest Passage Marathon Race 8/10/2008</p> <p>The Northwest Passage Marathon on Somerset Island in Nunavut, Canada will be North America's most northerly marathon and the world's most northerly ultra marathon. This race will be held under the 24-hour arctic sun and against the backdrop of the fabled the Northwest Passage. The events will include a 50 kilometre ultra marathon, a marathon, and a half marathon. For more information, contact Canadian Arctic Holidays. Visit www.canadianarcticholidays.ca/ArcticMarathon.html for more information.</p>
Hiking	<p>Nunavut is among the earth's rarest treasures, pristine, unequalled and off the beaten track. Whether a day excursion or a backpacking trek in the wilderness, a unique hike awaits.</p>

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	<p>At Cambridge Bay on Victoria Island, bird habitat, archaeological sites, great fishing, and the Arctic Ocean are within walking distance of your hotel. The Northwest Passage Trail near Gjoa Haven offers a self-guided walk commemorating the Franklin Expedition and Roald Amundsen's navigation through Canada's Northwest Passage. Hike, camp and climb in Auyuittuq National Park, outside of Pangnirtung on Baffin Island. It's a world-class!</p>
Floe Edge	<p>From April to July, the floe edge is the most dramatic, dynamic place to be, as the sea meets the retreating ice edge. Whales swim metres from shore. Walrus and seals haul themselves out to bask in the sunlight. Polar bear cubs enjoy an ocean dip.</p>
Iceberg Watching	<p>As the ice breaks up, icebergs arrive. White mountains float on blue seas. Only one eighth of their mass is above the water. They began as snow fell 10,000-15,000 years ago. Today, they are works of art crafted by Mother Nature. Waves lap up and crash against them, and the wind whistles as it polishes their icy walls.</p> <p>The east coast of Baffin Island, from Pond Inlet to Qikiqtarjuaq, is a real-life iceberg alley. The summer-long migration of gleaming giants is not to be missed. Outfitters all over Nunavut offer iceberg tours, so it's fairly easy to arrange a day trip. For a unique experience, consider a guided multi-day outing on the ice. It's rugged, comfortable, and unforgettable.</p>

CULTURE	<p>Living Culture</p> <p>Drum dancers and throat singers tell the same stories of hunts, travels, gods and beasts that were told a thousand years ago. Inuit traditional games are based on hunting and survival skills. Bones, stones, thread – items found in ancient homesteads – become pieces in skill testing challenges. The Inuktitut language is the first language in Nunavut schools. Culture in this part of Canada is simply different from anywhere else in the world.</p> <p>Everywhere you turn you encounter people living with traditions and customs completely different from those found anywhere else. It's totally authentic, casual and wonderful.</p> <p>Tour operators, interpretive centres and hotels in every community help arrange cultural encounters.</p>
Arts	<p>Inuit Arts & Crafts</p> <p>Inuit in Nunavut are recognized internationally for their stone sculptures, fine art prints and fabric arts. Over 27% of the population is involved in the production of Inuit art. Every community has amazing, artists producing original works in stone, bone, cloth, skins, prints and paints. Each community has its own distinct artistic specialty. Cape Dorset and Kimmirut carvers are recognized for the details and realism of their sculptures. The hard stone used in Arviat and Baker Lake yields more</p>

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	<p>abstract art. Pangnirtung, Baker Lake, Pond Inlet and Cape Dorset have world-renowned artist co-operatives where you can watch print makers and weavers at work.</p> <p>Repulse Bay specializes in clothing. The artisans at Baker Lake use precious metals and local organic materials. Nunavut Arctic College in Cambridge Bay has helped many naturally talented artists develop into world-class jewellery makers. The only community producing Inuit ceramics is Rankin Inlet</p> <p>That special piece can be found in the galleries of Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit, or at the Nunavut Artists' Co-ops. Don't forget the Visitor Centres and hotels.</p> <p>At Cape Dorset on Baffin Island, you'll encounter a community of world-renowned Inuit artists. Their art is available in galleries around the world and on the Internet, but nothing beats meeting the artists in person. Watch them create. It's just one more one-of-a-kind experience on a cruise that will fill your heart with Arctic moments.</p>
Music	<p>Susan Aglukark is an Inuit singer and song writer. She has released 6 albums and has won several Juno Awards. She blends the Inuktitut and English languages with contemporary pop music arrangements to tell the stories of her people, the Inuit of Arctic.</p>
Films	<p>Atanarjuat is Canada's first feature-length fiction film written, produced, directed, and acted by Inuit. An exciting action thriller set in ancient Igloolik, the film unfolds as a life-threatening struggle between powerful natural and supernatural characters.</p> <p>Atanarjuat gives international audiences a more authentic view of Inuit culture and oral tradition than ever before, from the inside and through Inuit eyes.</p>
Museums	<p>The Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum in Iqaluit houses Inuit sculpture, prints and artifacts.</p> <p>Unikkaarvik, the Baffin Regional Visitor Centre in Iqaluit, is the place to see interpretive displays and to explore the culture of the region.</p>
Festivals	<p>Each community in Nunavut has its own array of festivals each year. Here are some special ones:</p> <p>Toonik Tyme is Iqaluit's annual spring festival in April which has been a community tradition since 1965. It is a way for local residents to celebrate the return of spring as a community and is also an opportunity for visitors to experience the unique culture of the Canadian Arctic. A jam-packed, week-long schedule includes traditional Inuit activities such as igloo building, dog team races, Inuit games, and a seal skinning contest. Other activities you won't want to miss are the snowmobile races, Iqaluit Fear Factor, the craft fair, scavenger hunts and much more. No matter what age, you'll find lots to see and do during Toonik Tyme!</p>

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	<p>Kugluktuk Nattiq Frolics The Nattiq Frolics is a celebration of old traditions and welcoming spring back, held in April. Kugluktuk Heritage Centre (Kugluktuk - Qurluqtuq) Visitors to the Kugluktuk Heritage Centre can learn about the local history, and the importance of the Coppermine River - a nominated Canadian Heritage River, and the scenic Kuklok (Bloody Falls) Territorial Park. The Centre is also the starting point to a self-guided interpretive walking trail of Kugluktuk. Kugluktuk Heritage Centre: Offers walking tours and many other programs</p>
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ATTRACTIONS													
Birding	<p>Birding opportunities abound in Nunavut, in our Bird Sanctuaries and our Wildlife Sanctuaries. Beginning in June, millions of birds arrive in Nunavut. Our rugged cliffs and tundra – unspoiled and undisturbed for millennia – provide true sanctuary to huge populations, as many as 50,000 nesting birds in one location. A good guide and a little planning ensures guaranteed encounters with snowy owls, sandhill cranes, gyrfalcons (including the white phase), jaegers, loons, plovers and more. Nunavut has 11 Bird Sanctuaries:</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Akimiski Island</td> <td>Harry Gibbons</td> <td>Boatswain Bay</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Nannah Bay</td> <td>Bylot Island</td> <td>McConnell River</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Dewey Soper</td> <td>Prince Leopold Island</td> <td>East Bay</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Queen Maud Gulf</td> <td>Seymour Island</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	Akimiski Island	Harry Gibbons	Boatswain Bay	Nannah Bay	Bylot Island	McConnell River	Dewey Soper	Prince Leopold Island	East Bay	Queen Maud Gulf	Seymour Island	
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Wildlife	<p>Walrus Nothing says Arctic like a 1,400 kg (3,000 lb.) bull walrus hauling on an ice floe. Sometimes walrus are easily spooked, but it's not unusual to get a photo with a person in the foreground and a dozen or more walrus sunning. Combine walrus watching with a little iceberg and ice floe photography for a Natural Geographic calibre adventure. Hire a guide with a boat to take you to herds in the communities of: Arviat, Coral Harbour, Grise Fiord, Hall Beach, Kimmirut, Kugaaruk, Pond Inlet, Repulse Bay, Igloodik and Sanikiluaq. You might even be able to enjoy a picnic lunch on an ice floe</p> <p>Musk-Ox Adult musk-ox weigh 200 kg to 400 kg, stand around 1.4 m high at the shoulder and are about 2.5 m long. The long guard hairs of its mixed black, gray and brown coat reach almost to the ground. Musk-ox are not oxen and they don't have musk glands. In the male, the boss, the thick centre part of the horns, can be 10 cm thick. This is an important survival feature for a species that butts heads dramatically during the rut. 60,000 musk-ox are scattered around</p>												

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	<p>Nunavut. Cambridge Bay on Victoria Island, Gjoa Haven and Grise Fiord are a few of the communities known for their thriving and accessible musk-ox populations. A guide or ecotourism operator is invaluable and can arrange an encounter. Seasonal migrations affect where the animals will be at any given time, so be sure to ask how long an excursion will take at the time of year you plan to visit.</p> <p>Caribou More than 500,000 caribou, sometimes called reindeer, roam Nunavut. Seeing a herd for the first time is stunning – 50, 200, 5,000 or 50,000 animals at a time. These herds are one of the last great natural wonders of the world. Migration patterns and ranges are ancient, with the result that many communities offer reliable caribou excursions. The caribou herds of Bathurst, Beverly, Peary and Qamanirjauq, to name a few, are well managed. Mainland populations of caribou extend as far south as Arviat, plus there are significant populations on Victoria, Baffin, and Ellesmere Islands. Baker Lake, Cambridge Bay, Chesterfield Inlet, Kimmirut, Kugaaruk, Repulse Bay, Resolute are just some of the caribou communities of Nunavut. The Thelon Wildlife Sanctuary is known for spectacular wildlife sightings, including caribou.</p> <p>Polar Bear Adult males measure 2.5 to 3 metres (8 to 10 ft) tall and weigh 360 to 720 kilograms. Polar bears do not hibernate. Only the female will enter a den and then solely to give birth to her cubs. During spring break-up, bears and cubs congregate where the hunting is best – usually along the floe edge. Any food source is an attraction, and bird-nesting sites such as Akpatok Island can be bear magnets depending on the season. Qikiqtarjuaq is a great place to check out polar bear, as is the aptly named Polar Bear Pass on Bathurst Island. An excellent bear-spotting strategy is to have your guide or outfitter combine polar bear watching with other activities, such as whale watching and birding. Remember, Nunavut polar bears are totally wild. They are not at all tame and much more dangerous than grizzlies. You can get close enough, but a long lens will help you bring back that photo of a lifetime. Prime locations for bear sightings are: Resolute Bay, Clyde River, Qikiqtarjuaq in Baffin; Somerset and Bathurst Islands in Kitikemeot; Arviat and Ukkusiksalik National Park in Kivalliq.</p>
Parks	<p>There are 24 National and Regional Parks in Nunavut. Glaciers, mountains, musk-ox, birds, polar bears... they can all be found in our Territorial and National Parks. These remote, accessible parks receive around 2,000 visitors a year. That's one reason they</p>

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	remain unspoiled and untamed.
Whales	<p>Belugas This small white whale can be up to 5 metres (16 ft) long. Baby belugas are grey. The beluga is common to communities lining Hudson Bay's west coast, Foxe Basin, and the east coast of Baffin Island all the way to Pond Inlet. Belugas like to congregate in the mouths of rivers, making it possible to go beluga watching from land, but a guide and a boat are more advantageous and exhilarating.</p> <p>Bowhead The largest Arctic whale is the bowhead, reaching up to 18 m. (60 ft.) in length. Approximately 1,000 live full time in Nunavut waters in two distinct populations: one in the Hudson Bay/Foxe Basin region and the other along the east coast of Baffin Island. At the bowhead sanctuary near Clyde River, it's possible to stand on the floe edge during spring break-up, and watch these 50 metric ton leviathans swim by, just 6 m (20 ft) away! And to think these animals are filter feeders, essentially living on a diet of plankton and krill. Oh – and they have two blow holes! Bowhead watching is possible in or near Igloolik, Hall Beach, Cape Dorset, Repulse Bay, Kugaaruk, Pond Inlet, Pangnirtung, Clyde River and Qikiqtarjuaq (Broughton Island).</p> <p>Narwhal The most rare, and most wary whale in Nunavut waters is the narwhal. It really does have a tusk which can be up to 3 m (9 ft) long, on a body length of 7-8 m (23-26 ft). Quick and lively, these 1000 kilogram animals will dive to depths of 1,500 metres to feed on fish, shrimp and squid. In spring, narwhal move closer to shore, but a boat and guide will almost certainly be required to locate this illusive animal. The most common sightings are on the eastern and northern shores of Baffin and Ellesmere Islands.</p>

OTHER ACTIVITIES	
Shopping	<p>Several commercial art outlets sell Inuit sculpture, prints, paintings and other crafts in the Nunavut communities. In Iqaluit there are a number to choose from and you can get advice from The Arts and Crafts Centre of Nunavut Arctic College. I particularly was impressed with the arts and crafts available at the Co-operative in Pangnirtung</p>
Nightlife	<p>Dances at the local community halls are a unique way of meeting the locals and experiencing the social life of the people of Nunavut. Serious dancing begins at around 11pm and continues into the wee small hours!</p>

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CUISINE	
Food	<p>Traditional Foods</p> <p>Northern foods will surprise you with their texture and flavours. Arctic Char is a wonderful example. You can have this salmon-like fish smoked, dried, cooked in a stew or baked. Caribou meat has a very fine texture. Other foods can be exceptionally exotic.</p> <p>In a land without wood for cooking, uncooked meats are common. Certain walrus and whale dishes are for the extremely adventurous only. Even seeing these unique foods prepared and eaten will be a cultural experience you'll remember forever</p>
Alcohol	<p>Restrictions on importing and consuming alcohol in Nunavut have been determined by local plebiscite. The rules vary from community to community, and may change from time to time. Possession of alcohol is prohibited in some communities, and restricted in others. Check with the RCMP, or your outfitter or hotel</p>
Restaurants	<p>Only Iqaluit has a range of dining – elsewhere the accommodations are the main venues. In Iqaluit, the igloo-shaped Kamotiq Inn Restaurant is reliable and the Granite Room in the Discovery Lodge covers both local Arctic fare as well as international foods.</p>

MORE INFO	
Brochures	<p>1-866-NUNAVUT (686-2888) for Nunavut Tourism 1-866-CNE-3220 (263-3220) for Cruise North Expeditions</p>
Website	<p>www.nunavuttourism.com for Nunavut Tourism www.cruisenorthexpeditions.com for Cruise North Expeditions</p> <p>For some excellent observations on Nunavut from two of my favourite Canadian travel journalists go to these stories: http://www.krolltravel.com/stories/Nunavut_Eco.htm http://www.krolltravel.com/stories/Nunavut_Explore.htm</p>

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<p>CRUISE NORTH EXPEDITIONS</p>	
<p>Cruise North Expeditions</p>	<p>Cruise North is the newest member of the First Air / Air Inuit family. With a heritage that reaches back more than 50 years, they pride themselves on their knowledge, respect and commitment to the Canadian north and its native people. All three companies are owned by the Makivik Corporation of Quebec, where traditional values are married with innovative operational approaches. Owned wholly by the Inuit, Makivik is a highly successful investment corporation born of the first modern-day Aboriginal land claim settlement agreement in Canada. Under the direction of Dugald Wells, an industry veteran who began his career in the Arctic more than 20 years ago as a research scientist aboard Canadian icebreakers, Cruise North has developed an outstanding program of unique expeditions. In every detail of your travels, you will experience the land's exceptional scenery, culture and wildlife. With Cruise North, you are considered a privileged visitor to the home of the Inuit, and you experience an Arctic only the Inuit could show you.</p>
<p>2008 Programs & Reservations</p>	<p>Inuit-owned Cruise North Expeditions – the only cruise line to specialize exclusively in Canadian Arctic cruises – has expanded its line-up of affordable Arctic experiences for Summer 2008 to include the Torngat Mountains National Park Reserve of Canada, Labrador's first national park which opened to visitors for the first time in 2006. From June 22 through September 1, 2008, Cruise North will offer nine Arctic experiences on six distinct itineraries including Spirit Mountains, Arctic Explorer, Arctic Odyssey, Baffin Adventure, Northwest Passage and the High Arctic. Highlights of the season include the running of the second bi-annual Arctic Marathon Cruise taking place on the July 20 Arctic Odyssey sailing and the annual Arctic Clean-Up, a post-season trip open to volunteers in September. The seven-night Baffin Adventure is priced from \$3,695 including round-trip air from Montreal to the Arctic on Cruise North's sister company First Air from Iqaluit and Kuujjuaq.</p> <p>Cruise North is the first and only cruise line to bring ease and affordability to the Arctic. By positioning its ship at the northern limit of the great Boreal Forest in Kuujjuaq, a short two hour, 15-minute flight from Montreal, Cruise North passengers bypass the traditional Arctic cruise itineraries that involve long flights to Greenland and days at sea to travel to the Arctic.</p> <p>Cruise North's ice-class rated 122-passenger ship, the Lyubov Orlova, provides a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere for Arctic cruising. Each expedition offers exceptional opportunities for wildlife encounters with those who call the North home including polar bears, muskox, seals,</p>

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	<p>caribou, whales and a wide variety of bird species including the penguin-like thick-billed murre.</p> <p>Each Cruise North expedition features a first-rate Expedition team and lecture series with leading naturalists, historians, geologists and ornithologists. Itineraries include visits to ancient Inuit archaeological sites and explore traditional Inuit culture such as Drum dancing and throat singing.</p> <p>Travel arrangements are handled by the experienced staff at The Travel Network, a Virtuoso member agency in Toronto at 1-866-263-3220 or 416-789-3752.</p>
Wildlife	<p>Encounter a wide variety of birds and animals in their natural habitats. The sightings are often unpredictable, and can be sudden and dramatic. There's the collective screech of a half-million thick-billed murre nesting on the cliffs, the silent gliding of white beluga whales, and the humorous cacophony of a walrus colony. Seals poke their heads from the water, and polar bears measuring 11 feet in length - the undisputed monarch of the Arctic - swim more than 90 miles off shore.</p> <p>Exploring and learning are essential to the Arctic experience, and they take the time to do just that. Itineraries are designed to minimize time at sea, and maximize time spent ashore. Whether visiting wildlife colonies, traditional Inuit villages, or just exploring the pristine arctic landscape, you will move at your own pace, in the company of friendly guides. At the end of the trip, you will be amazed at how many and varied your experiences have been.</p>
Itineraries	<p>Itineraries include time and flexibility to seek out and take advantage of wildlife sightings whenever and wherever they occur. Each landing is carefully planned by the experienced Expedition Leaders and the ship's Captain, taking into account ice, weather and sea conditions, as well as wildlife movements, to ensure a unique and fulfilling experience. The fleet of stable, inflatable zodiac boats designed by Jacques Cousteau will take passengers ashore just about anywhere.</p>
Staff	<p>Cruise North expeditions are hosted by a mix of local and southern guides and naturalists with expertise on topics such as natural history, anthropology, zoology and ornithology. They have an incredible enthusiasm for the region, and enjoy nothing more than sharing with you the secrets of the natural world, whether in the course of an engaging presentation in the comfortable lounge, guiding a walk on shore, or lingering after dinner in informal conversation. Their Inuit staff understands the land like nobody else, and you will appreciate their quiet confidence, friendliness, and proud mix of traditional values and modern sensibilities.</p>
The ship	<p>Named Lyubov Orlova and built in 1976, the ship was renovated in</p>

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	<p>2006 and is 4251 tons. She carries 122 passengers and 63 crew; she's 328 foot long and travels at 13 knots. The ship offers a clean and casual setting with all the necessary comforts. All of the cabins have two comfortable berths, an outside view and private or semi-private facilities. Cabins also feature a writing desk, sitting space, and storage. The chefs onboard serve three delicious meals every day, with occasional selections of locally harvested country foods, and perhaps even a barbecue on deck. Early morning coffee and tea, and mid-afternoon snacks and refreshments are served for your enjoyment.</p> <p>Comfort is ensured by helpful, cheerful staff who will attend to your every need. Additional ship features include a library well stocked with arctic-related reading and reference books, a cozy bar and lounge, a gift shop, and several observation decks. They maintain an "open bridge" policy, which means that unless otherwise noted, you are welcome to visit the command bridge at any time of the day or night. There you can learn more about the operation of the ship and its navigational equipment, as well as talk with the Captain and his Officers and observe them at work.</p>
Safety	<p>The expedition vessel is a purpose-built, ice strengthened ship designed to operate in ice covered waters. Equipped with the most modern navigational equipment, it is small and maneuverable enough to reach the most remote bays and shores, yet large enough to traverse open ocean with speed and comfort. It operates in accordance with all Canadian and international safety regulations and shipboard staff undergo continuous training programs.</p>
Environmental commitment	<p>The arctic is their home, and they are dedicated to protecting its natural environments. Their entire program has been carefully reviewed with the elders and community leaders of the region, to ensure there are no unwelcome consequences for the people and animals who share this land. Cruise North is active in promoting and supporting local clean-up projects, to remove refuse from abandoned commercial activity sites.</p>
Prices	<p>Priced From US\$3695 to \$4895 for triple cabins to \$7895 for the Hudson Suite, Air, Land & Sea Inclusive</p> <p>Cruise North Expeditions is the price leader in expedition cruising. Their goal is to provide excellent value while providing exceptional quality - exceeding your expectations. Instead of black-tie dinners, they focus on providing an outstanding program of informative talks and frequent shore excursions that will enhance immeasurably your experience of the north. Included in all expedition fees are airfare when indicated, most meals, all lectures and shore excursions. A trip handbook with detailed information about the Arctic is also included. Single travelers who indicate they are willing to share a cabin are guaranteed the double occupancy rate for that cabin, whether or not a roommate is available.</p>

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Questions & Answers

When is the best time to travel to the Arctic?

The northern summer, especially during July and August, is the best time to visit. Though the sun may dip just below the horizon, the days are long and the weather is normally very pleasant. The region comes alive with wildlife and Inuit families head out onto the land to camp, hunt and fish the traditional harvest. Caribou begin their annual migration northward. Whales, seals and walrus head north and westward, following the retreating pack ice to feed along nutrient rich ice edges. Migratory birds, including geese, eider ducks, and murrelets by the hundreds of thousands nest on offshore islands and await the hatching of their young. By August, Arctic wildflowers have reached full bloom, and soon the local berries will be ready for picking.

What is the temperature in the Arctic?

During the months of July and August, the region's average temperature hovers around 9 C. However, it's also common to have beautiful sunny days with temperatures reaching 18 C.

Are Cruise North expeditions suitable for children & families?

By all means. Children and families are very welcome, however we generally advise against bringing children less than 5 years old. The excursions ashore will always include activity options geared to those with reduced mobility, however due to the nature of the expedition, they cannot always accommodate the disabled. When you make your reservations, discuss your particular needs with the agents.

What kind of clothes should I bring?

A complete clothing list will be sent with your pre-departure material, but generally, layering of warm clothes will ensure that you are comfortable. For example, a turtleneck, sweater and waterproof jacket will allow you to vary your attire to suit conditions that may change from warm to cool and back again within a short period of time. You will need waterproof pants to wear over your pants and rubber boots that go at least to the middle of your shins, since most landings will involve a brief step into the water.

How do I get to my departure gateway?

All of the Arctic voyages include airfare from Montreal, Quebec. If you need to fly to Montreal, Cruise North can assist you with connecting flights for an additional charge.

Will we encounter rough seas?

The seas in this region in summer are usually calm, though rough weather can be experienced at any time. There are remedies to control

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	<p>the rare case of seasickness. Please ask your physician for advice.</p> <p>Will there be any mosquitoes? Mosquitoes and black flies are common in the boreal forest tree-line areas - more numerous in July than August. However, it takes only a slight wind to keep them clear and fortunately, the great majority of our time will be spent along the coast - exposed to breezes, and away from the marshy breeding grounds.</p> <p>Is there a doctor on board? The expedition ship is equipped with a small infirmary, basic emergency supplies, and an emergency doctor.</p>
<p>Awards</p>	<p>Winner 2006 Award of Excellence, Nunavut Tourist Association Leading Innovators in Travel – Travel and Leisure Magazine 2006 Green List Honoree – Conde Nast Traveller TIAC National Award for Tourism Excellence</p>
<p>The People and the Land</p>	<p>The people native to the coastal regions of Labrador, Greenland, Nunavit, the Northwest Territories (including the Arctic archipelago), Alaska and northeastern Siberia share ancestors as well as many cultural traits, and form an entirely separate group from the adjacent Indian tribes. Each of these regions, however, has its own language: Yuit is spoken in northern Siberia, Yupik along the central Alaskan coast, Aleut in the Aleutians, and Inupik from northern Alaska across Arctic Canada to Greenland and Labrador. All these stem from the same linguistic roots but are mutually unintelligible.</p> <p>Inupik speakers occupy a greater land area than any other language in the world - there are only dialectic differences between people living in isolated groups thousands of miles apart. These are the Inuit people (Inupiat in Alaska), and their name means 'the people'.</p> <p>The Inuit belong to the Mongolian race. Most have dark eyes, straight black hair and darkish skin. It is thought that typically their large trunk and body mass, with relatively small hands and feet, is a genetic adaptation to the cold environment. Inuit babies are born with a blue patch at the base of the spine which disappears within a year or two.</p> <p>There are today about 20,000 people in the Baffin region, of which 85% or so are Inuit (in an area of 1.9 million sq km that makes for 172 sq km per person). Their lives are changing fast, and most of these changes were set in motion merely a generation ago.</p> <p>Traditionally, the Inuit lived in small groups of extended family members. Nowadays, Baffin communities range in size from Grise Fjord (population less than 100 and falling) to Iqaluit (population 3,500 and rising). Most of these were formed only 30 years ago, when government officials persuaded the Inuit to move into new housing projects so that</p>

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their children could be near a school.

In the old days, hunting and trapping were virtually the only pursuits of the Inuit, although in the last few centuries this was sometimes driven as much by the desire to obtain southern goods from traders as by personal need. Money did not come into question - furs were a far more common currency. With the furor over the cruelty of the age-old Inuit hunting practices, and the subsequent steep decline in the demand for fur, the Inuit lost their sole means of purchasing the food, gadgets and luxuries they had adopted from the south: They had become poor and functionally unemployed. By the end of the 1960's, the Inuit had come under the control of the remote Ottawa government - and had become the objects of what has been called 'welfare state colonialism'. The Baffin Region, like the rest of the Canadian Arctic, is now utterly dependent on transfer payments from the federal government: Ottawa spends more than \$15,000 for every man, woman and child Nunavut and in the NWT, compared to \$3,000 per capita in Newfoundland, Canada's poorest province.

In response to the changes in their lives, and the subsequent confusion, alienation and resentment that resulted, a wave of Inuit nationalism rose about 20 years ago. Many of the leading Inuit activists are the sons and daughters of people who were forcibly relocated into the High Arctic from their homelands in the 1950's. Fair representation for the Inuit by Inuit in regional government was a first step, and land claims for ancestral territories are still ongoing. The most important of these is the creation of Nunavut, a new territory which covers the Baffin region as well as part of what used to be central NWT. This legislation, ratified in 1999, includes a land claim agreement as well as a system of aboriginal self-government.

Current and recent projects in the Baffin Region aimed at improving the lot of the Inuit include educational reforms and the creation of Arctic College; the promotion of the region as a tourist destination, with local people becoming involved as guides and outfitters.

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