

2025-2026 TRAVEL GUIDE TO CANADA

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13 REASONS
WHY CANADA
ROCKS!



BEST DRIVES
ICONIC CITIES
NATIONAL PARKS
HOT DINING
HIDDEN GEMS

FEATURING
CANADA'S
PROVINCES AND
TERRITORIES

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CANADIAN WAR MUSEUM

A Double Dose of Canadian Heritage

Discover the Canadian War Museum and Canadian Museum of History—two must-visit landmarks in the heart of Canada's capital city.

BY FIONA TAPP

Uncover the stories of Canada's past and future at two world-class museums, each offering a unique perspective on the nation's journey. From gripping stories of war and remembrance to the unfolding narrative of Canadian culture, see dynamic exhibitions that offer new perspectives on the diverse identities that define Canada today.

Located at LeBreton Flats, the Canadian War Museum in Ottawa reopened in 2005. With its striking architecture and immersive exhibits, it offers a unique opportunity to explore Canada's military evolution, from early wars to contemporary peacekeeping efforts.

SYMBOLISM IN DESIGN

Designed by acclaimed architect Raymond Moriyama, the Canadian War Museum's low-lying structure blends seamlessly into the surrounding landscape. Its gently sloping copper roof evokes the idea of regeneration—an important theme throughout the museum's exhibits.

Inside, the museum's centrepiece is Moriyama Regeneration Hall. This soaring atrium features angled views of the Peace Tower on Parliament Hill, offering a quiet place for reflection. Memorial Hall, another striking feature, is dedicated to remembrance, providing a space where visitors can pause and think about the ultimate sacrifice made by those who served.

PERSONAL STORIES OF WAR

Inside the museum, you'll find The Canadian Experience Galleries which takes visitors through Canada's military history, focusing on the human impact of war. Each gallery is a journey through time, starting with the wars of First Peoples and moving through the world wars to Canada's more recent peacekeeping missions. The exhibitions focus not just on the battles fought but on the personal stories of those who lived through them. For example, look for a very special teddy bear given to a soldier by his daughter before he left for

war. When he was killed at Passchendaele in 1917, the bear was found in his pocket and later donated to the Canadian War Museum as a treasured artifact.

LAST VOICES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

As part of the 80th anniversary of the end of the conflict, *Last Voices of the Second World War*, will be on display from May through December, giving a voice to some of the last surviving veterans. Through interviews, photographs, and personal mementos, the exhibit explores the veterans' journeys after the war including how they rebuilt their lives, the struggles they faced, and the ways in which they've shared their stories over the decades.

If you're planning a road trip or visiting Ottawa, make sure the Canadian War Museum is on your list. You'll leave with a deeper appreciation for the sacrifices made by so many and the enduring power of remembrance (www.warmuseum.ca). ■



JOURNEY THROUGH CANADA'S MILITARY HISTORY

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CANADIAN MUSEUM OF HISTORY



Across the Ottawa River in Gatineau, Québec, the Canadian Museum of History offers a compelling exploration of Canada, from the Indigenous peoples who first shaped the land to the diverse, multicultural nation it is today.

Canada's Past Comes to Life

Experiences Await at the Canadian Museum of History.

BY FIONA TAPP

Designed by Indigenous architect Douglas Cardinal, the museum's flowing, organic design is inspired by Canada's natural landscape. Its curving walls, clad in the same type of stone used on the buildings of the Canadian Parliament, are meant to evoke the shape of the land, and the museum's expansive glass façade allows visitors to feel connected to the outside world.

Be sure to enjoy the Zen Garden before or after your visit, designed by renowned landscape artist and Buddhist monk, Shunamyo Toshiaki Masuno.

One of the most striking features of the museum is the Grand Hall, which houses the world's largest indoor collection of totem poles. These towering works of art set the tone for the museum's narrative, one that is grounded in the stories and traditions of First Nations people across the land.

Slowly circle the original plaster pattern of Bill Reid's stunning sculpture *Spirit of Haida Gwaii*, a canoe carrying human, animal, and supernatural beings. Also in the Haida Gwaii Salon, be sure to stand beneath Alex Janvier's *Morning Star*, then look up to the dome and the kaleidoscope of colours presented.

A RICH DISPLAY OF CANADIAN HISTORY

Wander through the Canadian History Hall, where you'll learn about key moments in Canadian history, from the first European settlers to the creation of the Canadian Confederation, and everything in between.

The First Peoples Hall is a fascinating, permanent exhibit where visitors experience the histories, cultures, and traditions of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Witness both the heritage and the ongoing struggles of many Indigenous communities, providing visitors with a deeper understanding of Canada's diverse identity. Look for the Sky Woman sculpture by Shelley Niro (*Hodinohso;ni*).

THE INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL MEMORIAL MONUMENT

In the Four Seasons Salon, you'll find the Indian Residential School Memorial Monument—a sombre reminder of Canada's dark history. Carved from red cedar by Kwagu't master carver Stanley C. Hunt, this monumental sculpture features 130 unsmiling children's faces and a protective raven overhead. It serves as a call for all Canadians to bear witness to the harm caused by the residential school system and reflects the ongoing journey toward reconciliation.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION: RETRO-POPULAR MUSIC IN CANADA

If you're a music fan, don't miss the *Retro-Popular Music in Canada From the '60s, '70s and '80s* exhibition (June-January). Iconic albums, vintage photos, and memorabilia culled from Canada's music industry showcase bold artists like Joni Mitchell, The Band and Céline Dion. See K.D. Lang's striking stage outfit and a guitar used by Rush on tour—just two of the many artifacts celebrating Canada's unflinching musical legacy.

A PLACE FOR REFLECTION AND DISCOVERY

Additionally, within the museum, you'll also find the thoroughly enjoyable Canadian Children's Museum offering interactive exhibits for young visitors, while CINÉ+ showcases engaging documentary films.

With its beautiful architecture, immersive exhibits, and thought-provoking monuments, visiting the Canadian Museum of History is an enriching experience for anyone eager to understand the complexities of Canada's history, its diverse cultural heritage, and the future we are all writing together as a nation (www.historymuseum.ca). ■