

WHY INVEST IN CANADA

Ranks first among G8 countries for

- **Best overall quality of life**
In a recent quality-of-life ranking of 215 world cities by Mercer Human Resources Consulting, five Canadian cities ranked among the top 25. Canada has the best overall quality of life among the G-8.
- **Safest Place to live**
Canada leads the G-8 in terms of the safest place to live and conduct business with the most fairly administered judicial system.
- **Lowest Cost of Living**
Canada has the lowest cost of living among the G-8.
- **Best in addressing environmental concerns**
As measured by the Environmental Performance Index (EPI), Canada's ranks 2nd in the G-8 and 8th in a 133-country study in terms of effectively reducing environmental stresses on human health and promoting ecosystem vitality and sound natural resource management.

Strong Fiscal Policies

- **Internationally recognized with a AAA credit rating** : According to Moody's Financial Strength ratings, Canadian banks rank first among the G8 in terms of their intrinsic credit worthiness.
- **9 Straight Budget Surpluses**: Canada has been the only G8 country running surplus budgets in recent years. The 2006 Canadian budget plan projected the country's 9th straight surplus — the longest stretch of surpluses since Canada became a country in 1867.

A Wealth in Resources

- Canada's oil reserves, totaling 180 billion barrels, are second in the world, placing Canada ahead of Iraq and Iran and behind Saudi Arabia .
- Canada is the third largest producer of natural gas in the world and ranks ninth in the production of crude oil.

Strong Technological Infrastructure

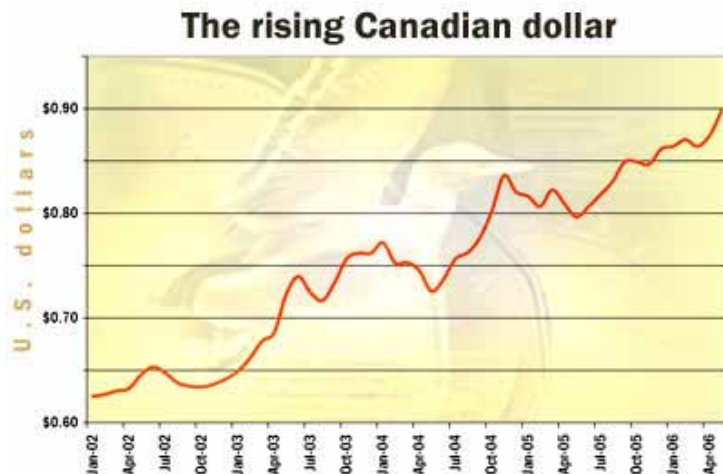
- **Technological Infrastructure**: Canada ranked ahead of Japan and far out front of the Germany, U.K., and France. *Source: World Competitive Yearbook, 2006*
- **Broadband Use**: Canada leads the G8 in broadband or high-speed Internet use.

THE CANADIAN DOLLAR

Four years after it hit an all-time low, the Canadian dollar in 2006 was riding a steady escalator up. Since January 2002, the once-lowly Canadian dollar has gained more than 40 per cent against the currency it's most concerned with – the American dollar.

By May 2006, the dollar had broken through the 90-cent US level - its highest rate since 1978. Despite rising all the way from its all-time low of 62 cents US in early 2002, many economists are saying there's still room for the Canadian dollar to keep rising.

Look for 92 to 95 cents US by later 2006, some say. And several analysts are calling for the Canadian dollar to reach parity with its U.S counterpart by 2007 – something that hasn't happened since 1976



While the international flight from the U.S. dollar to other currencies affects that currency, Canada's economic performance plays a big role in boosting the Canadian dollar. Canada's jobless rate was at a 32-year low of 6.3 per cent in early 2006, as more than 330,000 jobs had been created in the previous year. Growth in GDP was running at more than 3 per cent.

Another factor that has helped to push up the Canadian dollar is rising commodity prices – especially a run-up in the price of oil. As a net exporter of oil, Canada is seen as benefiting overall from record oil prices.

But it's not just oil. Canada exports huge amounts of nickel, copper, aluminum and zinc. All of these commodities are at or near record highs. With commodities accounting for 35 per cent of Canada's exports, the Canadian dollar is seen around the world as a "commodity-based currency," and has been bid up accordingly.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

Currency

The currency is the Canadian dollar, divided into 100 cents. There are notes of 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1,000 dollars; and coins of one, five, 10, 25 and 50 cents as well as one and two dollar coins.

Electrical Current

All of North America uses 110 volts for most residential and commercial purposes.

Standard Time

Canada has six time zones. From the last weekend of October to the first weekend of April standard time applies as below. The rest of the year Daylight Saving Time applies (except in Saskatchewan).

Hours behind GMT

Newfoundland (island) 3,5
Other Maritime Provinces 4
Eastern zone 5
Central zone 6
Mountain zone 7
Pacific zone 8

Working Hours

Banks

Generally, banks are open Monday to Friday from 8 or 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Some banks (or branches) have extended hours during the week and are open part of the day on Saturdays.

Public Offices

Office hours for all levels of government tend to be 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

Shops

Shopping hours vary widely from province to province and within municipalities. Generally, food stores have the longest hours (e.g., 8 a.m. - 8 p.m.) and are open daily; large cities will have some 24hr supermarkets and convenience stores.

Vacations and Holidays

Vacations: Governed by provincial labour laws and union contracts. Many employees receive only two weeks annual vacation but those with longer service may receive four or five weeks.

Holidays: January 1st, Easter Friday and Monday, Victoria Day (May), July 1st (Canada Day), first Monday in September, second Monday in October, November 11th, December 25th and 26th. Additional holidays apply in specific provinces, notably June 24th in Quebec and the first Monday in August in most provinces.

Entrance Requirements

Visitors arriving from abroad require a valid passport. Visitors from many countries will also need a Temporary Resident's Visa (TRV) to enter or transit Canada. It is best to check with the nearest Canadian embassy or consulate, or check the [Citizenship and Immigration Canada website](#).

Health Care System

Canada has a national health care system for citizens and permanent residents. The system benefits business in two ways: it helps maintain a healthy work force, and it drastically reduces employee benefit costs. In 2004, KPMG studied the comparative cost of statutory benefits plus other employer-sponsored plans. This critical combination of costs was lower in Canada than in any other G8 country.

Health Precautions for Visitors: None

Connections from Canada

By Air

Most major international carriers have direct or connecting flights to Canada. The majority of visitors arriving on overseas flights will enter via Toronto, Montreal or Vancouver airports.

By Land

There are 12 major road border crossings with the United States and a host of smaller ones. Many CBSA customs offices offer service 24 hours a day.