

Haida Gwaii (or Queen Charlotte Islands) is the ancestral home of the Haida people, renowned carvers of dramatic cedar totem poles.

Coho, Chinook, Chum, Pink, Sockeye: BC's five wild salmon species are a prize catch.

Land of the "spirit bear," a unique subspecies of the black bear, with

yellowish-white fur. Only 400 are left. Watch for the new Spirit Bear animated movie in 2007 — the first Hollywood film to devote a portion of profits to habitat conservation.

Vancouver and Whistler will host the 2010 Winter Olympics.

New Whistler Mountaineer and Rocky Mountaineer Fraser

Discovery routes.

The Willliams Lake frequent that Lloyds Stampede, dating to 1919, of London once offered doles out more than a \$2 million reward for proof of its existence \$80,000 in prize money to bronco riders, steer – but no one managed to claim it. See page 26. wrestlers and horseback racers each year.

Visions of Rocky Moungold lured prospectors taineer Yellowhead and to the Klondike in Kicking Horse routes. the late 1800s.

Cgopogo, a myth-

ical serpent, is the Loch

Ness Monster of Okana-

The launch-pad of Wayne Gretzky, hockey's all-time lead scorer. gan Lake. Sightings are so Edmonton is famous

for its arts festivals, frigid winters and West Edmonton Mall. the world's largest shopping centre, equivalent to 48 city blocks.

Make no bones about it: Dinosaur Provincial Park boasts fossilized beasts dating back 75 million years, with more than 300 skeletons found since the 1890s.

Is there a doctor in the house? Saskatchewan break the law in introduced Canada's first Medicare plan in 1962.

Better not

Mounted Police)

do basic training

province capital.

Eat your wheat!

Breadbasket of Canada,

produces more of the

Saskatchewan, the

crop than all other

Canadian provinces

combined.

in this prairie-

Regina. All of Canada's

RCMP (Royal Canadian

Diamonds are a girl's best friend, especially Canadian brilliants. Discovered near Yellowknife in 1991, they're mined according to stringent laws that protect Arctic wildlife, ecology and the welfare of aboriginal peoples.

Winnipeg lays claim to Pooh-bear fame. The real Christopher Robin, son of author A.A. Milne, loved to visit England's London Zoo to see the black bear donated by a Canadian soldier, who had named it after his hometown of Winnipeg. Zoo-goers shortened the name to Winnie, and the rest is history.

Some folks think all Canadians live in igloos, but the ingenious snow houses are unique to the Inuit of central Arctic. The Inuit have honed their skills as hunters, kayakers, negotiators and shamans for 5,000 years. In Canada, "Inuit" is preferred to the catch-all name "Eskimo."

Named for this enormous body of water, the Hudson's Bay Company saw furry lucre in beaver pelts, prized in Europe for fashioning into hats. Starting in 1670, HBC built trading posts across present-day Canada; the company still owns two nationwide department stores: The Bay and Zellers.

"Eager beavers" in Ontario and Ouebec use 40 parts sap from the sugar-maple tree to make one part maple syrup. If maple-syrup candies and ice cream sound sweet, try it with sausages,

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or in Dijon-mustard salad dressing.

🚺 Water, water everywhere: Lake Superior is the world's largest freshwater lake.

Towering success: author Margaret Atwood's hometown of Toronto is also home to the CN Tower, which at 553 m (1,815 ft) is the world's tallest freestanding structure.

💹 Niagara Falls is a favourite destination for dewy-eyed honeymooners and barrelwearing daredevils.

Each winter in Canada's capital city of Ottawa, skaters glide on the world's longest iceskating rink, the Rideau Canal (7.8 km/4.5 mi).

French and English have co-existed as Canada's official languages ever since the British defeated les français near Quebec City in 1759. A quarter of Canadians are of French descent, most living in Quebec, New Brunswick and northern Ontario.

📃 Belly up to the bar in Montreal. Molson is North America's oldest brewery, intoxicating Montrealers since 1786.

In pre-19th-century New England, serving inmates lobster more

than once a week was cruel and unusual punishment. But Canadians are gluttons for punishment: Nova Scotians used to fill bath tubs with lobster and eat only the claws. Now they feast on the whole crustacean, minus the brain but including the tomalley, the light-green liver considered a delicacy.

🔁 Lucy Maude Montgomery's classic children's book Anne of Green Gables is set in picturesque Prince Edward Island

More puffins than people live in Newfoundland/Labrador, where a mere 500,000 humans occupy an area nearly as large as California. Many residents are descended from Scots and Irish, and have their own offbeat dialect, including words like prog (food) and mauzy (misty).

Famous fiddlers Natalie MacMaster and Ashley MacIsaac hail from Cape Breton Island. Nova Scotia. In this cradle of Celtic music, Gaelic singing is making a comeback and step dancers go low to the floor in a style that disappeared from Scotland decades ago.

SOS: the SS Titanic sank on April 14, 1912, in the waters off Cape Race, Newfoundland. jw