

Contents

Introduction

1. A world of opportunity
2. Checking out work options
3. Organisations
4. Argentina
5. Belgium
6. Canada
7. Living in Montreal
Tim Uden
8. Chile
9. Cyprus
10. Denmark
11. Finland
12. France
13. My life in Paris
Rebecca Thistleton
14. Germany
15. Hong Kong
16. Ireland
17. Irish Times
Margaret Toohey
18. Italy
19. Italian fruit
Natalia de Cuba

20. Japan
21. On being a *gaigin*
Louise Southerden
22. Korea
23. Octopus, Korean style
Harrison Clark
24. Malaysia
25. Malta
26. The Netherlands
27. Keeping busy in Amsterdam
Kerry Martin
28. Norway
29. Sledding in Norway
John Ray
30. Singapore
31. Sweden
32. Land of the Vikings
Alicia Morton
33. Taiwan
34. United Kingdom
35. The Gumboots
Peter Barr
36. Uruguay
37. United States
38. Wake up polar bear
John 'Dingo' Thompson
39. Across the Tasman

Canada

Aussies (since 1977) and Kiwis

The country

Canada is a big country, the second largest in land area, but little of it is seen by most of the 32 million Canadians who cluster along the border with the US. Some 80 per cent of the Canadian population lives within 200 km of the US border and most live between Toronto (4.6 million) and Quebec City (644,000), along the lakes and the St Lawrence Seaway. There are many images of snow and ice associated with Canada and not without reason. Canada is characterised by long cold winters so if you don't like the cold think twice about spending time there. However, if you want to ski it's one of the best countries on the planet.

Canada is a popular destination for Australian and New Zealand working holidaymakers and it's a fair guess to say that the majority spend a good part of their time working in the snowfields of the Rockies in various capacities. It should not be forgotten however, that Canada has an Atlantic coastline and many cities east of the prairies are also worth exploring both to find work and as a traveller. If you find work in the eastern cities remember you can make weekend trips to other Canadian cities as well as New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Detroit with ease.

Canadian Tourism Commission: www.canadatourism.com

Visa requirements

To be eligible for a Canadian working holiday visa both Australians and New Zealanders must meet the following key criteria:

- be an Australian or New Zealand citizen
- be aged between 18 - 30 inclusive at the time of application

- have no dependent children
- have no criminal convictions (including alcohol-related driving offences)
- upon arrival in Canada Australians may have to prove they have access to at least \$4000, while New Zealanders must prove they have access to at least CN\$4000. You can do this with travellers cheques, a statement such as your credit card limit, proving the amount on a debit card, show cash or a return or onward ticket. New Zealanders are asked to have a return or onward ticket.

The Canadian working holiday visa is very popular on both sides of the Tasman so you need to get in early as both the Australian and New Zealand programs have caps which can change from year to year. In 2004 these were 7500 for Australians and 2000 for New Zealanders. Applications open each year in early January and all available places are usually allocated by May. Towards the end of each year, details of next years program is posted on the Canadian government websites (www.whpcanada.org.au for Australians and www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/newzealand for New Zealanders). You can't get an application form until the program is officially open, nor can you submit an application before the opening date. Application forms can be downloaded from the above websites.

If you're successful you'll be issued with a Letter of Introduction that is valid for presentation at any Canadian port of entry for 12 months from the date of issue. On presentation of this letter and upon proving you are able to meet the financial requirements, the immigration officer will staple a Work Permit to your passport that is valid for one year from that date.

Once in the country you'll need to obtain a Social Insurance Number (SIN) which is essential for getting a job. If you haven't already received an application form at immigration control, drop into the nearest Human Resources Development Canada office, fill out an SIN application and get a receipt in return. Until you receive your SIN, you're able to show prospective employers your receipt as evidence of your SIN application. Give your employer the number when it arrives.

It's possible, while holding a working holiday visa, to enrol in a course of study for up to six months. Eligible courses include a range of diplomas and certificates including language courses, the obvious one being French. For more information on this option contact the Canadian Education Centre, Canadian High Commission, Commonwealth Avenue, Canberra 2600. Tel: (02) 6270 4051. Fax: (02) 6270 4083. Email: cecaustralia@studycanada.ca. Website: www.canada.org.au

Canadian Consulate General, Immigration Section, 111 Harrington Street, Sydney NSW 2000. Tel: (02) 9364 3050. Fax: (02) 936 3099. Website: www.whpcanada.org.au

Canadian High Commission, NZWHP, PO Box 12049, Wellington. Tel: (04) 473 9577. Fax: (04) 471 2082. Website: www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca/newzealand

If you wish to travel to the US you should note that the US now has much stricter visa requirements. Contact a US embassy or consulate general for details or visit [//canberra.usembassy.gov](http://canberra.usembassy.gov) or [//wellington.usembassy.gov](http://wellington.usembassy.gov).

Work advice

Canadians are generally pretty fond of Antipodean workers, something to do with our can-do attitude, good work ethic and easy-going ways. That said, some parts of the country, particularly the ski fields, are overrun with travelling Australians and New Zealanders so don't count on novelty value to land a job.

One big advantage of the Canadian working holiday program is that you're not restricted in the type of work you can do, or indeed in the number of employers you can have. If you want to follow your career or work for one company for the whole of your time in Canada—provided the job is not 'permanent'—you can. Alternatively, you may choose to travel round the country picking up casual work such as fruit picking, waiting on tables or cleaning loos.

Although there are no restrictions on the type of jobs you can have, if you wish to work in childcare, primary or secondary teaching (including camp counsellor jobs) or healthcare—even as a volunteer—

you'll be required to undergo a medical examination once you hit Canadian shores. The same holds true for any Canadians working in these areas so don't worry, it's not a form of discrimination against working holidaymakers. To follow up on this requirement call your nearest Immigration Call Centre in Canada as soon as you arrive to arrange your medical examination. In Toronto, call (0416) 973 444, in Montreal call (0514) 496 1010 and in Vancouver, call (0604) 666 2171. Once you have successfully passed your medical examination your Work Permit will be modified allowing you to apply for positions in these fields.

If you do intend to pursue professional work make sure you take an up-to-date CV together with references from previous employers. Either take it on disk or email it to yourself so you can print out copies as required. To find out if your professional qualifications are recognised in Canada have a look at the Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials website at www.cicic.ca.

Before you leave home you can get a feel for the job market by visiting appropriate websites, some of which are listed below. Once you arrive there are a number of avenues you can try depending on the type of work you are after. In any of the larger centres, the private employment agencies are worth a try. You aren't able to use the Canadian Employment Centres because they are only for full-time permanent positions and under the working holiday visa you are only eligible for casual or temporary positions (both full-time and part-time). That said, private recruitment agencies can be very helpful, particularly if you have experience in office work, IT, engineering and technical, sales and marketing and nursing for example. Remember to have your CV and references and be prepared to spend some time registering with them and going through the interview process. A lot of hostels and other places where travellers hang out, have job boards as do university campuses. These can be a good source of leads as can your fellow travellers.

With over four million inhabitants, Toronto is the largest city, and it has the usual range of work found in most cities of this size. According to STA Travel SWAP (Student Work Abroad Program) participants from past years who have worked in both the ski fields

and Toronto, work in Toronto pays better but accommodation can be expensive. Vancouver offers only limited opportunities for the job hunter. The national capital Ottawa does not have a strong commercial base and so has fewer prospects relative to Toronto and Montreal. Montreal is two thirds Francophile and Quebec City is completely French-speaking so unless your French is better than passable, don't count on getting a job there. If you can speak French or wish to learn, working in these cities is a good option. Many Antipodeans stick to the Rockies but don't forget that Canada borders the Atlantic Ocean as well; Prince Edward Island and other Atlantic resorts have tourist work in summer.

The university and college summer-holiday period is July and August so it's best to secure positions before July when the competition for summer jobs increases. On the other hand, if you find yourself in a university town during this period there are often jobs left behind by departing students.

If you plan on driving during your time in Canada, then it's a good idea to get an International Driver's Permit from your local motorists association before you leave home. Visitors without this licence are only allowed to drive for a maximum of 60 days to six months, depending on which province you are in.

Agriculture and forestry

British Columbia may provide work in the forestry industry or fruit picking while Ontario has fruit, vegetable and tobacco-farm work. The forestry industry work mostly involves planting trees in logged or burnt-out areas or working in logging camps cutting and dragging timber. The latter pays quite well but few foreigners find their way into this type of work. They are more likely to find work tree planting, but be warned that this work is hard and involves long hours. The job does offer the advantages of fresh air, the chance to test little-used muscles on rough slopes along with the ability to save money. Tree planting runs through spring and early summer, from April to July.

Fruit picking in the Okanagan Valley, which stretches north for about 200 km from the American border, is worth a look. A wide

range of fruit is grown so picking times vary but are concentrated from July to October. In both of these areas you'll meet plenty of competition from the locals but don't let this discourage you. It's usually first in, first served, so you'll need to line up early in the morning at the local assembly point.

With the exception of peach picking you are paid not by the hour, but by how much you are able to pick. It may take a bit of practice to start earning some reasonable money and you might have to put up with some sore muscles. You are usually able to camp at the farms where you are working, so take your tent.

Information about fruit picking can be obtained from the Agricultural Employment Service which has offices in the main towns. Check the telephone book in Vancouver and make initial enquiries from there. Remember that college and university holidays in Canada are in the months of July and August so you'll find more competition then. Some good websites with details of harvesting dates and job opportunities include www.kfs.bc.ca, www.ruraljobs.com and www.agric-labourpool.com/jobseekers/alerts.

Domestic

Australians and New Zealanders are able to be employed as 'live-in caregivers' which is a term covering both the looking after of children and of elderly people, and you are not restricted by age. This is an area which is monitored quite strictly by the government so that neither side is treated unfairly. More details can be found at the Canadian government's website www.canada.org.au. There are numerous nanny agencies in Canada so check the yellow pages for details upon arrival.

Ski fields

The ski fields are a major drawcard for many Antipodeans visiting Canada. One reason is that the snow is good (except when it arrives late, which occasionally happens) and jobs are usually plentiful. Be aware that the best jobs (especially anything on the snow itself) are to be found early in the season, so if you wish to work in the snow resorts and are not restricted by work or exams as

to when you arrive, head for the slopes in October before the season (November-May) really gets underway.

Door knocking is generally regarded as the best way to find work. A survey taken a couple of years ago among STA Travel SWAP Canada participants found the average number of days taken to find a job was 3.7. Positions can include kitchen hands, waiting staff, dishwashers, labourers, cleaners, table clearing (bus boys) and chambermaids. There is a constant need for bar staff and waiters in cafes and restaurants. Without experience and a supply of references it can be difficult to pick up positions on the snow itself, especially the more sought after ones.

Accessible resorts include Banff, Lake Louise, Sunshine Mountain, Jasper and Waterton. Some Australians recommend finding positions in less well known resorts such as Rossland and Cologne where there are fewer Australians (and New Zealanders). A number of returned Australians say that Banff can be overrun by Australians, both those seeking work and those there for the skiing only; so much so that the locals are sick of them. Your choice.

Other resorts worth checking out are Fraser Valley, Blackcomb and Whistler. In Whistler, unlike many centres, you must find accommodation before anyone will give you work, and finding accommodation is not always easy. This is one good reason to travel with friends, as you can then find a flat to share. Also remember that most of these places are tourist destinations in summer as well, and so hotel work is a good bet throughout the year. You can expect to earn about CN\$7-8 per hour without accommodation being part of the package.

General information on the ski fields can be found www.skinetcanada.ca. For Whistler and Blackcomb, check out www.whistler-blackcomb.com, which has details of their recruitment fair and an online application form. Others include www.skitotal.com which is the website of Ski Total, a UK company specialising in catered chalets and www.morainelake.com, the site for Moraine Lake Lodge in Alberta. This lodge is a sizeable employer of casual staff over the winter and summer months. The website has an excellent jobs section with an online application form.

In Banff I found the cheapest accommodation was sharing a basement apartment with a group of friends. It is cheapest to get together about six people (you meet heaps of people looking for accommodation on buses, in hotels, or other swappers) to share a two to three bedroom apartment. Yogi's in Banff sells cheap second-hand furniture and household utensils. (A SWAP Canada participant)

I would advise skiing swappers to buy cheap second-hand skis in Vancouver, Edmonton or Calgary before heading to the ski towns which are notorious for inflated prices. Because the start of the season can be dubious, swappers should wait until after Christmas or until the end of season sales (they begin in January) to buy new skis. Major sports-store chains reduce skis, bindings and ski gear by up to 70 per cent at these times. You can always sell your skis later. (A SWAP Canada participant)

Teaching

The scope for ESL teaching in Canada continues to grow, fuelled by healthy numbers of immigrants and the needs of the French community. British Columbia is a particular hotspot—both in the private and public sectors. Those with ESL qualifications and some French may find work in French-speaking areas, while the large Chinese communities in Toronto and Vancouver offer scope for good teachers with Mandarin or Cantonese. The website for the Council of Second Language Schools in Canada www.cspl.com gives details of ESL and FSL (French as a second language) schools in Canada or try the Private English Language Schools Association at www.pelsa.org.

Resources and contacts

Living and Working in Canada, Janet MacDonald, Survival Books

Live & Work in The USA & Canada, Adam Lechmore, et al, Vacation Work

www.canada.gc.ca: Canadian government site with lots of information and links.

[//canadainternational.gc.ca](http://canadainternational.gc.ca): For visitors and immigrants with useful links.

www.hrsdc.gc.ca: Human Resources and Skills Development Canada

The following websites are mostly for those looking for permanent work but they also provide a range of useful information and links.

www.canadaonline.about.com, www.canadajobs.com, www.allstarjobs.ca, www.mediacorp2.com, www.worksitecanada.com

The following websites are more useful job-hunting sites as many focus on seasonal and short-term work which working holidaymakers are eligible for.

www.seasonalemployment.com/canada.html, www.summerjobs.com/do/where/CA

www.actionjobs.com, www.wework2play.com, www.canadaemployment.com, www.youth.gc.ca/yohome.jsp?lang=en