

Study in Canada: Top Value, Top Education

“South Park” blamed Canada for polluting the minds of young adults. What the movie didn’t say is that Canadians place a premium on education and demand first-rate schools. Canada spends more per capita on its students than any of the other leading industrialized countries in the world and is among the top three countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). That is why a degree from a Canadian university is recognized worldwide and, as a result, U.S. students who graduate from Canadian universities enjoy successful and prosperous careers.

For the past several years, the United Nations has rated Canada the best place in the world to live. This annual UN survey evaluates quality of life in 174 countries, using over 200 performance indicators. Canada earns consistently high marks for its access to education, long life expectancy (due to a universal health care system), and low crime and violence rates. In addition, Vancouver and Toronto are often cited as the best international cities by travel and business magazines, based on such factors as incidence of crime, quality of schooling and availability of culture.

Canada has a large selection of universities and colleges located in both urban and rural settings in every region of the country. Canadian universities are internationally known for the quality of their teaching and research, and degrees from Canadian universities are considered to be equivalent to those from American and other Commonwealth universities. Canadian universities are largely publicly funded; as a result they are of a consistently high quality, regardless of location or area of study. As well, they all retain a high degree of academic autonomy.

Full-time student enrollment at individual universities ranges from over 35,000 to fewer than 1,000. In addition, most universities have a large number of part-time or continuing education students. Canadian universities offer a broad range of courses and a full range of degrees from undergraduate to doctorates, and can also offer certificates and professional degrees. Fees for universities differ depending on the province, institution and program of study. Tuition rates and cost of living in Canada rank among the lowest when compared to Australia, France, the United Kingdom and the United States. Over the last three years, Canada’s inflation rate has remained one of the lowest in the industrialized world. The university year usually runs from September to May. Some universities are on a semester or trimester system, with all courses available even in the summer. There is no Canada-wide entrance test: each university sets its own admission standards and assesses the qualifications of each applicant individually.

Students who come to Canada will witness one

of the most beautiful natural environments in the world. Canada is also a country of diverse geography, and there is much to experience in the great outdoors, from the lush coastline of British Columbia to the majestic Rocky Mountains of Alberta, from the big skies of the prairies to the maple sugar country of the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence River, to the rugged hills and picturesque coastline of the Atlantic provinces.

Canada is a country of immigrants and has both a tradition and policy of encouraging multicultural diversity. Almost all of the world’s ethnic groups are represented in Canada. As a result, most ethnic foods and recreational activities associated with specific cultures are available. Clubs, informal clubs and associations representing a multitude of ethnic backgrounds are also easily accessible on campuses. International student advisors at schools can help students get in touch with such groups.

Canadians enjoy a standard of living that is among the highest in the world. All major urban centers have a variety of shopping malls, restaurants, theatres, art galleries and museums. Canadian cities provide numerous parks, gardens and beaches for public use, as well as excellent sports and recreation facilities. Also, Canada is well known as a safe, just and peaceful society. Firearms are strictly controlled and generally not permitted in Canada.

Canada is an international leader in computer and information technologies and has a reputation for excellence in such sectors as telecommunications, transportation and engineering (specifically, aerospace, urban transport, microelectronics, medical devices, advanced software, hydroelectric and nuclear power, lasers and opto-electronics) biotechnology, food and beverage processing, and ocean and environmental industries.

And if you think all this is too far away, think again. Approximately 80 percent of all Canadians live within 50 miles of the U.S. border, which makes study in Canada much closer than you think. For more information about study in Canada, go to www.studyincanada.com.