

Toronto is so multiracial The perspective of a Muslim immigrant

There is no place like home say Torontonians
even if their original home is elsewhere

After thirty **years** in Toronto
most immigrants feel that Toronto is now their home
Toronto is so different than it was thirty years ago
so multiracial

Since the 1960's
Toronto has transformed itself
to become multiracial

View the whole of Toronto
the largest city in Canada
with three million **people**
from the top of the CN tower
It is not a concrete jungle
but a **forest**
all **green**
of 10 million **trees**
a miracle of planning
Remarkable **vision!**

Soon you go to the Greater Toronto Area and beyond

Get drenched in the **rain** as you walk to work
Get drenched in the "Maid of the **Mist**"
and now in the "Hornblower boat cruise"
in the world-famous breathtaking Niagara **Falls**
and explore the tunnel under the **falls**
Get drenched in a boat ride in Canada's Wonderland
Take a scenic ferry to Centre **Island**
where no cars are allowed
Toronto is now your home

Applaud the sincere efforts of **people** from all directions
and all levels of Government
to make the Indigenous **people** feel appreciated

the migrants feel at home
and born Canadians to feel proud

Marvel at the indescribable **sunrise**
the **afterglow** of **sunset**
the **new moon** and the **full moon**
the **snowflakes** in **winter** each different
the carpet of **snow** on the ground and on all the roof tops
the colourful **flowers** in **spring** and
the maple **leaf**
all creations of God

Marvel at the **buds**
that blossom to become
gorgeous **red roses**

The **leaves** put on such beautiful **colours** in **autumn**
before they all fall in **winter**
to spring to **life** again in **spring**
How amazing!

See how the **squirrel** climbs up the **branches**

Travel across Canada
the world's second largest country
with the longest **coastline**
and containing more **lakes** than any other country
about 25,000
and see the **animals, birds** and **fish**
that are unique to Canada such as
the **eastern wolf**
the **Pacific Steller's jay** and
the Atlantic **whitefish** and the Vancouver **lamprey**
Go to the north to see
the **glaciers**, the frozen **stalactites** and **stalagmites** and
the **place** where the **sun** never sets

Behold the flocks of **birds** as they fly
Fall in **love** with their astonishing **colourful feathers**
Such **beauties!**

Do you get a message as they chirp?

Those from the U.K. say
there is a lot of **sunshine** here
Thank God for that

Be close to **nature**
plant a **tree**
This is your home
or your second home

Half of the **population** of Toronto was born here
The other half are immigrants
or multiple migrants

Go swimming and fishing
with **family** or friends
tobogganing in one of 25 **parks**
horseback riding
biking along bicycle lanes and 200 km of trails
canoeing in more than 300 km of **rivers** and **creeks**
a walk in the **forest trails** or
along the **waterfront** of **Lake Ontario**
ice skating in the rinks with ice trails
sightseeing at Thousand **Islands**
a picnic in one of the over 1600 **parks**
with **ravines, valleys, wood lots** and **beaches**
and to the Toronto Zoo
the largest in Canada
with about 6000 **animals**
which are very well taken care of
as well as the Ontario Science Centre
which specializes in astronomy and
the Scarborough Bluffs to
admire its **natural beauty**
There is no place like my old home and this home he says

Face the **hail** in **spring**
and **sleet** in **winter**
as you walk to work

Get stuck in the traffic jam on Highway 401
Take the TTC public transit along Yonge Street
the longest street in the **world**

A columnist in Europe praises garbage collection and recycling in Toronto
Hope garbage collectors don't go on strike!

Snow is ploughed away the same **day** on the highway
and the next day on smaller roads
Long line ups at Toronto airport are cleared
through immigration and customs in an **hour**
One's passport is renewed in a **week**

Visitors admire Canadians for greeting them as "sir"
and for following due process and the rules
You can't bribe a policeman to let you off
You can't bribe a government officer to get your work done
There is corruption but it is global

Hear the Indigenous **people** and learn their **history** of thousands of **years**
The English and the French
who are the earliest migrants
to learn the history of Canada of the past two hundred **years**
Hence, English and French are the official languages of Canada
Europeans and the Lebanese and
Chinese and Sikhs
whose **grandparents** were born in Canada

His friends are born Canadians
as well as from the Sudan and Sierra Leone
Her friends are born Canadians
as well from Sri Lanka and Japan
Our friends are born Canadians
as well as from Guyana and Kenya,
and Zanzibar and Pakistan
Their friends are born Canadians
as well as from Tanzania, Uganda and Bangladesh

And they invite each other for meals and feel at home

Hear the giggles of **kids** as they mimic

accents of immigrants from all over the **world**

Hear an Indigenous **person** give an introduction at a ceremony
a veteran speaking at a school

someone from Barbados make a PowerPoint presentation
someone from Australia conduct a business meeting
someone from America conduct a seminar

Hear religious poetry in the Sufi tradition
in English composed by a born Canadian,
and in Urdu composed by a multiple migrant from Pakistan
who knows Arabic, Urdu, Farsi, English, German and Punjabi

Marvel at those who try to preserve
their **chastity, morality, upright character**
language and **family values**

You are already multi-lingual
but now learn French to be counted as bi-lingual
or learn English as a second **language**
Arabic to become a **scholar** and to maintain your **traditions**
Urdu to open up new vistas

Get news about Ghana and Somalia
Egypt and Albania
Mexico and Argentina
in newspapers published by those
who have come from there

Say “nyet” to a Russian
to strike a conversation
and become his buddy

Volunteer as an interpreter
and now there is help with sign language as well

A teacher born in Toronto
does not need to go all over the **world**
to teach **students** of different **countries**
She teaches them in Toronto
Toronto is home to 230 different **nationalities**

who speak over 200 **languages** and **dialects**
which makes it the most diverse city
There is no place like home she says
so multilingual

Use the TTC public transit
with subways, trams and buses
You do not need to travel to other countries
to be with people from all over the world
Your international travel is on the TTC with fellow travelers

Be in a daze at Union Station
the main transit hub of Toronto
with the TTC subway, the Go Train and Via Rail
and a train going directly to the airport
and see the multiracialism of Toronto in full display
there as everywhere

In their travelogues
Canadians admire
the awesome Muslim architecture
in some **Muslim countries**

Santa who is a seasonal migrant from the **North Pole**
in the Christmas season
and his Canada Post volunteers
have answered more than one million letters of **kids**
around the **world**
in 30 **languages**
Christian kids taken for a rollercoaster ride in Christmas!
Much better though
than the crazy and heathen Halloween

There are places of worship for **people** of all faiths
in schools and universities
hospitals and the airports
and there are more than a hundred masajid in Metro Toronto
some big with minarets and domes
most of them small
or in basements

Study all about **Islam**
from thousands of Islamic books
and some ancient historical scripts
in dozens of **languages**
in the University of Toronto library

Even some non-Muslims
are beginning to greet Muslims with
As-Salamu ‘alaykum
peace be upon you!
Much appreciated!

Meet some people in suits
most in shirts and pants
Nigerians in long colorful baggy robes
Afghans in shalwar kameez and
Kashmiris in shawls
all so colourful

Go shopping in little Italy
little Greece
two big China towns
the shopping center near you
with all the other Canadians
born in Canada or in other countries

Taste at your home and at religious gatherings
Ajwa dates and **zam zam water** from Makkah and Madinah
Palestinian **olives** from al-Quds
pure **honey** and **cheese**
milk and dairy products
fruits and **vegetables** and
chicken and **lamb**
from **farms** in Toronto
cod from the Atlantic **sea** and **salmon** from the Pacific **sea**
Afghani naan
Barawa vitumbua
Belgian cake
Basmati rice
Bamiyan kabab
coconut from the Caribbean

French fries and **brown** bread
Italian pizza
Spanish lasagna
Mexican tacos
Hydrabadi tukre
Gujarati haleem and paya
Pakistani **mangoes**
Nigerian **yams**
Swahili mbazi and mandazi
Turkish baklava
and top it off with double-double **coffee**
Don't waste
Donate to food banks to help the needy
Marvel at the halal signs all over
Go for **halal**, avoid the prohibited

The superstore food chains carry
all the **foods** of the **world**

One and all naturally incline towards their staple **food**

The most delicious biryani is at the
Ghareeb Nawaz Restaurant

Like he kind of likes it, eh!

There is universal public health care
When he falls sick
he gets treated and helped by
a born Canadian or an immigrant who is
a Muslim faith healer
a German physician
a Chinese herbalist or heart surgeon
a nurse from the Philippines
an eye surgeon from Brazil
a front-line worker from Somalia
a physiotherapist from Korea
a student trainee dentist from Portugal
an optician from Iran and
a pharmacist from Kenya

The **family** gets helped by professionals and specialists born in Toronto
and by a computer specialist from Kuwait
a plumber from Pakistan
an electrician from Mexico
a carpenter from Greece
an engineer from Georgia and
an electrician from Bosnia
All the **labour force** growth in Canada
is through immigration

Visit your **relatives** back home to help them
Be resilient
face the new challenges in Toronto

Join in relief efforts to help the poor and the homeless in Toronto
the orphans and widows in Afghanistan
those swept away in floods in Pakistan
those devastated by earthquakes in Turkey and Syria
those suffering from the cyclone in Haiti
those affected by tornadoes in America and
those displaced by the wars in Iraq and Ukraine

You were born in Toronto
You are half its population
Compete in sports against those
who have settled down in Toronto
and who have joined existing teams
or formed their own teams
Hammer a soccer team of immigrants from India with four clear goals
Triumph against a cricket team of those from England with just one run
and exclaim “that was the **day!**”
Beat someone from Jamaica in a hundred-meter sprint
Finish first in the butterfly stroke
Dare to join the marathon race with people from Ethiopia
Don’t ever dare to compete against my grandson in weight lifting
Complete the historical Annual Terry Fox Run in Canada
Clinch a victory against Vietnam in volleyball with pure love
Play in friendly games with a team of Moroccans
You lost against the Americans in baseball
but won against them in Ice Hockey
So relax

and chew your popcorn
Be a sport!

Why did the Canadian cross the road?
“To get to the middle”
but that is another story

The transformation to multiracialism
was not achieved without friction
“Those who fell through”
both **white** and **non-white**
carried the transformation to multiracialism
on their **shoulders**

Some prejudice remains
There are some negatives
big and small
some very big

The TTC reminds everyone
one assault is too many

Everyone minds their own business
except for the French government in Quebec
which prohibits the hijab
for certain public sector employees

Some **people** complain
Examples are
those who had better social services in other **countries** but these are few
those who wish to keep the government on its **toes**
those who do not want Canada to follow Big Brother to the **south**
and those who stand up for the poor and **social justice**

Like all western **countries**
Canada exports its culture
to the rest of the **world**
some aspects of which may not be desirable

There are some gruesome incidents
of hate crimes against **women** and **Muslims**

However, let us end on a good note

Admire Canadian inventors of insulin and the telephone
advances in medical science and technology
the “be kind” signs everywhere after the Covid pandemic
and the admirable efforts of front-line **medical practitioners** and **workers**
during the pandemic

Note: Creations of Allah (The Glorified and The Exalted) have been typed in bold.

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