

Discover Nunavut's Capital City!

IQALUIT

VISITORS GUIDE 2005

news/north

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HISTORY & ATTRACTIONS



CLIMATE & NORTHERN LIGHTS



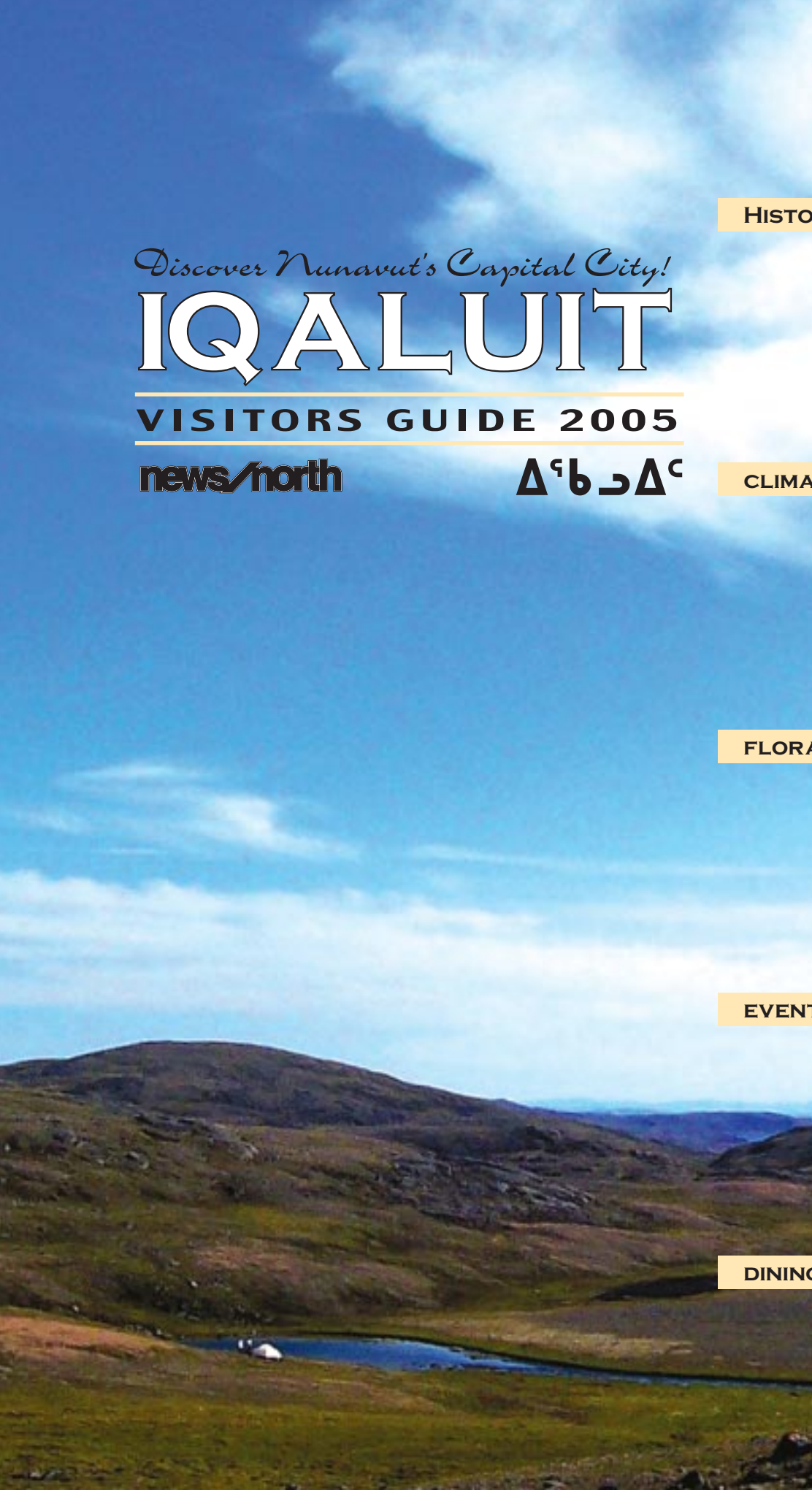
FLORA & FAUNA



EVENTS & CITY MAP



DINING & SHOPPING





Peterhead Inlet, Frobisher Bay



Sybil Island (Tiikuut), Frobisher Bay



Apex, Iqaluitl Island (Tiikuut)



Iqaluit

▲ **INSIDE**

History: Inuit have enjoyed the riches of Baffin Island for millennia **5**

Attractions: Friendly people are happy to welcome you to Iqaluit **11**

Baffin Region: Iqaluit is the place to start your Nunavut adventure **12**

MAP: Getting around the city **16**

Climate: Canada's newest capital city is its most temperamental - weatherwise **20**

Our home: Modern city surrounded by wide open spaces **22**

Northern Lights: Night sky shines with magical light **23**

Events: Cross-cultural environment makes for lively entertainment..... **24**

Dining: From pizza to country foods **25**

Shopping: A variety of shopping experiences..... **26**

Arts and crafts: Part of the economy and a link to the past **27**

Flowers: Tundra breaks out in bloom **28**

Hunting and fishing: World-class..... **29**

Wildlife: Big bears and little birds call Nunavut home **30**



Koojessie Inlet, Iqaluit



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 Above and cover photos by John Thomas

Unique culture and stark beauty

Clothed in caribou and seal skin for protection from the harsh Arctic climate, nomadic Inuit have enjoyed the riches and stark beauty of Iqaluit and Baffin Island for millennia.

A slow migration east through the North helped the unique culture develop the tools and know how required to exist on the unforgiving land now known as Nunavut.

Moving with the animals and seasons, they lived on inland fish and game during the long summer days. Winter was toiled away on the coast hunting seal.

Contact invariably occurred with early Norse seafarers and Europeans. However, the traditional Inuit way of life remained virtually unchanged until relatively recently.

Sixteenth century English explorer Martin Frobisher landed on the rocky shores in search of gold and within a hundred years, Dutch whalers were a common sight. But it was not until 1850 that the North Atlantic whaling industry had begun large-scale operations in the area they called Iqaluit, meaning “the place of many fish.”

Non-Inuit adopted the name Frobisher Bay.

At this time, Inuit began to spend the summers as hunters and



John Thomas photos

Peterhead Inlet, overlooking Frobisher Bay to the South/Southwest. Below: Main breakwater anchorage at Iqaluit

seamstresses for their new-found visitors. Modern goods and technologies, such as rifles and flour, were their reward.

Dysentery and disease accompanied, however, and some villages vanished entirely.

Anglican and Catholic missionary activity flourished. Much of the Inuit’s traditional shamanistic beliefs and culture would be lost by the early 20th century.

By 1905 Arctic whale stocks had collapsed. But the luxurious fur trade boomed.

continued page 7





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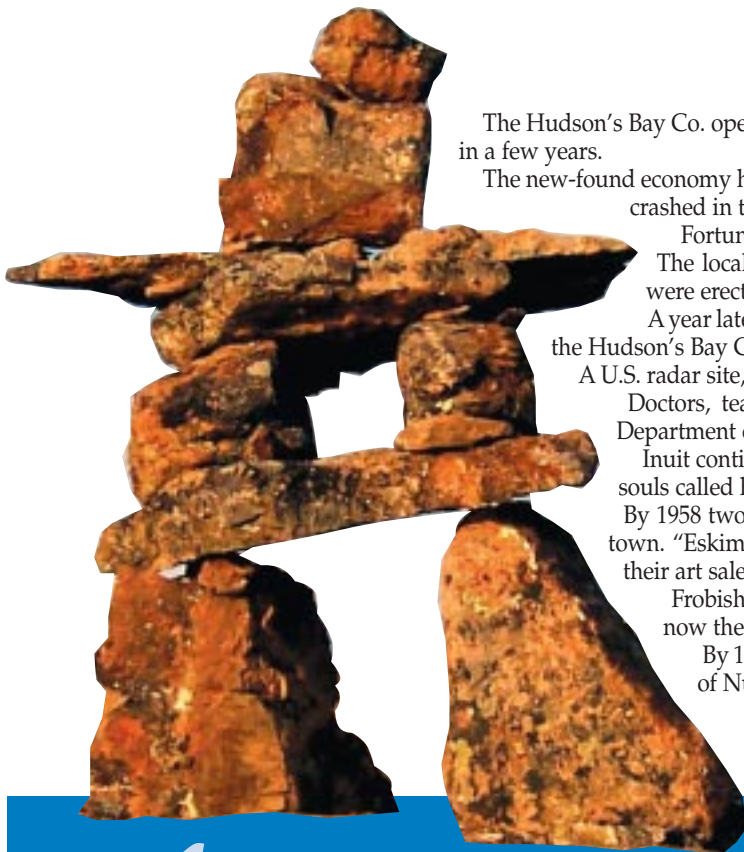
A joint venture company

A mix of new and old



John Thomas photo

*Anchorage in Lewis Bay (Pitsi), Frobisher Bay.
Below: An inuksuk guards Lewis Bay.*



The Hudson's Bay Co. opened its first trading post in 1914, spreading around Baffin Island within a few years.

The new-found economy however, did not protect the Inuit from impending hardship. Fur prices crashed in the 1930s, game was over-hunted and southern traders left.

Fortunately, a major U.S. Air Force base was built at Koojesse Inlet in 1942. The local economy revived and some of the first permanent Inuit settlements were erected.

A year later the airstrip was complete. Hangars and other buildings followed and the Hudson's Bay Co. built its first white and red buildings near Apex Hill.

A U.S. radar site, added in 1951, further fuelled the economic boom.

Doctors, teachers and other professionals arrived in 1955 along with the first Department of Indian and Northern Affairs office.

Inuit continued to settle permanently in the area, which at the time close to 1,200 souls called home.

By 1958 two banks, a nursing station, hotel and RCMP detachment popped up in town. "Eskimo Co-ops" became popular and allowed Inuit to carve out control of their art sales.

Frobisher Bay community council formed in 1964 and the Inuit Brotherhood, now the Inuit Tapiristat of Canada (ITC), was created in 1971.

By 1974 Frobisher Bay was officially a village and within two years, the idea of Nunavut was born. The city reclaimed its rightful name, Iqaluit, in 1987.

continued page 9

fact file:

Nunavut's flag - The colours of the territorial flag symbolize the abundant land, sea and sky. Red refers to Canada and the inuksuk symbolizes stone monuments which guide people on the land. The star is Niqirtsuituq, the North Star, the traditional guide for navigators.





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“Remembering Our Heroes”



Kathleen Lippa/NNSL photo

The Architecture of Apex, a community just outside of Iqaluit, can be quite unique. This house is an example of what you can achieve on Baffin Island using recycled materials.

**Have You Received
 OUTSTANDING
 SERVICE?**

**NOMINATE SOMEONE FOR A
 Nunavut/News North Outstanding
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The Outstanding Customer Service Award recognizes people who have provided exemplary customer service in Iqaluit. Share your experience and you could win your choice of merchandise that proudly promotes Northern traditions! If your nomination is chosen, both you and the nominee will receive a prize valued at \$250.00! An award of merit will also be presented to the local business recognizing their contribution to outstanding customer service.

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NOMINATION DEADLINE: December 30, 2005

Your Name: _____

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I wish to nominate the following employee for a
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Nominee Name: _____

Job Title: _____ Phone: _____

Business Address: _____

Company: _____

Comments:
 (Please describe how this person has demonstrated outstanding customer service.)

History in the making

The Inuit then proceeded to make history. In May 1993 the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement, the most comprehensive settlement ever reached between a state and aboriginal group, was signed.

Nunavut was now a reality, and Iqaluit was named capital 1995.

Now the territory's administrative centre, an unprecedented period of growth followed as federal and private buildings began to mark the landscape.

Premier Paul Okalik formed the first government Feb. 15, 1999.

The process extended more than 20 years, but in 1999 the people of Nunavut had reason to celebrate.

Media and tourists packed Iqaluit April 1 to take part in ceremonies marking the division from the western Arctic. A worldwide audience watched the historic event on television.

In 2001, Iqaluit's journey reached its most recent milestone when it officially became a city.



John Thomas photos

*Aseena Allurut at camp in Lewis Bay (Pitsi), Frobisher Bay 2004.
Below: Iqaluit overlooking Koojeesee Inlet and Frobisher Bay.*



factfile:

WORDS TO KNOW

- In Inuktitut, a boot is called a 'kamik.'
- The half-moon shaped knife used by Inuit women is called an 'ulu.'
- Say thank you with "qujannamiik."
- Do you take cream and sugar in your 'kaapi?' (Inuktitut word for coffee)

▲ attractions

Past & present come to life

Canada's newest capital city is certainly one of its most unique.

Iqaluit's rich history dates back thousands of years to when the nomadic Inuit first graced the land. Visitors can glimpse the stunning Arctic vistas and experience the region's rich history.

Outfitters, trip planners and even taxi drivers are happy to act as tour guides around the city's landmarks.

Nunavut's Legislative Assembly — an architectural masterpiece — is located in the heart of downtown Iqaluit.

Minutes from local restaurants, the three-storey building incorporates traditional Inuit motifs, such as the shapes of kayaks and qamutiit (sleds). Tours are available year-round.

Another must-see for visitors is the historic Anglican cathedral. Iglu shaped, the architecture and interior are certain to impress. Regular services are held in both Inuktitut and English and welcome people from all religious faiths.

While you're there, be sure to cross the street to share a cup of tea and swap a few iglu tales at the Elders' Facility. Hear first hand how life has changed for the Inuit over the past five decades.

A visit to the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum is always an insightful experience into the history of the Iqaluit and Baffin region. The permanent collection of Inuit artifacts and historical pictures will both inform and enthrall. Be sure to call in advance to learn more about the Northern-themed travelling exhibits which change throughout the year.

For those interested in local arts and crafts, the Nunavut Arctic College houses both a sculpture garden and an impressive



John Thomas photo

Dog teams tied along river running into Koojjessee Inlet at Coast Guard Beach, Iqaluit.



Kathleen Lippa/NNSL photo

Marilyn Scott runs the Unikkaavik Visitors Centre in Iqaluit.

display of jewelry, metalwork and prints.

Student artisans can also be observed hard at work throughout the school year.

One of the easiest ways to pass your time in Iqaluit is a walk along the beach. The summer tide provides a constantly changing environment. During the winter visitors can watch the sea ice get crushed and crumbled by the rise and fall of the water.

Take a walk along the breakwater for a glimpse of Nunavut's marine activity. Located just past the museum, the view is

breathtaking. If you're lucky, you might even be offered a boat ride.

Just five kilometres from Iqaluit is Niaqunngut — or Apex. Home to the historic St. Simon's Church and original Hudson's Bay Co. buildings, this is the spot where Inuit first settled. With stunning views of the ocean and surrounding hills there's no doubt why.

Bring along a packed lunch and take time to enjoy the Arctic scenery. The Iqaluit Rotary Club established a park nearby or make the short trip to Tarr Inlet for an invigorating hike.

Most importantly, visitors should not forget the friendliness of the Iqalungmiut — the Inuktitut name for people from Iqaluit. Helpful and always ready to lend a hand or provide directions, residents could be the best resource for visitors.

factfile:

- * Iqaluit's population is 6,200 and growing
- * The city is located at about 63 degrees north latitude and sits 34 metres above sea level
- * It gets 21 hours of sun during the summer.

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Brent Reaney/NNSL photo

The harbour in the town of Kimmirut. Those markings on the side of the rock are how high the tide gets.

A land of majesty

Iqaluit and the nearby Baffin region provide all the adventure travellers could want. Exciting, beautiful and friendly communities just wait to be explored. Most importantly, you'll experience what it's really like in Canada's rugged North.

Check with local charter companies for flight schedules and fares. (population counts based on 2001 Census)

Ikpiarjuk/Arctic Bay

'The pocket' Population 646

Surrounded on three sides by hills, Arctic Bay is located on the Borden Peninsula on North Baffin Island. In the spring and summer, marine mammals feed in the area, including narwhals, seals and walrus.

Mittimatalik/Pond Inlet

'Where there is Mittima' (burial place)

Population 1,220

This attractive place is blessed with beautiful mountains and icebergs. Wildlife, abundant in the mountains and in nearby waters, provide great opportunities for photographers and hunters. Outfitters offer snowmobile and dogteam tours as well as boat trips. It's also home to the headquarters for Sirmilik National Park.

Kangiqtugaapik/Clyde River

'Nice little inlet' Population 785

Local carvers work with stone, antler, whalebone and ivory. This is also a good place to see polar bears, narwhal and

▲ **baffin region**

bowhead whales. Hunting and camping are an integral part of residents' lives.

Panniqtuuq

'The place of the bull caribou'

Population 1,276

Panniqtuuq is situated near Cumberland Sound at the foot of the mountains. Residents are known for creating beautiful tapestries, prints as well as Pagnirtung hats. Kekerten Territorial Historic Park and Auyiuttuq National Park are major attractions. Many marine mammals inhabit the sound.

Kimmirut/Lake Harbour

'Heel named after a rocky outcrop'

Population 433

Located close to Katannilik Territorial Park Reserve on South Baffin Island. A large number of carvers reside here and most residents hunt and fish as a way of life. Jewelry making has also become quite popular. For those travellers interested in a day trip, Kimmirut is a good example of a traditional Inuit community.

Kinngait/Cape Dorset

'Mountains' Population 1,148

Located on the mountainous Foxe Peninsula on West Baffin Island. This community is considered the Inuit art capital of the world. Many tours and activities are available for visitors.

Sanikiluaq

Named after an Inuk man who lived on the Belcher Islands Population 684

This is Nunavut's most southern community, located in Hudson Bay. Inuit of Sanikiluaq support themselves by trapping, hunting and carving. Great hiking trails abound.

Iglulik

Place with houses' Population 1,286

Located on a small island in Foxe Basin, this is considered the cultural centre of Nunavut. Archaeological sites are up to

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Welcome to Iqaluit

The City of Iqaluit extends a warm welcome to all visitors to our special land, so rich in history and Inuit culture.

I invite everyone to share in the excitement of Canada's newest capital.

I'm sure you will enjoy your stay in Iqaluit regardless of the reason for your visit. There are a variety of special places that you must be sure to see while you are here - Unikkaarvik Regional Visitors' Centre, Nunatta Unakkutaangit Museum, Nunavut's Legislative Assembly Building, and Nunavut Arctic College's Arts and Crafts Centre. If you are interested in taking something back with you from Iqaluit or Nunavut, there are a wide range of retail outlets with books, arts and crafts, and souvenirs where you are sure to find the perfect item. Make sure to order caribou or arctic char at one of our local restaurants, and why not take a trip with one of our local tour guides or outfitters; the best memories come from experiencing the adventure.

We want you to enjoy your stay while in Iqaluit and to take advantage of the scenery that will leave you breathless.

Iqaluit



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Elisapee Sheutiapik
Mayor of Iqaluit

Iqaluit



City of Iqaluit Capital of Nunavut

Population

- 5,236 (2001 census - City estimate is 6,200 for 2002)
- 3,552 (1991)

Inuit

- 61% of residents (1991)

Location

- 63°45'N 68°31'W
- 2,060 air km north of Montreal
- 1,504 air km south-south-east of Grise Fiord
- 1,699 air km east-south-east of Cambridge Bay
- 1,175 air km east of Rankin Inlet

Average annual precipitation

- 19.2 cm rain
- 43.3 cm snow

Official name

- Iqaluit (INUKTITUT for "place of many fish") before 1987 Frobisher Bay for explorer Martin Frobisher

Businesses and services

- transportation hub for Nunavut
- capital of Nunavut
- wide range of head offices for northern businesses and organizations; 400 registered service and retail businesses including numerous arts and crafts outlets

Radio

- CBC 1230 AM (English and Inuktitut)
- Radio Iqaluit, CFRT 107.3 FM (French and Inuktitut)
- CIAQ FM 93.3 (weather forecast)
- CKIQ 99.9 FM (English, French and Inuktitut)

HISTORY OF IQUALUIT

1576 - Englishman Martin Frobisher sails into Frobisher Bay believing he has found the route to China

1861 - Charles Francis Hall, an American, camps at the Sylvia Grinnel River and explores the waters of Kojeese Inlet, which he names after his Inuit guide

1942 - U.S. Air Force selects Iqaluit's current location as the site of a major air base

1943 - The HBC moves its trading post from Ward Inlet to Apex

1955 - Frobisher Bay becomes the center for U.S. Canada Dew Line construction operations

1963 - US military move out of Iqaluit

1964 - First community council formed; population of Frobisher Bay is 900

1970 - Frobisher Bay officially recognized as a Settlement

1974 - Settlement of Frobisher Bay gains Village status

1976 - Inuit present the *Nunavut proposal* to the Federal government

1979 - First mayor elected

1980 - Frobisher Bay designated as a Town

1982 - Government of Canada agrees in principle to the creation of Nunavut

1987 - Frobisher Bay officially becomes Iqaluit, reverting to its original Inuktitut name meaning "place of many fish"

1993 - The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement is signed in Iqaluit

1995 - Nunavut residents select Iqaluit as capital of the new territory

April 1, 1999 - The Territory of Nunavut officially comes into being

April 19, 2001 - Iqaluit receives its Order of Official status as a City

NUNAVUT

Area

- 1.994 million square kilometres (20% of Canada's area)

Population

- 26,745 approximately 85% Inuit (2001 census)

IQUALUIT AIRPORT - (YFB)

Terminal

- Completed 1986
- Brilliant yellow - chosen over blue, red and orange for its visibility and durability

Runway

- Begun in 1942 by U.S. Air Force
- 8,600 feet long, 200 feet wide
- 20,000 flights/80,000 passengers annually

ANNUAL EVENTS

- Some dates change year-to-year
- Toonik Tyme spring festival - April
- Nunavut Trade Show - Spring
- Arctic Food Celebration - June
- Canada Day - July 1st
- Nunavut Day - July 9th

AVERAGE MONTHLY TEMPERATURE Iqaluit

Month	English	Inuktitut	Temperature (°C)
January	Janvier	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	-25.8
February	Février	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	-26.8
March	Mars	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	-23.5
April	Avril	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	-14.7
May	Mai	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	-4.2
June	Juin	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	3.4
July	Juillet	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	7.7
August	Août	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	6.8
September	Septembre	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	2.3
October	Octobre	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	-4.9
November	Novembre	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	-12.7
December	Decembre	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	-22.1



HOURS of SUNLIGHT per DAY Iqaluit

Month	English	Inuktitut	Hours of Sunlight
January	Janvier	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	6.12
February	Février	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	8.80
March	Mars	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	11.78
April	Avril	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	14.40
May	Mai	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	17.86
June	Juin	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	19.20
July	Juillet	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	18.83
August	Août	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	16.01
September	Septembre	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	12.97
October	Octobre	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	9.92
November	Novembre	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	6.99
December	Decembre	ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ	5.13

Phone Numbers • Les Numéros de téléphone • ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ

City of Iqaluit La ville d'Iqaluit

General Line - Ligne générale ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ979-5600

Information Hotline - Ligne ouverte 24 heures sur 24 ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ979-5677

Emergency Urgence ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ

Ambulance and Fire - Ambulance et incendie

ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ979-4422

Police (RCMP) - Police (GRC) ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ (ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ)979-1111

Medical Soins médicaux ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ

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Weather forecast Prévisions météorologiques ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ ᐱᓄᓂᐱᓄᓂ

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Where Mother Nature rules



Welcome to Iqaluit! This seaside wonderland dazzles visitors be it winter or summer.

Blue-tinged ice turns to red rocky terrain come summer as visitors are treated to up to 21 hours of sunshine a day.

Located at 63 degrees North latitude,

Canada's newest capital city is surely its most temperamental — weatherwise.

Whether it's July or December, the weather can change in a heartbeat.

January, February and March are particularly cold months with average temperature around -25C. Biting winds create

severe windchill conditions that can cause frostbite in minutes. Parkas, winter boots, mittens, hats and scarves are all mandatory if you're planning to visit Iqaluit during late fall, winter or early spring.

And remember blizzards and high winds regularly stall travel in the Arctic so don't be surprised if you have to spend an extra night or two in the North, a phenomenon folks refer to as being "weathered-in."

With the cold temperatures comes a shortage of daylight. During December, the sun rises and sets within a four-hour time period.

Night owls will find themselves in for a new experience under the midnight sun.

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Up-to-date temperature and tidal information is available from: Environment Canada's Web site www.weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca or call the weather hotline at (867) 979-6448. Marine forecasts - a must when heading out on the ocean - are also available.

During the summer, the sun shines up to 21 hours a day.

Nasty burns can occur if you forget to apply sunscreen. A severe burn is not the memento to bring home from your Northern adventure.

Visitors should note that the further north you travel towards the Arctic Circle, the more or less sunlight — depending on the season — you'll find.

Because Nunavut is a polar desert, rain is minimal. But it's important to be prepared for whatever Mother Nature throws your way.

Whether on the land or water, dress appropriately and take precautions.

John Thomas photos

Left: Frobisher Bay during breakup in July, Iqaluit 1998. Above: Midnight boating on Frobisher Bay. Below: Floe edge (boating) hunting trip with Andrew Cox in May.



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fact file:

Polar Desert...
Average annual precipitation in Iqaluit is 19.8 cm of rain and 235.8 cm of snow.

The Baffin beckons



Kathleen Lipka/NNSL photo

Baffin Island has stunning scenery. Here is Frobisher Bay during the ice break up.

Rich with adventure and activity, Nunavut's capital, Iqaluit, is known as the gateway to the Baffin region.

Overlooking spectacular Frobisher Bay, the city's history unfolds before your eyes. New commercial, residential and government construction continues to pop up alongside historical settlement buildings.

Life in the city of 6,200 Inuit and Qallunaat (non-Inuit) is a mix of tradition and modern conveniences.

Feasts and caribou hunting are common. Thule ruins are nearby at the ancient hunt camp now known as Qaummaarviit Historic Park. The largest territorial park is also close by. A hike through Katannilik Park makes for some great photo opportunities.

Out on the land

Spend the day on the land, camp on the tundra under the stars, spend the day sea-kayaking

or hire and outfitter for a wildlife-viewing excursion, the comforts of home will await you upon your return to the city.

Take in some of the culture while enjoying a cappuccino at one of several local cafes, grab a fine hamburger, or try some country food, relax and enjoy Iqaluit's way of life.

Rest your head at one of the city's elegant hotels or curl up and enjoy the hospitality of bed and breakfast. Another day's adventures await.

Several taxi companies operate in Iqaluit. It's a flat rate per person, per ride, but don't be surprised when others decide to join you — it's a common practice to share the same cab.

For some nightlife, trot down to one of the nearby lounges and enjoy a cocktail with new and old friends. A movie theatre and public pool

are also within easy walking distance. Don't forget to look up either, the Northern Lights may be dancing just above your head.

Evening walks in the summertime are great under the midnight sun, while spring and fall are the best times to view the Aurora.

Stroll through the streets for a first-hand look day-to-day life in Iqaluit. Sealskins and canvas tents rest next to sport utility vehicles and it's not unusual to see carvers hard at work in their yards.

The city's one-of-a-kind culture and friendly residents are certainly worth the trip.

John Thomas photo

Inuksuk marker at Lewis Bay (Pitsi)



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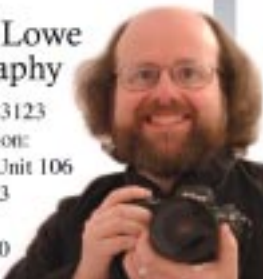
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Traditional modern delights

Iqaluit's menu of eateries is as varied as the foods they serve. Whether you crave fine dining or Northern delicacies, a burger or pizza, temptation is only a short walk away.

Open mainly at meal time, many restaurants are housed in hotels. Visitors are advised to call ahead for reservations.

Mexican, Asian and country foods can be also enjoyed

around town in more casual environments.

Those in need of a quick bite or in search of familiar tastes won't be disappointed either. More and more fast-food establishments are opening all time.

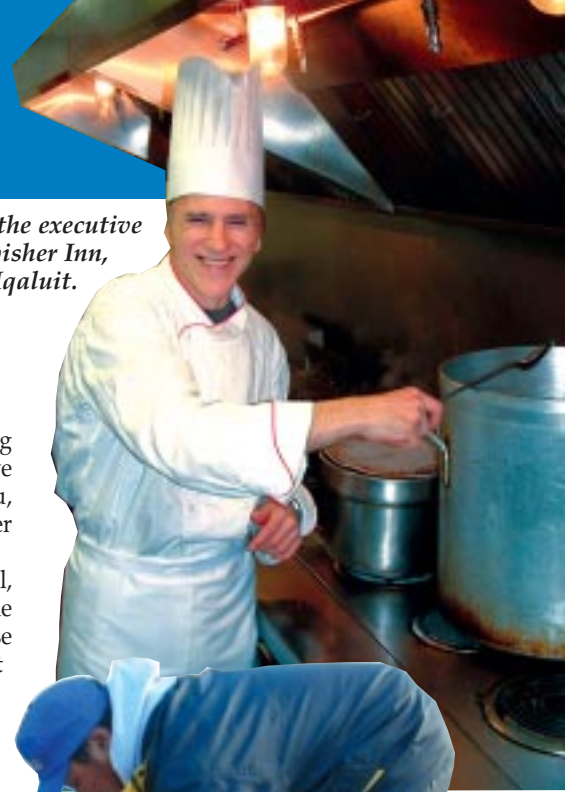
Celebratory meals are common and a great way to sample local specialties. If one of the many feasts is not in your schedule, the restaurants are second-to-none

when it comes to sampling "country foods." Most serve several dishes of caribou, char, muktaaq or other native fish and game.

Eateries do serve alcohol, but in accordance with the Nunavut Liquor Act, those who wish to drink must also have a meal.

If a nightcap is all you desire, head over to the Storehouse or Royal Canadian Legion.

Robert Barrette is the executive chef at the Frobisher Inn, Iqaluit.



Flavour of the land

After thousands of years, Inuit remain intricately connected to the animals and sea life that surround them.

For generations hides and fur provided warmth, marine mammal fat rendered to oil produced heat and light, and fresh meat and fish still make for a nutritious and tasty diet.

A visit to Iqaluit would not be complete without a healthy helping of the wilds' bounty.

Dinner-table regulars, caribou, muskox, fowl, walrus, whales, seal, char, turbot, clams and shrimp are all referred to as country food.

Most restaurants serve their own versions of the mouth-watering treats, often changing to reflect the season. Try something new and order a plateful of deep-fried muskox or a caribou steak topped blueberry sauce.

Local businesses also stock a variety of fish and meat for sale. Smoked, dried or frozen Arctic char, clams, shrimp, turbot, seal meat, muskox or muktaaq are all available at reasonable prices. If you have access to kitchen facilities, don't miss out on this chance to try your hand at "country" cooking.

Make sure to ask a resident for their favourite recipe or cooking tip, most will only be too happy to share.

Keep and eye out for festivals or community feasts. There is no better way to sample Arctic cuisine, unless you find yourself invited to a local home for dinner. The food will be fresh and traditionally eaten raw or frozen.



Kathleen-Lippa/NNSL photos

David Iqaqrialu carves a seal at Sylvia Grinnell Territorial Park for a feast.



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Loads of Loot



Kathleen Lippa/NNSL photo
Claire Kennedy is the owner of DJ Sensations Gift Shop in Iqaluit.

Shopping in Iqaluit is an experience unto itself. Local stores stock a wide variety of gifts and souvenirs, but don't be surprised if artisans approach you with their own handcrafted treasures.

A seamstress with a pair of sealskin kamiks (boots) or a carver handling a dancing walrus could walk up to you in any restaurants or even on the street.

This is a common practice. If you see something you like, pick it up for yourself or a gift, it was meant to be yours.



Printmakers and jewellers are also known to sell their work in this manner. It is appropriate to haggle a little over the price, but take into account the great time and talent that goes in to each creation and the retail prices down south.

The city is also home to several galleries, specialty art and jewelry stores. If that perfect gift eluded you at the restaurants, these businesses are sure to stock what you desire. The selection and quality will be second to none.

Colourful custom-made parkas and hand-sewn items are also available at a reasonable cost. Traditional garments and a choice of different pelts should be available.

A variety of stores in the city will accommodate any day-to-day clothing needs as well. Be it a suit jacket or running shoes, you're likely to find what you need.

For a taste of the Inuit diet, at least one local store specializes in country foods. Enjoy it while you are here or bring some home to share with family and friends. Where else will you get the opportunity to try walrus?

Small-town charm

It may be a city stocked with small-town charm, but don't fret if you have forgotten a necessity during the day. More and more convenience stores are opening in Iqaluit, many of which are open late.

Two gas stations make for worry-free driving around the city and the area is also equipped with two pharmacies for any cosmetic or medication needs.

If your wallet seems to be having as much of an adventure as you are, never fear. There are two banks in Iqaluit, each with a 24-hour Interac automated teller machine. Major credit cards are accepted nearly everywhere as well.

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Arts & Crafts in Iqaluit

Sought after and appreciated by collectors around the world, Inuit art has long been a central aspect of the local culture.

With more than 4,000 Inuit artists in the territory, it remains an integral part of the economy and link to tradition.

Mythical figurines have been carved out of the resources available for thousands of years. Used for worship, spirituality or displayed and appreciated for their beauty, Inuit sculptures have long been prized for their quality.

Ancient carvings as well as traditional clothing and tools can be seen at the Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum in Iqaluit. These are most likely the origins and first examples of Inuit art.

Sculptures, prints, jewelry and handicrafts now receive international acclaim and recognition. And it hasn't been long since art mogul James Houston first made the works famous in Cape Dorset during the 1940s and '50s.

In such a short period of time, Inuit artists have been catapulted onto the world's stage. The success of award-winning filmmaker Zach Kunuk or musi-

cian/actress Lucie Idlout attest to that fact.

Visitors in search of their own treasured pieces, need only visit one of the many gift shops or galleries in Iqaluit. Carvings depicting animals, drum-dancers, hunters and mothers are all honoured themes.

A recent addition to the Inuit arts, jewelry also features expressions of traditional culture. Quality-crafted from

local materials, gold, silver and semi-precious stones; these pieces are certain to become heirlooms.

Brooches, pendants, rings, bracelets and more are just part of the loot to be found in Iqaluit.

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Kathleen Lipka/NNSL photo

William Alainga, a Grade 12 student, is already a skilled craftsman. Here he holds an ulu he made.

also available for sale. Oil, acrylic and water-colour painters also sell original works. Traditional hand-crafted clothing and outerwear is easy to find. If you don't find what you want in the stores, some vendors sell their wares in the restaurants and lounges.



photo courtesy of DJ Sensations

Carving of a walrus by Juta Ipeelie.



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▲ flowers

Tundra's bold beauty

Kathleen Lippa/NNSL photos

Richardson's Willow sways in the breeze outside of Apex. Dainty Mountain Avens appear on Baffin Island in June. Delightful, purple Fireweed are found at Lewis Bay (Pitsi).

John Thomas photo

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Brilliantly coloured and hugging the tundra, Nunavut's well-adapted summer blossoms attest to the sweetness of the season.

As the snow melts and releases much-needed moisture into the ground, Purple Saxifrage — the territory's official flower — is first in bloom. The violet hue is unmistakable.

Broadleaved Willow Herb, also known as Dwarf Fireweed, pops its head up in July, growing in generous swaths along the roadside. It's so impressive the Nunatta Arctic College campus building was designed to resemble the pervasive pink petals.

Soft and simple Arctic Cotton Grass is common throughout the city. Atop the wild grass, white tufts appear.

When it grows in great numbers the effect is simple grace and beauty. The Inuit once used the plant along with dried moss to make wicks for qulliit, or traditional seal-oil lamps.

Arctic Poppies, Mountain Avens, Buttercups, Cinquefoil, Moss Champion, Thrit, Yellow and Purple Vetches and Chickweed also colour Iqaluit's rocky landscape.

To experience the full beauty of Nunavut's flora or the delicious taste of wild berries, take a walk through Sylvia Grinnell Park or hike the "Road to Nowhere."

Bountiful rewards

Some edible plants or those with medicinal properties also grow in the region.

The tasty Mountain Sorel has leaves rich in vitamin C. Low broadleaved Labrador Tea has long been used as a relaxant.

Visitors are encouraged to sample the berries and edible delights.

Residents warn against picking flowers though. Sturdy Northern plants hug the ground and may look young. But in the words of one outfitter: A young looking willow could actually be 100 years old.

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Creatures of the land



John Thomas photos



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Impressive in size and grace, polar bears seem to have a particular fondness for Nunavut. More than half the world's population of the majestic white giants call the territory home.

The world's largest land predator, these bears top the Arctic food chain. But with a diet rich in seal meat, it's unlikely you'll encounter one in Iqaluit.

Foxes, lemmings and Arctic hares are commonplace in the city however, and caribou are known to wander onto city streets.

For a closer look, it's best to hire an outfitter. Safety considerations are important and these folks can take you to where the animals live.

A short winter expedition can easily pay off with a bird's eye view of large groups of wildlife — caribou included.

Watch for tracks or ask the guides to point some out. If there are caribou, wolves are usually not far behind.

Several varieties of seal can also be observed around the shores of Koojesse Inlet when the ice melts.

Along the Baffin coast and in Frobisher Bay, beluga, narwhal and walrus are common along with an abundance of Arctic char.

Travel to the Kiviliq or Kitikmeot region if muskox fit your fancy. Well worth the trip, these beasts are a sight to behold.

Few species of birds can endure the harsh Arctic winter. It takes a hardy and resourceful creature to survive. Food becomes scarce and temperatures plummet.

The rock ptarmigan, hoary redpoll, snowy owl and ever-present raven do however, call Iqaluit home year-round.

Come summer, flocks of migratory birds return to the North in full splendour. Several breeds of gulls, Arctic terns and gyrfalcons among them. Large numbers of black and white snowbunting get an early start, returning in early April.

Various types of fulmars and murrelets live on the east coast of Baffin Island. Eider ducks and great quantities of geese also summer in the area.

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