



Welcome to 

Iqaluit

Nunavut's Capital City

Everything you need to know
about living here



www.city.iqaluit.nu.ca



Above: Flags of all 28 Nunavut communities, proudly aloft at the Legislative Assembly.

Main: Some of Iqaluit's varied housing options.

Far right: Nunavut's official flower, purple saxifrage, and the territory's flag.

Below: Icebreaker arrives in summer.

Share the visionary spirit of Canada's newest capital

As Canada's newest, fastest-growing capital, Iqaluit is an exciting place to be. The city's bursting with the anything's-possible attitude of a young community, with a diverse mix of people that gives the city extra spark. Even though it's located on the remote Arctic tundra, Iqaluit aims to be every inch a capital city, with the amenities and quality of life to rival any in Canada.

Nunavut — Our Land

The birth of Nunavut in 1999 gave an unprecedented measure of self-determination to Eastern Arctic Inuit, and the new territory is a world unlike any other. You can feel the pride of young and old as everyone works to create a future that preserves the strengths of traditional culture, while embracing the changes and growth of the 21st century. A major thread of that culture is Inuktitut, the people's language, and Iqaluit is one of the few places in the world where you can expect to see street signs written in Inuktitut syllabics.

Living here is an adventure

The Arctic climate can be daunting but to those who live here, it's a challenge to be met with gusto. Dogsledding and snowmobiling are signature Iqaluit sports, but so are boating, fishing and kayaking. There are only three snowless months a year, but what brilliant months they are, filled with long mellow sunlight, bursting wildflowers and the laughter of liberated children. And while the sea-ice doesn't move out of the bay until July, it stays out until October.



Gateway to the great outdoors

Fresh breezes, clear air, and matchless opportunities for recreation are the magic of both spring and summer in Iqaluit. Explore the satellite community of Apex, hike out to Sylvia Grinnell Territorial Park, or go boating on the bay.

Iqaluit is also the gateway to magnificent Baffin Island, with its deeply etched fiords, migratory birds and famous National Parks. You can fly to communities like Pangnirtung, Cape Dorset and

Kimmitut for authentic cultural experiences and outdoor adventure. Or experience the past at Keker ten and Qaummaarviit Historic Parks.

History in the making

The landscape of rugged Baffin Island is etched with the story of Inuit ancestors. You see it everywhere if you're attuned to the signs. Today, a new kind of history is being made and you can be among those who help to realize the dream.



Nunavut's Official Symbols

Nunavut flag

The colours symbolize land, snow, sea and sky. The central icon represents an Inukshuk coloured red in a reference to the Canadian flag. The blue star in the upper right corner is Niqir-t-suituq, the North Star.

Coat of arms

The caribou and narwhal represent the life-giving land and seas of Nunavut. Also pictured are the North Star, symbolizing the constant guidance of Inuit elders. The seal oil lamp, or qulliq, stands for community and family. The crowned igloo brings together Inuit tradition and the idea of Nunavut's place in modern Canada. The territorial motto, written in Inuktitut syllabics, reads "Nunavut: Our Strength."

Official bird: Rock Ptarmigan (Aqiggiq)

A truly Arctic species with plumage that changes to match the seasons, ptarmigan winter in and near Iqaluit, fearless of the biting cold.

Official flower: Purple Saxifrage (Aupilaktunnguut)

Tiny, tough purple saxifrage is one of the first plants to flower in the spring, lightening everyone's spirits as it chases the retreating snowbanks.

Official mammal: Canadian Inuit Dog (Qimmiq)

Human settlement of the Arctic would not have been possible without qimmiq, who has always performed faithfully as a hunting companion, sled-puller and protector.



Climate and topography

Located at 63°45' N, 68°31' W on the shores of Koojasse Inlet, Iqaluit (pronounced "ee-ha-loo-eet") has a dry Arctic climate; it receives about half the annual precipitation Ottawa does. At 33.5 metres above sea level, the

city experiences some of the highest tides in North America. The surrounding landscape combines beachfront and rolling, rocky tundra, dotted with lakes and rivers.



Expect the unexpected

Butterflies Some species, like wood nymphs, skippers and brush-footed butterflies, thrive in the Arctic, spreading their wings on south-facing rocks.

Exotic Automobiles Snowmobiles, ATVs and SUVs are pretty well the norm around Iqaluit, but some people brought fancier toys when they moved here. You can see VW Beetles, Harleys, Cadillacs and Mercedes tooling along our 20 km of roadways.

Croissants, capers, and balsamic vinegar You'll find everything you need to make rice pilaf, curried vegetables, or chicken satay. Stop by Arctic Ventures and NorthMart and see what they have in stock.

The best Northern bookstore in the world If you want to read anything about Northern history, science, lifestyles or literature, the best place to shop is the bookstore on the second floor of Arctic Ventures.

Catch the energy of a city on the move

Iqaluit ranks with cities like Halifax, Quebec City, Regina, Yellowknife, Whitehorse, and all the rest of Canada's territorial and provincial capitals. It outranks them all, however, as Most Northerly Capital City.

Iqaluit is now home to a 19-seat Legislative Assembly where there are no party politics, and decision-making is based on consensus. In Canada's bustling Arctic capital, you'll be on the leading edge of new development and phenomenal growth. Grow with us, and help shape the city of the future.

Iqaluit needs your skills

The Conference Board of Canada estimates that the wage-based economy of Nunavut will expand by almost 2.5 percent annually through 2020. Current growth sectors include government, services to government and business, hospitality and retail. Jobs are often advertised, and sometimes employers have to wait a considerable time to fill positions with qualified personnel.

Almost 65 percent of Iqaluit's present workforce has a high school, trade school, or post-secondary education, and the participation rate is over 74 percent, while the unemployment rate is about 10 percent. In 1996, average income was \$37,170; most observers believe this figure has risen significantly. Minimum wage in Nunavut is \$7.50 per hour.

Some degree of land-based activity is still common, and many Iqalumiut hunt to feed their families, an alternative that is both healthful and cost-efficient. These skills are key to the growing tourism and service sectors. Long-term potential exists for Iqaluit as a staging area for mining operations and as a growing tourist destination.

Top left: Iqaluit International Airport.

Top right: Snowmobile racing.

Below: Iqaluit resident and downtown rush hour.





Key community services available in Iqaluit

Important phone numbers to keep handy

Police	.....979-1111
Fire & Ambulance	.....979-4422
City After Hours Emergency Dispatch	...979-5650
Public Health Centre	...979-5306
Health & Social Services	...979-7600
Hospital	
Emergency Dept.	.....979-7350
Front Desk	.....979-7300
Sewers	.....979-5630
Water	.....979-5630
Heating oil	.....979-1620
Qimaavik Women's Shelter	.....979-4500
Kamatsiaqtut Nunavut Help Line Suicide and crisis intervention (7:00 pm-12:00 am)	...979-5281
Alcoholics Anonymous (Wellness Centre)	.....979-2533
Nunavut AIDS Information	.....979-5281
Iqaluit Airport	.....979-5224
CBC Radio Nunavut (1230 AM)	.....979-6100
Environment Canada Weatheradio (93.3 FM)	.....1-800-668-6767
CKIQ (99.9 FM)	.....975-2547

Banking and professional

Three major Canadian banks are represented in Iqaluit. The Royal Bank, Bank of Montreal and CIBC all offer full services.

There are three law firms, as well as a legal aid society. The Law Society of Nunavut licenses lawyers who practice in the territory.

Arctic Insurance Brokers is the sole insurance outlet in town. MacKay Landau is the only accounting firm, but other companies serve the Nunavut capital from Yellowknife and farther south.

Canada Post

Canada Post in Iqaluit has recently upgraded its services, adding 700 new postal boxes in 2002.

Media

Two weekly newspapers and two magazines serve Iqaluit. Several outlets carry national papers, as well as a couple of dailies from Ontario and Quebec. CBC Radio and TV have studios in Iqaluit, offering English and Inuktitut programming. The French language radio station offers over 20

hours of programming a week. Environment Canada operates a 24-hour all-weather radio station to keep you abreast of the latest conditions.

Public safety

Iqaluit has a fire department and well-trained volunteer firefighters, as well as ambulance and full paramedic services. RCMP "V" Division and municipal bylaw officers police the community.

Health care

Baffin Regional Hospital currently serves the Baffin area, and a brand new, full service hospital is under construction. Iqaluit has two medical clinics run by resident doctors, and three pharmacies to fill prescriptions. At any time, 10 to 12 other doctors are in Iqaluit on locum. There is always a surgeon on duty at the hospital, and medical specialists visit on rotating schedule. An eye clinic visits the capital several times a year, and Iqaluit has a fully equipped optical store. There are two dental practices with offices in Iqaluit.

Taking care of your best friend

You can register your dog or cat on the spot for a nominal fee by simply dropping by the front desk at the City of Iqaluit offices. The Rotary Club sponsors twice-yearly visits to Iqaluit by a travelling veterinarian from Baker Animal Hospital in Montreal. Services include checkups, vaccinations and spaying and neutering. Rotary Club members make the appointments and the visits are advertised well in advance. In case of emergency, you can contact the clinic in Montreal directly at 514-739-1935. The doctors may be able to prescribe treatment or medication for your pet over the phone.

Left: The Government of Canada's office complex.

Right: Banking and Post Office, under one convenient roof.

Photos in this publication are by Terry Pearce and Nick Newberry.



Above: Young Inuit woman carries on an ancient tradition as she softens seal-hide.

Top left: Dogsledding, a timeless and thrilling way to get around.

Top right: Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum.

Great gateways to the past

The treeless Arctic landscape is little changed since the first people arrived millennia ago. Once you've found your way onto the tundra, far from the noise of the busy young city, the only sounds you'll hear are those of nature.

The land is witness to the passing of countless generations. You can vividly imagine these long-ago wanderers – skin-clad hunters who saw the horizons you are seeing, heard the same whisperings of the wind, and drank deeply of the same sea-washed air. They left only the most subtle traces of their passing. But they are here, in faint pathways or lush tufts of

vegetation nourished by whale or seal bones. In stones that seem randomly scattered, yet may have once formed tent-rings and hearths. The evidence is all around.

Qaummaarviit Historic Park

A rich trove of archaeological remains suggests repeated settlement on this small island, 12 km west of Iqaluit, by precursors of modern Inuit. Although it's located far from the edge of the land-fast sea ice, Qaummaarviit was rich in whales, seal and caribou (its name means "the place that shines"). Thule-culture nomads appear to have arrived around the year 1200 AD, but there is evidence of much older habitation by the Dorset (Tuniit) people. When

you visit Qaummaarviit today, you can follow a signed interpretive trail to see the relics of winter sod houses, summer tent rings, kayak stands, meat caches and much more. Access to the park is through local outfitters by boat, snowmobile or dogteam, depending on the season. To learn more about visiting Qaummaarviit, call the Unikkaarvik Visitors Centre at (867) 979-4636, or see our directory for a list of Iqaluit's expert outfitters.

St. Simon's Church Built 50 years ago in Apex, Iqaluit's older satellite community, St. Simon's was one of the first Anglican churches on Baffin Island, and still holds Sunday services in Inuktitut. The little church has

An Iqaluit chronology

700 BC People of the Dorset culture (or Tuniit, as they are called by the Inuit today) replace earlier ("pre-Dorset") settlers in the Eastern Arctic.

1000 AD Thule-culture whalers, ancestors of modern Inuit, migrate into the region; the Dorset disappear.

1576 Martin Frobisher arrives in search of a Northwest Passage. Convinced he's found gold on what's now called

Qadlunaat Island, he ships tonnes of ore back to England, leaving traces of Elizabethan industry that can still be seen today. (The glittery stuff turns out to be mica.)

1861 Charles Francis Hall, an American, camps at the mouth of the Sylvia Grinnell River and explores the waters of Koojesse Inlet, which he names for his Inuit guide.

1800s American and European whalers arrive in the waters of south Baffin Island, taking countless bowhead. The Inuit

work and trade with them.

1880 Sovereignty over the Arctic Islands is passed to Canada by Britain.

1900s Whaling comes to a halt in the early years of the 20th century. Free traders continue to visit the Inuit, seeking seal-skins and furs. On their heels, Roman Catholic and Anglican missionaries establish beach-heads.

1914 The Hudson's Bay Company sets up shop about 65 km from present-day Iqaluit, at Ward Inlet.



no telephone, but for more information, call the Anglican Mission office in Iqaluit at (867) 979-5595.

Crystal II This archaeological site is located just outside Iqaluit, along the Sylvia Grinnell River corridor near its mouth. Here you can find a midden and the remains of several sod houses. Charles Francis Hall first recorded the site in 1865, and Henry B. Collins excavated it in 1948, naming it after a nearby U.S. military site of the same name. Crystal II is important because it's here that the first obvious separation of Dorset and Thule ruins occurs. The site was first occupied by Dorset people, and then abandoned. The passing years covered it with thin soil and plant life. On top of that is a clear second layer, indicating later Thule settlement. Have a look around, but please

don't take anything from the site. For more information, call the Unikkaarvik Visitors Centre at (867) 979-4636.

Bay buildings in Apex Relocating from Ward Inlet in 1943, the Hudson's Bay Company set up a post in Niaqunngut, now called Apex, a few kilometres from present-day Iqaluit. Some of the original buildings are still in good shape, standing low on the rocky coast right next to the shore. Picnic tables afford a chance to enjoy the sunshine as you soak up the atmosphere and picturesque views.

Nunatta Sunakkutaangit Museum

Set on Iqaluit's beachfront next to the Unikkaarvik Visitors Centre, the museum is a testament to community spirit in Iqaluit. The town's Museum Society

was formed in 1969 to ensure that a small collection of Baffin Island historical artifacts would remain in the Eastern Arctic. The collection was displayed sporadically, in locations like the liquor warehouse and the library. It found a permanent home in the mid-1980s, when the Museum Society bought an old Hudson's Bay Company building and moved it from Apex to its present location.

Top left: Visitors at Qaummaarviit Historic Park.

Top right: Old Hudson's Bay Buildings at Apex.

Right: Elder demonstrates how to light a seal-oil lamp.

Visit the museum to see the permanent artifacts, or take in visiting exhibitions and lectures by resident elders and visitors. For more information call (867) 979-4533.



1920s The Bay continues to establish Baffin posts, and the RCMP moves north to reinforce Canada's sovereignty in the Eastern and High Arctic.

1930s The worldwide collapse of fur prices creates economic difficulties for the Inuit of the Frobisher Bay area.

1942 The United States Air Force comes to Koojesse Inlet to build a wartime base for planes headed to Europe.

1943 With the base in full operation, improved transportation and communications prompt

the Bay to move its post from Ward Inlet to Niaqunngut, or Apex, where Inuit have also moved.

1955-57 The settlement now called Frobisher Bay becomes a centre for DEW Line construction, bringing in equipment, materials and hundreds of workers. In 1957, the population is 1200.

1959 The Government of Canada brings doctors, nurses, teachers and bureaucrats to Frobisher Bay. More Inuit settle permanently at Niaqunngut (Apex) and Frobisher Bay.

1960 - 63 Frobisher Bay is host to a U.S. Strategic Air Command unit. By the time the USAF departs, Frobisher Bay is established as Canada's administrative hub in the Eastern Arctic.

1964 Frobisher Bay's first Community Council is formed.

1970 Frobisher Bay is officially recognized as a settlement.

1974 The settlement becomes a village.

1976 The Inuit Tapirisat of Canada proposes the creation of a new territory in the Eastern Arctic, to be called Nunavut.

1979 Frobisher Bay is officially declared a town.

1987 The town reverts to its original Inuktitut name, Iqaluit ("place of fishes").

1993 In May, the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement is signed in Iqaluit.

1995 The people of the Eastern Arctic select Iqaluit to become capital of Nunavut.

1999 Iqaluit celebrates April 1, the day Nunavut officially comes into being.

2001 Iqaluit gains official status as a city April 19.



The big move to Iqaluit: What's involved?

It's never been easy to travel to the Arctic, as the first Europeans discovered when they tried to make their way through the pack ice in wooden ships. And it's still a long trip, especially if you're moving all your household effects.

Getting here

Sorry, but you can't drive to Iqaluit. There are no roads into Nunavut. The good news is that Iqaluit has daily scheduled flights connecting with Ottawa, Montreal, Rankin Inlet, Yellowknife and Edmonton. Fares are steep: Full fare is \$2430 return to fly between Iqaluit and Ottawa, but excursion rates are available at \$750. Schedules can change, especially according to the season and the weather, so call ahead for availability. See our directory for travel agents and airlines.

Moving your furniture and other treasures

Since there are no roads to Iqaluit, you can't rent a U-Haul to bring your household stuff up here. Air freight is an option, but it's the most expensive method. You might prefer to follow time-honoured tradition and ship your belongings by sealift from Montreal. Three companies operate sealifts – Nunavut Eastern Arctic Shipping, Nunavut Arctic Transport and N3 Alliance – and each makes four shipments to Iqaluit per year during the ice-free season, between July and October.

Sending cargo to Iqaluit by sealift container costs about \$200 per metric tonne. A full container can be shipped for about \$3,150. For smaller loads, tote prices apply, at about \$175 per cubic metre. Other examples: shipping the materials to build a single-family house would cost about \$35,000. Bringing a car north by sealift would run you around \$1,400.

Your cargo should be at the Montreal warehouse by the company's final receiving dates in June, July and August before each of its shipments. If getting your freight to Montreal yourself is too complicated, compa-

nies like TSC Moving and Storage Ltd. and Arctic Express Ltd. (affiliated with Atlas Van Lines) will help arrange your move and marshal your cargo between any North American centre and Iqaluit.

Getting around

Nunavut's capital is a work in progress. There are over 20 km of roads winding through the city and for short distances outside it, but most are not yet paved. A multi-year road upgrade plan is moving forward, school buses are in place, and a public bus system is in the planning stages. For now there's a great taxi system that doubles as public transit. A cab ride anywhere in town is a flat rate of \$4.50. Four taxi companies compete for business, charging by the person. Don't be surprised if your driver stops to pick up other fares along the way.

Above: Splendid Arctic poppies.

Top left, this page: Home of the Nunavut Legislative Assembly.

Top right: Sealift vessel beached at low tide.

Opposite, top: Igluvut Building in downtown Iqaluit.

Opposite, right: Arctic cotton in full summer bloom.

Bottom: Beachfront in summer.



Walking

The best way to get oriented is to take a walk around town, map in hand. New walking trails are being developed in the city. Until 2002, Iqaluit had no street addresses, only house numbers. Houses were numbered in the order they were built, so House 204 might have been next to 1602. Multifamily units were further identified by phonetic letter name as in 1604-Alpha. Many people still identify their homes this way.

Driving

Despite the fact that much of Iqaluit is easily negotiable on foot, there's been a boom in car sales and imports. Hundreds use the city's roadways; so do snowmobiles and ATVs (motorbikes with four fat tires), popular ways to get around town and tundra. The city has created snowmobile crossings around town and

is rewriting its bylaws to manage the widespread use of these popular vehicles.

Four car-rental outfits operate in the capital, but rental units can be scarce, so reserve ahead if possible. Alternatively, of course, you could buy a car or ATV in Iqaluit. Whether you do that or have your vehicle seallifted north, you need to register it with the Government of Nunavut's Department of Transportation, Motor Vehicles division. Take along your driver's license, insurance documents, and your old registration (in the case of a new vehicle, carry the bill of sale) when you register. To drive an ATV you need to be over 14 and must obey the same road rules that other drivers do, but you don't need a driver's licence. However, if you're barred from driving, you can't drive an ATV either.

Iqaluit's streets weren't

named when it became the Nunavut capital, but in spring 2002, they were in the process of being named. Expect four-way stops and school zones, but there are no stoplights. Remember that Iqaluit's a city with more kids, dogs and snowmobiles racing around than you may be used to. If you're new to driving here, keep a careful eye out for the unexpected.

Parking

Good news. Iqaluit has no parking meters and few no-parking zones. There's one underground parking lot, at the Northmart. Winter plug-ins are available, sometimes for a fee, to employees at most government and commercial buildings.

An Arctic Lexicon

Amauti Woman's parka with a big hood for carrying a baby

Honeybucket Very basic toilet in a home that's not connected to the sewer system

Iqalummiut People who live in Iqaluit

Inukshuk Stone cairn or marker, in the shape of a person

Longliner A large fishing boat

Mattaaq A chunk of raw whale-skin, complete with blubber

Kamik Knee-high boot made of sealskin or caribou

Nunavummiut People who live in Nunavut

Nunavut "Our land"

Qadlunaat Non-Inuit of European descent

Qajaq An Inuit invention, the small, fast boat used for hunting (usually spelled "kayak" in the outside world)

Qamutiik A large Inuit sled

Qimmik Dog. Usually refers to the Canadian Inuit Dog, a hardy working breed

Sked Short for "regularly scheduled airline flight"

Utilidor Above-ground water system, invented for Arctic conditions





Enjoy our exuberant sense of community

Above: Metal work raven near the Arts and Crafts Centre, Nunavut Arctic College.

Top left: Student in Iqaluit's famous jewellery-making course at Nunavut Arctic College.

Centre: Young commuter, snug in Mom's amauti.

Opposite, right: Dining out is always a special treat.

Opposite, far right: Innovative theatre combines Inuit culture and dance.

People who live in Iqaluit are called Iqalummiut. Sixty percent are Inuit, some of whom have always lived in this region, and many others who hail from communities all over Nunavut. The remaining 40 percent come from other parts of Canada and the world, and almost half of non-Inuit Iqalummiut moved here from Quebec. Francophones have their own school and are served by the northernmost French radio station in Canada.

Living in the Far North has always been a challenge, and social bonds are essential to most Iqalummiut. For many, extended families are a traditional source of companionship. Community anchors like churches and recreational groups help bring émigrés from other climates together with native Nunavummiut.

Churches

Services are offered in English, Inuktitut, and French. There are five houses of worship: one Bahai, one Pentecostal, one Roman Catholic and two Anglican. The latter churches are notable Iqaluit landmarks. St. Simon's is a charming little church in Iqaluit's satellite community, Apex. It was built in the 1940s and is typical of Arctic churches of the day. St. Jude's Cathedral is unmistakable with its white shingles and igloo shape.

Schools and daycare centres

One of the reasons Iqaluit has so much energy is the fact that our population is young: almost 65 percent are under 25 years of age. Three elementary schools, one middle school, and one high school give lessons in English, although some classes are also available in Inuktitut. The French-language school currently teaches kindergarten through Grade Eight, and plans to include high school classes soon. Nunavut Arctic College opened its Nunatta Campus in

Iqaluit in 1984. It provides a variety of courses for students locally, aimed at personal and professional development building on the cultural values of Inuit.

Five modern, well-staffed daycare centres all have waiting lists. Call some of the facilities listed in our directory to put your child's name on a list.

Social and recreational opportunities

Iqaluit's Department of Recreation produces an annual resource guide to the array of programs and facilities in the community. The city maintains an arena, offering skate rentals and three-month skating passes; one-time admissions are available at a modest cost. The swimming pool hosts regular public swims and scheduled lessons. There is a special events hall and a curling rink. And regular events are held in local gyms. The city also encourages summer recreation programs like soccer, softball and day camps. More than a dozen sports and leisure clubs focus on everything from Tai Chi to speed skating.



A new youth centre operates from the Arctic Winter Games facility. It features movie nights, sport nights, rollerblading, hockey, music and drama.

The Iqaluit Music Society is an umbrella organization comprising groups like a fiddle club and a musical theatre group that stages regular productions. Boy Scouts and Girl Guides are active in Iqaluit. The Pairijait Tigumivik Elder's Centre offers hot lunches and afternoon drop-ins for Seniors, as well as games and special events. Various groups and classes are geared to parenting and family well-being. Call the city recreation line or the Public Health Centre to find out more.

Restaurants

About a dozen eateries offer Arctic country food as well as more familiar luxury fare like steaks and seafood. Burgers, fried chicken and pizza are staples, or you can try Mexican and Chinese cuisine, Arctic style. A handful of coffee shops and cafés offer a warm haven in which to socialize over a steaming cup of your favourite blend.

Alcohol

Iqaluit is a "controlled community", which means you can bring liquor into the city for your own use or buy drinks in a bar or restaurant. There is, however, no liquor store open to the general public in Iqaluit. To purchase liquor for a special event

like a wedding, you need a permit from the Liquor Warehouse, operated by the Nunavut Department of Finance. Once your permit is approved, you can order your supply from the liquor warehouse in Iqaluit or from the liquor store in Yellowknife, which will ship it to Iqaluit by air.

Parks

Sylvia Grinnell Territorial Park, a 45-minute walk or 10-minute drive from Iqaluit, gives you access to the clear waters and gentle water falls of the Sylvia Grinnell River, which drains into Koojesse Inlet. During high tides on the inlet, the river rises so high that the falls become a series of rapids. Home to 40 species of migratory birds,

the park has day-use facilities, a cookhouse and shelter. Some people like to camp overnight, and plans are afoot to construct a bridge across the river.

Rotary Park, in Apex, is perfect for picnics among the spring wildflowers and for late summer berry-picking. You can also take your lunch to the beach at Apex, near the historic Hudson's Bay Company buildings.

Visit Nunavut Square, an outdoor gathering place in the centre of town. Stroll along the walkway and admire this Iqaluit-style piazza, then enjoy a picnic.

Favourite festivals

Toonik Tyme Iqaluit's celebration of the Arctic spring includes dogsled and skidoo races, igloo building, seal skinning, bannock making and harpoon throwing contests.

Annual Nunavut Trade Show The Baffin Regional Chamber of Commerce pulls

out all the stops as over 100 business and government exhibitors gather to mix, mingle and show off.

Annual Arctic Food Celebration At this favourite event, you can sample everything from cheesy-tasting mattaaq - whale blubber - to caribou stew and Arctic char.

Canada Day Parade There are no prouder Canadians anywhere, and Iqalumiut are happy to prove it on Canada's official birthday every summer.

Nunavut Day Every July 9, Iqaluit celebrates the founding of Nunavut with traditional Inuit games, throat-singing, drumming, and community feasts.

Qaumakuluit Decorating Contest This Christmas decorating contest (whose house has the most imaginative lighting and seasonal tableau?) brightens Iqaluit's deepest winter nights.



The cost of Arctic living

Iqaluit is a very great distance from southern Canada. That means food, clothing and other manufactured goods cost more here, since freight charges are an undeniable fact of life. A vast array of items considered necessary by Iqalumiut must be shipped for thousands of kilometres by ship or plane.

The admittedly difficult Arctic climate also helps make Iqaluit an expensive place to live. After all, citizens must survive long, cold winters and pay for the home heating fuel to do so.

Following are details about the cost of basics like food, water and fuel, plus information on such higher-end expenses as cable television and high-speed internet access.

Groceries

Aside from fish, country meats and autumn berries, your food will have to come from afar. That means groceries cost significantly more in Iqaluit than in most Canadian centres. Many Iqalumiut keep their food bills down by eating caribou, seal and Arctic char they have harvested themselves. These traditional foods have excellent nutritional value.

Some householders regularly buy large quantities of non-perishables in southern Canada and have them shipped to Iqaluit by sealift. But you can find almost everything here, from fresh-baked bread, balsamic vinegar to fresh herbs and blueberries.

Just as food costs more here, so does furniture and clothing, which can carry price tags up to 50 percent higher than in southern locations.

Electricity

Nunavut Power Corporation provides Iqaluit's electricity. Residential electricity is subsidized at a rate of 15.22 cents per kilowatt-hour up to 700 kwh. After 700 kwh, the rate goes up to 31.58 cents.

Above: Three of Canada's major banks serve the Nunavut capital.

Top left: Shopping for arts and crafts is one of the unique joys of living in Iqaluit.

Top centre: Several fast-food outlets may remind you of home.

Top right: Well-stocked shelves in department stores offer a great selection of foods.

Below: The Parnavik Building, owned by the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation, an Inuit-owned management business.

Here's a price comparison between Iqaluit and downtown Toronto grocery stores:

Item:	Iqaluit	Toronto
Lean ground beef, per kg	\$10.29	\$7.25
One dozen eggs	\$3.09	\$1.99
Two litres 2% milk	\$5.99	\$3.29
One loaf white bread	\$2.59	\$0.99
White flour, 2.2 kg bag	\$8.49	\$3.99
Butter, 454 g	\$3.99	\$3.19
One head iceberg lettuce	\$3.99	\$1.49
Granny Smith apples, per kg	\$5.78	\$2.18



Water

Iqaluit's residential water rate is one-third of a cent (\$0.0035) per litre. There are two water delivery systems in place: underground piped water and trucked water. Generally speaking, newer developments have a piped infrastructure in place and are built with a connection. Not all areas have pipes and where there are pipes not all houses are connected. Where the city has put down pipes in an older area, the cost of the connection falls to the homeowner.

Heating oil

Uqsuq Corporation provides Iqaluit's heating oil. The residential rate is \$0.5410 per litre.

Telephone

Call Northwestel Customer Service (811) to set up a residential telephone. Costs include a one-time connection fee of \$37, plus a monthly fee of \$31.36. Long distance costs vary in the daytime but there is a flat 10-cent-per-minute calling plan available anywhere in Canada from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m. and all day on weekends.

Internet service providers

Land-based fibre optics aren't feasible in the North, so satellite connections are used. This system is somewhat costly with limited bandwidth and satellite space. The National Broadband Task Force is studying ways to come up with a strategy to provide all Canadians with high-speed Internet services by 2004.

Two firms offer Internet service in Iqaluit. Nunanet charges \$30 per month for 45 hours of basic dial-up service, and \$50 for 90 hours; there's a \$5 charge for each of your additional E-mail addresses. Nunanet also offers wireless service with 50 MB of data transfer space at a cost of \$79/mo.; 100 MB for \$99/mo.; 1,000 MB for \$495/mo.

Bell-Sympatico (Northwestel) offers basic dial-up at \$24.95 for 100 hours per month. Each additional E-mail address costs \$5.95/mo. Satellite (wireless) service is not yet available from Bell-Sympatico.

Cell phone service

Visit Radio Shack in Iqaluit to buy a cell phone and sign a one- or two-year service contract with NMI Mobility. Before hooking you up, Radio Shack faxes the contract to NMI for a credit check. Depending on the results, NMI may require a minimum deposit of \$300.

Billing rates vary. If you use prepaid phone cards for calling, your phone will cost \$99 or \$179 per month. With contract plans, you pay a \$50 hook-up fee, and your phone can cost anywhere from \$50 to \$750. You can choose plans that cost anywhere from \$20 (for 30 min-

utes per month) to \$180 for 400 minutes. If you use up your time, there's a charge of about \$0.65 per additional minute. There is an option to purchase unlimited-time weekend or evening calling packages for \$10 each.

Cable television

Service is available through Eastern Arctic TV, located in the Toonoonik Gas Bar. Go to the Gas Bar (they won't arrange your service over the phone) and ask for a package. There is a hook-up fee of \$32, and the company requires the first month's payment up front. The three plans available are Basic at \$35.90/mo., Basic Plus Pay at \$55.40/mo., and Basic Plus Full at \$74.00/mo.





Housing options in Iqaluit

When it comes to housing, Iqaluit can be remarkably similar to most other cities in Canada. It has rowhouses, high-rise apartments, single-family homes, and multifamily dwellings like duplexes and fourplexes. Some houses are new, some are old, some are modest and some are posh. And several are decidedly eccentric. Neighbourhoods here run the gamut, though they tend to be more mixed than you might find elsewhere.

Despite concessions to housing styles from the south, Iqaluit's Arctic setting makes it very much a place apart. You'll see many homes that have the stamp of Northern living on them. They might be designed to follow the contours of the

bedrock on a certain lot, or oriented to minimize snowload and wind resistance. Many are ultra-insulated, and a certain proportion have snowmobiles and qamutiiks parked out front. Don't be surprised to see seal-skins stretched to dry in the sun, or caribou carcasses recently hauled home from a tundra hunt.

Buying a house

Can you buy yourself a house, eccentric or otherwise, in Iqaluit? John Matthews, president of Atilu Real Estate, says there's usually a small pool of houses for sale at any given time, and each will likely spend two or three months on the

market. A 10- or 15-year-old detached home with three bedrooms might be priced at around \$200,000, depending on its location and condition. Read on for the alternatives.

Building a house

To build a house in Iqaluit, you must first acquire a permit to lease a residential lot under Iqaluit's lottery system. When a lot becomes available for building and more than one party is interested, a draw is held, with first-time homeowners getting preference. (See "Land Under Development," page 15). Four engineering and architectural firms in Iqaluit specialize in Arctic building techniques.

Above: Most neighbourhoods boast a variety of housing styles.

Top left: Stucco covers efficient Arctic insulation.

Top right: Dome house adapted from a hurricane-resistant Florida design.

Below: Up on stilts, you can't expect to have a basement.





Above: Iqaluit's demographic is among the most youthful in Canada.

Top left: Astro Hill Complex, featuring apartments, offices, stores, a movie theatre and swimming pool.

Top right: The Capital Suites, great for temporary accommodation.

Renting accommodations in Iqaluit

Of course, not everyone wants to buy or build, at least not right away. Renting a place is a challenge, too, at least until more projected development takes place. The difficulties are likely to be short-lived, however, as high demand creates a new supply.

Rental accommodations

The cost of renting in Iqaluit varies according to the size and location of a unit. But to give you an idea, a small, one-bedroom apartment would cost you about \$1400 per month.

Despite the variety of housing in Iqaluit today, the rental market is tight because builders can't keep up with our fast-growing population. In fact, there's a negative vacancy rate for all types of rental accommodation, and job offers tend to come with the proviso "housing not included." One of the three major property management companies in the city reports a waiting list of over 50 prospective tenants.

To find your own place (or even shared accommodation), the best advice is to start net-

working early – before you arrive in Iqaluit. Once you're here, you might book into the Capital Suites as a temporary home while you look. Insider advice: property managers don't necessarily offer housing on a first come, first served basis, but can choose between potential renters. Drop by, introduce yourself, and stay in touch.

The good news is that everyone expects the tight rental market to open up as development continues; new properties are already in the works.

Land under development

There are few owners of land in the City of Iqaluit aside from the government and Inuit birthing organizations. Private citizens may hold these lands under lease. So what does this mean in terms of the cost of living?

The lease value of a residential lot is arrived at in two ways. For older, existing lots, an inspector appraises the lot and sets its value. The lease fee can be paid in a single payment or a number of scheduled payments. If the cost of the lease is paid over

time, the leaseholder pays annual fees based on the original cost of the lot. For a newly developed lot, price is determined by equity leasing. This way, the cost of the lease is equivalent to the cost of developing a lot and tying it into the existing infrastructure. In general, a lease is for a 30-year term. Development is usually initiated from above by one level of government or another, which issues calls for proposals to develop multifamily housing. Projects are planned well in advance, working around the sealift and winter seasons. In 2001, 68 development permits were issued.

Property taxes

Properties are taxed on a mill-rate system. In 2000, residential rates for a single-family dwelling were 27.55 and for multi-family dwellings were 34.45, with an additional 2.5 mills for school taxes.