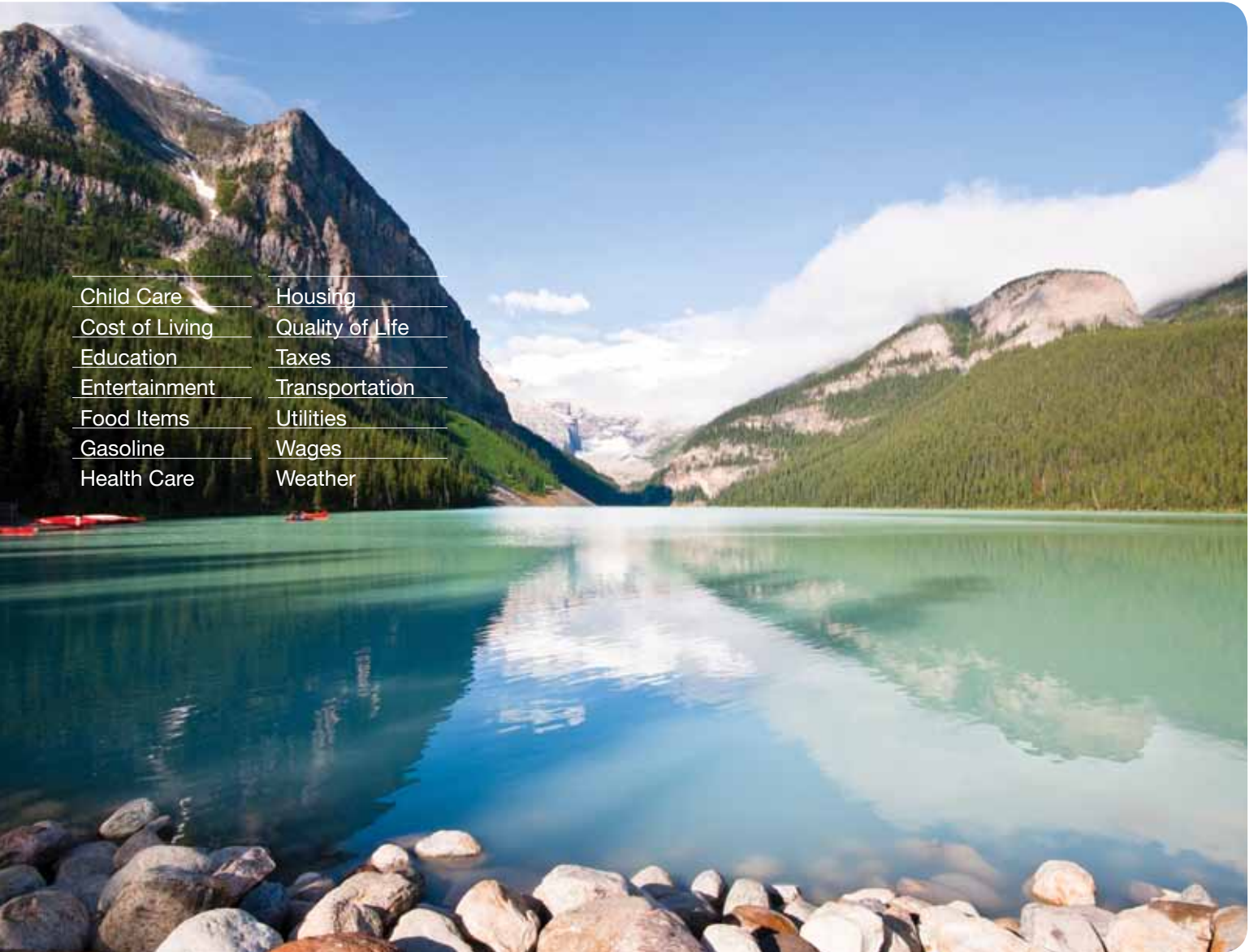


# Living in Alberta



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Alberta is home to the prairies, Rocky Mountains, four glorious seasons and people with an entrepreneurial spirit. As our population grows, so does our need for skilled professionals in our rural and urban communities. You can expect a fulfilling career with time to truly enjoy life. Our overall cost of living including housing, entertainment and taxes is one of the lowest in Canada, giving you more disposable income to enjoy.



## Alberta's opportunities, your future

Albertans from many ethnic and cultural backgrounds have worked together to build a strong, diverse province with a high standard of living. Alberta's stable economy and innovative business spirit make it an ideal place to work.

The official Immigrate to Alberta website has detailed information for you to explore on immigrating to, living and working in Alberta.  
[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration)

Sign up to receive up-to-date information that is relevant to you. [www.AlbertaCanada.com/subscribe](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/subscribe)



## Cost of Living

Living in Alberta is affordable. In a worldwide cost of living survey comparing the most expensive cities, New York City ranks 33rd, and London ranks 25th most expensive. In comparison, Calgary, Alberta is placed in a very affordable position at #92.

Source: Mercer Human Resource Consulting Cost of Living Survey for 2012

## Housing

Average rent per month for a two-bedroom apartment:

Calgary	\$1,113
Edmonton	\$1,036
Grande Prairie	\$966
Lethbridge	\$862
Medicine Hat	\$694
Red Deer	\$843

Average price of a newly constructed single-detached or semi-detached house:

Calgary	\$568,864
Edmonton	\$467,504
Grande Prairie	\$322,156
Lethbridge	\$338,110
Medicine Hat	\$377,500
Red Deer	\$450,021

Source: Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation 2012, Rental Markets Report, Housing Information Monthly.

## Child Care

Average child care costs for a licensed daycare in Alberta range from \$950 - \$1,200/month.

Sample of Edmonton area licensed daycares, 2012

## Utilities

The utilities industry in Alberta includes: electric power generation, transmission and distribution; natural gas distribution; and water, sewer and irrigation systems. Whether you rent or own, you will likely be responsible for paying for your utilities. The average Alberta yearly expenditure per household for water, fuel and electricity is \$2,893.

Other monthly household costs may include:

Basic digital cable TV	\$26
Basic phone	\$30
Basic high speed Internet	\$42

Source: Survey of Household Spending 2010, Statistics Canada

## Health Care

Most people living and working in Alberta get universal access to hospital and medical services under the Alberta Health Care Insurance Plan (AHCIP). AHCIP is free and is covered by the Government of Alberta. Most temporary foreign workers and their families are also eligible.

Patients are responsible for the cost of prescription medication; however, most people have benefit plans which cover these costs in addition to physiotherapy, chiropractic care and massage therapy.

## Food Items

Albertans spend an average of \$8,427/year on groceries and restaurants.

Source: Survey of Household Spending 2010, Statistics Canada





## Education

Albertans are among the best educated people in North America. In 2010, 62 per cent of the labour force, 25 years of age and older, held a post-secondary education certificate, diploma or degree.

Children living in Alberta must attend school from ages six to 16. Public education is free for those under 20 years of age, up to the end of high school.

### Kindergarten to Grade 12:

- **Kindergarten** (optional): age 5
- **Elementary** (Grades 1 to 6): age 6 to 11
- **Junior High** (Grades 7 to 9): age 12 to 15
- **Senior High** (Grades 10 to 12): age 16 to 18

Students attend school from early September to late June. A wide range of schools are available (public, Catholic, Francophone, charter, private) offering innovative programs (home education, online/virtual schools, outreach and alternative programs).

After completing the required high school courses, students must pass provincial examinations to qualify for an Alberta High School Diploma. Students are expected to find out which courses are required to enter the post-secondary institution they wish to attend and select their high school courses accordingly.

**Alberta's high school completion rate has increased to 74.1 per cent in 2011, up from 72.6 in 2010.**

### Post-secondary

Alberta's post-secondary system has 26 publicly funded institutions, including six universities, two technical institutes, 11 public colleges, five private university colleges, and two arts and culture institutions. Many private vocational training institutions also serve Alberta.

Canadians and landed immigrants pay tuition fees that are subsidized through the provincial government. International student fees are calculated based on the actual cost of post-secondary education. Every institution posts tuition information on their websites.

### Average undergraduate tuition fees for full-time Canadian learners, 2011 - 2012:

Alberta	\$5,662
Canada	\$5,336

The cost of attending universities and colleges varies across Canada according to institution, program and location.

*Source: Enterprise and Advanced Education, Facts and Figures, Advanced Education and Technology, 2012*

## Transportation

Alberta's road systems are extensive. To operate a car, truck or van you need a driver's licence, plus insurance and registration on your vehicle. Canada uses the metric system to represent speed limits (kilometres versus miles).

In major cities buses and light rail transit run frequently. A monthly pass for unlimited access to the public transportation system in a larger city will cost approximately \$90, and \$50 – \$75 for a smaller city.

Both Edmonton and Calgary international airports offer direct non-stop flights to many international destinations.

## Gasoline

Alberta has the lowest gasoline tax in Canada which leads to lower prices at the pump: \$1.05 CAD per litre for unleaded gasoline.

*Information correct as of December 2012*



## Weather

Alberta is Canada's sunniest province with more than 2,000 hours of sunshine each year and four distinct seasons.

Despite the cold, the winter sun is often shining, and days are spectacularly bright. You can go skiing and skating with the family or stay indoors and spend the day shopping. Main roads and highways are cleared of snow to ensure that travel in the communities and to the main centres is safe and easily accessible. Houses and office buildings are well insulated and have excellent heating systems. Even when it is cold outside, we stay warm inside.

Average summer temperature range  
(June to August)  
15° C to 23° C (60° F to 73° F)

Average winter temperature range  
(November to February)  
-8° C to -25° C (18° F to -13° F)

Source: *Travel Alberta*

## Quality of Life

In a worldwide quality of living survey, Calgary, Alberta ranked #32 out of the top 50 cities. New York City ranked #47, London ranked #38.

Source: *Mercer Human Resource Consulting Worldwide Quality of Living Survey for 2012*



## Entertainment

Bottle of wine	\$16.00
Bowling	\$6.50
Movie admission	\$12.50
Museum entrance	\$11.00
Pint of beer	\$6.00
Theatre ticket	\$40.00 and up
Hockey ticket (NHL)	\$60.00 and up
Golf	\$38.00
Ski lift ticket	\$79.00

*Average prices, December 2012*

## Taxes

Alberta has a personal tax advantage due to a low single-rate tax system. This includes the highest basic and spousal exemptions in the country, no provincial sales tax, the lowest gasoline tax rate and low property taxes.

### **Two income family of four earning \$75,000 CAD**

Alberta provincial and federal taxes \$12,398 CAD  
Ontario provincial and federal taxes \$14,439 CAD

### **Two income family of four earning \$125,000 CAD**

Alberta provincial and federal taxes \$28,394 CAD  
Ontario provincial and federal taxes \$31,480 CAD

Albertans also have access to the Canada Child Tax Benefit to help offset the expense of raising children aged 18 and under. This tax benefit is determined based on family income and residency requirements.

Alberta businesses have the lowest business taxes in Canada. Alberta's business tax advantage is a result of low corporate income tax rates, no capital tax and no payroll tax.

Source of basic information: *Alberta Treasury Board and Finance, Highlights of the Alberta Economy 2012*



## Wages

Salaries in Alberta vary depending on the employer, hours worked and educational qualifications, as well as experience and responsibilities that the job requires. The following list is a snapshot of occupations in Alberta and the average salary that a typical person could earn.

Accountant	\$68,000
Advertising Account Executive	\$74,611
Carpenter	\$63,223
Chemical Engineer	\$103,425
Cook	\$26,430
Computer Programmer	\$74,677
Electrician	\$75,690
Emergency Medical Personnel	\$58,000
Estimator (Construction)	\$72,836
Financial Analyst	\$79,732
Gasfitter	\$65,627
Heavy Duty Equipment Mechanic	\$68,451
Industrial Designer	\$82,189
Ironworker	\$81,299
Long Haul Truck Driver	\$61,481
Machinist	\$57,749
Millwright & Industrial Mechanic	\$71,695
Plumber	\$71,363
Registered Nurse	\$75,274
Secondary School Teacher	\$71,900
Social Worker	\$63,252
Steamfitter/Pipefitter	\$87,497
Welder	\$70,286

*Source: Alberta Learning Information Service, 2011 Alberta Wage and Salary Survey*

*Please note: All currency is in Canadian Dollars.  
Currency converter available at: [www.bankofcanada.com](http://www.bankofcanada.com)*



[www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration](http://www.AlbertaCanada.com/immigration)

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