



NATIONAL ABORIGINAL DAY

Nathan Phillips Square, City Hall,
100 Queen St. W.
June 21, 2017

Sunrise Ceremony

Permanent Flag Installation
representing:

- Mississaugas of the New Credit •
- Six Nations • Huron-Wendat •
- Métis • Inuit •

toronto.ca/aboriginal-day



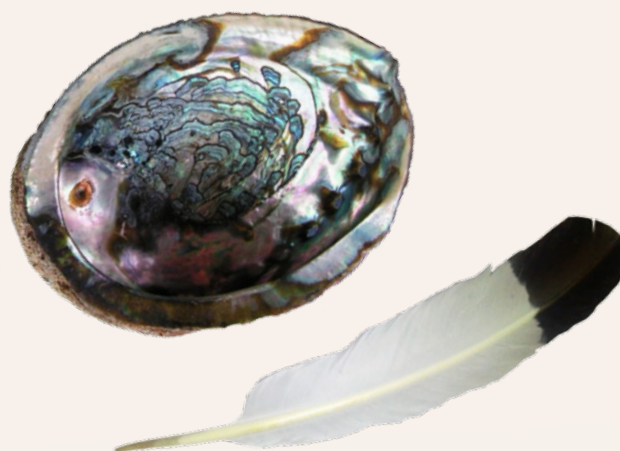
Call **311**

Sunrise Ceremony

At the sunrise ceremony, people come together to share in offering prayers and in giving thanks for all of creation and Mino Baamodziwin (The Good life). It is a time when Mishoomis Giizis (Grandfather Sun) starts to look over us and provide us with light and warmth for the daytime.

At the sunrise ceremony, people will be asked to form a circle. There will be smudging of sage for those who wish to cleanse their spirit in the smoke of this sacred medicine. There will be a pipe ceremony where the pipe will be loaded with tobacco, another sacred medicine.

Following the pipe ceremony, there will be singing with a hand drum and people will have the opportunity to share a few words within the circle and eat strawberries.



Strawberries and water

Often referred to as the heart berry because of its shape, the **strawberry** is an important food and medicine in Indigenous cultures. It helps us understand the connection between mind, body, spirit and emotions. The heart berry also reminds us of reconciliation and teaches us how to maintain heartfelt relationships.

Water gives all traditional medicines their potency and it is also itself a medicine. Respect for water, and honouring the spirit of water before using it, are the fundamental principles underlying all traditional water teachings.



Four medicine plants

There are four major medicine plants – tobacco, sweet grass, sage and cedar – that Indigenous people use frequently in ceremonies. The aromas from these plants help participants place themselves in a different state of mind. It may inspire memories, awaken the soul and give a sense of direction.

1. Sacred **tobacco**, used to make smoke, is believed to allow Indigenous people to communicate with the Spirit World. Tobacco is used first as an offering in every ceremony.



2. **Sweet grass** is the sacred hair of Mother Earth. Its sweet aroma reminds people of the gentleness, love and kindness she has for the people. This is why Indigenous people pick it and braid it in three strands representing love, kindness and honesty. Sweet grass is used for smudging and purification of the spirit.



3. **Sage** is more medicinal and stronger than sweet grass and is used more often in ceremonies. It also has physical healing properties when used to make tea. Sage helps release what is troubling the mind and remove negative energy.



4. **Cedar**, like sage and sweet grass, is used to purify the home. It also has many restorative medicinal uses. When cedar is mixed with tobacco and put in the fire, it crackles. This sound calls the attention of the Spirits to the offering that is being made.





Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation

The Mississaugas of the New Credit First Nation

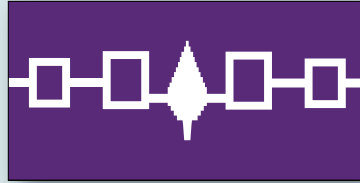
are a group of Ojibway (Anishinabe) belonging to the Algonquian linguistic group. The flag of the Mississaugas is based on their logo which includes five symbols of their history:

Eagle – The eagle is viewed as the messenger. The Mississaugas people were once considered to be great messengers, some days travelling 80 miles on foot.

Three Fires – The three fires are symbolic of the Mississaugas' traditional and political alliance with the Ojibway, Odawa, and Pottawatomi Nations known as the Three Fires Council.

The Blue and the Circle of Life – The blue writing symbolizes connection to the water and the circle symbolizes the circle of life. First Nations believe that every living thing is related and interconnected – we are all a part of the circle of life.

The Peace Pipe – The peace pipe was given to the Mississaugas by Queen Victoria's cousin (Augustus d'Este) and is used in special opening ceremonies to thank the Great Spirit, Mother Earth and the sun.

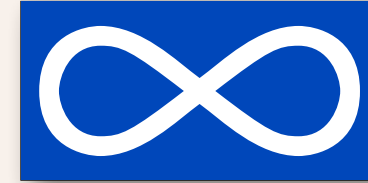


Six Nations

Six Nations (or Six Nations of the Grand River) is the largest First Nations reserve in Canada. These nations are the Mohawk,

Cayuga, Onondaga, Oneida, Seneca and Tuscarora. Land was granted to the Six Nations by the 1784 Haldimand Treaty.

- The flag represents the original five Nations Seneca, Cayuga, Onondaga, Mohawk and Oneida, which were brought together by the Peacemaker.
- The pine tree middle represents a White Pine (the needles are clustered in groups of five).
- The first square on the left represents the Mohawk Nation – Keeper of the Eastern Door. The inner square on the left, nearest the heart, represents the Oneida Nation. The white tree in the middle represents the Onondaga Nation. This tree also means that the heart of the Five Nations is single in loyalty to the Great Law of Peace. The inner square to the right of the heart represents the Cayuga Nation. The square furthest to the right represents the Seneca Nation, known as Keeper of the Western Door.
- The two lines extending from each side of the squares of the belt, from the Mohawk and Seneca Nations, represents a path of peace.



Métis Nation

Prior to Confederation, a new Indigenous people emerged. From the initial offspring of Indigenous and European unions

were individuals who simply possessed mixed ancestry. Subsequent intermarriages between these mixed ancestry children resulted in the genesis of a new Indigenous people with a distinct identity, culture and consciousness in west central North America – the Métis Nation.

This Métis people were connected through the highly-mobile fur trade network, seasonal rounds, extensive kinship connections and a collective identity through culture, language and way of life. Distinct Métis settlements emerged throughout what was then called “the Northwest”. In Ontario, historic Métis settlements emerged along the rivers and watersheds of the province, surrounding the Great Lakes and throughout to the northwest of the province.

The Métis flag is 188 years old. The current and most defining Métis flags consist of two variations – one that is blue and the other which is red. The Métis flag represents the Métis people with the infinity sign which symbolizes the immortality of the nation and the coming together of two distinct cultures: Indigenous and European and their existence forever as a people.



Huron-Wendat

The Huron-Wendat Nation community and reserve is now found at Wendake, Quebec. The Huron-Wendat Nation's symbol represents its culture, territory and history. The symbol on the flag is accompanied by belts of wampum.

- **The Bustards** (large terrestrial birds) recall one of the most important beliefs of the Huron-Wendat Nation: the creation of the world. While Yäa'taenhtsihk (Skywoman) fell from the celestial world, bustards gathered it on their wings and placed it on the carapace of Grande Tortue, the chief of the animals. The Great Turtle eventually became a wonderfully beautiful island, our Earth.
- **Canoeing and Snowshoeing** represent the means of transport used for travel on the territory. The water, the source of life, forms the paths to follow between the division of territories.
- **The Hut** represents the community, homes and the roof that protects our families. It is also a symbol of strength and agility for work.
- **The Circle and the Sweet grass** – The Huron-Wendat see all the elements of nature interconnected. All life, including humans, animals, plants, spirits, etc. forms a whole called the Circle of Kinship. The sweet grass represents spirituality, medicinal plants and the forest.
- **The Clans** include the deer, the tortoise, the bear, the wolf, the beaver, the eagle, the porcupine and the snake. Five of these clans made up the great Nations of the confederation: the Attignawantans, the Attigeenongnahacs, the Arendaronons, the Tahontaenrats Daim and the Ataronchronons. Four (of the eight) clans are represented at Wendake reserve: the deer, the wolf, the bear and the turtle.
- **The Beaver** – The national emblem of the Huron-Wendat Nation, the beaver alone represents a clan. The most industrious of all animals, it is a symbol of endurance, intelligence and pride.



Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami

The Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami is the national organization for the Inuit

who reside in four different areas in Canada. This includes Nunatsiavut in Labrador, Nunavik in Northern Quebec, Nunavut (a territory created in 1999), and the Inuvialuit Settlement area in the Northwest Territories and Yukon.

The depictions on the flag include the following:

- Four Inuit (men and women) which symbolize the four Inuit Nunangat (homeland) regions (Inuvialuit, Nunavut, Nunavik and Nunatsiavut).
- Maple leaf in the centre recognizing the Inuit connection and commitment to Canada.
- The ulu (the woman's knife) is an all-purpose knife traditionally used by Inuit women.