



Where downtown meets Old Town: a story on every corner.



• Legend •

- |                      |                                   |                                     |                                     |  |
|----------------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|
| Bus, Streetcar Route | Architectural/Historical Interest | <b>1</b> Metropolitan United Church | <b>6</b> St. James Cathedral        | <b>11</b> St. Lawrence Market South        |
| Subway Station       | Outdoor Art, Statues & Structures | <b>2</b> Ontario Heritage Centre    | <b>7</b> St. James Park             | <b>12</b> Flatiron Building & Berczy Park  |
| Hospital             | One-way Street                    | <b>3</b> 10 Toronto Street          | <b>8</b> Sculpture Garden           | <b>13</b> The Dixon Building               |
| Municipal Parking    | Greenspace                        | <b>4</b> York County Courthouse     | <b>9</b> St. Lawrence Hall          | <b>14</b> St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts |
| One-way Street       |                                   | <b>5</b> Courthouse Square          | <b>10</b> St. Lawrence Market North | <b>15</b> Hummingbird Centre               |



Welcome to the neighbourhood!

## OLD TOWN TORONTO WEST

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### Points of interest

- 1 Metropolitan United Church (56 Queen Street East)** Beginning as Metropolitan Wesleyan Methodist Church in 1868 and completed in 1872, it was known as Canada's "cathedral of Methodism". With the founding of the United Church of Canada (the country's largest protestant denomination) in 1925, it was rededicated as Metropolitan United. Sparing only the tower and the carillon, fire severely damaged the church in 1928. Rebuilt in 1929 on the original foundations, it became home to Canada's largest organ, which is featured today in regular services and public recitals.
- 2 Ontario Heritage Centre (10 Adelaide Street)** Built in 1907. Original home of the Canadian Birkbeck Investments and Savings Company. It now houses the Ontario Heritage Foundation. The building has one of only three operator-run, cage elevators remaining in Toronto. Parts of the movie *Cinderella Man* (2005) were shot here.
- 3 Toronto's Seventh Post Office (10 Toronto Street)** Designed by Cumberland and Ridout in the classic Greek revival style, it was opened in 1853 as Toronto's Seventh Post Office. In 1960, it was saved from demolition and completely renovated by Argus Corporation later controlled by Conrad Black whose Hollinger Corporation is headquartered here.
- 4 York County Courthouse (57 Adelaide Street East)** Built in 1852 as Toronto's 3rd county courthouse, it is also a Greek revival building designed by Cumberland and Ridout. The building housed courts and basement cells for prisoners. The Arts and Letters Club (now on Elm Street) was founded and met on the second floor: Sergei Rachmaninov and Pablo Cassals came to play, Sir Wilfred Laurier (later Prime Minister of Canada) lectured, and the Group of Seven formed here. Today, it is as an upscale restaurant and night club.
- 5 Courthouse Square (Court Street)** A City park with fountains, rose arbour, and sculpture installation commemorating the area's original use as a courthouse and jail. Leaders of the 1837 Rebellion were put on the gallows here. Public hangings were not outlawed in Canada until 1868, and the last hanging in Canada was in 1962 at Toronto's Don Jail. (Gerrard & Broadview).
- 6 St. James Cathedral (65 Church Street)** Completed in 1853, this is the third church on this site; the original frame building dating from 1803 was the Town of York's first. Today, it is the cathedral for the Anglican Diocese of Toronto. The tower and spire of St. James rises 93 metres above King Street and is the second tallest in North America. Its Parish House on Church Street has a small, public museum featuring exhibits relating to the church's role in Toronto's history. [www.stjamescathedral.on.ca](http://www.stjamescathedral.on.ca)
- 7 St. James Park** The grounds were originally the church's cemetery where many of the town's first settlers were buried, as were the thousands who fell to the 1832 cholera epidemic. The park now features a formal Victorian Garden, with wrought-iron fencing and a bird fountain. It is a great place to take pictures of St. Lawrence Hall and the Cathedral.
- 8 Sculpture Garden (115 King Street East)** Opened in 1981, Toronto's public sculpture garden features changing exhibits by artists who are often experimenting with outdoor exhibits. The park provides a stunning view of the St. James Cathedral spire.
- 9 St. Lawrence Hall (157 King Street East)** Opened in 1850 the hall retains its 19th century charm with its famous gas-lit ballroom on the third floor. Key parts of the hall's history are noted on a series of plaques in the main lobby: including the building's role as part of the Underground Railroad and a centre for the abolitionists campaigning against slavery, such as George Brown (father of Confederation and co-founder of *The Globe & Mail*).
- 10 St. Lawrence Market North (92 Front Street East)** The market began on this site in 1803 and today's building hosts a Farmers Market every Saturday and an Antique Market every Sunday. Market Lane Park runs parallel to the building on its east side and features outdoor vendors from May through October. [www.stlawrencemarket.com](http://www.stlawrencemarket.com)
- 11 St. Lawrence Market South (93 Front Street East)** The main building was built in 1901 and includes the centre block of Toronto's first City Hall built in 1845 and designed by Henry Bowyer Lane. The Market is open Tuesday through Saturday and features specialty foods, butchers, and fish vendors. Walking tours are offered Wednesday to Saturday at 10 AM. The Market Gallery, located on the second floor, features exhibitions on the history and culture of Toronto: admission is free. [www.stlawrencemarket.com](http://www.stlawrencemarket.com)

## Points of interest

### 12 Flatiron Building & Berczy Park (Church, Wellington, Front)

Built in 1892, the Gooderham Building was the business headquarters of the Gooderham and Worts distilling company. The “Flatiron” nick-name comes from its shape resembling an iron of the day. It is arguably Toronto’s most photographed spot. On its west side it has a noted mural created by Canadian artist Derek Besant which can be easily viewed from Berczy Park.

### 13 The Dixon Building (45-49 Front Street East)

Toronto’s only remaining example of a totally cast-iron façade, a 19th century “state-of-the-art” technique, enabling buildings to have elaborate façades at low cost. The look has often been compared to carved stone. The

building is now home to a restaurant on the main floor and a bar on the lower level.

### 14 St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts (27 Front Street East)

Home to the Jane Mallet and Bluma Appel theatres, the STLC is one of Toronto’s premier theatre and chamber music venues. CanStage performs its mainstage productions in the “Bluma.” [www.stlc.com](http://www.stlc.com)

### 15 Hummingbird Centre (1 Front Street East)

Designed by Peter Dickinson in the modernist style, the theatre opened in 1960 with a production of Camelot starring Richard Burton and Julie Andrews. The centre is noted for its famous mural *The Seven Lively Arts* by York Wilson, located in the main lobby. [www.hummingbirdcentre.com](http://www.hummingbirdcentre.com)

## How to get there

**By TTC:** There are many TTC routes serving Old Town Toronto. Exit the Queen or King subway stations and walk east one block. From Broadview Subway station take the 504 streetcar south to King Street, getting off at Jarvis, Church or Victoria streets.



**By Car:** Exit the Don Valley Parkway at Richmond Street and proceed west to Jarvis. Exit the Gardiner Expressway westbound at Yonge Street and proceed to The Esplanade. Exit the Gardiner Expressway eastbound at Jarvis proceed north to The Esplanade. On-street, pay and display parking is available along with the city’s largest “Green P” Parking Garage accessible from Yonge or Jarvis streets via The Esplanade – entrance at the foot of Church Street.

## Why you should go

There is a story on every corner: Toronto’s first public well, oldest Market, original City jail; and Toronto’s most photographed view—the Flatiron building with the gleaming bank towers in the background. The neighbourhood has the best of Toronto’s history while capturing all of its contemporary energy. Home to theatres and concert venues, famous for its pubs and patios, with a wide array of bars and fine restaurants, all anchored by St. Lawrence Market—selected by *Food & Wine Magazine* as one of the 25 best markets in the world!

Two of the City’s major performance venues are found in the neighbourhood—the Hummingbird Centre and the St. Lawrence Centre for the Arts—both offer diversity and excellence in Canadian and international performing arts.

Along Queen, King, Front and The Esplanade historic and contemporary buildings blend together to create a

welcoming urban streetscape. Locals and visitors stroll past home furnishing and design shops, unique cafes, welcoming pubs and fine restaurants. The best of old and new await you in Old Town Toronto (west).

## What to do

Saturday at St. Lawrence Market has been a Toronto tradition since 1803 and “meet me at the market” is a local idiom. Buy fresh food from local producers and growers in the Farmers Market and experience “old world” personal service and get the “story” behind the products. On Sundays, the Antique Market lures bargain hunters and collectors. Brunch opportunities abound from family-friendly to upscale gourmet. During the week office workers and visitors pop into the Market for a quick Peameal Bacon on a bun and a freshly squeezed juice or meet for lunch in the pubs and restaurants lining the busy sidewalks.

The Esplanade from Church to Scott Street is known for its wide sidewalks and ample patios, favoured by the after work crowd. Front Street between Scott and Jarvis Streets is known for specialty items, home furnishings, books, and its year ‘round Christmas store; and of course the South St. Lawrence Market for its famous selection of fresh food and gourmet treats. Wellington Street west of Church Street has a row of bars, clubs and dining establishments to meet a variety of tastes and budgets. Just north, Colborne Street’s heritage façade frames cafés, pubs and fine dining tucked away from the main streets. King Street East repeats the theme with after work hot spots, neighbourhood favourites and the famous King Edward Hotel built in 1903, which features shops and dining and afternoon tea. Photographers know the area for its camera stores clustered around Queen Street East and Church Street.

Nightlife favours theatre, concerts, and major touring productions at the St. Lawrence Centre or the Hummingbird Centre. After the show, relax with jazz or sip a cocktail in a hip bar housed in a restored, Victorian building. Whether it is fine dining, pub hopping, food shopping, heritage sight seeing, taking in a show, or just a casual stroll, Old Town Toronto (west) has it all.

### Local Festivals

**Buskerfest** Every August the St. Lawrence Market neighbourhood is alive with buskers from around the world, market food vendors, laughter and music. Front St. East from Scott Street to Jarvis Street, Berczy Park, and Market Lane Park. For more information please go to [www.torontobuskerfest.com](http://www.torontobuskerfest.com)

### A short history

Just west of the original ten blocks of the Town of York (see Old Town Toronto east), this half of Old Town Toronto developed when Lieutenant-Governor Peter Hunter established the Market Block on the land north of Front, west of Jarvis, south of King and east of Church street in 1803.

The original shoreline of the harbour ran just south of today's Front Street and formed the front door of the Town and the centre of its early economic life. William Cooper was an early entrepreneur who built the Town of York's first commercial wharf in 1817. Coopers Wharf was the business and transportation hub of its time.

After the City of Toronto was incorporated in 1834, city council members met in the 'second' St. Lawrence Market building, at the southwest corner of King and Jarvis Streets. The growing city demanded more space for its administration and Toronto's first city hall was built in 1845 at the southwest corner of Front and Jarvis streets. It also housed Police Station Number One. The central block of the building was later preserved and incorporated into the façade of the South St. Lawrence Market. It escaped the great fire of 1849 which burnt down the 'second' market and St. James Cathedral. The market building was rebuilt to the south and St. Lawrence Hall opened in 1850 on the previous market site. The

cathedral was rebuilt in 1853 and stands today.

In the 1850s with the advent of the railways, the shoreline was filled in well south of The Esplanade and the neighbourhood lost its direct connection to the waterfront but gained industry and warehousing that would define the area's future.

King Street East was the City's main shopping street in the mid 19th century. At King & Fredrick Streets, William Gambles opened the first wholesaler in the 1830s next to William Proudfoot's Wine Shop, which also sold dry goods ranging from ostrich feathers to tea kettles. Victoria Row, on King Street between Church Street and Leader Lane, opened in 1842 as the city's most high-end shopping destination. After this heyday the centre of commercial activity began to shift west to Yonge and Bay streets. The Gooderham family's building of the Flatiron

building in 1892 was seen as attempt to stem this tide but it proved unsuccessful.

In the early twentieth century the area, just like the eastern part of Old Town, became increasingly devoted to manufacturing and industrial uses. After the World War Two there was a slow and relentless decline in the manufacturing base as jobs began to move to more suburban areas. In the 1970s, the empty industrial land south and east of St. Lawrence Market was designated for the major urban renewal project that became the St. Lawrence Neighbourhood. Spurred on by this, new condominiums and smaller office buildings went up bringing new life to the neighbourhood, and City parks, such as Berczy, were created from reclaimed parking lots. Today, Old Town Toronto (west) is a vibrant 'downtown' neighbourhood home to thousands of residents, thousands of jobs and some of the City's finest heritage architecture.

### • A little trivia •

- One of the most popular parts of the city for film and TV production with films like *Rules of Engagement*, *Fever Pitch*, *How To Lose A Guy in 10 Days*, *Serendipity*, *Against the Ropes* and television shows like *Queer as Folk* shot here.
- The 504 King Streetcar is the busiest surface route in the City serving 55,000 passengers per day. The current service traces its origins back to 1874 when Toronto's third streetcar route launched, running from the Don River via King Street to Bathurst Street.
- York Mechanics Institute opened its headquarters at the northeast corner of Church and Adelaide in 1860. Founded in 1830, the Mechanics Institute, following the movement that began in Britain, promoted the new methods of manufacturing and craftsmanship brought on by the Industrial Revolution. The Institute operated a lending library which became the foundation for Toronto's first public library which opened here in 1884. Today it is the site

of a late 1970s condominium that incorporated a parking garage as part of its structure, the only conversion of its type in the city.

- Toronto's first public well was dug in 1823 near Market Lane Park (west of St. Lawrence Hall – Point of Interest #9). A public art installation – *Return of the Magri Stecchi* – at the north end of the park commemorates this and the stocks that stood in Market Square until 1834.
- On February 8th, 1879 Sir Sandford Fleming (1827-1915) presented his "invention" of Standard Time to the Canadian Institute in a building which then stood near Richmond and Berti Streets, marked today with an Ontario Heritage Trust plaque. Sanford had noted that railroad passengers travelling across country encountered arbitrary "local time," and hit upon the idea of globally standardizing time. Fleming's idea was formally adopted in 1884 at the Washington D.C., International Prime Meridian Conference.