



Welcome to the neighbourhood!

# THE DANFORTH

Global tastes and cosmopolitan style



## Legend

- Bus, Streetcar Route
- Greenspace
- Architectural/ Historical Interest
- Outdoor Art, Statues & Structures
- Municipal Parking
- One-way Street
- Subway Station
- 1 The Bloor Street Viaduct
- 2 Danforth Baptist Church
- 3 Eastminster United Church
- 4 St. Barnabas Anglican Church
- 5 Carrot Common
- 6 The Alexander the Great Fountain
- 7 Withrow Park
- 8 Holy Name Catholic Church

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## How to get there

**By TTC:** Broadview, Chester, Pape, and Donlands subway stations.

**By Car:** The Don Valley Parkway is a stone's throw away. There's street parking (with ticket purchase) except for certain hours, and several small-to-medium-sized "Green P" parking lots just north of Danforth Ave., but parking can be scarce during warm summer nights and festivals.



## Why you should go

The Danforth, which is home to one of the largest Greektowns in North America, offers hundreds of mouth-watering international restaurants, vibrant pubs, romantic cafés, organic and health-food stores, one-of-a-kind boutiques, and family-owned fruit and vegetable stands. Where else can you find fresh carrot juice, a wedding dress, delicious souvlaki or dim sum, or an authentic Irish pub—all within a couple of blocks? This is a clean, safe community with international flair. It attracts those in search of cosmopolitan tastes, sounds, and products, and it's perfect for night owls, who will appreciate the many clubs, pubs, patios, and cafés that stay open late—especially in the summer. Whether shopping for organic or international foods, searching for a unique gift, lazing away a sunny afternoon on a sidewalk patio, or looking for a fun evening out, The Danforth is the place to go.

## Points of interest

- 1 The Bloor Street Viaduct.** Built in 1918 and officially called the Prince Edward Viaduct after the then Prince of Wales, it was the first physical link between the City of Toronto and the neighbourhood. The construction of the Viaduct is described in Michael Ondaatje's award-winning novel, *In the Skin of a Lion*. In 2003, the "Luminous Veil"—a stainless steel barrier consisting of some 9000 vertical rods—was installed as artwork and as a deterrent to people wishing to commit suicide. Walking along the viaduct offers great views of the valley below.
- 2 Danforth Baptist Church** (60 Bowden St.) Built between 1903 and 1931, this church houses a large war memorial painting by noted Canadian artist Owen Staples.
- 3 Eastminster United Church** (310 Danforth Ave.). The original building was completed in 1910, with additions in 1914 and 1923. In 1954, the Moller organ (one of only two in Canada) was brought up from Hagerstown, MD in nine trucks.
- 4 St. Barnabas Anglican Church** (361 Danforth Ave.). In 1858, St. Barnabas was a small, wooden church on Ellerbeck St. serving the Chester Village community. The church was built on wheels, which came in handy when it was moving to its current location at Danforth and Hampton in 1907. Unfortunately, the wheels fell off en route, so the first service was celebrated in the middle of Danforth Ave. In 1912, the old wooden structure was replaced with a brick building.
- 5 Carrot Common** (320 and 348 Danforth Ave.) Originally the site of a grand, three-storey brick house—which was torn down in the 1960s and replaced with a used car lot—Carrot Common opened for business in 1987. Big Carrot Natural Food Market, a cooperatively-owned natural food store, joined with other partners to create the 17-store mini-mall.
- 6 The Alexander the Great Fountain.** Located in the parkette at the corner of Logan and Danforth, the Fountain was officially opened in 1995. The Fountain features a decorative urn in its centre and a mosaic tile floor depicting four flying fish; the design is based on a fresco found at the Phylakopi Palace on the Island of Crete in Greece.
- 7 Withrow Park.** This 21-acre city park—located one block south of Danforth between Logan and Carlaw—offers shady trees, public washrooms, a children's playground, a swimming pool and ice-rink, and an off-leash area for dogs.
- 8 Holy Name Catholic Church** (606 Danforth Ave.). Construction started in 1914, and the main church was completed in 1926. Modeled after the Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome, this grand church soars to 100 feet at the crossing of the transepts.

### What to do

In any season, a stroll along Danforth Avenue is sure to please. The main shopping, food, and entertainment venues can be found between Broadview and Jones Avenues, with GreekTown proper lying between Chester and Jones. This stretch of Danforth Avenue is about 1.5 kilometres (about a mile) long, but you should plan to spend at least four hours for window shopping and dining.

The pace is relaxed, and there's a Mediterranean feel to many of the restaurants and cafés: you're meant to linger over your meal, soaking up the ambiance and watching the world pass by. Still, there's always lots going on—especially when Greece makes the World Cup soccer finals and the whole street explodes with excitement!

**Broadview to Bowden: International samplings.** Starting at Broadview and walking east, you'll find the “international” part of The Danforth—complete with theatres, great restaurants, pubs offering live music, independent and chain cafés, and eclectic shops. In the first three blocks, you'll find Spanish, Irish, English, Tex-Mex, and French eateries—many of which offer live music in the evenings—as well as three high-end personal care shops/spas, a handful of eyewear shops, upscale women's clothing boutiques, handmade chocolates, and a sports bar.

**Bowden to Chester: Shopping.** Keep walking east of Bowden and you'll find three bridal shops, three churches, three cafés, two herbalists, and Carrot Common—a 17-store shopping centre named for founding tenant Big Carrot Natural Food Market. This New-Age mall offers holistic/homeopathic/naturopathic/fair trade products and services intended to promote wellness for us and for our planet. In this stretch of Danforth Ave., you can choose from Japanese, Chinese, East Indian, Scottish, or organic foods, or find a unique gift from a distant land at one of the fair-trade shops.

**Chester to Jones: Greektown.** Once you cross Chester, you're into Greektown,

which boasts the largest concentration of Greek restaurants in North America. But with 92 eateries to choose from, you'll also find excellent Thai, Japanese, Cuban, Italian, and Mexican food. Add some romantic restaurants, lively pubs, patios, and nightclubs, and you have all the makings of a great evening out.

**Withrow Park: Recreation.** This 21-acre greenspace offers shady trees and public washrooms. Every summer, the Shakespeare in the Rough theatre company presents one of the Bard's works in this park. All shows are pay-what-you-can; for more information, visit [www.sitr.ca](http://www.sitr.ca).

### A short history

Danforth Avenue was named after Asa Danforth, an American contractor who was commissioned to cut this road between York and the Bay of Quinte in 1799. In the 1800s, it was a country road outside city limits, offering travellers views of fields, market gardens, brickyards, and the occasional house, church, or roadhouse. Formerly known as Danforth Village, the area officially became part of Toronto in 1908, but it wasn't truly accessible until 1919, when work on the the Prince

Edward Viaduct (better known today as the Bloor Street Viaduct) over the Don Valley was completed. The bridge's designer, Edmund Burke, insisted on adding a lower deck for trains; about half a century later, his foresight saved Toronto millions of dollars when the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) subway started using the deck. In the early 1900s, this new suburb was home to immigrants from England, Ireland, and Scotland. The end of the Second World War brought a wave of Italians to the area, followed by Greeks and other immigrants in the '50s and '60s. In the '70s and early '80s, The Danforth had one of the highest concentrations of Hellenic immigrants living outside of Greece.

Today, the local businesses are very proud of The Danforth, and have formed two Business Improvement Areas (BIAs) who use their own money to make the area more attractive (such as building the “Alexander the Great Fountain”) and to add vitality to the local community (through festivals such as “The Taste of the Danforth”). Check out the websites below for festival and special events details and dates.

### ● A little trivia ●

- Second only to the Borough of Queens in New York, Toronto has the largest Greek population living outside of Greece.
- Taking place in early August, “The Taste of the Danforth” is an annual festival celebrating our multicultural city—from sushi to mezes, from world folk music to children's games—with an emphasis on Hellenic food and culture. The street closes down to accommodate the 1 million + Torontonians and tourists who flock to the area to sample delicious Greek food, drink Retsina (white wine matured in pine casks), and listen to music. For more details about this lively festival, visit: [www.tasteofthedanforth.com](http://www.tasteofthedanforth.com).
- The Danforth was featured in the movie “My Big Fat Greek Wedding”; aficionados will recognize Pappas Grill (across the street from the fictional travel agency where Toula worked), Louis Meat Market, and Ellas Restaurant to name just a few.
- Other movies shot on The Danforth include “Cinderella Man” (2004), “How To Lose A Guy in 10 Days” (2002), “Bulletproof Monk” (2002), and “Chicago” (2001).
- Built in 1865, the Don Jail was used for the “Jail Bar” in the 1980s movie “Cocktail”. On a more serious note, it was the scene of Canada's last hanging in 1962. Located at Broadview Ave. and Gerrard St. East, the Don Jail is one of a handful of intact pre-Confederation (1867) structures, and its Italianate façade is one of the city's architectural gems.