

Toronto's Many Chinatowns



VISUAL TRAVEL TOURS

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Table of Contents

[Cover](#)

[Tour Summary](#)

[Introduction](#)

[Tips](#)

[Chapter 1 - Downtown Chinatown](#)

[Chapter 2 - Chinatown East](#)

[Chapter 3 - Chinatown West](#)

[Chapter 4 - Pacific Mall Markham](#)

[Chapter 5 - Restaurants & Much More...](#)

[Maps](#)

[Author Biography](#)

[Publisher](#)

Tour Summary

In Toronto you can find unusual Chinese foods, and eat your way from Beijing to Tibet! There are at least six “Chinatowns” and over 30 malls that could be classified as such. This is the largest (half-million) Chinese community in North America. You can immerse yourself in culture, religions, and dragon boat races... learn several dialects or Karaoke songs in Chinese... or get your ailments treated with acupuncture and herbs. You can buy scorpions, tea flowers or goji berries, and even paper money and airplanes - to keep your ancestral spirits happy!

[Back to Table of Contents](#)

Introduction





In Toronto, you can eat your way from Beijing to Tibet and find food you never knew existed before. There are at least six Chinatowns, and over 30 malls that could

be classified as Chinatowns. Almost half a million Chinese live in the city, the largest Chinese community in North America.



You can find scorpions and goji berries for sale. You can stock up on high-end lung ching tea, innumerable sauces, dried mushrooms, and unusual bean curds. Don't be surprised if you find paper money for the

dead, and controversial shark fins in grocery stores. You'll also find new products like XO sauce and tea flowers.



In Toronto, you can become immersed in Chinese culture, its interesting teas, dragon boat races, tai chi, and karaoke. You can even join a fund-raising walk for a Chinese charity, without having to visit China.



The oldest extant Chinatown is at Dundas Street and Spadina. It is within a couple of miles of the city hall. It is itself the second largest Chinatown in North America, and it looks most like the older parts of Hong Kong. Many Asians live in this area and never learn English.



The prettiest Chinatown is in the Mississauga suburb, with its architecture and art inspired by old China. A gate looks

like one at the Great Wall. And the biggest and most modern Chinatown is the Pacific Mall complex in the Markham suburb.



Temples are not as magnificent as their counterparts in China but the statues in the Riwoche Tibetan Buddhist Temple are stunning. Fo Guang Shan in Mississauga is magnificent. Most Chinese temples are

outside Chinatowns, which are primarily commercial areas. Look for festivals you can experience!

The photo of Shantaraksita was taken with permission from the website.



A feng shui expert should be able to study his compass and advise you how to change an unhappy love life and business venture

the old Chinese way. Maybe the arrangement of your furniture or your lack of goldfish has blocked opportunities.



You can take a lesson in graceful sword dancing or learn the healing techniques of tai chi and qigong from experts. Want

to rent lion dancers to liven up a party, or become skilled at kung fu to defend yourself?



You might even see brides wearing traditional red wedding dresses at banquets in restaurants. (Red is the color of happiness.) Stores in some malls sell or rent these unusual gowns.



If you dine at the annual Miss Chinese Toronto beauty contest, with commentary almost entirely in Cantonese, Hong Kong movie stars will entertain you there. You can watch Chinese programs on television

and find Chinese newspapers published in Toronto. And you can learn Chinese cooking.



On a summer evening, you should be able to stroll through Ontario Place park when it is full of awesome giant Chinese lanterns, brought to Toronto largely because of its

Chinese community. You don't have to be Chinese to take part in the annual dragon boat races.



You can watch delightful cultural shows like the Toronto-based Chi Ping children's dancers and see touring artists and exhibitions from China. Toronto also has

resident troupes of Chinese opera performers and musicians playing in the old, high-pitched way.

[Back to Table of Contents](#)