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Jennifer Campbell

## World's top travel spots

**S**ummer travel: It's something we all look forward to, and at *Diplomat*, we get to embark on summer dreaming early because we plan our annual July travel issue in the depths of winter, when this season seems so far away. Last year, a travel article by Italian Ambassador Claudio Taffuri claimed Italy is the most popular tourist destination in the world. That made us wonder what other countries would make that list. Writer Laura Neilson Bonikowsky tackled the project and came up with a list of the 10 most-visited countries. There are the predictable ones: Italy, France, the U.S. and the U.K., but some of the others on the list might surprise you.

Bonikowsky compiled her list using data from *TripAdvisor*, *the World Atlas* and the United Nations World Tourism Organization. She provides not only a list of the most popular countries among the 1.32 billion tourists who travelled globally in 2017, but also a list of the most popular tourist destinations in each of those countries.

In addition to the feature story, Bonikowsky produced a sidebar on North American travel on a budget (if road trips came to mind, you're on the right track.)

But it's not all about travel in this summer issue. Also in our Dispatches section, we have Robert I. Rotberg's piece about the African animals facing extinction. And still in Africa, Jane Kerubo offers some coverage of a symposium that brought together African and Canadian women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. The event was organized by the African Women Diplomatic Forum, which was formed in 2011 by a group of female ambassadors and high com-

missioners and deputy heads of mission from Africa with a goal of bringing together female diplomats for moral, social and professional support. The stories of women overcoming their family poverty to become scientists and engineers are inspiring.

We also have a story about Mongolia's economy, which, while mostly reliant on natural-resource sectors such as mining, is seeing high rates of growth that would be the envy of many more developed nations.

Finally, we run a piece by Russian Ambassador Alexander Darchiev based on a speech he gave in Ottawa on the Eurasian Economic Union. It offers a glimpse of Russia's plans on the trade front.

In the Diplomatica section, Fen Hampson tells us why foreign policy should be an election issue, while acknowledging that he doesn't expect it will be, as most elections are fought and won on domestic issues. He offers three foreign policy issues for discussion: The ratification of the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement, Canada's relationship with China and Canada's role in multilateral forums.

We also have my interview with Senator Ratna Omidvar, who is a member of the World Refugee Council and introduced a bill about the seizure of assets (that are within Canada) of corrupt foreign leaders for redistribution to the victims of these leaders.

In Delights, books editor Christina Spencer reviews Bruce and Vicki Heyman's new book, along with several others; Margaret Dickenson offers three summer recipes that are great for al fresco dining and Patrick Langston takes us on a tour of the residence of Sri Lankan High Commissioner Madukande Asoka Kumara Giriagama and his wife, Sudarma. Visual arts writer Peter Simpson offers his take on the big summer shows at the National Gallery of Canada, as well as others at public and private galleries in the city.

In the back of the magazine, we have a travel feature by UAE Ambassador Fahad Saeed Al Raqbani and a primer on local attractions by Patrick Langston. No excuse not to travel this summer.

Jennifer Campbell is editor of *Diplomat*.

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### Jane Kerubo



Jane Kerubo has been the deputy head of mission at the Kenyan High Commission in Ottawa since July 2015. Before joining the foreign ministry, she served as a commissioner with the Ethics and Anticorruption Commission in Nairobi between 2012 and 2015 and assistant director of preventive services at the defunct Kenya Anti-Corruption Commission between 2010 and 2011. Prior to joining the commissions, she served as an associate professor of education at the Catholic University of Eastern Africa for more than 15 years. Kerubo holds a PhD in Higher and Further Education from University College London in Britain.

### Ülle Baum



Ülle Baum has contributed photographs to *Diplomat* magazine, the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *Hill Times* for 12 years. With her camera, she has recorded visits of presidents, prime ministers and foreign dignitaries. She worked as a cultural representative at the Estonian Embassy for three years and, for the past 11 years, she has organized the European Union's Christmas concert. She is a past-president of the Canadian Federation of University Women's Diplomatic Hospitality Group and has a PhD in political science from Lomonosov Moscow State University. She writes for Toronto's *Estonian Life* newspaper. Her articles have been published in Canada, Europe and Australia.

## UP FRONT

The cover story of our annual travel edition examines which countries are the most visited by tourists every year. Our cover photo depicts the No. 1 destination — France — and its world-famous Louvre Museum. The package starts on page 36.





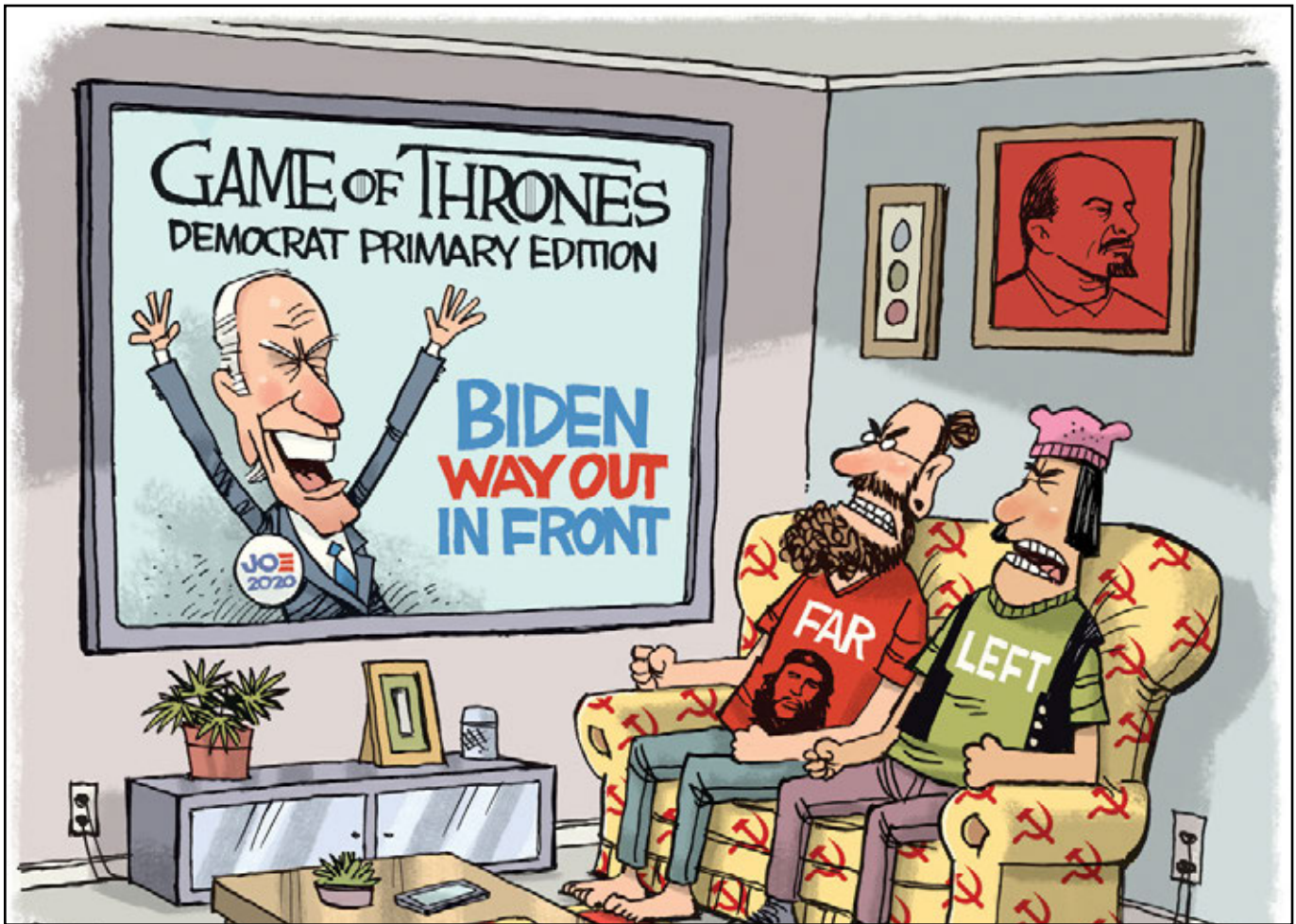
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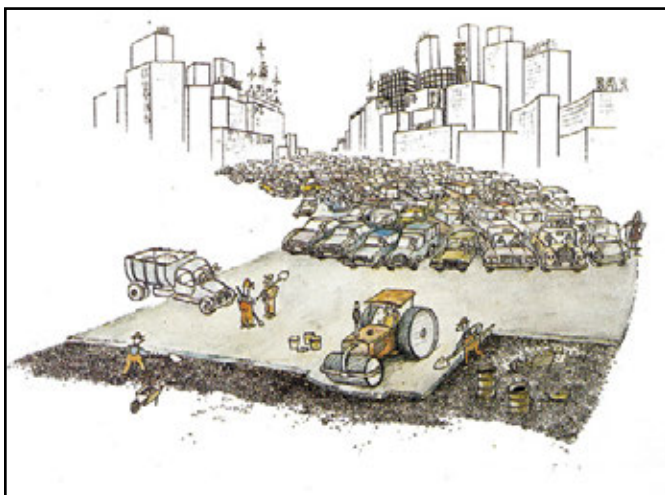


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## Political commentary from around the world



Democrat Game of Thrones, by Rick McKee, *The Augusta Chronicle*, GA

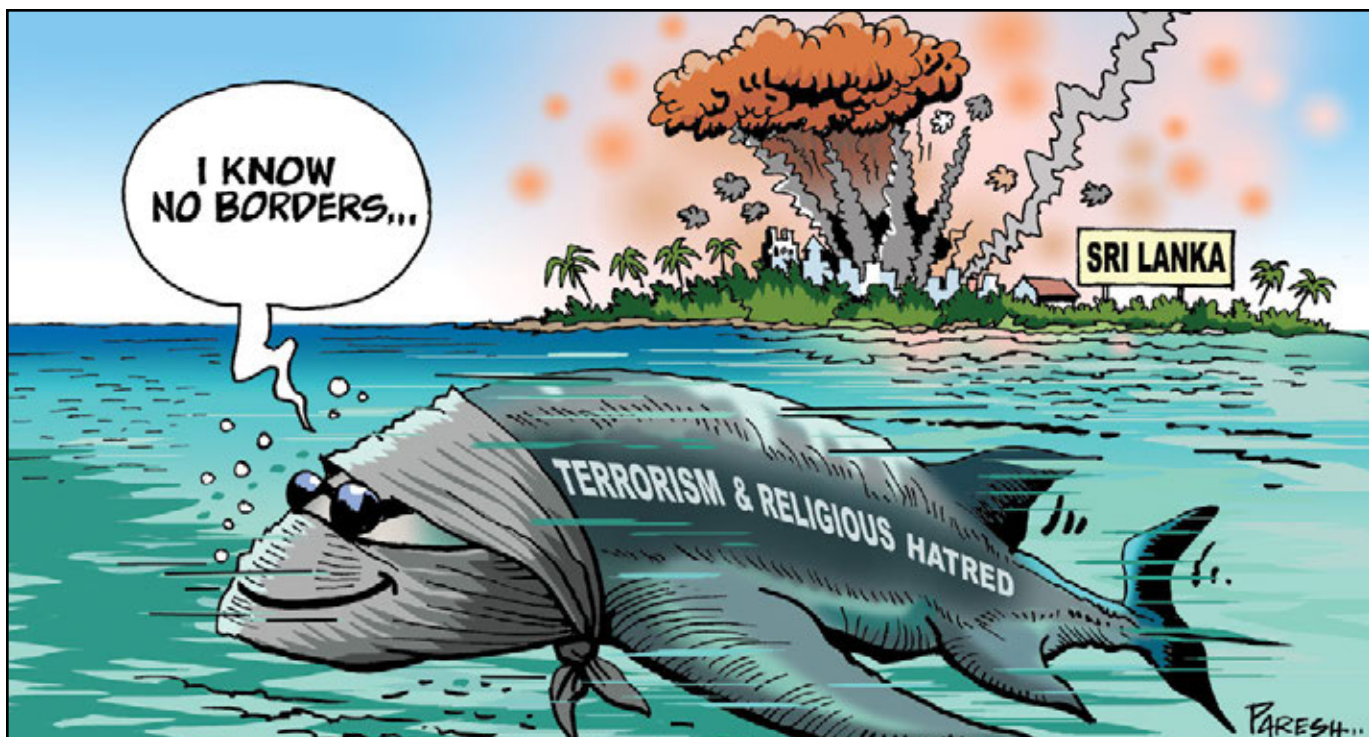


Infrastructure, by Pavel Constantin, Romania



Democrats impeach painting corner, by Sean Delonas, Easton, Pennsylvania





Sri Lanka explosions, by Paresh Nath, *The Khaleej Times*, UAE



Defeated ISIS, by Paresh Nath, *The Khaleej Times*, UAE



Kim-Putin summit, by Paresh Nath, *The Khaleej Times*, UAE



Last man standing, by Osama Hajjaj, Jordan



The extinction of dictatorship, by Osama Hajjaj, Jordan





Resistance Hong Kong, by Bart van Leeuwen, *PoliticalCartoons.com*



Phase 2, by Adam Zyglis, *The Buffalo News*, New York, U.S.



Trade war rare earths, by Taylor Jones, *Hoover Digest*, U.S.



Notre Dame, by Dario Castillejos, Oaxaca, Mexico



EU and China strategy, by Paresh Nath, *The Khaleej Times*, UAE



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Iran tanker attack, by Bart van Leeuwen, *PoliticalCartoons.com*



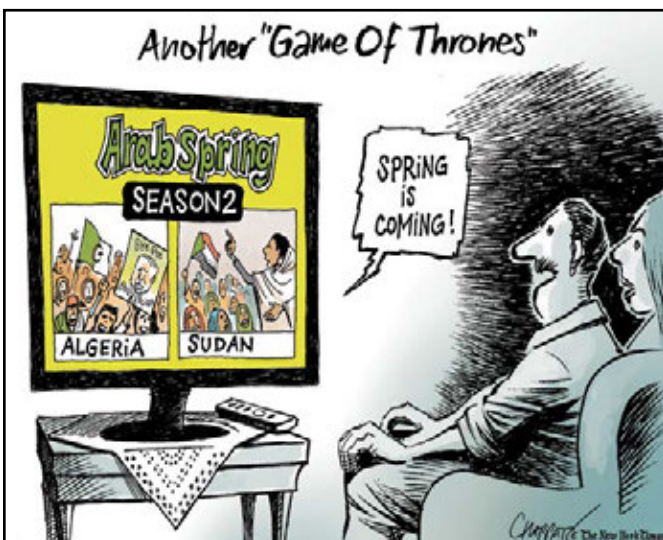
No more time for plastic, by Michael Kountouris, Greece



Champagne socialists, by Dave Whamond, Canada, *PoliticalCartoons.com*



Tug of war, by Luojie, *China Daily*, China



New Arab Spring, by Patrick Chappatte, *The New York Times*



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# Why foreign policy should be an election issue



Canadians should be asking elected officials, such as Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Foreign Minister Chrystia Freeland, about their CUSMA game plan. The agreement was signed in November 2018, but has yet to be ratified by any of its signatories, namely Canada, the U.S. and Mexico.



Fen  
Hampson

**F**oreign policy won't be a federal election issue during the 2019 campaign, although it should.

To be sure, there may be a leader's debate about foreign policy as there was in the 2015 election. But foreign policy is generally not a do-or-die, make-or-break issue with Canadians. Like voters pretty much anywhere, they are preoccupied with concerns closer to home, such as jobs, the health of the economy, national unity, and whether or not they trust their leaders. But how our government manages its international relations, especially with the United States and China, will increasingly

affect Canada's prosperity and future.

Historically, there are some notable exceptions in which broader foreign and security concerns defined election outcomes. The 1988 federal election was fought over the fate of the just-concluded free trade agreement with the United States. Going into that election, it looked as though Brian Mulroney's Conservative government, which had sealed the deal, would lose resoundingly against Liberal leader John Turner, who came out swinging against it. Mulroney was able to turn the tide by doggedly making his case that the agreement was in Canada's best interest.

Another Conservative prime minister, John Diefenbaker, was not so lucky. In 1958, Diefenbaker agreed to let the Americans station their nuclear-armed, surface-to-air *Bomarc* missiles on Canadian soil to defend North American airspace against Russian bombers. When details of the secret deal were leaked, the ensuing hue and cry caused Diefenbaker to renege. His clumsy about-turn proved fatal. His own cabinet split over whether Canada should

honour its Norad commitment to take the missiles and their nuclear warheads. Diefenbaker was forced to call an election in 1963, which he lost to Lester B. Pearson, who agreed to honour the commitment.

In 2019, there are no such politically defining international issues on the election agenda, with the possible exception of immigration. But that doesn't mean there is nothing to talk about or that voters should blithely ignore what their leaders have to say about foreign policy and international affairs. Here are some of the questions that Canadians might want to put to their leaders before they head to the polls.

## What is the CUSMA game plan?

On Nov. 30, 2018, Canada, the United States and Mexico signed the Canada-United States-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) to replace the 1994 NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement) in Buenos Aires, where the countries' leaders were attending the G20 summit. In 2017, total trilateral merchandise trade (the total of each country's imports from



one another) was nearly US\$1.1 trillion. Total merchandise trade between Canada and the United States has more than doubled since NAFTA's signing, while trade between Canada and Mexico has grown nine-fold.

However, none of the three countries has taken steps to ratify the new agreement and Canada won't ratify until the U.S. does. In the U.S., the agreement is sidelined by Congress's preoccupation with whether or not to launch impeachment proceedings against U.S. President Donald Trump following the release of special counsel Robert Mueller's report on Russian meddling in the 2016 American presidential election. U.S. Democrats who control the House of Representatives also want to see stronger and fully enforceable labour standards in the agreement. Although Trump lifted his tariffs on steel and aluminum, the threat of a "snapback tariff" creates uncertainty about the future.

During negotiations, there was remarkable unanimity across party lines about the importance of securing a deal and palpable relief when, after a lot of hard slogging, it was finally secured. There was little talk about a "sellout" to the Americans in this agreement. Almost any deal was better than the prospect of "no NAFTA," a distinct possibility as Trump threatened to tear up the trade pact.

While the agreement's ratification hangs in the balance, political uncertainty is proving to be bad for business. Canada's food-makers, for example, have issued dire warnings about plant closings and major job losses as onerous regulations, including tariffs on steel, which raise the cost of cans, hurt growth.

Do we just take our cue from the Americans? Do we just continue to play defence on trade or are there things we can do proactively with Congress or the White House to advance our interests? If Trump is re-elected in 2020, what will that mean for the agreement and, more generally, Canada's bilateral relations with the United States? If there is a new Democratic president, will we try to secure ratification of the existing agreement, renegotiate it with the hope of securing a better deal, or do we stick with the NAFTA status quo?

More generally, Trump's weaponization of trade and the uncertain global economic environment will, as the International Monetary Fund warns, slow Canadian growth at a time when Canada faces the challenge of attracting productivity-enhancing investment, diversifying its economy and remaining competitive. These are just some of the

questions that should be directed at those who want to form the next government.

#### What is the game plan for China?

There were high hopes among Canadian Sinophiles that Justin Trudeau would turn the page on relations with China by launching negotiations for a new free-



The Trudeau government lived up to its promise to contribute more troops to UN peacekeeping forces when it sent 250 personnel to Mali, but that mission won't be renewed.

trade agreement while restoring some of the pizzazz and glitz that his father brought to the China file when he was in office. (The Harper government was deeply ambivalent about China and many criticized it for not doing more to advance trade and investment relations with the world's second biggest economy at a time when Canada's trade with the U.S. was flatlining, especially in energy, our biggest export).

If the Chinese were unimpressed by our prime minister's casual attire when he stepped off the plane on Dec. 3, 2017 in Beijing to review an honour guard, they were even less impressed by his progressive free-trade agenda, which aimed to entrench labour, gender, environment and governance standards in any agreement. Talks went nowhere.

To say that relations with China have deteriorated badly under the Trudeau government is an understatement. Canadian businessman Michael Spavor and former Canadian diplomat Michael Kovrig were arrested and thrown in jail after Canadian authorities detained Meng Wanzhou, the chief financial officer of the Chinese telecom giant Huawei, for extradition to the United States. Two other Ca-

nadians have been given death sentences after being found guilty of drug trafficking. China is boycotting Canadian canola producers (a market valued at \$2.7 billion in 2018) and suspended permits for a number of other major Canadian exports, including pork.

There is also the outstanding issue of whether Canada will grant Huawei Technologies market access to build Canada's 5G mobile network infrastructure, a game-changing technology, or ban it as the United States, Australia and New Zealand have done because of fears that 5G software and hardware could be exploited by Chinese intelligence.

Canada clearly has to avoid getting caught in the crossfire of trade disputes between the United States and China and their growing strategic rivalry. This will require adroit diplomacy and the careful management of bilateral relations with both superpowers. But we still have to answer the question of whether we treat China with a high degree of suspicion or whether we try to forge a new kind of relationship to advance our mutual interests in trade, commerce, education and culture. For any government, relations are complicated by the fact that there are nearly two million Canadians of Chinese origin living in Canada, representing the largest Asian diaspora in the country.

#### Is Canada really back?

During the 2015 election campaign, Trudeau promised Canadians that his government would do everything possible to win a non-permanent seat at the United Nations Security Council. A year later, in August 2016, he formally announced that Canada would seek to return to the council in 2021.

How is the campaign going? Most observers think it is not going terribly well, not least because we are up against tough competition from Norway and Ireland, which are popular donor countries in vote-rich regions such as the Middle East and Africa. Major regional players, Saudi Arabia among them, are also unlikely to support Canada's candidacy as a result of souring bilateral relations. (The same goes for China, which is also an increasingly influential regional and global actor, including in sub-Saharan Africa.)

Although the Trudeau government kept its promise to contribute more troops to UN peacekeeping forces by deploying a small contingent of 250 personnel to Mali (after two years of careful study), the mission to Mali will not be renewed and Canada appears unwilling to commit a

major contingent for other missions.

If we lose our second bid for a seat (we lost under Stephen Harper in 2010), it will not look good for the election winner and the mantra, "Canada's back," at least when it comes to the UN, will ring hollow.

#### How should Canada manage its borders?

In its April 2019 C-97 omnibus budget bill, the federal government buried tough new immigration measures on asylum-seekers entering Canada at "unauthorized" border crossings. Under the legislation, claimants' access to a hearing by a refugee tribunal would be severely restricted. Claims by those who had already filed a refugee claim in another country, such as the United States, would also be disallowed.

The government is also quietly discussing with the U.S. how to close a loophole in the Safe Third Country Agreement, which went into effect in 2004. Under the agreement, each country declares the other country a haven for refugees, preventing most refugee claims at the U.S.-Canada border. However, claimants crossing the border at unauthorized or "irregular" locations can file asylum claims after entering Canada and, under existing Canadian law, cannot be turned back by law enforcement officials.

In 2018, there were 19,419 asylum claims and interceptions near the border, the bulk of which were in Quebec (18,518). The figures were slightly down from 2017, which saw 20,593 total claims, of which 18,836 were in Quebec.

Clearly, broader political and electoral considerations are at play in the government's decision to clamp down on asylum seekers and what Border Security Minister Bill Blair disparaged as "asylum shopping," a phrase that outraged many Canadians. Polls show Canadians are increasingly concerned about the government's immigration policies. In a September 2018 national Angus Reid poll, 67 per cent said they thought the refugee situation was in a crisis, while 71 per cent wanted to see greater investment in border security than on assisting those entering Canada through "irregular" points of entry.

Trudeau's Liberal government is wrestling with the same political dilemma as leaders in other Western democracies, especially in Western Europe, though on a much smaller scale compared to the millions who have entered Europe. The majority of citizens in an otherwise tolerant and open, democratic society will generally be welcoming towards those

seeking refuge, provided the numbers are manageable and the flows are conducted in an orderly way. But when a government is seen as losing control over its borders and cannot effectively manage the flow of asylum-seekers, the public will demand action. That is the issue Canada's leaders now face.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees predicts that by 2050, there will be 250 million forcibly displaced worldwide, once climate change submerges coastlines, where much of the world's population is concentrated, and destroys arable land through droughts, desertification and fires.

There's lots for candidates in this election to debate about Canada's international relations and where the parties stand on key issues. Let's hope Canadians pay attention.

Fen Osler Hampson is Chancellor's Professor at Carleton University and he has just completed his five-year term as a distinguished fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation. His next book, *BravER Canada: Navigating a Stormy and Unpredictable World* (with Derek Burney) will be published later this year.

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Independent Senator Ratna Omidvar

# The refugee crisis: '[We should] stabilize the hotspots so people can go back to their homes'

Photos by James Park

Ratna Omidvar came to Canada from Iran in 1981 and her own experiences of displacement, integration and citizen engagement have inspired her work in Canada. She was appointed by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in April 2016 as an independent senator representing Ontario. Prior to her appointment, Omidvar was the founding executive director of the think-tank Global Diversity Exchange and a distinguished visiting professor at Ryerson University. The co-author of *Flight and Freedom: Stories of Escape to Canada* (2015), was named by *The Globe and Mail* as its Nation Builder of the Decade for Citizenship in 2010 and, in 2015, she was named one of the Top 10 diversity champions worldwide on the inaugural Global Diversity List sponsored by *The Economist* magazine. She is a councillor on the World Refugee Council (WRC) and *Diplomat's* editor, Jennifer Campbell, sat down with her to talk about a recent report by the council titled "A Call to Action: Transforming the Global Refugee System" as well as a bill she brought before the Senate.

**Diplomat magazine:** According to the World Refugee Council report we're discussing today, half of the population of Syria has fled. What will become of that country?

**Ratna Omidvar:** It's a very big geopolitical question. I don't know what will happen. When I left Iran in 1980, I remember thinking that the regime change had to be coming and yet, there's still no sign of it. In Syria, with so many [people] having been displaced and so many of them internally displaced with very little access to resources that could have been available if they'd managed to leave the country, [it's hard to say.] I deal with what's happening in the present.

The World Refugee Council report is a very comprehensive one and the reason it's important is because it doesn't present an institutional point of view of external stakeholders. It's pretty substantive. Many of the recommendations are focused on multilateral institutions, such as the United Nations or the World Bank.

But then there are a number that are in the hands of nation-states.

**DM:** And that brings us to the Bill S-259 — *Frozen Asset Repurposing Act* — you introduced in the Senate.

**RO:** Yes. My bill deals with a nation's capacity to seize the assets of corrupt former officials that are located in the country and to redeploy them so the displacement that has been created by these corrupt people can be addressed and ameliorated to some extent. I tabled this bill in the Senate [in March.] I have aspirations that Canada will embrace this idea, but I also have aspirations that if Canada embraces it, others will follow, just as Canada has followed the movement of the Magnitsky [Act, which targets the assets of corrupt officials who have committed grievous human rights violations and] which was called into law in the U.S., the U.K., Canada and Estonia. I think there's an interest in nation-states learning from each other in how to deal with these crises of corruption and displacement because they are linked, one to the other. This is an idea whose time may well have come.

My bill is in second reading in the Senate. [Peter Beam], a former deputy minister of Global Affairs who is now a senator, weighed in last week and was very positive about what the bill is intending to do and about the approach in implementation that the bill takes. I know there are similar pieces of legislation that are being reviewed in the U.K. and France. I think the time has come to put this on the agenda. I fully intend to pick up this bill as soon as the next Parliament is convened. Peter Beam was an ambassador so he understands the global context of diplomacy in all of this.

**DM:** What are the other hotspots you anticipate in this context?

**RO:** I anticipate that Bangladesh will continue to be a hotspot because the situation in Myanmar doesn't seem to be easily resolvable. Bangladesh is incredibly pressured with the arrival of close to a



million refugees and is [buckling] under the pressure. As a result, since the world is unable to resolve the situation, they're [Bangladesh] actually considering repatriating the refugees back to Myanmar under the very same conditions [they left] with no guarantees for their security. I imagine that hotspot will dominate the discourse for another couple of years at least.

The situation in Syria — I can't read the tea leaves, but if I were outside Syria as a refugee, I don't know whether I would consider going back at this point. Because ultimately, if the situations resolve themselves, then people go back. Let's consider the history of the movement from Bosnia and Serbia in the 1990s. Canada received a number of refugees — I think it was 3,000 to 4,000. As soon as the situation stabilized with the help of the multinationals, many of the refugees left. They chose to go back and lead their lives again.

Ideally, those are the conditions the world should try to create. Stabilize the hotspots so people can go back to their homes, their language, their family, their culture and pick up the threads of their lives again. The intention of the world on resettlement, which involves about 10 per cent of the world's refugee population, is important, but misplaced. What is more important is resolving the situations in these unstable countries. That is long-term and painful and it requires dedication and effort that is hard to sustain. We need to look at out-of-the-box solutions. The report the World Refugee Council has tabled includes a number of practical solutions that are catalytic and transformational. The bill I'm proposing is practical because it's in the hands of one nation-state. Multilateral solutions typically are, as you well know, three steps forward, two steps back.

I do like the idea of calling into play the world's multilateral solutions around this question of safety and security for refugees. Of course, the UNHCR [United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees] will always be the primary multilateral institution, but there's the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, the World Trade Organization, too. When you think about all the levers that are in play and if these institutions got together and worked together as opposed to working in isolation, we could actually make some significant headway.

**DM:** As an immigrant, what are your thoughts on the "not welcome" signs greeting some of our refugees in Canada?

**RO:** It makes me unhappy, but I also

understand that Canadians feel insecure when they see people cross our borders by boat or by land. They feel insecure and I believe that the insecurity has to be addressed in other ways than putting up a 'you are not welcome' sign. The right thing to do is to process asylum-seekers according to the laws that we have signed on to, quickly and efficiently and accept or remove them. That would give the Canadian people confidence in the system. But the system that surrounds the hearings of asylum-seekers has been deprived of resources for so long. To turn it around quickly is actually quite difficult.



Omidvar: 'The right thing to do is process asylum-seekers according to the laws that we have signed on to, quickly and efficiently, and accept or remove them.'

I believe the changes and resources being invested in the Immigration Refugee Board are beginning [to take effect] — though not as quickly as Canadians expect and hope. I think there's a problem [in that people are feeling insecure], but there's also a solution and that doesn't start with putting up 'unwelcome' signs.

**DM:** A 2018 poll conducted by the Angus Reid Institute found that 67 per cent of Canadians believe the refugee situation is now a crisis; and 71 per cent think there should be a greater investment in border security than on helping those who are illegally entering Canada from the U.S. outside of official border crossings. What is the solution you'd propose?

**RO:** I went to the border last year in June. I spent a day at Roxsoms Road. I needed to touch it and feel it for myself. I had meetings with the RCMP, Canada Border Services Agency [CBSA] and Immigra-

tion, Refugees and Citizenship Canada [IRCC.] I stood and watched a number of families arriving in that ditch at Roxsoms Road. I saw how they were received and processed. I'd like Canadians to know that our system and the agencies around that system have really geared up to be efficient, to follow the rule of law as it is and implement it as best they can.

I was fairly impressed. I do believe the system may come under pressure again if the numbers over the summer rise. We haven't seen that yet, but I think we are prepared to some extent, but if there are thousands of people, that presents a problem to us. The state of readiness is fairly [well in place] at the border. Where we seem to fall down is making sure that, upon arrival, asylum-seekers get a hearing as quickly as possible. The delays in hearings and appeals and all the legal processes present a problem. I think efficiency, speed and fairness can co-exist.

A former deputy minister of immigration tabled a report on the inland asylum-seeker system and recommended a collaboration and co-ordination between the RCMP, CBSA and the IRCC, which hasn't happened to date. There was a file done one way by the RCMP, another way by CBSA and yet another way by IRCC. You can imagine the delays and confusion and repetition of steps and processes. I know this sounds boring, but process and efficiency of process are important. Changes the IRB [Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada] has announced, for example, would allow that if there's an asylum-seeker coming from a country where the rates of acceptance are really high, we don't have to go through the whole process again. Instead, we do a paper review. By the same token, if the rates of rejection are really, really high, there's no reason to roll out the whole articulated process. They always have access to an appeal. These changes are very recent and we need some time to ensure they are implemented and evaluated.

Our system is the gold standard of the world in terms of inland approvals; it is not the gold standard in Canadians' eyes in terms of speed and efficiency. Speed and efficiency only come from adequate resources and constantly fine-tuning and improving how people are being processed. We've also had a debilitating shortage of IRB judges, but those vacancies have now been filled.

**DM:** How should the Safe Third Country Rule be changed? Refugee claimants are choosing to cross from the U.S. illegally,



between entry points, jumping queues by lawful applicants and Canada is asking for the Safe Third Country Rule to be renegotiated with U.S. so that illegal entrants are not automatically entitled to a hearing. Do you agree with that?

**RO:** I think we have to explore a way forward and I'm not sure whether closing off access or opening it up is the most desirable. I welcome this conversation. I'm not a member of the government and have no way of knowing what's on the table, but I think it's important action for this government to take.

**DM:** What effect are populist politicians or those who want to limit migrant numbers or insist on legal applications having on this crisis?

**RO:** I think migration is at the heart of the rise of populism, its nativist attitudes and an aggrieved sense of being left behind — as we've seen south of the border and maybe in Canada as well. There is a sense of blaming migration for all the ills that may beset an individual or a community. But migration has always been a fact of life and will always be a fact of life. Refugees and asylum-seekers are conflated in this whole construct because in Canada, refugees are a very small portion of our annual immigration intake. For the most part, our immigration process works really well. We pick and choose and carefully select our immigrants. We also carefully pick our refugees, whether we select them from overseas or we select them from their asylum claims, there is a very full, articulated process that we have the luxury of enjoying. Other countries don't necessarily have this because of their geographic locations. The populism threat to progressive liberal policies is real and in this country, it's not refugees, it's asylum-seekers who are at the heart of this. We have to see in the next six months how social media play this up.

**DM:** How can WRC make sure protection of refugees is compatible with social cohesion?

**RO:** If you're a global citizen, you understand, as [former UN Special Representative for International Migration] Peter Sutherland has said, that proximity is not the issue. Just because something is far away, doesn't mean it doesn't touch us. It does touch us. Look at the conversation we just had around asylum-seekers. What's happening in Venezuela will affect us — maybe six months down the road. There's a social cohesion element in looking after your neighbour, even if that



A Rohingya family at Kutupalong Rohingya Refugee Camp in Bangladesh. Omidvar anticipates the plight of the Rohingya will continue to be a global issue for years to come.

neighbour is many oceans away.

There's another element of social cohesion: When refugees arrive, whether in Bangladesh or in Canada, their presence in communities can be a factor that, in the beginning, is possibly disruptive, but in the long term, it makes sense to build a social cohesion in the room. I think about Jordan and the millions of Syrian refugees there. New economies are being created both by local Jordanians and Syrian refugees. Obviously, some of the Syrians will go back to Syria eventually, but there's also hope that these regional economies will continue to grow and flourish.

**DM:** The report talks about economies that are cropping up in host countries as a result of businesses launched by refugees. It's not all bad news.

**RO:** It's not. It requires intention and the attention of multilateral institutes and their ability to make special concessions or waive rules such as duties here and there. These are all tweaks that can be made and the results can be surprising. The Jordan Compact [which loosened regulatory barriers to labour markets and gave refugees access to jobs] is a very interesting first experiment that we should look at and think about replicating.

**DM:** More than 50 per cent of refugees are younger than 18 years old. What does

their future hold and how do you convince Canada's and other countries' policy-makers to consider them every time?

**RO:** I think that is the most compelling of our findings. There are 69 million displaced people in the world. Half of them are children. Think about that number — it's more than the population of Canada. [They're] disaffected, disenfranchised, with little hope, at least in the short term, if not in the long term, of a sustainable life that has a foundation of education, let alone homes and food and water.

You look at the people who are in the Kakuma Refugee Camp [in Kenya]. There are two generations already in that camp. What hope do we have for those young people? It is a lost opportunity in terms of what people can contribute, but it's also a danger. Think about large groups of disaffected young people with no hope. What do we think they're going to do?

The world should sit up and take notice. I think [policy-makers] are notionally aware of the fact. But what are we doing about it? In any given year, the UNHCR is only able to meet 60 per cent of its requirements [For 2018, it required US\$8.2 billion to carry out its programs, but only had US\$4.2 billion in funding; 2019 looks more promising, but will still only see it realize 60 per cent of the funding it requires.] It relies on the charity and goodwill of member states and one of the most important

recommendations of the World Refugee Council is that we move from a system of voluntary contributions to a system of assessed contributions. If you're a member of the world order, or the United Nations, there are certain obligations and these assessed contributions would bring other donor countries into the fold. It would ease the stress on a few donor countries that are ponying up more and more and would make a level playing field, plus the world refugee system would finally be resourced appropriately.

If you add to that the new scheme of financing that could come from the Frozen Assets Repurposing Act, you can see good things happening. I want readers to remember that when former Libyan president Moammar Gadhafi fell, Canada had \$2.2 billion of his assets in our country. We had frozen them and when a new government was [created], Canada entered into negotiations with that government. These negotiations were not open and transparent, but it is the money of the people of Libya and we should return it to them through their government. We had no transparency or accountability of what happened. For all we know, it may have been corrupted all over again. The bill I have proposed [Frozen Assets Repurposing Act S-259] will shine light on the assets. We'll have accountability because the courts will be responsible for making the decision on whether [the assets go] back to the government of the day of that particular country or to an NGO such as UNHCR or Médecins sans Frontières or does it go to someone else?

**DM:** Is the international community abandoning host communities such as Turkey, Germany and Jordan?

**RO:** I think the international community has come to an unfortunate realization that the Syria conundrum will not be resolved, that the Syrian government will stay in power, and therefore, many Syrians will choose not to go home. In that light, I believe that Jordan, Syria and Lebanon need special attention and assistance that they may or may not be getting. Turkey has a huge influx of funds from the EU. I'm not sure about the others. I think abandoning is too strong a word. The way forward is unclear.

**DM:** How invested is Canada in the World Refugee Council?

**RO:** Canada should be very invested in the WRC. I'm not sure how invested they are. I've put forward the notion that Canada is looked to internationally as the

gold standard. In spite of the small numbers we deal with, we have systems and procedures and legislation and policy that are mature. They need to mature more, but we have the opportunity to do so. Canada should think about our refugee context as a best practice. We would be well advised to create a centre of excellence in Canada that the world could look at to help them develop policy and we could learn from others. To look at the internally displaced people of the world, for example, is a robust recommendation. That number is far larger [than the



Omidvar and 16 others sponsored this family of 12 from Syria in 2015. This photo was taken when they landed in Canada.

number of refugees.] There are about 25 million refugees, but the number of internally displaced is 42 million. We can't seem to touch them in a robust enough manner. The place of Canada and our experience and relative success in moving things forward, make this a report that the government of Canada should not just pay attention to, but own. Maybe it will help us get a seat on the UN Security Council.

**DM:** Is this the same kind of initiative as the landmine treaty and are you as hopeful about it?

**RO:** I am very hopeful about it, if we own it and embrace it. We're a middle power and most reasonable Canadians accept that fact. Our greatest moments internationally are when we have taken a leap in leadership. I think of the leap in leadership prime minister Brian Mulroney took when he persuaded the international world order to work on the apartheid problem, and I think about the Land Mines Treaty and Lloyd Axworthy. It's such a natural jump. The work we're doing with the Lima Group [a group of countries, including Canada,

that is pressing for democracy in Venezuela and recognition of president of the National Assembly Juan Guaidó over current President Nicolás Maduro and his regime] is also a leap in leadership. Our footprint can be way larger than the size of our foot.

**DM:** As you mentioned, there are 42 million IDPs in more than 100 countries. How can WRC help them?

**RO:** Unlike the UNHCR, which cannot have any impact on IDPs, we embraced their issues as very relevant to our work. We suggested a number of proposals to deal with that, especially calling for the UNHCR to take some action by naming a UN leader to [be dedicated to] this problem. We also recognized there are more concrete measures needed to deal with women and children.

**DM:** Are developed nations such as the U.S. reneging on their moral responsibilities to refugees?

**RO:** The actions and decisions of the U.S. are discouraging. There are other nation states that follow their lead. The populism discourse that started against migrants in Brexit is like a virus spreading and infecting populations. We need to find the right immunization against it.

Every nation state should and could be doing more. There are some states that sign a cheque, but won't accept refugees; some accept them, but have no money. The uneven ground is an issue. The World Refugee Council does call for common but differentiated responsibilities, which recognizes that there are some nation states that are able to do one thing and not others. There's some discussion about what common and differentiation could look like. I'm going to quote one of my heroes, Peter Sutherland. He said 'Refugees are the responsibility of the world. Proximity doesn't define responsibility.'

The WRC has made about six recommendations specifically about IDPs. In UN parlance, a special representative of the secretary general can call all kinds of nation-states together, table reports, make recommendations. We need a special representative on IDPs. That person could call a global summit on internal displacement. We could have special attention to donor requests and tie them to IDPs. These are basic, common sense steps. But in the absence of the world accepting and recognizing that we have an IDP crisis, nothing will move forward. Symbolic and substantive action could be that the UN says this is a crisis — we need to take some action



and do this beyond the scope of the current UNHCR.

**DM:** Syrians in Turkey have created 100,000 jobs through 6,000 businesses — that's a good news story, isn't it? Do you know of others?

**RO:** Can I tell you a story from Canada? Tareq Hadhad came from Syria and was sponsored by a group in Antigonish, N.S. He comes from a family of chocolate-makers. He decided to rebuild the family business in Antigonish. It's called Peace by Chocolate. It has created jobs in a depressed area of our country. It's revitalized the local economy. He's quite an amazing man.

**DM:** On private sponsorship of refugees — can you share some statistics and success stories?

**RO:** Since we've had the private sponsorship agreement, which just celebrated its 40th anniversary, we've sponsored 327,000 refugees. This is private sponsors, it doesn't include the government sponsorships. Here's another one: Two million Canadians report that they have been personally involved in helping Syrian refugees come and settle in. Environics did a poll and determined that eight per cent of Canadians were sponsoring refugees and another 25 per cent knew someone who did. That means one in three Canadians is either personally involved or aware of the private sponsorship program.

**DM:** Do you have any personal stories you can share?

**RO:** I have the story of the family I sponsored. When I created Life Line Syria, I felt it was imperative for me to walk the talk so I pulled together a team of sponsors. We were 17 individuals. We decided to sponsor a family that would be hard to place. There were 12 people in all. A mother, father and the father's two

sisters, along with eight children from the ages of three to 15. They spoke no English and lived in a tent in Lebanon for four years. They were rural people. The father had experience in construction. They arrived Dec. 18, 2015, and I just heard today that they've bought a house in Brampton and they've filed their application for citizenship. At the airport when they arrived, the father, Mahmoud, came to me and said, 'You are Ratna?' I said I was and he said 'Where we live?' I said 'Toronto' and I could see the sigh of relief on his face. The second thing he said was 'I go to work.' Private sponsors become ersatz families and they find it hard to let go. We saw them intensively for the first year, but we've encouraged our private sponsorship to not be too intrusive now. We'll have a celebration in August, hopefully in their new home.

**DM:** Are you involved in the Global Action Network for the Forcibly Displaced (GANFD)?

**RO:** I consider myself a member of the GANFD. There are people who are coalescing around the notion that this not just become another report on the shelf. I'm heartened by the young voices who've coalesced around the report. The report is written through the lens of women and children as much as it can be and I really appreciate that. It features incentives around solutions that have come up in countries we don't think of as progressive refugee-receiving countries. Let me give you an example: Tanzania gave citizenship status to more than 200,000 Rwandan refugees. Uganda gives plots of land to refugees. The report has [outlined several interesting] regional responses to regional movements of people that we should think about in other parts of the world. Yes, the private sponsorship program is amazing, really it is. But giving

citizenship to 200,000 Rwandan refugees? Who sat up and took notice of that?

**DM:** Can you share some top goals of the GANFD?

**RO:** First, these ideas need to be kept alive and implemented and we need a global action network to do that. The Global Action Network will be the platform to bring the proposals in the report to realization. It will be made up of governments and individuals who will work outside the formal intergovernmental context and could include actors such as city mayors, financial institutions and, of course, humanitarian groups and civil society organizations.

It is not easy to reduce the goals down to three, but here are my top favourites. Please note that these are my choices and are not necessarily those of the WRC.

1. Bring momentum behind at least one new multilateral reform proposal contained in the WRC (for example, annual assessed contributions to the UNHCR)
2. Call into life proposals that are within the jurisdiction of a nation-state (such as repurposing of frozen assets)
3. Bring unusual actors to the table as outlined in the report (e.g. multilateral organizations like the IMF and WTO, or financial-sector institutions) to [act on] recommendations such as trade preferences and refugee sovereign bonds.

**DM:** What role can women play in this crisis?

**RO:** Women and children *are* the crisis. They bear a disproportionate share of the burden and the risk. Their voices and perspectives have been central to the development of the recommendations. The WRC believes they must be at the forefront of change through leadership positions in the Global Action Network so that solutions implemented are viewed through a gender lens. ■



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## HOMSA provides dignity to aboriginal school children

**W**hen you can give a deeply impoverished child all the things she needs to feel as though she fits in at the start of a new school year, you've given her the dignity to thrive.

That's what the Asia-Pacific division of the Heads of Mission Spouses Association did for upwards of 200 children who are clients of Ottawa's Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health when it held its big annual fundraiser June 11.

"When people come together and they're generous to a population they know very little about, but they have an open heart and they care, that's special," said Allison Fisher, executive director of the Wabano Centre. "These folks took a look at our community and saw that our children needed some help and they asked what they could do."

Fisher told the spouses a program called Walk in Beauty that provides the children with much-needed school supplies and shoes — to start the school year on the right foot, so to speak.

HOMSA was hoping to raise \$10,000 with proceeds from ticket sales for the event, which included an exotic lunch of dishes from all over Asia, along with a raffle and silent auction. In the end, it raised approximately \$22,000, which Fisher said



The Asia-Pacific division of the Heads of Mission Spouses Association held the group's annual fundraiser at the Wabano Centre for Aboriginal Health. Event organizers Jane Haycock, left, Aparna Swarup, centre, are joined here by chief of protocol Stewart Wheeler.

will help at least 200 of her centre's children with their back-to-school needs.

Why did the diplomatic spouses choose the Wabano Centre as its recipient this year? One of the members of the Asia-Pacific group of HOMSA told Jane Haycock, wife of Australian High Commissioner Natasha Smith, the Wabano Centre was worth considering for support. Some committee members then met with Fisher and they talked about their common interests of supporting women in the community.

"We discussed the things they do with school children and we had a bit of a brainstorming session," Haycock said. "[Fisher] explained they were looking for funding to support the [back-to-school] program. She told us that some children

who come to Wabano come from very unprivileged families, often coming from a long way outside of Ottawa into the city. She said they are not very well supported and their family networks are quite poor. As we're an international community, we saw a nice fit in helping Canada's Indigenous community. It was a sense of community meeting community and reaching out to help each other."

One in five Canadian children lives in poverty and for Indigenous children, that statistic jumps to two in five. At Wabano — which is part of a network of Ontario community health centres and provides medical clinics, social services and support and youth programs — 5,000 children come through the doors every year, and 81 per cent of them live in poverty. ■

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# SOGC: Changing maternal outcomes globally

By Jay Poulton

In a white room inside a plain building in the town of Mzuzu, Malawi, doctors John Smith and Doris Kayambo stand behind a table where they have laid out a variety of medical instruments and models over a white sheet, ready to teach a room full of eager medical and clinical officers, midwives and nurses about the latest best practices as part of the Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada's (SOGC) ALARM International Program (AIP).

"Malawi has made incredible strides in women's health in the last decade," said Kayambo. "It is important work to continue and ensure that the health practitioners here have the latest tools available to not have them slide back to a care model that puts women and their babies at risk."

The SOGC has been promoting excellence in the practice of obstetrics and gynecology to advance the health of women through leadership, advocacy, collaboration and education for 75 years in Canada. While the health and well-being of women and their children has improved in Canada as a result of the work of organizations such as the SOGC, internationally, the outcomes for women in developing countries have not followed the same trend.

This is why, in 1998, the SOGC adapted the contents of its ALARM (Advances in Labour and Risk Management) course to the realities of health professionals practising in low-income countries. The objective of the ALARM course is to equip health professionals with the most recent best practices in providing care to women during labour, their babies and their families.

"Having the most up-to-date information in clinical practice is essential to healthy outcomes in pregnancy," said Jennifer Blake, CEO of the SOGC. "ALARM and its international program seek to give doctors, nurses and health administrators the tools they need to recognize, assist and help treat women during and after pregnancy, in order to reduce mortality."

The AIP has been taught in more than 20 countries in Africa, Central America, the Middle East and Asia and its impact has been immediate. Two years after ALARM training was provided in Senegal and Mali, maternal deaths decreased by 15 per cent.



Participants from Mzuzu, Malawi, hold their certificates of completion of the ALARM International Program (AIP), run by the Ottawa-based Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada.

"What is most important is that we can provide the tools for better care. We all want the same thing and that is healthy moms, healthy babies and healthy communities," said Kayambo. "But most of all, one aspect I find most rewarding is to see the change in worldview that the participants have when it comes to the sexual and reproductive health and rights of women."

As one participant from Malawi explained, "Sexual and reproductive health and rights are the most neglected areas in practice. This course taught me [that] most mothers who have died in our country, [died because] they have no [rights] of their own."

Those fundamental rights as outlined by the SOGC include the rights to life, health, education and information, privacy, number and spacing of children, consent to marriage, freedom from discrimination, freedom from harmful practices, freedom from violence and the right to share in the benefits of scientific advancement.

Having not only the women, but all those involved in health care on the

ground, understand that women have these sexual and reproductive health rights is one of the most fundamental aspects of the training the program is seeking to help trainees understand.

"Our immediate focus should be on giving women around the world access to comprehensive sexual and reproductive health services, including family planning, access to safe abortion, skilled attendance at birth and timely emergency obstetrical care," says André B. Lalonde, former executive vice-president of the SOGC. "As a long-term strategy, the focus should be on increasing education, strengthening gender equality and empowering women."

This base understanding of rights is essential to assisting the health practitioners on the ground to deliver the level of care that is necessary to each patient. Understanding that women in these rural or isolated communities have certain rights when it comes to their sexual and reproductive health will help in turning the statistical tides in these women's favour.

Jay Poulton is director of communications with the SOGC.





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# Greece: Rebuilding an economy with exports



*By Dimitrios Azemopoulos*

**C**anadians speak fondly about Greece — especially its natural beauty and interesting history. In fact, according to the most recent survey conducted across Canada, more than two in three Canadians would consider visiting Greece and vacationing there. Canadians most frequently mention history, historical sites and architecture as the main reasons. As such, tourism has been a top priority of our government. With its strong tourism policy, we've achieved unprecedented growth for four consecutive years. We've strengthened our international presence and launched Greece successfully as an attractive destination that stands out for its unique travel experiences. In 2017, we welcomed more than 30 million tourists. That's 6 million more than three years ago, and 2018 was also an exceptional year during which Greece attracted about 2 million more. This year could be another record year for tourism in Greece, with an expected 290,000 Canadian tourists among those choosing Greece as their vacation destination for 2019.

Launched in July 2013, the Greek golden visa program grants a five-year residency visa in return for a real estate investment that exceeds 250,000 euros (300,000 including taxes and fees.) There is no minimum stay requirement and children up to the age of 21 can be included in the family application. The visa can be renewed if the property investment is retained. Investors don't have to live in the country to retain and renew the investor visa, but they will want to budget for the additional taxes on real estate, which are 24 per cent. That said, this program offers the lowest cost residency in Europe.



Tourism, to such sites as the Acropolis, is one of Greece's main sources of revenue. In 2017, more than 30 million tourists visit the country.

Securing entry into the Greek residency program takes approximately 40 days.

International bailout programs were an important step in Greece's return to economic normalcy and renewed prosperity and they will continue to generate positive results as the country carries forward the ongoing and important work of implementing reforms and improving its international competitiveness.

Today, as we look back, the most significant progress has taken place since the beginning of the sovereign debt crisis in 2010, progress made thanks to the immense and unprecedented sacrifices of the Greeks. The implementation of this bold economic adjustment program has eliminated the root causes of the Greek crisis. It's worth noting that the fiscal adjustment was unprecedented, turning a primary deficit of 10 per cent of GDP in 2009 into a primary surplus of four per cent of GDP in 2017. In addition, the current account deficit has been reduced by more than 12 percentage points of GDP since the beginning of the crisis. Finally, labour cost competitiveness is fully restored and price competitiveness has been recording substantial gains since 2009.

The structural reform program covered various areas, such as the pension and health care systems, goods and services markets, business environment, tax system, budgetary framework and public

sector transparency.

Thanks to these reforms and the effort of business to make up for declining domestic demand by exporting to new markets, openness has improved substantially and the economy has started to rebalance towards export-oriented sectors.

The share of total exports in GDP increased from 19 per cent in 2009 to 37.7 per cent in 2018. Exports of goods and services, excluding the shipping sector, have increased in real terms by 53 per cent since their trough in 2009, outperforming euro-area exports as a whole. Greece's shipping sector itself controls about 20 per cent of the global fleet of 4,746 vessels in deadweight tonnes.

The volume of export goods and services in the economy increased cumulatively between 2010 and 2017 by 14 per cent, relative to non-exports in terms of gross value added. The rebalancing of the economy towards internationally tradable sectors was facilitated by increases in the relative prices and net profit margins of export goods and services. It is worth underlining that, in 2017, the estimated net profit margins of exports were three times higher than those of non-exports.

Greek-Canadian trade is healthy, but there is definitely room for improvement given the investment climate in Greece and its strategic position at the crossroads of three continents. In 2018, trade volume reached almost \$384 million, up by nearly 6 per cent over 2017. The main Greek products imported by Canada are olive oil, prepared vegetables, preserved food, seafood products, cheese, wine, fats, oils and chemical products. Canada exports mainly soya, fur, legumes and pharmaceutical products to Greece. It is worth mentioning that Canadian interest in quality Greek food products has risen significantly in recent years.

Greece welcomes Canadian investors not only in tourism, but also in energy, information and communications technology (ICT), life sciences, food and agriculture and logistics — sectors that are now in the core of Greece's long-term strategy of economic growth.

**Dimitrios Azemopoulos is the ambassador of Greece to Canada. Reach him at [gremb.otv@mfa.gr](mailto:gremb.otv@mfa.gr) or (613) 238-6271.**





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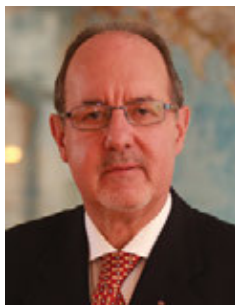
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# Canada-Chile: New trade milestones and goals



By Alejandro Marisio



Solar power is Chile's fastest growing renewable source of energy, a vital component of the expanding utilities sector.

In February 2019, new amendments to the Canada-Chile Free Trade Agreement came into force, further modernizing the free-trade system that has been in place between both countries since July 1997. These first 22 years of the free trade agreement have proved to be quite successful; more than 98 per cent of our bilateral trade is completely free of tariffs. In addition, bilateral trade has more than tripled, rallying from US\$559 million in 1997 to more than US\$1.9 billion in 2018, even after taking into account a recent decline in commodity prices.

The modernization of the agreement is aimed at further liberalizing trade. It streamlines public procurement, includes an investment chapter, a chapter on trade and gender and updates to provisions on technical barriers to trade and measures that assure food products are free of animal and plant disease and pests. Chile's trade partnership with Canada continues to grow and updating our bilateral regulatory framework shows how well both countries work together to deliver concrete results for their people.

The agreement is part of a broader range of economic agreements between both countries that include environment and labour agreements, a treaty to avoid double taxation and tax evasion and, more recently, the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

Chile's main exports to Canada are copper, passenger boats, wine, salmon, berries, apples and other fresh produce, while Canada's chief exports to our country are vegetable oils, wheat, coal, oil, sulphur, automobiles and medicines. Both countries continue to work at diversifying their export matrix.

To that end, Chile has particularly expanded its services industry with the aim of internationalization, especially in the mining sector and related fields such as engineering, exploration, legal and consulting services. Another industry that is quickly expanding is IT and financial technology services (fintech).

We also strive to expand free trade with the rest of the world and Chile's commitment to liberalization is present in agreements we have with 64 countries that represent more than 86 per cent of world GDP and 4.3 billion consumers. This year, Chile is the host country of APEC (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation), a regional forum that promotes regional economic integration. Priority areas for APEC Chile 2019 include digital society; integration; women, SMEs and inclusive growth; and sustainable growth.

Investment is also a vibrant part of our economic exchange. Investors value Chile for its growing economy, rule of law, reliable foreign investment, stable regulatory framework, ease of doing business, transparency and competitiveness and continue to choose our country. Chile remains first in the region in all major economic rankings and surveys and recently rose from No. 22 to 15 globally in the Fraser Institute's *Economic Freedom Index* and No. 6 in its *Investment Attractiveness Index*. Foreign investors from around the world continue to increase their presence in Chile and, in 2018, we saw new materialized investment of more than US\$8.2 billion.

Canada's foreign direct investment (FDI) in Chile is \$22.4 billion, 67 per cent of which is in the mining sector, where

Canada consistently ranks first and consequently may soon become the overall leader as a foreign direct investor in Chile. Other sectors that attract Canadian investment are utilities (including renewable energies such as solar), transportation and storage, chemicals and financial services. Chile's investment in Canada is more than US\$1.8 billion, focusing mainly in the mining sector, metallurgy and transportation, with presence in Ontario, Quebec and New Brunswick.

Our common dedication to the mining sector brings us together every year at the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada (PDAC) Convention in Toronto. Chile was present at PDAC 2019 last March to promote projects in mining and related services, with a renewed focus on opportunities in lithium, of which we have 54 per cent of world reserves.

The trade and investment relationship between Chile and Canada does not exist by chance. It is deeply rooted in a common view of the world. We share principles and values as like-minded countries and work together towards open and inclusive trade as part of our core commitment to democracy, a free-market economy, human rights and the environment — they are main pillars for the prosperity of our citizens and our economies. For Chile, working together with partners such as Canada is a key component of our goal for comprehensive, inclusive and sustainable development.

Alejandro Marisio is the ambassador of Chile. Reach him by email at [lcaceres@minrel.gob.cl](mailto:lcaceres@minrel.gob.cl) or (613) 235-4402.





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# Egypt: New energy and infrastructure projects



By *Ahmed Abu Zeid*

**A**mid the political turmoil in the Middle East and its devastating impacts on stability, Egypt has managed to overcome many persistent challenges by embarking on a major socio-economic transformation. This transformation comes with the sustainable development strategy — Egypt Vision 2030 — adopted in 2015. This vision works towards inclusive development, trade, investment promotion and social justice. It also offers a road map for maximizing competitive advantage to achieve Egyptians' dreams and aspirations of a dignified and decent life.

In light of the turmoil Egypt endured after the 2011 revolution, and after the election of a new president, the government undertook a series of bold reforms, including lifting the energy subsidy and floating the currency. As a result, economic and financial indicators are more positive and stable, with growth reaching 5.3 per cent in 2018, reducing inflation and unemployment rates to 12.2 per cent and 9.9 per cent respectively, raising foreign reserves to \$44.5 billion and augmenting foreign direct investments. In recognition of reforms, Moody's credit rating agency recently changed its outlook classification of Egypt from stable to positive, while Fitch rating agency upgraded Egypt's long-term foreign currency issuer default rating to B+ from B, with a stable outlook.

Alongside the financial and economic reforms, the government adopted an extensive and ambitious modernization plan focused on implementing mega-projects, such as the Suez Canal Development Zone, the Golden Triangle economic zone and the new administrative capital. Other projects include housing, under which the



GDP growth in Egypt in 2018 reached 5.3 per cent, reducing inflation and unemployment rates to 12.2 and 9.9 per cent respectively and raising foreign reserves to \$44.5 billion.

government built 11 new cities; transport, in which it has added 1,100 kilometres to the national road network since 2014 and electricity, having added 25,000 megawatts between 2014 and 2018. Work is also under way to build the Benban Solar Park in Aswan, which, once completed, will be the largest solar installation in the world. These projects undoubtedly provide many investment opportunities for Canadian companies.

On the energy level, following the discoveries of large offshore gas reserves in the East Mediterranean, particularly the Zohr gas field, which produces 2.3 billion cubic feet per day, Egypt has achieved self-sufficiency in gas. This was followed by an ambitious plan to make Egypt a regional energy hub, which included drafting a new law aiming to liberalize the gas market by 2022. The culmination of this policy helped in boosting foreign direct investment in the energy sector to US\$20 billion in 2018. It also led to the establishment of the Eastern Mediterranean Gas Forum in January 2019, which acts as a regional gas market.

In light of this economic transformation and the positive investment environment, I encourage the Canadian private sector

to take advantage of the investment and trade opportunities in Egypt and benefit from the investment-facilitating measures adopted by the Egyptian government, especially the new investment law. Let's boost Canadian investments in Egypt beyond the current amounts of US\$2.3 billion.

On the trade level, Egyptian trade with Canada amounts to US\$1 billion, but it could be stronger with more trade missions, and the establishment of a joint business council to act as a catalyst for trade and economic co-operation. Egyptian exports to Canada are mainly precious stones, textiles and fruits and vegetables, while Egyptian imports from Canada are machinery, coal, paper and iron ores. I believe the Canadian market can take more fruits and vegetables from Egypt, especially since Egypt's production significantly increased in 2018.

Moreover, Egypt has invested in its citizens in order to enable them to flourish and play a constructive role in advancing their society. The government adopted a national strategy to empower women. Today, women make up 25 per cent of Egypt's cabinet and 16 per cent of its Parliament. In addition, the government is focusing on skills development and micro-financing for women and youth empowerment.

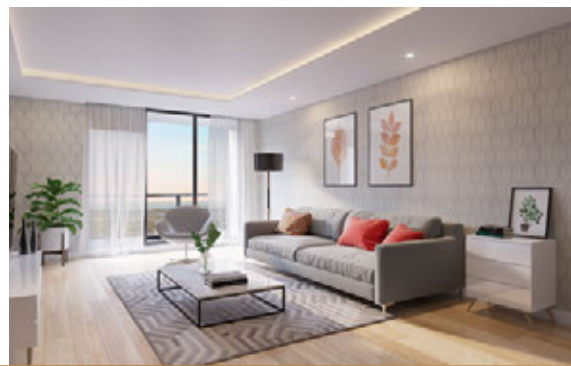
Egypt has also launched social solidarity initiatives such as the Takafol program, which aims to provide health care to poor families with children under 18 years old. The Karama initiative, meanwhile, targets those more than 65 years of age and those with disabilities. The government also adopted a social housing initiative through which more than 300,000 social housing units were built over the past four years to provide affordable housing to the most needy.

The new Egypt wants to become economically advanced and socially inclusive. In fulfilling these objectives, Egypt reaches out to its partners, including Canada, to achieve common benefits and continue to build a modern state that improves the quality of life of all Egyptians.

Ahmed Abu Zeid is the ambassador of Egypt. Reach him at [ambassador@egyptincanada.net](mailto:ambassador@egyptincanada.net) or 613-234-4931.



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# Kosovo: A thriving economic success story



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**LAST NAME:** Hiseni

**CITIZENSHIP:** Kosovar

**STARTED CURRENT POSITION:**  
October 03, 2016

**PREVIOUS POSTINGS:** France and  
Belgium

Exactly 20 years ago, Kosovo started building from the ashes of war. With the help of friends such as Canada, the nearly wiped-out country flourished into a free, multi-ethnic, dynamic democracy. This year, we mark several important anniversaries for Kosovo in Canada, and it's a great time to highlight the role that Canada played in our transformation, which is what makes our relations so unique.

The relationship began in 1999, when Canada and its NATO allies intervened in order to stop the Serbian state-led ethnic cleansing of Kosovo Albanians. It was, in fact, because of Kosovo that the Responsibility to Protect norm finally started to take shape. Following the intervention and after witnessing a humanitarian disaster with more than 80 per cent of Kosovo's population displaced and deported, Canada decided to airlift more than 7,000 refugees from camps in neighbouring countries on chartered Canadian Forces planes. The refugees were given a chance to start over in Canada and many of them are proud Kosovar-Canadians today.

The relationship between Kosovo and Canada was founded on universal moral principles and values, and everything that has followed since has built upon this foundation. Because we had suffered brutal oppression and massive human rights violations for so long, and because our freedom was a result of a joint international effort in the name of humanitarian values, today Kosovo stands proudly in defence of precisely those values.

This is also why Kosovo is rightfully considered one of the most successful cases of humanitarian intervention worldwide. Following a UN-supervised

transition process, during which Canada strongly supported Kosovo's internal consolidation and democratization, in 2008 Kosovo formally proclaimed independence and has since worked hard towards becoming a regional

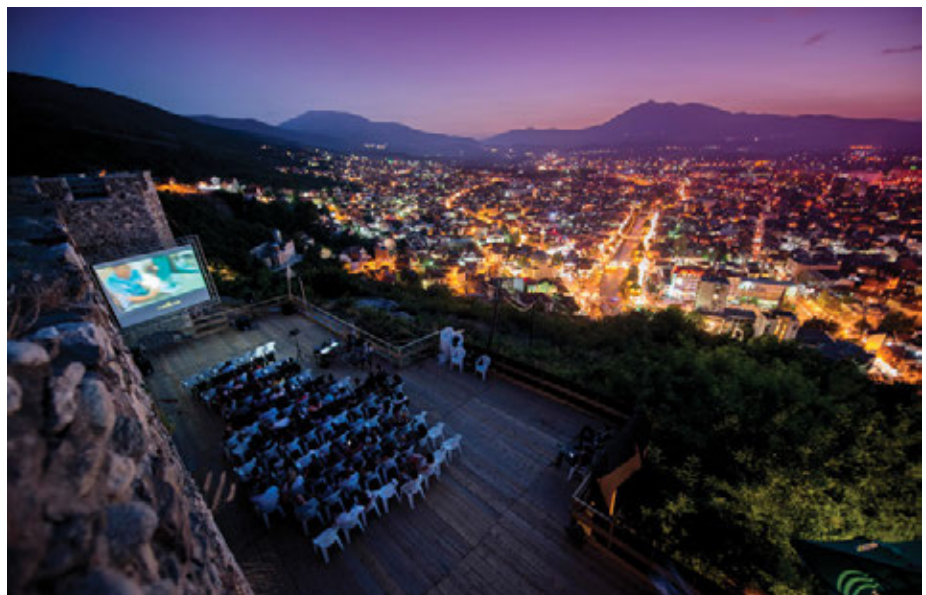
beacon of democracy and human rights. In this regard, Canada continues to serve as our role model for diversity, tolerance and inclusiveness.

Indeed, our constitution is among the most progressive in the world. It guarantees freedom, justice and equal rights for everyone, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, belief, or even sexual orientation. Kosovo's multi-ethnic character is reflected both symbolically — such as in our flag, which features six stars, each of which represents a community living in Kosovo — as well as practically, through specific affirmative actions that promote representation of these communities. For example, although non-Albanian communities make up less than 10 per cent of the overall population, our Parliament guar-

antees them 20 out of its 120 seats. The communities are also well represented in our government, police, armed forces and judiciary. We have two official languages at the national level, with an additional few at the municipal level. For a young republic born out of a violent ethnic conflict, it's a remarkable starting point.

We look up to Canada's feminist policies, especially given that it's women who are making international success headlines for Kosovo today. Indeed, Kosovo was the first Western Balkan country to elect a female president. Women are guaranteed 30 per cent of seats in our Parliament, and, in our first ever Olympic Games, unbeatable judo world champion Majlinda Kelmendi took home the gold. The global contemporary art scene is being rocked by our young star artist, Flaka Haliti, while Dua Lipa and Rita Ora dominate the popular music charts worldwide.

Looking at the last 20 years, it's clear that Kosovo's liberation unleashed the brimming potential of a nation vying to prove itself to the world. Our youth is the best testament to this. Kosovo is Europe's youngest country, not just in terms of statehood, but population age as well — the average age in Kosovo is 28 years, and a whopping 70 per cent of the population is under 35 years old. It comes as no surprise that music and arts are a booming industry in Kosovo, as are sports. In fewer



Kosovo was one of the first countries to sign a foreign investment protection agreement with Canada's current government.



than three years since its FIFA debut, the Kosovo national football team is already setting records by being undefeated for more than a dozen matches in a row.

This youth is also driving our economic development. Kosovo used to be poor and underdeveloped, with low literacy rates due to decades of apartheid. In the decade since it became independent, it has had the top economic growth in the region and even in Europe, with latest estimates at 4.2 per cent. The World Bank mentions it as one of only four countries in Europe to experience growth every year since the global financial crisis in 2008. The public debt is very low at 20 per cent of GDP, we have one of the soundest banking systems in the region, if not beyond, and foreign direct investments are growing steadily.

Kosovo's household internet penetration is at almost 90 per cent today. Coupled with an educated, driven and engaged youth, this has resulted in a thriving culture of entrepreneurship and innovation, with many international media now starting to talk about Kosovo less as a war-torn country and more as the region's first startup nation. From prestigious prizes, such as the NASA Space Apps Challenge, to job creation, our startups are putting Kosovo on a global map.

All this human potential is fortunately also supplemented by Kosovo's natural resources potential. Despite its small territory, Kosovo has the world's fifth-largest proven reserves of lignite coal and



Kosovar President Hashim Thaci met with Prime Minister Justin Trudeau during a visit in 2017. To thank Canada for its solidarity, Thaci presented Trudeau with *Sure Shore*, which highlights success stories of former Kosovo refugees warmly welcomed by Canada in 1999.

an abundance of minerals such as lead, zinc, silver, nickel, cobalt, copper, iron and bauxite. For this reason, Kosovo is a regular participant at Canada's PDAC, the

world's premier mineral exploration and mining convention, and why our partnership with Canada is becoming more tangible by the day.

Kosovo was one of the first countries to sign the Foreign Investment Protection Agreement, known as FIPA, with Canada. This agreement followed an increasing interest by Canadian companies in investing in the mining sector in Kosovo, and it is now opening the way for more Kosovo-Canada economic exchange, for example in agriculture, with the Canadian fertilizer manufacturer NutriVida recently inaugurated in Kosovo, or with Kosovo wines starting to be sold through the LCBO.

All the above helped strengthen the very special ties between Kosovo and Canada since 1999. We are happy to celebrate the 10th anniversary of diplomatic relations with Canada this year, after a successful bilateral agenda ever since our embassy opened in Ottawa in 2016. Whether it's bilateral visits — Kosovo's president was the first president from our region to meet Prime Minister Justin Trudeau in Ottawa — or the negotiation and signature of new agreements such as FIPA, or the celebration of success stories of Kosovars' integration in Canada, our co-operation is stronger than ever. ■

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The Palace of Versailles is one of France's most-visited tourist attractions.



# Where in the world everybody is going

The Top 10 tourist destinations around the globe

**E**ach year, people around the world leave home searching for adventure or a change of scenery. While most tend to travel mainly within their own region, international travel has become a dynamic and profitable business. In 2017, the most recent year for which statistics are available, there were 1.32 billion tourist arrivals around the world, 84 million more than 2016, the highest increase since the 2008 global economic crisis.

*By Laura Neilson Bonikowsky*







Data about the number of tourists, what they spend, where they stay and for how long are accumulated by credit card companies, third-party booking agencies such as *TripAdvisor*, the *World Atlas* and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). The list presented here has been compiled by comparing the lists generated by these agencies for 2017, particularly the UNWTO's data, to review the countries that received the most tourists and the most popular locations in those countries. The list includes useful tips, should you be inspired to leave home. Dollar amounts are U.S. currency, unless otherwise indicated.

## 1. France

*Ooh là là!* France tops the list, with 86.9 million tourists in 2017. It's no wonder — stunning scenery, history, sophisticated cities and amazing food! Among the most visited sites in France are Notre Dame Cathedral, the Louvre Museum, and the Palace of Versailles.

Henry James described Paris as “the greatest temple ever built to material joys and the lust of the eyes.” The city is a mélange of iconic architecture, history, grandeur and romance. Notre Dame Cathedral, on the east end of Île de la Cité, was built on the ruins of two churches; the cornerstone was laid in 1163. It was largely completed by 1250, but construction of porches and chapels continued for another 100 years. It is the most famous of medieval Gothic cathedrals, distinguished by its art and architecture, particularly the use of flying buttresses and the rib vault. As a symbol of Paris, it could not be more iconic.

The cathedral has deteriorated over the centuries, requiring extensive reconstruction. On April 15, 2019, a massive fire, possibly related to renovations, devastated the cathedral, destroying its roof, spire and woodwork, but its artifacts were saved. Paris has vowed to rebuild, which could take decades. The cathedral is closed, but the site will undoubtedly remain a place where people gather to pay their respects and reflect on the history that has taken place within its walls.

The Louvre Museum, housing the world's largest art collection, began as a 12th-Century garrison fortress. It has expanded many times from the 16th Century, becoming the main residence of François I and ultimately a public museum during the French Revolution. Among its 380,000 objects are many of the world's invaluable treasures, including Leonardo da Vinci's *Mona Lisa*, the sculpture known as



The Louvre Museum, which houses the *Mona Lisa* (shown here) is among the top tourist attractions in Paris. The small painting attracts crowds every day. (See page 80 for an article on an Ottawa-based *Mona Lisa* exhibit.)

the *Winged Victory of Samothrace*, by an unknown artist, and Michelangelo's *Venus de Milo*. The glass pyramid over the entrance was completed in 1989.

General admission is \$20, but free for some. See the list at [Louvre.fr](http://Louvre.fr). Reservations are recommended; book online.

Other must-sees in Paris include Sacré-Cœur, Montmartre, Tuileries Garden, Arc de Triomphe, Champs-Élysées, Musée d'Orsay, Place de la Concorde, and Champs de Mars. Each district, or, as they say in Paris, *arrondissement*, has its own flavour for cafés, restaurants and nightlife.

Fans of *Les Misérables*, engineering or unusual attractions may enjoy the Musée des égouts de Paris (Paris Sewers Museum) beneath the Quai d'Orsay on the Left Bank. The sewer was first built in the 13th Century by Philippe Auguste. Check dates before you go; the museum closes when the sewer is undergoing maintenance.

Take the train from Paris to Versailles, which is just on the outskirts, to see its exquisite palace. Of its 2,300 rooms, the most famous is the breathtaking Hall of Mirrors. Originally Louis XIII's hunting pavilion, the Palace of Versailles was transformed by Louis XIV to become the centre of government in 1682. Successive

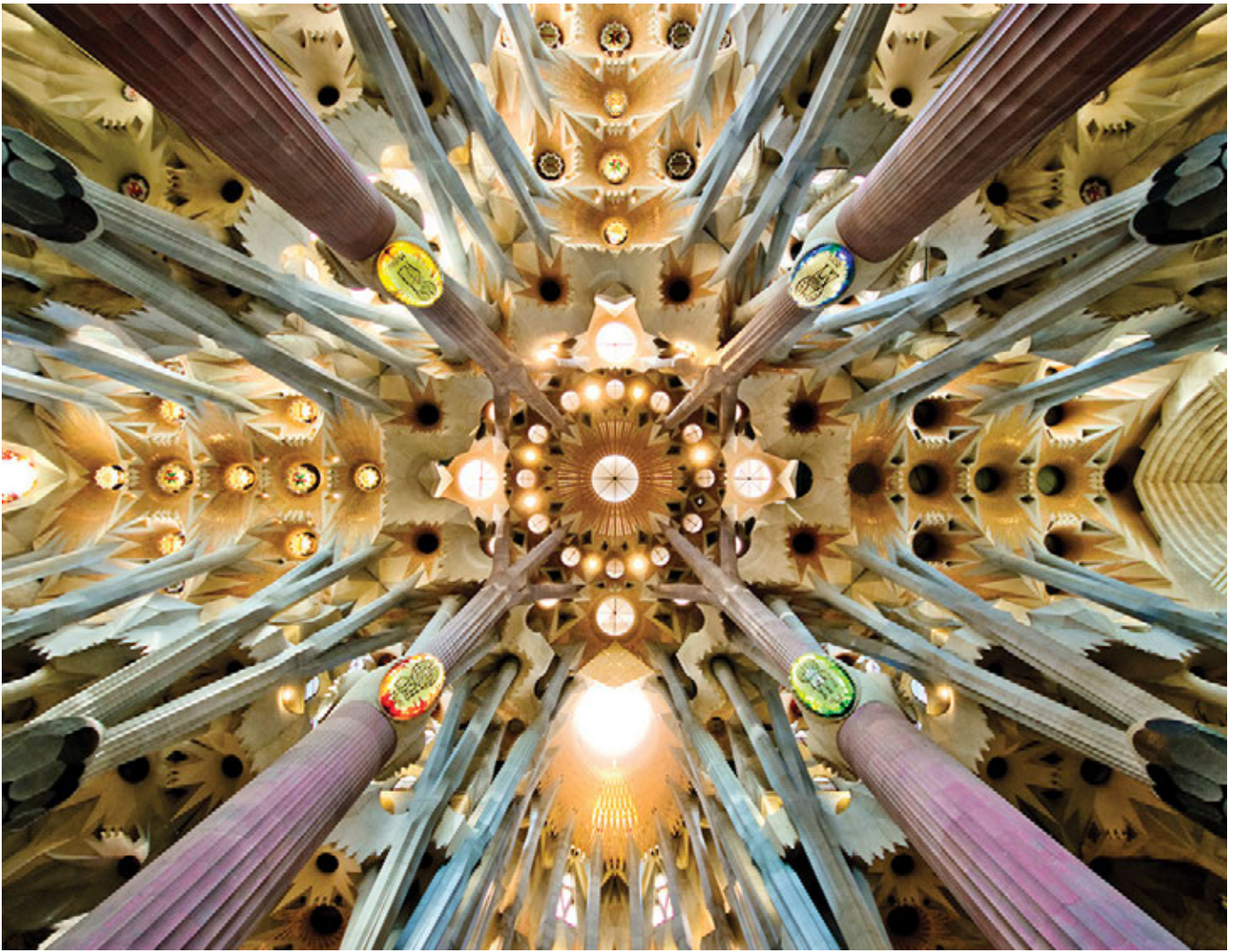
kings put their touch on it until the French Revolution in 1789, when Louis XVI fled to Paris. It was never again a royal residence and became the Museum of the History of France in 1837. A guided tour can be had for \$46 per person (it is closed Mondays).

## 2. Spain

In 2017, Spain received 81.8 million visitors. Spain's most popular destination is Barcelona, the capital of Catalonia, where visitors can enjoy Catalan culture, architecture, food, shopping and vibrant nightlife. Before you go, consider buying a Barcelona Card, the city's official 3-in-1 tourist pass for transportation, museums and discounts. It comes in a range of prices depending on the length of your stay. [barcelonacard.org](http://barcelonacard.org)

Barcelona's most visited place is the grand Basilica of La Sagrada Família. It was conceived in 1866 as an expiatory temple dedicated to the Holy Family. The cornerstone was laid on March 19, 1882. It has been under construction ever since and is expected to be completed in 2026. Visitors can tour the basilica for as little as \$20. The Archdiocese of Barcelona holds an international mass at the basilica on Sundays and on holy days at 9 a.m. Seat-





The grand Basilica La Sagrada Família is Barcelona's most visited place. The cornerstone was laid in 1882 and it's still under construction. The expected completion date is sometime in 2026.

ing is limited, so buy tickets well ahead of time.

At the centre of the old city is the Gothic Quarter, once the Roman settlement of Barcino, founded in 218 BC. The quarter's narrow, winding streets lead visitors to an array of eclectic shopping opportunities, plenty of restaurants and bars and several peaceful squares. Stroll along Las Ramblas, a tree-lined pedestrian street that was once a dry riverbed, stretching through the heart of the city.

Discover Barcelona's Roman history at the Museu d'Història de la Ciutat, the city history museum, comprising 13 locations around the city. Begin with MUHBA—Plaça del Rei, where you will travel back in time via elevator to Barcino, below street level. Traverse a series of footbridges to glimpse ancient Roman life before ascending to medieval Barcelona and the former royal palace.

No visit to Spain would be complete without taking in a flamenco performance at one of the country's prestigious tablaos (flamenco venues). The passionate and sultry dance embodies all we think of when we think of Spain. There are options in every city, some including dinner, a free lesson, or a walking tour around a historic area with a flamenco show included.

### 3. United States

Bold, brash and beautiful, the U.S. has a wide range of land and cityscapes to suit any traveller; it attracted 76.9 million visitors in 2017.

With Times Square, Central Park, Broadway, the Metropolitan Museum of Art and Grand Central Terminal, New York City is a shoo-in as the biggest draw for tourists. Its most visited location is the Statue of Liberty, on Liberty Island.

"Liberty Enlightening the World" was

proposed by Edouard de Laboulaye, who hoped this gift from France to the U.S. would inspire the French to create their own democracy. Constructed over eight years, it was presented to ambassador Levi Morton in Paris on July 4, 1881. It was shipped to the U.S., where the foundation and pedestal were being constructed, and revealed to the public on Oct. 28, 1886.

The statue has assumed several roles; she has symbolized freedom, mobilized troops, sold war bonds, advertised many products, welcomed immigrants and represented an idealized vision of the U.S. Whatever her political context, the Statue of Liberty is remarkable.

Visitors can climb 377 steps from the main lobby to the crown platform. Buy tickets in advance and wear comfortable shoes. The National Park Service, which is responsible for the statue, warns that the only authorized ferry service that can



The second most popular tourist destination in the U.S. is San Francisco, where tourists most often visit the Golden Gate Bridge.

land at Liberty or Ellis Island is Statue Cruises; do not purchase tickets from street vendors. Expect to pay around \$20. If you plan to visit, plan ahead by visiting [statuecruises.com](http://statuecruises.com)

For the second most popular place in the U.S., we cross the country to San Francisco, California, where tourists most often take in Golden Gate Bridge and Fisherman's Wharf.

Golden Gate Bridge is probably what most people envision when they think of San Francisco. Spanning Golden Gate Strait, the suspension bridge, built between 1933 and 1937, connects San Francisco with Marin County to the north. It was a boon to workers in the Great Depression; men were hired if they could withstand the rigours of the job.

It is 2.7 kilometres, built in the Art Deco style and painted international orange. Its suspension cables contain 128,747 kilometres of wire, enough to circle the Earth three times with a bit left over.

Southbound vehicles pay a toll from \$7

to \$56, depending on vehicle size and payment method. Get tickets at [goldengate.org](http://goldengate.org). There is a welcome centre at the south end of the bridge in the Presidio.

Not-to-be-missed in San Francisco is Fisherman's Wharf, where Italian fishermen once sang to communicate through the bay's dense fog. Get there on one of San Francisco's famous cable cars — the Powell-Hyde line or the Powell-Mason line.

The perfect end to a day of sightseeing is a meal of fresh seafood and a cold beverage on Pier 39 as you watch the sun set. A stroll along the pier leads past a marina to floating platforms where sea lions congregate, to the delight of tourists. You will smell them before you see them.

#### 4. China

Since reform and opening 40 years ago, and with global exposure from the 2008 Summer Olympic Games, China has become a hot tourist market. The country received 60.7 million tourists in 2017,

according to UNWTO, which sees China becoming the world's most visited country by 2020. Before you go, check into visa requirements, which vary by destination and length of stay.

China's rugged natural landscape contrasts starkly with the sleek skyscrapers of central Hong Kong, a Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China. A trip through Old Town Central provides a taste of Hong Kong's unique flavour, where ancient temples and authentic tea houses share real estate with fashion-forward concept stores and modern art galleries. Hong Kong's history lives in Old Town: 150 years of colonial rule began on Possession Street; merchants have conducted business since the 19th Century on Pottinger Street; and the Dr. Sun Yat-sen Museum is dedicated to the man instrumental in establishing the Republic of China.

Beach enthusiasts can bask on southern Hong Kong Island, including Repulse Bay, among the city's most expensive residen-





Perhaps the most intriguing attraction in China is the Museum of Qin Terracotta Warriors and Horses, 45 kilometres east of Xi'an.

tial areas. The history of the area's name has been lost to, well, history, though there are stories. One says the bay was once a base for pirates who were repulsed by the Royal Navy, though evidence is lacking.

If you crave nightlife, there are several districts where you can get your party on. Tung Choi Street, where locals hang out, has the best-priced drinks in town. Lan Kwai Fong is party central, with more than 90 restaurants and bars. SoHo, south of Hollywood Road, features chic bars, hip restaurants, boutiques and antique shops.

Elsewhere, two sites stand out. The Great Wall of China stretches more than 21,000 kilometres across northern China. It was built over a period of 2,200 years, beginning as state border walls during the Zhou Dynasty in 656 BC. During the Qin Dynasty (221–207 BC), Emperor Qin Shi Huang, China's first emperor, connected existing walls for defence against invasion from the north. Expansion during the Han Dynasty (206–220 BC) protected the Silk Road. Most of what exists today was built or restored during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). Construction was forbidden during the Manchu-led Qing Dynasty of northeast China (1644–1911); after all, the wall was originally intended to protect against invasion by the Qing Dynasty's Manchurian emperors.

Restoration of the Great Wall began under Chairman Mao in 1957 with the Badal-

ing section, with others restored to benefit tourism, mostly the sections near Beijing. Each season offers its own views, but it is notoriously crowded during peak times. Avoid the first week of May, a "golden" travel week. There are hotels and restaurants nearby or you can travel there from Beijing in about two hours.

Perhaps the most intriguing attraction in China is the Museum of Qin Terracotta Warriors and Horses, 45 kilometres east of Xi'an. The site, the most significant archaeological excavation of the last century, was discovered by farmers digging a well in 1974. Life-sized soldiers in full battle dress with their horses have guarded the tomb of Emperor Qin for 2,000 years. Work at the site continues with more than 8,000 pottery soldiers, horses, chariots, and weapons unearthed from three pits.

A tour package, including transportation from your hotel in Xi'an, an English-speaking guide and admission to the museum and Qin Shi Huang Mausoleum park, begins at \$75 per person in the spring and fall and \$85 in the summer.

## 5. Italy

In 2017, Italy attracted 58.3 million tourists. Italy's history is, in many ways, the history of the world. Rome was the capital of the emerging Roman Empire whose law, culture and technology laid the cornerstone of Italy and Western civilization.

Legend says Rome was founded in 753 BC by Romulus and Remus, twin sons of Mars who were raised by a she-wolf. The legend is represented by a 5th-Century



Italy attracted 58.3 million tourists in 2017. The Colosseum in Rome is one of the country's major tourist attractions.

BC bronze statue, the Capitoline She-wolf, which has been in the Musei Capitolini in Rome since 1471.

Roman sites are among the most popular with visitors to Italy, in particular the Colosseum and Palatine Hill, which are in close proximity to the Forum, the heart of Rome from the 7th Century BC to 283 when fire destroyed it. Tours of all three sites can be purchased as a package from \$23 per person. You can “skip the line” for a starting price of \$57.

The Colosseum was built in AD 72–80 on the site of Nero’s Golden Palace, built after Rome burned in 64. It is the biggest amphitheatre ever built, with 80 entrances and seating for 50,000. For four centuries, it hosted grand entertainment, much of it bloody, including mock naval battles, animal hunts, public executions and gladiatorial games.

It was abandoned as costs of putting on spectacles rose, public tastes changed and weather took its toll. For centuries, it served as a marble quarry for building projects, including St. Peter and St. John Lateran cathedrals, the Palazzo Venezia and fortifications along the Tiber River. By the 20th Century, nearly two-thirds of the original site, including all the seats (marble and wood) and decorative elements, had been destroyed by reclamation, weather, neglect, vandalism and natural disasters like earthquakes. Restoration efforts in the 1990s continued to 2017.

Walk back in time on the Palatino, one of the oldest parts of Rome and the most central of Rome’s seven hills, overlooking the Roman Forum. Archeological evidence puts the first habitation of the Palatino in about 830 BC. Romulus is said to have killed his brother there. The site includes the Criptoportico Neroniano, the tunnel where Caligula is thought to have been murdered.

Italy’s second most visited site is Pompeii, near Naples. The ancient Roman city was nearly destroyed when Mount Vesuvius erupted in 79. Most of the area’s 20,000 inhabitants fled, but about 2,000 people were smothered as millions of tons of volcanic ash buried the city.

Pompeii lay hidden until 1748, when a group of explorers began digging for artifacts. They found the city preserved by the ash, its buildings intact, household objects littering the streets and the skeletons of its citizens lying where they fell.

The excavation, which has uncovered 170 acres, has been ongoing for nearly 300 years, fascinating tourists and scholars as much today as in the 18th Century. Guided tours of the city and volcano leave from Naples and Sorrento daily, with prices from \$77–\$129/person depending on the time of year.

## 6. Mexico

Modern Mexico is the most populous Spanish-speaking country in the world. It is a popular tourist destination, visited by 39.3 million people in 2017, drawn by the weather, beaches, resorts, food, music, history and its welcoming people. Most of its visitors are from the U.S. and Canada,

*TripAdvisor* recommendations include luxury hotels such as the Gran Hotel Ciudad de Mexico, mid-range hotels such as the Historico Central, and budget hotels such as the One Ciudad De Mexico Alameda. Restaurants, shops and nightlife abound.

Outside of Mexico City, ancient ruins tell the story of Mexico’s history and dazzling beaches invite visitors to loll in



The pyramids and temples of Chichén Itzá in Mexico are a popular tourist site and the iconic Temple of Kukulcan, shown here, has been named one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.

but arrivals from Europe and Asia are increasing.

Mexico City, the country’s most visited location, has plenty to offer tourists; tour packages at a range of prices are just a Google search away. Its most popular attractions are in the Centro Histórico de la Ciudad, the historic city centre, surrounding the Zócalo, the Plaza de la Constitución (Constitution Square), where the country’s first constitution was proclaimed in 1813. Once the hub of Aztec society, it is the heart of Mexico City, dominated by the National Palace, Metropolitan Cathedral and the Templo Mayor Museum, where you’ll find the ruins of the Great Temple Tenochtitlán and its Aztec relics. The museum is closed Monday; admission is free on Sunday and 75 pesos/\$4 otherwise.

To see the best of the city, the Centro Histórico is a good home base, as is the affluent Polanco neighbourhood. The area offers accommodation to meet any budget;

the sun. On the Yucatán Peninsula, the stepped pyramids and temples of Chichén Itzá, a popular tourist site, with its iconic Temple of Kukulcan (El Castillo, or castle), has been named one of the New Seven Wonders of the World. It comprises two cities built by the Maya and the Toltecs, and was a religious and ceremonial site as well as a sophisticated urban centre and trade hub. In the 15th Century, after many prosperous centuries and absorbing other cultures, the city’s inhabitants left, abandoning Chichén Itzá to the jungle. They left brilliant works of art and architecture, but no record explaining their departure.

Playa del Carmen is a distinctive beach town, with a beach equal to others on the Yucatán, but with nightlife and hotel culture that blends the style of European and American destinations with traditional Mexican options. There are plenty of activities to keep you busy, including snorkelling, parasailing and ziplining at parks such as Xel-Há and Xenses.





The U.K. drew 37.7 million tourists in 2017 and Buckingham Palace, shown here from the inside, is one of the big draws.

## 7. United Kingdom

The United Kingdom drew 37.7 million tourists in 2017. London is its most popular destination. The city exudes history; it began as a Roman military storage depot when Rome invaded in 43. The East Anglians burned it to the ground in 61 to rebel against Roman rule. Rebuilt in 100, it had paved streets, shops, businesses, public baths, simple homes and elaborate estates. Some of the stone wall that surrounded it still exists.

London's most visited places are the Tower of London, built by William the Conqueror, and Buckingham Palace.

The Tower of London's history is gruesome. It saw several assassinations and, although built as a palace, was used to imprison and torture individuals accused of

various crimes. Many were executed, most famously Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard — two of Henry VIII's wives — and Lady Jane Grey, hapless victim of a political plot, who had the shortest reign in British history (nine days.)

The tower has stored the Crown Jewels since 1661. They comprise 23,578 gemstones set into St. Edward's Crown, the Sovereign's orb, the Jewelled Sword of Offering, the Sovereign's Sceptre and Rod, and the Imperial State Crown. They are used by the queen for important ceremonies, noted by an "in use" sign to advise visitors. Tower admission includes the White Tower where you can try shooting arrows, wielding a sword and firing cannons.

You can't visit London without seeing

Buckingham Palace, the official London residence of Britain's monarchs since 1837. It was originally Buckingham House, purchased in 1761 by King George III for Queen Charlotte as a family home. State rooms are open to the public for 10 weeks each summer and select dates in winter and spring. Book ahead through the Royal Collection Trust. [www.rct.uk/](http://www.rct.uk/)

In Scotland, the most popular attraction is Edinburgh Castle, built in the 13th Century and much besieged throughout its history. Today it is a military station and the site of the Scottish National War Memorial. It is also home to the Honours of Scotland (Crown Jewels, the oldest in Britain), the ancient Stone of Destiny and St. Margaret's Chapel, the oldest building in Edinburgh. Advance tickets can be purchased online for less than \$23. It also hosts the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo each August; ticket prices vary. ([edinburghcastle.scot](http://edinburghcastle.scot))

While Wales has historic sites, such as Caernarfon Castle, and lovely cities, its natural beauty may be its main attraction. National parks, including Snowdonia and Brecon Beacons, are paradise for hikers, with unspoiled vistas and that clarity of air only found where the humidity, temperature and elevation are just right.

Northern Ireland, once avoided by tourists, has become interesting in part for representing Westeros in a certain television series. The Giant's Causeway is an intriguing natural feature comprising polygonal columns of basalt created by a volcanic eruption 60 million years ago. If your taste runs more to the man-made, Titanic Belfast honours the *RMS Titanic* and Belfast's maritime history. Find it at 1 Queens Rd.

While in the U.K., take public transportation with a Visitor Oyster Card. Buy it online in advance in several currencies. [visitbritainshop.com](http://visitbritainshop.com)

## 8. Turkey

With its coastline edging the Mediterranean and Aegean seas, Turkey attracted 37.6 million tourists in 2017. Its seaside resorts, historic sites and ancient monasteries give visitors much to enjoy.

Turkey's history presents us with the Medieval Crusades, the Roman Empire, Alexander the Great, Homer, the city of Troy and the Trojan War and Stone Age settlements built in 7500 BC. Its most popular city for tourists is Antalya, but Istanbul, the capital, is also a draw for its museums, historic sites and bazaars, especially the Grand Bazaar where shoppers





Antalya, shown here, ushers visitors to the Turkish Riviera, also called the Turquoise Coast. Turkey attracted 37.6 million tourists in 2017.

can find ceramics, carpets, copperware, Byzantine-style jewelry and more.

Antalya ushers visitors onto the Turkish Riviera, also called the Turquoise Coast. Kaleici is the historic walled centre of Antalya and the heart of the modern city. You can get around easily and inexpensively by tram or walk through its maze of streets, traditional teahouses, souvenir shops and historic landmarks, such as the Kesik Minare (Broken Minaret) or the Mehmet Pasa Mosque. (When visiting a mosque, women require a head scarf.) Entry to Kaleici is through Hadrian's Gate, which opens onto an area of restored Ottoman-era buildings, open-air cafés and small shops. Wear comfortable walking shoes as there are steep hills and uneven cobblestones.

Nearby Duden Waterfalls is a good day trip, especially if combined with a visit to the Antalya Aquarium. Duden is a group of falls in the Duden River, which flows

from the Taurus Mountains to the sea. The upper falls are in a valley park with restaurants, walkways and picnic areas. A spiral staircase ends in a cave behind the waterfall. The lower falls are best seen from the sea as they rush over the cliffs. The Antalya Aquarium features more than 200 sharks and the world's longest aquarium tunnel.

Fifteen kilometres from Antalya lies the ancient city of Perge, which dates back to the 12th or 13th Century BC. The site includes the ruins of social and cultural buildings — a theatre, stadium, gymnasium, Roman baths — and an agora and columns that lined the streets.

Turkey's beaches are perfect for taking in the Mediterranean sun. Lara Beach, 16 kilometres east of Antalya, has several lovely resorts and a long sweep of sandy beach. It is categorized as a Blue Flag beach, which means clear water and a clean beachfront.

West of Antalya and at the end of the city's tram line is Konyaalti Beach, with miles of rocky or pebbly beach, many restaurants and cafés and a backdrop of the Taurus mountains and cliffs on either end.

## 9. Germany

Tourists from all over the world visit Germany — 37.5 million in 2017. It has always been a powerful nation and, in its ancient history, resisted Roman occupation in the central region; Roman forces were only able to occupy lands up to the Danube River in the south and the Rhine River in the west.

Germany's most visited areas are the cities of Berlin, Munich and Hamburg. Each offers a particular glimpse of Germany.

Germany and Berlin, the country's capital and largest city, were divided after the Second World War, ideologically and physically, by the conferences of Yalta and





Tourists from all over the world visit Germany and 37.5 million took it in in 2017. Shown here is Berlin's Brandenburg Gate, which was built in 1791 and became symbolic of a divided Germany when it was closed off by the erection of the Berlin Wall.

Potsdam. The east was given to the Soviet Union and the west to the U.S., Great Britain and France. American capital aided West Germany's recovery and transformation to the Federal Republic of Germany while the Communist east became the German Democratic Republic.

Berlin, entirely in the Soviet sector, was similarly split. In 1961, the Communists built a concrete wall through Berlin to keep people from defecting, ultimately harming East Berlin's recovery while West Berlin thrived. In 1989, international pressure on Russia brought the wall down, along with the collapse of the U.S.S.R., and the city was unified.

Today, the differences between east and west have diminished but may still be evident to a keen observer. Parts of the wall and Checkpoint Charlie, where people could transit through the barricade, remain powerful symbols of the Cold War. To see the wall, visit the open-air East Side

Gallery on Mühlenstraße or the Gedenkstätte Berliner Mauer (Berlin Wall Memorial) on Bernauer Straße on the west side. The Checkpoint Charlie guard house and museum are on Friedrichstraße.

The iconic Brandenburg Gate was built in 1791 by Frederick William II, and modelled after the Propylaea in Athens. Its 12 Doric columns create five portals, its reliefs and sculptures relate to Heracles, and on top is a statue of the goddess of victory. The Gate became symbolic of a divided Germany when it was closed off with construction of the Berlin Wall. It was reopened in 1989.

When you've had your fill of history, enjoy shopping on Kurfürstendamm, Berlin's most popular shopping boulevard, or visit the Berlin Zoo, dedicated to supporting biodiversity.

Munich is the capital of Bavaria, a stunning area with fairy-tale castles perched on rugged peaks above dark forests and

picturesque timber houses nestled in green valleys. Munich is best-known for its beer and Oktoberfest, a traditional two-week festival that ends on the first Sunday in October. *Prosit!*

Start your tour in the Altstadt (Old Town), which includes the Marienplatz, a public square that has long been the heart of the city and is the hub for public transportation. Gothic buildings surrounding the square appear to be straight out of the Middle Ages, but they house modern businesses. Parts of the square destroyed during the Second World War were rebuilt following their original plans.

Munich can serve as a staging base for exploring Bavaria's many castles. The most recognized castle is Neuschwanstein, built by King Ludwig in the 19th Century as a medieval castle, but fitted with the highest technology of its time (central heating, running water and flush toilets). It sits in the Bavarian Alps

## Travelling North America on a budget

We can't always afford a big fancy vacation, but still want a nice holiday. Here are a few travel suggestions in North America for the budget-conscious.

### Wilderness wonder

Camping is the obvious choice for an economical vacation. Expensive equipment is unnecessary, much can be improvised, and you can rent what you don't have or can't borrow.

Canada and the U.S. have fantastic national and provincial or state parks. National parks tend to be crowded in summer so reserve ahead and avoid long weekends or mix it up with other destinations. Park passes vary in price, with some free options. The nightly camping fee varies by the type of camping — backpacking, tenting, RV with or without services, or glamping (glamorous camping).

Some of North America's most picturesque camping areas are in national parks in the Rocky Mountains. They include Jasper, Yoho, Kootenay and Waterton in Canada and in the U.S., Rocky Mountain, Glacier, Grand Teton and Yellowstone.

### Road trip

With planning, a road trip is an economical option, even with volatile gas prices (several apps find the lowest price wherever you are). Stay close to home to save money and get in touch with your own region. Plan a route around free or inexpensive attractions. Go through rural areas and smaller towns for less expensive accommodations and look for lodgings that include breakfast or kitchen amenities. Or go old-school with a classic road trip along a historic route.

For example, you can ride the cliché, and find your kicks on Route 66. The historic highway (established 1926) runs 3,939 kilometres/2,448 miles from Chicago, through Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico and Arizona to Santa Monica, California. The highway does not officially exist today, replaced by I-40 in 1985, but the road itself remains in segments, with signs indicating it. The first sign is on East Adams Street at Michigan Avenue, Chicago (visible on Google Maps). A guide is helpful. [theroute-66.com/](http://theroute-66.com/) and [historic66.com/](http://historic66.com/)

Many roadside businesses failed when the route changed. Some exist as erstwhile museums, complete with vintage automobiles, but some of the original motels, din-

ers and service stations are still in business. The Blue Swallow Motel is on East Route 66 Boulevard, Tucumcari, New Mexico. Rooms include a single (queen bed) for \$85/night and a two-bedroom suite that sleeps five for \$140. Rooms include an attached garage (seriously!)



Grizzly bears such as this one can be seen, hopefully from afar, at Jasper National Park.

Off of Route 66, there are interesting (and free) sights along I-40 or nearby, including the Oklahoma City National Memorial; Meteor Crater east of Flagstaff, Arizona, south of the Grand Canyon; and Cadillac Ranch, outside Amarillo, Texas. You'll also encounter theme parks, water parks, zoos, trading posts, national historic sites and national and state parks

A road trip in Canada is best taken in summer; a convenient route is the Trans-Canada Highway, running 7,821 kilometres from Victoria, B.C., to St. John's, Nfld. It passes through cities, towns and wilderness. From the West Coast, the scenery shifts from lush valleys to mountain passes

before flattening out to the rolling Prairies. From Manitoba, around the Great Lakes and through Quebec, you cross the rugged Canadian Shield. Into the Atlantic provinces, the scenery changes again as you reach the East Coast's quaint seaside towns.

Many spots along the way are worth a stop: Dinosaur Provincial Park, northeast of Brooks, Alta.; the Canadian Museum for Human Rights in Winnipeg, Man.; the Parliament Buildings in Ottawa, Ont.; and the walled city of Old Quebec, Que. Along the route, you will encounter roadside attractions (world's biggest beaver, mosquito, cowboy boot...), feats of engineering, towns with unusual names (did you know Vulcan is in Canada, as is Paris?), an enchanted forest, theme parks, water parks and historic sites. This will help: [transcanadahighway.com/](http://transcanadahighway.com/)

### Winter Escape

Many of us in Canada and the U.S. long to escape winter, and Mexico offers delightful dollar-friendly options. The resorts of Cancun or Puerto Vallarta are not your only options, though they provide luxurious and affordable beach vacations.

Consider locations inland, such as Mexico City, if the beach isn't essential to your vacation mode, or look for small beach towns outside of the resort areas.

One such area is Sayulita, on the Riviera Nayarit, about 30 minutes from Puerto Vallarta. It offers lovely beaches, open-air restaurants and a relaxed atmosphere. Accommodations range from vacation rentals below \$100/night to luxury hotels with suites at several hundred dollars per night. (Be sure to check reviews and get references if deals seem too good to be true.)



Route 66, the historic highway, ran 3,939 kilometres, but was replaced by the I-40 in 1985, yet one can still travel on segments of it.





Thailand's capital of Bangkok, shown here, is the most visited locale in the country, but the island of Phuket is one of the world's premier beach destinations.

overlooking the Hohenschwangau Valley. It was the inspiration for Walt Disney's Magic Kingdom.

The port city of Hamburg is known as the Venice of the North. Jungfernstieg, on the coast of Alster Lake, is considered the heart of Hamburg. You'll find shops, restaurants and tour boats ready to take you on a cruise of the lake. For shopping addicts, Mönckebergstraße is a major shopping area. Its shops and department stores offer well-known and international brands.

For the curious, the infamous and gaudy Reeperbahn — the red-light district — has a history of, well, "entertaining" the countless sailors whose ships made port at Hamburg. In the 1960s, its many dive bars became an incubator of talent for several groups, including the Beatles. Today the Reeperbahn area is packed with bars, clubs, restaurants, cabarets, theatres and art galleries. It retains its old purpose on Herbertstraße, just off the Reeperbahn.

## 10. Thailand

Tenth on our Top-10 list is Thailand, which received 35.4 million tourists in 2017. It is a tropical hot spot with long stretches of sandy beaches, lush islands, unique topography, archeological sites, temples and monasteries.

Thailand, formerly Siam, is the only Southeast Asian country never to be colonized; it has awe-inspiring ancient ruins that reflect the country's unique culture and history. Several archeological sites contain relics that indicate the earliest rice cultivation in all of Asia began in Thailand.

The capital is Bangkok, which is also the most visited locale in Thailand. The most popular site for visitors to Bangkok is the Grand Palace, the official residence of the kings of Siam since 1782. Sitting on the banks of the Chao Phraya River, the palace is a walled complex of pavilions, halls, wats (temples), lavish gardens, green spaces and formal courtyards. It was the residence of the king, his court and the royal government until 1925.

Wat Pho is one of Bangkok's most popular Buddhist temples. It houses the 46-metre Reclining Buddha. The wat is known as Thailand's "first public university" due to more than 1,000 inscriptions about medicine, history and the liberal arts. Inscriptions about anatomy and orthopedics contributed to the development of traditional Thai massage principles.

A trip to Thailand must involve shopping. Combine it with a taste of Thai history by visiting a floating market outside Bangkok. Much of central Thailand lies in wet lowlands in broad river valleys, areas that made boats the most efficient mode of transportation and moving and selling goods. With development of the region, the area around Bangkok was drained and a system of canals created.

There are still floating markets outside the city. Although they are mostly tourist attractions rather than important parts of agricultural economies, they are vibrant and brimming with delicious food. The most popular floating market for tourists is Damnoen Saduak; most Thais prefer the Amphawa.

The Island of Phuket, with more than

30 beaches, is one of the world's premier beach destinations. Most of the best beaches lie along the west coast — take in the sunset on the soft white sands. Phuket Town, the provincial capital, is a blend of Sino-Portuguese splendour and European and Chinese architecture. Patong, a beach and town on Phuket's west coast, has several night markets for enjoying street food and shopping. Bangla Road is the place on Phuket for nightlife, with a noisy collection of clubs, bars and shows.

In close proximity to the coast and Phuket are many incredible little islands. Phi Phi is the most popular, though it may be too popular. The Similans are nine islands whose dive sites are among the best in the world.

Phang Nga Bay, 95 kilometres south of Phuket, is among the country's most scenic areas. It boasts beautiful sea caves and aquatic grottoes that are best accessed by kayak. The most famous island in the bay is a sea stack called Ko Khao Phing Kan (aka James Bond Island), which has been displayed in several movies, including the James Bond flick *The Man with the Golden Gun*.

### Epilogue

Tourism matters; it can drive economic growth and has become a main source of income in some countries, according to the UNWTO. Travellers may return home with more empathy and understanding of other peoples, and that can only be a good thing.

Laura Neilson Bonikowsky is an Alberta writer and avid traveller.

# Mongolia's GDP and trade rise

Story and photos by Ülle Baum



The Genghis Khan Equestrian statue, a major Mongolian tourist attraction, is located on the bank of the Tuul River at Tsonjin Boldog, east of the capital of Ulaanbaatar. This equestrian statue was built in 2007 to commemorate the 800th anniversary of a major battle by Genghis Kan, founder of Mongol Empire.

**A** giant dump truck travels under blue sky towards an open pit mine in Mongolia's South Gobi Desert. It may look like an average dump truck, but it is actually one of 28 enormous Komatsu trucks, powered by 3,000-horsepower engines and capable of moving up to 300 tonnes of ore per load at the Oyu Tolgoi copper and gold mine in Mongolia's southern region.

Last summer, the mine in Khanbogd celebrated its fifth anniversary since commercial copper concentrate shipments began. Oyu Tolgoi is a massive combined open pit and underground mine project that is equivalent in size to the borough of Manhattan. It is a huge joint venture

that is 34-per-cent owned by the state of Mongolia and 66-per-cent owned by Turquoise Hill, a Canadian company, which, in turn, is 51-per-cent controlled by Rio Tinto, an Anglo-Australian multinational corporation. Thanks to this world-class mining project, Mongolia's economy has grown dramatically over the past decade. Indeed, in 2011, Mongolia reached the highest economic growth record in its history — an impressive 17.5 per cent. Eight years later, in 2019, the economy is still projected to grow by 6.7 per cent. Mongolia's star should continue to rise as it has several advantages, including a strategic location, educated workforce and an abundance of natural resources.

One of the largest landlocked countries in the world, Mongolia is situated between China and Russia. It is about the size of Western Europe, with just 3.1 million inhabitants and has one of the lowest population densities in the world. Westerners might harbour a romantic image of Mongolia as a land of nomads — and nomadic life does exist in Mongolia, but almost half the population lives in the capital city Ulaanbaatar. Most of this vast country is covered by grassy steppe, desert and mountain ranges. It has a highly homogeneous population; 96 per cent are ethnic Mongolians and the remaining 4 per cent are mostly Kazakhs. Due to its strategic location, Mongolia can offer ac-



cess to the Northeast Asian market.

Since successfully completing structural reforms and privatization efforts beginning in the early 1990s, Mongolia has developed an outward-looking economy that has shown steady growth. “How are we managing [the rapid growth]?” asked Mongolian Foreign Minister Tsogtbaatar Damdin in an interview last October. “It’s very difficult because it tends to create over-expectations that can be very distracting. It can have a negative impact. Managing such expectations is extremely difficult. We are learning by doing.”

The minister noted that there are no manuals or handbooks to guide one through such momentous growth. Even friendly countries that are helping Mongolia to strengthen its democracy and its market economy don’t know how to manage such rapid change.

“We had a recession after the period of rapid growth, and lessons were learned about the boom and bust cycle,” the minister said. “We are learning that we need to save, have stable and transparent governance, a high level of discipline and consistent policies aimed at preserving direct foreign investment. Money is a very sensitive thing, it comes and then with just a few mistakes, it leaves.”

Within a year and a half of the recession, Mongolia regained its status as the second fastest growing economy in the North East Asian region.

“This is not a small thing for us because we are in a neighbourhood with Japan, China, South Korea — all are locomotives of the global economy,” he said. “Our success is indicative that this economy can perform. Macro-economic discipline, accountability, predictable policies and commitment to co-operate with the international community permits us to secure better market access for our exports and the goodwill of investors.”

Mining is the primary economic sector of this mineral-rich country and contributes to 88.6 per cent of total exports, notably copper, gold and coal. Mongolia traded with 155 countries in 2018 and exported goods to more than 70 countries. Mongolia’s foreign trade reached close to US\$13 billion in 2018, with exports equivalent to \$7 billion. During the first quarter of 2019, Mongolia’s total foreign trade reached \$3.06 billion, an increase of \$444.5 million or 17 per cent compared to the same period in 2018, while exports surpassed imports by \$485.9 million. Mongolia’s export growth was mainly due to an increase of mineral exports, precious and semi-precious stones and textile goods.

Herding and agriculture have remained the cornerstones of an ancient way of life. One of the last countries in the world with a large nomadic population, Mongolia

country. Building the Mongolia-Russia-China Economic Corridor, to develop multimodal transportation and improving regional infrastructure, is key. As



The Oyu Tolgoi open pit mine operates 28 of these giant Komatsu trucks, which have a load capacity of up to 300 tonnes. When the mine was first established, Oyu Tolgoi was just a small hill known to locals on the empty steppe. The mine has changed the face of southern Mongolia.



Workers eat at the Oyu Tolgoi copper and gold mine, jointly owned by Turquoise Hill Resources Ltd., Rio Tinto Group and state-owned Edrenes Oyu Tolgoi in Khanbogd, the South Gobi Desert. At the end of the first quarter of 2019, the mine, the largest private employer in Mongolia, had a total workforce of 16,600 of which 92.6 per cent were Mongolians.

has a livestock population of 70 million. Agriculture still employs the largest share of the labour force at 30 per cent to 40 per cent. In 2018, Mongolia exported 54,900 tonnes of meat products. A proposed national program of intensive animal husbandry for 2019 to 2023 aims to boost the export of livestock and dairy products significantly, by as much as 30 per cent.

International connectivity is vital for the economic growth of this landlocked

one of the main corridors of China’s Belt and Road initiative, the Economic Corridor project will modernize railroads and highways. The proposed road starts at the port of Tianjin, China, and heads northwest, entering Mongolia at Erlianhaote in the southeast and then connecting to the Trans-Siberian Express at Ulan Ude, Russia. In 2020, the Oyu Tolgoi mine will build a 300-megawatt power plant next to the Tavan Tolgoi coal mine. The





Filled with copper concentrate, these two-tonne bags are waiting to be loaded onto the trucks at the Oyu Tolgoi copper mine. Eighteen of these bags will be loaded onto each truck. A total of 2,800 tonnes of high-value copper concentrate leaves this mine every day, destined for China and other countries. As copper is used all over the world, Mongolians like to say there's a little bit of Mongolia in every country.

government is also considering a Russian-Chinese oil and gas pipeline through Mongolia.

"The Third Neighbour Policy" is a foreign-relations policy to build relationships with countries other than its closest geographical neighbours, Russia and China. Dialogue and agreements with Japan, the United States, the European Union, India, South Africa, and Turkey among others, are developing into strategic partnerships. All these countries have a valuable role in bringing high-tech and management expertise to Mongolia's financial capital.

Mongolia, whose cashmere wool is known for its quality, produces almost 50 per cent of the world's raw cashmere. The cashmere fibres are especially long and fine and are obtained from the neck of the Cashmere goats (*Capra hircus laniger*). There are several world-famous Mongolian cashmere brands — Gobi Mongolian Cashmere and Goyo Cashmere. But much is exported raw. In 2017, out of 9,400

tonnes of raw cashmere produced, 8,300 tonnes were exported directly to neighbouring China without adding any value. The textile industry is now looking for investors to produce a final product and export high-end finished cashmere products to the global market.

Cashmere has cachet for Mongolia, but the Oyu Tolgoi (OT) mine is still the prime driver of its newfound success. Batsukh Galsan, chairman of the mine's board of directors and, at one time, the first resident ambassador of Mongolia to Canada, talked about the origin of the project, its prominence in Mongolia's economy and the relationship with Canada. Indeed, there are 122 Canadian companies involved in the Oyu Tolgoi mine — doing everything from mining to construction.

"In October 2001, Robert Friedland, founder and executive chairman of [Vancouver-based] Ivanhoe Mines, told me that he was going to drill at Oyu Tolgoi and [would] find a significant ore body

that will put Mongolia on the mining map of the world. Now, after 15 years, Oyu Tolgoi has become the largest Western-invested mining project in the country, both open pit and underground, and has contributed to Mongolia maintaining its economic independence."

Galsan said Mongolia's relationship with Canada has become "more significant" than with any other foreign country. He said he wanted Mongolia and Canada to talk about how Mongolia can make investment more attractive for Canadian companies, not only for mining and exploration, but also agriculture, livestock and education, among others. Mongolians are not only looking for capital, but intangibles such as skills and expertise. The Oyu Tolgoi project is physical, but it involves expertise in engineering, mining, safety and operations, industrial knowledge and the capability to create and manage large, complex projects.

"At Oyu Tolgoi, we have a culture of safety, which is a non-tangible contribution, but it is so important," he said. "We have excellent professional experts to train Mongolians, to share this knowledge. Through Rio Tinto, we are bringing world-class professional engineers and managers to work with Mongolians to teach and train and we grow from this long term. Many Canadians are in that expert community. This is an indirect benefit in addition to the direct investment. I want this to happen not only at Oyu Tolgoi, but at many similar sites."

Galsan said Canadians should consider Mongolia because it sits beside some large markets. China needs more mineral and agricultural products. Transportation costs — shipping from Vancouver or Saskatchewan — are expensive, but producing mineral and agricultural exports in Mongolia is cheap. "Bring your expertise and production values in mining and livestock here and ship from Mongolia to China," he said. "This is something Canadians can consider."

Oyu Tolgoi is on course to realize its potential to become the world's third largest source of copper by 2027, producing more than 500,000 tonnes a year. The success of the Oyu Tolgoi mining project will mean a lot for the future economic development and prosperity of Mongolia. By continuing its mining exploration, Mongolia could increase its GDP and economic security. The land of nomads and promise looks with optimism to the future.

Ülle Baum is *Diplomat's* staff photographer and a contributing writer.



# Killing off Africa's iconic animals



In 1900, the population of white rhinos (two are pictured here) stood at an estimated 250,000. Now they number 20,000 and are officially classified as “near threatened.” Demand from China and Southeast Asia for rhino horns and elephant tusks drives poaching.



Robert I.  
Rotberg

**M**any of the iconic fauna that are indelibly associated with Africa, and that attract so many local citizens and foreign tourists alike, no longer spread limitlessly across the vast savannahs of the mid-continent. Nor are many of the larger animals of the unbroken forest often visible. This century's massive escalation of illegal poaching has decimated the herds of elephants, the pods of rhinoceroses, the prides of lions and even the towers of giraffes that once browsed and foraged without much human interference. Even the lowly and

secretive pangolin is being hunted ceaselessly to satisfy Asian demand.

Poaching is destroying today's animals and tomorrow's breeders. Few species numbers are increasing and, in the case of particularly valuable large mammals, poachers are killing as many as they can to meet Asia's pulsating demand for ivory, rhino horn, pangolin scales and the like. In 1930, Africa could count as many as 10 million elephants across more than 50 countries. In 2019, no more than 400,000 elephants remain, a decline (by one count) of 111,000 or more since 2006. These great losses are due almost entirely to an onslaught of poaching. The various local poaching gangs across Africa are killing about 20,000 elephants a year, stripping the carcasses of their tusks, and leaving the rest of the slaughtered beasts for vultures, hyenas and other scavengers of the savannah.

Clearly, elephants are adaptable and resilient. They travel miles for water and

to graze on the rough grasses, twigs, fruit, roots, bushes and tree bark that are their main fodder. Elephants play a crucial role in Africa's savannah ecosystems as seed dispersers. Their dung recycles valuable nutrients and, by feeding on trees, they maintain the savannah's matrix of woodland and grassland and the biodiversity it supports. Paradoxically, when, because of human population pressure and poaching threats, elephants are confined to reserves and cannot roam freely, frequently their numbers grow to exceed the carrying capacities of their demarcated lands. And then, sometimes, they need to be re-located or culled.

If anything, rhinoceros are much more endangered than elephants. More than 1,000 are killed yearly, leaving fewer than 23,000 white and black rhinoceroses in the wild today, mostly in Botswana and Namibia, in South Africa and Mozambique, and — in fewer numbers — in Zambia, Tanzania and Kenya. In 2017, South Africa

alone lost 1,028 rhinos to poachers.

Black rhinoceros are critically endangered. Only slightly more than 5,000 of these massive animals remain. Large-scale poaching saw black rhino populations decline from approximately 70,000 individuals in 1970 to just 2,410 in 1995 — a

gone virtually extinct with the death of the last male in 2018.

Both the black and white rhinoceros are herbivores. The black rhino eats trees or bushes because its long lips allow it to pick leaves and fruit from up high. The white rhino has a flat-shaped snout that



Even the lowly and secretive pangolin is being hunted ceaselessly in Africa to satisfy Asian demand.

dramatic decline of 96 per cent over 20 years. Fortunately, thanks to the persistent efforts of conservation programs across Africa, black rhino numbers have risen since then to a current population of approximately 5,458 individuals, and their range has increased. Black rhinos have narrow mouths and two horns, the front one from 50 to 130 centimetres (20 to 51 inches) long and the rear one about 50 centimetres (20 inches) long. Both white rhino horns are slightly smaller than their black rhino counterparts. They are well-adapted to arid and semi-arid terrain and can now be found in South Africa, Zimbabwe and southern Tanzania. They have also been reintroduced to Botswana, Malawi, eSwatini and Zambia.

White rhinoceros are larger than black, growing to 4 metres (13 feet) long and 1.8 metres (6 feet) from hoof to shoulder. White rhinos are so called because of their wider mouths (and a mistranslation from an Afrikaans word). In 1900, the white rhino population stood at an estimated 250,000. Now they number about 20,000 and are officially classified as “near threatened.” Given the scale of killings earlier in this century, even those modest numbers represent an overwhelming conservation success story and mean that the white rhinoceros has recovered from near extinction. Most live in South Africa and Namibia, with smaller numbers in Zambia. The northern white rhino has

lets it get closer to the ground to eat grass.

Elephant tusks and rhinoceros horns are wanted almost exclusively in Asia. With increasing prosperity in China and Southeast Asia — the primary world markets for elephant ivory — there has been increasing demand for what, long ago, was a commodity carved into ornaments and used for piano keys, bassoon and oboe mouthpieces and similar products of comparatively limited appeal. But, since the 1990s, primarily Chinese, Vietnamese and Malaysian customers have sought to purchase carved-ivory ornaments and chopsticks as displays of wealth and status, and also for use as medicinal elixirs.

Cancers can supposedly be cured and male sexual prowess allegedly enhanced by infusions of ground-up horn (actually keratin, the substance of hair and fingernails) and ivory. Powder made from rhino horn is often added to food or brewed in a tea in the belief that the horns are a powerful aphrodisiac, a hangover cure and treatment for fever, rheumatism, gout and other disorders. Even though such outcomes have never been verified scientifically, many Asians still strongly believe in their health efficacy. Alas, China has not yet embarked upon a campaign to educate consumers to dispel the myths about ivory and rhino horn, or even to inform potential customers of its prosaic composition. There is no medical research that has ever found ivory or horn to be of benefit in

preventing or curing diseases, nor has any aphrodisiacal impact ever been noted by researchers.

Although China banned ivory imports in 2017 and Hong Kong in 2018 and China burned piles of illicit elephant tusks, a black-market trade continues. Nowadays, some of the smuggled ivory first travels from Africa to Vietnam or Laos, and thence into China.

Asians also value the esthetics of ivory carvings, ownership of which enhances prestige and signifies wealth. China may hold as many as 100 tonnes of ivory carvings. The sizes of the Vietnamese and Malaysian hoards of carved figures are not precisely known, but they are likely to be modest fractions of the Chinese total. Yemenis, meanwhile, use rhino horn to produce traditional dagger grips.

Research done in China identifies women who live in smaller Chinese cities and possess medium-to-high incomes as the key modern purchasers of ivory. They are the supposed “die-hard” buyers of ivory products. These women are apparently attracted to ivory because it is “rare and beautiful,” carries cultural significance and makes a good gift. Ivory, sometimes referred to as “white gold,” clearly is a status symbol — a luxury product that people use to flaunt their wealth.

In Hong Kong, more than 300 traders in 2019 held licences allowing their stores to sell ivory legally. These were not back-room shops; many were situated on busy streets, open to regular street traffic. Some



In 1930, one could count as many as 10 million elephants roaming more than 50 African countries. In 2019, no more than 400,000 remain.

of the stores resembled expensive jewelry emporia, others were more haphazard in their displays. In both types of shop, the ivory on sale was hardly inexpensive.

Another researcher remarks that China’s rising middle class often parked its



money in ivory. After all, “it never goes bad.” Ivory is considered a smart way to spend money because it is both an investment and something that can be shown off. Collectors also regard well-carved ivory as akin to fine art in value and enjoyment.

Ivory is worth US\$2,100 per kilogram, or about \$5,000 per pound, in China, and somewhat more in Vietnam and Malaysia, with rhino horn ranging from \$12,000 to as much as \$65,000 per kilogram in Asia. Though these prices, which, on the upper end, are higher than those for equivalent amounts of gold, platinum or cocaine, are hardly realized by the actual poachers, or even by middlemen, there is obviously room for profit-taking at the end of the long logistical queue from Africa. Local poachers in Africa usually work on consignment from African and Chinese middlemen, receiving a fraction of the overseas kilogram value of ivory and horn for their dangerous forays. Yet that fraction often represents the kinds of handsome incomes otherwise unavailable to rurally based African men and their families.

Effectively reducing the killing of African elephants and rhinoceroses thus depends more on curbing the foreign appetite for tusks and horn than on localized national endeavours to combat poachers. Although approaches from both angles are essential, it is the consumer lust for elephant ivory and rhino horn that propels illegal attacks on innocent herbivorous mammals across the savannahs and forests of southern, eastern and even western Africa. China needs to minimize demand through educational efforts or intensive regulation.

Substantial quantities of ivory destined for China and trafficked by Chinese men and women have been seized in recent years in the ports and airports of Nigeria, Togo, Uganda, Kenya, Tanzania, Namibia and South Africa. Cut-up tusks and horns have been detected in shipping crates, luggage and even hand luggage. In early 2019, a Tanzanian judge sentenced a Chinese businesswoman dubbed “the ivory queen” to 15 years in prison for attempting to smuggle out of the country 860 tusks or pieces of tusk belonging to 350 elephants and worth approximately \$5.6 million. The perpetrator was head of the Chinese-Africa Business Council of Tanzania and owned a popular restaurant in Dar es Salaam. She and two African co-conspirators were also convicted of running an organized criminal gang and were each sentenced to 15-year prison terms.

All three also had to pay fines amounting to double the value of the ivory, or serve an additional two years incarceration. In 2016, two Chinese men received an even stiffer sentence of 35 years in prison for attempting to smuggle ivory. In 2015, four male smugglers, also Chinese, each received 20-year sentences for attempting to ship rhino horn to China. Even earlier, three Chinese “seafood” exporters were jailed and held for more than a year after being apprehended in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania’s main port. They were trying to leave the country with 76 elephant tusks hidden under shellfish.

South Africa discovered a number of Chinese “tourists” travelling with hidden ivory and some horn. Namibia has deported a number of middlemen — and several women — for being suspected of masterminding poaching syndicates. The suspects captured in Togo and Nigeria were relatively brazen about their illicit actions, possibly because bribing inspectors and customs officials had previously been successful. Ivory has also been intercepted in Hong Kong, en route to mainland China.

As a counter to what happens at home, China has been attempting to assist East African countries and South Africa in

their pursuit of poachers. Partnering with African conservation efforts, China directs modest funding and training to wildlife ranger activities and other anti-poaching police efforts. With Chinese assistance, local control and major funding, several of these anti-poaching endeavours have been modestly successful in South Africa and Namibia, but have yielded far less encouraging results in Zambia, Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. Local wildlife protection operations are active in those countries, but have so far achieved only limited success because of the unremitting actions of poachers and their overseas patrons.

If elephants and rhinoceroses are not soon to become extinct, the poachers will have to be defeated on the ground. Asian governments will need to undertake a major battle to make their citizens understand that ivory and horn cannot cure their ailments magically and that killing these animals is bad for Africa.

Robert I. Rotberg is the founding director of Harvard Kennedy School’s program in intrastate conflict, president emeritus of the World Peace Foundation and a fellow of the American Academy of Arts And Sciences. His latest book is *The Corruption Cure*. (Princeton, 2017)

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# Greater Eurasian co-operation

By Alexander Darchiev



Russian Ambassador Alexander Darchiev says the Eurasian Economic Union — made up of Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan (shown above) and Kyrgyzstan — is a natural partner for the Chinese Belt and Road Initiative and will be a security and economic driver for the region.

**T**he modern world is facing fundamental geopolitical transformation. International free trade and the very notion of globalization are being challenged by the comeback of protectionism and nationalism, with arbitrarily imposed barriers and tariffs. All of this makes integration in Greater Eurasia, pragmatically connecting the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and other regional economic and trade projects, a real alternative to this destructive trend.

Unlike the “America First” agenda, aimed at regaining dominance in the military-political sphere and world economy by resorting to 19th-Century policies such as those of “big sticks” and gunboats,

Russian President Vladimir Putin’s vision of a greater Eurasian partnership takes a completely different approach, one that works in the 21st Century. It includes strong adherence to multilateralism as an antithesis to unilateral dictate, while promoting recognition of national interests and mutual respect in interstate relations. Preserving WTO agreements and principles and providing guarantees for non-discriminatory free trade and investment are an imperative.

The EEU, currently made up of Russia, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, took its present form by a treaty signed in 2014. It was the culmination of the integration process that included several transition stages, including the Eur-

asian Economic Community of 2000 and Eurasian Customs Union of 2010. The EEU is now a natural partner to the BRI, which promotes multidimensional engagement in various spheres, including transportation, infrastructure development, telecommunications and energy. Russia and China are major security and economic drivers for making Greater Eurasia a territory of dialogue and co-operation.

The EEU is a key player and key integrator of resources, industry, agriculture and science — from Kaliningrad on the Baltic to Vladivostok on the Pacific, and from the port of Sabetta in the Arctic to the Kazakh city of Almaty. Teamed up with the BRI, it could be a promised land for international investors. Inside the union,



there are no language barriers and labour and capital flow freely. Further, the EEU is now intensively working to fine-tune supranational bodies and national legislation so businesses operating in one member country will have free access to the markets of other members. In addition to the already existing free-trade zone with Vietnam, new free-trade agreements are being negotiated with Egypt, Israel, India, Iran, Serbia and Singapore.

Having a valuable advantage to learn from others' mistakes — including the European Union's experience with Brexit — the EEU respects sovereignty and does not impose political obligations on its members. With a single market of 183 million people, the EEU had a combined GDP of more than US\$5 trillion (by purchasing power parity) in 2018, which boasted more than two-per-cent growth last year. According to the World Bank's recent *Ease of Doing Business Index*, the Eurasian Economic Union moved up from 40th in 2017 to 31st last year, among the world's 190 economies.

Being an integral part of the Greater Eurasian Partnership, the EEU provides a vital transportation corridor from Europe through Russia and China to North America, where the port of Vancouver, as

a potential sister city of Russia's Vladivostok, could become the "Golden Gate" for Trans-Pacific trade routes. Commercial traffic between Europe and Asia is securely connected via the historic Trans-Siberian Railway which, at nearly 9,300 kilometres from Moscow to Vladivostok, is the longest railroad in the world. It is also the crucial link to the Russian Far East, which is now accounting for more than a quarter of all direct foreign investments in Russia.

New windows of opportunity are also opening in the Arctic through the Greater Eurasian Partnership. An example of that is the recently built LNG hub at the port of Sabetta on the Yamal Peninsula, north of the 70th latitude. It is the internationally financed investment project jointly run by Russia's Novatek natural gas company, which owns 50 per cent of the shares, China's National Petroleum Corporation, which owns 20 per cent, the Silk Road Fund from China, which owns 10 per cent, and French Total Inc., which controls the remaining 20 per cent. Recently, the aforementioned Chinese and French companies also decided to expand their investment in the new Arctic LNG-2 project worth US\$25.5 billion by purchasing a 30-per-cent stake.

Russia and the EEU are welcoming bilateral and multilateral infrastructure projects linking economies and markets, especially a far-reaching initiative to create an energy super ring that will connect the electric grids of Russia, China, Japan, South Korea, Kazakhstan and Mongolia with Japan's Hokkaido Island, which is to be linked to Russia's Sakhalin Island by undersea power cable.

All prerequisites are there to succeed in trade, investment and mutually beneficial co-operation in Greater Eurasia by fusing integration initiatives and projects in the framework of WTO rules, respect and acceptance of each country's chosen path of development and cultural traditions. It should also be clear that neither Russia nor China ever bows to outside pressure or yields to bulldozer cowboy policies. The Greater Eurasian partnership is being built not against someone, but for common prosperity on a "win-win" basis. The underlying idea is security and stability for all, a fair and just system where global players come to mutually agreed-upon terms and voluntarily follow them.

Alexander Darchiev is the ambassador of Russia to Canada. Reach him at [info@rusembassy.ca](mailto:info@rusembassy.ca) or (613) 235-4341.

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# Preparing for a summer of terror

By J. Paul de B Taillon



This group of Islamic State fighters surrendered to Afghan government forces in April 2018, after having been defeated by the Taliban. Some who were involved in the Syrian conflict have done the same.

**T**he vestiges of the fiercely defiant Islamic State group (ISIS) in Syria are reportedly defeated. Meanwhile, the victorious American-led coalition and its hard-fighting Kurdish and coalition forces will face a new and potentially bloody phase, just forming now.

Throughout the well-phased systematic destruction of ISIS, numerous Islamist fighters have escaped, with the objective of returning to their respective nations or remaining to fight locally. Some, on the other hand, realizing their precarious personal situation, abandoned their Islamic nirvana and exfiltrated, escaping an unpleasant experience or personal demise. Many gave themselves up to the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), the Western-supported Kurdish militia or fought to the

death, seeking the rewards of martyrdom.

In a warning, U.S. Gen. Joseph Votel, responsible for the conduct of operations in the Middle East, advised a congressional committee in March 2019 that substantial numbers of ISIS fighters had dispersed across Iraq and Syria. American intelligence estimates that 15,000 to 20,000 fighters are distributed throughout the two countries; some analysts believe the numbers are higher.

Votel's presentation clearly outlined the current truth. "What we are seeing now is not the surrender of ISIS as an organization, but a calculated decision to preserve the safety of their families and to preserve their capabilities by taking their chances in camps for internally displaced persons and going to ground in remote areas and

waiting for the right time to resurge." Moreover, he reported, "the ISIS population being evacuated from the remaining vestiges of the caliphate largely remains unrepentant, unbroken and radicalized." Votel's analysis doesn't bode well for those hoping for a reprieve from Islamist violence. Conversely, such analytical ruminations underscore the possibility of a renewed Islamist terrorist offensive targeting Western and Middle Eastern interests.

Votel's assessment is dramatically borne out in Great Britain, which justifies British concern for the safety and security of its citizens. *The London Telegraph* reported in April that 23,000 jihadists have been identified in Britain. More concerning was that 3,000 of them are believed to pose an active threat.



### Sri Lanka's Easter attack

The Easter Sunday attack in Sri Lanka in April 2019 ranks among the deadliest terrorist attacks in recent history, with a reported 253 dead and hundreds wounded. The Sri Lanka bombings were seven times deadlier than the March massacre by a white supremacist at two mosques in Christchurch, New Zealand. The Sri Lanka death toll more than doubled that of the 2008 Mumbai attacks, which involved 10 Pakistani-based militants in one of the modern world's longest-ever terrorist sieges.

Although initial analysis suggested that the Sri Lanka bombings were in revenge for the mosque attacks in New Zealand, this may not be the case. Reports released by the Islamic State described "Operation Sri Lanka" as a "victory... for the soldiers of the caliphate, to raise the flag of the Islamic State in new areas and to build up the presence of fighters in other areas." This statement was posted on *NABA*, the Islamic State's weekly newsletter, and counters the claim that ISIS has been defeated. Moreover — and most alarmingly — Sri Lanka's bombings could be the pattern for future ISIS operations on the "periphery." One London-based researcher monitoring ISIS proffered the notion that, "the statement was significant because it scotched the idea the Sri Lanka attack was carried out in revenge for the far-right attack on mosques... in New Zealand."

An April 2019 *London Times* article noted that MI5 is looking into reports that ISIS plans to carry out a series of attacks in Britain and Europe using "crocodile cells," essentially sleeper cells that would surface and, without warning, undertake mass casualty terrorist attacks. This latest development spurred the police and security authorities to press for churches and mosques to undertake counterterrorism measures and conduct security training.

The attacks in Sri Lanka strongly support the analysis signalled by Votel during his report to Washington that ISIS will likely continue to conduct external attacks from Iraq and Syria against regional and Western allies, including the U.S.

Some have argued this will embrace areas within the Far East and include India, the Maldives, Kenya and Tanzania, but is more likely to include any country or region that has ISIS sympathizer or operators willing to undertake such missions. Moreover, any country involved in the U.S.-led coalition represents a potential target for ISIS operators. ISIS foreign fighters have and will continue to disperse around the world, seeking out soft tar-

gets to promote the Islamist message and demonstrate that they remain a force to be reckoned with.

### Money for mayhem

The ISIS leadership once controlled a fortune estimated to be in the range of US\$6 billion, according to the International Institute for Strategic Studies, mak-



ISIS fighters entering Raqqa, Syria, in 2014.



In early 2016, ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, seen here, directed his followers to remain at home and orchestrate attacks using cars, knives and other improvised weapons.

ing it the richest terrorist organization in history. This wealth was derived from a number of sources including oil and gas, taxes and extortion, which added approximately \$360 million in 2015. These amounts were augmented by an estimated \$500 million taken by ISIS from Mosul banks looted in 2014.

According to David Kenner in *The Atlantic*, this enabled ISIS to raise roughly \$1 million a day from taxes on its citizenry

and from illegal oil sales. This, in itself, transformed the Islamic State into the world's wealthiest terrorist organization. A February 2019 United Nations study estimated ISIS militants' current war chest at \$300 million. Astutely, some of these funds have been invested in legitimate commercial enterprises, apparently managed by middlemen who are more focused upon enlarging profit margins than an Islamist ideology. There are indications that large amounts of ISIS's assets have been transferred to Turkey and held by certain individuals, while a portion of these funds have been invested in gold. During the existence of the ISIS caliphate, Turkey reportedly turned a blind eye to the smuggling and selling of oil to Turkish buyers.

Like AQI (al-Qaeda in Iraq), ISIS will likely continue criminal activities to fund its nefarious initiatives, which include stealing goods and reselling them, kidnapping wealthy family members, trafficking in antiquities and skimming construction contracts. These criminal ventures have helped it rack up to \$1 million a month and do not require an ability to hold territory, and they demonstrate that ISIS remains financially focused and shrewd in its dealings. Similar to any multinational, ISIS has diversified its finances, making it difficult for the allies to turn off the financial taps that feed the Islamist agenda.

ISIS also gathered substantial personal data from the population under caliphate control. This includes details on personal wealth, family assets and information pertaining to extended family members who may have resided elsewhere.

The loss of the caliphate resulted in a dramatic drop in ISIS expenses, as there is no responsibility to pay for the spectrum of services required of a modern "state," such as salaries, public works, health and social services. The money saved can now be reallocated to terrorist operations and to the insurgency campaigns that apparently have commenced in Iraq and Syria, essentially just weeks after physical destruction of the last caliphate stronghold of Bagouz. This new reality enables ISIS leadership to finance its recruiting and reorganize and resupply fighters in various parts of Syria and Iraq in preparation for a renewed regional insurgency.

### ISIS change of strategy

In early 2016, ISIS leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi directed his followers to remain at home and orchestrate attacks using cars, knives and other improvised weapons. Since the demise of the ISIS caliphate, there has been a resurgence of violence



Large strips of Iraq and Syria experienced the destruction of the Christian and Yazidi communities that resided there for millennia. Many Yazidi women and others were forced into slavery. Shown here are Iraqi Yazidis at northern Syria's Newroz refugee camp.

in Iraq and parts of Syria. Many of these attacks have been claimed under the slogan "The campaign of vengeance for the blessed province of Syria." This campaign appears to have already commenced; as reported in April in *The Times of London*, as Bashar al-Assad's Syrian regime began deploying troops into eastern Syria to counter the seizure by ISIS insurgents of new territory for the first time since the fall of Bagouz.

The situation seemingly morphed when large numbers of ISIS fighters reportedly conducted a series of raids that retook territory around al-Kawm. According to pro-Assad online reports, two Syrian Army battalions were surrounded by ISIS forces, and Syrians reportedly lost 50 soldiers, including members of the Palestinian militia sent to relieve them. If true, such an event, along with other related incidents, must be taken as a grim omen for the future.

Since 2016, ISIS leadership began a strategy of seeding areas in Iraq and Syria with fighters to undertake small-scale operations when required. ISIS will likely foment an aggressive terrorist campaign that will evolve into an all-embracing

insurgency and possibly engulf wider areas of the region. It should be appreciated that large tracts of Syria and Iraq are in complete ruin. Communities have been devastated, populations uprooted and the borders are porous, enabling ISIS fighters to move freely between countries. Moreover, large tracts have no governing authority, leaving jihadists able to recruit, train and regroup as they rebuild their support networks.

Although claims of victory over ISIS resonate unsettlingly through the halls of many Western capitals, this is premature. The fact remains that a large number of dedicated, combat-experienced fighters, devoted to the Islamist cause or Islamic State, remain. Although many have been taken prisoner by the Kurdish Security Forces, many foreign fighters have successfully escaped the net and have either returned to the home from whence they came or are en route. Many fighters will have nascent support networks operating in home countries. As with any terrorist or resistance organization, these foreign fighters would have been directed to develop command-and-control, recruiting and logistical cells to plan, organize and

prosecute operations against targets in the Middle East, but also members of the American-led coalition.

#### **Appreciating Mao Zedong**

This flexible campaign strategy is reminiscent of Mao Zedong's famed three-phase strategic model of guerrilla warfare. In Phase 1, ISIS garnered a degree of popular support through its impressive online media campaign and well-honed and diverse propaganda machine that persuasively promulgated its Islamist doctrine and ideas on the internet. In Phase 2, prior to the creation of the caliphate, ISIS escalated attacks against the Iraqi government's military forces and its institutions, spreading fear within the government apparatus while garnering popular support. Then, in Phase 3, ISIS essentially went into a conventional war phase against the Iraqi military, which subsequently fled, enabling ISIS to seize major towns and cities — overthrowing the local governments and assuming control of large tracts of Syria and Iraq.

Like Mao's doctrine, the loss of the caliphate forced ISIS and its supporters to revert to Phase 1 — likely buttressed and enabled by the Islamic State's effec-



tive propaganda machine that will undoubtedly espouse and glorify online the “achievements” of the caliphate during its short existence. The intent is to honour those who sought martyrdom in defending the caliphate and its Islamist agenda.

ISIS, it must be remembered, now has franchises operating in Yemen, Egypt and as far afield as Afghanistan and the Philippines. Dedicated to an Islamist agenda, these forces will continue to conduct sectarian attacks and compete with other jihadist groups for influence, resources and territory. This must now be recognized as a real global Islamist insurgency.

### ISIS operational requirements

*The Sunday Times* reported that ISIS documents found on a hard drive revealed that the leadership is planning to conduct new attacks in Europe and has sleeper cells throughout parts of Syria. More chillingly, it reported that, even in the face of “defeat,” ISIS has formed assassination squads in preparation for direct action missions against specified individuals. Those persons targeted are to be named, located and scheduled for termination. And the assassinations are to be videoed and spread via the internet as ISIS propaganda.

Substantial numbers of ISIS fighters escaped the final surrender at Baghouz, many exfiltrating to the area of Palmyra in the Syrian desert. This is largely an ungoverned area where ISIS can regroup and operate “under the radar” to re-establish itself with the aim of adapting to its new operational reality of prosecuting terrorist operations regionally and globally, while conducting a low-level insurgency in Iraq and Syria. This was showcased in late March, when three terrorists ventured from Syria into Iraq, detonating suicide bombs in Sinjar. This was a site where ISIS had conducted a genocidal slaughter of Yazidis, and then kidnapped tens of thousands in August 2014.

Analysts already point to a low-level insurgency as evidenced by a sudden increase in roadside IEDs, ambushes, “flying (temporary) checkpoints” and continuing minor skirmishes.

### Defeating the idea

The physical destruction of persons, places and things can be viewed as relatively simple. The eradication of a philosophy, ideology or religious inspiration is more problematic and has yet to be comprehensively addressed.

ISIS is responsible for the deaths of tens of thousands of people, including fel-

low Muslims, who have been murdered or have died in this conflict. In addition, thousands have been driven into exile, compromising the stability of nations that border Syria and Iraq and the region itself, including Europe. Large strips of these two countries subsequently experienced the destruction of the Christian and Yazidi communities that resided there for millennia. Many of the Yazidi women and others were forced into slavery.

### A new, dangerous threat

With the demise of the caliphate, the world is left with a group of ISIS fighters

The military and security forces of the West and coalitional allies will confront an army of terrorists who are hardened, better disciplined and even more focused. The randomness of yesterday will not prevail. Their operations will be well orchestrated and media-driven to maximize fear, psychological dislocation and the ensure shock and awe. Using the internet, encryption, covert communications, couriers and other discrete means of communication, dedicated and determined ISIS operators in the West and elsewhere will be directed or self-directed to undertake “we-are-back” operations aiming for max-



Using explosives, ISIS partially demolished the Temple of Bel, shown above, in Palmyra, Syria in 2015.

who are highly skilled in conventional and unconventional warfighting, urban warfare, weaponized drones, mass-casualty terrorist attacks, psychological operations and masterful online media propaganda. Many have returned to their respective home countries. They are well-disciplined, knowledgeable in the application of weaponry and know how to shoot, move and communicate in disciplined formations. They are experienced in the use of support weapons such as mortars and rockets. They have effectively conducted attacks using drones and suicide operations and fully exploited the propagandistic and psychological nature of such operations while understanding the importance of media and the internet and the advantages this technology brings to the fight.

imum casualties, and the much-desired psychological and media attention. In an audiotape provided in mid-March, ISIS spokesman Abu Hassan al-Muhajir urged his listeners to “avenge the blood of your brothers and sisters... Set up the [explosive] devices, deploy the snipers.” The images of the burned bodies of women and children killed by coalition airstrikes that are promulgated on social media today will become the martyr-motivating propaganda images used to recruit future fighters for ISIS.

The physical destruction of the caliphate, albeit complex — particularly in a political and military coalition context — has been very successful. Modern weapons technology, while not perfect, minimized collateral damage. The extremist mani-

festations of ISIS in the caliphate clearly showed the world the threat posed not only to Muslims, but to all communities that reject this extremist form of political Islam.

#### Returning sleeper cells?

While ISIS no longer governs large areas of the Arab heartland, it still has strong appeal to angry, mostly young Muslims throughout the world. The United States, other Western nations and their regional allies must face substantial challenges in stabilizing the liberated areas of the caliphate, as well as dedicating resources to identify and eradicate Islamist sleeper cells and their sympathizers. Simultaneously, rebuilding must begin to re-establish the towns, cities and residential, cultural and religious communities, to ensure the return of the diaspora that fled the region for safety. Finally, local governance, as well as effective security and law enforcement must be established and provided for in order to ensure that ISIS does not return.

Furthermore, there needs to be a well-developed and cogent counter-narrative to Islamic State's murderous ideology, and this has not yet occurred. This is a most difficult and prickly issue, as ISIS will undoubtedly continue to raise funds through the internet, and promulgate its propaganda to agitate and recruit — sometimes without opposition. The issues and reported grievances that gave rise to ISIS must be correctly identified and addressed with a widely acceptable Islamic counter-narrative — otherwise the cost in blood and gold has or will be for naught. This in itself is problematic as the Al Azhar University in Cairo has opined that ISIS members are not apostates. Hence, there is no convincing counter-narrative coming from this leading Islamic school.

#### ISIS ideology is now underground

Under U.S. leadership, allies brought together an effective effort to retake lost territories while surgically wearing down ISIS fighters and supporters.

It must be fully appreciated by those concerned that the ISIS ideology has not been defeated, but rather has been driven underground. To ensure its own survival, ISIS undertook a retrograde step into the realm of terrorism and low-key insurgency.

Logically speaking, post-caliphate objectives for ISIS strategists would be to undermine the stabilization and reconstruction initiatives. However, such reconstruction also presents a financial



New Zealand Gov. Gen. Dame Patsy Reddy lays flowers for the victims of the Christchurch mosque shootings at Hagley Park.

opportunity for ISIS to extort money from officials, infiltrate ISIS operatives into the supply chain and garner intelligence and funds for its future nefarious ventures.

An important issue with which the West must come to terms, is that we are in what has been variously described as a “long war” and a “forever war.” At a terrorist symposium in Toronto, one Canadian police officer sadly acknowledged that, “my children will be dealing with this.”

At its zenith, the Islamic State covered an area half the size of Great Britain, controlling a population of up to 7.7 million people. Now that this state no longer exists, another phase is upon us. Having no territory means the ISIS leadership of this now defunct proto-state has the time and the financial wherewithal to commence the planning cycle to resurface, phoenix-like, to prepare for and initiate terror attacks whenever and wherever they deem most advantageous. The destruction of ISIS and the subsequent loss of fighters, their supporters and families will fuel revenge attacks. Moreover, these losses and their memories will feed the propaganda machine and be employed to radicalize a new generation of jihadists. It is now recognized, more than ever, that the fight on the internet must be accepted as an integral part of the “battle space.”

In turn, they will, no doubt, be willing to undertake a spectrum of terrorist operations — not only in the West, but throughout the Middle East and Africa.

Warfare is Darwinian by nature, and ISIS leaders and their foot soldiers are now well-trained, well-led, combat-experienced and potentially well-financed. The West is confronting a new set of highly-motivated and determined fighters who have experienced and waged violence at a level rarely seen or experienced since the Second World War. Disciplined and targeted operations focused on mass casualties will likely be the order of the day.

Confronted with the military power of the coalition, ISIS leadership recognized early on that their time as a caliphate, in territorial terms, would be limited. However, their Islamist belief that such defeats are tests from God, who will grant them an inevitable victory, gives them the strength to persevere. The U.S.-led coalition must now realize that, although the fire is out, the embers of the ideology still burn hot.

Col. J. Paul de B. Taillon (ret'd) is honorary lieutenant-colonel of the Canadian Grenadier Guards and an adjunct professor at the Royal Military College of Canada.





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# Promoting women in science, math, technology and engineering

By Jane Kerubo



Purity Ngina, centre, speaks at the African Women Diplomatic Forum's seminar that celebrated African and Canadian women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

In her own words, Rita Orji describes her upbringing: “I was born in a small village in Eastern Nigeria called Enugu to parents who had no education. I had four sisters and four brothers. My parents did not have money to pay my school fees. After I completed primary education and scored very high marks, my sister found me a job as a sales girl in a petrol station. However, members of the community saved me from this job by raising enough money for my secondary school education and later my university. After high school, I [enrolled] in a computer science program at university. I had never seen or used a computer in my life, but I liked mathematics and I liked to innovate and learn new things. Through trial and error and studying on the internet, I was able to complete my bachelor’s degree.” Orji is now an assistant professor in Dalhousie University’s faculty of

computer science. She was named one of Canada’s Top 150 Canadian Women in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics in 2017 and was one of the “Top 50 Young Most Influential Best Brains” in Enugu State, Nigeria, in 2017.

Purity Ngina, meanwhile, is a lecturer and motivational speaker at the Institute of Mathematical Sciences, Strathmore University in Nairobi, Kenya. But it was a tough climb to get to where she is. She was born and raised in Mbiriri, a village in the foothills of Mount Kenya in Nyeri County to a single mother who was a squatter and a casual labourer. Life was difficult. In primary school, her grades weren’t exceptional — she scored 235 out of a possible 500 in her first attempt at the Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination (KCPE) and she repeated Grade 8 a year later [2003] and scored 369. In high school, she sat for her Kenya Certificate of Sec-

ondary Examination (KCSE) in 2007 and scored a mean grade of B+. She went on to obtain a bachelor’s degree with first-class honours and was awarded a scholarship for her graduate studies.

“I did not in my wildest dreams imagine that one day I would be Kenya’s youngest PhD in biomathematics at 28 years,” Ngina said.

Ngina and Orji shared their stories along with many others at a gathering of African and Canadian women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) who gathered in Ottawa for a one-day roundtable and seminar organized by the African Women Diplomatic Forum (AWDF). AWDF was formed in 2011 by a group of female African ambassadors, high commissioners and deputy heads of mission based in Ottawa. Its goal was to bring together female diplomats in informal ways for moral, social and



professional support during their tour of duty in Canada. The Forum works with various stakeholders to promote the women's agenda in diplomatic service. Current members include Senegal, Rwanda, Egypt, Uganda, Kenya, Morocco and South Africa.

The seminar, whose theme was "Women in STEM in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities," was organized to celebrate the accomplishments of African female scientists in STEM. There was also a slideshow presentation that showcased profiles of more than 60 female scientists from 17 African countries.

Among the panellists were: Soumaya Yacout, professor of industrial engineering at Ecole Polytechnique Montreal and founder, President and CEO of the data-mining company, DEXIN Inc.; Wanja Gitari, associate professor of science education at the University of Toronto; Safaa Fouda, former deputy director general at CANMET Energy Technology Centre, Department of Natural Resources Canada; Vern Singhroy, chief scientist, Canada Centre for Remote Sensing; Orji, who is an assistant professor of computer science at Dalhousie University; Midia Shikh Hassan, manager of MakerLaunch, a startup growth hub at the University of Ottawa. From Africa, there was Rajaa Cherkaoui, professor of nuclear physics at Hassan II Academy of Science and Technology in Morocco and a Laureate L'Oréal-UNESCO "Women in Science" in 2015; Amina Abubakar, senior scientist at the Aga Khan Foundation Network; and Ngina, who is a lecturer at Strathmore University in Kenya. There were also several young female scientists pursuing graduate studies in African and Canadian universities.

The seminar was organized in two parts. The morning session took place in partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC) and was a roundtable discussion that brought together African and Canadian female scientists. It provided a platform for them to share and exchange knowledge and ideas on how to enhance the participation of women in STEM. IDRC president Jean Lebel, in his remarks, noted that there is a need to address the "leaky pipeline" of women in STEM in Africa and all over the world. The subsequent discussion revealed that women are facing many of the same barriers in Canada as they are across Africa. Some of the challenges identified included a big gender gap in STEM in Canada and across Africa, which leads to women feeling isolated and missing out on research opportunities due to informal

conversations that take place among male researchers; lack of mentorship opportunities for women; a tendency on the part of women to gravitate toward sciences where they can see societal impact; the pressures of having children before it's too late; a lack of funding for women in STEM and a lack of data available in Africa to monitor and address the gender gap in STEM.

Despite these challenges, participants were also eager to share best practices from their respective countries. From Canada, the discussion revealed a number of interventions have been put in place



South African High Commissioner Sibongiseni Yvonne Dlamini-Mntambo congratulates Rita Orji on her successes.

to encourage women in STEM. These include parental leave for women and men, dedicated research chairs for women and the requirement for researchers to apply for grants as a team that includes women. In Rwanda, dedicated scholarships for women to attend university are in place. In Egypt, the introduction of gender equality legislation led to higher numbers of women in engineering.

To tackle some of these key challenges, participants proposed several solutions and actions. They said those in the sector need to ensure that funding is available to support female scientists and provide seed funding for entrepreneurship. They suggested funding programs that will push the younger generation to connect innovation to creativity. This includes moving from STEM to STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art and Mathematics). They also suggested diverse representation in classrooms, political buy-in and legal frameworks that promote and uphold gender equality in STEM. They said men must be engaged in dialogues and work together as allies to address the

gender gap. Finally, they identified a need to link women to one another to foster collaboration.

During this roundtable discussion, experienced and newer scientists in STEM came together to talk about bringing more women into STEM to make a change in society. The output from the roundtable was the proposal to establish the Africa-Canada Women Scientists Network.

Diane Jacovella, Canada's deputy minister of International Development, delivered a keynote address titled "Women in Science: Busting Myths and Misconceptions" and in a video message, Gov. Gen. Julie Payette, a former astronaut and a supporter of women in STEM, offered a powerful message. She said, "science is a great unifying platform [in which] we search, explore and find solutions to common problems."

Next, a high-level panel discussion, organized in partnership with the Aga Khan Development Network, took place. Panellist Rajaa Cherkaoui shared statistics from Africa, showing that the numbers of women in STEM are increasing, albeit slowly. Orji identified three factors that affect women's participation in STEM, namely family background, community support and opportunity provided by organizations. She encouraged women to "raise up their hands" in order to be noticed and to support each other.

The second panel discussed strategies to improve the situation of female scientists in STEM, including funding opportunities. Some of the strategies identified by the panellists included: positive discrimination, especially in funding for women in STEM; flexible working environments to enable women to combine their personal and professional roles, especially those who would like to have families; mentorship programs targeting girls in high schools, to increase the pool of women enrolling in STEM in colleges and universities; and an effort to identify champions of STEM.

The seminar ended on a high note with remarks from Rwandan chargé d'affaires Shakila Umutoni, who is also vice-president of AWDF. She observed that for "Africa to achieve sustainable development, it is imperative to eliminate gender stereotypes in STEM." Another seminar will be organized in Africa to bring together African and Canadian women in STEM to make the Africa-Canada Women Scientists Network a reality.

Jane Kerubo is the deputy head of mission at the Kenyan High Commission.

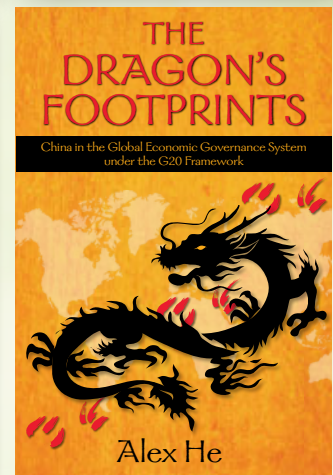
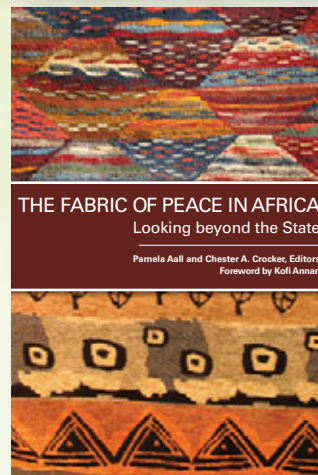
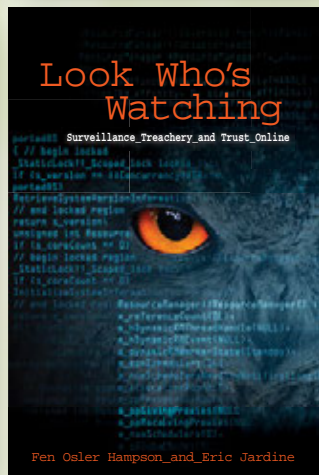
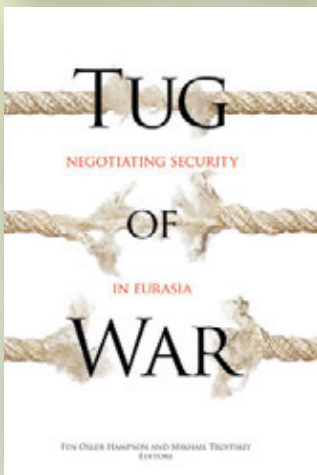
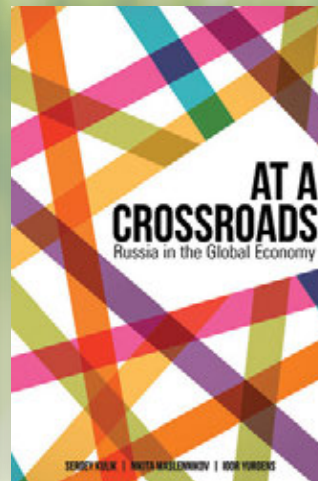
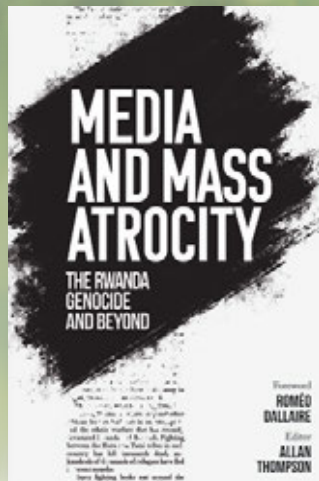
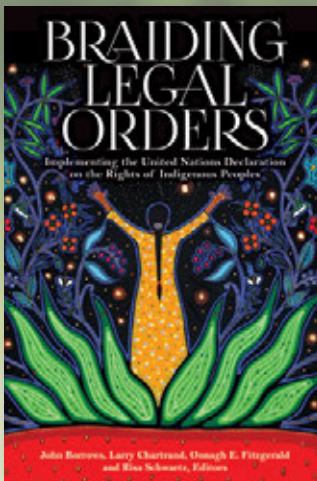




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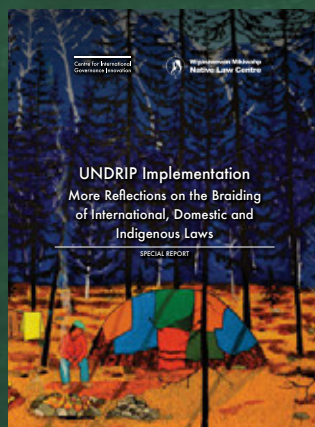
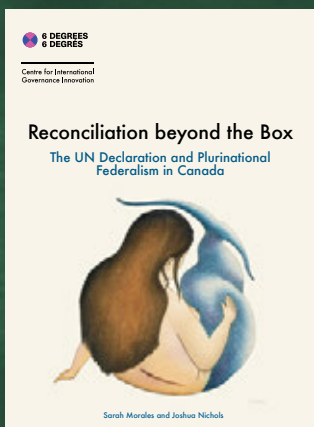
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# 'Love letter' to Canada prefers passion over policy



Christina  
Spencer

**B**ruce and Vicki Heyman's *The Art of Diplomacy* (Simon and Schuster, 2019, 266 pages, \$32) is a syrupy fan letter to Canada — a collection of clichés about our weather, our pronunciation, Tim Hortons and Sourtoe cocktails. About the only thing missing is an ode to the BeaverTail.

Still, Canada these days needs to welcome love where it can find it, and praise from Americans isn't something we often hear. Usually they don't notice us. The Heymans hope to change that.

The book, by the former U.S. ambassador to Canada and his wife, is also a fan letter to Justin Trudeau, filled with breezy bromides about his stellar leadership. One can imagine that the prime minister, after a disastrous start to Election Year 2019, is also happy to accept the praise.

And the Heymans, though they come across a bit like annoying high school cheerleaders, seem sincere and likeable. They're a down-to-earth couple who clearly enjoyed their almost-three-year tenure as "co-ambassadors" to Canada on behalf of Barack Obama's administration.

Wait, correction — you can't have co-ambassadors. The couple is told this when the position is initially offered by a U.S. administration official who asks which of them wants the job. "You do know you are both qualified," he tells the former Obama fundraiser-philanthropists. Ultimately, the Heymans decide Bruce will be the official envoy, but his outgoing, personable wife will play a key public role.

And she does. Bruce Heyman deals in conventional ambassadorial diplomacy; Vicki forges relationships in the world of art and culture. The Heymans alternate as authors of various chapters, reflecting slightly different experiences, but always the same upbeat message about Canadians. Who knew we were this great?



In their new book, Vicki and Bruce Heyman underline the importance of the Canada-U.S. relationship and discuss how they tackled the job together; he dealt with the conventional ambassadorial diplomacy and she forged relationships through the world of art and culture.

Still, for a book written by a heavyweight diplomatic couple, there is surprisingly little substantial diplomacy discussed. Obviously state secrets and delicate negotiations can't be revealed, but the relentless omission of almost any weighty policy content tends to reinforce the stereotype that what ambassadors do is host parties, travel and hob-knob with cool people. [Examples of issues at the time include the anti-nuclear agreement with Iran, labelling of Canadian beef, president Barack Obama's early-announced troop pullout from Iraq, Canada's presence on the U.S. watchlist of countries not fully implementing treaty commitments enforcing internet and copyright piracy and the refusal by the Obama administra-

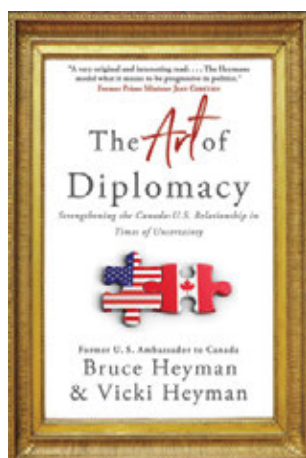
tion to share the construction cost of the new Gordie Howe International Bridge Windsor-Detroit Bridge.]

The exception is the heated debate around the Keystone XL Pipeline between the Stephen Harper government and the Obama administration during the first part of the Heymans' tenure in Ottawa. Bruce recounts how, from the start, he is pressed by Canadian leaders to convey to Obama how fervently Canada wants the pipeline segment in Nebraska approved. Early on, he is called in to the Department of Foreign Affairs to be (politely) dressed down over Keystone by then-deputy minister Daniel Jean. "In the days that followed, I noticed that all meetings I had scheduled with various ministers, for



one reason or another, were cancelled," he writes. "Message received: I was shut out."

Ever optimistic, the Heymans use their political isolation from official Ottawa to travel the country — seven provinces in 21 days on their first foray — and they love us all instantly. They also learn. Meeting with elders of Great Bear Lake, they hear powerful pleas for wise stewardship of the land. "In the United States, Bruce and I have limited contact with Native Americans," writes Vicki. "But in Canada we developed over time a huge network of Indigenous acquaintances and friends



... I had to wonder, if Canada was able to recognize its past abuses of Indigenous people, why couldn't the United States do the same?"

Another impact of the Harper freeze-out is the Heymans' evolving friendship with the third-party leader of the day, Justin Trudeau, and his family. Vicki becomes chummy with Sophie Grégoire-Trudeau (the two even take off for lunch on Sophie's Vespa, to the alarm of embassy staff). At a dinner together at Lornado, the official residence of the U.S. ambassador, the Heymans and the Trudeaus bond.

"What was clear to me even then was that (Trudeau) was a man of conviction; someone who was authentic, honest and had a clear perspective of what he wanted for Canada — and what he didn't," Bruce Heyman writes of that evening meal.

The book is replete with such gushing about the Liberal leader (there is no reason to think it's insincere: They like him, they really like him). But what's odd is that while the Heymans eagerly describe the early frost in their relations with Harper — more on that in a minute — and the warmth of their friendship with Trudeau, the book never mentions the then-leader of the Official Opposition, the NDP's

Tom Mulcair. For much of the Heymans' tenure, the NDP was running strong in the polls and Mulcair might well have knocked out Harper as prime minister. In the Heymans' book, however, he doesn't exist.

But back to Harper. Bruce Heyman writes that relations finally thawed when he rescued the prime minister from a foreign policy gaffe. In September 2014, Heyman writes, Harper told the media that the U.S. had asked Canada to join the bombing campaign in Iraq. Apparently no such invitation had been issued, and reporters were asking awkward questions. "It was obvious to me that Prime Minister Harper and his team were in a bit of a jam," Heyman notes. So the ambassador stepped in with this statement: "On behalf of the U.S. government, I'd like to formally invite Canada to participate in the Iraq effort ... any and all help from Canada in the U.S.-led campaign against ISIS would be deeply appreciated by the United States."

One has to assume Heyman didn't freelance this act, but the book offers no further explanation. "After that," Heyman continues, "everything opened up for me in Ottawa. When I asked for meetings with cabinet ministers, I got them." Gradually, a better personal relationship developed between the prime minister and the ambassador.

Vicki Heyman calls the Harper months and the Trudeau months "as different as night and day." For instance: "The Trudeau months were warm, invigorating, and youthful from the moment Justin stepped into power as the 23rd prime minister of Canada." When Trudeau's three-day visit to Washington is arranged (we learn more in the book about this kind of negotiation than about any substantial policy work), Bruce describes it as "such a high point in our lives and careers. It took us back to 2008 when Obama was first elected."

This "Camelot moment" was not to last; In November 2016, Donald Trump was elected U.S. president. The Heymans, like many liberal-minded Americans, were stunned and deflated. And in January 2017, their tenure, like that of other Obama appointees, came to an end. Trump, Bruce Heyman writes, "was about to test our relationship with our greatest ally and friend by attacking longstanding, mutually beneficial trade agreements and undermining the core values that define Canada and Canadians." He adds, "it was beyond my worst imaginings that, as president, he would pose a threat to the sacred bond between our two countries."



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With no formal diplomatic role since then, the couple nonetheless see themselves today as “unofficial ambassadors for the U.S.-Canada relationship” and they’ve been outspoken about Canada’s virtues. Writes Bruce, “the moral compass of North America points north.”

Not all Canadians would be quite this generous in assessing their own country or its leader(s). But in the end, the Heymans’ affection for us is no small thing, not if they’re willing to so eagerly and consistently make the Canadian case to the U.S.

Perhaps, then, we can overlook the clichés. Let’s just sip our double-doubles and bask in the compliments.

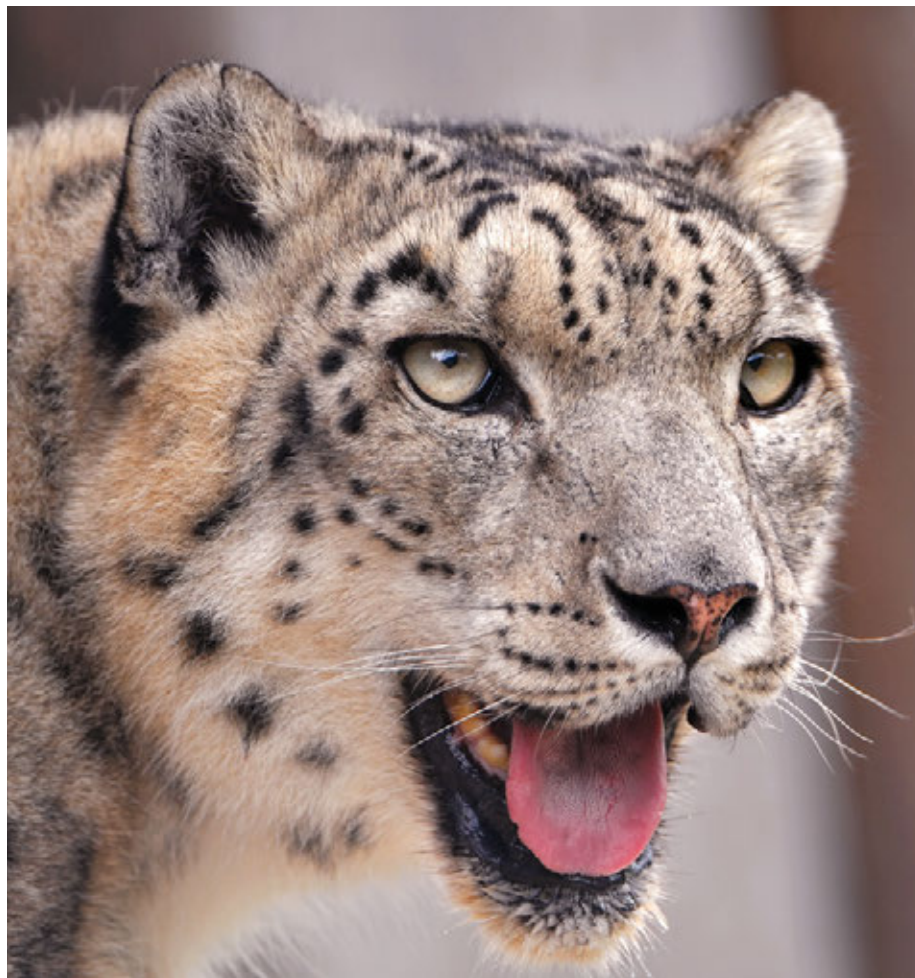
#### **Saving the snow leopard**

A completely different take on diplomacy arrives via Alex Dehgan’s *The Snow Leop-*

American scientist who travels to one of the world’s most dangerous places to research and help save scarce species, trying to preserve the natural landscape from the scars of fighting.

Conservation diplomats aren’t soldiers or aid workers or official government envoys; they’re on the ground in this particular nasty war zone to count Marco Polo sheep and find musk deer and gather bits of animal scat as they try to establish national parks in a remote, unlikely corner of the planet.

And yes, they want to find out the fate and health of Afghanistan’s fabled snow leopards — the huge-pawed, plump-tailed, mountain-dwelling felines of central Asia, under threat, as other species are, from decades of human conflict. Quick spoiler: The author never actually sees a snow leopard,



Alex Dehgan’s *The Snow Leopard Project* is part adventure tale, part policy manual and part environmental essay, writes Christina Spencer.

ard Project (Public Affairs, Hachette Book Group, 280 pages, \$16.65.) Set in Afghanistan, this book — part adventure tale, part policy manual and part environmental essay — tells the story of an Iranian-

but his team uncovers ample evidence that the big cats are there and being hunted, and works out innovative plans to safeguard these and other creatures so essential to restoring the country’s natural health.

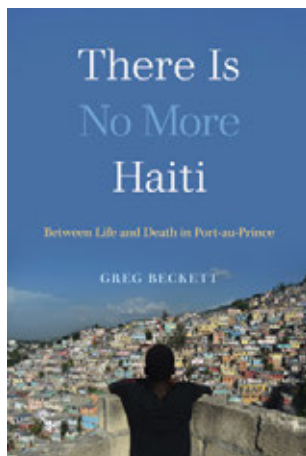


Afghanistan isn't the most obvious location to be pitching ambitious conservation projects. But as Dehgan points out, "just as Afghanistan was a crossroads of human culture and empires, it was always a biological Silk Road," a home to some unique biogeography. "Take these fragile habitats and their denizens, add a quarter-century of conflict, and stir furiously; the result is a serious disruption of the ecosystem ... our goal was to reverse this disruption."

Dehgan's Wildlife Conservation Society team, funded by USAID, faces the traditional threats confronting any organization in Afghanistan, such as kidnappings, IEDs, mines or suicide attacks — but it also endures the unique perils of travel by yak or horse in extreme environments, and often spends weeks under primitive conditions in some of the highest elevations on Earth.

The team, many of whom are Afghans, knows its stuff, yet still routinely runs into danger. Dehgan, for instance, is bird-watching alone one day when a stranger approaches, announcing he is Taliban. The author — an American, remember — somehow maintains his cool and keeps his eye on the birds. Eventually, his newfound acquaintance does the same.

On another occasion, travelling by vehicle to the mountainous province of Badakhshan, the conservationists accidentally veer off the poorly marked track and find themselves more than 50 feet into a



minefield. "We went silent as Khoja (the experienced driver) put the car in reverse and slowly backed up, trying to follow our tracks precisely," Dehgan writes. Afghanistan, as he reminds us, is one of the most heavily land-mined nations in the world.

Other harrowing tales are included, but Dehgan's book isn't simply (or even

mostly) a retelling of war stories at the bar. He delves into what works — and doesn't — for foreign aid in conflict zones; vividly describes the culture of the capital, Kabul; pens beautiful descriptions of the natural world he sees around him; and offers much-needed historical context on Afghanistan itself. He is a man partly in search of his own identity, but his admiration for Afghan people is plain as the narrative develops.

In the end, national parks do get built, thanks in part to local populations that quickly, perhaps surprisingly to Western eyes, embrace the concept of natural preservation. "The protection and renewal of wild Afghanistan, of its flora and fauna, represented a restoration of the country's own ferocity and identity," writes Dehgan.

And the magnificent snow leopards have a fighting chance to survive — and maybe thrive.

#### 'This does not have to happen again'

Greg Beckett has a much grimmer story to impart in *There is no Haiti: Between Life and Death in Port-au-Prince* (University of California Press, 2019, 295 pages, \$37.95.) An anthropologist by training, his focus is Haiti, a country he visited repeatedly for a decade from 2002 on, probing how it is that people can live their everyday lives in a state of constant crisis, not merely day after day, but year after year.

Haiti's crisis is environmental, political and social. But while the author seeds his book with historical context, his strong narrative style emphasizes individual people — mostly men, as it happens — who work in the informal economy and with whom he becomes fast friends while meticulously studying their lives. There's Manuel, for instance, whom he meets at a market; Manuel will become the source of the book's title when he bluntly tells the author, "Haiti is dead; there is no more Haiti." There's Wilfrid, who runs a shop that becomes the locus for much of the book. There's Alexis, whose beat-up car is his lifeline to employment, sometimes as a driver or brief tour guide for foreigners and aid workers. Their world is one of "wageless work, squatter settlements, black markets and debt."

There are surprises woven through this book — such as the history of a remarkable forest on the edge of Port-au-Prince that activists are desperately trying to save by turning it into a botanical garden (it will later house gangs of kidnappers). There are descriptions of the markets, where "everything is sold in the smallest units. And alongside the tiny fractions of



## Lois Siegel

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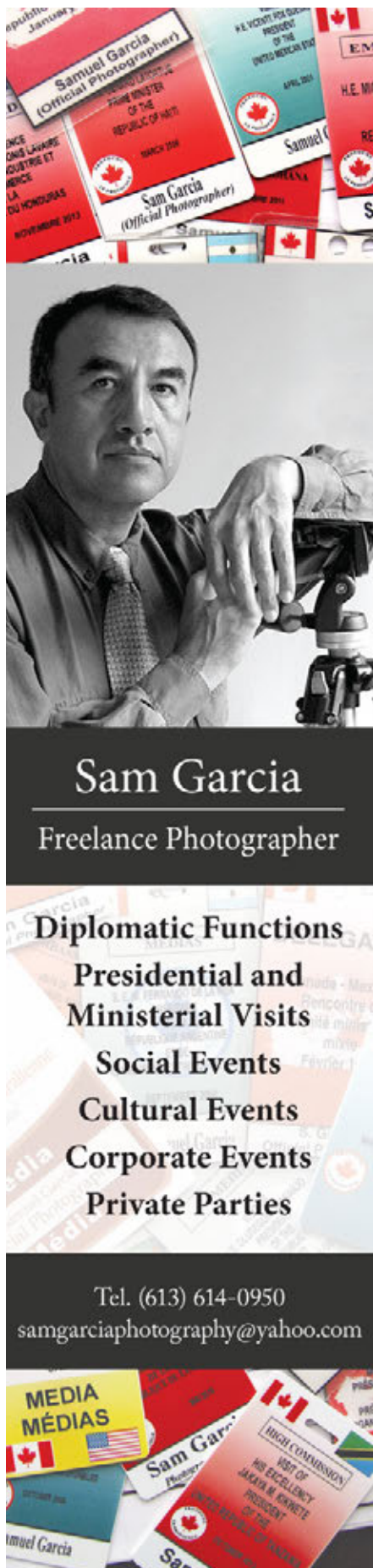
Lois has worked as a photographer for the *Ottawa Citizen* (Around Town and Diplomata), *Ottawa Business Journal*, the *Glebe Report*, *Centretown Buzz* and *Cinema Canada*.

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Photo by Bill Blackstone



food: the slivers of soap, the lone matches, the single tablets of medicine.” This is what poverty looks like: “Everything is for sale in the city, in the city full of people with no money.”

Having survived the turbulent Duvalier dictatorship only to scratch out a living under the reformer Aristide, who will later be displaced, the residents of Port-au-Prince endure one calamity after another: poverty, gang violence, kidnappings, coups, tropical storms, mudslides and floods of epic proportions, and, of course, the 2010 earthquake and cholera epidemic that follow. Beckett speaks to his friends not only of how they survive but of what they are feeling; indeed, if there’s a flaw to his narrative it is his tendency to imbue these characters with an abstract, almost spiritual air that most humans don’t seem to have. But Beckett walks among them, and his philosophical waxing is an attempt to distil his friends’ stories into some sensible form.

One remarkable part of this book is his description of waiting for the coup (that eventually topples Aristide). Everyone knows it is coming: Street violence is mounting; there are food and gas shortages and rolling blackouts. “Waiting was just about the only thing there was to do,” he writes. When he tells Wilfrid he wants to understand the political situation, his friend responds “Ah, you would have to be Haitian.”

That Haiti should be in such constant chaos and disorder (“dezod”) seems inevitable, but for Beckett, it need not be. “I resist the dominant trope of tragedy in stories about Haiti ... what happened did not have to happen and does not have to happen again,” he writes with determination. One admires his optimism, but there is scant evidence in his book to justify it.

#### Further reading:

*There Is No Planet B: A Handbook for the Make or Break Years*

Mike Berners-Lee

Cambridge University Press, 2019

288 pages, \$15.45

This jargon-free primer addresses a range of questions about the fate of the planet, using a Q and A format that lets the reader skip or focus on sections according to interest. Berners-Lee spends a lot of time on the environment, but his approach is holistic, delving into subjects from food to energy to travel to modern values. Questions range from “What are the fourteen things every politician needs

to know about climate change?” to “Why don’t people explode from over-eating?” to “Is nuclear nasty?” and even “How can I tell whether to trust anything in this book?” One need not agree with all of the author’s conclusions to enjoy this trove of information.

*Too Dumb for Democracy: Why We Make Bad Political Decisions and How We Can Make Better Ones*

David Moscrop

Goose Lane Editions, 2019

254 pages, \$20.2

Humankind, notes David Moscrop, is “a clever species that routinely makes bad decisions, including political decisions, and gets stuck living with the consequences.” It’s capable of electing both an Abraham Lincoln and a Donald Trump. The question is: Why? And how can we learn to make better political choices? The book’s title provocatively implies that we may just be too dumb to get it right. Yet, as Moscrop notes, we can strive for better, and we must — for “we have never faced the risks of mass casualty or extinction by our own hands that we face now.” His recipe for how to do democracy right is a thoughtful read.

*No Nation for Women: Reportage on Rape from India, the World’s Largest Democracy*

Priyanka Dubey

Simon and Schuster India, 2019

320 pages, \$15

India, which held national elections this year, boasts with justified pride of being the world’s largest democracy. But statistics also suggest it is one of the world’s biggest “rape capitals” too. Investigative journalist Priyanka Dubey explores that darker side of the subcontinent in this uncompromising account of often unreported stories about abused women and cultures that encourage sexual assault. Over six years of travel through her country, the Bhopal native asks whether India is making meaningful progress on respect for all, and shares thoughts about how it can do justice not just to men, but to women, too.

Christina Spencer is the editorial pages editor of the *Ottawa Citizen*. She holds a master’s from the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs at Carleton University, and is a past winner of National Newspaper Awards for international reporting and editorial writing.



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# Summertime, and the entertaining is easy

Photos by Larry Dickenson



Fruit-filled crêpes make a nice dessert or a fancy breakfast for special guests.



Margaret  
Dickenson

It is that wonderful time to celebrate not only barbecue season, but the fresh fruits of summer. The variety and versatility of summer fruits enable them to be included in any course of a menu and at any time of day. My summer menus highlight recipes in which fruit stars. Presented with personal creativity, these recipes have proven to be winners.

## Fruit-Filled Lace Crêpes

*Makes 4 servings*

Crêpes seem to make breakfast special. My Fruit-Filled Crêpes always add a wow factor. Feel free to adjust the filling ingredients to suit your own taste and the resources you have on hand.

1¾ cups (430 mL) crêpe batter (recipe attached), divided  
3 cups (750 mL) banana, sliced  
2 cups (500 mL) fresh strawberries (stems removed and sliced) or other berries  
1 tbsp (15 mL) orange-flavoured liqueur, optional  
3 tbsp (45 mL) strawberry jam  
¼ cup (60 mL) Double Ginger Sour Cream Sauce\* or crème fraîche  
3 tbsp (45 mL) creamy butterscotch dessert sauce or maple syrup

2 tbsp (30 mL) toasted slivered almonds or chopped pecans, optional  
1 tbsp (15 mL) chopped chocolate, optional

## Garnish (optional)

As desired, sprigs of fresh mint or whole fresh strawberries  
½ cup (125 mL) maple syrup (for passing)

1. In a large non-stick skillet over medium-low heat, prepare 4 large crêpes (diameter: 7-inch or 17-cm) using ¼ cup (60 mL) of batter per crêpe. Arrange each crepe on individual dinner plates.
2. With remaining batter, make 4 “lace crêpes,” using about 3 tbsp (45 mL) of batter for each crêpe. First, quickly drizzle a ring of batter about the same diameter as the prepared crêpes and then, continue to drizzle in a haphazard manner within ring





Quick Irresistible Barbecued Ribs make a tasty main course when served with some pretty rice pilaf on the side.

to form a thin “lace” crêpe. Cook until top surface is set. To simplify the drizzling process, place the batter in a clean plastic squeeze bottle fitted with a medium-sized nozzle.

3. Using a pancake flipper, carefully peel lace crêpe away from skillet and turn crêpe over; cook second side briefly. Remove from skillet and stack on a plate, separating each crêpe with a layer of wax paper; set aside.

4. Place sliced bananas and strawberries in separate bowls; mix with liqueur.

5. Using about ¼ of total amount for each crêpe, spread strawberry jam evenly over each regular crêpe, add bananas and dabs of Double Ginger Sour Cream Sauce. Drizzle with butterscotch sauce, top with sliced strawberries, toasted nuts and chopped chocolate.

6. Top each fruit-layered crêpe with a lace crêpe enclosing fruit mixture between crêpes.

7. Dust crêpes lightly with icing sugar and garnish with sprigs of fresh mint. Pass maple syrup at the table.

**\*Double Ginger Sour Cream Sauce:** Makes 1 ⅓ cup (80 mL): Whisk together 1/3 cup (80 mL) of sour cream, 1½ tbsp (23 mL) of chopped ginger in syrup, 1/3 tsp (2 mL) of ground ginger and if desired, 1/3 tsp (2 mL) of cognac. (Store sauce refrigerated for up to 10 days.)

#### **Crêpe Batter/Crêpes**

Makes about 2 ⅔ cups (675 mL) of batter  
1 cup (250 mL) all-purpose flour  
1½ tsp (8 mL) granulated sugar  
1/8 tsp (pinch) ground ginger  
2 eggs

2 egg yolks  
1½ cups (375 mL) milk, divided  
¼ cup (60 mL) unsalted butter or margarine, melted

1. In a medium-sized bowl, sift together flour, sugar and ground ginger.

2. In another medium bowl, using an electric mixer, beat together eggs, yolks and ¾ cup (about 180 mL) of milk.

3. Continuing to beat constantly, gradually add ½ cup (125 mL) of flour mixture, then remaining milk (¾ cup or 180 mL) and remaining flour mixture (½ cup or 125 mL). Beat to form a smooth batter.

4. Beat in melted butter. If batter is not perfectly smooth, pass it through a coarse-mesh sieve.

5. Allow batter to rest for at least 30 minutes before using.

6. Whisk batter thoroughly before using.

### Quick Irresistible Barbecued Ribs

(with Star Anise)

Makes 4 servings

Many rib recipes involve slow cooking with the meat falling off the bones. However, if you want a quick recipe for pork ribs, this one is a crowd-pleaser. The recipe is particularly for those of us who enjoy “nibbling” the meat off the bones and don’t mind using our fingers — rather appropriate for casual al fresco dining. For best results, only use pork back ribs, which are not too large in size, and grill them to the perfect degree of doneness. Make sure the meat is no longer pink around the bones, but avoid overcooking. The star anise and grated orange zest make the flavour of these barbecued ribs a unique treat.

2 racks pork back ribs (each rack: about 1¾ lbs or 800 g)

¾ tsp (4 mL) finely grated orange zest

### Marinade

1½ cups (375 mL) granulated sugar

½ cup (125 mL) soy sauce

6 tbsp (90 mL) hoisin sauce

3 tbsp (45 mL) peeled and grated fresh gingerroot

1½ tbsp (23 mL) finely chopped fresh garlic

2½ tsp (13 mL) finely ground star anise

1. Cut racks into individual ribs; transfer to 2 large plastic bags.

2. In a medium-size bowl, whisk together marinade ingredients. (Note: Set aside 1/3 cup (80 mL) of marinade to be offered at the table.)

3. Pour remaining marinade equally over ribs in plastic bags. Remove air and seal bags securely. Turn ribs in marinade to coat thoroughly; refrigerate for 24 hours or up to 36 hours, turning bags of ribs from time to time.

4. Before cooking, remove ribs from refrigerator and allow to come closer to room temperature.

5. Thoroughly drain marinade from ribs and discard used marinade.

6. Oil ribs very lightly on all sides and place on a well-oiled preheated (medium-high) grill with bone side down and immediately reduce heat to medium (or slightly lower). Turn ribs as browning occurs and a stable crust is formed (about 5 to 6 minutes). Try to keep lid closed as much as possible, and oil grates again if

required.

7. Continue to grill ribs, turning occasionally for about another 3 to 5 minutes until meat next to the bone is no longer pink. However, if meat is still pink, reduce heat to low and cook ribs until done. The total cook time should be eight to 10 minutes.

8. Immediately transfer ribs to a platter, cover loosely with aluminum foil (shiny side down).

9. Serve ribs arranged artistically in a vertical pile. Sprinkle sparingly with grated orange zest.

10. Offer reserved marinade at the table to be drizzled over ribs only if desired and according to individual tastes.

### Watermelon Salad with Sesame Balsamic Sauce

Makes 4 servings

Take advantage while watermelon is at its best. This chilled watermelon salad profiles a complex dimension of flavours, textures and colours; however, it is easy to prepare. Present this recipe as an individual fruit plate for breakfast, as an appetizer particularly for al fresco dining, or in a reduced quantity as a palate cleanser salad for an elegant dinner party. To maximize the flavour of this salad, it is essen-



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tial that the watermelon be served chilled.

¼\* of a regular-size seedless watermelon, chilled

½ cup (125 mL) of Stilton cheese or ¾ cup (180 mL) of feta cheese

To taste, salt

To taste, small (or torn) fresh basil or mint leaves

1 1/3 tbsp (20 mL) toasted pine nuts (or ¼ cup/60 mL of walnut pieces)

4 sprigs of fresh mint and/or basil

#### Sesame Balsamic Sauce

2 to 2½ tbsp (30 to 38 mL) sesame oil

3 tbsp (45 mL) Balsamic Vinegar Syrup\*\*

1. Make the Sesame Balsamic Sauce by whisking sesame oil into Balsamic Vinegar Syrup to create a fairly thick, syrupy drizzle that, when applied, will retain a thread-like path.

2. Cut the ¼ watermelon crosswise into 2/3-inch (1.5-cm) slices. Take the 4 larger central slices and cut each into 3 wedges of equal size. Keep melon slices chilled until ready to serve. Reserve leftover pieces of watermelon for another purpose.

3. For 4 individual servings, just before serving, arrange 3 watermelon wedges artistically on each of 4 separate dinner plates.

4. Sprinkle watermelon slices and plates with crumbled cheese; season very lightly with salt. Whisk the Sesame Balsamic Sauce very well as it tends to separate. Immediately drizzle about 1½ to 2 tsp (8 to 10 mL) of sauce over each serving of the watermelon salad. Scatter plates with nuts. 5. Garnish salads with sprigs of fresh mint or basil and serve promptly.

\* Total weight of the ¼ watermelon: 2½ lbs or 1.2 kg.

\*\* To make about 3½ tbsp (53 mL) of Balsamic Vinegar Syrup, place 1/3 cup (80 mL) of balsamic vinegar and 2 tbsp (30 mL) of granulated sugar in a small non-stick skillet over medium-low heat. Stir constantly with a silicone spatula until sugar dissolves and mixture comes to a boil. Reduce heat to low and allow mixture to simmer, stirring constantly until the reduced syrup coats the back of a regular teaspoon well (i.e., until reduced to about 3½ tbsp. or 53 mL). Remove from heat immediately, allow to cool and refrigerate to thicken.

Margaret Dickenson is a cookbook author, TV host, menu/recipe developer and a protocol, business and etiquette instructor.



Watermelon Salad with Sesame Balsamic Sauce can be an appetizer or part of a fruit plate at breakfast.



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Paul Gauguin's *Self-portrait with Yellow Christ*, painted between 1890 and 1891, is part of the summer show at the National Gallery of Canada. It's on loan from the Musée d'Orsay in Paris.

## New views of 19th-Century icons

By Peter Simpson

**T**he National Gallery of Canada has intriguing looks at two 19th-Century icons of modern culture, the artist Paul Gauguin and writer-philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche.

Gauguin is one of the world's best-known artists, so it's incredible that any aspect of his work has not been studied, studied and restudied. Yet *Gauguin: Portraits* is the first exhibition anywhere dedi-

cated to portraiture by the French master.

Gauguin challenged the rules of portraiture in the 19th Century, says Cornelia Homburg, an international expert on late 19th-Century art, who is co-curator of the exhibition with Christopher Riopelle of the National Gallery in England.

"Gauguin was very much part of his time, but he was one of the free thinkers in that way," Homburg says. "He broke that

open completely. With him, the idea of portraiture is much broader and also goes in a very different direction."

The "portrait" that inspired the exhibition is Gauguin's sculpture of his friend, Dutch artist Meijer de Haan. The portrait is roughly hewn from a block of wood that had been salvaged from a fire. The standards of the day said that the purpose of a portrait was to project the fine social status





The paintings shown in the new da Vinci exhibit at the Canadian Museum of Science and Technology are reproductions, but they leave no doubt about da Vinci's mastery of the medium. The exhibit analyzes his most famous painting, the Mona Lisa, like never before.

of the subject, but Gauguin dispensed with any such considerations and did portraits of ordinary people, even peasants. His own self-portraits were also different — he put himself in traditional garments of people who had not typically been seen in portraiture, for example.

This new direction cost him financially, says Elizabeth Childs, a professor of art history at Washington University in St. Louis. "Gauguin was among the higher-valued of those living avant-garde artists whose work came up the most for auction in Paris in the 1890s," Childs says in the exhibit's catalogue. "Nevertheless, his portraits did not generally sell at his highest price range."

*Gauguin: Portraits* includes paintings, drawings and sculptures from collections around the world. It continues to Sept. 8.

Meanwhile, the exhibition *Friedrich Nietzsche and the Artists of the New Weimar* revolves around Max Klinger's bronze bust of Nietzsche. It also includes work by Edward Munch, Henry van de Velde and others who were fascinated by Nietzsche's work, and by his sad story of melancholy and decline. It continues to Aug. 25 and is part of the gallery's Masterpiece in Focus series. gallery.ca



Annette Hegel and Deborah Margo have created a space that examines the bee's world [using] organic materials such as beeswax and sedum plants, along with sound recordings of bee activity and shifting light. It will remain at the City Hall Gallery until Sept. 29.

**da Vinci's scientific side**

The impact that Leonardo da Vinci had on art and science almost beggars belief, and it's all on display at the Canadian Museum of Science and Technology.

Titled *Leonardo da Vinci: 500 Years of Genius*, the exhibition includes many models built from the designs of machines he invented or greatly improved. For purposes of this column, the focus is on the art side, and it is glorious. The paintings are reproductions, but they leave no doubt about da Vinci's mastery of the medium.

His most famous painting — indeed, art's most famous painting — is the Mona Lisa, and here an entire large space is set

**ROSALIE FAVELL'S  
WRAPPED IN CULTURE  
IS A HEARTWARMING  
DEMONSTRATION  
OF INTERNATIONAL  
INDIGENOUS CULTURE  
AND HISTORY.**

aside to analyze it like never before. Rest assured that no matter how much you've looked upon the Mona Lisa, you've never seen it like this — taken apart layer by layer, by ear and by eye and by lip, to reveal many secrets.

The exhibition continues to Sept. 2. [ingeniumcanada.org/scitech](http://ingeniumcanada.org/scitech)

**SAW Gallery's transformation**

When SAW Gallery officially reopens (scheduled for July 19), it'll be bigger, better equipped and as provocative as ever. The inaugural exhibition is titled *Sex Life*, with a global look at homoeroticism in drawings.

*Sex Life* will include artists from Canada and around the world and, judging by the gallery's past exhibitions, it won't flinch from making sharp comment on the homophobic policies in some nations or regions.

SAW is the final part of the Arts Court development project to open. What was a fusty, 19th-Century building has been



Rosalie Favell's *Wrapped in Culture* exhibit at the Ottawa Art Gallery includes images of the 10 Indigenous artists who helped create versions of the garment she is shown wearing here.

transformed into a hotel, condos and a greatly expanded and improved Ottawa Art Gallery. The entire project is a major public space in the city as it's never been before.

SAW — renamed the SAW Centre — still occupies its former lower-level space, and now what had been the major exhibition spaces for OAG on the main level. All the spaces are much more versatile and

exhibition-friendly, and much brighter now that windows have been added or, in some cases, reopened after decades.

The new SAW also includes a Nordic Lab ("a circumpolar artistic research space") and enhanced versions of Club SAW and the SAW Courtyard. Both of those spaces have improved audio, video and staging for live performances (67 Nicholas St.) [saw-centre.com](http://saw-centre.com)



### Favell at the OAG

Upstairs from SAW in the Ottawa Art Gallery, Rosalie Favell's *Wrapped in Culture* is a heartwarming demonstration of international Indigenous culture and history.

Favell, the Ottawa photographer, recruited 10 Indigenous artists from Canada and Australia to create contemporary versions of a Blackfoot robe and an Aboriginal cloak, the former made of buffalo hide and the latter from possum skins.

Individual artists decorated panels on the cloak or robe, and each artist was photographed wrapped in the two garments. The photographs are mounted on the walls around the room, and the cloak and robe hang in the centre. This allows a close-up inspection from all sides, to fully appreciate the designs, the handiwork, the textures. The temptation to wrap oneself in their warmth and love and history is tremendous.

The exhibition continues to Sept. 15. [oaggao.ca/wrapped-culture](http://oaggao.ca/wrapped-culture)

### For the love of bees

By the bee, a site-specific installation by Annette Hegel and Deborah Margo, will turn City Hall Art Gallery into a bee's world.

"Hegel and Margo continue to disrupt the idea that nature takes place outside the city, which is fitting given that a recent British study found that bumblebees fare better in urban environments," writes Michaela Rife in the exhibition catalogue. "[They] have created a space for human visitors to imagine the bee's world [using] organic materials like beeswax and sedum plants, joined by sound recordings of bee activity and shifting light, to simulate a pollinator's environment in the midst of the Ottawa City."

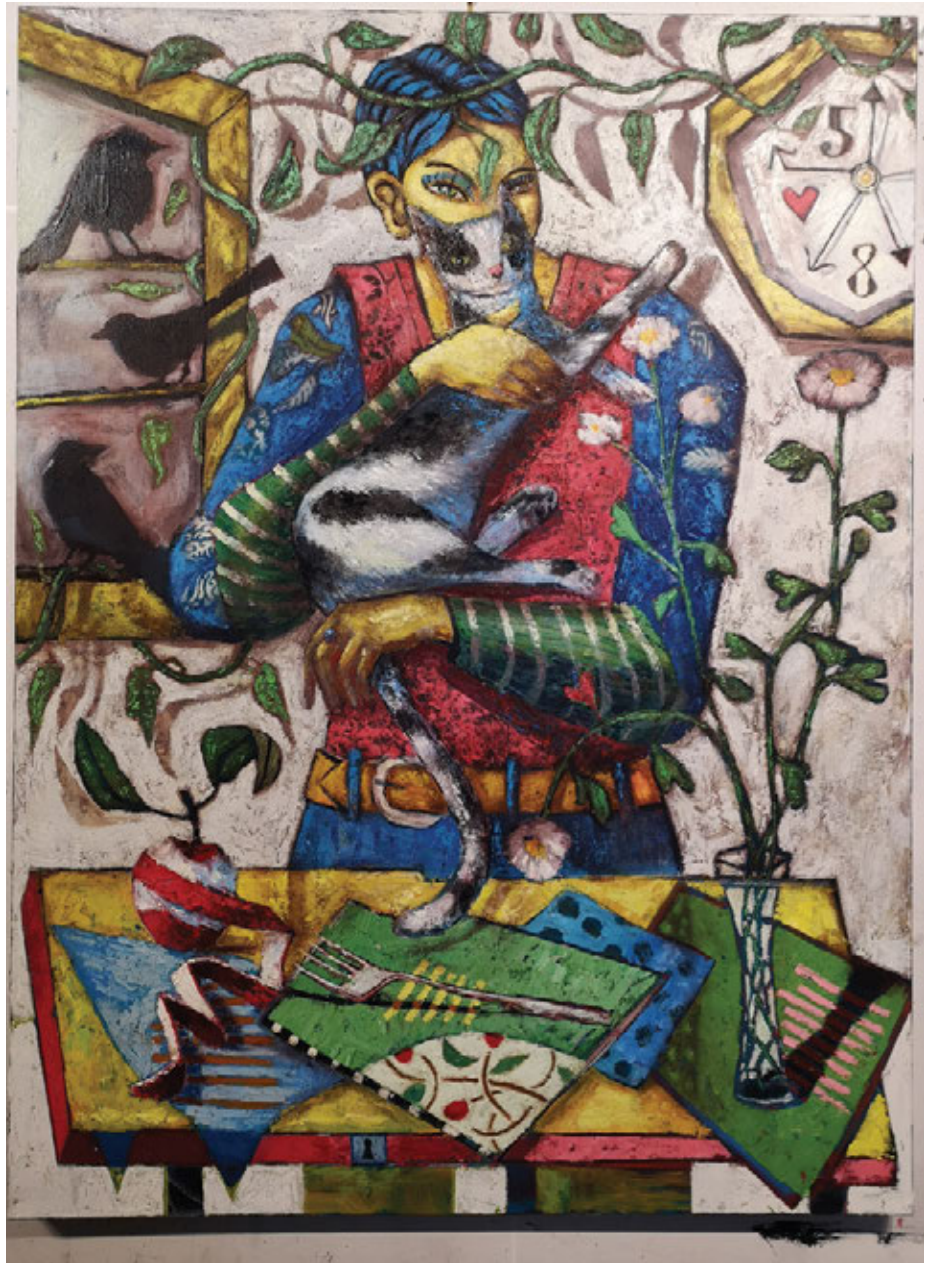
It continues to Sept. 29. Search for the gallery at [ottawa.ca](http://ottawa.ca).

### Other shows

**Leslie Hossack:** *Freud*, Sept. 5 to Oct. 13 at Studio Sixty Six, 858 Bank St. A selection of photographs from Leslie Hossack's book, *Freud*. Vernissage 6 to 9 p.m., Sept. 6. [studiosixtysix.ca](http://studiosixtysix.ca)

**John F. Marok:** *The Muse*, Sept. 25 to Oct. 13 at Orange Gallery, 290 City Centre Ave. New works from Wakefield, Que., painter John F. Marok. Vernissage 6 to 10 p.m., Sept. 26. [orangeartgallery.ca](http://orangeartgallery.ca)

**Benjamin Rodger:** *Tu peux encore changer le monde*, Sept. 19 to Nov. 11 at Karsh-Mas-son Gallery in City Hall. These new works



John F. Marok's exhibition, *The Muse*, will feature new works at Orange Gallery in September.

from Gatineau painter Benjamin Rodger, who has long been fascinated by textures and patterns, were completed during an artist residency in Leipzig, Germany. [benjaminrodger.com](http://benjaminrodger.com)

**Karen Kulyk:** Sept. 19 to Oct. 3 at Wallack Gallery, 225 Bank St. New impressionistic paintings from Toronto-born Karen Kulyk, who has painted and exhibited around the world. [wallackgalleries.com](http://wallackgalleries.com)

**16th Annual National Student Jewelry Competition:** July 27 to Aug. 16, L.A. Pai Gallery, 13 Murray St. Pieces designed by finalists for the competition. [lapaigallery.com](http://lapaigallery.com)

**Gayle Kells and Catherine Gutsche:** *Reverie*, Aug. 23 to Oct. 6 at Sivarulrasa Gallery, 34 Mill St., Almonte. Kells will be showing works on paper while Gutsche will present paintings and mixed media work. Vernissage 3 to 6 p.m., Sept 7. [sivarulrasa.com](http://sivarulrasa.com)

**Kai McCall:** Sept. 19 to Oct. 8 at Galerie St. Laurent + Hill, 293 Dalhousie St. New works from Montreal's Kai McCall, who merges classical tropes of portraiture with modern visuals, to subtly surreal effect. [galeriestlaurentplushill.com](http://galeriestlaurentplushill.com)

Peter Simpson is an Ottawa writer and regular contributor to ArtsFile.

# Champagne: Why smaller producers are worth a try



Alex  
McMahon

**W**hen we hear “Champagne,” our minds tend to conjure up images of opulence and prestige. Years of brilliant marketing on the part of Champagne producers have resulted in an instant association between the region and a few major brands — Dom Perignon, Veuve Clicquot, Moët & Chandon and Pol Roger, to name a few.

The former are some of the big Champagne “houses.” Houses build their reputations on consistency and their house style. An NM — meaning “Négociant Manipulant” — graces their labels and means that more than 94 per cent of the grapes used in their production come from different growers and vineyards from across the region. These big houses then blend them to produce the final product.

Not unlike a blockbuster movie, these wines are impressive and enjoyable and you know what you’re getting yourself into before you dive in. They also dominate the market. They own 12 per cent of vineyards in Champagne and boast 80 per cent of champagne sales globally.

Although the above wines tend to

represent the Champagne that the world historically has come to love, many wine professionals and drinkers alike have turned their attention to “Grower Champagnes.” Affectionately nicknamed “farmer fizz,” grower Champagnes are wines produced by vigneron who also own the vineyards where the grapes are grown. Rather than a consistent style, the aim is to make a wine that represents a specific terroir or sense of time and place.

Small batches, artisanal methods and lower intervention define this category, whose wines often have a “Récoltant-Manipulant” label. Since many of these growers and producers are relatively new, they aren’t bound by the historical traditions of a brand the way a winemaker working for a larger house will be. One grower taking full advantage of this freedom is Olivier Horiot in the village of Riceys. Horiot’s stunning organic Champagnes are always fermented using wild yeasts and often have a hazy quality due to a lack of filtration. He produces a number that focus on the lesser-known, rarely used grapes of Champagne, grapes such as Pinot Blanc, Arban, Petit Meslier and Fromenteau.

Meanwhile, in the premier cru of Vriigny, Clemance Lelarge and her family at Lelarge-Pugeot have experimented with skin-fermented whites in blends as well as using honey for their estate as a dosage to start the second fermentation of their “Honey Harmony” Cuvée, which boasts beautiful floral flavours along with citrus and nutty notes. Although Champagne is

never inexpensive, grower Champagnes tend to offer the drinker more value for money. A \$75 bottle from a large house means that your \$75 has to pay for the cost of grapes, the upkeep on massive cellars and estates, advertising and marketing campaigns and the salaries of the large teams that work in the many departments that make up these companies. Growers, however, tend to have very small teams — often not more than two or three — and rely on word of mouth for marketing. Their expenses tend to lean more toward upkeep of small cellars and vineyards, barrels and bottles. For \$75, the drinker pays mostly for what’s in the bottle — close to \$75 worth of wine.

I’ve likely made clear where my passion lies when it comes to Champagne. It’s certainly not a matter of better or worse, only personal preference. To debate their worth is to debate Spielberg versus Bergman. Different strokes...

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Alex McMahon is wine director at Riviera restaurant in Ottawa.

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# Sri Lanka's residence is full of charm — and charms

By Patrick Langston

Photos by Dyanne Wilson



The residence of Sri Lankan High Commissioner Madukande Asoka Kumara Giriagama is located across from Strathcona Park and the Rideau River.

**T**he odds are good you've never seen a dumb waiter quite like the one in the Sandy Hill residence of Sri Lankan High Commissioner Madukande Asoka Kumara Giriagama. In fact, at first glance, you might mistake the wood-panelled beauty concealed behind a white interior door as an elevator for short people who don't suffer from claustrophobia. But then Giriagama's wife, Sudarma Kumarihamy Giriagama, points out the two horizontal wood bars on the interior walls, and exclaims, "You can put the tray of food there and send it up!"

Her delight in the device — which goes

from the main to the second storey, but no longer operates — is obvious. However, it's far from the only delightful aspect of the large home at 28 Range Rd., with its soft blue exterior, centre hall plan and view of Strathcona Park and the Rideau River beyond.

The large, warm-toned living room, just off the spacious foyer, anchors the residence's public space.

"This is the gathering area. When our guests come in, we greet them here," says the high commissioner. "During the national day (in February), it has become a celebration hall: We set up a podium

here and I talk to the Sri Lankan community."

Sri Lanka purchased the home in 1965, 12 years after it established diplomatic relations with Canada. The wood-panelled main wall in the living room, with built-in book shelves and a fireplace, along with the deep wood trim throughout the home, speak to the residence's origin in the region's lumber trade. Designed by the architectural firm of Burritt & Kingston, the house was built in 1924 for J.R. Booth Jr., grandson of lumber king J.R. Booth.

Giriagama, his wife and their 17-year-



Sri Lankan High Commissioner Madukande Asoka Kumara Giriagama shares the residence with his wife, Sudarma Kumarihamy Giriagama, and their 17-year-old daughter, Thiyara.



The dining room, where the couple serves traditional Sri Lankan food, seats 12 comfortably.



The dumb-waiter, which no longer works, used to be used to transport food between floors in the large residence.



old daughter, Thiyara, began their posting here last fall after serving in Oman, and they take pride in detailing the many personal items that lend extra warmth and interest to the main room.

Traditional Sri Lankan furniture, much of it made of ebony and some of it antique, surrounds the space in a large semi-circle. Floral carving and swirling designs characterize it. "In Sri Lankan carving, there are a lot of curves and floral lines," says Thiyara, adding that the written version of Sinhala, one of the national languages of Sri Lanka, is itself full of curves and swirls.

On one wall stand two large sethasas, or umbrellas, and two spears. Both were used by guards to protect the last Sri Lankan monarch, Vikrama Rajasinha, who surrendered his power to the British Empire in 1815. The king's deposition also meant the end of the long line of monarchs from the country's central hill region of Kandy, where the high commissioner and his family are from.

Along another wall, one sees patras, large antique brass bowls once used by Buddhist monks to collect alms.

A procession of small, intricately detailed elephants and camels marches across the fireplace mantel. At the front,



The home is full of family treasures, including these wedding photos of the couple. The chest they are on is a family heirloom called a petagama, used to store clothes during the monarchical era.

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This large room faces Strathcona Park and serves as the principal reception room when the high commissioner entertains.



This reception room serves as a secondary space for large crowds and connects to a pretty sunroom on the south side of the home.



decked out in finery, is an elephant representing the animal that leads the annual parade in Kandy, part of a week-long cultural celebration in August. The real-life version of the elephant carries a replica of the sacred tooth of the Buddha, says Giriagama.

Elsewhere in the home, more Sri Lankan elements abound. Thiyara, who is entering her final year at Ashbury College and already possesses the savoir faire of the diplomat she intends to become, points out two metallic reliefs on a foyer wall. They are loaded with mangoes, flowers, lions, elephants, peacocks and snakes — all common ingredients in Sri Lankan art and decor, she says.

She also encourages her mother to show visitors some richly coloured jewelry that's been passed down through the generations on both sides of the family. "The thing with Sri Lankan antiques," says Thiyara, with a mix of sorrow and practicality, "is that the British took much of the jewelry. You can still find it in auctions in the U.K."

In the dining room, there's a display of dishware, some of it collected from the Czech Republic when the family was posted to Vienna in the mid-1990s, shortly after Giriagama joined Sri Lanka's foreign service. The dining room, with its view of Strathcona Park, seats 12. Dinner guests can look forward to dishes of yellow rice, chicken curry and eggplant followed by desserts including potato toffee (unexpected but delicious, as we discovered during our visit).

The main floor of the residence also includes a cosy parlour and a solarium with double French doors that's used in the warmer months.

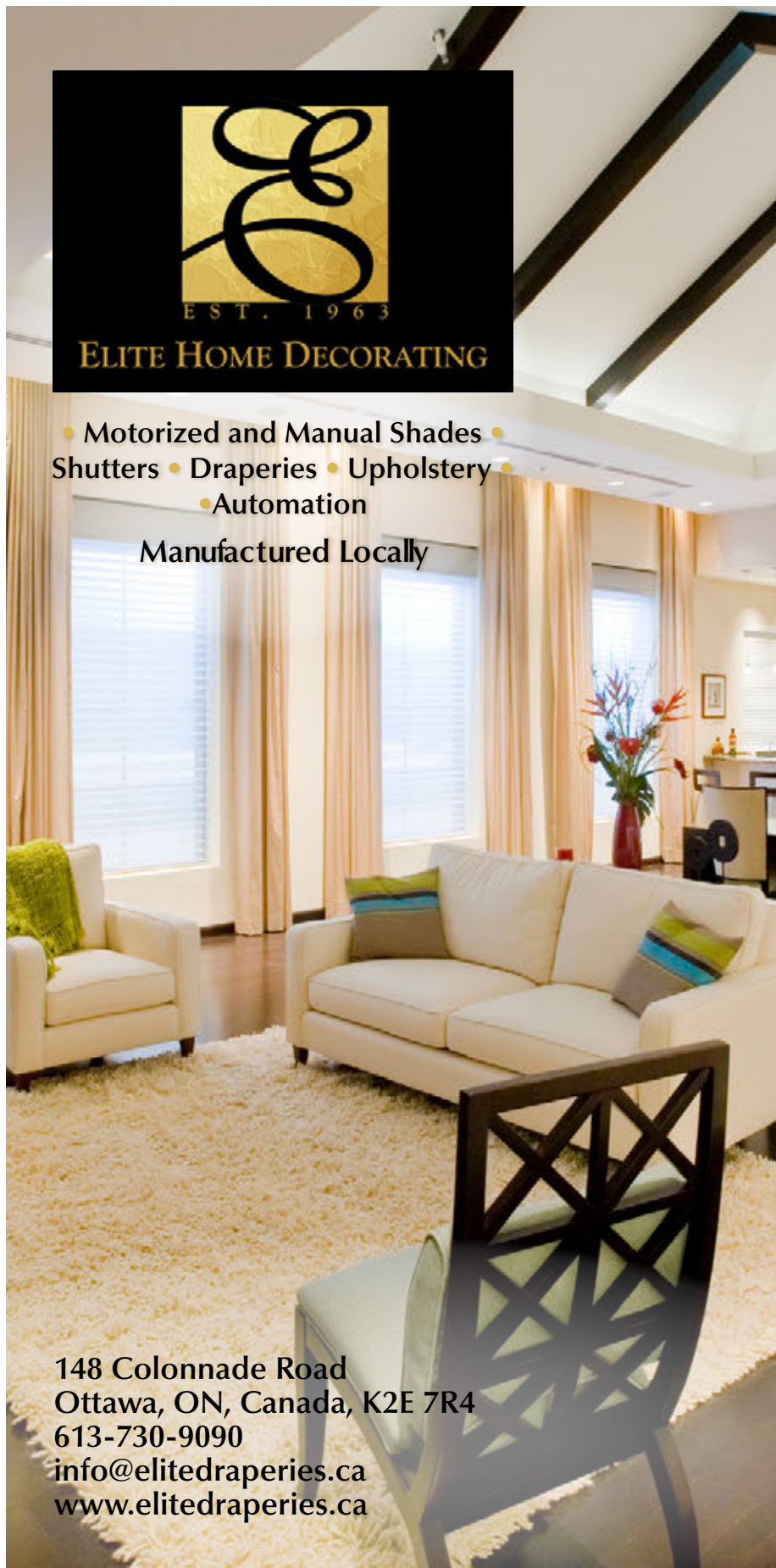
The high commissioner's small, close family is united in its fondness for older homes.

"We like this home very much because of its antiquity, but we have to repair it from time to time," he says, referencing recent exterior renovations and a kitchen modernization.

Older homes are charming, says his wife. "I do my functions with the ladies here — the coffee mornings, the lunches."

"There's something timeless about this house," adds Thiyara. "This is where it all happens, where [a high commissioner] comes and builds relationships with other officials, entertains and builds his reputation in the country he's in. It's the tool in the diplomat's tool box."

Patrick Langston is an Ottawa writer who dreams of living in a manor.



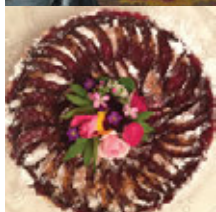
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## New arrivals

**Nasise Challi Jira**  
Ambassador of Ethiopia



Ambassador Jira began her career as a lecturer at universities in Ethiopia, including Jimma University, St. Mary's University College and Adama Science and Technology University.

She then went to work as director of the directorate of protocol and public relations in the president's office of Oromia National Regional Government. Between 2014 and 2016, she studied at Bellevue College in Bellevue, Washington, and completed a bachelor of science in informatics, information assurance and cybersecurity at the University of Washington in Seattle. Prior to this appointment, she was a cyber-security engineer with The Boeing Company in Seattle.

The ambassador is married and has three children. She speaks English, Amharic and Oromo.

**Abdul Kadir Jailani**  
Ambassador of Indonesia



Prior to his appointment to Canada, Ambassador Jailani served as consul-general in New York. Previous postings included The Hague, Geneva and New York.

Ambassador Jailani has held various positions, including deputy director for treaties on political and security affairs (2010-2012) and director for treaties of economic and social cultural affairs (2012-2016). He led negotiations in bilateral, regional and multilateral forums, including the code of conduct in the South China Sea (2011-2012), task force of ASEAN on an enhanced dispute settlement mechanism (2013-2016) and bilateral comprehensive economic partnerships between Indonesia and several countries (2013-2016). Furthermore, he acted as vice-chairman of the intergovernmental committee of the World Intellectual Property Organization on genetic resources, traditional knowledge and folklore (2014-2016).

The ambassador is married and has two children. He's dually accredited as permanent representative to the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO).

**Juan José Gómez Camacho**  
Ambassador of Mexico



Ambassador Gómez Camacho is a career diplomat. He joined the foreign ministry in 1988 and over the past 30 years, he's held numerous key positions.

For example, he led negotiations on the pandemic influenza preparedness framework, a global deal between nation states, industry, laboratories and civil society that ensures better co-operation in responding to global pandemics. With the Swiss ambassador to the UN, he also led the drafting and negotiations of the UN Global Compact for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.

He served as permanent representative to the UN from 2016 to 2019; ambassador to the European Union, Belgium and Luxembourg from 2013 to 2016; permanent representative to the UN and other international organizations based in Geneva from 2009 to 2013 and ambassador to Singapore, Myanmar and Brunei from 2006 to 2009.

He has written and co-authored numerous articles on foreign policy and international law.

**Bhriugu Dhungana**  
Ambassador of Nepal



Ambassador Dhungana joined Nepal's foreign service in 1996 as a section officer. He was then appointed as second secretary and then first secretary in India before returning

to headquarters to serve in the protocol section. In 2005, he became first secretary, then under-secretary at the embassy in Egypt. He returned to protocol at the foreign ministry from 2008 to 2010 when he was named counsellor and deputy permanent representative to the UN in Geneva.

In 2014, he spent two years in the policy planning and South Asian sections of the foreign ministry before being promoted to joint secretary and director-general. Prior to coming to Canada, he was head of the South Asia division of the foreign ministry.

In addition to a bachelor degree in law, and a master's in public administration, the ambassador completed a post-graduate diploma in diplomatic studies at Oxford, U.K. He is married and has two children.





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First secretary

### Bulgaria

Antoniya Plamenova Aleksieva  
Second secretary

### China

Junhua Zhao  
First secretary

### Denmark

Jesper Duevang Rasmussen  
Assistant defence, military, naval and air  
attaché

### Gambia

Saidou Sillah  
Attaché

### Pa Sako Darboe

First secretary

### Germany

Markus Gerhard Dr. Brill  
Minister-counsellor

### India

Mohd Tariq  
Attaché

### Italy

Gabriella Saponaro  
Attaché

### Japan

Tomoko Takahashi  
Second secretary

### Mexico

Erick Marco Zendejas Hinestrosa  
Deputy naval attaché

### Jose Roberto Islas Telich

Attaché

### Pakistan

Mushtaq Ahmed  
First secretary

### Panama

Dennisse Carolina Cabrera Jaramillo  
Third secretary

### Peru

Juan Pablo Guerrero Espinoza  
Minister-counsellor

### Russia

Vladimir Poliakov  
Third secretary

### Saudi Arabia

Mohammed Ali A. Alseari  
Attaché

Bader Abdulrahman O. Alotaibi  
Attaché

### Senegal

Serigne Dieye  
Minister-counsellor

### Spain

Begona Nieto Gilarte  
Counsellor

### Sudan

ABUSALIH, Tarig Hassan Sulieman  
Chargé d'affaires

### Thailand

Thanapol Wang-Om-Klang  
Minister

### Togolese Republic

PEKETI, Ptangme  
Second counsellor and Chargé d'affaires

### United Kingdom

KELLY, Samuel Paul  
Second secretary

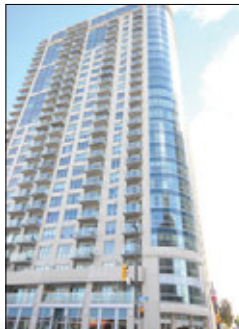
### Vietnam

Ngoc An Nguyen  
First Secretary

### Zambia

Jabes Lyson Zulu  
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1. The award-winning Chilean film ... *And Suddenly the Dawn* was presented at the 23rd Latin American Film Festival that took place at the Ottawa Art Gallery. From left, Chilean Ambassador Alejandro Marisio Cugat and Tom McSorley, executive director of the Canadian Film Institute. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. To mark the 48th anniversary of independence and national day of Bangladesh, High Commissioner Mizanur Rahman and his wife, Nishat, hosted a reception at the Delta Hotel. Nishat, left, stands with dancers in traditional national costumes. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. Hungarian Ambassador Bálint Ódor hosted a concert at the embassy featuring harpist Klára Bábel, who is shown here. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. Philippine Ambassador Petronila P. Garcia hosted an embassy concert and buffet reception for the Friends of the National Arts Centre Orchestra (FNACO). The evening featured pianist Judy Ginsburg, flutist Kathy Baerg, classical guitarist Nathan Bredeson, and cellist Steve Smith and raised funds for NACO's educational programs. From left: FNACO president Albert Benoit, Garcia and J. Ian Burchett, director general for APEC and ASEAN at Global Affairs Canada. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 5. Gov. Gen. Julie Payette welcomed Israeli President Reuven Rivlin to Rideau Hall during his state visit. Shown, Rivlin and Payette at the tree-planting ceremony. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 6. A talk and tour of art by Aparna Swarup, wife of the Indian high commissioner, for 40 members of the International Club of Ottawa (ICO), took place at India House. Shown are Swarup and Marian Devine, chairwoman of the arts and heritage committee. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





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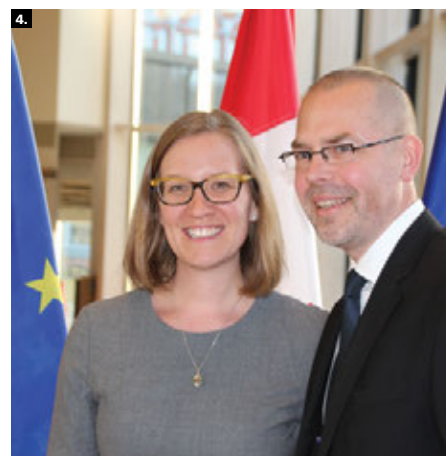
1. Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (left) held a joint press conference at the Sir John A. Macdonald Building. Prior to that, the two signed several memorandums of understanding. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. To mark Cameroon's national day, High Commissioner Solomon Anu'a Gheyile Azoh-Mbi and his wife, Mercy Enow Egbe Epse Azoh Mbi, hosted a reception at the Château Laurier. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. The Slovak Embassy hosted an art exhibit by Juri Janovcik. Janovcik, left, is shown with Slovak Ambassador Vit Koziak (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. UNAM-Canada director Alicia Mayer González hosted the launch of an exhibition titled *Our Frida* by 23 artists from Mexico. Shown are curator Alejandro Dorantes, left, and González. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 5. Taiwan Night 2019 took place at the Fairmont Château Laurier. Shown are Taipei Economic and Cultural Office Representative Winston Wen-yi Chen and his wife, Sylvia Pan. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 6. The Ottawa Service Attachés Association hosted annual international cuisine night at the Sala San Marco Conference Centre. More than 600 people attended the event and 18 countries participated. At centre, Lt.-Col. Pedro J. Ornelas Cruz, defence attaché of Mexico, and his wife, Natalia, dance to the music of a mariachi band. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





1. Turkish Ambassador Kerim Uras paid a courtesy call to Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson (Photo: Chris Bricker)  
 2. The second Ambassador of the Year Awards ceremony and reception took place at University of Ottawa in collaboration with the deans of the faculties of civil and common law. South African High Commissioner Sibongiseni Yvonne Dlamini-Mntambo was one of the 10 winning heads of mission accredited to Canada. (Photo: Ülke Baum)  
 3. A friendly hockey match between Canada's Commandos and Russia's Red Machine took place at TD Place Stadium. The game and the reception were hosted by the Russian Embassy (Score Russia 1, Canada 0). (Photo: Ülke Baum)  
 4. Georgian Ambassador Konstantine Kavtaradze hosted a national day event at the Fairmont Château Laurier. He's joined here by chief of protocol, Stewart Wheeler, left. (Photo: Sam Garcia)  
 5. The Vietnamese Embassy was among 200 exhibitors from 50 countries taking part in the Ottawa Travel and Vacation Show at the Shaw Centre. With the diplomatic missions of ASEAN countries, it hosted a culinary show called ASEAN Happy Hour. Nguyen Huong Tra, Vietnamese counsellor and deputy head of mission, took part. (Photo: Ülke Baum)  
 6. Kazakh Ambassador Akybek Kamaldinov and his wife, Olga Kamaldinova, hosted a dinner at their residence for members of the media. (Photo: Ülke Baum)





1. Then-Chinese Ambassador Lu Shaye hosted a reception at the embassy to present the "Ambassador's Award" to Lee Edward Errett, a professor of surgery at the University of Toronto and the president of the Bethune Medical Development Association of Canada, for his dedication to the development of China-Canada relations. From left: Wang Liwen, Ambassador Shaye's wife; Lu; Errett; his wife, Mitze Mourinho; and Chinese deputy chief of mission Chen Mingjian. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. Guyana High Commissioner Clarissa Sabita Riehl, left, and MP Omar Alghabra took part in a reception to mark the anniversary of the Caribbean Community at the Fairmont Château Laurier hotel. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. Pakistani press minister Nadeem Haider Kiani and his wife, Shazia Kiani, left, hosted a dinner at their home. Shown with Kiani is Siddiq Tarrar, wife of the new Pakistani high commissioner Raza Bashir Tarrar. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 4. To mark the 69th anniversary of the Schuman Declaration, EU Ambassador Peteris Ustubs hosted a reception at the National Arts Centre. He's shown with MP Karina Gould. (Ülle Baum) 5. The Council of Thai culture of Canada hosted a Thai New Year Celebration at Ottawa City Hall. These dancers in traditional costumes performed. (Photo: Ülke Baum)



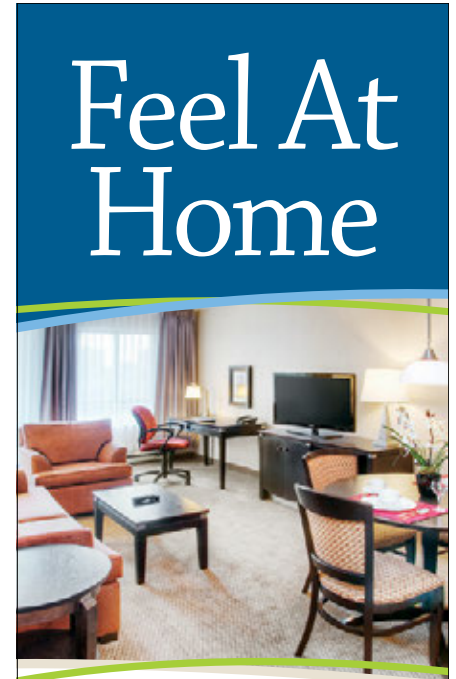


1. To mark Italy's national day, Ambassador Claudio Taffuri and his wife, Maria Enrica Francesca Stajano, hosted a garden reception at their residence. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 2. To mark International Women's Day, the Fairmont Château Laurier hosted a luncheon for female ambassadors in Ottawa. They are shown here, along with Château staff and chief of protocol Stewart Wheeler, who is in the middle. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 3. British High Commissioner Susan le Jeune d'Allegre and French Ambassador Kareen Rispal attended World Press Freedom luncheon. (Photo: Lois Siegel) 4. These diplomats participated in a seminar on African and Canadian women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics, organized by the African Women Diplomatic Forum. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 5. To celebrate Estonian Flag Day, Ambassador Toomas Lukk and his wife, Piret Lukk, hosted a reception at the new Estonian Embassy. The event featured a presentation by International Estonian Centre architect Alar Kongats. From left: Ellen Valter, chair of the International Estonian Centre, and Lukk. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 6. To commemorate the 25th anniversary of the Rwandan genocide, acting high commissioner Shakilla Umtoni Kazimbaya hosted a conference. She's shown with former justice minister Irwin Cotler. (Photo: Ülle Baum) 7. To mark the end of Ramadan, Malaysia's acting high commissioner Muhammad Radzi Bin Jamaludin, left, and his wife, Norashikin Binti Abdul Rahim, hosted an open house at the high commission. (Photo: Ülle Baum)





1. The embassies of Israel and Poland held a ceremony to commemorate the 76th anniversary of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising at the National Holocaust Monument. Holocaust survivors and members of the Jewish and Polish communities attended. From left: Polish defence attaché Krzysztof Ksiazek, Polish Ambassador Andrzej Kurnicki, Israeli Ambassador Nimrod Barkan and Israeli defence attaché Col. Nachmani Amos. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 2. From left: South African High Commissioner Sibongiseni Yvonne Dlamini-Mntambo, Russian Ambassador Alexander Darchiev, then-Chinese Ambassador Lu Shaye and Mongolian Ambassador Ariunbold Yadmaa took part at the Victory Day celebrations at the Russian Embassy. (Photo: Ülke Baum) 3. The Brussels Philharmonic Orchestra performed at the National Arts Centre. Belgian Ambassador Verkammen, right, and his wife Kathleen Billen, left, hosted pre- and post-concert receptions. They're shown with conductor Stéphane Denève. (Photo: Ülke Baum)



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# Sallying forth this summer

By Patrick Langston

**1** 950s beat writer Jack Kerouac was bang on: Being on the road is all about discovery. Here are some nearby and more distant spots for you to discover this summer. The advantage you have over Kerouac is that you can check websites before heading out; that way, you'll know what's open when and how much it's going to cost.

**Digging Montreal archeology:** Pointe-à-Callière Museum, at 350 Place Royale in Montreal's popular old port area, houses hundreds of thousands of artifacts dating back 4,000 years. Sitting above the remains of Montreal's birthplace, it's Canada's largest archeological museum and is a National Historic Site.

On view: in situ archeological remnants as well as everything from an ancient slate sundial to a centuries-old handle of some kind with the name "Charlotte Roc" carved into it. In addition to permanent exhibitions and special displays such as a collection of impressionist watercolour paintings of Montreal streets, the museum hosts temporary exhibits. Until Jan. 5, 2020, visitors can see *Into the Wonder Room*, a collection of more than 1,000 curiosities from around the world and through the ages, including a two-headed calf, samurai armour and two Virginia deer who died when their antlers became locked during battle. Until Oct. 13, 2019, *French Gastronomy at its Best* invites you to drink and listen as monarchs, gourmets and philosophers discourse on contributions to the art of eating well. 514-872-9150, [pamusee.qc.ca](http://pamusee.qc.ca)

**More Montreal:** Why not make your trip to the city an overnighter? Visit Pointe-à-Callière Museum one day and spend the next at the gorgeous St. Joseph's Oratory on Mount Royal, where pilgrims still climb the 99 wooden steps on their knees so that Saint Brother André, who built the original chapel more than a century ago, will intercede with God on their behalf. Thousands of crutches left behind by those apparently cured by André suggest he may have some impressive influence. Along with the magnificent domed Basilica, the site includes the original chapel, a smaller crypt-style church and a vo-



St. Joseph's Oratory on Mount Royal is a place to which pilgrims still climb — all the way up 99 wooden steps — on their knees so that Saint Brother André will intercede with God on their behalf.

tive chapel with 10,000 lights and candles. There are also lovely gardens (1-877-672-8647, [saint-joseph.org](http://saint-joseph.org)) If you're looking for more secular activities, check out Montreal's restaurant- and bar-laden Crescent Street between Sherbrooke and Sainte-Catherine. The stylish strip is close to the Musée des beaux-arts on Sherbrooke Street, which is hosting tributes to French and Montreal fashion designers until Sept. 8. The excellent Canadian Centre for Architecture museum is also nearby.

**Schemers, masks and a summer evening:** Cheaters, misers, matchmaking, power struggles, a big inheritance — *The Bonds of Interest* by the late Spanish playwright and Nobel Prize winner Jacinto Benavente has pretty much everything you'd want in a lively, satirical play about human foibles. Ottawa's Odyssey Theatre mounts



Odyssey Theatre, showing an earlier play here, will perform *The Bonds of Interest* by late Spanish playwright Jacinto Benavente this summer.



the Canadian premiere of the play, which finds two penurious con men concocting a get-rich scheme, July 25 to Aug. 25 in Strathcona Park on the banks of the Rideau River. Given Odyssey's rich, 34-year history of producing sharp-witted outdoor theatre with great masks in the Commedia dell'arte tradition, the show should be a lot of fun. (613-232-8407, [odysseytheatre.ca](http://odysseytheatre.ca))

**Marvellous Manotick:** It's only 25 kilometres south of downtown, but visiting the village of Manotick can make you feel as though you've stepped back in time. Watson's Mill, a stoic stone structure on the banks of the Rideau River dating back to 1860, still grinds grist into flour and the ghost of Ann Crosbie Currier — the second wife of the mill's co-founder — is said to haunt the building, where she died accidentally in 1861. The footbridge next to the mill is a favourite fishing spot and a lovely place to chill out, watching the water course by below. Manotick's main drag features boutiques and reliable restaurants, including the Black Dog Bistro (the grilled sandwich with double-cream brie and pears in mango chutney is memorable.) The annual Taste of Manotick, this year on Aug. 17, features live music, entertainment, food and more along Main Street, which closes to traffic for the event. ([manotickvillage.com](http://manotickvillage.com))

**A ferry ride away:** Gatineau is just on the other side of the river, but have you ever explored it? Tourisme Outaouais has mapped out a 70-kilometre, east-to-west route that includes stops at museums, a beach and the Rapides-Farmer power station that's been generating electricity courtesy of the Ottawa River for almost a century. You'll even pass Les Brasseurs du Temps, a brewery-cum-beer-museum, en route. When you go, take Highway 174 to Cumberland and cross the Ottawa River to Buckingham by ferry; the short boat trip is a bracing start to the trip. ([tourismeoutaouais.com/en/routes/gatineau-crossing-city-east-west/](http://tourismeoutaouais.com/en/routes/gatineau-crossing-city-east-west/))

**Sssshhh:** Silent Lake is a balm for anyone wearied by 21st-Century life. Located in Bancroft, about 250 kilometres west of Ottawa, Silent Lake Provincial Park features hiking and mountain biking trails, walk-in camping as well as yurts and rustic cabins, two sandy beaches and, best of all, no motorboats on the lake. Fish, rent a canoe or kayak, or just chill out — sounds blissfully serene, doesn't it? (613-339-2807, [ontarioparks.com/park/silentlake](http://ontarioparks.com/park/silentlake))



Silent Lake Provincial Park features hiking and mountain-bike trails, camping facilities, yurts and cabins, as well as two sandy beaches and no motorboats on the lake.

**Festival time:** Our appetite for big, outdoor summer festivals seems insatiable. This year, why not try the smaller, out-of-town events? Not only are they more intimate, you get to see the Ottawa Valley in its seasonal splendour.

Kemptville Live Musical Festival, July 18 to 21, continues its tradition of crack-jack entertainment with performers such as the ever-astute Steve Earle and the Dukes, Canadian rocker David Wilcox and the hard-travelling Fred Eaglesmith with his wife, Tif Ginn. Also on the bill are Kim Mitchell, George Thorogood & the Destroyers, and retro acts, such as April Wine. [kemptvillivelivemusicfestival.com](http://kemptvillivelivemusicfestival.com) Tip: The sausage rolls at Grahame's Bakery, 115 Clothier St. E., are terrific, but the bakery closes at 3 p.m. Saturday for the weekend.

The Perth Ribfest Music Festival, July 26-28, blends hearty eating with live blues, classic rock and country music ([perthribfest.com](http://perthribfest.com)). There's a kids' zone, of course, plus a car show. Is acerbic George Bernard Shaw more your thing? Skip the live music and try Perth's Classic Theatre Festival ([classictheatre.ca](http://classictheatre.ca)), celebrating its tenth anniversary with a trio of shows this summer, including Shaw's Pygmalion from July 19-Aug. 11. Perth is a lovely, historic town, so try to squeeze in the Perth Museum at 11 Gore St. E. and stop by Perth Chocolate Works at 17 Wilson St.

E. for delectable treats.

**Other driveable events this summer:** The Ottawa Valley Midsummer Herbfest takes place in White Lake near Arnprior July 28 and features workshops, a chef cook-off and pontoon boat cruises ([midsummerherbfest.ca](http://midsummerherbfest.ca)). The inaugural Live at the Falls fest ([latf.ca](http://latf.ca)) takes place in Smiths Falls Aug. 16 and 17 and is all about the blues. The Flour City Brewers Fest in Rochester, N.Y., is a bit of a hike but hey, who wouldn't drive four hours or so to tuck into craft beer, local food and music? It takes place Aug. 16. ([flourcitybrewersfest.com](http://flourcitybrewersfest.com))

**A one-stop shop:** The Mill of Kintail Conservation Area in Almonte, a short drive from downtown Ottawa, is a kind of one-stop shop for the fit and the curious. There are hiking trails; a museum dedicated to James Naismith, the inventor of basketball; the R. Tait McKenzie Museum, housing Canadian artwork; and an 1832 sandstone grist mill. The scenery is so dandy that it even inspired the Group of Seven's A.Y. Jackson to paint it. (613-256-3610, google Mill of Kintail at [mvc.on.ca](http://mvc.on.ca))

**Mighty mica:** The mining of mica, used in everything from eyeliner to drywall, was once a booming business in Eastern Ontario. The Silver Queen Mine Trail at Murphys Point Provincial Park near Perth is a restored mica mine that's open to the public. The one-kilometre trail includes a miner's bunkhouse and historical interpreters, while the park itself offers camping, hiking, swimming and more. (613-267-5060, [ontarioparks.com/park/murphyspoint](http://ontarioparks.com/park/murphyspoint))

**Zimbabwean sculptures, Canadian canoes and old caves:** About three hours southwest of Ottawa, Peterborough and the Kawarthas brim with delights. Among them: Rice Lake Gallery, which sells stunning sculptures from Zimbabwe; the world's largest collection of canoes housed at the Canadian Canoe Museum, where you can sign up for paddling courses and canoe tours; and craft breweries and wineries. Also in the area: Warsaw Caves Conservation Area and Lang Pioneer Village Museum. (1-800-461-6424, [thekawarthas.ca](http://thekawarthas.ca))

Travellin' Patrick Langston is, at this very moment, likely on the road somewhere tracking down fun stuff to see and do. He supports the habit by writing for local publications.

# The United Arab Emirates: Something for everyone



Dubai is the UAE's financial centre and its most cosmopolitan and luxurious city. It boasts the world's tallest building, seen here, as well as such novelties as a shopping mall that features a ski hill.



*By Fahad Saeed Al Raqbani*

**W**hether you are a luxury traveler looking to relax on pristine beaches or spend time shopping in the world's most glamorous malls, an adventure seeker looking to journey by camel over golden sand dunes or ride on the longest zipline, or someone looking for an entertaining family-friendly vacation with some of the largest waterslide and amusement parks, the UAE offers something for everyone.

The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is a federation of seven emirates located on the eastern side of the Arabian Peninsula. The country is known for its safety, beauty and upscale glamorous living. With more than

200 different nationalities calling the UAE home, including approximately 40,000 Canadians, and English spoken throughout the country, Canadian visitors will definitely feel at home.

While the UAE is known for its luxurious cosmopolitan cities, such as Dubai, the country is equally blessed with a rich cultural heritage and diverse landscape — it boasts rugged mountains, deserts of rolling sand dunes, sunny coastlines and an abundance of flora and fauna. Likewise, each of its seven emirates offers a unique experience for visitors, and if you do not have time to visit all of the emirates, you can easily take a day trip to explore differ-



ent regions.

The UAE's national airline, Etihad Airways, flies from Toronto directly to the capital, Abu Dhabi, and Emirates Airlines flies directly from Toronto to the metropolitan city of Dubai. Either location is a good option from which to start your UAE visit, with additional direct flights also offered through Air Canada.

#### **Dubai: City of dreams**

Dubai could be called the city of dreams, because it's a place where anything is possible. Opulence and sophistication define this city, which features a stunning skyline of modern skyscrapers, including the world's tallest building, the Burj Khalifa.

The Burj Khalifa, which stands at 828 metres (2,716 feet), is definitely worth a visit. One can enjoy a 360-degree skyline view of Dubai and the surrounding emirates from its sky-high observation decks, dine at the highest luxury restaurant and lounge, spend time at a luxurious spa with pool, or, if you are with children, you can visit a shop filled with heavenly sweets.

A visit to The Park, an 11-hectare green oasis at the base of the Burj Khalifa, is also captivating. This green space includes six spectacular water features, lush green gardens and flowering trees. A dancing water feature, designed by California-based WET, the creators of the fountains at the Bellagio in Las Vegas, always attracts the gaze of locals and visitors alike.

After the Burj, you can see one of the most iconic views of Dubai from the water on Dubai Creek. Set in the heart of the city, this clean waterway is bustling with a lively atmosphere day and night. Visitors can travel by dhow, a traditional sailing-style boat used in the Red and Indian oceans that serves as a local ferry, or they can opt for a tour that includes dinner and entertainment, a nice evening option as dusk approaches with the twinkling city lights.

Modern Dubai also offers visitors insight into the UAE's historic culture and heritage through its Al Bastakia Quarter and Al Fahidi Historic Neighbourhood. As one of the oldest standing residential areas of the city, (established in the 19th Century), the Bastakia Quarter is one of the UAE's most picturesque and historic sites.

Visitors can walk through narrow winding alleyways, and visit ochre-coloured buildings made of coral, mud and palm wood, which host cafés, restaurants and hotels. They will also find numerous galleries, featuring prominent contemporary and traditional works.

For cultural enthusiasts, the UAE is also



Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi at first appears to be a larger version of the Taj Mahal. Named after founding president Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan, it is also his burial site.



Although largely desert, the UAE is located on the Persian Gulf.



Beaches, such as this one at the luxury hotel resort, Atlantis The Palm in Dubai, are prominent features of the cities of Dubai and Abu Dhabi.



United Arab Emirates boasts the planet's largest uninterrupted sand desert.

home to world-class museums, such as the Louvre Abu Dhabi, designed by Jean Nouvel, winner of the Pritzker Prize (often referred to as the Nobel peace prize for architecture). It features 12 galleries, tracing humanity's artistic achievements from the Neolithic Age to the present day. Famous pieces are abundant and include Giovanni Bellini's Madonna and Child and an Archaic Sphinx.

The top cultural must-see in the UAE is the Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi. At first glance, it appears to be a larger version of the Taj Mahal, so exquisite that it stops visitors in their tracks. Named after founding president Sheikh Zayed Al Nahyan, it is also his burial site.

Encrusted with exotic jewels — from amethyst and lapis lazuli to mother of pearl — and lavishly lined with gold and Indian Makrana white marble, which is the same material used for the Taj Mahal, there may be no match to this building's opulence and beauty anywhere. Visitors will also witness its inlaid delicate flowers, featuring 82 snow-white domes, 1,000 columns covering 500,000 square metres, gold German-made chandeliers with more than a million Austrian Swarovski crystals and the world's largest silk and wool Persian carpet,

Turning from this beautiful human-made site to more natural ones, the UAE is home to magnificent fine-powder sandy beaches, set beside crystal clear turquoise waters. Whether on a city beach in Dubai, with the dynamic highrise backdrop, or on a beach in Abu Dhabi with its unending coastline, the watersport options, from diving, jet-skiing, paddle-boarding to snorkeling, are endless.

For those looking for an outdoor day trip from Abu Dhabi, visiting the summit of Jebel (Mount) Hafeet in Al Ain is a popular excursion for its expansive views. From the second-highest peak in the UAE, at 1,240 metres, you can view breathtaking panoramas even as your vehicle winds its way up the limestone mountain.

Once at the top, you will have striking photo opportunities of the far-reaching golden desert, and perhaps even catch a glimpse of red foxes, rock hyrax or feral cats that inhabit the area. While you are there, make sure to also visit the stone beehive-shaped Jebel Hafeet Tombs at the base of the mountain. Built during the bronze age, they tell the story of our early ancestors and stand as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Another worthwhile outdoor adventure is a visit to the Al Hajar Mountains, just a few hours by car from Dubai. One





Visiting the summit of Jebel (Mount) Hafeet in Al Ain is a popular excursion from Abu Dhabi.

can expect winding roller-coaster roads with spectacular scenery as one ascends the mountain. Picturesque small villages along the route make the journey memorable. There are also plenty of hiking, trekking and archeological sites and bird-watching opportunities, as well as dry riverbed valleys (wadis) to explore. In addition, visitors are welcome to camp in most areas.

#### The magical Arabian Desert

Equally popular with all visitors is a journey into the Arabian Desert, where one can discover its mystique or engage in heart-racing activities. Visitors can take air-conditioned luxury vehicles or more rugged SUVs to travel to the desert, and try dune-buggy racing, camel-trekking or spend time sand-boarding.

For those who like nature, wildlife or history, Sir Bani Yas Island, near Abu Dhabi, is home to the Arabian Wildlife Park, with thousands of free-roaming animals, such as giraffes, cheetahs and gazelles, several million tree and plant species, as well as countless archeological sites throughout the island, including the ruins of an ancient Christian monastery estimated to have been built in AD 600.

Many visitors plan a visit from Dubai, but similar trips can be had from Abu Dhabi. Also popular are the Bedouin traditional evening dinners, experienced as

the sun sets over the rolling desert sand dunes.

For families, the UAE offers some of the world's best and largest amusement and waterparks. In fact, *TripAdvisor's* Travelers' Choice Awards named Dubai's Aquaventure Waterpark, Wild Wadi Water Park and Abu Dhabi's Yas Waterworld as three of the world's top 10 waterparks. Dubai's Aquaventure Waterpark has the tallest and fastest free-falling waterslide outside of the Americas. These dynamic parks also offer artificial surfing machines, shark-filled lagoons and unique pearl-diving experiences.

There are also plenty of adrenaline-pumping amusement parks, including IMG Worlds of Adventure, Ferrari World, Warner Brothers, Legoland and Motiongate. The Ferrari-themed park is home to the fastest roller-coaster in the world, which accelerates to 240 kilometres an hour in just five seconds, while the impressive IMG Worlds of Adventure is housed in an air-conditioned hangar the size of 28 football fields, and is the largest indoor theme park in the world.

Legoland, meanwhile, caters to younger children, aged two to 12, and includes a Miniland, where more than 20 million Lego bricks were used to create 15,000 miniature models of different landmarks from around the world.

For many visitors to the UAE, shopping

is also a main attraction, and given the endless options, it is easy to see why. The Dubai Mall, with an enormous aquarium, and the Emirates Mall, with an indoor ski hill, are both epicentres of upscale luxury brand-name shops. But the many exotic souks (traditional markets), are where culture-seekers will find everything from pearls to gold and spices.

All cities have their own souks, and customers are welcome to bargain. Souks are a good place to discover Arab world culture, and find local handicrafts to take home as souvenirs. In Abu Dhabi's Carpet Souk, there are more than 100 stores selling carpets — from Persian and Afghani to local patterns — while in the Emirate of Sharjah, the lovely Blue Souk building is a popular shopping location, with hundreds of shops selling jewelry, perfume, regional pottery, antiques, carpets and various collectables.

The Fabric Souk in Dubai offers handmade pashminas and rolls of cotton and silk, sold by the yard. Skilled tailors are also on site and can make affordable, high-quality clothes from your fabric purchases.

From the exotic allure of the Arabian Desert, to some of the world's most innovative architecture, the UAE is a magical place to visit and we look forward to welcoming you there.

**Fahad Saeed Al Raqbani is the ambassador of the United Arab Emirates.**

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## Celebration time

A listing of the national and independence days marked by countries

July		
1	Burundi	National Day
1	Canada	Canada Day
3	Belarus	Independence Day
4	Rwanda	Liberation Day
4	United States	Independence Day
5	Venezuela	Independence Day
7	Nepal	Birthday of His Majesty The King
10	Bahamas	Independence Day
11	Mongolia	National Day
14	France	National Day
14	Iraq	Republic Day
20	Colombia	National Day
21	Belgium	Accession of King Leopold I
23	Egypt	National Day
28	Peru	Independence Day
30	Morocco	Ascension of the Throne
August		
1	Benin	Independence Day
1	Switzerland	National Day
3	Niger	Proclamation of Independence
6	Bolivia	Independence Day
6	Jamaica	Independence Day
7	Côte d'Ivoire	Independence Day
8	Macedonia	Independence Day
10	Ecuador	Independence Day
11	Chad	National Day
15	Congo	National Day
15	India	Independence Day
17	Gabon	National Day
17	Indonesia	Independence Day
19	Afghanistan	National Day
24	Ukraine	Independence Day
25	Uruguay	National Day
31	Malaysia	National Day
31	Trinidad and Tobago	National Day
September		
1	Slovak Republic	Constitution Day
2	Vietnam	Independence Day
7	Brazil	Independence Day
15	Costa Rica	Independence Day
15	El Salvador	Independence Day
15	Guatemala	Independence Day
15	Honduras	National Day
16	Mexico	National Day
18	Chile	Independence Day
19	St. Kitts & Nevis	Independence Day
21	Armenia	Independence Day
22	Mali	Proclamation of the Republic
23	Saudi Arabia	National Day





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MIKE BEDELL WWW.MIKEBEDELLPHOTO.CA

Photographer Mike Beedell on the wolf eel: "I met this denizen of the deep in God's Pocket Marine Provincial Park off the northeast coast of Vancouver Island. I was 30 metres below the surface when I came upon this fat-lipped fellow who looked as if he had wasted some money on a shady plastic surgeon. The male was snuggled into a cosy little cave with his coy mate. Mild in temperament, wolf eels are often filmed being fed fish by divers. This male was curious, while the female was shy. The male, however, stretched out of the den to examine my beard with his bulbous lips and dark eyes. Wolf eels can mate for life but spousal swapping does occur, which creates some dramatic arguments. The female lays up to 10,000 eggs and encircles them while her mate wraps himself around her for protection. Not true eels, they are members of the wolf fish family (*Anarhichadidae*). They can grow up to 2.4 metres in length and weigh up to 18 kilograms. Pacific Ocean wolf eels exist from southern Alaska, through British Columbia to California and all the way to Japan. Atlantic wolf eels' Canadian habitat includes waters from Nova Scotia to Davis Strait."





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