

# Alberta Day

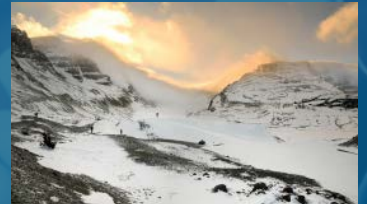
## Fun facts

In the 117 years since Alberta became a province on September 1, 1905, we've achieved some pretty incredible things. In honour of Alberta Day, here are 117 things you may or may not have known about our great province!

- 1 Established in 1885, Banff was Canada's first national park.



- 2 The water melting from the glaciers of the Columbia Icefield flows into three oceans: the Pacific, Atlantic, and Arctic.



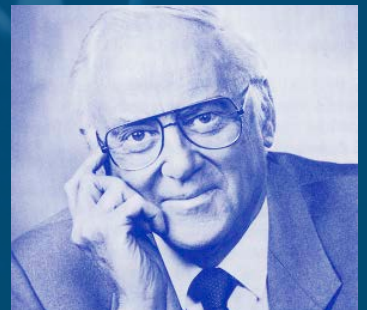
- 3 The first car trip between Edmonton and Calgary was made in 1906 by H.G. White. The journey took two days and reached speeds over 30 mph.



- 4 The Queen Elizabeth II Planetarium in Edmonton was built in 1960, making it Canada's first planetarium.



- 5 John Carter Callaghan of the University of Alberta performed Canada's first open heart surgery in 1956.



- 6 Ready, set, go! The 1988 Calgary Olympics was a game of iconic moments: it was the first games that ran for 16 days; it was the last attended for both the Soviet Union and East Germany; and it was the first time the Jamaican Bobsled Team competed. They, along with Eddie 'the Eagle' Edwards, didn't place for a medal, but their heartwarming stories brought international attention to our province.



- 7 Cowley Ridge, the first commercial wind farm in Canada was established near Pincher Creek in 1993.



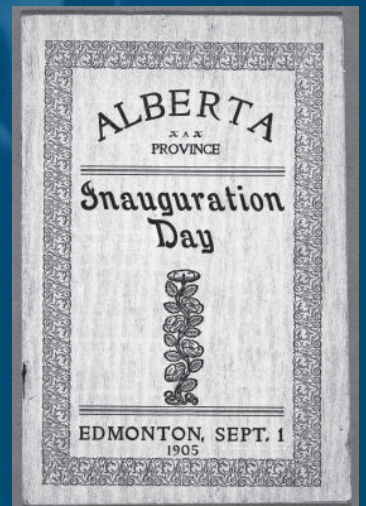
- 8 Lake Louise is Canada's highest settlement at 1650 metres above sea level.



- 9 How sweet it is...University of Alberta chemistry professor Raymond Lemieux was the first to synthesize sucrose in 1953



- 10 On Sept. 1, 1905, Alberta became a province. The inauguration was hosted in Edmonton, where approximately 20,000 people attended - an astounding number, since the last census counted the population of the city at 4,176!



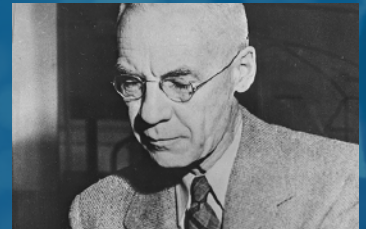
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- 11** Devil's Coulee was the first dinosaur nesting site discovered in Canada.



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- 12** On May 14, 1914, Alberta's first major oil and gas discovery took place in Turner Valley. The Turner Valley Gas Plant is now a national and provincial historic site, sharing this moment in Alberta's history with the world.



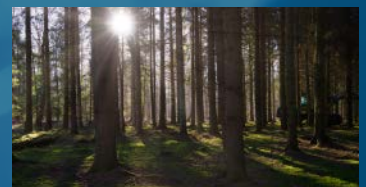
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- 13** Dr. Karl Clark was the first person to extract oil from bituminous sand deposits near Fort McMurray in 1929.



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- 14** Bertie Beaver has been the symbol for wildfire prevention in Alberta since 1958. The idea for Bertie was born after forestry staff and film crews from Walt Disney Studios worked together on a number of wildfire film documentaries in Kananaskis as part of Disney's True Life Adventure Series. Walt Disney had his illustrators design Bertie's image for fire poster designs.



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- 15** Each year, for nearly 60 years, Alberta has distributed about 70,000 seedlings to Grade One students across the province. That totals 4.2 million trees!



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- 16** Wood Buffalo National Park features the largest beaver dam in the world. It's so large that it's visible from space!



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- 17** Alberta is home to Canada's only museums dedicated solely to the study of paleontology: the Royal Tyrrell Museum in Drumheller and the Phillip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum in Wembley.



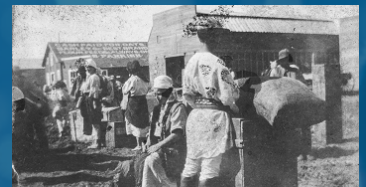
**18** Edmonton-awr! Edmonton was the first Canadian city to have a dinosaur named after it: the Edmontosaurus.



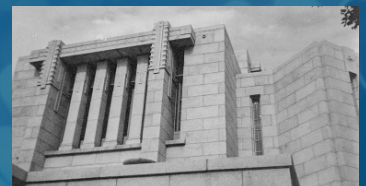
**19** Al-Rashid Mosque, the first mosque in Canada, was built in Edmonton in 1938.



**20** The first Ukrainian settlement in Canada was founded in the Edna-Star region located in East-Central Alberta in 1892.



**21** The first Mormon settlement in Canada was located in what is now Cardston.



**22** In 1917, Calgary magistrate Alice Jamieson was the first woman to be declared a person in Canada.



**23** Women Power! The Famous Five, a group of women from Alberta petitioned the British Privy Council to recognize women as “persons” under the law in 1929, giving women the right to run for public office, attend university, and become judges or senators.



**24** In 2021, 17,746 free permits were issued to people to harvest Christmas trees in Alberta.



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**25** Alberta was the first province to create a Ministry of Culture and Multiculturalism in 1986.



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**26** James Gladstone (or Akay-na-muka, meaning “Many guns”) of High River was Canada’s first Aboriginal Senator, appointed in 1958



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**27** Yes, Madam Justice... Beverly McLachlin, Canada’s first female Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada, is from Pincher Creek.



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**28** Violet King, a graduate of the University of Alberta law program, became the first black female lawyer in Canada in 1953.



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**29** Edmonton was the first city in Canada to have a memorial to the Holodomor.



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**30** Roberta MacAdams, elected as an Alberta MLA in 1917, was the first woman to introduce and pass legislation in the British Empire.



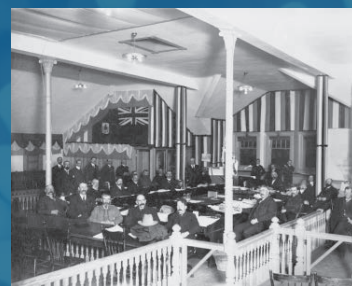
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- 31** John Ware arrived in the district of Alberta in 1882 on a trail crew driving thousands of cattle to the site that became known as the Bar U Ranch. In 2022, Ware was recognized as a person of national historic significance.



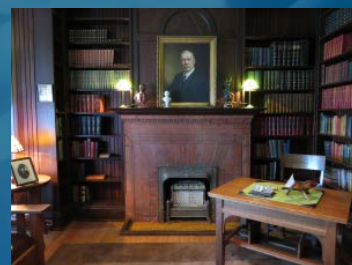
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- 32** The revolutionary Edmonton Protocol was developed at the University of Alberta in 2000. This treatment helps people with Type 1 diabetes become insulin-independent, improving the quality of life for people around the world.



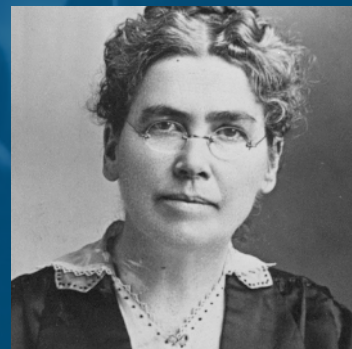
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- 33** In 1905, the first meeting of the Alberta legislature was held in a hockey rink, and thereafter, the first two sessions were held on the third floor of McKay Avenue School.



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- 34** Alexander Cameron Rutherford, Alberta's first premier, was also Alberta's first Minister of Education. His home on the University of Alberta campus is preserved as a provincial historic site.



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- 35** Louise McKinney was the first woman elected to a legislature in Canada and the British Empire in 1917.



- 36** Following the devastating tornado on July 31, 1987, Alberta created the first emergency alert system in Canada in 1992. There are approximately 850 users in 400 communities across Alberta trained to issue alerts.



- 37** Deborah Grey was the first Reform Party candidate elected to the House of Commons in 1989.



- 38** Alberta's Legislature Building was built on the original site of Fort Edmonton and opened in 1912.



- 39** The first Calgary Stampede was held in 1912 and drew 80,000 visitors – twice the number of people who lived in Calgary at the time. Attendees included the Governor General of Canada, Princess Louise Margaret and Princess Patricia.



- 40** Alberta was the first province to establish a provincially-owned telephone system, Alberta Government Telephones, in 1906. It was privatized beginning in 1990 and would eventually become Telus Corporation.



- 41** Live long and prosper! Alberta is home to one of the Star Trek capitals of the world. The vibrant, rural community of Vulcan was established in town of Vulcan was established in 1912, long before the science fiction show existed.



**42** Alberta's forested public lands cover over half the province – roughly 35 million hectares. That's about the size of Germany!



**43** Big Rock Brewery is named after the Okotoks Erratic, also called the Big Rock, which is a 16,500-tonne glacial erratic west of Okotoks.



**44** The original mace used in the Alberta Legislature was made from pieces of scrap metal, including a plumbing pipe, a toilet tank float, shaving mug handles and pieces of a bed frame. It was used for 50 years until it was replaced in 1956.



**45** The current mace used in the Alberta Legislature is studded with gems that form an acronym of Alberta: Amethyst, Lazurite, Bloodstone, Emerald, Ruby, Topaz and Agate.



**46** Alberta has its own official tartan, made up of colours that represent the green forests, gold wheat fields, blue skies and lakes, pink wild roses, and black petroleum.



**47** Drumheller is considered the Dinosaur Capital of the World and is home to the World's Largest Dinosaur, which is 25 meters tall and was named Tyra in 2020.

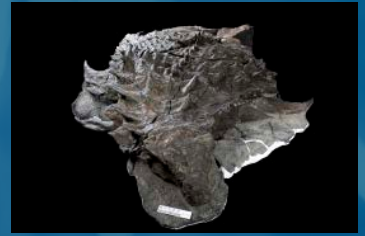


**48** The largest dinosaurs found in Alberta are Tyrannosaurus and Edmontosaurus. Tyrannosaurs weighed up to 10 tonnes and were 12m long, and Edmontosaurus weighed up to 14 tonnes and were 14m long.





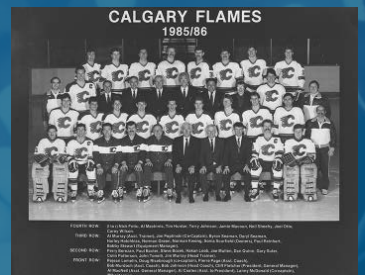
**49** The oldest dinosaur fossil found in Alberta is the Suncor nodosaur. It is estimated to be over 110 million years old. It was named *Borealopelta markmitchelli* after Royal Tyrrell Museum technician Mark Mitchell, who spent five years and 7,000 hours working on the specimen.



**50** The Albertosaurus was first discovered in 1884 by Joseph Burr Tyrrell. The Royal Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology was named after him in recognition of this discovery.



**51** Let's Go Oilers...Go Flames Go!  
Every year between 1983 and 1990, the Stanley Cup Finals featured a team from Alberta.



**52** The Frank Slide is the deadliest rock slide in Canadian history. Its story is told at the Frank Slide Interpretive Centre in the Crowsnest Pass.



**53** Spooky season is almost upon us...According to a Halloween historian, the earliest reference to the saying "trick or treat" appeared in a 1927 southern Alberta newspaper article.



**54** Ginger Beef and the Caesar drink were both invented in Calgary.



55 The Lethbridge High Level Bridge, called a viaduct by Canadian Pacific Railway engineers, is the longest and highest trestle bridge of its type in the world.



56 Alberta is home to five UNESCO world Heritage Sites including Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump. It is one of the oldest buffalo jumps, where Indigenous peoples drove buffalo over a cliff to use them as food and other resources such as clothes, tipis, and more.



57 The Remington Carriage Museum in Cardston is the largest carriage museum in the world, with more than 240 carriages on display.



58 The first feature film made in Canada was filmed in Alberta in 1919. It's called Back to God's Country. A copy is in the Provincial Archives of Alberta collection.



59 Lights, Camera, Action! Every year, Banff hosts the Banff World Media Festival, Canada's first television festival.



**60** Approximately 100 Alberta newspapers received a special citation from the Pulitzer Foundation for defending the freedom of the press in 1938.



**61** Get your fringe on! Edmonton is the site of Canada's oldest and largest Fringe theatre festival.



**62** Turn the radio up...  
CKUA Radio's first broadcast was on November 21, 1927, making it the first public radio station in Canada.



**63** Can you Bee-lieve...?  
Alberta produces more honey than any other province in Canada.



**64** Indigenous history is etched into the Alberta landscape going back more than 11,000 years and 500 generations—from ancient rock carvings at Writing-on-Stone in the southern part of the province, to a 10,000-year-old spear point unearthed in the Athabasca lowlands in the north.



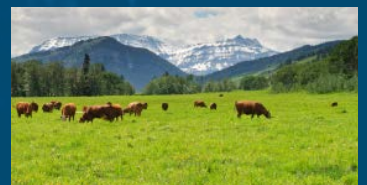
**65** Alberta is home to the third largest Indigenous population in Canada, with an estimated 324,000 Indigenous Peoples living in the province.



**66** Banff National Park has the most wildlife crossing structures in a single location in the world that allow wildlife to safely cross highways.



**67** Alberta is currently home to more cattle than people.



**68** Alberta's one of the few jurisdictions in the world that can claim to be rat-free (the others are islands).



**69** Fort Vermillion and Fort Chipewyan were the first European settlements in Alberta and were both established in 1788.



**70** Many places in Alberta have names that come from the Cree language, including:

- Fort Chipewyan – named for the Cree word for the Chipewyan people, which means “pointed skins.” It referred to how the Chipewyans prepared beaver pelts.
- Wetaskiwin – an adaptation of the Cree word wi-ta-ski-oo ch-ka-tin-ow, meaning “place (or hill) of peace
- Medicine Hat – the translation of saamis, which means “medicine”
- Ponoka – Blackfoot for “elk”



**71** Calgary is home to Canada's National Music Centre, which shows off the sights, sounds and stories of music in Canada.



**72** Lying on the banks of the North Saskatchewan River, Métis Crossing was the first Indigenous meeting site for the Métis, Europeans, and other Indigenous Peoples.



- 73** I'll take that to go, please...  
Polychemical Industries of Edmonton was the first Canadian company to manufacture polystyrene coffee cups in 1953.



- 74** The Calgary Flames' mascot, Harvey the Hound, was the first-ever NHL mascot when he was introduced in 1983.



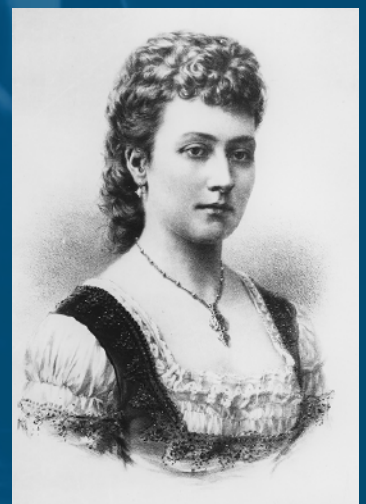
- 75** Alberta is the only province in Canada in which Métis people have rights over specific territories, the Métis Settlements. Eight settlements cover 512,121 hectares (1.25 million acres) of land in northern Alberta and give Métis people a land base, autonomy at a local level, and self-sufficiency.



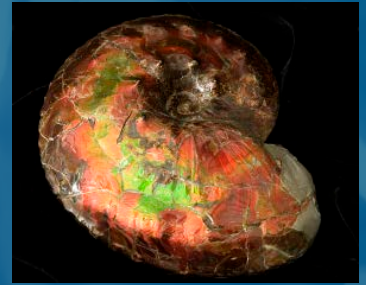
- 76** Some Indigenous members of the Alberta Order of Excellence include Jim Boucher (2020), Victor Buffalo (2007), Alex Janvier (2010), Leroy Little Bear (2016), Dr. Wilton Littlechild (2014), Lena Heavy Shields-Russell (2021) and Muriel Stanley Venne (2019).



- 77** Alberta was named after Princess Louise Caroline Alberta, Queen Victoria's fourth daughter.



**78** Rare as Alberta's beauty, the Ammolite gemstone can only be found in Alberta. Ammolite became Alberta's official gemstone in 2022.



**79** The Edmonton Grads women's basketball team were national and international champions, and from 1915 to 1940 won more than 95% of their games.



**80** Dance, paint, sing your heart out! Alberta is the first and only province to have a month dedicated to celebrating artists. Celebrate Month of the Artist in September: <https://www.alberta.ca/month-of-the-artist.aspx>



**81** The first Muslim cabinet minister in Canada, Larry Shaben, was elected as the MLA for Lesser Slave Lake in 1975.



**82** Alberta has an official provincial song, called Alberta. The song was created for the centennial of the province in 2005. You can find sheet music for various instruments on <https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-emblems.aspx>



**83** In addition to the Alberta flag, there is also a Franco-Albertan flag which was created in 1982 to symbolize the Francophonie in this province.



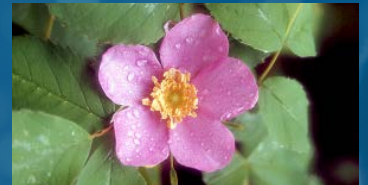
**84** Alberta's two provincial colours are blue and gold, representing the big blue sky and vast golden prairies of the province.



**85** What a hoot! In 1977, children across the province voted on a provincial bird of Alberta, ultimately choosing the Great Horned Owl.



**86** Stop and smell the roses...Alberta's official flower is the wild rose, which grows almost everywhere in the province.



**87** Alberta has the largest area of rough fescue grassland in the world, and is the only place in North America that has plans, foothills and northern rough fescue. In 2003, rough fescue became the official grass of Alberta.



**88** Alberta's official stone is petrified wood. It's commonly found in gravel pits and is made of fallen trees from the Cretaceous and Paleocene eras – 60 to 90 million years ago!



**89** Alberta's official tree is the lodgepole pine. It was used to make rail ties in the early 1900s, and still plays an important role in Alberta's forest industry.



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- 90** Alberta's official mammal is the Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep. Prehistoric bighorn sheep remains have been found in river valleys across Alberta.



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- 91** Alberta's official fish is the bullhorn trout. Bullhorn trout is one of 8 species of trout found in Alberta.



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- 92** Vroom vroom! The Reynolds-Alberta Museum has the largest collection of cars, airplanes, tractors and industrial machines in Canada.



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- 93** Alberta has the highest Francophone population growth in Canada after Quebec, and 10.3% of Albertans are of French or French-Canadian descent.



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- 94** Approximately 2,000 communities and natural sites in Alberta have French-influenced names, and four municipalities are officially bilingual (Beaumont, Legal, Falher and Plamondon)



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- 95** The Royal Alberta Museum officially opened its doors on December 6, 1967. Back then, it was called the "Provincial Museum and Archives of Alberta." It was renamed "Royal" after Queen Elizabeth II visited in 2005.





**96** The home of Stephan Stephansson, known as “the poet of the Rocky Mountains” is preserved at Stephansson House near Markerville as a provincial historic site.



**97** The first Indigenous police officer in Canada, Alexander Decouteau, joined the Edmonton Police in 1911. He also represented Canada at the 1912 Summer Olympics in the 5,000 meter race.



**98** Katherine Hughes became the first woman to head a provincial archives in Canada in 1908.



**99** Yeehaw... or Yahoo?  
The first professional rodeo in Canada took place in Raymond in 1903.



**100** Did you know that the first car in Alberta was a Locomobile brought to Calgary by W.E. Cochrane?



**101** Up, Up, and Away! Rosella Bjornson, from Lethbridge, was the first female commercial pilot in Canada.



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**102** Annie Gale was elected to Calgary City Council in 1917, becoming the first woman to be elected to a municipal government in Canada.



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**103** Until 2006, Alberta was home to the oldest continuously used Buddhist sanctuary in Canada.



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**104** The Canadian Rockies Rodeo North, held annually in Calgary, is the only gay rodeo in Canada



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**105** In 1998, the Vriend case led to sexual orientation being added to the protected grounds in the Alberta Human Rights Act and establishing a foundation for equal rights for 2SLGBTQQIA+ people across Canada.



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**106** Bon Accord was the first Canadian city to be designated an International Dark Sky Community.



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**107** In 1872, to encourage people to immigrate to the prairies, the Canadian government offered 65 hectares for \$10, provided a residence was built on the land within 3 years. Many pioneers built sod huts for their families until they could build a permanent house.



- 108** Alberta's coat of arms includes several unique Alberta elements, including the wild roses on the base, a beaver and a pronghorn antelope. Alberta's motto is at the bottom: "Fortis et Liber" or "Strong and Free"



- 109** The Waterton-Glacier International Peace Park was the first park of its kind in the world by crossing the Canada-US border. The International Peace Parks promote the international nature of wilderness and the co-operation required in its protection.



- 110** The oldest document in the Provincial Archives of Alberta collection is a land transaction contract written on animal skin in 1645.



- 111** Let's go shopping! Alberta is home to North America's largest shopping mall. West Edmonton Mall is home to over 800 stores, an NHL-sized skating rink, aquarium, hotel, mini golf and amusement park with the largest indoor roller coaster.



- 112** The world's first UFO landing pad was built in St. Paul in 1967.



- 113** Alberta is the fourth-largest province in Canada, covering an area of 661,000 square kilometres (255,000 square miles) — about the same size as the American state of Texas — and more than twice the size of Italy.



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**114** I'll have mine with chili sauce, please! Green Onion Cakes are considered the "unofficial" official food of Edmonton. The dish was introduced and popularized in the 1980s by chef Siu To, who came to Edmonton from Northern China in 1978.



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**115** Alberta is home to many talented actors, musicians, dancers and artists, including Nathan Fillion, Nickelback, Brett Kissel, Tegan and Sara, and Evangeline Lilly, to name a few!



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**116** Boreal forest covers almost half our province. We also have prairies, desert badlands, and more than 600 lakes and 245 rivers to enjoy.



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**117** Our province has many unique landmarks. You can see the world's largest pysanka (Ukrainian Easter Egg) in Vegreville, the world's largest kubasa (Ukrainian sausage) in Mundare, and a 1,500 pound beaver in, where else, Beaverlodge.

