



10 Best Places to See the Northern Lights in Canada in 2026â??2027

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Your next bucket-list adventure might be closer than you think.

Imagine standing beneath a sky filled with swirling ribbons of green, purple and pink: no filters, no special effects, just one of nature's most extraordinary displays.

The Northern Lights, also known as the *Aurora Borealis*, are one of those experiences that deserve a spot on everyone's travel bucket list. And the good news? You don't have to fly to Iceland, Norway or Finland to see them if you are in Canada.

Canada is home to incredible Northern Lights destinations, and a recent study identified 10 locations worth keeping on your radar.

Whether you're planning a winter getaway, a photography adventure or a once-in-a-lifetime experience, here's where to start.

Where Are the Best Places to See the Northern Lights in Canada?

According to a 2026 study reported by Open Jaw, these are the top 10 Canadian destinations for Northern Lights viewing, ranked using factors such as sky darkness, light pollution, distance from the North Pole and clear-sky conditions.



Photo: storage.googleapis.com

1. Iqaluit, Nunavut

Best for: Adventurous travellers looking for a true Arctic experience.

Taking the number-one spot, Iqaluit offers something truly special: the chance to witness the Northern Lights surrounded by the dramatic landscapes of Canada's Arctic.

Far from the bright lights of major cities, Nunavut offers a remarkable setting for stargazing and aurora watching.

Beyond the lights, visitors can discover Inuit culture, Arctic landscapes and experiences unlike anywhere else in Canada.

Travel tip: Arctic travel requires extra planning. Accommodations, flights and guided experiences should be arranged well in advance.

2. Cold Lake, Alberta

Best for: Travellers looking for a quieter Northern Lights escape.

You might not immediately think of Cold Lake when planning an aurora adventure, but this Alberta destination ranks second in the study.

With relatively dark skies and opportunities to escape urban light pollution, it's an appealing option for those looking to enjoy nature without the crowds of more established aurora destinations.

Travel tip: Find a safe viewing location away from streetlights and check local cloud forecasts before heading out.



Photo: on.spingenie.ca



Photo: northernescapephotography.com

3. Meadow Lake, Saskatchewan

Best for: Nature lovers and photographers.

Saskatchewan's wide-open landscapes and expansive skies make it a fantastic destination for anyone hoping to catch a glimpse of the Northern Lights.

Meadow Lake takes third place, with the study highlighting clear-sky conditions approximately 43% of the time.

For travellers who love the outdoors, the surrounding region also offers opportunities to explore lakes, forests and beautiful natural scenery.

Travel tip: Plan your aurora viewing around a new moon for darker skies, and allow multiple nights to improve your chances.

4. Yellowknife, Northwest Territories

Best for: First-time Northern Lights travellers.

Yellowknife might rank fourth in this particular study, but it remains one of Canada's most recognized Northern Lights destinations.

Why? Its location beneath the auroral oval, combined with established aurora tourism experiences, makes it a popular choice for travellers.

Think guided evening excursions, cozy winter accommodations and the excitement of waiting for the sky to come alive.

Travel tip: Consider booking a guided aurora tour, especially if it's your first visit. Local guides can help identify suitable viewing locations based on conditions.



Photo: Pinterest.ca



Photo: Fullsuitcase.com

5. Dawson Creek, British Columbia

Best for: Road-trip enthusiasts.

British Columbia makes the list!

Known as Mile 0 of the Alaska Highway, Dawson Creek offers an interesting combination of road-trip history, northern landscapes and potential aurora sightings.

For travellers who enjoy exploring off-the-beaten-path destinations, this could be a unique addition to a northern BC adventure.

Travel tip: If you're planning a winter road trip, monitor highway conditions and avoid travelling to remote viewing spots without appropriate preparation.

6. Prince Albert, Saskatchewan

Best for: Outdoor enthusiasts.

Prince Albert offers access to Saskatchewan's beautiful northern landscapes, with darker viewing areas available outside the city.

Pair your Northern Lights search with time exploring the region's forests, lakes and natural attractions.



Photo: flickr.com



Photo: bcminns.com

7. Fort McMurray, Alberta

Best for: Travellers seeking a northern Alberta adventure.

Located in northeastern Alberta, Fort McMurray offers access to northern skies where aurora displays can sometimes be seen.

Heading away from the city's lights can provide better viewing conditions, especially on clear nights with elevated geomagnetic activity.

8. Whitehorse, Yukon

Best for: Travellers who want a complete winter getaway.

Whitehorse is an excellent option for combining Northern Lights viewing with a memorable Yukon vacation.

Picture snowy landscapes, outdoor adventures, relaxing hot springs and evenings spent searching for the aurora.

It's the kind of destination where the journey is just as exciting as the Northern Lights themselves.

Travel tip: Consider spending at least three or four nights to give yourself several opportunities to see the aurora.



Photo: freepik.com



Photo: Pinterest.com

9. Fort St. John, British Columbia

Best for: Travellers exploring northern BC.

Another British Columbia destination makes the list!

Fort St. John offers access to northern landscapes and darker skies outside the city, making it an interesting destination for aurora enthusiasts.

While sightings are never guaranteed, clear winter nights can offer rewarding opportunities.

10. Thompson, Manitoba

Best for: Travellers looking beyond the usual aurora destinations.

Rounding out the top 10 is Thompson, a northern Manitoba city surrounded by vast wilderness.

Its northern location makes it a destination worth considering for travellers interested in exploring a less conventional part of Canada.



Photo: roadtripmanitoba.com

When Is the Best Time to See the Northern Lights in Canada?

While the Northern Lights can occur throughout the year, **September through March** is generally a great period to plan an aurora-focused trip in many northern Canadian destinations.

Longer nights provide more hours of darkness, giving travellers a better opportunity to spot the lights when conditions cooperate.

Here are a few things to keep in mind:

- **Look for clear skies.** Cloud cover can completely hide an aurora display.

- **Avoid light pollution.** The darker your surroundings, the better.
- **Check aurora forecasts.** Geomagnetic activity plays an important role.
- **Stay multiple nights.** Give yourself more than one opportunity to see the lights.
- **Be patient.** Aurora sightings depend on nature, and no experience can be guaranteed.

How to Plan Your Northern Lights Adventure

Whether one of these destinations caught your eye or you have somewhere completely different in mind, a Travel Masters advisor can help turn your ideas into the right trip â?? from flights and accommodations to tours, cruises and unforgettable experiences.

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