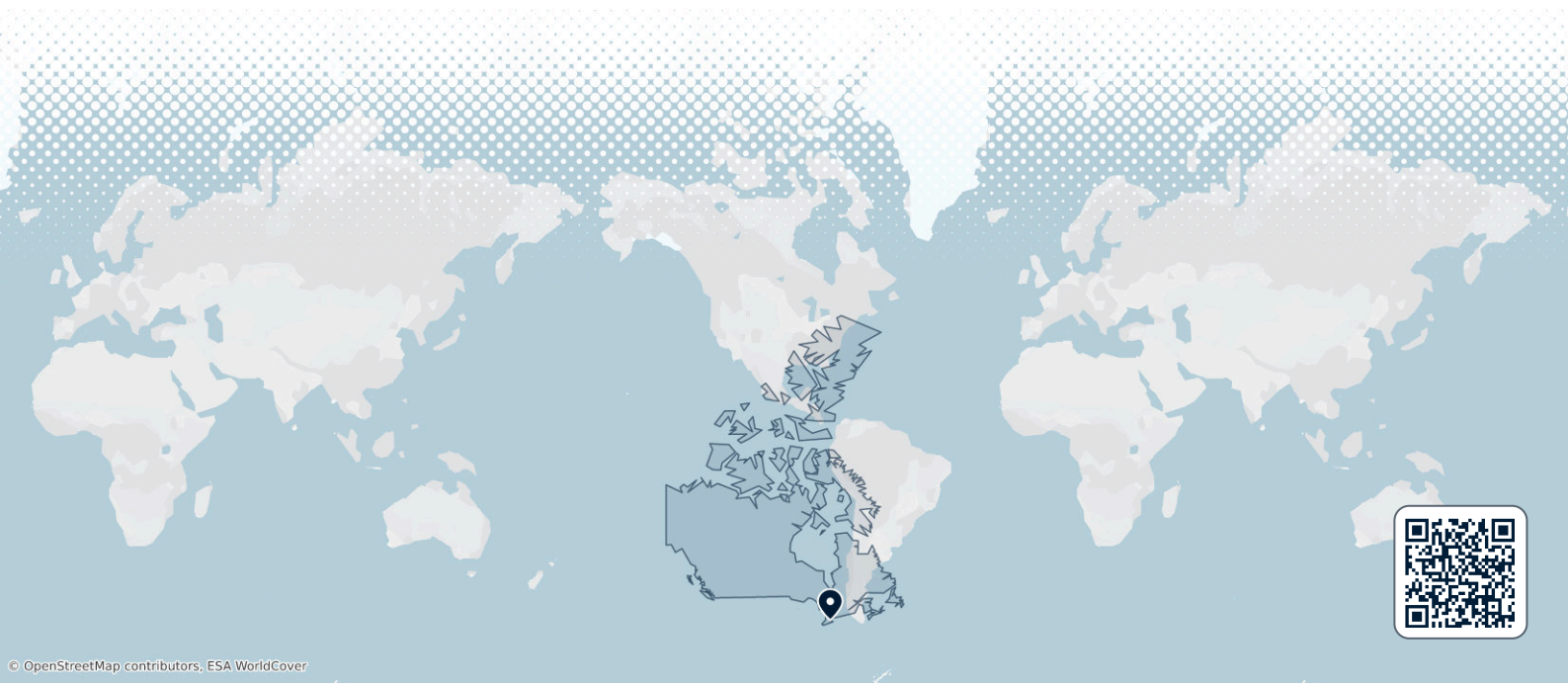


Hamilton

Ontario · Canada

TRAVEL GUIDE

Tripomatic



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Overview

Hamilton is an Ontario city on the western end of Lake Ontario, about an hour from Toronto. A long cliff called the Niagara Escarpment runs through it. The cliff creates more than 100 waterfalls, and the city is known for them. Many are on or near the Bruce Trail.

The city grew as a steel and port town. Today it also has a good botanical garden, a historic villa, a naval ship museum and a growing arts scene. It suits a short trip of one to three days, or a day trip from Toronto or Niagara.

When to visit

Late spring to early autumn is the best time. Summers are warm and humid. Autumn colours on the Escarpment are popular, and trails and parking are busy on fine weekends.

Waterfalls are fullest in spring and after heavy rain. Some run low in late summer. Winters are cold and snowy, and some falls freeze. Gardens and outdoor sights are limited in winter.

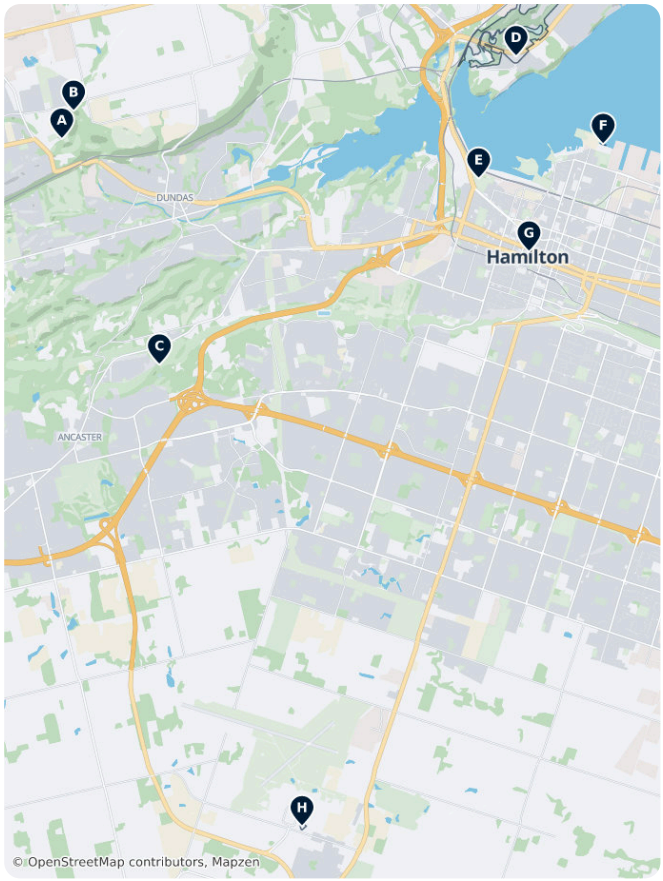
MONTH	CONDITIONS	DAY °C avg / max	NIGHT °C avg / min	
January	Poor Poor for hiking	0° / 9° Feels like -6°	-7° / -19°	12 rainy days · Dry air
February	Poor Poor for hiking	1° / 10° Feels like -4°	-8° / -18°	Dry air
March	Poor Poor for hiking	6° / 16° Feels like 1°	-3° / -13°	Dry air · Calm winds
April	Good Good for cycling	12° / 22° Feels like 9°	3° / -3°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
May	Great Great for sightseeing	19° / 28°	10° / 3°	12 rainy days · Dry air · Calm winds
June	Great Great for sightseeing	25° / 31°	16° / 10°	13 rainy days · Calm winds
July	Great Great for sightseeing	27° / 33°	18° / 14°	Humid air · Calm winds
August	Great Great for sightseeing	26° / 31°	18° / 13°	Humid air · Calm winds
September	Great Great for sightseeing	23° / 29°	15° / 9°	Calm winds
October	Good Good for hiking	15° / 24°	8° / 2°	Dry air · Calm winds
November	Fair Fair for cycling	8° / 17° Feels like 4°	2° / -5°	Dry air · Calm winds
December	Poor Poor for hiking	3° / 10° Feels like -2°	-3° / -12°	12 rainy days · Dry air

Best months: May, June, July, August, September

Climate data: NASA POWER + Copernicus ERA5-Land and ERA5 · 1996–2025

Top sights

- A Webster's Falls is a wide, tiered waterfall in Spencer Gorge. A historic stone footbridge and easy paths make it one of the simplest falls to visit.
- B Tew's Falls is a tall ribbon waterfall near Webster's Falls. It is the tallest in Hamilton, and it is best in spring.
- C Tiffany Falls is a small falls on the Bruce Trail in Ancaster. A short trail leads to it through the forest.
- D Royal Botanical Gardens is a large botanical garden with the Rock Garden, formal gardens and nature trails by Cootes Paradise. Opening days and hours change by season.
- E Dundurn Castle is a historic villa from the 1830s. Entry is by guided tour, and the kitchen garden is open in summer.
- F HMCS Haida is a Second World War destroyer, now a museum ship on the waterfront.
- G Art Gallery of Hamilton is on King Street West downtown. It is one of the oldest and largest art museums in southwestern Ontario.
- H Canadian Warplane Heritage Museum is at the airport. It shows Canadian military aircraft, and some of them still fly.



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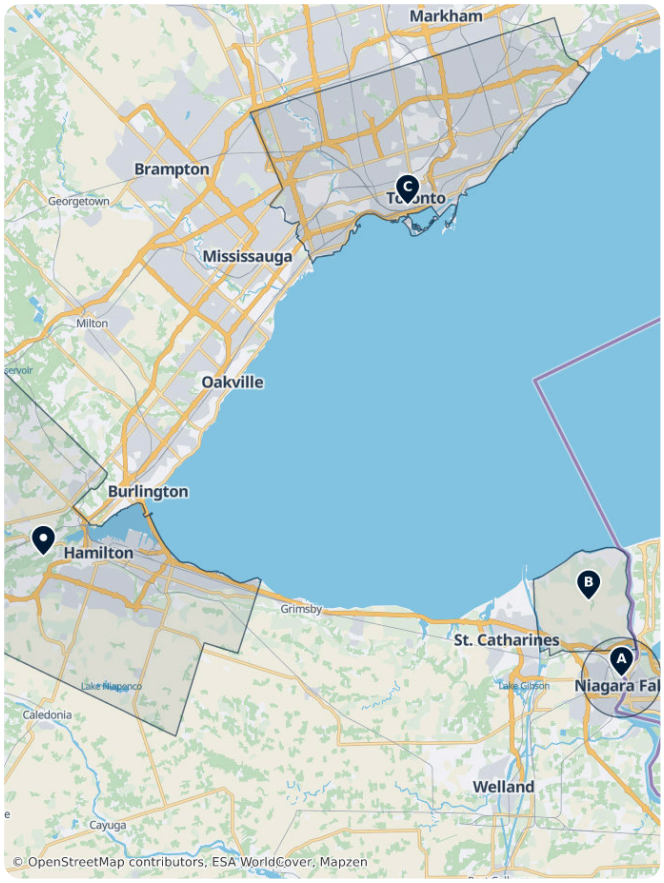
What to experience

- **Walk the Bruce Trail.** Canada's oldest long-distance trail follows the Escarpment through Hamilton. Many waterfalls sit on short side trails or loops.
- **Visit several waterfalls in one day.** Combine Webster's Falls and Tew's Falls in Spencer Gorge. Add smaller falls in Dundas or Ancaster. Stay on marked paths, because the gorge edges are dangerous.
- **See wildlife by car.** African Lion Safari is a drive-through safari park northwest of the city. It is open in the warmer months.
- **Walk the waterfront.** A paved trail runs along the harbour past the Haida and Bayfront Park.

Day trips

All trips are one way from Hamilton, in order from closest to farthest.

- A Niagara Falls: about 1 hour by car. Home of the famous waterfalls on the Niagara River.
- B Niagara-on-the-Lake: about 1 hour by car. A small historic town with wineries nearby.
- C Toronto: about 1 to 1.5 hours by GO train or car. Canada's largest city, with major museums and a big food scene.



Getting there

- **By train**: GO Transit trains run from Toronto Union Station on the Lakeshore West line. The trip takes about 1 to 1.5 hours. West Harbour GO station is near the waterfront. Hamilton GO Centre is downtown at Hunter Street East. Check times and fares at GO Transit.
- **By bus**: GO buses link Hamilton with Toronto and nearby cities. Long-distance coaches also stop downtown.
- **By air**: Hamilton International Airport (YHM) is south of the city and has limited flights. Many visitors fly into Toronto Pearson, about an hour away by car, and continue by road or GO transit.
- **By car**: Toronto is about 70 km away and Niagara Falls about 80 km. Highway traffic around Toronto can slow the trip a lot.

Getting around

- **Public transit**: Hamilton Street Railway runs the city buses. Pay with PRESTO or tap a contactless bank card or phone. See Hamilton Street Railway.
- **Waterfalls and trails**: Many are away from main bus routes. A car or taxi is easier. Parking near popular falls can be limited, so arrive early or visit on a weekday. Check the Hamilton Conservation Authority for current access rules.
- **On foot and by bike**: The downtown core is walkable, but the Escarpment is steep. The waterfront trail is flat and good for cycling.

Getting around on foot & by bike

WALKABILITY

Moderate

The downtown core is walkable, but the Escarpment is steep and the main sights are spread out.

CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE

Moderate

The waterfront trail is flat. Routes up the Escarpment are steep.

Driving

- **Is a car worth it?** Yes, if you want to visit several waterfalls, the gardens and the airport museum in one trip. For downtown only, transit and walking are enough.
- **Parking**: Downtown has paid street and garage parking. Waterfall lots are small, and street parking near them is often restricted. Follow the posted signs.

Food & drink

Hamilton has a growing café and restaurant scene. Look for it on James Street North, on Locke Street and in the old town centre of Dundas. Breweries and small galleries are common in the same areas.

What to eat & drink

DINNER

Tourtière
A savory meat pie, traditionally made with pork, beef, or game, especially popular in Quebec.

SNACKS & STREET FOOD

Poutine
Fries topped with cheese curds and hot gravy, originally from Quebec and now popular nationwide.

Bannock
A simple fried or baked bread with roots in Indigenous cooking, found in many regional variations across the country.

Montreal-style Bagel · Bagel montréalais
A smaller, sweeter, denser bagel than the New York style, boiled in honey water and baked in a wood-fired oven.

Maple Syrup · Sirop d'érable
Syrup tapped from maple trees, mainly in Quebec and Ontario, used on pancakes and in baking and savory dishes alike.

SWEETS & DESSERTS

Butter Tart
A small pastry shell filled with a sweet, gooey butter, sugar, and egg filling, sometimes with raisins or pecans.

Nanaimo Bar
A no-bake dessert bar from British Columbia with a chocolate-crumb base, custard filling, and chocolate topping.

DRINKS

Caesar
Canada's signature cocktail: vodka, Clamato juice (tomato and clam broth), and spices, served with a celery stalk.

Canadian Whisky
A lighter, smoother style of whisky than Scotch or Bourbon, often blended with rye.

Ice Wine
A sweet dessert wine made from grapes frozen on the vine, produced mainly in Ontario's Niagara region and British Columbia's Okanagan Valley.

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Safety & health

Hamilton is generally safe for visitors. Normal city care is enough. Keep valuables out of sight in parked cars, especially at trailheads.

The waterfalls and gorges are the main risk. Cliff edges are steep and slippery, and rocks near the falls can be wet. Stay on marked paths and behind fences. Wear shoes with good grip. Trails can be icy in winter. In summer, bring insect repellent and check for ticks after walks in long grass.

History

Indigenous peoples lived around Hamilton Harbour and along the Escarpment long before Europeans arrived. The city was founded in the early 1800s and grew around its port and railways.

In the 20th century it became Canada's main steel-making city, and is still called the Steel City. Today the old industry shares the waterfront with parks and museums. Dundurn Castle shows life in a wealthy household in the 1800s.

Country facts

Quick practical facts for Canada at a glance:

CURRENCY
CAD $

EMERGENCY
911

ELECTRICITY

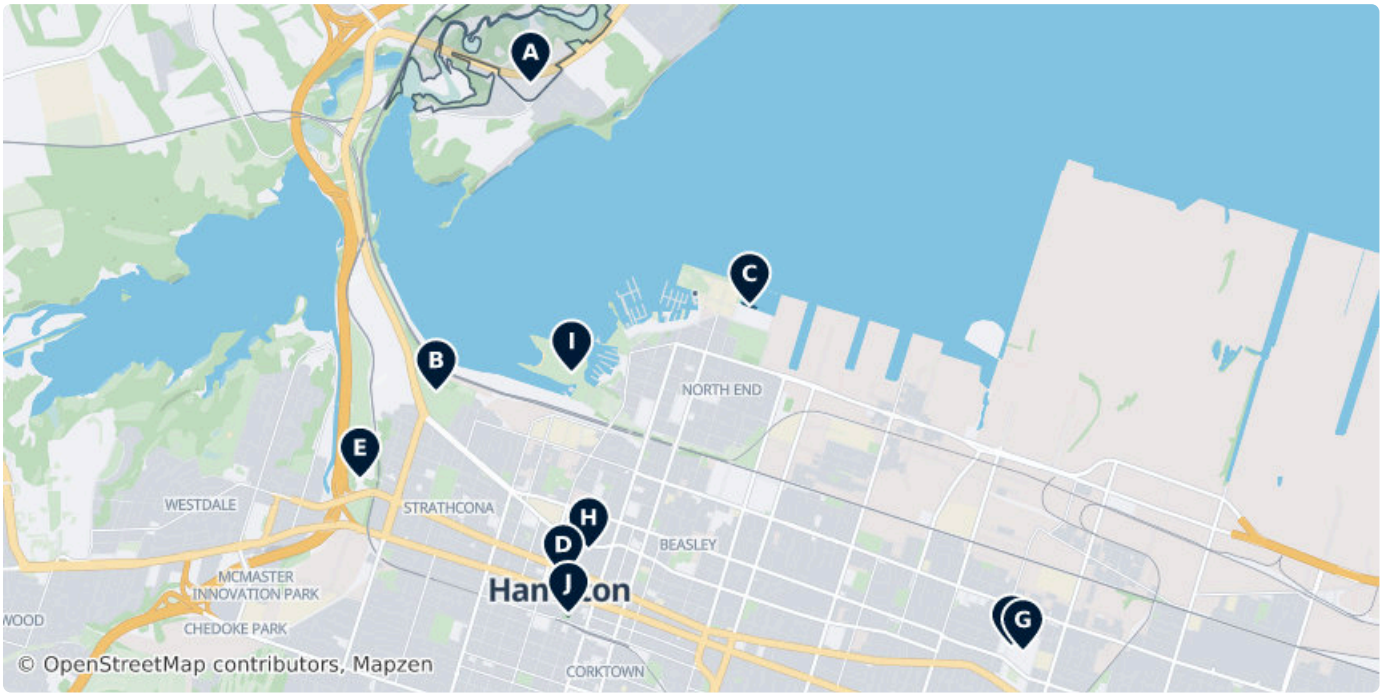
Type A / Type B
120 V · 60 Hz

LANGUAGES
English, French

TAP WATER
Safe to drink

Hamilton Essentials

Hamilton's heritage is defined by a mix of significant botanical collections, military history, and architectural landmarks. The Royal Botanical Gardens protects extensive environmental areas, while Dundurn Castle provides a look at 19th-century neoclassical design. Maritime history is preserved aboard the HMCS Haida, a Tribal-class destroyer from World War II. As the home of the Canadian Football Hall of Fame and Tim Hortons Field, the city celebrates its deep sporting roots alongside cultural institutions like the Art Gallery of Hamilton and the historic 1837 Farmers' Market.





A Royal Botanical Gardens

Royal Botanical Gardens is headquartered in Burlington owning extensive environmental protection areas, historic sites and culturally...

680 Plains Road West, Burlington, ON, Canada (43.29014, -79.87550)

rbg.ca, +1-800-694-4769



B Dundurn Castle

Dundurn Castle is a historic neoclassical mansion on York Boulevard in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

York Boulevard 610 (43.26947, -79.88419)

hamilton.ca/things-do/hamilton-civic-museums/dundurn...



C HMCS Haida

HMCS Haida is a Tribal-class destroyer that served in the Royal Canadian Navy from 1943 to 1963, participating in World War II and the...

658 Catharine St N, L8L, Canada (43.27529, -79.85531)

parks.canada.ca/lhn-nhs/on/haida



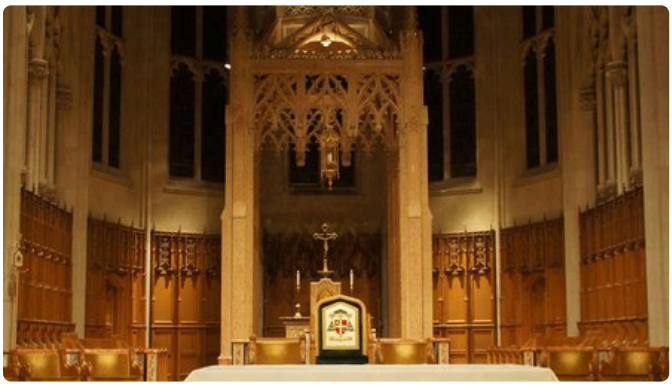
D Art Gallery of Hamilton

The Art Gallery of Hamilton is an art museum located in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

123 King St W, Hamilton L8P, Canada (43.25712, -79.87249)

Th	11:00–21:00
Fr	11:00–18:00
Sa–Su	11:00–17:00

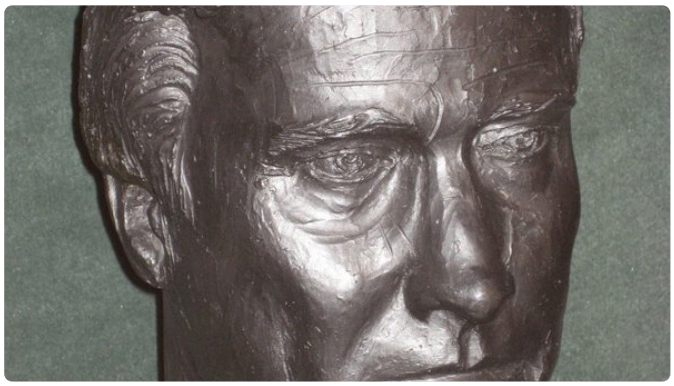
artgalleryofhamilton.com, +1-905-527-6610



E Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King

The Cathedral Basilica of Christ the King is a Roman Catholic church in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

714 King St W, L8R, Canada (43.26360, -79.89121)



F Canadian Football Hall of Fame & Museum

The Canadian Football Hall of Fame is a not-for-profit corporation, located in Hamilton, Ontario, that celebrates achievements in Canadian...

Melrose Avenue North 64 (43.25236, -79.83117)

Tu–Sa	09:30–16:30

cfhof.ca



G Tim Hortons Field

Tim Hortons Field, nicknamed "The Donut Box"; is a multi-purpose stadium in Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

(43.25208, -79.83012)



H Hamilton Farmer's Market

The Hamilton Farmers' Market was founded in 1837 is located within a large multi-faceted complex in downtown Hamilton, Ontario called Lloyd...

York Boulevard 35 (43.25892, -79.87014)

Tu	09:00–16:00
We	Closed
Th–Fr	09:00–16:00
Sa	08:00–16:00

hamiltonfarmersmarket.ca, +1 905 546 2096



I Bayfront Park

Bayfront Park is a 16-hectare park found in the West-end of Hamilton Harbour in the North End neighbourhood of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

L8L, Canada (43.27075, -79.87170)

J Whitehern Historic House

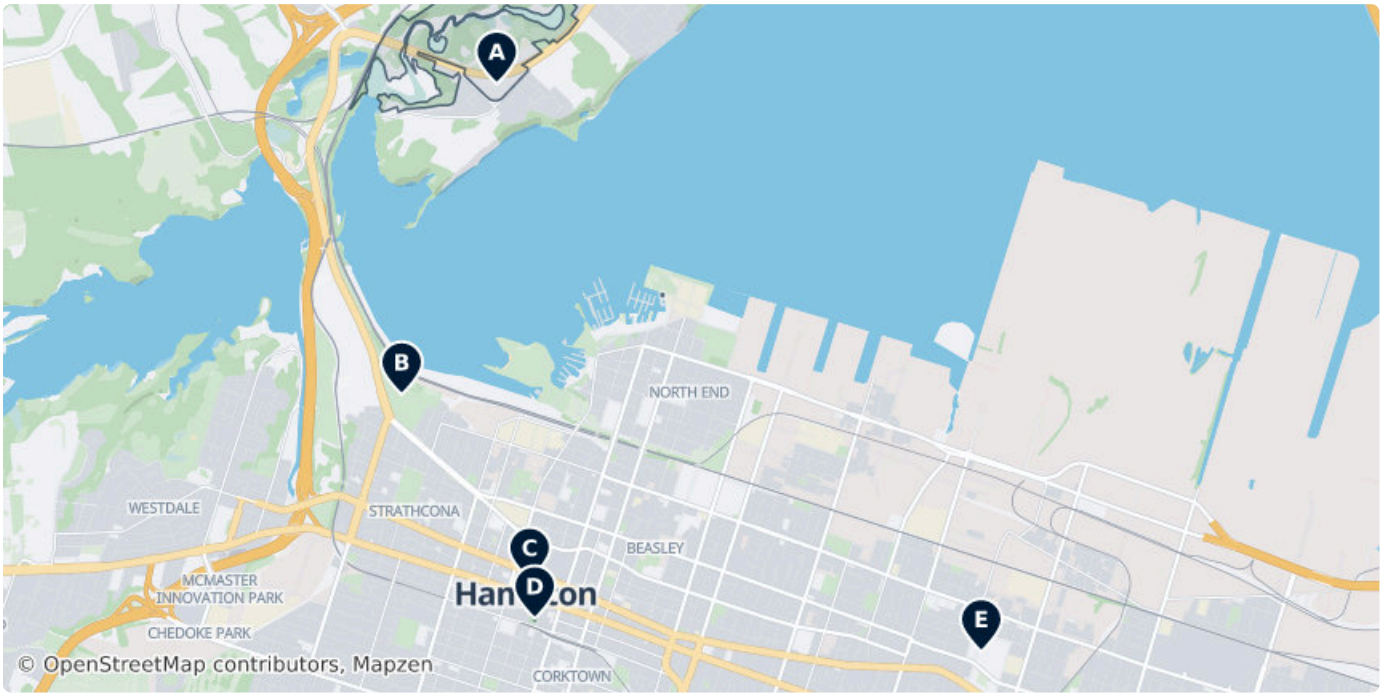
This mid-19th-century National Historic Site was the home of the prominent McQuesten family. The house contains original furnishings and personal items spanning three generations, illustrating the transition from Georgian to Edwardian domestic life.

Jackson Street West 41, L8P 1L3 Hamilton (43.25456, -79.87202)

hamilton.ca/attractions/hamilton-civic-museums/whitehe...

Best of Hamilton

Hamilton's cultural landscape features the Royal Botanical Gardens, a massive environmental protection area spanning Hamilton and Burlington. The city's history is preserved at Dundurn Castle, a 40-room neoclassical mansion built in the 1830s, and Whitehern Historic House, which showcases three generations of the McQuesten family. Art enthusiasts can explore the Art Gallery of Hamilton's extensive collection, while sports history is highlighted at the Canadian Football Hall of Fame and Museum through its archives and artifacts celebrating achievements in Canadian football.





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hamilton.ca/things-do/hamilton-civic-museums/dundurn...



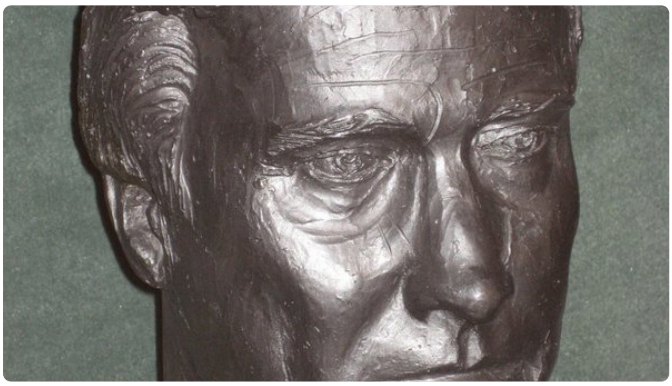
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artgalleryofhamilton.com, +1-905-527-6610



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D Whitehern Historic House

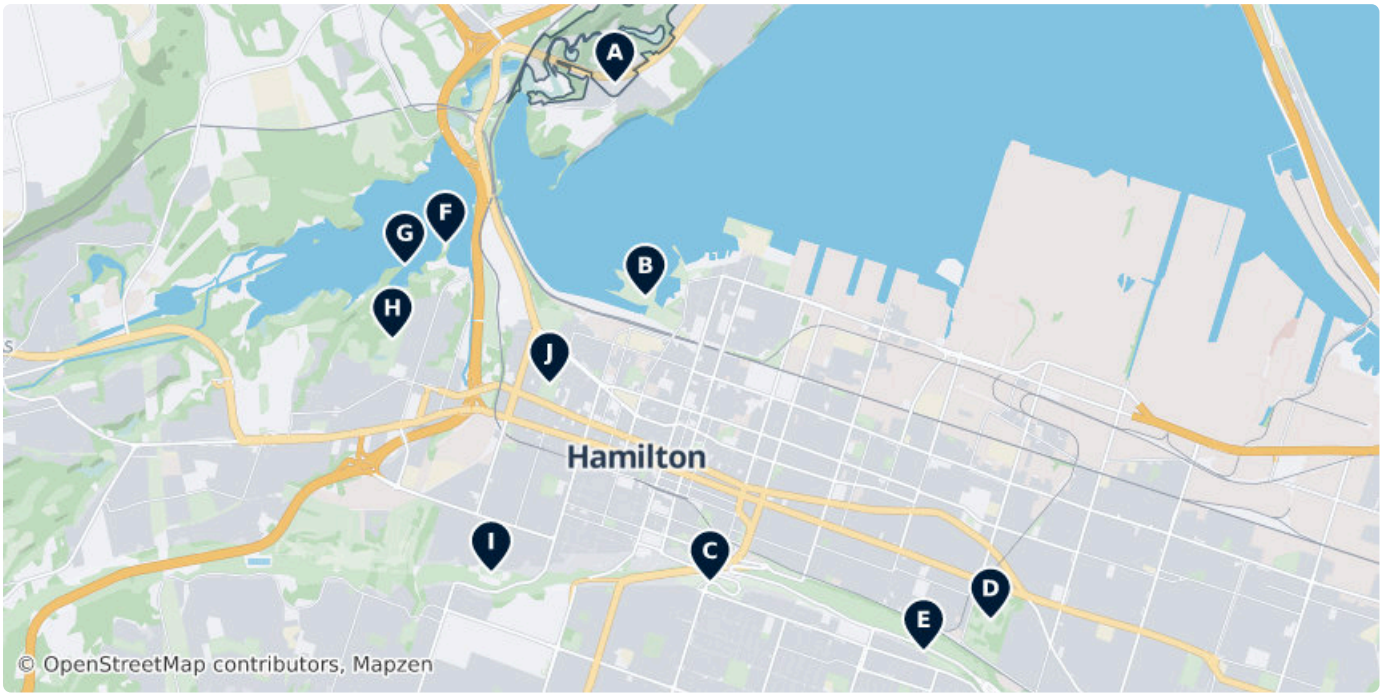
A mid-19th-century urban estate that served as the home of the McQuesten family for three generations. The museum preserves original furnishings and personal effects reflecting the Georgian, Victorian, and Edwardian eras within its limestone walls and landscaped garden.

Jackson Street West 41, L8P 1L3 Hamilton (43.25456, -79.87202)

hamilton.ca/attractions/hamilton-civic-museums/whitehe...

Parks and Nature

Hamilton's landscape is defined by the Niagara Escarpment, a UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve that creates dramatic cliffs and over 100 waterfalls. This collection features the Royal Botanical Gardens, Canada's largest botanical garden, alongside the historic Gage Park and the waterfront trails of Bayfront Park. Nature enthusiasts can explore the wetlands of Cootes Paradise at Princess Point or take in panoramic views of the city and harbor from the edge of the escarpment at Sam Lawrence Park.





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680 Plains Road West, Burlington, ON, Canada (43.29014, -79.87550)

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B Bayfront Park

Bayfront Park is a 16-hectare park found in the West-end of Hamilton Harbour in the North End neighbourhood of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

L8L, Canada (43.27075, -79.87170)

C Sam Lawrence Park

Panoramic lookout on the edge of the Niagara Escarpment. Features extensive rock gardens, paved walkways, and views of the lower city and Hamilton Harbour.

(43.24480, -79.86361)

D Gage Park

Large historic park featuring a 14,000-square-foot tropical greenhouse, a formal rose garden, and a vintage bandstand.

(43.24137, -79.82856)

E Niagara Escarpment

A UNESCO World Biosphere Reserve and limestone ridge. In Hamilton, it forms a prominent cliff line and provides the geological foundation for the region's numerous waterfalls.

(43.23853, -79.83693)

F Princess Point

A nature area and canoe launch within Cootes Paradise Marsh. Connects to the Waterfront Trail and features several hiking paths through diverse ecosystems.

(43.27557, -79.89664)

G Sassafras Point

A scenic lookout point located in the Cootes Paradise nature reserve, offering elevated views of the marshland and local bird species.

(43.27367, -79.90174)

H Churchill Park

A 20-hectare green space in the Westdale neighborhood. Provides access to Royal Botanical Gardens trails and features multiple sports fields and a community garden.

(43.26688, -79.90331)

I Highland Gardens Park

Neighborhood park centered around a historic water reservoir. Provides elevated views of the city and access to nearby escarpment trails.

(43.24566, -79.89096)

J Victoria Park

Established in 1890, this central park includes an outdoor pool, community garden, and a baseball diamond within a residential neighborhood.

(43.26284, -79.88366)

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