

international student survival guide

SUMMER 2013



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First steps

You're just settling in to your new life at university. There is lots to take in. Complete the list of steps below to ensure a smooth transition into life at UFV. If you have any questions, visit UFV International to speak to our friendly and multilingual staff (Room B223).

First week checklist

- ☐ Participate in [orientation](#)
- ☐ Bring your passport to the UFV International office in room B223
- ☐ Introduce yourself to the [staff at UFV International](#)
- ☐ [Find accommodations](#) if needed
- ☐ Buy a long-distance phone card and call home
- ☐ Pick up your Student Identification (ID) Card
- ☐ Make note of [important dates for Summer 2013](#) and know the [tuition refunds & policies](#)
- ☐ [Log in to myUFV](#) to check your classes
- ☐ Buy your textbooks and pick up your free UFV daily planner
- ☐ Meet your student mentor
- ☐ Pick up your U-Pass student bus pass
- ☐ Buy your books
- ☐ Shop for household items you may need
- ☐ Make sure that your study permit is valid for study at UFV
- ☐ Open a bank account (optional)
- ☐ [Apply for a British Columbia ID Card](#) (optional)



Academic success

UFV provides many resources to help you succeed in your academic career. To help you adapt to the education system in Canada and make the best of your time at UFV, take the time to familiarize yourself with the resources available on campus and online.

Plan your program

To earn a degree, diploma or certificate at UFV, you have to take some core required courses. You can also choose some electives according to your interests.

It's important to plan ahead to make sure you get all the courses you need to graduate. Your first resource is the [UFV academic calendar](#). Find your program to see the requirements.

If you are not familiar with the terms used in the calendar, use the [glossary](#).

See an advisor

International advisors can guide you through the program and career choices you need to make. [Book an appointment online](#), on the phone at 604.854.4544 or in person at UFV International in room B223 to see an advisor as soon as possible after you arrive at UFV.

Register early

In your first semester before you arrive, UFV International

registers you for courses depending on your program of study. For your second and later semesters, you are responsible for choosing your own courses and learning how to register.

As an international student you have priority registration if you register on your registration date (found on [myUFV](#), approximately two weeks before registration starts). If you register after that date you may find yourself on a class waitlist, because courses fill up quickly.

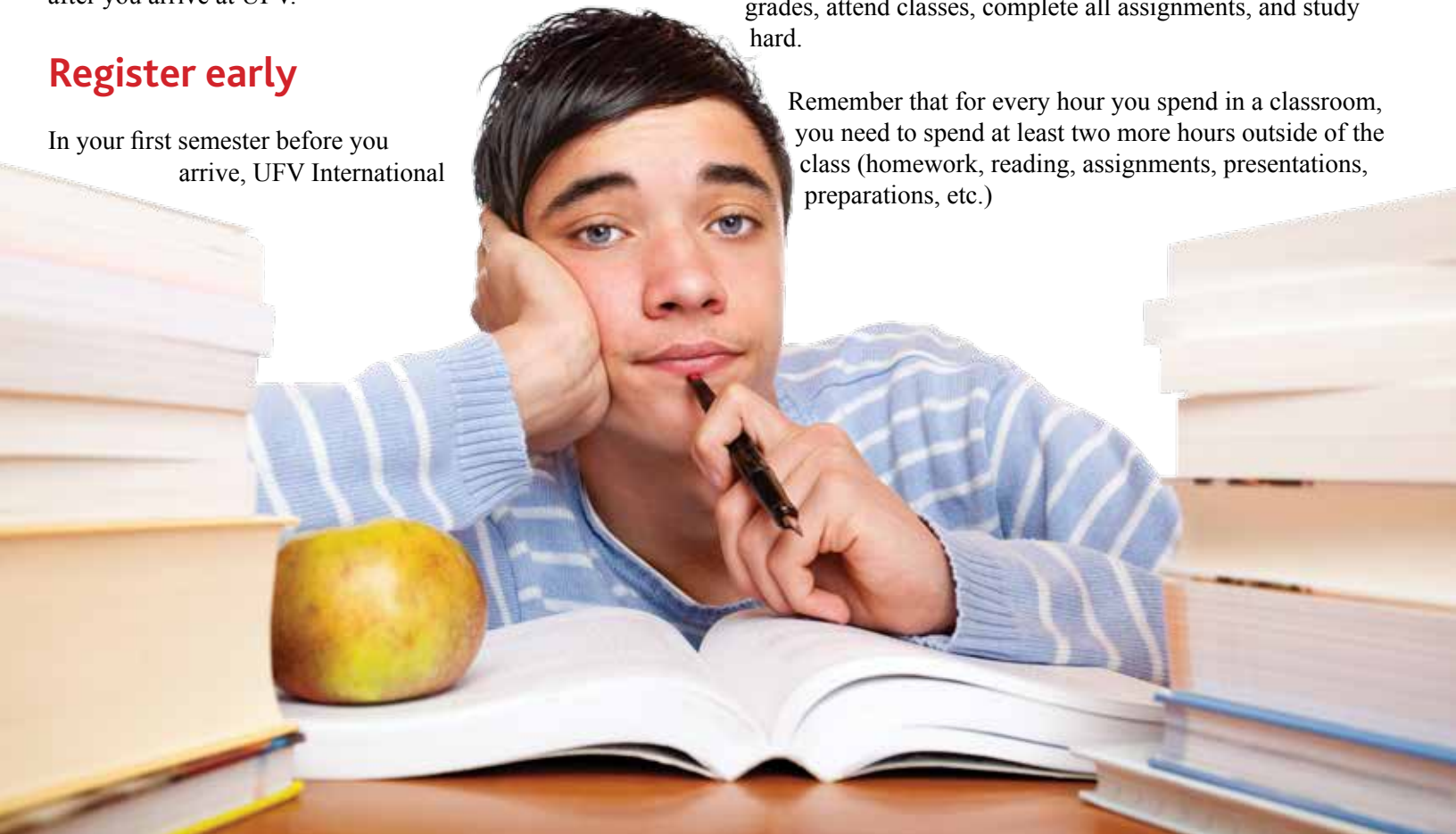
Use these resources to register successfully:

- [Registration how-to](#)
- [Registration info sessions](#)
- [Timetables and Interactive Course Finder](#)
- [myUFV](#) (access to course registration, email, course materials, UFV news and announcements, calendar, and more)
- Semester information
- [International student tuition information](#)

Maintain good grades

The higher your Grade Point Average (GPA), the greater are your opportunities to achieve your goals. Grades can affect your ability to secure scholarships, [get work on or off campus](#), and pursue certain programs of study. To maintain good grades, attend classes, complete all assignments, and study hard.

Remember that for every hour you spend in a classroom, you need to spend at least two more hours outside of the class (homework, reading, assignments, presentations, preparations, etc.)



Take care of yourself

While it is important to study hard, do not neglect your physical and mental health. Make sure you eat well, sleep enough, exercise, and make time for friends and social activities.

[Campus Buzz](#) and [Student Life](#) organize many fun activities. Check out what is going on and get involved.

Ask for help if you need it

If you do not understand material presented in class, you can:

- Ask a classmate to help
- Talk to your instructor
- Look up more information in the [library](#) or on the Web

You can also take advantage of the resources available at UFV:

- Go to the [Math Centre](#)
- Go to the [Writing Centre](#)
- Join a [Supported Learning Group](#) (SLG)
- Attend a [study skills workshop](#)
- [Talk to an advisor](#)
- Hire a private tutor

If you find you have problems with adjusting to life at university or in Canada, you may want to talk to your student mentor or to a [trained counsellor at Student Services](#).



Understand the Canadian education system

You may find that the university culture in Canada varies from what you have experienced in your home country. The following tips will help you do well in and out the classroom.

Get to know your classmates

In Canada, you have different classmates in every class. Introduce yourself to at least three or four people in each class. Feel free to ask your classmates questions, invite them to study with you, or share notes if you are sick.

Speak up in and out of class

Canadian professors value independent thinking. In the classroom, participate in class discussions, ask questions, and contribute ideas and opinions. Out of the classroom, connect with your instructors during their office hours. Ask questions about course material or get feedback on your ideas for papers and assignments.

Take charge of your learning

In Canada, you are expected to take charge of your own learn-

ing. Review the course outline in each class and be aware of all expectations and dates for assignments and exams. Write these dates on a calendar so you don't miss an important deadline. Keep and file your course outlines in case you wish to transfer your UFV studies to another school.

Always cite your sources

Using the words or ideas of someone else and passing them as your own is called plagiarism. In Canada, it is considered cheating and it is not allowed. Make sure you always reference the authors, books, magazines, or websites where you find your ideas for your papers and essays. To learn how to cite your sources, check out the [style guide\(s\) used in your courses](#) or ask for help at the [UFV Writing Centre](#).

Check myUFV regularly

Both instructors and staff will use your UFV email address to communicate with you. Check [myUFV](#) regularly for important information including official university correspondence and notifications.

Health care

Medical insurance

In Canada, health care can be very expensive if you are not covered with proper medical insurance. That's why UFV requires that you have health insurance for the duration of your studies.

UFV International manages a [group medical insurance plan for international students](#) that includes coverage with StudentGuard for your first three months in British Columbia or for the duration of your stay if you are an exchange student.

After three months and for the rest of your stay, you become eligible for medical coverage under the BC Medical Services Plan (MSP). Students registering in the Fall semester are also automatically enrolled in the Student Union Society's (SUS) Health and Dental Plan (\$159.92 CAD annually) for extras not covered by MSP such as vision care, prescription drugs, and dental care.

Your first three months

Upon arrival you will receive a Student Guard Health Insurance card that applies for your first 3 months in British Columbia. This card can be used at the following two walk-in clinics:

Abbotsford Village Medical Clinic

#302-2050 Sumas Way Abbotsford, BC

Telephone: (604) 504-7145

Hours: Mon-Fri 9:00 am – 8:00 pm

Saturday, Sunday, and most holidays 9:00 am – 5:00 pm

McCallum Clinic

2479 McCallum Rd. Abbotsford, BC

Telephone: (604) 852-2279 Hours: Mon-Fri 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Saturday 9:00 am – 2:00 pm, Sunday and Holidays Closed

- If you choose to use any other walk-in clinic or hospital, you will need to pay for the doctor's fees upfront.
- Students must pay for all medical costs (i.e. prescriptions, x-rays, blood or lab tests) themselves, and will be reimbursed by the insurer, provided it is not for a pre-existing condition.
- To submit a claim, [visit the insurer's website](#) or bring receipts for all services to UFV International within 14 days. A cheque will arrive at UFV in three to four weeks.

After three months

After three months, you qualify to enroll under the British Columbia's Medical Services Plan (MSP). Anyone residing in BC for six months or longer is required to enrol in MSP.

[MSP covers the cost of basic medical care within Canada,](#) including most physician and hospital services.

You can use the Care

by MSP at any

doctor's office.

not cover

alternative

Card provided
clinic or doc-

MSP does
dental care,
medicines



such as homeopathy or acupuncture, prescription drugs, or routine vision care (such as eye examinations or corrective lenses).

- International students are required to pay for medical insurance on an annual basis. Students starting their studies in Winter 2013 pay for coverage from August to December. Medical coverage for 2013 works out to \$840 for the calendar year (\$70/month), payable with your tuition fees at the date of registration for the Winter semester.
- Remember that your insurance is only valid for the year in which you have paid UFV your medical premiums, even if your Care Card has a different expiry date.
- International students must have a valid study permit to qualify for MSP. Your Care Card will expire on the same date as your study permit.
- When you receive a new study permit, you must give a copy to UFV International; otherwise, your medical insurance will no longer be valid.
- Check for your MSP Care Card at UFV International about three months after you have applied for MSP. Because MSP pays for health care services directly, you will be asked to present your Care Card when you see a doctor. Carry it with you at all times.
- If you travel outside of BC, you may not be covered for 100% of medical expenses. [Check the MSP website](#) to

find out if you should purchase additional travel insurance before you leave.

- If you leave BC for longer than one month, you may be eligible for a refund of medical insurance premiums. Advise UFV International of your departure and return dates before you leave to find out if you qualify. You must provide proof with your airline ticket.



Canadian health care tips

Find a family doctor

People in Canada either have a family doctor or general practitioner (GP) with whom they make appointments, or they visit a walk-in clinic and see the physician who is on duty. Check with UFV International for a list of doctors accepting new patients.

Make the most of your doctor's visits

Feel free to ask your doctor questions, even if he/she is in a hurry. If you have more than one concern, be sure to address them all. It is also common to seek a second opinion, so your doctor should not be offended.

Take medication as prescribed

Some mild medicines are available over-the-counter at the pharmacy. Others require a prescription from your doctor, which you need to take to the pharmacy. Be sure to take your medication exactly as prescribed. If you feel it is not helping, go back to your doctor.

Use the right health care service

In case of an emergency, call 911 or go immediately to the nearest hospital's emergency room. Otherwise, go to a drop-in clinic or make an appointment with your doctor.

Get a referral to see a specialist

If you require the care of a specialist, your doctor may give you a referral to secure an appointment with the specialist. It is usually not possible to see a specialist without a referral.

Stay healthy

Eating a well-balanced diet, getting regular exercise and sleep, and maintaining regular routines are all keys to staying healthy. The resources below can help you take care of your health:

- [BC Health Guide](#)
- [BC Health Guide Files](#) (multilingual: search for information on nutrition, safe sex, etc.)
- BC Nurseline: phone (toll-free in BC) 8-1-1 for 24-hour, confidential health information and advice (translation services available).

Culture shock

All new students must adjust to university life. But as an international student, you may also experience a process of cultural adaptation, often referred to as “culture shock.” If you come from another culture, you may find some aspects of Canadian life, such as food, relationships, climate or social rules, unfamiliar and difficult to understand or like.

If you cannot speak English fluently yet, it may take you even longer to adapt to the cultural differences. The best remedy to culture shock is to form relationships with Canadians and to become active across campus and in the community, networking with different cultural groups.

Symptoms of culture shock

Culture shock affects individuals differently, but almost everyone experiences it to some degree. Symptoms may include:

- Poor appetite or over-eating
- Inability to sleep or over-sleeping
- Tiredness and irritability
- Feeling alone, isolated, or helpless
- Feeling powerless
- Feeling boredom
- Withdrawal – spending excessive amounts of time alone without human contact
- Homesickness
- Various aches and pains
- Substance abuse – alcohol, nicotine, drugs, gambling, food binges
- Criticism of local customs and culture

Stages of culture shock

Culture shock is normal and does

not last forever. The time frame will vary by individual. The five stages of culture shock are:

Honeymoon Stage

You may feel very positive about the new culture, are excited and curious, and may even idealize the new host culture.

Withdrawal

After having experienced the host culture, you may become anxious, irritable, and frustrated. You may find the behaviour of the host people unusual and unpredictable, and begin to dislike and withdraw from the culture.

Gradual Adjustment

You may feel more relaxed as you have settled in and developed a routine. You begin to understand and accept the behaviour of the host culture, and feel less isolated.

Adaptation

You may now feel more “at home” and have a new sense of belonging and sensitivity to the host culture. You may even adopt certain behaviours from the host culture.

Reverse Culture Shock

If you return home to visit, you may go through a similar experience as described above. As you have lived in and experienced a new culture, you may have developed new perceptions, habits, and values. Transitioning back into your home culture may be more difficult than expected.





Coping with culture shock

Culture shock may not disappear quickly, but it will go away eventually. Remember it is a normal experience and use these tips to cope:

- Establish simple goals for yourself and celebrate each success
- Keep a journal to reflect on your progress
- Talk to other international students who can give you advice
- Make local and international friends. Practice English and other languages
- Volunteer in the community and get active on campus
- Take up a new hobby
- Be patient and give yourself time to adapt
- Stay in touch with family and friends
- Decorate your room with small and familiar objects that remind you of home
- Find activities that help relieve stress such as exercising
- Find ways to live with the new things that you may find difficult
- Try to stay positive, remain confident, and don't be too hard on yourself

If you need help, you can talk to a [counsellor at Student Services](#). UFV International staff and advisors can also help. Never hesitate to reach out if you are feeling overwhelmed.

Understanding Canadian culture

As a whole, Canada is a diverse nation, with people coming from many backgrounds. As a result, it is difficult to describe a typical Canadian. But you can use the observations below as general guidelines to help you navigate Canadian culture.

Individuality and privacy

Canadian society encourages self-reliance and individualism. As a result, Canadians are more likely to look out for themselves and their close family members. They may not feel a strong sense of obligation towards public institutions and only hold loose bonds with their community. Canadians highly value privacy and would generally prefer that you contact them to arrange a visit rather than dropping by unannounced.

Directness

While Canadians are generally considered polite, they can be direct with their opinions and preferences. They may feel free to contradict others or to say no when they disagree or do not like what is proposed. Once they've taken a decision, they may not welcome attempts to argue, negotiate or bargain. Canadians, both male and female, believe that steady eye contact is a sign of self-confidence and trustworthiness.

Punctuality

At school and at work, Canadians expect you to be on time.

If you show up more than five minutes late for a meeting, it is considered polite to provide an apology and a reason for your lateness. If you have to miss an appointment, let the person you are meeting know ahead of time. In social situations, such as parties, it is not as important to arrive on time.

Physical space

Most Canadians do not often kiss or hug when greeting friends. However, it is customary to shake hands when being introduced. Generally, only lovers will hold hands in public. Friends or co-workers may touch each other lightly on the shoulder or arm during a discussion. Canadians generally stand at arm's length when waiting in line or talking to acquaintances, especially if the speaker is a man addressing a woman.

Informality

Canadian culture emphasizes equality and cooperation and does not encourage class, gender, or age distinctions. As a result, relationships are informal and relaxed: it is common to address teachers or supervisors by their first name. However, informality does not mean that marks of respect are not valued. People who are older, more experienced or knowledgeable, or in a position of authority will still expect you to defer to them.

Safety

As you get used to your new home in Canada, it is important that you stay safe. Take the time to review the tips below to protect your personal information, your belongings, and yourself from crime.

Protect your personal information

- Rip any receipt, bank statement or financial document that contains personal information before you put it in the garbage or recycling.
- Do not put your name and address on your keys or lend your keys to someone you don't know.
- Do not give someone your bank card number, PIN number, driver's license, or social insurance number except to known and trusted sources.

Protect your valuables

- Keep valuables out of sight in a safe place.
- Do not leave your phone, camera, purse, or laptop unattended in a public area.
- Make sure the windows and doors of your home and car are locked when not in use.
- Do not open your wallet in public.

- Never exchange cash for a cheque.
- Do not pay in cash ahead of time for a service or purchase. If you buy something, get a receipt and make sure you have been charged the correct amount.
- Do not lend your valuable items unless you feel you can afford to replace them.
- Do not sign any document you do not understand. Get someone's help to translate or interpret first.

Protect yourself

- Have your keys ready to open the door when you reach your car or when you arrive home.
- On the bus or SkyTrain, sit close to the driver and do not fall asleep. If another passenger bothers you, ask the driver for help.
- At night, stay away from dark areas. Choose well-lit parking spaces or bus stops. After dark, go out with a friend, or contact campus security to arrange a SafeWalk escort.
- Tell trusted friends or your homestay family your schedule. If you go out alone, let them know your plans and call them when you have arrived safely.
- Carry a cellphone.
 - Do not accept rides from strangers or offer a ride to someone you have just met.





Security services at UFV

Student Safety Patrol

Trained student employees patrol the campuses from 6:30-10:30 pm, Monday to Friday. They wear blue vests. If you need help, let them know.

Safe Walk Program

When you are walking to parking lots at night, you can ask a Patroller in a blue SafeWalk vest to escort you to your car.

Safe Walk Stations

There are two stations located on the Abbotsford campus – Building A by the bus stop and Building B in the Great Hall.

Code of Conduct

By requiring that all students behave in a respectful and mature manner, UFV provides a civil and safe environment that respects the rights and dignity of all its members.

Important Phone Numbers

On-campus Security

Emergencies: 1.855.282.7770 or dial 7770 internally

Non-emergencies: 1.855.29.7654 or dial 7654 internally. You

- Never open your door to a stranger or let them into your home.
- If you feel unsafe or see suspicious activity, ask for help from someone you trust, a school employee, or the police.
- Be on your guard when a stranger approaches you. If you feel you are being followed, cross the street, change directions or go to the nearest public place.

can also call this non-emergency number if you need a Safe-Walk escort or Student Safety Patroller.

For a non-life-threatening emergency, call:

- Police Abbotsford: 604-859-5225
- Fire: 604-853-3566
- Ambulance: 604-504-7044
- Police Chilliwack: 604.792.4611

For a life-threatening emergency:

- Call 911 – a free number and you will not need a coin if you are using a pay phone. This is the number for police, fire, and ambulance.

Fire safety at UFV

In the event of a fire alarm, you must exit the building immediately and not re-enter until permitted to do so.

It is a criminal offence to pull a fire alarm as a prank. Tampering with exit signs, fire extinguishers, hoses, valves, alarms, sprinkler heads, heat sensors, or smoke detectors, for any reason other than an emergency, is also prohibited.

The law in Canada

Alcohol and drugs

In Canada, it is against the law to use illegal drugs, to drink and drive, or to drink alcohol in a public place. Each province sets its own drinking age. In British Columbia, you need to be 19 to purchase or consume alcohol.

Using, buying or selling illegal drugs is a serious offense in British Columbia. Driving with a blood alcohol level of 0.05 or higher can also have serious consequences: police can suspend your driver's license, impound your car, and give you a heavy fine.

Don't let anyone pressure you to drink or take drugs against your will. At parties, it is acceptable to have only one drink or none at all. Always arrange to get home with a non-drinking, drug-free driver. Bring money for a taxi in case your plans or your driver's plans change.

Harassment and assault

In Canada, the law protects you from people who try to have physical contact against your will. Going out on a date does not give someone permission for sex or unwanted physical contact. It is illegal for anyone to continue to touch you after you have told them to stop.

Consider bringing a friend if you go out on a date with someone you do not know well. If it is not possible, tell trusted people who you are meeting, where you are going, and when you plan to return. Meet your date in a familiar public place. Always carry money for transportation. Know your way home and carry a cell phone in case you need help.

At a party or night club, do not leave your drink alone or accept a drink from a stranger. Sexual predators can slip fast-acting drugs in the drink of unsuspecting victims to lower their defenses and make it easier to commit an assault.

Permits & visas

As an international student, you are responsible for maintaining your student status while studying in Canada. You must ensure that your immigration documents are accurate and kept up-to-date if you want to remain in Canada legally and avoid costly renewal fees. If you need information, the staff at UFV International can help with your immigration questions. You can also contact [Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#) (CIC) or call toll-free 1-888-242-2100. Remember that immigration regulations are subject to change.

Documents

There are three categories of people in Canada: citizens, permanent residents, and temporary residents. International students, workers, and visitors are all temporary residents. As a temporary resident, you may have one or two types of immigration documents in addition to your passport:

Study permit

A valid study permit authorizes you to remain in Canada while you study. It is the piece of paper issued by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (usually stapled in your passport) that permits you to study in Canada and work on the campus in which you are enrolled as a full-time student. If you are accepted to a program that is less than six months long or are an exchange student, you do not need a study permit, but you may choose to apply for one anyway. If you decide to prolong your stay and study longer, you can simply extend your study permit and avoid a complicated application process.

Extending your study permit

It is your responsibility to ensure that your study permit remains valid during your studies in Canada. If you need to extend it, apply 30 to 90 days in advance of the expiry date (90 days is recommended). Processing times are typically 4 to 12 weeks, but can be longer. You can [apply online](#) or send a paper application by mail to Citizenship and Immigration Canada. Applying online may save you time and money.

If you plan to travel abroad during a period when your study permit is almost expired, ensure that you renew it from within Canada before you leave. If your passport is expiring, you need to renew it before you apply to extend your study permit.

If your permit expires while you are waiting for a response from CIC, you have “implied status” in Canada until you receive a response. It is important that you remain in Canada while you have this status. You may be unable to re-enter Canada without a valid permit.

[View UFV's permits and visas guidebook for more information](#)

Temporary Resident Visa

A Temporary Resident Visa (TRV or entry visa) is a sticker that is placed in your passport if you are a citizen of a country that requires a visa to visit Canada. If this is a requirement for citizens of your country, a valid TRV must be shown along with a valid immigration document (study or work permit) in order to re-enter Canada. A TRV may allow “single entry” or “multiple entry” and may only be obtained from a visa office (consulate or embassy) outside of Canada.



If you are planning a trip outside of Canada and the continental United States (US), you need a valid TRV in addition to your valid study permit to re-enter Canada, unless you are from a country that is exempt from this requirement.

If you have any questions, [check the CIC website](#) or come to an info session at UFV International room B223, on the Abbotsford campus, either Monday or Thursday at 2:30 pm.

[View UFV's permits and visas guidebook](#)

Passport

If your passport expires while you are in Canada, your immigration documents, such as study and work permits, will also expire at the same time. In most cases, you can apply to extend them after you obtain a new passport.

Renew your passport well in advance to allow enough time to renew your study permit. Passport applications can take up to three months. To apply for a new passport, contact the nearest visa office for your country.

Off-Campus work permit

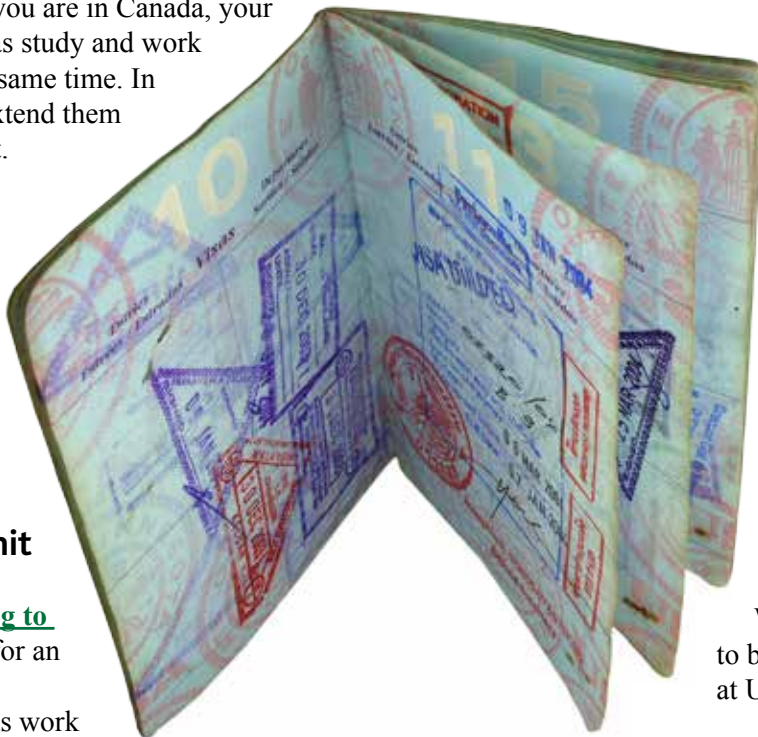
[International students wishing to work off-campus](#) must apply for an off-campus work permit. To be eligible for an off-campus work

permit, you must:

- have a valid Study Permit
- have been a full-time student for at least six of the 12 months preceding the date of your work permit application
- be in satisfactory academic standing (minimum GPA 2.0)

Undergraduate students with an off-campus work permit may work a maximum of 20 hours per week during the regular academic year (September to April) and full-time during scheduled breaks (summer, winter, and reading breaks).

Find more information and application instructions at [Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#).



Useful tips

Check the expiry dates of all of your important information documents and make notes in your calendar.

If you are travelling and require a TRV, check processing times and apply far in advance of your travel plans.

Remember that your Care Card also expires at the same time as your study permit.

When leaving Canada, make sure to bring with you proof of enrolment at UFV.

Travelling outside of Canada

Plan ahead and renew your documents before you travel home or to another country. To re-enter to Canada, you need a valid study permit and passport. If you are from a country that requires a visa to enter Canada, you also need a valid TRV, unless you are returning from the continental United States. To be safe, consider taking with you a current letter of enrolment that proves your current registration status at UFV.

Visiting the United States

If you have a valid study permit and are visiting the United States, you do not need a valid TRV to re-enter Canada. To enter the United States, however, you must first determine the requirements for citizens of your country. Citizens of most countries require a non-immigrant visa to enter the US for business or pleasure and must apply in advance. Citizens of select countries participate in the [Visa Waiver Program](#) which

allows them to apply for entry to the United States without a non-immigrant visa if they are seeking entry for 90 days or less as a visitor for business or pleasure as long as they have a machine-readable passport.

If you need a non-immigrant visa to enter the US and you are eligible, you must make an appointment for an interview at the [US Consular office in Vancouver](#). Plan ahead as it can take several weeks to get an appointment. You should be aware that if you have been in Canada less than one year or have previously been refused a US visa, you may encounter difficulty at the time of the interview.

As immigration regulations often change at a moment's notice, visit the official website of the [US Embassy-Consulate Services in Vancouver](#) for the most accurate and updated information.

Campus & community

We encourage you to get involved in student life on campus: connecting with your fellow students, Canadian and international, as well as the local community will enhance your social and academic life while you are studying in Canada.

UFV International

UFV International supports international students and is dedicated to your success. The department staff speak many languages, organize activities and events for international students, and provide important support services such as academic advising and medical insurance plan administration.

The department also provides international exchange opportunities through its Study Abroad program, runs a volunteer program to help you get involved in community life, and provides work experience for international students through the International Student Association and the Student Mentorship program.

Campus Buzz

[Campus Buzz](#) organizes many extra-curricular activities meant to include international and Canadian students. Intercultural interaction is a fundamental component of your education and will enrich your experience in Canada.

That's why the International Activities Coordinator plans different activities throughout the year to give students the opportunity to go skiing, hiking, camping, horseback riding, and more!

Join Campus Buzz:

- [On Facebook](#)
- On Twitter @UFV_campus_BUZZ
- [Through the e-newsletter](#)

Recreation

Campus recreation and physical activity produce more than just physical benefits. Being active as a student can help you concentrate better, have less stress, have more energy, and sleep more soundly. Physical fitness plays an important part in living a healthy lifestyle.

UFV has dedicated [recreational facilities](#) and a wide variety of opportunities on campus.

Check out [Student Life's Campus Recreation & Wellness](#) for more information and be sure to become engaged in:

- [Intramurals](#)
- [Athletics](#)
- [SOLAR \(Student Outdoor Life and Recreation\)](#)
- [Fitness classes](#)

International Student Association

UFV's International Student Association is here to celebrate diversity in our university.

The association organizes and promotes trips, events, and activities to give all local and international students a platform to socialize, learn, and have fun in a friendly and inclusive environment.

Becoming an ISA member allows you to participate in planning and volunteering in events such as the international student orientation, multicultural community dinners, and fun trips.

To become a member contact the COO at isa.coo@ufv.ca.





Other fun or useful stuff at UFV

UFV provides a wide variety of student services. Get to know what is available and take advantage of it.

Academic resources

- [Academic Calendar](#)
- [UFV Library](#)

Student Life resources

- [Student Life](#)
- [Student Clubs and Associations](#)
- [UFV CIVL radio](#)
- [Student Union Society](#)
- [Cascade student newspaper](#)

Technology and media resources

- [IT services](#) (help with campus computers & myUFV)
- [Educational Technology Services](#) (access to equipment and specialized software)

Campus resources

- [Maps](#)
- [News & events](#)
- [Parking](#)
- [Campus Closures](#) (useful on snow days)

Other resources

- [Counselling](#)
- [Disability services](#)
- [Admissions and Records](#)
- [Bookstore](#) (includes a coffee shop, with some food options)
- [Career Centre](#)
- [Lost and found](#)

Volunteering

Volunteering in your local community can be a very meaningful and beneficial experience. Not only can volunteer experience boost your résumé or grad school application, it also looks great when you apply to another university or seek permanent resident status in Canada.

Volunteering can help you improve your language skills, develop employment skills, apply learning in real situations, learn more about Canadian culture, and make new Canadian friends.

The UFV Volunteer to Work program provides volunteer opportunities on campus and in the community. Many international students have benefitted greatly from participating in the program.

In the Volunteer to Work program, students are encouraged to develop a portfolio and résumé to help them find employment once eligible to work. Students also learn how to gain valuable reference letters and certificates for their volunteer time. Join the [Volunteer to Work Facebook group](#), for postings, communications, and notifications, and watch for UFV Volunteer to Work information sessions at the beginning of each semester.

If you'd like to organize a volunteer activity, group, or fundraiser on campus, email volunteer@ufv.ca

Check out [volunteering stories from UFV students in The Standout magazine](#)

Transportation & travel

Whether you are exploring Abbotsford or wishing to travel throughout British Columbia, you can choose from a variety of transportation options.

Locally, you can use your [U-PASS](#) for unlimited access to the local [transit system](#). If you need help with reading a bus schedule, you can ask your student mentor or a UFV International staff for help.

Check out the links below to help you travel around Abbotsford and beyond:

- [City of Abbotsford](#)
- [Translink](#) (Vancouver transit, including SkyTrain)
- [Greyhound](#) (bus to travel from town to town)
- [Via Rail](#) (train)
- [West Coast Express](#) (train to Vancouver)
- [BC Ferries](#)
- [Quick Shuttle](#) (Vancouver-Seattle)



- [Valley Airporter](#) (Shuttle to Abbotsford airport)
- [Island Express](#) (local air travel)
- [Pacific Coach](#) (Vancouver-Whistler-Nanaimo-Victoria)
- [Rocky Mountaineer](#) (train)
- [Hi-Hostels Canada](#)
- [Discover Camping](#)

If you are travelling to Vancouver and beyond, or wish to go east, taking the bus is your cheapest option. If you are travelling to the United States make sure to [review the immigration information provided in this guide](#).

The only travel services listed above that operate to and from the Abbotsford area are Greyhound and the West Coast Express (Mission). For the other services, you have to first travel to Vancouver. You can also take public transit to Vancouver from Abbotsford [via Aldergrove](#), Langley, and Surrey, but this will take a lot longer than the Greyhound (and some buses may not run on weekends).

Join us for an adventure

Every semester, in collaboration with Discover Canada Tours, UFV International offers you the option to participate in a variety of overnight tours to popular destinations such as Whistler, the Rockies, and Vancouver Island.

These tours provide great value, while enabling you to travel safely, stay at quality accommodations, and enjoy fully guided sight-seeing of the area you visit.

Participate in international student orientation for an opportunity to win a trip.

To learn more about tours or to join a tour, contact Money at campus.buzz@ufv.ca



Financial resources

Financial assistance is available to UFV students through UFV and externally funded bursaries, work-study opportunities, on campus and off-campus employment, and scholarships.

Student Awards and Financial Aid

Scholarships and awards available to Canadian and international students attending UFV range in value from \$400 to \$16,000. Applications are available at myUFV.

- [Scholarships available for international students](#)
- For further information, including a budget worksheet and list of available awards at UFV, visit [Financial Aid and Awards](#)
- Check available [UFV-administered scholarships and awards](#) by category (UFV international students may apply unless otherwise noted)
- For information from the Canadian government about award opportunities, costs, and budgeting, visit [Can Learn](#)

Student Employment

Working and volunteering can be a great way to earn extra income and gain valuable experience while you are studying. However, as an international student, there are certain restrictions on the type of employment you can have. This section describes your employment options.

Work on campus

The [Work-Study Program](#) gives eligible students an on-campus, part-time job that is flexible around their class schedule. A number of positions are available during the Fall, Winter, and Spring/Summer semesters in a variety of different areas.

To be eligible to participate in the Work-Study Program, a student must:

- be enrolled in a minimum of 9 credits for the current semester (3 courses)
- maintain a GPA of 2.0 or greater

To provide proof of eligibility, you may access your student record through [myUFV](#).

Work-study job postings are posted on the first day of classes in each

semester. Work-study opportunities are posted online in [CareerLink](#) in which you must register to gain access. Students may work up to 10 hours per week; the current wage is \$11.28 per hour (inclusive).

Work off campus

As an international student, you can apply for a work permit in order to work off-campus.

To get an off-campus permit, you need to:

- have a valid Study Permit
- have been a full-time student for at least six of the 12 months preceding the date of your work permit application
- maintain a GPA of 2.0 or greater (check your student record through myUFV to confirm your GPA)

Visit [Citizenship and Immigration Canada](#) to find out how to apply. It can take four to eight weeks to get your work permit. A non-refundable application fee of \$150 applies.

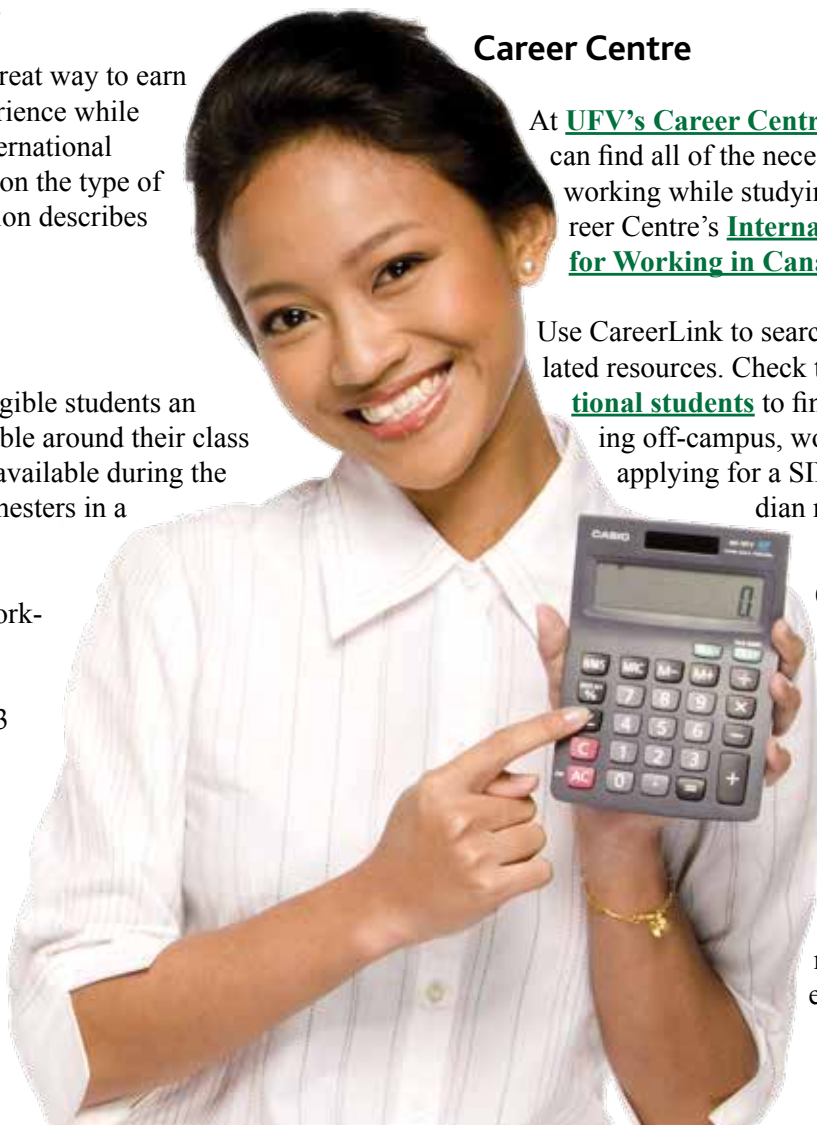
Career Centre

At [UFV's Career Centre](#), international students can find all of the necessary information about working while studying at UFV. Check Career Centre's [International Student Guide for Working in Canada](#).

Use CareerLink to search for employment-related resources. Check the [section for international students](#) to find information on working off-campus, working after graduation, applying for a SIN card, writing Canadian résumés, and taxes.

Co-operative Education

UFV's Co-operative Education program (Co-op) offers students in several disciplines the option of pursuing a diploma or degree program that incorporates paid work experience.



The Co-op program is designed to enhance students' job prospects by formally integrating full-time study terms with discipline-related work terms. Students earn their academic credentials while gaining valuable applied skills and professional experience.

Check the Career Centre's [Co-operative Education Handbook for Students](#).

Income Taxes

You may not earn enough income from Canadian sources to have to pay income tax. However, if you earn income in Canada, you are expected to file a tax return every year.

Completing Canadian Income Tax forms is beneficial as you may qualify for tax refunds and long-term tax credits (if you stay and work after graduation).

Tax-related receipts are produced in January and February for the previous tax year. Taxes owing must be paid by April 30, or interest charges will apply.

To complete your income tax return, students will typically have:

- T2202A (Tuition and Education Amount) – available through [myUFV](#)
- T4 (Employment Income) – issued by your employer if applicable
- T4A (Scholarship and Bursary Income) – issued by UFV if applicable

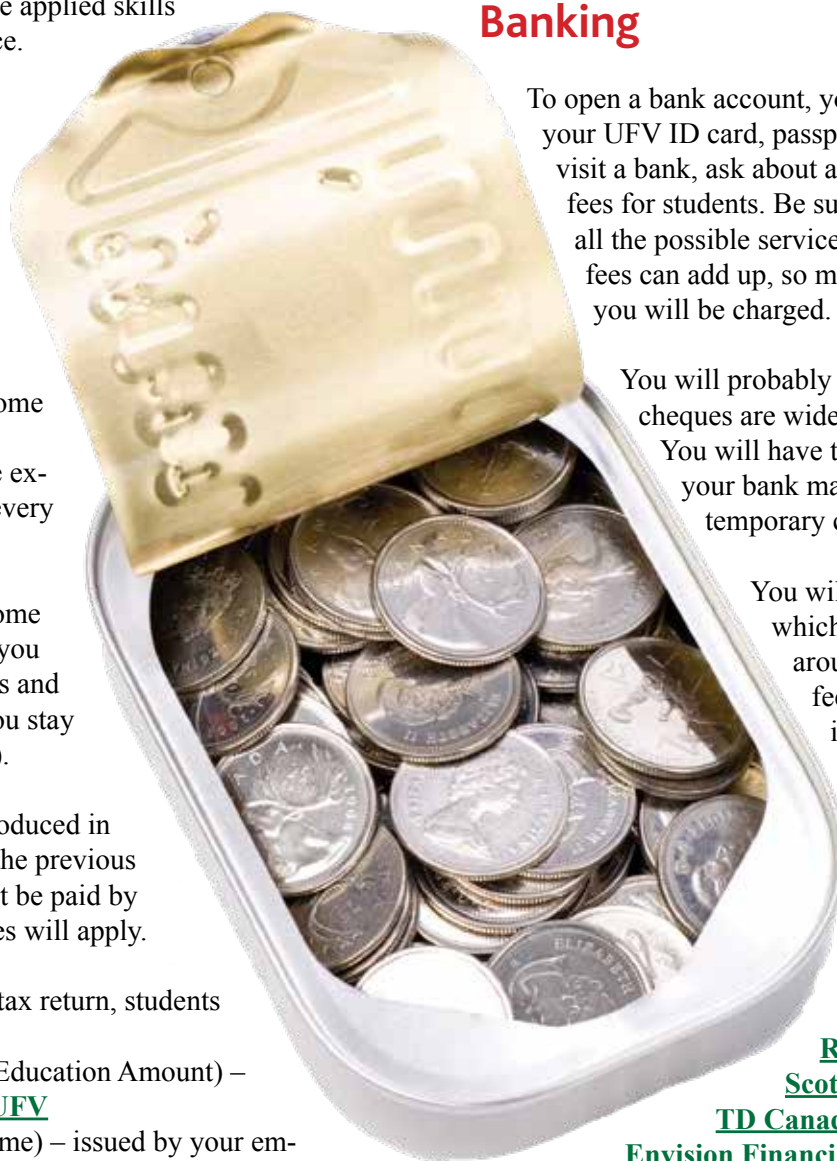
For further information, access the [Canada Revenue Agency's Income Tax Information for international students](#).

Banking

To open a bank account, you will probably need to provide your UFV ID card, passport, and local address. When you visit a bank, ask about accounts that offer lower service fees for students. Be sure to ask for details concerning all the possible service fees that may apply. Service fees can add up, so make sure you understand how you will be charged.

You will probably need a chequing account, as cheques are widely used for paying rent and bills. You will have to pay a fee to order cheques, but your bank may be able to give you a few free temporary cheques to use right away.

You will also be issued a debit card, which you can use in bank machines around the city (watch for service fees and withdraw from your bank, if possible). In most cases, you can use your card to pay for items directly. Charges to debit cards are deducted from your account immediately, unlike a credit card.



[CIBC](#)
[HSBC](#)
[RBC](#)

[Scotiabank](#)

[TD CanadaTrust](#)

[Envision Financial](#) (Credit Union)

[BMO](#)
[Prospera](#) (Credit Union)

Tips for saving money

The best way to manage your finances is to create a budget and follow it closely. When making your budget, be sure to consider the number of months you will study in Canada and plan accordingly. To save money, you can:

- Buy used books whenever possible
- Buy second-hand furniture, clothing, and household supplies
- Look for free or used stuff on [Craigslist](#)
- Prepare food to bring with you to school and avoid eating out too often
- Collect discount coupons and watch for sales at local stores
- Record all of your income, expenses, and expenditures each month. Estimate a monthly budget and do your best to

follow it.

- Use your student card and [International Student Identity Card](#) (ISIC) or [SPC Card](#) to take advantage of discounts when applicable
- Attend campus events where food is served for free or at minimal cost
- Return your bottles to the recycling depot or grocery store and collect the deposit
- Sell or trade the things you no longer want or need
- Turn down the heat and wear a sweater
- Pay your bills on time to avoid interest charges
- Live without a car
- Buy only what you need

Grocery Stores

Missing your mother's cooking? If you have her recipes, there is no need to despair. While you may not find the ingredients you need to make your favorite recipe at the local grocery store, the Fraser Valley features several ethnic markets that sell goods from around the world.

Dashmesh Indian Foods

You can find most ingredients used in Indian Cuisine.
2622 Cedarpark Place ([Map](#))
604-852-9690

Ming Ming's

This Korean grocery store offers specialty items from other parts of Asia and the Philippines.
#152 - 31935 South Fraser Way ([Map](#))

Vinh Tan Oriental Grocery Store

This store offers a variety of Asian and Latin products.
2618 Cedar Park Place
([Map](#))
604-859-2618

Pan-Asia Market & Deli

This deli offers a variety of Asian and Latin products.
1-32288 South Fraser Way
([Map](#))
604-746-3229

Healthway Market

This market has a selection of organic products.
#5 - 2664 Gladys Avenue ([Map](#))
604-854-5004

Pacific Flooring & Imports Inc

In addition to selling flooring, this store offers a variety of products from South America.
32660 George Ferguson Way ([Map](#))
604-854-6585

Vancouver Chinatown

The [Vancouver Chinatown](#) is one of the world's largest Chinatowns and features a wide selection of Chinese wares, including food and other goods.

Price Smart

A general supermarket with a great selection of Indian and specialty ingredients.
32700 South Fraser Way ([Map](#))
604-854-5318
www.pricesmartfoods.ca

Real Canadian Superstore

This Canadian grocery store has a good selection of imported food from around the world.
2855 Gladwin Road ([Map](#))
604-557-5218
www.superstore.ca



T & T Supermarket

This supermarket offers a wide variety of meats, vegetables, and products used in Chinese food and other Asian cuisine. Find outlets in the following malls:

Central City Shopping Centre

3000 Central City ([Map](#))
10153 King George Boulevard,
Surrey, B.C. V3T 2W1
Phone: 604-580-3168
Fax: 604-580-2168

Metropolis at Metrotown

147-4800 Kingsway, ([Map](#))
Burnaby, B.C. V5H 4J2
Phone: 604-436-4881
Fax: 604-436-0717

Other general supermarkets

Safeway

32500 South Fraser Way ([Map](#))
604-850-2316
www.safeway.ca

Save-On-Foods

2140 Sumas Way ([Map](#))
604-504-4453
www.saveonfoods.com

Marketplace IGA

(Two locations)

3033 Immel Street ([Map](#))
604-852-1100

3270 Mt Lehman Road
([Map](#))
604-607-7774

Independent

This grocery story is conveniently located in Seven Oaks Shopping Centre, close to the Bourquin bus exchange.
32900 South Fraser Way ([Map](#))
604-859-6501



Top ten Canadian delights

Canada has such a mix of cultures that it is hard to define “authentic” Canadian cuisine. That being said, below are top 10 Canadian favourites you have to try.

Poutine

Originating from Québec, poutine may be the most famous Canadian dish. Relish these thick-cut fries with squeaky cheese curds and warm gravy on top. Just watch the calorie count.

Pierogies

These light parcels filled with meat, potatoes or cheese are perfect for warming up in the rainy winter nights of a West Coast winter.

Maple syrup

Try maple syrup in the morning smothered over pancakes.

Beaver tails

No, we are not talking about munching on Canada’s national animal. The Beaver Tail is a huge waffle-and-pancake hybrid usually eaten on the run. US’s President Barack Obama tried it. So should you.

Tourtière

A Christmas dinner staple in the province of Québec, tourtière

is a meat pie often made with ground pork, veal or beef.

Tim Hortons Donuts

Canadians are fiercely proud of their homegrown donut chain and many would not even consider starting their day without a Timmy’s coffee. Just watch the line-up at Timmy-on-campus during class breaks.

Smoked salmon

Salmon cured with smoke is a First Nations staple on the West Coast. Many early explorers in British Columbia would have starved without this dish, provided by generous native hosts.

Coffee Crisp

This snack bar is a combination of coffee cream, cookie wafers and milk chocolate coating. Mmm.

Nanaimo Bars

This layered dessert requires no baking and is named after the city of Nanaimo, B.C.

Butter tart

The tart consists of butter, sugar, syrup, and egg filling in a flaky pastry, baked until the filling is jelled with a crunchy top.