



<https://www.strollto.com/stroll/annex/>

Neighbourhood Stroll

Bound by Bloor, Christie and Yonge streets as well as the railway tracks to the north, The Annex neighbourhood is larger than most realize and has so much to offer! Grab a latte and peruse one of Yorkville's many boutiques or discover unique gift shops and clothing stores along Bloor Street West. Indulge in the flavours of Korea Town, like walnut cakes or Tteokbokki (spicy rice cakes)! Discover all the fantastic local businesses that can be found in the Korea Town, Mirvish Village, Bloor Annex, Dupont by the Castle, Rosedale Main Street, and Bloor-Yorkville BIAs!

Main Streets: Yonge Street, Bloor Street West, Bay Street, Dupont Street, Bathurst Street, Avenue Road, Yorkville Avenue, Cumberland Street

A. Baekho

Parkette at Christie Street and Bloor Street West

Baekho (which is Korean for white tiger) is the name of this giant cat that iconically sits in the square between Christie and Bloor Streets. Commissioned by the Koreatown BIA in 2005, this 17-foot-long sculpture is lit with over twenty thousand LED bulbs each November as part of the neighbourhood's holiday celebrations. According to Korean mythology, the Earth is guarded by four beasts representing the north, south, east and west. Baekho is the guardian of the west and was chosen by the BIA to bring luck to the surrounding neighbourhood.

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B. Cork House

473 Clinton Street

*Note: Private property. Please observe the house from the sidewalk only. While recovering from a work injury in the mid-90s, this house's owner began decorating the mailbox with cork and coins. What started as short do-it-yourself project to pass the time, quickly spread to the entire property - even the van! The owner has quickly adopted other salvaged materials like dolls, plastic insects and knick-knacks donated by neighbours. The house appeared on TV show 'Weird Homes' in 1997, and in 1998, the City's then-Mayor Barbara Hall named it Toronto's Best Eccentric Garden. It continues to wow passers-by to this very day.

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C. Deborah Brown Lane

Deborah Brown Lane

This laneway is named after Deborah Brown, believed to be the first resident of Seaton Village. Deborah Brown's house (since demolished) was located on Markham Street, west of the laneway. In the 1850's Brown and her husband Perry fled slavery in Maryland to come to Toronto. During this time, this area known as Seaton Village had the largest Black population in York County, with many other formerly enslaved people seeking refuge in Toronto and settling here in the neighbourhood. When Brown passed away in 1898, she was 111 years old and, according to her obituary, Toronto's oldest resident.

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D. Jane Jacobs' Former Home

69 Albany Avenue

*Note: Private property. Please observe the house from the sidewalk only. Jane Jacobs was a celebrated urban author, theorist, and activist who lived at this house on Albany Avenue for many decades. Jacobs was a leader in urban planning, advocating for walkable neighbourhoods with easy access to commercial, industrial, residential, and cultural spaces throughout. She's also known for her role in stopping the Spadina Expressway, a proposed four-to-six-lane highway in the 1960s that would have ran straight down Spadina Road. Jacobs is also the inspiration behind Jane's Walk, the annual neighbourhood walking tours that take place all across Toronto and in other cities around the world.

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E. Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema (Madison Theatre)

506 Bloor Street West

On this site in 1913, the Madison Theatre opened as one of Toronto's first cinemas! Within a decade, other theatres opened along the street including Allen's Bloor Theatre (now Lee's Palace) and the Alhambra Theatre at Bloor and Bathurst. In 1940, the theatre was demolished (save for two side walls) to reopen a year later as the Midtown Theatre, popular for its weekend matinees and horror film showings. As theatre attendance declined in the 1960s, the theatre was rebranded three more times before eventually being purchased by Ice Group, a film financing and production company, and its partner, Hot Docs Canadian International Documentary Festival. This led to the theatre operating today as the Hot Docs Ted Rogers Cinema, screening first-run Canadian and international documentaries, as well as special documentary festivals like Hot Docs' Canadian International Documentary Festival.

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F. Toronto Public Library - Spadina Road Branch

10 Spadina Road

The Spadina Road branch of the Toronto Public Library opened its doors on July 16, 1977 on the grounds of the former Ontario Bible College. The creation of this branch was a

collaboration between the property owner, the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCT), and the Toronto Public Library. This partnership was the result of a request from the Library Committee of the NCCT, who recognized the need for a Native focused library and reference centre in the city. In 1980, the Toronto Public Library purchased the building from the NCCT. This generated enough revenue for the NCCT to retire their mortgage on 16 Spadina Road, which is the current location of their organization. The Spadina branch continues to maintain the Native Peoples Collection. It is one of the most extensive collections of Indigenous focused material in Toronto. It includes a wide variety of contemporary and historical representations of Indigenous people in popular culture, academic writing, and government publications. Many of the resources in the collection were donated by members of Toronto's Indigenous community Mahsinahhekahnikahmik, meaning 'the lodge or place of the book' in the Cree language is on the front of the building in both Cree syllabics and roman orthography.

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G. Totem Pole at the Native Canadian Centre of Toronto

16 Spadina Road

The Native Canadian Centre of Toronto (NCCT) was founded in 1962. It was the very first Indigenous organization in Toronto and was created through Indigenous community building and activism in the 1950s and 1960s. The NCCT is a community led non-profit whose mission statement is 'to empower the Indigenous community in Toronto by providing programs that support their spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental wellbeing'. The agency is guided by a circle of Elders, The Seven Grandfather Teachings, a Board of Directors, and community members. The NCCT offers a variety of cultural programs. Indigenous language, beading, regalia making, and pow wow dancing are just some of the learning opportunities that are available. The agency hosts a weekly drum social and feast, where the community is able to come together, share a meal, dance, and socialize. The NCCT has built a network of relationships with other agencies in Toronto to help support Indigenous people as they navigate various systems in the city, including housing, transportation, healthcare, education, and employment. The NCCT plays an important role in advocating for the urban Indigenous community. The agency is a member of the Toronto Aboriginal Support Services Council and sits on the Aboriginal Affairs Committee which is an advisory body to Toronto City Council. For more information about the history of the NCCT, the book 'The Meeting Place Aboriginal Life in Toronto' is available to purchase in their gift shop, The Cedar Basket.

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H. Philip Cote 'The History of the Land' Mural

Northeast corner of Spadina Road and Dupont Street

This mural titled 'The History of the Land' is a land acknowledgement illustrated with First Nations symbolism such as the Black Thunderbird within the Medicine Wheel Circle to represent the Anishinaabe People who were the first to inhabit this territory. This mural was commissioned by the Dupont by the Castle BIA and The City of Toronto in 2018 to create discussion about First Nations history and to contribute to Indigenous awareness, education and reconciliation.

I. Paul Aloisi Mural

Davenport Underpass (Davenport Road and Dupont Street)

Described as a multi-sensory experience, the interactive artwork encourages visitors to engage directly with the painting by calling a phone number posted at the mural site to listen to a sound recording while imagining relationships of colour and shape within the mural.

J. Ramsden Park

1020 Yonge Street

After a recent makeover, Ramsden Park boasts many amenities including two playgrounds, a wading pool, and a large off-leash dog area. The park is one of Toronto's largest and oldest - and it's come a long way from where it started. In the 1800s, the site operated as Yorkville Brickworks, a brick factory. Clues to this park's past can be seen in some of the surrounding houses on Belmont Street, which are built with the same yellow brick produced at the factory.

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K. Yorkville Fire Hall (Station 10), Mist Garden and Toronto Public Library - Yorkville Branch

34 Yorkville Avenue

*Note: This is an active fire station. Please do not block the driveway. The Yorkville Fire Hall is the oldest fire hall in all of the city! Originally built in 1876, the tower is the only remnant of the original build. The hall was renovated in the 1970s. Aside from its charming yellow brick and fire-red accent doors, this hall also displays the Yorkville coat of arms over the main entrance. To the right of the fire station is Toronto Public Library's Yorkville Branch, a stately building and the library's oldest branch. Tucked away to the left of the fire station is Mist Garden. Owned and operated by The Four Seasons Hotel next door, this quaint parkette is open to the public. During the spring and summer it serves as an excellent spot to cool down and take a break, as mist flows out of a metal art installation along the east side of the green space.

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L. Home of Sheriff John Daniels

77 Yorkville Avenue

This charming brick building is one of Yorkville's oldest. Built in the 1860s, it was inhabited by Yorkville's Sheriff John Daniels, who also owned a saloon nearby. Legend has it that Daniels turned a shed in the backyard into a makeshift jail cell. The building now houses a clothing store.

M. Mount Sinai Hospital

98 Yorkville Avenue

Though this building now houses a designer brand, it was once home to Mount Sinai Hospital's first location in 1923. Then known as The Hebrew Maternity and Convalescent Hospital, it was Toronto's first Jewish hospital. It was founded by four Jewish women who spent nine years raising \$12,000 to buy the building at 98 Yorkville Avenue. The need for a Jewish hospital was strong. Toronto's Jewish population grew rapidly in the 1920s and many within the community did not speak English and were fearful of large institutions. Jewish doctors also faced discrimination and couldn't find work at other hospitals in the city. The hospital quickly outgrew this building and moved around before setting along University Avenue under the name of Mount Sinai. What started as a safe place for Toronto's Jewish doctors to practice and for the Jewish community to access health care has grown to a world-renowned hospital that now offers its patients interpreters for over 45 languages.

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N. The Riverboat Coffee House

134 Yorkville Avenue

In the 1960s, Yorkville started to flourish with new galleries, coffee shops and bars that made it a thriving neighbourhood for Toronto's hippie movement. These spaces acted as artistic havens for visual art, poetry, live music and fashion. The bars and cafes also played a huge role in the city's music scene at the time. Though a hotel now sits at this site, it was once the

home of The Riverboat Coffee House, which famously hosted Canadian folk music icons like Gordon Lightfoot, Joni Mitchell and Neil Young. Neil Young even makes a reference to The Riverboat in his song 'Ambulance Blues'. A Heritage Toronto plaque can be found onsite along the sidewalk. Additional Heritage Toronto plaques about Yorkville's hippie music scene can be found at 33 Avenue Road, 114 Yorkville Avenue and 60 Yorkville Avenue.

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O. birdO 'C-Horse' Mural

148 Cumberland Street

*Note: Not visible from ground level. One of Yorkville's coolest murals is also one of Yorkville's best kept secrets. 'C-Horse' is painted by artist birdO as part of the Yorkville Murals project. This hidden gem is located on top of the Citipark Cumberland Parkade. To find it take the stairs or the elevator all the way up to the rooftop of the parking building.

Accessibility information: All points of interest are viewable from the street. Ramsden Park and Mist Garden have paved and/or stone pathways throughout. There is an elevator available at the Citipark Cumberland Parkade to view the birdO 'C-Horse' Mural. Use caution when viewing this ground mural.

The StrollTO itineraries may follow routes that do not receive winter maintenance. Please review [winter safety tips](#) and for more information contact [311](#).