

The Air Canada Centre - Toronto

The Air Canada Centre, located right in the downtown core, is a world-class sports and entertainment facility and is the premier arena for professional hockey and basketball in North America. Designed with the fans in mind, the focus is on intimacy and customer experience. The seating capacity for hockey is 19,500 (including 1,500 fans in 150 Suites and 300 in Standing Room) with excellent sight-lines throughout. The facility will also house a club restaurant and bar with a view of the ice. There will be televisions throughout the building, including all washrooms. One percent of seating in the building has been designed for the disabled, offering physically-challenged individuals a choice of various ticket prices.

The Air Canada Centre has all of the characteristics of a first-class, technology-advanced facility while maintaining the spirit and legend associated with that of Maple Leaf Gardens.

DESIGN ELEMENTS Air Canada Centre is built on the site of the original Canada Post Delivery Building and retains the historic east and south walls.

A conservation program is in place to maintain the integrity of the original building facade including the restoration of stonework, bas relief panels, and replication of historic window profiles.

In addition to the arena, a 140,000 square foot 12-storey office tower, The Air Canada Tower, has been constructed in the northeast corner of the site, adding to the skyline presence of the project. Air Canada, a major building partner, takes residence in the top six floors with Maple Leaf Sports & Entertainment, Ltd. occupying the remainder.

The steel roof is 40 feet above the existing facades, and has a profile designed to be flat, giving the appearance of a hangar. This allows for better acoustics inside and a prominent city presence outside without blocking the view of other landmark buildings.

GALLERIA Running in an east-west direction just south of the GO train tracks, the Galleria is a public walkway located at the north end of Air Canada Centre. It is a covered, climate-controlled walkway that will house the ticket office, food court and other retail establishments. In addition, a historical display of artifacts from the original Canada Post Delivery Building and site is a prominent feature. It is expected that 60 percent of guests will enter Air Canada Centre through the Grand Entrance, located in the Galleria.

PATH WALKWAY SYSTEM Air Canada Centre is connected to the well known PATH system, providing covered access to the downtown core. PATH reaches as far north as Dundas Street. Two grade level connections, referred to as the Bay West Teamway and the Blue Route provide convenient access from Union Station to the arena's Grand Entrance.

FAMILY CONSIDERATIONS Air Canada Centre is considerate of fans of all ages. A children's play area will be on the main level concourse. Baby change tables will be in all washrooms, as well as lower urinals for children.

More than 650 television screens, complete with cable, satellite and replay ability, will be located throughout the concourses and washrooms so fans don't miss a minute of the action.

ECONOMIC STIMULUS Over the next 10 years, this additional spending, combined with arena and team operations, will result in a total economic benefit of \$2.4 billion.

The construction will be the impetus for other downtown development associated with the railway lands east. Approximately \$13 million in public infrastructure elements will be advanced by at least five and up to as many as 15 years ahead of schedule through private financing in conjunction with the project. Projects include: the Bay West Teamway, Union Plaza, the Galleria, Bremner Blvd. And related infrastructure.

No public funding will be used.

BUILDING PARTNERS Air Canada Centre is pleased to announce the following major corporations as building partners:
- Air Canada

- The Ford Motor Company of Canada
- with many more to come

NEIGHBORHOOD Located in the heart of the city, the arena is close to the CN Tower, theatre district, restaurants, 15 major hotels, shopping and two main transportation arteries; The Gardiner Expressway and Union Station, which services the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC) and GO train. The project also begins the development and revitalization of the area known as the Railway Lands East.

Air Canada Centre provides an excellent link between the downtown core and the Harbourfront, one of Toronto's major tourist attractions.

Air Canada Centre - "One of a Kind" Arena Design

The arena will be user-friendly, providing 1% of fixed seating for the disabled and their companions. Accessible seating areas are strategically located throughout the building, providing maximum flexibility and pricing selection. Among other features, all public washrooms are wheelchair accessible. Food and beverage service counters will be lowered to accessible service heights.

The amount of dirt, which was excavated from the new Air Canada Centre site, is equivalent to filling 2,000 household pools. Total concrete poured is 27,128 cubic metres -- enough to make a five-foot-wide sidewalk from Air Canada Centre to Niagara Falls. There is 2,000 tons of steel in the Air Canada Centre -- that is equivalent to 2,000 average size cars. Ten kilometres of steel piping were installed for the ice rink alone. The ice surface has enough ice to make up 2 million one-inch ice cubes. There is enough wire in the arena to stretch from P.E.I. to Vancouver. The total worker-hours used in the construction of the Air Canada Centre is about one million. The tallest player in the NBA is 7-foot-7 tall; the height of the doorframes in the Raptor's locker room is eight feet high. There are over 650 televisions throughout the arena, many of which are located in the washrooms. It would take 300 televisions to make up the size of the 16-by-9 inches video boards at Air Canada Centre. The average number of hot dogs sold at a single event is approximately 1,800. There are 15 concession stands throughout the Air Canada Centre, two restaurants that are open to all fans and three others that are members-only. Air Canada Centre has 56 washrooms. The total wattage of lights used for a basketball or hockey game is 308,000 -- or enough to light an average school for more than a week. The Air Canada Centre house sound system can reach levels of 96 decibels, comparable to a 747 jet taking off 1000 feet away. The six copper kettles in Lord Stanley's Mug will produce 2,000 HL (equivalent to 600-thousand bottles of 25-thousand cases) of freshly brewed beer. Head Brewer is Roxanne Diakowsky, one of only a few female brewers in Canada. The Air Canada Centre has almost 1000 part-time and full-time workers.



- A blend of the historical "Postal Delivery" building and today's modern arena design, not a "cookie cutter".
- Fully upholstered 20 - inch seats . first "Soft Seat Arena".
- 40 unique courtside lounges located within the 100 level and 65 luxury suites located on the 200 level.
- A brew pub.
- A themed food court - "St. Lawrence Market" concept.
- A themed Galleria with team store.
- An interactive "Raptorfest" area.
- An interactive computer centre.

Air Canada Centre - Location

From the Airport - Take Hwy 427 South to Queen Elizabeth Way (QEW) East (Toronto). QEW turns into Gardiner Expressway. Exit at York Ave. North and continue one block to the arena.

- In the heart of a 4 million market place.
- Very accessible:
 - Terminus of GO Transit/TTC

- Minutes from business core
- Access to major highways
- 13,000 surrounding parking spaces
- Safe and comfortable for our guests
 - 2 minute covered walk from Union Station
 - Part of the downtown "Path System"
- Hub of major Marathon Land development plans
 - Dramatic increase in traffic through West Teamway and ACC Galleria



THE ULTIMATE SPORTS ROAD TRIP

By: Andrew Kulyk & Peter Farrell
Air Canada Centre Ranking by USRT
Architecture

March 3, 2002 - This beautiful arena opened in February, 1999, and was originally planned as a basketball arena and a permanent home for the Raptors. Common sense eventually prevailed, and rather than building two arenas for their teams, the design was modified to accommodate both the Raptors and the Leafs.

Our greatest concern was how the Maple Leafs could ever duplicate the grace and musty charm of one of the hallowed grounds of hockey - the venerable Gardens. Of course, nothing will ever really replace Maple Leaf Gardens, but they did a great job trying.

Getting to the Venue

The arena is located right downtown, at the foot of Bay Street and adjacent to Skydome. One of the best ways to go to the arena is via the TTC subway system. Trains run every 4-5 minutes. You get off at the Union Station and from there it is a completely enclosed walk through the train terminal and right into the Air Canada Centre Galleria pavilion. The building is easily accessible with covered walkways to the GO Trains and the TTC subway system. If you do drive, you can see the arena right along the Gardiner Expressway. Exit at Yonge Street or Bay Street, and seek out parking anywhere there. Prices run CDN\$20 outside the building but drop a bit once you walk further. Expect to pay at least CDN\$10.

Outside the Venue

Even though the ACC is right downtown, the venue is somewhat landlocked, with the Gardiner Expressway abutting one side and the train station and its tracks on the other. If you want to walk to the attractions and the downtown core - simply traverse the viaduct and you are on Front St. And of course, on the corner of Front and Yonge is THE Hockey Hall of Fame, a must see during your stay here. If you walk the other direction (under the Gardiner), you will eventually find yourself at Queens Quay and the bustling Toronto waterfront. Just a short walk west is Skydome and the CN Tower. Yes, lots to do and see here!!!

The Concourses

We have to mention the Galleria, which serves as the pavilion and the main entrance to the Air Canada Centre. Here you will find the ticket offices, merchandise store, Fan Zone interactive games, old Maple Leaf exhibits and a tribute to Poste Canada, the Canadian postal workers. This site actually housed the main post office here, and the shell of the building was kept and incorporated into the arena's design.

Once you walk through the turnstile, every where you look there is memorabilia of the Leafs and the Raptors - old exhibits brought from the Gardens interspersed with new material. Take the time to look at the murals and photographs - they are spectacular.

There are several restaurants and bars right in the arena - Rickard's microbrewery on the 100 concourse, adjacent to a cool pub called "Lord Stanley's Mug", the Original Six bar behind the blues in one end zone, and for club seat holders - the Air Canada Club concourse, including a premium restaurant in the east end zone and also overlooking the seating bowl.

The Bowl

They sort of emulated the seating colors at the Gardens - golds, reds, blues, greens. They also added "platinum" seats in the first few rows, which gives you access to a private and exclusive lounge at ground level. In the center is an awesome four sided scoreboard with four crystal clear Sony jumbotron video panels, and dot matrix information presented on a circular board. Along the balcony are synchronized changable ad panels, interspersed with dot matrix information boards on 4 sides. The press box here is named the "Foster Hewitt Gondola" in honor of one of the greatest broadcasting legends in NHL history, who called Leafs games a generation ago from the gondola at the Gardens.

Premium Seating

In addition to the Air Canada Club seats and the platinum seating, one can find suites in three different configurations - along the sidelines at the top of the 100 level, skysuites in a gondola high above the rink, and three levels of suites in each end zone above the upper level seating.

Concessions

A great variety of food awaits you here - the classic Canadian chains "Pizza-Pizza" and "Tim Hortons" stands are everywhere, not to mention the "Good Humor" ice cream stand. (Shouldn't it be "Good Humour"???) The unique items that caught our eye were a sushi stand and a potato pancake stand, both in the east end zone at the 100 level.

Hat Tricks, Extra Points, Penalties

Hat Trick - to the Toronto Maple Leafs, for their SUPERIOR job in showcasing their teams rich history with endless displays and memorabilia which transforms this building into a museum. Not to be missed is the Esso "Memories and Dreams" display, half way up the escalators to the upper level. Remarkable displays.

Hat Trick - to the Toronto fans who support this Leafs team and have done so for a generation, even surviving the Ballard years of futility and misery. This building is sold out night after night, only a scant few seats are available for individual sale, and even the Raptors are getting in on the act now, with the sell out sign posted almost all the time.

Extra Point - "The Sprite Zone", which is 4 upper deck sections in the corner of the ACC, offers seating in a non-alcohol section, and guest relations entertainers passing out prizes and holding contests throughout the game. Best of all, the ticket price - CDN\$12.50 for a Raptors ticket. Folks, with the exchange we got a see an NBA game for \$7.90.

How good a bargain is that!

Extra Point - For our March, 2002 visit, the Leafs game took nearly 4 hours to complete, what with a lengthy pregame ceremony, then a delay because an honoree was stricken with a heart attack just before stepping onto the ice (we learned he did not make it), then another delay when a Chris Gratton slapshot shattered the glass behind the net, and that had to be cleaned up. Did we mention overtime???

Summary

Good job Toronto! A great venue and a great hockey experience, not to mention the electric basketball crowds cheering on their beloved Raptors.. Definitely one of the favorites on our list and a venue we look forward to visiting again and again. And best of all, when you go to the Air Canada Centre, you are in the middle of one of the world's great cities! Check out the nice hotels, restaurants, the attractions, the nightlife, shopping on Yonge Street. Everything you would want is right here!