

The History of Thanksgiving in Canada

Where did the tradition come from?

Thanksgiving weekend. For many, this long weekend really kicks off the autumn season. People across the country will spend it raking leaves, harvesting, shutting down the family cabin, and hopefully eating a delicious meal surrounded by friends and family. But where did this tradition come from?

In 1621, the pilgrims at Plymouth Plantation, Massachusetts, held the first Thanksgiving in North America, giving thanks for the end to a drought and a bountiful harvest. Without the help of the Wampanoag, who shared planting, hunting, and fishing knowledge and techniques, the pilgrims would have died. Some records say the first official Thanksgiving likely predates this event by around fourteen years.

But let's try again — we're thinking of our neighbours to the south.

Believe it or not, Thanksgiving in Canada, or at least the land that would become Canada, has its own history, separate from our American counterparts.

Traditions of giving thanks long predate the arrival of European settlers in North America. First Nations across Turtle Island have traditions of thanksgiving for surviving winter and for receiving crops and game as a reward for their hard work. These traditions may include feasting, prayer, dance, potlatch, and other ceremonies, depending on the peoples giving thanks.

When it comes to European thanksgivings in Canada, we have a few tales to tell.

As the story goes, in 1578, English explorer Martin Frobisher and his crew gave thanks and communion was observed, either on land at Frobisher Bay, in present day Nunavut, or onboard a ship anchored there. The explorers dined on salt beef, biscuits, and mushy peas and gave thanks through Communion for their safe arrival in then Newfoundland. This is now accepted as the first "Canadian" Thanksgiving, forty-three years before the first "American" Thanksgiving.

Forty-eight years later on November 14, 1606, inhabitants of New France under Samuel de Champlain held huge feasts of thanksgiving between local Mi'kmaq and the French. Though not known at the time by the settlers, cranberries, rich in vitamin C, are credited with helping avoid scurvy. The neighbouring Mi'kmaq likely introduced the French to cranberries, or as they called them, petites pomes rouges (little red apples).

Champlain's feasts were more than an annual affair. To prevent the scurvy epidemic that had decimated the settlement at Île Sainte-Croix in past winters, the Ordre de Bon Temps (Order of Good Cheer) was founded, offering festive meals every few weeks. Medical treatises recommended better nutrition (more food) and entertainment to combat scurvy.

However, despite this history of uniquely Canadian thanksgivings, our modern concepts of Thanksgiving were influenced by our American neighbours. Foods that are associated with a "traditional" Thanksgiving, such as North American turkey, squash, and pumpkin, were introduced to citizens of Halifax in the 1750s by the United Empire Loyalists, who continued to spread this "traditional" fare to other parts of the country.

Today Canadian Thanksgiving is held on the second Monday of October every year, or at least it has been since Canadian Parliament declared it so on January 31, 1957. Before this, Thanksgiving in Canada had been held sporadically, often coinciding with other major events and anniversaries.

In 1879, Thanksgiving was officially declared a national holiday to be held on November 6th.

The most recent date change to the second Monday in October was largely a result of the first and second world wars, which we officially remember each year on November 11, Remembrance Day. This was so that the two holidays would not fall on the same weekend.

As Thanksgiving in Canada has historically been celebrated on several different dates, it is fitting that, even though it is observed on Monday, families are equally as likely to celebrate on Saturday or Sunday.

Most Canadians embraced the change of date to October, since that period better coincides with the actual completion of harvest in much of the country.

Parliament officially declares Thanksgiving as "a day of general thanksgiving to almighty God for the bountiful harvest with which Canada has been blessed." While this mandate for Thanksgiving may not be observed by all Canadians in its entirety, **the ideas of being thankful, of spending time with family, and sharing a delicious meal still remain.**





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LOCAL MARKET STATS

ORANGEVILLE:
September 2019

SEPT
2019

SEPT
2018

SEPT
2017

# OF SALES	AVG. PRICE	AVG. DOM
48	\$549,924	24
53	\$552,600	28
58	\$536,840	25

Summertime is officially over, the kids are back to school, the weather is getting a little cooler, and the fall real estate market has begun. This begins the second "hump" we see in real estate sales with most Buyers and Sellers looking to close before the snow flies and the Christmas holidays begin. 48 residential sales occurred in the month of September in Orangeville, slightly down from September of 2018. Home prices are still hovering around the mid 500's in Orangeville with 64% of sales occurring below \$600,000. Inventory of homes on the market is healthy in Orangeville, with close to 100 active listings on the market. Just over 50% of these listings are below the \$600,000 mark which is the most active price range. We will see how the fall market unfolds over the next couple months! **Don't forget to give the Grime Team a call with any of your Real Estate inquiries! Happy October!!! - Dave**



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The Grime Team's Annual Client Appreciation Pancake Breakfast

Saturday, Nov 23rd from 8:00 - 11:00 am
Monora Park Pavilion (500 Monora Park Rd., Mono)

Santa & Mrs. Claus • Crafts 4 Kids

We will be accepting donations for the Orangeville Food Bank

Please RSVP by November 15th, 2019 to
drisana@thegrimeteam.com or cindym@thegrimeteam.com
or call our office at 519-941-1797 Ext 7225/7226