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WINNIPEG, CANADA

Little spark on the prairie

WINNIPEG, THE CAPITAL OF Manitoba, doesn't usually find its way onto bucket lists. This multicultural, multilingual metropolis of 800,000, affectionately called the Peg by locals, blipped onto international radar screens in 2014 when the Canadian Museum for Human Rights opened here, and again this past summer when the FIFA Women's World Cup passed through.

Planted midway between Canada's Atlantic and Pacific coasts, Winnipeg is a whistle-stop on rail and road trips across Canada; polar bear and beluga whale enthusiasts know it as the starting point for their journey north to Churchill. But this unpretentious prairie city proves itself worthy of more than a glance from a train window.

Winnipeg's 30-block Exchange District hums with music venues, galleries, restaurants, and boutiques. Winter brings notoriously bone-chilling temperatures—but that doesn't stop Winnipeggers from skating the frozen Red River to applaud winners of the annual warming-hut competition, or heading to St. Boniface, Winnipeg's French quarter, for the Festival du Voyageur, one of the city's many festivals.

"I love the Peg," says Martina Hutchison, an assistant at the Manitoba Museum. "But I hate to brag too much about it because I don't want it to get any bigger." —KIMBERLEY LOVATO

ON THE WEB

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