

# 30 Indigenous Place Names and their Meanings

Yellowknife  
(named after the Yellowknives, a Dene band who lived on the islands of the east arm of Great Slave Lake)



Restigouche (Mi'kmaq for "fine river")

Gaspé (Mi'kmaq for "end place")

Nepisiguit (Mi'kmaq for "rough waters")

Mississauga (Anishinaabe for "large outlet")



Saguenay (Innu for "water flows out")

Nipissing (Algonquin for "little body of water," in contrast to the Great Lakes)



Chicoutimi (Montagnais for "end of deep water")

Timiskaming (Algonquin for "deep water")

Caughnawaga (Mohawk for "rapids")

Athabasca (Cree for "where there are reeds")



Kamloops (Salish for "meeting of the waters")

Keewatin (Cree/Ojibwa for "north wind")



Minnedosa (Sioux for "swift water")

Winnipeg (Cree for "murky water")

Ottawa (Algonquin for "traders")

Toronto (Mohawk for "trees standing in water," in reference to the appearance of fish weirs seen from a distance)



Kitimat (Tsimshian for "people of the snow")

Kootenay Lake (Ktunaxa (Kootenay) for "water people")

Penticton (Okanagan for "always place," i.e., permanently settled)

Nanaimo (Salish for "big strong people")



Assiniboine River (Assiniboine for "cook by placing hot stones in water")

Kelowna (Okanagan for "grizzly bear")



Aklavik (Inuvialuit for "place of bear")

Tuktoyaktuk (Inuktitut for "reindeer that looks like caribou")

Inuvik (Inuktitut for "place of man")

Saskatoon (Cree word for a wild berry found in abundance by the first settlers in 1882)



Medicine Hat (a reference to the Siksika (Blackfoot) word saamis — a medicine man's hat)

Moose Jaw (from the Cree word moosegaw, meaning "warm breezes")



Thunder Bay (a reference to the thunderbird from Ojibwa folklore)



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