

CASTLEGAR, BRITISH COLUMBIA



Source: Picture BC



Source: Picture BC

Location: Southern B.C., Kootenay region

Key industries: Forestry, education, government, tourism

High demand occupations: Retail, health care, transport, trades

Education: Pre-school through to college and post-secondary training

Population: 7,816 (2011 Census) (Regional population approximately 16,000)

There is a big community of immigrants coming here already with a job. Because Castlegar is small, it is friendly. I have a daughter and there are a lot of activities to do with her. Maybe you think you can find more opportunity in a big city, but raising a family in Castlegar is much nicer and safer.

Maria G., originally from Mexico



ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES

Here, residents enjoy a low cost of living, high-quality public services and good business opportunities. There are many reasons you will love living in Castlegar. The economy is stable, led by large regional forestry, hydro, and mining employers, and wages are good. In 2011, the full-time, average weekly wage rate was \$997.66.

DOING BUSINESS IN CASTLEGAR

Castlegar's economic base is stable and diversified. Business conditions are dynamic and affordable. The City serves as a commercial service centre for the West Kootenays and is working hard to attract new firms.

- [Castlegar Chamber of Commerce](#)
- [Southern Interior Development Initiative Trust](#)
- [Columbia Basin Trust](#)
- [Invest Kootenay](#)

HIGH DEMAND OCCUPATIONS

The steady economy and older workforce in Castlegar and the region mean that many jobs will be coming available through 2020 and beyond. Some of the occupations with many openings will include:

- **Retail** - Salespersons and sales clerks, managers
- **Health** - Registered nurses, assisting occupations in health
- **Administration** - Clerical occupations, paralegals, secretaries
- **Trades/other** - Heavy equipment operators, motor vehicle and transit drivers, electricians, cooks

The [Occupational Guides for Immigrants to B.C.](#) provide information on these occupations.





Source: BC Stats

MAJOR REGIONAL EMPLOYERS

There are well-paying, steady jobs available in the Kootenay region, either in Castlegar or in nearby towns. Here are some of the region's largest employers.

Kootenay Region:

B.C. Government

Utilities

- FortisBC Inc.

Mineral processing

- Teck – Trail

In Castlegar:

Educational Services

- Selkirk College
- School District #20

Health Care and Social Services

- Castlegar and District Hospital

Utilities

- Columbia Power Corporation

Pulp

- Zelstoff Celgar

JOB SEARCH

Looking for work? These organizations can help you on your journey to a new career.

- The Skills Centre
- Ashland Training Centre
- Kootenay Career Development Society

Nearly 15 per cent of the population of Castlegar has a first language other than English.

JOB RELATED TRAINING

Set your sights on the work you deserve without any of the hassle that comes with life in the city. Regional education in Castlegar offers all sorts of opportunities to grow your career.

- Selkirk College
- Ashland Training Centre
- Many employers offer on-the-job training

English as a Second Language

Need to work on your English skills? The Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy offers free ESL family and adult literacy programs. Selkirk College also provides ESL classes in a range of levels.





LIVING IN CASTLEGAR

Enjoy life in a quiet and friendly town. In Castlegar you have the opportunity to make new friends, try new activities, make a contribution and become an important member of the community. With such a welcoming population, you will soon feel at home.

IMMIGRANT RELATED SERVICES

These agencies may be your most important contacts when arriving in Castlegar. They will help you and your family get settled.

- [Selkirk College](#) provides free English language courses and has training options to get your career started.
- [Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy](#) helps immigrants with settlement services and supports. It also connects you with education, recreation and other community resources.

HOUSING

Castlegar offers good housing value. You can buy a new home with less money or debt; in 2013 the average home was assessed at \$257,000, about 75 per cent less than in Vancouver. The average three-bedroom rental unit costs \$817 per month, about 33 per cent of the cost in Vancouver.

Use the [B.C. Government's Cost of Living Calculator](#) to find out more about costs in Castlegar.

Castlegar has moderately hot summers and snowy winters.

CHILDCARE AND EDUCATION

You can choose from several options for early childhood care in Castlegar, including child care centers and home providers. Search for providers through the B.C. Government's [Childcare Information](#) site. [Kootenay Family Place](#) offers information, programs and support to children, youth and families including child care and specialized services.

Castlegar has three public elementary schools and one high school. Russian and French immersion programs are available in the elementary schools. The schools are safe and spacious with a diverse student population.

The [Castlegar and District Public Library](#) offers free Internet access and other educational resources.

TRANSPORTATION

The City is a transportation hub for the Columbia Valley and the West Kootenays. Castlegar has a [regional airport](#), with regular daily flights to Vancouver and Calgary. Local and inter-city bus service is available.

HEALTH CARE

British Columbia has a world-class health care system. [Castlegar Health Centre](#) provides service on a daily basis. The town has family doctors, walk-in clinics and the full range of health care professionals. The Kootenay Regional Hospital is located in nearby Trail, about a half-hour drive away.



Source: BC Stats

FAITH AND WORSHIP/CULTURAL ORGANIZATIONS

In Canada, you are free to practice your religion or faith. The Castlegar community includes numerous Catholic, Protestant other Christian churches.

The town celebrates holidays such as an annual Diwali Festival of Lights. In 2013, it was also home to a multicultural society, a Russian cultural centre and a Portuguese cultural association.

MEDIA

Local newspapers give you many ways to get the news, share opinions and discover what the Kootenays has to offer.

- [Castlegar News](#)
- [The Castlegar Source](#)



LEISURE ACTIVITIES

Castlegar is home to many community organizations and groups that work to improve the community, or just enjoy time together. The Castlegar Community Complex houses an aquatic centre, fitness and weight rooms, ice arena, and sports facilities for the local teams. It has many affordable events for children and families.

ENJOYING THE OUTDOORS

People in the Kootenays embrace the scenic, healthy lifestyle that easy access to the mountains, rivers and lakes offers.

In the winter skiing, sledding, ice fishing, hockey and curling are readily available at an affordable cost. In the summer, you can enjoy family camping, fishing, boating, hiking and marvel at the clean air and water.

The community also celebrates many festivals throughout the year. In the summer, you can enjoy music festivals, farmer's markets, nature celebrations and much more. There are also fall and winter fairs to help you get out, meet your neighbours and enjoy wholesome family fun.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Castlegar's location among mountain peaks and river valleys make it a clean, safe and beautiful place to live. With a solid economy and friendly people, it is an ideal place to advance your career and raise a family.

- [Castlegar website](#)
- [LoonLounge](#): Canada's immigration and settlement online community
- [Castlegar Chamber of Commerce](#)