



The Chinese in Toronto from 1878: From Outside to Inside the Circle

Arlene Chan

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The Chinese have become a vibrant part of Toronto's multiculturalism, with no less than seven Chinatowns created since 1984.

Short-listed for the 2013 Speaker's Book Award and for the 2012 Heritage Toronto Award

The modest beginnings of the Chinese in Toronto and the development of Chinatown is largely due to the completion of the CPR in 1885. No longer requiring the services of the Chinese labourers, a hostile British Columbia sent them eastward in search of employment and a more welcoming place.

In 1894 Toronto's Chinese population numbered fifty. Today, no less than seven Chinatowns serve what has become the second-largest visible minority in the city, with a population of half a million. In these pages, you will find their stories told through historical accounts, archival and present-day photographs, newspaper clippings, and narratives from old-timers and newcomers. With achievements spanning all walks of life, the Chinese in Toronto are no longer looking in from outside society's circle. Their lives are a vibrant part of the diverse mosaic that makes Toronto one of the most multicultural cities in the world.



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