

# ***cultural diversity*** ***in the south fraser region***

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## **Our cultures share many similarities.**

It is important that we recognize the cultural diversity of the South Fraser Region. These cultures share common values and practices showing that we are more alike than we are different. Everyone has hopes and dreams for their children. Another example is that many cultures are influenced by religion. Many world religions share a "light festival" symbolizing rededication and renewal such as Christmas in Christianity, Hanukkah in Judaism and Diwali in Hinduism.

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## **Many cultures and faith groups live in the South Fraser Region.**

The South Fraser Region offers dozens of multicultural experiences you and your family can share in. The third week of February has been declared Multiculturalism Week and is celebrated throughout the Region. Children learn about different cultures in the classroom and students and youth put on and participate in multicultural festivals. Community groups mark the week by showcasing the many cultures that have contributed to British Columbia's growth. Cultural diversity adds vibrancy to the South Fraser Region.

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## **Learning about cultures means learning more about yourself.**

We all have a cultural heritage regardless of how many generations our families have lived in Canada. Newcomers to the area are undertaking the same journey that many families from South Fraser have already experienced. This Region is still home to many descendants of Scottish and Irish settlers who arrived in the late 1800's as agricultural workers, and the descendants of these early immigrants still continue many of the cultural traditions of their ancestors.

## **quick facts**

There are over 20 cultural groups whose home is in the South Fraser Region. These groups represent the wide diversity of cultures in Canada, such as Ukrainian, South Asian and Irish.

The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA) distributes a Multifaith Calendar detailing festivals from a myriad of religions.

## **about the surrey delta intercultural consortium**

The Surrey Delta Intercultural Consortium (SDIC) is a collaborative effort of government and non-governmental organizations that promote the settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees. Through networking and education, SDIC's goal is to identify the gaps in existing immigrant and refugee services and develop strategies to proactively address the social and economic needs of those communities.

**contact us!**  
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## how you can benefit...

**a**

### **Visit the many cultural sites and places of worship.**

Most cultural sites and places of worship welcome visitors. You can learn about the cultural and religious practices of local groups, and about the services that they provide to enrich and support the wider community. For example, Sikh temples provide a free lunch to community members in their community hall — regardless of religious faith.

**b**

### **Enjoy the different cultures and religions in your area.**

With such an exciting diversity of ethno-cultural groups in the South Fraser Region there are many opportunities for you and your family to participate in Canada's cultural diversity. There are language courses, tours, cultural dance lessons, multicultural restaurants, art exhibits, and music concerts just to name a few. Groups in the South Fraser Region also present many exciting cultural events. For example, the Region hosts multiple "New Year" and "Festival of Light" celebrations such as Malanka (Ukrainian New Year) and Women's Little Christmas (Irish). Once you try these diverse restaurants, stores and events, you just might find yourself becoming a regular.

**c**

### **Work to build a strong and cohesive community.**

Participating in other cultures and faiths is the first step to reducing prejudice and building bridges. When we understand how our cultural experiences differ and what the similarities are, we can appreciate the skills and experiences we all bring to the South Fraser Region. Studies show that when communities work together to reduce prejudice and crime, a strong identity is created that supports and fosters economic development.

## **resources**

The Ministry of Community, Aboriginal and Women's Services has a multicultural event calendar and a directory of ethno-cultural groups in BC.  
[www.gov.bc.ca/mi/](http://www.gov.bc.ca/mi/)

The Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC offers numerous multicultural links, and sells the Multifaith Calendar.  
[www.amssa.org](http://www.amssa.org)

Cultures Canada features links to numerous cultural groups across Canada and multicultural information.  
[www.culturescanada.ca](http://www.culturescanada.ca)

The Canadian Ethnocultural Council's website features numerous reports and resources on the multicultural diversity of Canada.  
[www.ethnocultural.ca](http://www.ethnocultural.ca)

This unique website details the history and culture of Pier 21, destination point of over a million newcomers to Canada.  
[www.pier21.ns.ca](http://www.pier21.ns.ca)

All school districts have webpages outlining the services they offer to your children as well as to adults.  
Surrey - [www.sd36.surrey.bc.ca](http://www.sd36.surrey.bc.ca)  
Delta - [www.deltasd.bc.ca](http://www.deltasd.bc.ca)  
Langley - [www.sd35.bc.ca](http://www.sd35.bc.ca)