

# Osoyoos: Fast Facts

**Population Year-round:** 5,115

**Location:** Southern end of the Okanagan Valley on the Canada/USA border.  
401 km from Vancouver, BC; 730 km from Calgary, AB; 467 km from Seattle, Washington.

**Osoyoos Lake:** 19 km (11.8 miles) long, (14.7 km / 9 miles of Lake Osoyoos is in Canada, the remainder is in the USA).  
It is the warmest lake in the country with summer temperatures of 24°C / 75°F

**Elevation:** 312 m (1,001 ft)

**Regional District:** Okanagan-Similkameen

**Climate:** Summer High: 38 C (100 F)      Summer Low: 16 C (66 F)  
Winter High: 4 C (39 F)              Winter Low: -5 C (23 F)  
Average Rainfall 300 mm              More than 2,000 hours of sunshine annually

**Economy:** Tourism, wine and agriculture, secondary manufacturing and small business. In recent years the growth in Osoyoos' economy through business development and real estate has prompted a huge increase in the creation of resorts, restaurants and residential development. Over the past 5 years, this new growth has brought an estimated \$350 million in investment into the community.

**History:** The name Osoyoos (pronounced "oh-sue-use", from the earlier "Souyoos") comes from an Okanagan First Nation word that describes the narrow waterway or where the land almost meets; the coming together of two lakes.

Home to the Osoyoos Indian Band, part of the 'Syilx' Okanagan First Nations people for thousands of years, the region has a rich cultural heritage and plays a large role in today's economy through tourism, vineyards and a winery.

Osoyoos is set at the junction of two famous fur-trade routes – The North-South Fur Brigade and the West Dewdney Trail. Not far away, in Rock Creek, gold was discovered in 1859, which brought a rush of miners and homesteaders from the United States. Following the gold rush came an influx of ranchers who successfully built ranching empires in the late 1800s. Soon after this, the first commercial orchard was planted, in 1907, and the agricultural roots of the region were born. Orchards and fruit production flourished and were complemented by the introduction of grape-growing in the late 1960s.

**Ecology:** Home to Canada's only true desert, Osoyoos is positioned at the northernmost tip of the Great Basin Desert, which is part of the larger Sonoran Life Zone system which stretches from Mexico, through the United States, to the South Okanagan Valley. This unique ecological make-up means that the area is known as an antelope-brush ecosystem and is home to a wide variety of specially adapted flora and fauna not found anywhere else in the world.

For more information on Osoyoos, visit [www.destinationosoyoos.com](http://www.destinationosoyoos.com)