

Meeting & Conference Insights

AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO INNOVATIVE MEETINGS IN YORK REGION



www.yorktourism.com


York Region

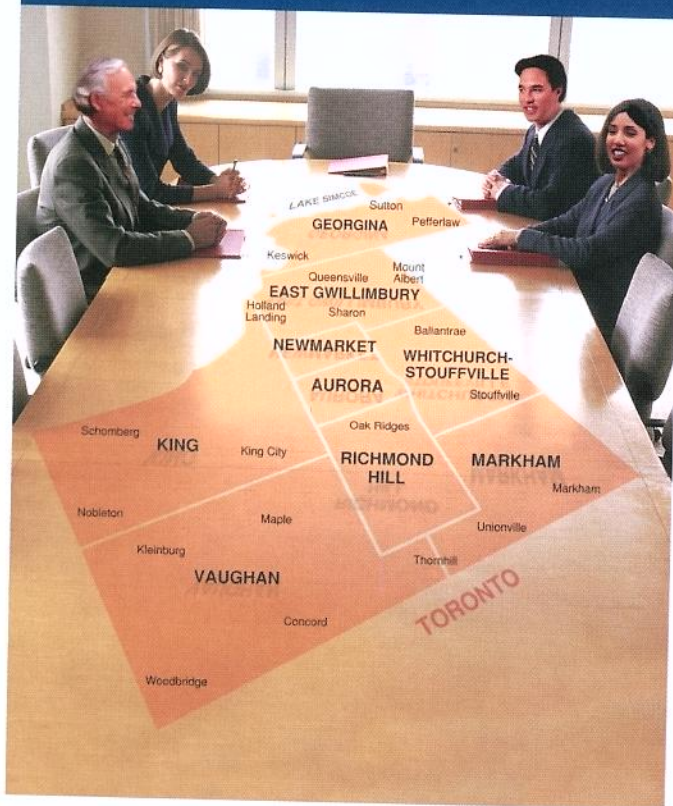
Markham • Vaughan • Richmond Hill • Newmarket • Aurora
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York Region Your Guide to 'Meetings Innovation'

While York Region is well-known as home to theme parks and attractions, York Region is also well-regarded as a sophisticated centre for meetings, conferences, trade shows and training programs.

Whether it's to kick off a sales initiative, launch a product, encourage team building, or to recognize a job well done, York Region's outstanding venues and facilitators offer the opportunity for unique experiences your overachievers and top guns will never forget.

York Region offers bountiful opportunities for planners and their groups – the trick is knowing just what all the options are. That's why we've assembled this guide to show you just a sampling of the lineup of innovative choices open to you.



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York Region is All About Innovation

Innovative experiences are all about "learning by doing". You may have experienced the power of a ropes course, a rock wall, or a scavenger hunt on an outdoor trail to hone your team's communication, prioritization, leadership, and strategic planning skills. Think of that and more being available to you in York Region. We invite you to venture beyond the 'tried and true' in training, professional development, and motivation. Take advantage of this area's skilled facilitators and non-traditional venues to tap into new approaches for your team.

Learn sustainability from the environment, tactical skills at a chef's table, or run away and join the circus! York Region will not only provide a unique environment to foster creative thinking, learning, and stimulating dialogue but can also be the idea generator that makes your next meeting exceptional.

Location, location, location...

When it comes to planning dynamic conferences, meetings or retreats, venue and location have as significant an impact as content.

Whether you're planning a high-energy team building extravaganza or a quiet problem-solving corporate retreat, York Region has the venue you're looking for, where the settings are relaxed and the atmosphere is focused and free of urban interruptions.

Accessibility is always key and York Region is close by from any direction.

Served by four 400 series highways with convenient connections to the surrounding greater Toronto area, York Region is also close to Pearson International and Buttonville Municipal Airports.

The Right Environment

York Region is all about mixing natural green space with high tech progress. Corporations are becoming ever more environmentally responsible and your meeting venue needs to echo that commitment. If you need to base more meetings on the environment, consider how York Region can create the right environment to meet your goals.

You're never very far from unique places that inspire unique ideas when surrounded by the green spaces of York Region.

Take your meeting to nature's classroom at the Kortright Centre. Respected for their environmental



Innovation: * "A process through which economic or social value is extracted from knowledge... through the creation, diffusion and transformation of ideas... to produce new or significantly improved products or processes."



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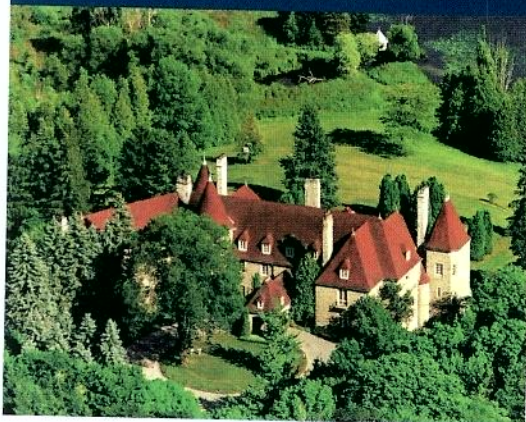
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education programs, this site is ideal for a staff retreat, offering highly skilled facilitators and unique natural settings like the Renewable Energy Cottage.

The Kingsbridge Centre is a one-of-a-kind York Region conference centre that offers experiential learning for corporate groups. By offering custom-tailored programming in a setting far from the confines of the office, their facilitators help groups effect change, build leadership and foster team effectiveness. Known for their in-house technology and conference philosophy, the Kingsbridge Centre also provides customized experiences that include facilitated high ropes courses and other team programs.

Looking for the relaxed elegance of a country chateau? Eaton Hall – the former Eaton estate – is a choice rich with the history of one of Canada's corporate elite. Set amidst the Oak Ridges Moraine forests, Eaton Hall shares a lakeside setting with the Seneca College Outdoor Education Centre. Reserve the entire Estate for a meeting or create team building activities using the excellent outdoor facilities for an orienteering hike or perhaps kayaking. Eaton Hall also offers all-inclusive two-day meeting packages designed to make a planner's life easier!

Need a high-energy event? Try the Quest for Success Team Works program at Laser Quest in Richmond Hill. An innovative approach to team building uses a laser-gun hide and seek format. Laser Quest draws rave reviews:

"Having attempted many team building programs over the past years, I think that Laser Quest provided the best venue for instant application of team principles while allowing all participants to have fun without company structure interfering with individual contribution" – *MMS Group of Companies, Toronto, Ontario*

For a more traditional conference setting, the theatres of York Region offer fabulous facilities

for your next seminar, multi-media presentation, or product launch. The Vaughan City Playhouse Theatre, the Markham Theatre for the Performing Arts and the new Richmond Hill Theatre are all wonderful choices and offer full support for planners in need of ideas.

Diversity & Inspiration in York Region

Infuse your agenda with creativity, diversity, team-work and inclusivity by making use of York Region's diverse ethnic cultural mosaic.

Raising cultural awareness can be an empowering means of coming to a new understanding of your own corporate culture, so take advantage of our area's immense ethnic diversity and showcase diversity through food, performing arts, music or art during your corporate retreat or conference.

The Canadian Museum of Hindu Civilization makes an ideal venue for a horizon-broadening conference group visit. Featuring an engaging range of exhibits, the museum is a fascinating introduction to an ancient religion and wellness philosophy.

Delve into ancient teachings at Pacific Mall – the largest Asian mall in North America. Experience



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an authentic Asian market and learn the beliefs of the centuries-old dynasties at Pacific Heritage Town – a replica village that makes an ideal off-site venue for unique social/ethnic dining and culture experiences.

The unique venues of York Region are eager to stir creative juices and allow you to exercise your corporate creativity. Consider these creative programs for your conference agenda.

The Varley Art Gallery has developed a Corporate Creativity Program to “serve the needs of 21st century companies by supporting employees in recognizing and accessing deeper creative qualities of the mind... through drawing, painting and sculpture with an experienced artist/facilitator.”

At the McMichael Canadian Art Collection, a full range of workshops/lectures and Art2Go talks can be customized. Learn from Native practices or ask guest experts to show participants how to blend artistic and creative new approaches into your corporate environment.

At Bisque It!, a casual café style art studio, your group can take part in hands-on creative experiences, building important team skills along the way. The marketing-minded wizards who run

this facility not only provide on-site food and beverages, but also offer a ‘To Go’ service that brings facilitators, pottery, and refreshments to the venue of your choice.

Food for Thought

Eating healthy inspires positive thinking and innovative meeting planners know how to capitalize on the power of the plate!

York Region is home to great culinary options and food festivals. Award-winning chefs are ready to incorporate enticing food and beverage options into your meeting agenda. Have attendees interact as they sample an exotic ethnic starter or dive into what we call “100-mile Cuisine” – menus developed using only the finest local food, wine and beers from York Region’s farms and markets. York Region-based culinary entrepreneurs are eager to provide your group the best from field to table.

At the Willow Springs Winery & Cooking School, your group can enjoy a Wine Maker’s Luncheon or take part in a corporate team building session like the ‘appetizer architecture’ contest where teams create, display and name their own appetizer creation.

York Region has the home-grown culinary artists



to make your events delectable. Include some local flavour in your next event. There are purveyors of hand-made chocolates and organic foods, artisans, and wineries and micro-breweries offering ideas for that perfect corporate gift.

Tranquility North of Toronto

It’s rare that a location so convenient to a major city can offer the kind of seclusion necessary for true mind and body rejuvenation – but York Region offers a tranquil retreat with everything from slow food, to group yoga and mind-altering massage and aromatherapy.



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Learn the art of rejuvenation by having your group visit one of York Region's many outstanding spas, specialty dining rooms or chef's gardens. For example, the luxurious Briars Resort & Spa will not only incorporate a spa visit into your group's itinerary, but can also offer a Chef's Garden cooking class, complete with an informative herb garden learning session.

HighFields Inn & Spa is ready to tempt your group with organic cooking and wellness workshops, while the Rejuvenation Services division of the Kingsbridge Centre offers a wide variety of massage therapies all focused on mind/body wellness.

Take Action! Innovative Interaction

We all know what they say about teams that play together, so why not get your group working and playing together in one of York Region's exciting off-site venues? Let group members match wits and test their skills in friendly competition, as they chart a new course for your company's future.

Even the big kid in the corner office loves a day at Canada's Wonderland, a meeting venue choice so far from the ordinary that you might find it hard to convince your delegates to leave at day's end!

Consider a presentation in an outdoor auditorium or create themed corporate days with a team building event such as a Roller Coaster Competition.

Let's be honest – deep inside, we all have a need for speed and the NASCAR SpeedPark in York Region offers activities and individual competitions that will rev everyone's engines. Imagine pint-sized NASCAR stock cars, races complete with checkered flag finishes and incentive ticket rewards packages. If it's time for something totally off the wall, you might consider running away with your group to the circus – to perform! The Big Top Circus School is one of York Region's most unusual group entertainment and training options, but it's one of the most exciting. Whether your group members learn to swing from a trapeze, walk a tightrope or just clown around, the Big Top trainers will be ready to design a program that could last from a quick couple of hours to a full day.

Think your group might prefer slightly less heart-thumping excitement? Book an afternoon of bowling at Lucky Strike Lanes, Canada's first Upscale Bowling Lounge. Not only is their team-building concept sure to create excitement and inject some healthy competition into your event,

but your group can head home, proud as punch, sporting their own team shirts.

Educate your group in precision, accuracy and skill and get them on target with an archery course in the beautiful York Region countryside, or give them a chance to test their agility and ability with a one-day Introduction to Polo clinic available at the Gormley Polo Fields in Stouffville.

Then there is Golf, of course....

However, when it comes to golf destinations, few can rival York Region's rolling hills, lush valleys, and unique terrain. York Region is home to more than one third of the Greater Toronto Area's 150 courses and their easy access and proximity make them the ideal choice for a golf outing or corporate tournament.

The "Toronto Highlands" courses, a unique grouping of high-end golf courses, offer a quality of golf rarely found in or around a major metropolitan area. For the golfer, this is truly a golf Mecca.

Watch delegates mix a little business with pleasure on the golf course.

Reward your team with phenomenal scenery, quiet courses and utterly invigorating golf by selecting a golf course in York Region



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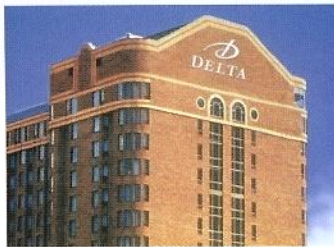
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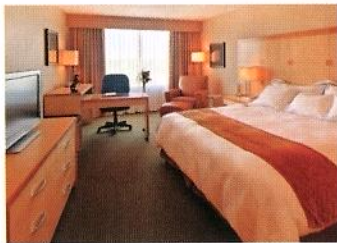
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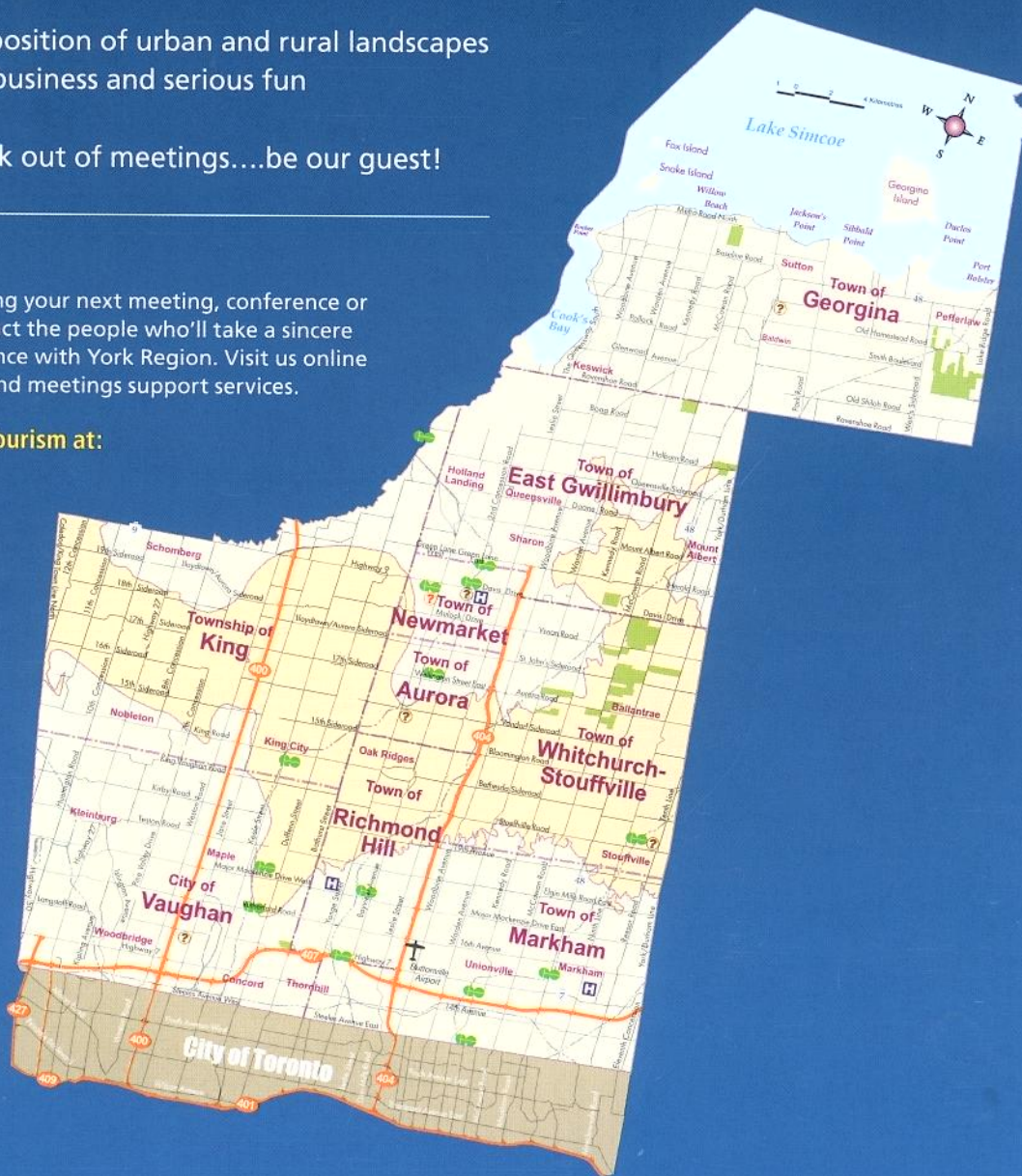
Making Contact

For assistance in planning your next meeting, conference or corporate retreat, contact the people who'll take a sincere interest in your experience with York Region. Visit us online for site selection, RFP, and meetings support services.

Contact York Region Tourism at:

York Region Tourism
17250 Yonge Street
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