

ASIAN HERITAGE MONTH



What is Asian Heritage Month?

The month of May is Asian Heritage Month. This event gives showcases the culture, history and art of all Asian Canadians. As well as to acknowledge the contributions of Asian people in Canada. This month is a reminder for all of us to come together to combat anti-Asian racism and discrimination in all its forms.



Simu Liu, a Canadian actor of Chinese origin, migrated to Canada when he was five years old. He gained recognition for his role as Shang-Chi in the 2021 Marvel Cinematic Universe movie, Shang-Chi and the Legend of the Ten Rings. Liu also starred as Jung Kim in the CBC Television comedy series Kim's Convenience, and was nominated for the ACTRA Awards and Canadian Screen Awards for his work in the series Blood and Water. Additionally, he wrote the book We Were Dreamers in 2022, a memoir about his life, and was included in Time magazine's list of 100 most influential people.

"STORIES OF DETERMINATION."

This month marks the beginning of Asian Heritage Month. This year we are celebrating with a theme of "Stories of Determination" that represents the progress made and the challenges overcome by Asian communities to prosper in Canada over the last 2 centuries. The history of the communities here in Canada is filled with hardships and hindrances but it is a story of triumph over adversity. The Government of Canada is committed in fighting all forms of racism, which include anti-Asian racism, and is taking actions to protect the rights and well-being of Asian communities here in Canada with Canada's Action Plan on Combatting Hate and Canada's new Anti-Racism Strategy. The policies are being developed through community consultations and are based on the lived experiences of the communities affected by hate and discrimination in our country.



Rev. Margaret Ai Koizumi Propp

As a second generation 'nisei' Japanese Canadian, my ethnic Japanese heritage and my Canadian nationality are huge parts of my personal identity. My Canadian nationality doesn't fully describe who I am. My Japanese heritage helps give myself, my children, and people I meet a fuller picture of who I am. The language, the foods, the customs and culture have shaped my identity. I prefer to capture my pickles in the jar with chopsticks! Or that 3 generations live together in one household to help support the family network. As a Japanese Canadian pastor, it's also about a faith that was passed down to me when being Christian in Japan was very difficult for my grandfather's generation.

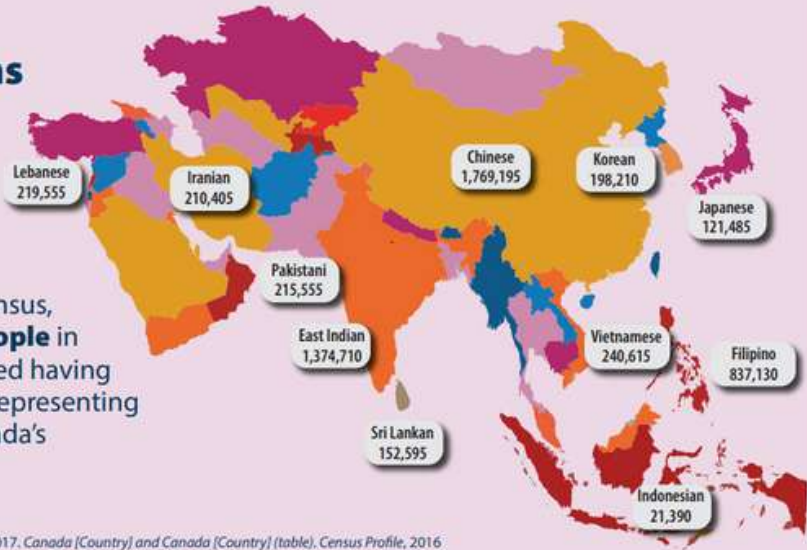
A few years ago, my sister made a short film about our father as a tribute of how he became the first generation Japanese Canadian 'isei' to pave a path for future generations of Japanese German American Scottish Ukrainian Canadians. It explores the complexities of shame, racism, and classism and the way her identity was shaped. Identities are certainly complex, but the openness to allow for the diversity which many of us bear, allows for the depth and beauty of ourselves and Canadian culture.

<https://www.cbc.ca/shortdocs/shorts/in-the-shadow-of-the-pines>

May is Asian Heritage Month, a time to celebrate and learn about the stories of people of Asian heritage in Canada.

Canadians of Asian descent

In the 2016 Census, **6,095,235 people** in Canada reported having Asian origins, representing **17.7%** of Canada's population.



Source: Statistics Canada. 2017. *Canada [Country] and Canada [Country] (table), Census Profile, 2016 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.

Chinese and Indian are the two largest ethnic groups of Asian descent in Canada, with 1,769,195 and 1,374,710 reported individuals respectively. Filipino and Vietnamese are also significant groups, with over 837,000 and 240,000 reported individuals respectively. The remaining groups, including Korean, Japanese, Sri Lankan, Iranian, Pakistani, and Indonesian, have smaller but still significant numbers of reported individuals ranging from just over 20,000 (Indonesian) to over 200,000 (Lebanese). Source: Statistics Canada. 2017.

Mother tongue

Some of the **mother tongues** Canadians reported speaking in the 2016 Census:



Source: Statistics Canada. 2017. *Canada [Country] and Canada [Country] (table), Census Profile, 2016 Census*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017.



The data is sourced from Statistics Canada 2017 and includes the number of speakers for each language. Mandarin and Cantonese are the most widely spoken mother tongues among Canadians based on the 2016 Census, with 592,040 and 565,270 speakers respectively. The next most commonly spoken languages are Punjabi and Tagalog, with over 400,000 speakers each. Arabic, with nearly 420,000 speakers, also has a substantial presence in Canada. The remaining languages on the list have smaller but still significant numbers of speakers ranging from just over 40,000 (Japanese) to over 150,000 (Korean and Vietnamese).

Asian Heritage Month. (2017, November 29). Statistics Canada. Retrieved May 10, 2023, from <https://www.statcan.gc.ca/sites/default/files/daily-btn-2022-asian-heritage-eng.pdf>
 Heritage, C. (2023, May 2). Statement by Minister Hussen on Asian Heritage Month. Canada.ca. <https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/news/2023/05/statement-by-minister-hussen-on-asian-heritage-month.html>
 In the Shadow of the Pines. (n.d.). www.cbc.ca. <https://www.cbc.ca/shortdocs/shorts/in-the-shadow-of-the-pines>
 Wikipedia contributors. (2023). Simu Liu. Wikipedia. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simu_Liu