

Penticton - Okanagan Profile

Official Club Name:

**The Friendship Force Penticton-Okanagan**

Founded July 1999

Website: [www.thefriendshipforceofpenticton-okanagan.org](http://www.thefriendshipforceofpenticton-okanagan.org)

Closest major airport:

Kelowna 72Km or 45 miles

Closest regional/local airport: Penticton

By bus: Greyhound is available

By Train: N/A

Maximum number of Ambassadors our club can host: 16 Ambassadors

About the club:

The Friendship Force of Penticton-Okanagan was chartered in July 1999, and now has approximately 25 members. The members are mainly very active retired seniors. Luncheon meetings are held once a month and sometimes there is a guest speaker. Some of the members are from Penticton, but we also have members from the neighbouring communities of Kaleden, Okanagan Falls, Oliver, Summerland, Keremeos and Osoyoos.

About the region:

The South Okanagan Valley is in the interior of British Columbia 400Km or 250 miles East from Vancouver. Penticton is located between two lakes, Okanagan Lake to the north and Skaha Lake to the south. The population is over 34,000, but swells dramatically in summer. Penticton means, "A Place To Stay Forever". There are many communities in the valley, to the north of Penticton are Summerland and Peachland and to the south are Okanagan Falls, Kaleden, Oliver and Osoyoos. Also, to the west of the valley, are the communities of Keremeos and Hedley.

Everything has to be irrigated as we are in a very arid area. There is an abundance of fruit grown here: cherries, apricots, peaches, pears, plums, different varieties of apples and berries. The valley land is also suitable for grape growing and we have a flourishing wine industry. Oliver is the "Wine Capital" of Canada. There is the Fall Wine Festival at the end of September/early October with "A Grape Stomp".

Osoyoos has the only true desert in Canada. The area hosts many rare plants and it is actually part of the Great-Basin Desert. The valley is a narrow strip of land between two mountain ranges. There are more lakes to the south of Penticton (Osoyoos Lake is shared by Canada and the U.S.A.). Beautiful sandy beaches great views, good camping and great boating make the valley a popular summer destination. Penticton has been voted #4 in the world of great places to vacation. We also have great skiing in the winter at Apex Resort, Big White, and Mt. Baldy. Tubing is also a fun sport done on the river channel.

Weather in summer is dry and sunny, often Canada's hotspot. Farmers' Markets, Festivals and other activities take place all summer long.

About a typical exchange:

Our Exchanges vary in activities according to the time of year.

There are two events that are done with most exchanges --- a visit to "The Gleaners" in Oliver. As the name implies they take produce, dehydrate it to make a very nutritious soup base that is shipped all over the world to feed the hungry and disaster victims.

The other event is a visit to the N'K mip Desert Cultural Centre that shows what the valley land is really like and also see the First Nation's culture of the area. There is also a "Snake Show" at the centre.

Potlucks, visits to the wineries for tasting and tour the trout hatchery are other activities that are featured in some exchanges. In the fall, we can visit Hardy Falls to see the salmon run. There can be the scenic boat ride aboard the sternwheeler the Casabella Princess. We also can ride on the KVR Steam Engine Train (Engine#3716 is 100 years old) to view the mountains and Trout Creek Canyon. A Farewell Banquet is usually planned to wish our new friends a fond "adieu".