

The Green Mountain State

Established 1791

14th State



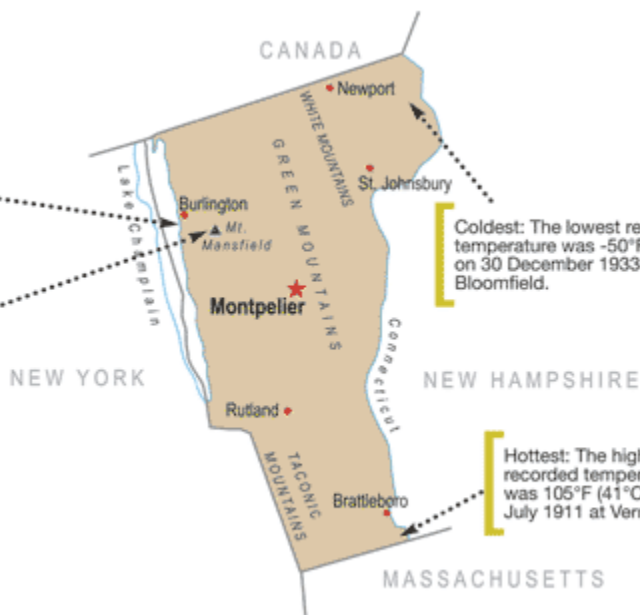
EXTREMES

Lowest: The lowest point is the Lake Champlain shoreline, at 95 feet (29 m).

Highest: The highest point is Mount Mansfield, at 4,393 feet (1,339 m).

Coldest: The lowest recorded temperature was -50°F (-46°C) on 30 December 1933 at Bloomfield.

Hottest: The highest recorded temperature was 105°F (41°C) on 4 July 1911 at Vernon.



Did You Know?

- People have claimed there are sea monsters (Champ and Memphre) in Lakes Champlain and Memphremagog.
- Vermont's name came from the French explorer Champlain, who named the mountains *les monts verts*, meaning "green mountains." However, *ver* without a *t* means "worm," so *ver mont* is really translated as "worm mountain."
- Montpelier is the only U.S. state capital without a McDonald's.
- A few of Vermont's schools have only one room.
- The 1777 Vermont Constitution was the world's first constitution to abolish slavery.
- President Calvin Coolidge, born in Plymouth, was known for saying as little as possible. One night at dinner, a guest bet that she could get him to say more than two words. What was his response? "You lose."
- In the 1960s, Vermont banned all billboards from major highways.
- Vermont has a town named Beanville and a village named Bread Loaf.

The Place

Climate

A winter wonderland is a good way to describe Vermont's long winters. They often

begin as early as October and last until the middle of April. The average winter temperature is 17°F (-8°C), and winter often brings about 90 inches (229 cm) of snow. In the north and mountain areas, often more than 120 inches (305 cm) fall each winter. It is not uncommon for temperatures to fall below -10°F (-23°C). Because the state is so far north, the summers are also cooler than most of the United States. The short summer days average a temperature of 68°F (20°C). It rains often and in great amounts, especially at the beginning of the summer.

Geography



Vermont is small (9,615 square miles, or 24,903 sq km) compared to most states, but it is the second largest in New England. Almost all of the land is either hilly or mountainous. Champlain Valley is the flattest and warmest part of the state. It's also the best for farming. To the west is Lake Champlain, which also belongs to New York and Canada. On its eastern side are the Green Mountains, which run right down the middle of the state. More than 75 percent of the state is covered with trees.

Thousands of maple trees, which turn brilliant colors during the fall, cover the Green Mountains as well as the Taconic Mountains in the southwest and the White Mountains in the northeast. There are more than four hundred lakes and ponds scattered throughout the narrow river valleys of the Vermont Piedmont.

Resources and Economy

Vermont is known for beautiful scenery, and *leaf peepers* (out-of-staters who come to admire the scenery) are a common sight in the fall. Millions of visitors also come to ski, hike, swim, and see the historic sites. Many also come to ride horses. Horse-related businesses are an important part of agriculture in the state. But the most important agricultural business is dairy farming. Dairy farms produce more than 250 million gallons of milk every year. In fact, Ben and Jerry's ice cream company was founded in the state, using Vermont milk and cream to make its frozen desserts. Many farmers sell other products, such as apples, potatoes, honey, and eggs, at roadside stands or farmers' markets. Technology and publishing industries are other important contributors to Vermont's economy.

History

Time Line

Thousands of years ago, Native Americans live along the rivers	
A.D. 1600	
A.D. 1609	Samuel de Champlain is the first European to explore the area; the French claim

Vermont

1700

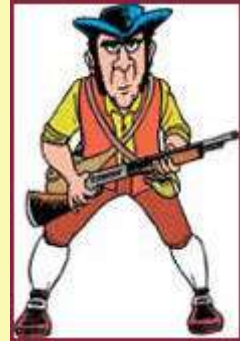
1724 The British build Fort Dummer (Brattleboro), the first permanent white settlement in Vermont

1763 After the French and Indian War, the English completely control Vermont

1764 The British king gives the Vermont area to New York



1770 Ethan Allen leads the Green Mountain Boys against the New Yorkers



1775 The Green Mountain Boys take Fort Ticonderoga from the English

1777 Vermont becomes an independent colony and adopts a constitution

1791 Vermont becomes the 14th U.S. state



1800

1814 Emma Willard opens the first school for the higher education of women



1881

Chester A. Arthur becomes the 21st U.S. president



1900

1923

Calvin Coolidge becomes the 30th U.S. president



1927

The Connecticut River floods, killing more than 85 people and causing millions of dollars worth of damage



1965

Voting for state house of representatives changes from one vote per town to one vote per person

1985

Madeleine Kunin becomes Vermont's first woman governor

1990

Bernard Sanders, from Vermont, is the first Socialist U.S. representative in 60 years

PRESENT

Early Inhabitants

The Abenaki lived in the land N'Dakinna (part of which is now Vermont) years before the first Europeans arrived. This tribe of the Algonquian Nation was the first to discover how to make maple syrup. They lived in villages along the Connecticut and Winooski Rivers. They hunted, farmed, and passed on their traditions through storytelling. They used canoes to travel during the summer and snowshoes during the winter. They were one of the few Native



American tribes to fight against the British during the American Revolution. Today, only around two thousand Abenaki live in the northwest part of Vermont.

Early Explorers and Settlers

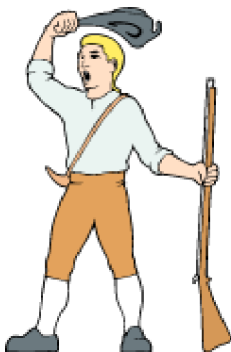


Control of Vermont territory was constantly switching hands. The first European to discover Vermont was Samuel de Champlain, a French explorer. He journeyed with an Algonquian war group to fight against the Iroquois. They traveled up the Saint Lawrence River to Lake Champlain. During the French and Indian War, the French and the English fought to control America. The English won, but then New Hampshire and New York argued about who should get Vermont land. Finally, the New Yorkers won.

The Green Mountain Boys

Ethan Allen was a farmer trying to make a living when Vermont was given to New York. The New York governor started demanding high taxes from Vermonters. In some cases, the New Yorkers took land and homes away from them. The Vermonters secretly organized a resistance group called the Green Mountain Boys. Ethan Allen was chosen as their colonel, and they began to kick out the New Yorkers living in "their" territory. They declared themselves independent from Britain and New York.

The American Revolution



The American Revolution turned the Green Mountain Boys' attention to the British. They were the key in taking Fort Ticonderoga, the first British fort to fall into American hands. George Washington used the fort's cannons to drive the British out of Boston. After the war, Vermonters applied for statehood, but New York was against the idea. In 1791, New York finally agreed to Vermont's statehood because Kentucky was also going to become a state. New York was afraid that if Kentucky became a state, it would give the south more

power than the north. Vermont became the 14th state in 1791.

A Growing Population



After its initial population boom, Vermont grew only slowly. Following World War II, electrical and computer companies began to open, and the state began to build highways. Better roads made it easier for tourists to enjoy Vermont, and the tourist industry began to skyrocket. Ski resorts and vacation homes were built quickly. During the 1960s and '70s, people moved to Vermont as part of the Back to the Land Movement. They wanted to move away from the crowded cities to the green and peace of a rural life.

Environment

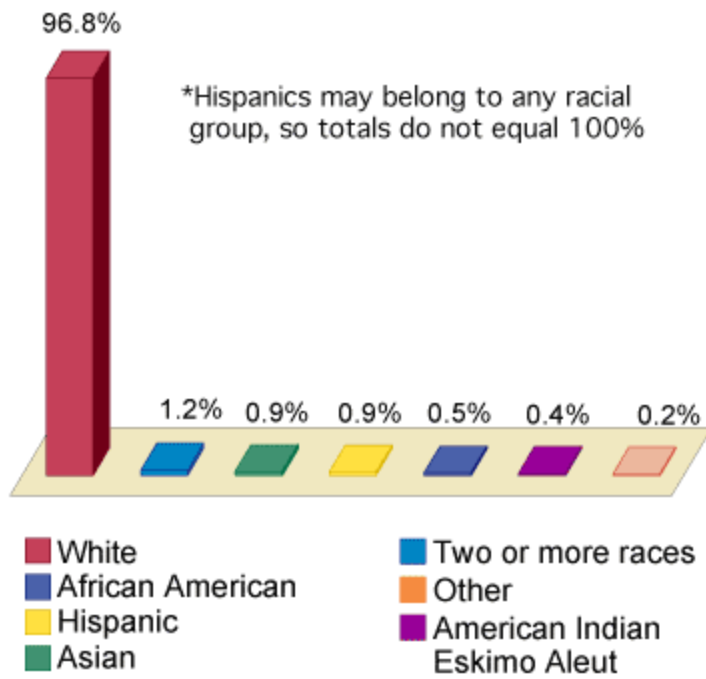
While new businesses, highways, and houses were good for the economy, they were a potential danger to the environment. In 1970, the government passed the Environmental Control Law. It said that before anyone could build anything large, they had to prove it wouldn't hurt the environment. The Growth Management Act (1988) gave each town or community the money and the power to control what was built in their areas. People continue to move to and visit Vermont for the beauty of its natural environment.

The People

Population

Vermont has only seven cities or towns with more than 10,000 people. Burlington (39,391) and Rutland (18,083) are the biggest. Many Vermonters live in towns with less than 2,500 people. In fact, Vermont is the most rural state. Most cities and towns are located in the Vermont Valley, by the Connecticut River, or by Lake Champlain. Vermonters are known for independence and hard work. They are mostly Roman Catholic or Protestant. Many of their ancestors moved from French Québec or western Europe.

Total Population: 616,592



Government

Capital: Montpelier

U.S. Senators: 2

U.S. Representatives: 1

Counties: 14

- Vermont's governor and legislators are elected to two-year terms.
- Vermont has three electoral votes in presidential elections.

Famous People

- *Aleksander Solzhenitsyn* — Nobel Prize-winning author
- *Alexander Twilight* — First African-American college graduate and legislator
- *Andrea Mead Lawrence* — Olympic gold medal skier
- *Bernard Sanders* — Congressman
- *Calvin Coolidge* — Thirtieth U.S. president
- *Chester A. Arthur* — Twenty-first U.S. president
- *Dorothy Thompson* — Journalist
- *Emma Willard* — Educator and women's advocate
- *Ethan Allen* — Leader of the Green Mountain Boys, patriot, folk hero, statesman, and farmer
- *Maria von Trapp* — Musician and author
- *Sinclair Lewis* — Nobel Prize-winning author
- *Thomas Davenport* — Inventor

Fun Facts & Contacts

State Symbols

State Animal

Morgan horse—This was the first uniquely American horse breed. It could outrun almost all the other horse breeds.



State Bird

Hermit thrush—In the summer, this bird hides in shady shrubs and trees. In the winter, it migrates south.



State Flower

Red clover—It is commonly found along the roads and in the hay fields. It was brought over from Europe.



State Tree

Sugar maple tree—Tree sap is gathered at the beginning of spring in an activity known as “sug'rin'.”



Cultural Note



You may not know Wilson Bentley's name, but you have probably appreciated his work. He loved photography and snow. He combined these two loves and took the first successful pictures of snowflakes. He showed that no two snowflakes are the same. Another of Vermont's citizens, Justin Morgan, introduced the first truly American horse breed. The first Morgan horse was born late in the 18th century on a Randolph farm. This breed can outrun almost any other horse and is a favorite today.

For More Information

See www.vermont.gov or contact the Vermont Department of Tourism and Marketing, Six Baldwin Street, Drawer 33, Montpelier, VT 05633-1301; phone (800) VERMONT; web site www.1-800-vermont.com.