



THE YOUNG COLLECTOR

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A SELECTION OF STUNNING STAMPS

Some of the most eye-catching stamps in the world are Canadian. The Bluenose from the Scroll Issue of 1929, which quickly comes to mind for many collectors, is internationally renowned for its beauty.

However, in this column, I will focus on the somewhat lesser-known, and more affordable, but still stunningly gorgeous Canadian stamps. Luckily for Canadian collectors, there are too many to name in one article.

Here are my top ten favourite beauties:

10. “1997 \$8 Grizzly Bear” – Not all beautiful stamps are old, and this is a perfect example. Designed by Alain Leduc, and engraved by Jorge Peral, everything about this definitive is perfect.

I love the meticulously-crafted coat of the bear as he ambles through the design. He almost looks like he will wander off the stamp to explore the letter inside a cover. In my mind it is a masterpiece.



The image also reminds me of the time my mother and I were chased by a bear at a dump in Northern Ontario. It was a curious and protective mother who was heading towards us, pushing us far away from her cubs. Luckily we escaped by quickly walking back to the car.

9. “1967 10-cent Jack Pine” – This 10-cent definitive certainly deserves acknowledgement!

Part of the Centennial Issue, this postal masterpiece was painted by Tom Thomson. He is honored as a member of the celebrated Group of Seven artists even though he died before the group was officially established.



Thomson was raised in Leith, Ontario which is near to where I live. Many of his paintings, including the “Jack Pine,” were based on the amazing views that Thomson had hunting, fishing, and canoeing in Algonquin Park.

This image is iconic of the Canadian landscape and as a nature lover, I am particularly drawn to this one.

8. “1954 5-cent Wilding Issue of Queen Elizabeth” – I love the colour of this stamp!

Dorothy Wilding was a British photographer who captured the likenesses of many famous people, most especially royalty. She was able to capture the young Queen’s regal dignity, while still maintaining her gentle countenance.



7. “1953 \$1 Pacific Coast Totem Pole” – What makes this \$1 definitive part of my top 10 Canadian Beauties is the symmetry and design used by artist Emmanuel Otto Hahn.

A testament to our First Nations heritage, the totem pole stands proudly in the centre of the image, flanked by mountains. When I visited British Columbia, I saw the totem poles at Stanley Park in Vancouver and they certainly impressed me.

6. “1951 \$1 Fisherman” – This gem was designed by the Fairbairn Art Studios of Ottawa, which consulted the Federal Department of Fisheries.

The stamp is also very informative, since it is bordered by 16 species of fish and other sea life caught commercially in Canadian waters.



The fisherman in the centre is drawing in this catch, entangled in a net, into his boat. For a topical collector who collects fish, fishing, or crustaceans, this is a ‘must have’.



5. “1946 50-cent Logging” – From the King George VI Peace Issue, this definitive makes my top 10 because of the excitement and action of a massive tree falling deep in the murky and dense forests of British Columbia.

The fine details even show the concentric rings of surrounding felled trees. Those of you who, like me, have been in those forests, know how accurately they are portrayed.

4. “1935 50-cent Parliament Buildings, Victoria B.C.” – I particularly love the snapshot element of the vignette and how the buildings are so beautifully framed by the border, which is flanked in the upper corners by the quintessentially Canadian maple leaf.



3. “1999 95-cent Dove of Peace on Branch” – With its ornate design and intricate engraving, this beautiful commemorative pays homage to the classical stamp era.

To me, classical stamps have the most visual appeal, and I often think of the painstaking work involved.

2. “1897 50-cent Diamond Jubilee” – This definitive was issued for the 60th anniversary of Queen Victoria’s reign.



Of the 16 different stamps in the set, all of which have a different colour, I love the rich blue tone of the 50-cent the best.

Appearing rather expensive in the catalogues, but since it is popular to collectors, it is easily attainable in F-VF condition for less than \$50.



1. "1933 5-cent Royal William"

- The SS Royal William was a side-wheel paddle steamship which crossed the Atlantic Ocean in 1833.

The 1,370-ton vessel made the historic crossing entirely under steam power, with its sails only used while crew members were doing maintenance work on the boilers.

Named after the ruling monarch, King William IV, the stamp issued a century later commemorated this voyage.

This beautiful example of philatelic art makes the number one spot in my list because I just love the way the waves break across the sides of the ship, and the careful observer will also find a small man on the deck.

It also has the classical border, which I am always drawn to.

There are also beautiful Canadian "back-of-the-book" and revenue stamps.



One example is the 1927 20-cent Special Delivery stamp from the Confederation Issue. It features a steam locomotive, a boat, airplanes, a dogsled team, and a mailman on a horse, which were all ways that mail was transported in Canada. If you look closely, you can see writing on the horse's mailbag.

A gorgeous Canadian revenue issue is the 1868 \$3 green-and-black Bill Stamp. The colours used to print this engraved stamp, along with the amazing borders, makes it truly stunning.



An interesting side note about this issue is that it is Canada's fourth multi-coloured revenue stamp. It was released 30 years before Canada's first multi-coloured postage stamp, the Imperial Penny Postage 2-cent commemorative, issued in 1898.

I believe that, throughout the years, the quality of beauty in Canadian stamps has declined. However, just to prove me wrong, Canada Post does come out with amazing stamps every once-in-awhile.



For instance, the \$4 "Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep" definitive designed and engraved by Jorge Peral certainly stands out. Produced by a combination of lithography and intaglio printing, it was issued in September 2018.

On an interesting note, the selvedge in the pane of four stamps shows images of the process of the stamp being designed and made.

One of the most delightful things about collecting Canada is that many of the pages will be filled with beautiful stamps. ☒

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