

Morden 🌿 Manitoba

At HARROWSMITH, we think of Morden as “the Prairie town that could... and still does.”

Founded in 1882 as the CPR headed west, this burg became home to thousands of settlers, including many German Mennonites. It was a wise choice of location: Morden has some of the best agricultural land in the province, it's in a hotspot (Zone 3B), and off in the distance, as if to defy the notion that all of Manitoba is a landscape of unbroken plains, the horizon is broken by a ridge of hills.

We first profiled Morden as one of our prettiest towns in Canada in 2004, and were fortunate enough to pay a return visit in 2008. We found that very little had changed. A little remote from the Winnipeg commuter belt, Morden remains the quintessential rural town and a service centre for local farmers. Agriculture still rules beyond the town limits, but Morden also benefits from the presence of a few local industries and the continued presence of Agriculture Canada's famed research station, home of the “Parkland” series of hardy Canadian roses.

Remarkably well preserved, the town's heritage character has not been forgotten in this 21st century. Morden's most attractive asset is its old houses, many just past the century mark and, oddly enough for the Prairies, built of stone, whose veran-

dahs and historic charm are still intact.

Its grain elevators still stand beside the CPR and, under graceful shade trees, mom-and-pop shops still line the main drag. You might say that every town used to look like this, but with the spread of shopping malls and commuting, so many have suffered. Morden soldiers on.



REAL ESTATE UPDATE: In 2004, we reported that a new 2,500 square foot house in town is apt to run about \$175,000 tops. Five years later, it seems that same house would go for at least that much, and maybe as high as \$300,000. There are also a few modest hobby farms at that price nearby, if you know where to look.