



Mikéson Peng, who comes from a city of 10 million inhabitants, loves to take advantage of the Canadian wilderness.

Courtesy photo

Mikéson Peng, or Determination Personified

When Mikéson Peng's parents chose Canada as the best place to send their young son to study, little did they know that he would love the country so much that he wouldn't want to go back to China, preferring to stay here instead.

From West to East before heading North

When he arrived in Vancouver at age 18, Mikéson Peng only spoke Chinese. He devoted his first year in Canada to learning English. But knowing how to express himself in just one of Canada's two official languages wasn't enough for him. So he moved to Montréal to take an intensive French course. For five and a half months, he studied 30 hours a week at the ILSC* Language Schools and lived with a Francophone family. "I made a determined effort. It's super important that I make a real effort," said Mikéson.

*International Language Schools of Canada

With three languages under his belt, he felt ready to take his 18-month training in aircraft mechanics at the British Columbia Institute of Technology (BCIT). Upon graduation, he decided to hone his French language skills in Montreal with super intensive courses. Nine months later, he returned to Vancouver to work. After six months in customer service at the airport, he had had enough of Vancouver. "I like to move. After the East and West, I wanted to see the North," Mr. Peng explained.

Love at first sight

The Yukon made a very favourable impression on Mikéson Peng. "I've met nice people everywhere here. A person I didn't even know gave me a lift to Canada Post where I submitted my curriculum vitae; two months later I had a job."

Meanwhile, he applied for other positions. Today, Mikéson is holding down two full time jobs: weekdays as a mechanic for the Alcan Company, and evenings and weekends as a clerk at Tag's. "I like making money. Otherwise, what would I do? I don't have too many friends here. I'm going to work hard for a year."

Three cities, three cultures

Of the three Canadian cities he has lived in, Mr. Peng says that Vancouver is the one he liked the least. The two main reasons are the rain, to which the British Columbia capital owes the nickname Raincouver, and the large Chinese community that lives there. "In Vancouver, I don't feel I'm in Canada. You hear Chinese everywhere. When you live in a foreign country, you should try to adapt, to integrate."

He liked Montreal. "I didn't feel I was in Canada in the East. Quebec has nothing in common with the rest of the country. It's not just the language that's different, it's the whole culture."

As for Whitehorse, well, he loves it. "I like the winter, the Francophone community, the people. Everyone seems so nice, so friendly," said Mikéson Peng.

The fact that there are few Chinese residents in the Yukon, and the diversity of people you meet add to the Yukon's good qualities. "I think everything here is positive. I like the Yukon. I have but one objective: to buy a house, that's why I work so much."

Application for permanent residency

Since coming to Canada five years ago, Mikéson Peng has never been back to China. "I love Canada too much. I'm completely captivated by Canada!"

One of his projects is to obtain permanent resident status. But he intends to gain more professional experience before applying. If later he acquires Canadian citizenship, he will lose his, but that does not seem to bother Mikéson. "That's right," he said, "This is my home! Canada welcomes people from all over the world and that's why I like it. I enjoy seeing people from various backgrounds around me. I think I'm well suited to Canada."