

# Canada, learning vacations, and the experience



Bay of Fundy, New Brunswick

STORY ON PAGE 3

## TSA's Revolutionizing the view of the tourism industry

World tourism leaders wrapped up an international conference on May 10, 2001 in Vancouver with a commitment to redouble efforts to demonstrate the economic importance of tourism worldwide.

The conference, "Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA): Credible Numbers for sound business decisions", brought together over 200 delegates from more than 50 countries to review the progress of TSA development, and to encourage adoption of this

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## RVC buyers hit record numbers

Three hundred and fifteen foreign tourism companies were exposed to the best of Canada's market ready products at Rendez-vous Canada in Toronto May 12-16. Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Director of Operations David Ostiguy is thrilled with the record numbers of qualified buyers and sellers that have made RVC's return to Toronto an outstanding success.

"Our numbers this year, for both buyers and sellers attending, have surpassed even the highly successful Quebec City edition of Rendez-vous Canada in 1998," reported Ostiguy from the selling floor at RVC a half-hour before closing. The 315 wholesale tour companies were represented by 442 delegates this year; in 1998 there were 358 delegates representing 255 companies.

### BUYER TO SELLER RATIO UP

This year saw a record number of sellers as well, with 867 delegates representing 526 organizations. These numbers are up slightly over RVC in Calgary last spring. Ostiguy is particularly pleased that ratio of buyers to sellers has improved dramatically: "This increased number of buyers relative to the number of sellers augurs well for the success and utility of RVCs in the future."

There had recently been concerns expressed in the industry that the number of sellers at RVC had increased to the point where there was too much pressure on buyers, and that new buyers were needed

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# COMMUNIQUE

CANADA'S TOURISM MONTHLY  
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*Discover our true nature*



# EDITORIAL

## Canada is a learning destination

Travelling has always implied 'learning' to me. I travel to see new and unfamiliar places – new cities, new landscapes. I want to experience different cultures, people, histories and lifestyles. I want to be awed and impressed. I want to have to think... and then go home with my own world expanded and richer.

'Going on vacation', however, has never conjured up that same association. For many people it's that (far too) short time each year they are free to do ... well ... very little. They need a break, want to have fun, do things they enjoy, whether in a familiar or an exotic setting. And then go home refreshed.

However, to many other people a holiday in a beach resort or on the ski slopes is not quite enough. They are looking for something interesting and stimulating, but perhaps have neither the time nor the wherewithal to research and organize this for themselves. For them a learning vacation is a very attractive option.

Some want to pursue a special interest, like fossil hunting, canoe building, log home construction, architectural or native history, the rain forest ecosystem, and so on. This can be a long-time interest or a new one, so there's room for introductory and in-depth courses. Others want to learn an outdoor activity, like canoeing, kayaking, dogsledding, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, golfing, horseback riding, or flyfishing. Again, these can be done at various levels of expertise.

Some are looking for some training in the arts or crafts. Others have no burning desire to learn anything specific but want to see, learn and try out something interesting. These people are usually looking for a mix of outdoor and cultural activities.

This type of tourism attracts people who are individualists, open to new experiences and people, and who prefer to stay away from the offerings 'for the masses' – just the type of people that fit naturally into Canada. There are different types of 'Learning Vacationers', but Canada has something for all of them.

**Kerstin Petersson** is the owner-operator of River Echo Language School in Wakefield, Québec.  
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**MISSION** – Canada's tourism industry will deliver world-class cultural and leisure experiences year round, while preserving and sharing Canada's clean, safe and natural environments. The industry will be guided by the values of respect, integrity and empathy.

## Attention tourism organizations!

Should your members be getting *Communiqué* regularly? We can't get it to them if we don't know how! We would be happy to receive your mailing list so that we can add your members to our monthly distribution. We would be happier yet if we could receive your list in electronic form rather than in hard copy, but nonetheless we will accommodate your organization any way we can!

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### COMMUNIQUÉ 2001 EDITORIAL SCHEDULE

MONTH	FEATURED THEME	DEADLINE
July/Aug	Resorts	Wed. May 30
September	Meetings and incentive travel	Wed. Aug. 1
October	Exploring the countryside	Wed. Aug. 29
November	Canadian winter	Wed. Oct. 3
December	Wellness of body and spirit	Wed. Oct. 31

*Communiqué* welcomes contributions of editorial material from the tourism industry. For articles related to the monthly featured product themes, priority will be given to material that identifies and discusses what makes vacation packages and tourist experiences uniquely Canadian. We encourage our contributors to explore the characteristics of these experiences that present a strong 'sense of place' for Canada.

Contributions must be received by the publisher on or before deadline to be considered for publication.

The aforementioned themes are not supposed to preclude the submission of timely information about Canada's tourism industry.

### LETTER TO THE EDITOR

We read *Communiqué* from front to back; so many opportunities to write and discuss, ask questions, offer opinions, and so on but where does one find enough time?

Over the past 17 years we have sent out a letter to persons requesting information, and without using a formal brochure, it has served us well. We are always adding or changing it a little each time we review it. After reading the editorial on "branding", we have added to and changed it again: we have emphasized that we are, and live, Canadian!

You are right: as Canadians we are always bashful when it comes to where we are and what we have. This usually reflects in us wanting to give it away too cheaply... after all, we are Canadian!

Thanks for the inspiration!

**Doug and Sandy Antler**  
Kingfisher Lodge  
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### You've come a long way baby!

While reading the May '01 *Communiqué*, I thought about an article I wrote for the same publication in January 1998, *Vision, action needed for culture/heritage tourism*. At that time the development and marketing of cultural heritage tourism seemed like thousands of kilometers away. To now see a 24 page issue of *Communiqué* devoted to this product is a dream come true.

I spent much of 1997 working with staff of the Dept. of Canadian Heritage and the tourism/culture sectors developing "roundtables" across Canada to examine and make recommendations on developing this product line. While I realize that there is still work to be done in developing and marketing Canadian cultural heritage tourism – congratulations to you, the members of the industry who are making it happen!

**Donna Owens**  
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# LEARNING VACATIONS

## Canada, learning vacations, and the experience

by Nancy Arsenault

Have you ever excavated an archaeological site then "travelled the path" of an artifact? Stepped behind the scenes into a world-class cooking school and winery? Contributed to the well being of a national park? This and much, much more abound in Canada's natural, cultural, historical, and artistic wonderland. An emerging opportunity is on the horizon for Canada's tourism industry. It's called enrichment travel, and it's one of the fastest-growing travel segments worldwide.

Enrichment travel is a concept. It involves a series of formal and informal learning, travel, and social activities that, when cleverly packaged, engages people in memorable 'ed-ventures'. Its unique selling proposition is quality-learning experiences, delivered by dynamic resource specialists. Privileged access to 'behind-the-scene' opportunities, not typically available to the general public is paramount. Educational travellers are willing to pay a premium for these experiences.

### LEARNING VACATIONS ARE THE PRODUCT

Strategically choreographed learning vacation itineraries usually follow a theme, but can be built around a mix of opportunities representative of the host community's distinctive assets. Participatory activities, led by subject matter experts, result in personal growth and lasting memories for the traveller. Traditionally a small group tour product (6 to 50 travellers), catering to the affinity market, there is evidence of an emerging demand for FIT and family products.

Themes, subject matter and activity modules are the building blocks of a learning vacation. Learning vacations encompass a wide array of topics including history, culture, politics, ecology, horticulture, nature, science, photography, research, wine and cuisine. Activity modules shape the experience, and vary in length

from one hour to one day. When packaged by a tour operator, these modules weave a range of in-depth experiences into a theme that takes people on 2 to 21 day personal journeys.

### EXPERIENCE IS KEY

Experiential learning is the heart of the product. Chinese philosopher Confucius said in 531 BC, "I hear, I forget. I see, I remember. I do, I understand," and that remains true today. Experiential learning engages travellers in authentic, hands-on, interactive and participatory activities that enhance understanding. Animating the activity modules are curators, conservationists, interpreters, academics, aboriginal elders, story tellers, artists, musicians, even managers – resource specialists with excellent presentation skills, an ability to stimulate conversation and bring stories to life.

### EDUCATED CLIENTS

Today's educated travellers are characterized as well educated, financially secure, healthy adults with a curiosity about the world. They are informed, articulate, value lifelong learning and travel. Premiums will be paid for authentic experiences that offer personal growth and engaging experiences. Adding hands-on activities such as carving an arrowhead, identifying petroglyphs, or monitoring wildlife is essential.

Learning travel packages are in demand, particularly from the Asia/Pacific markets, the United Kingdom/Europe and the U.S. Traditionally, mature adults and baby boomers have been the target market. "The majority of these travellers would feel guilty if they didn't participate in something educational on an international vacation," reports Menlo Consulting. Demand from these audiences will continue. Increasingly however, "educated families want learning vacations for their children."

At the April Youth Tourism Conference in Toronto, Gratton Sheely, Hostelling International echoed that experiential travel was an important element for young adults, but that affordability must be considered. Charles Bélanger, Le Bureau international du tourisme social, affirmed the pioneering qualities of 16 to 25 year olds who enjoy exploring new lifestyles, are keen on environmental issues, and when traveling on their 'gap year' look for personally enriching experiences.

### INCREASED MARKET ACTIVITY

The stars are aligned and the time is right for a proactive, integrated approach to position Canada as a leader in enrichment travel. A range of products exists in the Canadian market but there is tremendous untapped potential.

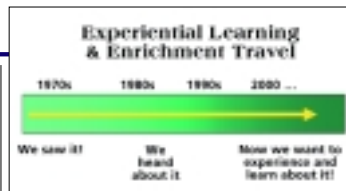
Already, select companies exclusively offer learning vacations and an emerging number of adventure travel, ecotourism, receptive operators, and corporate and incentive travel companies are exploring new or complementary product lines.

Public and private attractions have a key role to play. Historic sites, parks, museums, biodomes, zoos, aquariums, gardens, theatres, planetariums, and biosphere reserves are all special venues with a wealth of resource specialists. Last year, Parks Canada launched its national Learning Travel Program. It is working with industry, developing training materials, supporting national and international activities, and augmenting the range of heritage-based activity modules.

In May, the executive board of the National Museum of Civilization endorsed a new learning travel initiative with an emphasis on augmenting off-season programs. "The initiative has the full support of the curatorial department who will be working behind the scenes this summer with marketing and programs to develop new products," reports France Faucher.

DMOs are embracing this market with interest and enthusiasm.

Lee Morris of Tourism Victoria affirms that enrichment travel is part of their long-term strategy for market development. Québec Maritime just hosted a meeting of potential "Club-Ed" partners to identify con-



crete actions to develop this sector, identify partners, increase their offer. The provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland, Québec and British Columbia have all made strategic investments in growing this market.

### BENEFITS FOR CANADA

Learning vacations and experiential travel packages hold tremendous promise for the Canadian tourism industry. They respond to the growing demand for learning as part of the tourism experience and:

- Stimulate new product development and creative alliances,
- Foster economic benefits for local communities, travel suppliers, attractions, and educational organizations,
- Increase domestic products that thrive off-season,
- Present Canada as an exciting destination for authentic and engaging tourism experiences, and
- Heighten Canadians understanding and pride of the 'Canadian experience.'

### SELL THE EXPERIENCE

Bump along the northern terrain in a tundra buggy, breathe the crisp autumn air and learn about polar bear life as you anticipate your first sighting. Be part of the musical theatre crescendo as you explore a costume warehouse, meet the performers, and tour the staging area prior to the show. And enjoy solace and personal growth while painting the majesty of the Canadian Rockies and receiving expert guidance on improving your brush technique.

Canada is more than a destination. It is a country rich with history, culture, natural beauty, world-class attractions, and vibrant community activities. Enrichment travel is about the experience and Canada has it! Ad campaigns and sales staff must sell the experience and communicate the personal benefits.

### INNOVATIVE PARTNERSHIPS

"The demand exists in the market.

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The question is not: 'should we fill it? But 'how?'" comments Jean Bouffard of Tourism Québec. Thinking 'out-of-the-box' is a good place to start. Successful learning travel packages are contingent on innovative alliances, identifying non-traditional partners, and working with existing supplier network to find novel ways to refresh existing product and launch new ideas. Companies interested in enrichment travel would be well served by forming a product club.

**THE OPPORTUNITY AHEAD**

Enrichment travel and learning vacations are not typical tourism products. Like all forms of special interest tourism, they are not for everyone and will

appeal only to certain companies and their clients. Currently Canada has a range of products under various labels such as educational travel, study-tours, study abroad, learning vacations, "edutainment" and "ed-ventures". While these products vary in their target market, packaging and price, they all share a set of important common denominators. They involve unique partnerships, a commitment to learning, and understanding that the premium people are willing to pay is intimately linked to creating experiences that touch their hearts and minds. The challenge and the opportunity for the Canadian tourism industry is fourfold:

- strategically grow the depth and breadth of product,

- leverage marketing dollars
- conduct research that measures the economic and social impact, and
- create networking and training opportunities to learn about enrichment travel, develop networks, new product concepts and collaborative marketing strategies.

**LEADING EDGE ACTION**

The CTC and Parks Canada have taken proactive, leading roles in contracting research and working with industry to stimulate market awareness and product growth. The CTC's U.S. Leisure Marketing Program and Product Development Sector are working in harmony, using a leading edge approach to develop the product,

market and establish a platform for partnerships.

In June 2000, the Learning Travel Task Force was created uniting product and marketing representatives from government and the private sector. "Canada's tourism industry can be proud of the results realized to date and the process has only just begun," says Kim Whytock, Taskforce Chair. "We are doing something no other country is doing – building an integrated, collaborative foundation for the long-term, sustainable development of enrichment travel in Canada."

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# Commitment to excellence Educational integrity in learning travel

by Heather MacDonald

Personally enriching learning experiences are at the heart of every learning vacation package. The notion of enjoying in-depth learning experiences while travelling is a concept that is attracting many travellers to an increasingly significant sector of the Canadian tourism industry. While the rapidly growing learning vacation market is attractive and stimulating for travellers and industry alike, numerous principles that are essential to ensuring the quality and authenticity of the learning experiences – the hallmarks of the sector – must be considered.

For an experience to be personally enriching, the participants must be regarded as individuals, with individual needs, individual learning styles and individual learning objectives. And whether the participant is travelling as an independent traveller or within a group, the enrichment experiences have to touch each individual personally.

A learning experience implies that the individual will emerge from the experience with greater insight and an increased understanding with regards to the subject matter or activity that is being learned. Ideally, the individual will embrace the new knowledge and will adapt it into their repertoire of learned behaviours.

**LEARNING IS THE KEY COMPONENT**

The implication that the learning experience is the 'heart of the matter' is also essential to consider. If an experience or a combination of experiences are to truly leave a lasting

impression, the essence and unique qualities of the activity, site, event or destination have to be effectively and enthusiastically conveyed by the provider of the experience.

All of these aspects of learning travel packages need to be integrated into a cohesive, dynamic whole that inspires the participants to interact and learn. The individual elements, or learning modules, of the package should be designed to complement, enhance and build upon each other. The various learning activities should respect and integrate different learning styles. The learning experiences comprised in the package should be properly paced to ensure effective assimilation and retention. And, ideally each individual group's learning expectations should be assessed beforehand and the package should be designed or adapted to suit their identified needs.

**COMMITMENT ESSENTIAL**

The commitment to integrating these characteristics in quality learning travel activities and itineraries was voiced repeatedly during interviews with over 80 suppliers of Canadian learning travel experiences as part of a recent research project undertaken by Culture Quest International. At the same time, however, the suppliers stressed that it is a commitment that requires considerable time, resources, and investment in people, partnerships and infrastructures on their behalf. Similarly, for the tour operators and affinity groups that are developing learning travel vacations for their FIT markets and group clients

it is a commitment that requires resources, collaborative efforts and a creative process that goes far beyond the standard group tour approach.

Patricia Hatchman, President of First Island Tours Ltd. of Victoria, a local tour operator who specializes in interactive culinary and cultural themed learning vacation packages, confirmed that it takes at least three years to develop and fine tune a quality learning travel itinerary. This comment was echoed by suppliers of learning travel packages across the country.



Canadian Museum of Civilization, Hull, Québec

educational content and the methods of delivery considered as a whole. It is not enough for the subject matter to be fascinating. It has to be brought alive and interactively presented by the resource specialists in ways that engage the participants and leave a lasting impact."

Celes Davar, President of Earth Rhythms Inc. expressed a similar view in words that exemplify the creativity, rhythm and deft interpersonal skills that have to be crafted into each learning travel itinerary. Mr. Davar describes Earth Rhythms' Prairie-

based corporate incentive travel offerings as carefully choreographed experiences that are created with consideration for the groups' identified needs, the themes of interest, the educational content, the pacing of the delivery, and

the unique attributes of the resource experts and the other partners who contribute to the experiences. And significantly, Earth Rhythms' choreographed tours are conducted by experienced Facilitators who are keenly aware of the groups' interests and how to adapt to their diverse learning needs in a variety of learning situations.

**MEETING EXPECTATIONS**

David Mendel, President of Canadian Cultural Landscapes / Baillairgé Cultural Tours Inc., a private company based in Québec City, stressed that the educational integrity of the learning experiences is crucial to developing and delivering quality learning travel products. Mr. Mendel cites the educational orientation of their packages as the key to Canadian

Cultural Landscapes' success in a challenging marketplace characterized by very discerning clients. Canadian Cultural Landscapes often works collaboratively with its clients to assess their specific needs and expectations, and then designs new programs or adapts existing itineraries to suit each client. Their packages are characterized by a multi-faceted approach that integrates slide lectures, guided behind-the-scenes visits to cultural institutions and historical sites, and opportunities to interact with local subject matter experts.

### INDUSTRY EXCELLENCE

Clearly, creating and offering quality learning travel packages requires a committed, multi-faceted approach to product development and delivery, and an in-depth knowledge of the themes and subject matter that are being offered. Considerable dedication to establishing and maintaining partnerships is also required by both the suppliers of the experiences and the tour operators that create the packages.

If Canada is to fulfill its potential as a premier destination for quality learning travel vacations, all of the industry players in this inspiring and challenging sector must collectively prescribe to standards of excellence. Mediocrity does not have a place in a field where perceptive clients are seeking high quality, authentic experiences.

At this stage of significant growth, the Canadian learning travel sector would benefit from establishing criteria for defining and measuring standards of excellence in terms of educational content, delivery of the individual learning travel experiences, and tour itinerary development and operations. Training workshops in product development, delivery and packaging, complemented by on-going evaluation of the products, would contribute to establishing Canada as a world leader in quality-assured learning travel vacations.

*Heather MacDonald is a Consultant to the Learning Travel Sector with Culture Quest International  
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## Selling a Manitoba learning vacation

by Celes Davar

*"Thank you! I feel honoured to have met so many people in the community in such a short time and truly learned more about the area myself". These words, from a US-based CTC Leisure Travel Manager, rang true for seventeen residents in southern Manitoba who partnered with Riding Mountain National Park and Biosphere Reserve to create a memorable familiarization tour.*

As part of a successful bid by Tourism Winnipeg to bring the CTC's U.S. Leisure Group and Advisory Board to the "City of Festivals", a post-conference outing was sponsored by Travel Manitoba to help U.S. buyers become aware of Manitoba's learning adventures. Six CTC Leisure Sales

"Freedom Fantasy" coach (a well-appointed living room on wheels) resonated with the clarion voice of Ted Longbottom, Métis singer, songwriter, and storyteller. From the heart, he introduced the guests to the history and heritage of the Métis, making history come alive so they could almost "hear the buffalo hunt". As one participant remarked in his post-experience comments, "Great! A natural transfer from airport to lodge, setting the stage for a wonderful experience."

### NOT THE STANDARD FAM TOUR

There was no formula here. The guests did not tour hotel rooms, conference rooms, and listen to lectures. Instead,



managers from the U.S. and five U.S. tour operators took part in the "FAM". Beginning in Winnipeg, the

a careful choreography of encounters with authentic people and the Riding Mountain landscape provided a unique

## PARTNERS ACROSS BORDERS

by Celes Davar

Partners across borders is about more than simply bringing visitors from the U.S. to Canada. Developing and marketing learning vacations around Riding Mountain National Park crosses some less obvious borders, and is an example of how local operators, Park staff, local residents from communities and ranches near the national park, and a biosphere reserve volunteer group can stage a series of interactive learning experiences for visitors.

For a recent familiarization tour for U.S. operators and market specialists, the chair of Riding Mountain Biosphere Reserve, John Whitaker, brought perspectives about the many attractions of living and raising cattle in this area, with its high landscape and nature values that include black bears, elk, and moose. "Our UNESCO objectives include the melding of biodiversity conservation with the development of a sustainable economy, and learning vacations are a perfect fit. The culture of farming in such a diverse landscape provides opportunities for local residents to participate in learning tourism ventures related to both farm operations and to the natural environment." Whitaker goes on to say that major activities of biosphere reserves focus on research, education and communication, and working with local ecotourism operators can strengthen the largely agricultural economy while at the same time maintaining the commitment to biodiversity. "By involving local people in the travel product, new economic opportunities are being created – ones we never dreamed of previously."

### INVOLVING NATIONAL PARKS

National Park managers are assessing how they can be involved as "educational suppliers" to learning vacations. Riding Mountain National Park Superintendent Greg Fenton has made it a priority, beginning this year, to explore how the park staff can begin creating learning vacation modules. Fenton says, "my desire is for learning vacations to become an important part of our communication and education program. Partnering with tour operators to deliver unique experiences that complement national park objectives, including effecting understanding and support of our nationally and internationally significant natural and cultural heritage, is something that we must do."

Creating tourism partners across borders in and adjacent to protected areas requires leadership from agency managers and from local tour operators. Communication about the nature of the program needs to be frequent, honest, and direct. Background about the intent of the proposed program, its potential benefits to all involved, and the specific roles of each experience-provider need to be clear. Partner guidelines, sent out beforehand by the operator, clarify the intent of the overall program and provide suggestions for artists, craftspeople, musicians, aboriginal teachers, resort managers, and park staff.

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experience. The heart and soul of successful learning adventures is the interactivity and learning which happens for each person individually, as well as for the group as a whole.

From the interactive cuisine appetizer preparation, and a creative dinner menu with the chef and team at the four-star Elkhorn Resort, to the special gift of an elk antler letter opener presented by a local carver, to a special sharing circle with an Anishinabe teacher from Waywayseecappo First Nation, this was about building relationships. Partnerships between tour operators, hoteliers, and other suppliers grow from genuine relationship-building, one quality product at a time.

### HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES

During a surprise spring blizzard, National Park Warden Pat Rousseau carefully guided the FAM participant group towards a Global Positioning System (GPS) coordinate previously determined by airplane. Arrival at the location of two elk carcasses provided a unique opportunity to understand what happens when winter conditions make it difficult for these animals to

reach grasses which are hidden under an impenetrable layer of ice and snow. Making available a number of the GPS instruments provided everyone with a unique opportunity to feel what it is like to be guided by satellites in the sky.

An afternoon "country lunch" with guest ranch hosts Jim and Candy Irwin added warmth and a feeling like staying in someone's home. The FAM participants also spent time in the studio of artist Libby Weir where they could model with clay, paint with acrylic on a 15-foot canvas, or brush with watercolour.

This type of partnership in tourism, which steps lightly into communities, leaves wealth for local artists, preserves a protected area, and features regional cuisine provides very special opportunities for visitors. That's what learning vacations should feature: memorability, authenticity, simplicity, intensity, and reality.

*Celes Davar  
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# Parks Canada and learning vacations

Where can you hike along a rare, exposed portion of the earth's mantle thrust up from miles below the earth's surface... view an excavated house once inhabited by the ancient Dorset peoples... visit the 16<sup>th</sup> century's largest whaling port... wander among the encampments of the first European settlement in North America... and learn from resource people every step of the way? In the national parks and national historic sites – including two UNESCO World Heritage Sites – of Newfoundland and Labrador, thanks to Parks Canada and Saga Holidays, who have made it possible through the Road Scholar Program. It is one example of the capacity Parks Canada is building with travel industry partners to meet the growing demand for learning vacations and enrichment travel.

## A NATIONAL PROGRAM

The nationally coordinated learning travel program connects tourism operators with people, places and programs in 4 national marine conservation areas, 39 national parks, and over 145 national historic sites managed by Parks Canada throughout the country – including 9 UNESCO World Heritage Sites. It's a program that offers the possibility of adding diverse natural and cultural experiences, in authentic and safe environments, to a client's itinerary.

Parks Canada's high-quality, hands-on, interactive learning activities can be delivered by interpreters, researchers, scientists, curators, wardens, historians and other on-site experts. Activities are customized to create unique packages that meet the needs of a wide variety of groups.

"These are not standard tours" says Nancy Arsenault, Parks Canada's Learning Travel Specialist. "They are enriched visitation experiences tailored to meet the needs of people interested in special access to unique, authentic, behind-the-scenes heritage experiences in our national parks and national heritage sites."

## EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

Parks Canada has been acting in a support role to tour operators for many years. Now the agency is working to develop its capacities as an education and program partner.

"As the educational partner, we supply the resource specialist for packages developed by the tour operator," says Arsenault. "The tour operator identifies the needs, and

Parks Canada delivers the appropriate enrichment programming."

An example of educational partnerships are the Road Scholar Programs offered by Saga Travel in Newfoundland and Labrador, and in the Rocky Mountains.

The 7-day "Calgary and Banff, Heritage of the Canadian West"



Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site

package offers a variety of Parks Canada programming. A visit to Bar U Ranch National Historic Site includes a recital of verse by a cowboy poet, plus a traditional "cow camp" stew dinner. In Banff, participants explore the Cave and Basin National Historic Site, join a guide for a walk along the Marsh Loop Trail, and visit the Banff Park Museum, among other things.

A full-day excursion to Lake Louise is followed by a trip to the Columbia Icefield, where specially equipped Sno-coaches carry participants onto the massive Athabasca Glacier. The last day offers the option of an excursion to Kootenay National Park. Parks Canada experts provide insightful lectures at various points along the way.

And that's only the Parks Canada portion of the package. Lots more is involved, including a visit to Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, a UNESCO World Heritage Site where Blackfoot Hunters lured great herds of bison over the edge of a cliff.

## PROGRAM PARTNERSHIPS

The program partnership is even more involved – a lengthier, more

complex process, but well worth the time and effort.

"We sit down with the tour operator and explore objectives and mutually beneficial opportunities," says Arsenault. "We also work towards fostering a sense of shared responsibility for our national parks and national historic sites."

One illustration is the set of packages under development with Routes to Learning Canada. The Fortress of Louisbourg National Historic Site, for example, is one of the destinations on the menu. This 12-acre site features more than 50 buildings and a community of costumed interpreters who re-create the lives of 18<sup>th</sup>-century fishermen, servants, soldiers, ladies and merchants.

Once one of the busiest harbours in North America, this national historic site now offers an authentic 18<sup>th</sup> century experience, including French cuisine, formal gardens, lively taverns, and theatre and musical performances. It's an opportunity for visitors to relive maritime and military history, and to rediscover the genesis of much of North America's French-speaking population.

Within reach of the Fortress of Louisbourg is a different sort of experience – the Alexander Graham Bell National Historic Site, devoted to the life and work of the well-known communications technology pioneer. Most famous as the inventor of the telephone, Bell made countless other contributions to fields such as aviation and genetics.

This national historic site offers access to the world's largest collec-

tion of artifacts, photographs and personal mementos relating to this fascinating man. And it tells the story of Alexander's equally engaging wife Mabel, the inventor's silent partner and major contributor to his success, and an energetic individual with numerous, significant accomplishments unrelated to her husband's career.

## THE FUTURE OF LEARNING TRAVEL AT PARKS CANADA

Experiential travel opportunities developed in partnership with Parks Canada draw on the unique knowledge and expertise of a wide range of specialists. They are designed for group travellers and, depending on the location, may be available year-round. The flexibility and potential heritage opportunities are a great advantage to tour operators.

Parks Canada also benefits from learning and enrichment travel. Given the planning cycle, these programs represent a proactive way to manage human use and visitor demand because they attract the right visitor, at the right time, to the right place, with the right expectations. It helps support Parks Canada's ecological and commemorative integrity priorities.

"Learning travel engages people in their heritage experience," says Arsenault. "It creates a positive, memorable visitor experience, enriches the people who deliver the program, and promotes innovative partnerships."

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# Routes to Learning Canada

One organization that isn't surprised by the new emphasis on learning travel is Routes to Learning Canada (RLC). Offering one-stop shopping for Canadian learning travel packages, the 21-year old national not-for profit company (formerly ELDERHOSTEL Canada) has broadened its mature market focus to include baby boomers, conference travellers and affiliation groups. Based in Kingston, Ontario, the new organization is looking forward to expanding its products and services into the rapidly growing Canadian learning travel market.

Despite the growth potential of this market, RLC cautions that it's easy to corrupt the unique importance of this type of travel: the learning component. An experienced adult educator and travel packager, RLC's President and CEO Robert Williston

says that it's important to maintain the educational integrity of the product. He fears that new companies entering the market won't understand the value and importance of the learning experience to the consumer.

"It isn't about slapping a tour guide onto the bus with a script," says Williston. "It's about really making people understand and think about why what they are seeing and doing is significant to their personal growth...and how it fits into the wider experience of their own lives and others."

## CONSUMER CHOICE

RLC is uniquely placed in its multiple emphases in the learning travel market. Allowing for consumer choice and flexibility is critical to packaging in this market. Companies that can

# Learning to ride the wave

address both group and independent travellers' needs are poised to do well.

Williston is excited by the changes to the organization. "We are embarking on an expedition of change," he said, "and will be expanding our learning travel products. Designed by Canadians for Canadians, they will celebrate Canada's broad natural, cultural, social, musical, political, historical and artistic richness." Williston says that RLC is keenly interested in forming partnerships with museums, art galleries, alumni associations, and service organizations. "By partnering with existing organizations," he said, "we will be able to use our 20 years of educational programming experience effectively."

## EXPERIENCE AND GROWTH

Response from interested travellers has been steady. "There's an overwhelming interest in Canadian programming that has been growing rapidly over the last few years," said Andrea Cole, Director of Communications and Marketing. "People want to travel and learn about their own country, but they also have definite ideas about the types of learning experiences they're seeking. Our challenge is to offer learning travel products that are second to none in terms of quality and value. RLC leads the market in this respect. No one else offers our experience, products and service in Canada."

Not only Canadians are enthusiastic about RLC. "We've already created and marketed product to groups from abroad, particularly the Asian market" stresses Cole. The change in the company has certainly helped in this respect. "We're in a much stronger position now to create alliances and partner with others interested in developing and delivering quality experiential opportunities beyond the older adult market."

For 2001, RLC's "Canada Learning Series 2001" offers a variety of 4 to 5 day thematic programs, as well as service learning programs. It joins the ever-popular Cuban Learning Series, which is already booking travellers for its new season. On the horizon for 2002 is the Commonwealth Learning Series, as well as weekend getaways and customized group itineraries. RLC continues to be the provider of Elderhostel programming in Canada.

Established in Kingston in 1986, Routes to Learning Canada, formerly ELDERHOSTEL Canada, leads the market in Canadian learning travel products. Currently RLC employs 12 full time and two part-time employees in a total of 4 offices in Western, Central and Eastern Canada, coordinating programming at 200+ venues in all 10 provinces and 3 territories.

[www.routestolearning.ca](http://www.routestolearning.ca)



*Haida Houses, Collection of the Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver*

by Helen Chadwick

There is a wave of learning travel awareness sweeping across Canada from coast to coast to coast. Riding the crest are traditional learning venues such as art, heritage and cultural sites as well as tour operators interested in capitalizing on this new product. Driven by market demand with the burgeoning demographic of educated boomers, the product is designed to provide unique and authentic experiences. These travellers are willing to pay for hands-on exclusive experiences and subject experts who can disseminate information and knowledge about what the travellers are seeing.

Behind-the-scenes visits at museums like the Canadian Museum of Civilization are now possible for groups. Participants can visit the archive rooms and see how artifacts are catalogued and stored and museum curators will explain how they create exhibitions. At the National Gallery of Canada, a specialist will describe the frames around paintings and explain how they are chosen. Pre and post performance talks with actors or directors are becoming standard fare at Canada's theatres. First Nations guides at the UBC Museum of Anthropology in Vancouver will enlighten guests about native art and culture.

## DMO'S ALERT TO OPPORTUNITY

Provincial and destination management organizations are targeting the learning travel market and developing specific material to catalogue and promote the enriching opportunities in their region. Tourism New

Brunswick is devoting time and energy to attracting this niche market and has developed Learning Quest Adventures. Québec City and Kingston are just two municipalities that have created learning travel directories for the sites, attractions and features in their cities. Eastern Ontario DMOs, sites and operators have joined together to provide History Alive, tracing the route of French Canadians from Cobourg to Kingston, and the Rideau Heritage Route along the historic Rideau Canal.

Parks Canada is another organization making a concentrated effort to develop partnerships with the tourism industry in the learning travel market. Beyond expanding their own

internal capabilities, they are actively helping to educate specialty tour operators and travel suppliers about the product potential and reaching markets in Canada and the United States.

## TOUR COMPANIES RESPOND

SNV International, Canada's leading independent receptive tour operator, is making experiential travel and enriching experiences available to tour operators and travel agents around the world. Through its extensive supplier network in Canada, SNV International is able to offer culinary & wine tours, nature observation with interpretive guides, archaeology digs, tours of artisan studios with hands on learning, art and culture interpretation programs, First Nations experiences and behind-the-scenes tours of museums. Many of the programs are available for the FIT (independent) traveller as well as for custom groups.

Several tour companies provide complete learning packages throughout Canada for both affinity groups or individuals by direct booking: Canadian Cultural Landscapes, Adventure Canada, Routes to Learning Canada and Odyssey Learning Adventures, to name a few. Odyssey Learning Adventures has recently expanded from offering Elderhostel programs, to making enriching learning travel experiences across the country available to all age groups. These programs involve history, culture and fine arts themes which are explored on board trains, in the Northwest, Nunavut, and major cities in Canada. New additions to those

## AN ODYSSEY OF LEARNING

Odyssey Learning Adventures, based in Kingston Ontario, develops and administers educational and cultural tourism adventures throughout Canada. Odyssey Learning Adventures has expanded from offering Elderhostel programs to making enriching learning travel experiences across the country open to all individuals. The current demographics, market trends, and the growing interest in authentic experiential travel all point towards this change at this time.

History and culture themes are explored in the Arctic, Nunavut, and across the country on Trans-Canada train programs. Urban programs range from exploring the unique French Canadian culture of Québec City, the world class theatre and museums of Toronto and Ottawa, to the multi-cultural city of Vancouver, Canada's window on the Pacific. The public and private art galleries of Toronto and Ottawa are exciting and representative of all schools of art. The Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Royal Ontario Museum offer a rich tapestry of exhibits and interpretive programming. Active programs available include canoeing and kayaking in pristine lakes and rivers, hiking unspoiled mountain vistas, biking along country roads and exploring the national parks.

After nine years of working in this market, Odyssey Learning Adventures has established relationships with educational and travel suppliers across Canada who are experienced with the sensitivities and uniqueness of this product. In 2000, they operated more than 50 programs involving in excess of 1,500 participants. While programs are available for individual bookings, they can also be tailored to the specific needs of groups. Assistance is provided with marketing materials and client presentations if required.

[www.odyssey-travel.com](http://www.odyssey-travel.com)

offerings include intergenerational, programs geared for youth and service programs.

Given their unique nature and relatively prohibitive cost for individuals, many of the learning experiences are still only available for groups. Some industry experts believe that learning travel will bring consumers "back to the bus". This may be true, but this bus will take a different road and travel an authentic route to the exceptional enriching experiences that Canada has to offer.

*Helen Chadwick  
operates Odyssey Learning  
Adventures  
[www.odyssey-travel.com](http://www.odyssey-travel.com)*

# Language learning in the country

Language holidays have always been popular because people know they will learn a language much faster and better in a country where it is spoken. Whether the boss insists on improved language skills or whether personal interest is the primary motivation – learning quickly on a holiday is definitely preferable to those dreary evening courses back home.

It's not a new idea. There are literally thousands of EFL (English as a Foreign Language) schools in North America, Britain, Australia, New Zealand, the Caribbean and parts of Africa. The majority are big, urban based and cater to a fairly young student clientele. The situation is similar for French language schools.

## RURAL ROUTE APPEAL

Wakefield, Québec, typical of small-town Canada, is a picturesque village on the banks of the Gatineau River. With nearby lakes, hills, skiing, golfing, dogsledding, canoeing, hiking, fishing – the attractions are there. Artists and artisans galore. In the summer, an antique train pulled by a steam

engine from Ottawa – 30 miles south – drops tourists in for a couple of hours every day. There's great music at the local bar. Many people come for a visit, whether it's winter for skiing or summer for canoeing. But how do you get them to stay?

Can this sort of ambience entice people to come to a small school in a small town in Canada to learn English? According to the foreign customers at River Echo, that's just it: it's in Canada and it's not in a city. Like most people in other countries, they first and foremost associated Canada with space, trees, lakes, rivers, bears, whales, fishing, lumberjacks, big mountains, big skies and big snow. That is what they came to see and that was an integral part of their learning experience – where they come from they could never experience that.

The teachers at River Echo have a variety of skills and interests besides the language training and they are often part of these other activities. If not, River Echo will draw from the many talents and skills that exist in the community of Wakefield and can

deliver almost everything that customers ask for. It also helps sharing the building with the local outfitter, Expéditions Radisson. Canoes, bikes, skis and other outdoor equipment are available right there and the time for the dogsled trip can be arranged with the "musher" in the room next door.

## MAKE IT PERSONAL

Visitors have said that it was the personal contacts they made that helped make their stay in Wakefield so memorable. Every new 'student' at River Echo gets a tour of the village and is introduced to people present in the stores, the library, the post office, the cafés, the bar, etc. (Try that in the city!) This breaks the ice, makes them feel more welcome and less like strangers – and it helps them with their language skills. For the same reasons, customers are encouraged to make use of the school's homestay program.

For other Canadian small-town and rural businesses in the 'Learning Vacation' segment of the tourism industry, there is a valuable lesson to learn from the River Echo experience: the country and the people are your biggest assets.

[www.EnglishInCanada.com](http://www.EnglishInCanada.com)

# Just what is a learning vacation anyway?

A new publication from the CTC will help you answer that question, and many more: the first volume of *Canadian Ed-ventures: Learning Vacations in Canada* is now available.

## Information covered in the report includes:

- Definitions and Clarifications
- Markets, Products, Pricing
- Packaging
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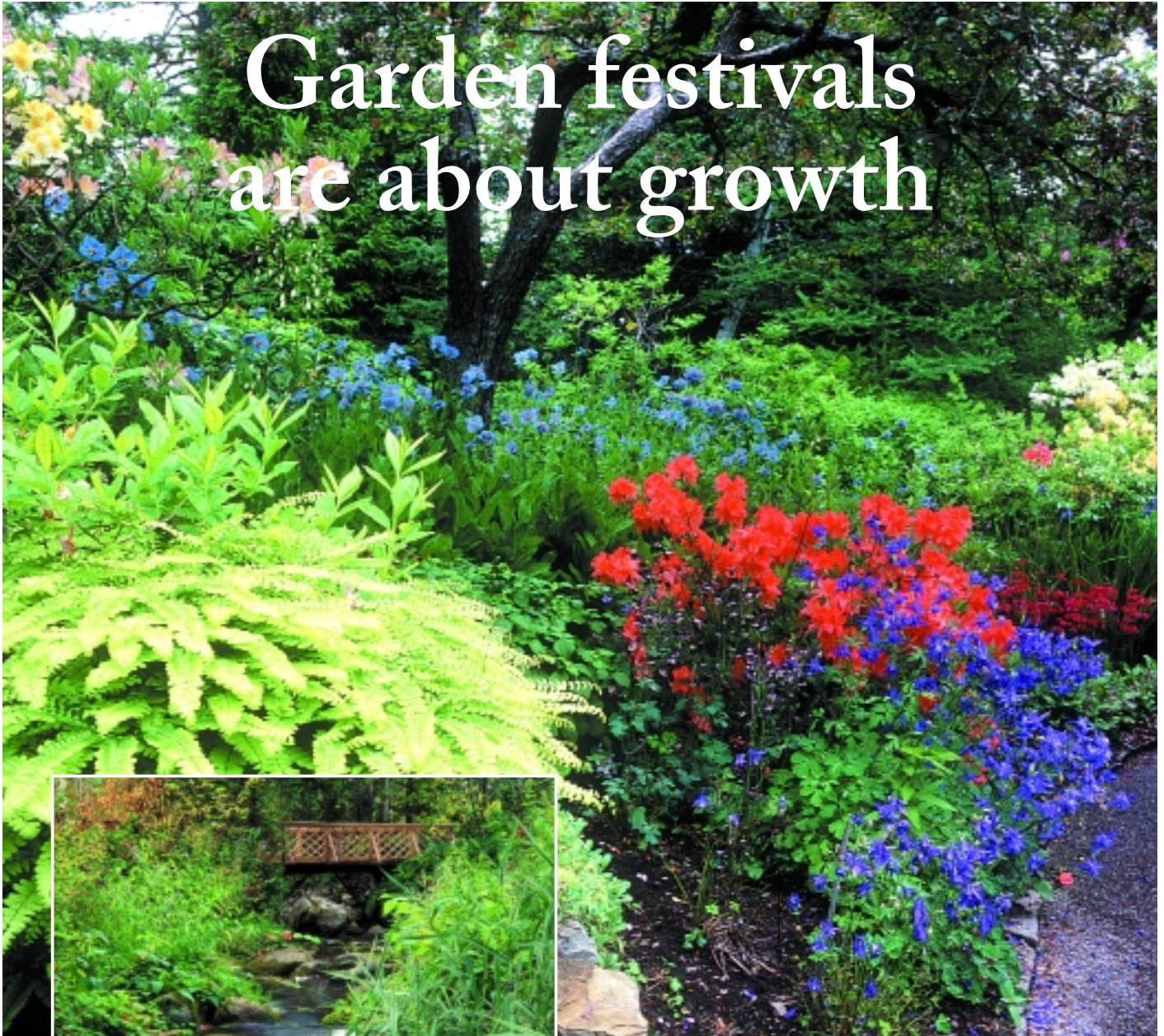
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# Garden festivals are about growth



The 2001 edition of the International Garden Festival at Grand-Métis, Québec, will take place from June 23 to September 30, 2001. Ten temporary gardens will be presented, one of which is designed by Anna Radice and Patricia Lussier (author of *Not in My Backyard*). Their garden will be joined by four gardens to be created by designers from this year's

featured country, France. Five other temporary gardens will be created by designers from Québec, Alberta, and the United States, chosen following an international call for proposals.

The 2000 edition of the festival enjoyed remarkable public and critical success. 127,473 visitors came to the Gardens over the course of the summer, an increase of more than 40 per cent in comparison with 1999.

The program will be complemented by a series of events developed in collaboration with the Centre Culturel des Jardins de l'Imaginaire in Terrasson (one of the

leading contemporary gardens in France) to include the following: a garden book fair (*La plume et le râteau*), an international colloquium on landscape, and master classes by French landscape designers in conjunction with the annual session of the Summer School in Gardens and Garden Design. These activities will take place in August 2001.

Denis Lemieux, Director  
418 775-2294  
festival@jardinsmetis.com





## Virgin develops a partnership with Ontario

Effective June 12, 2001, British-based Virgin Atlantic Airways will launch daily 747 non-stop service between London's Gatwick and Toronto's Lester B. Pearson International Airport. Introductory round-trip economy fare is \$659CDN.

"I am very excited about the possibilities of our new partnership with Virgin Atlantic Airways," says Eugene Zakreski, chief operating officer of Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation (OTMPC). "I am confident our new alliance will benefit all our stakeholders and provide a tremendous boost for the tourism industry in Ontario."

The OTMPC's role in this partnership is to assist Virgin Atlantic

Airways with promoting Ontario as a destination of choice to British consumers, tour operators and the travel trade. Virgin Atlantic Airways estimates that their new Canadian route will provide an annual economic benefit to Toronto of more than \$200 million in increased jobs, trade and tourism, with some 50 additional jobs to be created in Toronto. Among the new hires, Virgin has named Steven Larkin – an Ontario native and graduate of York University as regional manager for Ontario.

Virgin Atlantic Airways, which began service in 1984, is now the second largest British long-haul international airline.

[www.virgin-atlantic.com](http://www.virgin-atlantic.com)

## Newfoundland a "destination for time travellers"

Tour operators are turning to Newfoundland and Labrador for new Cultural/ Heritage and Learning Vacation itineraries. The diversity and distinct mix of European, Viking, and Aboriginal interpretative and active archaeological sites dating back over 9,000 years make Newfoundland and Labrador as a globally significant destination. Saga Holidays picked Newfoundland for its destination for the new and highly popular "Road Scholar Program." Canadian Cultural Landscape's Barry Lane offers Newfoundland and Labrador as one of its most popular "new" packages. And when Smithsonian Study Tours added "Wild Newfoundland" to its program it quickly became one of its fastest selling new products.

"A wonderful destination for time travellers" is how Archaeology Magazine editor Angela Schuster describes Newfoundland and Labrador. Schuster adds that "the host of interpretation centres and ongoing archaeological excavations provide insight into the lives of its first inhabitants, with each culture leaving its indelible mark on this dramatic, pristine landscape."

For hotel manager Chad Letto at the Northern Light Inn in Labrador

there is something "invigorating" about sharing stories, songs and a bakeapple pie around a cozy evening fire with these groups. When tourists return from a day that takes them to the 16th century Basque whaling station at Red Bay National Historic Site and inside the tallest light house in Atlantic Canada at Point Amour, there is an undeniable sense of pride and place for Letto. For the visitor, there is a remarkable sense of discovery and fascination as they have ventured to one of the most inspiring parts of this great country and shared with its people their life history.

*Interested tour operators may obtain Archaeology's Guide to Newfoundland and Labrador, The New Found Destination by contacting The Department of Tourism Culture and Recreation*

Charlotte Jewczyk  
709 729-0992

[cjewczyk@mail.gov.nf.ca](mailto:cjewczyk@mail.gov.nf.ca)



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## 'Root-Less' competition will continue

by Bob Mowat

Pardon the pun, but is there anyone out there that is really surprised that Roots Air didn't make it?

I used to talk to my father (who was in the graphic arts wholesale business) a lot about the travel business and he could never fathom the nature of this industry's inventory. The most printable exclamation that he used to describe it was "bloody ridiculous."

My point being that when traditional retailers – well-experienced with hard goods and 200 to 300 per cent mark-ups – get into the airline business it doesn't take too long for it to become clear that they'll never get the mark-ups they have come to expect from their traditional or core business and, in most cases, they discover that the return on investment is pitifully less than satisfying.

Roots, the retailer, and SkyService, the charter and special aviation services operator, are both

good at what they do, but the cards were stacked against them in the sked airline side of the business. I'm sure that there was lots of money burned during the course of the experience, but there was no way that Air Canada was going to let them get a foothold in the pointy-end business that AC has been targeting for many years now.

### WHAT'S NEXT

Well, with Air Canada making noises about the launch of a low-cost carrier – RootsJet, perhaps – sometime in June or July, it certainly looks like we're in for a tumultuous summer. Already AC pilots have made it clear that they don't like their employer's plans to create such an airline on the 'negative heels' of Roots.

And it is certainly going to be exciting to watch and see what kind of fireworks develop this country's dominant carrier and its arch nemesis, Konrad von Finckenstein, commis-

sioner of the Competition Bureau. He's already made it abundantly clear that he doesn't like the kind of market dominance AC has and that, as he was recently quoted in one Toronto national newspaper, maybe it's time to bring more international competition into the Canadian marketplace.

Hmmm... I wonder if he's sending AC a message here?

### OTHER (SILLY) THOUGHTS

Let's see Roots Air's gone. Royal and CanJet have been swallowed by Canada 3000. I guess there's absolutely no possibility that another 'traditional retailer' would consider a foray into the sked airline business.

I'd love to see a "WalMart Air" or possibly a "Club Z-Jet." Actually, the latter is my preference seeing it would give me somewhere to spend the Club Z points that I've accumulated over the past few years. Come on guys, gals, get those red pencils out and consider taking a shot at it.

### I STAYED FOR THE COMMERCIAL !

Congratulations to the gang at the

Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), you made me miss at least one of my standard "run-to-the-fridge" breaks when my attention was grabbed by your new 'native land' TV promotional spots.

Now let's build on it and get that Canadian Travel Agent Specialist program in full swing and don't just swing it abroad (Is this politically correct?). Go after the domestic agency market. There are all sorts of agencies, groups and chains, out their looking for educational opportunities for their counselors that will help them generate more sales and revenue for their agency.

These programs have had a great deal of success for destinations (think Australia) and companies (think Sandals Resorts) in the last few years, and it's time to move the specialist program up the priority list.

What better country to sell than Canada!

Bob Mowat is Managing Editor  
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## SELLING CANADA

## Learning opportunities add a new value dimension to baby-boomer vacations

by Fred White

We're not talking about something that involves study or hard work. A learning vacation means choosing a destination and / or activity, then having the opportunity to enrich that experience with a deeper, more rewarding involvement. This travel segment is one of the fastest-growing categories in the world. Growth rate in Canada was 13 per cent last year, *twice that of worldwide tourism*. The market is well-educated baby-boomers who are interested enough in their destination and itinerary to want to take home much more than snap-shot memories. They're financially secure and willing to pay for high-quality and authentic travel experiences that give them a deeper appreciation and knowledge of the places they visit. The opportunities

vary according to region and are available across the country.

### For instance:

In New Brunswick, Scott Walking Adventures believe that many visitors to the Bay of Fundy want much more than just seeing the highest tides in the world. Today, Scott guides take visitors out onto the ocean floor where they explain the impact the tides have had in creating unique rock sculptures and sea-caves, and where they discover hidden chapters of history through freshly uncovered fossils. Tours also include rafting trips on the Fundy tide and opportunities to learn about the endangered right whale.

**Catherine Collins: 1 800 262-8644  
adventures@scottwalking.com**

Over 700,000 people come each year to the Niagara Peninsula to be part of the harvest at 40 different wineries. They want to learn about grape varieties, see grapes being pressed, understand the effect of oak barrels on aging, then enjoy the tastings. At wineries like Inniskillin, these learning opportunities don't stop at wine appreciation, they have evolved with many cooking schools, chef's seminars, restaurants and hotels in the area that prepare and serve international and

Canadian cuisine as part of a unique vacation experience.

**The Wine Council of Ontario  
www.wineroute.com**

Can a museum be more of a learning experience than it already is? At the Museum of Civilization in Hull/Ottawa they are providing original and authentic programs that expand the traditional museum visit. Curators and players from the museum's own theatrical company become major participants in bringing exhibits like *One Thousand Years of Canadian History* to life. Today, many museums in the area are collaborating in the development of similar programs that involve the visitor in historic events, cultures, politics, and the preservation of our National Parks.

**France Faucher: 819 776-7086  
france.faucher@civilization.ca**

How do you attract visitors to a floral garden in winter? Butchart Gardens, near Victoria on Vancouver Island developed a learning program that showed how they created one of the most admired gardens in the world from a disused quarry. Historical material, including original furniture, artifacts, memorabilia and photographs, that had been saved over

100 years, was organized and displayed in a presentation in the original Butchart residence. From mid-January to early March it attracted over 14,000 visitors.

**Alison Partridge: 250 652-4422**

ENF Canada have been providing adventure and learning tours for ten years. In addition to exploring Québec City, they take guests to the boreal forest to learn how wildlife and plants have adapted to unique ecosystems. Their list of tours also include visits to the Canada Trail and a bird sanctuary that is visited by thousands of migrating snow geese. Their business grew by 14 per cent last year. They estimate that these types of learning products will account for 50 per cent of their business within two years.

**Roch Ancil: 1 888 692-9965  
enfcan@cilc.net**

For more information on Learning Travel, see other articles throughout the magazine and contact provincial and territorial tourism offices across the country.

*Fred White is President of  
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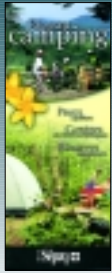
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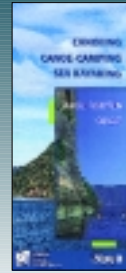
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## Going back in time to learn

Two of Saskatchewan's best learning vacations are all about exploring our pre-historic past. Head to the province's Cypress Hills and Frenchman River Valley to look for dino bones. Or go north to find out why ancient native people used the rocky shores of the Churchill River as a canvas for spiritual dreams.

### DIGGIN' DINOS IN THE DIRT

The newly constructed T-rex Discovery Centre, located in the southwest Saskatchewan community of Eastend, has developed learning vacation programs as part of the overall visitor experience at the centre. The 16,000 sq. ft complex is built into the slopes of the Frenchman River Valley and contains a working fossil research laboratory operated by the Royal Saskatchewan Museum, a 98-seat theatre, educational room, gift shop, visitor information area and administration area. The Frenchman River Valley has been recognized as one of western Canada's richest fossil areas.

A two and a half hour program takes you back almost 40 million years, when southern Saskatchewan was a large open savanna. Visitors have the opportunity to view the quarry, as interpreters explain the operations and discoveries found there. Technicians excavating the fossils provide information on the wide range of specimens being discovered at the site and the scientific importance of the specimens.

A second program expands on the Fossil Tour and is called Day Dig. This half or whole-day activity puts you right in the middle of the fossil excavation. Guides transport visitors to the site and introduce them to the technician working the excavation. Tools and equipment are supplied. This program is designed for those looking to experience being the first human to even touch or see a specimen and allows the visitor to experience the "real-life" task of excavating fossils.

### MESSAGES ON GRANITE

Experience a five-day, soul-inspiring encounter with ancient culture,

heritage and archaeology by discovering Canada's most spectacular display of Canadian shield rock art in the remote northern Saskatchewan wilderness. With professional archaeologist Tim Jones, author of *The Aboriginal Rock Paintings of the Churchill River*, and a local Cree guide, explore the painting sites by canoe – just as indigenous artists did centuries ago. Take part in archaeological research and interpretation, listen to legends of the paintings' origins and meanings, learn about ancient hunting and gathering cultures of the area, and more. Inhabit this opportunity for a physical and spiritual connection to the land and its intriguing heritage.

There are over 100 pictographs – second largest display in Canada – available for viewing at this northern 'open-air gallery' and no where in the country are they as vivid and well preserved. The setting is dramatic, with gigantic outcrops and sheer rock walls – natural inspiration for the visionary messages painted ages ago on this rough granite canvas.

Base camp is located about 50 air miles from the Churchill River hamlet of Missinipe, 550 km north of Saskatoon. Rustic cabin accommodation is available in addition to tenting on site. This year's Rock Art

Camp is slated for Aug. 16-20 at a cost of \$1,490 (\$1,065 US).

**Diggin' Dinosaurs**  
www.dinocountry.com

**Rock Art Camp**  
www.canoeski.com

### WORLD HERITAGE SITES OFFER GLIMPSE OF PRE-HISTORY

In Newfoundland and Labrador, the Viking Trail stretches all the way from the west coast of the island to Southern Labrador. It is the only route to the popular UNESCO World Heritage sites at Gros Morne National Park and L'Anse aux Meadows National Historic Site.

Learning travel packages along the Viking Trail have grown ten-fold in recent years, with companies such as the Smithsonian Institute, Canadian Cultural Landscapes, Saga's Road Scholar Program and Routes To Learning Canada enjoying increased demand and rave reviews far exceeding expectations. Viking Trail Marketing Director Randy Letto credits the industry for its "commitment to quality service, skilled academic interpretation and respect of their land."

www.vikingtrail.org

## Travel for the “experience” of it

by Martha Plaine

Starting this June, American visitors to New Brunswick will have the chance to don life jackets and take to sea for a day's work with a lobster fisherman. In the morning, they'll set the traps, and later in the day, haul up the catch. In between, they'll learn about the life cycle of the lobster, what they eat, and how to tell the males from the females. After a day on the Baie des Chaleurs, the visitors will plunge the day's catch into a steaming cauldron. And they'll sit down to a lobster supper that they helped create.

Or, travellers to British Columbia will have the opportunity to work with staff of the Vancouver Aquarium who care for beluga whales and other marine mammals. They'll learn about their diet and help prepare their meals. Then, along with regular staff, the visitors will suit up and dive into the beluga pools where they will actually feed the whales.

These are two new programs that SNV International is offering this season. Cathy Holler is vice president of marketing for SNV, a company that creates Canadian tours for American and overseas tour operators.

Trips like the lobster fishing

experience in New Brunswick and beluga feeding in British Columbia represent an evolution in Holler's thinking about the role of learning vacations in travel. “It first became apparent to me when I attended the Non-profits in Travel annual conference in Washington D.C., maybe five or six years ago,” says Holler.

### EXPERIENCE BEYOND TRAVEL

“There were groups such as Smithsonian Associates, the National Audubon Society, and alumni organizations providing an experience that was almost beyond travel. Their trips included lectures and field work with the very top people in their fields – truly intellectual, enriching experiences.” Holler was interested in providing products for these specialty tour operators. At the same time she wondered if learning vacations might not have broader appeal.

Kim Whytock knew from his work with Parks Canada that there was increasing demand from visitors to the national parks for more in-depth experiences. National parks were responding by creating new programs for groups, families, and independent travellers. In the Rockies,

for instance, parks offered opportunities to work alongside trained biologists doing field work. In Prince Edward Island National Park, visitors could sign up for birding walks led by ornithologists. Over a period of years, Whytock came to believe that Canada had great potential to expand on the basic notion of a learning vacation and give it a popular twist.

In her job as Vice President of Marketing with VIA rail, Christena Keon Sirsly observed that travellers' tastes were changing. Customers were asking for more exotic, more stimulating educational experiences. VIA was looking into ways of satisfying the demand.

### JOINING FORCES

In the mid-1990's Cathy Holler, Kim Whytock, and Christena Keon Sirsly joined the U.S. Leisure Executive Committee. Sirsly is now chair of the committee. They met regularly with colleagues from the hotel and resort industry, a cruise line, and provincial and territorial tourism departments.

During frequent discussions about market trends in the U.S., the committee talked about learning vacations. They consulted CTC staff. Sylvie Lafleur, director of the U.S. Leisure Marketing program, provided information from the market research and analysis group. Studies confirmed that travel tastes were indeed changing; that the Baby Boomer generation, in particular, was looking for travel experiences that gave them opportunities for learning and

enrichment; and that there was real demand for learning vacations and experiential travel.

### MAKING IT WORK

The committee decided to set up and provide a budget for an expert Task Force to look into the potential for marketing Canadian learning vacations. Keon Sirsly, Whytock, Holler, and their colleagues realized that this was more than a question of marketing strategy. They needed to address the “product” side. Given a market demand in the U.S. for learning vacations, could Canada satisfy the demand? They brought in staff with the CTC's product development group to work on the project.

As other stories in this issue of *Communiqué* demonstrate, the Task Force accomplished the goals the U.S. Leisure Executive Committee set. Staff compiled an inventory of market-ready experiences for group and individual travel, and a pilot marketing program with several tour operators is about to begin.

“The Task Force has been a success,” says Cathy Holler. “We see that the idea of learning vacations/experiential travel has expanded across all boundaries. There is great interest among suppliers, great interest among tour operators, and we know there is great interest from our customers. This is going to be a fresh look for Canada.”

Martha Plaine  
is an Ottawa-based freelance writer  
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## What's in a name?

by Martha Plaine

There are several ideas about what to call this type of travel product. “Learning vacations” is common, but the term may suggest that study, classrooms, and tests are involved. That's not the case.

Some prefer the term “enrichment experiences” to distinguish this type of travel from language study and academic courses. Ernest Labrègue, a product specialist with the CTC's Product Development branch, points out that enrichment experiences are one subset of the larger category of learning travel.

The following definition of enrichment experiences/learning vacations comes from the CTC report Canadian Ed-Ventures, Learning Vacations in Canada, An Overview:

“A pre-organized, structured, high quality learning opportunity that allows visitors to experience the authentic cultural, historical, and natural wonders of an area, led by top experts; learning vacations require participants to travel and stay at one

or more destinations away from their usual place of residence.

### A LONG TRADITION

Whether you prefer the term learning vacations or enrichment experiences, this type of travel is part of a respected tradition. And research shows that as the mature and baby boomer market segments grow, the demand for this type of travel is also growing.

On the non-profit side, what was formerly Elderhostel Canada and its parent organization in the U.S. are grand-daddies in the field, in business for twenty years. Elderhostel Canada has recently struck out on its own and formed a new company, Routes to Learning Canada, and is running programs at more than two-hundred locations in every province and territory.

The Smithsonian Institute, based in Washington, D.C., is another veteran supplier of learning vacations and enrichment experiences. The large readership of *Smithsonian Traveler* magazine is one indication

of the high level of interest: there are more than 170,000 active subscribers. The institute estimates that each year more than 100,000 people take its tours.

University alumni associations in the U.S. and Canada have long been in the business of offering customized learning vacations/enrichment experiences to their members. A number of private companies in Canada and the U.S. offer travellers the opportunity to learn and experience for themselves the authentic culture and natural history of many fascinating places.

### DEMAND EXCEEDS SUPPLY

Public sector attractions such as museums, Parks Canada, and cultural organizations have taken initiative, adding opportunities for in-depth learning experiences to their programming activities, but the demand for learning travel and enrichment experiences exceeds the Canadian supply. One challenge facing Canada is to figure out how commercial tour operators can tap into the wealth of opportunity for learning travel and enrichment experiences that already exists.

Research from several sources underlines some of the hurdles. For instance, a 1999 Rendez-Vous Canada survey concluded that learning vacations/enrichment experiences represent a significant opportunity to offer a product that is much in demand by an affluent, demographically important segment, the mature and baby boomer markets. But, although Canada has all the raw ingredients of cultural, historical, and natural attractions to develop top-notch learning vacations, we are behind our competitors, especially the U.S., in this field.

### BEAR FACTS AND PHOTOGRAPHS

The industry is getting involved. Some attractions and businesses saw the opportunity early; the business run by David Mendel and Barry Lane, Canadian Cultural

Landscapes, is one such enterprise. The Banff Centre is another. The Centre offers a series of packages they call Live and Learn.

One is the Grizzly Bear Vacation. Small groups of participants take field trips with top research scientists to

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## Small country, big market for Canada

Switzerland is a very lucrative market for Canada. With a population of only a little bit more than 7 million people, Canada has received 103,800 visitors from this tiny country in 2000. The average spent of Swiss travellers was \$1,321 per person and is one of the highest which we receive from overseas travellers.

The Swiss economy is very healthy with a very low unemployment rate and hardly any inflation. Switzerland is not part of "Euroland" and the Swiss Franc is known worldwide as a very strong currency, although it recently lost some ground versus the U.S. and Canadian dollars.

Switzerland is a little but cosmopolitan country where four different languages are spoken. Swiss don't like their country to be seen as an annex to Germany, France or Italy but emphasize their individuality. Although they write the same German as Germans, the spoken language differs very much from their neighbours'. Zurich, Geneva and Basel are the largest and most important cities, while the capital city of Bern is more of an administration centre and smaller.

The Swiss traveller is usually an individualist and very keen on comfort, well-organized trips, and good wine and dining. He appreciates Canada's endless nature and is interested in soft adventure and local culture. Most German-speaking Swiss travellers understand English whereas French-speaking Swiss rather expect

to be welcomed in their language. This is reflected in the fact that more than half of French-speaking visitors to Canada go to Québec.

### NEW SERVICE TO POTENTIAL TRAVELLERS

In August 2000, our German office located in Düsseldorf took over the responsibility for the Swiss market. At that time, a Canada hotline was installed for consumer and travel trade enquiries; since then, this service has been well received in particular by travel agents and tour operators.

A marketing company was hired to organize the Canada pavilion at various consumer and trade shows, e.g. FESPO in Zurich and the TTW in Montreux. The contract with HDS Consulting (a German public relations agency) has been extended to cover Switzerland as well. With the current marketing activities in Germany (such as advertising and cross promotions with non-traditional partners), the CTC is also aiming at a certain spill-over effect to reach Swiss consumers at the same time.

Given the favourable economic conditions and the increased activities this year, the CTC forecasts an annual growth of roughly 2 per cent in travellers and receipts for both, 2001 and 2002. Travel trade promotional programs and Canada Specialist activities this year are detailed on CTX.

*Karl-Heinz Limberg  
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## Shugaku Ryoko and the Japan school market

Shugaku Ryoko is a well established part of the school curriculum in Japan. Originally the Shugaku Ryoko trips focused on travel within Japan but the Japanese desire for international travel now includes student groups. The groups generally consist of between 100 to 300 students and objective of the tour focuses on the students learning during travel; learning from travel and learning with travel.

Tours have experiential aspects, whereby trying new activities will develop the student's understanding of the world, as opposed to the more passive sightseeing tour. These aspects range from studying and experiencing a destination's history, culture, lifestyle, and language to actively participating in sporting and recreational activities. The average duration of a Shugaku Ryoko tour for Canadian destinations is seven days.

In the past decade, the number

of schools selecting international destinations has increased dramatically. In 2000 Canada received 45 schools comprising 7,510 students.

Canadian destinations are effectively offering English as a Second Language (ESL) programs which typically last two to three weeks. These programs are often a "Home Stay" and include field trips in addition to the language study.

The reasons most often identified for choosing Canada for Shugaku Ryoko and ESL are: spectacular nature, English spoken by a large segment of the population, life style well regarded by the Japanese, and Canada's multi-cultural characteristics.

The Shugaku Ryoko market has become very competitive as Europe, Asia (Korea and China) and Oceania (Australia and New Zealand) all vie for this expanding sector.

*burchell.john@ctc-cct.ca*

## SMITHSONIAN STUDY TOURS A LEARNING VACATION ICON

The Smithsonian Institution is the world's largest complex of museums, art galleries, and research institutes. Smithsonian Study Tours are designed to engage Associate members in the broad vision and wide-ranging interests of the institution and are intended to expand members' intellectual horizons and satisfy their curiosity about the world around them. Smithsonian offers over 350 trips in U.S. and abroad.

Smithsonian travellers are looking for quality educational experiences. They are typically aged 60 plus, have an income of over \$50,000 USD, and have a post-secondary education.

### CHALLENGES

The number of offerings to Canada has grown in recent years as the institution has discovered small tour operators that offer the type of learning experience it wants for its members. Although numbers are down since last year (perhaps due to stock market declines), nonetheless Smithsonian is offering 24 different tours to Canada with approximately 650 travellers in 2001.

Smithsonian tour managers say there is a need to create new destinations in Canada, other than the Canadian Rockies and large cities. Also, net prices from Canadian tour operators do not reflect the 40 per cent difference in currency, so Canada tour prices are comparable to U.S. tours.

*Prudence Clendenning, Deputy Manager, Smithsonian Study Tours  
202 786-3270*

## Building on the 'Non Profits In Travel' initiative

by Frank Lafleche

Based on the results of over five years of attendance at the annual Non Profits in Travel Conference in the U.S. by the Canadian Tourism Commission and its Canadian marketing partners, and on related research information into the learning travel niche market, it became evident that Canada has the right product at the right time. However, it has also been determined that we need to position our product better to meet the needs of the learning travel market.

In the spring of 2000, the CTC established a Canadian industry "Learning Travel Task Force" made up of a cross section of our travel industry. As a result of this industry task force we were able to make our first presentation to a select number of tour operators in December with a concept of how Canada would like to position learning/enrichment travel product by changing existing product to fit the criteria, or where possible constructing new enrichment products for sale by U.S. Tour Operators. Although the reaction was positive from a conceptual point of view, we were not export-ready and we had to come up with a representative selection of product that would meet the specific needs of the U.S. Tour Operator.

A "short list" of export ready Enrichment Travel products. Five nodes were developed, from Garden and Culinary experiences in B.C. to Natural History, Acadian Culture & Culinary Experiences in New Brunswick. Thus armed, the Task Force developed an Enrichment Travel Partnership Proposal to develop a working partnership on a pilot basis with a cross

section of a few major U.S. tour operators pre-disposed to bring this new market segment to Canada.

### OPERATOR INTEREST

Our first contact was with Tauck World Discovery with whom we presently have a National Marketing Partnership. Tauck has a commitment to rich and rewarding travel for their clients with emphasis on authenticity and integrity. The company wants to sell more programs to the Baby Boomer Market.

Also, we approached the Saga company, who have a preferred partnership with the Smithsonian Study Tours Group (Odyssey Tours and the National Museum). As the CTC has a preferred supplier status with the Smithsonian, this would be an excellent vehicle to develop Canadian Enrichment product to Canada.

Third, we contacted "Virtuoso" an exclusive network of more than 5,000 elite travel specialists in North and South America. Virtuoso provides services and products to leading independent luxury travel agencies as well as having a consumer data base of one million affluent leisure travelers. Virtuoso members generate more than \$2.5 billion annually in travel sales; the network has indicated its interest in our Enrichment Proposal.

The Smithsonian Associates Program has also agreed to work with CTC in 2002 to include export ready Enrichment Tour Product.

*Frank Lafleche  
CTC - U.S. Leisure Travel  
202 682-7704*



## Bloom and garden tours of Canada

The Bloom and Garden Tours of Canada, a new and unique tourism product established under the Canadian Tourism Commission's Product Club program, aims to develop market-ready tours under the gardening, horticulture and green spaces themes. The various products and tours focus on gardening interest, while also highlighting green space and heritage conservation as well as environmental protection in urban and rural areas.

The main feature of the Bloom and Garden Tours is that they are being developed in conjunction with both the horticultural and tourism trades, through strategic partnerships with the private and public sectors. The founding partners of the Product Club are Communities in Bloom, a Canadian non-profit organisation, Tours Chanteclerc, a well-established Québec-based Tour Operator, Garden Associations, such as the Gardens & Arboreta Committee of Ontario and the Garden Association of Québec, and trade magazines such as *Plant & Garden* and *Fleurs, Plantes et Jardins*.

### MORE THAN BEAUTIFICATION

The product is designed to include municipalities recognized through the

Communities in Bloom beautification program; public & private gardens and parks; natural sites, experimental farms, research centres & greenhouses as well as traditional attractions naturally included on the itinerary. Historical sites reflecting the richness and diversity of Canadian Heritage are also an important component of the experience. The garden tours are meant to seduce the traveller with unique travel, cultural and human experiences highlighting the Canadian quality and way of life.

The tours are also designed to recognize gardening enthusiasm not only as a spectator activity but also as an active passion. The participants will be able to obtain and exchange information on plant material, planting secrets and horticultural knowledge. The tours will be guided by a professional guide with general gardening and horticulture knowledge and will be hosted and entertained by professionals of the industry each step of the way. In essence, the participants will have the opportunity not only to see the flowers and plants but also to "talk and mingle" with the professional gardeners who do the work. Thus, they will bring back practi-



cal tips and knowledge along with their memories.

### SEEDING THE MARKETPLACE

In 2001, four pilot projects have been put on the market: *Hidden Gardens* (travelling through Montréal, Laval, Ottawa and the Laurentians); *Discover Québec and New Brunswick*; *Gardens of Southern Ontario*; and *Discover Western Canada*. The tours combine known entities such as the Royal Botanical Gardens, le Jardin Botanique de Montréal, Reford Gardens, Mosaicultures Internationales de Montréal, Butchart Gardens, etc, with "best kept gardening secrets" such as the best private garden of Québec, located in Rosemère, the native tree collection of the Morgan Arboretum, the lovely village of Merrickville, the award winning parks of Guelph and Brantford in Ontario and of Stony Plain and Viking in Alberta along with the desert gardens of Osoyoos and Kelowna in British Columbia.

The tours are presently commercialized through Horticulture Societies, Gardening Clubs and to individuals, mostly in Québec and Ontario. In this matter, the partnership with *Plant & Garden* magazine has already proven its strategic value by the response to infomercials and editorials. Interest groups are invited to customize their itineraries. The marketing efforts will be evaluated in the fall to be able to include Eastern and Western Canada.

The Bloom and Garden Product Club wishes to establish partnerships throughout Canada to develop tours that will include all provinces and territories. Tour operators, public and botanical gardens, municipalities and institutions are invited to become part of the product club to work in making Canada the best garden destination in the world.

*Bloom and Garden Tours of Canada*  
514 398-9535  
bloom.fleurs@sympatico.ca  
www.communitiesinbloom.ca

## Groundbreaking ideas for the shoulder season

by Tracey Arial

Every April, hundreds of Japanese gardeners visit Victoria to learn how to make the city's famous hanging baskets. Although the course takes less than one day, the Japanese spend four nights and six days in both Vancouver and Victoria. Their trip includes visits to VanDusen, Butchart and a variety of lesser-known public and private gardens, many that aren't usually open to tourists.

The initiative started with one tour operator bringing in 650 people in 1998, and has since grown to include at least six tour operators. "What made this successful was that the City of Victoria hanging baskets are unique," says Mimi Horita, from JTB International, a tour operator that's been involved since the project's inception. "Our clients couldn't get the experience anywhere else."

### DEMOGRAPHICS COUNT

Horita describes the tour participants as mainly couples in their fifties and sixties, a fact that doesn't surprise David Foot, an economics professor at the University of Toronto and co-author of the best-selling book *Boom, Bust and Echo*. Gardening starts in your thirties, says Foot, but by the time you're in your early fifties, the kids have left home, leaving you with time, energy, education and money to explore your own interests. To attract this market, Foot says "you need small groups of no more than 20 people, good hotels, good food, and the top expert available in the field. You don't just want a gardening tour, either. You might want a tulip tour, a wild flower tour, an alpine meadows tour, or an azalea and rhododendron tour."

Tourism players who can meet these conditions will be able to tap

into a stable but growing market. "Gardening learning tours have huge potential," says Foot. "There are 10 million boomers in Canada alone. Four hundred and fifty thousand people at the front end of the boom were born in 1947, so they are now 54. The peak (550,000 people) was born in 1960 and the back end is 1966. This is only the beginning."

### INVOLVE THE KEY PLAYERS

The key to success in this market will be the ability of tour operators to partner with gardening experts from botanical gardens, seed companies and amateur gardening clubs to create memorable experiences that attract visitors. The possibilities are endless. Visitors could learn how to prune lilacs at the Royal Botanical Gardens in Hamilton, Ontario; create North American bonsais at the Montréal Botanic Garden in Québec; learn to grow salt-resistant species at Memorial Gardens in Newfoundland; or take a variety of other unique courses.

Routes to Learning Canada

(Elderhostel) has begun tapping into the potential with its "period gardens tour" to the Blomidon Inn in Wolfville, Nova Scotia. The five-day tour includes a guided walk through the Inn's Victorian-inspired garden, a visit to the Annapolis Royal Historic Gardens and lectures by Jill Robinson, a local celebrity who specializes in landscape design. The tour has attracted everyone from master gardeners to enthusiastic amateurs since it started six years ago. One couple from Strawberry, Arizona enjoyed their visit so much that they brought their daughter with them the following year. "People like an educational component much better than just touring because they understand what they're seeing," says Jim Lacey, who runs Blomidon Inn. "They go away with a little knowledge and a lot of enjoyment."

*Tracey Arial is a freelance writer whose most recent book, the Ulysses Guide to Hiking in Ontario was released last month.*

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# Coaching and mentoring

In addressing the current labour challenges, we are continuing our series of human resource articles. The concepts of coaching and mentoring are outlined below and make an excellent beginning to improving the work environment in any organization.

Coaching and mentoring techniques are powerful tools, helping people to grow personally and professionally in their work environment. Using a combination of these two techniques can provide many benefits to an organization. Knowing the difference between the two and using them properly is essential for their effectiveness.

Coaching provides people with quick, over-the-shoulder help to correct a specific technique. It is:

- **Immediate** – done at the time the skill is being used
- **Non-threatening** – structured to attack the problem, not the person
- **Hands-on** – solutions can be put to work immediately
- **Cost-efficient** – time is the only cost of coaching
- **Constant learning** – encourages constant learning and improvement
- **Empowering for employees** – employees become empowered when they are given the tools to find solutions

Some ways to make your coaching more effective include:

- using positive reinforcement
- making sure your employees know what is expected of them
- recognizing that employees learn in different ways
- being consistent
- involving all of your staff in the process

## MENTORING FOR DEEPER IMPACT

Mentoring assists people in changing their behaviours, attitudes and/or ideas. According to Kevin Wassegijig, Director of First Nations Affairs for Casino Rama in Ontario, "There are two key goals for mentoring programs. One is to help people to develop their careers and the other is to assist them in their personal growth."

To establish a mentoring program, it is important to have a plan in place. Wassegijig notes, "One of the essential elements of a mentoring program is structure. Having a plan outlining the processes of orientation, check-in periods for goal setting sessions, and other program details, is just as important as the program itself."

After developing a plan, the next step is to match mentors and employees. Employees in the mentoring process are known as protégés.

Personalities, interests and commitment all play key roles in this decision. At Casino Rama, all protégés are paired with senior management employees. "Upon entering the mentoring program, protégés are asked to write a letter outlining their career interests and to attend an interview to determine what they are looking for from the program. From these letters and interviews, it is determined which protégés will be matched to which mentors. The personal interview is especially useful since it encourages people who are not comfortable in expressing themselves in written form to participate in this process." Wassegijig explains. It is essential to allow for flexibility when pairing mentors and protégés.

## EXPECTATIONS AND ACTIONS

To help initiate the relationship between mentors and protégés, a 'getting-acquainted' session should be planned. During this time, discussion should centre around the expectations of both the mentor and protégé, concerns about the mentoring process, the benefits that each party wishes to receive, and a time and place for future meetings.

The final step is to develop an action plan. Action plans should be generated together by the mentor and protégé. Wassegijig explains, "It is up to the protégé to give direction to the sessions and the mentor to provide resources and guidance. For example, if a protégé wants to improve their resumé, then



the mentor might provide their protégé with a book that he/she recommends. In doing this, the mentor is empowering the protégé with the means to find their own solution."

The benefits of these programs are many. At the Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre a mentoring program for students has been put in place. Several protégés, from this program, have returned to the centre seeking full-time employment. Brennan Gohn, the Director of Marketing and Public Relations for Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre says, "We have a very high return of students for work. Some of the best cultural interpreters we have are from our youth mentoring program, "Passport to the Workplace".

For many of them, it has changed their lives and their future." Mentoring has proven to be an excellent way for Quw'utsun' Cultural and Conference Centre to recruit and train staff as well as building satisfaction among employees. Gohn reflects on her involvement in a mentoring program when she was younger. "Someone spent time believing in me, so I want to spend time believing in them." Gohn adds, "Being a mentor allows one to share strengths and share challenges. It is only by doing this that others can learn."

[www.cthrc.ca](http://www.cthrc.ca)

# Market-based product development in rural Ontario

*Arts in the Wild* is a new venture dedicated to bringing Ontario's art community to the world stage. With over ten million people living within the province, there is a modern art community that is looking for new and different ways to attract customers. This alliance of Ontario-based art organizations and tourism operators offers eclectic travellers the unique opportunity to combine their passion for the outdoors with their passion for the arts. From First Nation experiences to The McMichael Canadian Art Collection, the visitor can tap into a wide range of art related activities.

In January 2000, paddling companies, learning institutions and other arts related companies met at Limerlost Lodge in Huntsville, Ontario to discuss *Arts in the Wild*. What became known as "the think tank in the bush" planted the seed for progress. Led by Steve Bruno, outdoor product facilitator

of the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership (OTMP), discussions centered on the viability of companies offering arts related products with a nature component. "Is the world ready for this?" and "is it profitable?" were the concerns at the time. Participants knew the world is ready, as studies show people are looking for more stimulating vacations. The ability to use their creative skills and learn new ones in a no-pressure environment pointed the way to new ideas for tourism operators.

Similar to the recently formed *Paddling Alliance*, the boundaries for marketing and promoting the new product were largely undefined. How do you harness the power of twenty-one companies – large and small and get them to work together? Over twelve months, Bruno showed the partners how brand marketing in a cooperative partnership can pay divi-



dends for all. He brought ideas, corporate partners and a commitment on his part to make it happen. By pooling talents and resources, operators learned they could move further and open more doors by working together. The partners created criteria for product involvement, hired a website company and produced a brochure. A public relations firm was engaged to direct media to the new product and plan a launch for the first day of spring. Hudson's Bay Company, Canoe Museum and Ontario Parks bought

into this venture and now are partners in the alliance.

2001 is the development year for this new initiative. The *Arts in the Wild* alliance has moved further and faster than many thought possible, and by bringing together such a diverse group of operators, the products and venues give the customer many choices. Partners know that there is much work ahead, but they feel that *Arts in the Wild* is poised to show the world Ontario.

[www.artsinthewild.com](http://www.artsinthewild.com)



## Expanding learning travel for Canada

The publication of a catalogue that features several hundred Canadian market-ready learning vacation products is one more step in what has been a rapid and focused action to respond to the opportunity for Canada to be a learning vacation destination. The catalogue, with the title *A Selection Of Learning Travel Experiences in Canada, for the Leisure and Learning Travel Markets*, was introduced at Rendez-vous Canada by Canadian Tourism Commission President Jim Watson on May 16.

The publication, which is targeted at tour operators and buyers interested in Canada as a destination, will be made available in limited quantities in hard copy and CD-ROM formats. Two major themes – Culture and Society, and Nature and the Environment, will provide buyers with access to a multitude of subject matter and tour options. The catalogue is in two “volumes”, enabling buyers to examine Canadian learning vacation product by destination (province and territory) and by subject and activity sector. The CTC’s Ernest Labrègue, who has been heading up the production of the catalogue, explains that this is, indeed, a sampling of what is available and that it in no way pretends to be an exhaustive list of the full range and scope of learning

vacation product in Canada.

### COLLABORATION IS THE WATCHWORD

Murray Jackson, Executive Director of Product Development for the CTC, speaks enthusiastically of the level of cooperation between industry, agencies, and divisions within the CTC to move the learning vacations initiative forward in a timely fashion. The special Task Force created for the purpose is chaired by Parks Canada’s Kim Whytock, and has involved CTC product development specialists, marketing personnel, and in-market sales specialists as well as cooperation from industry.

During his presentation to Rendez-vous Canada, Watson pointed out, “this initiative, like so much we do at the CTC, started with one of our industry committees. In this case, it was our U.S. Leisure Marketing Committee that identified through their research that today’s international travellers are looking for more than traditional sightseeing tours.” Watson went on to say that learning travel is a market segment “we feel offers tremendous potential growth for the Canadian tourism industry.”

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## Québec City hosts World Ecotourism Summit

The United Nations has designated 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism (IYE). According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO-OMT), the IYE will serve as an opportunity to review good and bad practices in ecotourism throughout the world, with a view to increasing benefits to recipient communities and mitigate negative impacts on the environment and local cultures.

As part of the IYE, the United Nations Environmental Programs (UNEP), the WTO-OMT, the Canadian Tourism Commission, and Tourisme Québec will play hosts to the World Ecotourism Summit in Québec City in May 2002. The summit will encompass four major themes:

- Ecotourism planning and product development
- Monitoring and regulation of ecotourism
- Marketing and promotion of ecotourism
- Costs and benefits of ecotourism

### INDUSTRY LED

The Canadian tourism industry has addressed the issue of sustainability by adopting a vision and mission statement that states in part that it will preserve and share Canada’s clean, safe and natural environments while guided by values of respect, integrity, and empathy. Within that framework, ecotourism is a product with the potential to contribute

to sustainability and should therefore be industry led and developed.

With this in mind, the CTC is encouraging the Ecotourism Product Club in its desire to build on past efforts and work towards the creation of a national Sustainable Tourism Association (STA). The association will incorporate the needs of all Canadian ecotourism organizations, and act as a clearing house for ecotourism information and policies in Canada with an objective of sharing information and exemplary practices among regional, provincial or territorial groups/associations.

During the upcoming year, the STA will work towards the completion of a broad based national certification program that can be used in conjunction with destination-focused programs, as well as the development and testing of training workshops and other specific tools for operators. A working paper on ecotourism will be presented at the World Ecotourism Summit, which will include the draft certification program developed by the STA.

*For more information about the CTC’s involvement in the IYE*

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*For information about the STA,*

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## TECHNOLOGY

## From e-Commerce to m-Commerce

Montréal was host to the International Congress on Tourism and Communication Technologies in Tourism, held outside of Europe for the first time on April 24 to 27. The conference provided a unique forum of interchange for both academics and industry leaders from forty different countries.

A recurrent theme at the congress was how the tourism industry can adapt to the new economy. Keynote speaker Don Tapscott, Itemus Chairman and best selling author of *Digital Capital, Growing Up Digital, and The Digital Economy*, noted that new business models will need to be built for the “Net-Generation”. Mr. Tapscott further explained that the internet savvy generation will want more options, expect greater customization and require highly mobile services.

The new economy is transforming many industries and this is especially true for travel and tourism. The internet has become the number one source of information for business travellers and travel enthusiasts, surpassing traditional mediums such as travel agents, magazines and newspapers. Terrell Jones, Travelocity President and CEO, tackled the issue in his keynote speech by pointing to the fact that travel is a product that is virtual, complex, and takes a lot of research. In light of this, the internet has become the ideal tool for finding travel information such as prices, availabilities, pictures and videos.

### WHAT IS “WAP” ?

While travel and tourism organizations in North America are striving to find the most effective e-commerce strategy, innovative mobile-commerce

(m-commerce) initiatives are being implemented into business models across Europe and Japan. Mobile phones have traditionally been used to place and receive calls. However, mobile phones and other handheld devices are now being used to perform tasks such as sending and receiving emails and carrying out transactions, with Europe and Japan leading the way.

Even if Wireless Application Protocol (wap) services are currently used by only a small percentage of the European population, more and more phones configured for wap are being sold and the growth of m-commerce is expected to increase very quickly. Ingvar Tjostheim and Staale Haier from the Norwegian Computing Centre, who presented a research paper titled *The Characteristics of WAP-Phones Users: Travel Habits, Intent Usage, and Demographics* at the congress, believe that 20 per cent of the population in Western Europe will be wap-users by 2003. M-commerce has already been embraced in Japan and is expected to soar in the

next few years. According to Tjostheim and Haier, DoCoMo’s i-mode service already has 15 million subscribers accessing more than 15,000 web-sites using wireless devices.

As is the case for e-commerce, travel and tourism will be a leading industry in developing innovative m-commerce applications in North America. A report prepared last September by the Travel & Tourism Intelligence noted that “it is clear that business travellers will be leading the wireless phone, online booking revolution”. Wireless devices will be used by business travellers to perform tasks such as finding a hotel room in Halifax or booking the next available flight to Edmonton. Leisure travellers will also appreciate wap services when searching for ski conditions at Mont Tremblant or reserving two tickets for a 1000 Islands cruise.

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## Adventure travel operators surveyed

Canada's adventure travel industry has boomed during the 1990s as adventure-seekers have signed up to do everything from whale watching to hang gliding, spelunking and sea kayaking.

Between 1993 and 1999, the number of adventure travel operations has doubled from 669 to 1,336, and during the same time their sales have more than doubled. Revenues in 1999 reached an estimated \$362.0 million, up 119 per cent over 1993. Slightly more than one-half of these revenues (52%) came from sales of guided adventures, followed by 22 per cent from sales of self-guided adventures with equipment rentals.

On a regional basis in 1999, operators in British-Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba had the lion's share of revenues (61%). Ontario and Québec had 55 per cent of all adventure travel jobs.

### GROSS PROFITS UP

The industry reported gross profits of just over \$40 million in 1999, up 32.1 per cent from 1993, when the survey was last conducted. However, because of rising costs, the sector's average gross profit margin was only 11.1 per cent, down from 18.3 per cent in 1993.

The adventure travel sector consists mainly of small companies.

Those generating less than \$50,000 in revenue comprised 48 per cent of the industry, but generated only \$11.5 million in revenue, or about 3 per cent of the total. Those making over \$500,000 represented only 7 per cent of all operators, but generated an estimated \$248.6 million, or 69 per cent of total revenues.

In 1999, adventure travel produced 7,212 full-time equivalent positions, or 1.3 per cent of all employment generated in tourism. The industry paid out \$117.8 million in wage income. Operations involving sea kayaking, whale watching, trail riding and hiking made the biggest contributions to employment representing 51 per cent of all adventure travel sector jobs.

The adventure travel industry is mainly seasonal, as only one-fifth of operators reported operating on a year-round basis. Adventure travel accounted for 4 million travellers, the majority of whom (54%) were male and aged between 20 and 44.

More than one-half of travellers (57%) came from the domestic market. Canadian adventure operators served just over 1,720,000 foreign adventure travellers in 1999. Half of all foreign travellers came from the United States. Alberta attracted the largest number of foreign travellers in 1999, about 42 per cent of the total, followed by Ontario (25%).

## A MONTHLY GUIDE TO TRAVEL & TOURISM DATA

Tourism Activity	Reference Period	Quantity	% Change from previous year
<b>TOURISTS TO CANADA</b>			
<b>From the U.S.</b>	January-March 2001	2,223,597	6.0
By Auto	January-March 2001	1,330,712	6.7
By Non-auto	January-March 2001	892,885	4.9
<b>From Overseas - Total</b>	January-March 2001	619,386	5.0
United Kingdom	January-March 2001	135,785	7.6
Japan	January-March 2001	70,069	11.2
France	January-March 2001	55,598	-7.3
Germany	January-March 2001	36,321	-5.8
Hong Kong	January-March 2001	23,396	8.1
Australia	January-March 2001	31,935	9.5
Taiwan	January-March 2001	23,609	3.9
Mexico	January-March 2001	17,742	7.3
Korea (South)	January-March 2001	22,648	14.3
<b>OUTBOUND CANADIAN TOURISTS</b>			
<b>To the U.S.</b>	January-March 2001	3,197,261	-1.6
By Auto	January-March 2001	1,446,466	-2.5
By Non-Auto	January-March 2001	1,750,795	-0.9
<b>To Overseas - Total</b>	January-March 2001	1,662,913	17.6
<b>EMPLOYMENT IN TOURISM</b>			
<b>Total Activities</b>	Fourth Quarter, 2000	552,400	5.3
<b>Accommodation</b>	Fourth Quarter, 2000	154,400	8.7
<b>Food and Beverage</b>	Fourth Quarter, 2000	145,000	2.0
<b>Transportation</b>	Fourth Quarter, 2000	102,200	4.2
<b>SELECTED ECONOMIC INDICATORS</b>			
<b>Personal Disposable Income</b>	Fourth Quarter, 2000	\$20,719	2.1
<b>GDP at market prices (current, \$B)</b>	Fourth Quarter, 2000	1,058.9	7.4
<b>GDP at market prices (1992, \$B)</b>	Fourth Quarter, 2000	933.4	4.0
<b>CPI (1992=100)</b>	March 2001	115.6	2.5
<b>EXCHANGE RATES (in Cdn\$)</b>			
<b>American dollar</b>	April 2001	1.5575	6.1
<b>British pound</b>	April 2001	2.2354	-3.8
<b>Japanese yen</b>	April 2001	0.0126	-9.4
<b>French franc</b>	April 2001	0.2120	0.2
<b>German mark</b>	April 2001	0.7110	0.2
<b>EURO</b>	April 2001	1.3906	0.2

Note: All tourist estimates deal with trips of one or more nights. All data on this table is not seasonally adjusted. Source: Statistics Canada and the Bank of Canada.

These data came from the Survey of Adventure Travel Operators conducted by Statistic Canada on behalf of the Canadian Tourism Commission between October 2000

and January 2001.

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### TAMS HIGHLIGHTS

## Wine and cuisine tourism

The Traveller Activities and Motivation Survey (TAMS) was a comprehensive survey commissioned by the CTC, Tourism Ontario and various other tourism partners. The study focused on Canadian and American travellers' vacation habits and trip motivators. The following highlights discuss wine and cuisine tourism activities while on vacation.

Canadians with an interest in vacation activities associated with cuisine (e.g., fine dining) and wine (e.g., tours of wineries, wine regions) were more likely to be from Québec, Ontario, Alberta and British Columbia than from other provinces. In the U.S., those from the Pacific Region (e.g., California, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii) and the South Atlantic (Florida, Georgia, North and South Carolina) and the Middle Atlantic (e.g., Pennsylvania, New York, New Jersey) were most likely to be interested in wine and cuisine vacation activities.

In both Canada and the U.S., Affluent Mature and Senior Couples were the most likely to be interested in wine and cuisine. This is the prime target market for such promotional activity. Affluent Young Singles, Affluent Couples, Affluent Families and Affluent Mature Couples (\$70,000 and up) also exhibit an above average interest in wine and cuisine and should be considered secondary markets for such promotional activities. Clearly affluence is an important predictor of interest in such activities. Overall, these five segments represent 24.5 per cent of the Canadian adult populations (18 plus) and 27.3 per cent of the United States adult population.

Those who exhibited an interest in vacation activities associated with wine and cuisine were considerably more likely to have sought out vacation experiences associated with exploration (e.g., visiting historical sites, natural wonders), personal indulgence (e.g.,

to experience the good life, visiting a casino, experiencing city life such as night life) and romance and relaxation (e.g., experience intimacy and romance, relax and recuperate). Advertising and promotional materials designed to promote cuisines and wine should emphasize the cultural, entertainment and romantic images of the destination specifically targeted at affluent couples, and to a certain extent, affluent singles. There should be an hedonistic quality to such promotions.

Participation in cultural and entertainment activities while on a trip is more closely associated with an interest in wine and cuisine than participation in outdoor activities while travelling. This association is especially strong for those who shopped or dined, attended high art performances (e.g., ballet, opera), attended concerts, carnivals or fairs, visited botanical gardens or visited casinos. These cultural and entertainment activities should be promoted in wine and cuisine vacation packages.

Those who exhibit an interest in wine and cuisine were also more likely

to have participated in outdoor activities while on a trip and especially water sports (e.g., sailing, scuba diving), fitness activities, swimming and sun-bathing, team sports, natural sight-seeing (e.g., viewing wildflower & flora, going on picnics in park settings) and golfing. These sorts of activities are more likely to be undertaken by the more affluent traveler and especially affluent couples and singles.

Those interested in wine and cuisine are more likely to consult a larger number of information sources when planning their vacations and especially newspapers and magazines, travel agents, travel information offices, travel guides and the internet.

*More in-depth information at  
[www.canadatourism.com](http://www.canadatourism.com)  
under "Market Research".*

*Information related to learning  
vacations, intended for publication in  
this issue, was unavailable at press  
time; it will be provided later*

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**TSAs REVOLUTIONIZING THE VIEW...**

*continued from page 1*

new United Nations/ World Tourism Organization (WTO) standard in the next decade.

In remarks closing the conference, the Hon. Judd Buchanan, Chairman of the Canadian tourism Commission (CTC), observed: "Not every international collaboration is this successful. In less than a quarter of a century, the Tourism Satellite Account has gone from idea to acceptance to implementation, from a tentative set of concepts to a useful set of tools for policy and decision-makers – a framework for economic analysis. We came to Vancouver to celebrate that progress. And we've worked, over the last three days, to help set the research and development agenda for Tourism Satellite Accounts for the next ten years."

Tourism Satellite Accounts are revolutionizing the view of the tourism industry, bringing new recognition and confidence to the industry and

greater credibility to tourism statistics. Buchanan noted that, in Canada, data generated by the TSA gave tourism the muscle required to increase government funding of tourism – by 500 per cent – during a period when budgets were being slashed: "The TSA gave the Canadian industry the tools it needed to argue for a new government-industry partnership. When Canada's Prime Minister asked 'How much does tourism contribute to the economy?', we finally had a precise answer – and it was a lot more than most people expected."

Getting tourism identified as a strategic industry on government's agenda is the first objective for use of the TSA. Using TSA-generated data to influence decision making in business is the second. Buchanan characterized this as "putting better tools in our toolbox, and making sure that business decision makers know that they're there, and how to use them."

Francesco Frangiali, Secretary-

General of the WTO, said "The conference has been an important step on the road towards greater recognition of tourism. We will work hard over the next few years to assist both developing and developed countries in carrying out the TSA. We will also support the two directions mapped out by the conference for extension of the TSA – studies of employment and regional and local economic impact."

Recommendations arising from the Vancouver TSA conference include:

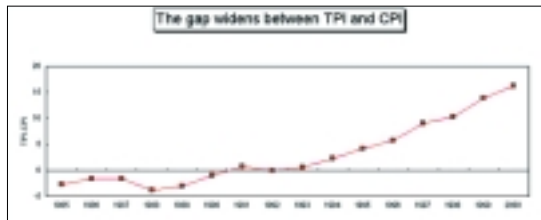
- Worldwide implementation of TSAs and harmonization of various approaches to meet UNWTO standards.
- Assistance in training for countries launching a TSA.
- Increased and more in-depth reporting of data contained in TSAs to decision-makers.
- Extension of the TSAs to the regional and local level to generate practical information for small and medium-sized businesses.

- Extension of the TSA to include employment data.
- Extension of the TSA to include information on other related economic sectors, such as transportation.
- Training of educators and communicators in the effective use of TSAs.
- Maintenance of a TSA website to continue the exchange of research and ideas.
- Development of additional ways of measuring tourism's economic impact.

The Tourism Satellite Account is a statistical tool that measures the total economic and employment impact of tourism, allowing researchers to directly compare the impacts of tourism with those of other industries – and from country to country. Canada was the first country in the world to publish a TSA and Canadian guidelines are used to develop similar instruments in other countries.

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## Gap between TPI and CPI widens substantially



### TPI UP 3.2 PER CENT FROM SAME PERIOD LAST YEAR

In the fourth quarter of 2000, consumers experienced a 3.2 per cent increase in the prices of goods and services included in the Travel Price Index basket compared with the same quarter of last year. This is lower than the increase reported on the corresponding date last year (5.6%). The largest price increases were for operation of automotive vehicles and traveller accommodation, at 7.4 per cent and 5.8 per cent respectively. Combined with a slight decrease of inter-city transportation (1.1%) cost during the same period, consumers have devoted a larger share of their budget on accommodation (11%) and reduced the share allocated to inter-city transportation (16%).

In comparison, the price of all goods and services, as measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI), reached 114.9, up 3.0 per cent from the same period last year. The real gap between the TPI and the CPI, which was nil in the base year 1992, reached 14.7 points in the fourth quarter of 2000.

### TPI DOWN 4.3 PER CENT FROM PRECEDING QUARTER

In the fourth quarter of 2000, the

Travel Price Index was down 4.3 per cent compared to the third quarter of 2000. Accommodation costs fell 16.5 per cent, while the costs of inter-city transportation declined 7.2 per cent. At the end of the year, the drop in accommodation costs that typically occurs in the off-peak season is generally enough to reduce the TPI as a whole. Since 1996, drops in accommodation prices from the third to the fourth quarter have been particularly high ranging between 17 per cent and 18 per cent. The prices of most other component were slightly higher in the fourth quarter of 2000 than in the previous quarter. During the fourth quarter of 2000, the cost of all goods and services recorded by the Consumer Price Index was up 0.7 per cent from the preceding quarter.

### AVERAGE ANNUAL TPI FOR 2000 UP 5.5 POINTS FROM 1999

In 2000, the average TPI rose to 129.8 overall, up 4.4 per cent from 1999 or 5.5 points. However, this advance was slightly less than the 4.6 per cent increase recorded between 1998 and 1999, which was the strongest year-over-year increase since 1991. The rise in the TPI in 2000 was mainly attrib-

utable to higher prices for operation of automotive vehicles and accommodation. The gap between the TPI and the CPI widened substantially. Whereas the TPI was lower than the CPI from 1981 to 1990, it exceeded the CPI by 16.3 points in 2000, the largest gap ever recorded.

Of all the components of the TPI, inter-city transportation is by far the one whose price has increased the most over the years. The inter-city transportation price index was 172.3 in 2000, representing an average annual increase of 8.4 points since 1990. With an index that hit 136.6 in 2000, traveller accommodation ranked second in terms of price growth. This represents an average annual increase of 3.8 points since 1990.

While down only marginally, clothing, footwear, photographic equipment and photographic services and supplies were the only components in which

prices declined between 1999 and 2000. However, the change in the prices of these items had little effect on the overall TPI because travellers devote only a small part of their budget to them. All other components of the TPI registered substantial increases over the same period.

#### NOTE TO READERS

The Travel Price Index (TPI) is an aggregate index of goods and services used by travellers in Canada. Price movements are derived from detailed Consumer Price Index (CPI) series.

A technical report on the Travel Price Index is available from the Tourism Statistics Program at 613 951-1673.

*This article was published in Travel-log, Spring 2001, Statistics Canada*

### SELECTED COMPONENTS OF THE TRAVEL PRICE INDEX (TPI) (NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED, 1992 = 100)

Components of the TPI	Percentage Change				
	Fourth Quarter 2000	Year 2000	Third Quarter 2000	Fourth Quarter 1999	2000/1999
Inter-city transportation	168.0	172.3	-7.2	-1.1	3.3
Local and commuter transportation	129.8	128.6	0.1	3.3	3.4
Rental of automotive vehicles	119.3	118.7	0.6	-2.2	0.3
Operation of automotive vehicles	131.3	128.5	1.2	7.4	9.3
Traveller accommodation	132.5	136.6	-16.5	5.8	5.6
Food purchased from stores	112.3	111.5	0.0	2.5	1.1
Food purchased from restaurants	115.7	114.8	0.5	2.0	2.1
Served alcoholic beverages	112.9	111.5	0.7	3.2	2.7
Alcoholic beverages purchased from stores	115.0	114.0	0.7	2.4	1.4
Spectator entertainment	138.2	134.3	3.3	4.6	4.9
Clothing	105.6	105.1	0.1	0.7	-0.3
Footwear	107.6	106.3	1.7	-1.0	-0.4
Travel Price Index (TPI)	129.6	129.8	-4.3	3.2	4.4
Consumer Price Index (CPI)	114.9	113.5	0.7	3.0	2.7

Sources: The Consumer Price Index, Cat. No. 62-001-XPB and the Tourism Statistics Program

# PEOPLE

## ROD HARRIS APPOINTED TO CTC BOARD

The Honourable Brian Tobin, Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for the Canadian Tourism Commission, announced the appointment of **Rod Harris** to the Board of Directors of the CTC on April 27. Mr. Harris will represent the British Columbia and Yukon Territory region on the Board for a term of three years.

Harris has experience in all facets of the tourism industry, including senior positions in destination management. He is currently President and CEO of Tourism British Columbia, prior to which he worked with the Government of British Columbia as Assistant Deputy Minister, Tourism Division.

## ADAM BELYEA RESIGNS AS TIAC PRESIDENT

**Adam Belyea** has resigned from the position of President and CEO of the Tourism Industry Association of Canada, a position he has held since January 2000. "Adam has contributed a great deal of time and effort to TIAC and the Canadian tourism industry over the past three years (that he has been associated with the organization)," stated TIAC Chair Geno Diraddo in a prepared press release April 19.

The Board of Directors of the association is expected to indicate shortly the process it will be following to replace Belyea.

## Tourism websites honoured

Several Canadian websites were honoured with the Travel and Tourism Web Awards at the recent International Conference on Tourism & Technology (ENTER) in Montréal. An international panel of scholars, using an established set of criteria, judged the sites.

Le Québec Maritime ([www.quebecmaritime.qc.ca/](http://www.quebecmaritime.qc.ca/)) won for best DMO site, a site with news, postcards, and photos about the Québec-Maritime region. As well as descriptions of activities, attractions, and tour packages. Internet surfers

### WHAT'S IN A NAME... *continued from page 13*

study grizzly bear habitat, travel patterns, food preferences, and the impact of development on the species. Other packages include a winter Weekend with Wolves and summer photography session with a professional wildlife photographer.

Provinces such as Québec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador have

can get the latest information on whale sightings.

In the "Related Services" category, the winner was Montréal plus.ca ([www.montrealplus.ca/](http://www.montrealplus.ca/)), a "one-stop shop" for all that is Montréal from events and restaurants to shopping and hotels, with reviews and recommendations on what to see and do. It also offers on-line ticket purchases.

Canadian Tourism Commission President Jim Watson presented the CTC Web Award to the best Canadian Website as selected by the judges: exit.ca ([www.exit.ca/](http://www.exit.ca/)). This site uses an easy-to-navigate structure which allows users to select a flight, package, or cruise.

[waksberg.rene@ctc-cct.ca](mailto:waksberg.rene@ctc-cct.ca)

## Travel Tips, the brochure

Canada Travel Tips is a new bilingual tourism brochure of the Canadian Tourism Commission produced in partnership with Air Canada and VIA Rail Canada. The brochure is a useful tool for foreign residents who are in search of tourism information about Canada.



The brochure provides a range of basic vital information. Among other things, it introduces our geography, describes transportation options, and touches on accommodation. It explains our currency

and immigration regulations. It directs readers who need more information to provincial and territorial tourism offices as well as to the CTC website.

The brochure will be available at Canadian embassies, consulates, CTC offices around the world. It will also be distributed by CTC Canada Specialists and various industry partners.

To receive copies of the brochure  
[berube.lana@ctc-cct.ca](mailto:berube.lana@ctc-cct.ca)  
613 954-3884

been working with their local industries to develop learning vacation packages and promote them in the marketplace.

Now the industry-led Task Force is hoping to make learning vacations and enrichment travel a priority nationwide. Everyone agrees it will take creative thinking and a high level of cooperation among suppliers and packagers if Canada is to succeed at defining itself as a leader in the field.

## SPECIAL PEOPLE MAKE PRODUCTS SPECIAL

*Communiqué began to publish this special monthly feature in September 2000; special people, indeed, do operate special products all over Canada that contribute in special ways to Canada's unique blend of tourism experiences. We invite our readers to submit their special story to Communiqué; tell us who you are, where you operate, where your markets are, how long you have been in business (3 years minimum), and what makes your product distinctly Canadian*

Send to:

[peter.kingsmill@ecocanada.ca](mailto:peter.kingsmill@ecocanada.ca)

**THIS MONTH'S FEATURE...**



**Sylvie Nadeau** operates SN Tourisme Culturel Inc. from Saint-Donat, Québec. Her company offers arts, music, and heritage tours within the province, with the goal of "sharing the richness of Québec's cultural and artistic life with people from here and abroad." Tour highlights include exclusive activities provided by cultural associations in Québec and first-class concert, theater, ballet and opera tickets.

Group tour packages feature unique custom-designed programs for groups of 15 people or more, and participants receive a personalized welcome with quality packages in harmony with nature, music and culture. Nadeau also customizes packages for independent travellers as well as incentive, convention, and business travel groups. Packages include top-quality lodging and dining.

In May, SN Tourisme Culturel was accorded a Bronze award at the Grands Prix Québécois du Tourisme in the tour category.

*Sylvie Nadeau, President*

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### RVC BUYERS HIT RECORD NUMBERS...

*continued from page 1*

to create an effective and balanced trade show. The Canadian Tourism Commission stepped forward for this year's edition of RVC with an initiative to bring a target of 75 new foreign buyers. Ostiguy told *Communiqué*, "RVC owes a great 'thank-you' to the CTC for the new buyer initiative. It has paid off in a big way for Canada's tourism industry this year."

### ALL COMPONENTS STRONG

Destination marketing organizations (DMOs) and provincial and territorial marketing groups (PMOs) were strongly represented this year, with the same organization numbers as

last year (70) and 204 delegates, up slightly from the Calgary RVC last year. Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) operates RVC for the industry; Chairman of the Board Geno Diraddo recognized the contribution of the whole industry toward the success of RVC 2001: "It has been an outstanding effort by all concerned."



When you see this symbol at the end of an article, go to [www.canadatourism.com/communique](http://www.canadatourism.com/communique) for additional information

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CANADIAN PUBLICATIONS MAIL PRODUCT SALES AGREEMENT NUMBER 1468367