

# Experiences

A toolkit for partners of the Canadian Tourism Commission  
*Version 1.5, April 2010*



# Dear partners

It is with great enthusiasm that I present the Canadian Tourism Experiences Toolkit for Industry. This guide provides concrete tools and resources for you, Canada's operators, small and medium sized enterprises, and tourism associations, to align with the CTC's dynamic international marketing efforts.

Our goal is to grow tourism export revenues to Canada, and with that in mind, we have set four objectives:

- Convert high-yield customers
- Focus on markets of highest return on investment
- Lead industry in brand relevancy and consistency
- Respond to changing market dynamics

Canada's tourism brand visual identity was the first bold step towards re-imaging Canada's position as a global destination. But to the high-yield, discriminating international traveller we target, experiences are the key to bringing Canada's Tourism Brand to life.

The purpose of this toolkit is to:

- Demonstrate the shift from product to experience
- Provide tips so you can add value to your tourism business

- Enable you to be more competitive in today's ever-changing marketplace
- Add to your bottom line
- Share some examples of best practices from across Canada

Through partnerships and knowledge sharing, we can ensure Canada excels in the highly competitive global travel arena. The Canadian Tourism Experiences Toolkit will help us all achieve our goals. By working together with one strong voice, we will succeed in motivating travellers to visit Canada now.

Sincerely yours,



**Michele McKenzie**

President & CEO

Canadian Tourism Commission

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### Canadian Tourism Commission

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# Welcome

The Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) has produced this publication as part of our commitment to harness Canada's collective tourism voice. It is designed for tourism partners big and small, from coast to coast to coast. It's all about how we can work together practically to advance our dynamic national tourism brand and entice our target travellers to come to Canada now.





# The publication provides:

- Key information on how you can differentiate your tourism product in a competitive market
- Quick diagnostic tools to ensure that your product is aligned with the expectations of today's experiential traveller
- Access to the CTC's Explorer Quotient™ types so that you can identify Canada's best target market segments and get snapshot profiles of the nine international marketplaces that the CTC works in
- Information on how you can deliver the most memorable experiences, both individually as an operator and working effectively with the CTC
- Information on how to get onboard with Canada's national tourism brand. The CTC is keen to share our assets and research with the industry—it's easier than you think to get on brand!
- Access to the latest trends and research insights as well as where you can find more detailed information
- Examples of Canadian tourism experience operators who are doing a great job and might provide some inspiration and practical tips that you can apply

Ready? Let's get started!





From product  
to experience

# How do I know if my product fits with Canada's tourism brand?



Canada's tourism brand, through its imagery, tagline and positioning, is designed to make an emotional connection with travellers. The idea of **Canada. Keep Exploring™** speaks to the hearts and minds of curious travellers, inviting them to experience a land and culture defined by a spirit of geographic, cultural and personal exploration.

Each tourism product and marketing program that represents (and sells) Canada as a destination should support this concept and be guided by the three pillars of Canada's tourism brand:

1. Canada's geography
2. Canada's culture
3. Embodies personal exploration—resulting in a life less ordinary

To find out whether your product fits with this idea of Canada's tourism brand, ask yourself the following questions:

- Does my product deliver a unique sense of place or do my customers feel as though they could be anywhere?
- Does my product exist in isolation or is it integrated into the overall tourism experience available in the surrounding market?
- Am I focused on what I have to sell or do I reflect what's important to travellers?
- Am I telling consumers what to buy, or how they'll feel when they experience my product?
- Is there a sense of surprise and discovery in my product?
- Is my product unique or could travellers experience the same thing in many other places?





# What is the difference between a tourism product and a tourism experience?

A tourism product is what you buy.

A tourism experience is what you remember.

Historically, Canada, like many other destinations, marketed itself as a series of products or commodities (hotel rooms, picturesque views, generic activities, etc). With the launch of Canada's tourism brand, we have the opportunity to focus on the overall travel experience. Success depends on everyone involved in tourism focusing on the “why” in Canada—not just the “where”.



# Experiences

Consider these descriptions of Canadian travel experiences, brought to life in three dimensions and touching all five senses:



## Storm Watching in Tofino, British Columbia

"I had heard about this relatively new tourism phenomenon, and decided I had to try it for myself. Snuggled and wrapped in a down duvet at the window of an oceanfront luxury resort, in the afterglow of a wondrous spa treatment, sipping an organic chai latte, I was awed by the power of the massive waves rolling in off the majestic Pacific and moved by the ferocious beauty of the wind and rain. The juxtaposition of the power and rage of the storm against the peace and relaxation I was feeling is one I will always remember."



## Nunavut 2007

"It was like accidentally discovering chocolate. I was there for the nature. But everywhere I went I saw world-class pieces of Inuit art—and I just fell in love."



## Shucking 101/Keep on Shucking in Prince Edward Island

Learn, prepare and taste all aspects of the oyster from a world-champion oyster shucker. Savour the spoils of your work by pairing local wines with the freshly prepared oysters. Now that's a true "hands-on" day!



## Newfoundland

Try an "eco-cultural experience" where you become part of the community. Pick up your set of keys to one of three houses and immerse yourself in hundreds of years of local culture.

# Products

Now here are three product-based descriptions:

- The CN Tower is one of the world's tallest buildings.
- Montreal is two hours from Ottawa.
- The Calgary Stampede takes place every July.

See the difference?

# Canada's unique selling propositions

What is going to make Canada the destination of choice for high-yield travellers? After much research and development, we've identified five Unique Selling Propositions (USPs) that showcase the experiences that make Canada unique. They can be found elsewhere; what makes them special is how they happen here in Canada.



## Vibrant cities on the edge of nature

Canadian cities are a tapestry of Canadians of all ethnicities and persuasions, which forms the urban energy. They speak to a uniquely Canadian set of values, because they are liveable, fresh, new, thriving, and green. Our urban centres have breathing space: in the physical sense, they aren't overcrowded; in the social sense, you're free to be yourself and explore. And while they are cosmopolitan and sophisticated, our cities are inspired by the truly authentic nature found both inside and in close proximity to our cities.

Tour Halifax's spectacular harbour front, where the vibrant, old and new converge. Discover Toronto's lively neighbourhoods. Explore historic Québec City, the only walled city in North America.



## Personal journeys by land, water and air

A journey is more than getting from one place to the next, it's about exploring, and discoveries made along the way.

Cross the country by rail. Take a float plane from downtown Vancouver to a luxury lodge. Drift in a sailboat along the world's longest coastline.



## Active adventure among awe-inspiring natural wonders

Travellers can find adventure by immersing themselves in nature's wonders, water, and wildlife, without having to sacrifice their creature comforts.

Be mesmerized by the Aurora Borealis (from the comfort of a hot tub). Get soaked by Niagara Falls (and experience a private wine tasting tour at a nearby winery). Watch polar bears by day (and enjoy a gourmet dinner in the evening). Heli-ski in the Rockies in the morning (and spend the afternoon in a spa).



## Award-winning Canadian local cuisine

Unique locally-sourced ingredients, a return to natural freshness and low-intensity farming, ethnic fusion, techniques, settings, and people all combine to make Canadian cuisine a savoury experience.

Discover Ontario's ice wines or visit a micro-brewery in Nova Scotia. Try world-renowned Asian fusion restaurants in Vancouver. Find out how Quebec cheeses are made or learn to shuck oysters in Prince Edward Island. From farm to table, there are food movements in the making: slow food, terroir and the 100 Mile Diet.



## Connecting with Canadians

Travellers can immerse themselves in the communities they visit: Experience Canadian culture and personalities to understand where Canada comes from and where it's going. It's where the brand personality comes to life: Witty, fun, approachable, authentic.

Absorb Canadian art at Montreal's art galleries. Discover Acadian culture at a summer kitchen party. Share stories with a local at the Yukon Storytelling Festival. Learn the legacies of the Great Plains people at Alberta's famous buffalo jump.





# Ok, where do I begin?

## Start by making a quick evaluation of your current product.

At its core, reaction to a tourism experience is based on two factors; what travellers expect the experience to be and their enjoyment of the actual experience.

What consumers expect an experience to be is shaped by everything they've heard about your product and their experience (if any) with similar products. Often, the image they've built up in their mind—coloured by pop culture, history, the evening news and the opinions of friends and family—may bear little resemblance to the reality of your product. But to consumers, if that image isn't matched by the actual experience, they may come away feeling your product was not authentic.

Authenticity is a big topic in tourism circles. However, the key thing to remember is that tourists don't visit the reality of a destination—they visit the stereotype that exists in their head.

If, for example, tourists come to Montréal expecting “Mountains, Mounties and Moose,” they're likely to go home feeling they didn't have an authentic Canadian experience. The reality of their visit didn't live up to their perception of the brand.

It's why consumers will rate a good experience at a two-star hotel better than an average experience at a five-star hotel. The experience at the five-star hotel may still have been superior to that of the two-star, but the consumers had much higher expectations for the high-end hotel.

Which brings us to the first of our two most important questions to put to clients when evaluating a tourism experience:

**Was it what you expected?**

It's that simple. The experience you provided either met the consumer's expectations or it didn't.

The second most important question to ask clients when evaluating a tourism experience is just as simple:

**Did you enjoy your experience?**

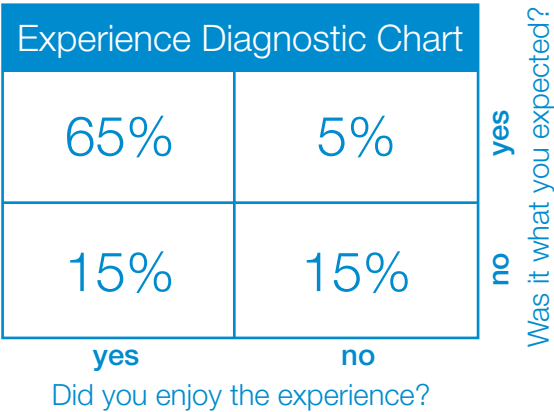
Armed with only the answers to these two questions, you can diagnose a lot about your marketing program and your product.

**Here's how it works**

Consumers will respond in one of four ways:

- The experience was what they expected and they enjoyed it
- The experience was what they expected but they didn't enjoy it
- The experience wasn't what they expected, and they didn't enjoy it
- The experience wasn't what they expected, but they enjoyed it anyway

Take the percentage of consumers who fit into each group and create a chart that looks like this:



Now you've got your diagnostic tool.

If most of your customers fall into the top left quadrant (the experience was what they expected and they enjoyed it), you're in great shape. Keep making improvements on what you're already doing to get more of your customers into this happy group.

If a large percentage of your customer fit into the lower right quadrant (wasn't what they expected and they didn't enjoy it), you've got a problem. Your brand is making a promise that your product can't deliver (and by "brand" we mean whatever the consumer believed to be true about you and the category of business in which you operate). You can either reconfigure your marketing program to be true to your actual product or reconfigure your product to be true to consumer expectations.

If the bulk of your customers falls into the lower left quadrant (it wasn't what they expected, but they enjoyed

it anyway), your product is probably fine but your brand isn't correctly positioned or at the very least is under-leveraged—and you may be sitting on an untapped marketing goldmine. These are the customers who have real potential to become advocates for your brand—the folks who will spread positive word of mouth—because they've been surprised by your experience in a positive way.

Customers who fall into the upper right quadrant (it was what they expected, but they didn't enjoy it) are the most difficult to figure out. Your immediate reaction might be, "If you knew what you were getting into, what's your problem?" but the answer probably lies in one of three areas:

- They may have been travelling with others who were attracted to your experience and came along reluctantly
- Your overall experience may have delivered on what they expected but one or two "moments of truth" let them down and negatively affected their overall enjoyment
- They may have reluctantly picked you by default (e.g., yours was the last available hotel room or the restaurant they wanted to visit was closed)

Making a habit of asking these two simple questions won't solve all your challenges or give you all the answers, but in terms of providing an easy-to-administer and effective diagnostic tool, it's tough to beat.

# How do I differentiate my experience?

Even if your basic tourism product is in good shape, you still need to differentiate your tourism experience.

When considering your tourism experience, evaluate your product against the pillars of Canada's national tourism brand:

- How does your experience promote/ embody geographic exploration?
- How does your experience promote/ embody cultural exploration?
- How does your experience promote/ embody personal exploration?

These are the links between Canada's national tourism brand and experiences that will motivate a travel decision.

Is the experience truly differentiated within Canada and on the international stage against international competition?

Complete the following chart with respect to an "experience."

This chart will tell you several things:

- Is the experience differentiated from the competition?
- What aspects are common expectations in the category?
- What aspects of the experience are unique to my product?
- What aspects of the experience can the CTC promote as a differentiator across Canada?

## Experience Differentiation Chart

### Nation Differentiators

Is there anything different or special about the experience in Canada compared to other places in the world?

### Experience Differentiators

What's different, better or special about the experience I offer (compared to my competitors in Canada or elsewhere)?

Differentiators may include:

- Geographic setting
- Incredible experience with staff
- Yourself as an operator
- How customers' senses are engaged in the experience

### Price of Entry

What basic aspects of the experience are the same everywhere?

### Competitor Advantages

What aspects of my competitors' experience are different, better or special compared to what I offer?

If the top two squares are positive, then this is an experience that is differentiated internationally and will provide a positive brand halo as well as motivate visitors to consider Canada.

If you can look at the experience and think "that's amazing" and "that's truly differentiated" plus "that makes sense coming from Canada"—even if it may initially come as a surprise to some markets—then we definitely have an experience to consider in marketing communications that will bring Canada's tourism brand to life.



# Ok, I'm with you so far, but how will this help sales?

It's a shift in thinking to look at a product as an experience rather than as a commodity, but one that is required to remain competitive today. There are benefits for both individual operators and tourism marketing organizations. It is also the best way to ensure that the marketplace sees Canada in a whole new way.

## Individually, you will:

- Have a more effective experience offering
- Increase exposure and profitability
- Have stronger experience-to-market matching
- Maximize marketing efforts
- Offer effective communications and imagery that sets you apart
- Be more in tune with travellers' perceptions, expectations and motivators

- Have access to CTC's global resources and be able to capitalize on CTC investments by being aligned with Canada's national tourism brand—delivering a *life less ordinary* to each visitor
- Offer enriching experiences that give Canada a sense of urgency to visit NOW! (a feeling of “must do” and “must see”)

## Collectively, we can:

- Leverage Canada's national tourism brand
- Offer a consistent and animated voice in global markets
- Be known and recognized by our national tourism brand
- Create increased demand by tapping into travel motivators



# How can I make my experience even better?

A travel product is what you buy. A travel experience is what you remember. Travel experiences engage travellers in a series of memorable events that are revealed over a duration of time, that are inherently personal, involve the senses and make a connection on an emotional, physical, spiritual or intellectual level.

We've all heard the buzzwords such as "authentic tourism experience," but what does this really mean and what can you do as a business to benefit from what some are calling the *experience economy*?

At their core, travel experiences are about engaging the senses, enabling visitors to connect with the people and the place and creating unique and lasting memories.

## **Some ideas to consider include:**

[Incorporate unexpected elements and textures to your experience](#)

Can you add an element that will enhance what you already have? It's often the little things that make the difference and turn a good product into a great experience. Be sure to consider how this new element will engage the senses when planning. Some simple ideas include adding a short group walk that encourages social engagement and conversation along with the benefits of being outdoors.

[Enhance the learning opportunities in your product offering](#)

You may be surprised at the wealth of local experts who are available in your community. Are there teachers, instructors or professors who would be interested in sharing some of their knowledge with visitors in their spare time? For example, a biologist could add great value to a soft adventure product by leading a group on a walk through the local environment and discussing the flora or fauna.

[What is the most vibrant memory of your experience that visitors will take home with them?](#)

Audit your product offering and take a hard look about what is the true moment of delight or transformation for visitors as a result of the experience you offer.

[Take care of the basics](#)

While authentic tourism experiences that actively engage the senses are in demand right now, it is important to consider the amenities and services that support your product offering. Today's travellers have a wealth of choices and the ability to research online as well as post and read online peer-to-peer websites. Ensure all the facilities that you use (your own or contracted) and all aspects of the operation are safe, refined and as luxurious as possible. In a world full of choice and increasing extravagances, there is less and less tolerance for rundown or aging facilities.

[Deliver "insider experiences" that can't be found anywhere else](#)

Can you provide access to something that is not available to the general public? This has great value to today's travellers. Examples include behind-the-scenes opportunities and access to local celebrities.

[Socialization](#)

It sounds simple, but everyone likes to socialize and have fun.

# Looking for more ideas?

A marketing organization, the CTC is not actively involved in hands-on product development activities. Contact your local tourism organization or provincial/territorial tourism product development officer for more information, or contact one of the many private-sector consulting firms operating in this area in Canada. You can also view examples from the following institutes and operators:

## **Edge of the Wedge—Innovation in Experiential Travel**

Based in Newfoundland and Labrador at the Gros Morne Institute for Sustainable Tourism, this course provides intensive “experiential travel” training for Canadian operators. Log onto [www.gmist.ca/edge](http://www.gmist.ca/edge) for more information.

## **The Bonavista Institute for Cultural Tourism**

This Institute, based in Newfoundland and Labrador, draws on the wealth of local cultural resources to develop and deliver executive-level training based on the needs of this developing industry. It is a leading-edge centre for professional development in the cultural tourism sector in Atlantic Canada. Visit [www.bonavistainstitute.ca](http://www.bonavistainstitute.ca) for more information.

## **Arsenault Project Solutions**

This consulting firm specializes in the development of experiential tourism in Canada. Visit [www.arsenaultprojectsolutions.ca](http://www.arsenaultprojectsolutions.ca) for more information, or call Nancy Arsenault at 1.250.391.6077.

## **Earth Rhythms**

Based in Manitoba, award-winning Earth Rhythms Inc. is both a successful experience provider and an expert in experiential tourism development. Visit [www.earthrhythms.ca](http://www.earthrhythms.ca) to learn more or call Celes Davar at 1 888 301 0030 for more information.

## **Kim Whytock and Associates**

This consulting firm promotes the advancement of sustainable tourism in Canada. The firm guides the growth of innovative travel experiences that spark the imagination of travellers, enhance travel industry viability and are in harmony with sustainable tourism principles. Log onto [www.thewhyoftravel.com](http://www.thewhyoftravel.com) or call 902 462 2680.

“Creating outstanding and memorable experiences has become central, not just to the leisure and entertainment industries, but to an increasing number of businesses, as companies seek to build the emotional involvement that goes with them.”

The Experience Profit Cycle,  
The London School of Business, 2003



# Finding your best customers

## Psychographic profiles: the Explorer Quotient™

The EQ, or Explorer Quotient™, is a new way of looking at consumer segmentation based on insights that are far richer than traditional travel segmentation metrics such as income, age, travel intentions and preferred activities.

The Explorer Quotient™ leverages the Environics' 3SC Social Values survey and builds a link between social values and travel behaviours and preferences.

Explorer Quotient™ is based on the idea that two travellers standing in the exact same spot participating in the exact same activity can be going through two completely different experiences. As a broad example, imagine how a Japanese traveller might interpret Lake Louise as a

spiritual connection to nature compared to a German traveller who might feel a great sense of personal accomplishment at having realized a lifelong travel goal.

How people interpret a travel experience, and what that experience “means” to them, is directly related to their fundamental outlook on life—their “social values.” For example, people who view the world as a dangerous, chaotic place might be looking for security, reassurance and familiarity when they travel. On the other hand, people who view the world as an intriguing and exciting place might be looking to explore other cultures and ways of life when on vacation. Any number of locations in Canada can appeal to both traveller types and more—the key is to present the experience in the correct context for each type of traveller.

This approach allows us to go beyond traditional segments (such as golf, outdoor adventure or sightseeing) and to tailor our presentation of individual activities and destinations as experiences that will appeal to each type of traveller. For example, a single destination may be presented as an exploration base with endless possibilities to travellers who value spontaneity, and as a hotbed of social interaction to travellers who make social interaction a primary life and travel motivation.

The Explorer Quotient™ offers the CTC and our partners several advantages unique in the world of destination marketing.

Indeed, as a consumer segmentation model, the Explorer Types™ offer much richer insights into consumer behaviours and preferences compared to traditional activity and demographic based models. Creative development, Customer Relationship Management (CRM), promotion development and communications planning will all benefit.

The CTC has identified three of the nine Explorer Types™ as Canada's best prospect targets:

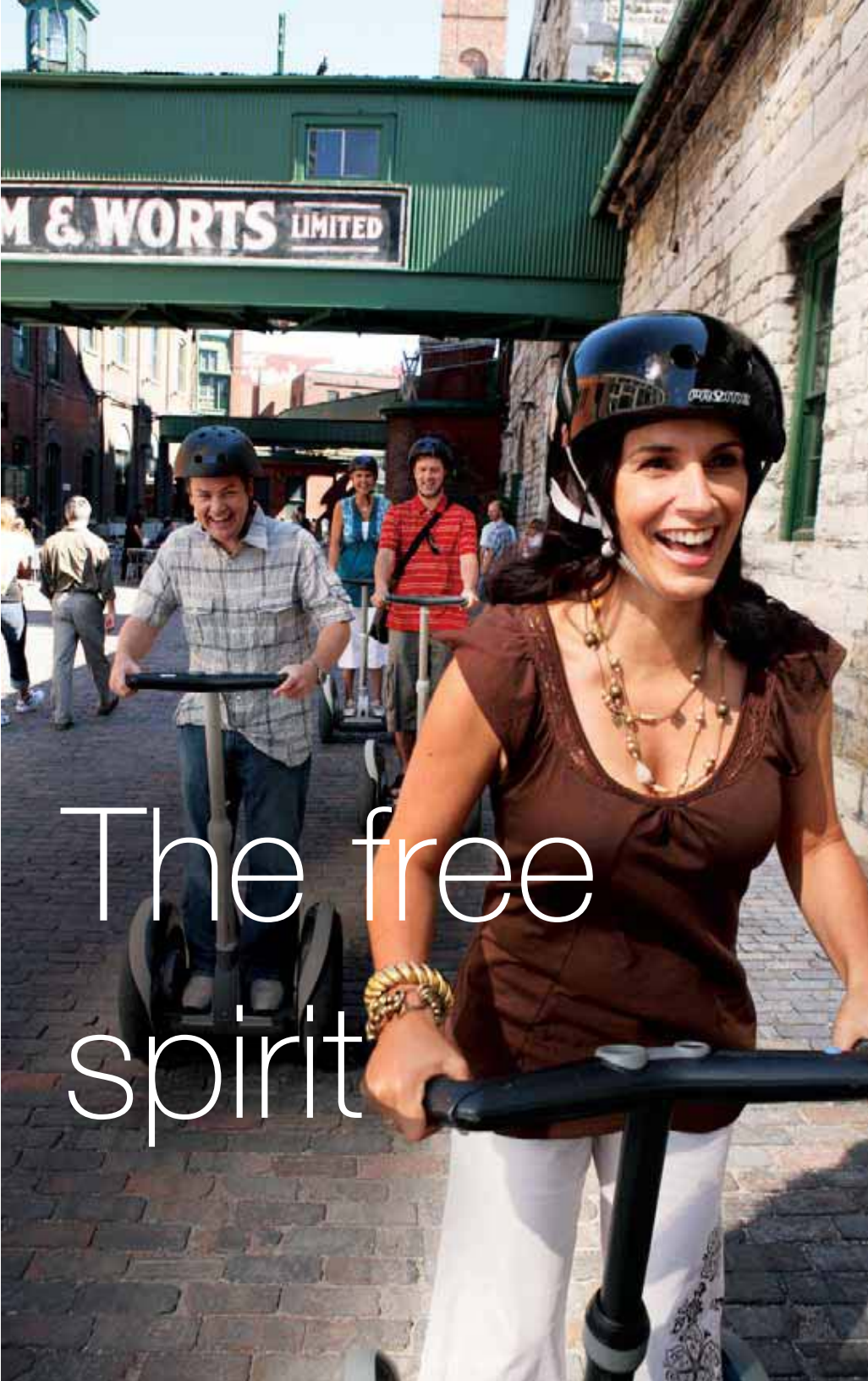
The Authentic Experienter, Cultural Explorer and Free Spirit are all high-yield, long-haul customers with a keen interest in the experiences offered by Canada. They also have the income profiles and passport ownership numbers that make these three segments compelling targets for Canada.

The following are brief profiles of each of the nine Explorer Types™, with emphasis placed on three priority segments. To find out what EQ type you are, take the test at **[www.canada.travel/eq](http://www.canada.travel/eq)**.

For more information about EQ please visit **[www.corporate.canada.travel/en/ca/eq\\_toolkit.html](http://www.corporate.canada.travel/en/ca/eq_toolkit.html)**.







# The free spirit

Travel satisfies Free Spirits' insatiable need for the exciting and the exotic. They like the best of everything and want to be with others who feel the same way. They have a lot of energy and want to see and do everything. It all adds up to fun! Young, or young-at-heart, they travel for the thrill and emotional charge of doing things. Carpe diem (seize the day) is their motto.

Free Spirits need to be stimulated by the activities and environments of the places they visit. For them, travel is not a time to worry or to work at making things happen. While they enjoy immersing themselves in the culture and activities of the places they visit, they tend to be samplers, experiencing as many of the "must-see" locations and recommended activities as time permits. Time is a precious commodity, so products and services that help save time are useful.

Free Spirits have faith in advertising messages. However, they are unlikely to purchase on impulse and pay special attention to their buying experiences. While they do purchase products that convey status, they are conscious of ethical consumerism and will look for ethically produced products. Free Spirits also embrace technology and are inspired by novelty and the latest trends.

## Characteristics

### Personality

- open-minded
- ambitious
- enthusiastic
- fun-loving
- adventurous
- curious
- social

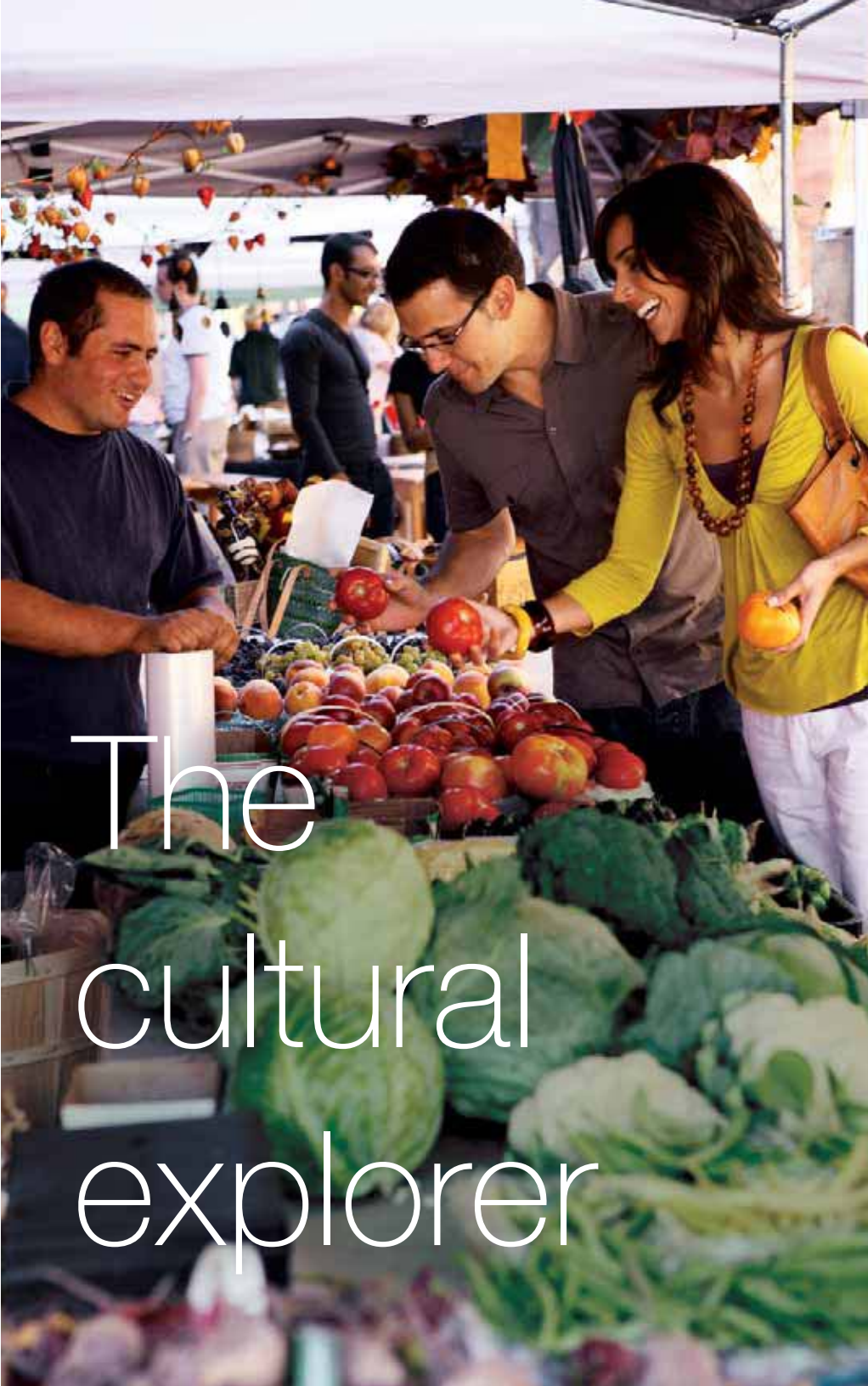
### Most likely to be seen at

- luxury hotel
- tourism hot spot
- top restaurant
- night club
- group tour

### Travel values

- sample travel—like to see and experience a bit of everything
- constant exploration—always planning for the next trip
- companion experiences—prefer travelling with like-minded people
- indulgence—seek the best they can afford





# The cultural explorer

Cultural Explorers seek constant opportunities to embrace, discover and immerse themselves in the entire experience of the culture, people and settings of the places they visit. Not content to just visit historic sites and watch from the sidelines, they want to participate in the modern-day culture as well. They often attempt to converse with locals, attend cultural festivals or go off the beaten track to discover how locals truly live.

For Cultural Explorers, travel is seen as the only way to truly experience life and the world. Experiencing the world first-hand can never be replaced by secondary methods such as TV or the Internet. Travel tends to have an element of escapism for Cultural Explorers, as they get away from their everyday lives. Cultural Explorers prefer spontaneous events and unique discoveries; they avoid mainstream, touristy locations. They are not intimidated at all by unfamiliar locations or situations and are willing to endure uncomfortable transportation and amenities to “live” a different culture. Cultural Explorers avoid skimming the surface of their destinations and are more interested in deep, meaningful experiences than seeing all of the “must-see” attractions.

Cultural Explorers feel some time pressure, trying to meet all of their goals and responsibilities. They are willing to take risks to reach their goals and are confident in their ability to adapt to change. Cultural Explorers are egalitarian and progressive in their societal views, and feel little need to adhere to societal norms. They seek fun and excitement, and are attracted to crowds and social events. When shopping, Cultural Explorers place little importance

on brand names and status purchases, and are skeptical of advertising. They are ecologically and ethically aware, which their carefully thought-out and researched purchases reflect.

## Characteristics

### Personality

- positive
- open-minded
- curious
- risk-taker
- flexible
- easygoing
- energetic
- creative

### Most likely to be seen at

- heritage sites
- cultural events
- museums
- festivals
- B&Bs
- hostels

### Travel values

- companion experiences—prefer travelling with like-minded people
- living history/culture—enjoy ancient history and modern culture
- learning travel—like to learn everything about a place, time or culture
- constant exploration—always planning for the next outing



# The authentic experienter

Authentic Experiencers appreciate the understated beauty of both natural and cultural environments, and try to keep a foot in both worlds. They enjoy using all of their senses when they explore their chosen destination and really get to know the places they visit. They quickly adapt to personal challenges and risks, easily figuring out how to make the most of every situation. Authentic Experiencers want to be fully immersed in their travel experience and tend to stay away from group tours and rigid plans.

While Authentic Experiencers are not constant travellers, they are also not reluctant travellers. Travel is seen as enriching life, not escaping from it. Authentic Experiencers travel to better understand the world around them and value the nature and culture found everywhere, including in their own backyard. Authentic Experiencers tend to visit a wider range of destinations and prefer longer trips to weekend getaways. They are more likely than others to add time before or after business trips.

Authentic Experiencers have a strong ecological and societal ethic, being very conscious of the environment and those around them. Generally, they are more socially reserved and are not interested in crowds or status seeking. Authentic Experiencers are skeptical of advertising and tend not to impulse shop. When they decide to purchase, they are guided by ethical concerns and social equality.

## Characteristics

### Personality

- spontaneous
- discreet
- ethical
- eco-conscious
- independent
- open-minded
- curious

### Most likely to be seen at

- nature reserves
- world heritage sites
- hiking trails
- museums
- homestays
- campsites

### Travel values

- learning travel—like to learn everything about a place, time or culture
- nature—enjoy vast natural settings and wonders
- cultural immersion—prefer integration into the local culture
- personal development—seek self-improvement through understanding others



Now that you've learned in some detail about the three target Explorer Quotient™ types that the Canadian Tourism Commission focuses on globally as target segments, we'd like to introduce you to the other six types of Explorer Quotient™ traveller.

### The no hassle traveller

Escapists at heart, No Hassle Travellers search for relaxation and simplicity when they get away. They prefer worry-free travel and spending time travelling with family and friends. Short breaks and getaways are preferred to long-distance travel. After planning the basics of the trip (accommodations and transportation), they like to fill in the details as they go. Along the way, they hope to see and expose their families or travel companions to the beauty of the natural scenery and different cultures

### The rejuvenator

For Rejuvenators, travel is a chance to totally disconnect and just “get away from it all.” All they want to do is escape, recharge and renew. They usually take short vacations to familiar destinations, often for family visits and celebrations. While they might seek out destinations with a few interesting things to see and do, they don't want an overly hectic schedule of events. After all, travel is meant to be relaxing, not extra work!

### The personal history explorer

Personal History Explorers travel to gain a deeper understanding of their ancestry and heritage. Their travel tends to be a shared experience, both during and after the trip. They generally feel safer when they stay at branded hotels and prefer to travel in style, comfort and security. They like to visit all of the important landmarks—a carefully planned schedule, sometimes as part of a guided tour, ensures this.

### The cultural history buff

Cultural History Buffs travel to pursue a personal interest or hobby, making the experience more intrinsically rewarding. They strive to go beyond their own roots to understand the history and culture of others. Travelling alone or in small groups, they seek the freedom to observe, absorb and learn at their own pace, unhurried by others and not driven by rigid schedules. Cultural History Buffs will do a lot of research prior to travel and tend to avoid guided tours, finding they know as much or more than many tour guides.

### The gentle explorer

Gentle Explorers like returning to past destinations or travelling to similar locations and enjoy the security of familiar surroundings. They seek the most comfortable and serene places when they get away and avoid the unknown. Well-organized travel packages and guided tours that take care of all the details appeal to them—travel should be fun, not extra work! And if it's fun, chances are they'll be back.

### The virtual traveller

Virtual Travellers prefer not to travel very often and would rather enjoy the comforts of home than the uncertainties of new places or cultures. Often very active locally, they usually find enough to satisfy their sense of exploration within their community. Rather than being restricted to the confines of prepackaged tours, Virtual Travellers prefer the flexibility of being able to decide what they want or don't want to do on their own. Their trips tend to be shorter, closer to home and centred on family events or as part of work travel.



# Why does the CTC focus on long-haul, high-yield travellers?

Destination marketing is a highly competitive business. The Canadian Tourism Commission tries to capture the imagination of our target segments, many of which are also targets for other countries looking to capitalize on the economic benefits of today's high-yield travel. Simply put, Canada needs to put its best foot forward.

The CTC's focus is to attract long-haul and high-yield travellers. Research consistently shows that consumers who travel further, mostly arriving by air, stay for the greatest amount of time and have the greatest "spend" while they are in Canada. We put the bulk of our marketing, sales and communications efforts into attracting these travellers, particularly from the three target Explorer Quotient™ segments detailed earlier. This impacts everything from decisions about what countries we target, to where we buy media, to what trade and consumer shows we participate in.





## If we fill up the high-end hotel rooms and resorts, the middle and lower end of the accommodation range will benefit as well.

In the CTC's nine international markets, wealth is being created at an astonishing pace. In fact, there are more than eight million millionaires in the US alone. These wealthy, high-yielding travellers not only expect inspiring experiences to provide them with stories and memories to take home, they also expect a certain level of amenities when they travel. These customers can choose from many destinations and experiences around the world that will effectively cater to their needs. Canada needs to, and can, compete here.

By targeting higher-yield travellers (those who stay at more expensive hotels, demand correspondingly better service and amenities, and who tend to spend

more at a wider variety of experiences and activities), we're putting ourselves in a position of having to portray a more "premium" image of Canada.

If we all do our jobs well, the travellers who can afford to pay for premium experiences will come. But so, too, will the people who want a premium overall travel experience, but who choose to spend less on a place to sleep in order to conserve their cash to enjoy everything else the destination has to offer. In other words, if we fill up the high-end hotel rooms and resorts, the middle and lower end of the accommodation range will benefit as well.

# Demographic & market profiles: international markets

The following country profiles are derived from information collected from the CTC's most recent in-market research analysis for each respective market. Full research reports along with quarterly market reports are available by visiting [www.canada.travel/research](http://www.canada.travel/research).

## The U.K. market at a glance

- The U.K. is Canada's third largest economy in Europe after Germany and France and the sixth largest economy in the world
- The U.K. is the most significant overseas market for Canada by volume, with 836,900 overnight trips in 2008, a 6.4% decrease compared to 2007
- Canada and the U.K. share substantial historical and cultural links, therefore the U.K. travellers tend to feel a strong connection to Canada

## 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,415 (up 3.1% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 14 nights (up 7.3% from 2007)
- Travelling to Canada for pleasure remained the major trip purpose for the U.K. travellers (47.7%), followed by travellers visiting friends and relatives (33.3%)

- 44.6% of U.K. travellers to Canada travel in groups of two, while 33.2% travel alone
- Although less than the overall average among CTC's key markets, the summer remained the most popular season (38.8%) for UK travellers





### France market at a glance

- France is the fifth largest economy in the world and the 2nd largest in Europe
- Travel is a normal household expense for the French and they are not willing to forfeit their vacation even in an unstable global economic environment
- Following a decline of 0.6% in 2007 travel from France increased by 12.5% to 404,500 overnight trips in 2008, representing the largest increase in visitors among CTC's key markets
- French travellers feel strong cultural connections to Canada as French Canada represents a preservation of their roots
- There is increased demand for aboriginal culture and historical attractions, along with a growing interest in vacation destinations that showcase unique local lifestyles

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,337 (up 0.7% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 17 nights (up 6.8% from 2007)
- French travel to Canada was primarily for pleasure purpose (48.3%), followed by those visiting friends and relatives (29.4%)
- The most popular season was summer (46.4% of travellers)

### Germany market at a glance

- Germany is Europe's largest economy and the fourth largest in the world
- Canada experienced a 5.6% increase in travellers from Germany (315,400 overnight trips) compared to 2007
- The German travellers are seeking a greater quality of life within their financial means; the goal is not necessarily to earn more, but to do more with what they have

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,478 (up 4.7% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 17 nights (up 3.2% from 2007)
- German travel to Canada was primarily for pleasure (48.8%) followed by those visiting friends and relatives (24.6%)
- Canada remained most popular as a summer destination, capturing 45.9% of German travellers



For the French, there is a growing interest in vacation destinations that showcase unique local lifestyles

### Canada market at a glance

- Canada is the eleventh largest economy in the world
- Canadians are avid outbound travellers having made over 18.9 million trips to the U.S. and 8.1 million trips overseas in 2008, and increase of 6.2% and 9.5% respectively
- Despite overnight domestic travel declining by 1.6% to 90,100 in 2008, spending increased 4.6% to \$25.1 billion

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average inter-provincial spend per trip: \$519 (up 13.1% from 2007)
- Average intra-provincial spend per trip: \$231 (up 5.5% from 2007)
- The top two purposes of overnight travel within Canada were for visiting friends and relatives at 45.4%, followed by pleasure travel at 43.2%
- Summer is the most popular season (36.9%) for overnight domestic travel, accounting for 40.3% of receipts in 2008

### United States market at a glance

- The U.S. economy is the largest in the world
- The U.S. is Canada's largest market and the U.S. leisure program represents the majority of visitation to Canada. (69.9% of overnight trips and 48.1% of receipts from the CTC's key markets)
- Poor economic performance, coupled by a weakened U.S. currency, rising unemployment and low consumer confidence contributed to reductions in visitation to Canada in 2008.
- Overnight leisure arrivals decreased to 10.6 million, falling by 7.5% over 2007

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$475
- Average stay per trip: 4 nights (up 6.6% from 2007)
- Of total overnight travellers, 67.2% of the travellers visited Canada for pleasure purposes while 23.6% visited friends and relatives
- Americans visited Canada on a year-round basis, although summer was still the most popular season



## The Americas



### Mexico market at a glance

- The economy of Mexico is the thirteenth largest in the world
- Although Mexico has had a lower propensity to travel long-haul than short-haul, the long-haul market grew by 8.0% (1.8 million travellers in 2008)
- Mexico's importance to Canada as a source of visitors increased with a total of 257,200 overnight visitors in 2008 (+11.7% over 2007)

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,415 (up 8.3% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 20 nights (up 8.5% from 2007)
- Of total travellers to Canada, those travelling for pleasure purpose (36.2%) comprised the largest segment, followed by those visiting friends and relatives (27.3%)
- Summer remained the most popular travel season for Mexicans with a 39.2% share, while the winter season saw a 29.3% gain in popularity in 2008

### Brazil market at a glance

- Brazil is the tenth largest economy in the world and the fifth largest population in the world, projected at 196.3 million in 2008
- There were a total of 4.2 million world arrivals from Brazil in 2008, a 12.7% increase over 2007
- Projected arrivals to long-haul destinations from Brazil registered 2.7 million in 2008, up 14.1% over 2007
- In 2008, Canada received approximately 71,600 Brazilian travellers with a 8.3% increase over 2007

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,566 (down 4.4% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 19 nights (up 1.7% from 2007)
- The top two purposes of travel to Canada were for visiting friends and relatives at 35%, followed by pleasure travel at 33%
- 31% of travellers from Brazil were between 45 and 64, making up the largest share of all travellers
- The summer months continue to be the most popular attracting 34% of total visits to Canada from Brazil



The summer months are the most popular with visitors from the Americas



### South Korea market at a glance

- South Korea has the fifteenth largest economy in the world
- South Korea is quickly emerging as a significant source country for tourism. Long-haul travel from South Korea posted 2.5 million trips in 2008
- For a second consecutive year Canada experienced a decline travel from South Korea, down 7.8% (172,800 overnight visitors) relative to 2007
- South Koreans with more travel experience and language skills tend to seek long-haul travel, unique travel experiences, good value and independent travel

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,598.0 (up 8.9% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 24.2 nights (up 5.1% from 2007)
- South Korean travel to Canada was primarily for those visiting friends and relatives (36.1%) followed by those for pleasure purpose with a 17.1% share
- Although spring increased in popularity in 2008, summer remained the most popular travel season (38.0%)

### Japan market at a glance

- Japan is Asia's largest economy and the second largest economy in the world

- In 2008, Japan dropped to Canada's 5th largest overseas tourism market down 16.6% (258,900 overnight visitors), along with a 11.5% overall decline in spending
- Japanese travellers continue to be attracted to spa and wellness experiences, with papering and luxury remaining a high motivator to visit Canada

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,375.8 (up 6.2% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 12 nights (up 9.6% from 2007)
- Japanese travel to Canada was primarily for pleasure purpose (48.8%) while 23.8% were visiting friends and relatives
- Although less than the average compared to other Asia/Pacific markets, summer is still the most popular season for Japanese travellers (36.8%). Winter and fall seasons have become more popular in recent years

### China market at a glance

- The economy of China is the third largest in the world after that of the U.S. and Japan
- China long-haul travel reached 4.1 million trips in 2008, a decline of 13.3% compared to 2007
- Travel from China increased 5.3% to 158,700 visitors in 2008, a decline in

comparison to the 8.4% increase in 2007 and 22.8% gain in 2006

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,656 (down 3.2% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 28.0 nights (down 2.9% from 2007)

- Visiting friends and relatives continued to be the most common purpose for trips to Canada, maintaining a share of more than 46.5%, while 20.2% of Chinese travellers came to Canada for business purposes
- Summer was the most predominant travel season for Chinese (35.6%)



### India market at a glance

- India is the twelfth largest economy in the world with a population of 1.15 billion in 2008, that is forecasted to reach 1.8 billion by 2050
- A total of 9.2 million outbound arrivals from India were estimated in 2008, constituting a 14% rise over 2007. Of the 9.2 million travellers, there were an estimated 4.9 million arrivals to long-haul destinations from India;
- In 2008, Canada captured an estimated 2.3% of the total long-haul arrivals estimated from India
- In 2008, approximately 111,000 overnight trips to Canada were reported from India making up an 8% share of Asian travellers to Canada following 7 years of positive year-over-year growth averaging 12% since 2002

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$951 (up 3.2% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 22 nights (up 3.3% from 2007)
- The top two reasons for travel to Canada were visiting friends and relatives (54%) and pleasure purposes (25%)
- The majority of travellers were 45-64 years of age with this age group increasing in size by 12% over 2000
- Summer was the most popular travel season (35%)

### Australia market at a glance

- Australia has seen a year-over-year increase in overnight trips to Canada with the exception of 2006 when a marginal decline of 0.5% in visitation was registered. In 2008, Australia posted an increase of 5.6% over 2007 with 219,300 overnight trips
- Australia is an important market for Canada's ski products

### 2008 Visitor Characteristics

- Average spend per trip: \$1,623 (up 4.4% from 2007)
- Average stay per trip: 13 nights (up 1.4% from 2007)
- Australian travel to Canada was primarily for pleasure purposes (58.2%) followed by those visiting friends and relatives (24.0%)
- Summer remained the most popular travel season (36.5%), with the number of winter trips increasing 14.3% over 2007



Australia is an important market for Canada's ski products

# How do I leverage current travel trends?

Consumers' travel preferences and the trends that emerge are in a state of constant change. As a provider of tourism experiences, the goal isn't to chase after each new trend, but rather to be aware of what's on the horizon and to recognize the important shifts that may affect your business either positively or negatively.

The CTC and our partners conduct ongoing research with both consumers and travel trade in the nine international countries that we market in. In addition, we monitor data and trends from outside sources and incorporate these into our strategies.

Listed below is a sampling of current tourism trends. As you review each one, consider its potential impact on your business and determine whether the trend would create an opportunity to refine your tourism experience.

## Trend 1: Experiential travel

Travellers are increasingly seeking to immerse themselves in rich experiences and partake in local culture. This is a departure from previous tendencies to view local culture and observe activities.

### Australia

Interest in lifestyles/experiential travel continues to grow with food and wine, spa, culture and soft adventure all ranking highly as preferred activities.

### Japan

The trade confirms travellers want more experiential travel in Canada. Younger travellers are more interested in activities such as visiting a local supermarket, experiencing a different country's healthy lifestyle and coming home with exciting travel stories. This supports

the importance for Canada to position and promote itself as an experiential destination. (CTC Japan Study)

## Trend 2: Fully Independent Travel (FIT)

Many travellers are feeling more confident in travelling on their own, and are getting away from traditional group tours.

### South Korea

Over half (55%) of South Koreans now travel FIT. In general, consumer travel patterns are moving away from group packages. FIT continues to impact tour operators' way of marketing and selling products. A growing number of agents are focusing on developing FIT products and launching a new FIT brand.

### Australia

FIT travel is growing rapidly, creating an opportunity to capitalize on this niche segment by developing FIT packages that focus on experiencing Canadian nature—both as an observer (for the less active) and via soft adventure.

## Trend 3: Responsible/sustainable tourism

An abundance of environmental reports, backed by a prevalence of environmental and climate change stories in today's media, has made a growing number of travellers more and more concerned with environmental issues. This is beginning to affect travel decisions.

### United Kingdom, France, Germany

As a result of numerous reports on the impact of travel on climate change, environmentally conscious travel is emerging as an important niche market.

## Trend 4: The aging traveller

Demographics are changing. As the baby boomer generation ages, it is becoming more active in travel. More mature travellers demand a different product and different experiences.

### China

Over the next 15 years the percentage of mainland Chinese aged 65 years or older will jump from 8% to almost 12%.



As the Chinese traveller ages, they will increasingly demand authentic, high-quality goods and services.

### Europe

The baby boomers have the wealth, health and desire to take advantage of their new lifestyle. It is expected that the 55+ population will rise by 15% in the next 10 years.

### Trend 5: Internet usage

Internet accessibility is on the rise. The Internet is used primarily for travel research (as opposed to bookings). As accessibility to the web rises, more and more travellers have personal access to the information they require to make travel decisions.

### Australia

The Internet has integrated heavily into Australian society, going from 44% penetration in 1998 to 75% in 2007. This ranks Australia tops in the Pacific region. The Internet is used predominantly to research destinations and source trip options.

### South Korea

The Internet is an important (and growing) resource for Korean travellers. Korea is the world's most Internet-savvy population,

with 76% of the population online and over 90% of households receiving broadband access. While these travellers use the Internet for research, they still tend to book trips through travel agents. Koreans are not confident English speakers and require Korean language content on the Internet. (2006-2007 Tourism Yukon Situational analysis)

### Trend 6: Luxury travel

The standard of living is on the rise, contributing to the growth of customers who prefer luxury travel. This type of travel is not just the prerogative of rich people, but includes a heterogeneous clientele, from the wealthy to younger people wishing for a memorable experience. As well, despite the economy's fluctuations, luxury travel is in constant progression.

### USA

Wealthy American households have increased by over 51% in the last four years. Households with an annual income of \$150,000 or more have risen to eight million in 2006.

120 million people have an annual income between \$50,000 and \$150,000. These travellers will spend immoderately for a product or experience that will give them emotional satisfaction.

### Trend 7: Multigenerational travel

An ever-increasing trend in many markets is for larger groups of the family to travel together. This is a way of combining family time and travel time. It is no longer uncommon to have a couple travelling with their parents, grandparents, in-laws, cousins and so on. All sectors of the tourism economy have had to amend their services to be more flexible in handling these groups. In 2008, Forbes.com recognized multigenerational travel as one of its top travel business trends.

### USA

A recent survey of American Express travel agents showed that 56% of travellers are booking with families, often extended. This is directly related to the increase in luxury travel and willingness to spend more on a vacation. Families are increasingly taking nannies along and bookings for private villas are up. (The Globe and Mail, December 8, 2007, Page T11)

# How do I find the right customers for my experience?

In the previous section we provided an overview of the CTC's innovative Explorer Quotient™ psychographic segments, then discussed demographic and market profiles, then further incorporated travel trends. The CTC uses all of these resources to identify our best targets.

Finding your best customers is also a challenge—the previous information is useful background in recognizing where Canada's customers are coming from and where the focus of marketing efforts is aimed. By combining your existing databases, research and business trends that you monitor yourself, we hope that you can apply some of our resources to help along the way.

Identifying the best prospects for your tourism experience relies on three key factors:

- Understanding the true nature of your tourism experience and what makes it different, better and special
- Identifying the demographic customer segment (location, age, income, family status, etc.) for whom your experience will appeal most and from whom you can derive the greatest revenue
- Identifying the travellers through associated psychographic (travel motivations) profiles for whom your experience will appeal most

Begin by identifying the best demographic target for your experience, then find the psychographic profile within that group that most closely aligns with what you have to offer.



# Tools to help you best position your experience

## What type of imagery should I use to communicate my tourism experience?

Previously, images of Canada have shown vast, beautiful landscapes with few people in the scene. We need to show viewers more than just a mountain; we need to show the experience of the traveller exploring and discovering a mountain in Canada.

To reflect the true experience of your tourism product, the imagery should look to capture a moment in time—illustrating intriguing Canadian experiences through the eyes of travellers. It should evoke the feelings you yourself have felt when travelling this country—fun, peacefulness, elation and wonder.



# What is the specific style to look for?

The imagery needs to be both unique and engaging for viewers, reflecting the kind of moment travellers experience and cherish. It should feel authentic and real, not overly posed. It should capture a moment in time and evoke the feelings of that particular experience in Canada.

On the whole, Canadian context is important, but it is not the driver—an obvious iconic reference is not necessarily required. Instead, the imagery should show people connecting with, rather than simply observing, their environment. It is more important to capture the spirit of the moment being shared (between the people in the scene or between the people and their environment) than it is to show a specific tourist icon. The people (or person) in the shot should come across as the hero, with the environment serving as the inspiration.

## Previous image direction

(generic landscapes; no interaction with landscape; void of “fun”)



## New image direction

(travellers are the heroes; connecting with their surroundings; it captures a personal experience: a moment to remember)



# What are we looking for?

We're looking for imagery, both still photography and video footage.

## Checklist

We're looking for imagery that clearly reflects the personal experiences of travellers shown within the context of Canada's geography, culture or people.

When you're looking through images, ask yourself:

1. Does this imagery capture real, intimate moments with people?
2. Does it have an overall sense of energy and vitality? Are people having fun?
3. Does it feel authentic and not overly posed?
4. Does it seem natural (in both the setting and the movement of the people)?
5. Is there an overall sense of warmth in the imagery (specifically as it relates to its use of light and the colour of the environment)?
6. Are the images up to date? What does the styling look like?

Most important, is it compelling enough to make you want to share that same moment right now?

## Image Requirements

Generally, we're looking for imagery that illustrates interactions between travellers, their environment, and the people around them. The three central areas include:

### Geographic exploration

Seeing the world from a whole new perspective/expressing the emotion that a geography evokes in you—examples include skiing, snowboarding, sledding, snowball fights, walking, running, rafting.

### Cultural exploration

Discovering that you share more in common with folks from different walks of life than you think/putting yourself in other people's shoes for a moment and seeing life through their eyes/experiencing the traditions or way of life of others—people engaged in festivals (Winter Carnivale, Caribana, etc.), musicals, theatre, opera, dining, scenes involving chefs, etc.

## Personal exploration

Learning something new about yourself/stretching your boundaries/stepping slightly outside your comfort zone—heli-skiing, diving, climbing, racing through the sand dunes, etc.

## Formats

### B-roll—video assets

- All b-roll must be shot in HD with a resolution of 1920x1080 at 29.97 or 23.98fps
- Please provide video description, location information and video credits
- Signed model releases are required for all identifiable people. If available, please provide scanned copies of the model release with the video in PDF format.

### Still imagery

- Please submit photos in the highest available resolution, either as Adobe RGB TIFF files (minimum 8.5 x 11 at 300 DPI) or uncompressed JPG files (saved at maximum quality). If available, please submit RAW image files in DNG

format ([www.adobe.com/dng](http://www.adobe.com/dng)).

- For all images, please provide a photo description, location information and photo credit. Wherever possible, this information should be attached to the image as metadata, using the XMP standard ([www.iptc.org/IPTC4XMP](http://www.iptc.org/IPTC4XMP)).
- Signed model releases are required for all identifiable people. If available, please provide scanned copies of the model releases with the photos in PDF format. Alternatively, model releases must be available upon request.

# How do I position my tourism experience?

The Canadian Tourism Commission has adopted a very contemporary, modern and informal way of positioning and communicating. This is consistent with current trends of customers speaking to customers on peer-to-peer review sites and also with the ever-growing trend of tourism blogging. Today's sophisticated travellers do not want to be spoken to by a big advertising machine. They trust themselves and what they learn. Here are some tips on how you could position and communicate your product as an experience.

Communicating a tourism experience is very different than communicating a tourism product. When you promote a product, you talk about what you have. When you talk about an experience, you talk about what the consumer wants to feel.

In the case of Canada's tourism brand, our promise to the consumer is that when they visit Canada, they can create their own unique and extraordinary personal experiences. We call these "wow" experiences.

The brand personality is confident, youthful, modern and upbeat. Evocative and beautiful. Friendly but witty. Intriguing. Idealistic and compassionate. Creative, unexpected, honest. Free.

## Who am I talking to?

We are talking to people who believe in participating in life, not sitting on the sidelines; people who are inquisitive, who want to learn about themselves and the world around them. We are talking to curious travellers.

## How should I sound?

Informal and personal, intimate and revealing, straightforward and concise. Writing about travel experiences is like telling a story to a good friend. It's a conversation, speaking traveller to traveller.

## The underlying message

Freedom...

...to explore.

...to be yourself.

...to experience Canada in a personal way.

Your exploration could be a series of encounters, moments in which you create memories by doing things that spark your imagination and ignite your passion. Canada enables you to try new things, to hang out with people from different backgrounds, to speak French, to discover something new, to gain perspective and knowledge. You will be more than you were before.

## It's about feeling

This is not factual downloading, it's personal. Traditional destination marketing rattles off a grocery list of activities, places

and events in hopes of connecting with travellers. Now, we're providing a launch pad for unique life experiences. Any place can offer buildings, mountains and oceans. It's how the experience of being in our country makes you feel that distinguishes us from every other travel destination.

## Keep it light

This isn't poetry. Let's have fun. Sprinkle your text with some signature Canadian humour and wit, e.g., "My first mistake was thinking I could use a sea cucumber in a salad."

## Take readers with you!

Readers need to feel as if they are in the place with you:

- What does the beach in Tofino smell like?
- What do the Prairies sound like?
- What does a tourtière taste like in Montréal on Christmas Eve?
- What does a sea cucumber feel like?
- Know the place you're describing



Don't fake it. Do your research. Get on the phone. Read a blog. Talk to the locals. Get on an airplane. See it with your own eyes. Blend knowledge with personality, insight with passion, confidence with a fresh, optimistic perspective.

### **Get to the point early**

This is Canada. We don't ramble on here—unless we're in a pub in Newfoundland. That's a whole other story.

### **Keep it simple**

We're straightforward people. Our writing should reflect this.

Stay away from the hard sell.

You may be selling a hotel room or a rental car, but to travellers, you are providing the chance for a personal experience—the sale is merely a by-product. Traditionally, you might say, “Hertz vacation special \$300” in your headline and in the main text explain what travellers can see from their cars. We are flipping that around. Now we are hooking travellers with the experience and then saying, by the way, now you can do it thanks to this great offer from Hertz.

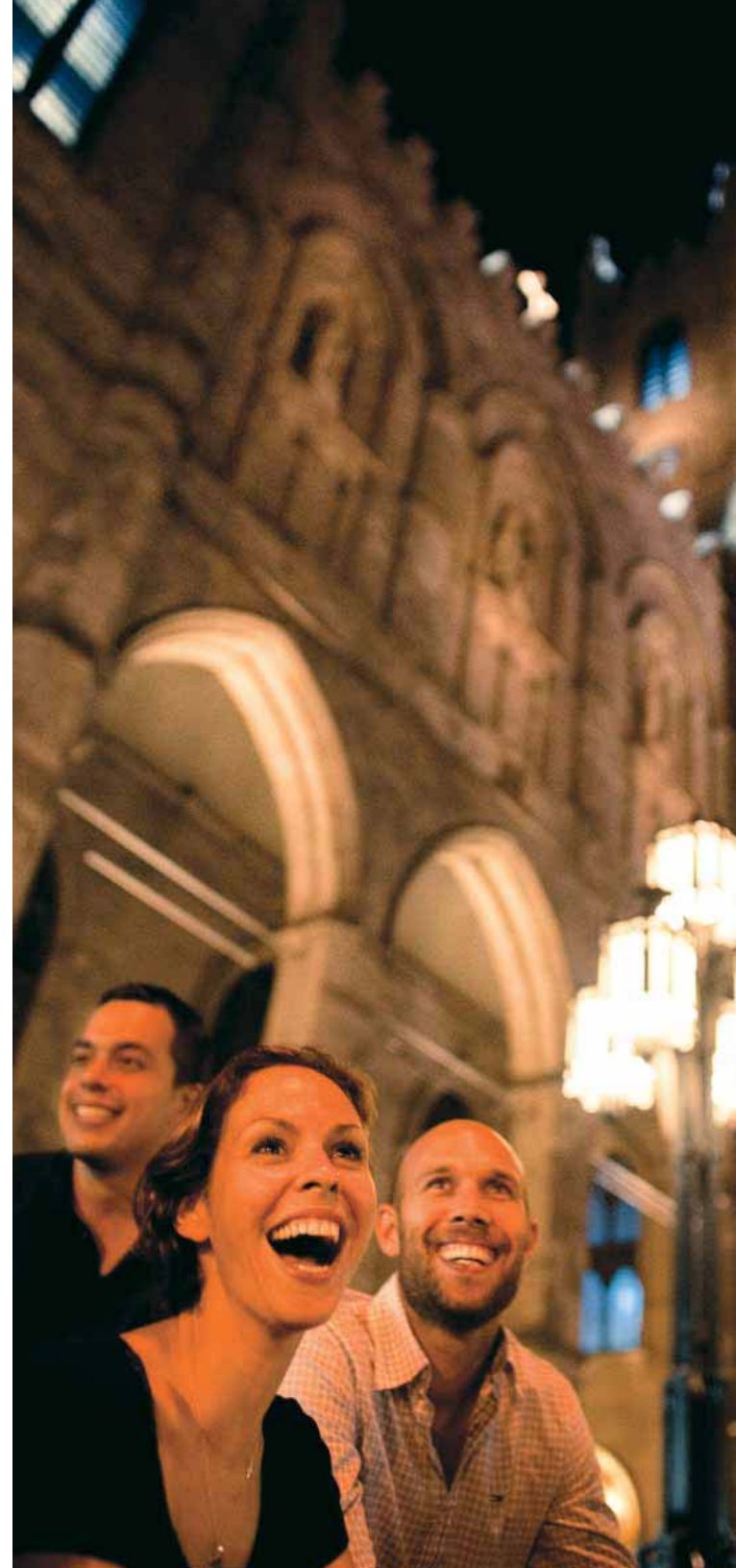
### **The traveller is the star of the story**

Here's an example: Canada's regional, multicultural culinary traditions use fresh, locally sourced ingredients in original, unexpected ways that you will only find here. But instead of the usual anecdotes of dining on pristine fare in a three-star restaurant, we tell the story of shopping with a chef—hunting for morels in the forest or selecting the plumppest oyster at a public market—and learning how to squeeze the essence out of each salmonberry and heirloom tomato.

### **Here's your checklist**

When you've finished, read it out loud. Ask yourself:

- Does this sound personal?
- Does it feel natural?
- Does it feel intimate?
- Does it feel unique?
- Does it feel authentic (real)?
- Does it give me a tingle?
- Would it motivate me to book a trip to Canada?



# How can I work with the assets of the brand's visual identity?

The Canadian Tourism Commission recognizes that every business and organization has its own brand and marketing attributes. But if you see value in working with some of the elements of the visual identity of Canada's tourism brand, we would be keen to discuss this with you. The CTC is committed to working with the Canadian tourism industry so that we can go into marketplaces with a strong and consistent look and feel.

The section shows some of these brand visual identity elements and provides a quick overview of how they can be used.

Our brand has key elements to help differentiate Canada in a bold, new way. Here's a synopsis of these elements:

1. Logo
2. Colour
3. Pattern & bar graphics
4. Tone of voice
5. Photography

Please contact us at **[experiences@ctc-cct.ca](mailto:experiences@ctc-cct.ca)** to learn more.

For a complete brand toolkit, go to **[www.canada.travel/brand](http://www.canada.travel/brand)** to download one for yourself.



# Best practices from industry

## Introduction

All across Canada, dynamic entrepreneurs of all sizes are raising the bar for experiential travel. Using sound business planning and research as guides mixed with a healthy dose of creativity, Canadian operators are bringing in the business and winning awards. These are just a small sample of operators who have leveraged trends and built on a foundation of quality to deliver what we call “wow” experiences.

Four have volunteered to share some of their elements of success and we hope their stories will provide both inspiration and some practical tips.

1. Sustainable experience:  
Canadian Mountain Holidays
2. Premium experience:  
Nimmo Bay Resort
3. Value-added experience:  
Lighthouse Picnics

Enjoy...



# Sustainable Experience: Canadian Mountain Holidays

British Columbia/Alberta

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



## **CTC: How would you describe Canadian Mountain Holidays?**

CMH is the largest, most experienced helicopter skiing and hiking company in the world. We offer amazing mountain experiences and a distinctive style of personal hospitality that keeps 70% of our guests coming back every year, from all over the world. At peak season, we employ 500 staff—including 110 mountain guides and 50 chefs—to work at our nine remote mountain lodges and three town-based areas, located throughout the Columbia Mountains of eastern BC. We coordinate our busy pre- and post-trip travel business from our main office in Banff, AB.

**Canadian Mountain Holidays has a well-established reputation for embracing sustainable tourism practices. What were some of the factors leading the company in a sustainable direction?**

CMH was founded by Hans Gmoser, an avid climber and mountain guide who embraced a strong personal commitment to sustainable practices long before any green movement existed. Today, stewardship—along with safety, personal service, passion and accountability—is the core value that guides our leadership and acts as a filter for our decision-making in every part of our operation.

Six key initiatives have influenced our sustainable direction:

1. A strong commitment from leadership to balance the social, environmental and financial goals of our company
2. Designating a Director of Land Resources in 1997 to champion our sustainability initiatives

3. Establishing the Second Nature program to add structure to our practices and provide direction for our employees\*
4. Sharing our stories of success and challenge through media, web, reports, newsletters and training as a way of increasing our public accountability
5. Seeking out like-minded companies and individuals to help refine our practices and increase our knowledge base
6. Hiring people who share our passion

\*CMH's Second Nature sustainability program, established in 2000, collectively reaffirms and focuses our stewardship commitment throughout the company. The Second Nature committee works hard to ensure all employees understand our sustainability practices, are accountable for their actions and are able to contribute in a hands-on way to achieving our sustainability vision.

**Many operators view embracing sustainability as a daunting task. How did CMH successfully integrate sustainability practices into its day-to-day operations?**

When sustainability is viewed as a stand-alone initiative, it can be daunting! Integration in all aspects of our operation is the key and the challenge. The following guiding principles help to keep us focused:

1. Start small and do a few things really well. The journey towards sustainability is long term and every step, no matter how small, counts.
2. Engage staff in finding solutions. Our employees are our best innovators and are responsible for developing and implementing our initiatives as well as communicating with our guests.
3. Understand the environmental, social and financial implications of every decision. This can be a challenge, but the discipline always ends up helping us to make better decisions.



**Aside from the benefits for the planet, were there any other unexpected benefits to CMH from your focus on sustainability?**

In the past four years we have seen increased benefits from our focus on sustainability. First, we know from our staff that our stewardship commitment is an important factor in choosing CMH as an employer and a key differentiator that we promote when recruiting.

Second, through regular employee surveys we know that our employees want more opportunities for personal and professional development and the Second Nature program allows for this.

Third, we have received very positive media attention because of our sustainability commitment, which has enhanced our reputation not only as a great heli-ski operator but also as a responsible and stable company worth investing in. We also know that all things being equal, our sustainability program is viewed as 'value-added' by our guests.

Finally, we have seen savings as a result of various initiatives, and have worked hard to establish some baseline measurements, so our measurements will be more effective in the future.

**Tell us about the awards you've won for sustainability. Has winning them been a boost to CMH's bottom line?**

CMH has been fortunate to win the following awards:

- 2007—UNWTO e-Tourism Award for Climate Change
- 2006—Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) Lifetime Achievement Award to Hans Gmoser, founder of CMH
- 2004—British Columbia Tourism Industry Environmentally Responsible Tourism Award
- 2004—British Columbia Tourism Industry Technology in Tourism Award
- 2004—Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) Parks Canada Sustainable Tourism Award
- 2004—Travel Alberta Alto Award for Sustainable Tourism

Each award has provided a major moral boost to our team, reaffirming our efforts and goals. I believe our success has also inspired other operators.

Although it is difficult to measure the direct connection to our bottom line,

we know through our employee surveys, customer comments and industry connections that these awards have had a major impact on shaping CMH's reputation as a leader and innovator in all aspects of our operation.

**Do you think that your customers would pay a premium to support a business based in the principles of sustainability?**

We have done some direct research in this area and 92% of our guests indicated that having sustainability measures in place was either important or critically important. These numbers were higher than we expected. Other research we are familiar with has indicated that guests would be willing to pay a premium, although the premium was not clearly defined.

**Thank you for your time.**

Contributed by:

**Connie MacDonald**

*Director of Communications*

# Premium experience: Nimmo Bay Resort

Nimmo Bay, British Columbia  
[www.nimmobay.com](http://www.nimmobay.com)

## **CTC: What's the spiel on Nimmo Bay Resort?**

Nimmo Bay specializes in providing international visitors with high-end wilderness tourism experiences throughout the central coast of BC and northern Vancouver Island. Helicopters give us access to this virtually unexplored territory. Our products include unparalleled angling adventures, as well as a motherlode of whale-watching, kayaking, river rafting, heli-hiking, beachcombing, caving and First Nations cultural adventures. Now entering our 28th year of operation as a family business, Nimmo Bay's season runs from mid-April to mid-October, with 18 guests at a time staying in nine exclusive intertidal chalets. Our positioning is simple: 'There is no substitute for being #1' and our vision is clear: E2 = MC (Expectations Exceeded = Memories Created).

## **Tell us more about E2 = MC**

In 1999, we came up with the Theory of Hospitality—the magic formula everyone is trying to emulate today in the world of hospitality: Expectations Exceeded =



Memories Created. It's a simple answer to a complex question! If we exceed our clients' expectations, it not only brings them back to us on repeat visits, but also gets them to talk about Nimmo Bay to others. In fact, it's our clients who do the bulk of our marketing for us—we just have to make sure to do our job in the first place!

**You started as a luxury fishing lodge. Now Nimmo Bay offers many grand experiences. What do you consider before adding new products to your high-end adventure roster?**

First, we look at what's out there—is there any company doing a particular adventure elsewhere in the world that's appealing?

Then we see if there are local experts who can assist us in guiding the potential experience. Next, we focus on whether the adventure is within the range of our helicopters, plus research to see if it will attract a diversity of ages as well as both men and women. Finally, we consider if the experience possesses that all-important "wow" factor—one that would attract the media in helping us to market this adventure.

**How do you position your product in a way that makes you compelling to those who have the financial means to take a vacation anywhere in the world?**

We give them value for their money—people will go anywhere and pay anything if they perceive value for their money. We offer the ability to explore BC's spectacular wilderness without the hordes of people normally found in exotic places. This is a big deal to our clientele. From 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. they can count on being



'coptered away from their comfort zones into sensational experiences that veer from the dramatic, isolated beaches of the west coast to the dazzling glaciers of the Silverthorne Icefields. We show them wildlife most people will only see in pictures, and we guide them to fishing waters that most anglers can only dream about. But between 5 p.m. and 10 a.m. we return our clientele to their comfort zones and give them the indulgences to which they are accustomed—or even better—in their everyday lives. For them this is money well spent.





**Nimmo Bay has won many awards over the years. How direct is the correlation between the awards and recognition, and a fully booked year?**

Extremely direct! Nimmo Bay has benefited over the years from great awards and third-party recognition. Lifestyles of the Rich & Famous, Forbes Traveler, Condé Nast Traveler, Men's Health Journal—all declare Nimmo Bay the best in the world in its class. The House of Hardy in England (fishing tackle manufacturers for 135 years) has even recognized Nimmo Bay as its first-ever endorsed fly-fishing resort. Boston Legal, the TV show starring William Shatner and James Spader, shot an episode called "Finding Nimmo." These high-end awards and recognition bring instant bottom-line improvements. The phones ring and the emails come in from folks wanting to do what Denny Crane (William Shatner) did, or take the trip Condé Nast Traveler described in its pages. We know immediately if the media PR has worked by the almost-instant response.

**Do you think that your customers would pay a premium to support a business based in the principles of sustainability?**

They already are! It is good to see that what Nimmo Bay started 27 years ago has finally moved to the forefront of today's society. Water has always been the key to our existence—it is basic to our identity, and every sustainable decision we have made over the years, from our first small hydro facility to our catch-and-release fishery, to our state-of-the-art waste management system, reflects this. We have been—are still, in this part of BC—the eyes and ears of the wilderness with our helicopters and we have created many firsts with government to monitor and report on the state of the wild and its ecosystems. Today, we educate our guests on what we do within our environment to preserve what we have. They learn also what they can do within their home environments to make our planet a better place, just from seeing what lengths we go to protect our natural habitat. Sustainability has always been part of our vocabulary and our partnership with the other five companies to form a sustainable tourism collective is getting all of us great press and notoriety, which is good for the bottom line, good for our communities where we shop and good for the environment. That's actually a triple bottom line! The fact is, ecosystem-based management serves us well, both as business people and environmentalists.

**Can you explain more about your sustainable tourism collective?**

Nimmo Bay is one of six companies that founded, in 2006, the BC Sustainable Tourism Collective. From big to small, and front country to backcountry, we share best practices in environmental sustainability, market each others' properties and showcase ways to reduce our environmental footprint. Our three priorities are: climate change as it relates to water, waste reduction and alternative energy; labour and engagement; as well as guest and staff education.

Our mission statement reads:

The BC Sustainable Tourism Collective was founded on the vision that travel within British Columbia must foster appreciation and stewardship for the natural environment, regions, and communities on which it depends.

*For this purpose, sustainable tourism is defined as travel that ensures destinations remain unspoiled or future generations through a commitment to environmental, social and economic responsibility as it relates to a company, its people, guests, communities, and the environment.*

**Thank you for your time.**

Contributed by:  
**Craig Murray**  
Owner

# Value-added experience: Lighthouse Picnics

Newfoundland  
[www.lighthousepicnics.ca](http://www.lighthousepicnics.ca)



## **CTC: Give us the dish on Lighthouse Picnics.**

Lighthouse Picnics serves up a feast of food, history and culture in spectacularly beautiful Ferryland, Newfoundland. We use only fresh, local products to create

a meal clients enjoy while relaxing and absorbing the amazing scenery—a vista of waves, whales and seabirds. Guests also experience an interpretive tour of the lighthouse.

When we began, we prepared the food in the community (a 10-minute drive away), transported it to the lighthouse and then literally stood in front of the then-abandoned building to sell our picnic goodies. Many visitors, though surprised to see us, tried our food and loved it. The positive feedback encouraged us to restore the lighthouse dwelling, which had been abandoned for 21 years. Through a tremendous amount of hard work, enthusiasm and a lot of fun we opened in June 2004.

We have grown to a full-time staff of 11, and call upon part-timers when hosting large events such as weddings. We continue to expand our business by hosting events featuring high-calibre Newfoundland artists.

## **The Lighthouse Picnics experience combines family and community history with wildlife viewing and culinary tourism, all in a unique setting. Did you weave these elements together on purpose?**

The elements fell into place quite naturally, as they encapsulate everything we love:

- **Family:** Our business allows us to live in Ferryland, our home. We have strong family connections as well as a sense of belonging here.
- **Food:** We use local producers, and where possible, organic and Fairtrade products.
- **Newfoundland:** We have preserved one of our province's historic buildings, which is brought to life through our interpretive tours.
- **Culture:** Our events bring Newfoundland's amazing musical talents to the lighthouse.

- **Landscape:** We have not altered the rugged landscape—our clients sit on the ground, use natural trails and protect what they have come to see.

## **What tips can you offer other tourism operators?**

Offer a genuine experience—do not try to be anything other than what you are. We've been successful at presenting a multifaceted experience because we feel so passionately about what we do. It took a huge leap of faith to open where we have, and we've learned that people are drawn to places where there is a story. What our setting and experience does so well is provide the ingredients for people to create their own memories—they've got sea, sky, good company and great food.



**Most people who have experienced your product agree that the overall experience is greater than the sum of its parts. What do you provide to create an experience bound to be shared in a story when travellers return home?**

While our product is food or events, it is much more than that—it is an experience. We try to engage our guests' senses from the moment they start their hike to the lighthouse—smelling the sea, hearing seabirds and absorbing the view that goes on forever sets the scene for a memory. The lighthouse itself offers a real sense of place and history, and many locals have shared their memories of the lighthouse with us—this is very much a collection of people's stories. We keep our menu small and simple, using seasonal ingredients—when the crab fishery is open, we'll have fresh crab on the menu. People experience the delight of being given a picnic blanket and books of local interest, then asked to find the perfect spot to enjoy their meal, which is soon delivered. Our many guest comments include sentiments regarding the creation of special memories and

feeling more relaxed than they have in years. To have guests leave with that feeling is truly an honour.

**How did you know that you had assets that could be turned into a marketable tourism experience? Did you do any research and business planning?**

In terms of research, there was none—what we wanted to offer was so unique, we hadn't seen it anywhere else! Our first year we had no clue if the idea would fly, so we started small, just testing the marketplace. We were also always asking tourists what they thought of what we were doing and why they were enjoying it, and they freely shared their comments with us. We also reflected on what drew us to favourite places that we had travelled—in many cases the places had stories, were off the beaten track and were simple in their approach.

**How do you decide what new products to offer?**

Well, we joke that each year our comment book becomes our 'to do' list. We listen to what our customers are telling us. Some of our best improvements have come through these suggestions! For example, as we have grown we have struggled to find out where people have wandered off to their picnic spot. A regular customer, Geraldine, saw these growing pains and suggested that we give people coloured flags and match them up with their orders. We have taken that fabulous idea a step further and now offer signal flags that were once used for communications at the lighthouse.

**What's your approach to the media, and what type of media exposure have you received?**

What you see is what you get! We're honest about what we've done well, and just as frank on what we've done not so well. We've been fortunate to have had an amazing response from travel writers and journalists. Media include: Canada AM (TV), The National Post, Journal de Montréal and The Telegram as well as Chatelaine, Time, Travel Girl, Continental Airlines and Outpost Travel magazines. We've also had support from the media relations people at our province's Department of Tourism, Culture and Recreation plus Destination St. John's. If you have a new product or service you want people to know about, contact your provincial tourism department—tell them that you are interested in participating in FAM tours and hosting visiting travel writers. We have also won several awards that have brought us media attention, including 2007 Restaurateur of the Year Award by the Newfoundland and Labrador Restaurant and Foodservices Association.

**What practical tips could you offer tourism operators about the assets they have or can develop in order to have a completely unique tourism experience?**

Often the best opportunities are the ones right in front of you. Growing up in Ferryland, I saw the lighthouse every day. I always wondered why someone didn't do something with the abandoned building, until one day I realized that I could be that person. What's unique

**“People are searching for connections with people and places—when you can offer a product that connects with people you often have a winner.”**



within your town, your community or your culture? Is there a story? People are searching for connections with people and places—when you can offer a product that connects with people, you often have a winner. For example, do your hiking tours explain the historical significance of the trails you are using? Were these paths used traditionally to connect towns? This might be everyday stuff for you—but it's a new experience for your visitors. Give them a sense of what it is like to live there, the story behind the place.

**Thank you for your time.**

Contributed by:  
**Jill Curran**  
Partner



# Keeping in touch

## The Canadian Tourism Commission is looking for unique differentiating experiences.

Partnership is a cornerstone of the CTC business model and philosophy, and working with industry is vital to the success of our Brand Experiences Unit.

Now that you've learned something about the CTC's Explorer Quotient™ segmentation approach based on social values and about the three global targets that the CTC has worldwide, **we want to hear from you**—in order to be successful, we need to hear about those truly differentiated experiences that will help advance the CTC's storytelling brand: **Canada. Keep Exploring.™**

Please forward any tourism experiences or stories that you feel are aligned with Canada's tourism brand to the Brand Experiences team for consideration. These will be vetted against established guidelines and target considerations and could be used in a variety of ways in the CTC's distribution channels. Learning about new and differentiated Canadian travel experiences is critical to our mutual success going forward.

Please forward your experiences to [experiences@ctc-cct.ca](mailto:experiences@ctc-cct.ca).

The CTC works closely with provincial and local destination marketing organizations to learn about experiences that advance Canada's tourism brand. Working with these

organizations is always a constructive step for any tourism business operator.

## Feedback

The CTC is committed to working collaboratively with partners and industry. We welcome your feedback to make future editions more valuable to you, the members of the Canadian tourism industry.

Please submit your ideas and suggestions for upcoming editions to:

**Lesley Braby**  
*Experiences Specialist*  
604 638 8401  
[braby.lesley@ctc-cct.ca](mailto:braby.lesley@ctc-cct.ca)

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## Other ways to stay in touch with the Canadian Tourism Commission

For weekly updates from the CTC on the Canadian tourism industry, please subscribe to receive the CTC News at the following address:

[www.canada.travel/news](http://www.canada.travel/news) (English)

[www.canada.travel/nouvelles](http://www.canada.travel/nouvelles) (French)

Further information about the CTC is available from [www.canada.travel/corporate](http://www.canada.travel/corporate).



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