



Every month we'll be sending you the latest insights, research and thoughtful perspectives on the issues that matter most to tourism businesses and operators in RTO 9.

In this month's newsletter we explore new research on Canadian destinations and travel behaviour in response to COVID-19.

If there are topics you want to read about in a future newsletter please email Imedeiros@region9tourism.com with your ideas.

RTO 9 News

SAVE *the* DATE

RTO 9 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

06 . 01 . 21

2021 TIAO's AGM, RTO9's AGM and TIAC Town Hall

We invite you to join RTO 9, the Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO), and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) for our Annual General Meeting, followed by a TIAC Town Hall.

When: Tuesday, June 1st, 2021, 1 PM - 5 PM EST

RTO 9 will fill 4 seats on its Board of Directors during the RTO9's AGM.

Applications to run for election for the Board of Directors are to be received by 4 pm on Friday, May 7, 2021. Seats on the Board of Directors are available in the following destinations:

- Land O'Lakes
- Cornwall & The Counties
- Kingston
- Gananoque

To apply for a seat on the Board of Directors visit tourismtalk.ca to download a pdf of the application.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

The Importance Of Tourism Research

You are invited to join RTO 9, Oliver Martin of Twenty31 and Fran Hohol of CBRE, as we discussed the importance of tourism research. How to use research and how important it is for current and future decision making.

Oliver is a destination development strategist with over 18 years of experience in quantitative research. He has worked with 50+ tourism management organizations to develop sustainable growth plans and to measure impact. At Twenty31 Oliver advises destinations on how to utilize research insights for development and strategy assessment.

Fran is Senior Director at CBRE Limited with over 35 years of consulting experience in the hospitality and tourism sector, including market and financial feasibility studies, needs assessments, economic impact studies, and strategic business plans. Fran is also responsible for CBRE Hotels' extensive national database on the accommodation sector, including the collection of monthly data on the performance of Canada's hotel sector (Occupancy, Average Daily Rate and RevPar). This data is reported to RTO 9, along with a *National Trends Report* for a market comparison to the rest of Canada.

When: Monday, April 26th from 10 AM – 11 AM EST

Mark your calendars and join our meeting using the link below: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/757855429>



Creating Sustainable Events Webinar

Join RTO 9 and The Sustainable Events Forum (TSEF) for an engaging look at steps that event planners can take to move toward hosting sustainable events. Whether your event is small or you are planning ahead for post-COVID larger events, this is a great opportunity to learn from the experts at TSEF.

When: Thursday May 20th 1:00 PM - 2:00 PM EST

[REGISTER](#)

[WATCH ALL OF OUR PAST WEBINARS](#)

South Eastern Ontario Consumer Research - Findings & Insight

Join us for a presentation and moderated discussion on consumer demand for South Eastern Ontario vacation experiences and market profiles based on Twenty31's latest consumer research study. The session includes a presentation of findings and a Q and A session to allow participants to learn, share and collaborate on marketing ideas for 2021 and beyond.

Presented by Oliver Martin, Twenty31 and Cathy Kirkpatrick, Alphabet Creative

[CORNWALL April 19th, 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM](#)

[BROCKVILLE April 19th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM](#)

[GANANOQUE April 20th, 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM](#)

[RIDEAU CANAL April 20th, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM](#)

[FRONTENAC/L&A April 21st, 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM](#)

[BAY OF QUINTE April 21st, 10:00 AM – 11:00 AM](#)

[PRINCE EDWARD COUNTY April 22nd, 8:30 AM – 9:30 AM](#)

[KINGSTON April 22nd, 11:00 AM – 12:00 PM](#)

COVID - 19 Tourism Adaptation Fund

The Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario (FedDev) delivers programs and services to support innovation and economic growth in Southern Ontario. FedDev recognizes the significant decline in tourism activity for many tourism dependent communities as a result of the COVID – 19 pandemic and wishes to help offset the high costs incurred by tourism-oriented businesses. RTO 9 is now accepting applications from tourism businesses located in Leeds & Grenville, Frontenac County, Hastings County and Lennox & Addington. Businesses can apply for a non-repayable grant of up to \$20,000.00. Please see link below for eligibility requirements.

For more information, please contact: Bonnie Ruddock, Executive Director, Region 9 Regional Tourism Organization

[APPLY NOW](#)

State of Tourism

Monitoring the Impact of COVID-19

In addition to the resources on our [COVID-19 resource webpage on Tourism Talk](#), we have been monitoring trends in key areas to help you understand the trends and respond strategically.

Ontario Implements Four Week Province-Wide State of Emergency Stay-at-Home Order

The Ontario government has issued a province-wide Stay-at-Home order requiring everyone to remain at home except for essential purposes, such as going to the grocery store or pharmacy, accessing health care services (including getting vaccinated), for outdoor exercise, or for work that cannot be done remotely. As Ontario's health care capacity is threatened, the Stay-at-Home order, and other new and existing public health and workplace safety measures will work to preserve public health system capacity, safeguard vulnerable populations, allow for progress to be made with vaccinations and save lives.

[VIEW THE FULL GOVERNMENT RELEASE](#)

[VIEW THE FULL LIST OF RULES & REGULATIONS](#)

Market Insights

1. Canadian Destinations and Travel Behaviour in Response to COVID-19

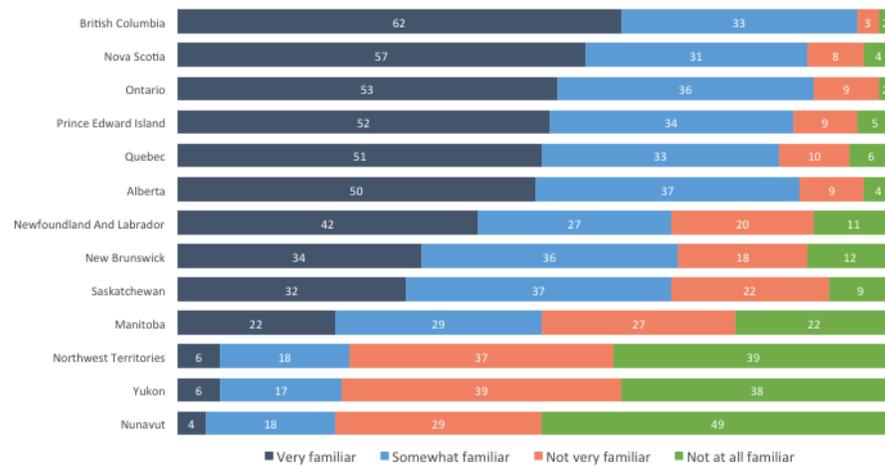
In late 2020, the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) and Twenty31, in partnership with Skift, launched a comprehensive primary travel consumer study in Canada to assess perceptions of Canadian destinations and travel behaviour in response to COVID-19. This research, based on a stratified,

random sample of Canadian consumers with screeners to identify travel consumers (total sample: n=2,750 resulting in a confidence interval of +/-95%) presents the most comprehensive assessment to date of brand perceptions and travel intentions of Canadians (published March, 2021).

The data highlights a number of key findings:

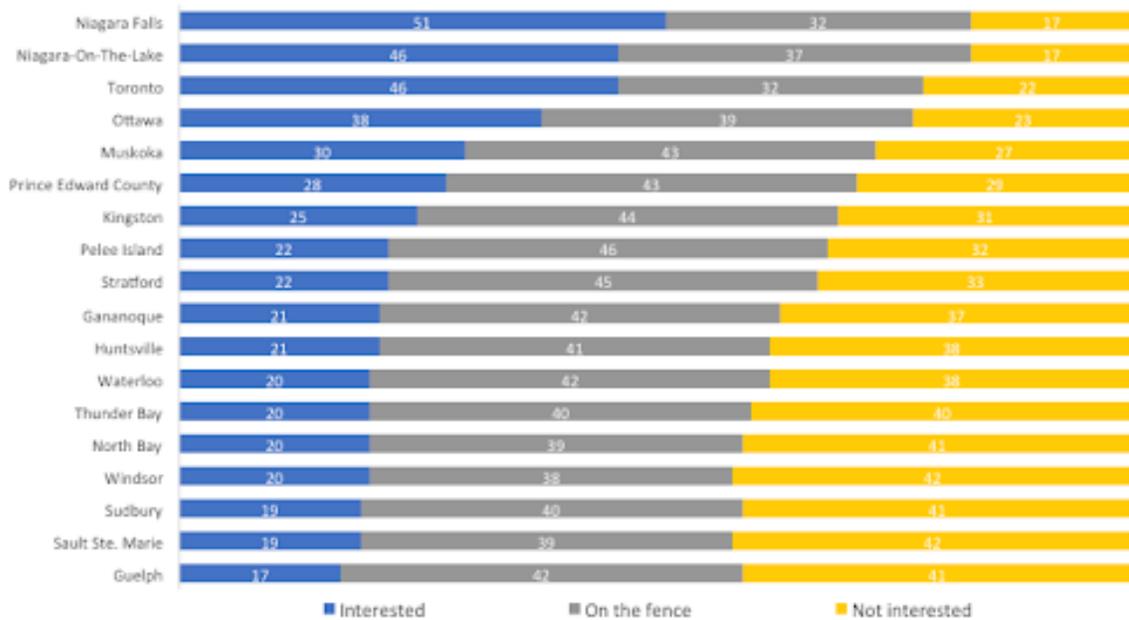
Awareness of Ontario as a travel destination is high in Canada, but awareness of the actual visitor offering is much lower –itineraries help stimulate awareness and interest and are required to move travel consumers through the path to purchase.

Chart 1: DESTINATION FAMILIARITY ACROSS CANADA, MARCH 2021



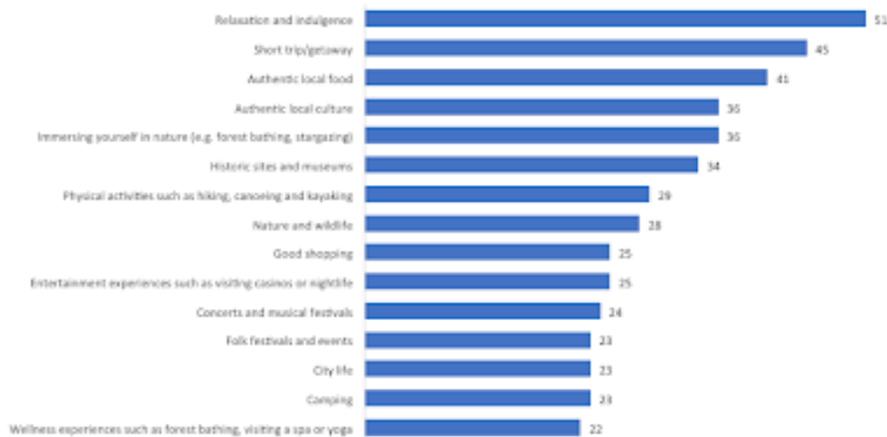
Prince Edward County, Kingston, and Gananoque fall within the top 10 tourism destinations of interest for Ontarians’ travelling within Ontario; overall interest is 28%, 25%, and 21%, respectively.

Chart 2: ONTARIANS’ INTEREST IN TRAVELLING TO SPECIFIC ONTARIO DESTINATIONS, MARCH 2021



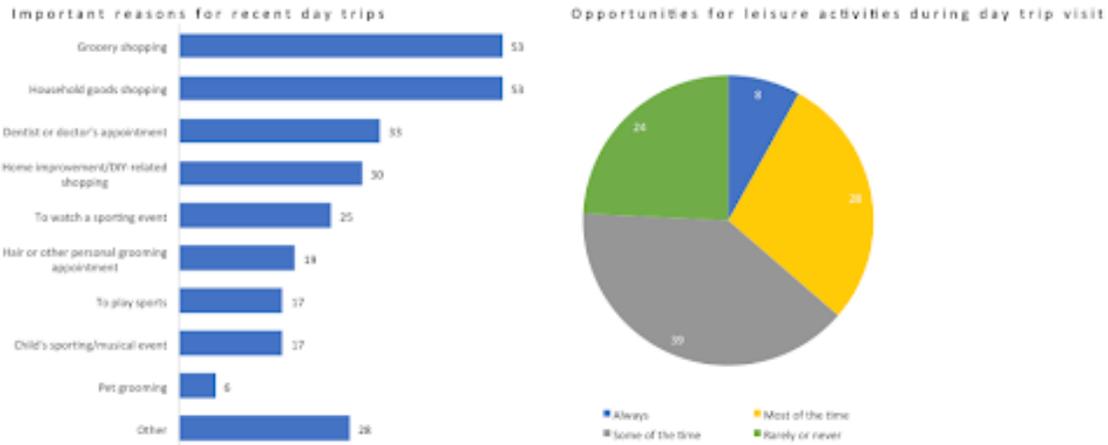
Packages linked with shorter getaway trips to relax and experience a new destination, enjoy good food and partake in an outdoor experience are in high demand by Ontario consumers.

Chart 3: TOP ACTIVITIES OF CANADIAN TRAVEL CONSUMERS ON DOMESTIC VACATIONS, MARCH 2021



There is a large potential market of day-trippers (and the potential to convert them into over-night tourists) based on linking shopping/errands and leisure activities.

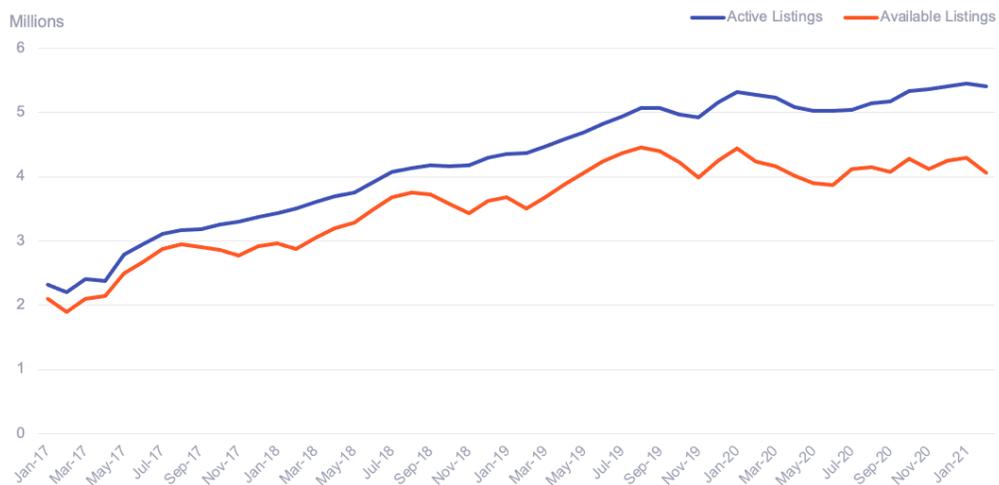
Chart 4: CANADIAN TRAVEL CONSUMER INTEREST IN COMBINING DAY TRIPS AND LEISURE ACTIVITIES, MARCH 2021



2. Short-term Rental Trends

Short-term rentals have proven to be a strong and growing competitor for the traditional accommodations market. Especially with the onset of COVID-19, more space and a variety of options in remote destinations have made short-term rentals highly appealing for visitors.

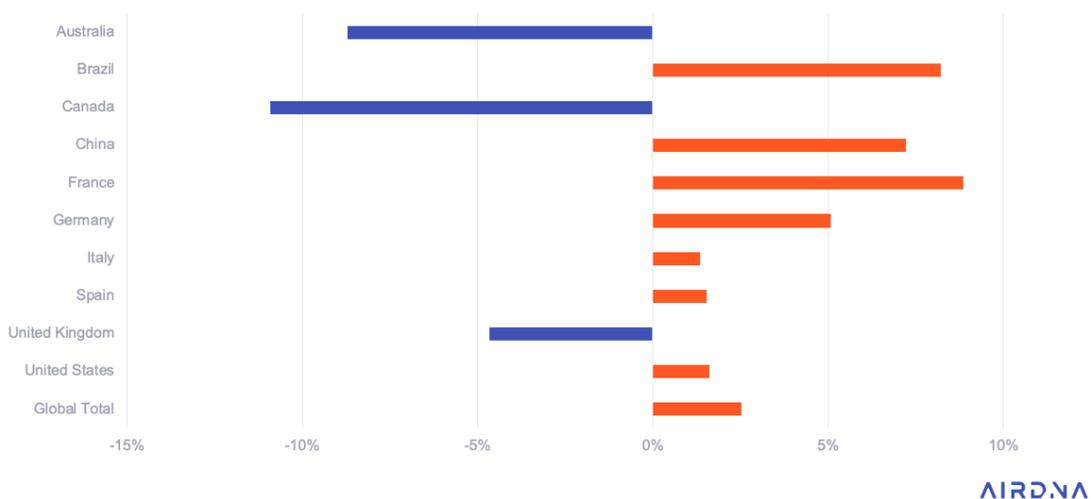
Global Supply of Airbnb Units by Month (2017 - 2021)



Source: AirDNA

According to AirDNA research, there are now more than 5.4 million active listings on Airbnb globally, far exceeding the units available when combining the total of 3.3 million affiliated with Marriott, Hilton, and IHG. From January through June 2020, Airbnb lost 5% of its total listings, but it has since recovered and grown 2.5% from pre-pandemic levels.

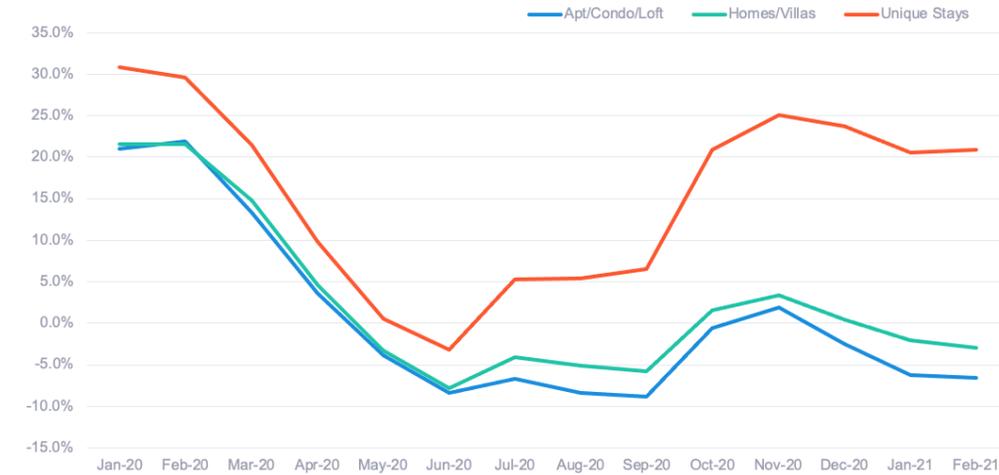
February 2021 Y-o-Y Change in Active Listings



Trends Across Global Markets

Not all markets have experienced even growth. When comparing countries, active listings (the number of listings viewable on Airbnb with at least one prior booked night) have decreased the most in Canada. Approximately 40% of units were concentrated heavily in Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver at the start of 2020. Combined, these markets lost 22% of their active supply over the past year, compared to a decline of just 3.5% throughout the country.

Global Y-o-Y Change in Available Units



Source: AirDNA

AIRDNA

Expanding Demand and New Investments

The Business/Arts and the National Art Centre conducted a tracking to study to understand Canadians' plans to return to in-person performances and exhibitions, the opportunities that exist moving forward, and potential barriers to participation.

From an investor perspective, unique property types are becoming more coveted. Stays in lighthouses, yurts, tiny homes, and farm stays were the only types to maintain positive year-over-year growth in available listings throughout the pandemic. These types of listings are expected to continue attracting above average occupancy as local travellers look for interesting experiences in remote areas within their own country and provinces/territories.

[READ MORE](#)

Workforce Development



Join the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) and Destination Canada (DC) on Friday, April 9th from 11 to 12 pm EDT for an update on industry support efforts and marketing plans.

When: (TODAY) Friday April 9th at 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM EDT

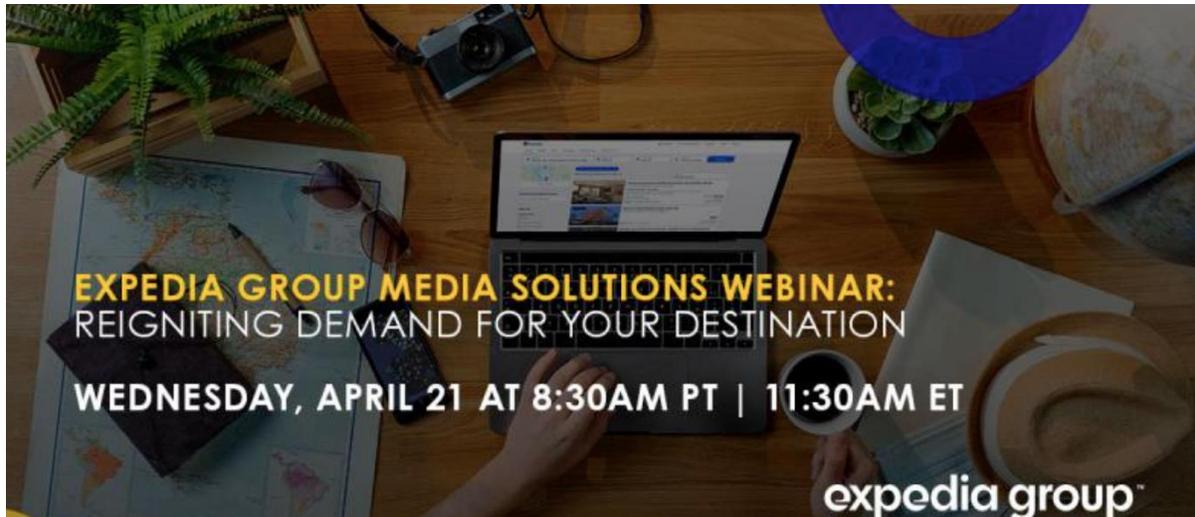
[REGISTER](#)

Webinar: How Can Destinations Stand Out through Great Storytelling?

Storytelling will be the differentiator that ensures your place stands out from the crowd! To be successful, you must develop stories that can withstand the test of time and that are also flexible enough to be adapted in a crisis. Learn practical ways to promote your place through bold, creative storytelling.

When: May 5th at 8:00 AM EST

[REGISTER](#)



Webinar: Reignite Destination Demand

In this Expedia expert-led session participants will learn about ways DMOs are using digital advertising to reignite demand for their destinations. This session will keep you up to date on the best practices for campaign creative and advertising solutions used during different stages of rebuilding.

When: Wednesday, April 21 at 11:30 AM EST

[REGISTER](#)



Podcast: Tourpreneur

Tourpreneur is an excellent podcast for anyone looking for personal stories, tips, insights, morning routines, resources, inspiration and challenges. If you operate a tour business or plan on starting one, this podcast is for you.

[LISTEN NOW](#)

Opportunities

2021 Reconnect Festival and Event Program

Over the last year, festival and event organizers have taken innovative approaches to develop and deliver alternative programming while incorporating enhanced health and safety measures. These innovative ideas are creating opportunities for people across Ontario to reconnect with the beauty and diversity of their communities in new ways, whether in person or online, while providing local jobs.

That's why the Ontario government is investing \$20 million through the 2021 Reconnect Festival and Event Program to provide support to event organizers who are finding new, exciting and engaging ways to deliver local programming during the COVID-19 pandemic. For information on the program including changes to eligibility, funding priorities and program details, please see the [Reconnect Festival and Event Program Application Guide](#).

The deadline to apply for the 2021 Reconnect Festival and Event Program is Tuesday, April 20, 2021, at 5 p.m. (EDT).



Great Taste of Ontario Culinary Cultural Diversity Survey

The Culinary Tourism Alliance is looking to increase the representation of diversity within the local culinary tourism industry, and within the Feast On program. The Culinary Cultural Diversity Program key priority is to reach more businesses within the BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities who could benefit from their platform and programs.

[TAKE THE SURVEY](#)

We have also attached information and resources for businesses featured in Great Taste of Ontario passports and content to help you make the most of your participation in the program.

[VISIT THE BUSINESS PORTAL](#)



Tourism and Hospitality Fundamentals- Registration Now Open!

If you know of any clients, or employees eager to upskill and gain employment in the Tourism and Hospitality sector, please have them reach out to THFinfo@sl.on.ca

Ontario Supporting Young Black Entrepreneurs

The Ontario government is investing \$1.2 million over three years to help young Black entrepreneurs and Black-owned tech start-ups access the resources and tools they need to succeed in the province's changing economy. The funding will be provided through Ryerson University DMZ's Black Innovation Programs, which support Black-led businesses by connecting them with customers, capital, experts and a community of entrepreneurs and influencers.

[LEARN MORE](#)

#SAFETRAVELS



'Safe Travels' Stamp Application

The specially designed stamp will allow travellers and other Travel & Tourism stakeholders to recognise destination authorities and companies around the world that have implemented health and hygiene protocols that are aligned with WTTC's Global Safe Travels Protocols.

Below are all the resources you need to complete your application:

- [Download the Safe Travels Application Form](#)
- [Download the Safe Travels Guidelines](#)
- [Review the Safe Travels Terms and Conditions](#)
- [Review the Safe Travels Protocols](#)

[LEARN MORE](#)

Our Industry Partners



Get Social With Us!

Connect and engage with our industry brand 'RTO 9' on social media.



Get Social With Us!

Connect and engage with our consumer brand 'South Eastern Ontario' on social media.



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