



This month's newsletter is about looking ahead and ushering in a feeling of renewal!

RTO9 News

Ontario Staycation Tax Credit

Ontario residents can claim 20% of their eligible 2022 accommodation expenses, when filing their personal Income Tax and Benefit Return for 2022. You can claim eligible expenses of up to \$1,000 as an individual or \$2,000 if you have a spouse, common-law partner, or eligible children, to get back up to \$200 as an individual or \$400 as a family.

"How should I inform my guests about the Ontario Staycation Tax Credit?"

- Provide a link to the [Ontario Staycation Tax Credit site](#) on your website.
- Develop a marketing campaign with your local Destination Marketing Organization, Chamber of Commerce, Municipality, and other tourism organizations to inform the travelling public of the Ontario Staycation Tax Credit.

"How can my business benefit from the Staycation Tax Credit if I do not sell accommodations?"

- Create a package with the accommodator close to you:
 - If you run a restaurant, create a unique room/meal package with the accommodator. By creating a unique meal package, you do not need to discount your menu prices. You could also create an experience for the guests of your accommodation partner.

- If you provide guiding services, create a unique package with the nearby accommodator that includes your services. By creating a unique package, you do not need to discount your fees.
- Strengthen your relationship with the accommodator. Provide current information about your services/offerings to the owners/managers/.
- Share social media posts of the accommodators' offerings and communicate how they will match up with your services.
- Provide priority reservations for guests of the accommodator.

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RTO 9 Research Summary - 2019

[The Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries](#) has provided us with a overview of the economic impact of tourism in the region for 2019. View the infographic below for visitor spending by region, origin, and category, accommodation statistics, and more.

[VIEW INFOGRAPHIC](#)



The Tourism Economy in South Eastern Ontario

An analysis of the latest economic and market data

Twenty31 Consulting Inc.
January 2022



The Tourism Economy in South Eastern Ontario

The latest report from [Twenty31 Consulting Inc.](#) provides a full picture summary of the economy (using a series of economic indicators) in the RTO 9 catchment area and how it has changed post-COVID.

Key Takeaways

- Overall economic activity in Canada slowed during the first half of 2021, making it another challenging year. Experts predict Canadian GDP growth to be 4.4% in 2022, with pent up consumer demand helping fuel recovery.
- Tourism GDP has grown in alignment with the removal of pandemic restrictions. Transportation and accommodations were the most significant contributors to the rise in tourism GDP in the third quarter of 2021.
- Core retail sales increased in the majority of sub-sectors across the economy. Before the Omicron variant emerged, October 2021 retail sales showed that consumers were spending and leading recovery.
- The gap between consumers' expected spending growth and expected income growth remains wide. Canadian consumers plan to increase their spending significantly in various areas, including travelling and restaurants, but remain cautious about the impact of variants.
- Ontario unemployment rates have hovered above pre-pandemic levels. Similar to national rates, tourism unemployment in Ontario declined during the first half of 2021 with the increase in demand for tourism.
- Travel restrictions and limitations have greatly impacted tourism businesses across Ontario. Excluding retail and other services, 2,489 tourism businesses were operating in SE Ontario in 2020, a 1.5% decline from the year before.

- Retail positions are among the top job types impacted by tourism in the SE Ontario region. Direct jobs in industries impacted by or participate in tourism will stabilize in 2022, though to levels below those seen pre-pandemic.
- Accommodation occupancy rates and revenues have declined significantly across the region. Occupancy among SE Ontario's commercial accommodations fell to 41% in 2020 from 61% in 2019. Revenue/room dropped to \$48 (-13%), and average daily rates contracted by 34%.
- Short-term vacation rental occupancy rates are up in the region. The SE Ontario region has seen some of the biggest boosts in demand, with the highest occupancy rate amongst all regions in Ontario.

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RTO 9 Announces 9 Additional Partnership Proposal Recipients

We are pleased to announce that we have awarded over 45k from our Partnership Fund to support projects across the region as a result of our second intake of applications! Partnership Funds allow us to partner with tourism operators across the region to grow tourism receipts within South Eastern Ontario.

[VIEW THE LIST OF RECIPIENTS](#)



Smartphone Photography Basics For Business

This is an introductory course to smartphone photography for business owners. Whether you are a bricks & mortar, online or outdoor activity business, understanding the equipment you are using and the guidelines of photography will help produce images that create a more professional appearance for your website and social media.

[WATCH THE WEBINAR](#)



How TIAO and CFIB Are Aligning Efforts to Assist Tourism Operators

Chris Bloore, President and CEO, Tourism Industry Association of Ontario, and Ryan Mallough, Senior Director of Provincial Affairs, Canadian Federation of Independent Business, as they discuss their individual & combined efforts to support the tourism industry throughout the pandemic. [View the Rules for Areas at Step 3 and at the Roadmap Exit Step.](#)

[WATCH THE WEBINAR](#)

Market Insights

In addition to our [COVID-19 resource page on our website](#), we also monitor and share key market trends to help you respond strategically.

1. TOURISM'S BIG SHIFT: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism industry

In collaboration with Resonance Consultancy and national and international tourism leaders, Destination Canada developed a summary of key trends expected to have the greatest impact on travel and tourism in Canada in the near term. The report TOURISM'S BIG SHIFT: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism industry summarizes the implications for consideration in 2022.

Here are the top five implications highlighted in the report:

1. **More Domestic.** Domestic visitation will prevail with continued barriers to travel and locals seeking to explore their own city or region.
2. **More Leisure.** Leisure time and leisure travel will grow and become more important in the industry.
3. **More Digital.** The increase in digital and faster connectivity and smart data will give destinations greater human understanding and knowledge about trends, predictions and experiences.
4. **More Competition.** Government investment and limited international tourists from source markets will create a highly competitive landscape in the short term.
5. **More Change.** Uncertainty will continue; operators and destinations need to be future-facing and flexible to adapt.

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2. Expedia's 2022 Travel Trends Report

Expedia's 2022 Travel Trends Report reveals a new era of traveller priorities. For two-thirds of Canadians, travel comes with a distinct mindset and habits dubbed "GOAT" (Greatest of All Trips). GOAT is characterized as going big on trips with a no regrets style of travel. The survey examined the views of 12,000

people in 12 countries planning domestic or international travel in the next 18 months.

Below are the top highlights from the report on the pursuit of transformative and meaningful travel experiences:

- Canadian travellers are planning to be more present and live in the moment, immerse themselves in culture, splurge on experiences and seek out excitement, as they crave the feelings of contentment/mental wellbeing (41%), gratification (35%) and excitement/exhilaration (36%).
- Canadian travellers are planning to embrace the impromptu and let loose on their future trips by seeking to be more spontaneous and live in the moment (27%), preferring to go-with-the flow and forgo an itinerary (22%) and embracing the freedom to do whatever they want, whenever they want (29%).
- More than a third of travellers are more willing to treat themselves (36%) and prioritize their enjoyment and experiences over budget on their next trip.
- Nearly half (41%) are searching for a sense of contentment and mental wellbeing on their next trip, and one in five travellers (23%) will spend less time on their devices to be more present.

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3. Seasonal Branding 101

Research shows time and again that the summer months are when most travellers visit South Eastern Ontario. However, taking the time to plan and spend your marketing dollars in the shoulder season (such as spring) will help you proactively connect with new travellers and achieve a solid return on investment in those not-so-busy times.

Want to build a successful seasonal brand? Start with these five principles.

1. Align with your goals. Always have a purpose in mind.
2. Try not to focus on just one event or season. Carry seasonal branding year-round.
3. Nail the visuals and tone. Use your general brand identity as your guide.
4. Gauge your audience / new audiences to figure what type of branding resonates.
5. Help people focus on the positives (warmth in fall/winter or renewal in spring).

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Workforce Development



National Indigenous Tourism Conference

Date: March 8th – 10th, 2022

This year's event will take place in Calgary, Alberta. The conference aims to create an industry-focused conversation on how to Build Back Better towards a bright future for Indigenous tourism.

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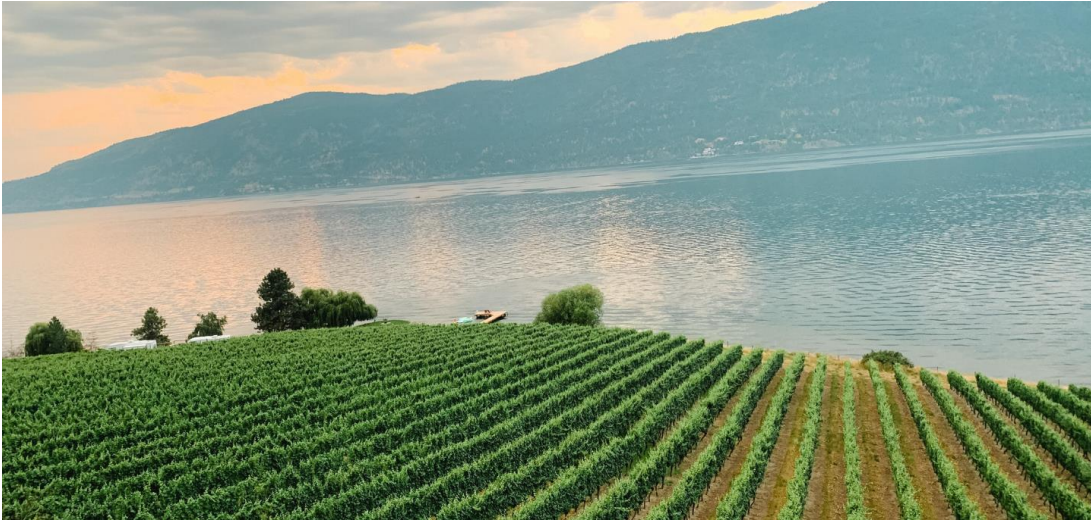
MOVE ON: EDCO Conference

Date: April 5th - 7th, 2022

EDCO2022 will give participants the space to imagine, create and collaborate with some of the most innovative and strategic minds in the economic development profession. Participants will share and learn about transformative ideas from industry leaders while engaging with fellow learners.

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Media Spotlight



Kelowna See You This Spring

Great examples and inspiration are all around us! Tourism Kelowna's spring and summer marketing campaigns have typically rolled out in early April, with a message that invites travellers to "get a jump start on a busy and exciting travel season." Consumer brand research indicated their key travel profiles were wine and food lovers, golf enthusiasts, urban adventurers, outdoor explorers. Known as the hub of the Okanagan Valley and Canada's four-season playground, the spring and summer campaigns shows off the natural beauty, freshest flavours, and lively events. Visitors are encouraged to find themselves at the centre of an energetic, warm, and friendly destination, surrounded by the best the Okanagan Valley has to offer.

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Opportunities



St. Lawrence College Hospitality and Tourism Program HOTE 99 Field Placement

HOTE 99 Field Placement is a culminating course that provides graduating Hospitality and Tourism students with the opportunity to apply program acquired skills and knowledge through unpaid participation within a supportive hospitality and tourism workplace.

If you or your company are interested in hosting student(s) for this work placement experience please contact Kourtney Valpy, Placement Coordinator, at KrValpy@sl.on and indicate that you would like to be placed on our placement list for Hospitality and Tourism.

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Destination Canada's Marketing Tips & Tricks

These resources are designed to help Canadian tourism business get the most out of their marketing efforts, reach travellers and remain competitive. The quick

tutorials and take-aways feature Destination Canada team members sharing their expertise.

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'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.

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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.

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

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