



This month's newsletter will focus on **sport tourism** as an important building block for increased visitation and expenditures and the important tourism benefits beyond the rights holders. The global sports tourism market is rapidly gaining traction over the recent years and is expected to register robust revenue growth in the near future. Only in Canada, the sports tourism industry is nowadays valued at \$7.4 billion.

What's Inside

- [FedDev Ontario Launches New Tourism Relief Fund](#)
- [How Sports Tourism is Boosting Local Economies](#)
- [Sports Tourism Trends for 2022 the New World](#)

The Importance of Sport Tourism

Tourism and sports are interrelated and complementary. Sport – as a professional, amateur or leisure activity – involves a considerable amount of travelling to play and compete in different destinations and countries. Major sporting events, such as the Olympic Games, football and rugby championships have become powerful tourism attractions in themselves, making a very positive contribution to the tourism brand of the host destination.

Sports tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in tourism, as travellers are increasingly interested in sport activities during their holiday, even if it is not intended as the main purpose of the trip. Sport events of various kinds and sizes attract tourists as participants or spectators and destinations try to add local flavours to them to distinguish themselves and provide authentic local experiences. Mega sport events such as Olympics and World Cups can be a catalyst for tourism development if successfully leveraged in terms of destination branding, infrastructure development, and further economic and social benefits.

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How Can can Sport Tourism Benefit the Whole Tourism Community?

Sport and tourism are two driving forces for the promotion and sustainable economic development of tourism destinations. Properly managed sports tourism visitor volume can have a significant positive contribution in a destination, as all tourism verticals benefit from the immediate economic impact – from airlines and accommodations to restaurants and tour operators. One key aspect is to leverage the benefits of sports tourism to transform the destination to the benefit of the residents – this is the case of major sports events, where entire cities approve renovation budgets for their historic centres, regular neighbourhoods become trendy, or new tourism assets are built. The benefits of sports tourism should not be a one-off, but a legacy to the destination.

Sports tourism can also contribute to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, as it provides engagement in physical activities, opportunities for interactions, and high development potential almost anywhere. On the other hand, sports tourism doesn't necessarily need to be motivated by a major event or a professional sport discipline, but can also relate to hiking or adventure tourism. Walking tourism is now one of the most popular ways to experience a destination. It allows tourists to better engage with local people, nature and culture, while also meeting the growing demand of travellers for outdoor activities in general. Walking tourism can be developed anywhere as a sustainable tourism offer with a relatively small investment, bringing social and economic benefits to residents and communities if properly developed and managed.

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RTO9 News

ICYMI: Tourism Organizations on Both Sides of the Border Applaud Government of Canada's Decision to End Travel Restrictions

With three land border crossings connecting South Eastern Ontario to the U.S. Thousand Islands and Upstate New York regions, the easing of restrictions is a step in the right direction for businesses that rely on cross-border traffic.

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

Market Insights

Resident Sentiment

Destination Canada's Resident Sentiment Report reveals how safe residents feel about travelling to different places in Canada. Here are the highlights from the latest update with data collection between September 14 – October 2, 2022:

- Compared to the previous month, likelihood to travel over the next 9 months within Ontario and to other provinces and territories has remained stable. Strongest demand for in-province travel for the remainder of 2022 is for October (27%) followed by November (15%) and December (16%); demand for inter-provincial travel is between 7% to 10% from October to December.
- Demand for travel to Ontario from residents of other provinces remains stable, with residents from Newfoundland & Labrador (31%), Québec (27%) and Manitoba (23%) being the most interested to travel to Ontario in the next 9 months.
- Ontarians' interest in travelling to other provinces is strongest for British Columbia (24%), Québec (19%), Nova Scotia (18%), and Alberta (16%).
- Feelings of safety among Ontarians are still significantly low when it comes to travelling internationally, however a positive trend started to emerge. While 86% of people in Ontario feel safe travelling to within province, only 44% of Ontarians feel comfortable travelling to the US and 45% to other international destinations. This suggests that there will continue to be strong potential for domestic visitation for the fall/winter season, but international travel volume levels are improving worldwide,

so Canadian destinations will be competing for visitors as prior to COVID-19.

- Lastly, Ontarians' level of comfort with welcoming visitors remains somewhat stable – with 83% of Ontarians' feeling welcoming to visitors from nearby communities, 83% for visitors from other parts of Ontario, and 79% from the rest of Canada. These levels decrease when considering to welcome visitors from the US (61%) or other countries (59%), but have seen an improvement compared to the previous months.

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State of the Ontario Tourism Industry Report

The Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) and Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) worked closely with the Ontario's tourism stakeholders over the last year to inform and develop: The State of the Ontario Tourism Industry Report. The report offers a blueprint for recovery through practical recommendations to confront both immediate and long-term challenges, with the full report being available by the end of 2022. Here are the highlights:

- The tourism faces ongoing workforce challenges and a multi-faceted labour crisis.
- Travel and tourism often incur more arbitrary taxes and add-on fees than many other sectors.
- There remain under-explored markets that can attract more international visitors and highly skilled workers to the tourism industry in Ontario.
- Gaps in public transportation need to be addressed within and between Ontario destinations. These gaps limit mobility, opportunities for multi-destination travel, and the recruitment and retention of workers.
- Some areas of Ontario remain unserved or underserved in broadband access, placing rural and Indigenous tourism economies at a disadvantage.
- Business travel is slow to return to the meetings and convention sector, but most consumers are unaware of the range of Ontario destinations outside of urban centres that offer meeting and convention options.
- Limited availability of affordable housing impacts workforce recruitment, retention, and dispersion to rural tourism economies.
- Current and future disruptions to the reliable flow of international visitors e.g., climate change events, global pandemics, global conflicts, highlight the importance of building sustainable domestic visitor markets.
- Sustainable tourism is a growing preference among travelers.

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Media Spotlight



FedDev Ontario Launches New Tourism Relief Fund

The Tourism Relief Fund provides support to tourism businesses and organizations to assist them with recovery, while investing in products and services to facilitate their future growth.

Applications for this fund will be accepted from November 2 to November 28, 2022. This application process will provide an opportunity to support activities and events that attract visitors to communities across southern Ontario during the tourism sector's winter and off-season months (e.g., seasonal markets, outdoor illuminations, outdoor experiential offerings, holiday parades and events, etc.). All projects must be completed by March 31, 2023.

FedDev Ontario is hosting three technical briefings via Zoom on November 8, November 9 (in French), and November 16, 2022 to run through eligibility criteria and answer any questions.

Register via the links below:

[Tuesday November 8, 2022 from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM](#)

[Wednesday November 9, 2022 from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM \(session in French\)](#)

[Wednesday November 16, 2022 from 2:00 PM to 3:00 PM](#)

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TIAC Launches First In-Person Hill Days Advocacy Campaign in Two Years

The Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) kicked off its first in-person Hill Days advocacy campaign in two years this week with a special reception in downtown Ottawa at the Wellington Building.

More than 60 TIAC Members gathered with 50 Parliamentarians and other government officials at a 2-day event to raise awareness of the key challenges now faced by the beleaguered industry as it emerges from the COVID-19 pandemic.

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Indigenous Tourism Ontario Lands \$300,000 Boost for Creation of Authentic Experiences

The Ontario government is providing \$300,000 to ITO through the Pan-Regional Fund to create jobs and support unique and authentic Indigenous experiences across Ontario. This investment also supports a wide range of projects that unite communities, including cultural authenticity workshops, product development and itineraries, marketing and workforce development.

Neil Lumsden (Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport) explained the funding is part of a \$1.65 million investment the government has provided to ITO since 2018 to create jobs and encourage more visits to Indigenous tourism operators and the businesses in their communities.

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New Mayors Elected in Several Eastern Ontario Municipalities

Several long-serving eastern Ontario mayors were replaced in October 25 night's municipal election.

In Arnprior, Councillor Lisa McGee defeated incumbent Walter Stack, promising a new tone and professionalism on town council. In Carleton Place, Councillor Toby Randell defeated incumbent Doug Black. Randell claiming to have a more open communication style than his predecessor. Judy Brown, also a Councillor, was successful in winning the mayoralty from incumbent John Fenik in Perth. She also sees preserving the small-town community and economic development as key issues.

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One Canadian Destination Among National Geographic's Top Destinations for 2023 and Beyond

Alberta has been listed as one of the top destinations worldwide in 2023 by National Geographic, within the 'Community' category.

From epic landscapes and cultural reawakenings to conservation initiatives and family favourites, National Geographic Traveller's Best of the World list is back with 35 destinations that should be on your radar for 2023. Across five categories - adventure, culture, nature, family and community - the list highlights some of the most exciting and exceptional experiences on the planet.

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Workforce Development

TIAC Tourism Congress 2022

Date: November 22nd-23rd, Ottawa

The economic recovery of Canada's tourism industry began in earnest this year, but the setbacks have been many. The labour shortage, supply chain disruptions, and skyrocketing inflation are some of the current challenges.

Join the Tourism Industry Association of Canada's Tourism Congress 2022 at The Westin Ottawa on November 22-23 to learn about the changing market dynamics that are affecting your business and how to adapt to these. Each year, the event hosts more than 400 delegates from across the industry, including key decision-makers from both the private and public sectors.

The 2-day event will be filled with thought-provoking keynotes, insights into industry trends, strategic sessions, tactical advice and plenty of networking opportunities for in-person participants.

For those who are unable to join in person, some sessions will be recorded and available for online viewing.

[REGISTER](#)



Social Media for Your Business

Date: November 22nd, Virtual

Social media is an invaluable tool for today's business, whether you are just starting out or have been established for years. Not understanding how to use

social media effectively can leave you overwhelmed and ultimately hurt your bottom line as your potential customers can easily find your competitors.

This workshop hosted by the Toronto Digital Service Squad will leave you with a better understanding of how to leverage the power of social media to grow your online community, drive sales and reduce marketing costs.

[REGISTER](#)

Featured Operators/ Destinations

RTO 9 Takes Home Several Awards at the TIAO Summit

We're thrilled to announce that we have won 3 out of 5 nominations from the TIAO Ontario Resiliency Awards 2022. The TIAO Ontario Resiliency Awards are well established as the defining tourism award program in the province and we're proud to be a part of it.

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Opportunities

How to Explore Canada's Indigenous Food Culture

The Washington Post describes how fishing, foraging and fine dining can all help tourists better understand Indigenous communities in Canada. Within the past few years, there has been a focus on reconciliation: land acknowledgments, improving education within Indigenous communities and an increase of Indigenous-led tourism, much of which focuses on food.

Explore some of the indigenous culinary experiences in Ontario:

- Made up of the Three Fires Confederacy (Ojibwa, Odawa and Pottawatomi nations), Wikwemikong Tourism hosts and arranges outings including fishing trips, maple syrup harvesting, portaging, pow wows and theater.
- Founded by Ojibwa chef Zach Keeshig, Naagan is an exclusive restaurant in Southern Ontario offering a nine-course tasting menu that incorporates foraged ingredients such as corn or peaches in the summer, and carrots or beets in the fall, while also hosting foraging tours, cooking demonstrations and private dinners.
- Mādahōki Farm was built on Algonquin Nation land near Canada's capital city, and now the space is home to a series of year-round events offering traditional Algonquin foods, music, and creative workshops where families can make dream catchers, play drums, take part in storytelling or participate in a pow wow.

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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 Imedeiros@region9tourism.com with your ideas.

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