



This winter edition newsletter, will focus on **how tourism partners can utilize small, digestible, and easy to create videos to grow visitation, as well as understanding the importance of tourism as a means to support and connect the local community and to increase the quality of life and economic parity of a destination.**

## What's Inside

- [2023 Top Trends Shaping the Future of Travel and Destinations](#)
- [Tourism Industry Association of Ontario: State of the Ontario Tourism Industry Report](#)
- [Revenge Travel: Taking a Responsible Approach](#)

## The Importance of Video in Tourism Marketing

It is common for travel consumers to watch travel videos at various stages of their journey, from researching a destination to making a purchase. Many travelers (63%) rely on videos to help make decisions about activities to do in a specific location. Videos provide a comprehensive and immersive look at the travel experience and can overcome any hesitations a traveler may have about booking a vacation.

Video is an effective tool for quickly and strongly conveying your brand's personality. It can help travellers connect with your brand and differentiate it from competitors by showcasing your tone and character. Additionally, using music in your videos can further enhance your brand message and tone, effectively establishing your brand's voice, style, and behavior in a short amount of time.

Video can convey emotions to viewers that photos cannot. Through changes in body language and micro-facial expressions, videos can convey a more complete and dynamic message. While photos can show what a product or service is, they cannot capture the moment-to-moment changes or movements that allow the audience to experience the action. Video can also evoke empathy

in viewers, which is a crucial aspect of effective storytelling. When consumers can connect with a face behind a brand, they feel more comfortable and begin to trust the brand.

Video is a growing trend that is not likely to lose popularity soon. In 2021, the estimated spending on digital video advertising in the US was \$55.34 billion, and it is projected to increase to \$78.5 billion by 2023. This represents a significant increase from 2019, when spending on digital video advertising was half of what it is projected to be in 2023.

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## **Growth of Digital Communities**

In 2021, the online community and social influencer industry was valued at \$13.8 billion. While these groups have traditionally been seen as a marketing channel, they have become the most influential and trustworthy publishers and leaders. They play a crucial role in shaping social change, commerce, and trends, and their collective voices are driving the development of what is known as the "creator economy."

Attracting social influencers to your destination is no longer just a matter of financial transactions, and it is important to consider new ways of engaging with them across all platforms, and how to measure and evaluate engagement as they create higher-quality content. These creators are driving the next stage of the internet's evolution.

## **Tourism Significantly Drives the Economic Growth of Destinations**

The tourism sector plays a significant role in improving the livelihoods of people around the world. For the past nine years, the sector has grown at a faster rate than the global economy, resulting in a greater enhancement of people's livelihoods and their communities than most other industries. In fact, the growth of the sector's GDP per capita outpaced that of the overall economy between 2011 and 2019, with an average annual growth rate of 2.9% compared to 1.7%. This was true for all key regions. Southeast Asia recorded the highest annual growth rate in tourism at 6.7% compared to 3.7% for the overall economy; while

the Middle East achieved a 3% growth in tourism compared to 0.3% for the overall economy of the region.

The benefits of tourism extend beyond its direct impacts on GDP and employment, with indirect benefits throughout the supply chain and connections to other sectors such as agriculture, retail, arts, and construction.

- For every \$1 generated in direct Travel & Tourism GDP globally, more than \$2 is generated through indirect and induced impacts. This means that the entire supply chain benefits more than twice as much value from tourism.
- For every direct job globally, nearly 2 new jobs are created indirectly or induced. This means that one direct job in tourism effectively creates a total of three jobs.
- Tourist revenues support not only people directly employed in the sector but also workers in other economic sectors including the public sector. For example, in the US, a 1% increase in travel spending generates \$827 million in Travel State & Local Taxes, which could create jobs for 15,530 firefighters, 12,640 police officers, and 13,190 teachers.

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## **Community-Based Tourism is on the Rise**

Destination Canada's market trends report identifies key trends that are most likely to have the greatest impact on the travel and tourism industry in Canada over the next one to three years. The importance of communities in tourism and indigenous relations are among key market trends.

The primary goal of increasing tourism is no longer sufficient, and the emphasis on the well-being and safety of local communities - urban, rural, and Indigenous - has become more pressing. Destinations belong to the people who live in them. Cities and towns of all sizes are now taking a proactive approach to balancing the benefits and pressures of tourism. To create sustainable solutions, the true metric for tourism development must include factors such as economic prosperity, sociocultural vibrancy, and environmental sustainability, all filtered through the lens of resident quality of life. This locals-first approach is shifting the focus of destination development and tourism marketing towards more sustainable goals.

Additionally, Indigenous experiences are becoming increasingly popular among Canadian and international travelers, providing sustainable employment for

Indigenous communities, and offering travelers the opportunity to learn about culture, history, and tradition. Research conducted by the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) and Destination Canada shows that one in three Canadians are interested in Indigenous experiences, and that international visitors have an even higher level of interest (37%).

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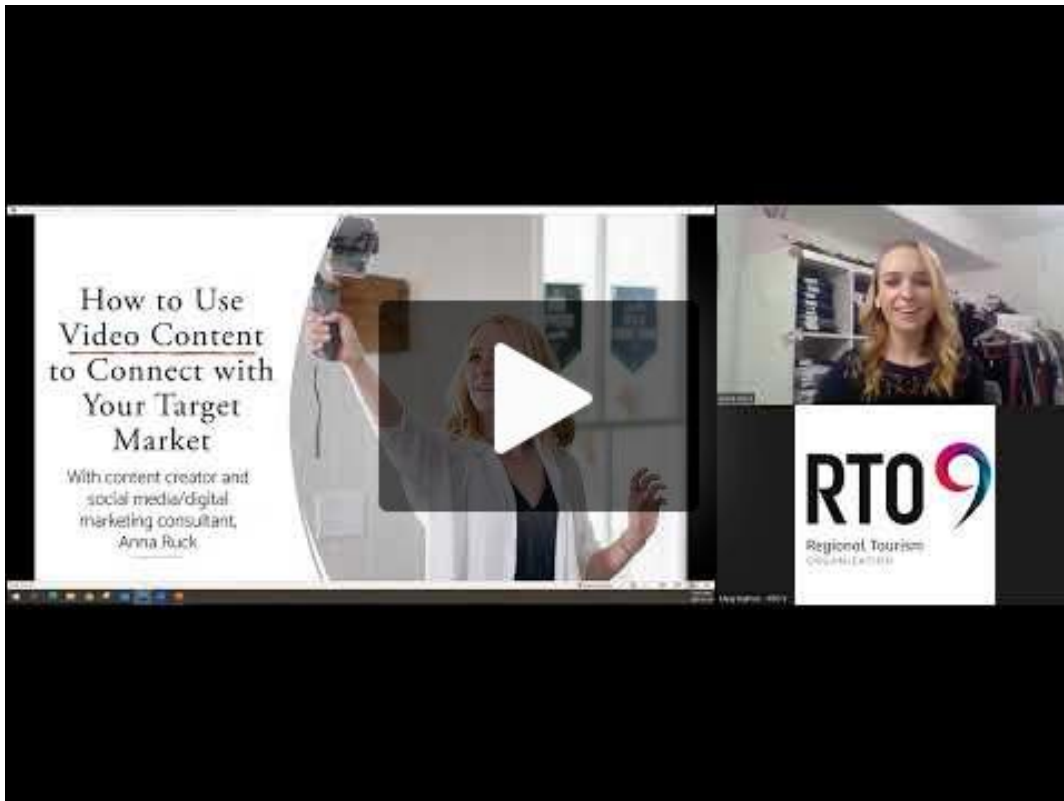
## RTO 9 News

### Workforce Development - 'Discovery Days'

The Discovery Day - Careers in Skilled Trades and Technologies Event, brings together tourism-related skilled trade/technology professionals and educational institutions throughout South Eastern Ontario for a common goal; to inspire youth to make skilled trades and technologies first choice career options. Originally planned as a virtual event, Skills Ontario, the organization RTO9 contracted to lead this event, have organized in-person events for the students in Grades 7 to 12 at two amazing venues to be held in April of 2023.

1. Tuesday April 11 at Upper Canada Village in Morrisburg. This will be for those from Gananoque to Cornwall. Upper Canada will be opening the blacksmith and the bakery for the students to have that additional experience.
2. Thursday April 13 at Fort Henry in Kingston for those students west of Gananoque to Belleville.

Connect with Katherine Hobbs at [khobbs@region9tourism.ca](mailto:khobbs@region9tourism.ca) to learn more.



## How to Use Video Content to Connect with Your Target Market

If you missed our recent Webinar, don't worry, [we have provided the recording and presentation](#). You can access this recording any time and take plenty of notes from it! Social media creator and consultant, Anna Ruck will show you how to identify who your target market is on social media and how to attract and connect with them through video content.

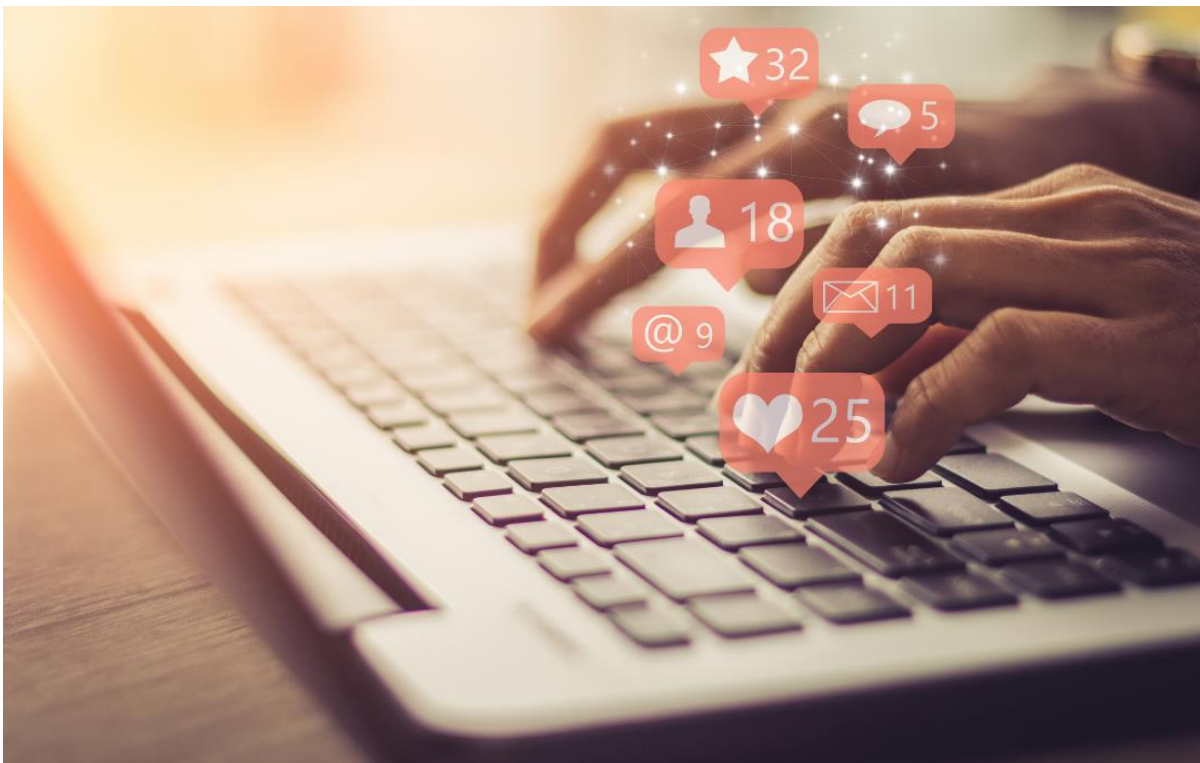
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## We're Hosting Two Webinars On Social Media Marketing & Management

Join RTO 9 and digital marketing specialists from Search Warrant Online Marketing for these exciting new Webinars on Social Media Marketing & Management. They will break down how to strategically analyze, plan, and create content for your social channels so you can walk away with the confidence to build your social community (aka, your mini eco-system).

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### Here's How To Connect With Us on Social Media

Our consumer regional brand, **South Eastern Ontario**, gives a sense of place and the content found on our social channels, website, and newsletter, targets future visitors from outside of the region and locals that live within the region.

We encourage our tourism partners and operators to share with us their stories, products, experiences, and packages **with our South Eastern Ontario social media channels**. Keeping us in the loop with your offerings can lead to

opportunities in features on our channels or pitched to our PR Agency. Read our blog post below on what our channels are and how to connect with us.

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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.](#)

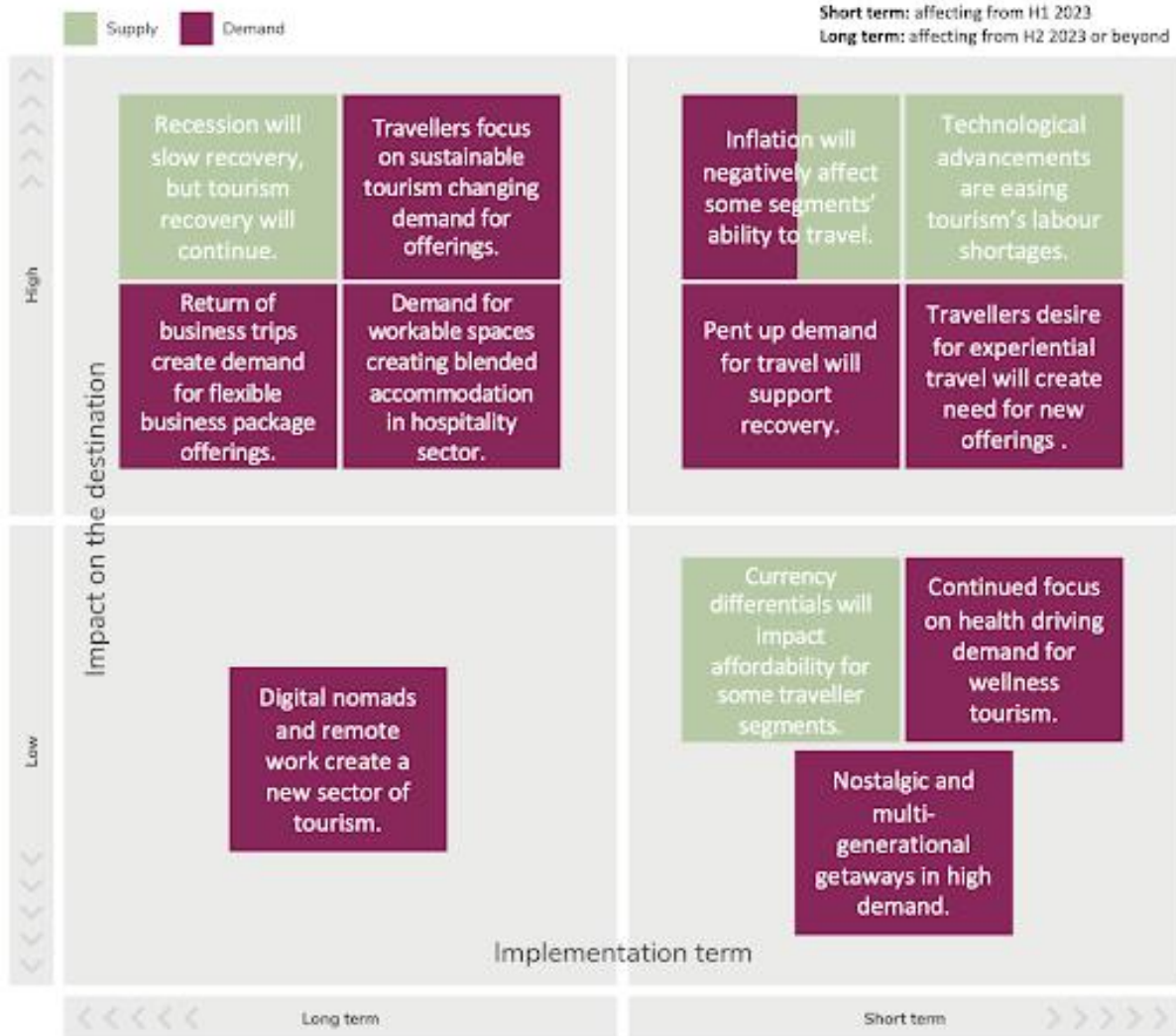
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## Market Insights

### 2023 Top Trends Shaping the Future of Travel and Destinations

[Twenty31 Consulting](#) recently released the 2023 Top Trends Facing the Tourism Industry report identifying the top 12 trends in travel and tourism for 2023, based on analysis from various sources and scenarios. These trends are classified based on their immediate and long-term effects on destinations and provide direction for destination managers on where to direct their attention and resources, how to address the challenges these trends may present, and how to take advantage of the opportunities they offer.





Here are some of the trends most likely to affect RTO 9 and its surrounding regions:

- Recession will slow recovery, but tourism recovery will continue: Even in the face of recession, travel is a priority for many heading into 2023 helping stabilize the tourism industry in 2023 and beyond. Travel destinations reliant on budget conscious travellers may suffer as well as other industries.
- Currency differentials will impact affordability for some traveller segments: U.S. currency will continue to dominate, making travel to the U.S. from international source markets including Canada more expensive. Competitor destinations to the U.S., with cheaper currencies, may be more attractive.
- Return of business trips create demand for flexible business package offerings: Business trips and MICE will significantly increase in 2023 and



destinations with business package options and the ability to host conventions with flexible hybrid options will have an advantage.

- Traveller desire for experiential travel will create a need for new offerings: Reviewing unique experiences and ensuring that they align with the brand and purpose of the destination is crucial.
- Traveller focus on sustainable tourism changes demand for offerings: Consumer sentiment is prioritizing a focus on sustainable methods of delivering tourism
- Nostalgic and multi-generational getaways in high demand: Travellers want to feel a historic connection with the destination, whether that be through nature, bloodlines, or media. Destinations should prioritize repeat travellers creating a story of history within the destination and creating a nostalgic vibe within experiences and accommodations offered

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## **Tourism Industry Association of Ontario: State of the Ontario Tourism Industry Report**

Tourism Industry Association of Ontario (TIAO) published its Ontario Tourism Industry Report (December 13, 2022) covering four major areas: economy, labour, infrastructure, and the future of tourism in Ontario. The report discusses various challenges facing the tourism industry in Ontario, including labor shortages, economic instability, bureaucratic obstacles, housing and transportation difficulties, and a lack of investment and development opportunities. It also emphasizes the importance of sustainability and innovation in driving future growth in the industry. Despite ongoing challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic, the report remains optimistic about the future of tourism in Ontario and calls for continued collaboration between industry and government partners to achieve this goal. Here are some of the key takeaways:

- 4 in 10 tourism operators forecast profitability in 2024 and beyond.
- Tourism businesses have accumulated soaring debt to remain financially viable during the pandemic. Not all tourism markets and regions are rebuilding at the same pace, with Northern Ontario still hard-hit.
- Business travel—including transient travel and meetings and conventions—has been far slower to return. This has a disproportionate effect on major urban centres, but most consumers are also unaware of the range of Ontario destinations outside of urban centres that benefit from meeting and convention options.

- International gateway cities like Greater Toronto and Ottawa play an important role in attracting high volumes of visitors, many of whom travel to other regions of the province.
- Provincial and federal taxes present barriers for growth (e.g., provincial beer tax, federal excise tax). While other taxes are geared toward growth (e.g., Municipal Accommodation Tax), these could be retooled to maximize their benefits.
- The lack of comprehensive and affordable public transportation within and between Ontario destinations limits travel and commuting options, precludes opportunities for multi-destination travel, and impacts business recruitment and retention.
- Limited availability of affordable housing impacts workforce recruitment, retention, and dispersion to rural tourism economies.
- Access to reliable, high-speed broadband is critical to participating in an increasingly digital economy. Some areas of Ontario remain underserved, placing rural and Indigenous tourism economies at a disadvantage.

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## **Business Intelligence Survey Report**

Tourism HR Canada released Business Intelligence Survey Report (January 25, 2023). In total, 700 businesses were interviewed by telephone survey. Here are some key highlights:

- Of those interviewed, 30% of businesses represented the accommodations industry, 29% recreation and entertainment, 15% travel services, 12% food and beverage services, and 12% transportation. Over three quarters (79%) were open with no limitations or restrictions. Those operating in Quebec reported the largest proportion of operating with restrictions.
- A quarter (24%) of respondents had no paid employees, while the majority (47%) had between 1 and 19 employees. Three-quarters (74%) of businesses operate on an annual basis. Those who operate on a seasonal basis operate predominantly in the summer (91%), followed by fall (58%), and spring (55%).
- Close to half (46%) of businesses interviewed actively had job vacancies; this finding was consistent across all industry groups.
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of all businesses were experiencing difficulties with the recruitment of workers, and 35% with retention.

- More than half (59%) of businesses indicated that their current operating conditions had improved when compared to the summer of 2021, with those in the travel services industry stating the greatest level of improvement (77%). For businesses whose operating conditions have weakened, 39% of these businesses were considering reducing operating hours and reducing product offerings (24%).

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## US Sentiment for Travel to Canada

Destination Canada's latest US Sentiment Report reveals how US residents feel about travelling to Canada (November 15-22, 2022). Here are the highlights:

- After seeing a spike in enthusiasm to visit Canada last month following eased border restrictions, likelihood to travel to Canada in the next 9 months has decreased (39%, down from 53%), but remains higher than levels seen in the months prior.
- Canada remains among the top desired foreign destinations that Americans most want to visit in the next 12 months, second only to Italy, and slightly ahead of the UK and Mexico.
- There is a continuing upward trend in perception that Canada is safe to travel to – this safety sentiment is shared by two-thirds (67%) of Americans.
- At the same time, 60% of respondents indicated that they consider Canada to be easy and safe to travel to, while 77% are excited to embark in a leisure travel trip within the next 12 months, both being positive trends compared to the previous months.
- 42% of US travellers feel that transport costs are a consideration that would prevent them from visiting Canada, a stable trend since July as inflation arises as a global travel issue.
- For those who were likely to travel to Canada, 30% are likely to visit Ontario, with the province being ahead of BC (24%) and Québec (20%).

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# Media Spotlight



## **Forbes Names Air Canada One of the Best Employers**

Air Canada has been recognized by Forbes as one of Canada's Best Employers for 2023 for the eighth year in a row, highlighting the company's dedication to providing exceptional job opportunities for its Canadian employees. The ranking was determined through surveys of over 12,000 employees working for companies with at least 500 staff in Canada, taking into consideration factors such as employee recommendations, working conditions, compensation, and growth opportunities.

Arielle Meloul-Wechsler, Executive Vice President, Chief Human Resources Officer and Public Affairs, attributes this success to the company's dedication to create a positive work environment that supports employee fulfillment and development and the hard work of their more than 36,000 dedicated employees.

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**The IMPACT Conference Promoting Sustainability and  
Regenerative Tourism**

The IMPACT Sustainability Travel and Tourism Conference wrapped up in B.C.'s capital city, Victoria mid January. The first day of the conference, 'the Day of Impact', was a way for attendees to experience aspects of the Victoria region that have sustainable or regenerative qualities, including indigenous history, before starting the (indoor) conference agenda on the following day.

During the next three days, conference attendees delved into the topic of regenerative tourism, listening to a variety of speakers discuss important topics such as biodiversity and climate action. They heard insights from experts on sustainability planning and partnership development and learned about innovative techniques and technologies that support sustainable practices in various contexts.

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## Revenge Travel: Taking a Responsible Approach

According to a new Allianz Global Assistance survey – conducted by Ipsos – 70% of Canadian millennials are packing their bags and taking a vacation this year, and over half of travelling millennials say they're revenge travelling – unapologetically making up for lost travel time during the pandemic.

The survey also reported that 89% of travelling millennials say they desperately need a vacation this year.

And it also revealed that millennials are seemingly responsible travellers who proactively plan to obtain travel insurance before they take a trip. Three quarters of the generation believe travel insurance coverage is more important or equally as important now versus before the pandemic.

More travel trends among Canadian millennials include:

- Three quarters of millennials feel that an annual vacation is important
- Half of millennials typically escape the cold and take a winter vacation, but 55% are confident they are taking a winter vacation this year
- 62% of millennial travellers plan to travel internationally, while 38% plan to travel domestically for their next vacation
- Millennials are well into adulthood and this life stage is reflected in their vacation plans – 71% are taking a trip with family or a partner, while 15% are travelling with friends, 12% are solo travelling, and two percent are taking a work trip

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## Workforce Development

### TIAO Advancing Sustainable Tourism in Ontario: Take the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge

**Date: February 22nd, 2023 1:30 - 2:30 PM**

Attend TIAO's session with the GreenStep team to learn about the Sustainable Tourism 2030 Pledge, which aims to make Ontario a leader in sustainable tourism. By attending you will learn about how to measure your sustainability performance, an overview of the criteria used to assess your business or destination and be part of a community of industry businesses and destinations making a commitment to improving their results by 2030.

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### Rainbow Registered Program

Rainbow Registered is a national accreditation for LGBT+ friendly businesses and organizations. When you see a Rainbow Registered symbol, you know the business or organization meets a stringent set of standards to ensure LGBT+ customers feel safe, welcomed, and accepted.

The accreditation program grants a time-limited recognition to businesses and organizations for demonstrating compliance with the quality standard. Accredited businesses are deemed market ready for the LGBT+ customer and given the right to be associated with the program's prestigious Rainbow Registered designation mark.

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## **Baxter Student Ambassador Program**

Tourism HR Canada is a proud supporter of the Baxter Student Ambassador Program (BSAP) which is established by Baxter Media. The BSAP program is the only travel and tourism student mentoring program of its kind in Canada, offering learning and networking opportunities for aspiring travel industry professionals. The program is currently open to students at 16 colleges and universities across the country.

Applications are open now and will close February 16, 2023.

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## **Featured Operators/ Destinations**





## **Tourism Winnipeg Launches New Digital Pass for Local Attractions**

The Winnipeg Attractions Pass is a new program that will be ongoing and features a selection of up to five destinations. According to Tyler Walsh, the Director of Marketing at Economic Development Winnipeg, the region has world-class destinations and the Winnipeg Attractions Pass is an excellent way to discover or rediscover the region. The pass also offers a discount of up to 35% on individual admission prices for locals to save money.

The five local attractions include a one-or three-day pass for admission to the Canadian Museum for Human Rights, FortWhyte Alive, Royal Aviation Museum of Western Canada, Royal Canadian Mint, and The Manitoba Museum. Residents of Winnipeg can buy the pass online without the need for downloading a separate app. The pass is supported by Travel Manitoba, which has introduced various other passes for Manitoba, such as the Manitoba Brew Pass and the Explore Churchill Pass.

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## **Ontario Bringing Economic Opportunities to the Northeast**

The government of Ontario is investing over \$4 million through the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund Corporation (NOHFC) to support 13 economic development projects in the northeastern region of the province. This funding will help to create jobs, expand businesses and enhance the overall quality of life for people living in the north. According to the Minister of Northern Development, Greg Rickford, this support for community and business development is key in creating jobs, keeping the region competitive and attracting new investment. He added that the government is providing real opportunities for Northeastern Ontario.

The NOHFC is dedicated to promoting economic growth and development throughout Northern Ontario by providing financial support to projects that create jobs, stimulate growth, and develop skills. Since June 2018, the NOHFC has invested over \$580 million in 4,997 projects in Northern Ontario, resulting in \$1.87 billion in investment and the creation or preservation of over 7,900 jobs.

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## **Ontario's Initiative to Bring Economic and Job Training Opportunities to Atikokan**

The NOHFC is investing over \$706,000 in six business development projects in Atikokan, through the Ontario government. This funding will help create jobs and support the growth of companies in the region.

Here are a few of the tourism-related projects that are being funded:

- \$500,000 for the Town of Kapuskasing to refurbish the exterior of the Kapuskasing Civic Centre
- \$300,000 for Cedar Meadows Resort & Spa – a resort in Timmins – to build additional accommodations and purchase equipment
- \$200,000 for the Township of Fauquier-Strickland to refurbish the exterior of the Fauquier-Strickland Community Centre
- \$81,000 for the Local Services Board of Hallebourg to renovate the Hallebourg Community Centre

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# Opportunities

## **\$71 Million Investment From Government of Canada in Infrastructure Funding for Parks Canada**

Terry Duguid, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada, and Randy Boissonnault, Minister of Tourism and Associate Minister of Finance, on behalf of the Honourable Steven Guilbeault, Minister of Environment and Climate Change and Minister responsible for Parks Canada announced nearly \$71 million over three years for projects in the mountain national parks.

This funding will be used to improve infrastructure in Lake Louise, enhance dispatch services in Banff and Jasper national parks, and make repairs to roads and bridges. This investment is part of the government's recent allocation of \$557 million over three years for infrastructure projects and maintenance at Parks Canada sites, to ensure that they continue to provide important services to Canadians and visitors.

This federal investment will improve infrastructure, visitor experience, and safety in mountain national parks. Projects include community infrastructure improvements in Lake Louise, upgrades to emergency dispatch in Banff and Jasper, and road and bridge repairs in Jasper, Banff, Kootenay, and Yoho National Parks. The funding will also support design work for bridges in Jasper National Park, ensuring a safe and enjoyable experience for visitors.

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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](mailto:imedeiros@region9tourism.com) with your ideas.

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