



This winter edition newsletter, covering December and January, will focus on how travellers' emphasis on sustainability and responsibility while travelling affects demand and how local tourism partners can adapt to meet visitor needs.

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Shift Towards Sustainable Travel

The [World Travel & Tourism Council](#) (WTTC), in collaboration with [Trip.com Group](#) and [Deloitte](#), has released a report highlighting a significant shift towards sustainable travel among consumers. The report, titled “A world in motion: shifting consumer travel trends in 2022 and beyond,” underscores the growing emphasis on sustainability in the travel sector.

Key findings include:

- Approximately 69% of travellers are actively seeking sustainable travel options, with three-quarters considering more sustainable travel in the future. Nearly 60% have already chosen sustainable travel options in recent years.
- About three-quarters of high-end travellers are willing to pay extra for sustainable trips.
- The report observes a 109% increase in international overnight arrivals compared to 2021, indicating a strong resurgence of travel interest following pandemic disruptions.
- In 2022, 86% of travellers planned to spend the same or more on international travel than in 2019. The trend continues into 2023, with 31% of travellers intending to spend more on international travel despite inflation and cost-of-living concerns.

- Over half of global consumers surveyed during summer 2022 planned to stay in hotels in the following three months.
- Travel & Tourism is recognized as a crucial driver of the global economy, job creation, economic growth, and community development. The Asia-Pacific region, in particular, is poised for significant industry growth.
- The report also highlights a 75% increase in sun and sea package holiday sales compared to the previous year, near pre-pandemic levels of international arrivals at European beach destinations, and a significant anticipated increase in visits to major cities. The luxury travel market is expected to grow, with luxury hotel sales projected to reach \$92 billion by 2025.

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Younger Generation's Approach to Sustainable Travel

According to [Skift](#), younger travellers are increasingly focusing on the authenticity of sustainability efforts within the tourism industry. According to Etienne Matchard, director of sales at [Ennismore](#), a brand under Accor, these

younger travellers are not swayed by tourism businesses that heavily market their sustainability efforts; instead, they are turned off by such overt promotions. Gen Z's preference is to witness real, operational changes that reflect a genuine commitment to environmental friendliness.

This shift in attitude was highlighted during a panel at [ITB Berlin](#), emphasizing that Gen Z is more responsive to subtle, practical implementations of sustainability rather than grandiose marketing campaigns. For example, Ennismore's approach includes replacing liquid soap with solid soap in its Mama Shelter hotel brand and avoiding explicit advertising about this change. The overall sentiment suggests that Gen Z travellers value actual sustainable practices over promotional claims, focusing on details like the absence of plastic utensils in hotels as a true measure of a business's commitment to the environment.

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Market Insights



State of Destination Marketing 2024 Report

The "State of Destination Marketing 2024" report, a new report produced in collaboration between [Sojern](#), [Digital Tourism Think Tank](#) (DTTT), and supported by [Brand USA](#), [Destination Canada](#), and the [European Travel Commission](#), offers critical insights into destination marketing trends and challenges. It is based on feedback from nearly 300 destination marketing organizations (DMOs), government departments, and affiliated tourism entities worldwide. Here are the key findings:

- **Economic Challenges and Strategic Priorities:** Economic uncertainty, inflation, and cost of living are significantly impacting marketing strategies. More than half of the respondents consider these as critical areas requiring careful planning. The report emphasizes the importance of sustainable, diverse tourism and creating unique experiences for travellers.
- **Impact of Artificial Intelligence (AI):** AI is seen as a game-changer in destination marketing, particularly in content creation (49% foresee a significant impact), predictive analysis (40%), data analysis (38%), and personalized marketing content (37%). However, many DMOs are less confident about AI's impact on web/app/platform creation and conversational marketing.

- **Digital Paid Media and social media Dominance:** Almost all DMOs (96%) are investing heavily in paid media. Social media advertising and Search Engine Marketing (SEM) are crucial, with Instagram and Facebook being the top platforms. TikTok, despite its popularity, is not yet a primary channel for most DMOs.
- **Data Utilization and Privacy Concerns:** Demographic data is predominantly used for decision-making, but DMOs face challenges like data integration, high data acquisition costs, and access to quality data. With the impending deprecation of third-party cookies, DMOs are focusing on obtaining more first-party data and enhancing social content strategies.
- **Environmental and Social Goals:** European DMOs lead in prioritizing environmental sustainability. There's also a strong focus on social diversity and sustainability, with emphasis on gender equality, accessibility for visitors with disabilities, LGBTQ+ strategies, and promoting social and economic diversity.
- **Co-op Marketing Efforts:** A significant majority (78%) of DMOs invest in co-op marketing, partnering with local businesses to promote destinations. Motivations include boosting marketing investment, expanding audience reach, and cost-sharing.

[READ THE FULL REPORT](#)

TOURISM LABOUR FORCE

The number of individuals
employed or unemployed
(actively seeking work for < 1 year)

OCTOBER 2023

2,161,600

SEPTEMBER 2023

2,147,700

OCTOBER 2019

2,199,300

TOURISM EMPLOYMENT

The number of
individuals in jobs

OCTOBER 2023

2,037,600

SEPTEMBER 2023

2,045,300

OCTOBER 2019

2,092,700

Canadian Tourism Labour Market Snapshot:

October 2023

[Tourism HR Canada](#)'s latest Canadian Tourism Labour Market Snapshot for October 2023 reflects a moderate overall improvement for the tourism sector, with a slight decrease in employment. However, the sector remains below its pre-pandemic baseline of October 2019. Key takeaways include:

- The tourism sector experienced a modest month-over-month increase in labour force by 0.7% but saw a decrease in employment by 0.4%. Despite these monthly fluctuations, there is a notable year-over-year improvement with the labour force growing by 7.4% and employment by 5.8% since October 2022.
- However, the sector has not fully rebounded to pre-pandemic levels, remaining 1.7% below the labour force and 2.6% below the employment figures of October 2019.
- There was a decrease in both the labour force and employment in the Accommodations and Food & Beverage Services sectors from September to October 2023, along with a rise in unemployment rates.
- Conversely, the Recreation & Entertainment and Travel Services sectors showed growth across labour force and employment, with Transportation seeing a slight increase in labour force but a decrease in employment.
- All industry groups, except Travel Services, showed improvements in labour force compared to the previous year, although unemployment rates increased across the board.
- The percentage of part-time employment in the tourism sector remains close to pre-pandemic figures, with a slight overall increase in part-time work that could be linked to seasonal adjustments, such as students returning to academic schedules.
- The unemployment rate within the tourism sector was slightly higher at 5.7% compared to the national average of 5.3%. This is higher than both the previous month and the previous year, suggesting a potential easing of the tight labour market conditions seen earlier.

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US Sentiment for Travel to Canada

Opinion des Américains concernant les voyages au Canada

September 18-23, 2023

18-23 septembre 2023

CANADA*



U.S. Sentiment for Travel to Canada

[Destination Canada's](#) latest U.S. Sentiment Report reveals how U.S. residents feel about travelling to Canada (September 18-23, 2023), reflecting both caution and enthusiasm among American travellers.

Here are the highlights:

- There is a noticeable economic apprehension affecting travel decisions, with a higher proportion of Americans (38%) feeling that now is not a good time to spend on travel compared to 28% who think it is. Despite broader concerns, Millennials, affluent, and urban households show a propensity to spend on travel.
- Enthusiasm for leisure travel remains strong, with 87% of Americans excited about the prospect of traveling for leisure in the next 12 months. This high level of enthusiasm has been consistent since the beginning of 2023.

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Opportunities



**CANADIAN
TOURISM**



Applications Now Open for the Federal Tourism Growth Program

The Canadian federal government has launched the Tourism Growth Program (TGP), a financial support initiative that allocates \$108 million to aid tourism-related entities. This program will be in effect for the next three years and is administered through Regional Development Agencies. The TGP is designed to assist both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, as well as businesses and organizations, in the development and enhancement of local tourism products and services. Notably, 15% of the funds are reserved for projects led by Indigenous groups. The program emphasizes projects that contribute to economic, environmental, and cultural sustainability and those that help extend the tourism season.

Small and medium-sized enterprises, Indigenous-owned enterprises, not-for-profit entities, and municipalities are among those eligible to apply for funding. For each project, applicants can request up to \$250,000. While businesses will receive repayable, interest-free funding, not-for-profit groups are eligible for non-repayable contributions. All projects funded under the TGP must be completed by March 31, 2026.

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2024 International Indigenous Tourism Conference

The [Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada](#) is inviting everyone to Ottawa, Ontario, on the unceded Algonquin Anishinaabeg Territory from February 26 to 28, 2024, for a large Indigenous Tourism Conference. The conference aims to provide a space for people to share knowledge, network, and work together to help grow the Indigenous tourism sector.

Date: February 26-28, 2023

Location: 55 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, ON K1N, Ottawa, ON K1N 9J2, Canada

[REGISTER](#)

Workforce Development



Scheduling for Success

Christie Johnson from [Little Mushroom Catering & Lounge](#) is hosting an online session on Tuesday, December 5th from 8-9pm EST, focusing on effective staff scheduling strategies. During the Zoom event, participants will learn how the Waterloo-based catering company has mastered the art of scheduling and will gain insights into:

- Techniques for managing multiple schedules efficiently.
- Using feedback loops to maintain a steady workflow.
- Creating a transparent workplace culture that enhances scheduling practices.

The session aims to show how flexibility in scheduling can be harmoniously integrated with business operations to achieve excellence. Attendees are encouraged to join the session to discover actionable scheduling strategies. Those interested in participating must RSVP to attend.

Date: 5 December 2023, 8:00pm - 9:00pm EDT

Location: Online

[REGISTER HERE](#)



Rainbow Registered Information Session

Dec 14th, 2023 | Online

HOSTED BY
TOURISM HR CANADA
CANADA'S LGBT+ CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Join RTO9 for a Rainbow Registered Information Session.

Not only is having 2SLGBTQI+ friendly policies in your company the right thing to do, but it's also good for business.

Hosted by Canada's 2SLGBTQI+ Chamber of Commerce (CGLCC) and Tourism HR Canada, learn the benefits of being Rainbow Registered and how your business can get accredited.

Rainbow Registered is a national accreditation for 2SLGBTQI+ 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 2SLGBTQI+ customers feel safe, welcomed, and accepted. Accredited businesses are deemed market-ready for the 2SLGBTQI+ customer and given the right to be associated with the program's prestigious Rainbow Registered designation mark.

Date: Thursday, 14 December 2023, 1:00pm - 2:00pm EDT

Location: Online

[REGISTER](#)

Featured Operator



**North Bay chosen as host for 2024 Northern Ontario
Tourism Summit**

North Bay has been selected as the host city for the [Northern Ontario Tourism Summit](#) in 2024, which is scheduled to take place next fall. This event, a collaboration between [Nature and Outdoor Tourism Ontario](#) and [Destination Northern Ontario](#), is an annual gathering that began in 2014. It serves as a platform for tourism businesses, organizations, suppliers, and government representatives to collaborate and promote tourism in Northern Ontario. Tanya Bédard, the executive director of Tourism North Bay, expressed excitement about hosting the summit for the first time in the city. She sees it as an excellent opportunity to showcase North Bay's attractions, activities, and accommodations to colleagues and peers from across the region.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Scugog Waterfront to Welcome New Outdoor Skating Rink and Market in December 2023

This December, Scugog will unveil a new outdoor skating rink, funded by the Government of Canada through [FedDev Ontario](#). The rink, located in the Joe Fowler north ball diamond, is part of an initiative to boost winter tourism and provide recreational activities in the Durham Region. Filomena Tassi, Minister responsible for FedDev Ontario, highlighted the rink as a great opportunity for both residents and visitors to enjoy winter activities. The government's support for such projects reflects its commitment to fostering tourism that enhances community life in southern Ontario.

The outdoor rink, coupled with a vendor village, aims to offer an extended skating experience from early December to mid-March. It will be open seven

days a week from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., with vendor kiosks operating mostly on weekends. This setup is designed to draw visitors to the area, offering both a unique skating experience and a market featuring food and artisan products. Township of Scugog Mayor Wilma Wotten expressed gratitude for the federal support and emphasized the importance of such initiatives in aiding the recovery of the tourism sector, especially during the winter months.

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Media Spotlight



Successful Wrap-Up of International Symposium on Destination Stewardship

The [International Symposium on Destination Stewardship](#) was successfully held from November 6-8 at the Canadian Museum of History in Gatineau, Quebec. It convened over 45 global thought leaders and 250 attendees from various sectors to engage in a pivotal discussion on reshaping the future of tourism and destination stewardship. The event was inaugurated with opening remarks from the Honourable Soraya Martinez Ferrada, Minister of Tourism and Minister

responsible for the Economic Development Agency of Canada for the Regions of Quebec. The Symposium served as a platform to exchange innovative ideas and practices for advancing responsible tourism and destination management, highlighting the potential for tourism to contribute positively to communities and the environment.

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Recent Study Reveals Arts and Culture Tourism Triples Economic Impact in Ontario

The [Ontario Arts Council](#) (OAC) has released a new report, commissioned from Forum Research, that highlights the substantial economic impact of arts and culture tourism in Ontario. Using data from Statistics Canada, the report, titled "[Ontario Arts and Culture Tourism Profile](#)," presents several key findings:

- Arts and culture trips in Ontario have nearly three times the economic impact of non-arts and culture trips. The report notes that arts and culture

tourism generates approximately \$11.4 billion in spending, resulting in a direct value-added of \$5.7 billion to the province's economy.

- Although only 13% of unique tourist trips in Ontario include arts and culture activities, these trips account for 30% of tourist spending in the province. Additionally, 40% of Canadian arts and culture visitors stay for three days or more, compared to just 13% of non-arts and culture tourists.
- Arts and culture tourism is particularly appealing to international visitors, with nearly one-third of them participating in such activities while in Ontario.
- Arts and culture activities feature in one-eighth of all tourist trips to or within Ontario, amounting to over 18.4 million unique tourist trips.

[LEARN MORE](#)

That's a wrap for 2023. Happy Holidays!

Stay tuned for the latest insights, research and thoughtful perspectives on the issues that matter most to tourism businesses and operators in RTO 9 in 2024.

If there are any topics you want to read about in a future newsletter, please email Lesley McDougall lmcdougall@region9tourism.ca with your ideas.

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