



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 RTO9.

In this month's newsletter we leap forward into the new year and discuss the performance and potential of tourism in Canada. We also look more closely at the key trends that are expected to influence travel in 2019 and beyond.

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



UNWTO World Tourism Barometer

The November release of the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer summarized international tourism for the first nine months of 2018.

As expected, **a strong global economy fuelled an overall growth rate of 5%—which was consistent with forecasts of 4-5% for the year.** Asia and the

Pacific and Europe led international arrival gains at 7% and 6% respectively, while the Americas reported the most modest gains of all regions at 3%.

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Canada's Visitor Economy

Consistent with global tourism growth, Canada has gained from increased demand for travel since hitting a low point in 2009. Since then, **both visitor numbers and spending has been positive and source markets have diversified beyond the US.** A strong brand and reputation have Canada in must-see and top destination lists across key travel magazines. However, Destination Canada's report ["Unlocking the Potential in Canada's Visitor Economy"](#), which was released in December 2018, shows there is still more work to be done to compete with peer countries such the United States, Australia, the United Kingdom and Japan.

The report suggests that Canada's tourism sector faces **five key challenges: demand is concentrated, access is difficult, labour is in short supply, investment is lacking, and governance is not integrated.** An example of an

access challenge is that although nature is a key driver for visiting Canada getting to natural areas from urban centres is difficult because of distance.

The report outlines the key opportunities for tourism growth and diversification in Canada:

1. Elevate existing major urban centres through increased capacity and connectivity (i.e., more hotels, better inter-modal connections).
2. Generate excitement around nature-based attractions such as iconic luxury experiences and winter products.
3. Create tourism clusters to align stakeholder resources and infrastructure investments with needs.
4. Showcase unique cultural experiences in Canada's smaller urban centres and position them as affordable gateways to other experiences.

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Travel Trends for 2019

We've scanned the hottest travel trends lists for 2019 and have put together our own comprehensive top four list to inform and inspire you this year.

Off-Peak Travel

Cheaper prices, less crowds and new ways to experience destinations will drive the trend of off-peak travel into 2019.

Foodie Love

Travellers are after truly unique food experiences that allow them to feel more immersed and connected with the local culture and people.

New Destinations

For some it's a desire to stay away from the crowds and for others it's the appeal of an underrated and undiscovered destination, either way travellers are thinking beyond the traditional.

Adventure and Activity

Leading a healthy and active lifestyle is increasingly top of mind for consumers around the globe, 2019 will see more travellers seeking a physical activity and sightseeing combo. There will also be a focus on finding calm and enjoying a slower pace (think, yoga retreat).

Let us know if there are any trends you're predicting for 2019!

Sources: TrekkSoft Travel Trends Report 2019, Intrepid Travel, Lonely Planet



Spring Cruise Campaign Final Results

The final results from our Spring Cruise Campaign are in! The campaign promoted the variety of St. Lawrence and 1000 Islands cruise experiences and drove qualified traffic to operator websites and phone calls to operators. The campaign ran from May 29th to July 10th, 2018.

Funding was targeted towards an out-of-province audience in Quebec in both French and English before their getaway. Our objective was to create awareness for Cruise Experiences while in the planning phase of a trip.

The campaign used a combination of awareness, engagement, and conversion media in the form of paid search, mobile and desktop display with our network partner.

Result highlights:

- Over 5,500 clicks to partner sites
- Performed best with audiences between 55-64 and 65+, which earned CTRs (all) of 3.41% and 4.50%.
- Comment sentiment on both EN and FR units were very positive, including sharing past experiences and tagging friends to suggest trips

Revisions for the next campaign include targeting a slight older audience and a shift towards more mobile over desktop.

The Best of South Eastern Ontario

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