



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 discuss **how vacation experiences are changing and how you can satisfy the needs of your consumers by uncovering what it is they are truly looking for.**

If there are topics you want to read about in a future newsletter please email [lmedeiros@thegreatwaterway.com](mailto:lmedeiros@thegreatwaterway.com) with your ideas.

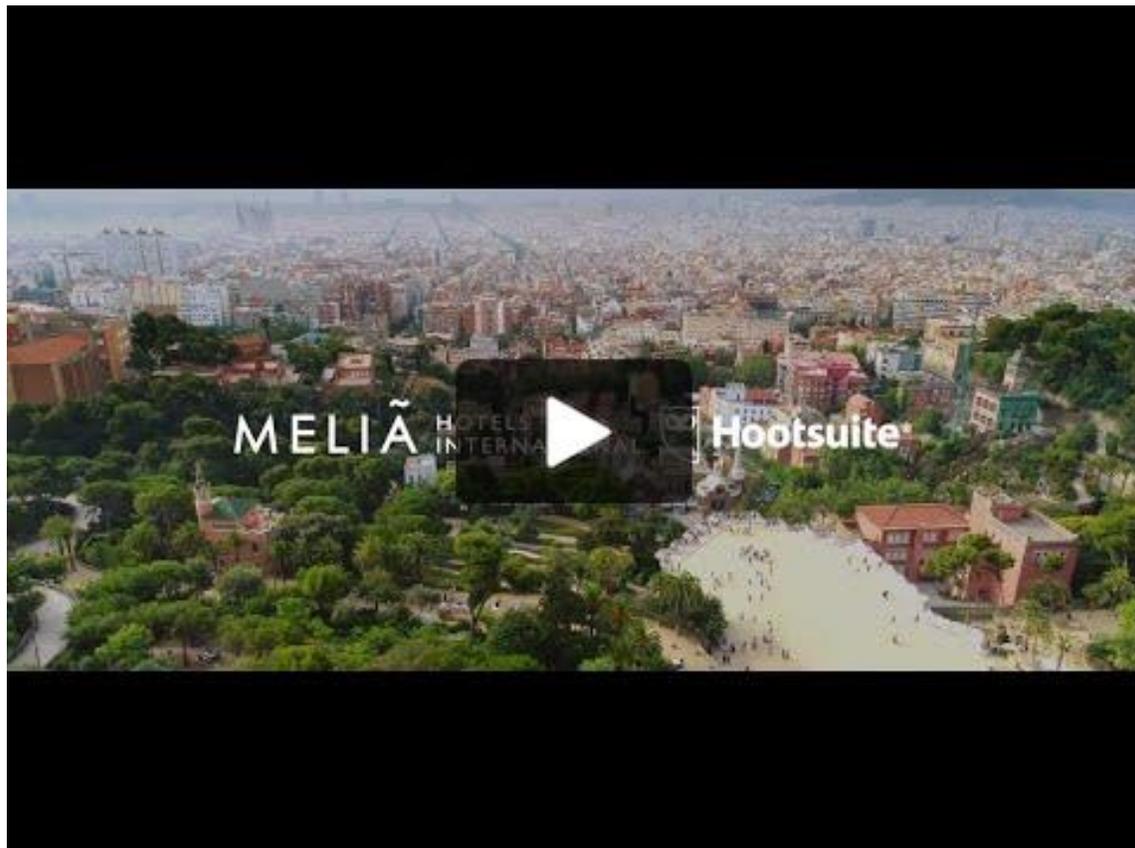


## March Tourism Snapshot

For the last three months US arrivals by non-air modes of travel have continued to drop. Arrivals by air travel have climbed, in March the increase was +6.5%. US overnight travelers that did arrive by car were most likely to have come from Washington (23.4% YTD), New York (19.6% YTD), and Michigan (12.3% YTD).

**Overall US arrivals dropped by 2.02 million in the first quarter of 2019, which was just -0.8% lower than in 2018.** Mexico, the UK and Germany experienced arrival decreases in March while India, France and Australia expanded by direct from overseas. Some of the declines observed were due to the Easter effect but overall the first quarter of this year has been positive, representing the second highest record since last year's peak.

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## Hootsuite And Melia Hotels International

Hootsuite is a popular social media management system that is being used by leading tourism and hospitality businesses around the world to save time, manage and curate content and to help figure out what's working and resonating with consumers. **Some of the most used features include scheduled postings, multiple profile management, targeted messaging and analytics with reports.** Overall, Hootsuite can be an incredibly useful tool for brand building and making positive impressions on consumers.

As an example, **in 2018 Melia Hotels International teamed up with Hootsuite to transform their digital presence and adapt to new traveler booking methods such as Expedia and TripAdvisor.** Their key goals were to strengthen client relationships, increase brand recognition, increase quality traffic to their main consumer site and engage and attract employees. The **results of the partnership included a 15% social media followers increase in the first six months and 491% increase in mobile sales** compared to the year before.

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## Are Guided Vacations The Answer For You?

Last year our South Eastern Ontario Consumer Insights Survey confirmed that the vast majority of trips to the region are independent rather than with a tour or by package deal. However, **with transformational travel on the rise is there an opportunity for operators to adapt their products and services to give travelers more than they were ever expecting through guided vacations?** Travel Weekly's Thought Leadership article on guided vacations gives us much needed insight on the revamp of what many would call a traditional trip. Here are our takeaways on what this type of vacation can look like and how to create it:

1. Features like 'special access' are often a hit. Insider led excursions and guided tours with experiences travelers wouldn't otherwise be able to find on their own is key.
2. Asking qualifying questions at the start find out how much guidance is needed, comfort with independent travel and how easy a traveler wants their vacation to be is critical for understanding needs and expectations.
3. Dining that includes an in home experience or hands-on cooking class are often memorable. On the other end of the spectrum, access to a sought after restaurant popular with locals can be another way to add an extra special touch.

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# ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS



## Asking Powerful Questions

Building on our previous tips, qualifying and strategic questions are vital because they can help uncover what it is that travelers are looking for. According to Travel Weekly's Thought Leadership article on Qualifying Clients this process happens when there is a two-way exchange between an agent and consumer, resulting in a "**consultative sales process**". The article provides a thorough overview on what this process looks like from **the types of questions to ask, active listening tips and the potential rewards of it all**. Here are some sample qualifying questions to get you started on the shift to a two-way exchange with your clients:

- Why did you choose this destination for this trip? Is there something in particular you want to see or do while there?
- What are some of the must-do activities on this trip? Why are those elements important to you?
- What kind of vacation did you take last? What did you like about that experience? What would you have changed if you could?
- What's the best vacation you ever taken? What stands out as making that the best?
- Tell me more about yourself and traveling companions: hobbies, interests, past travels, etc.
- If budget were no issue, what would your dream vacation be?

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## **Notice Of Annual General Meeting & Tourism Summit**

**Our AGM Tourism Summit will be held on Friday, September 6th 2019** at the Four Points by Sheraton Kingston at 285 King St E, Kingston, ON. The Annual General Meeting portion of the summit will begin at 9:30am - 10:00am followed by our tourism summit which includes information sessions from leading industry professionals. **More details to follow.**



## **RTO 9 Multi-Year Market Research Plan – Year 2**

Building on the positive results of 2018-19, **RTO9 will continue delivering a series of research initiatives that are designed to support the operational needs of tourism partners and inform forward strategies for growth across the region.** Our Research Committee will continue to play an important role in assessing the relevance of data being monitored, rolling out primary research initiatives and making key decisions on secondary research. Stay tuned for more updates on upcoming initiatives, including the Consumer and Industry Insights Surveys!

[VIEW THE HUB](#)

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# RTO 9

Regional Tourism ORGANIZATION

## Guest Pass

### 2019 Admission Rates

\$12.99 Adults

\$9.99 Children



6 Broad Street  
Brockville, ON  
613.342.6789

[www.aquarium.ca](http://www.aquarium.ca)



**Terms Of Use:**

- Guest pass includes discounted admission to the Aquarium only
- Rates listed are before HST
- This pass is valid for up to 5 people
- Ropes Course and Aqua Drop are not included
- Cannot be combined with any other offers
- Passes must be used on the date issued during AQ hours of operations
- Passes must be presented to Aquarium admissions staff
- Transfer or sale of this pass is not permitted
- Guests may only use one pass per week (7 calendar days) per person
- Each pass is valid for one visit only



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 Staff Authorization \_\_\_\_\_  
 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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