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# DIRECTIONS

DECEMBER 2017



A herd of caribou near Mackenzie, BC.  
CREDIT: Kaila Walton

## A year of challenges and triumphs



*Marsha Walden, President and CEO, Destination British Columbia.*

We know that British Columbia is the kingdom of abundance: snowy peaks, vibrant cities, vast ranches and ranges, rushing clear rivers, leading wineries, and pristine beaches. But what constantly fills me with pride, even more than our constellation of natural assets, is the strength and tenacity of the people who work in BC tourism. This year challenged industry with devastating floods and ferocious wildfires, and we know that the affected regions will need our continued support in the months to come. But despite a year that threw us unprecedented natural disasters, BC tourism

remains strong as an industry, with more than 3% growth in international visitors, to date, over the same time last year.

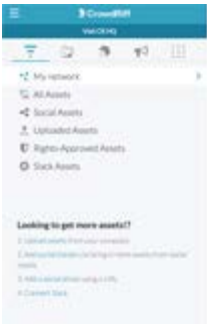
We continue to put BC in front of the eyes of the world with marketing partnerships and projects in China, Australia, Mexico, Japan, the UK, and beyond. We carry on our work to ensure that visitors here are well informed. We keep moving forward with sure purpose in elevating the excellence of our destinations.

We are stronger together. Our shared success is the result of deep collaboration and enduring partnerships that help us build the scale we need to win in a highly competitive world. We align our work with partners across the province and around the globe. And no

program embodies that more than our Co-operative Marketing Partnerships Program. Now in its second year, the program supports a variety of marketing programs in 140 communities around the province, and reinforces our commitment to nurturing the growth of tourism at the local, regional, and provincial level. And, as part of our Destination Development strategic planning process, we've been consulting travellers, tourism businesses, communities, and governments to gather ideas and build plans across British Columbia that will ensure our destination remains competitive over the long term.

As we celebrated our 150th anniversary, Canada had a very good year internationally. Many leading travel publications selected Canada as their Destination of the Year for 2017. We can only imagine what 2018 might hold for British Columbia as we enter the year of Canada-China Tourism. I hope you take some time this holiday season to reflect on the strength and resilience of our industry in addressing challenges, all that we've accomplished together, and all we have to look forward to as tourism grows around the world. I wish you peace, prosperity, and happiness in the coming year.

## Join us in a national User-Generated Content Partner Network



Our team is excited to share that we'll be participating in the new cross-Canada User-Generated Content Partner Network, in partnership with Destination Canada, all the provinces and territories plus other tourism marketing organizations around BC. This will allow us all to work together to streamline the way we source user-generated content (UGC), reducing duplication and allowing us to collectively find or "surface" the best content for use across our social channels.

The network, powered by [CrowdRiff](#), will allow any participating organization to easily feed UGC directly to Destination Canada, Destination BC, and/or any regional and community destination marketing organizations that also participate. By joining, you'll help surface the best content from your destination, sector, or organization, so partners like us can amplify it across our global social media channels. You'll also be able to access special pricing for CrowdRiff, that has been negotiated on behalf of all members of the tourism industry. [Learn More.](#)

## Introduction to the User-Generated Partner Network - webinar

On **January 9 at 10am PST** Destination BC and CrowdRiff will host a webinar to provide more information on the User-Generated Content Partner Network.

In this webinar, we'll cover:

- What is the UGC Partner Network and how can it benefit my organization?
- What is CrowdRiff and how can it support my organization's content marketing efforts?
- How will I be able to feed user-generated content directly to Destination Canada, Destination BC and to regional and community destination marketing organizations by joining the network?
- How can I take advantage of the preferred co-op pricing that Destination Canada has secured for all Canadian tourism partners?

Please [register here](#)

## Co-op Talk

## Co-op Marketing Partnerships Program application period is now closed

The application intake for Destination BC's Co-op Marketing Partnerships Program for fiscal 2018-2019 is now closed. Thank you for your submissions. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated against program criteria. Applicants will be notified of funding decisions on January 31, 2018.

## Don't miss the next sessions of our Remarkable Experiences Program



Recruitment is open for our winter 2018 program. The Remarkable Experiences Program allows tourism businesses to explore new ways to improve their visitor experiences and online marketing efforts while increasing revenue potential. It is offered throughout the year in different locations across BC. Space is limited, so click [here](#) to find out when the program will be offered near you. For more information, email the [Remarkable Experiences team](#).

## Social Studies

### Like every mountain, follow every stream



Our social media fans love BC's mountains and the charming, quirky towns that sit at their doorstep. While monitoring the #exploreBC hashtag, our consumer social media team noticed this real-time user-generated photo taken from downtown Fernie. After seeking permission, we shared the photo on Instagram where it received more than 23,000 likes and 230 comments. We also shared the photo on Facebook—this time asking our fans what their favourite BC mountain town was and why. This post generated 1,100 likes, 81 shares, and 120 positive comments. See our Instagram post [here](#), our Facebook post [here](#), and our [BC's Best Mountain Towns](#) blog post here.

## Global Marketing News

### UK team promotes BC at World Travel Market

Our team recently spent three busy days providing updates and answering queries at the World Travel Market in London. The team had close to 50 meetings with operators. Feedback highlighted the demand for more unique experiences across the province, as well as the need for alternative





accommodation in areas where availability is reduced during peak season.

### Explore BC East event shines in Toronto



Last month, Destination BC's Global Marketing team hosted a biennial event called Explore BC East (formerly called Discover BC East) in Toronto. The event provides an opportunity for tourism regions, destination marketing organizations, and the Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC (AtBC) to update receptive tour operators in Eastern Canada and tourism partners. [Read More.](#)

### Media visit highlights sustainable wildlife and bear viewing



Sarah Marshall, editor of the Press Association, visited British Columbia in September 2017 to explore the wildlife and bear viewing opportunities in British Columbia with EcoTours-BC and Knight Inlet Lodge. Destination BC created the itinerary, and Destination Canada and Bridge & Wickers also partnered on the trip. [Read More.](#)

### Top media gather at Travel Classics in Tucson



Mary Zinck of Tourism Whistler and Saschie MacLean of Tourism Vancouver pose at Travel Classics in Tucson, Arizona. Destination BC teamed up with our partners at Tourism Vancouver and Tourism Whistler to sponsor an event at the conference.

At the recent Travel Classics conference in Tucson, Arizona, Destination BC's team met with editors and writers who work for outlets such as *AFAR*, *National Geographic Traveller*, *San Francisco Chronicle*, *Hemispheres*, *The New York Times*, *Condé Nast Traveler*, *BBC Travel*, *Outside Magazine*, *Men's Journal*, *Sunset Magazine*, and *The Los Angeles Times*. Many of the media representatives we met with will attend our future press trips, or publish stories, images, and videos that inspire travellers to visit BC. [Read More.](#)

### BC's Railtown Urban Eats Tour joins Canadian Signature Experiences



Destination Canada recently announced the addition of three new members to the Canadian Signature Experiences, including the Railtown Urban Eats Tour with [Off the Eaten Track](#). [Learn More](#).

## Congratulations to the 2017 Canadian Tourism Award winners

The Canadian Tourism Awards are presented annually by the Tourism Industry Association of Canada to recognize success, leadership, and innovation in Canada's tourism industry. Congratulations to this year's finalists and winners representing BC tourism. Find the BC finalists [here](#). The four BC winners:

- **The Air Canada Business of the Year Award**  
Sun Peaks Grand Hotel & Conference Centre – Sun Peaks, BC
- **The Metro Toronto Convention Centre Event of the Year Award**  
Half Corked Marathon: Oliver Osoyoos Winery Association – Oliver, BC
- **The Diversy & Restaurants Canada Culinary Tourism Experience Award**  
The Flight Across the Top of Canada: Edible Canada – Vancouver, BC
- **The Tourism HR Tourism Employee of the Year Award**  
Debra Elless: Fairmont Hotel Vancouver – Vancouver, BC

[Learn More](#).

## Good News

### Business owners suffering wildfire losses now eligible for additional funding

Small business owners who suffered financial and business losses following British Columbia's worst wildfire season can now apply for additional financial assistance. [Learn More](#).

### BC Ferries reports record numbers for summer travel

Last month, BC Ferries reported the highest passenger traffic levels in the second quarter that the company has experienced in over 20 years. [Read More](#).

### Air Canada will launch service between YVR and Sacramento, and more domestic flights to BC in 2018

Air Canada recently announced the introduction of a new daily service between Vancouver International Airport and Sacramento International Airport. [Learn More](#). Air Canada also announced more domestic flights, including seasonal service Toronto to Nanaimo and to

Kamloops, and Montreal to Victoria. [Learn More](#).

## Bear Mountain wins Canada's best golf hotel

The [Westin Bear Mountain Golf Resort & Spa](#) was named Canada's Best Golf Hotel at the recent World Golf Awards. [Learn More](#).

## Good to Know

### ITAC announces recipients of increased funding support for Indigenous tourism businesses

The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) has renewed and grown the Product Development Fund program which supports Indigenous tourism businesses across Canada. This year's funds will assist a total of 65 Indigenous tourism businesses representing every province and territory in Canada. [Read More](#).

### Call for nominations: ITAC 2018 nominating committee

The Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC) has posted a call for nominations to assist with governance of their organization in 2018. [Learn More](#).

### Seven new Visa application centres open in China

In the lead up to the Canada-China Year of Tourism 2018, seven new visa application centres make it even easier for millions of potential Chinese travellers to book their vacation and explore Canada. [Learn More](#).



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