



TOURISM BRITISH COLUMBIA
C A N A D A

RESEARCH SERVICES

VALUE OF THE SALT SPRING ISLAND VISITOR INFO CENTRE STUDY RESULTS – FOR DISTRIBUTION

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Executive Summary

Due to increasing needs in communities around the Province, Research Services, Tourism British Columbia has developed a methodology that Visitor Info Centres (VICs) can use to measure the impact of the VIC on traveler behaviour and to determine the economic impact of the VIC. The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of the Salt Spring Island Visitor Info Centre (Salt Spring VIC). Specifically, the study objectives were:

1. To profile travelers who use the Salt Spring VIC in terms of traveler and trip characteristics.
2. To measure the influence the Salt Spring VIC has on the decision-making process of travelers in British Columbia: the influence the VIC has on the length of stay, expenditures, and selection of additional or alternative activities, attractions or destinations.

A multi-location, two-stage survey design was used to examine the study objectives. Travelers were interviewed at several locations, the Salt Spring VIC and three other sites on Salt Spring Island, namely the Fulford Harbour, Long Harbour, and Vesuvius BC Ferries terminals. Throughout this report, interviews conducted at the ferry terminals are referred to as the 'BC Ferries Sites' and are used to obtain information about the typical traveler to Salt Spring Island for comparison to travelers who used the VIC.

- Between July 1 and August 31 of 2003, 705 people were approached at the Salt Spring VIC or the BC Ferries Sites. Of those, 439 agreed to complete the interview but 173 were excluded because they were residents of Salt Spring Island. This resulted in 266 useable surveys. One-hundred and six were conducted at the Salt Spring VIC and 160 were conducted at the BC Ferries Sites.
- At the Salt Spring VIC, 33% of travelers were from BC, 28% were from other Provinces in Canada, 29% were from the US and 10% were from Overseas. A higher proportion of travelers at the BC Ferries Sites were from BC (57%); while fewer were from other Provinces in Canada (12%), Overseas (9%), and the U.S. (24%). These differences in travelers residence categories between the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites were statistically significant.
- At the Salt Spring VIC, the average party size was 3.3 people and 17% of travel parties had children. Average travel party sizes at the BC Ferries Sites were slightly larger (3.6) due to the higher proportion of those traveling with children (36%).
- The primary purpose of travel for travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries varied between locations, with 81% of travelers at the VIC traveling for leisure purposes, as compared to 59% of travelers at the BC Ferries Sites traveling for leisure. Nearly one quarter (24%) of all travelers interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites were on a trip to visit friends and family, as compared to 11% at the VIC. Fifteen percent of those at the BC Ferries Sites were traveling on work or business related activities, as compared to only 5% of travelers at the VIC. There was a statistically significant difference in primary trip purpose between sites.

- BC Ferries was used as the primary transportation for nearly all travel to the Islands (VIC 91%; BC Ferries Sites 93%). The other primary source of travel to the island was by private boat (VIC 8%; BC Ferries Sites 5%).
- Most travelers at both locations used a private vehicle for transportation on Salt Spring Island (VIC 55%; BC Ferries Sites 65%). A larger proportion of those at the VIC used rental vehicles (18%) or walked (16%) as compared to those at the BC Ferries Sites (8% and 11%, respectively).
- The percentage of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC staying at bed and breakfasts (24%) was higher than the proportion of those staying in hotels/motels (19%), or staying with friends and relatives (19%). For travelers at the BC Ferries Sites, campground/RV parks (22%) were the most common accommodation choice, while a smaller proportion of travelers stayed with friends and relatives (21%), or at a hotel/motel (20%).
- The primary destinations of travelers differed slightly between locations. More travelers at the BC Ferries Sites had Salt Spring Island as their primary destination (68%) compared to travelers at the Salt Spring VIC (55%).
- The top three sources of information utilized by travelers prior to their departure were: the Internet (VIC 50%; BC Ferries Sites 54%), word of mouth (including friends, relatives etc.; (VIC 37%; BC Ferries Sites 37%)), and brochures and books (VIC 27%; BC Ferries Sites 16%).
- The majority of travelers interviewed at both the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites indicated that they were very flexible in the activities that they planned to participate in while on Salt Spring Island (Salt Spring VIC 87%; BC Ferries Sites 82%). Only a third of travelers at both the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites indicated they were 'very flexible' in terms of the amount of time they could spend on Salt Spring Island or in British Columbia.
- The majority of travelers who stopped at the Salt Spring VIC spoke with a Counsellor (89%).
- Nearly all of the travelers interviewed (96%) at the VIC indicated that the VIC met or exceeded their expectations. Fifty-four percent of travelers indicated that the VIC met their expectations while 42% felt that the VIC exceeded their expectations.
- Travelers at the Salt Spring VIC spent more per day than travelers interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites. On average, travelers at the Salt Spring VIC spent \$191.80 and those at the BC Ferries Sites spent \$178.32.
- In the summer of 2003, Salt Spring Island VIC users spent \$9.2 million on the Island and another \$16.1 million while traveling throughout the rest of the Province.

- The Salt Spring VIC had an impact on traveler behaviour. Forty-two percent of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC indicated they learned about a new activity or destination at the VIC and 6% replied they would stay another night as a result of information obtained at the VIC.¹

¹ Additional spending as a result of these findings was calculated and presented in the full study results. These estimates can be obtained from the Salt Spring Visitor Info Centre.

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Introduction

Visitor Info Centre Counsellors at British Columbia's 112 Visitor Info Centres (VICs) provided travel counselling and advice to over 1.55 million visitor parties in 2003. In addition, many more visitors used the VICs without actually speaking with a Counsellor. The use of the VICs provides communities with an opportunity to influence the activities and satisfaction of travelers, thus increasing the length of stay and the probability of a return visit to the community and British Columbia. Due to increasing needs in communities around the Province, Research Services, Tourism British Columbia has developed a methodology that Visitor Info Centres can use to measure the economic impact of the VIC on traveler behaviour. A pilot project was conducted in 2001 to test the methodology of measuring such impacts. This study at the Salt Spring VIC in the summer of 2003 was designed using the methodology developed in the 2001 pilot project.

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of the Salt Spring Island Visitor Info Centre. Specifically, the study objectives were:

1. To profile travelers who use the Salt Spring VIC in terms of traveler and trip characteristics.
2. To measure the influence the Salt Spring VIC has on the decision-making process of travelers in British Columbia: the influence the VIC has on the length of stay, expenditures, and selection of additional or alternative activities, attractions or destinations.

Methods

Data Collection

A multi-location, one-stage survey design was used to examine the study objectives. Travelers were interviewed at several locations, the Salt Spring VIC and at three other sites on Salt Spring Island, specifically the Fulford Harbour, Long Harbour, and Vesuvius BC Ferries terminals. Throughout this report, interviews conducted at the ferry terminals are referred to as the 'BC Ferries Sites' and are used to obtain information about the typical traveler to Salt Spring Island and is used to compare to travelers who used the VIC.

Several interviewers collected data between June 27 and August 30, 2003 at both the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites. The interviewers' schedules consisted of two or three days on and two or three days off (depending on the week). Interview days usually consisted of a shift interviewing at the Salt Spring VIC followed by a shift interviewing at one of the BC Ferries terminals the following day (See Appendix A for full interview schedule). The shifts at the BC Ferries Sites were selected based on the BC Ferries schedule and the proportion of passengers traveling on each route.

Potential respondents were randomly chosen as they exited the Salt Spring VIC or while they were waiting to board the ferry at the BC Ferry Sites. Respondents were asked if they were willing to participate in the interview and were given a **Super, Natural British Columbia**® refrigerator magnet for their time if they agreed to participate. Respondents were asked if they were residents from Salt Spring Island and, if so, were eliminated from the remainder of the interview ensuring that only

travelers were interviewed. The interviewers recorded all responses on Palm handheld computers using Techneos Data Entryware software.

During the interview, questions were asked about:

- traveler demographics,
- trip-planning habits,
- primary trip purpose,
- primary destination,
- primary accommodation,
- mode of transportation,
- length of stay on Salt Spring Island and in British Columbia,
- use of the VIC (VIC only),
- trip flexibility,
- daily expenditures,
- perceived impacts of the VIC on the rest of their trip,
- satisfaction with the VIC (VIC only),
- awareness of booking accommodations at the VIC,
- other products or services that should be offered at the VIC (VIC only).

Eight other similar studies conducted in British Columbia have collected information from travelers after they return home from their trip with a mailback questionnaire in addition to the on-site interview. The purpose of the mailback questionnaire was to compare mid-trip and complete trip perceptions of the VIC impacts on traveler behaviour and to understand travelers' perceptions of Salt Spring Island and British Columbia after their trip was complete. Unfortunately, the number of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites that agreed to participate in the mailback questionnaire was not sufficient to complete this part of the study. Statistical tests conducted in the eight other studies demonstrated that the data from the on-site interviews did not vary significantly from the mailback data. Therefore, in those studies, where questions were similar between the two data sources, on-site interview data was used.

Data Analysis

The study design produced two sets of data that are available for analysis - the interview at the VIC and the interview at the BC Ferries Sites. The responses to similar questions in the interview and at each of the locations could vary due to real differences in traveler behaviour. Where possible, all results are presented for both locations. Additionally, when practical and when assumptions such as sample size were met, significance tests were conducted to assess differences between the locations. All statistical tests used a 0.05 significance level.

Results

Between July 1 and August 31 of 2003, 705 people were approached at the Salt Spring VIC or the BC Ferries Sites. Of those, 439 agreed to complete the interview but 173 were excluded because they were residents of Salt Spring Island. This resulted in 266 useable surveys. One-hundred and six were conducted at the Salt Spring VIC and 160 were conducted at the BC Ferries Sites.

Table 1. Travelers surveyed at the Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites.

	Travelers Approached	Agreed to Interview	From Local Community¹	Useable Traveler Surveys (%)
Salt Spring VIC	313	136	30	106 (40.0%)
BC Ferries Total	392	303	143	160 (60.0%)
Grand Total	705	439	173	266 (100.0%)

1. Residents living on Salt Spring Island.

Tourist Characteristics (Demographics)

At the Salt Spring VIC 33% of travelers were from BC, 29% were from the US, 28% were from other Provinces in Canada and 10% were from Overseas (Table 2). A higher proportion of travelers at the BC Ferries Sites were from BC (57%), but fewer were from the US (24%), other Provinces in Canada (12%), or Overseas (9%). These differences in travelers residence categories between the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites were statistically significant.

At both the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites the majority of travelers from Provinces outside of British Columbia originated from Alberta or Ontario (Figure 1). Fewer travelers were from Saskatchewan, Quebec, Manitoba or Nova Scotia. Similarly, at both sites, the majority of travelers from the United States were from Washington or California, with some travelers from Oregon, Arizona or Massachusetts (Figure 2). The majority of Overseas travelers were Europe (VIC 73%; BC Ferries Sites 64%; Figure 3). At the Salt Spring VIC, other countries represented from outside Europe included Mexico, South Korea and Taiwan. At the BC Ferries Sites, travelers from outside of Europe were from Japan and Yemen.

There was no statistically significant difference in the age, education or income of travelers interviewed at the Salt Spring VIC and at the BC Ferries Sites (Table 2). At the Salt Spring VIC, the average party size was 3.3 people and 17% of travel parties had children. The average party size of travelers interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites were higher than the VIC as a result of the higher proportion of travel parties which included children (36% of parties interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites were traveling with children). The overall average party size was 3.6 at the BC Ferries Sites, and when children were present, the average party size rose to 5.4 members.

Table 2. Traveler demographics at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites.

	Salt Spring VIC		BC Ferries Sites	
	Number of Responses ¹	Percentage of Responses	Number of Responses ¹	Percentage of Responses
Origin*				
British Columbia	35	32.7%	90	56.3%
US	31	29.0%	37	23.1%
Overseas	11	10.3%	14	8.8%
Other Canada	30	28.0%	19	11.9%
Age³				
Under 24 Years	8	8.2%	19	14.7%
25-34 Years	12	12.4%	21	16.3%
35-44 Years	18	18.6%	27	20.9%
45-54 Years	32	33.0%	39	30.2%
55-64 Years	16	16.5%	11	8.5%
65 Years or Older	10	10.3%	10	7.8%
Education^{2,4}				
Less Than High School	2	2.1%	4	3.1%
High School	8	8.2%	17	13.3%
Some Technical, College or University	9	9.3%	10	7.8%
College or Technical Diploma	21	21.6%	22	17.2%
University Degree	29	29.9%	44	34.4%
Masters or a PhD Degree	25	25.8%	28	21.9%
Income²				
Less than \$25,000	5	5.2%	19	15.0%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	8	8.2%	14	11.0%
\$50,000 to \$64,999	8	8.2%	12	9.4%
\$65,000 to \$99,999	22	22.7%	18	14.2%
\$100,000 or More	25	25.8%	27	21.3%
Don't Know/No Response	29	29.9%	37	29.1%
Party Size				
Average Party Size-Total*	97	3.28	129	3.58
Average Party Size-Parties without children	81	2.73	83	2.59
Proportion with Children	16	16.5%	46	35.7%
Average Party Size-Parties with children	16	6.06	46	5.37

* Indicates there are statistical differences at the p=0.05 level between Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites.

1. The total number of responses does not always equal the number of useable surveys presented in Table 1 because some respondents did not complete the full interview.

2. Business travelers are excluded from this analysis.

3. Don't Know/No Response (DK/NR) Salt Spring VIC – 1 (1.0%); BC Ferries Sites – 2 (1.6%)

4. Other: BC Ferries Sites – 2 (1.6%); DK/NR: Salt Spring VIC - 3 (3.1%), BC Ferries Sites – 1 (0.8%)

Origin of Canadian Travelers from Outside of BC by Province

Where are you from?

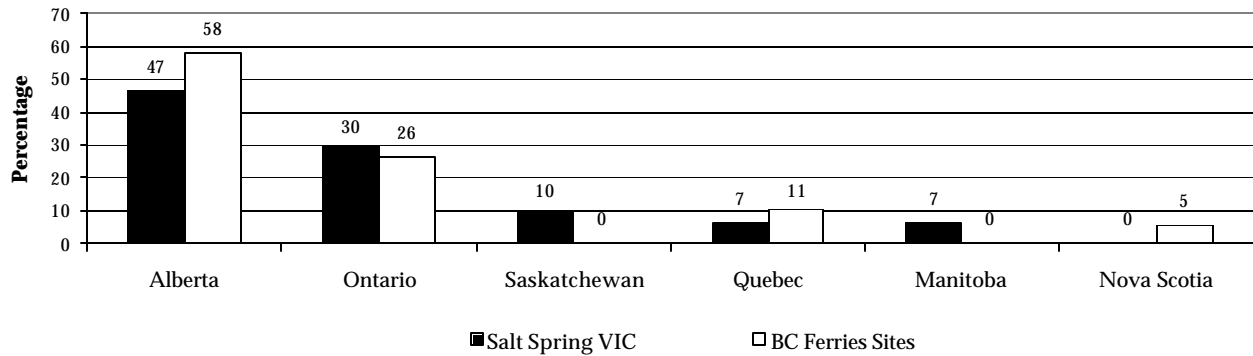


Figure 1. The percentage of travelers from Provinces outside of British Columbia at the Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites.

Origin of US Travelers to BC by State

Where are you from?

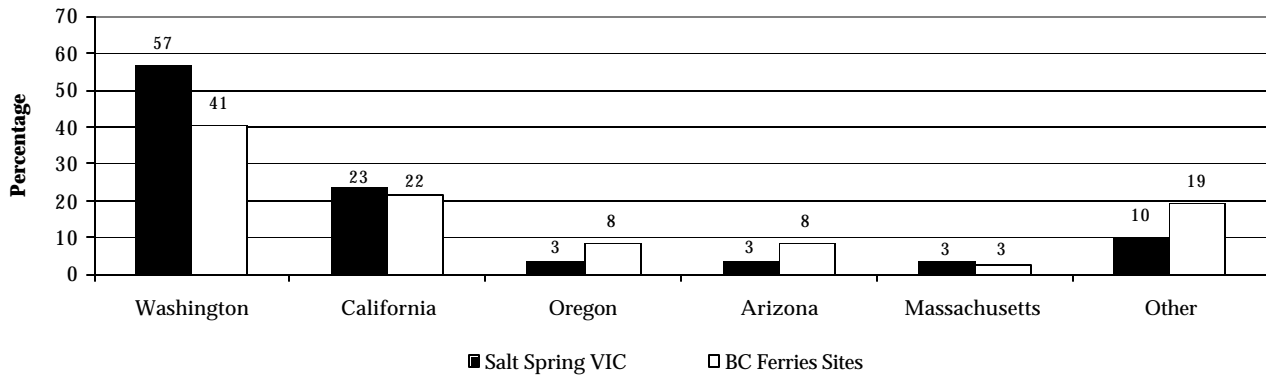


Figure 2. The percentage of US travelers from each state at the Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites.

Origin of International Travelers to BC by Country

Where are you from?

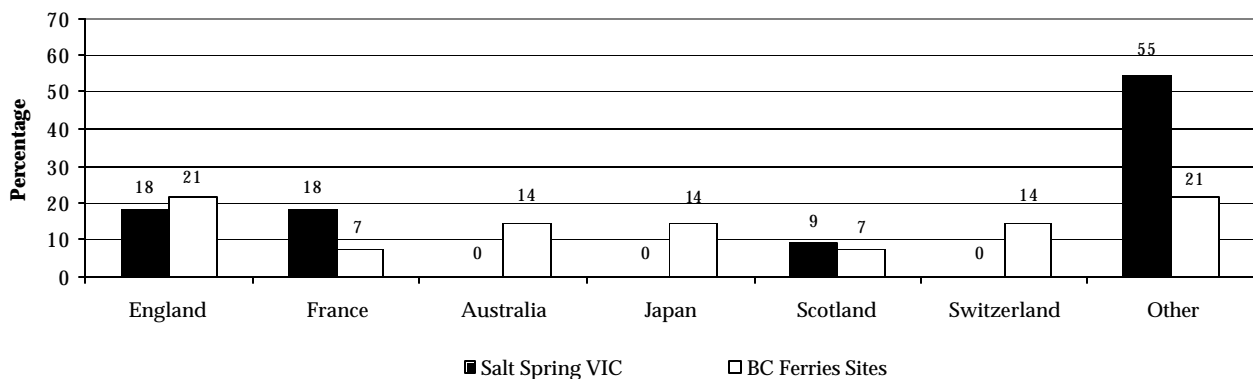


Figure 3. The percentage from each overseas country at the Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites. At the Salt Spring VIC, countries in the other category include; Germany, Mexico, South Korea, Spain, Sweden and Taiwan. At the BC Ferries Sites countries in the other category include; Austria, the Netherlands and Yemen.

Trip Characteristics

The majority of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC were traveling for leisure purposes (81%) while fewer were traveling to visit friends and family (11%) and fewer for business (5%; Table 3). The primary purpose of travelers at the BC Ferries Sites demonstrated a statistically significant difference, where 59% were traveling for leisure, 24% were traveling to visit friends and family and 15% were traveling for business purposes.

Nearly all travelers to Salt Spring made use of BC Ferries as their primary mode of transportation to get to the island (Salt Spring VIC 91%; BC Ferries Sites 93%). The other popular method of travel was by private boat (Salt Spring VIC 8%; BC Ferries Sites 5%); while fewer arrived on the island via floatplane (Salt Spring VIC 0%; BC Ferries Sites 2%). Of the three floatplane arrivals, 1 was at Fulford Harbour and 2 were at Ganges. Other methods of transportation mentioned included water-taxi or a charter boat.

While on the island, private cars/trucks/motorcycles were used by the majority of travelers (Salt Spring VIC 55%; BC Ferries Sites 65%). As compared to the BC Ferries Sites, rental vehicles were used more commonly by travelers at the VIC (Salt Spring VIC 18%, BC Ferries Sites 8%). A large number of respondents also indicated that walking was their primary form of transportation (Salt Spring VIC 16%; BC Ferries Sites 12%).

Travelers at the Salt Spring VIC were somewhat more likely to make use of bed and breakfasts than those at the BC Ferries Sites (Salt Spring VIC 24%, BC Ferries Sites 16%). A slightly higher proportion of travelers at the BC Ferries Sites stayed at a campground/RV park (Salt Spring VIC 19%, BC Ferries Sites 21%) or with friends and relatives (Salt Spring VIC 19%, BC Ferries Sites 21%). A large number of the responses fell in the 'other' category (Salt Spring VIC 14%; BC Ferries Sites 15%). Of the other responses, about half stayed overnight on a boat (Salt Spring VIC 46% of 'other' responses; BC Ferries Sites 53%), fewer stayed at a hostel (Salt Spring VIC 31%; BC Ferries Sites 18%), and some rented a private home (Salt Spring VIC 23%; BC Ferries Sites 29%).²

² As a percentage of the overall total, the other accommodation is broken down as follows: Boat (Salt Spring VIC 6%, BC Ferries sites 7%); Hostel (Salt Spring VIC 4%, BC Ferries sites 2%), Private Home (Salt Spring VIC 2%, BC Ferries sites 3%).

Table 3. The primary trip purpose, mode of transportation and primary accommodations of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites.

	Percentage of Responses	
	Salt Spring VIC (n=106)	BC Ferries Sites (n=123)
Primary Trip Purpose*		
Leisure	81.1%	59.1%
Visiting Friends & Family	11.4%	23.9%
Work/Business Activity	4.7%	14.5%
Other ¹	2.8%	2.5%
Transportation to Island		
BC Ferries	90.6%	92.5%
Private Boat	7.5%	5.0%
Floatplane	0.0%	1.9%
Other ³	2.6%	0.6%
Primary Transportation on Island*		
Private Car / Truck / Motorcycle	54.7%	64.8%
Rented Car / Truck / Motorcycle	17.9%	8.2%
Feet (Walking)	16.0%	11.9%
Boat	2.8%	0.0%
Bicycle	1.9%	5.7%
Other	6.6%	9.4%
Primary Accommodations ²		
Hotel/Motel/Resort	18.6%	20.0%
Campground/RV Park	18.6%	21.5%
Friends and Relatives	18.6%	20.7%
Bed and Breakfast	23.7%	15.6%
Cottage	6.2%	7.4%
Other ⁴	14.4%	14.8%

* Indicates there is a statistical differences at the p=0.05 level between Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites.

1. Other purposes mentioned at the VIC included studying, visiting a second home, or planning to move to the area. At the BC Ferries Sites, other included house sitting, releasing pigeons, studying, and a wedding.
2. Primary accommodations only included travelers who were visiting for leisure and visiting friends and relatives because it was not asked of business travelers at the Salt Spring VIC.
3. Two responses at the VIC and one response at the BC Ferries Sites were classified as 'other'. Other responses at the VIC included swim and water-taxi, while at the BC Ferries Sites; the other response was a charter boat.
4. 13 responses at the VIC and 17 at the BC Ferries Sites were classified as 'other'. Other responses included: staying on a boat (46.2% VIC; 52.9% BC Ferries Sites) staying at a hostel (30.8% VIC; 17.6% BC Ferries Sites) and staying in a private home/renting a private home (23.1% VIC; 29.4% BC Ferries Sites).

The primary destinations of travelers differed slightly between locations. More travelers at the BC Ferries Sites had Salt Spring Island as their primary destination (68%) compared to travelers at the Salt Spring VIC (55%). Other destinations of travelers interviewed at the Salt Spring VIC included: Vancouver Island (20%), Vancouver, Coast and Mountains (12%), other Gulf Islands (6%), touring (3%) or other Canada or International Destinations (2%). Travelers at BC Ferries Sites indicated their primary destinations were; Vancouver Island (12%), other Gulf Islands (6%), or touring (5%).

Overall, travelers at the Salt Spring VIC planned to spend an average of 15 days away from home (Figure 4), including 11 days in British Columbia and 4 days on Salt Spring Island. Travelers at the BC Ferries Sites generally made shorter trips away from home (10 days) and in British Columbia (9 days), however they spent slightly longer on Salt Spring Island (5 days; Figure 5). At both locations, those travelers from Overseas spent more time away from home and in British Columbia than those travelers from the US, other Provinces in Canada and travelers from British Columbia.

Average Days Spent Away from Home and in British Columbia by Visitors to the Salt Spring VIC

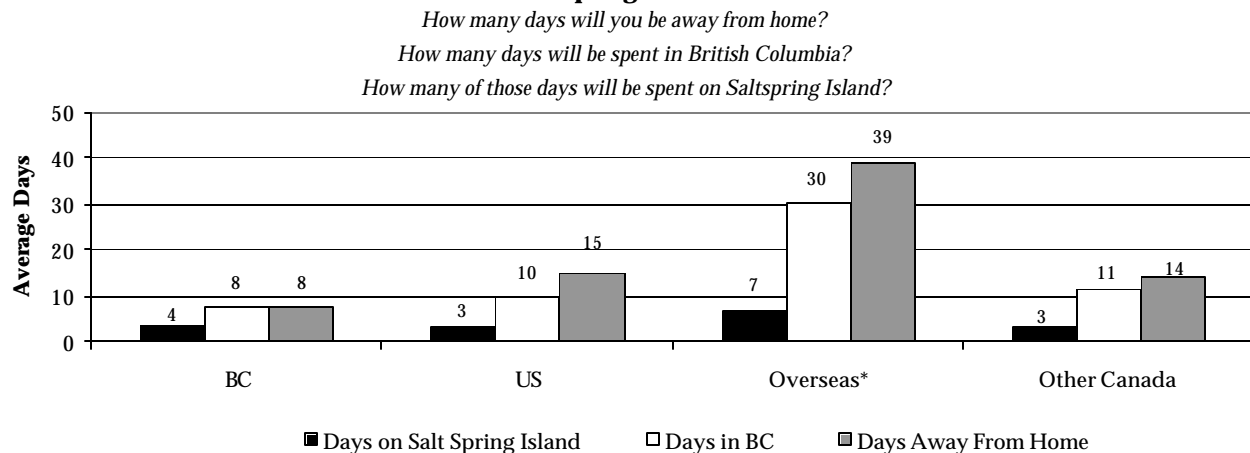


Figure 4. The average number of days spent away from home and in British Columbia by traveler origin at the Salt Spring VIC (n=104). Note that outliers with trips of more than 182 days (VIC n=3; BC Ferries Sites n=3) were removed from this analysis in order to produce a representative average trip length.).

*This category has a small sample size (n<=20) thus caution is warranted when interpreting results.

Average Days Spent Away from Home and in British Columbia by Visitors to the Salt Spring Reference Sites

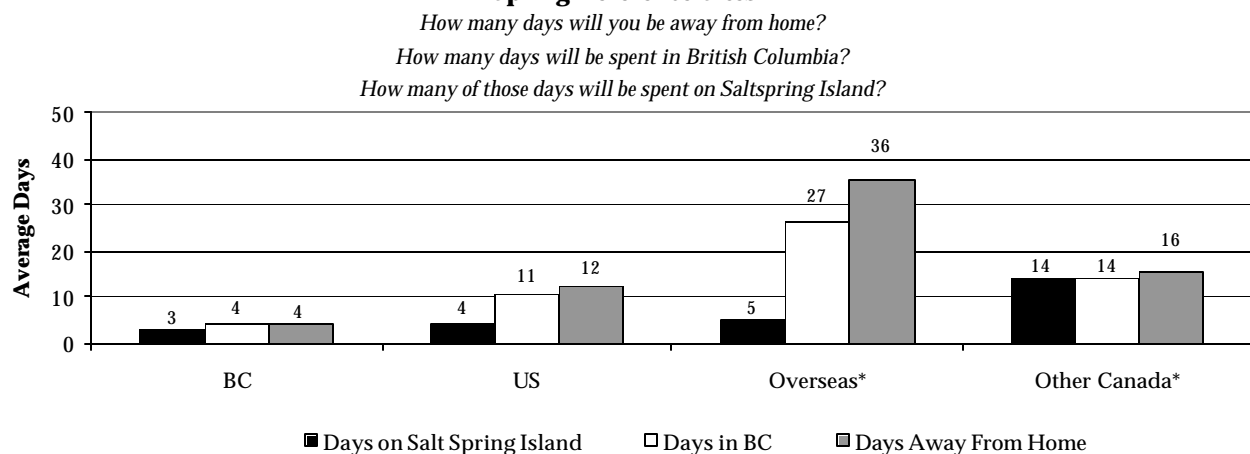


Figure 5. The average number of days spent away from home and in British Columbia by traveler origin at the BC Ferries Sites (n=157). Note that outliers with trips of more than 182 days (VIC n=3; BC Ferries Sites n=3) were removed from this analysis in order to produce a representative average trip length.

* These categories have small sample sizes (n<=20) thus caution is warranted when interpreting results.

Trip Planning

Trip planning horizons were similar for travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites (Table 4). The majority of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites spent more than three weeks planning their trips. The most common trip planning horizon for travelers to the Salt Spring VIC was more than 13 weeks (30%), which was also the case for those interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites (32%).

Table 4. Trip planning horizons for travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites.

Trip Planning Horizons	Percentage of Respondents	
	Salt Spring VIC (n=98)	BC Ferries Sites (n=131)
During The Trip	1.0%	1.5%
Day of Departure	7.1%	7.6%
1-6 Days	19.4%	13.7%
1-2 Weeks	9.2%	14.5%
3-8 Weeks	20.4%	23.7%
9-12 Weeks	12.2%	6.9%
13+ Weeks	29.6%	32.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

More than half of the travelers at both the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites used the Internet as an information source to plan their trip (Figure 6). Also important, but less frequently used information was from: friends, relatives and other relations (VIC 37%; BC Ferries Sites 37%); brochures and books (VIC 27%; BC Ferries Sites 16%); VICs (VIC 16%; BC Ferries Sites 8%); and travel agents, airlines, and auto clubs (VIC 4%; BC Ferries Sites 5%). A larger share of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC had used brochures & books, VICs and media coverage as their information source, while travelers at the BC Ferries Sites were more likely to mention other information sources. Information from a previous trip or previous knowledge was by far the most important 'other' source of information, accounting for 69% of all of the other Salt Spring VIC responses, and 63% of all other BC Ferries site responses. The ferry schedules were also another important source of information, accounting for 22% of the 'other' category for those interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites.

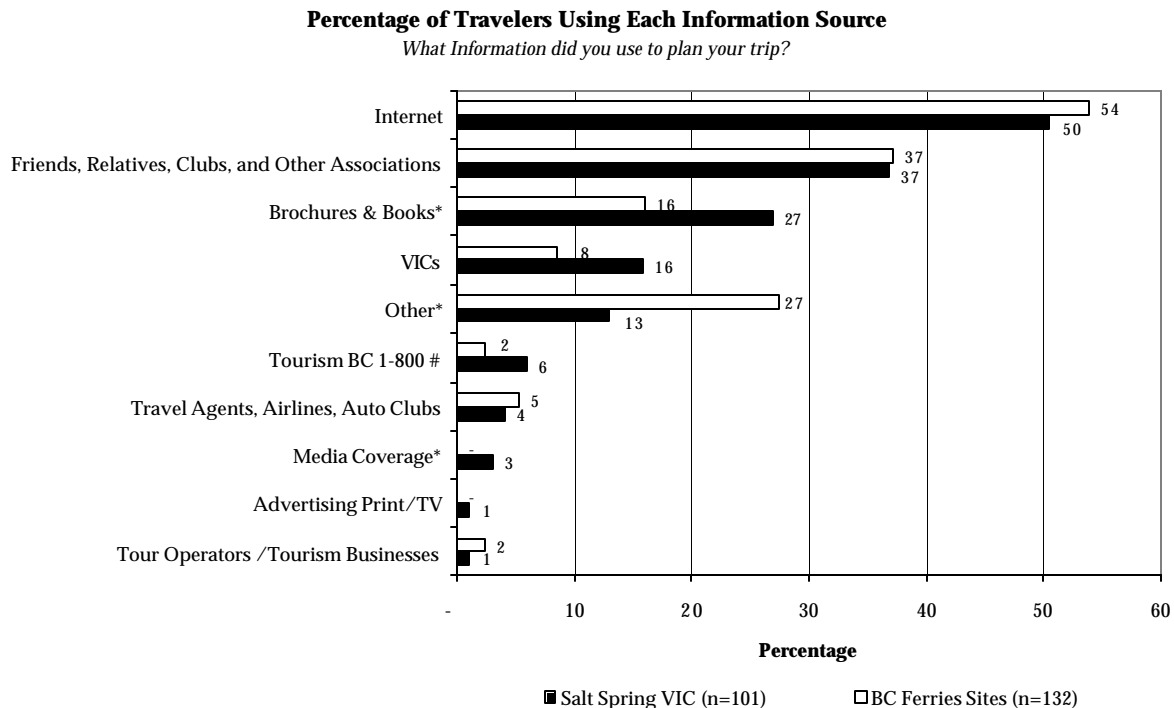


Figure 6. The percentages of travelers using each of the information sources for trip planning at the Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites. Percentages add to more than 100% because travelers could use more than one information source for planning their trip. *Indicates a significant difference between the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites at the $p=0.05$ level.

Trip Flexibility

Travelers were asked about their flexibility in terms of the activities they would participate in, the amount of time they could spend on Salt Spring Island, and the amount of time they could spend in British Columbia (Figure 7, 8, 9). The majority of travelers interviewed at both locations, travelers indicated that they were very flexible in the activities that they planned to participate in while on Salt Spring Island (Salt Spring VIC 87%; BC Ferries Sites 82%). Only a third of travelers at both the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites indicated they were 'very flexible' in terms of the amount of time they could spend on Salt Spring Island or in British Columbia. Over half of travelers indicated they were inflexible as to the amount of time that they had available to spend in British Columbia.

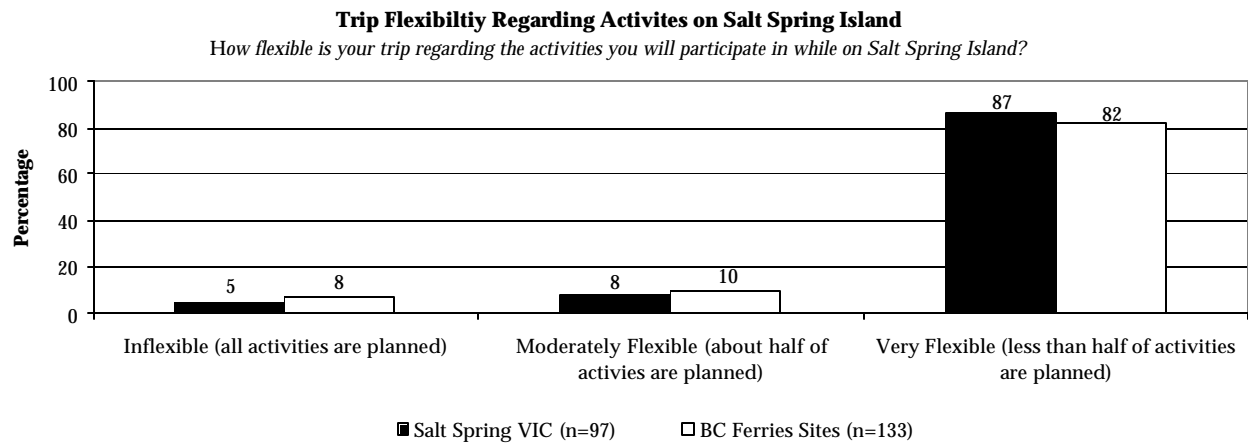


Figure 7. Travelers rating of trip flexibility regarding activities on Salt Spring Island for travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites.

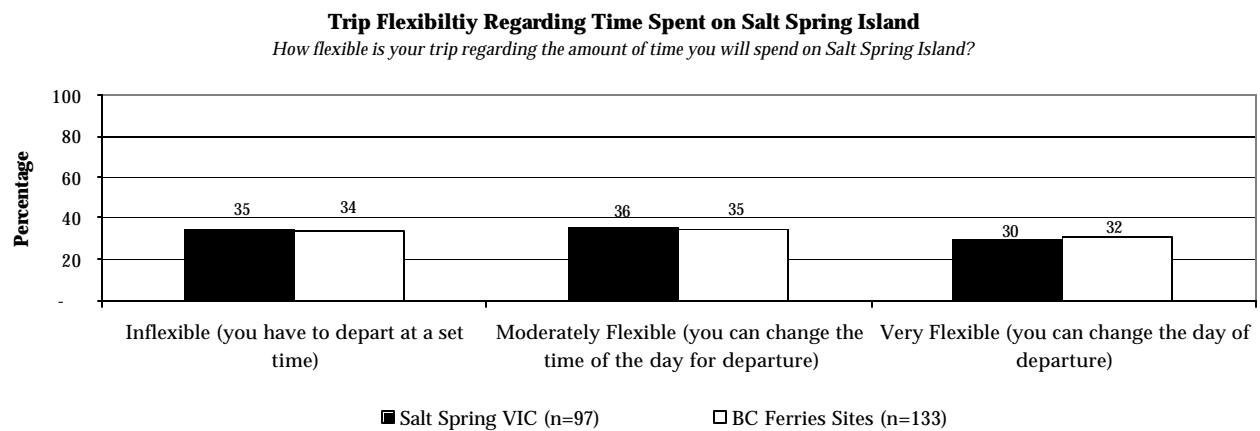


Figure 8. Travelers rating of trip flexibility regarding time spent on Salt Spring Island.

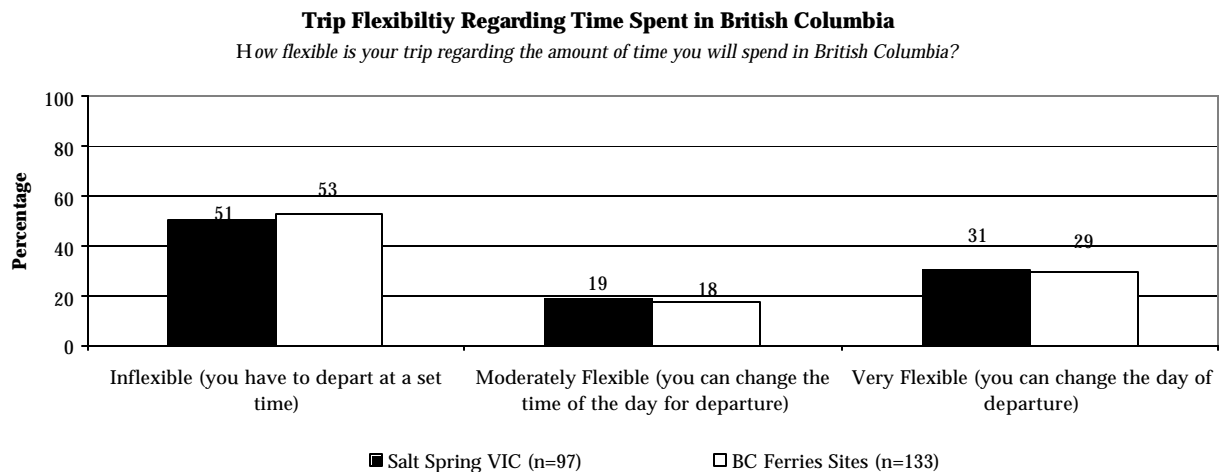


Figure 9. Travelers rating of trip flexibility regarding the time spent in British Columbia for travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and BC Ferries Sites.

Traveler Activities

Travelers participated in a wide variety of activities while traveling on Salt Spring Island. Of those interviewed at the VIC, the most popular activity was sightseeing/touring (27%), shopping (13%), hiking/walking (13%), and relaxing (9%; Table 5). Less popular activities for travelers at the VIC included boating/fishing (6%), visiting the Saturday market (6%), kayaking/canoeing (5%), arts/crafts (5%) and swimming/beach activities (4%). For those interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites, sightseeing was also the most common activity (14%), followed by relaxing (12%), hiking/walking (12%), and swimming/beach activities (10%).

Table 5. Top fourteen primary leisure activities of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites.

Primary Activity	Percentage of Respondents	
	Salt Spring VIC (n=120)	BC Ferries Sites (n=155)
Sightseeing/Touring	26.7%	13.5%
Shopping	12.5%	7.1%
Hiking/Walking	12.5%	11.6%
Relaxing	9.2%	12.3%
Boating/Fishing	5.8%	4.5%
Visiting Market	5.8%	1.3%
Kayaking/Canoeing	5.0%	6.5%
Arts/Crafts	5.0%	3.2%
Swimming/Beach	4.2%	10.3%
Dining/Eating	3.3%	4.5%
Camping	2.5%	6.5%
Visiting	1.7%	7.7%
Cycling	0.8%	3.9%
Other ¹	5.0%	7.1%

1. Other activities included: climbing, fiddle workshop, fossil hunting, gardening, golfing, guitar, house hunting, meeting people, nurseries, painting, photography, releasing pigeons, shooting, wedding planning, weaving festival, and working.

Use of the VIC

This section summarizes data from travelers who were interviewed at the Salt Spring VIC. Travelers stopped at the Salt Spring VIC to obtain: a map (37%); route information (23%); attractions information (23%); or accommodations information (13%; Figure 10). More than one third (34%) of travelers at the VIC stopped to obtain other information. Reasons for stopping included obtaining ferry information (21% of 'other' responses), miscellaneous Island information (18%), kayaking information (9%), tide information (6%), and transportation information (6%). Other reasons given for stopping included finding a place to leave luggage, information on Salt Spring Island currency, information on float planes, food, phone numbers, house rental information, and the weather.

Respondents were also asked what type of information they obtained at the Salt Spring VIC (Figure 11). Nearly half of travelers interviewed indicated they obtained a map (45%), while more than one quarter obtained attraction information (27%) or route information (23%). Fewer travelers obtained

accommodation information (19%), campground information (3%), or event information (1%). A large number of travelers (36%) also obtained 'other' information. The VIC provided information on ferry schedules (17% of other responses), kayaking information (8%), hiking/biking trails (8%), transportation (5%), and the Saturday Market (5%).

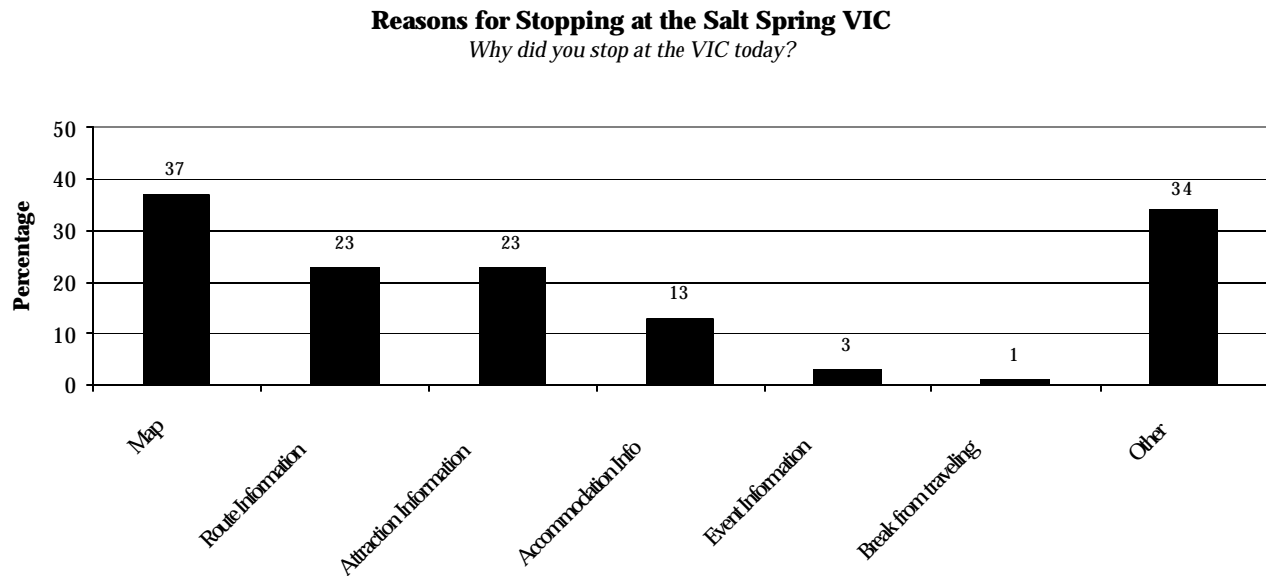


Figure 10. The reasons why travelers stopped at the Salt Spring VIC (n=100). The total number of responses exceeds 100% because respondents could give more than one reply.

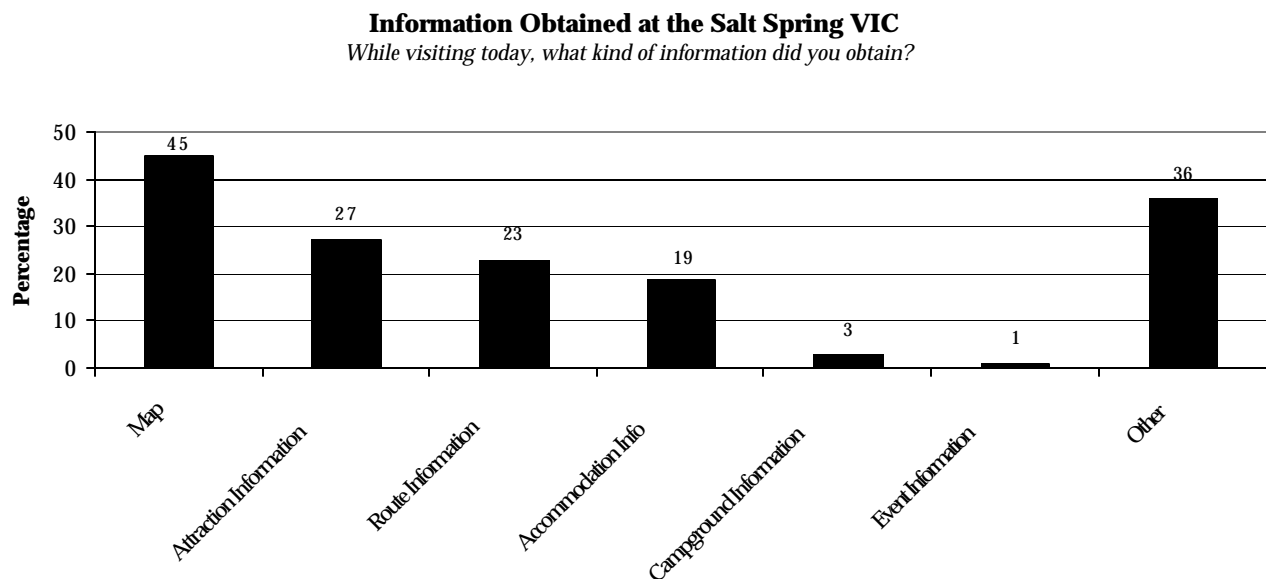


Figure 11. The information obtained by travelers at the Salt Spring VIC. The total does not equal 100% because respondents could give more than one reply (n=100).

A large majority of travelers at the VIC spoke with a Counsellor (89%; Table 6). Overseas travelers were the least likely to speak with a Counsellor (78%), while Canadian travelers from Provinces other than BC were the most likely to (92%).

Table 6. The percentage of travelers who spoke with a Counsellor at the Salt Spring VIC by traveler origin category.

Traveler Origin	Percentage that Spoke with a Counsellor¹	
	Yes (n=88)	No (n=11)
BC	87.9%	12.1%
US	90.3%	9.7%
Overseas	77.8%	22.2%
Other Canada	92.3%	7.7%
Total	88.9%	11.1%

1. Sample sizes in the 'No' category were not sufficient to test statistically.

Counsellors at the Salt Spring VIC record the number of parties that they speak with throughout each day. This number was divided by the proportion of travelers who responded that they had spoken with a Counsellor to determine an estimate of 11,979 parties that used the Salt Spring VIC (excluding locals). This estimate (11,979 between July 1 and August 31, 2003) is approximately 27% more than the 9,432 parties that the VIC staff recorded as speaking with a Counsellor (excluding locals).

Travelers were asked, “Overall, how well did the VIC meet your expectations?” An overwhelming majority (96%) of travelers at the VIC responded that the VIC met or exceeded their expectations (Table 7). More than half (54%) of all travelers at the VIC indicated that their expectations were met, while four in ten (42%) said that their expectations had been exceeded. Only 4% indicated the VIC fell short of their expectations.

All travelers from the United States felt that the VIC met or exceeded while 11% of Overseas travelers, 8% of travelers from other Provinces in Canada and 3% of British Columbian travelers indicated that the VIC did not meet their expectations. The most common response for all origin categories was that the VIC met their expectations.

Forty-four percent of travelers who spoke with a Counsellor replied that the VIC exceeded their expectations whereas 22% of travelers who did not speak with a Counsellor thought the VIC exceed their expectations. More leisure travelers indicated that the VIC exceeded their expectation (44%) compared to those traveling to visit friends and family (19%).

Table 7. The proportion of travelers who felt the Salt Spring VIC fell short, met or exceeded their expectations by traveler origin, those that did or did not speak with a Counsellor and primary trip purpose.

	Percentage of Travelers who Felt the Salt Spring VIC Fell Short, Met, or Exceeded Their Expectations		
	Fell Short (n=4)	Met (n=51)	Exceeded (n=39)¹
Overall	4.3%	54.3%	41.5%
Origin			
BC	3.2%	51.6%	45.2%
US	0.0%	55.2%	44.8%
Overseas	11.1%	44.4%	44.4%
Other Canada	8.0%	60.0%	32.0%
Spoke with a Counsellor²			
Yes	4.7%	51.8%	43.5%
No	0.0%	77.8%	22.2%
Primary Purpose³			
Leisure	3.8%	51.9%	44.3%
Visit Friends & Family	9.1%	72.7%	18.2%

1. Spoke with a Counsellor, the number of responses that exceeded their expectations equals 38.

2. Statistically significant difference between those who spoke with a Counsellor.

3. Does not include 'other' trip purpose category (expectations met 2; expectations exceeded 1).

Travelers at the Salt Spring VIC were also asked why the VIC met or exceeded their expectations. Of the 92 respondents, the majority (67%) indicated that the VIC provided good information (Figure 12). Other positive comments included friendly people (38%) and a helpful staff (37%). Fewer travelers commented that the building was nice (3%) or clean (1%). Fifteen percent of travelers gave other reasons, such as the local knowledge of the area, the patience of staff, the prompt service, the VIC provided more information than expected, free maps, lots of ideas, and the art display.

Only four comments were given as to why the VIC fell short of the travelers' expectations. These included: they could not find accommodation; the Counsellor did not demonstrate enthusiasm; poor information; and the restaurants.

Reasons Why Travelers Felt the Salt Spring VIC Met or Exceeded Their Expectations

How did the VIC exceed, meet, or fall short of your expectations?

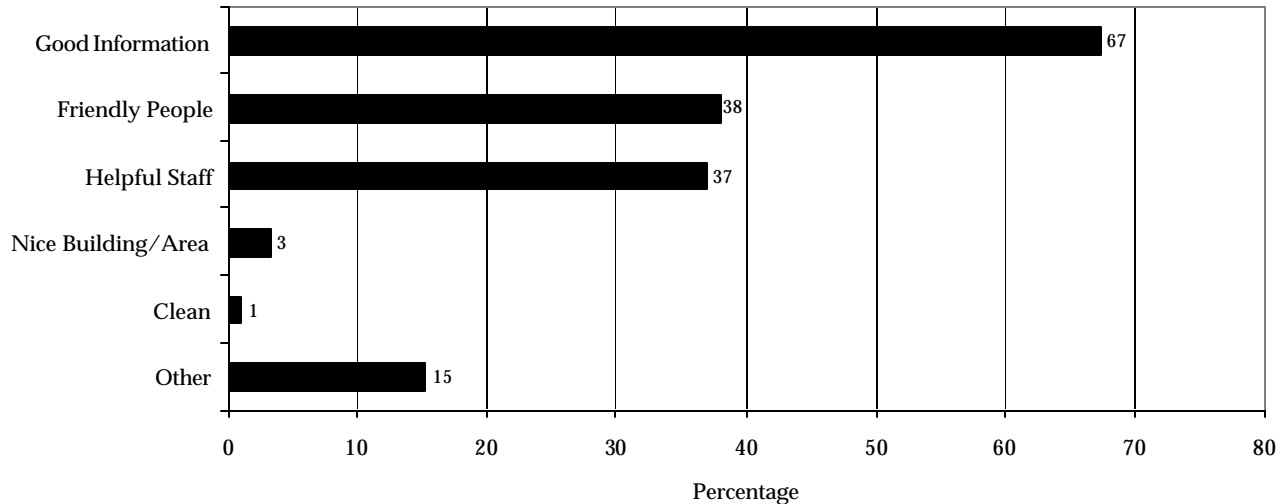


Figure 12. The reasons why travelers felt the Salt Spring VIC met or exceeded their expectations.

Travelers at the VIC were asked, '*Were there any other products and/or services that were not currently available at the Salt Spring VIC that you would have liked to have found?*' Thirteen percent of travelers indicated that there was some new product or service that they would like to have found at the VIC, while 81% said no and the remainder (6%) did not know or had no response. The most common response was restrooms (21% of all suggestions), followed by: better provincial park information (7%); wireless Internet service (7%), maps of kayak launches (7%), mooring/maritime rules (7%), promotions for restaurants (7%), parking, shuttle service (7%), and stamps (7%).

Those interviewed at BC Ferries Sites were asked if they had stopped at the Salt Spring VIC. The majority (66%) indicated that they did not stop while 32% indicated that they did stop and 2% were unsure.

All travelers were asked '*Are you aware that you can book accommodations at some Visitor Info Centres throughout BC?*' The majority, 58% of travelers interviewed at the VIC and 53% of those interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites, indicated that they were not aware of the service. When asked '*in the future, how likely are you to book your accommodations at a Visitor Info Centre?*' 30% of travelers at the VIC and 29% of travelers at the BC Ferries Sites indicated that they were likely or very likely to make use of the service (Figure 13). Residents of BC, other Canadian Provinces and Overseas were the most likely to make use of the service, 33%, 30% and 29%, respectively while travelers from the US were less likely to book accommodations at a VIC (23%).

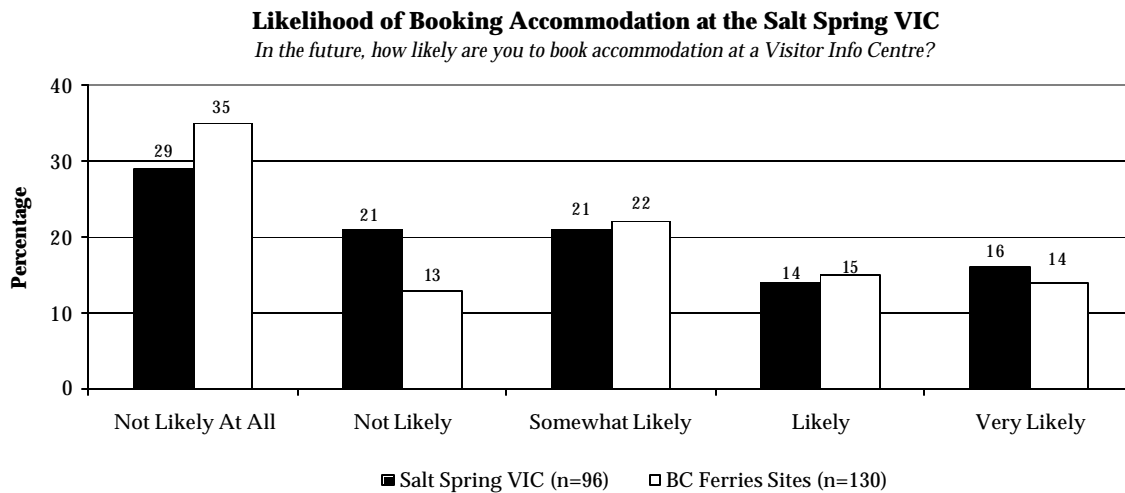


Figure 13. Likelihood of booking accommodations at a VIC in the future.

Expenditures

Travelers were asked, “*In Canadian Dollars, what were your travel party’s total expenditures **yesterday**, including accommodations?*” Travelers at the Salt Spring VIC spent slightly more than travelers interviewed at the BC Ferries Sites. On average, travelers at the Salt Spring VIC spent \$191.80 and those at the BC Ferries Sites spent \$178.32 (Table 8). At both locations, there were no statistically significant differences in expenditures between origin categories.

Table 8. The average daily expenditures of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites.

Expenditures	Average Per Party Daily Expenditure	
	Salt Spring VIC(n=71) ^{1,3}	BC Ferries Sites(n=110) ^{2,3}
British Columbia	\$ 173.08	\$ 172.52
US	\$146.15	\$176.56
Overseas	\$138.45	\$ 167.08
Other Canada	\$269.16	\$211.33
Total	\$ 191.80	\$ 178.32

1. 22% (21) travelers began trip today and were on the trip as a day trip, and therefore did not have responses, 2.1% (2) DK/NR. Business travelers not included in this analysis. The top and bottom 2% of responses were trimmed to ensure an accurate mean daily expenditure.
2. 9% (12) travelers began trip today and were on the trip as a day trip, and therefore did not have responses, 6% (7) DK/NR. Business travelers not included in this analysis.
3. There is no statistical difference in the mean between the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites.

The difference between sites is due, in part, to the expense of the accommodation that the travel party used. Those who used hotels or motels for accommodation had the highest average daily expenditure with an average of \$285 per day. For those at the BC Ferries Sites, the highest spenders were found to use bed and breakfast facilities, while spending an average of \$270 per day³. However, nearly one out of every four travelers at the Salt Spring VIC used a bed and breakfast

³ These are the 2% trimmed means, see Appendix D for complete details.

(24%), whereas at the BC Ferries Sites, only one in six travelers stayed at a B&B. For more details on expenditure by accommodation type, see Appendix D.

In the summer of 2003, Salt Spring VIC users spent \$9.2 million on Salt Spring Island and another \$16.1 million while traveling throughout the rest of the Province (Table 9). These figures do not represent the economic impact of the VIC but rather the total expenditures of travelers on Salt Spring Island and in the rest of the Province while on the trip during which they were interviewed at the Salt Spring VIC.

Table 9. Estimated expenditures of travelers who visited the Salt Spring VIC.

July 1 – August 31, 2003 ^{1,2}	Salt Spring VIC
Estimated Total VIC parties in July – August 2003	11,979
Average Daily Expenditures	\$192
Estimated Total Expenditures on Salt Spring Island by VIC Users	\$9,190,472
Estimated Total Expenditures off of Salt Spring Island by VIC Users	\$16,083,326
Estimated Total Expenditures in British Columbia by VIC Users	\$24,433,926

1. For details on the methods used to calculate the numbers, please see Appendix C.

2. Does not include residents of Salt Spring Island.

Impact of the VIC on Traveler Behaviour

Travelers were asked several questions to gauge how the VIC impacted their trip. They were:

1. *While at the centre today, did you learn about any activities, places or attractions that you were not previously aware of?*
2. *What were those activities and when will you participate in them? On this trip or on a future trip?*
3. *On this trip do you feel you will stay an extra night or nights in British Columbia as a result of stopping at the VIC?*

The Salt Spring VIC had a positive impact on traveler behaviour. Nearly half (42%) of the travelers at the Salt Spring VIC indicated that they had learned about new activities and 6% replied that they would extend their stay by one or more nights as a result of their stopping at the VIC (Figure 14).⁴ Eighty-four percent of those who learned about new activities planned to participate in them, with the majority (91%) planning to do so during their current trip; while 4% planned to participate in the activities on a future trip. Of those travelers who were participating in the new activities on the current trip, 12% planned to spend extra time on the island.

In other VIC studies, the question, ‘*Do you think you will make another trip in British Columbia in the future as a result of the information you obtained at this VIC?*’ was asked in addition to the above questions about impacts of the VIC. Due to technical difficulties, this question was omitted from the Salt Spring VIC survey. Therefore, an estimate of 19% of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC would make another trip to BC as a direct result of the information obtained from the VIC was used. This

⁴ Additional spending as a result of the findings was calculated and presented in the full study results. These estimates can be obtained from the Salt Spring Island Visitor Info Centre.

proportion was the most conservative estimate (lowest) found from past research at other VICs in British Columbia.

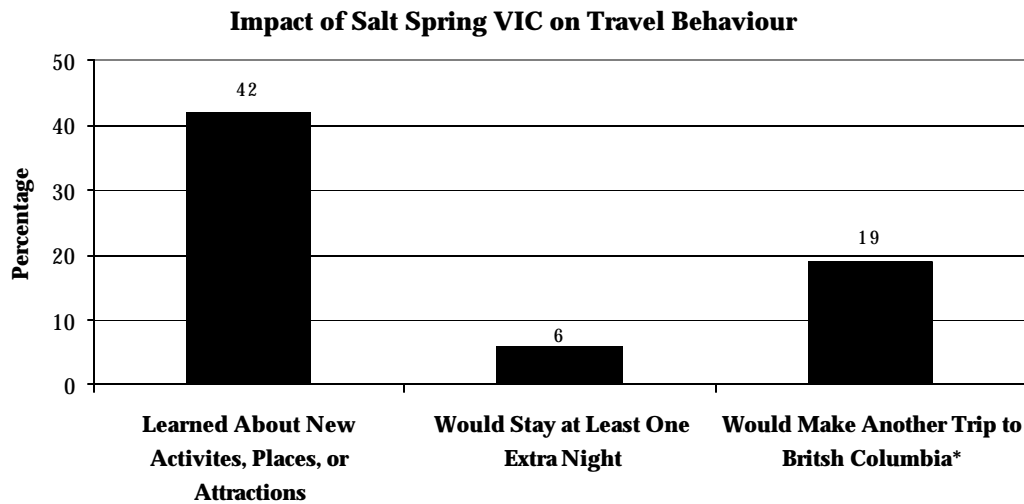


Figure 14. The proportion of travelers (n=98) at the Salt Spring VIC who learned about new activities, places or attractions, stayed at least one extra night or would make another trip to BC as a direct result of the Salt Spring VIC.

*Note that 19% is an estimate of those travelers who would make another trip. This question was not in the survey and was therefore taken as an estimate from other VIC studies. This estimate is the most conservative (smallest) number obtained from studies completed at nine other VICs. The consequence of using a conservative estimate is a low estimate of economic value of the VIC.

A number of trip and traveler characteristics could influence the impact of the VIC on traveler behaviour. Characteristics like traveler origin, speaking with a VIC Counsellor, primary trip purpose, flexibility in activities participated in while on Salt Spring Island, flexibility in the time spent on Salt Spring Island, or the time spent in British Columbia were examined to understand if they influenced the impact the Salt Spring VIC had on traveler behaviour (Table 10). Travelers from other Provinces in Canada and the United States were the most likely to learn about new activities, places or attractions.

Travelers who spoke with a VIC Counsellor were more likely to be influenced by the information they received. A higher proportion of travelers who spoke with a VIC Counsellor learned about new activities and would stay an extra night in British Columbia. A similar pattern was found in primary trip purpose, those traveling for leisure were more likely to learn about new activities or indicated they would stay extra time as a result of information obtained at the VIC. Traveler flexibility in terms of the amount of time spent on Salt Spring Island or the amount of time spent in British Columbia did not influence if a traveler learned about new activities on Salt Spring Island.

Travelers at the Salt Spring VIC learned about a wide range of new activities (Table 11). Travelers reported about learning of: arts and art galleries, the Saturday Market, local beaches, kayaking, Mt. Maxwell and Ruckle Park, hiking, stores/shopping, food/restaurants, accommodation, and local lakes. Other activities that were also learned about but less frequently mentioned included: camping, swimming, crabbing, fair, Romeo & Juliet, details on 'Artspring', wineries, golf, dance, horseback riding, shooting, skiing, and a petting zoo.

In total, 53 travelers at the VIC learned about a new activities, places or attractions, with 88% indicating that they would participate in them. Of those who indicated they would participate in the activity, 91% thought it would be during their current trip. Twelve percent of those participating in activities said they would be spending extra time on Salt Spring Island to participate in the activities they learned about. On average, travelers indicated they would spend between two and eight extra hours to participate in the new activities they learned about.

Table 10. The impact of the Salt Spring VIC on traveler behaviour by traveler origin, travelers who did and did not speak with a Counsellor, primary trip purpose and flexibility.

	Percentage of travelers who ² :	
	Learned About New Activities ^{4,*} (n=41)	Would Stay an Extra Night ^{**} (n=6)
Origin		
British Columbia	37.5 %	3.1%
US	41.9%	13.3%
Overseas	33.3%	0.0%
Other Canada	50.0%	3.8%
Spoke With A Counsellor		
Yes	46.0%	7.0%
No	9.1%	0.0%
Primary Trip Purpose³		
Leisure	45.1 %	7.4%
Visiting Friends & Family	16.7%	0.0%
Flexibility with Activities		
Inflexible (all activities are planned)	60.0%	0.0%
Moderately Flexible (about half of activities are planned)	25.0%	0.0%
Very Flexible (less than half of activities are planned)	41.7%	7.3%
Time Flexibility on Salt Spring Island		
Inflexible (you have to depart at a set time)	39.4%	0.0%
Moderately Flexible (you can change the time of the day of departure)	40.0%	5.8%
Very Flexible (you can change the day of departure)	44.0%	13.8%
Time Flexibility in British Columbia⁵		
Inflexible (you have to depart at a set time)	47.4%	5.4%
Moderately Flexible (you can change the time of the day of departure)	35.7%	0.0%
Very Flexible (you can change the day of departure)	43.5%	17.4%

1. Don't Know/No Response for: Learned About New Activities, Places, or Attractions = 4.1% (4 responses).

2. This table only contained one response for the column of 'Would Stay at Least one Extra Night' (DK/NR = 6). The traveler staying an extra night was from 'Other Canada'; Spoke with a Counsellor, Visiting Friends and Family; and Very flexible in terms of Activities, time on Salt Spring Island, and time in BC.

3. Business travelers were not asked these impact questions. Other purpose =2.5% (1).

4. Sample size issues did not permit any statistical testing of primary trip purpose and flexibility with activities.

5. DK/NR =17.5% (7 responses).

* More travelers who learned about new activities spoke with a Counsellor (statistically significant difference).

** Sample size constraints did not permit formal statistical testing of variations between groups; however there appears to be statistical differences based on origin, time flexibility with activities, and time flexibility in British Columbia.

Table 11. The proportion of travelers who learned about each new activity, the proportion who would participate in that new activity, when they would participate in those activities, the proportion who would spend extra time on Salt Spring Island and the average number of hours spent participating in each activity.

Top Ten New Activities Who Travelers Learned About	% Of All New Activities (n=53)	% That Will Participate	Timeline For Participation (Percentage of Total for each)*			% That Will Spend Extra Time	Average Hrs. Spent On Each Activity*
			Sometime on this trip	On a future trip	Unsure		
Arts/Art Galleries	15.1%	87.5%	100%	0%	0%	14%	8
Saturday Market	11.3%	83.3%	100%	0%	0%	20%	2
Beaches	9.4%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	NA
Kayaking	9.4%	80%	75%	0%	25%	33%	4
Mt. Maxwell/Ruckle Park	7.5%	100%	75%	0%	25%	0%	NA
Hiking	5.7%	100%	100%	0%	0%	33%	2
Stores/Shopping	5.7%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	NA
Food/Restaurants	3.8%	50%	100%	0%	0%	0%	NA
Accommodation	3.8%	50%	0%	100%	0%	NA	NA
Local Lakes	3.8%	100%	100%	0%	0%	0%	NA

*Caution is warranted in interpreting these results because sample sizes are small.

Conclusions

1. Travelers who stop at the Salt Spring VIC differ somewhat from the typical traveler intercepted at the BC Ferries Sites. Relative to travelers at the BC Ferries Sites, those at the Salt Spring VIC are:

- Less likely to be from BC and more likely to be from the U.S. or other Canadian Provinces,
- Less likely to be traveling with children,
- More likely to be traveling for leisure, and less likely to be traveling to visit friends and family or for work/business activities,
- More likely to be staying at a bed and breakfast,
- More likely to have their primary activity be sightseeing/touring and not beach activities.

Travelers at the Salt Spring VIC were similar to travelers at the BC Ferries Sites in their:

- Age,
- Education,
- Income,
- Transportation to the island,
- Number of days spent on Salt Spring Island,
- Information Source,
- Trip planning horizons,
- Flexibility in activities, flexibility in time spent on Salt Spring Island and flexibility in time spent in British Columbia.

2. The profile of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC can be applied:
 - To ensure that the current information provided to VIC users reflects the needs of travelers using the VIC. For example, is there enough information at the Salt Spring VIC about hiking trails?
 - To design a marketing plan to attract travelers who do not currently use the VIC. For example, a plan could be designed to encourage more travelers who are visiting friends and family to visit the Salt Spring VIC.
3. The profile of travelers at the Salt Spring VIC and at the BC Ferries Sites can be used for business planning and management of new and existing tourism businesses on Salt Spring Island. The data presented here provides details on the types of clients new tourism businesses on Salt Spring Island can expect and characteristics, interests and trip flexibility of potential clients that could be attracted through marketing (brochures, etc.) at the Salt Spring VIC.
4. The majority of travelers had their expectations met (54%) or exceeded (42%) when they stopped at the Salt Spring VIC because useful information was provided, there were friendly people and there were helpful staff.

5. The Salt Spring VIC had a positive impact on traveler behaviour. Forty-two percent of travelers learned about new activities/places/attractions and 6% reported that they would stay at least one additional night as a direct result of the information they obtained at the Salt Spring VIC. Repeat visits are important for generating long term tourism income for Salt Spring Island and British Columbia as a whole. Future research should be conducted to determine what percentage of travelers who said they would return actually do return as a result of the information obtained.
6. Travelers who spoke with a VIC Counsellor were more likely to be influenced by the information they received. Those travelers who spoke with a counsellor were statistically more likely to learn about new activities, places, or attractions while at the VIC. This finding highlights the importance of having a Counsellor available at all times to help travelers.
7. The majority of travelers at both the VIC (58%) and the BC Ferries Sites (53%) indicated they were not aware that accommodations could be booked at a VIC. Thirty percent of travelers at the VIC and 29% of travelers at the BC Ferries Sites indicated that they were likely or very likely to make use of the service on a future trip.

Limitations

1. These results are representative of travelers who stopped at the Salt Spring VIC or BC Ferries Sites between July 1 and August 31 of 2003. The results do not represent the impact of the Salt Spring VIC for the whole year. Applying these results to the remaining months in the year could over estimate the impact of the VIC because the study was completed during the peak tourism period. In addition, trip and traveler characteristics of visitors at other times of the year could differ from those interviewed during the study period.
2. These results are representative of the impact the Salt Spring VIC had on travelers who did not live on Salt Spring Island. Also, this study did not explore the impacts of the Salt Spring VIC had on travelers calling or emailing for information prior to their visit.
3. Many of the statistics contained within this report were produced with small sample sizes; consequently the results should be treated with caution.
4. Results from similar studies at other VICs have differed substantially from those presented here and therefore the results presented here cannot be applied to other Visitor Info Centres.
5. Results presented here do not represent the full range of analysis that can be completed with the data collected. Please contact Krista Morten, Research Services Tourism British Columbia (Krista.Morten@tourism.bc.ca) for more information on obtaining custom reports using this data. For example, a profile of travelers visiting friends and family versus those that were traveling for leisure could be developed.

Applications

An estimate of 11,979 parties visited the Salt Spring VIC between July 1 and August 31, 2003. A number of percentages have been produced in the pages of this report that can be applied to the total number of parties.

Example

If a user of this report wanted to know how many parties at the Salt Spring VIC came in a rental car/truck/motorcycle:

11,979 parties * 0.179 (percentage of rental car/truck/motorcycle) = 2,144 non-resident parties that visited the Salt Spring VIC were using a rental car/truck/motorcycle between July 1 and August 31 of 2003.

Appendices

Appendix A- Interviewer schedule and interviews completed

Appendix B- Questionnaires

Appendix C- Calculation of total VIC use

Appendix D- Expenditures by site and accommodation type

Appendix A-Interview Schedule and Interviews Completed

Table A1. The day and number of travelers approached, the number who agreed to the interview, the number of residents, number of refusals and the number of tourists interviewed at the Salt Spring VIC and the BC Ferries Sites (Long Harbour, Fulford, and Vesuvius Ferry terminals) during the study period.

	Salt Spring VIC					BC Ferries Sites (Long Harbour, Fulford Harbour, Vesuvius)				
	Number of People Approached	Agree to Interview-YES	Number of Residents	Refusals	Tourists	Number of People Approached	Agree to Interview-YES	Number of Residents	Refusals	Tourists
June 27	1	1	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	1
June 30						12	12	5	0	7
July 4	22	16	5	6	11					
July 5	0	0				10	10	6	0	4
July 9	21	10	3	11	7					
July 10						14	10	5	4	5
July 15						19	15	8	4	7
July 17						1	1	0	0	1
July 19	47	17	0	30	17					
July 20						37	22	9	15	13
July 24	25	13	1	12	12	19	15	8	4	7
July 25	1	1	1	0	0	24	17	5	7	12
July 30						63	48	22	15	26
Aug 5						58	42	17	16	25
Aug 7	7	4	1	3	3	12	10	3	2	7
Aug 9	46	21	6	25	15					
Aug 11	35	18	5	17	13					
Aug 12	1	1	1	0	0	39	30	8	9	22
Aug 15	28	9	3	19	6					
Aug 21	14	2	0	12	2					
Aug 24	19	4	0	15	4					
Aug 29						82	69	46	13	23
Aug 30	46	19	4	27	15					
Total	313	136	30	177	106	391	302	142	89	160

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Appendix B-Questionnaires

Appendix B-Interview Questions (Salt Spring VIC)

Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is _____ and I'm conducting a survey on behalf of Tourism BC. We want to ask you about your trip to Salt Spring Island and your experiences in British Columbia. Can I please speak with someone in your party that is knowledgeable about your trip planning and expenditures? Would you have ten minutes to answer some questions? If you participate, we would like to give you a complimentary gift for your time.

☐ YES ☐ NO Are you sure? You will receive a complementary gift for completing the interview?

Thank you.

Are you a resident of Salt Spring Island?

☐ NO ☐ YES Thanks for agreeing to participate, in this study we are only interested in visitors that do not live on the Island.

Are you part of an organized tour group?

☐ NO ☐ YES

Where are you from? **Prov.** _____ **State** _____ **Country (Overseas)** _____

If Canada or US, what is your postal code? _____

To start with we have a few questions about your current trip.

What is the **primary** purpose of your trip to British Columbia? Is it for Leisure, Visiting Friends and Family or Business?

☐ LEISURE ☐ VISIT FRIENDS & FAMILY ☐ WORK/BUSINESS ACTIVITY ☐ OTHER _____

What is your primary destination?

☐ _____ ☐ NONE, TOURING ☐ OTHER _____ ☐ DK/NR

How did you get to Salt Spring Island? Was it by

☐ PRIVATE BOAT (VESSEL) ☐ BC FERRY ☐ FLOATPLANE Where did you land? _____ ☐ OTHER _____

What was your primary mode of transportation while on Salt Spring Island? Was it by

☐ PRIVATE CAR/TRUCK/MC ☐ RENTAL CAR/TRUCK ☐ BOAT ☐ FEET (WALKING) ☐ OTHER _____

☐ PRIVATE RV ☐ RENTAL RV ☐ BIKE ☐ BUS ☐ NONE

What day did you leave your residence on this trip? ____/____ month/day

When did you enter British Columbia? ____/____ month/day (**do not ask if from B.C.**)

What day do you plan to return to your residence? ____/____ month/day

To confirm, you will be gone for a total of _____ days (**include day left and day returning**)

How many of those days will be spent travelling in British Columbia? _____ days

Of those, how much time will be spent on Salt Spring Island?

☐ NONE-JUST PASSING THROUGH Go to accomm _____ HOURS _____ DAYS ☐ DK/NR

If WORK/BUSINESS what is the likelihood that you will return for leisure?

☐ NOT LIKELY AT ALL ☐ NOT LIKELY ☐ SOMEWHAT LIKELY ☐ LIKELY ☐ VERY LIKELY ☐ DK/NR

If NOT LIKELY AT ALL or NOT LIKELY why not? _____ ☐ DK/NR

If SOMEWHAT LIKELY, LIKELY or VERY LIKELY why? _____ ☐ DK/NR

That completes the interview for business travellers. Thank-You For Participating!!

If spending time, what is your **primary** (most time spent) leisure activity while on Salt Spring Island?

_____ ☐ NONE ☐ DK/NR

On this trip, which of the following best describes your **primary** (most often used) type of accommodation? Is it a

☐ RESORT/HOTEL/MOTEL/B&B ☐ CAMPGROUND/RV ☐ FRIENDS OR RELATIVES ☐ OTHER _____

In Canadian dollars, what were your travel party's total expenditures yesterday, including accommodation?

\$_____ ☐ BEGAN TRIP TODAY ☐ DK/NR

How flexible is your trip regarding the activities you will participate in while in Salt Spring Island? Is it

☐ INFLEXIBLE ☐ MODERATELY FLEXIBLE ☐ VERY FLEXIBLE ☐ DK/NR

(all activities are planned) (about half of activities are planned) (less than half of activities are planned)

How flexible is your trip regarding the amount of time you will spend on Salt Spring Island? Is it

☐ INFLEXIBLE ☐ MODERATELY FLEXIBLE ☐ VERY FLEXIBLE ☐ DK/NR

(You have to depart at a set time) (You can change the time of the day for departure) (You can change the day of departure)

How flexible is your trip regarding the amount of time you will spend in BC? Is it

☐ INFLEXIBLE ☐ MODERATELY FLEXIBLE ☐ VERY FLEXIBLE ☐ DK/NR

(You have to depart at a set time) (You can change the time of the day for departure) (You can change the day of departure)

How far in advance did you start planning your trip?

☐ DURING THE TRIP ☐ DAY OF DEPARTURE ☐ 1-6 DAYS ☐ 1-2 WEEKS ☐ 3-8 WEEKS ☐ 9-12 WEEKS ☐ 13 WEEKS+ ☐ DK/NR

What information sources did you use to plan your trip? **Do not prompt, check all that apply**

☐ INTERNET ☐ TRAVEL AGENTS, AIRLINES, AUTO ASSOCIATIONS ☐ BROCHURES AND BOOKS ☐ VICs ☐ TOURISM BC 1-800 # OR OTHER ☐ DK/NR

☐ MEDIA COVERAGE ☐ FRIENDS, RELATIVES, CLUBS AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS ☐ TOUR OPERATORS/TOURISM SPECIFIC BUSINESSES ☐ ADVERTISING (PRINT/TV) ☐ OTHER _____

Now, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your use of the Salt Spring Island Visitor Info Centre.

What was your reason for stopping at the Info Centre today? **(Do not prompt-check all that apply)**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN A MAP | <input type="checkbox"/> TO USE THE CENTRE'S WASHROOM FACILITIES |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN ROUTE INFORMATION | <input type="checkbox"/> TO TAKE A BREAK FROM TRAVELING AND GET OUT OF OUR VEHICLE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN ATTRACTION INFORMATION | <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN EVENT INFORMATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN ACCOMMODATION INFORMATION (EXCLUDING CAMPING) | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN CAMPGROUND INFORMATION | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN REFRESHMENTS | |

While visiting today, what type of information did you obtain? **(Do not prompt-check all that apply)**

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> NOTHING | <input type="checkbox"/> EVENT INFORMATION |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MAP | <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ROUTE INFORMATION | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ATTRACTION INFORMATION | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ACCOMMODATION (EXCLUDING CAMPGROUND) INFORMATION | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CAMPGROUND INFORMATION | |

While visiting today, did you speak with a Visitor Info Counsellor?

- ☐ NO ☐ YES ☐ DK/NR

While at the Centre today, did you learn about any activities, places or attractions that you were previously not aware of?

- ☐ NO ☐ YES ☐ DK/NR

If YES, What were those activities, places or attractions? <i>Record activity.</i>	Will you participate in them?	IF YES, Will it be sometime on this trip or on a future trip?	IF SOMETIME ON THIS TRIP Will you stay extra time to complete this activity?	If YES, how many additional hours?
1. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	<input type="checkbox"/> SOMETIME ON THIS TRIP <input type="checkbox"/> ON A FUTURE TRIP <input type="checkbox"/> UNSURE <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	_____hr
2. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	<input type="checkbox"/> SOMETIME ON THIS TRIP <input type="checkbox"/> ON A FUTURE TRIP <input type="checkbox"/> UNSURE <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	_____hr
3. _____	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	<input type="checkbox"/> SOMETIME ON THIS TRIP <input type="checkbox"/> ON A FUTURE TRIP <input type="checkbox"/> UNSURE <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	<input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	_____hr

Overall, will you extend this trip in British Columbia by staying an extra night or nights as a result of the information obtained at the Salt Spring Island Visitor Info Centre?

- ☐ NO ☐ YES If yes, how many nights _____ ☐ DK/NR

Will you make another trip in British Columbia in the future as a result of the information you obtained at the Salt Spring Island Visitor Info Centre?

- ☐ NO ☐ YES ☐ DK/NR

Overall, how well did the Salt Spring Island Visitor Info Centre live up to your original expectations? Did it EXCEED, MEET OR FALL SHORT of your expectations?

☐ FELL SHORT ☐ MET ☐ EXCEEDED ☐ DK/NR

How did the VIC exceed, meet, or fall short of your expectations? (*Don't prompt, check all that apply*)

POSITIVE

☐ HELPFUL STAFF
☐ GOOD INFORMATION
☐ FRIENDLY PEOPLE
☐ GOOD ACCESS
☐ NICE BUILDING/AREA
☐ CLEAN
☐ OTHER _____
☐ OTHER _____

NEGATIVE

☐ POOR SIGNAGE
☐ POOR WASHROOMS
☐ POOR PARKING
☐ IMPROVE OUTSIDE AREA
☐ OTHER _____
☐ OTHER _____
☐ DK/NR

Were there any other products and/or services that were not currently available at the Salt Spring VIC that you would have liked to have found?

☐ NO ☐ YES ☐ DK/NR

If YES, what were they? _____, _____, _____

Are you aware that you can book accommodations at some Info Centres throughout BC?

☐ NO ☐ YES ☐ DK/NR

In the future, how likely are you to book your accommodations at a Visitor Info Centre?

☐ NOT LIKELY AT ALL ☐ NOT LIKELY ☐ SOMEWHAT LIKELY ☐ LIKELY ☐ VERY LIKELY ☐ DK/NR

Now, I'd like to ask you a few more questions about yourself

Including yourself, how many people are in your travel party today? How many are children under 18 and how many are adults?

_____ Adult(s) _____ Child(ren) (under 18) = _____ Total

In which of the following age category are you?

☐ A. UNDER 24 YEARS ☐ E. 55-64 YEARS
☐ B. 25-34 YEARS ☐ F. 65 YEARS OR OLDER
☐ C. 35-44 YEARS ☐ G. DK/NR
☐ D. 45-54 YEARS

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

☐ A. LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL ☐ E. UNIVERSITY DEGREE
☐ B. HIGH SCHOOL ☐ F. MASTERS/PHD DEGREE
☐ C. SOME TECHNICAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY ☐ G. OTHER _____
☐ D. COLLEGE OR TECHNICAL DIPLOMA ☐ H. DK/NR

Before taxes, in Canadian dollars, what is your approximate annual household income?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> A. LESS THAN \$25,000 | <input type="checkbox"/> D. \$65,000 to \$99,999 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> B. \$25,000 to \$44,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> E. \$100,000 PLUS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> C. \$45,000 to \$64,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> F. DK/NR |

Gender of respondent **(Record, don't ask)**

- ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE

As a follow-up to this interview, we would like to contact you after your trip to inquire how the Visitor Info Centre influenced the rest of your trip in British Columbia. Participation would involve completing one short questionnaire that will be mailed to you. In exchange, we are pleased to offer you one free edition of British Columbia Magazine and a chance to win a digital camera. All contact information will be kept confidential and only used for this study. Would you like to participate?

- ☐ NO ☐ YES

If **YES**-can I get your name and mailing address?

Name:
Mailing Address:
City:
Country:
Postal Code <i>(If Outside North America)</i> :

Thank-You For Participating!!

Appendix B-Interview Questions (BC Ferries Sites)

Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is _____ and I'm conducting a survey on behalf of Tourism BC. We want to ask you about your trip to Salt Spring Island and your experiences in British Columbia. Can I please speak with someone in your party that is knowledgeable about your trip planning and expenditures?

Would you have ten minutes to answer some questions? If you participate, we would like to give you a complimentary gift for your time.

☐ YES ☐ NO Are you sure? You will receive a complimentary gift for completing the interview? **Thank you.**

Are you a resident of the Salt Spring Island?

☐ NO ☐ YES Thanks for agreeing to participate, in this study we are only interested in visitors that do not live on the Island

Are you part of an organized tour group?

☐ NO ☐ YES

Where are you from? **Prov.** _____ **State** _____ **Country (Overseas)** _____

If Canada or US, what is your postal code? _____

To start with we have a few questions about your current trip.

What is the **primary** purpose of your trip to British Columbia? Is it for Leisure, Visiting Friends and Family or Business?

☐ LEISURE ☐ VISIT FRIENDS & FAMILY ☐ WORK/BUSINESS ACTIVITY ☐ OTHER _____ ☐ DK/NR

What is your primary destination?

☐ _____ ☐ NONE, TOURING ☐ OTHER _____ ☐ DK/NR

How did you get to Salt Spring Island? Was it by

☐ PRIVATE BOAT (VESSEL) ☐ FERRY ☐ FLOATPLANE Where did you land? _____ ☐ OTHER _____

What was your primary mode of transportation while on Salt Spring Island? Was it by

☐ PRIVATE CAR/TRUCK/MC ☐ PRIVATE RV ☐ BOAT ☐ FEET (WALKING) ☐ OTHER _____
☐ RENTAL CAR/TRUCK ☐ RENTAL RV ☐ BIKE ☐ BUS ☐ NONE

What day did you leave your residence on this trip? ____/____ month/day

When did you enter British Columbia? ____/____ month/day (**do not ask if from B.C.**)

What day do you plan to return to your residence? ____/____ month/day

To confirm, you will be gone for a total of _____ days (**include day left and day returning**)

How many of those days will be spent travelling in British Columbia? _____ days

Of those, how much time will be spent on Salt Spring Island?

☐ NONE-JUST PASSING THROUGH ☐ _____ HOURS ☐ _____ DAYS ☐ DK/NR
Go to accomm

If WORK/BUSINESS what is the likelihood that you will return for leisure?

☐ NOT LIKELY AT ALL ☐ NOT LIKELY ☐ SOMEWHAT LIKELY ☐ LIKELY ☐ VERY LIKELY ☐ DK/NR

If NOT LIKELY AT ALL or NOT LIKELY why not? _____ ☐ DK/NR

If SOMEWHAT LIKELY, LIKELY or VERY LIKELY why? _____ ☐ DK/NR

That completes the interview for business travellers. Thank-You For Participating!!

If spending time, what is your **primary** (most time spent) leisure activity while on Salt Spring Island?

☐ NONE☐ DK/NR

On this trip, did you stop at the Salt Spring Island Visitor Info Centre?

☐ YES☐ NO☐ DK/NR

On this trip, which of the following best describes your **primary** (most often used) type of accommodation? Is it a

☐ Resort/Hotel/Motel/B&B☐ Campground/RV☐ FRIENDS Or Relatives☐ OTHER _____

In Canadian dollars, what were your travel party's total expenditures yesterday, including accommodation?

\$ _____

☐ BEGAN TRIP TODAY☐ DK/NR

How flexible is your trip regarding the activities you will participate in while on Salt Spring Island? Is it

☐ INFLEXIBLE☐ MODERATELY FLEXIBLE☐ VERY FLEXIBLE☐ DK/NR

(all activities are planned) (about half of activities are planned) (less than half of activities are planned)

How flexible is your trip regarding the amount of time you will spend on Salt Spring Island? Is it

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(You have to depart at a set time) (You can change the time of the day for departure) (You can change the day of departure)

How flexible is your trip regarding the amount of time you will spend in BC? Is it

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(You have to depart at a set time) (You can change the time of the day for departure) (You can change the day of departure)

How far in advance did you start planning this trip? Was it....

☐ DURING THE TRIP☐ DAY OF DEPARTURE☐ 1-6 DAYS☐ 1-2 WEEKS☐ 3-8 WEEKS☐ 9-12 WEEKS☐ 13 WEEKS+☐ DK/NR

What information sources did you use to plan your trip? **Do not prompt, check all that apply**

☐ INTERNET☐ TRAVEL AGENTS, AIRLINES, AUTO ASSOCIATIONS☐ BROCHURES AND BOOKS☐ VICs☐ TOURISM BC 1-800 # OR OTHER☐ DK/NR☐ MEDIA COVERAGE☐ FRIENDS, RELATIVES, CLUBS AND OTHER ASSOCIATIONS☐ TOUR OPERATORS/TOURISM SPECIFIC BUSINESSES☐ ADVERTISING (PRINT/TV)☐ OTHER _____

Are you aware that you can book accommodations at some Info Centres throughout BC?

☐ NO☐ YES☐ DK/NR

In the future, how likely are you to book your accommodations at a Visitor Info Centre?

☐ NOT LIKELY AT ALL☐ NOT LIKELY☐ SOMEWHAT LIKELY☐ LIKELY☐ VERY LIKELY☐ DK/NR

Now, I'd like to ask you a few more questions about yourself

Including yourself, how many people are in your travel party today? How many are children under 18 and how many are adults?

_____ Adult(s)

_____ Child(ren) (under 18)

= _____ Total

In which of the following age category are you?

- ☐ A. UNDER 24 YEARS ☐ E. 55-64 YEARS
☐ B. 25-34 YEARS ☐ F. 65 YEARS OR OLDER
☐ C. 35-44 YEARS ☐ G. DK/NR
☐ D. 45-54 YEARS

What is the highest level of education that you have completed?

- ☐ A. LESS THAN HIGH SCHOOL ☐ E. UNIVERSITY DEGREE
☐ B. HIGH SCHOOL ☐ F. MASTERS/PHD DEGREE
☐ C. SOME TECHNICAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY ☐ G. OTHER _____
☐ D. COLLEGE OR TECHNICAL DIPLOMA ☐ H. DK/NR

Before taxes, in Canadian dollars, what is your approximate annual household income?

- ☐ A. LESS THAN \$25,000 ☐ D. \$65,000 to \$99,999
☐ B. \$25,000 to \$44,999 ☐ E. \$100,000 PLUS
☐ C. \$45,000 to \$64,999 ☐ F. DK/NR

Gender of respondent (**Record, don't ask**)

- ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE

As a follow-up to this interview, we would like to contact you after your trip to inquire about the rest of your trip in British Columbia. Participation would involve completing one short questionnaire that will be mailed to you. In exchange, we are pleased to offer you one free edition of British Columbia Magazine and a chance to win a digital camera. All contact information will be kept confidential and only used for this study. Would you like to participate?

- ☐ NO ☐ YES

If **YES**-can I get your name and mailing address?

Name:
Mailing Address:
City:
Country:
Postal Code (<i>If Outside North America</i>) :

Thank-You For Participating!!

Appendix C -Calculation of Total VIC Use

Calculation of total parties that use the Salt Spring VIC

1. A proportion of parties that spoke with a Counsellor on each day of the study period was obtained.
2. The number of parties (excluding locals) counted by VIC Counsellors was obtained for that day (daily party counts).
3. The daily party count was divided by the percentage of parties that replied they spoke with a Counsellor to obtain the estimated total daily parties.
4. The estimated total daily parties was averaged for each month and multiplied by the number of days in each month (estimated total monthly parties).
5. The estimated total monthly parties for July and August were summed to obtain total parties.

Table A2. The proportion of parties interviewed that spoke with a Counsellor, Salt Spring VIC counts of parties counselled and the estimated total daily parties and estimated total monthly parties.

Date	Spoke with a Counsellor	Salt Spring VIC Daily Party Counts ¹	Estimated Total Daily Parties	Estimated Total Monthly Parties
July 4	100.0	114	114	
July 9	100.0	116	116	
July 19	85.7	244	285	
July 24	91.7	118	129	
July Total		148.00	160.85	4,986
August 6	66.7	172	258	
August 9	92.3	246	267	
August 11	75.0	159	212	
August 15	100.0	183	183	
August 21	50.0	161	322	
August 24	100.0	129	129	
August 28	100.0	147	147	
August 30	84.6	243	287	
August Total		180.00	225.58	6,993
Total (Estimate)				11,979

1. Excludes local parties.

Appendix D-Expenditures by Accommodation Type

Table A4. Salt Spring VIC Expenditure by Accommodation Type (not statistically significant at $p=0.05$, statistically significant at $p=0.075$)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
HOTEL/MOTEL	11	285.00	257.03	77.50	130.00	440.00	40.00	1,000.00
CAMPGROUND/ RV PARK	15	143.77	160.11	41.34	61.09	226.45	12.58	600.00
FRIENDS OR RELATIVES	11	201.82	258.19	77.85	46.12	357.51	50.00	900.00
BED & BREAKFAST	18	237.50	99.87	23.54	190.42	284.58	75.00	475.00
COTTAGE	6	191.83	62.23	25.40	141.03	242.64	100.00	250.00
OTHER	10	68.00	85.51	27.04	13.92	122.08	0	300.00
TOTAL	71	191.80	179.80	21.34	149.12	234.47	0	1,000.00

Table A5. BC Ferries Sites Expenditure by Accommodation Type (statistically significant difference at $p=0.05$)

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
HOTEL/MOTEL	19	232.37	137.28	31.49	169.38	295.36	20.00	500.00
CAMPGROUND/ RV PARK	26	127.27	140.90	27.63	72.01	182.53	5.00	500.00
FRIENDS OR RELATIVES	23	111.39	138.60	28.90	53.59	169.19	5.00	550.00
BED & BREAKFAST	17	270.00	87.87	21.31	227.37	312.63	100.00	450.00
COTTAGE	9	258.33	252.49	84.16	90.01	426.66	100.00	900.00
OTHER	16	150.94	182.32	45.58	59.78	242.10	0	700.00
TOTAL	110	178.33	161.11	15.36	147.61	209.05	0	900.00