



RESEARCH AND PLANNING

VALUE OF THE PRINCE RUPERT VISITOR CENTRE STUDY RESULTS – FOR DISTRIBUTION

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- VIA Rail
- Prince Rupert Airport
- Prince Rupert Chamber of Commerce (Visitor Centre)
- Prince Rupert Yacht Club

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Executive Summary

Due to increasing needs in communities around the province, Research and Planning, Tourism British Columbia has developed a methodology that Visitor Centres (VCs) can use to measure the impact of the VC on traveller behaviour and to determine the economic benefit of the VC. The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of the Prince Rupert VC. Specifically, the study objectives were:

1. To profile travellers who use the Prince Rupert VC in terms of traveller and trip characteristics.
2. To measure the influence the Prince Rupert VC has on the decision-making process of travellers in British Columbia: the influence the VC has on the length of stay, expenditures, and selection of additional or alternative activities, attractions or destinations.

A one-location, two-stage survey design was used to examine the study objectives. Travellers were interviewed at the Prince Rupert VC to obtain information about the typical traveller to the VC. On-site interviews collected information from travellers during their trip and a mailback questionnaire collected information from travellers after their trip. The purpose of the mailback questionnaire was to gather information about trip motivation, planning, experiences and activities, to compare mid-trip and post trip perceptions regarding the VC's impact on traveller behaviour, and to understand travellers' perceptions of Prince Rupert and British Columbia upon trip completion.

- Between June 1 and August 31 of 2007, 851 people were approached at the Prince Rupert VC, 548 agreed to the interview, but 95 were excluded because they were from the Prince Rupert region. Twelve respondents indicated that they were part of an organized tour group and were removed from the analysis in an effort to represent the results of independent travellers. Another five surveys were removed due to incompleteness, resulting in 436 useable surveys.
- Sixty-six percent of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC agreed to complete the mailback survey and 61% of these returned the mailback surveys, resulting in 104 useable surveys for analysis.
- At the Prince Rupert VC, 31% of travellers were from British Columbia, over a quarter (28%) were from countries outside North America, whereas a fifth were from the US (21%) or from other provinces or territories in Canada (21%).
- Overall, the average party size was 3.0 people and 14% of travel parties had children. Those parties with children had an average of 5.7 people travelling in their group.
- On average, respondents had taken an average of 3.6 leisure trips over the previous 12 months.
- The majority of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC were travelling for leisure purposes (84%), while fewer were travelling for business (9%) or to visit friends and family (7%). Non-BC residents were more likely to be travelling for leisure (89%) than were BC residents (72%).

- Three-fifths (60%) of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC used a car/truck/motorcycle as their primary mode of transportation, 18% travelled in a recreational vehicle whereas fewer used a private boat (5%), bus (4%) or a bicycle (2%). Over a tenth (11%) used other forms of transportation including trains, airplanes and ferries.
- Almost two-fifths (38%) of travellers were staying in campgrounds/RV parks and a third (33%) were staying in resorts/hotels/motels. Fewer were staying at a B&B (9%) or with friends or relatives (9%). Eleven percent were staying in other types of accommodations, including boats and hostels.
- Over two-fifths of the travellers (43%) had a destination somewhere within British Columbia, another two-fifths (40%) were touring with no particular primary destination and the remaining 17% had primary destinations outside British Columbia. Most of the visitors who were travelling to destinations within British Columbia were travelling to the Prince Rupert region (52%), elsewhere in Northern BC (26%) or to Vancouver Island (12%).
- A large majority (84%) of travelers had stopped at, or planned to stop at and spend time in the Queen Charlotte Islands.
- Travellers at the Prince Rupert VC planned to spend an average of 37 days away from home, including 20 days in British Columbia and 3 days in Prince Rupert. Less than one-percent of the travellers (0.7%) indicated that they were just passing through Prince Rupert.
- The majority of travellers (82%) spent three weeks or more planning their trip.
- Past experience (53%), visitor guides and books (52%) and advice from friends/relatives (49%) were the top three information sources used before travel. Also important, but less frequently used information sources included travel guide books (42%), local/regional tourism sites (41%), other Internet sites (38%) and Visitor Centres (33%).
- Visitor Centres (85%) and visitor guides and brochures (63%) were most frequently cited as information sources used during the trip by mailback respondents. Also important but less frequently used information sources included travel guide books (39%), previous experience (35%), advice from friends/relatives (28%) and local/regional tourism sites (27%).
- Over two fifths of the travellers (43%) were very flexible with the amount of time that they could spend in Prince Rupert. Overall, respondents were somewhat more flexible in terms of spending additional time in British Columbia, as almost three-fifths of BC resident travellers (59%) and over half (53%) of non-BC residents indicated they could extend their trip by an extra day or days.

- In the mailback survey, travellers were asked about leisure activities they participated in during their trip. The three most frequently cited activities by visitors at the Prince Rupert VC were visiting municipal/provincial/national parks (85%), wildlife viewing (77%), and visiting a museum, heritage or historic site (77%).
- In the mailback survey, travellers were also asked about leisure activities they participated in while in the Prince Rupert region (Table 7). The three most frequently cited activities included visiting a museum, heritage or historic site (69%), shopping for local arts and crafts (68%), and wildlife viewing (57%).
- Over two-thirds (69%) of all travellers at the Prince Rupert VC spoke with a Visitor Information Counsellor.
- Nearly two-thirds (64%) of the mailback respondents visited another VC in British Columbia during their trip.
- Positive images of the Prince Rupert region were dominated by the beautiful scenery/landscapes of the region, family/friends and wildlife/nature/wilderness.
- Negative images of the Prince Rupert region focussed on the rainy weather, the unattractive/run-down town and isolation.
- Respondents to the mailback questionnaire were asked to rate various components of their trip and their overall travel experience in the Prince Rupert region. Ratings were high for overall travel experience and for each trip component, especially access to information about Prince Rupert and customer service.
- Respondents to the mailback questionnaire were asked about their satisfaction with their trip in British Columbia. The majority of travellers were either 'very satisfied' (79%) or 'somewhat satisfied' (9%) with their experience in all of British Columbia.
- Almost three-fifths of mailback respondents were 'very likely' (29%) or 'likely' (30%) to return to the Prince Rupert region.
- In terms of likelihood of taking another leisure trip in British Columbia, an overwhelming majority of travellers indicated that they were either 'very likely' (70%) or 'likely' (10%) to take another trip.
- Travellers at the Prince Rupert VC spent an average of \$190.07 per party per day. Average daily expenditure **per person** was also calculated, with the result being \$85.60 per person per day. There were notable differences in expenditures when broken down by origin of the travellers, primary accommodation type, travel party size and age.

- In the summer of 2007, Prince Rupert VC users were estimated to have spent \$9.6 million in the Prince Rupert region and \$54.9 million on their trip throughout the rest of the province.
- The Prince Rupert VC had a positive impact on traveller behaviour. Over one-quarter of the travellers (30%) said that they learned about new trip activities as a result of their stopping at the VC. Almost one-fifth (17%) replied they would spend extra time in the Prince Rupert region, 13% would spend extra time in other parts of British Columbia, and over two-fifths (41%) would make another trip in/to British Columbia as a result of the information obtained at the VC.

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Introduction

Visitor Information Counsellors at British Columbia's 115 Visitor Centres (VCs) provided travel counselling and advice to nearly 1.7 million visitor parties in 2007. In addition, many more travellers used VCs without actually speaking with a Counsellor. The use of the VCs provides communities with an opportunity to influence the activities and satisfaction of travellers, 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 and Planning, Tourism British Columbia has developed a methodology that Visitor Centres (VCs) can use to measure the impact of the VC on traveller behaviour and to determine the economic benefit of the VC. A pilot project was conducted in 2001 to test the methodology of measuring such impacts.

In 2005, Tourism British Columbia introduced the Community Tourism Foundations (CTF) Program®, which was designed to assist communities in developing their tourism potential. Facilitators are hired by Tourism British Columbia's Partnership Marketing division to work with selected communities to develop multi-year tourism development and marketing plans. A lack of current information available about visitors to Northwest British Columbia and Prince Rupert's participation in the CTF program led Research and Planning, Tourism British Columbia to determine that the region would benefit from a comprehensive visitor study in the summer of 2007.

The purpose of the Prince Rupert Visitor Study was to develop a visitor profile of travellers to the Prince Rupert region and to measure the value of Prince Rupert's Visitor Centre. Specifically, the study objectives were:

1. To profile travellers who visit Prince Rupert in terms of traveller and trip characteristics.
2. To estimate visitor volume and tourism expenditures of travellers to Prince Rupert during June to August 2007.
3. To profile travellers who visit Prince Rupert Visitor Centre in terms of traveller and trip characteristics
4. To measure the influence the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre has on the decision-making process of travellers in British Columbia: the influence the Visitor Centre has on the length of stay, expenditures, and selection of additional or alternative activities, attractions or destinations.

Two reports were generated from this visitor study. This report outlines characteristics of the travellers that use the Visitor Centre and the value the Visitor Centre brings to Prince Rupert and British Columbia. A second report entitled, *"2007 Prince Rupert Visitor Study: Community Tourism Foundations"* outlines the results of the general visitor study including an estimation of overall visitor volume and tourism expenditures to Prince Rupert during the summer of 2007. The 2007 Prince Rupert Visitor Study is available from Research and Planning, Tourism British Columbia under a separate cover.

Methods

A multi-location, two-stage survey design was used to examine the study objectives. The first stage consisted of interviewing travellers at various locations in Prince Rupert. The purpose of collecting information at the multiple sites was to obtain information about the typical traveller to the Prince Rupert region during their trip. The interview sites included:

- Prince Rupert Visitor Centre,
- Cow Bay,
- Museum/Cultural District,
- BC Ferries – Port Hardy,
- BC Ferries – Queen Charlotte Islands,
- Alaska State Ferry,
- VIA Rail,
- Air Canada Airport Bus,
- Hawk Air Airport Bus, and,
- Angler Sites (Rushbrook Floats, Wampler's, Stromdahl's).

The second stage, the mailback questionnaire, collected information from travellers after their trip (see questionnaire in Appendix C). The purpose of the mailback questionnaire was to gather information about trip planning, experiences and activities to understand travellers' perceptions of the Prince Rupert region and British Columbia upon trip completion.

Due to the multiple objectives of this visitor survey, there were two streams of survey data collected – the general visitor survey and the Value of the Visitor Centre survey. Information to fulfill objectives one and two (to collect general traveller characteristics and to estimate visitor volume and expenditures) of this project was collected at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre and other sites in Prince Rupert. Information collected to fulfill objective three of this project (to determine the Value of the Visitor Centre) was collected only at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre. This report only outlines the results of the interviews at the Visitor Centre in order to fulfill the Value of the Visitor Centre objectives. This report does not attempt to estimate total visitor volume or total visitor expenditures. Those results, along with the profiles of the general visitor to Prince Rupert can be found in the 2007 Prince Rupert Visitor Study report that is available under separate cover from Research and Planning, Tourism British Columbia at www.tourismbc.com/research.

Data Collection - Interview

Four interviewers collected data between June 1 and August 31, 2007. For the majority of the summer, the interviewers' schedule consisted of a systematic sample of four continuous days of interviewing followed by two days off. Each day of interviewing, the two interviewers rotated between the different interview sites, including the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre. The interview dates and number of interviews conducted at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre are detailed in Appendix A.

Potential respondents were randomly selected as they exited the VC. Respondents were asked if they were willing to participate in an eight to ten minute interview and were given a *Super, Natural British Columbia*® refrigerator magnet for their time if they agreed to participate. Respondents were then asked if they were residents of the Prince Rupert region (defined to include Kaien, Ridley, and Digby islands as well as the surrounding mainland area south to Port Edward). If so, they were eliminated from the remainder of the interview ensuring that only non-resident travellers were

interviewed. Travellers who were part of an organized tour group were also screened out of the survey in an effort to focus on independent travellers. Business travellers and day trippers were asked a shortened series of trip characteristics questions before exiting the survey in an effort to focus the analysis on leisure travellers. The interviewers recorded responses on handheld computers (Palm Pilots) using Techneos Data Entryware software.

During the interview, questions were asked about (see Appendix B for questionnaires):

- traveller demographics,
- primary trip purpose,
- primary destination,
- primary mode of transportation,
- trip duration,
- length of stay in Prince Rupert and in British Columbia,
- primary accommodation,
- daily expenditures,
- trip flexibility,
- use of the VC, and
- perceived impacts of the VC on the rest of their trip.

In addition, mailing addresses were collected from those respondents in the interview who agreed to participate in the mailback questionnaire. A copy of *British Columbia Magazine* and a chance to win a digital camera were used as incentives to achieve a high participation rate in the mailback questionnaire.

Between June 1 and August 31, 2007, 851 people were approached at the Prince Rupert VC, 546 agreed to the interview, but 95 were excluded because they were from the Prince Rupert region. Twelve respondents indicated that they were part of an organized tour group and were removed from the analysis in an effort to represent the results of independent travellers. Five surveys that were barely filled out, and for all practical purposes considered incomplete, were also excluded resulting in 436 useable surveys (Table 1).

Table 1. Travellers surveyed at the Prince Rupert VC.

	Travellers Approached	Agreed to Interview	From Local Community¹	Part of Organized Tour Group	Incomplete Surveys	Useable Surveys^{2,3}
Prince Rupert VC	851	548	95	12	5	436

1. The Prince Rupert region includes Kaien, Ridley, and Digby islands as well as the surrounding mainland area south to Port Edward.

2. Includes 121 cruise ship passengers that responded to selected questions in the interview.

3. Includes 28 business travellers and 11 day trippers who were eliminated from the survey after the first several questions of the interview.

Data Collection - Mailback

Mailback questionnaires were sent to consenting visitors with a business reply envelope and a *British Columbia Magazine* in mid-September 2007 after the interview field season came to a close. The first mailing was followed by a second mailing of a reminder postcard and a third mailing of just a questionnaire and a business reply envelope. Responses were accepted until early January 2008.

The mailback questionnaire collected a variety of information including (see mailback questionnaire in Appendix B):

- travel party demographics,
- trip duration,
- length of stay in British Columbia,
- primary destination,
- destination decision-making,
- trip motivation,
- trip activities,
- trip planning,
- trip expenditures,
- the VC's impact on their trip,
- use of other VCs in British Columbia,
- positive and negative images of Prince Rupert,
- unique characteristics of Prince Rupert as a vacation destination,
- satisfaction with Prince Rupert and British Columbia, and
- the likelihood of returning to Prince Rupert and British Columbia.

Sixty-six percent of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC agreed to complete the mailback survey and 61% of these returned the surveys by January 9, 2008, resulting in 104 useable surveys for analysis (Table 2).

Table 2. Mailback survey response from travellers intercepted at the Prince Rupert VC.

	Travellers Asked to Participate in Mailback¹	Agreed to Complete Mailback	Incomplete Addresses	No Response	Useable Mailback Surveys
Prince Rupert VC	257	170 (66.1%)	1	65	104 (61.2%)

1. Does not include business travellers (n=28), cruise ship travellers (n=121) and day trippers (n=11).

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to analyze and summarize results of the report. 'Don't know/No response' answers and responses from business travellers have been excluded from the analyses for all questions unless otherwise noted. For some sections, results are presented by traveller sub-group (e.g. segmented based on traveller demographics or trip characteristics) to examine the difference among sub-groups.

In an effort to provide practical and actionable information to meet stakeholders' operational or marketing needs, this report will focus on practical differences rather than statistical differences. The rationale for this approach is that very small and unimportant differences can be found to be statistically significant under certain circumstances. As such, this report typically takes note of where there is a difference of ± 10 percentage points (ppts) or more. In the report's tables, differences that are 10 ppts or more higher than the overall results are highlighted in blue, while differences that are 10 ppt or more lower are shown in red (Figure 1).

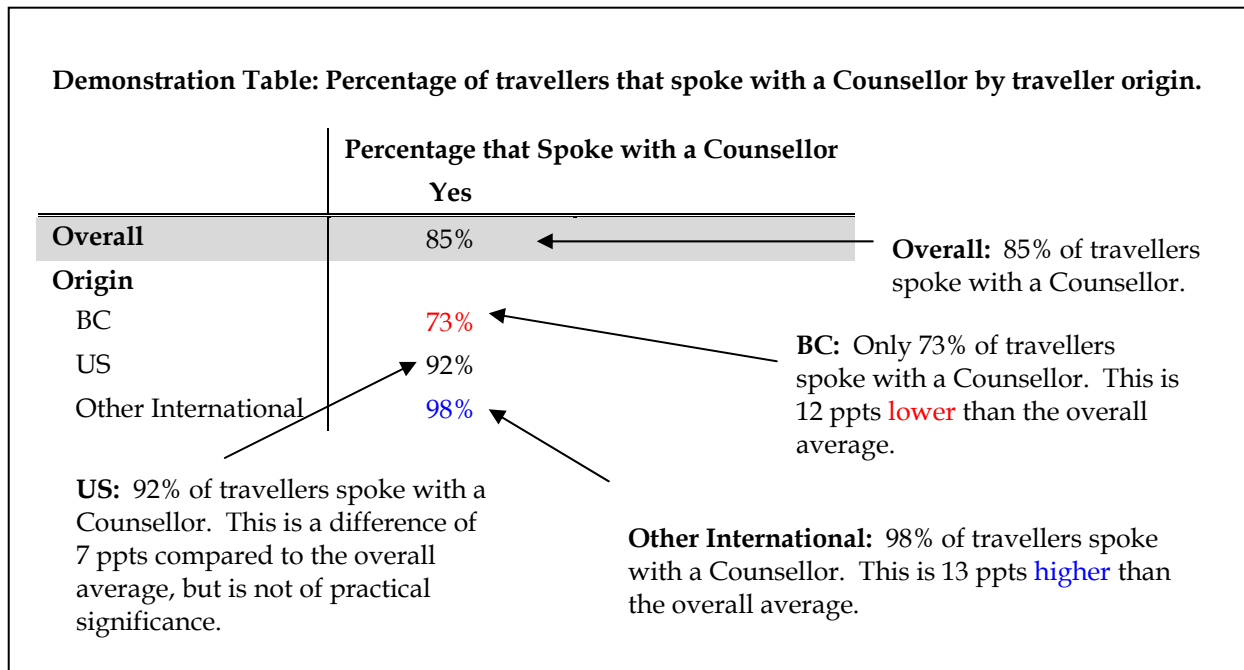


Figure 1. Interpreting the tables. Data is fictitious and for illustrative purposes only.

The study design produced two sets of data – data from the interview and mailback questionnaires. The respondents and the responses could vary between the interview and mailback questionnaires because travellers could drop out of the study by not agreeing to complete the mailback questionnaire or by not completing the mailback questionnaire even if they had agreed to complete it (which could cause non-response bias). Both instances could cause the mailback questionnaire results to be unrepresentative of travellers interviewed on-site. In addition, the responses to similar questions in the interview and mailback questionnaires could vary due to real differences in traveller behaviour (for example, a traveller may have perceived that the VC had a different impact on their trip when they were interviewed compared to the responses on the mailback questionnaire).

Response biases were assessed to ensure validity of the final results by way of examining practical differences among the aforementioned data sets. Results of these assessments (Appendix C) and several other factors indicated that the interview information is the best source of data when the same or similar questions were asked on both the interview and mailback questionnaire. Thus, mailback questionnaire responses were used only when the question was not asked in the interview and when sample sizes permitted. All results presented in the remainder of this report are from the interview unless otherwise noted.

Results

Tourist Characteristics (Demographics)

At the Prince Rupert VC, 31% of travellers were from British Columbia, over a quarter (28%) were from countries outside North America, whereas a fifth were from the US (21%) or from other provinces or territories in Canada (21%, Table 3).

The largest proportion of Canadian travellers from outside of British Columbia were from Alberta (53%) while almost a third were from Ontario (32%) and fewer were from Quebec, Saskatchewan, Northwest Territories, Manitoba, Nova Scotia, and New Brunswick (Figure 2). US travellers from 25 different states were intercepted at the Prince Rupert VC (Figure 3). The largest proportion of US travellers came from Washington (15%) or California (15%) while fewer were from other states such as Florida, Oregon, Alaska, Idaho and Colorado (Figure 3). Most travellers from overseas countries were European with a quarter from Germany or the United Kingdom (25% & 23% respectively). An additional 17% of overseas travellers originated from Australia while fewer were from countries such as the Netherlands (9%), France (6%) or Switzerland (6%, Figure 4).

The majority of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC were between 45 and 64 years of age (51%) while nearly two-fifths were over the age of 65 (19%). Fewer respondents were between the ages of 25-34 years (15%) or between 35 to 44 years of age (14%). Only 3% of travellers were under 24 years of age (Table 3). Almost three-quarters of travellers (71%) had at least a college/technical diploma or degree, with the most frequently stated education category being a university degree (34%).

The highest proportion of travellers came from households with an annual income of \$100,000 or higher (31%) while an additional quarter of respondents came from households with an annual income of \$65,000 to \$99,999 (26%, Table 3).

At the Prince Rupert VC, the average party size was 3.0 people and only 14% of travel parties included children. Those parties that travelled with children had, on average, 5.7 people travelling in their group (Table 3). On average, travellers had taken 3.6 leisure trips over the previous 12 months (Table 4).

Table 3. Traveller demographics at the Prince Rupert VC.

	Prince Rupert VC	
	Number of Travellers	Percentage of Travellers
Origin		
BC	97	30.8%
Other Canada	66	21.0%
US	65	20.6%
Other International	87	27.6%
Age¹		
Under 24 Years	9	2.5%
25-34 Years	53	14.6%
35-44 Years	50	13.7%
45-54 Years	74	20.3%
55-64 Years	110	30.2%
65 Years or Older	68	18.7%
Education¹		
Less Than High School	4	1.1%
High School	56	15.6%
Some Technical, College or University	44	12.3%
College or Technical Diploma	66	18.4%
University Degree	121	33.7%
Masters or a PhD Degree	68	18.9%
Income¹		
Less than \$25,000	14	4.8%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	43	14.8%
\$50,000 to \$64,999	70	24.1%
\$65,000 to \$99,999	74	25.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	63	21.7%
\$150,000 or More	26	9.0%
Party Size¹		
Average Party Size-Total	370	3.0
Average Party Size-Parties without children	317	2.5
Proportion with Children	53	14.3%
Average Party Size-Parties with children	53	5.7

1. Business travellers and day trippers were not asked these questions and therefore are not part of the analysis.

Origin of Canadian Travellers From Outside of BC by Province

Where are you from?

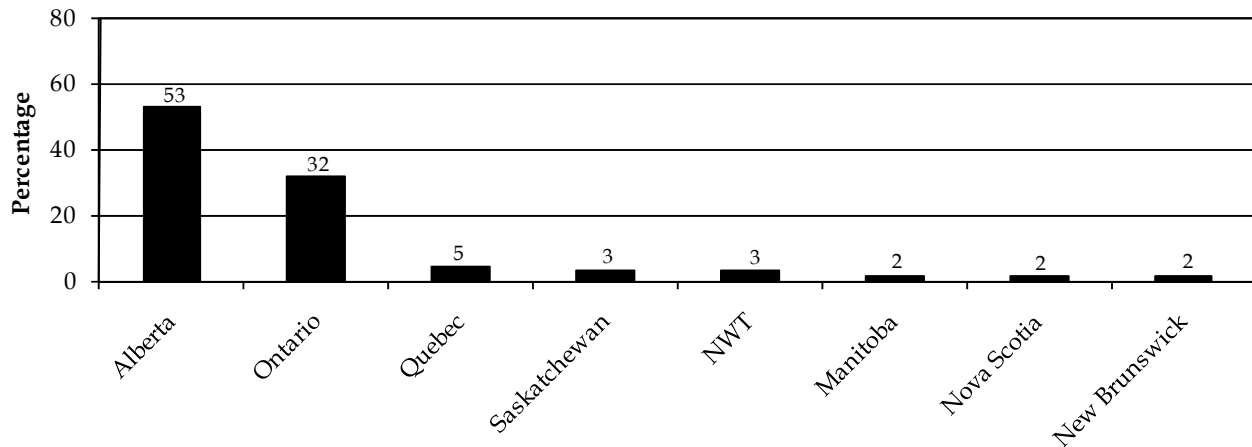


Figure 2. The percentage of travellers from provinces outside of British Columbia at the Prince Rupert VC (n=66).

Origin of U.S. Travellers by State

Where are you from?

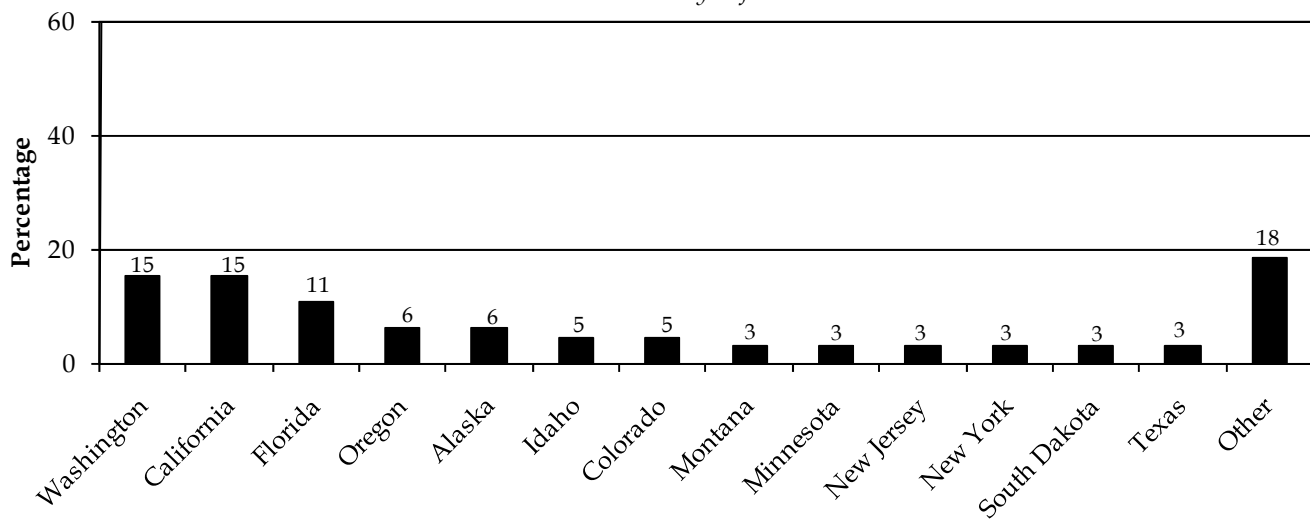


Figure 3. Percentage of US travellers from each state at the Prince Rupert VC (n=65). Other includes Alabama, Arizona, Hawaii, Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, North Carolina, North Dakota, New Mexico, Ohio, Tennessee and Wisconsin.

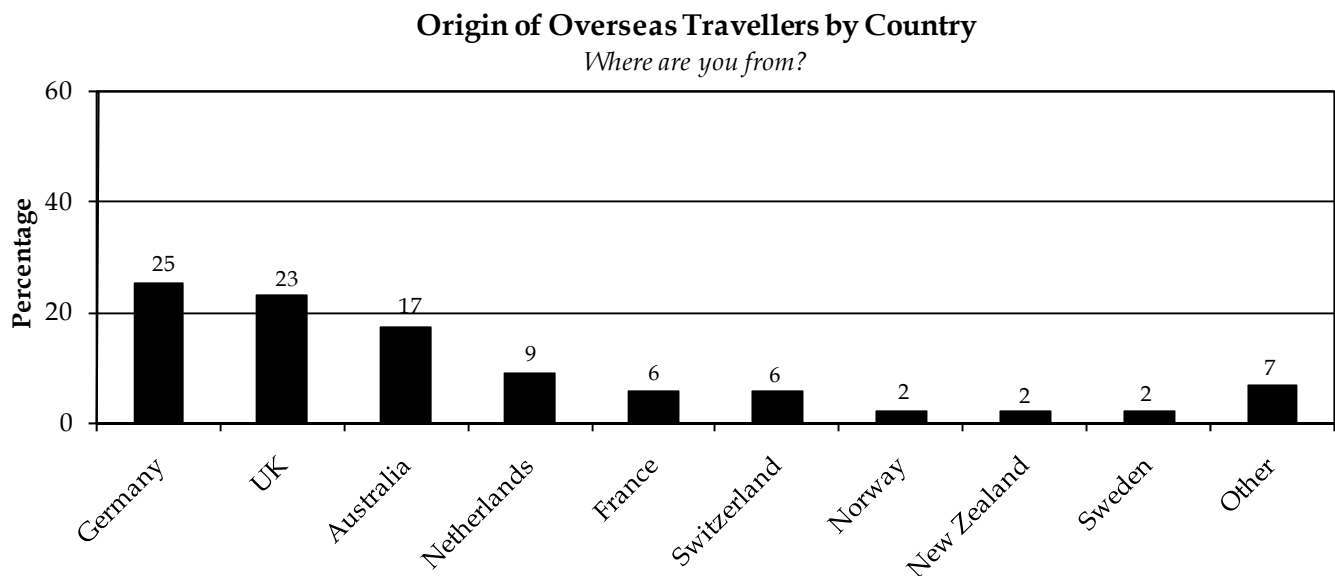


Figure 4. Percentage of travellers from countries other than Canada and the US at the Prince Rupert VC (n=87). Other includes Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, Ireland, South Korea and Spain.

Table 4. Number of leisure trips taken in last 12 months.

Number of Leisure Trips	Percentage of Travellers Prince Rupert VC (n=366)
1	18.6%
2	23.0%
3	25.7%
4	13.1%
5	6.3%
6	6.8%
7-10	3.9%
11 or more	2.8%
Average	3.6

Trip Characteristics

The majority of respondents at the Prince Rupert VC were travelling for leisure purposes (84%) while fewer were travelling for business (9%) or visiting friends and family (7%). Non-BC residents were more likely to be travelling for leisure (89%) than BC residents were (72%). BC residents were more likely to be travelling for work/business (17%) or to visit family and friends (11%) than non-BC residents (6% and 5% respectively; Table 5).

Three-fifths of travellers (60%) used a car/truck/motorcycle as their primary mode of transportation, while 18% travelled in a recreational vehicle. Fewer respondents reported travelling by other means of transportation including: private boat (5%), bus (4%) or bicycle (2%). Another tenth (11%) used other types of transportation that included trains, airplanes and ferries. BC residents were more likely to be using a car/truck/motorcycle (75%) than non-BC residents (54%) while non-BC residents were more likely to be using a RV (19%) than were BC residents (13%; Table 6).

Almost two-fifths (38%) of travellers reported staying in campgrounds or RV parks while a third stayed at a resort, hotel or motel (33%). Almost a tenth stayed in a B&B (9%) or with friends or relatives (9%). Another tenth (11%) stayed in other types of accommodation such as boats or hostels (Table 6).

Table 5. The primary trip purpose of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC.

	Percentage of Travellers
Primary Trip Purpose (BC and non-BC Residents)	n=314
Leisure	83.8%
Visiting Friends & Family	6.7%
Work/Business Activity	8.9%
Other ¹	0.6%
Primary Trip Purpose (BC Residents)	n=97
Leisure	72.2%
Visiting Friends & Family	11.3%
Work/Business Activity	16.5%
Other	0.0%
Primary Trip Purpose (non-BC Residents)	n=217
Leisure	88.9%
Visiting Friends & Family	4.6%
Work/Business Activity	5.5%
Other ¹	0.9%

1. Other primary trip purpose responses included moving (n=1) and funeral (n=1).

Over two-fifths of the travellers (43%) had a primary destination somewhere within British Columbia while an additional two-fifths were touring with no particular primary destination (40%). The remaining 17% of respondents reported a primary destination outside British Columbia.

A majority (78%) of the visitors at the Prince Rupert VC who were travelling to destinations within British Columbia were travelling to Northern BC including 52% who specified the Prince Rupert region as their primary destination. Other regional travel destinations included Vancouver Island (12%), Vancouver, Coast and Mountain (6%), Thompson Okanagan (1%), Kootenay Rockies (1%). Three percent of respondents did not specify their BC travel destination.

Of the forty eight travellers at the Prince Rupert VC who had primary destinations outside of British Columbia, seven were headed to destinations in other Canadian provinces, thirty-nine were travelling to a US destination and two were going overseas.

Table 6. The primary mode of transportation and primary accommodations of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC

	Percentage of Travellers
Mode of Transportation (BC and non-BC Residents)¹	n=280
Car/Truck/Motorcycle	59.6%
RV	17.5%
Bus	4.3%
Private Boat	5.0%
Bicycle	2.1%
Other ²	11.4%
Mode of Transportation (BC Residents)²	n=79
Car/Truck/Motorcycle	74.7%
RV	12.7%
Bus	1.3%
Private Boat	3.8%
Bicycle	2.5%
Other	5.1%
Mode of Transportation (non-BC Residents)²	n=201
Car/Truck/Motorcycle	53.7%
RV	19.4%
Bus	5.5%
Private Boat	5.5%
Bicycle	2.0%
Other ²	13.9%
Primary Accommodations^{1,3}	n=268
Resort/Hotel/Motel	32.8%
B&B	9.3%
Fishing Lodge/Resort	0.0%
Campground/RV Park	38.1%
Friends or Relatives	8.6%
Other ⁴	11.2%

1. Business travellers were not included in this analysis because they were not asked these questions.

2. Other transportation responses included train (n=13), airplane (n=8), ferry (n=5), walking (n=2), boat (n=1), hitchhiking (n=1), kayaking (n=1) and water taxi (n=1).

3. Daytrip travellers were excluded from the analysis (n=11).

4. Other accommodation responses included boat (n=17), hostel (n=11), car (n=1) and medical stay unit (n=1).

Respondents were asked about communities they visited or plan to visit while travelling in British Columbia. A large majority (84%) of travellers had stopped or planned to stop at and spend time in the Queen Charlotte Islands. At least half of the respondents intended to stop and spend time in Alaska (62%), Smithers (58%) and Terrace (53%). Although lower, a sizable proportion of travellers also intended to stop and spend time in Prince George (46%) and Vancouver Island (46%, Table 7).

Table 7. Communities visited while travelling in British Columbia.

Stopped at or plan to stop at and spend time in	Percentage of Travellers (n=283)		
	Yes	No	Don't Know
Alaska	61.5%	37.1%	1.4%
Queen Charlotte Island	84.1%	13.8%	2.1%
Smithers	57.6%	39.9%	2.5%
Terrace	53.4%	44.9%	1.8%
Prince George	45.6%	51.9%	2.5%
Vancouver Island	45.6%	51.9%	2.5%

Mailback respondents were asked if they had considered other destinations or routes when planning their trip. Two-fifths (44%), or 42 respondents had thought of 87 other destinations and routes. These included destinations in Northern BC (43%), Alaska (31%), other Canadian provinces (24%), the Cariboo region (19%), other states in the US (17%), Vancouver Island (14%), the Coast Mountain region (14%) and other international locations (12%).

In the mailback survey, visitors were asked to provide reasons for choosing their primary destination or route. Ninety-six mailback respondents from the Prince Rupert VC provided 142 reasons for selecting their primary destination. The most frequent responses (as a percentage of respondents) were as follows:

- Never visited before/recommended (29%),
- Landscape/scenery/nature (24%),
- Friends and/or family (22%),
- Regular route/annual trip (15%),
- Ferry ride (12%), and
- Past experience (9%).

Travellers at the Prince Rupert VC spent an average of 37 days away from home, including 20 days in British Columbia and 3 days in Prince Rupert (Figure 5). Less than one percent (0.7%) of the travellers interviewed indicated that they were just passing through Prince Rupert. Overall, US and other international visitors were on considerably longer trips and spent notably more time away from home than travellers from Canada. US and other international visitors also spent more time travelling in British Columbia than Canadian travellers. BC travellers spent twice as much time in the Prince Rupert region than those from any other market origin.

Average Days Spent Away From Home and in British Columbia by Travellers to the Prince Rupert VC

*How many days will you be away from home?
How many days will be spent in British Columbia?
How many of those days will be spent in the Prince Rupert region?*

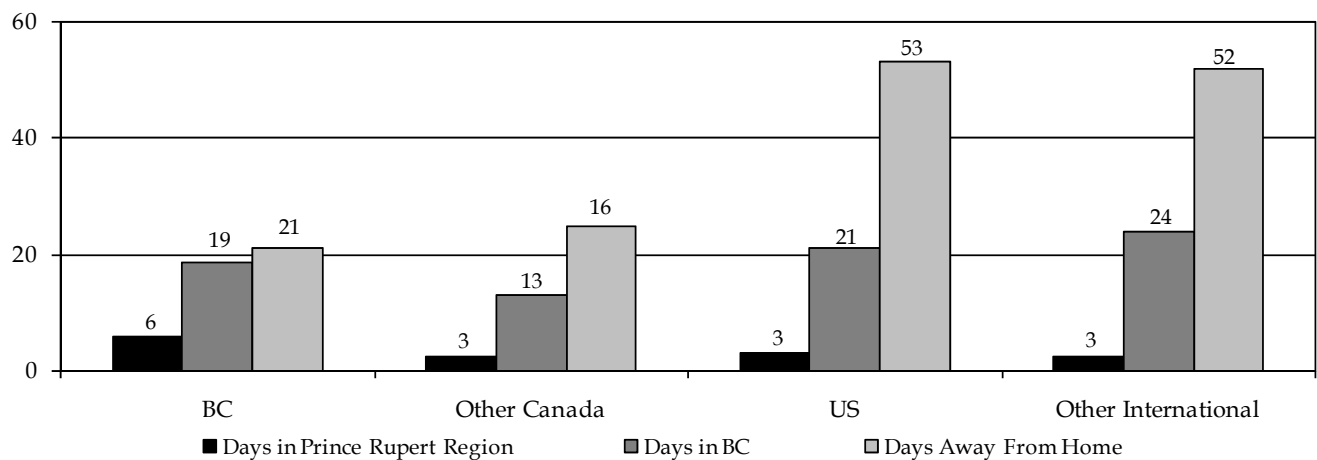


Figure 5. The average number of days spent away from home, in British Columbia and in the region by traveller origin at the Prince Rupert VC (n=269 'Away from home', n=269 'Days in BC', n=267 'Days in Prince Rupert').

Trip Planning

Mailback respondents were asked about trip planning horizon and percentage of travel services booked prior to leaving home. Most travellers at the Prince Rupert VC spent three weeks or more planning their trip (82%), with the most common planning horizon being greater than 13 weeks (58%, Table 8).

Table 8. Trip planning horizons for travellers at the Prince Rupert VC.

Trip Planning Horizons	Percentage of Travellers (n=104)
Day of Departure	5.8%
1-6 Days	3.8%
1-2 Weeks	8.7%
3-8 Weeks	9.6%
9-12 Weeks	14.4%
13+ Weeks	57.7%

In addition to planning ahead, travellers booked some aspects of their trips prior to leaving their residence. Accommodation and transportation are the two main travel services that a large proportion of Prince Rupert VC users booked prior to leaving on their trip. Mailback respondents indicated that 40% of accommodation services are booked prior to leaving while over half (51%) of transportation is booked prior to departing on their trip. In contrast, attractions, events and activities are generally

booked during their trip (Table 9). Considering a large proportion of travellers have some flexibility in their travels, this makes sense as attractions, events and activities are associated with specific times and destinations; therefore, travellers choose to purchase these activities during their trip when they have a better idea of when they will be in the area and how long they will be there.

Table 9. Percentage of Each Travel Service Booked Before vs During Trip

Travel Services	Percentage Booked Before Trip	Percentage Booked During Trip
	Average	Average
Paid accommodation (hotels, motels, lodge, camping/RV, etc.)	39.7%	60.3%
Transportation within British Columbia	50.6%	49.4%
Permanent attractions (museums, theme/amusement parks, gardens, zoos, etc.)	3.1%	96.9%
Events (festivals, concerts, etc.)	5.0%	95.0%
Other activities (spa, recreational activities, etc.)	5.8%	94.2%

Not surprisingly, market origin is a key determinant of how much of a trip is pre-purchased. International visitors, for instance, booked approximately 55% of their accommodations and 77% of their BC transportation prior to departure. This compares to Canadians (other than BC residents) who only book 28% of accommodations and 27% of BC transportation prior to departure. Leisure travellers tend to book a higher proportion of all travel services before leaving their home than their Visiting Family & Friends counterparts.

Table 10. Percentage of Each Travel Service Booked Before vs During Trip by Key Differentiators

	Paid Accommodation		Transportation in BC		Permanent Attractions		Events		Other Activities	
	Before	During	Before	During	Before	During	Before	During	Before	During
Overall	39.7%	60.3%	50.6%	49.4%	3.1%	96.9%	5.0%	95.0%	5.8%	94.2%
Origin										
BC*	31.7%	68.3%	37.1%	62.9%	10.0%	90.0%	17.5%	82.5%	8.3%	91.7%
Other Canada	28.2%	71.8%	27.2%	72.8%	5.3%	94.7%	9.1%	90.9%	11.3%	88.7%
US	38.8%	61.3%	43.3%	56.7%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Other International	55.3%	44.7%	77.0%	23.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	5.0%	95.0%
Primary Purpose										
Leisure	40.4%	59.6%	50.9%	49.1%	3.2%	96.8%	5.2%	94.8%	5.9%	94.1%
Visiting Friend/ Family	20.0%	80.0%	41.7%	58.3%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Other*	50.0%	50.0%	n/a	n/a	0.0%	100.0%	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Primary Accommodations										
Hotel/Motel/Resort	57.8%	42.2%	65.9%	34.1%	5.6%	94.4%	5.8%	94.2%	5.9%	94.1%
Campground/RV	25.2%	74.8%	41.9%	58.1%	3.2%	96.8%	3.8%	96.2%	7.3%	92.7%
Friends/Relatives*	21.7%	78.3%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	100.0%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Other*	16.1%	83.9%	21.4%	78.6%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
B&B*	62.9%	37.1%	69.5%	30.5%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	8.6%	91.4%
Travel Party Size										
1 person*	18.8%	81.3%	25.0%	75.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
2 people	41.6%	58.4%	53.3%	46.7%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	2.2%	97.8%
3-6 people*	39.7%	60.3%	48.5%	51.5%	10.7%	89.3%	28.6%	71.4%	17.0%	83.0%
7 or more people*	75.0%	25.0%	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%	0.0%	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%	0.0%
Age										
Under 24 Years*	0.0%	100.0%	10.0%	90.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
25-34 Years*	28.5%	71.5%	68.3%	31.7%	10.0%	90.0%	8.3%	91.7%	13.0%	87.0%
35-44 Years*	15.0%	85.0%	19.3%	80.7%	0.0%	100.0%	33.3%	66.7%	10.0%	90.0%
45-54 Years*	46.4%	53.6%	64.6%	35.4%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
55-64 Years	41.1%	58.9%	45.2%	54.8%	1.5%	98.5%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
65 Years or Older	48.6%	51.4%	54.2%	45.8%	5.6%	94.4%	9.1%	90.9%	13.8%	86.2%
Planning Horizon										
Day of Departure*	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
1-6 Days*	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
1-2 Weeks*	27.9%	72.1%	26.4%	73.6%	16.7%	83.3%	25.0%	75.0%	25.0%	75.0%
3-8 Weeks*	32.2%	67.8%	28.6%	71.4%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
9-12 Weeks*	44.2%	55.8%	54.5%	45.5%	5.0%	95.0%	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
13 or More Weeks	47.5%	52.5%	61.7%	38.3%	1.9%	98.1%	5.4%	94.6%	6.5%	93.5%

* Please use caution when interpreting these results as the base sample size is small (under 20).

In the mailback survey, travellers were asked about information sources they used to help plan their trip before leaving home and to indicate the most useful information sources. Past experience (53%), visitor guides and brochures (52%), advice from friends or relatives (49%), travel guide books (42%) and local or regional tourism internet sites (41%) were the top five information sources used before travel (Figure 6). Over a third of respondents used general interest sites (38%) while a third used Visitor Centres (33%) as an information sources prior to travel. Less frequently used information sources included travel agents (25%), traveller's commentary sites (17%), HelloBC (15%), tour operators (13%), advertising (8%), media coverage (8%), travel/consumer shows (8%) and 1-800-HelloBC (4%). Visitor guides and brochures (45%), Visitor Centres (38%), travel guide books (35%), local or regional tourism internet sites (33%), advice from friends or relatives (28%) and past experience (28%) were noted as the most useful information sources to utilize before travel.

Travellers were also asked what information sources they used during their trip (Figure 7). The majority of respondents indicated that Visitor Centres were the top information source used during travel (85%). Visitor guides and brochures (63%), travel guide books (39%), past experience (35%), advice from friends or relatives (28%) rounded out the top five information sources most used by respondents during their trip. Local or regional tourism Internet sites (27%), other internet sites (16%), travel agents (14%), tour operators/ tourism-specific businesses (13%) and advertising (10%) were also mentioned. Less than ten percent of respondents mentioned using travellers' commentary sites, HelloBC.com, media coverage, 1-800-HelloBC, or travel/consumer shows as information sources during their trip.

Percentage of Travellers Using Each Information Source Before Their Trip

What information sources did you use to plan your trip?

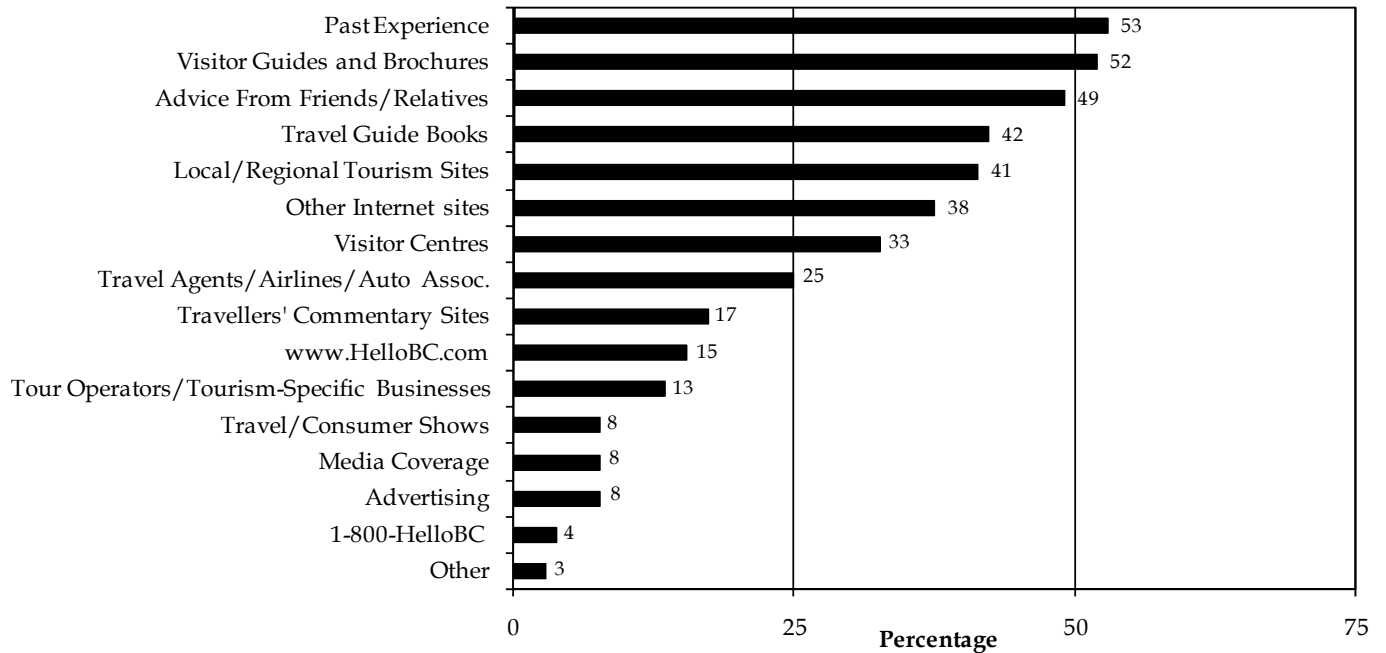


Figure 6. Percentage of travellers using each information source before their trip at the Prince Rupert VC (n=104). Percentages add to more than 100% because travellers could use more than one information source before their trip. Other includes VIA Rail, boating and cycling books.

Percentage of Travellers Using Each Information Source During Their Trip

What information sources did you use during your trip?

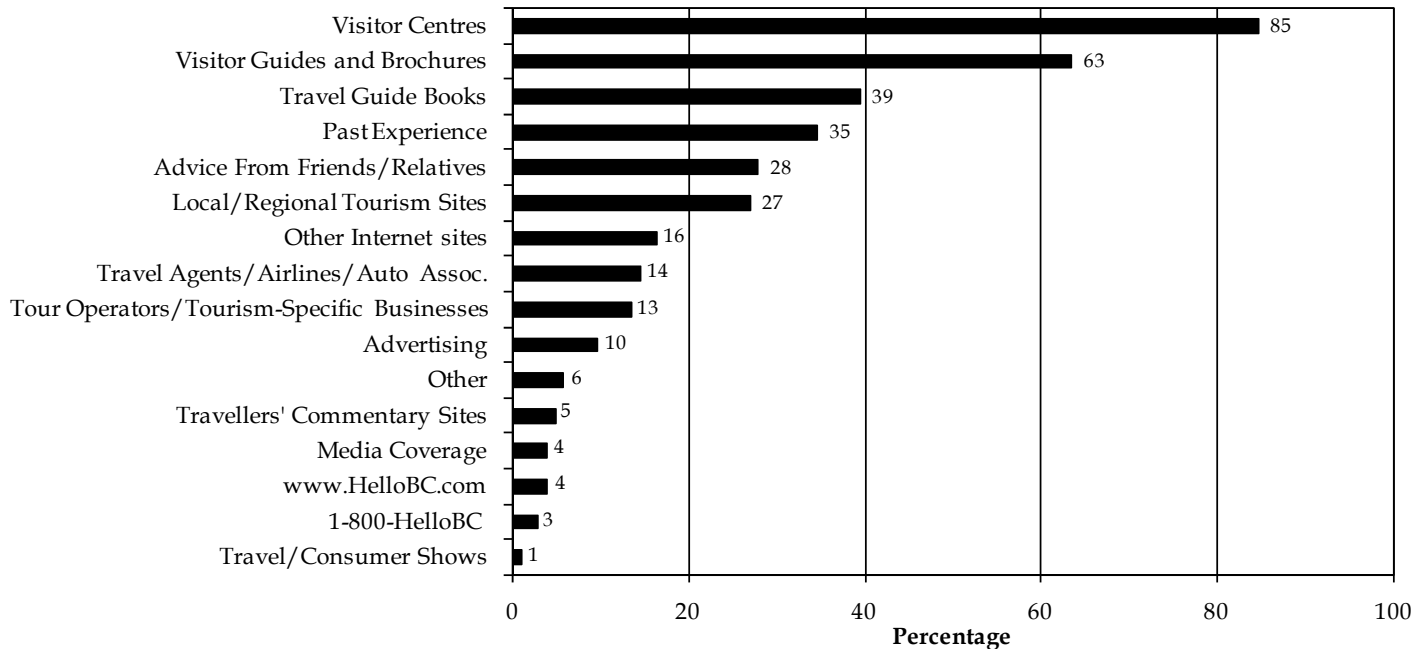


Figure 7. Percentage of travellers using each information source during their trip at the Prince Rupert VC (n=102). Percentages add to more than 100% because travellers could use more than one information source during their trip. Other includes advice from locals or other travellers, Via Rail/boating books.

Trip Flexibility

Travellers were asked about their flexibility in terms of:

- the amount of time that they had to spend in Prince Rupert,
- the amount of time that they had to spend in British Columbia, and
- the amount of time they had to spend on the entire trip (BC Residents).

Over two-fifths (43%) of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC were flexible with time in the region and could extend their stay by a day or more. However, a similar proportion of respondents (43%) indicated that they were inflexible in terms of time they could spend in the region (Figure 8).

Over half of travelers (53%) were flexible with time in British Columbia and could spend an extra day or days in the province. However, two-fifths of respondents (40%) indicated that they were inflexible and could not spend any additional time in British Columbia (Figure 9).

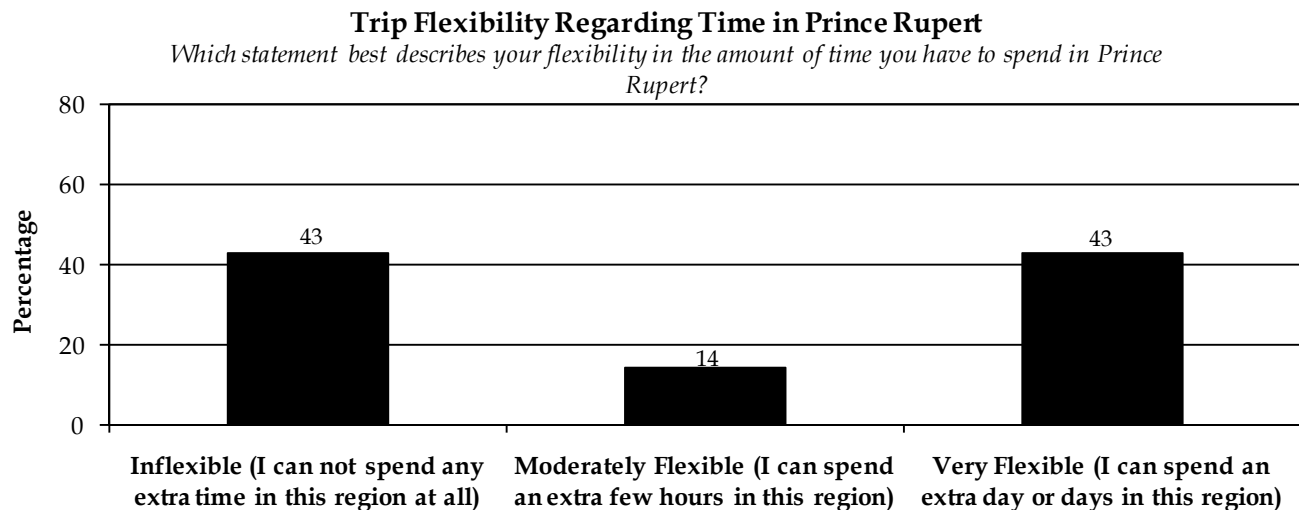


Figure 8. Travellers rating of trip flexibility regarding time spent in the region for travellers at the Prince Rupert VC (n=264).

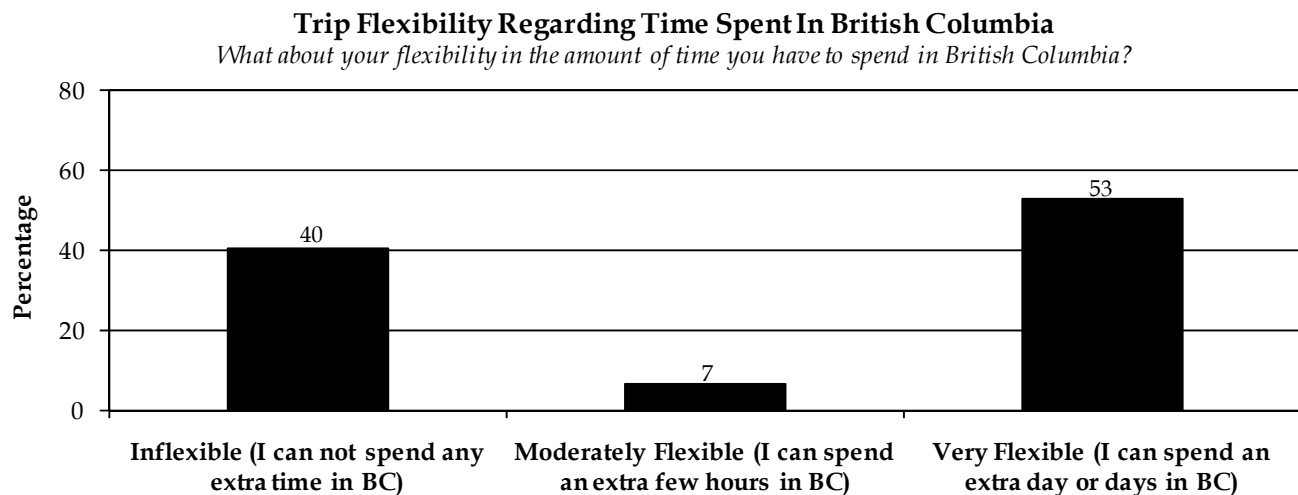


Figure 9. Travellers rating of trip flexibility regarding time spent in British Columbia (n=198).

Traveller Activities

In the mailback survey, travellers were asked about leisure activities they participated in during their trip (Table 11). The most frequently cited activities by visitors at the Prince Rupert VC included visiting municipal/provincial/national parks (85%), wildlife viewing (77%), visiting a museum, heritage or historic site (77%), shopping for local arts and crafts (68%), visiting a First Nations attraction or event (47%), hiking (45%) and fine dining (43%).

In the mailback survey, travellers were also asked about leisure activities they participated in while in the Prince Rupert region (Table 12). The most frequently cited activities included visiting a museum, heritage or historic site (69%), shopping for local arts and crafts (68%), wildlife viewing (57%), visiting municipal/provincial/national parks (50%), fine dining (44%), hiking (31%) and visiting a First Nations attraction or event (30%).

Table 11. Participation in activities by respondent and/or travel party while on the trip.

Participation in Activity while on trip	Percentage of Respondents (n=100)
Visiting municipal, provincial or national park, or nature area outside a park	85.0%
Wildlife viewing (whale, bear, birds, etc.)	77.0%
Visiting a museum, heritage or historic site	77.0%
Shopping for local arts and crafts	68.0%
Visiting a First Nations attraction or event	47.0%
Hiking	45.0%
Participating in fine dining	43.0%
Visiting a farm, farmers' market, orchard or food processor	31.0%
Visiting an art gallery or studio	30.0%
Attending a festival, fair or exhibition	29.0%
Fishing	24.0%
Boating (other than kayaking/canoeing)	24.0%
Visiting city or municipal facility (swimming pool, performing arts centre etc.)	24.0%
Kayaking/canoeing	21.0%
Flight seeing	11.0%
Visiting family attraction (mini golf, zoo, etc.)	11.0%
Other ¹	9.0%
Visiting a winery	8.0%
Visiting a spa	8.0%
Cycling (other than mountain biking)	7.0%
Attending or participating in a sporting event (other than golf)	6.0%
Mountain biking	4.0%
White water rafting	3.0%
Golfing or attending a golfing event	2.0%
Rock climbing	2.0%

1. 'Other' activities include camping, fish hatchery at Toboggan Creek and Fulton River, geocaching, Great Bear Rain Forest, hockey game (and ski, camping, site seeing), hot springs, riding stay at ranch, tourist attractions (including gondolas, ride on glacier, etc.), travel via car and train in the Rockies.

Table 12. Participation in activities by respondent and/or travel party while in the Prince Rupert region.

Participation in Activity while in Prince Rupert	Percentage of Respondents (n=96)
Visiting a museum, heritage or historic site	68.8%
Shopping for local arts and crafts	67.7%
Wildlife viewing (whale, bear, birds, etc.)	57.3%
Visiting municipal, provincial or national park, or nature area outside a park	50.0%
Participating in fine dining	43.8%
Hiking	31.3%
Visiting a First Nations attraction or event	30.2%
Visiting an art gallery or studio	26.0%
Boating (other than kayaking/canoeing)	16.7%
Visiting city or municipal facility (swimming pool, performing arts centre etc.)	13.5%
Visiting a farm, farmers' market, orchard or food processor	13.5%
Fishing	11.5%
Attending a festival, fair or exhibition	9.4%
Kayaking/canoeing	5.2%
Flight seeing	4.2%
Visiting family attraction (mini golf, zoo, etc.)	4.2%
Other ¹	4.2%
Attending or participating in a sporting event (other than golf)	2.1%
Mountain biking	2.1%
Cycling (other than mountain biking)	2.1%
Golfing or attending a golfing event	1.0%
White water rafting	0.0%
Rock climbing	0.0%
Visiting a winery	0.0%
Visiting a spa	0.0%

1. 'Other' activities include camping, CNR Port (Prince Rupert), geocaching and touring Prince Rupert.

Use of the Visitor Centre

Travellers stopped at the Prince Rupert VC for a variety of reasons (Figure 11). The most common reasons given were to obtain attraction information (39%), a map (18%) or adventure recreation information (16%). Close to a tenth of travellers stopped for route information (7%) or to use the washroom facilities (7%). Fewer travellers stopped to obtain accommodation information, ferry information, dining information, event information, break from travel, camping information, to purchase merchandise or for refreshments. Over a fifth (21%) of travellers stated other reasons for stopping at the VC including looking or walking around, using a telephone/fax, seeking regional information, using internet/e-mail, obtaining general information on Prince Rupert, information on local shopping/services and getting their passport stamped.

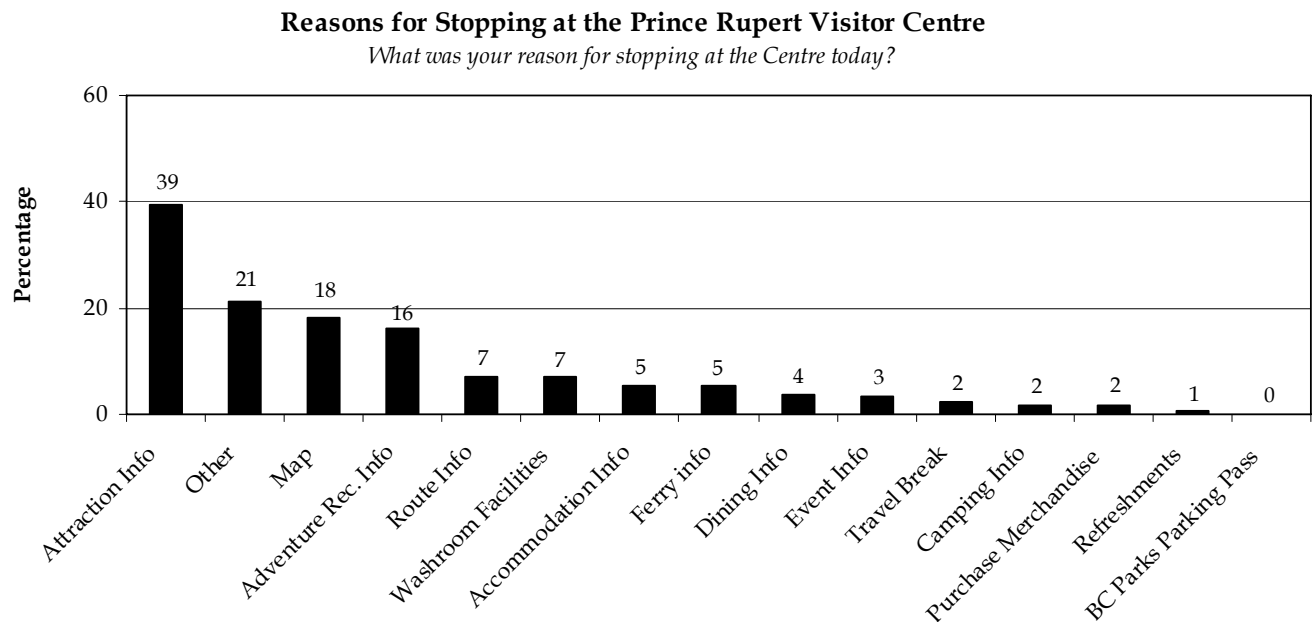


Figure 11. Reasons why travellers stopped at the Prince Rupert VC (n=389). The total number of responses exceeds 100% because respondents could give more than one reply. Other responses include looking/walking around (n=20), telephone/fax (n=13), regional information (n=8), internet/e-mail (n=7), general information on Prince Rupert (n=7), local shopping/services (n=7), passport stamp (n=6), boating/fishing/marine information (n=4), Alaska information (n=3), information on other cities (n=2), water taxi (n=2) and visiting (n=2).

When travellers were asked about information or other things they actually obtained or used at the VC, over two-fifths (45%) of travellers said that they did not obtain or use anything (Figure 12). Amongst the 55% of travellers who did, the most frequently obtained items included a map (26%), attraction information (16%), adventure recreation opportunities (5%) and information about accommodation (5%). Fewer travellers obtained other things including using washrooms, dining information, route information, merchandise and ferry information. Eight percent of travellers obtained other things from the VC including magazines on Prince Rupert, information about other regions, travel brochures/magazines, telephone/internet services and information on Alaska.

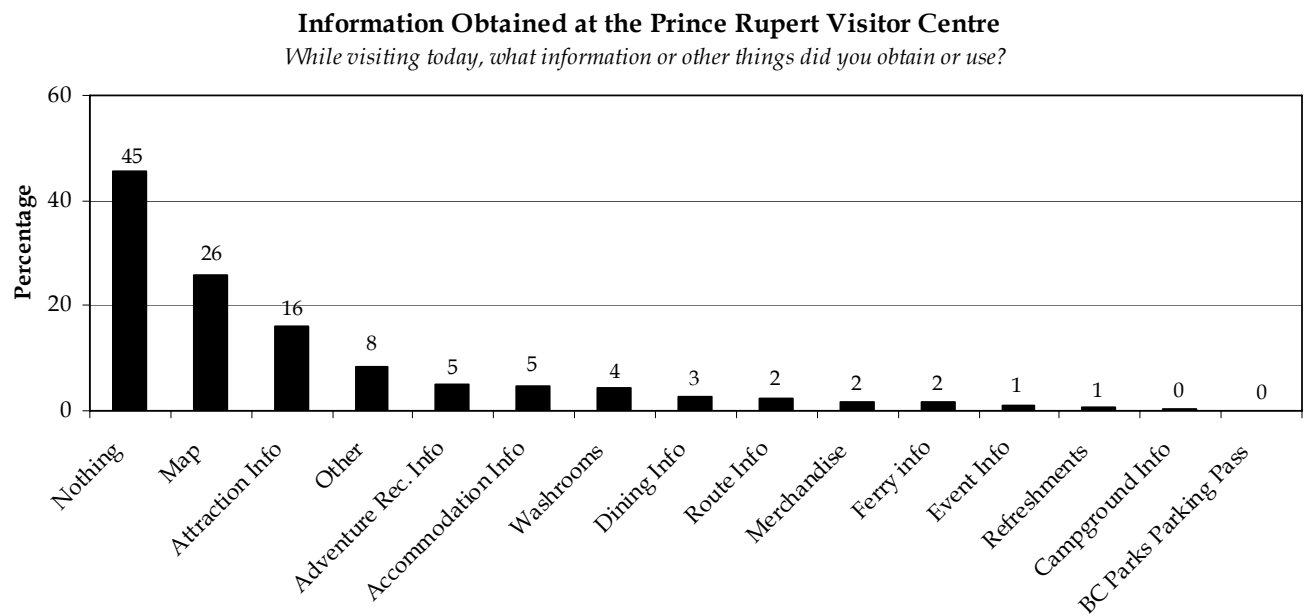


Figure 12. The information obtained by travellers at the Prince Rupert VC (n=387). The total number of responses exceeds 100% because respondents could give more than one reply. Prince Rupert magazine (n=11), other regional information (n=6), travel brochures/magazines (n=5), telephone (n=3), internet (n=2), Alaska information (n=2), and other (n=4).

Over two-thirds of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC spoke with a Counsellor (69%, Table 13). Travellers from other international locations (82%) and the US (70%) were notably more likely to speak to a counsellor than were their counterparts from BC (59%) or other Canadian provinces (61%).

Table 13. The percentage of travellers who spoke with a Counsellor at the Prince Rupert VC by traveller origin.

Traveller Origin	Percentage that Spoke with a Counsellor	
	Yes (n=183)	No (n=83)
BC	59.1%	40.9%
Other Canada	60.7%	39.3%
US	69.8%	30.2%
Other International	81.5%	18.5%
Total	68.8%	31.2%

Counsellors at the Prince Rupert VC record the number of visitor parties that they speak with throughout the day. This number was divided, on a daily basis, by the proportion of travellers who responded that they had spoken to a Counsellor to determine an estimate of 16,973 parties (excluding locals) that used the Prince Rupert VC between June 1 and August 31, 2008. This estimate is approximately 52.7% more than the 11,119 parties that the VC staff recorded as speaking with a Counsellor during the same period.

Travellers were asked, *“Overall, how well did the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre live up to your original expectations?”* Almost all of travellers responded that the VC either met or exceeded their expectations (98%). Thirty-eight percent of travellers indicated that the VC exceeded their expectations while 60% felt the VC met their expectations.

Travellers were asked, *“How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services offered at the Prince Rupert VC?”* Almost all travellers were very satisfied with the services offered at the Prince Rupert VC (Table 14). Satisfaction with the Visitor Centre remained high regardless of market origin or primary trip purpose. Travellers who spoke to Counsellor provided slightly higher satisfaction ratings (95%) than those who did not speak to a Counsellor (92%).

Respondents were asked, *“What suggestions do you have to improve the services offered at the Centre?”* Fourteen percent of travellers (n=51) had suggestions (see Appendix D). One-fifth (20%) of these suggestions referred to the need to increase the range of amenities offered and to better display the information at the VC. A further 20% cited the need for greater marketing/display of local information. Sixteen percent of respondents mentioned the need for more/better signage. Twelve percent of the suggestions related to providing unlimited/free wireless internet access. One tenth of respondents mentioned the need to reduce the cost and increase the selection of merchandise available at the Centre (10%) as well as offering more tours (10%). Suggestions also came forward about the need to provide more information on the local community (6%), extending the hours of operation (4%) and the need for older, more knowledgeable staff (4%).

In the mailback questionnaire, travellers at the Prince Rupert VC were asked if they had visited any other VCs in British Columbia. Of the 104 valid responses, nearly two-thirds (64%) indicated that they had visited another VC. The locations of the other VCs visited were diverse and are listed in Appendix E.

Table 14. The proportion of travellers who were dissatisfied, impartial or satisfied with the services offered at the Prince Rupert VC by traveller origin, those that did or did not speak with a Counsellor and primary trip purpose.

	Percentage of Travellers		
	Dissatisfied or Very Dissatisfied (n=4)	Neither Dissatisfied nor Satisfied (n=18)	Satisfied or Very Satisfied (n=348)
Overall	1.1%	4.9%	94.1%
Origin			
BC	0.0%	4.9%	95.1%
Other Canada	3.6%	0.0%	96.4%
US	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Other International	0.0%	6.3%	93.8%
Primary Purpose			
Leisure	0.9%	3.4%	95.7%
Visiting friends & family	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Spoke with a Counsellor			
Yes	1.7%	2.9%	95.4%
No	0.0%	8.3%	91.7%

Perceptions of Prince Rupert and British Columbia

In the mailback questionnaire, travellers were asked *“What positive and/or negative images come to mind when you think of the Prince Rupert region as a vacation destination?”* Positive and negative image questions were asked to obtain an understanding of what travellers perceive Prince Rupert to be doing right and what regional stakeholders can work on in terms of attracting and keeping travellers in the region.

The majority of respondents provided positive comments towards the Prince Rupert region (88%), three-fifths of respondents provided negative comments (61%) and a number of respondents did not provide any comment to the perceptions questions (12%). Overall, respondents had over twice as many positive responses (221) as negative (103) of the region. Positive responses were dominated by the natural beauty and scenic landscapes of the Prince Rupert region (41%), the presence of family/friends and friendliness of people in general (31%), the wildlife/nature/wilderness (20%), attractions (19%), restaurants (16%) and the ocean/harbour/waterfront (16%, Figure 13).

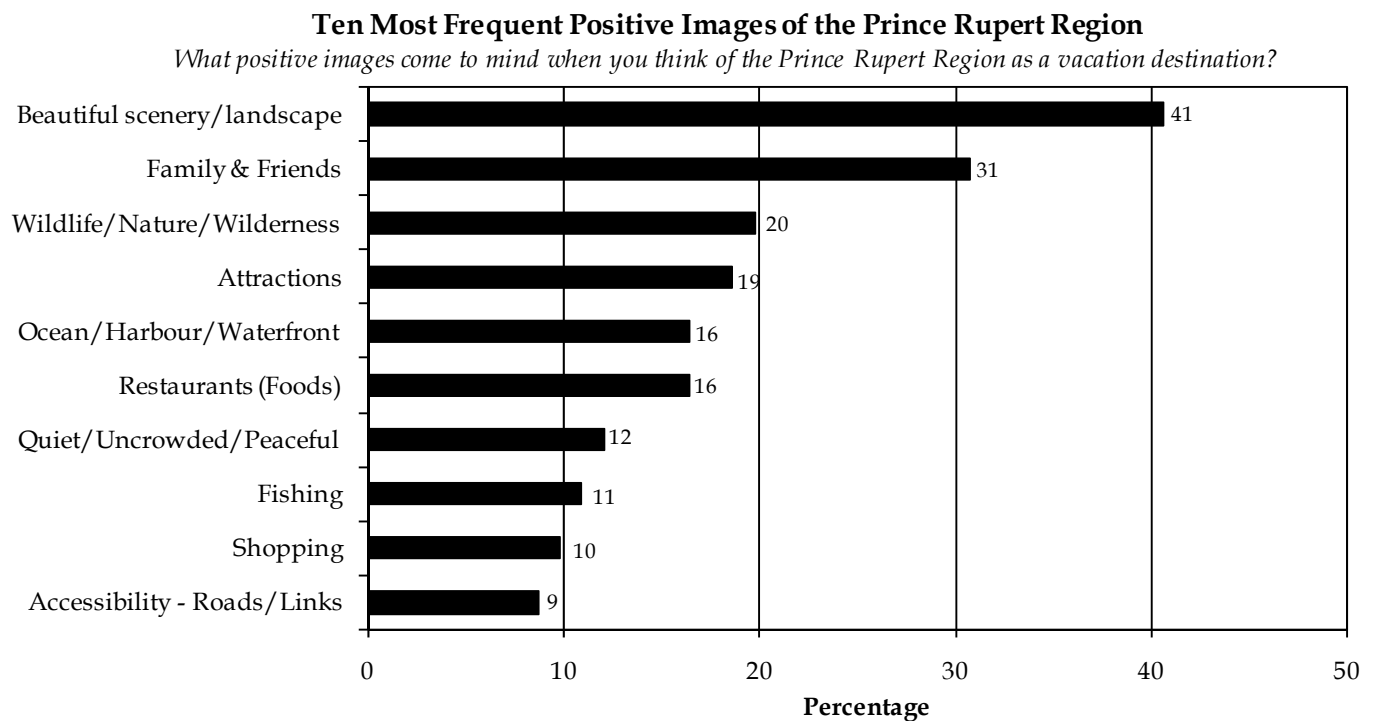


Figure 13. The most frequent positive images respondents had of the Prince Rupert region. At the Prince Rupert VC, 91 respondents replied with 221 images.

Negative perceptions from respondents at the Prince Rupert VC focused on rain (25%), unattractive/run-down town (13%), the isolation/quietness (10%) and unsettled weather (8%, Figure 14).

Eleven Most Frequent Negative Images of the Prince Rupert Region

What negative images come to mind when you think of the Prince Rupert Region as a vacation destination?

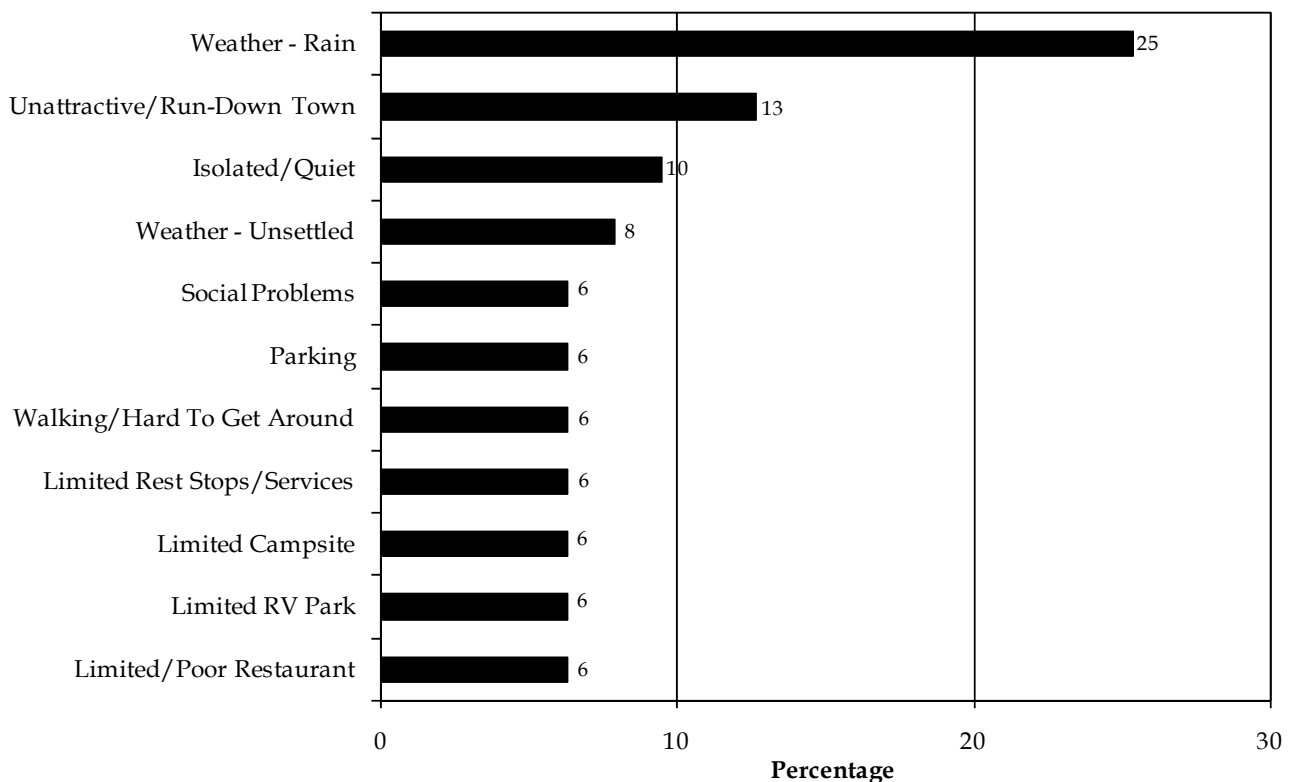


Figure 14. The most frequent negative images respondents had of the Prince Rupert region. At the Prince Rupert VC, 63 respondents replied with 103 images.

Mailback respondents were asked to identify up to three unique characteristics of the Prince Rupert region that differentiate it from other regions as a vacation destination. These characteristics could be useful for promotional activities to attract travellers to the area. A variety of characteristics were identified as unique to the area (Figure 15). The most common were accessibility through roads/links/highway (30%), ocean/harbour (29%), wildlife/nature/wilderness (21%), beautiful scenery/landscape (15%) and attractions (15%). Less frequently mentioned characteristics included historic/quaint nature (10%), fishing opportunities (10%), presence of family/friends and friendliness of people in general (10%), and peacefulness of the region (10%).

Ten Most Unique Attributes of the Prince Rupert Region

What are the most unique attributes of the Prince Rupert Region as a vacation destination?

Unique attributes are those that make the Prince Rupert Region different from other vacation destinations

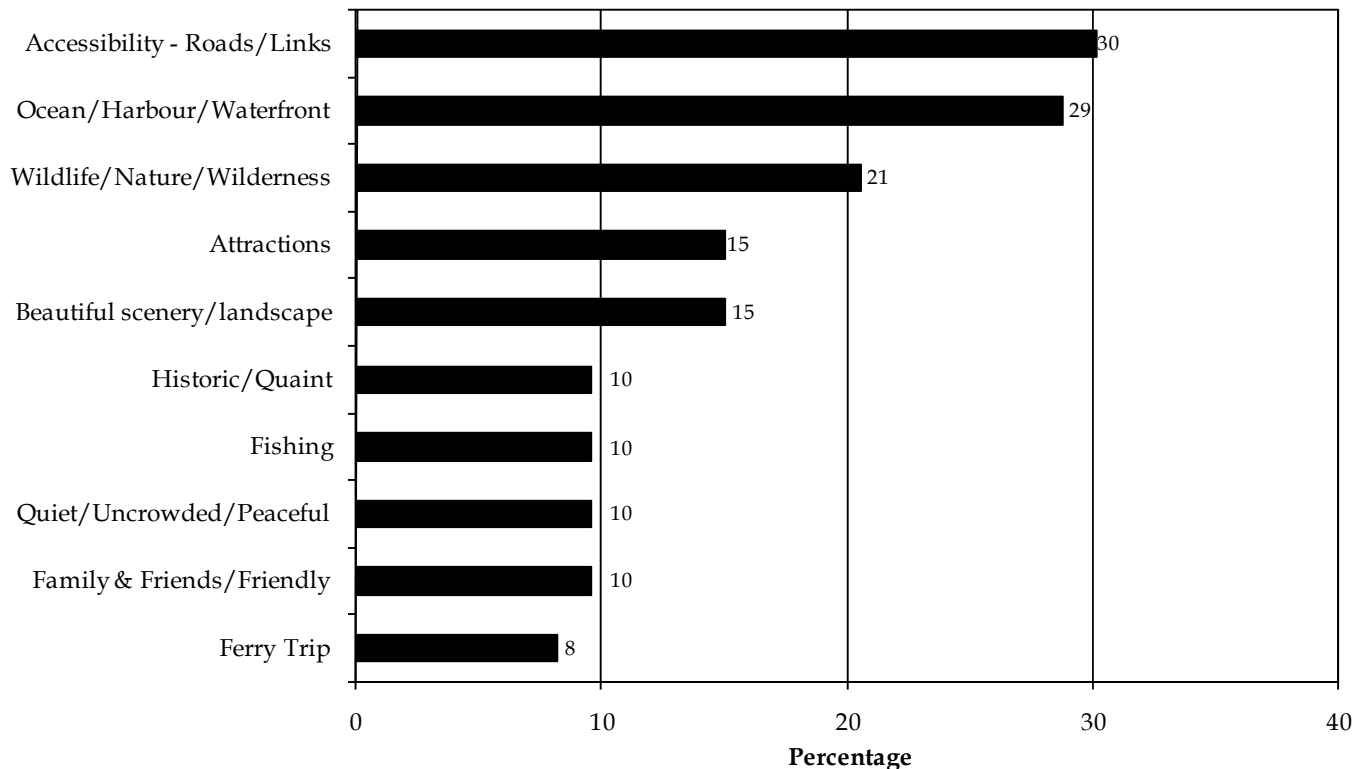


Figure 15. The most frequent unique characteristics of the Prince Rupert region. At the Prince Rupert VC, 73 respondents replied with 151 characteristics.

Respondents to the mailback questionnaire were asked to rate various components of their trip and their overall travel experience in the Prince Rupert region (Figure 16). Over four-fifths of respondents rated their overall travel experience as good (61%) or excellent (27%). Ratings for each trip component were also high. Access to information about Prince Rupert (95%), customer service (93%), recreation and adventure opportunities (84%) and local signage (83%) stand out as strengths with most respondents rating these components as either good or excellent. Attractions and events (62%) received the lowest ratings.

Respondents to the mailback questionnaire were also asked about their satisfaction with their trip in British Columbia (Figure 17). Most travellers were either very satisfied (79%) or somewhat satisfied (9%) with their experience in all of British Columbia.

Mailback respondents were asked about their likelihood of returning to Prince Rupert or to the province of British Columbia for another leisure trip. Almost three-fifths of travellers indicated that they were either 'very likely' (29%) or 'likely' (30%) to return to Prince Rupert for a future trip (Figure 18). Reasons cited by respondents who were not likely to return to the region included the desire to explore alternate routes and destinations, distance, cost, and highway links/roads.

In terms of likelihood of taking another leisure trip in British Columbia, an even larger proportion of travellers indicated that they were 'very likely' (70%) or 'likely' (10%, Figure 19).

Percentage of Travellers Rating Trip Components as Good or Excellent

Please rate your experience with each component of your trip and your overall travel experience in the Prince Rupert region.

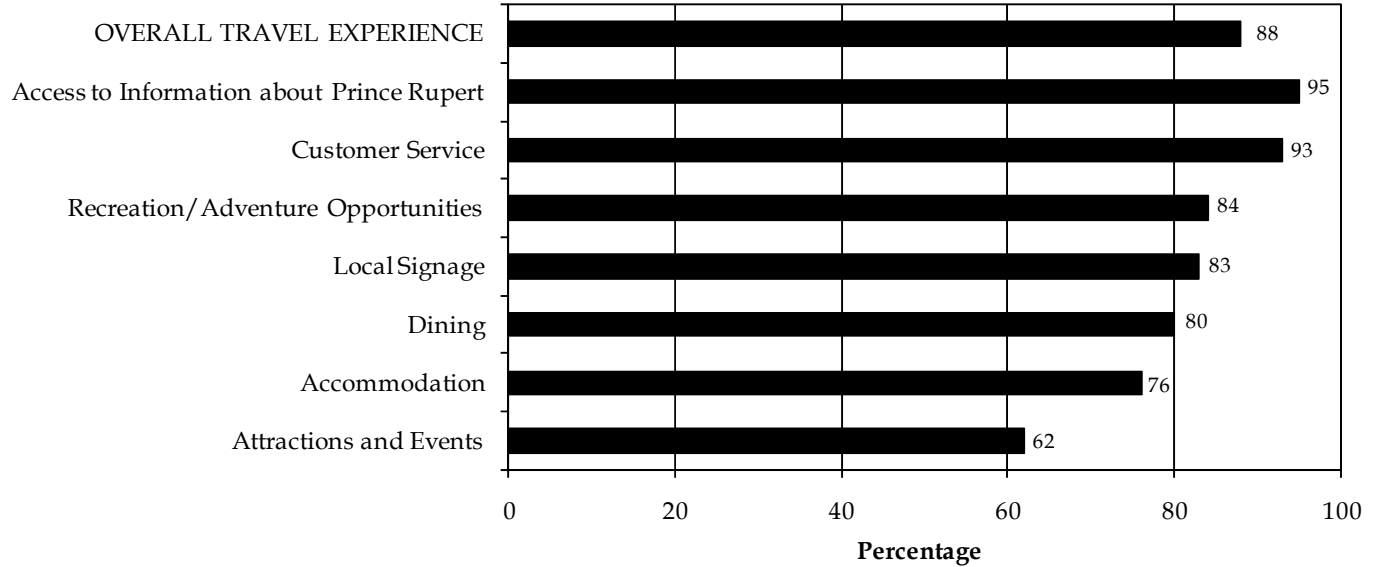


Figure 16. Travellers' rating of trip components and overall trip experience in the Prince Rupert Region.

Satisfaction With Trip to British Columbia

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your trip in British Columbia?

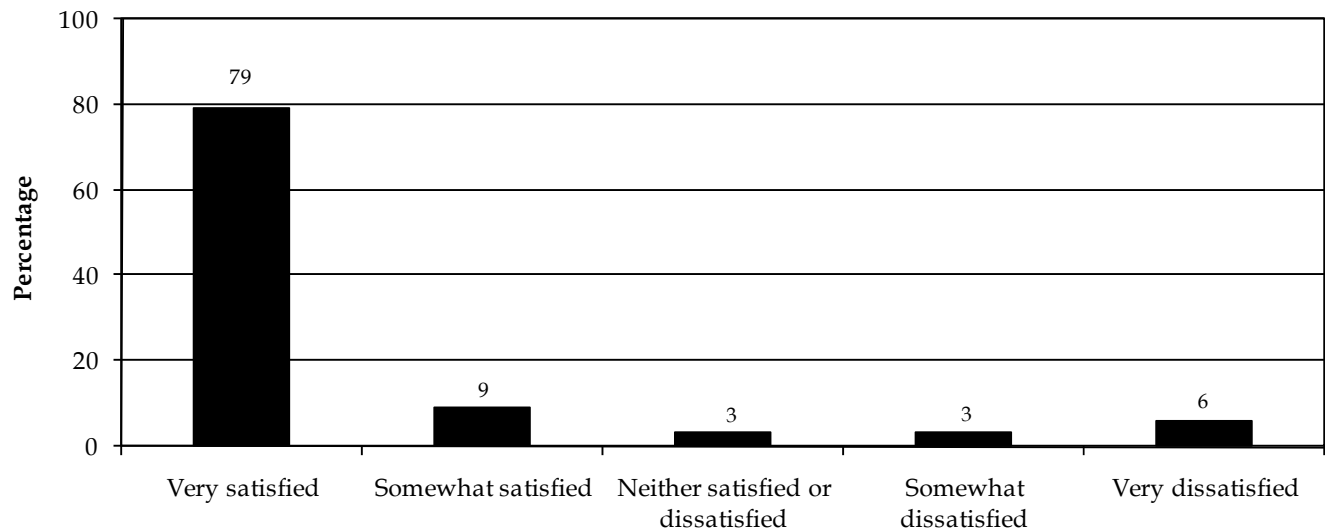


Figure 17. British Columbia trip satisfaction for travellers at the Prince Rupert VC (n=99).

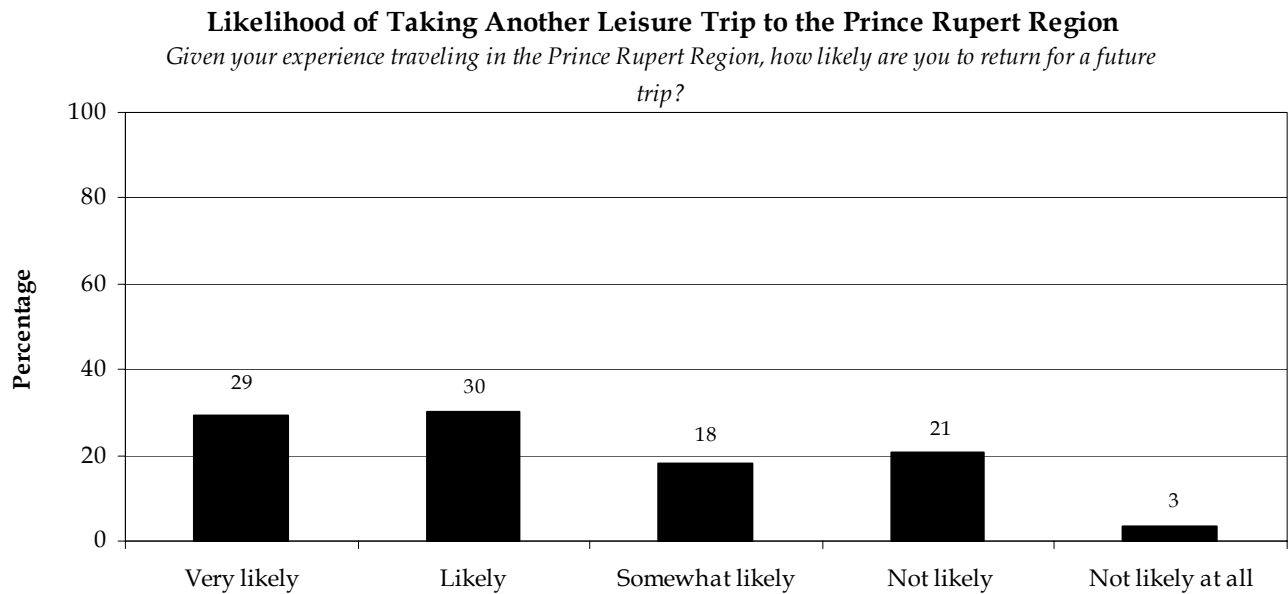


Figure 18. The likelihood of travellers taking another leisure trip to the Prince Rupert region (n=91).

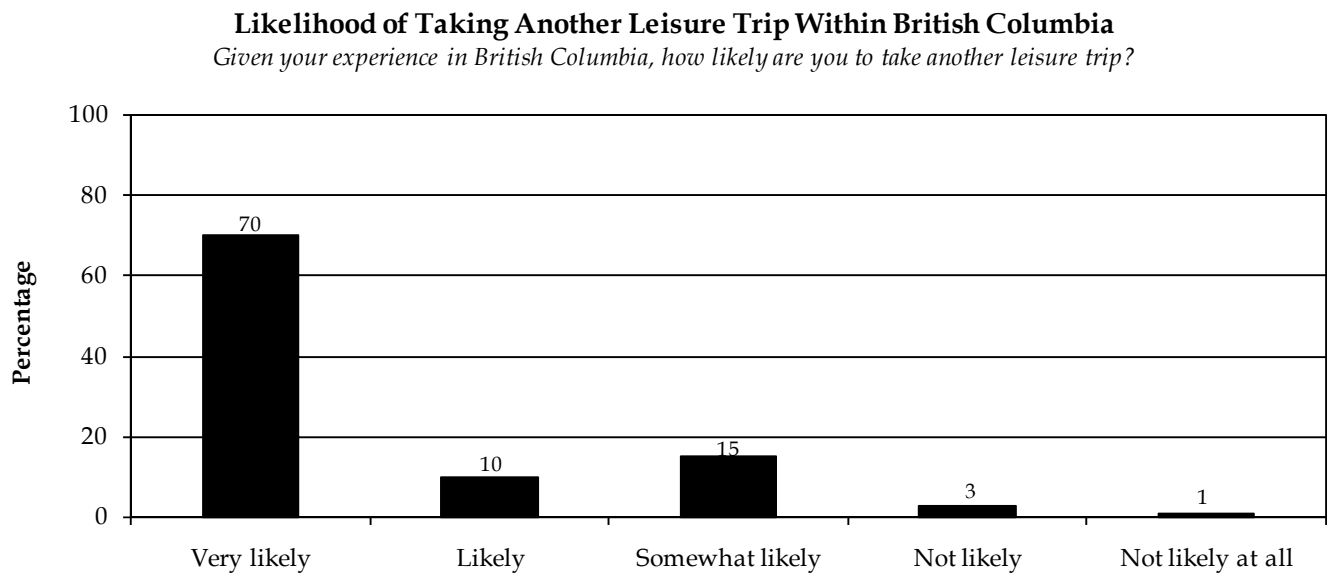


Figure 19. The likelihood of travellers taking another leisure trip within British Columbia (n=98).

Expenditures

Travellers were asked, *"In Canadian dollars, what were your travel party's total expenditures yesterday, including accommodations?"* Travellers at the Prince Rupert VC spent an average of \$190.07 per day (Table 15). Spending patterns varied noticeably depending on the origin of the travellers, ranging from \$172.60 for travellers from outside North America to \$216.43 for those visiting from the US. There were also notable differences in expenditures when broken down by primary accommodation type, which ranged from \$118.48 for those staying with friends or relatives to \$238.26 for those using B&Bs. Given that respondents were asked to provide expenditures based upon the spending of their entire travel party it is not surprising that larger parties spent more than smaller parties. The results ranged from \$107.04 for those travelling alone to \$427.50 for travel parties containing seven or more people. There were also noteworthy differences in expenditures based upon respondents' age category. Results ranged from \$122.33 for travellers under the age of 24 to \$235.73 for travellers between 45-54 years of age.

Average daily expenditure **per person** was also calculated. Travellers interviewed at the Prince Rupert VC spent \$85.60 per person per day. As suspected, visitors from the US spent more per person than all other visitors. Per person expenditures also varied by type of accommodation, with those staying at B&B's spending more per person than visitors staying with campgrounds or RV parks. Interestingly, those with larger travel parties tended to spend less per person than those travelling alone or as a couple.

Table 15. The average daily expenditures of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC.

\$ CDN Daily Expenditures*	Average Per Party Daily Expenditure	Average Per Person Daily Expenditure
	Prince Rupert VC (n=241) ¹	Prince Rupert VC (n=241) ¹
Overall	\$190.07	\$85.60
Origin		
BC	\$186.36	\$86.89
Other Canada	\$191.04	\$77.43
US	\$216.43	\$105.58
Other International	\$172.60	\$76.06
Primary Accommodations		
Hotel/Motel/Resort	\$227.65	\$97.21
Campground/RV	\$157.92	\$72.58
Friends OR Relatives	\$118.48	\$66.66
Other	\$197.96	\$94.74
B&B	\$238.26	\$102.42
Travel Party Size		
1 person	\$107.04	\$86.89
2 people	\$179.10	\$77.43
3-6 people	\$246.10	\$65.13
7 or more people ²	\$427.50	\$57.90
Age		
Under 24 Years ³	\$122.33	\$71.22
25-34 Years	\$155.26	\$77.60
35-44 Years	\$170.18	\$67.85
45-54 Years	\$235.73	\$93.42
55-64 Years	\$199.95	\$90.44
65 Years or Older	\$176.20	\$88.38

*The top and bottom 2% of responses were trimmed to ensure an accurate mean daily expenditure.

Practical differences of $\pm 10\%$ from the overall average are colour-coded.

1. 2% (n=4) of travellers began trip on the day of interview, and therefore did not have responses, 6% (n=15) Don't Know/No Response. Business travellers and day trippers were not included in this analysis.
2. Caution is advised when interpreting these numbers because the sample size for this category is low (n=4).
3. Caution is advised when interpreting these numbers because the sample size for this category is low (n=6).

In the summer of 2007, Prince Rupert VC users expended nearly \$9.6 million in the Prince Rupert region and over \$54.9 million on their trip throughout the rest of the province (Table 16). These figures do not represent the economic impact of the VC but rather the total expenditures of travellers to Prince Rupert and in the rest of the province while on the trip during which they were interviewed at the Prince Rupert VC.

Table 16. Estimated expenditures of travellers who visited the Prince Rupert VC.

June 1 –August 31, 2007 ¹	Prince Rupert VC
Estimated Total VC parties for June 1 – August 31, 2007	16,973
Average Daily Expenditures	\$190.07
Estimated Total Expenditures in Prince Rupert by VC Users	\$9,610,626
Estimated Total Expenditures outside of Prince Rupert by VC Users	\$54,911,874

1. Visitor party statistics reported by the Prince Rupert VC include local residents but exclude visitor parties that do not talk to a Counsellor. Estimated total VC parties in this report exclude residents of Prince Rupert. However, all non-resident visitor parties are included, whether or not they spoke to a Visitor Information Counsellor. An estimated 69% of visitor parties speak to a Counsellor, thus the total number of visitor parties is larger than the number who spoke to a Counsellor.

Impact of the Visitor Centre on Traveller Behaviour

Travellers were asked several questions to gauge how the Prince Rupert VC impacted their trip. The questions were as follows:

1. *While at the Centre today, did you learn about any activities, places or attractions that you were previously not aware of?*
2. *What were those activities, places or attractions?*
3. *Will you spend some extra time in Prince Rupert as a result of the information obtained at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre? How much time?*
4. *Will you spend some extra time in other parts of British Columbia as a result of the information obtained at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre? How much time?*
5. *Will you make another trip in British Columbia in the future as a result of the information you obtained at the Prince Rupert VC?*

Results from these questions indicate that the Prince Rupert VC had an impact on traveller behaviour. Almost a third (30%) of the travellers at the Prince Rupert VC said that they learned about new trip activities as a result of their stopping at the VC. Just over one-sixth (17%) replied they would spend extra time in Prince Rupert, 14% would spend extra time in other parts of British Columbia, and over two-fifths (41%) would make another trip in/to British Columbia as a result of the information obtained at the VC (Figure 20).

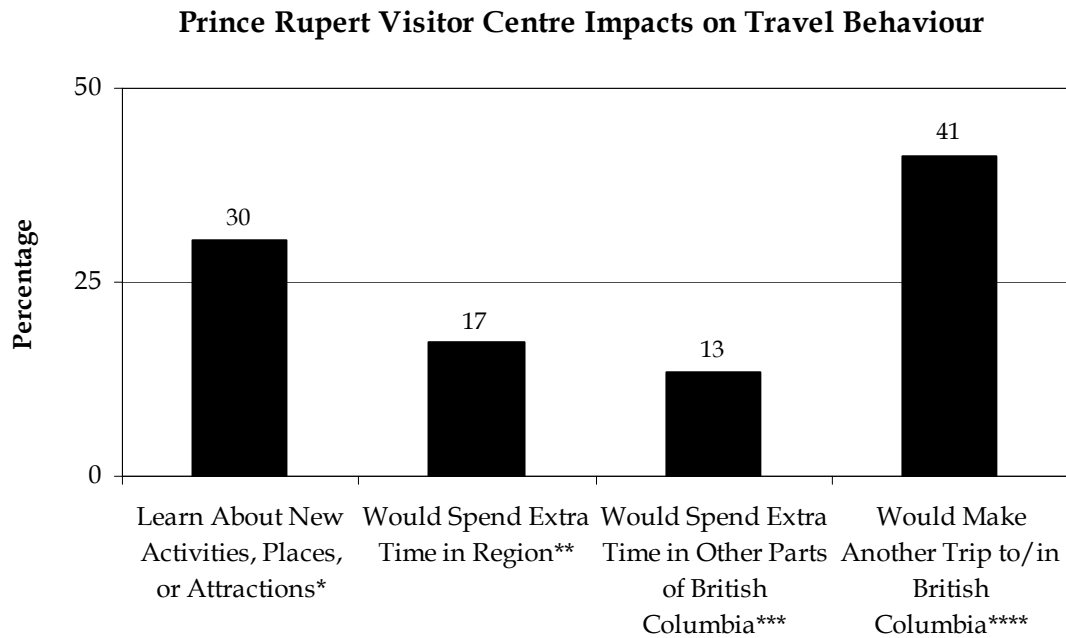


Figure 20. The proportion of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC that learned about new activities, places or attractions, would spend extra time in region, would spend extra time in other parts of British Columbia or would make another trip to/in British Columbia as a direct result of the Prince Rupert VC. * Don't Know/No Response =11 (2.9%); ** Don't Know/No Response =11 (7.3%); *** Don't Know/No Response =10 (4.1%); **** Don't Know/No Response=18 (6.9%).

Travelers at the Prince Rupert VC learned about a wide range of new activities, places or attractions (Table 17). A total of 115 new activities, places or attractions were learned about at the VC. These included arts, cultural or local attractions (31%), land based recreation activities (16%), wildlife viewing opportunities (13%), information on local shopping/services (11%) and information on various tours (9%).

Table 17. The proportion of travelers who learned about new activities, places or attractions while at the Prince Rupert VC.

Activities, Places and Attractions	Percentage (n=115)
Festival and Events	4.3
Arts, Cultural or Local Attractions	31.3
Accommodation Information	3.5
Water Based Recreation	4.3
Information on Other Communities	2.6
Wildlife Viewing	13.0
Local Shopping/Services	11.3
Land Based Recreation	15.7
Information on Tours	8.7
Transportation Information	5.2

A number of trip and traveller characteristics could influence the impact of the VC on traveller behaviour. Characteristics like traveller origin, speaking with a Visitor Information Counsellor, primary trip purpose, flexibility in the time spent in the Prince Rupert region, and flexibility in the time spent in British Columbia were examined to understand if they influenced the impact the Prince Rupert VC had on traveller behaviour (Table 18). Affirmative answers to the impact questions varied by market origin. Travellers from the US were more likely to make another trip and to spend extra time in other parts of BC as a result of the VC. Travellers from international locations were much more likely to learn about new activities, places or attractions than travellers from other locations. Travellers who did not speak with a Visitor Information Counsellor were far less likely to be influenced by the VC compared to those that did speak to a Counsellor. A considerably higher proportion of travellers who spoke with a Counsellor learned about new activities, places or attractions. Leisure travellers were more likely to give affirmative responses to the impact questions than travellers who were visiting friends and family although the latter group of respondents were more likely to learn about new activities, places or attractions from their visit to the VC. Respondents who were inflexible with their activities in the region were more likely to learn about new activities, places or attractions as a result of the information obtained at the VC. In terms of time flexibility in British Columbia, those who were very flexible were much more likely to spend extra time in the region and in BC as a result of the information obtained at the VC than those who were less flexible.

Additional comments regarding the Prince Rupert VC made by respondents to the mailback survey are included in Appendix G.

able 18. The impact of the Prince Rupert VC on traveller behaviour by traveller origin, travellers who did and did not speak with a Counsellor, primary trip purpose and flexibility.

	Percentage of Travellers Who:			
	Learned About New Activities, Places or Attractions*	Would Stay Extra Time in Region*	Would Stay Extra Time in Other Parts of BC*	Would Make Another Trip*
Overall	30.4%	17.3%	13.5%	41.4%
Origin				
BC	25.8%	14.9%	14.0%	43.8%
Other Canada	30.4%	17.1%	11.1%	33.9%
US	28.6%	19.0%	17.2%	47.5%
Other International	38.3%	19.2%	11.8%	40.0%
Spoke With A Counsellor				
Yes	39.1%	19.8%	15.0%	44.1%
No	15.0%	12.2%	10.1%	35.4%
Primary Trip Purpose¹				
Leisure	31.1%	18.7%	14.2%	41.4%
Visiting Friends & Family	36.8%	0.0%	5.9%	36.8%
Time Flexibility - Region				
Inflexible (no extra time) ²	33.9%	n/a ³	8.0%	39.6%
Moderately Flexible	24.3%	11.1%	12.9%	55.6%
Very Flexible (extra day(s))	31.9%	20.0%	20.2%	39.1%
Time Flexibility - BC				
Inflexible (no extra time)	30.2%	11.8%	5.1%	37.9%
Moderately Flexible	30.4%	11.1%	9.1%	59.1%
Very Flexible (extra day(s))	32.2%	19.5%	19.3%	42.1%

* Due to a relatively high number of DK/NR answers, DK/NRs were kept in the denominator to calculate the percent of respondents who said 'Yes.' This approach is consistent with previous years and avoids overestimating impact.

1. Two 'other' cases excluded from analysis in order to display the most pertinent information.
2. Respondents who indicated that they had no extra time to spend in the region regarding trip flexibility were not asked the impact question about willingness to stay extra time in the region.

Conclusions

1. Travellers who stopped at the Prince Rupert VC:

- Were predominantly from BC (31%) or countries outside North America (28%),
- Were most likely to be over the age of 45 (69%),
- Were likely to have attained at least a college or technical diploma (71%),
- Were likely to have annual household incomes of \$100,000 or higher (31%) or between \$65,000 to \$99,999 (26%),
- Were most likely to be travelling without children (86%),
- Were most likely to rate their overall travel experience in the region as good (61%) or excellent (27%), and
- Were most likely to rate themselves as either very satisfied (79%) or somewhat satisfied (9%) with their experience in British Columbia.

Trip characteristics of travellers at the Prince Rupert VC showed that:

- The primary trip purpose was leisure (84%), followed by work/business (9%),
- Cars/trucks/motorcycles were the primary mode of transportation for most travellers (60%),
- Campgrounds/RV parks were the primary accommodation type for 38% of travellers, followed by resorts/hotels/motels (33%),
- Over two-fifths of the travellers (43%) rated themselves as very flexible in terms of having extra time to spend in the Prince Rupert region and over a half (59% BC Residents; 53% BC non-Residents) rated themselves very flexible in terms of having extra time to spend in British Columbia,
- The three most participated in activities during the trip were visiting parks (85%), wildlife viewing (77%) and visiting museums/heritage or historic sites (77%).
- The three most participated in activities in the Prince Rupert region were visiting museums/heritage or historic sites (69%), shopping for local arts and crafts (68%) and wildlife viewing (57%).
- Most travellers (82%) spent three weeks or more planning their trip, with the most common planning horizon being greater than 13 weeks,
- Past experience (53%), visitor guides and brochures (52%), and advice from friends or relatives (49%) were among the top information sources used before travel,
- Visitor Centres were the top information source used during travel as listed by 85% of respondents,
- The majority of travellers (99%) were spending time in the Prince Rupert region as opposed to just passing through, and
- The average time spent in the Prince Rupert region was three days.

2. The profile of travellers can be applied:
 - To ensure that the current information provided to VC users reflects the needs of travellers using the VC.
 - For business planning and management of new and existing tourism businesses in the Prince Rupert region. The data presented in this report provides details of the type of clients new tourism businesses in the region can expect and characteristics, interests and trip flexibility of potential clients who could be attracted through marketing (brochures, etc.) at the Prince Rupert VC.
 - To design a marketing plan to attract travellers who do not currently use the VC. For example, a plan could be designed to encourage visitors who are in the Prince Rupert region visiting friends and relatives to visit the Prince Rupert VC.
3. The Prince Rupert VC had a positive impact on traveller behaviour. Over a quarter (30%) of the travellers at the Prince Rupert VC said that they learned about new trip activities as a result of their stopping at the VC. Almost one-fifth (17%) replied they would spend extra time in the Prince Rupert region, 13% would spend extra time in other parts of British Columbia, and over two-fifths (41%) would make another trip in/to British Columbia as a result of the information obtained at the VC.
4. The proportion of travellers who said that they learned about new activities, would stay extra time in the region or elsewhere in BC or would make another trip to/in British Columbia as a result of the information obtained at the VC was consistently larger for those travellers who had spoken to a Visitor Information Counsellor. This finding highlights the importance of having a Counsellor available at all times to help travellers.

Limitations

1. These results are representative of travellers who stopped at the Prince Rupert VC between June 1 and August 31, 2007. The results do not represent the economic impact of the Prince Rupert VC for the whole year. Applying these results to the remaining months in the year could over-estimate the economic benefit of the VC because the study was completed during the peak tourism period. In addition, trip and traveller characteristics of travellers at other times of the year could differ from those interviewed during the study period.
2. These results are representative of the impact the Prince Rupert VC had on travellers who did not live in the Prince Rupert region. This study did not explore the impacts that the Prince Rupert VC had on travellers calling or emailing for information prior to their visit to the area. In addition, it did not describe the benefits that local residents receive from the Prince Rupert VC or the benefits of local residents collecting information for their non-resident guests.
3. Some of the statistics contained within this report were produced with small sample sizes; consequently some of the results should be treated with caution.
4. Findings from similar studies at other VCs in British Columbia have differed from these results; therefore, the findings presented in this report cannot be applied to other Visitor Centres.
5. Results presented here do not represent the full range of analysis that can be completed with the data collected. For example, a profile of travellers visiting friends and family versus those that were travelling for leisure could be developed. Please contact Alison Aspinall, Research and Planning Tourism British Columbia (Alison.Aspinall@tourismbc.com) for more information on obtaining custom reports using this data.

Appendices

Appendix A - Interviewer schedule and interviews completed

Appendix B - Questionnaires

Appendix C - Response bias testing

Appendix D - Suggestions to improve services offered at the Visitor Centre

Appendix E - Other Visitor Centres visited in British Columbia

Appendix F - Calculation of total Visitor Centre use and economic benefits

Appendix G - Comments from Prince Rupert Visitor Centre mailback survey

Appendix A – Interview Schedule and Interviews Completed

Table A1. The day and number of travellers approached, the number who agreed to the interview, the number of residents, number of refusals, number travelling in a tour group and the number of independent tourists interviewed at the Prince Rupert VC during the first half of the study period.

	Prince Rupert VC (June 1 – July 31, 2007)							
	Number of People Approached	Agree to Interview	Number of Residents	Refusals	Part of Tour Group	In- complete	Tourists	Cruise Ship
June 1	16	12	2	4	0	0	10	1
June 3	23	14	4	9	0	0	10	0
June 7	26	14	7	12	0	0	7	0
June 9	15	9	4	6	2	0	3	0
June 13	33	20	0	13	0	1	19	17
June 15	23	14	5	9	1	0	8	0
June 19	15	6	3	9	0	0	3	0
June 21	31	13	2	18	0	0	11	3
June 25	22	13	5	9	0	0	8	0
June 27	41	22	2	19	0	0	20	16
July 1	20	16	3	4	0	0	13	0
July 3	27	15	1	12	0	1	13	0
July 4	36	24	1	12	0	0	23	19
July 7	22	13	5	9	0	0	8	0
July 8	13	8	6	5	0	0	2	0
July 9	17	10	3	7	0	0	7	0
July 13	9	5	1	4	0	1	3	0
July 15	6	4	3	2	0	0	1	0
July 16	10	7	0	3	0	1	6	0
July 19	12	8	0	4	0	0	8	0
July 20	15	9	0	6	0	0	9	0
July 21	22	11	2	11	2	0	7	0
July 23	12	9	2	3	0	0	7	0
July 25	32	17	0	15	0	0	17	11
July 27	11	7	0	4	0	0	7	0
July 28	15	12	1	3	0	0	11	0
July 29	12	6	2	6	0	0	4	0
July 31	11	5	1	6	0	0	4	0

Table A2. The day and number of travellers approached, the number who agreed to the interview, the number of residents, number of refusals, number travelling in a tour group and the number of independent tourists interviewed at the Prince Rupert VC during the last half of the study period.

	Prince Rupert VC (August 2 - August 31, 2007)							
	Number of People Approached	Agree to Interview	Number of Residents	Refusals	Part of Tour Group	In- complete	Tourists	Cruise Ship
August 2	8	6	4	2	0	1	1	0
August 3	12	10	3	2	0	0	7	0
August 4	12	8	2	4	2	0	4	0
August 6	15	11	5	4	0	0	6	0
August 7	12	8	3	4	0	0	5	0
August 8	24	17	2	7	0	0	15	13
August 10	16	11	0	5	1	0	10	0
August 12	10	10	0	0	0	0	10	0
August 14	17	12	3	5	0	0	9	0
August 15	22	14	1	8	0	0	13	9
August 16	10	9	5	1	0	0	4	0
August 20	20	15	0	5	0	0	15	0
August 22	33	25	1	8	0	0	24	22
August 24	22	17	0	5	4	0	13	0
August 25	10	8	0	2	0	0	8	0
August 26	22	16	1	6	0	0	15	0
August 27	12	9	0	3	0	0	9	0
August 29	14	10	0	4	0	0	10	10
August 30	7	5	0	2	0	0	5	0
August 31	6	4	0	2	0	0	4	0
Total	851	548	95	303	12	5	436	121

Appendix B – Questionnaires

Interview Questions (Prince Rupert Visitor Centre)

Good morning / afternoon / evening. My name is _____ and I'm conducting a survey on behalf of Tourism British Columbia. We'd like to ask you about your trip to the Prince Rupert region and your experiences in British Columbia. Can I please speak with someone in your travel party who is knowledgeable about your trip planning and expenditures?

1. Would you have approximately 10 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.*

2. Are you a resident of the Prince Rupert region? The Prince Rupert region includes Kaien, Ridley, and Digby islands as well as the surrounding mainland area south to Port Edward.

☐ NO ☐ YES *Thanks for agreeing to participate, however, we are only interviewing visitors from outside the area.*

3. Are you a cruise ship passenger?

☐ NO – Go to Q4 ☐ YES – Go to Q18

4. Are you part of an organized tour group?

☐ NO ☐ YES *Thank you for agreeing to participate, however, we are only interviewing independent travellers.*

5. Where do you live (usual place of residence)?

Province _____ OR State _____ OR Country (other international) _____

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

IF FROM BC 6. What is the **primary** purpose of your trip? Is it for Leisure, Visiting Friends and Family or Business?

- ☐ LEISURE → Go to Q7
- ☐ VISITING FRIENDS & FAMILY → Go to Q7
- ☐ WORK/BUSINESS ACTIVITY → Go to Box 1
- ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY _____) → Go to Q7

IF NOT FROM BC 6. What is the **primary** purpose of your trip to British Columbia? Is it for Leisure, Visiting Friends and Family or Business?

- ☐ LEISURE → Go to Q7
- ☐ VISITING FRIENDS & FAMILY → Go to Q7
- ☐ WORK/BUSINESS ACTIVITY → Go to Box 1
- ☐ OTHER (SPECIFY _____) → Go to Q7

BOX 1 (ONLY FOR BUSINESS TRAVELLERS)

- Including the day you left your residence and the day you will return, how many days will you be away from your residence for this trip? _____ days (**Consult calendar; include day left and day returning**)

IF OVERNIGHT TRAVELLERS

- How many of those days will be spent travelling in British Columbia? _____ days
- And how much time will be spent in the Prince Rupert region? The Prince Rupert region includes Kaien, Ridley, and Digby islands as well as the surrounding mainland area south to Port Edward. (**Consult study area map**)

☐ NONE - JUST PASSING THROUGH _____ HOURS OR _____ DAYS ☐ DK/NR

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

\$ _____ ☐ BEGAN TRIP TODAY ☐ DK/NR

IF DAY TRIPPERS ▪ In Canadian dollars, what will your travel party's total expenditures be today?

\$ _____ ☐ DK/NR

That concludes our interview. Thank you for participating!

7. What is your **primary** destination (the place that you will spend the most time)?

☐ NONE, TOURING

☐ DK/NR

8. We are interested in the communities people visit while travelling in British Columbia. On this trip, have you or are you planning to stop and spend time at (at least 1 hour)..... **(Consult reference map)**

A. ALASKA	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	D. TERRACE	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR
B. QCI	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	E. PRINCE GEORGE	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR
C. SMITHERS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR	F. VANCOUVER ISLAND	<input type="checkbox"/> YES	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR

IF FROM BC 9. What is your **primary** (most often used) mode of transportation while on this trip?

☐ CAR/TRUCK/MC ☐ RV ☐ BUS ☐ PRIVATE BOAT ☐ BICYCLE ☐ OTHER_____

IF NOT FROM BC 9. What is your **primary** (most often used) mode of transportation while in British Columbia?

☐ CAR/TRUCK/MC ☐ RV ☐ BUS ☐ PRIVATE BOAT ☐ BICYCLE ☐ OTHER_____

10. Including the day you left your residence and the day you will return, how many days will you be away from your residence for this trip? _____ days **(Consult calendar; include day left and day returning)**

IF Q 10 ≤ 1

▪ In Canadian dollars, what will your travel party's total expenditures be today?

\$_____ ☐ DK/NR

That concludes our interview. Thank you for participating!

IF Q 10 > 1

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

12. And how much time will be spent in the Prince Rupert region? The Prince Rupert region includes Kaien, Ridley, and Digby islands as well as the surrounding mainland area south to Port Edward. **(Consult study area map)**

☐ NONE - JUST PASSING THROUGH _____ HOURS OR _____ DAYS ☐ DK/NR

IF SPENDING TIME IN REGION 13. What is your **primary** (most time spent) leisure activity while in the Prince Rupert region?

☐ NONE ☐ DK/NR

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

☐ Hotel/Motel/RESORT ☐ B&B ☐ Fishing lodge/resort ☐ Campground/RV ☐ FRIENDS Or Relatives ☐ OTHER_____

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

\$_____ ☐ BEGAN TRIP TODAY ☐ DK/NR

16. Which of the following statements best describes your flexibility in the amount of time you have to spend in Prince Rupert?

- ☐ A. I CAN NOT SPEND ANY EXTRA TIME IN THIS REGION AT ALL
- ☐ B. I CAN SPEND AN EXTRA FEW HOURS IN THIS REGION (LESS THAN A DAY)
- ☐ C. I CAN SPEND AN EXTRA DAY OR DAYS IN THIS REGION
- ☐ D. DK/NR

IF FROM BC AND ENTIRE TRIP IN BC 17. What about your flexibility in the amount of time you have to spend on this entire trip? **(Read choices, if necessary)**

- ☐ A. I CAN NOT SPEND ANY EXTRA TIME ON THIS TRIP AT ALL
- ☐ B. I CAN SPEND AN EXTRA FEW HOURS ON THIS TRIP (LESS THAN A DAY)
- ☐ C. I CAN SPEND AN EXTRA DAY OR DAYS ON THIS TRIP
- ☐ D. DK/NR

ELSE 17. What about your flexibility in the amount of time you have to spend in British Columbia? **(Read choices, if necessary)**

- ☐ A. I CAN NOT SPEND ANY EXTRA TIME IN BRITISH COLUMBIA
- ☐ B. I CAN SPEND AN EXTRA FEW HOURS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA (LESS THAN A DAY)
- ☐ C. I CAN SPEND AN EXTRA DAY OR DAYS IN BRITISH COLUMBIA
- ☐ D. DK/NR

Now, I'd like to ask you a few questions about your use of the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre.

18. What was your reason for stopping at the 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 INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> TO TAKE A BREAK FROM TRAVELLING / GET OUT OF YOUR VEHICLE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN ATTRACTION INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN REFRESHMENTS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN ACCOMMODATION INFO (NOT CAMPING) | <input type="checkbox"/> TO PURCHASE MERCHANDISE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN CAMPING INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN FERRY INFO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN ADVENTURE / RECREATION INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN EVENT INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO OBTAIN DINING INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TO BUY A BC PARKS PARKING PASS | |

19. While visiting today, what information or other things did you obtain or use? **(Do not prompt, check all that apply)**

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> NOTHING | <input type="checkbox"/> BC PARKS PARKING PASS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> MAP | <input type="checkbox"/> REFRESHMENTS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ROUTE INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> MERCHANDISE |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ATTRACTION INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> WASHROOMS |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ACCOMMODATION (EXCLUDING CAMPGROUND) INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> FERRY INFO |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CAMPGROUND INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ADVENTURE / RECREATION INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> EVENT INFO | <input type="checkbox"/> DK/NR |
| <input type="checkbox"/> DINING INFO | |

20. While visiting today, did you or anybody in your travel party speak with a Visitor Information Counsellor?

- ☐ NO ☐ YES ☐ DK/NR

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

☐ NO - Go to Q23 ☐ YES - Go to Q22 ☐ DK/NR - Go to Q23

22. What were those activities, places or attractions? (**Record up to three**)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

SKIP IF Q16 = A (NO EXTRA TIME IN REGION) or IF CRUISE SHIP 23. Will you spend some **extra** time in Prince Rupert as a result of the information obtained at the Centre?

☐ NO ☐ YES How much? _____ hours **OR** _____ nights ☐ DK/NR

SKIP IF Q16 ≠ A (SOME EXTRA TIME IN REGION) AND Q17 = A (NO EXTRA TIME IN BC) or IF CRUISE SHIP

24. Will you spend some **extra** time in **other parts of British Columbia** as a result of the information obtained at the Centre?

☐ NO ☐ YES How much? _____ hours **OR** _____ nights ☐ DK/NR

SKIP IF CRUISE SHIP 25. Will you make another trip in British Columbia in the future as a result of the information you obtained at the Centre?

☐ NO ☐ YES ☐ DK/NR

26. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the services offered at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre?

☐ VERY DISSATISFIED ☐ DISSATISFIED ☐ NEITHER
DISSATISFIED
NOR SATISFIED ☐ SATISFIED ☐ VERY SATISFIED ☐ DK/NR

27. What suggestions do you have to improve the services offered at the Centre? (**Record up to three**)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

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

28. Including you, 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

29. Including this trip, how many leisure trips have you taken in the past 12 months?

_____ trip(s) ☐ DK/NR

30. In which of the following age categories 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

31. 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

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

- ☐ A. LESS THAN \$25,000 ☐ E. \$100,000 TO \$149,999
☐ B. \$25,000 TO \$49,999 ☐ F. \$150,000 PLUS
☐ C. \$50,000 TO \$64,999 ☐ F. DK/NR
☐ D. \$65,000 TO \$99,999

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

- ☐ MALE ☐ FEMALE

SKIP IF CRUISE SHIP 34. 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 a 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 be willing to participate?

- ☐ NO ☐ YES

IF YES 35. Can I get your name and mailing address?

Name:
Mailing Address:
City:
Province/State:
Country:
Postal/Zip Code:

Thank you for participating!

Mailback Questions (Prince Rupert Visitor Centre)

The Prince Rupert Visitor Centre

What was your experience?

Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope to:

**Tourism British Columbia
Research Services
Box 9830, Stn Prov Gov't, 300-1803 Douglas Street,
Victoria, BC Canada V8W 9W5**



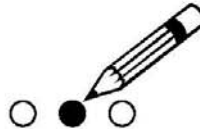
Your opinions are important...

Thank you for participating in this survey. Tourism British Columbia and Tourism Prince Rupert are working together to better understand your experiences, activities and impressions of your trip to the Prince Rupert region and British Columbia.

*If you have travelled within British Columbia more than once this year, **please tell us about the trip during which you were asked to participate in this survey.***

Your responses and personal information will be kept confidential and used only for this survey.

Please answer the survey questions by shading your answer using a pen or pencil. This will help us process the surveys accurately.



Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope to:



Tourism British Columbia
Research Services
Box 9830, STN PROV GOV'T
300-1803 Douglas Street
Victoria, BC
Canada V8W 9W5



If you have any questions, please call
(toll free) 1-877-877-8811 in North America
or 1-250-356-5629 from elsewhere.

About your entire trip.....

*This section asks questions about characteristics of your trip within British Columbia.
Please answer all of the following questions with respect to the trip you were on
when we interviewed you at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre.*

1. How many days did you spend away from your residence on this trip?

_____ day(s) away from residence

2. How many of those days were spent in British Columbia? If you are from British Columbia and you spent your whole vacation within the province, this should be the same as your reply to Question 1.

_____ day(s) in British Columbia

3. What was your **primary destination** on this trip? Your primary destination is the place you stayed the longest or the place that immediately comes to mind as your destination when describing your trip. Choose **one** answer only.

- ☐ Our primary destination was _____
☐ We had no specific destination – we were touring around

4. When planning this trip, did you and/or your travel party consider other destinations or routes?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Don't know



Where? Please list up to three.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

5. In general, what made you and/or your travel party choose the destination or route indicated in Question 3?

Mapping your trip...

6. Using the map to the right, please:

- A. **Trace** your party's travel route in the area shown on the map (preferably in coloured pen or marker). Please include your return route, even if you travelled the same way in both directions (please use arrows).

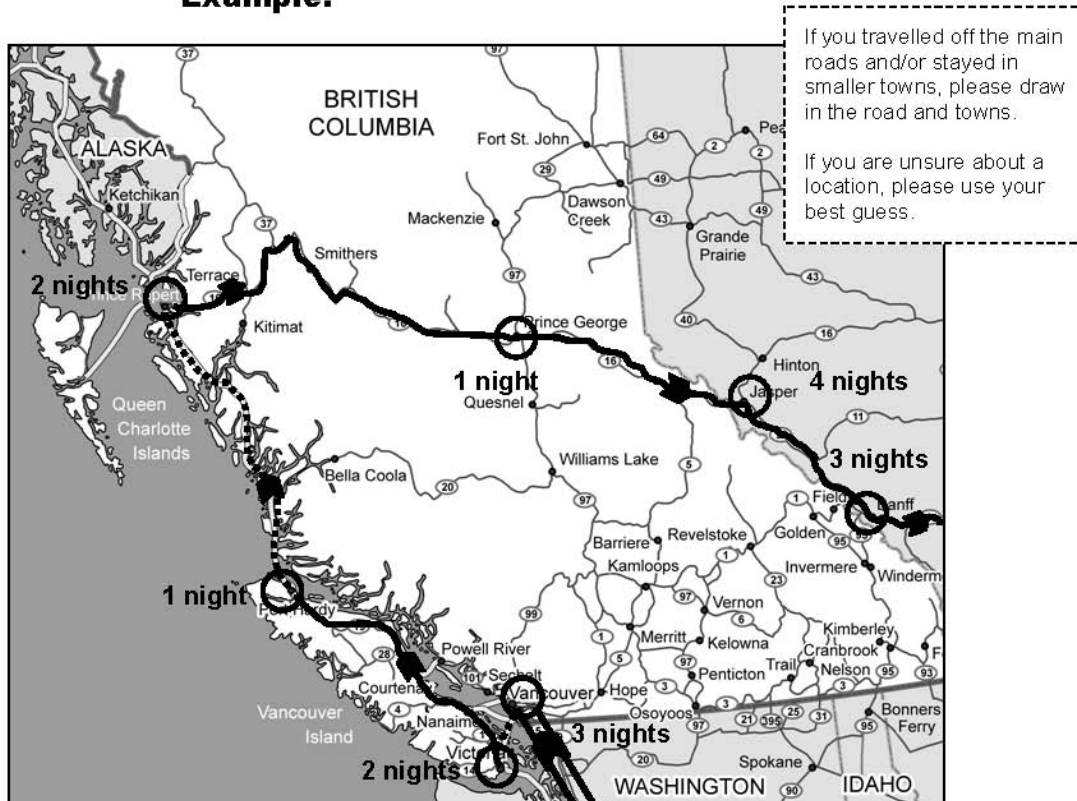
Use the symbols below to show:

- where you drove
- ===== where you took a flight
- - - - where you took a cruise or ferry

B. **Circle** each place that you stayed overnight.

C. **Write in** how many nights you stayed in each place.

Example:



On this map, please:

- A. TRACE your ROUTE
- B. CIRCLE where you STAYED overnight
- C. WRITE in the number of NIGHTS



*PS. It's okay if your map starts to look a bit messy.
We appreciate your efforts!*

7. A. What activities did you and/or your travel party participate in while on this trip?
Mark all that apply.
- B. What activities did you and/or your travel party participate in while in the **Prince Rupert** region?
Mark all that apply.

Your activities	A Participated in during this trip <i>Mark all that apply</i>	B Participated in while in the Prince Rupert region <i>Mark all that apply</i>
Golfing or attending a golfing event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Shopping for local arts and crafts	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in fine dining	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending a festival, fair or exhibition	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attending or participating in a sporting event (other than golf)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Participating in:		
wildlife viewing (whale, bear, birds, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
fishing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
kayaking/canoeing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
boating (other than kayaking/canoeing)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
mountain biking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
cycling (other than mountain biking)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
hiking	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
flight seeing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
white water rafting	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
rock climbing	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visiting a:		
municipal, provincial or national park, or natural area outside a park	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
city or municipal facility (swimming pool, performing arts centre etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
First Nations attraction or event	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
museum, heritage or historic site	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
art gallery or studio	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
winery	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
farm, farmers' market, orchard or food processor	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
family attraction (mini golf, zoo, etc.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
spa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (specify) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. How far in advance did you start planning for this trip? Choose **one** answer only.

- ☐ Day of departure ☐ 9-12 weeks
☐ 1-6 days ☐ 13 weeks+
☐ 1-2 weeks ☐ Don't know
☐ 3-8 weeks

9. We would like to know the information sources you used to plan your trip before and during your trip. This includes information about where to stay, what route to take, where to eat and/or what to see and do.

A. What information sources did you use **before** your trip? Mark all that apply.

B. What were the **three most useful** information sources you used **before** your trip? Mark top **three** only.

C. What information sources did you use **during** your trip? Mark all that apply.

Information sources	Before trip		During trip
	A Used before trip Mark all that apply	B Most useful information Mark top 3	C Used during trip Mark all that apply
Past experience/been there before	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advice from friends/relatives	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
1-800-HelloBC	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Internet sites:			
www.HelloBC.com	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
local or regional tourism sites (e.g. www.tourismprincerupert.com)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
travellers' commentary sites (e.g. www.tripadvisor.com, travel blogs)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
other Internet sites	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel agents, airlines, auto associations	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tour operators, tourism-specific businesses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visitor guides and brochures	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel guide books (e.g. Lonely Planet, Frommer's, Fodor's)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Advertising on TV/newspapers/magazines	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Media coverage (e.g. travel articles in newspapers, programs on TV)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Visitor Centres	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Travel/consumer shows	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Other (specify) _____	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. We would like to know what travel services you booked/purchased before leaving on your trip and what travel services you purchased during your trip.

A. What **percentage (%)** of each travel service did you book or purchase **before** your trip?
If you did not purchase/book that service before your trip, please enter zero (0%).

B. What **percentage (%)** of each travel service did you purchase **during** your trip?
If you did not purchase that service during your trip, please enter zero (0%).

Travel services	Before trip A Booked before trip		During trip B Purchased during trip	
Example:	75%	+	25%	= 100%
Paid accommodation (hotels, motels, lodge, camping/RV, etc.)	_____	+	_____	= 100%
Transportation within British Columbia	_____	+	_____	= 100%
Permanent attractions (museums, theme/amusement parks, gardens, zoos, etc.)	_____	+	_____	= 100%
Events (festivals, concerts, etc.)	_____	+	_____	= 100%
Other activities (spa, recreational activities, etc.)	_____	+	_____	= 100%

11. What were your travel party's **total** expenditures during the trip?

*Please include all purchases, taxes and tips **except long-haul flights**. If you pre-paid any items prior to leaving on your trip (e.g. accommodation, tours, etc.), please include these in your estimate.*

TOTAL \$ _____ Canadian dollars

12. Approximately what percentage of your party's total expenditures was attributed to the following categories? Please fill in the appropriate proportions, **excluding long-haul flights**.

Categories	% of Total
Accommodation (hotels, motels, lodge, camping/RV fees, etc.)	_____ %
Transportation (short-haul flights within British Columbia, vehicle rental, gas, repairs, ferry, taxi, bus, etc.)	_____ %
Food & beverage (include any taxes and tips paid)	_____ %
Shopping (clothing, gifts, film, books, etc.)	_____ %
Attractions (admission, shows, tours, etc.)	_____ %
Outdoor recreation (park pass, nature guide, etc.)	_____ %
Other entertainment (spa, etc.)	_____ %
Other (specify) _____	_____ %
TOTAL	= 100 %

About the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre...

This section asks about the use of the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre on the trip that we interviewed you.

13. Did you spend any **extra** time in the **Prince Rupert** region **as a result of** the information obtained at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre? *The Prince Rupert region includes Kaien, Ridley, and Digby islands as well as the surrounding mainland area south to Port Edward.*
- ☐ Yes → How much additional time? _____ hours **OR** _____ night(s)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know
14. Did you spend any **extra** time on your trip in **other parts of British Columbia as a result of** the information obtained at the Visitor Centre?
- ☐ Yes → How much additional time? _____ hours **OR** _____ night(s)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know
15. Will you take another trip in British Columbia **as a result of** the information obtained at the Visitor Centre?
- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Don't know
16. Overall, how well did the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre live up to your original expectations?
- ☐ Fell short ☐ Met ☐ Exceeded ☐ Don't know
17. We interviewed you at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre. On this trip, did you visit any other Visitor Centres in British Columbia?
- ☐ Yes → **Where?** *Please specify.*
- ☐ No
- _____
- _____
- _____
18. Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre?
- _____
- _____
- _____

What do you think about Prince Rupert?

This section asks questions about your impressions and experiences of your trip to the Prince Rupert region.

19. What positive and/or negative images/characteristics come to mind when you think of the **Prince Rupert** region as a vacation destination? *Please list up to three.*

Positive

Negative

1. _____

1. _____

2. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3. _____

20. What do you consider to be unique about the **Prince Rupert** region? Unique characteristics are those that make the Prince Rupert region different from other destinations. *Please list up to three.*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

21. During the trip that we interviewed you, did you spend time (more than 1 hour) in the **Prince Rupert** region?

- ☐ Yes → Go to Question 22
☐ No → Go to Question 23
☐ Don't know → Go to Question 23

22. Please rate your experience with each component of your trip and your overall travel experience in the **Prince Rupert** region. *Choose **one** answer for **each** row.*

	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Don't know	N/A
Accommodation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Local signage	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dining	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access to information about Prince Rupert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Customer service	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Attractions and events	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recreation/adventure opportunities	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Overall travel experience in Prince Rupert	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. What new or expanded services, activities and attractions would you like to see if you visited the **Prince Rupert** region again? *Please list up to three.*

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

24. Given your experience travelling in the **Prince Rupert** region, how likely are you to return to the Prince Rupert region for a future leisure trip? *Choose **one** answer only.*

- ☐ Not likely at all
- ☐ Not likely
- ☐ Somewhat likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Don't know



→ Please explain why.

Your overall travel experience...

This section asks questions about your impressions of British Columbia.

25. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your trip in **British Columbia**?

*Choose **one** answer only.*

- ☐ Very dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat dissatisfied
- ☐ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- ☐ Somewhat satisfied
- ☐ Very satisfied
- ☐ Don't know



→ Please explain why.

26. Given your experience travelling in **British Columbia** on this trip, how likely are you to take another leisure trip within British Columbia? *Choose **one** answer only.*

- ☐ Not likely at all
- ☐ Not likely
- ☐ Somewhat likely
- ☐ Likely
- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Don't know

About you...

27. Who was in your travel party when we encountered you at the Prince Rupert Visitor Centre? Please indicate their relationship to you, age and gender. Please start with yourself.

Who? e.g. wife, husband, partner, son daughter, parent, friend...	Age (in years)	Gender (M=Male, F=Female)
1 Myself		
2		
3		
4		
5		
6		
7		

28. Are you willing to participate in future research about your travel patterns and preferences in British Columbia? Participation may involve answering paper-based questionnaires similar to this one or web-based surveys. Your address information will be kept completely confidential and used only for research purposes.

- ☐ No
- ☐ Yes → What is your email address?
Please clearly print your email address.

_____@_____

Thank you for your help!

All completed surveys will be entered in a draw for a digital camera. The draw will be held in December 2007. Please return your completed questionnaire in the enclosed postage-paid envelope to:



Tourism British Columbia
Research Services
Box 9830, Stn Prov Gov't,
300- 1803 Douglas Street,
Victoria, BC Canada V8W 9W5

Appendix C - Response Bias Testing

Response Bias Testing

Methods

The study design produced two sets of data that are available for analysis – the interview and mailback questionnaires. The respondents could differ because travellers could drop out of the study by not agreeing to complete the mailback questionnaires or by not completing the mailback questionnaire if they had agreed to complete it. Both instances could cause the mailback questionnaire results to be unrepresentative of travellers interviewed (non-response bias).

A series of tests were conducted to assess the mailback questionnaires' representativeness or, in other words, if the mailback questionnaire results portray the actual population of travellers interviewed.

Representativeness was assessed by:

1. Comparing demographics, trip and traveller characteristics between those that agreed and did not agree to complete the mailback questionnaire (Tables A3).
2. Comparing demographics, trip and traveller characteristics between those that responded and those that did not respond to the mailback questionnaire (Tables A3).

Responses to similar questions in the interview and mailback questionnaires could vary due to real differences in traveller behaviour (for example, a traveller may have perceived that the VC had a different impact on their trip when they were interviewed compared to the responses on the mailback questionnaire). Therefore a series of questions were asked in the same way on both the interview and mailback questionnaire. Differences between responses to the two questionnaires were assessed by comparing responses to key questions that were asked in both the interview and on the mailback questionnaire (Table A4).

Results

Differences in Respondents who Agreed or Did Not Agree to Mailback

- At the Prince Rupert VC, there were only three differences between respondents who agreed to participate with those who did not agree to participate in the mailback questionnaire.
- Respondents who agreed to participate in the mailback questionnaire spent more on average and were more likely to indicate that they would take another trip to British Columbia in the future as a result of the information obtained at the VC. There was also a higher proportion of respondents 55 years and older who agreed to participate in the mailback survey

Differences in Respondents that Returned/Did Not Return the Mailback Questionnaire

- There were also three differences between respondents who returned the mailback questionnaire compared to those that did not. There was a higher proportion of respondents 55 years and older who returned the mailback survey. In addition, those who returned the survey had a slightly higher daily expenditure than those who agreed to complete the survey but did not follow

through. A higher proportion of mailback respondents were very satisfied with the Prince Rupert VC compared with those that did not return the surveys.

Differences in Interview/Mailback Responses

- Responses to the mailback survey were generally consistent with those given during the interview at the Prince Rupert VC.
- On average, mailback respondents spent fewer days away from home.
- They also spent more during each day they were away from home.
- A higher proportion of respondents said that they spent extra time in the Prince Rupert region as a result of the Visitor Centre in the mailback survey than in the interview.
- The proportion of travellers with primary destinations within the study area was significantly lower for mailback respondents. This is likely attributed to respondents providing a broader location to the question upon reflecting on their completed trip (e.g. recording primary destination as Vancouver Island on the mailback survey versus saying Courtenay during the interview). The proportion of respondents with a primary destination within Vancouver Island was similar between data sets, which validates the above hypothesis and suggests that the difference is unlikely due to response bias.

Conclusions

- Overall, few differences existed between those who agreed to participate in the mailback questionnaire and those who did not agree to participate in the mailback questionnaire.
- Mailback responses are generally representative of the population that was interviewed.
- Most of the variables tested did not indicate practical difference between the mailback questionnaire and interview results.

Table A3. A summary of the comparisons between those that agreed to the mailback questionnaire and those that did not, those that did and did not respond to the mailback questionnaire and between the interview and mailback responses for the Prince Rupert VC.

Prince Rupert VC	✓ Indicates a Practical Difference		
	Agreed to Mailback	Mailback Responses (Non-Response Bias)	Interview/Mailback Responses
Origin	N	N	n/a
Gender	N	N	N
Age	✓	✓	N
Party Size	N	N	N
Parties With Children	N	N	N
Education	N	N	n/a
Satisfaction with VC	N	✓	n/a
Days Away from Home	✓	N	✓
Days in BC	N	N	N
Daily Expenditure ¹	✓	✓	✓
Learn About New Activities	N	N	n/a
Extra Time in Region	N	N	N
Extra Time in Other Parts of BC	N	N	N
Take Another Trip To/In BC	✓	N	N

1. Expenditure comparisons only include those that could answer the question in the interview. Those that started their trip on the day of the interview and those that did not answer the question were excluded. The top and bottom 2% of responses were trimmed.

Table A4. A summary of differences in data between the interview and mailback questionnaire at the Prince Rupert VC.

Concept/Questions	Trip Characteristics Results		Practical Difference?
	Interview	Mailback	
Mean Days Away From Home	39.0	33.0	Yes
Mean Days In BC	19.9	17.4	No
Mean Daily Expenditure	\$190.07	\$233.44	Yes
Mean Party Size	3.0	2.3	No
Age - Under 24 Years	2.5%	1.0%	No
Age - 25-34 Years	14.5%	13.1%	No
Age - 35-44 Years	13.7%	7.1%	No
Age - 45-54 Years	20.3%	15.2%	No
Age - 55-64 Years	30.2%	38.4%	No
Age - 65 Years or Older	18.7%	25.3%	No
Gender - Male	57.5%	48.1%	No
Gender - Female	42.5%	51.9%	No
Parties with Children	14.3%	9.1%	No
Extra Time in Region (% said 'Yes')	17.3%	27.2%	No
Extra Time in Other Parts of BC (% said 'Yes')	13.5%	21.6%	No
Take Another Trip To/In BC (% said 'Yes')	41.4%	43.3%	No

Appendix D – Suggestions to Improve Services Offered at the Visitor Centre

What suggestions do you have to improve the services offered at the Centre?

- Be at same level as visitors - sit on stool
- Better communication between other centres - up to date info
- Better directions to centre for cruise ship passengers
- Cafe
- Campsite on the waterfront to tie up boat
- Daily attractions - events board - tidal charts for butze
- Disastified with signage directions to vc and parking for rv's
- Free coffee - jokingly, but not a bad idea
- Free internet
- Guided nature tours for walking
- Hard to find
- Have ak ferry schedule available
- Have older ppl that know more about area
- Headings for brochures
- Improve signage to get here
- Internet
- Internet and coffee
- Local info - family friendly activities
- Lockers
- Longer hours
- Longer internet limits
- Lower cost of bc map too expensive
- Maybe include local art - pg has a gallery
- More advertisement for cannery
- More advertisements of local events
- More booking opportunities
- More computers to use
- More info on buses
- More info qci
- More knowledgeable at desk about brochures
- More signage (4)
- More tours (2)
- Not as good as nova scotia (booking accommodations)
- Not open on Sunday evening
- Passport stamp at visitor centre
- Phone cards for sale
- Postcards
- Provide hwy maps
- Quality of fishing - too many i don't know answers, local calls should be available
- Sell phonecards to visitors
- Smithers info
- Upset that there were no whale tours
- Visa info
- Walking tour of town
- Weather forecast displayed/printed
- Wireless internet
- Wireless internet for palm pilots

Appendix E – Other Visitor Centres Visited in British Columbia

Table A5. Location of other VCs visited by mailback survey respondents.

Location of Other VC Visited ¹	#. of Responses	Location of Other VC Visited ¹	#. of Responses
100 Mile House	3	New Denver	1
Ayansa*	1	New Hazelton	2
Banff*	4	Old Hazelton*	1
Barkerville*	1	Osoyoos	2
Campbell River	3	Pacific Rim National Park*	2
Canmore*	1	Penticton	1
Cache Creek*	1	Port Alberni	2
Chetwynd	1	Port Hardy (Van Island).	3
Clearwater	1	Port McNeill	1
Cranbrook	1	Prince George	13
Dawson City*	1	Nass Valley*	1
Dawson Creek	5	Princeton	1
Every stop along the way*	1	Queen Charlotte	2
Everywhere*	1	Queen Charlotte Islands*	2
Fernie	1	Quesnel	3
Field (Banff and Jasper National Parks)*	1	Revelstoke	7
Fort Nelson	4	Salmon Arm	1
Fort St. James	1	Sicamous	1
Fort St. John	1	Smithers	12
Fraser Lake*	1	Squamish	1
Golden	2	Stewart	4
Granisle	2	Stopped in at centres in most places we stayed*	1
Haida Gwaii (including many watchman sites)*	2	Taylor	1
Hope	1	Terrace	12
Houston	3	Tofino (Van Island)	3
Hudsons Hope	1	Tumbler Ridge	1
Hyder*	1	Ucluelet	1
In every place we visited, even if we took only a short break to do laundry, etc.*	1	Vancouver	5
Jasper*	5	Vanderhoof	1
Just about every town we visited to use restrooms, obtain brochures, ask questions, pickup maps.*	1	Victoria	9
Kamloops	1	Virtually every town we visited.*	1
Kazan (Hazelton)	1	Waterton Park*	1
Kelowna	2	Watson Lake*	1
Kitimat	2	West Glacier Nat. Park.*	1
Moricetown*	1	Whistler	2
Mount Robson	2	Williams Lake	7
Nanaimo	1	Windermere*	1
Nelson	3	Wherever our children could get their travel passports stamped.*	1

1. The locations marked with a * are not part of the official British Columbia VC network but are listed here because they were mentioned by respondents.

Appendix F – Comments from Prince Rupert Visitor Centre Mailback Survey

Comments are typed exactly as they appear in the mailback surveys – sentences were not corrected for spelling and grammar.

Comments are grouped into the general categories of staff friendly and helpful, appreciated VC services and amenities, suggestions for VC improvement, enjoyed Prince Rupert area and other.

Staff Friendly and Helpful

- Friendly, helpful staff.
- Friendly, beautiful and hope more people visit it. Great experience.
- The girl that interviewed us was very polite. The girls inside the visitors centre went out of their way to help us. A very good experience all around.
- Very helpful.
- Friendly and very helpful staff.
- Were very helpful and informed. We had visited here 4 years ago and thought the same then.
- People were nice, well informed.
- Very friendly girl.
- We were impressed with the attitude of the staff there. Nothing was too much trouble for them. Our 3 days of sightseeing, restaurants etc. was done on their advice.
- The young lady who we dealt with helped us hire a car in Port Hardy for the next but one day. This solved a travel problem and put our minds at rest. She was courteous, helpful and friendly.
- Nice! Exceptionally friendly staff.
- Excellent service. Great personalities. Very valuable information.
- The people were knowledgeable and friendly. They called and found a charter boat booking for me.
- Friendly staff.
- Manager very helpful re Queen Charlottes info for the Khutzeymateen. Fabulous, saw Lucy & 3 cubs!
- Very friendly staff!
- Good staff!
- Very helpful advice given.
- Very professional staff at Visitor Centre.
- We were impressed with the outstanding service at all BC visitor centres.
- Very friendly staff.
- Friendly people. Clean, inviting.
- Enjoyed talking with staff, watched introduction shows when showing. Most very informative and friendly. Good e-mail in some. Plus washrooms all good.

Appreciated Visitor Centre's Services and Amenities

- Lots of information, lots of shops. Took lots of pictures. Very nice.
- It was everything a visitor centre should be.
- PRVC was the best centre we visited during our trip.
- Very pleasant.
- Yes, used internet to email family back home.
- Very impressed with visitor centres throughout BC. Especially opening hours, late in summer, very smart! Free internet was great for booking future attractions on trip.
- A very nice centre.
- The building is very clean and people very helpful.
- It was very nice, good information, helpful staff. A meeting point for us while waiting for ferry.
- A lot of useful print information and helpful staff, as return visitors we had few questions.
- Very clean; well presented & organized information. Friendly & informative staff.
- Well set up, friendly knowledgeable staff.

Suggestions for Visitor Centre Improvement

- Didn't seem to be up to speed on the Alaska Ferry from PR to Ketchikan.
- Was given wrong information regarding ferry service, arrival times from Alaska.
- We did not manage to arrange a trip to see the bears, because we already had the train & ferry booked. This info was important 'before' we arrived to Prince Rupert. Web site?

Enjoyed Prince Rupert Area

- Been there several times, always a great place to visit.
- Wonderful lunch at Smiles.
- Great place especially when fish are biting.
- Very big change in area from last visit. Good experience and lots to see in shops.
- We liked the shops and restaurant.
- It's a great place, very nice and clean. Like the shopping centre there and the view (the water, ocean).

Other

- Interesting.
- It is important that things advertised in a newspaper like a parade specify that they are 3 to 4 hours away.
- Very nice.
- All the tours to see sealife were closed the same day. Impossible to have our trip if you stay only one day!
- Nice to see the Cow Bay area expanding. A nice day trip from Terrace, too.
- This was a super trip as we did not have a plan. Just sneaked in all the spots of interest, downtown, etc. A very relaxing trip. Info centres were well used, museums, libraries, etc.