



Hiker on the Mountain above Wilderness Lake in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast.

Photo credit: Destination BC/Kari Medig

2016 smashes BC tourism visitation records

British Columbia's tourism industry had an exceptional year in 2016, with a total of 5,532,065 overnight international visitor arrivals to the province, including 3,620,975 visitors from the US, 1,200,481 from Asia Pacific, and 535,238 visitors from Europe. International visitor arrivals were up 12.3% over 2015. This means an additional 605,918 visitors from international markets arrived in BC in 2016 over the previous year. BC saw increases from key markets, such as Mexico (up 33.4%); Australia (21.1%); China (18.2%); United Kingdom (17.3%) & India (9.9%). The strong growth in the tourism sector can be linked to a number of factors, including the marketing efforts of Destination BC and our industry partners, increased number of direct flights, and the easing of visa restrictions. [Read More](#)

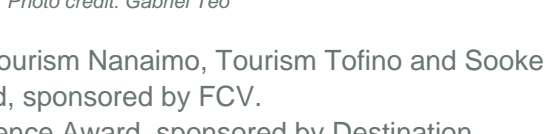
New report confirms major economic impact of BC tourism

The Value of Tourism 2015: A Snapshot of Tourism in BC profiles the economic contribution of the tourism industry. It includes tourism-generated GDP, revenue, employment, wages and salaries, as well as tourism tax revenue. Among the key findings for 2015, tourism GDP grew more rapidly than that of the BC economy as a whole at 5.6%, compared to 3.1%. In 2015, tourism generated \$15.7 billion in revenue, a 5.3% increase over 2014, and \$1.1 billion in tourism-generated tax revenue, an increase of 8.9%. Among all of BC's natural resource industries, tourism generates the highest GDP—that is, our industry's economic bang for the buck—not only the highest direct GDP revenues but also the highest spinoff benefits. [Read More](#)

Congratulations to the 2017 BC Tourism Award winners

It's time to pop the BC bubbly and toast our hardworking colleagues and industry partners. The 2017 BC Tourism Awards were celebrated on February 23 at a gala during the BC Tourism Industry Conference in Victoria. This year's winners are:

- **Yolanta Malkovska, 8th Generation Vineyard:** Customer Service Award, sponsored by **WorldHost®**.
- **Landsea Tours & Adventures:** Employees First Award, sponsored by go2HR.
- **"Share Vancouver Island" Campaign,** a collaboration between Black Ball Ferry Line, Tourism Nanaimo, Tourism Tofino and Sooke Region Tourism Association: Innovation Award, sponsored by FCV.
- **Free Spirit Spheres Inc.:** Remarkable Experience Award, sponsored by Destination Think!
- **Tourism Golden:** BC Destination Marketing Organization Association Professional Excellence Award, sponsored by Destination Marketing Association and the Tourism Industry Association of Canada.



Minister Shirley Bond (in red) with the 2017 BC Tourism Industry Award winners.
Photo credit: Gabriel Teo

Congratulations to all. Read more about the awards [here](#).

Destination BC welcomes new Tourism Marketing Committee members

Destination BC would like to welcome our new Tourism Marketing Committee (TMC) members: **Erika Stenson** (Head of Marketing and Business Development, Royal BC Museum), and **Tom Rosner** (Vice President Marketing & Sales, Resorts of the Canadian Rockies). We would also like to thank our departing members **Harley Elias** (Faculty, Tourism & Hospitality and Business Programs, North Island College), and **Thom Tischik**, (Executive Director, Travel Penticton), for their service on our committee. Our board members **Josie Tyabji** and **Loring Phinney** will also serve on the TMC. [Read More](#)

Co-op Marketing Partnership Program update

Funding notifications were sent to applicants on January 31, 2017. Details on funding decisions will be provided once all contracts are signed. Please remember that Post Project Reports for the 2016/17 year are due no later than March 15, 2017. If you have any questions, please contact coop@destinationbc.ca. [Learn More](#)

Canada Corroboree leads to big exposure Down Under



The team of Canadian delegates gathered together in Sydney to cap a successful Canada Corroboree. From February 1 to 9 the team visited Perth, Melbourne, Brisbane, as well as Sydney.

This year's Canada Corroboree roadshow, hosted by Destination Canada, took Destination BC and partners to seven shows. The team connected with 800 travel agents while promoting travel to Canada and BC. The yearly roadshow allows access to travel agents, tour operators, wholesalers and media. Over 60% of the Australian consumers still buy their travel to Canada via a travel agent.

Research Round-Up

Tourism Indicators

Our year-end Tourism Indicators publication for 2016 can be found [here](#). Stay tuned for upcoming Newsletters that will include new stats for 2017.

Custom Entries

In December 2016, BC had another great month of overnight visitor arrivals: entries to BC were up 13.3% over December 2015. The year overall was also exceptional with an increase in visitors of 12.3% over 2015. Total Asia/Pacific entries for the year were up 14.4% over 2015; and total Europe overnight visitor arrivals were up 13.1%. The International Visitor Arrivals publication summarizes customs-entries data to British Columbia and Canada from selected markets of origin. See the full report on international visitor arrivals [here](#).

The monthly International Arrivals by Province publication provides insight into overnight visitor arrivals for each province. The publication can be found [here](#).

Updates from our team in the United Kingdom

Destination BC UK representative David Ezra promoted BC at the TravMedia's International Media Marketplace quarterly event in London last month. Ezra discussed story angles with representatives of the *Daily Telegraph*, *Daily Express*, *Travel Trade Gazette* and Independent.co.uk at this important networking gathering of UK media. [Read More](#)

Press trips highlight joys of BC powder

Our travel media team is knee-deep in the snowy season. Destination BC recently led two Powder Highway press trips for key media, which ran simultaneously. The "Ski Like a Pro, Kootenay Style" press trip involved Revelstoke, Kicking Horse and Panorama. The "Uncover Powder Highway Secrets" press trip covered Fernie, Kimberley and Panorama. Outlets included *National Geographic Traveler*, *Forbes*, *SKIING Magazine*, *Denver Post*, *Doctors/Dentists Across Canada*, *The Carousel* (Australia), and *New Zealand Herald*. [Read More](#)



Media guests from Powder Highway press trips enjoy the view at Panorama Mountain Resort.

Whistler trip for winners promotes BC ski in China

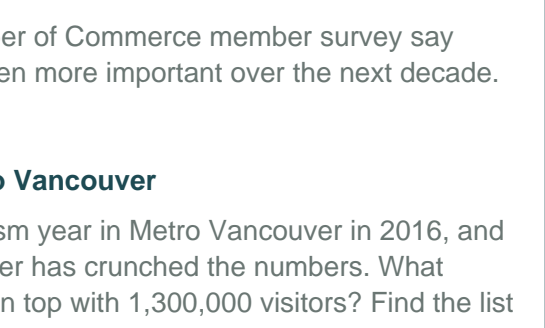


The Nanshan Mogul winners, shown here, were given the trip prizes in front of more than 50 media guests.

Winners at the 10th annual Nanshan Mogul event in Beijing received an enviable prize: trips to Whistler. Destination BC China, Tourism Whistler, and Whistler Blackcomb collaborated to sponsor the trips. As the premium place to ski in Beijing, Nanshan has been Destination Canada and Destination BC China's key marketing partner to promote ski traffic to Canada. [Read More](#)

Chilliwack hosts tours with help from Visitor Services Innovation fund

The Chilliwack Visitor Centre hosted three familiarization (FAM) tours for local frontline staff and Visitor Centre staff from surrounding communities last summer and fall. A total of 42 participants experienced the diverse range of Chilliwack's tourism products. Destination BC's 2016 Visitor Services Innovation Fund supported the trips.



The familiarization tours, such as this rafting trip, were such a success that Tourism Chilliwack has allocated budget to host them annually.

GOOD TO KNOW

Our Annual Service Plan is ready

As a Provincial Crown corporation, Destination BC prepares an Annual Service Plan each year, outlining the Corporation's strategy, goals, performance measures and targets for the next three years. You can access the new Service Plan [here](#).

Tourism a top sector, new BC Chamber survey shows

Nearly 90% of respondents to a recent BC Chamber of Commerce member survey say British Columbia's visitor economy will become even more important over the next decade. [Learn More](#)

New list ranks most visited attractions in Metro Vancouver

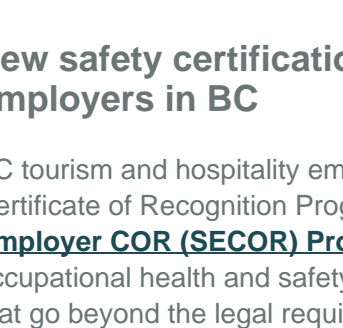


Photo credit: Destination BC/Alex Strohl

It was a banner tourism year in Metro Vancouver in 2016, and Business in Vancouver has crunched the numbers. What attraction came out on top with 1,300,000 visitors? Find the list [here](#).

Apply for Boating BC grants and sponsorships by April 14

Did you know? The Boating BC Association sponsors events and provides grants to non-profit organizations with an aim of supporting participation in, knowledge of and access to recreational boating. Deadline is April 14, 2017. [Learn More](#)

New safety certification program available for small tourism employers in BC

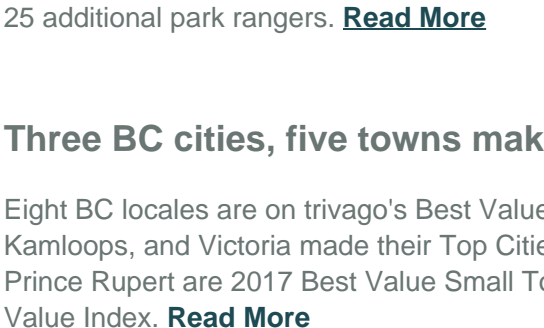
BC tourism and recognition employers with fewer than 20 employees can now participate in the Certificate of Recognition Program (COR) that is specifically designed for them. The **Small Employer COR (SECOR) Program** was recently launched by go2HR. The COR Program is an occupational health and safety audit, certification and incentive program, rewarding employers that go beyond the legal requirements by taking the "best practice" approach to health and safety in the workplace. [Read More](#)

go2HR's Industry Health & Safety Specialists designated to tourism regions in BC

Each BC tourism region will now have a designated Industry Health and Safety Specialist available to assist tourism and hospitality employers with their occupational health and safety needs. [Learn More](#)

Good News

Eleven BC hotels land on the TripAdvisor 2017 Traveler's Choice list



The Wickaninnish Inn on Chesterman Beach near Tofino.
Photo credit: Destination BC/Adrian Dorst

Properties from across British Columbia made the TripAdvisor 2017 Traveler's Choice list. [Learn More](#)

BC Parks funding will fuel hiring of 25 more rangers

Dreaming of sunny summer days? BC provincial parks receive more than 23-million visits each year from hikers, campers, boaters and swimmers. As part of the BC Parks Future Strategy, a portion of BC's \$35-million investment will go toward park operations, including hiring of around 25 additional park rangers. [Read More](#)

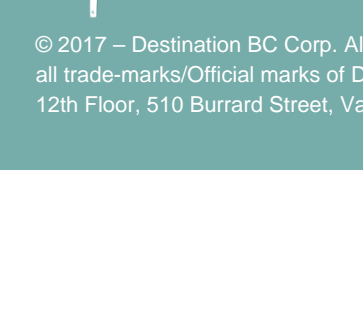
Three BC cities, five towns make trivago best-value list for Canada

Eight BC locales are on trivago's Best Value Destinations of 2017 list for Canada. Kelowna, Kamloops, and Victoria made their Top Cities list. Smithers, Hope, Quesnel, Port Alberni and Prince Rupert are 2017 Best Value Small Towns. The findings are based on the trivago Best Value Index. [Read More](#)

Province supports Canada Sevens Series men's rugby tourney

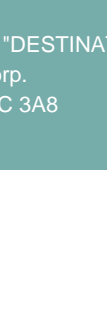
Game on! The 2017 HSBC Canada Sevens men's rugby tournament has just scored \$220,000 in funding from the BC government. [Learn More](#)

News and Events



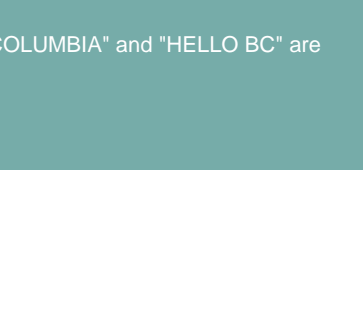
Mountain Travel Symposium

This year's Mountain Travel Symposium runs March 26 to April 1 at the Fairmont Banff Springs. The MTS is "the largest and longest running annual gathering of mountain travel professionals in the world." [Learn More](#)



ITB Berlin 2017

ITB Berlin runs March 8 to 12 this year. The event, billed as "the world's leading travel trade show", welcomes participants from 187 countries and includes 10,000 exhibitors and 26,000 visitors. [Learn More](#)



Canada Media Marketplace 2017

Watch for news from Canada Media Marketplace, held April 3 to 5, 2017 in New York. CMM unites Canadian tourism partners with top US media. [Read More](#)



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