

GOING PLACES

MAY 2022

Wanuskewin Heritage Park
navigates the journey to
World Heritage Site status

John Lagimodiere
discusses recruiting
and hiring Indigenous
employees

Prairie Bee Meadery sees
change as a matter of
course

Tourism Saskatchewan
and Travel Manitoba join
forces to attract U.S.
anglers

SASKATCHEWAN'S TOURISM INDUSTRY NEWSLETTER



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Material subject to change.

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COVER IMAGE

Darlene Brander, CEO,
Wanuskewin Heritage Park

Past issues of *Going Places* are available on
[Business.TourismSaskatchewan.com/going-places](https://business.tourismsaskatchewan.com/going-places).

Saskatchewan comprises lands covered by Treaties 2, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 10, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dakota, Dene, Lakota, Nakota and Saulteaux peoples, and the traditional home of the Métis.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Order bulk copies of the 2022 Saskatchewan Travel Guide.....	2
Message from the CEO	
Luring international travellers with outdoor adventure, food and hospitality	3
Trent Fraser joins Board of Directors	3
In Conversation	
John Lagimodiere discusses recruiting and hiring Indigenous employees	4
Wanuskewin Heritage Park patiently navigates the journey to World Heritage Site status	5
Research and Trends	
Survey shows the value of Tourism Saskatchewan's industry communications.....	6
Going paperless with mobile surveys	7
Marketing Saskatchewan	
Tourism Saskatchewan and Travel Manitoba join forces on campaign to attract U.S. anglers.....	8
Firing up for the 2022 festival season	9
Learn tips for creating event marketing and business plans	10
Tourism Saskatchewan teams with Saskatchewan Roughriders to "Bring it to the Heartland" in 2022	11
Destination and Workforce Development	
Prairie Bee Meadery sees change as a matter of course.....	12
Access funding for employee training and work placement.....	13
Saskatchewanwanderer program refreshed and improved.....	14
Destination Canada reports on key trends influencing tourism...15	
World Travel & Tourism Council offers recommendations to address labour shortages.....	16
Tourism Apprenticeship Program supports training in two tourism trades	16

Order bulk copies of the 2022 Saskatchewan Travel Guide



The 2022 Saskatchewan Travel Guide is now available to display and share with visitors. Order your FREE quantities of the guide by completing the bulk order form (available on [Business.TourismSaskatchewan.com](https://business.tourismsaskatchewan.com) in the Marketing Your Business section) and emailing it to bulkorders@tourismsask.com.

Featuring engaging copy and impressive photographs, the 2022 Saskatchewan Travel Guide offers top travel suggestions in south, central and northern Saskatchewan, as well as holiday highlights in Regina and Saskatoon. Each section also includes winter content and feature articles that put the spotlight on the area's key experiences – from culinary road trips and family fun in Saskatchewan parks to Indigenous tourism destinations and rural boutique shopping.

For added convenience, conceptual maps in each section include Saskatchewan regional, provincial and national parks, as well as major attractions throughout the area. An extensive index provides travellers with contact information for the businesses and attractions mentioned in the guide.

The new 2021-2023 Official Saskatchewan Road Map and 2022 Saskatchewan Fishing & Hunting Map are also available to order.

MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Luring international travellers with outdoor adventure, food and hospitality



By the time readers open this issue of *Going Places*, Tourism Saskatchewan's spring marketing campaign will be well underway. At the same time, we're deep into activities to boost the outfitting industry and entice U.S. anglers and hunters to Saskatchewan.

Restoring important international markets and attracting new high-yielding niche markets are key to getting the visitor economy back on track and reaching our target of \$3.6 billion in annual travel expenditures by 2030. That's a 50 per cent increase above pre-pandemic levels. This goal represents a bold challenge to the province's tourism sector – one that Tourism Saskatchewan is determined to help our industry achieve.

To reach this target, Saskatchewan's tourism industry needs to continue to maintain high standards of market-readiness and constantly evolve to meet rapidly changing market demand.

While Saskatchewan and Alberta residents remain the bread and butter of our markets, key investments need to be made to attract higher-spending long-haul travellers from across Canada, the U.S. and overseas.

It's exciting to be out in full force again at Rendez-vous Canada (RVC) – the nation's largest business-to-business travel trade marketplace, which will be held on May 24-27 in Toronto. In-person attendance is expected to be as high as 1,000 buyers and sellers, while another 150 buyers are participating virtually.

The value of making a meaningful impression and forging relationships at RVC cannot be overstated. This year, Tourism Saskatchewan is taking full advantage of the opportunity to host the full delegation for breakfast – aptly themed *Wake Up to Saskatchewan*. As you can guess, we will be serving up generous helpings of our signature brand of hospitality, coupled with a menu showcasing Saskatchewan products and flavours.

This spotlight at RVC, along with our meetings with buyers and sellers will not just whet their appetite, but also persuade them that Saskatchewan can satisfy pent-up demand for new and meaningful travel experiences. In addition to Tourism Saskatchewan representatives, seven industry partners will be on hand to promote the province.

It is always gratifying to see some immediate gains from our efforts at RVC, but we know that it's in the long-term where our work will really show results.

Jonathan Potts

Trent Fraser joins Board of Directors

Tourism Saskatchewan recently welcomed Trent Fraser to the Board of Directors. He brings a wealth of skills as a business consultant with over 30 years of experience in marketing, sales, brand management, special event/project management and business development. Fraser also has experience with diverse governance models and holds a certificate in board governance.

He is best known for re-energizing the Saskatchewan Roughrider brand and orchestrating memorable campaigns, such as *The Melon Head* and *Heart of the Nation*. Additionally, he chaired marketing initiatives for the Western Hockey League, Hockey Canada and several high-profile events hosted in Regina. In 2010, he was managing director of the Saskatchewan Pavilion at the Olympic and Paralympic Games, held in Vancouver.

Fraser has served on numerous boards and committees and was previously Vice-Chair of Tourism Saskatchewan. In 2017, he received the Tourism Builder Award for exceptional leadership and contributions that have advanced Saskatchewan's tourism sector.



IN CONVERSATION

John Lagimodiere discusses recruiting and hiring Indigenous employees

John Lagimodiere is President and owner of Aboriginal Consulting Services (ACS), an award-winning company that began delivering Indigenous awareness education in 1997 and expanded into facilitation and consulting services. His Métis family tree includes great, great, great, great, great grandmother Marie Anne Lagimodiere, who was the first white woman to settle in Western Canada and grandmother to Louis Riel.

Lagimodiere is a successful and respected entrepreneur. His work bridges Indigenous and non-Indigenous cultures and he understands the challenges faced by employers and employees. In an interview with Tourism Saskatchewan, he shared approaches and networks for recruiting Indigenous employees, along with tips for creating an inviting and inclusive workplace.

What is important for employers to understand about Saskatchewan's labour pool?

In Saskatchewan, 33 per cent of the Aboriginal population is under the age of 14. We have a growing, young Indigenous population both on and off reserve, and that's going to be the future labour pool of Saskatchewan – a full third of the population by 2045. A lot of Baby Boomers are reaching retirement age in the next few years, so we're teetering on change. There is so much potential in the Indigenous community. We just have to work together through things like accepting the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action to get there. Now is the time.

What are some of the common misunderstandings or missteps that prevent businesses from accessing this labour pool?

You have to remember that it's a different community altogether, so you have to recruit differently and build relationships. It's not like you can just put up a sign and they'll come to you. They may not know anything about your organization, so you have to reach out to the community.

What kind of training does it take to work at your business or in your industry? Find the schools that offer the training or start partnerships with organizations like Gabriel Dumont Institute or the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies – they've got the communities, they know the need, they can find people and they prescreen.

Never forget about Indigenous media – Missinipi Broadcasting, Eagle Feather News, Prince Albert Grand Council Tribune, for example. Almost every community in northern Saskatchewan has its own radio station.

Again, there are ways to reach people through the schools. The University of Saskatchewan Indigenous Students Centre has a large community. There are about ten career fairs throughout the province and two big ones in Saskatoon and Regina. Go to where the students are, where the employees are. When you post jobs, think of those gathering places in your area, such as a tribal council office – they've all got employment folks who are working with people in the community.

What are some tools that small- and medium-sized businesses can put in place to improve the hiring process?

When you are hiring, where are you hiring from? When you are looking at a résumé, are you screening out or screening in? If there is limited work experience, understand that if they grew up or are living on a reserve, there is not as much economy as in a nearby town. Think about the different connections to the labour market that our communities have experienced historically.

Communicate clearly about expectations – what you need from them, what they can expect from you. When you are interviewing, ask open-ended questions and encourage conversation.



Provide new employees with a mentor – someone who is their go-to for specific questions and can explain the language of the workplace. This is a basic HR best practice. If you are doing this with every new employee, you are going to get better retention.

What are some policies that businesses can adopt to ensure that Indigenous employees feel supported and empowered?

Start by developing an Indigenous strategy. With that, you commit to understanding the community and the issues, and understanding the history. That brings you to the truth and, from there, you can go forward with reconciliation. Recognize things like National Indigenous History Month and National Indigenous Peoples Day. Wear orange shirts every Friday or at least the last Friday of every month and, for sure, on National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. Bring in a guest speaker or a survivor. Attend a community powwow or events like Treaty Days. Elevate the conversation. Be supportive.

Sometimes employers fear saying the wrong thing or making a mistake. We've been kept apart for so long that there's all this trepidation, and there shouldn't be. We're people who obviously grew up with different histories under a shared umbrella. It's important to understand that history, realize the similarities and work together in the future. In this era of reconciliation, there has to be greater understanding and investment – more effort and more training programs because of that historical, still traumatic impact on our communities. If an employer comes at it with patience, persistence and sincerity, things will work out.

Wanuskewin Heritage Park patiently navigates the journey to World Heritage Site status



Wanuskewin Heritage Park

Darlene Brander, CEO

"Wanuskewin's story is a Saskatchewan story in which the world is interested. A UNESCO designation is going to have a positive ripple effect and benefit businesses and communities across the province."
- Darlene Brander, CEO

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is committed to the "identification, protection and preservation" of cultural and natural heritage assets. UNESCO encourages countries that have signed the 1972 World Heritage Convention to identify potential candidates and submit proposals for inclusion on the list of World Heritage Sites.

The process is lengthy and complex. In 2013, Wanuskewin Heritage Park embarked on its mission to earn UNESCO designation. By 2017, it inched closer when it was added to Canada's Tentative List of UNESCO World Heritage Sites.

"That recognition was exciting and signalled the next step – crafting our Outstanding Universal Values (OUV) statement," Darlene Brander, CEO, said. "Work on the statement began in earnest in 2019 and continues. It describes how we are unique in the world and is a key foundational item for the UNESCO nomination dossier package."

Brander stresses that there is still a lot to finalize between now and the projected designation date of 2025. "We need to ensure stakeholder support and keep the public informed of our intent and progress. We are also compiling research from over 40 years of archaeological excavation at Wanuskewin and using this as the foundation of our dossier. It's quite the endeavour – almost like putting together a successful bid to host the Olympics," she said.

Wanuskewin has numerous qualities in its favour. The site contains Canada's longest-running archaeological research project. Work has uncovered evidence of human occupation from over 6,400 years ago, along with traces of every cultural group that existed on the Northern Plains.

Since 1992, Wanuskewin has been a flagship tourism attraction. Activities and programming highlight the scientific research underway, as well as focus on arts and culture, ecological

sustainability, environmental protection, Indigenous history and traditions, and reconciliation.

The park has tripled in size since it opened in 1992 and now occupies 741 acres. Expanding the land base was a goal from early on as founders, Elders and partners envisioned a day when bison would return to the area.

More than 30 million bison once roamed the North American plains. By the 1880s, they numbered fewer than 1,000. Their near extinction, one of the grim consequences of colonization, would forever alter the traditional way of life for Indigenous peoples.

In December 2019, Wanuskewin welcomed six yearling female bison from Grasslands National Park. A partnership with Parks Canada enabled the transfer. Days later, four bred cows and a bull arrived from the U.S. These five animals have ties to the Yellowstone National Park herd.

The first calf was born on Earth Day 2020. Two years later, Wanuskewin's herd is 18 strong and growing. In April, Wanuskewin announced the birth of the first offspring of the Canadian and U.S. herd members. "What makes these babies so special is that, genetically, they are the closest to bison that roamed these plains 150 years ago," Brander said. "They really represent the past, the present and the future."

In late 2021, Wanuskewin announced a major archaeological discovery – a 1,200-year-old petroglyph exposed by bison activity – wallowing on the ground and loosening the packed prairie grassland. Careful excavation of the site revealed the stone tool used to carve the rock image, as well as three additional petroglyphs.

"This discovery has fueled momentum towards UNESCO recognition in that it kept our journey front and centre in peoples' minds," Brander said. "The petroglyphs made international headlines and served as a catalyst for people to elevate their understanding and appreciation of Northern Plains Indigenous culture. We appreciated working with partners, like Tourism Saskatchewan, to tell the story."

Brander imagines the day when Wanuskewin officially receives news of its UNESCO designation. "I think about what it will mean for the park and for the province," she said. "It's going to mean that our place in history is assured, and that we, as a community, have said "yes" to conservation and preservation, leaving a legacy for future generations."

Being named Saskatchewan's first World Heritage Site will create a ripple effect that touches all four corners of our province. "Job creation, economic spin offs in the retail and hospitality sectors, and significant tourism growth are among the extraordinary benefits," Brander added. "Above all, this puts Saskatchewan on an international stage and begins a dialogue with the global community – telling our stories and showcasing the many voices who call this place home. Although UNESCO designation is a few years away, the work, the investment and critical partnerships need to happen now to get us there."

Wanuskewin receives Global Vision Award

The Travel & Leisure Global Vision Awards pay tribute to people, companies, destination and organizations that lead the development of sustainable and responsible travel products, practices and experiences. Wanuskewin Heritage Park was recently named among the 2022 award recipients, honoured for its work in restoring Plains bison to their ancestral homeland.

Global Vision Award winners stand out for their thoughtful leadership and creative problem solving, and for taking action to protect communities and environments throughout the world.

RESEARCH AND TRENDS

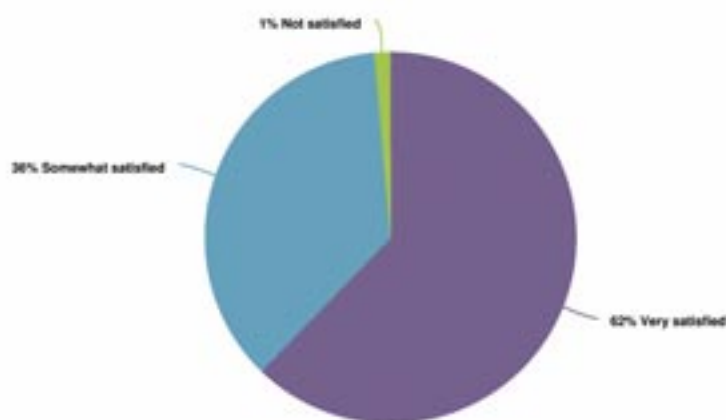
Survey shows the value of Tourism Saskatchewan's industry communications

Tourism Saskatchewan recently conducted an online survey to gauge satisfaction with its industry communications. Operators and stakeholders throughout the province were contacted via email and invited to share their feedback on a number of communications resources, including the *Industry Update* e-newsletter, *Going Places* and the online Business Hub.

More than 250 people participated in the survey that was open from March 3-28. Data collected will help improve the content and information that Tourism Saskatchewan provides to industry.

In general, 98.7 per cent of respondents expressed satisfaction with Tourism Saskatchewan's efforts to keep industry informed about programs, services and events through its primary communications channels.

How satisfied are you with Tourism Saskatchewan's efforts to keep you informed about program offerings, services and events that are relevant to your business?



As for frequency of communications, 87 per cent agreed that it was "just right." This response was particularly valuable, given the changes to format and frequency of the *Industry Update* e-newsletter since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. From March 2020 and onward, *Industry Update* was distributed multiple times each week. It became a fundamental source of information about federal and provincial relief programs, webinars and online training opportunities, as well as Tourism Saskatchewan programs to assist industry and speed recovery.

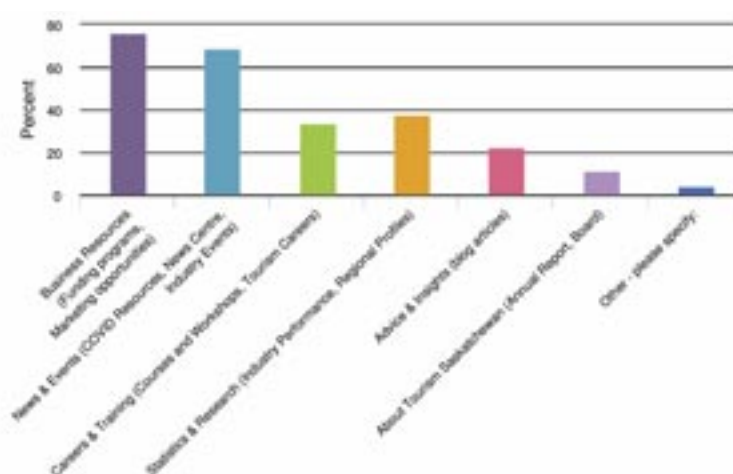
Currently, the e-newsletter is circulated weekly. *Industry Update* maintains an impressive open rate of 28 per cent.

Almost 86 per cent of survey participants identified *Industry Update* as the top form of communication from Tourism Saskatchewan. A large number, 66 per cent, have accessed programs, resources, webinars and other websites that were reported in *Industry Update* stories.

Person-to-person contact was the next most valued form of communications, measuring 48.7 per cent. In third place, *Going Places* received 34.6 per cent of the vote. Over 50 per cent of respondents read most or almost all of *Going Places*, while 45 per cent scan it for articles of interest or read certain sections.

The Business Hub is becoming a go-to resource for industry, visited weekly by 13 per cent of survey participants while 47 per cent access it once or twice a month. Top sections are Business Resources (75.6 per cent), News and Events (68.7 per cent), Statistics and Research (37.8 per cent) and Careers and Training (33.3 per cent). Funding and marketing opportunities were topics most important to businesses, measuring 67.7 and 52 per cent respectively.

What sections of Business.TourismSaskatchewan.com do you typically visit or have the most interest in?



Success in communicating important information was evident. Percentages measured in the mid-to-high-80s for efforts to provide industry with details about funding opportunities and education and training programs, while research and marketing opportunities scored over 81 per cent.

Sign up for Industry Update

Tourism Saskatchewan's e-newsletter highlights important announcements about funding programs, industry development resources, marketing opportunities, training initiatives, webinars and more. Email information.updates@tourismsaskatchewan.com to subscribe to *Industry Update*.

Going paperless with mobile surveys

Mobile technology has been a game changer for the tourism industry, through the collection of higher quality customer data and many other advantages. Mobile surveys can be easily deployed on smart phones and tablets, allowing for on-site interaction with visitors at events, information kiosks, displays and more. They offer several advantages over paper-based surveys and are a more environmentally friendly option.

Simple and practical for volunteers

Using a tablet in the field is far more manageable than carrying a stack of paper surveys and extra pens. Most people are comfortable with using a smart device, so staff and volunteers can learn to input survey responses with minimal training.

No internet? No problem

Mobile surveys can be deployed anywhere, even in locations without internet coverage.

Save time and reduce human error

Data collected in mobile surveys can be stored on the device and downloaded and analyzed instantly. The process saves hours of time spent on manual data entry and reduces double entry errors common to paper-based surveys.

Storage safety

Paper can be easily misplaced, discarded or destroyed, especially in a busy environment or outdoor location. Mobile survey data is stored on the device or in the cloud, which can be password-protected, copied or backed up for secure future access.

Mobile surveying in action: Waskesiu Lakeside Music Festival

In August 2019, Tourism Saskatchewan worked with the Waskesiu Lakeside Music Festival to deploy a mobile survey to help organizers gain a better understanding of the origin and make-up of festival attendees.

Tourism Saskatchewan provided festival volunteers with an online training video and supplied three iPads pre-loaded with a short survey. During the event, attendees were offered a small incentive to participate in the survey.

"We started with offering a choice of a two-for-one certificate – for either mini golf or ice cream," Jim Kerby, festival organizer, said. "After those ran out, we just asked people to participate. We were always very well received and hardly ever turned down."

The survey data collected enabled Tourism Saskatchewan to build a demographic profile of the typical festival-goer and revealed marketing



Waskesiu Lakeside Festival. Photo by Bob Holtsman.

tactics with the greatest impact. Kerby is a strong advocate for the technology. "We are big fans of the iPads for the survey – they worked really well, and we got lots of responses," he said.

Mobile surveys will continue to be conducted this summer. After a two-year hiatus, the Waskesui Lakeside Music Festival will resume on August 26-28.

To inquire about conducting consumer surveys and other research, contact Jeannette Lye at 306-787-9556, jeannette.lye@tourismsask.com.

Consider these tips for collecting consumer information

1. What Information do you have already? Look for customer data (e.g. where they live, party size, visitor feedback) in sources like guest books, comment cards, ticket sales information or reservation forms.
2. Get additional details by asking basic questions:
 - What brings you to the area? (e.g. visiting family and friends, vacation, business)
 - Where are you from? What is your postal code?
 - How did you hear about us? (e.g., social media, website, print, word-of-mouth)
 - How many people are travelling with you?
 - Is this your first time visiting?
3. Collect postal codes. They are links to a wealth of information about markets and consumers.
4. Keep information private. When people disclose personal information for any research purpose, they trust that details are private. Businesses have a responsibility to carefully maintain client data and prevent disclosure.

MARKETING SASKATCHEWAN

Tourism Saskatchewan and Travel Manitoba join forces on campaign to attract U.S. anglers



Northern Saskatchewan

Saskatchewan and Manitoba are like siblings. They share a few physical characteristics, are a blend of rural and urban sensibilities, and engage in playful rivalry over which province is truly the heart of Canada and has the better CFL team. Both endure the “flat prairie” stereotype, among others, and counter misconceptions with strategic, imaginative campaigns that entice visitors.

Like destinations worldwide, Saskatchewan and Manitoba experienced severe fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic. Outfitting was one of the hardest hit industries. Pre-pandemic, the fishing market was valued at well over \$200 million in each province. Border closures, travel restrictions and the loss of U.S. clientele in 2020 and 2021 had a catastrophic impact on outfitters, northern communities and people employed in the industry.

The two neighbours recently joined forces on a Prairie Fishing Program that would strategically market angling adventures in key U.S. states.

“Tourism Saskatchewan and Travel Manitoba are like-minded in so many ways and have often partnered in efforts to attract international visitors,” Jonathan Potts, Tourism Saskatchewan CEO, said. “Working collaboratively on a campaign was a logical decision given our common markets and the emphasis that we both place on support and growth of the outfitting industry – a fundamental part of tourism recovery strategies for our provinces.”

Illinois, Michigan, North Dakota and Wisconsin are currently key markets for both provinces, while Saskatchewan also invests in campaigns to appeal to anglers in Colorado, Iowa, Montana, Minnesota, Nebraska, South Dakota and Texas.

Saskatchewan and Manitoba share similarities in the high quality of fishing experiences, species size and diversity, and long-standing relationships between established operators and loyal clientele.

“Tourism is an industry driven by collaboration and co-operation and, in this case, Tourism Saskatchewan and Travel Manitoba view one another not as competitors but as like-minded partners,” Colin Ferguson, Travel Manitoba President and CEO, said. “Both our provinces need to recapture the visitors that were lost while pandemic travel restrictions were in place. We need to pull out all the stops to encourage our loyal U.S. customers to return.”

A \$1 million campaign in 2022 will focus on recovery of the outfitting sector in both provinces. The partnership boosts buying power for purchasing advertising in key markets and acquiring media exposure on popular outdoor adventure channels.

“Working together on this project is good for both provinces,” Potts added. “Saskatchewan and Manitoba each have an ambitious goal of 50 per cent growth in annual visitor spending by 2030. Enticing people here for the unparalleled fishing and outdoor adventures is central to reaching those long-term targets and, more immediately, driving a busy 2022 angling season and welcoming returning and new customers.”

Hosting popular outdoor media personalities and crews bring widespread attention to angling adventures in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. Media trips scheduled this summer include:

- The New Fly Fisher, June 14-19. Filming at Tazin Lake Lodge.
- Jason Mitchell Outdoors, July. Filming at Trails End Outfitters.
- Lindner’s Angling Edge, September 10-16. Filming at Lawrence Bay Lodge.

Firing up for the 2022 festival season



Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan Festival 2022 production of Macbeth, directed by William Brooks. Actors: Joshua Beaudry and Kristi Friday. Photo by Debra Marshall.

Reviving a busy calendar of festivals and events is vital to tourism growth and recovery. A recent report by Hill Strategies identifies the performing arts and festivals as cultural industries hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, losing 36 per cent of jobs and 52 per cent of sales between 2019 and 2020.

Confronted by significant challenges, many arts organizations and events took a pro-active stance and found innovative ways to maintain stability, keep artists employed and audiences engaged, and plan the next big celebration.

Tourism Saskatchewan reached out to three long-standing Saskatchewan festivals to discuss steering the operation through a global pandemic and some of the efficiencies and positive outcomes of extreme change.

Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan Festival, Saskatoon

The Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan Festival was anticipating a landmark year in 2020 with the opening of a new festival site and amphitheatre, and an expanded season to accommodate school matinees. "The pandemic crushed plans for the grand opening we envisioned, but we made the best of an unexpected situation," Melanie Rogowski, General Manager, said.

By September, the organization was able to host open-air donor events, in partnership with Prairie River Cruises. Imaginative outdoor lighting installations became another way to animate the site, showcase artists and uplift spirits. "With a grant from the City of Saskatoon, we were able to present a series of designs from December until spring. It was light amid the darkness," Rogowski said.

As an outdoor venue, the festival had some advantages and was one of the first large-scale annual events to re-emerge in 2021. A modified schedule, responsible health and safety precautions, and clear communication with patrons enabled the 2021 season to proceed with few complications. "We were one of the first things that people could come back to, and they appreciated the precautions in place and how the festival was set up to be a great experience for everyone," Skye Brandon, Co-Interim Festival Co-ordinator, said.

Health and safety remain a priority in preparing for the 2022 festival. "A challenge for live theatre productions and festivals, like ours, is that we have performers who need to be healthy all summer long," Rogowski said, noting that Shakespeare on the Saskatchewan employs 25 actors and crew members during a four-week rehearsal period and eight weeks of shows.

The pandemic highlighted the importance of supporting work/life balance for artists and staff, and being transparent and flexible in customer

relations. Rogowski stressed that clear understanding at the time of ticket purchase reduces headaches. "We are committed to ensuring that people know about policies that we have in place and can make informed decisions. At the same time, we recognize that circumstances can change. Last year, we developed a flexible cancellation and booking policy. If someone's individual circumstances change, we're not going to penalize them."

Regina Folk Festival

Josh Haugerud was being interviewed for the Regina Folk Festival (RFF) Executive Director position when COVID-19 struck. "I started the job by cancelling the 2020 festival," he said. "Our focus shifted to working with other Saskatchewan festivals on strategies to manage the crisis ahead. We moved quickly on contacting sponsors, grant providers and artists to determine what we could do that summer, even if it wasn't a full festival."

Solutions included a do-it-yourself backyard experience that engaged fans and kept RFF spirit and traditions alive on social media. A drive-in concert in August came together through community support and partnerships with local businesses. "The shows were terrific," Haugerud said. "We had bands on stage while the sound played on car radios. Instead of applause, people honked their horns."

The RFF went through structural changes in 2021 and adopted a dual leadership team model. Haugerud was joined by Artistic Director Amber Goodwyn, who was on board in time to plan and book artists for the outdoor Summer Satellite Series, held in lieu of the main festival. "The changes have given us the opportunity to look at the organization from top down and see where we can make progressive movements," Haugerud said. "Accessibility is a big part of what we are looking at, along with reconciliation and accountability. The music industry had a number of issues brought to light during the pandemic. It's clear that we need to be better at making spaces safe for our audiences."

Haugerud sees crowd management and scenario planning as fundamental to moving forward. "Health and safety are major concerns and mean having two or three plans for the festival, based on potential situations," he said, adding that there are new challenges and needs for heightened security.

"The world has changed and there are different things that outdoor festivals need to consider now. The pandemic afforded us some time to examine other matters because we weren't planning a full-scale festival for two years. We had opportunities to take a close look at what we do, how we do it and who we can involve to help make our event safer."

Continued on page 10

Firing up for the 2022 festival season (continued)



Ness Creek Music Festival, Big River

Plans were underway for Ness Creek Music Festival's 30th anniversary celebration when events were shuttered in 2020. "We made every effort to find ways to continue to support local artists and stay connected with our community of festival goers," Kerri Fischer, Festival Manager, said.

Two uplifting social media campaigns were launched early in the pandemic and offered some lightheartedness at a dark time. In July, VirtualNess replaced the annual festival. Programming included many of the artists

originally booked, who entertained audiences through Facebook Live performances and virtual workshops.

"Early on, we took advantage of federal and provincial relief programs, as well as numerous online training opportunities, and stayed on top of COVID-19 regulations and guidelines," Fischer said. "Along with the Regina Folk Festival, we initiated a monthly Sask Festivals Unite group. These sessions were particularly helpful in the beginning when everything was so unknown and we were all just 'treading water.' Peer support was so valuable."

Planning for 2021 was another cycle of uncertainty. Attention shifted to a new series of events – Nesscape Mini Breaks – held on back-to-back weekends in July. Mini Breaks were all-inclusive, smaller versions of the popular annual festival, each limited to 150 attendees. Glamping packages included meals and refreshments for groups of 2-4 people. Ticket purchasers received three meals daily that showcased local cuisine and included table service. Entertainment featured four mainstage artists.

Activities throughout the festival grounds were designed for small groups and included beverage tastings, horse-drawn wagon rides, tours through the forest and hikes to secluded forest stages for mini acoustic shows. In addition to the Nesscape Mini Breaks, four individual concert nights were held throughout the summer, featuring both touring and local musicians.

"Smaller audiences enabled us to try activities that wouldn't be possible during the traditional festival," Fischer said. "We will definitely be incorporating some of the successful activities launched during the Mini Breaks into other programming, either at the annual Ness Creek Music Festival or during any number of events hosted at the site throughout the year. There's also consideration of a Nesscape Mini Break weekend in 2023 for those who still want the festival experience, but on a smaller scale."

Source:

Hill Strategies. *Innovation and Resilience in the Arts, Culture and Heritage in Canada*, 2022.

Learn tips for creating event marketing and business plans

Tourism Saskatchewan's Marketing and Event Partnership Program (MEPP) provides support to eligible businesses and organizations for the promotion of tourism products, services, attractions and events to audiences within and outside of Saskatchewan. The application-based program accepts submissions in the spring and fall. The next intake period is in September.

Applicants are required to include a marketing plan for their specific project. For events that want advice on creating marketing and business plans – consider enrolling in Tourism Saskatchewan's Organizing Special Events program.

The program is offered entirely online, and participants work at their own pace to complete seven modules:

- Getting Your Event Off the Ground
- Marketing and Promoting Your Event
- Fundraising for Your Event
- Event Logistics
- HR Management for Your Event
- Financial Management for Your Event
- Risk Management for Your Event

A Special Events Toolkit, included in the first module, provides forms and templates that can be customized to suit the planning process for any type or size of event.

Marketing plan and business plan templates are included in relevant modules.

The cost to enrol in Organizing Special Events is \$30 per participant. For more information, call (306) 933-5900 or email stec.training@tourismsask.com.

Tourism Saskatchewan teams with Saskatchewan Roughriders to “Bring it to the Heartland” in 2022



Mosaic Stadium, Regina

In March, the Saskatchewan Roughriders Football Club announced the official theme of the 2022 Grey Cup Festival – Bring it to the Heartland. The theme reflects the spirit of Rider fans and the province as the heartbeat of the Canadian Football League (CFL), and conjures images of the Canadian prairies – the heartland of Canada.

The 109th Grey cup will be played at Mosaic Stadium in Regina on November 20. The Grey Cup Festival begins on November 14; however, celebrations will occur across the province throughout the CFL season.

Tourism Saskatchewan has a longstanding relationship with the Saskatchewan Roughriders. In addition to its ongoing sponsorship of the team, Tourism Saskatchewan is recognized as a 2022 Grey Cup Premier Partner. The partnership includes activities throughout the entire football season, along with the signature event in November.

Industry recovery and growing the visitor economy are the focus for Tourism Saskatchewan, which will leverage the team's sweeping media reach, in-game activities, website and other channels to put stories, content and messages about Saskatchewan tourism experiences in front of audiences.

“The Saskatchewan Roughriders are an iconic team with an enthusiastic and loyal fanbase across the province and nation,” Jonathan Potts, Tourism Saskatchewan CEO, said. “Stories of Rider Pride often go back generations. There is nothing like the devotion that Saskatchewanians feel for their home

team. It's one of our province's most unifying stories, highlighting community, family connections and deep pride of place.”

A series of videos will be featured on the SaskTel Maxtron at Rider home games. The 30-second spots will highlight a variety of tourism partners and experiences throughout the province, and bring attention to sectors hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic – outfitting, hospitality, food and beverage services, events and Indigenous tourism. Having a highly visible presence in-stadium will inspire residents and encourage them to support Saskatchewan businesses – to shop, eat and travel local.

The videos will also play on various online platforms managed by the Saskatchewan Roughriders and Tourism Saskatchewan. The inspiring messages and content drive a clear message – explore Saskatchewan, make new discoveries and enjoy all that the province offers.

“This partnership is a premium opportunity to harness the momentum of Rider Nation and help spread the word that Saskatchewan is a great travel destination,” Potts said. “The content will elicit cheers and heartfelt responses from people, boost resident pride and showcase Saskatchewan's vibrant and diverse tourism industry.”

Sign up for Tourism Saskatchewan resources

- **Free listings on TourismSaskatchewan.com** – Tourism businesses, attractions, events, accommodations, etc., are urged to take advantage of FREE listings on [TourismSaskatchewan.com](https://www.tourismsaskatchewan.com). Update your Tourism Profile to ensure that details about your tourism business are current and accurate. If the key tourism contact has recently changed, notify Tourism Saskatchewan. Email information.updates@tourismsask.com with updates to your listings and contact details.

- **Business.TourismSaskatchewan.com** – The online Business Hub is a one-stop source for advice, information and tools to benefit tourism operators. It offers quick access to programs and opportunities. An expanded Statistics and Research section reports on industry performance. It includes profiles of key visitor markets and data showing tourism activity in specific regions of Saskatchewan.

DESTINATION AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Prairie Bee Meadery sees change as a matter of course



Prairie Bee Meadery display in Grant Hall, Moose Jaw

Prairie Bee Meadery was one of the early applicants to Tourism Saskatchewan's Diversification and New Market Program, introduced in 2019. The application-based program offered partnered investment opportunities – direct incentive to adapt business models and diversify products and experiences. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck in 2020, the program was among a number of resources to help operators change tactics and be in a competitive position when restrictions were lifted and travel resumed.

Co-owner Gerard Milburn explained that the Moose Jaw area business already had the word "pivot" in its vocabulary and was accustomed to change. He summarized the evolution from an orchard and u-pick operation to award-winning mead producer to opening a new retail site during a global pandemic.

Phase 1: Grandpa's Garden

In 2011, Milburn's in-laws, Dennis and Vickie Derksen, planted 1,000 sour cherry trees on their farm outside of Moose Jaw. "It was intended to be a retirement project, but they got bitten by the fruit-growing bug, adding strawberries, cherries and 500 haskap trees," Milburn said. "Vegetables came next and they began selling produce to the Co-op and at farmers markets, then opened to the public as a u-pick operation."

Phase 2: Fruit plus honey in one product

Milburn and his wife Crystal relocated from Alberta and became minority partners in the operation in 2016. By then, full-scale honey production had been underway for several years. "Having excess honey, we started to experiment and worked with the Saskatchewan Food Industry Development Centre to create a delicious, shelf-stable product – Grandpa's Garden Fruit Honey."

Phase 3: Fruit plus honey II – award-winning mead

In 2016, the Government of Saskatchewan amended regulations for craft alcohol producers. Changes included quadrupling the production limit,

permitting direct delivery to retailers and allowing independent retail spaces apart from the main site. "Turning a profit in the u-pick business is tricky," Milburn said, noting that the Derksens suggested there was potential in crafting mead – made from honey and fruit, the two ingredients they had in abundance. "We made the pivot and never looked back. Our products are now carried by more than 100 retailers throughout Saskatchewan and in other provinces, and we made our first export shipment to Taiwan in December 2021."

Prairie Bee Meadery has won 32 international awards, which speak to the high standards and commitment to excellence. "We have specific requirements and only use clover, alfalfa and wildflower honey," Milburn added. "Honey is different all over the world. Local crops and flowers create a distinct flavour profile, which is reflected in the mead from that area. No two places or products are alike."

Phase 4: Pandemic partnership

Prairie Bee Meadery was the first craft alcohol producer in Saskatchewan to open an offsite retail store. Located next to the Tunnels of Moose Jaw, there was ample foot traffic. People would stop by after their tunnel tours, sample flavours and buy products. When the COVID-19 pandemic struck and tourist activity came to a halt, operating the storefront at that location was unsustainable. It was time to pivot again.

"We began talking with the owners of Grant Hall, who showed us space they wanted to redevelop," Milburn said. "We were interested in a partnership that could pair our wines with food and bring in some new traffic to Grant Hall. At the same time, we became aware of Tourism Saskatchewan's Diversification and New Market Program. Our proposal for a wine and dine experience put a fresh spin on Moose Jaw historical tours. We envisioned tours that not only look at alcohol during the prohibition era but cover the gamut from the 1870s to present day, and promote the craft alcohol industry that has evolved in Saskatchewan."

Prairie Bee Meadery and Grant Hall launched the Wine & Dine Experience in July 2021, after many COVID-19-related restrictions were lifted. The evening event features a one-hour informational tour that includes mead tastings, followed by dinner in the Little Chicago Steakhouse. Product sales during the first six months far exceeded targets.

Summer and year-round visitor experiences

Hard work and willingness to diversify have resulted in two distinct visitor experiences. Prairie Bee Meadery anticipates a busy season ahead for its popular Bee to Bottle Winery Tour of the main property, offered from May-September. The year-round Wine & Dine Experience appeals to couples or groups of friends, and offers a night out to enjoy exceptional local flavours and cuisine. "We are committed to giving visitors unique, interesting experiences. Of course, it helps us promote and sell our products. Most people are unfamiliar with mead, so tastings open them to a new world of possibilities."

Prairie Bee Meadery creates 13 different bottled meads. It recently introduced session meads, which are light and refreshing canned beverages. Containing 4 per cent alcohol, they are similar to wine coolers. This product was made possible through a partnership with District Brewing in Regina.

What is mead?

Enjoyed by the ancient Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Vikings and Celts, mead is arguably the world's oldest fermented beverage. It is sometimes described as "honey wine" – honey and water are fermented by yeast, and flavoured with fruit, hops, spices and grains. Mead has similarities to wine and beer but is unique and offers tremendous versatility to experiment with techniques and flavours.

Access funding for employee training and work placement

Tourism Saskatchewan's recent industry communications survey (reported on page 6) affirmed that tourism operators and businesses appreciate information about available funding programs and opportunities.

There is a demand for programs that provide assistance for employee training in tourism occupations. The Propel Student Work Placement Program and the Re-Skill Saskatchewan Training Subsidy are two that tourism operators and businesses can consider. *Industry Update* subscribers receive concise reminders about these programs. Here is a more in-depth outline.



Propel Student Work Placement Program

Led by Tourism HR Canada, the Propel Student Work Placement Program (Propel) offers paid work-integrated learning (WIL) opportunities in tourism and hospitality. The program is funded by the Government of Canada through its Student Work Placement Program.

Propel helps employers recruit critically needed workers and pays a subsidy on wages. The program is open to businesses, start-ups and not-for-profits in any of the five tourism industries: accommodation, food and beverage services, recreation and entertainment, transportation, and travel services.

The wage subsidy is available to employers who hire students registered at recognized Canadian post-secondary institutions and enrolled, full- or part-time, in programs that include a WIL placement (e.g. co-op program, internship, work placement).

Participation is not limited to students in tourism or hospitality programs, but can draw from a range of fields – marketing, communications, administration, human resources, conservation, fine arts and more. For example, if a tourism business needs help with accounting or website design, the program can link them with individuals enrolled in relevant courses.

Students benefit from hands-on experience and mentoring, and get paid for their work. They must be guaranteed a minimum of 20 hours per week for four weeks.

Qualified employers can hire multiple students. There are two levels of subsidization:

- 1) Up to 50 per cent of wages or up to \$5,000
- 2) Up to 70 per cent of wages or up to \$7,000 for under-represented students: women in science, technology, engineering and mathematics; Indigenous students; persons with disabilities; and visible minorities and newcomers. This level also applies to first year students.

Propel is retroactive. Employers can apply for subsidization of wages paid to qualifying students any time after June 1, 2021.

Interested businesses can register on the Propel portal at tourismhr.ca and apply for a wage subsidy, as well as post their WIL placements. Employers hiring for the summer (anytime between May and August) are encouraged to register immediately and make their subsidy application or post placement opportunities.

Looking ahead, employers expected to have WIL placements in September or later can express their interest and be notified when posting is available.

Tourism HR Canada regularly hosts online information sessions to address questions from employers. Visit tourismhr.ca to register for a session or access more information. Email any questions to propel@tourismhr.ca.

Re-Skill Saskatchewan Training Subsidy

The Government of Saskatchewan's Re-Skill Saskatchewan Training Subsidy (RSTS) is a temporary program that provides businesses with financial support to train employees. Private and not-for-profit-sector employers can apply for the subsidy.

Designed to speed economic recovery, the RSTS offers financial assistance for employer-driven, short-term training programs. Its objectives are as follows:

- Support employers in meeting the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic
- Provide enhanced training support to ensure employers are able to access training to sustain business activities and be competitive
- Reduce obstacles to hiring, retraining and retaining workers to boost the province's economic recovery

The program reimburses employee training costs to a maximum of \$5,000.

The RSTS is managed by the Ministry of Immigration and Career Training. Applications will be accepted from eligible employers pending available funding. Visit [Saskatchewan.ca](https://saskatchewan.ca) (search Re-Skill Saskatchewan Training Subsidy) for program information, eligibility requirements and detailed application instructions.

Train tourism and hospitality employees

A number of training programs for the tourism and hospitality industries qualify for the RSTS, including Food and Beverage Server/Manager, Front Desk Agent, Bartender, Housekeeping Room Attendant, Heritage Interpreter, Event Manager, Freshwater Fishing Guide and more.

View the full list of eligible programs at Business.TourismSaskatchewan.com (search Pathway to Recovery Training Series).

Saskatchewanderer program refreshed and improved



Grasslands National Park

The Saskatchewanderer program was introduced in 2010. Each year, a new candidate was chosen to travel the province, gather stories and share, across social media channels, the many reasons why Saskatchewan is a great place to live, work and visit.

Each Saskatchewanderer has brought a unique perspective to the role and endeared themselves to communities visited. A success on many levels, the program has grown a loyal fan base of more than 137,000 followers on social media.

Program performance is assessed annually. After careful review, several improvements were made at the beginning of 2022.

The Saskatchewanderer shifted from a yearly contract to a full-time content creator position with Tourism Saskatchewan.

Hiring and training a new ambassador each year put repeated demands on resources and created some scheduling delays. The skills required for the position have also increased. Advancements in technology, new social platforms and changing consumer expectations and engagement require greater range and more refined capabilities for the individual selected.

"The change to this role will allow for continuity of content development and storytelling, and create efficiencies in promoting tourism entrepreneurs and small businesses in Saskatchewan," Jeremy Harrison, Minister Responsible for Tourism Saskatchewan, said in a February news release.

A fulsome search was conducted in March, adhering to policies and procedures for hiring Government of Saskatchewan employees. The successful applicant, Andrew Hiltz, assumed his new responsibilities on May 2, taking over from Felipe Gomez, 2021 Saskatchewanderer.

Hiltz is a familiar face, having previously fulfilled the role of Saskatchewanderer in 2017. He was hired as a Content Creation Specialist at Tourism Saskatchewan a year later. In early 2021, he was part of a team of "retro-Wanderers," along with Ashlyn George and Kevin Dunn, who captured Saskatchewan winter content and stories.

He brings extensive experience and skills to the role. Hiltz is a talented videographer, photographer, editor and drone pilot. His imaginative approach to storytelling has helped grow the number of social media followers and bring widespread attention to entrepreneurs, businesses and communities throughout the province.

Hiltz values friendships with previous Saskatchewanderers and is inspired by their achievements. "I am grateful for the opportunity to build on the program's legacy and on some of the groundbreaking work of my predecessors," he said. "My mission is to make Saskatchewan people the showpiece – their work, their stories and how we thrive as a province because of the diverse voices here."

Follow the Saskatchewanderer on Facebook (facebook.com/skwanderer), Twitter ([@SkWanderer](https://twitter.com/SkWanderer)) or Instagram ([@saskatchewanderer](https://instagram.com/saskatchewanderer)). Keep up with the latest blogs on YouTube (youtube.com/user/skwandererofficial) or saskatchewanderer.ca.

Connect with the Saskatchewanderer

Saskatchewanderer Andrew Hiltz welcomes story suggestions from the public. If you have a destination in mind or know of a person, story or event that would make for engaging content, email saskatchewandererofficial@gmail.com.



Destination Canada reports on key trends influencing tourism

Destination Canada commissioned a research project in 2021 to gauge the effect of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry and travel behaviours. A sweeping industry scan and assessment identified travel trends that will have the largest impact on Canada's tourism industry over the next three years.

A full report, titled *Tourism's Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism Industry*, was issued in November 2021. The document lists five major factors that will affect travel and tourism, along with many other industries, in the short and long term: 1) COVID-19 uncertainty; 2) economic change; 3) social change; 4) climate change; and 5) accelerated digitization. A number of industry challenges are outlined, ranging from labour shortages to transportation limitations to shifts in corporate travel and events.

Ten key market trends are addressed in the report. Those particularly relevant to Saskatchewan's tourism sector are summarized below.

Domestic travel

"All of Canada is 'local' to Canadian tourists, and renewed sentiments of pride in the country could fuel enthusiastic travel in the short term."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Canadians have been exploring their own provinces and territories. Although there is pent-up demand for travel after two years of uncertainty and restrictions, a significant portion of the Canadian population is not eager to stray far from home. This creates opportunities for drive destinations and road trip itineraries that will appeal to people interested in exploring Canada regionally, provincially or nationally. Though not the biggest spenders, domestic travellers are potential long-term loyalists and ambassadors. They can be convinced to visit parts of Canada that long-haul travellers would not consider.

Indigenous tourism

A rise in domestic travel can forge meaningful connections with Indigenous peoples, communities and culture. Historically, international visitors have demonstrated a high level of interest (37 per cent) in Indigenous experiences; however, there is growing demand among Canadian travellers. Research undertaken by the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada and Destination Canada revealed that one in three Canadians is interested in Indigenous tourism experiences. Growth in this industry helps to create sustainable employment in Indigenous communities and enrich travel experiences through sharing Indigenous culture, history and traditions.

Responsible travel

"People and places are rethinking the impact of visitation and how the effects can be mitigated."

A growing volume of consumer research emphasizes "responsible travel." The forecast is that travellers will increasingly seek to reduce their footprint on destinations through supporting local economies, engaging with local cultures, lowering carbon emissions and championing conservation and environmental concerns. Forward-thinking destinations are considering the concept of "regenerative travel" that sees tourism contribute net benefits to host communities – economically, socio-culturally and environmentally. Meaningful action involves creating a symbiotic engagement between host communities and the type of visitors they seek.

Wilderness and outdoor experiences

"Canada is understood to be a place closely connected to the wild and can authentically tout the benefits of contact with nature. . . The natural world's ability to enhance wellness and provoke awe in visitors reduces anxiety and stimulates a sense of belonging to the grander story."

The freedom of wide-open spaces and experiences in the wilderness have been remedies for isolation, confinement and stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. Growing interest in and appreciation of nature have driven visitation to parks and nature-based destinations, and expanded shoulder-season travel. Saskatchewan's expansive spaces and opportunities to enjoy outdoor recreation resonate with travellers seeking adventure and experiences in nature. Strategies for attracting this market are a focus of immediate and long-term efforts to regain a strong visitor economy.

Health and wellbeing

"After obsessing about health, hygiene, epidemic-level loneliness, decreased mental health and lack of connection . . . people are hungry for a sense of wellbeing and the good feelings associated with travel, escape, rejuvenation and nature-based healthfulness."

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated interest in travel for wellbeing and personal enrichment. The Global Wellness Institute estimates the current value of the wellness travel market at \$639 billion. Pre-pandemic, the industry's annual growth rate was 6.5 per cent, more than twice the rate of tourism growth overall. Ongoing concerns about health and wellness will increase opportunities for destinations to seize a part of this rapidly expanding industry.

Affluent travellers

Research into high-income earners and level of savings accumulated (10-20 per cent higher than before the pandemic) signals positive signs for tourism recovery. A solid increase in affluent travel could expedite recovery. These travellers spend their money on leisure trips and are interested in unique, "legendary" experiences, as well as opportunities for personal growth and wellbeing. To meet their demands and expectations, high-quality experiences in cities, rural areas and remote wilderness locations are needed.

Retired travellers

The pandemic has made people reassess work-life balance. Pew Research Centre reported that in 2021 (Q1), 30.3 million U.S. Baby Boomers were removed from the labour force due to retirement (2.7 million above the first quarter in 2020). By 2025, people 65 and over will represent 11 per cent of the world's population. Their number of annual cross-border/international trips will double. Having time and money for travel, Baby Boomers are a key market for tourism destinations and operators to consider.

Read *Tourism's Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism Industry* in full at destinationcanada.com.

Source:

Destination Canada. *Tourism's Big Shift: Key Trends Shaping the Future of Canada's Tourism Industry*, November 2021.

World Travel & Tourism Council offers recommendations to address labour shortages

In December 2021, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) issued a report on staff shortages in the tourism sector. Fallout from the COVID-19 pandemic included the loss of 62 million tourism jobs worldwide in 2020, leaving 272 million people employed in the industry compared to 334 million in 2019. October 2021 economic projections estimated that the job number could rise to 324 million in 2022 – just 10 million below the pre-pandemic level. Filling those positions will require a sufficient labour force, hence the need for proactive approaches to solving current staff shortages.

The WTTC report stresses that countering labour shortages requires policy changes and creative initiatives, ranging from facilitating labour mobility to upskilling, reskilling and retaining a robust workforce, along with other solutions. Several of the report's recommendations are summarized below:

Enable decent work and provide social safety nets – Supporting and ensuring decent work – defined as fair, safe, productive and meaningful – is key to attracting and retaining talent. This issue is fundamental in the wake of COVID-19, as many people face mental health struggles and fears about job and financial security. Public and private sectors play a vital role in enhancing workers' mental wellbeing. Additionally, it is important for policy makers to evaluate and adjust social safety nets and protections to ensure no one is left behind.

Upskill and reskill the workforce and retain talent – Training, reskilling and upskilling initiatives that focus on current and anticipated workforce needs are essential. Developing new skills, such as enhanced digital literacy, will strengthen workforce resiliency and help resolve the issue of staff

shortages. Additionally, the tourism sector requires investment in attracting and retaining new talent by improving perceptions about tourism as a career choice and highlighting opportunities for professional growth. Strategic, meaningful employee retention efforts are critical to minimizing loss of quality human assets.

Create and promote education and apprenticeships – As the nature of work and skills required for a vibrant and resilient tourism sector evolve, so do talent and recruitment needs. Effective policies and public-private collaboration supporting education programs and apprentice-based training are critical to bridging skills gaps and building a robust tourism workforce.

Facilitate labour mobility – Enabling the movement of talent, within and across borders, is an effective mechanism to resolve skills and labour deficits. Governments and decision makers are urged to reconsider migration and visa policies, among other issues that hamper labour mobility.

Facilitate remote work – The COVID-19 pandemic demanded flexibility for employees and accelerated opportunities for hybrid and remote work. Although many tourism jobs are customer-facing and not conducive to more flexible practices, there is still value in examining roles suited to alternate conditions. Supporting remote work can help alleviate talent shortages and enable some people to keep their jobs, particularly those with child or elder care responsibilities.

View the full WTTC report, titled *Staff Shortages*, at [wttc.org](https://www.wttc.org).

Tourism Apprenticeship Program supports training in two tourism trades

Tourism Saskatchewan works with the Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission to provide opportunities for experienced front-line tourism workers to complete journey person certification in two trades: Food and Beverage Person and Guest Services Representative. The Tourism Apprenticeships Program lowers the cost for employers who support eligible employees in attaining journey person status.

Journey persons are highly trained and bring in-depth knowledge and skills to a business. Employers report increased productivity and quality, improved workplace safety, reduced staff turnover, and higher customer satisfaction.

In Saskatchewan, tourism trades do not require apprentices to leave the workplace for extended classroom training. Most training takes place on the job.

More information about the Tourism Apprenticeships Program is available at [Business.TourismSaskatchewan.com](https://business.tourismsaskatchewan.com) (search tourism apprenticeships).

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