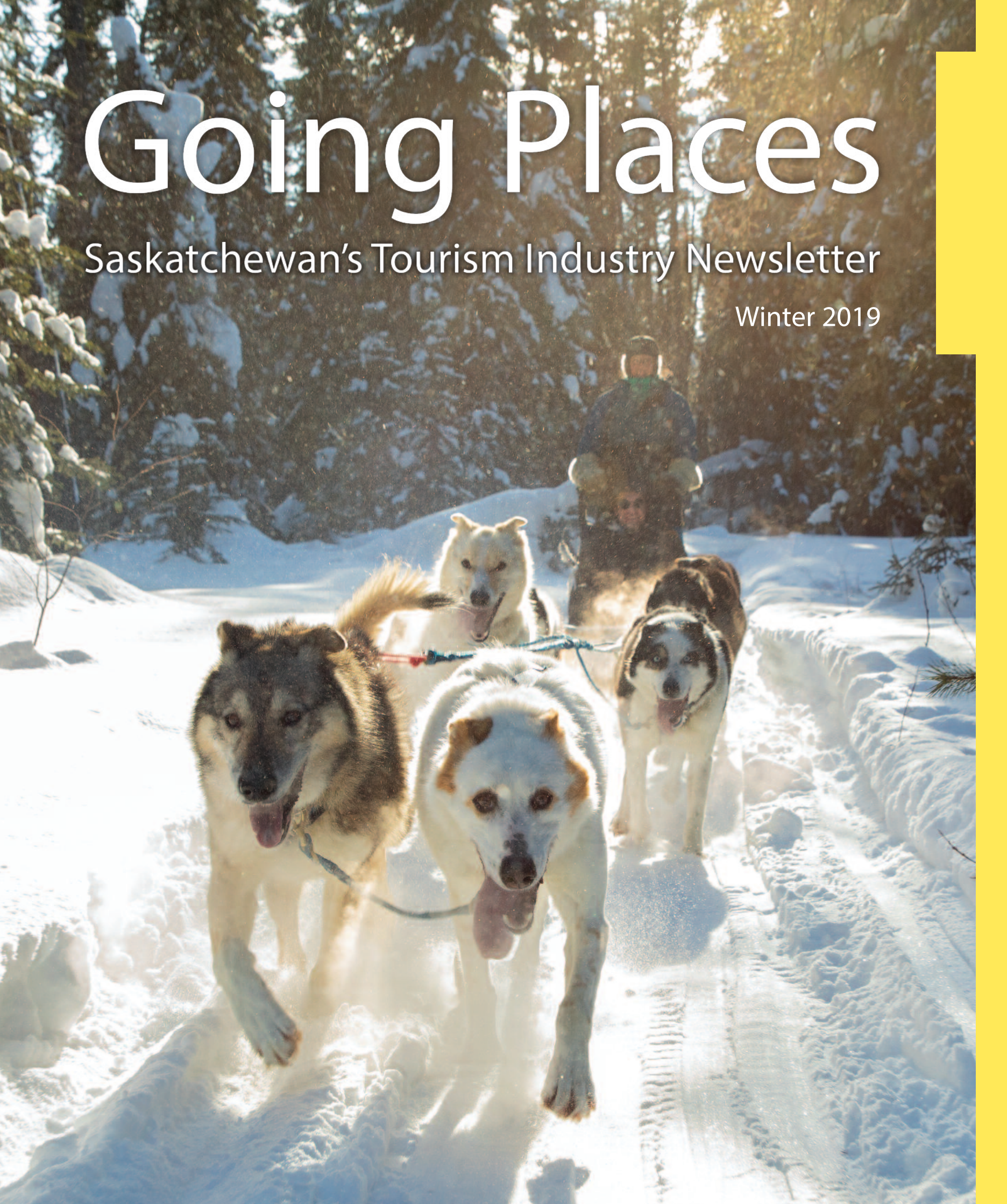


Going Places

Saskatchewan's Tourism Industry Newsletter

Winter 2019



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TOURISM
Saskatchewan
CANADA

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Cover Image

Sundogs Excursions
Anglin Lake

Bookmark Industry Website

The new industry website, Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com, is your one-stop site for the latest news and information from Tourism Saskatchewan and the province's tourism sector. You will find information on partnership opportunities, upcoming events, education and training programs and more.

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2019 Saskatchewan Travel Guide available



The *2019 Saskatchewan Travel Guide* is now available to display and share with visitors. Order your free bulk quantities of the guide by completing the online bulk order form on Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com, and submitting it to patti.peesker@tourismsask.com. The *2018-2019 Official Saskatchewan Road Map* and *2019 Saskatchewan Fishing & Hunting Map* are also available to order.

Featuring engaging copy and impressive photographs, the 40-page *Saskatchewan Travel Guide* offers top travel suggestions in southern, central and northern Saskatchewan, as well as holiday highlights in Regina and Saskatoon. Each section has event information, winter content and feature articles that put the spotlight on the area's key experiences – from hidden gems and family fun in Saskatchewan parks to game day festivities and top-notch dining.

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, attractions and events mentioned in the guide.

Tourism operators are encouraged to take advantage of FREE listings on TourismSaskatchewan.com. The website receives more than 1.5 million visitors annually and provides effective marketing exposure for businesses. For a free web listing or to update an existing one, contact Tourism Saskatchewan at 1-877-237-2273 or email information.updates@tourismsask.com.



MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

Research is definitely a theme weaving through this issue of *Going Places*. Several research projects were recently undertaken by Tourism Saskatchewan and yielded solid data to inform decision making, strategic planning and activities designed to grow tourism and enhance experiences in our province.

Tourism Saskatchewan appreciated the response from operators to our industry communication survey in November. The exercise affirmed that our printed and electronic newsletters are valued by industry, and provided insights on how to improve these resources. Several changes have been made to this issue of *Going Places* to provide operators and stakeholders with enhanced information.

My colleagues and I were pleased to receive new information from Statistics Canada that presents a comprehensive overview of tourism in the province (see page 4 for a summary). Going forward, regional reports will be compiled for southern, central and northern Saskatchewan and for Regina and Saskatoon. These reports will be posted on our industry website, Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com. Watch for announcements of their availability via our *Industry Update* e-newsletter.

Each report gives a clear picture of who is travelling to Saskatchewan, where they are coming from and what types of activities interest them, along with other important details. The information helps operators

to plan strategically and ensure that marketing efforts are hitting the right targets.

Research will be a topic of conversation at the upcoming HOST Saskatchewan Conference in Saskatoon on April 11. Tourism Saskatchewan's team of professionals will be on hand to share highlights from recent research projects and activities. The conference has a great lineup of speakers whose insights and expertise will benefit delegates.

It will be a pleasure to welcome keynote speaker Rebecca Mackenzie, President and CEO of the Culinary Tourism Alliance. She is a trailblazer in food tourism and a champion for Canada's unique tastes, homegrown products and innovative entrepreneurs.

William Bakker, Chief Strategist and Partner at Destination Think!, was a hit presenter at past conferences. We are delighted to have him back on the agenda.

The HOST Saskatchewan Conference and Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala provide an important opportunity for our industry to assemble and celebrate our strengths and achievements. I look forward to seeing you on April 11.

Mary Taylor-Ash

Rebecca Mackenzie to deliver keynote address at HOST Saskatchewan Conference



Mark your calendar to attend the 2019 HOST Saskatchewan Conference in Saskatoon at TCU Place on April 11. The one-day forum offers delegates engaging presentations and valuable networking opportunities. The 30th annual Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala will be celebrated that evening. Register now to secure your spot at the largest annual gathering of Saskatchewan's tourism sector.

Rebecca Mackenzie, President and CEO of the Culinary Tourism Alliance (CTA), will deliver the conference keynote address. Mackenzie has been involved in food tourism for more than 20 years and was instrumental in projects such as the award-winning Taste Trail in Prince Edward County (ON) and the CTA's Feast On® certification program. Her career enables her to explore Canada and the globe, connecting people across the agriculture and tourism industries to grow a "taste of place."

In a dynamic presentation titled *A Recipe for Developing a Taste of Place*, Mackenzie will touch on the history of growing the food tourism industry in Ontario and share CTA accomplishments and successful partnerships. Industry will benefit from facts about current consumer demand for food tourism and developments taking place within the broader tourism industry. Turn to page 11 for a

conversation with Mackenzie about food and drink tourism.

The conference agenda includes opening greetings at 10 a.m. by Norm Beug, Chair of Tourism Saskatchewan's Board of Directors, and Mary Taylor-Ash, CEO of Tourism Saskatchewan. William Bakker, Chief Strategist and Partner at Destination Think!, will present a plenary session focusing on content marketing success stories. Bakker will include case studies, as well as best practices and strategies for industry, provincial marketing organizations (PMOs) and destination marketing organizations (DMOs) to work together.

The afternoon is full of breakout sessions on topics ranging from Saskatchewan's Tourism Sentiment Index and events, festivals and the visitor economy to panel presentations on Indigenous and culinary tourism. Panelists will include local tourism operators and industry stakeholders. The conference program concludes at 4 p.m. To view the full agenda, visit Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com.

The Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala begins at 5:30 p.m. with a networking reception, followed by dinner and the award presentations. See page 6 for the list of award finalists and Tourism Builders.



Rebecca Mackenzie

William Bakker

The cost to register for the HOST Saskatchewan Conference is \$179 (plus GST). This fee includes lunch, conference materials, and a ticket to the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala. To register, contact Nancy Hubenig at 306-787-9844, nancy.hubenig@tourismsask.com.

Statistics Canada research provides snapshot of visitors

The Statistics Canada Travel Survey of Residents of Canada reflects trends, characteristics, spending and activities of Canadians travelling within their home country. This two-part series presents a summary for Saskatchewan, based on 2017 data.

PART ONE: STARTING WITH THE BASICS

Determining a clear picture of travellers begins with some fundamental details.

Who is visiting?

Canadians made 13.3 million visits to and within Saskatchewan in 2017. Saskatchewan residents travelling within the province account for 97 per cent of same-day visits (e.g., a visit for less than 24 hours). They are the primary market for overnight or longer visits, as well, measuring 73 per cent. Visitors from Alberta are the second largest market for overnight visitors, at 19 per cent, followed by Manitoba, British Columbia and Ontario.

Saskatchewan residents travelling within the province spend an average of 2.5 nights away from home, while the average length of stay for visitors from Alberta is four nights. There is little visitation to Saskatchewan from Quebec or the Atlantic provinces.

For more than 51 per cent of all overnight visitors to the province, visiting friends or relatives is the main purpose for travel (and the main source of

accommodations), followed by leisure (35 per cent), and business (7 per cent). In comparison, over 20 per cent of same day travel is for business.

One-fifth of all overnight visitors choose to stay in hotels or motels. When it comes to alternative accommodations, choices vary significantly by province of origin. Saskatchewan residents are most likely to spend their nights camping, while long-haul visitors from Ontario and British Columbia are more likely than other visitors to favour guest ranches and bed and breakfasts.

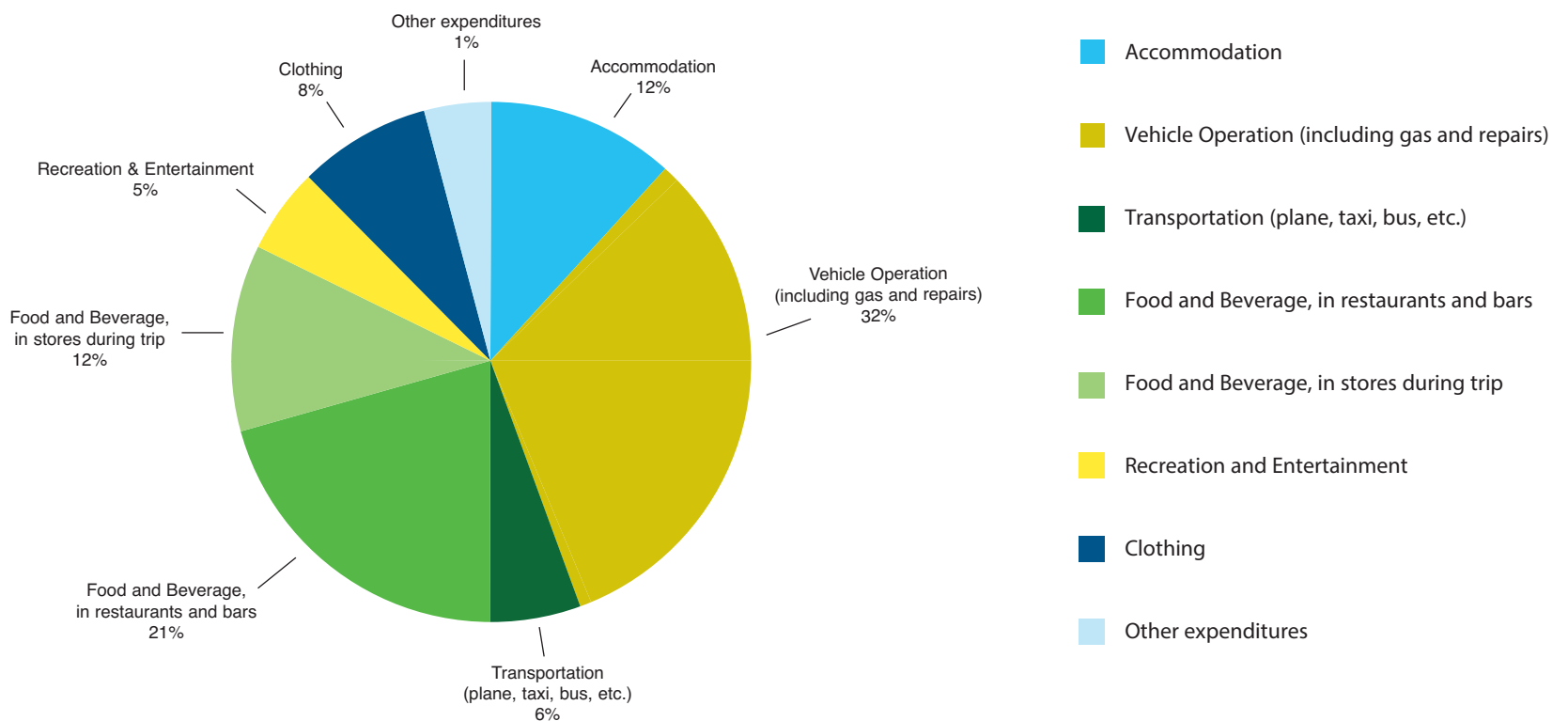
How much are they spending?

In 2017, visits to and within Saskatchewan, including same-day trips, generated an estimated \$1.88 billion in tourism-related spending on accommodations, restaurants, shopping, travel, and travel activities. Vehicle operation, including gas and repairs, accounts for 31 per cent of total spending; restaurants and bars – 21 per cent; and accommodations – 12 per cent.

The average spend per visit for all visits to and within Saskatchewan was \$135, while the overnight average spend was \$204.

For more information about travel to and within Saskatchewan, visit Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com. Detailed reports for specific areas of the province will also be posted on the industry website, as completed.

TOTAL EXPENDITURES BY TYPE



Jeannette Lye named Manager of Planning and Research



Jeannette Lye

Tourism Saskatchewan welcomed Jeannette Lye to the role of Manager of Planning and Research in April 2018. Lye is a graduate of the School of Public Administration at Dalhousie University and holds a Master of Science degree in Cultural Psychology from Brunel University.

She is the former Manager of Bylaw Enforcement for the City of Regina, where she was responsible for the day-to-day branch operations. Additionally, she provided evidence-based policy and strategic recommendations to

City Council and executive leaders on issues that have an impact on community safety.

Prior to moving to Regina in 2012, Lye was a research associate for the Conference Board of Canada, where she engaged in a variety of studies and data collection activities within the Health Innovation, Policy and Evaluation unit.

Originally from St. John's, Newfoundland, she got her start in tourism at Cape Spear National Historic Site of Canada, where she worked as a historic interpreter.



MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

On New Year's Day, it was announced that Saskatchewan will be hosting an outdoor hockey match between the Winnipeg Jets and Calgary Flames – in October. The Tim Hortons NHL Heritage Classic on October 26 will see Regina's Mosaic Stadium become a temporary hockey rink. The game will provide great entertainment as well as generate high visitation in the fall shoulder season.

Tourism Saskatchewan is a proud sponsor of the Tim Hortons NHL Heritage Classic, along with other upcoming events, including the Grey Cup game, JUNO Awards and Scotties Tournament of Hearts in 2020, and the Canadian Curling Trials Roar of the Rings in 2021. A variety of local and provincial tourism events are also receiving support under the Event Hosting Program. We are particularly pleased to sponsor the Saskatchewan Airshow on July 6-7. To read more about the return of this signature summer event after a long hiatus, turn to page 10.

As spring approaches, planning for conferences and award celebrations require a shift into overdrive for the Tourism Saskatchewan team. The 30th annual Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala on April 11 (following the day-long HOST Saskatchewan Conference)

promises to be a memorable occasion. A new award will be introduced that night – the Indigenous Tourism Experience Award. It will truly be a pleasure to acknowledge the inaugural group of finalists in this category.

Nearly 90 award nominations were received this year, challenging the Award Selection Committee to make some tough choices. To all of the finalists, Tourism Saskatchewan extends sincere congratulations and deep gratitude.

A highlight of the gala will be the introduction of Tourism Builders – Randy Fernets (Saskatoon), Scott Ford (Saskatoon) and Shann Gowan (Swift Current). Each has made an indelible impression on our province's tourism industry. To read about their achievements, turn to page 7.

On behalf of Tourism Saskatchewan's Board of Directors and staff, I invite you to join us in Saskatoon on April 11. It will be an impressive gathering and a great opportunity to connect with industry peers.

Norm Beug

Thank you, Going Places readers

In November 2018, Tourism Saskatchewan conducted an industry survey to measure the effectiveness of communication methods with tourism operators and stakeholders throughout Saskatchewan.

Survey respondents represented the following categories: 48 per cent – for-profit businesses or organizations (accommodations, resorts, campgrounds, events and attractions, etc.); 31 per cent – not-for-profit organizations (museums, events or other non-profit enterprises); 21 per cent – city and destination marketing organizations, along with government-funded operations (parks, campgrounds, recreational facilities, etc.).

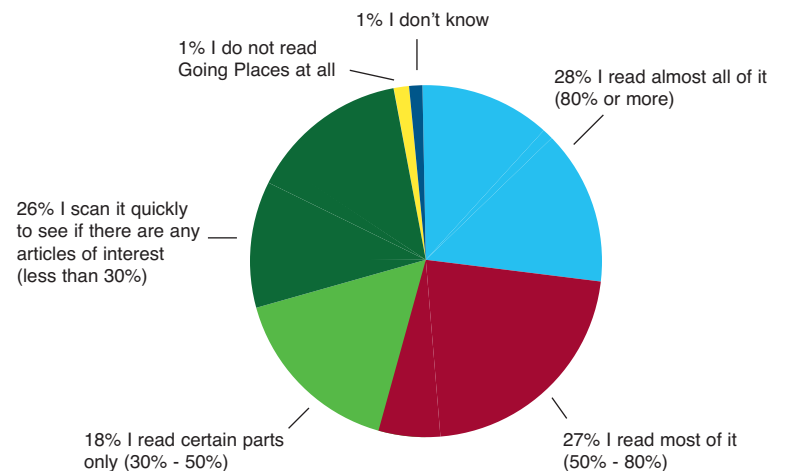
Respondents were most familiar with Tourism Saskatchewan's *Industry Update* e-newsletter (61.4 per cent), its industry website Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com (59.74 per cent) and quarterly newsletter *Going Places* (58.7 per cent). Nearly 75 per cent agreed that the overall frequency of communications with industry is "just right."

Regarding *Going Places*, 55 per cent indicated that they read almost all or most of the newsletter, while 45 per cent read parts or scan it for relevant articles.

Funding and marketing opportunities were topics considered most important, ranking 62 and 55 per cent, respectively. Market trends and education and training programs followed at 43 per cent and 37 per cent.

Feedback from participants indicated that they value:

- Consumer insights that identify how travellers are accessing information and what channels they are using
- Updates on social media trends



- Information about marketing and funding opportunities for tourism businesses, attractions and organizations
- Marketing advice for small businesses

Respondents' constructive feedback will help to shape and enhance the content of *Going Places* and *Industry Updates*.

Tourism Saskatchewan extends its appreciation to all who participated in the survey.

Going Places is available online

Issues of the popular industry newsletter (dating back three years) are posted on Tourism Saskatchewan's industry website. To view, download or print issues, visit Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/news/going-places-newsletter.

FINALISTS ANNOUNCED FOR SASKATCHEWAN TOURISM AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE



Tourism Saskatchewan is pleased to announce the names of 36 finalists and three Tourism Builders for the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence for 2018.

Nearly 90 nominations were received in the 13 award categories that acknowledge quality in marketing, service, business practices, human resource development and other areas.

The finalists and award recipients will be honoured at the 30th annual Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala, which will be celebrated on April 11 at TCU Place in Saskatoon. The gala will be held in conjunction with the HOST Saskatchewan Conference, which takes place earlier that day (see page 3 for conference details).

Recipients of the Tourism Builder Award will also be honoured that night. The Tourism Builder Award recognizes individuals who have made tourism an important part of their life's work and have helped position Saskatchewan as a welcoming destination.

Tickets for the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala are \$120 (plus GST) or \$800 (plus GST) for a corporate table of eight. The evening will start with a networking reception at 5:30 p.m., followed by dinner service at 6:30 p.m. and the award presentations at 8 p.m.

For more information about the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala, visit Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com. To order tickets, contact Nancy Hubenig at 306-787-9844 or awards@tourismsask.com.

The Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence finalists for 2018 are:

Business of the Year Award (Over 20 Full-time Employees)

Sponsored by Insightrix
Casinos Regina and Moose Jaw, Regina/Moose Jaw
Regina Exhibition Association Limited, Regina
Remai Modern, Saskatoon

Business of the Year Award (Under 20 Full-time Employees)

Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority
Grotto Gardens Country Market, Maple Creek
Over the Hill Orchards and Winery, Lumsden
Tazin Lake Lodge, Tazin Lake

Community Event of the Year Award

Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Arts Board
Cowtown Showdown, Maple Creek
2018 Saskatchewan's OUTBACK KCRA Rodeo, Carrot River
Taste of Maple Creek Festival, Maple Creek

Fred Heal Tourism Ambassador Award

Sponsored by Wanuskewin Heritage Park
Escape Sports, Saskatoon
Government House Historical Society, Regina
Watrous Manitou Marketing Group, Watrous

Gil Carduner Marketing Award

Sponsored by Phoenix Group
Kinder Surprises Antiques, Davidson
Scott Lake Lodge, Scott Lake
Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon

Indigenous Tourism Experience Award

Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Indian Institute of Technologies
Aski Holistic Adventures, Cumberland House
Cowtown Showdown, Maple Creek
Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon

Marquee Event of the Year Award

Sponsored by CTV
Ag in Motion, RM of Corman Park
Congress 2018, University of Regina, Regina
2018 WBSC Junior Men's World Softball Championship, Prince Albert

Rookie of the Year Award

Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Roughrider Football Club
Farm One Forty, Vanscoy
Poundmaker Storyteller's Festival, Poundmaker Cree Nation
Wheatland Express, Cudworth/Wakaw

Service Excellence Award

Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
Harvest Eatery, Shaunavon
Manitou Springs Resort and Mineral Spa, Manitou Beach
The Rockin' Horse Cookhouse and Bar, Maple Creek

Tourism Employee of the Year Award

Sponsored by Harvard Broadcasting Regina
Brenda Peterson, Parks Canada, Grasslands National Park
Davis Hunks, 9 Mile Legacy Brewing Company, Saskatoon
Katie Willie, Wanuskewin Heritage Park, Saskatoon

Tourism Employer of the Year Award

Sponsored by the Regina Airport Authority
DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel & Conference Centre, Regina
Gold Eagle Casino, Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority, North Battleford
Prairie River Cruises Ltd., Saskatoon

Travel Media Award

Sponsored by Vendasta
Ashlyn George, Saskatoon
Robin and Arlene Karpan, Saskatoon
Amy Rosen, Toronto, ON

Tourism Builder Award

Sponsored by Tourism Saskatchewan
Randy Fernets, Saskatoon
Scott Ford, Saskatoon
Shann Gowan, Swift Current

Introducing the 2019 class of Tourism Builders

The Tourism Builder Award category was added to the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence in 2016. The honour carries on the legacy of past recipients of the Chairman's Lifetime Achievement Award and President's Award of Merit, and recognizes peers who have made significant and long-standing contributions to Saskatchewan's tourism sector.

Congratulations are extended to Randy Fernets, Scott Ford and Shann Gowan, who will be formally recognized as Tourism Builders at the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala on April 11 in Saskatoon.



RANDY FERNETS, SASKATOON

Randy Fernets served as Director of Industry Development and Sport with Tourism Saskatoon from 2005 to 2017. During his career, he built a culture for tourism in the province and beyond. His advocacy has benefitted the food and beverage industry, local sports, recreation and festivals, and other areas of tourism. As Managing Director of Saskatoon Sports Tourism, he secured over 48 national and international sport events and conferences. He was responsible for Tourism Saskatoon's Destination Marketing Program Incubation Fund, which evaluates and encourages new festivals and events. Fernets was a driving force behind the Trails of 1885 initiative, which brought recognition and funding to support the commemoration of key sites related to the Northwest Resistance. Through his lobbying efforts and dedication to the project, the Trails of 1885 is a viable brand that crosses three western provinces. He helped establish the Athletics Commission of Saskatchewan, which led to securing a UFC Fight Night – the first in the province. As a result of the commission, many professional boxing events have been held throughout Saskatoon. Fernets was also instrumental in the development of a food truck strategy for Saskatoon, along with other projects to enhance the visitor experience.



SCOTT FORD, SASKATOON

Scott Ford began his career in tourism in 1988 at Saskatchewan Place, now SaskTel Centre, where he serves as Executive Director. His 30 years of experience in facility and event management, event booking and self-developed/-promoted events has helped Saskatoon and Saskatchewan secure hit concerts, family entertainment and national and international sporting events. In addition to his professional career, he has dedicated countless volunteer hours to attracting major events and visitors to the province. Ford's leadership has been shared among various committees, including the Bid Committee and Host Organizing Committee for the 2000 Labatt Brier, 2004 Nokia Brier, 2007 JUNO Awards, 2009 Canadian Country Music Association Awards, 2010 IIHF World Junior Hockey Championships, 2013 MasterCard Memorial Cup, 2018 4 Nations Cup and others. Ford was responsible for creating two of Saskatoon's most popular outdoor summer festivals: A Taste of Saskatchewan, which began in 1995, and Rock the River, which has been an annual sellout since it premiered in 2014. Ford is directly involved in hosting all major rodeo events in Saskatoon, which include the 2010 to 2018 PBR Canadian Finals. For over a decade, he has been active on the board of Saskatoon Sports Tourism.



SHANN GOWAN, SWIFT CURRENT

Shann Gowan is a cultural leader and driving force in Swift Current. She has worked tirelessly to bring forth a range of cultural experiences and festival programming to the community. Gowan created Cultural Festivals, an organization with a mandate to present a variety of high-quality performing and visual art experiences that enhance the quality of life and boost community pride. As its director for nearly 20 years, she produced the SaskPower Windscape Kite Festival, Long Day's Night Music Festival and the Blenders Music series. She recruited volunteers, booked quality performers, raised funds to compensate artists fairly, and worked with key community partners to ensure the success and viability of these events as creative tourist draws to the area. The SaskPower Windscape Kite Festival has grown into a nationally recognized family event that welcomes as many as 11,000 attendees annually, half of whom are from outside of Swift Current and include visitors from across Canada, the U.S., Europe and Asia. The festival generates more than \$1.7-million in tourism spending each year. Additionally, Gowan has managed the fundraising, finances, marketing and promotion of over a dozen local partners, such as the Swift Current Art Gallery, Swift Current Museum, Lyric Theatre and others.

Selling Saskatchewan

New market research reshapes Saskatchewan angling campaign

Anglers and hunters from the United States represent a lucrative market for Saskatchewan's outfitting industry, totaling more than \$100 million in travel spending annually. Tourism Saskatchewan traditionally undertakes a winter advertising campaign that targets anglers when they may be considering destination options and planning trips. The 2019 campaign, conducted in January-March, featured both agency-led and in-house components. Research was key to determining the approach, content, messaging and targeted audiences.

Market segmentation research conducted by Environics Analytics in late 2017 identified three strong U.S. angling and hunting markets (see categories below for characteristics). The data provided valuable insight into the demographics, values, travel attitudes and media consumption habits of these outdoor enthusiasts. Prospective geographic distribution across the U.S., down to the zipcode level, was also determined. The information was central to the creation of a strategic, precisely targeted angling campaign that reached consumers most likely to be interested in Saskatchewan's adventure offerings. Research categorizes these consumers as follows:

UPSCALE FAMILIES

- Wealthy, midlife families
- Highly educated homeowners who work in white collar jobs and earn above-average household incomes
- Very active and enjoy outdoor activities
- Vacation frequently and are one-and-a-half times more likely than the average American to visit Canada
- Use internet at high rates, preferring to research and book their travels online
- Reached via a variety of media channels, especially online and through social media

GOLDEN YEARS

- Wealthy middle-aged to mature couples
- Earn above average household incomes and work in white collar jobs
- More likely to visit Canada, and are willing to pay more for staying at well-known luxurious hotels
- Plan and book their travel online
- Enjoy listening to and watching sports, and tend to enjoy outdoor activities



Twin Falls

BUDDING FAMILIES

- Younger and midlife couples and families
- Middle income and may have more conservative values
- More likely to participate in outdoor recreational activities and to have a Saskatchewan fishing licence
- Look for value when travelling and are less likely to use online channels for travel planning or purchases
- Less likely to travel abroad, possibly due to financial constraints
- Uses the internet to stay up-to-date on trends and connected with friends and family

The campaign employed customized landing pages, along with engaging visual and written content and messaging to target each segment. Key industry assets were leveraged, notably impressive video and still photography captured through the 2018 Industry Content Pilot Project. Components also included earned media articles and video created by angling influencers who participated in Tourism Saskatchewan's Travel Media Program. For the first time, outfitter packages tailored to each market segment featured prominently on the landing pages to give prospective anglers an idea of real destinations and experiences to inspire trip planning.

Travel Media Program central to shaping Saskatchewan stories

Earned media coverage is a key marketing tactic in promoting Saskatchewan destinations and experiences. It involves third-party endorsements from travel writers, bloggers and video journalists who visit the province and share their experiences, at a fraction of the cost of a traditional, paid media buy.

Tourism Saskatchewan's Travel Media Program offsets the cost for media and influencers to travel to and within the province to collect material for future articles or episodes. The Travel Media team also pitches Saskatchewan stories to media, introduces writers and journalists to operators, plans and organizes familiarization (FAM) tours, hosts visiting media and ensures the delivery of remarkable hospitality and experiences.

The program sees activity year round. Tourism Saskatchewan considers proposals from media and operators that adhere to criteria and policies that are in place.

Understanding the following is helpful before submitting a request for assistance:

- Support may be provided to offset the cost of transportation, accommodations and meals for media travelling to Saskatchewan. In some instances, admission costs for events may be covered.
- Media pursuing fishing and hunting stories must work with licensed Saskatchewan outfitters.
- Fishing and hunting licences and permits, bait, ammunition and any charges for required work permits are not eligible expenses.

Tourism Saskatchewan works closely with partners, such as Destination Canada, Parks Canada and destination marketing organizations to co-ordinate efforts and maximize resources.

Inquiries about the Travel Media Program are welcome. Contact Jodi Holliday at 306-787-0988, jodi.holliday@tourismsask.com regarding leisure media. For fishing and hunting media information, contact Daryl Demoskoff at 306-787-3712, daryl.demoskoff@tourismsask.com.

Measuring business-readiness – Are you visitor-ready, market-ready or export-ready?

Tourism operators who know and understand their level of business-readiness are in a position to make wise, strategic decisions. In the simplest terms, business-readiness describes how ready a destination or operator is to meet the expectations of their target customers.

The desired level of business-readiness depends on the goals of the operation. For example, a local non-profit heritage site may be satisfied with attracting largely local visitation during select events. The level of necessary business-readiness, in that case, would be significantly less than an operator seeking to tap into the overseas travel trade market, which expects precise standards and high service levels.

The following self-assessment checklist helps operators gauge their level of readiness and understand where they fit on the path to becoming export-ready.

LEVEL #1 VISITOR-READY BUSINESS OR EXPERIENCE

A visitor-ready business has all of its licenses, permits and insurance in place in order to operate legally. It should affirm criteria in points 1-7 to be considered visitor-ready.

1. Business exists and is open (year round or seasonally):
 Yes No
2. Has all licenses, permits and insurance in place to operate legally:
 Yes No
3. Maintains a basic website or Facebook listing with limited information and can provide contact information for owner/operator (including contact name, business name, mailing address, telephone number and email address):
 Yes No
4. Engages in some marketing efforts:
 Yes No
5. Has some type of tourism offering in place and articulates what visitors can see or do:
 Yes No
6. Has consistent hours of operation and, if closed or seasonal, responds to inquiries:
 Yes No

LEVEL #2 MARKET-READY BUSINESS OR EXPERIENCE

A market-ready business actively markets to potential visitors; communicates with potential visitors year round, and is ready to accept advanced reservations. It meets all of the above criteria, plus the following:

7. Has marketing materials with year-round contact information (if seasonal, an automated response should be provided for phone and email) and provides details of what visitors can see or do (brochure, rack card, website or social media presence):
 Yes No
8. Has published prices and consumer booking, payment and cancellation policies:
 Yes No
9. Meets or exceeds industry expectations for their sector by participating in specialized training or certification:
 Yes No
10. During the operating season, a 24-hour response time is maintained for confirming bookings, and 24-48 hours for inquiries:
 Yes No
11. Is ready to accept advanced reservations online, or by phone and/or email:
 Yes No



La Reata Ranch

LEVEL #3 EXPORT-READY BUSINESS OR EXPERIENCE

Export-ready businesses market to and through travel trade distribution sales channels. Owners/operators understand and are willing to offer commission or net rate pricing, agree to travel trade bookings and have a defined cancellation policy. An export-ready business meets all of the above criteria, plus the following:

12. Engages with industry partners, works with destination marketing organizations, media, etc. to welcome international visitors:
 Yes No
13. Is prepared to market and partner with travel trade distribution sales channels:
 Yes No
14. Understands commissions and net rate pricing, has commissionable pricing structures, accepts vouchers:
 Yes No
15. Will agree to guaranteed trade bookings and pricing as far as 18 months in advance and has cancellation policies in place:
 Yes No
16. Has detailed domestic and overseas marketing plans, and can provide editorial-quality images:
 Yes No
17. Experience can be adapted to the interests, language and expectations of whichever international market is targeted:
 Yes No

In Development

Saskatchewan Airshow back on schedule in 2019



The 2019 Saskatchewan Airshow will take place on July 6-7 at 15 Wing Moose Jaw.

On any given day, the sky above Moose Jaw reveals impressive feats in aviation. South of the city, 15 Wing Moose Jaw is the centre of Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) pilot training and principal site of NATO Flying Training in Canada, along with other programs. It is also home to the iconic Canadian Forces Snowbirds.

The Saskatchewan Airshow ends its 14-year hiatus with a spectacular display of performances and technology on July 6-7 at 15 Wing Moose Jaw. The show will commemorate Saskatchewan's commitment of more than 75 years to pilot training, and celebrate historical connections between 15 Wing Moose Jaw and communities throughout the province.

For 40 years, the Saskatchewan Airshow was a premier summer event, attracting up to 50,000 visitors annually. Col. Denis O'Reilly, Commander of 15 Wing Moose Jaw, is credited as the driving force behind the show's revival. At a news conference in November, O'Reilly recalled growing up in Saskatchewan and recognizing how aviation was entrenched in the local culture.

Attendance at the 2019 Saskatchewan Air Show is expected to be 25,000 people from across Western Canada and northern states. The event

coincides with Moose Jaw Sidewalk Days, which attracts up to 20,000 visitors.

Special events, like the return of a beloved summer tradition, are cause for celebration. The 2019 Saskatchewan Airshow is receiving the distinction of having a limited edition craft beer created by Rebellion Brewing.

Tourism Saskatchewan is proud to sponsor the 2019 Saskatchewan Airshow through its Event Hosting Program, under the category of Marquee Annual Tourism Events. The investment will assist with marketing the show in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

Visit saskairshow.ca to purchase tickets.

Since Tourism Saskatchewan's Event Hosting Program was unveiled in 2013, more than \$10 million has been invested in tourism events, festivals and special projects that drive visitation and travel spending, and showcase Saskatchewan as a welcoming destination. To inquire about the program or application process, contact Tyler Lloyd at 306-787-5525, tyler.lloyd@tourismsask.com.

The next Event Hosting Program intake closes on September 30, 2019.



The following national events are coming to Saskatchewan. Tourism Saskatchewan is proud to support these and other showcases.

Tim Hortons NHL Heritage Classic, Regina, October 26, 2019

Outdoor hockey is a Saskatchewan tradition. But in October? The Winnipeg Jets and Calgary Flames will face off at Mosaic Stadium in Regina.

Scotties Tournament of Hearts, Moose Jaw, February 14-23, 2020

The Scotties Tournament of Hearts sees Canada's top women's teams from each province compete for the national title and the chance to represent Canada at the 2020 World Women's Curling Championship. Moose Jaw has the distinction of hosting two Scotties in five years, the last in 2015.

JUNO Awards, Saskatoon, March 9-15, 2020

Saskatchewan hospitality and spirit will share the spotlight with Canada's top musical talent. The showcase was previously hosted in Saskatoon in 2007 and Regina in 2013.

Grey Cup championship, Regina, November 2020

Rider Pride will be out in full force as Regina hosts its fourth Grey Cup. The year is a milestone for the Canadian Football League, which turns 110.

Canadian Curling Trials Roar of the Rings, Saskatoon, November 23-December 5, 2021

Saskatoon will rise to the occasion of hosting Canada's top women's and men's teams, competing for the honour of representing the nation at the 2022 Winter Olympics. The 12-day championship will take place at SaskTel Centre.

Rebecca Mackenzie talks food and drink tourism

“Every dish has a story and every ingredient maps the history of a destination. Tourists are curious explorers . . . and many prefer to travel with their taste buds.”

United Nations World Tourism Organization, *Second Global Report on Gastronomy Tourism*

Delegates attending the 2019 HOST Saskatchewan Conference on April 11 can expect a generous helping of information on food and drink tourism (aka culinary or gastronomy tourism). It is a sizzling topic and one that Saskatchewan operators can appreciate, given the province’s leadership in agriculture and world food production.

HOST Saskatchewan Conference keynote speaker Rebecca Mackenzie, President and CEO of the Culinary Tourism Alliance (CTA), was recently interviewed by Tourism Saskatchewan. She commented on the growth of food tourism and the benefits of developing and delivering “taste of place” experiences.

How long have you been involved in food tourism and what are some of your career highlights?

“I’ve been working in this area for 20 years. For 10 years, I managed the destination marketing organization for Prince Edward County, ON, and helped to increase tourism visitation to the point that the area more than tripled its revenue from tourism. We put a focus on growing out the shoulder season through food tourism, developing a taste trail, as well as their Maple in the County program and other food tourism products. I’ve been with the CTA for a decade. From 2008 to 2016, it was called the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance (OCTA) and existed to implement a 10-year culinary tourism strategy that the Province of Ontario had commissioned. We dropped the “O” in 2016 when we decided that because we had successfully completed the Ontario strategy, we would take our knowledge and expertise across the country and around the globe.”

What are some of the most inspiring developments you have witnessed in food tourism? What has surprised you the most?

“Agri-tourism and the growth of food tourism in rural areas – it is great to see that happening. Some of the growth is driven by developments in the distilling industry in Canada. You are seeing more craft beer and spirit trails. With greater understanding that tourism is more than just dining out, destinations are developing more robust products that include everything from on-farm experiential visits to farmers markets, distillers, brewers, festivals and events that have a food focus.

The growth in destinations across Canada that have invested in food tourism is a pleasant surprise. A number of them really understand the economic development potential when food tourism is developed properly. They get that it’s not just about marketing, but about working with small- and medium-sized businesses and helping them reach a level of market-readiness where they can guarantee quality taste experiences. It’s about building partnerships between those operators and their communities. When you connect farmers or added-value food and beverage processors with chefs and restaurateurs, event organizers and tour operators, you can get some creative partnerships that result in business growth along the food tourism value chain.”

What are important messages to share with small businesses that offer food and beverage services, but may not consider themselves part of tourism?

“There are a lot of really amazing treasures that either: A) aren’t involved in tourism because they don’t think they are a tourism experience; or B) don’t understand how to get involved. They may not understand how to leverage what they are doing due to the day-to-day demands of running a business. When a destination wants to grow food tourism, the CTA can help to identify all of the businesses along the food tourism value chain and measure their level of market-readiness. By market-ready, I mean – Do they have a strong

online presence that clearly articulates what their offering is? Can you find them on Google Maps? Do they have their hours posted? Are they active on social media and sharing regularly with consumers about the experience offered at their business?”

When we geo-map and geo-tag those businesses and understand their unique offerings, we can see how to thread it all together and develop some type of experience or build partnerships among those operators and with other businesses in the community.”

Turn to page 3 for details about Mackenzie’s presentation at the HOST Saskatchewan Conference in Saskatoon at TCU place on April 11.



Rebecca Mackenzie, President and CEO, Culinary Tourism Alliance

The Culinary Tourism Alliance has defined the Food Tourism Value Chain to include “all businesses that can deliver a ‘taste of place’ experience.” These include:

- farms (that offer on-farm or agri-tourism experiences, sell wholesale to the food services industry or participate in farmers’ markets)
- farmers’ markets
- restaurants (ranging from food trucks to fine dining)
- accommodation properties (that offer food and beverage services)
- attractions (that offer food and beverage or “taste education” services)
- festivals and events (that have food and beverage vendors or products available)
- culinary schools
- food tours

STEC News

Special Events Series soon available online

Saskatchewan is renowned for hosting local, national and international events. Organizing a festival, showcase or tournament takes effort and often involves a multitude of volunteers. Large celebrations or assemblies may require the talents of experienced, paid staff.

The Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council (STEC) offers programs and resources that help take the guesswork out of event planning. A new seven-course Special Events Series is a full suite of practical training beneficial to people responsible for planning events.

The first course in the series, *Getting Your Event Off the Ground*, guides participants through the process of creating a solid business plan – a fundamental first step in planning an event. *Getting Your Event Off the Ground* is a recommended pre-requisite for the six remaining courses:

- Marketing and Promotion
- Fundraising and Sponsorship
- Event Logistics
- Human Resource Management
- Financial Management
- Risk Management

Courses in the Special Events Series are based on the *emerit* National Occupational Standards for Event Coordinator and Event Manager.

All seven courses in the series will soon be available online at stec.com.

For experienced event planners, *emerit* Professional Certification recognizes competence in the role. Certification is available for Event Coordinator. Management certification is offered in the categories of Event Manager and Event Management International. Visit emerit.ca for details.

Sandra Butel, CEO and Artistic Director of the Regina Folk Festival, knows the value of certification. She was one of the first event professionals in Canada to be certified and was instrumental in pioneering *emerit* Event Coordinator certification nearly 20 years ago.

"Certification is a way of legitimizing your work," Butel said. "It shows that you understand that event planning is a real job and that you're actually good at it. Being able to have a certification that recognizes your skills and being seen as a professional is important."

To inquire about the Special Events Series, *emerit* certification or other training delivered by STEC, contact Kari Burgess at 306-933-5913, kari.burgess@tourismsask.com.

Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference explores career opportunities

The 4th annual Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference will take place on June 12 at the Delta Hotels by Marriott Saskatoon Downtown. The conference theme is *Explore, Learn and Grow Your Career in Tourism*.

The conference offers practical, progressive human resource strategies to strengthen business and enhance Saskatchewan's tourism sector. A full schedule of presentations and sessions will highlight tourism career opportunities and the benefits and fulfilment of working in the industry.

The registration desk opens at 10 a.m. Mary Taylor-Ash, CEO of Tourism Saskatchewan, will deliver opening remarks at 11 a.m. An inspiring keynote address will be delivered by the Saskatchewan Tourism Education Council's newest career influencer, who will share stories of turning career dreams into reality.

Afternoon breakout sessions will address a selection of timely topics. A panel discussion will feature three Saskatchewan tourism professionals represented in the *Canadian Traveller* Top 40 Under 40 list for 2018. Panelists Stephanie Clovechok, Tourism Saskatoon; Kirk Morrison, Krugo Travel; and Jesse Tiefenbach, d3h Hotels will share insights on tourism careers and the "secrets of success."

An interactive session titled *Managing versus Leading* will help delegates identify their management style and learn to adapt and expand leadership abilities.

Rachelle Brockman, Principal of Eureka Experience, will lead a workshop titled *Ignite the Leader Within*. Brockman will coach delegates on discovering their leadership capabilities, staying "ignited" as a leader and inspiring others to take action.

The Educators' Forum will explore the opportunities and challenges of guiding youth into long-term, rewarding careers in tourism. This interactive session will examine the resources available to educators, students and institutions.

The Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference is intended for mid-level managers, frontline employees, *emerit*-certified employees or those currently enrolled in certification, and secondary and postsecondary educators.

The 26th annual Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner will be held in conjunction with the conference. The dinner honours new nationally certified tourism professionals and journeypersons, Employers of Choice and the Tourism Ambassador Award recipient.



To register for the Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference, contact Nancy Hubenig at 306-787-9844, nancy.hubenig@tourismsask.com. The cost is \$125 (plus GST) and includes one ticket to the Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner.

Expanded sponsorship opportunities are available. For information, contact Darcy Acton, 306-933-7466, darcy.acton@tourismsask.com.

Visit Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com for a full agenda.

In the Spotlight

Recipients of the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence earn their place in the spotlight by demonstrating exceptional work and a commitment to treating visitors to great service and experiences. Throughout the year, *Going Places* profiles those who took top honours at the Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence Gala in April 2018. In this issue, Tourism Saskatchewan salutes two award winners.



Historic Reesor Ranch, Maple Creek, Business of the Year Award (under 20 full-time employees)

Sponsored by the Saskatchewan Indian Gaming Authority

Historic Reesor Ranch, located high in the Cypress Hills, has established a proud legacy during its 113-year history. It has been home to six generations of the Reesor family and has operated as a guest ranch and bed and breakfast since 1991. The family's dedication to preserving history was honoured in 2017 when the Historic W.D. and Alice Reesor Ranch became the first Saskatchewan ranch to be designated a Provincial Heritage Property. The business strikes a successful balance between managing growth and maintaining the integrity of the land, and consistently delivers on the promise of an authentic, memorable visitor experience. The popular Ranch Hall Grill, guided ATV tours, enticing winter getaway packages and Wine in the West tours are examples of services and offerings that enhance appeal. Technical upgrades and the availability of online booking further demonstrate the commitment to guest satisfaction. Historic Reesor Ranch received national recognition at the Canadian Tourism Awards in November 2018, garnering the Hilton Worldwide Small- or Medium-sized Business of the Year Award. Visit reesorranch.com to book your stay.

Grassroots Restaurant Group, Saskatoon, Business of the Year Award (over 20 full-time employees)

Sponsored by The Western Producer

Since the opening of Ayden Kitchen & Bar in 2013, Grassroots Restaurant Group has been committed to making Saskatoon known for quality cuisine. The early success of its first restaurant paved the way for two additional ventures: Little Grouse on the Prairie and Sticks and Stones. The trio of restaurants in Saskatoon employs over 100 people. A focus on developing service skills and nurturing the culinary talents of staff delivers meaningful benefits. Grassroots Restaurant Group has made further efforts to raise the profile of Saskatoon's culinary scene by maintaining strong connections to local suppliers and charities, and by hosting Prairie Feast Street Fair, an event that brought chefs from across the country to Saskatchewan. With the opening of Avenue Restaurant in 2018, its fourth restaurant and first Regina location, Grassroots Restaurant Group continues to herald the province as a destination for exceptional dining. For information about its restaurants, events and catering services, visit grassrootsrestaurantgroup.ca.

Take advantage of free operator listings on TourismSaskatchewan.com

Saskatchewan tourism operators, including businesses, attractions, accommodations, campgrounds, communities, etc., are encouraged to take advantage of FREE listings on TourismSaskatchewan.com.

Extensive customer research of key Saskatchewan tourism markets revealed that an overwhelming majority of travellers use online sources to find information and plan their vacations. Web, mobile and social media are now the most used and preferred information and search methods.

Ensure that your Tourism Profile is up-to-date. For changes to current web listings, contact Tourism Saskatchewan at 1-877-237-2273 or information.updates@tourismsask.com.

For more information about Tourism Profiles, contact Kathy Rosenkranz at 306-787-2312, kathy.rosenkranz@tourismsask.com.

Tourism Trends

Reports from Expedia and Treksoft highlight 2019 travel trends



Top: Grasslands National Park
Bottom: Treosix Adventure Parks, Elk Ridge Resort

Top: Churchill River
Bottom: RCMP Sunset-Retreat Ceremony, Regina

Predicting travel activities and patterns for seasons ahead requires digging deep into consumer behaviours. Global companies Expedia and Treksoft recently published reports forecasting trends for 2019.

Projects of such scope examine travel markets worldwide, including Canada. The reports are encouraging for Saskatchewan, which has many of the attributes that Canadians value in a destination. Several highlights from each report offer insights relevant to Saskatchewan experiences.

Expedia Group Media Solutions shared the following details in its report, *Multi-national Travel Trends: A Global Look at the Motivations and Behaviors of Travelers*:

- **Visiting family is Number 1.** For approximately 50 per cent of Canadian travellers, visiting family is their most likely type of vacation. Relaxation and sightseeing ranked second and third, at approximately 45 per cent and 40 per cent respectively.
- **Travellers seek value and exploration.** Over 90 percent of Canadians want the most value for their dollar. Almost 80 per cent are interested in places where they can explore the outdoors and be active. They are interested in “bucket list” and “off the beaten path” experiences and appreciate recommendations from locals.

- **The heart speaks louder than the wallet.** People make travel decisions based on feelings and aspirations – on “what’s in the heart” above “what’s in the wallet.” Activities and experiences offered by a destination drive those decisions. For Canadians, once-in-a-lifetime opportunities and cultural experiences ranked the highest. Food experiences were a priority for a number of travel markets, with Canadians ranking them among the top five.
- **Friends trust their friends.** Personal insights into how social media shapes travel decisions shed light on the influence of travel photographs shared by family and friends. People in all of the surveyed markets, including Canada, take these images into consideration more so than photographs posted by travel writers or bloggers, or published articles about travel destinations.
- **Canadians like a deal.** Similar to other markets, Canadian travellers value their money and respond to deals or special promotions. Social media advertising that includes such incentives scored high, outranking the influence of travel photos, videos, hashtags or celebrity endorsements.

Treksoft echoed some of the above insights in its *Travel Trends Report 2019*. The company’s research suggests the following will be in high demand this year:

- **Unique experiences** – Tour operators are seeing an increase in requests for unique, once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Most inquiries

are coming from Millennials eager to explore the world and share their experiences with others.

- **Ecological tours** – For many tour and activity operators, ecological tours are their most popular offering. They are often rare, educational experiences that enable travellers to experience an area firsthand and learn how to protect it in the future. Tours that use proceeds to fund ecological projects, such as forest or animal habitat restoration, are favoured above alternatives with no specific cause.
- **Local experiences** – Travellers are increasingly interested in understanding and being immersed in the local culture. They want to “do what the locals do and eat where locals eat.”
- **Adventure** – Growing demand for adrenaline-pumping activities is driven by new generations of travellers who are keen to push their limits.
- **Multi-day tours and activities** – More multi-day tours and activities are being booked in advance. Convenience is a key selling feature. Travellers appreciate spending less time searching for activities and planning activities.
- **History and culture** – Walking tours remain a top experience for visitors to a new location. They appreciate stories about an area’s history and culture, as told by a local expert. These tours provide a great opportunity to meet other travellers.

Wise business decisions begin with research

In an increasingly competitive tourism environment, consumer research can provide valuable insights to help determine the products, prices, and promotions that will motivate potential visitors. Asking customers a few simple questions can yield the information required to tailor products and experiences to meet their needs.

Data collection is not exclusive to large organizations. Small- and medium-sized tourism businesses, attractions, events, festivals and communities can easily acquire information from customers that can yield surprising discoveries.

As operators and communities prepare for the busy summer travel season, Tourism Saskatchewan encourages them to make consumer data collection a standard business activity. Ask customers for postal codes, engage visitors in conversation and maintain a system for tracking and organizing the data. These simple steps can take the guesswork out of marketing and business decisions.

Quality research takes time and effort; however, the benefits are worth it. To inquire about conducting consumer surveys and other research, contact Jeannette Lye at 306-787-9556, jeannette.lye@tourismsask.com.

TOP FIVE TIPS FOR COLLECTING CONSUMER INFORMATION

Tourism businesses gain a competitive edge by taking a greater interest in visitors and acquiring a few details about them. It makes good business sense to know your customers. Just a few short questions can uncover helpful facts. For example, if improving your marketing strategy is a priority, asking customers how they heard about your business can help determine the best use of advertising dollars. To determine strong target markets, knowing where visitors are from is necessary. Here are a few tips on how to gather and use consumer information.

1. WHAT INFORMATION DO YOU ALREADY HAVE?

Determine if important details already exist within your business. Look for valuable 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. WHAT DO YOU NEED?

Identify information that will benefit your business. Consider these basic questions:

- What brings you to the area? (e.g., visiting family and friends, vacation or leisure, business)
- Where are you from? What is your postal code?
- How did you hear about us? (e.g., social media, website, print, television, radio, word-of-mouth).
- How many people are travelling with you?
- Is this your first time visiting? (yes/no)

3. ENGAGE STAFF IN THE PROCESS

Bring staff on board early on. Explain the importance of gathering the data. Establish a simple tracking system. An easy way to track and analyze information is to use an Excel spreadsheet. Build it into the business routine and update the spreadsheet on a daily or weekly basis.

Date	Postal Code	Reason for Visit	First time visitor?	Party Size	How did you hear about us?
14-Jan-19	X0X0X0	Business	Y	2	Word of Mouth
14-Jan-19	H0H0H0	Visiting Friends and Family	N	1	Social Media
15-Jan-19	S0S0S0	Visiting Friends and Family	N	2	Social Media

4. COLLECT POSTAL CODES

Many retail outlets ask shoppers for their postal code at the time of purchase. Why? Because postal codes are links to a wealth of information about markets and customers. There are a number of user-friendly tools available to analyze postal code data, including:

- PRIZM5, environicsanalytics.com/en-ca/PRIZM5
- SuperDemographics, superdemographics.com/loadFileMain.php

5. KEEP INFORMATION PRIVATE

Ensure the confidentiality of customer information and responses. 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 of information.

Around the Province

Introducing Zane Buchanan, 2019 Saskatchewaner



2019 Saskatchewaner Zane Buchanan and his travel companion Stedman

The Government of Saskatchewan introduced Zane Buchanan as the 2019 Saskatchewaner on January 8. Raised in the province, but with experience living and working elsewhere, Buchanan brings a unique perspective to the role. He has a passion for the arts and social media blogging, and looks forward to meeting the people who make the province an inviting destination.

“Along with my travel companion – my trusty dog, Stedman – I’m eager to expand on the legacy left behind by the seven unique and talented wanderers who preceded me,” Buchanan said. “Aside from exposing the evident natural wonder of Saskatchewan, I’m keen on giving a voice to the many inspiring entrepreneurs, artists and diverse communities that our province has to offer.”

Buchanan grew up on an acreage near White City. He spent time in Eastern Canada and on the west coast, pursuing an education and working in broadcasting, theatre and social

media before applying to become the next Saskatchewaner. He nurtures his appetite for knowledge and learning through continuing education courses with Simon Fraser University.

As Saskatchewaner, Buchanan will travel the province, connect with citizens and communities, and share his adventures across social media channels. The program engages nearly 90,000 followers on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

The Saskatchewaner program is an inter-ministerial partnership between Tourism Saskatchewan and the Ministries of Agriculture; Parks, Culture and Sport; and Trade and Export Development.

CAA Saskatchewan has been the official program sponsor since the program launched in 2011. Its commitment ensures that Buchanan will travel in comfort and provides him with a vehicle, CAA membership and gas vouchers.

Learning From the Land: A Cree Cultural Experience (with dogs!)

Submitted by Saskatchewaner Zane Buchanan

Being an alumnus of the Prairie Valley School Division, I’m well aware of its commitment to reconciliation. The predominantly rural division includes 15 First Nations, resulting in a student population that includes 17 per cent self-declared First Nations, Métis and Inuit students (36 per cent of whom are residents of First Nations). Statistics aside, these schools are built on a platform of integration, and the curriculum actively honours the diverse student body.

A prime example of this directive is Fort Qu’Appelle’s Bert Fox High School (BFHS), where more than 70 per cent of students are Indigenous. The school’s open-door philosophy was clear when I was invited to attend a Cree culture camp on January 22.

BFHS offers a course called Learning from the Land (LFTL), which takes learning outdoors. The program marries Indigenous values with core content in a purposeful way. On the day of my visit, the class learned the ins-and-outs of dogsledding.

Dr. Kevin Lewis taught the land-based Cree camp. Lewis is the owner of Kâniyâsihk Culture Camps, which is a grassroots not-for-profit camp based in Ministikwin Lake. He travelled over 600 km, accompanied by three instructors and –

get this – 28 sled dogs. The LFTL students learned how to operate the sleds and give rides to their high school peers. In the spirit of community, students from Fort Qu’Appelle Elementary School were invited to participate.

At lunch, everyone was invited into the school auditorium to listen to Dr. Lewis tell traditional Cree stories about the origin of sled dogs. He was adamant that each dog had its own unique “spirit” and he frequently expressed his gratitude to the species for loyalty and service.

I’m incredibly grateful to Bert Fox High School and their Learning from the Land class for sharing the experience with me and lending some insight on the heartfelt practices of Cree culture.

Join along on my travels by following me on Facebook ([facebook.com/skwanderer](https://www.facebook.com/skwanderer)), Twitter (@skwanderer) or Instagram (@saskatchewaner).

Keep up with the latest blogs and videos on saskatchewaner.ca and YouTube ([youtube.com/user/skwandererofficial](https://www.youtube.com/user/skwandererofficial)).



Top: Dr. Kevin Lewis addresses students at Bert Fox High School, Fort Qu’Appelle

Middle/bottom: Students receive firsthand experience driving sled dogs

Blending business and nature in Saskatchewan provincial parks

Submitted by the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport



Pickerel Point Marina



Renovated cabin in Duck Mountain Provincial Park



Pickerel Point concession

For many years, Saskatchewan provincial parks have been special places for families and friends to visit, make memories and connect with nature. Through a combination of natural park features and enhanced modern services, Sask Parks offers visitors a variety of activities and services, from beaches, lakes and hiking trails to restaurants, golf courses and water equipment rentals.

Private business lessees are key contributors when it comes to keeping parks fresh and fun. By working together toward a common goal, the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport and private business lessees are enhancing the overall visitor experience. A vision for the future private-sector commercial development activities within provincial parks was established by Sask Parks in 2018, providing a common direction and clear path forward.

For the 2019 camping season, visitors to Duck Mountain Provincial Park can look forward to a number of recently renovated facilities. Last spring, the ministry teamed up with Madge Lake Developments Inc. to purchase, renew and operate rental accommodation facilities, a store/food service with laundry and a watercraft rental/marine gas facility. Since then, the project has been in full swing. Madge Lake Developments Inc. has focused on employing local trades from the community to complete the work. Rental cabins and townhouse units in the park have been refurbished. The marina will feature premium marine gas, along with boat slips and watercraft rentals.

Madge Lake Developments Inc. is part of a team of many dedicated lessees in Saskatchewan's provincial parks. Sask Parks and its private lessees are excited to continue offering unique and memorable experiences for all park visitors.

Largest T. rex discovered coming to the Royal Saskatchewan Museum in Regina

Submitted by the Ministry of Parks, Culture and Sport

Saskatchewan's own Scotty, the most massive creature of its kind ever assembled, will be the centrepiece of the new T.rex Gallery when it opens in the spring of 2019. Not only will this bring a compelling new attraction to the Queen City, the exhibit represents another chapter in the fascinating story of Scotty, which until now has only been available for viewing regionally at the T.rex Discovery Centre in Eastend.

Scotty's history dates back to August 16, 1991. In the Frenchman River Valley near the town of Eastend, high school teacher Robert Gebhardt was looking for fossils with RSM palaeontologist Tim Tokaryk, when he discovered the fossilized remains of the now famous 65-million-year-old T. rex. In June 1994, palaeontologists began the long excavating process of this large skeleton. Once removed, the 20-year process of exhibiting an exact copy began.

First, Scotty's bones were covered in a plaster field jacket to be moved to the lab in Eastend. This was no small feat, with the largest block weighing more than five tonnes. Once those were moved, the painstaking process of separating the fossils from ironstone and cemented sandstone was undertaken by RSM palaeontologists and volunteers. The prepared fossils were then sent to Research Casting International in Ontario, where the mount and casts of Scotty were created.

This process allowed Scotty to become an international star, with one replica in a travelling exhibit by the Australian Museum in Sydney and another replica that is a part of a Japanese travelling exhibit. While Scotty now has another place for fans of all ages to visit her in Regina, the great T. rex's home will forever be in Eastend.

Construction is now underway for the Scotty exhibit at the RSM, thanks to a grant from Heritage Canada and investment by the Ministry of Central Services. This support has allowed the RSM to remove a portion of the upper gallery to create a space large enough to fit Scotty and will also allow for more open flow patterns and dynamic gathering areas.

For more information on the Scotty exhibit, programming at the museum or to learn more about supporting the RSM's world-class work, visit the website (royalsaskmuseum.ca), Facebook ([@Royal.Saskatchewan.Museum](https://www.facebook.com/Royal.Saskatchewan.Museum)), Twitter ([@royalsaskmuseum](https://twitter.com/royalsaskmuseum)) or Instagram ([@RoyalSaskMuseum](https://www.instagram.com/RoyalSaskMuseum)). Visit. Donate. Discover.

TOP FIVE TIPS FOR EYE-CATCHING PROMOTIONAL MATERIALS

Research commissioned by Tourism Saskatchewan in 2017 determined that “in-market” promotional materials, such as rack cards, maps or concise brochures, are resources that travellers use for day-to-day activity planning when they have reached their destination. Local businesses – hotels, gas stations, restaurants and tourism information centres – are key places for display. Here are some tips for creating materials that stand out amid the clutter, give travellers the information they are seeking and lead them to new discoveries.

1. WHAT'S UP TOP MATTERS

Display units tend to be cluttered. Their design may block the bottom half of your rack card or brochure from view. The top of the card should scream “Pick me!” A striking blend of colour, fonts and strong call to action makes all of the difference in the world. A good exercise is to stand in front of an overcrowded display and see what catches your eye. Consider the look of those items that stand out. Design advice is only a click away and there are many online resources to explore.

2. BE SPECIFIC

Provide detailed, up-to-date information about your business or event. Travellers value their time and want their questions answered up front. Ensure that your rack cards or brochures are concise and accurate. Include dates, hours of operation, location, directions, address, website and contact information. If visitors request additional details, ensure a prompt reply to any phone calls or emails.

3. FEATURE IMPRESSIVE PHOTOGRAPHS AND MAPS

Compelling images are part of effective storytelling. Tourism businesses, attractions and events benefit from investing in impressive, inviting photography for use online and in print. Show off your best photos of special places, dynamic settings and experiences that will spark curiosity. Travellers still use and appreciate maps. If your location is off the beaten path, feature a simple map that visitors can easily navigate.

4. PLACEMENT AND AVAILABILITY ARE UP TO YOU

Placement is everything. See that your brochures are visible and adequately stocked in local restaurants, hotels, bed and breakfasts, gas stations, attractions and other businesses visited by tourists. Restocking is up to you, as is the removal of outdated information or rack cards and brochures that highlight past events. Keep the material fresh.

5. PROMOTE LOCAL

Travellers value authentic experiences and are eager to discover local tastes and products. Highlight any unique features of your businesses, as well as local partnerships or products that enhance the visitor experience. Most importantly, ensure that you deliver on the promise made to consumers.



Nominate a colleague for the Tourism Ambassador Award

Tourism Saskatchewan will be presenting the Tourism Ambassador Award at the 26th annual Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner on June 12 in Saskatoon. The award will honour an outstanding professional who has made exceptional contributions to tourism and hospitality in Saskatchewan. It recognizes commitment to professional development in the workplace and in the industry.

Tourism Ambassadors can be powerful mentors to new employees, make their community a household name or spend their lifetime dedicated to tourism.

Consider nominating colleagues who have demonstrated exemplary work in the Accommodation, Food and Beverage Services, Recreation and Entertainment, Transportation and Travel Services industries, or deserve recognition as Educator of the Year.

May 17 is the deadline to submit nominations. Download a nomination form at Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com.

For information about the award or to submit a nomination, contact Lendee Wiebe at 306-933-5910 or 1-800-331-1529, lendee.wiebe@tourismsask.com.

Here & There



Michela Carrière, Aski Holistic Adventures. Photo provided by APTN.



(Left to right) Sheila Wong, CEM, Senior Vice President and Founding Partner, BBW International Inc.; Candace Schierling, Director of National Sales, Tourism Saskatoon; Krista Cameron, Director of Sales, Destination St. John's. Photo by Jon Benjamin Photography.



Allen (Ahmoo) Angeconeb (Canadian [Anishinaabe/Ojibway], born 1955), *Wolves Looking Out of Den*, 1984, siltscreen on paper, edition 57/93. Collection of the MacKenzie Art Gallery, gift of Thomas Druyan and Alice Ladner, the Kampelmacher Memorial Collection of Indigenous Art.

Michela Carrière among cast of *Merchants of the Wild*

Michela Carrière, owner of Aski Holistic Adventures near Cumberland House, appears in the documentary series *Merchants of the Wild*, which premiered on February 22 on Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN). The 13-episode series features six Indigenous youth on a 25-day canoe journey across the traditional territory of the Oji-Cree people in northern Ontario. The course takes them through woods and waterways used during the fur trade. Outfitted with birch bark canoes, clothing and tools characteristic of the period, the adventurers test their survival skills and gain important life lessons. Episodes of *Merchants of the Wild* can be viewed on aptn.ca/merchantsofthewild.

Carrière travelled to Panama in February to present a workshop at the Tribal Gathering 2019, hosted by the public charity GeoParadise. The annual gathering fosters connections between Indigenous communities worldwide and is a forum for sharing ideas and concepts to preserve Indigenous culture and habitat. In her workshop, Carrière shared background on Aski Holistic Adventures and the eco-therapy offered, and brought knowledge of the Saskatchewan River Delta to delegates from around the world.

Saskatchewan spas recognized among Top 50 spas in Canada

Spas of America, a leading spa and wellness website, recently announced its Top 50 Canada Spas of 2018. Two Saskatchewan properties made the list. Manitou Springs Resort and Mineral Spa, located at Manitou Beach, held the 19th position. Temple Gardens Hotel and Spa, in Moose Jaw, ranked 44th. Spas of America determines rankings by website statistics, specifically unique page views of spasofamerica.com by global spa and wellness travel consumers.

Tourism Saskatoon's Candace Schierling receives industry award

Candace Schierling, Tourism Saskatoon's Director of National Sales, was celebrated among the winners of the Professional Convention Management Association (PCMA) Canada Awards of Excellence 2018. Schierling received the Inspirational Supplier of the Year Award at the PCMA's 2018 Innovation Conference, held in Victoria in November. The award is presented to an active PCMA supplier member who demonstrates professional excellence. Tourism Saskatchewan extends congratulations to Schierling for receiving recognition for her accomplishments.

MacKenzie Art Gallery receives generous donation of contemporary Indigenous art

The MacKenzie Art Gallery in Regina recently announced the donation of 1,000 works by contemporary Indigenous artists to its permanent collection. Donors Thomas Druyan and Alice Ladner (Alberta) began collecting in the 1990s. They chose the MacKenzie Art Gallery as the beneficiary of their seven-figure gift based on the gallery's leadership in the area of Indigenous art, with a specialized curator in place since the 1970s. The collection has been named the Kampelmacher Memorial Collection, in honour of Druyan's grandparents. Five works from the collection are on display until April 28. The gift follows an anonymous \$25 million donation for an endowment that the MacKenzie Art Gallery received in July 2018 and a six-figure donation for acquisitions from Regina philanthropist Lyn Goldman.

Save the date for Saskatchewan Tourism Week – May 26-June 1, 2019

Saskatchewan Tourism Week will be celebrated provincewide from May 26 to June 1, coinciding with Tourism Week in Canada. It is a time for tourism businesses, operators, attractions and destinations across the country to stand united and promote awareness about a dynamic industry that contributes significantly to the Canadian economy.

Canada's travel economy is valued at \$97.4 billion, according to the Tourism

Industry Association of Canada. Tourism is the nation's fourth largest service export, representing \$41.2 billion of Canada's GDP in 2017. The industry employs 1.8 million Canadians.

Travel expenditures in Saskatchewan reached \$2.37 billion in 2017, and there were approximately 13.6 million visits to and within the province that year. As of August 2018, 63,800 Saskatchewan citizens were employed in tourism-related jobs.

Communities throughout Saskatchewan will celebrate Saskatchewan Tourism Week with events and festivities that encourage residents to discover some of the tourism resources in their own backyard and explore unique destinations and sites elsewhere in the province.

Watch for details about Saskatchewan Tourism Week on Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com.

Going Places changes serve industry

Changes to *Going Places*, based on industry research and consultation, include an expanded list (below) of important dates and deadlines, upcoming conferences and workshops, valuable programs and tools, and other information beneficial to operators.

Tourism Saskatchewan reminds public event organizers and communities to list events for free on TourismSaskatchewan.com.

Industry Events, Opportunities and Resources

INDUSTRY EVENTS

HOST Saskatchewan Conference

April 11, 2019TCU Place, Saskatoon

Saskatchewan Tourism Awards of Excellence

April 11, 2019TCU Place, Saskatoon

Saskatchewan Craft Brewing Week

April 22-27, 2019Provincewide

49° x 110° Spring Conference

May 2-3, 2019Swift Current

Saskatchewan Tourism Week

May 26-June 1, 2019Provincewide

Tourism Week in Canada

May 26-June 2, 2019Nationwide

Saskatchewan Hotel & Hospitality Association Conference and Trade Show

May 28, 2019Evraz Place, Regina

Rendez-vous Canada

May 28-31, 2019Toronto, ON

Tourism Workplace Leadership Conference

June 12, 2019Delta Hotels by Marriott
Saskatoon Downtown

Tourism Professional Recognition Dinner

June 12, 2019Delta Hotels by Marriott
Saskatoon Downtown

International Indigenous Tourism Conference

November 12-14, 2019Kelowna, BC

INTAKES AND DEADLINES

Employer of Choice

intake period: May 1-November 30, 2019

Information at [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/
business-recognition-programs](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/business-recognition-programs)

Tourism Ambassador Award nominations

deadline: May 17, 2019

Information at Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com

Canadian Tourism Awards nominations

deadline: June 17, 2019

Information at tiac-aitc.ca/cgi/page.cgi/awards.html

Event Hosting Program Intake

deadline: September 30, 2019

Information at [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/
apply-for-funding](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/apply-for-funding)

Co-operative Advertising Program

deadline: September 30, 2019

Information at [Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/
apply-for-funding](http://Industry.TourismSaskatchewan.com/apply-for-funding)

Is your event listed on TourismSaskatchewan.com?

Tourism Saskatchewan's consumer website, TourismSaskatchewan.com, receives more than 1.5 million visitors annually. The site is a popular resource for vacation planning and researching activities and events in Saskatchewan communities. Posted information ranks highly in Google searches.

Event organizers are encouraged to submit dates and details about upcoming festivals, community celebrations and tourism events. Simply use the submission form located at TourismSaskatchewan.com/things-to-do/events/submit-an-event.

Have dates or details about your event changed? Avoid disappointment and missed opportunities by updating your current information. Submit changes by contacting Tourism Saskatchewan at 1-877-237-2273, information.updates@tourismsask.com.

Return Undeliverable Canadian Addresses

to:

TOURISM SASKATCHEWAN
189 - 1621 Albert Street
Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada
S4P 2S5
E-mail: travel.info@tourismsask.com

TourismSaskatchewan.com
1-877-237-2273

