

Statistics Canada research provides snapshot of Saskatchewan visitors



The Statistics Canada Travel Survey of Residents of Canada reflects trends, characteristics, spending and activities of Canadians travelling within their home country. The following summarizes characteristics of Saskatchewan travellers, travel spending and top draws for leisure travel.

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, 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.

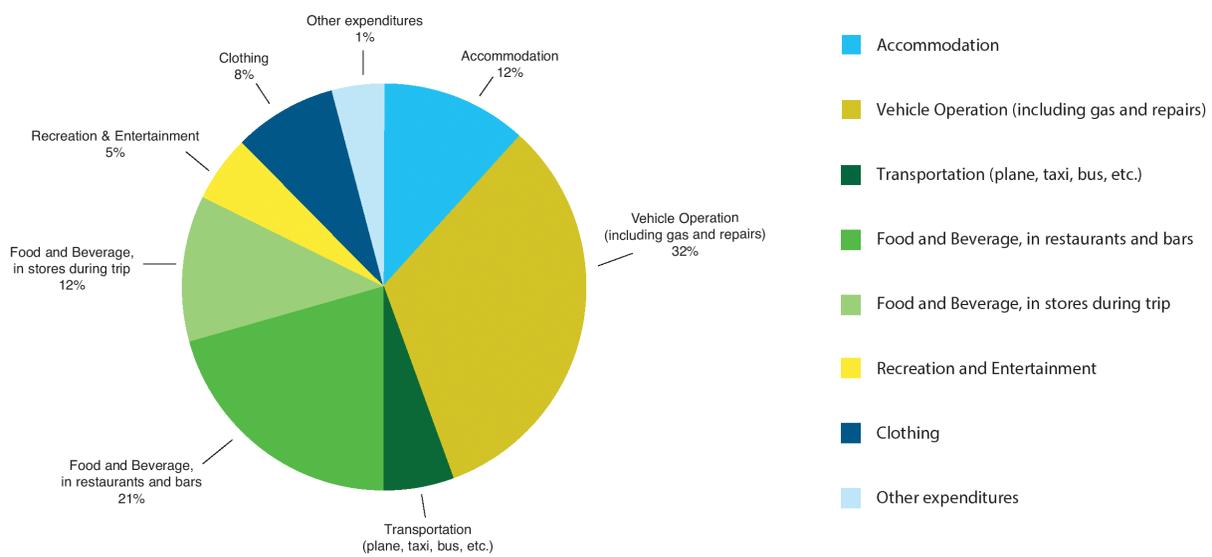
For more than 51 per cent of all overnight visitors to the province, visiting friends or relatives is the main purpose for travel (and the main source of accommodations), followed by leisure (35 per cent), and business (7 per cent). In comparison, over 20 per cent of same day travel is for business.

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.



WHAT EXPERIENCES ARE THEY SEEKING?

Saskatchewan is one big, beautiful place. Its tourism brand pillars – land and sky, time and space, and community – speak to the defining characteristics that travellers, from far and near, appreciate and seek in a destination. Nature and outdoor experiences are popular attractions.

Parks and more parks

Saskatchewan has an enviable parks system. Two national parks, 36 provincial parks and close to 80 regional parks are favourite holiday destinations for Saskatchewan residents, the province's primary travel market. Visitors from Alberta, the second largest market, are equally keen to enjoy holiday time in Saskatchewan parks. In 2017-2018, nearly 4 million visits were made to Saskatchewan provincial parks. Grasslands National Park and Prince Albert National Park recorded 317,000 visits.

World-class fishing and hunting

With nearly 100,000 lakes and waterways, Saskatchewan offers an abundance of fishing, boating and water-based activities. In 2018, more than 34,000 angling licences were sold to Canadian travellers from outside of Saskatchewan, while 10,350 licences were sold to U.S. visitors. Saskatchewan continues to gain recognition in the U.S. as a premier destination for hunting, demonstrated by a 25 per cent increase in hunting licence sales

to U.S. visitors in the past five years. Hunting and fishing are especially popular activities in northern Saskatchewan, where leisure travel makes up 60 per cent of overnight visitation.

Big city sights

Sports events are the top leisure attractions for visitors to Regina and Saskatoon. In March 2019, the Canadian Sport Tourism Alliance named Saskatoon as the No. 1 destination for hosting sporting events among cities with populations of 150,000-500,000. Regina was listed as No. 3 in the same category.

Exploring arts and culture

Destinations that nurture a vibrant arts scene and diverse cultural landscape attract travellers. People who visit a location for its cultural activities (museums, galleries, performances, music festivals, Indigenous experiences, etc.) stay longer and spend more than other types of travellers. Statistics for Saskatchewan reflected this fact. Among overnight visitors to the province, cultural explorers spent an average of \$390 during their stay, while outdoor adventurers spent about \$128.