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## Culinary Tourism



A survey conducted by TIA in 2006 reveals that the emerging phenomenon of culinary tourism—defined as travel to learn about or enjoy unique and memorable eating-and-drinking experiences—is taking hold in the American vocabulary. According to the survey, two in five (40%) of leisure travellers self-identify as travelling to learn about or enjoy unique and memorable eating-and-drinking experiences. The research also shows that 46% of US leisure travellers (12.6 million) are deliberate culinary travellers (individuals for whom culinary or wine-related activities were either a key reason to take the trip or helped them choose between destinations). According to a report in 2003 prepared for the Canadian Tourism Commission the number of US traveling Wine & Culinary Enthusiasts to British Columbia is estimated to be 1.6 million. This number is expected to increase at a higher

growth rate than the population growth rate of the USA. British Columbia ranks third after Ontario & Quebec as destinations visited by this group. Typically American Wine & Culinary Enthusiasts visiting Canada are from states adjacent to the Canadian border, slightly above 48 yrs old and slightly more likely to be men than women with an average household income of \$76,600. Interestingly even though they are Wine & Culinary Enthusiasts, these Americans proffer their highest ratings of Canada for attributes that are associated with the *outdoors*: beautiful scenery, clean, great place for fishing, great place to relax and get away from it all, a place with lots of things for mature adults to see and do.

### How can we attract more of these US Wine & Culinary Enthusiasts to BC?

- ◆ BC needs to score very high ratings as *great place to shop*, a place that is *popular or trendy*, *value for money*, a place with many *cultural & urban attractions*, *romance*, a *bon vivant lifestyle* ('the good life'), and a *great place to visit in winter*.
- ◆ Pairing Wine & Culinary product with the following heritage activities: *museums, festivals/fairs, Farmers' fairs or markets, science & tech museums, historic sites, Aboriginal celebrations or attractions, pick -our-own farms/harvesting*
- ◆ Pairing Wine & Culinary product with the following outdoor activities: *wildlife viewing, wildflowers/flora viewing, golfing, fishing, hiking/backpacking in wilderness settings, cycling, kayaking or canoeing, whale watching, bird watching, downhill skiing, horseback riding.*
- ◆ Pairing Wine & Culinary product with the following performing & visual arts activities: *theatre, local arts & crafts studios, and art galleries.*

## Help for Tourism Employers

Tourism accounts for more than 117,500 direct jobs in British Columbia, representing 1 in every 14 jobs in the province. When you include indirect tourism employment this number swells to 266,000 almost 1 out of every 8 jobs in the province. It is anticipated that BC will need 84,000 NEW tourism workers over the next decade. This means a lot of competition for tourism employers to recruit & retain quality personnel. Tourism BC has just launched a new tool that offers insights to this dilemma and addresses the issues. Developed in partnership with go2 human resources organization, the guide "Employees First" can now be ordered online:

<http://www.tourismbc.com/pdf/TourismEssentialsOrderForm.pdf>

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### Does this brochure get your attention?



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Everyone needs  
 a little Island time.

Technological advances have called into question many traditional models, including the common tourism brochure. And yet, this form does not appear on the brink of extinction. It remains one of the most popular information sources for tourists. Tourism Vancouver Island alone sent over 16,000 information packages filled with brochures in 2006. Destinations & tourism operators need not question the importance of a strong online visibility strategy, however studies show 62% of travellers are still looking for information *while* traveling and only 11% bother consulting the Internet *while* traveling making the brochure an important piece of your marketing mix.

A study on Glendale, AZ visitor inquiries conducted by an Arizona State University professor showed that traditional brochures still have a major influence on travel decisions. Potential tourists who had requested a brochure showed an increased interest in Glendale, thanks to the information they received. In fact, 51% of respondents said they were interested or extremely interested in visiting Glendale after they received the brochure, while only 19% said this *before* they received the brochure. Tourist brochures have a significant influence on other major travel decisions, particularly the decision to include the region in one's travel plans (33%) or stay longer in the region (15%). The study sampling also illustrated significant differences in brochure effectiveness, according to the socio-demographic profile of potential visitors. The researchers noted that women were more likely than men to be positively influenced by this form of advertising. Since women are responsible for 80% of all travel decisions the importance of brochures should not be ignored.

In another study conducted by Professor Patrick Tierney of San Francisco State University 2569 tourists in Canada, the US and Ireland were interviewed. His study revealed that of those tourists who had taken a brochure from a rack, 37% changed their travel plans due to the information in the brochure and 47% purchased something featured in the brochure.

Other merits to brochures include credibility: people expect a "real" company to have printed materials), time-saving: consumers want printed material to take with them and read at their leisure, support advertising: brochures can re-direct consumers to your website & other online promotions.

Want a great brochure? Here are some tips:

Know What Your Reader Wants Begin by analyzing what your reader wants to know & answer their questions in a logical sequence following the reader's train of thought.

Motivate your reader to look inside

Include benefits or thought-provoking statements that motivate the reader to pick up the brochure and open it. i.e.: an exclusive invitation, special discount or advance notice of sales.

Make it a Keeper Putting helpful information in your brochure will encourage the reader to keep it, refer to it often or pass it on to other people. Example: you sell paint so you provide hints on color schemes, instructions, tips from pros etc.

Alter the Shape Who says a brochure has to be A4? Try tall and slim, square, oblong. The only limitation is your imagination, and, of course, your budget.

A Benefit-Filled Headline A benefit-loaded headline is a headline that clearly and powerfully communicates a desirable benefit that your product or service offers your customers.

Educational Content Make sure your brochure is written in such a way that your prospects will know more about your product or service after they read the brochure than they did before.

Unique Selling Proposition (USP) A USP is something that separates you from your competition & causes prospects to lean toward your company instead of your competitors. Your USP is a statement that either your competitors can't, or aren't saying.

Proof Testimonials, quotes, charts, graphs, pictures, endorsements, and articles are great ways to prove your claims and cause your prospects to believe what you are saying.

A Low-Risk Offer The next step could be to make a purchase, to call for more information, to set an appointment, or whatever. Whatever the next logical step is you need to invite your prospect to take it, and make them feel comfortable about taking it. i.e.: money-back guarantee, no pressure, etc. Remove all of the possible barriers that would prevent a person from taking the next step.

**What does a great tourism brochure look like?** <http://www.heritageinterp.com/a.htm> (scroll down to heritage tourism brochures) for sample images & more great tips!