

## National Tourism Week (April 24-30, 2023)

National Tourism Week is all about celebrating the workforce that continues to bolster the industry and rebuild post-pandemic.

The tourism industry largely consists of businesses in the following five areas:

- scenic and sightseeing transportation
- performing arts, spectator sports and related
- heritage institutions
- amusement, gambling and recreation
- accommodation services

Investing in tourism delivers economic, social, and environmental benefits for the region. Winnipeg is a vibrant, artsy, multicultural city that has been singled out by publications including *National Geographic Traveller*, *Lonely Planet*, the *New York Times* and *LA Times* as a top travel destination for its many charms.

Pandemic years aside, in a typical year, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada attracts approximately 3.5 million visitors, resulting in an estimated \$609 million in direct expenditures.

## Tourism in Manitoba

Manitoba, located in the heart of Canada on Treaty Territories (**Treaty 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5 Territories and communities who are signatories to Treaties 6 and 10**) is a province that offers a unique blend of nature, culture, and history. Its diverse landscape features expansive prairies, boreal forests, crystal-clear lakes, and rolling hills, and its cultural experiences include growing Indigenous tourism, excellent outdoor recreational opportunities, as well as a multicultural mosaic celebrated through festivals, music and art.

There are six recognized tourism regions within Manitoba: [Interlake](#) Tourism Association, [East Manitoba](#) Tourism Association, [Central Plains](#) Tourism Network, Tourism [Westman](#), [Parkland](#) Tourism Association, and Tourism [Winnipeg](#).

The province of Manitoba is home to more than 25 national historic sites, 10 provincial parks, and numerous museums and cultural attractions, including the renowned Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR) in Winnipeg, the first national museum built outside of Ottawa, Ontario. The province boasts 80+ protected areas, including national parks, provincial parks, and wildlife management areas.

- In 2021, Manitoba had 6,538,000 visitors and saw preliminary visitor spending hit [\\$720 million](#) for an average spend rate of \$110 per visitor.
- Manitoba's top international markets for tourism are the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

## COVID-19: Pre-pandemic tourism statistics (2019)

Prior to COVID-19, tourism was one of the fastest-growing industries in the world. As one of Canada's largest industries, tourism was responsible for \$105B in GDP, provided one in 10 Canadian jobs - approximately 1.9M, and was made up of 225,000 small and medium-sized businesses across the country.

According to [Tourism HR](#), before the pandemic, over 2 million Canadians worked in the tourism sector. However, 880,000 individuals had lost that employment by April 2020.

- In 2019, Manitoba welcomed 10.5 million visitors who spent \$1.64 billion.
- Pre-pandemic, Manitoba's tourism industry supported close to 21,000 direct and indirect jobs and tourism wages. Direct spending contributed to \$649 million in tax revenues to the economy, money that went to support critical public priorities such as health care and education.
- The vast majority (94 per cent) of visitors to Manitoba in 2019 were Canadian, including Manitobans. A total of five per cent were from the U.S., with one per cent arriving from international markets. U.S. visitors accounted for 10 per cent of visitor spending, however, while overseas visitors accounted for eight per cent, spending roughly [\\$1,200](#) per person visit.
- Manitoba's northern tourism industry has faced additional barriers, including periods of travel restrictions to northern Manitoba, reduced flight and rail access as well as a closed international border that impacted many businesses reliant on U.S. and overseas clients.

Based on Travel Manitoba's most recent forecasts, the new targets for the Manitoba Tourism Strategy are to recover to the 2019 annual tourism expenditure level of \$1.6 billion by 2024 and to achieve \$2.5 billion in annual tourism expenditures by 2030 (50 per cent growth).

## Indigenous tourism

Indigenous tourism experiences are an important part of visiting Manitoba and these experiences have high potential to be recognized as iconic Canadian tourism products that capture the attention of visitors from around the world.

By participating in Indigenous tourism experiences, visitors can gain a deeper understanding of Indigenous peoples' perspectives and ways of life while increasing their awareness of the diversity of Indigenous cultures in Canada.

- Travel Manitoba conducted two surveys in summer 2021 to evaluate the potential for developing Indigenous tourism in Manitoba.

- Fifty per cent of Manitobans are likely to seek out Indigenous tourism experiences (nine per cent very likely).
- Outdoor adventure and nature experiences, as well as the chance to stay in an Indigenous accommodation, such as a tipi, are particularly appealing to these groups.
- The key drivers of interest in an authentic tourism experience are a willingness to support Indigenous-owned businesses and a genuine desire to learn from an Elder.
- Seventy-eight per cent are keen to learn about Indigenous culture if it is led by an Indigenous person, and 72 per cent want to know their tourist dollars will directly benefit Indigenous communities.
- Indigenous tourism in Canada saw growth because of Indigenous-led programs and solutions specifically tailored by ITAC to fit the unique needs of Indigenous tourism operators.
- According to the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada (ITAC):
  - Indigenous tourism GDP increased from [\\$1.4 billion in 2014 to nearly \\$1.9 billion](#) in 2019, and export readiness increased from 65 to more than 130 Indigenous-owned businesses within just three short years.
  - 57 per cent of all jobs in the Indigenous tourism industry are occupied by Indigenous Peoples, two times more than any other sector, and 33 percent of all Indigenous tourism businesses in Canada are owned by women.
- Indigenous tourism experiences in Winnipeg, Manitoba can include visiting museums and galleries such as the Manitoba Museum (Aboriginal Peoples' Art & History) and [Qaumajug](#) — an innovative new facility at the Winnipeg Art Gallery home to the largest public collection of contemporary Inuit art in the world – as well as participating in traditional ceremonies and events such as the annual Manito Ahbee Festival, and sampling Indigenous cuisine at restaurants such as [Feast Cafe Bistro](#) in Winnipeg.

## Tourism Strategies

- Indigenous tourism 2022-25 three-year [Strategic Plan](#) and [Marketing Plan](#)
  - **Objective:** To reach ITAC's 2025 targets while ensuring the long-term sustainability of the industry and strengthening its ability to handle future pandemics or other disasters.
- Travel Manitoba [Northern Manitoba tourism strategy](#) and [Northern Marketing Plan](#)
  - **Objective:** To work collaboratively with the tourism industry from Manitoba's North to prepare a realistic, achievable tourism strategy focused on the coming five years.
- Travel Manitoba, Manitoba tourism [Strategy](#)
  - **Objective:** Shine light on a 10-Year Economic Forecast for Manitoba's Tourism Sector.

## About Tourism Winnipeg

Tourism Winnipeg, Winnipeg's destination marketing organization, offers an online itinerary builder so tourism industry professionals can provide visitors with a customized list of things to see and do in Winnipeg. We also provide [sample itineraries here](#) to help visitors pre-plan their adventures.

[Download the Winnipeg Visitor's Guide.](#)