

Calgary's tourism industry achieves impressive 2018 results

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By: Bridgette Slater

Calgarians are ultimate hosts, and Tourism Calgary's aspiration is to make ours the Ultimate Host City. As champion of Calgary's Destination Strategy, Tourism Calgary works alongside partners and stakeholders to develop the destination for the benefit of visitors and Calgarians. At the end of May, Tourism Calgary shared the impact of the collective efforts of Calgary's tourism industry at its Annual General Meeting.

In 2018, Calgary welcomed over 7.7 million visitors who injected more than \$2 billion into the economy. These strong tourism numbers translate to a robust visitor economy, pride of place for residents and a sought-after destination for visitors.

Driven by research, Tourism Calgary markets the destination locally, nationally and internationally. In 2018, Tourism Calgary established that 28 per cent of Canadians plan to visit Calgary within the next two years. Moving forward, the goal is to grow Canadian travellers' intent to visit by advancing Calgary's story and engaging travellers at various points along the path to purchase. Using findings from two years of community engagement, Tourism Calgary also identified personality drivers that express Calgary's image and designed a new destination brand model that helps partners identify and strategically align with the brand.

In representing 719 industry partners, Tourism Calgary advocates for the industry and destination to accomplish the city's collective goals and actualize benefits for visitors and Calgarians. In 2018, 90 per cent of Tourism Calgary stakeholders agreed the organization is an effective champion for industry. To maintain this standing and support Calgary's growth as the Ultimate Host City, Tourism Calgary undertook 28 public advocacy positions, which included supporting the expansion of the BMO Centre.

Tourism Calgary attracts and supports events that build Calgary's brand, enrich the city's vibrancy, contribute to the economy and support hosting infrastructure. In 2018, Tourism Calgary supported a record 89 events, which generated \$108 million in economic impact. Tourism Calgary also secured Calgary as the host city for 58 future events including the 2019 Canadian Country Music Awards and Week and 2019 Grey Cup Championship and Festival.

In 2018, Tourism Calgary established that 85 per cent of Calgarians believe tourism is an important contributor to Calgary's economy and quality of life, and that 66 per cent of Canadians and 84 per cent of Calgarians believe Calgary offers shareable experiences. Moving forward, Tourism Calgary will continue to foster a destination that is welcoming, innovative and experience-rich by providing members of Calgary's tourism industry with the knowledge, tools and resources they need to be ultimate hosts.

The value of tourism in Calgary is undeniable. To learn more about how tourism diversifies the economy, advances Calgary's destination brand, enhances quality of life, builds shareable experiences and invigorates Calgary's community spirit, see visitcalgary.com.