

Positive summer tourism numbers affirm value of Calgary's tourism industry

Influx of summer visitors to Calgary helped tourism industry achieve four consecutive months of record-high hotel room demand.

Oct. 8, 2019 – May through August is traditionally the busiest time of year for Calgary's tourism industry, and summer 2019 was no exception. Calgary saw record-high hotel room demand, with 1.3 million rooms sold – up 3.4 per cent over May through August 2018. While hotel rooms sold is up 3.5 per cent year-to-date, five new hotels have opened this year, increasing supply by 6.8 per cent and bringing the total number of available rooms in Calgary up to 3.7 million. Over this period, YYC Calgary International Airport welcomed over 6.5 million travellers – up 2.5 per cent over 2018.

“Calgary's tourism industry is a vital economic driver, with over 7.7 million annual visitors contributing \$2 billion each year to the economy and supporting jobs in multiple sectors,” said Cindy Ady, CEO, Tourism Calgary. “With the diverse range of festivals, events and experiences available in our city, it's no surprise that travellers are continuing to make Calgary a destination of choice.”

A key function of Tourism Calgary is to attract, develop, promote and activate festivals, events, meetings and conventions. In the first half of 2019, Tourism Calgary supported 43 sport, cultural and major events, which generated over \$30 million in economic impact. The organization also welcomed 24 meetings and conventions to the city, which generated over \$6.8 million in delegate spending.

Events and conventions supported by Tourism Calgary so far in 2019 included the PGA TOUR Champions Shaw Charity Classic, 2019 Canadian Country Music Awards and Week, Red Bull Outliers, the Society of Petroleum Engineers' Annual Technical Conference and Exhibition and many more. Looking forward, Calgary will welcome the 2019 Grey Cup Championship and Festival from Nov. 20 to 24, which is estimated to draw 100,000 attendees and generate over \$35 million in economic impact.

The benefits associated with hosting local, national and international events are multi-faceted. For visitors, it means a compelling destination with attractive and diverse experiences in every season. For Calgarians, year-round activity generates vibrancy, destination brand awareness, economic impact, jobs and enhanced quality of life through legacies and participation opportunities.

Based on positive summer tourism numbers and boosts from hosting major events like the Canadian Country Music Awards and the Grey Cup Championship and Festival, 2019 is expected to be another significant year for tourism to Calgary. The Conference Board of Canada's Travel Markets Outlook predicts 2019 travel numbers will reach upward of 7.9 million total visits and \$2.1 billion in visitor spending.

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