



Tourism, Culture and Heritage

## TOURISM FACTS FLASH

Visit [www.gov.ns.ca/tch](http://www.gov.ns.ca/tch) for ongoing Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture & Heritage updates. For up-to-date information on what's happening in Nova Scotia, visit Nova Scotia's Official Tourism website at [www.novascotia.com](http://www.novascotia.com) . If you have comments on FACTS FLASH, or a submission for consideration, please email [factsflash@gov.ns.ca](mailto:factsflash@gov.ns.ca) .

**Week of March 23, 2009**

### **In this Edition of FACTS FLASH...**

- \* 2009 Web Marketing Opportunities
- \* NEW! Face to Face Presentations
- \* 2009 Product Development Day – Secrets to Travel Packaging Success
- \* 2009 Research Forum
- \* 2009 Festivals and Events Day – May 31, 2009
- \* Marketing Update
- \* Provincial VIC Product Knowledge Tours (FAM Tours)
- \* On-Line Visitor Satisfaction Program
- \* Tourism Outlook
- \* Nova Scotia Tourism Activity Statistics, December 2008

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### **2009 Web Marketing Opportunities**

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Take advantage of the many different web marketing opportunities that help you promote your businesses on novascotia.com!

Check out these **new free opportunities**:

- **Contests:** Donate a prize for one of our monthly homepage contests. We'll feature your sponsorship in the contest announcement and provide a direct link to your listing. This feature will begin in April 2009.

- **Doers' and Dreamers' Advertising:** If you purchased advertising in the Doers' and Dreamers' travel guide, your ad will be featured with your online listing. This feature will be available in March 2009.

Also new this year, consider our paid program offered in three payment options annually starting April 1, 2009 (some conditions apply). **Paid program opportunities** include:

- **Banner/Text Advertising:** We'll promote three banner ads or text links for your tourism product on a specific novascotia.com page for any three months. Visitors click on your banner or text ad, and your website opens up in a new browser. Note: You can choose to advertise for more than three months for an added fee. Banner ads are \$175 per month and text ads are \$75 per month.
- **Packages:** Feature your vacation value package(s) in the packages section on novascotia.com. We'll also link to your package from your listing. Criteria apply.
- **Homepage Experience Lures:** Participate in product clustering and we'll feature your listing in a new homepage lure section, combining your tourism product with other tourism products in your area.
- **Itineraries:** Send us sample itineraries of things to see and do within your community and region which will be included with your listings. Your sample itineraries will also be displayed in a new sample itineraries section on novascotia.com with a link to your listing.
- **RSS Feed:** Opt into our new packages feed, and gain exposure on other online marketing websites, such as news and travel sites.
- **Video:** Send us a link to your YouTube video and we'll embed it into your listing page.

For more information, visit [www.novascotia.com/partners](http://www.novascotia.com/partners) or contact Tanya Johnson at [macleotl@gov.ns.ca](mailto:macleotl@gov.ns.ca) or by phone at (902) 424-2682

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### NEW! Face 2 Face Presentations

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Keep us informed on your tourism product offerings by making a presentation to the tourism department. Our staffs are in frequent contact with consumers, travel trade professionals and travel media. Help us supply them with current information on your new products and services as well as story ideas. This also helps us better understand how to incorporate your information into our marketing programs and promotions. A staff member each from marketing, sales and partnerships and product development will hear your presentation. We'll reserve 9-10 a.m. the first Wednesday of every month for presentations. Audio-visual equipment will be provided. Please remember to book one month in advance. Additional presentation time will be allocated on request.

**Who can participate?** Tourism operators, regional tourism industry associations, destination marketing companies or others with export-ready products, experiences and itineraries.

For more information please contact April Hannah at 902-424-6172 or via email: [hannaham@gov.ns.ca](mailto:hannaham@gov.ns.ca)

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#### **2009 Product Development Day – Secrets to Travel Packaging Success**

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The Secrets to Travel Packaging Success Workshop is fast approaching. This year's Tourism Product Development day is promising to be a very informative session. Whether you are an accommodation operator, regional tourism association, attraction, activity or event provider, you are sure to find value in this year's workshop and come away with practical tools that can be applied to your business.

"We know that when product is assembled together in a package there is a greater benefit to the destination," said Joe Veneto, facilitator for 2009 Product Development Day. "By assembling multiple days of activities and services, we extend the visitor stay which has a direct economic impact on a destination".

Participants will learn trends, tools and techniques - everything you need to know to create compelling travel packages. "Consumers are looking for value in today's economic environment," said Joe. "When we stitch together tourism product in a compelling way, we make it easy for consumers to purchase and there is a higher perception of value." Participants will also learn about online packaging models that can be used by businesses to promote and sell their products.

"The Internet has revolutionized the travel industry," said Joe. "Canadian's use of the Internet has skyrocketed - there has been a double-digit increase in trip planning and purchasing online in the last five years. It is important for tourism suppliers to not just package but to move their packaged product online - that is where consumers are."

The Secrets to Travel Packaging Success is scheduled for April 29th from 8:30 am - 5:00 pm at the Museum of Industry in Stellarton, Nova Scotia. Presented by the Tourism Division of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, there is no charge for this workshop and lunch is provided. You can register online by going to [www.gov.ns.ca/tch](http://www.gov.ns.ca/tch) under the "What's New" section. Questions may be directed to Jennifer MacIntyre at (902) 424-4646 or [macintjen@gov.ns.ca](mailto:macintjen@gov.ns.ca)

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#### **2009 Research Forum**

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Are you interested in research that will give you competitive and up-to-date insights on tourism during challenging economic times? The Tourism division of Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage is pleased to offer the 3rd Annual Tourism Research Forum free of charge. The forum will provide industry partners with opportunities to obtain the latest information from the department, share ideas and learn about best practices. The program will begin at 11.00 am and continue until 4.00 pm at the Museum of Industry in Stellarton. The day will include a buffet-style networking lunch at 12.30 pm.

Topics to be addressed will include:

- Competitive Assessment
- 2009 Outlook for Tourism
- Opportunities in the Nova Scotia Market
- Economic Impact Update
- Visitor Exit Survey and other research initiatives and updates
- Research Best Practices: Tracking online marketing programs

Operators, associations, development agencies, community groups and others involved in tourism will find the afternoon useful for planning and decision-making. The forum will enable industry partners to examine and identify possible opportunities and participants will be able to make suggestions and input into future research initiatives.

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### **2009 Festivals and Events Day - A Professional Development Day for the Festivals and Events Sector, Sunday May 31, 2009**

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Take advantage of this outstanding opportunity to learn from and network with top Festivals and Events industry professionals. The 2009 Professional Development Day for the Festivals and Events Sector will offer dynamic presentations, workshops and Panel discussions on everything from Risk Management, Volunteerism, Financial and Environmental Management, Fundraising, and Best Practices. With an emphasis on "Volunteerism", the Program is sure to inspire and motivate festivals and events staff and volunteers.

Nova Scotia has significant strengths and a competitive advantage in the global market place for festivals and events. This sector encompasses a diversity of events throughout the province, with many having their origins in community life and the rich varied cultural traditions of Nova Scotia. In order to remain competitive in today's market, we must remain focused on developing and enhancing Nova Scotia's tourism experiences.

The Sales and Partnership division of the Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, in partnership with the Nova Scotia Festival and Events Council is pleased to offer a complimentary Professional Development Day for the festivals and events sector.

Festivals and Events Day will be held at Future Inns Halifax, 30 Fairfax Dr. Halifax on Sunday, May 31, 2009 from 10:00am - 5:00pm. Stay tuned for details on the event as well as registration information. Space is limited but in the meantime, any questions may be sent to Susan Jeffries at (902)-424-5486 or [jeffrisl@gov.ns.ca](mailto:jeffrisl@gov.ns.ca)

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### **Tourism Division welcomes Susan Jeffries back**

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The Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage is pleased to welcome Susan Jeffries back to the Tourism division after her secondment to Democracy 250. Susan has been with Tourism for over 11 years and her work with Democracy 250 involved coordinating its year-long celebrations.

Susan will play a pivotal role with Festival and Events on the Sales and Partnership team and can be reached on telephone at (902) 424-5486, Email [jeffrisl@gov.ns.ca](mailto:jeffrisl@gov.ns.ca)

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### Marketing Update

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The Tim Horton's Brier is complete and the Tourism team is home from Calgary after a very successful week of promoting Nova Scotia as a year round vacation destination. The Tourism team held various successful events in Calgary during the Brier and gained a lot of great media coverage. They even managed to hold a Kitchen Party on one of the city's buses showcasing our unique maritime culture.

Fresh off the heels of the Brier in Calgary, the Tourism team is preparing to launch the national media campaign. The **national media campaign** will begin the week of **March 23rd**. Five new, 30-second TV spots will showcase the scenic beauty, unique Maritime culture, and genuine, friendly people of Nova Scotia. The ads will air on national specialty channels including Discovery, HGTV, Bravo!, Food Network and more. These TV ads will be supported by a print campaign in

national magazines, such as Reader's Digest, Homemakers, Canadian Geographic, Style at Home and newspaper, including a special promotion with the Globe and Mail.

The **regional advertising campaign** will begin the week of **April 27th**. This will include 15-, and 10- second spots that encourage Atlantic Canadians to discover unique Nova Scotian experiences.

The TV ads will be supported by newspaper and online advertising and other activity.

**Online**, Nova Scotia will be featured on sites such as Lonely Planet, Canadian Geographic Photo Club, iExplore, Trip Advisor and more. Online efforts will also include search engine optimization and search engine marketing, and new social media tactics, such as Face book and blogs. Watch FACTS FLASH for more details in the spring.

Tourism is also participating in a number of upcoming promotional events, and trade and consumer shows in key markets, including:

- **Toronto's Ultimate Travel Show (March 27 to 29)** – To participate, call 1-800-265-3673 or visit [www.totranselshow.com](http://www.totranselshow.com) and book your space today. Indicate your desire to be in the Nova Scotia section, and you will receive a \$100 discount.
- **Calgary Outdoor Adventure Show (March 28 and 29)** – Although the Tourism division will promote Nova Scotia at this event, it has already sold out.
- **Ottawa Travel and Vacation Show (April 4 and 5)** – Register now for the Nova Scotia Tourism section and receive a 10 per cent discount. Call 1-800-489-8333 or visit [www.travelandvacationshow.com](http://www.travelandvacationshow.com) to make your reservation.

- **Saltscapes in Halifax (April 24 to 26)** – Call your local RTIA to book your space. Last year's show was a great success.
- **Milwaukee Irish Fest (August 13 to 16)** – More information to follow.
- **Celtic Fest Chicago (September 12 to 13)** – More information to follow.

For more information on these and other consumer shows, please contact Doug Matthews at 902-424-3942 or [matthews@gov.ns.ca](mailto:matthews@gov.ns.ca). Further detail on **US and UK marketing activities** will be available in future editions of FACTS FLASH.

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### **Provincial VIC Product Knowledge Tours (FAM Tours)**

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Experiencing a product first-hand greatly increases travel counsellors' knowledge of an area and the many products available, allowing them to transfer this information to our visitors. Each spring, travel counsellors in provincial, as well as locally operated visitor information centres and Check In staff, take part in regional product knowledge or FAM tours. The tours are part of their annual training to enhance their knowledge of Nova Scotia's tourism product. Tours are three to five days and involve 25 to 35 participants each. Industry support is critical in maintaining this important aspect of product knowledge training.

For more information on how to participate in any of the following Product Knowledge Tours, please contact: Peter Johnson on (902) 424-2788 or at [johnsp@gov.ns.ca](mailto:johnsp@gov.ns.ca)

|                                      |               |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Halifax Tour                         | May 5-7/09    |
| Northumberland Tour                  | May 11-13/09  |
| South Shore Tour                     | May 14-16/09  |
| Fundy Shore Tour                     | May 19-21/09  |
| Annapolis Valley Acadian Shores Tour | May 26-29/09  |
| Eastern Shore Tour                   | June 2-4/09   |
| Cape Breton Tour                     | June 7 -11/09 |

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### **On-Line Visitor Satisfaction Program**

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The Nova Scotia Department of Tourism, Culture and Heritage, in cooperation with its partners, is presenting accommodation and campground operators in Atlantic Canada an opportunity to learn about guest satisfaction and how to improve their businesses based on customer feedback.

Operators pay a modest annual fee for the program, which is set to run until March 31, 2011. The program offers operators' insights into how their businesses are doing and how they compare to other operators in their area, province and the Atlantic Canada region.

Participants in the program have so far been pleased with the results. "Any feedback we get is a chance to improve and any chance we get to improve is better for our business." said Diane Maher, Comfort Inn, New Glasgow. Ann Pilon, A Charming Victorian B & B, Sydney stated,

"...responses are coming back fabulous...its really good input for us to know what's important for our guests."

There are 110 spots available to operators in Nova Scotia for the period April 01, 2009 - March 31, 2010. Additional information is also available at [www.visitorsatisfactionatlantic.ca](http://www.visitorsatisfactionatlantic.ca) , [www.visitorsatisfactionatlantic.ca/](http://www.visitorsatisfactionatlantic.ca/) or by contacting Mary Tulle, Project Coordinator on telephone (902) 496 9171, Email: [mary@visitorsatisfactionatlantic.ca](mailto:mary@visitorsatisfactionatlantic.ca) The survey that customers complete may be viewed at [www.actgasurvey.com](http://www.actgasurvey.com) <http://www.actgasurvey.com> by using access code 2500000000.

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### **Tourism Outlook for 2009**

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Canada's travel industry is feeling the effects of the economic slowdown, falling consumer confidence, volatile gas prices and fluctuating exchange rates. At the national level, overseas visits softened while American visitation continued to lose ground in 2008. Many Canadians are planning to travel less in 2009 and that will impact growth opportunities from this important market.

The Canadian Travel Research Institute (CTRI) warns that growth prospects for the domestic-travel market this winter remain weak as Canadians restrict spending in response to economic concerns and financial uncertainty. Canadian consumer confidence has fallen to its lowest level since the recession in the early 1990s, negatively impacting travel intentions for both domestic and international trips.

David Redekop, a Principal Research Associate with CTRI suggests we need to be concerned about Canada's travel industry, but advises that the effects of the economic conditions are more similar to the slump resulting from September 11, 2001 than they are to the last recession. He believes fear over Canada's economic future is impacting travel and travel intentions more than actual changes in discretionary income. Increasing capacity, in the face of falling travel intentions, he warns, could impact the tourism industry in 2009 more than direct economic factors.

### **What does this mean for Nova Scotia as a tourism destination?**

The Nova Scotia tourism industry is feeling the impact of these global economic conditions. Overseas visits started showing a decline in October 2008, and visits from the United States of America, Ontario, Quebec and the Atlantic provinces have softened, consistent with falling domestic travel intentions reported by CTRI. Please read more on the Tourism Research website at: [www.gov.ns.ca/tch/pubs/insights/AbsPage.aspx?siteid=1&lang=1&id=1](http://www.gov.ns.ca/tch/pubs/insights/AbsPage.aspx?siteid=1&lang=1&id=1)

## Nova Scotia Tourism Activity Statistics – December 2008

| <b>YTD Statistics</b>   | <b>YTD-Time Frame</b> | <b>2007</b> | <b>2008</b> |
|---|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Visitation:</b>  |                       |             |             |
| <b>Road Visitors</b>  | Jan-Dec               | 1,471,700   | 1,398,000   |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | 0           | -5          |
| <b>Canada Road visitors</b>   | Jan-Dec               | 1,341,700   | 1,295,300   |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | 1           | -3          |
| <b>US Road visitors</b>   | Jan-Dec               | 129,900     | 102,800     |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | -9          | -21         |
| <b>Air Visitors</b>   | Jan-Dec               | 668,000     | 681,700     |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | 4           | 2           |
| <b>Total Visitors</b>   | Jan-Dec               | 2,139,600   | 2,079,800   |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | 1           | -3          |
| <b>Accommodations:</b>  |                       |             |             |
| <b>Room-nights Sold (NS)</b>  | Jan-Dec               | 2,591,800   | 2,616,900   |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | 2           | 1           |
| <b>Provincial Museum Attendance:</b>  | Jan-Dec               | 532,200     | 529,000     |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | 6           | -1          |
| <b>Historic Site Attendance:</b>  |                       |             |             |
| <b>Halifax Citadel</b>  | Jan-Dec               | 145,500     | 153,200     |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | -9          | 5           |
| <b>Alexander Graham Bell</b>  | Jan-Dec               | 73,500      | 71,200      |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | -4          | -3          |
| <b>Information Requests:</b>  |                       |             |             |
| <b>Check In Reservations</b>  | Jan-Dec               | 28,600      | 21,000      |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | -6          | -26         |
| <b>Check In Literature Requests</b>   | Jan-Dec               | 188,900     | 157,100     |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | -40         | -17         |
| <b>Website Activity:</b>  |                       |             |             |
| <b>Visits</b>   | Jan-Dec               | 1,754,300   | 1,577,300   |
| <i>New web metrics pkg in 2007;<br/>data not comparable to previous years</i> |                       | n/a         | -10         |
| <b>Downloads</b>  | Jan-Dec               | 242,700     | 174,000     |
| <i>% change from 2007 (see above)</i>   |                       | n/a         | -28         |
| <b>Monthly Statistics:</b>  |                       |             |             |
|   | <b>Month</b>          | <b>2007</b> | <b>2008</b> |
| <b>Road Visitors</b>  | Dec                   | 72,900      | 78,800      |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | -11         | 8           |
| <b>Air Visitors</b>   | Dec                   | 35,400      | 32,000      |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | -4          | -10         |
| <b>Total Visitors</b>   | Dec                   | 108,400     | 110,800     |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | -9          | 2           |
| <b>Room-nights Sold</b>   | Dec                   | 110,400     | 114,600     |
| <i>% change from previous year</i>  |                       | 2           | 4           |

Note: Tourism activity estimates rounded to the nearest 100.

% Change calculated using unrounded figures.

For comprehensive information on Nova Scotia tourism activity, please check the key tourism indicators section at: [www.gov.ns.ca/dtc/pubs/insights](http://www.gov.ns.ca/dtc/pubs/insights)

Date: 2/24/2009