

Tourism Highlights - December 2000

By Beverley O'Neil, Ktunaxa Nation

Ki'suk kukyit, and welcome to the first of what will be a quarterly report on tourism featuring visitor trends and statistics, tips on tourism, events, and highlights of the many successes we have to celebrate in the Aboriginal tourism industry. Through this column, I hope to provide useful information that will help guide you with the development and expansion of your Aboriginal tourism business or community strategy, as well as aid you in finding an Aboriginal tourism business or service. I also welcome your ideas and suggestions, and since this column will be a quarterly feature (next one March 2001), you may plan some of your advertising dollars to coincide with it.

#s to Plan By

- ❑ In July 2000 the hotel occupancy rate in Greater Vancouver was 78.8 percent, Greater Victoria 87.7 percent, and Prince George 65.8 percent. The average daily room rate for these locations during the same time was \$145.37, \$162.99, and \$86.96 respectively.
- ❑ BC's restaurants earned almost \$1.4 million in total receipts from June to August 2000 (source Tourism BC/Statistics Canada).
- ❑ Fuel prices didn't slow drivers in BC down in August (at least from traveling). The Coquihalla Highway vehicle volume went up by 3.7 percent over the same time in the previous year, contributing to year-to-date increase of 1.5 percent.

(Tourism British Columbia compiles "Tourism Indicators" to help business plan better - contact (25) 387-1567, fax (250) 387-9406, or email research@tourism.bc.ca for further information).

Flying High?

Did you notice any changes in your airline options since the Air Canada - Canadian Airlines restructuring earlier this year? Well, if you didn't you are likely one of the fortunate ones who does not depend on the airlines. "Since the airline merger the total in-bound seat capacity from outside BC declined from 11,359,000 seats in 1998 to an estimated 10,408,000 seats during 2000", reports Tourism British Columbia based on their research of the impact on BC from these mergers. All BC Regional Airports from Cranbrook to Kamloops to Kelowna and Prince George... including Victoria... lost non-stop seat capacity. Prince Rupert was the hardest hit with a loss of 57.8 percent. Tourism British Columbia continues to study the changes and effects. Complete reports are available on-line at :

www.hellobc.com/media/pressreleases/000809Final.pdf, and

www.hellobc.com/media/pressreleases/0000809Complete.pdf.

Did you know?

Osoyoos Band owned Vineyards is the largest vineyard in all of British Columbia producing more than 1 million tones of grapes a year. The Osoyoos Band was the recipient of the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers (CANDO) Economic Developer of the Year Award this fall '00.

Tourism BC's Regional Tourism Associations such as Northern BC and Vancouver Island membership programs offer advertising discounts in regional publications.]

- ❑ Since FirstHost was launched in 1996, more than 3000 people have been certified as FirstHosts. This 'home-grown, BC-based, First Nation-and-Tourism' created program is spreading its wings... across Canada to Ontario, and overseas (in a presentation in

Scotland earlier this year)! FirstHost is becoming fastly recognized outside of First Nations as well. This summer it became a part of a Parks Canada pilot project to help connect their front-line people with the First Nations' hospitality philosophy of balancing the importance of the "place" with the guest and host.

Is Your Star Rising?

"Can you spot the brightest stars in all of BC?" This is the quest of Tourism British Columbia as it seeks nominations for its second Annual British Columbia Tourism Awards. The Awards recognizes the - Tourism Industry Leader of the Year, Best Tourism Marketing Campaign, Environmentally Responsible Tourism Award, Outside of the box Award, and SuperHost Customer Service Award. Fax (604) 660-3383 or email awards@tourism.bc.ca with your name, address, tel, fax, and email address to get a nominations form. Nominations close **January 5, 2001**... so don't let your rising stars fall. Winners will be announced February 22, 2001 at the **BC Tourism Industry Conference Gala Dinner** at the Hyatt Regency, Vancouver.

Kudos & Celebrations

- ❑ **Sliammon First Nation's Lund Hotel** at Powell River was honored in early November when the **Powel River Chamber of Commerce** granted them the **Tourism Excellence Award**. Quite an accomplishment since the Hotel just opened in May. The 18-room hotel employs 20 people in the summer planning a further 12 rooms in Phase 2. The hotel is situated at the gateway of Desolation Sound in the Georgia Strait offering a restaurant, pub, grocery and liquor store, post-office, docking facilities with fuel services, and a full size meeting room for 20... the perfect place for executive retreats. Call (604) 414-0474 for further information.
- ❑ **Little Shuswap Band** owned **Quaaout Lodge** on the shores of Little Shuswap Lake

near Chase has just completed the finishing touches on its Stage 2 expansion plans. By fall 2001, the Lodge will add a 250-seat cultural and gathering conference centre... the first part of this expansion that will be followed with the addition of a golf course. The Lodge presently offers 72-room lodge with restaurant and meeting facilities that accommodates groups of 70-100 people. - Tel. (250) 679-3090, Toll Free 1-800-663-4303, or on-line at www.quaaout.com for further information.

- ❑ In the heart of Kootenay country, the origin people, the Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Development Corporation, opened in May 2000 the long-awaited **St. Eugene Mission Golf Course**. The Golf Course is the first part of a major resort development that will convert the St. Eugene Mission Indian Residential School to a destination resort. The resort will include a Ktunaxa interpretive centre, the Helping Hands women's cooperative arts & crafts gift shop, restaurant, and driving range. It will also be situated adjacent to the **Casino of the Rockies** (another Ktunaxa/Kinbasket Development Corporation venture). The conversion of the St. Eugene Mission Residential School to a resort is what the Ktunaxa people proudly say is taking control of the future by "Creating a future from the past."
- ❑ Congratulations to **Ayjoomixw Tours** of Powell River. Owned by Tlex-tan (Murray Mitchel), a member of the Sliammon Band, and his wife Katrin Gross, this eco-tourism outdoor adventure specializes in Coast Salish cultural tours sharing the Nation's culture, history and way of life. This past summer the business was recognized for its success through **BC Hydro's Aboriginal Relations Department Business Development Program**.
- ❑ Are you feeling withdrawal symptoms? Can't get enough fashion? Well, now satisfaction is but a mere click away. Celebrated Haida fashion designer **Dorothy**

Grant has added on-line buying to her website at www.dorothygrant.com.. so now you can buy 24 / 7.

Events

BC Tourism Industry Conference - February 21-23, Hyatt Regency, Vancouver, BC -- (the event to attend if you're in tourism in BC). Early bird rates before January 12, 2001. Info: **(604) 464-1182** or travel.bc.ca.

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