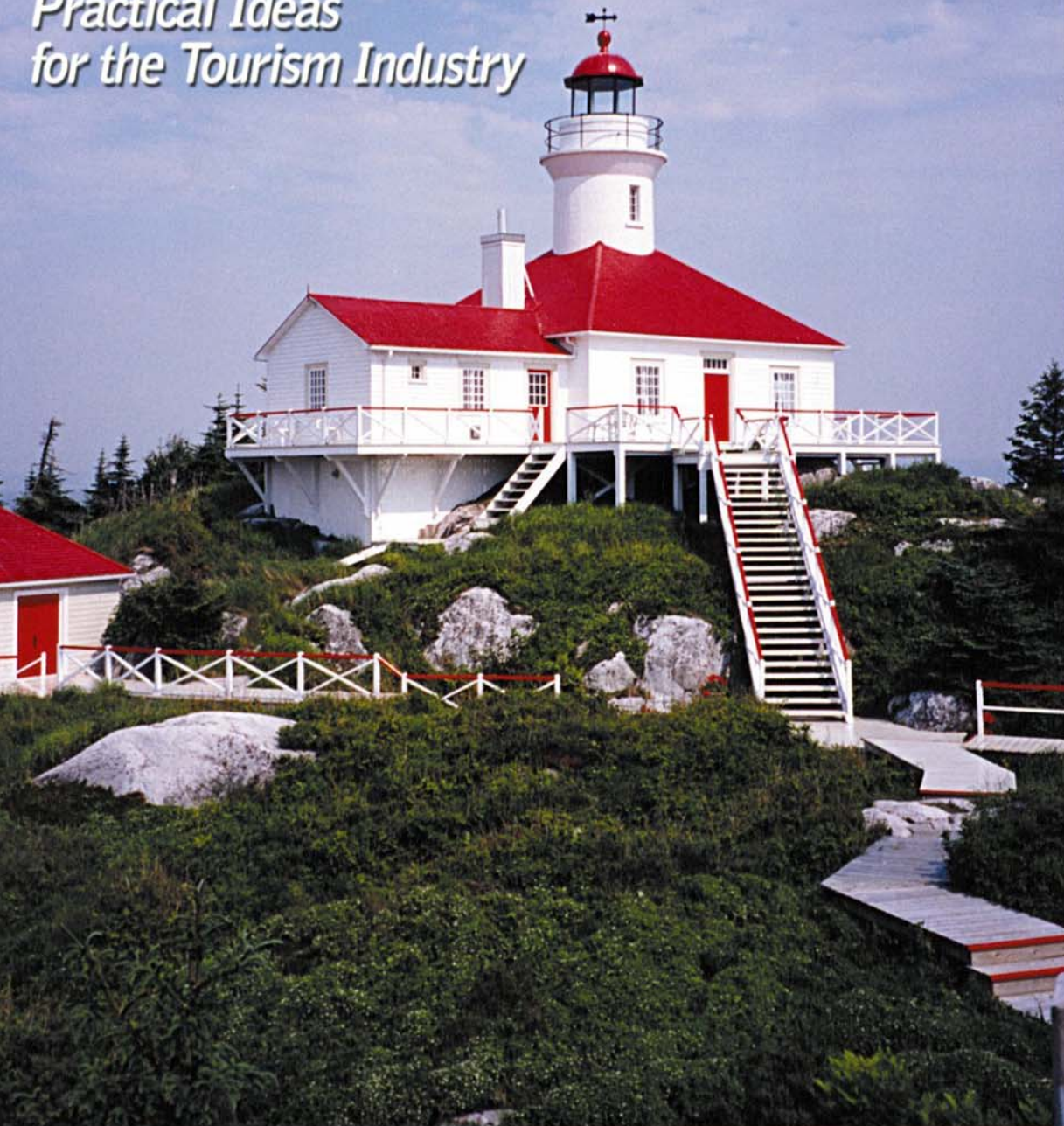


PACKAGING THE POTENTIAL

DISCOVERING HERITAGE TOURISM

*Practical Ideas
for the Tourism Industry*



from a
Heritage Canada Foundation
Conference

CANADIAN
TOURISM
COMMISSION



COMMISSION
CANADIENNE
DU TOURISME

HERITAGE
CANADA
FOUNDATION



LA FONDATION
HÉRITAGE
CANADA

DISCOVERING HERITAGE TOURISM
PRACTICAL IDEAS FOR THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

(from a Heritage Canada Foundation Conference)

Discovering Heritage Tourism

A conference produced by the Heritage Canada Foundation
in collaboration with

Canadian Tourism Commission
www.canadatourism.com

Tourism and Culture Nova Scotia
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Discovering Heritage Tourism

Practical ideas for the tourism industry

(from a Heritage Canada Foundation conference)

produced by:

The Heritage Canada Foundation
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Canadian Tourism Commission
www.canadatourism.com

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Photo credits:

Photo (Main): *The Pot à l'Eau-de-vie Lighthouse* (Lower Saint-Lawrence Islands, Québec)
A classified Federal Heritage Building.

Credit: C. Bouchard - Société Duvetnor / Le Québec maritime.

Photo (Top): *Yukon Hotel*, Dawson
a component of the Dawson Historical Complex National Historic Site of Canada.

Credit: Heritage Canada Foundation.

Photo (Middle): *Exploring Heritage Tourism conference* of the Heritage Canada Foundation 2002; field trip to Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, a World Heritage Site (UNESCO).

Credit: Heritage Canada Foundation.

Photo (Bottom): *Claybank Brick Plant* (Claybank, Saskatchewan). A National Historic Site of Canada.

Credit: Heritage Canada Foundation.

Foreword

The Heritage Canada Foundation, a national organization dedicated to preserving the architectural heritage and historic places of Canada, held its 2002 annual conference on Heritage Tourism. The event took place in Halifax and Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, areas now greatly benefiting from heritage tourism, one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism market.

This conference was a solid example of a key recommendation contained in *Packaging the Potential**, the Canadian Tourism Commission's business strategy in heritage and cultural tourism: *to enhance linkages among the heritage, culture and tourism sectors.*

At that conference, experts from the tourism industry and heritage preservation fields from across Canada and abroad came together to explore new ways to develop and strengthen heritage tourism authentically rooted in historic places.

Delegates also had first hand experience in touring behind the scenes in Lunenburg, a National Historic Site and UNESCO World Heritage Site

This adaptation of the *HCF conference proceedings** should be useful to those in both sectors who are seeking to learn about good heritage tourism practices and to generate more related business opportunities.

* See Resources on page 21.

The Heritage Canada Foundation (HCF)

The Heritage Canada Foundation is an advocate for the preservation of historic buildings and places. It is a national, non-profit membership-based organization which encourages Canadians to identify, protect and enhance their cultural environments or built landscapes. It has volunteer members in all provinces and territories, and an elected Board of Governors.

The HCF has created innovative programs to help communities recognize and manage heritage resources. Recent projects have been: the research report Built Heritage: Assessing a Tourism Resource, the Main Street Canada program, and Heritage Regions program. These last two initiatives encouraged heritage conservation as a means to benefit community life, stimulate economic development and attract tourism.

The Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC)

The CTC is a Crown corporation dedicated to marketing Canada as the premier four-season destination to connect with nature and experience diverse cultures and communities. The CTC is committed to working in partnership with governments at every level and other public and private sector organizations and businesses.

The CTC's primary activities are: research, marketing, industry and product development, and corporate and information services. The board of directors, from all parts of Canada, and working committees are comprised of individuals from the public and private sectors. The CTC is truly industry-led, market-driven and research-based.

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Discovering Heritage Tourism: Contextual Information

Authentic tourism experiences: these are among the fastest-growing, highest-demand products in the tourism industry today.

The Heritage Canada Foundation 2002 annual conference showed that **Heritage Tourism** is one of the strongest segments of the market in authentic tourism experiences in Canada. More sophisticated, knowledgeable and wealthy travellers today want to learn, understand and taste authentic experiences—and heritage tourism can deliver.

Presented here are highlights of this conference specially selected for the tourism audience: destination management organizations, provincial and territorial tourism organizations, travel agents, specialty package wholesalers, and others.

The purpose is to help tourism planners and businesses to develop new products, grow their markets, and prosper in a sustainable way.

The Heritage Canada Foundation promotes the careful use of heritage architecture and historic places. For more than twenty years, tourism operators have known through market surveys that touring vacationers, in particular, check “visiting heritage places” as a favourite activity.

Canada is in a good position to develop the potential of this tourism sector. The domestic market for heritage tourism products is approximately 2.6 million and growing, according to the recent Travel Activities and Motivation Special Study (TAMS). The size of the American market for Canadian heritage tourism is more than 8.3 million.

At the conference, delegates from the conservation-preservation field heard experts from the public and private sectors discuss ways for tourism and heritage to collaborate successfully. And to gain an even better understanding, they visited the historic places of Halifax and the Unesco World Heritage Site of Lunenburg.

Delegates to the 2002 Heritage Canada conference judged it a huge success, and pledged to increase the flow of information between the heritage and tourism industries.

Tourism Trends

World Tourism Organization, News Bulletin, September 2002:

- Shorter stays
- Greater fragmentation of holidays
- Shift from active holidays to holidays as an experience
- Travellers want a complete, participatory, authentic experience which provides them with opportunities for new knowledge.

Executive Summary

When the Heritage Canada Foundation chooses heritage tourism as the theme of its annual conference, the tourism industry should sit up and take notice. This is a strong sign that the heritage community has recognized the important role of tourism in assuring that heritage resources are valued and preserved.

The conference was held in Halifax, Nova Scotia, a city and province that have been home to people from diverse backgrounds. Halifax was an ideal location for a meeting to consider the value and promise of heritage tourism. Sessions included:

Keynote Address: Heritage Tourism and the Canadian Tourism Commission*

Roger Wheelock gave an overview of the role of the Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC), its programs, and how heritage activities are at the heart of many tourism products.

What Business Said

The range of tourism products with heritage tourism appeal is vast. **David Mendel** explained the success of his business, *Canadian Cultural Landscapes*. What started out as a small operation that specialized in walking tours grew to become a company that packages tours about cuisine, history, art and architecture for major clients in North America. **Lynne Perry**, chair of the *Atlantic Lighthouse Council* and executive director of *South Shore Tourism Association, Nova Scotia*, told what she learned in her quest to find new uses for old lighthouses. This CTC Lighthouse Product Club helped tourism groups develop the lighthouses as popular destinations.

Spotlight on Heritage Tourism

The Canadian Tourism Commission has recently released special reports based on the **Travel Activities and Motivation Survey (TAMS)**.

- *Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts* are significant groups both in Canada and the United States. By definition, these are people who have taken leisure trips in Canada and participated in at least four "heritage activities" on their trips.
- *Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts* tend to be mature, affluent, and well-educated.
- Heritage activities they enjoy include: museum visits; historic sites; festivals, fairs and farmers' markets; carnivals; Aboriginal, French Canadian, and other cultural experiences.
- *Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts* represent a **potential market** of 34.5 million Americans and 2.6 million Canadians.

Copies of the reports are available from the CTC.*

Breakthroughs in Heritage Tourism in the U.S.

South of the border, heritage tourism has a champion in the person of **Amy Jordan Webb**, of the U.S. National Trust for Historic Preservation. She described winning strategies for heritage tourism for the consumer and the tourism industry.

* For more information about the Canadian Tourism Commission, please refer to *page ii* and to *Resources*, page 21.

New Programs for Marketing Heritage Tourism in Parks

Parks Canada has taken an active approach to packaging high-quality tourism experiences and enhancing heritage resources. **Dr. Nancy Arsenault**, a learning travel specialist, described characteristics of the heritage tourism market and exciting programs for groups and individuals. **Peter Froot** explained how a new initiative will benefit heritage groups and tourism businesses.

Trends and Innovations

Speakers looked at trends and challenges to successful heritage tourism development. **Jean-Marie Girardville** created the Association of the Most Beautiful Villages of Quebec, a group that encouraged villages in rural Quebec to preserve their heritage.

Conclusion: Do we need to change our thinking?

Dr. Geoffrey Wall of the University of Waterloo summarized recent trends and asked provocative questions about the value of heritage tourism.

Keynote Address (Summary)

Preservation and Presentation: The Canadian Tourism Commission and Heritage Tourism

*(Roger Wheelock, as vice president and chief operating officer,
Canadian Tourism Commission)*

The tourism industry and heritage conservationists have more in common than they may realize. They both recognize the importance of special places and heritage buildings to Canadians.

Heritage activities are an important element of the tourism product, Wheelock acknowledged. This is something that the tourism industry may not always be conscious of or explicit in expressing.

This is because the tourism industry and heritage movement use different vocabularies to speak about similar values. While the tourism industry talks about *authentic attractions and experiences* or cities with a *unique character or soul*, heritage conservationists speak of *built heritage* and *sense of place*.

In recent years the two groups have been moving closer. The tourism industry has taken part in many types of heritage preservation and interpretation initiatives.

Heritage is key element of "product clusters"

In its work to encourage travel to Canada, the CTC promotes "product clusters." These are groups of destinations and activities: cities, attractions along a touring route, experiences of authentic culture, heritage places, outdoor and winter experiences.

Often product clusters are anchored to a heritage place. For instance, in Newfoundland and Labrador, the Viking site L'Anse aux Meadows is the anchor of a tour that might include visits to fishing villages, wildlife viewing, and parks.

Lately the CTC has become more influential in the field of heritage tourism. Here are examples of its involvement:

Can tourism and heritage work together?

A good working relationship is possible and worth the effort, Roger Wheelock said. He left the audience with a suggestion: to consider how the two groups might collaborate better in the future.

One way to recognize the strong link between heritage and tourism might be a *Heritage Tourism National Award*, sponsored by the Heritage Canada Foundation.

The 2002 Québec Declaration on Ecotourism

This summit, sponsored by the United Nations Environment Program and the World Tourism Organization, brought together 132 countries. The Declaration affirmed the significance of ecotourism to the conservation of natural and cultural heritage. The CTC was a key partner.

Packaging the Potential/Faire fructifier les atouts

This is a long-term CTC strategy that sets out broad principles for the best way to promote the growth of cultural and heritage tourism without overexploiting resources. This approach brings the goals of tourism closer than ever before to the goals of heritage preservationists.

Developing New Heritage Tourism Experiences

The CTC launched the Product Club Program in 1996 as a way of assisting small and medium-sized businesses and organizations to connect with the tourism industry and offer tourists new experiences. The program has been a success - with over 40 product clubs delivering a variety of tourism experiences across Canada.

In addition to the Atlantic Lighthouse Product Club, described in Lynne Perry's talk, other successful product clubs with a heritage flavor include: the Economuseums; the Club de produit acadien; Greek Town in Toronto; and the Northern Learning Travel Product Club in the Yukon.

Economuseums® attract 850,000 visitors a year

This is thriving network of small craft and local product museums (and studios or shops) in Québec and Atlantic Canada, all designed along the same concept and guidelines. The CTC's Product Club Program helped with the expansion to the four Atlantic provinces. More Economuseums® are planned for other provinces and the territories. At each Economuseum, artisans reveal the history of their craft and demonstrate their traditional skills to the public. Museums have boutiques where visitors may purchase the goods created on site.

Among others, there are museums devoted to the art of violin making, bookbinding, brewing, pewter manufacturing, leather tanning, harvesting wild berries, and more. For information, consult the Web site: www.economusees.com

What Business Said

The privately owned company *Canadian Cultural Landscapes* packages custom tours for groups with a special interest in heritage. The *Atlantic Canada Lighthouse Club* is a successful public sector collaboration to present heritage places to the public.

A Packager's Initiative

David Mendel and Barry Lane built a profitable business based on the conviction that there is a good market for heritage tourism. In the early 1980s, Mendel and Lane joined forces to provide in-depth walking tours of Québec City. The tours focused on history and culture.

As business boomed, they formed the company *Canadian Cultural Landscapes/Les Visites culturelles Baillairgé* and established a travel agency to market complete travel packages for group tours. The company operates throughout Canada, in both official languages.

Cultural Tourists from Canada and the U.S.

Who they are and what they want, according to David Mendel

- The majority have at least an undergraduate university degree.
- Most are retired, but active.
- Clients are affluent and have the means to pay for high-level trips including the best hotels, restaurants, and activities.
- They stay an average of 4 or 5 days at a destination, instead of just 1 or 2 days.
- Travellers are seeking in-depth, authentic experience.
- Learning is one of their main travel motivations.

In-depth tours for discriminating customers

The company creates themed tours to fit the interests of clients. For instance, they designed tours highlighting the Cuisines and the Military History of Québec for the Smithsonian Institution, based in Washington, D.C. They created a tour about architecture for the U.S. National Trust for Historic Preservation. Other recent clients have been the Friends of the Royal Ontario Museum and Elderhostel. To provide high-quality educational content for tours, the company produced more than 60 slide lectures on aspects of Canadian culture.

Join familiarization tours

Cultural tourism gets a boost when diverse organizations cooperate. By participating in familiarization tours in Quebec, Ontario, New Brunswick, and Newfoundland and Labrador, Mendel's company made important contacts.

The purpose of familiarization tours is to show key tourism decision-makers the potential of a region. Many partners have to work together: the CTC, provincial and local tourism offices, transportation companies, hotels, restaurants, and heritage sites.

Secrets to Success

A small learning travel group of just 25 people can have considerable economic impact on a region. That is because a learning group tends to stay longer and spend more than many busloads of tourists who are just passing through.

- For the tour planner: take advantage of historic buildings, sites and landscapes. Even when choosing hotels, restaurants, tour routes, and places for programs, incorporate interesting locations. Seek places where strong heritage elements are concentrated. When possible, Mendel's tour groups stay in historic hotels located near important cultural and historic sites.
- For the heritage conservationists: The ideal approach is to identify and protect whole neighborhoods, cityscapes, waterfront areas, and landscapes. An isolated monument is not enough. Don't overlook significant but less obvious aspects of a place's heritage. For instance, a tour of Québec City for the U.S. National Trust for Historic Preservation focused on both French and English cultures. Activities with an English accent included a concert in the Anglican Cathedral and dinner at the Garrison Club.
- Create unique experiences. On a Cuisines of Québec tour, tourists met with the executive chef of the Château Frontenac and took a cooking class in the hotel kitchen.

New markets

Growth in the field of cultural and heritage tourism is accelerating. Groups include national organizations, such as the Learning and Enrichment Travel Alliance (LETA, www.letacanada.com) and regional product clubs.

"For new partnerships to survive and prosper, they will have to be based on true mutual advantage. Success will require considerable effort, on both sides, to listen and to be flexible."

David Mendel said it is worth the effort.

Heritage Tourism Success: Saving Lighthouses

The heritage preservation community should "use" the tourism industry - and both groups stand to gain. That was the lesson Lynne Perry learned in her work preserving lighthouses in Atlantic Canada. Ms. Perry is Executive Director of Nova Scotia's South Shore Tourism Association. Also, she is chair of the Atlantic Lighthouse Council, a group responsible for protecting the heritage of lighthouses.

A serious difficulty facing many valuable heritage sites is their lack of financial resources. They don't have the money it takes to pay for needed restoration and preservation. That is where tourism can help. But then the challenge becomes to create an exciting tourism experience around heritage. By sharing the cultural/heritage experience of buildings and locations on a fee-for-service basis, the sustained preservation of a heritage location can be assured.

Cafés, B&Bs, Museums draw visitors

In the late 1980s, the Canadian Coast Guard decided it no longer needed all of its lighthouses as navigational aids and decommissioned a number of the lights in Atlantic Canada. The fate of the heritage lighthouses was uncertain. But thanks to a partnership among local tourism groups, lighthouses were transformed into sustainable tourism destinations. Some now operate as private lighthouses; others have opened as museums; and many offer hospitality services such as cafés and B&Bs. All the lighthouses welcome visitors.

This heritage tourism success did not happen overnight. First, the Atlantic Lighthouse Council stepped in and assumed responsibility for protecting the heritage character of the lighthouses. Next the Council turned to the Canadian Tourism Commission's Product Club Program.

The Product Club Program encourages groups to form partnerships to develop new market-ready tourism products and to enhance existing products. The Lighthouse Product Club was established with the purpose of making lighthouses in Atlantic Canada market-ready for domestic and international tourism.

A later survey looked into travel behaviours, demographics and motivations. One key finding was that visiting lighthouses was the primary travel motivator for one in four (25%) visitors. Also 61% of visitors were age 46 and older; more than 25% were university graduates; and they tended to be affluent, with household incomes over \$60,000 among 54% of visitors.

Meanwhile the lighthouses were transferred to community groups for alternative uses. To ensure that heritage qualities would be respected, the Council drew up guiding principles and a Quality Development and Maintenance Handbook.

The collaboration between tourism and heritage has paid off. The lighthouse structures have been preserved and they are popular attractions for paying visitors.

Market research guarantees smart planning

The Lighthouse Product Club carried out a survey of visitors to lighthouses to learn about their interests and travel motivations. Results showed the following:

- A majority of people were interested in the lighthouses as historical buildings.
- A large group was enthusiastic about photography.
- Some visitors wanted to learn about marine history and heritage.
- Some identified themselves as "lighthouse enthusiasts."
- Visitors wanted more services and activities: cafés; restaurants; museums; audio-visual presentations; workshops; interpretive centres; and hiking trails.

Breakthroughs in Heritage Tourism in the U.S.

Amy Jordan Webb is Director of Heritage Tourism for the U.S. National Trust for Historic Preservation, the American counterpart of the Heritage Canada Foundation. Ms. Webb is passionate about the value of what she calls "cultural heritage tourism," or simply "heritage tourism."

"One of the reasons we are in tourism is to make sure that we can help preserve those very special places," she said. Her organization has developed these principles for success.

Collaboration ensures success

The first principle is to create partnerships at all levels - within a community, between communities, with like and dissimilar organizations.

For example, in downtown Providence, Rhode Island, historic churches were rundown, but had limited funds. The churches formed a partnership with the city's Preservation Society to raise money for repairs. They printed a marketing brochure and ran a series of special events such as tours, concerts, and bazaars. Guides explained the importance of downtown revitalization.

Five Principles For Successful Cultural Heritage Tourism

- Collaboration
- Finding the fit between the community and tourism
- Finding ways to make sites and programs come alive
- Focusing on quality and authenticity
- Preserving and protecting resources

Find the fit between the community and tourism

Make sure that what you are doing is good for the visitor and also good for the person who lives in that community. The Hand Made in America program did just that. This program helps bring culturally-minded tourists into homes to meet artists and craftspeople of Appalachia, a poor rural area of North Carolina.

To make certain the community was on side, planners held public meetings. They explained potential benefits and listened when craftspeople told what they wanted to share and what they wanted to keep private. With this understanding, planners published a guidebook for tourists. Follow-up economic impact studies have shown increases in craft sales due to the publication and home visits. The program has been a model for other communities.

Bringing sites and programs to life

Offer an entertaining and interactive experience that engages as many of the visitor's senses as possible. Add heritage tourism value to souvenirs: Open up arts and crafts studios so that visitors can talk to artists and then buy something to take home. Or, place tags on souvenirs that tell the story of the artist or the product.

“Don't compromise on quality and authenticity”

Today's heritage travellers are more sophisticated and well-travelled than those of a generation ago. Assure them that what they are doing or buying is authentic through a mark of quality.

The Amish community of Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with help from the National Trust, drew up authenticity guidelines for heritage sites, local products, and events. They put together a branding campaign that made the Lancaster Heritage logo a widely accepted guarantee of quality.

Preserving and protecting resources

Historic resources are the backbone of the heritage tourism programs. Preserve and protect resources because, in turn, that ensures that heritage tourism programs are sustainable.

Heritage places are vulnerable. River landscapes, archaeological sites, and even cultural traditions such as oral story-telling need protection.

Getting started in heritage tourism

Assess the potential. Take stock of your community in terms of attractions, visitors' services (hotels and restaurants), ability to protect resources, organizational capabilities, and marketing.

Plan and organize. Make good use of human and financial resources. Set priorities and measurable goals.

Prepare for visitors. Protect and manage resources. Look to the future and consider the long term.

Market for success. Develop a multi-year, many-tiered marketing plan that targets your market. Find partners.

Consult resources. The guide, *Discover the Opportunity*, published by the Department of Canadian Heritage* and Industry Canada, is a valuable tool based on relevant Canadian experience.

* See *Resources*, page 21.

New Programs for Marketing Heritage Tourism in Parks

Dr. Nancy Arsenault, a specialist in learning travel, has worked as a consultant with Parks Canada. Peter Frood is director of the Historic Places Initiative with the National Historic Sites Branch of Parks Canada. In their joint presentation, they spoke of recent research into heritage tourism and new initiatives at Parks Canada.

Parks Canada is the federal agency dedicated to protecting and preserving Canada's natural and cultural heritage. Parks Canada acts as steward for the system that includes parks, marine conservation areas, national historic sites, and 13 UNESCO world heritage sites. These places include many of Canada's prime attractions: Unesco world heritage sites such as Lunenburg, the old city of Québec, Gros Morne, and Heads-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump; national parks such as Banff, Jasper, Riding Mountain, Cape Breton Highlands, Fundy and Nahanni.

Because millions of people visit the parks and sites each year, Parks Canada has developed considerable expertise as a supplier of heritage tourism products and experiences.

A Learning and Enrichment Travel Initiative

New enriched learning experiences are available at parks and sites in every region of Canada. Here are a few examples:

- At Artillery Park National History Site in Old Québec, the program "Divine Port" focuses on British military history of 19th century Québec when port wine was the drink of choice. A wine steward teaches about port and leads a winetasting activity.
- At the Bar U Ranch National Historic Site south of Calgary, tourists experience life on a working ranch. After a day on the range and discussions about range management, they relax by the campfire and listen to cowboy poetry.
- Visitors to the Rideau Canal National Historic Site, near Kingston, gather around an evening campfire for ghost stories, dramatic skits, and musket fire.

Travel Activities & Motivations of North American Travellers Study (TAMS)

The study asked 25,000 American and Canadian tourists what they enjoy doing when they are on holiday. An analysis of data gave information about a group identified as heritage tourism enthusiasts.

- 11% of the adult Canadian population - 2.6 million people - are "Canada Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts," who pursue a minimum of 4 'heritage' activities during their leisure trips;
- In the U.S., "Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts" represent a large, mostly untapped pool of potential visitors for Canada, 34.5 million. But only 8.3 million have taken recent leisure trips to Canada.
- The number of travellers who want to visit natural and historic sites (and experience adventure and unspoiled nature) is growing.
- When packaging tours for Heritage Tourism Enthusiasts, include outdoor activities and cross-market to the two market segments.

Benefits of successful tourism at heritage places

When it is done well, heritage tourism leads to some unexpected results, Dr. Arsenault suggested.

- Heritage issues get incorporated into business planning. Heritage is taken more seriously when there is a business case to be made for preservation and conservation.
- There is increased investment in people and places. Heritage tourism leads to good jobs, the maintenance of buildings and landscapes, and related economic activity.
- The business community and local residents recognize the important of heritage places, and they have a stake in ensuring their continued maintenance and preservation.

Parks Canada Opinion Poll: Visitors to National Historic Sites

- 85% think understanding Canada's history is important
- 53% want to meet with specialists on site
- 52% want to learn through self-guided tours

Opinion polls and research such as TAMS have convinced Parks Canada that tourists have high expectations of their visits. Visitors are seeking opportunities for deeper knowledge and understanding. To satisfy the demand for high-quality, sustainable, and authentic tourism experiences, Parks Canada has created some exciting new initiatives and programs for individuals and groups.

Working together, a win-win situation for tourism and heritage

Collaboration between heritage suppliers such as Parks Canada and the tourism industry is beneficial to both.

- Good collaboration helps achieve sustainable tourism that is economically viable, environmentally sensitive and respectful of cultures.
- Enriched tourism programs at parks and national historic sites provide the tourism industry with high-quality products.
- The industry can help heritage suppliers safeguard the integrity of heritage places and manage the impact of tourism.

Historic places go on-line

Director of the Historic Places Initiative for the National Historic Sites, Parks Canada, Peter Froid supervises this new program that uses technology to help preserve historic places.

Phase 1 of the Initiative got under way in the spring of 2003. It consists of three parts. First, the Web-based Canadian Register of Historic Places (CRHP) will be a comprehensive listing of about 20,000 historic places of importance at the local, provincial or territorial, and national level.

The Register will be a useful tool both for ordinary citizens and for tourism professionals who are packaging themed tours. The Register may even help boost travel to smaller historic places, such as the Viking Trail and Kamouraska, that have considerable historic significance but are not well-known destinations.

Next, the *Standards and Guidelines for the Conservation of Historic Places in Canada* will be drawn up. This will be a reference tool for all heritage restoration projects. Finally, there will be a certification process for conservation plans and work which conforms to the standards and guidelines above.

Informed tourists

The Register of Historic Sites should lead to better informed tourists with high expectations of tourism experiences. Also, the Register will enable governments at all levels to work more closely together on heritage issues.

In Peter Frood's opinion, more tools, legislation and financial incentives are needed to safeguard the integrity of heritage sites in Canada. Effective planning in the heritage sector will require the cooperative effort of citizens and local, provincial, territorial and federal governments.

Trends and Innovations

Villages take pride in heritage

Jean-Marie Girardville is a strong believer in the value of cultural tourism that is authentic and respects the natural landscape. In 1997, Mr. Girardville borrowed an idea from France. He launched the *Association of the Most Beautiful Villages of Quebec* (www.beauxvillages.qc.ca/anglais/accueil_a.html). The purpose was to encourage villages to preserve their authentic character and heritage qualities. As a result, many of the villages have experienced a boom in tourism activity.

There are three criteria to qualify as a *beautiful village*: beauty or originality of location; authentic, high-quality architecture; and exceptionally fine beaches.

So far, twenty-nine villages in nine of Quebec tourist regions of the province have met the criteria. Most are located along primary tourist routes, and all border lakes and rivers. For instance, Knowlton, an old Loyalist settlement on Brôme Lake in the Eastern Townships, is one of the villages. So is Kamouraska, on the south shore of the St. Lawrence River, where local fishermen and women use traditional methods to catch eel on the tidal flats.

Local business thrive

Membership in the Association has boosted civic pride. Local businesses have gone out of their way to preserve small operations where tourists can learn about local life and history. The designation "most beautiful village" has attracted tourists who in turn support local artisans, farmers, inns and B&Bs. The villages are ideal for visiting on foot or by bicycle, which encourages a sustainable type of tourism suitable for rural locations.

Over-commercialization threatens heritage

Despite the success of programs such as the Most Beautiful Villages of Quebec, Canada's predominant shopping culture and the commercialization of culture can compromise authentic experience, Mr. Girardville warned.

While the imitation "heritage" experience that you find at a theme park may be a commercial success, this is not the authentic and high-quality experience heritage tourists seek. Further obstacles to successful tourism are the degradation of the landscape and the relatively low value governments place on culture and heritage.

New approaches

One way to improve the chance of success of heritage tourism is to integrate other activities into existing heritage tours.

- Apprenticeships let tourists experience real cultural immersion.
- Develop a label of quality to position the product. An example is the Qualité-Québec program.
- Control growth. Put a quota on hotel development and vehicles.
- Develop a code of ethics to promote respect towards tourists.
- Use school programs to develop an early interest in heritage.

Conclusion

Do we need to change our thinking?

Professor Geoffrey Wall, Department of Environmental Studies, University of Waterloo, summarized trends and challenged the audience to think creatively and tackle hard issues.

To achieve success, the tourism industry and heritage community need to set clear goals. They must understand the benefits and potential compromises inherent in this kind of tourism.

Consider local visitors and community

The market for heritage tourism experiences is competitive and global. In the rush to attract international visitors, do not overlook the importance of local markets. Even at an international destination such as Niagara Falls, about 65% of the visitors come from the region.

Heritage sites can serve a dual purpose: as tourist attractions and as locations for recreation, meetings and other activities for local residents. This helps achieve sustainability and win local support.

The ideal heritage site has an attractive environment. A supporting infrastructure of restaurants, accommodations, and transportation is essential. Be alert to problems such as overuse and crowding.

Are tourism and heritage compatible?

Some individuals worry that heritage has become a commodity. People now pay money for an experience which was previously available to them for free. For Professor Wall, this is not a problem. In fact, tourism helps pay for conservation. If they work together, tourism and heritage will find that the advantages outweigh any problems.

Resources

| | |
|---|--|
| Association of the Most Beautiful Villages of Québec | www.beauxvillages.qc.ca (Welcome/English) |
| Canadian Tourism Commission | Industry → www.canadatourism.com Travellers → www.travelcanada.ca |
| Department of Canadian Heritage | www.pch.gc.ca |
| Heritage Canada Foundation | www.heritagecanada.org |
| The Learning and Enrichment Travel Alliance | www.letacanada.com |
| Parks Canada | www.parkscanada.ca |
| Société internationale des entreprises Économusée® (Network of Economuseums®) | www.economusees.com (English) |
| South Shore Tourism Association (Nova Scotia) | www.ssta.com |
| The Atlantic Lighthouse Council | www.atlantic-lighthouses.com |
| US National Trust for Historic Preservation | www.nationaltrust.org |