

Overview

In 2010, overnight tourism in British Columbia generated 15.7 million person-visits* and \$8.1 billion in related spending. Northern British Columbia, one of six tourism regions in the province, represents 5% of provincial overnight visitation and 5% of related expenditures.

This profile provides a general overview of the region and summarizes the latest data available about overnight travellers visiting Northern British Columbia.

Top markets for Northern BC

British Columbia residents make up the largest share of overnight visitation (65%) and spending (56%) in Northern British Columbia. Those familiar with the region will not be surprised that German travellers are included in the top markets for visitation and spending, one of two regions that have this market in their “top five” list.

| Top five markets of origin (2010) | | Share in Northern BC | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------------|----------|
| | | Visitation | Spending |
| 1 | British Columbia | 65% | 56% |
| 2 | Alberta | 12% | 12% |
| 3 | Alaska | 2% | 1% |
| 4 | Germany | 2% | 3% |
| 5 | Washington | 1% | 3% |

About this tourism region

British Columbia’s largest tourism region covers 569,000 km² of the province, and has more than 60 provincial, national and marine parks, and wildlife refuges that offer access to globally unique ecosystems and priceless cultural heritage treasures. The population of Northern British Columbia has remained virtually unchanged from 2006 and continues to be characterised by a younger demographic than the province as a whole, with 60% aged 44 years or younger compared to the province average (54%).



| The region | 2011 | % change (2006-11) | Age groups ¹ | 2011 | % change (2006-11) |
|---|----------|--------------------|-------------------------|------|--------------------|
| Population ¹ | 253,521 | -0.1% | 0-19 years | 27% | -7% |
| Population as % of BC | 6% | +0.4 point change | 20-44 years | 33% | -5% |
| Avg annual earnings (2006) ² | \$28,044 | n/a | 45-64 years | 29% | 6% |
| Unemployment rate ³ | 6% | n/a | 65+ years | 11% | 20% |

| Tourism industry | 2012 | % of BC |
|--|-----------|---------|
| Businesses (2011) ⁴ | 1,158 | 6% |
| Employment (2011) ⁴ | 6,459 | 5% |
| Accommodation sector revenue (\$000s) ⁴ | \$327,023 | 10% |
| Room revenue (\$000s) ⁴ | \$50,794 | n/a |
| Campsites | | |
| Private/municipal ⁵ | 2,579 | 10% |
| Provincial ⁶ | 2,006 | 16% |
| National ⁷ | 0 | 0% |
| Custom entries ⁸ | 46,054 | 1% |
| Visitor centre parties ⁹ | 106,909 | 7% |

| Transportation | 2012 | % change (2011-12) |
|---|---------|--------------------|
| Airport passengers ¹⁰ | | |
| Fort St. John | 136,305 | 6% |
| Prince George | 418,589 | 4% |
| Smithers | 73,059 | 12% |
| Alaska Ferry passengers ¹¹ | 262,931 | 4% |
| BC Ferries passengers ¹² | | |
| Route 10/40 | 44,816 | -1% |
| Route 11 | 35,552 | 3% |
| Highway traffic volume (000s) ¹³ | | |
| Route 16 | 1,054 | 5% |

Please see page 4 for data sources

*A traveller may visit several locations on one trip to British Columbia; each stay represents a person-visit.

Trip characteristics by origin

Northern British Columbia received 919,000 overnight person-visits in 2010 and generated \$383 million in related spending. Domestic overnight travellers accounted for 80% of visitation and 75% of related spending. International travellers accounted for 20% and 25%, respectively.

On average, domestic travel parties in Northern British Columbia stayed 3.8 nights and spent \$130 per night during their trip. US travel parties stayed 3.5 nights and spent \$304 per night during their trip, and Other international travel parties stayed 5.3 nights and spent \$167 per night during their trip in Northern British Columbia.

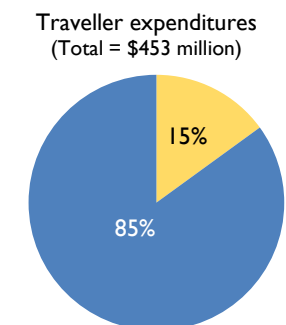
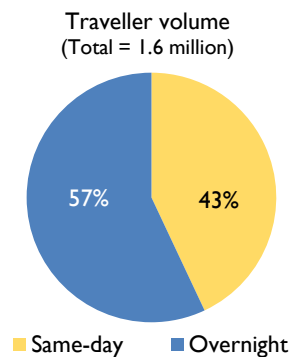
OVERNIGHT VS SAME-DAY TRAVEL

Same-day travel encompasses travellers who enter and leave a destination (i.e. region) in less than 24 hours.

Same-day travellers accounted for 43% of visitor volume and 15% of visitor expenditures in Northern British Columbia.

| | Overnight visitors (000s) | Total | | % change (2009-2010) | | | Share of total | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|---------------|----------------------|----------|--------|--------------------|----------|--------|
| | | Spending (\$000s) | Nights (000s) | Overnight visitors | Spending | Nights | Overnight visitors | Spending | Nights |
| All travellers in Northern BC | 919 | \$383,027 | 3,575 | 5% | -4% | -9% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| BC residents | 599 | \$215,845 | 2,163 | 18% | 6% | -0.3% | 65% | 56% | 61% |
| Other Canadian residents | 139 | \$70,627 | 667 | -14% | -16% | -9% | 15% | 18% | 19% |
| US residents | 117 | \$62,715 | 405 | -20% | -8% | -12% | 13% | 16% | 11% |
| Other international residents | 64 | \$33,840 | 340 | 6% | -20% | -40% | 7% | 9% | 10% |
| Leisure travellers in Northern BC | 442 | \$204,415 | 1,839 | 12% | -4% | -2% | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| BC residents | 271 | \$103,331 | 1,140 | 34% | 6% | 11% | 61% | 51% | 62% |
| *Other Canadian residents | 50 | \$26,925 | 196 | -18% | -38% | -34% | 11% | 13% | 11% |
| US residents | 74 | \$47,827 | 283 | -13% | -2% | -5% | 17% | 23% | 15% |
| Other international residents | 46 | \$26,332 | 220 | 4% | 13% | -14% | 10% | 13% | 12% |

*Due to small unweighted sample size, please use extreme caution when interpreting.



Accommodation

Over 40% of all traveller nights in Northern British Columbia were spent in the residences of friends and family for all markets of origin, except US residents. US residents spent more of their nights at camping or RV park facilities than travellers from other markets of origin.

*Accommodation while in the region

| Primary accommodation | BC residents | Other Canadians | US residents | Other international |
|-----------------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Friends and family | 43% | 47% | 16% | 46% |
| Hotel | 20% | 41% | 21% | 18% |
| Motel | 2% | 1% | 18% | 14% |
| Other commercial fixed roof | 8% | 3% | 9% | 6% |
| Camping/RV parks | 10% | 4% | 30% | 16% |

*Please note the sum will not equal 100% for each market as other non-paid accommodation is not included in the table.

Seasonality

Most people travelled in Northern British Columbia during the peak summer months, particularly US residents (58%) and Other international travellers (56%). More British Columbians travelled from October to December compared to other markets of origin, particularly in the months of October and November.

Visitors to Northern BC by quarter

| Season of travel | BC residents | Other Canadians | US residents | Other international |
|---------------------|--------------|-----------------|--------------|---------------------|
| January to March | 11% | 13% | 5% | 7% |
| April to June | 18% | 31% | 31% | 26% |
| July to September | 42% | 47% | 58% | 56% |
| October to December | 30% | 9% | 6% | 10% |

Trip activities

Overnight travellers who spent one or more nights in Northern British Columbia took part in a number of outdoor activities during their trip, including visiting national/provincial parks, hiking/backpacking, camping, and wildlife viewing. Some cultural activities, including visiting museums/art galleries and historic sites, also ranked as top trip activities among non-British Columbia residents.

*Top activities on the trip

| | BC residents | Other Canadians | **US residents | **Other international |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Hiking or backpacking | National, provincial or nature park | National, provincial or nature park | National, provincial or nature park |
| 2 | Camping | Hiking or backpacking | Museum or art gallery | Historic site |
| 3 | National, provincial or nature park | Wildlife viewing or bird watching | Historic site | Museum or art gallery |
| 4 | Boating/canoeing/kayaking | Museum or art gallery | Camping | Zoo or aquarium |
| 5 | Wildlife viewing or bird watching | Golfing | Zoo or aquarium | Camping |

*Please note that the activities listed could have taken place anywhere on the trip, not just in the Northern British Columbia.

**Please note that the following activities were not included in this analysis: visit friends or family, shopping, sightseeing, bar/night club, sport/outdoor activity unspecified.

Data sources for travellers in Northern British Columbia

The International Travel Survey (ITS) and the Travel Survey of Residents of Canada (TSRC) are ongoing surveys conducted by Statistics Canada in partnership with the Canadian Tourism Commission and some provinces, including British Columbia.

The ITS and TSRC provides statistics on the volume and demographics of domestic and international travellers and on characteristics of their trips such as activities, expenditures, places visited, accommodations and length of stay.

The data are based on the 2010 results for those who travelled in Canada and spent at least one night in Northern British Columbia. For more information, please visit www.statcan.gc.ca.

Other data sources are noted where appropriate and listed on page 4.

Regional comparisons

| Travel characteristics by region | Total | | | % change (2009-2010) | | | Regional share of total | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|----------------------|----------|--------|-------------------------|----------|--------|
| | *Overnight visitors (000s) | *Spending (\$000s) | Nights (000s) | Overnight visitors | Spending | Nights | Overnight visitors | Spending | Nights |
| All travellers in BC | 15,729 | \$8,070,235 | 74,216 | 6% | 3% | 3% | | | |
| Cariboo Chilcotin Coast | 484 | \$105,301 | 1,835 | 15% | -1% | 8% | 3% | 1% | 3% |
| Kootenay Rockies | 1,581 | \$521,582 | 5,679 | -1% | -1% | -2% | 9% | 7% | 8% |
| Northern BC | 919 | \$383,027 | 3,575 | 5% | -4% | -9% | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Thompson Okanagan | 3,309 | \$1,098,024 | 11,932 | 2% | -6% | -4% | 19% | 14% | 17% |
| Vancouver, Coast & Mountains | 7,182 | \$4,086,981 | 34,703 | 11% | 10% | 9% | 42% | 54% | 48% |
| Vancouver Island | 3,736 | \$1,435,306 | 14,577 | 4% | -0.1% | 5% | 22% | 19% | 20% |
| Leisure travellers in BC | 8,286 | \$4,565,658 | 36,009 | 4% | 2% | 3% | | | |
| Cariboo Chilcotin Coast | 280 | \$75,405 | 1,252 | 7% | -0.2% | 14% | 3% | 2% | 4% |
| Kootenay Rockies | 1,072 | \$401,642 | 3,826 | -4% | -0.2% | -2% | 12% | 9% | 11% |
| Northern BC | 442 | \$204,415 | 1,839 | 12% | -4% | -2% | 5% | 5% | 5% |
| Thompson Okanagan | 1,799 | \$727,122 | 6,545 | 3% | -3% | -1% | 19% | 17% | 19% |
| Vancouver, Coast & Mountains | 3,669 | \$2,066,686 | 13,787 | 9% | 10% | 8% | 40% | 47% | 40% |
| Vancouver Island | 1,975 | \$876,645 | 7,462 | 0.1% | -2% | 3% | 21% | 20% | 21% |

*Please note the visitation of all regions will not equal the provincial total as travellers can visit multiple regions on one trip and the spending of all regions will not equal the provincial total as the "unspecified" region is not included in the table.

Sources

1. 2011 Census, Statistics Canada
2. 2006 Census, Statistics Canada
3. BC Stats
4. Tourism Statistics, BC Stats
5. Destination BC
6. BC Parks
7. Parks Canada
8. Statistics Canada
9. Destination BC
10. Individual airports
11. Alaska State Ferry
12. BC Ferries
13. BC Ministry of Transportation

Data tables are based on Statistics Canada microdata which contain anonymised data collected in the Travel Survey of Residents of Canada (pooled) and/or the International Travel Survey 2009/2010. All computations on these microdata were prepared by Research Resolutions & Consulting Ltd. on behalf of Destination BC and the responsibility for the use and interpretation of these data is entirely that of the author(s).

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