

# INDIGENOUS VOICES OF VANCOUVER ISLAND

## HOW A PODCAST BOOSTED GLOBAL INTEREST IN INDIGENOUS TOURISM IN BC

Grizzly bear tours and kayaking adventures, local cuisine harvested from the Pacific Ocean, a journey through the world-renowned Great Bear Rainforest...

— “ —

“Many Indigenous communities across Vancouver Island are attempting to reach a wider global audience to further their profits and create an awareness for their culture and heritage.”

—Tchadas Leo,  
podcast host and member  
of Homalco First Nation



On Vancouver Island, Indigenous entrepreneurs and natural treasures take stage on the podcast “[Indigenous Voices of Vancouver Island](#),” a destination development initiative created by [4VI](#) and hosted by Tchadas Leo of the Homalco First Nation.

Told exclusively through Indigenous voices, the five-episode series was created to boost mindful travel to and within Vancouver Island by sharing compelling stories and perspectives from Indigenous Peoples who are connected to the land since time immemorial.



PORT ALBERNI | Photo: Peter O'Hara

## PROJECT CONSIDERATIONS

Podcasting is a complex endeavour, particularly with so many options saturating the market. “Indigenous Voices of Vancouver Island” needed to stand out from tens of thousands of travel podcasts vying for audience attention. It also needed to respect the oral traditions of Indigenous Peoples while adhering to the technical requirements and time restraints required to produce an engaging podcast.

Within the confines of its limited-edition series, the “Indigenous Voices of Vancouver Island” producers had to manage and organize input from multiple partners and communities—and, ultimately, develop a clear brand that supports and respects the unique cultural voice of each participating Indigenous entrepreneur.

## PROJECT APPROACH

Destination BC’s research has shown that many visitors to British Columbia are eager to dive deeply into First Nations cultures. To provide these experiences while supporting reconciliation, the 4VI team highlighted a range of tourism experiences—from outdoor adventure, to cuisine, to arts and culture—that promote Indigenous businesses, while also engaging a global audience.

To ensure the project reached its full potential, 4VI used funding from the Province of B.C.’s Targeted Regional Tourism Development Initiative to hire Everything Podcasts, an established production company with experience producing destination podcasts and working with Indigenous communities. The team focused on identifying tourism entrepreneurs and businesses that promote cultural preservation, contribute to economic development in their communities, and encourage sustainable tourism practices.

With the support of Everything Podcasts, the 4VI team collaborated closely with Indigenous communities throughout Vancouver Island. Participating entrepreneurs were provided an opportunity to tell their stories in their own voices, sharing inspiration, culture, traditions, and hopes for visitors to Vancouver Island.

The final product includes five episodes, each with an overarching theme that showcases Indigenous entrepreneurs offering unique tourism experiences.



COURTENAY | Photo: Totem Design House





COURTENAY | Photo: Kimberley Kufaas/I-Hos Gallery

## PROJECT RESULTS



**2,500**  
downloads  
of the podcast\*



**14,000**  
listeners  
tuning in\*



Global audience  
spanning  
**25 COUNTRIES**  
including the U.S.,  
U.K., Germany, France,  
and the Netherlands



**Funding secured  
for a second season,**  
which will focus on  
community-led  
initiatives told through  
interviews with First  
Nations communities  
across Vancouver Island

\*Between January and mid-March 2023



## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Podcasting is a valuable medium through which destinations can build meaningful connections with potential visitors. Collaborating with Indigenous partners to share stories from Indigenous Elders, entrepreneurs, and tour operators can further help travellers develop an intimate bond with First Nations communities before arriving.

Ultimately, the tourism opportunities that 4VI has created through the “Indigenous Voices of Vancouver” podcast will leave a legacy that continues to generate interest and drive traffic to the participating Indigenous entrepreneurs and businesses.



VANCOUVER ISLAND | Photo: Sean Scott

*Indigenous Voices of Vancouver Island* can be streamed on [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), and other podcast platforms.