

# ALBERTA'S VISITOR ECONOMY

## THE ECONOMIC SIGNIFICANCE OF TRAVEL IN ALBERTA

In Alberta, the visitor economy is literally “everyone’s business”. It is a complex, interwoven and dynamic ecosystem. We are an industry of industries, inclusive of all private and public businesses and service providers that support a visitor’s trip. So when our sector, which was growing faster than the

provincial economy, was abruptly halted by COVID-19, this sent shockwaves to the core of Albertans’ way of life and their livelihoods. Below is a snapshot showing the contributions that tourism brought to Alberta’s economy, our present state, and, still how far we have to go to recover.

**25,546<sup>+</sup>**  
ALBERTA TOURISM  
BUSINESSES  
2020 (pre-COVID-19)



**45.9%**  
BUSINESSES  
WITH EMPLOYEES



**54.1%**  
BUSINESSES  
WITHOUT EMPLOYEES

### PRE-COVID-19 PERFORMANCE<sup>^</sup>

**\$8.2B<sup>\*</sup>**

2019 EXPENDITURES  
IN ALBERTA

**\$105.1B**

IMPACT OF CANADA’S  
TRAVEL SECTOR

**2.03%**

TOURISM’S SHARE  
OF CANADA’S GDP

**\$23.1B<sup>†</sup>**

CANADA’S LARGEST  
SERVICE EXPORT

### # OF BUSINESSES WITH EMPLOYEES



**SECTOR**  
**BUSINESS COUNT**  
**% OF TOTAL**

ACCOMMODATION

**1,196**  
**11.0%**

FOOD & BEVERAGE

**8,120**  
**71.0%**

RECREATION

**1,122**  
**10.0%**

TRANSPORTATION

**598**  
**5.0%**

TRAVEL SERVICES

**353**  
**3.0%**

### COVID-19 ECONOMIC IMPACTS<sup><</sup>

**-91%**

PASSENGER AIR  
TRANSPORT REVENUES

**-71%**

ACCOMMODATION  
REVENUES

**65%<sup>‡</sup>**

FOOD & BEVERAGE BUSINESSES  
OPERATING AT A LOSS

**-\$1.56B**

ALBERTA ESTIMATED LOSSES IN  
INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL REVENUE

### PRE-COVID-19 PER PERSON VISITOR SPENDING IN ALBERTA<sup>‡‡‡</sup>



**\$157**

Albertans

**\$471**

Canadians

**\$900**

Americans

**\$1180**

Overseas

Sources: Destination Canada Research; Statistics Canada: National Tourism Indicators; <sup>^</sup>Statistics Canada, Visitor Travel Survey and National Travel Survey; <sup>\*</sup>Alberta Jobs, Economy and Innovation (Statistics Canada, Visitor Spending Model for Alberta - 2019 numbers); <sup><</sup>Destination Canada, Revisiting Tourism: Canada’s Visitor Economy One Year Into the Global Pandemic, decline in revenues YoY April-Nov, 2020; (i) International tourism revenue increased by 4.1%; (ii) Restaurants Canada, Alberta’s Foodservice Industry COVID-19 Update; (iii) TIAA A Call for Action Report, Recommendations to Accelerate the Recovery, Sustainable Growth & Resilience of Alberta’s Visitor Economy, June, 2020; <sup>\*</sup>Based on 2016 census data, and adjusted to account for business growth rates. Notes on business count methodology: Calculations based on tourism business location counts versus, establishment counts. A location is defined as: an operating entity, specifically, a production entity which: conducts economic activity at, or from, a single physical location or group of locations; resides within the smallest standardized geographical area; and, is able to provide employment data at a minimum. For information on the methodology used to estimate employment by riding, email research@tourismhr.ca; Statistics Canada, Business Register December 2020, customized tabulations and Annual Labour Force Survey, customized tabulations.