

WEAK CANADIAN DOLLAR BENEFITS TOURISM



From Vancouver to Montreal, the weak Canadian dollar benefits tourism greatly. Weakened by the drop in oil prices and an international decrease in the price of resources, the Canadian Dollar is at about 70 cents to the American dollar, prompting Americans to travel north of the border.

The CEO of the Hotel Association of Greater Montreal, Eve Paré, has confirmed that there has been an increase in the amount of last minute reservations made by American travelers who are heading to Canada for weekend getaways.

In December, the hotels in the Montreal region made more than 40 million dollars, a growth of 9% compared to last year, according to Paré. According to Tourism Montreal, last summer, between June and August, there were 10% more American tourists than over the same period in 2014.

The fact that the current rate benefits tourism in Canada is shown on the influx of other international travelers as well. At Place Jacques-Cartier, in Old Montreal, Adriana Carvalho, a 43-year-old Brazilian tourist explains she originally planned to go to the United States with her partner, but changed her mind at the last minute to take advantage of the exchange rate. The Brazilian real is worth 34 cents in Canada, whereas it is only worth 24 cents in the United States. Another attraction were the ski resorts in Quebec as well as the possibility to buy some items that they don't have south of the border, like fur.

In British Columbia, Tourism Whistler, which takes count of hotel stays in the resort in northern Vancouver, noted that November and December 2015 were the busiest months on record and that the Canadian dollar is a huge incentive for American travelers.

"The mood is really positive," confirmed the spokesperson Patricia Westerholm, "The energy is palpable throughout the resorts." She specified that the organization doesn't keep count of business in general, but that business owners have noted that there has been a customer surge.

Joey Gibbons, the owner of Gibbons Whistler, who owns five bars, a brewery and a distillery, **confirmed that there were also more Canadians in Whistler coming to experience the great skiing conditions.**

"Canadians are comparing the Canadian Dollar to the American dollar on a daily basis, so they come to Whistler rather than to Hawaii," he concluded. "When Americans get here and realize how much of a bargain it is and how strong their dollar is, they buy champagne and good wine. The combination of the value of the dollar and the excellent ski conditions is perfect and benefits tourism," he added.

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