

# CANADA, WHERE DID ALL THE TOURISTS GO?



Canadian tourism industry is an important cash and job generator for the economy. The inconvenient truth however is that the tourism sector is very fragile. Even minor changes in political relationships between countries or e.g. terrorist attacks can have devastating impact on the industry. Economy is also among the reasons why the tourist's behavior can change. Canadians for instance make much more same-day car trips to the US than they did before. The reason is the cheaper USD. On the other hand number of US citizens traveling to Canada is dropping for the same reason.

Canada needs to deal with this problem. They need to bring new tourists to their country. It is not only the rising value of the Canadian dollar that stops US citizens from coming to Canada. There are also confusing passport requirements and the high gas prices. What more, American's awareness of Canada as a tourism destination is declining. Those who have the best knowledge of Canadian tourism products are the people living closest to the Canadian border. Nevertheless, they are quite sensitive to economic and political changes and therefore it is supposed they will visit Canada less often in the future. There is a need for advertisement campaign that would show tourists what is on offer in Canada.

The country is viewed as a friendly and safe destination. There has been a success in advertising agritourism (tourism in which tourists board at farms or in rural villages and experience farming at close hand), waterfront rejuvenation, winery growth, golf course expansions, health and wellness services and cultural tourism. The country, however, needs to promote its outdoor activities, such as skiing, snowboarding, snowmobiling and boating, to attract tourists who long for adventure and excitement.

The industry employs approximately 10.6% of the Canadian workforce. There are approximately 200,000 mostly small and medium-sized enterprises involved in the tourism businesses. The industry is literally vital for numerous people as well as for the economy since the tourism sector generates an estimated \$18 billion in tax revenues.

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