

# ***Tourism in Calgary & Area***

## **A Summary Of Visitor Numbers, Revenue & Characteristics -- 2003**

Based on the 2003 Canadian & International Travel Surveys (Statistics Canada)

Policy & Economic Analysis  
Alberta Economic Development

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## TOURISM IN CALGARY & AREA

### A Summary Of Visitor Numbers, Revenue & Characteristics -- 2003

#### Introduction

Whether to see their friends and relatives, for business or for pleasure, nearly 4.1 million person visits were made to destinations within Calgary & Area by Albertans, other Canadians and visitors from the US and overseas. The trips included day trips and overnight trips. Tourism generated \$874 million in consumer spending in the region during the one-year period.

To better understand the size, characteristics and spending activity of visitors to Alberta, Research Resolutions and Consulting was commissioned to prepare a special analysis of the 2003 Canadian and International Travel Surveys conducted by Statistics Canada. These consumer surveys measure travel in Alberta by Canadians for trips of at least 80 kilometres one way from home, and trips to the province made by American and overseas visitors to Canada. Almost all trips, whether same-day or overnight, are included.<sup>1</sup>T

This report highlights travel in the Calgary & Area Tourism Destination Region. For more information on tourism in Alberta, please contact Alberta Economic Development.<sup>2</sup>

#### Calgary & Area: 2003 Overview

- Calgary & Area received 23% of total person visits to Alberta.
- More than one quarter (28%) of American person visits and almost one half (46%) of overseas person visits to Alberta were to locations in Calgary & Area.
- The region was responsible for 22.2% of Alberta's total tourism revenues.

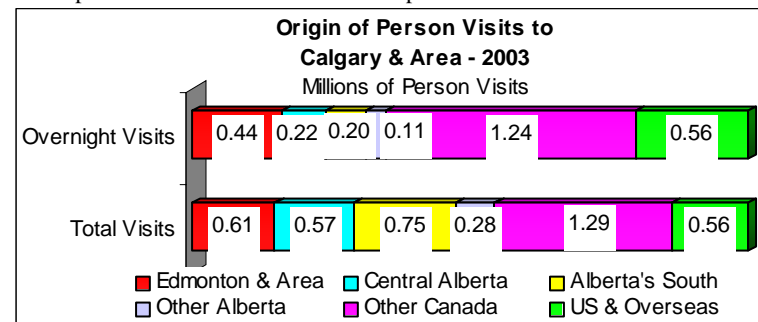
| Comparison of Tourism Numbers |                |               |                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------------|
| (millions)                    | Calgary & Area | Total Alberta | Calgary % of Alberta |
| Number of Visitors            |                |               |                      |
| Overnight Person Visits       | 2.76           | 9.95          | 27.7%                |
| Total Person Visits           | 4.06           | 17.89         | 22.7%                |
| Origin of Visitors            |                |               |                      |
| Alberta                       | 2.21           | 13.23         | 16.7%                |
| Other Canada                  | 1.29           | 3.09          | 41.7%                |
| United States                 | 0.27           | 0.96          | 28.1%                |
| Other International           | 0.28           | 0.61          | 45.9%                |
| Revenues                      | \$874          | \$3,929       | 22.2%                |

\*The reader is reminded that travellers to Alberta could visit more than one Tourism Destination Region while in Alberta

#### Who travels in Calgary & Area?

**All trips, all purposes:** The majority (86%) of the 4,058,000 person visits in Calgary & Area were by Canadians. The largest proportion of all person trips (54%) was by Albertans, eight per cent\* by residents of BC, and six per cent\* by Saskatchewan residents. Americans accounted for seven per cent\* of person visits to the region, and overseas visitors another seven per cent\*.

\* Interpret with caution due to small sample size



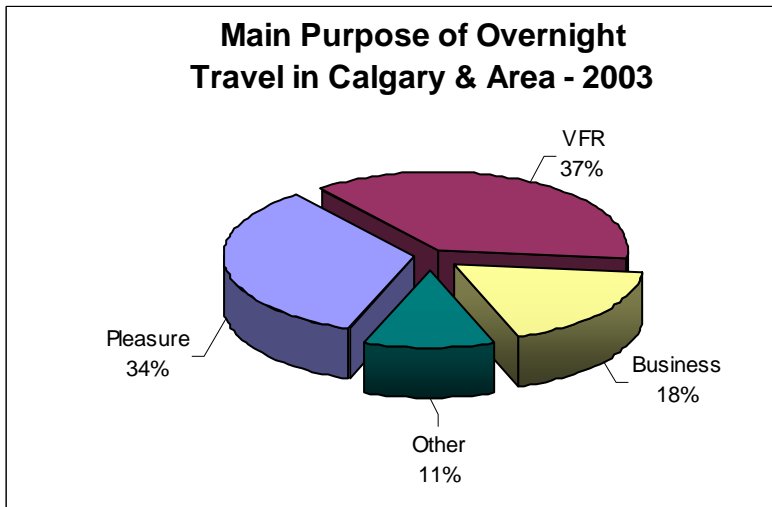
Almost one half of all person visits in this region were by residents of Alberta South (18%), Edmonton & Area (15%) and Alberta Central (14%).

**Overnight visits:** Overnight visits to Calgary & Area totalled 2.76 million person visits, accounting for two-thirds (68%) of all visits to the region. The majority of these trips (35%) were by Albertans. Saskatchewan visitors accounted for 11% of overnight visits, BC residents 16%, American visitors 10% and overseas visitors 10%.

Overnight visits by Albertans were primarily by residents of Edmonton & Area (16% of all overnight person visits), Alberta Central (eight per cent) and Alberta South (seven per cent).

**Main purpose of overnight travel**

The two most often reported purposes for a trip with an overnight visit in Calgary & Area were trips to visit friends and relatives (VFR) (37%) and pleasure trips (34%). Business travel ranked third at 18%.



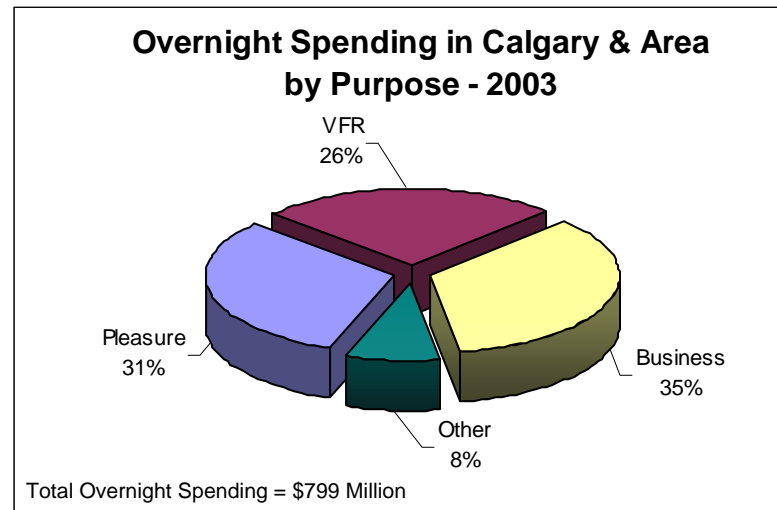
N= 2.76 Million Overnight Person Trips

**Spending in Calgary & Area**

**All purposes, all spending:** As reported in the provincial summary, tourism spending in Alberta in 2003 totalled \$4.33 billion. Of this, \$3.93 billion was spent by visitors who made same-day or overnight visits to locations in the province. The remaining \$405 million was spent by Albertans in Alberta to purchase fares and other incidentals for trips to other parts of Canada<sup>3</sup>. It is not possible to allocate the \$405 million to any of the province's Tourism Destination Regions.

Total spending in Alberta by all travellers in 2003 was \$3.93 billion. Of this amount, \$874 million was spent in Calgary & Area. Canadians spent \$640 million (73%) in the region, while overseas visitors spent \$145 million (17%) and American visitors \$89 million (10%).

Business trips accounted for 35% of all overnight trip expenditures in the region, followed by pleasure trips (31%) and trips to visit friends and relatives (26%).



\* Interpret with caution due to small sample size.

**Length of stay in region:** Same-day trips to Calgary & Area accounted for nine per cent of all money spent in the region (\$75 million). Spending by visitors staying one or more nights totalled \$799 million or 91% of all money spent in the region.

**When spending took place:** The largest proportion of all visitor expenditures in the region (35%) were spent in the third quarter (July to September). Almost one quarter (24%) of expenditures in Calgary & Area were made between October and December. The second quarter accounted for an additional 21%. The remaining 20% of spending took place in the first quarter (January to March).

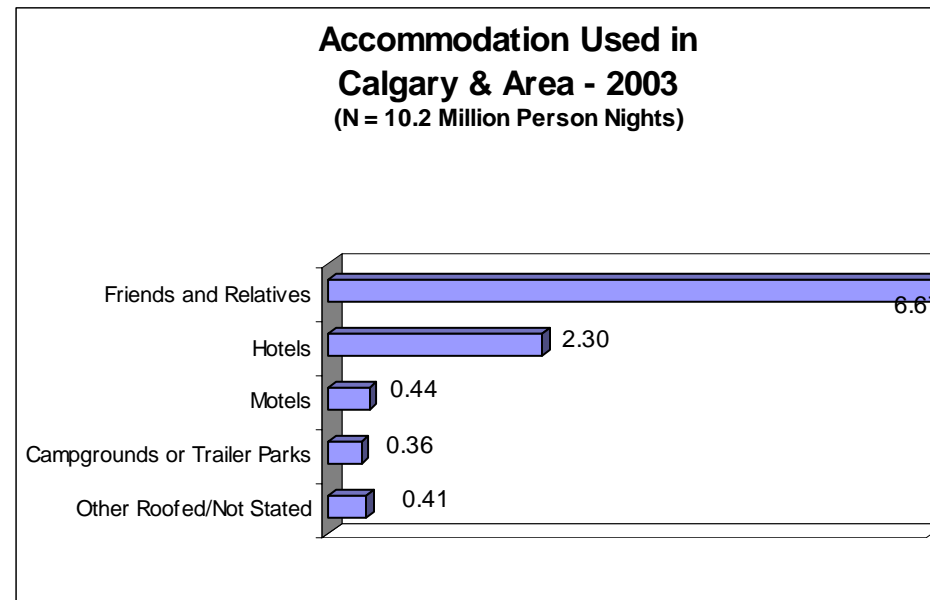
**Overnight spending:** Of the \$874 million spent in the region by overnight visitors, \$223 million (28%) was spent on accommodations, while \$214 million (27%) was spent on food and beverages. Visitors spent 17% (\$133 million) on retail purchases in the region, \$145 million (18%) on vehicle operations/car rental, and \$59 million (seven per cent) on recreation/entertainment. The remaining \$26 million (three per cent) was spent on public/local transportation.

**Accommodation used in the region**

In 2003, overnight visitors to Alberta spent a total of 37.2 million person nights in the province. Of these, 27% (10.2 million person nights) were spent in Calgary & Area. Visitors stayed with friends or relatives for 66% of those person nights. One quarter (23%) of the nights were spent in hotels, and four per cent in motels. Camping was used on three per cent of nights spent in the region.

Of the nights spent in the region, Canadians spent 76%, overseas visitors 17% and US visitors seven per cent.

The average length of stay in the region by overnight visitors was 3.7 nights.



**Activities on overnight trips**

Overnight visitors to Calgary & Area participated in the following activities while travelling in Canada: visiting friends and relatives, attend cultural events, attend sports events, shop, sightseeing, take in nightlife/entertainment, visits to parks/historic sites and participation in outdoor sports/ activities.

**Seasonality**

When do people visit Calgary & Area? Over one third (37%) of all overnight person visits took place between July and September, while 22% took place in the fourth quarter. One fifth (21%) of the overnight visits took place between April and June, and the remaining 20% took place between January and March.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> The Canadian Travel Survey (CTS) is a monthly telephone survey among Canadians 15 years of age or over. The study captures travel in the previous month by the respondent for all trips 80 km or more one way from home, for purposes other than commuting to work or school, crews, and moving to a new residence.

The International Travel Survey is a self-completion survey, distributed at ports of entry for completion by USA and overseas visitors to Canada at the end of their trip. The survey excludes border workers, visitors travelling on military or diplomatic orders, and students. Questionnaire data are projected to Canada Customs information on total entries to Canada. For more details of the survey designs, please contact Statistics Canada.

The information provided in this report is based on special tabulations of Statistics Canada data, using data management principles developed by Research Resolutions & Consulting Ltd. in conjunction with provincial partners (Alberta Economic Development, Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation, and Tourism Saskatchewan).

<sup>2</sup> Sid Nieuwenhuis, Alberta Economic Development, Phone: 780 422-1058;  
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<sup>3</sup> Total spending on tourism goods and services in Alberta in 2003 includes money spent in Alberta locations by people who visited these locations (\$3.93 billion) and fares paid and some other incidental expenditure items by Alberta residents in Alberta to leave the province (\$405 million). According to the International Monetary Fund rules, air carrier fares for non-domestic visitors who use a domestic carrier are allocated to the country of the airline's head office. Thus an additional \$26.9 million for Americans and \$224.3 million for overseas visitors who used domestic air carriers to travel to Canada are allocated in Alberta. These domestic carrier fares for non-residents are not included in the \$3.93 billion in total tourism spending in the province (see Table 81-1 of detailed USA and overseas tabulations).