

Tourism in Alberta Central

A Summary Of Visitor Numbers, Revenue & Characteristics -- 2002

Based on the 2002 Canadian & International Travel Surveys (Statistics Canada)

Policy & Economic Analysis
Alberta Economic Development

April 2004



TOURISM IN ALBERTA CENTRAL

A Summary Of Visitor Numbers, Revenue & Characteristics -- 2002

Introduction

Whether to see their friends and relatives, for business or for pleasure, over 5.3 million person visits were made to destinations within Alberta Central by Albertans, other Canadians and visitors from the US and overseas. The trips included day trips and overnight trips. Tourism generated \$466 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 2002 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.¹

This report highlights travel in the Alberta Central Tourism Destination Region. For more information on tourism in Alberta, please contact Alberta Economic Development.²

Alberta Central: 2002 Overview

- Alberta Central received 24% of total person visits to Alberta.
- About eight per cent of American person visits to Alberta were to locations in Alberta Central compared to 28% for Albertans.
- The region was responsible for 9.6% of Alberta's total tourism revenues.

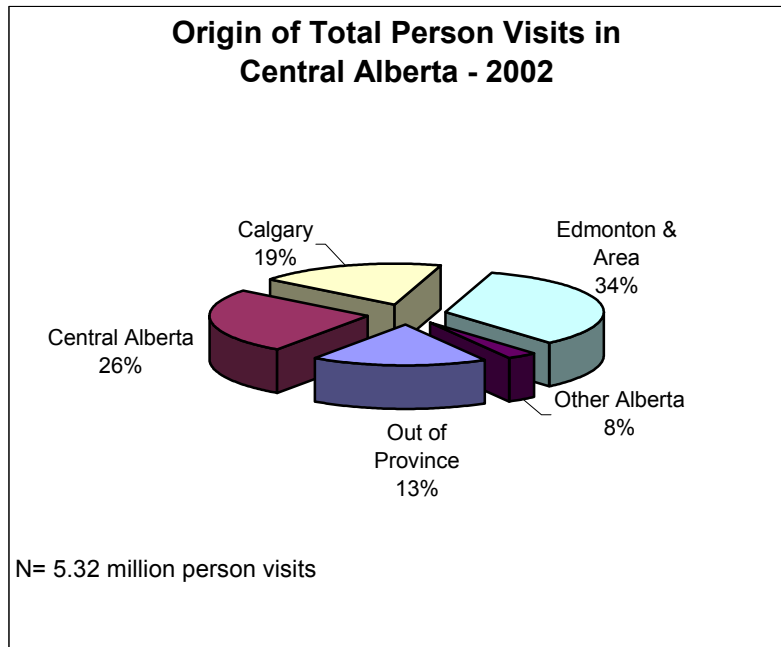
Comparison of Tourism Numbers (millions)	Alberta Central	Total Alberta	Central % of Alberta
Number of Visitors	2.87	12.54	22.9%
Total Person Visits	5.32	22.02	24.2%
Other Canada	4.64	16.51	28.1%
United States	0.53	3.41	15.5%
Other International	0.10	1.29	7.8%
	0.05	0.81	6.2%
	\$466	\$4,852	9.6%

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

Who travels in Alberta Central?

All trips, all purposes: Nearly all (97%) of the 5,315,000 person visits in Alberta Central were by Canadians. Most of these person trips (87%) were by Albertans.

Almost two thirds of all person visits in the region were by residents of either Edmonton & Area (34%) or Alberta Central (26%). Residents of Calgary & Area accounted for an additional 19%.



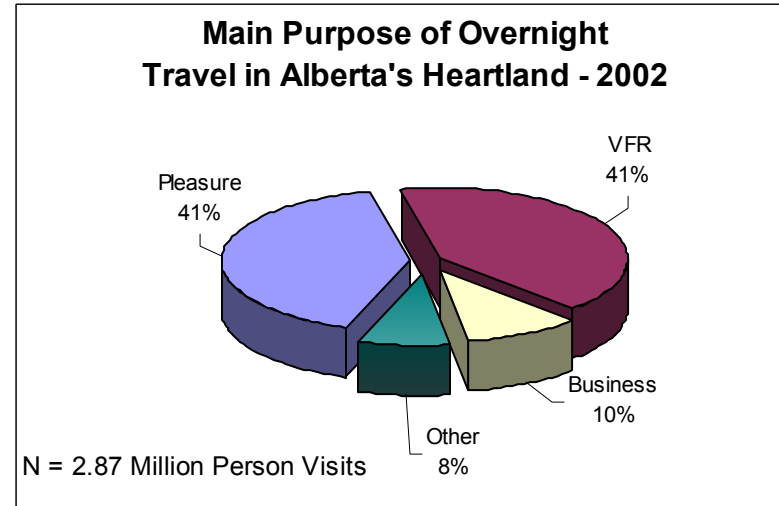
Overnight visits: Overnight visits to Alberta Central totalled 2.87 million person visits, accounting for slightly more than one half (54%) of all visits to the region. The majority of these trips (82%) were by Albertans.

Overnight visits by Albertans were primarily by residents of Edmonton & Area (30% of all overnight person visits), Alberta Central (20%) and Calgary & Area (21%).

* Interpret with caution due to small sample size

Main purpose of overnight travel

The two most often reported purposes for a trip with an overnight visit in Alberta Central were trips to visit friends/relatives (VFR) (41%) and pleasure trips (41%). Business travel ranked third at ten per cent.



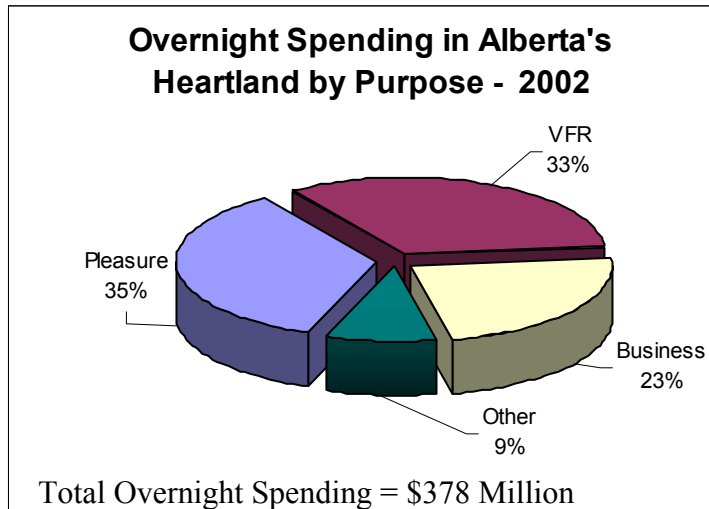
Spending in Alberta Central

All purposes, all spending: As reported in the provincial summary, tourism spending in Alberta in 2002 totalled \$5.46 billion. Of this, \$4.85 billion was spent by visitors who made same-day or overnight visits to locations in the province. The remaining \$611 million was spent by Albertans in Alberta to purchase fares and other incidentals for trips to other parts of Canada³. It is not possible to allocate the \$611 million to any of the province's Tourism Destination Regions.

Total spending in Alberta by all travellers in 2002 was \$4.85 billion. Of this amount, \$466 million was spent in Alberta Central. Canadians spent \$425 million (91%) in the region, while American visitors spent \$27 million (six per cent)* and overseas visitors \$14 million (three per cent)*.

Pleasure trips accounted for 35% of all overnight trip expenditures in the region, followed by trips to visit friends and relatives (33%) and business trips (23%).

* Interpret with caution due to small sample size



Length of stay in region: Same-day trips to Alberta Central accounted for 19% of all money spent in the region (\$88 million). Spending by visitors staying one or more nights totalled \$378 million or 81% of all money spent in the region.

When spending took place: The largest proportion of all visitor expenditures in the region (39%) were spent in the third quarter (July to September). The fourth quarter accounted for an additional 23%. Close to one fifth (19%) of expenditures in Alberta Central were made between April and June, and the remaining 19% of spending took place between January and March.

Overnight spending: Of the \$378 million spent in the region by overnight visitors, \$112 million (30%) was spent on vehicle operations/car rental, while \$101 million (27%) was spent on food and beverages. Visitors spent 22% (\$82 million) on accommodations in the region, 13% (\$50 million) on retail purchases and eight per cent (\$31 million) on recreation/entertainment. The remaining one per cent* (\$2 million) was spent on local / public transport.

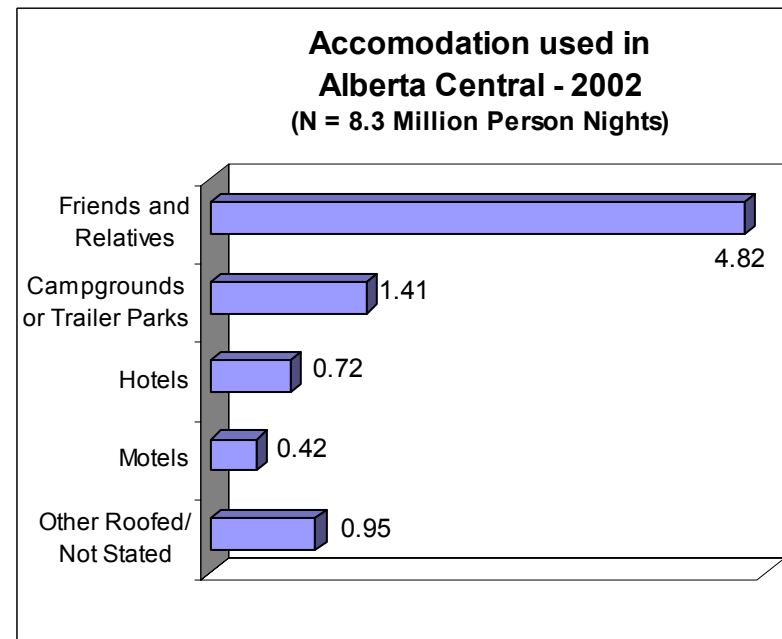
Accommodation used in the region

In 2002, overnight visitors to Alberta spent a total of 45.7 million person nights in the province. Of these, 18% (8.3 million person nights) were spent in Alberta Central. Visitors stayed with friends and relatives for 58% of the person nights spent in the region. Camping was the second most popular form of accommodation, accounting for 17% of nights spent. Nine per cent of person nights were spent in hotels, and five per cent* in motels.

Of the nights spent in the region, Canadians spent 93%, US visitors four per cent* and overseas visitors three per cent*.

The average length of stay in the region by overnight visitors was 2.9 nights.

* Interpret with caution due to small sample size.



Activities on overnight trips

Overnight visitors to Alberta Central 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 Alberta Central? Almost one half (44%) of all overnight person visits took place between July and September, while almost one quarter (22%) took place in the fourth quarter (October to December). Eighteen per cent of the overnight visits took place between April and June, and the remaining 16% took place in the first quarter (January to March).

Notes

¹ 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).

² Sid Nieuwenhuis, Alberta Economic Development, Phone: 780 422-1058;
Fax: 780 422-0061; email: sid.nieuwenhuis@gov.ab.ca

³ Total spending on tourism goods and services in Alberta in 2002 includes money spent in Alberta locations by people who visited these locations (\$4.85 billion) and fares paid and some other incidental expenditure items by Alberta residents in Alberta to leave the province (\$611 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 \$44.6 million for Americans and \$208.1

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 \$4.85 billion in total tourism spending in the province (see Table 81-1 of detailed USA and overseas tabulations).