

# ***Tourism in Canadian Rockies***

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

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

Policy & Economic Analysis  
Alberta Economic Development

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## TOURISM IN CANADIAN ROCKIES

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

#### Introduction

Whether to see their friends and relatives, for business or for pleasure, nearly 3.6 million person visits were made to destinations within Canadian Rockies by Albertans, other Canadians and visitors from the US and overseas. The trips included day trips and overnight trips. Tourism generated \$1.1 billion 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.<sup>1</sup>

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

#### Canadian Rockies: 2002 Overview

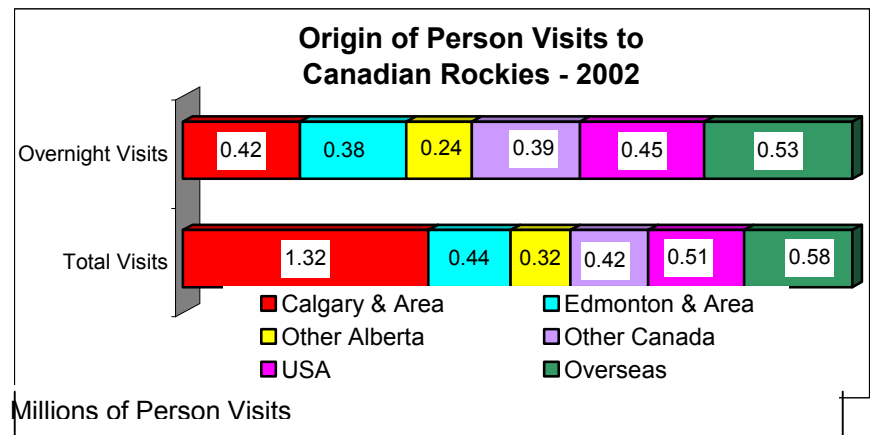
- Canadian Rockies received 16% of total person visits to Alberta.
- Forty per cent of American person visits to Alberta and 72% of overseas person visits to the province were to locations in Canadian Rockies compared to 13% of person visits by Alberta residents.
- The region was responsible for 23% of Alberta's total tourism revenues.

Comparison of Tourism Numbers			
(millions)	Canadian Rockies	Total Alberta	Rockies % of Alberta
Number of Visitors			
Overnight Person Visits	2.41	12.54	19.2%
Total Person Visits	3.58	22.02	16.3%
Origin of Visitors			
Alberta	2.08	16.51	12.6%
Other Canada	0.42	3.41	12.3%
United States	0.51	1.29	39.5%
Other International	0.58	0.81	71.6%
Revenues	\$1,108	\$4,852	22.8%

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

#### Who travels in Canadian Rockies?

**All trips, all purposes:** The majority (70%) of the 3,585,000 person visits in Canadian Rockies were by Canadians, while US visitors accounted for 14% and overseas visitors 16%. More than half (58%) of all person visits were by Albertans.



More than one third (37%) of all person visits in this region were by residents of Calgary & Area, followed by Edmonton & Area (12%).

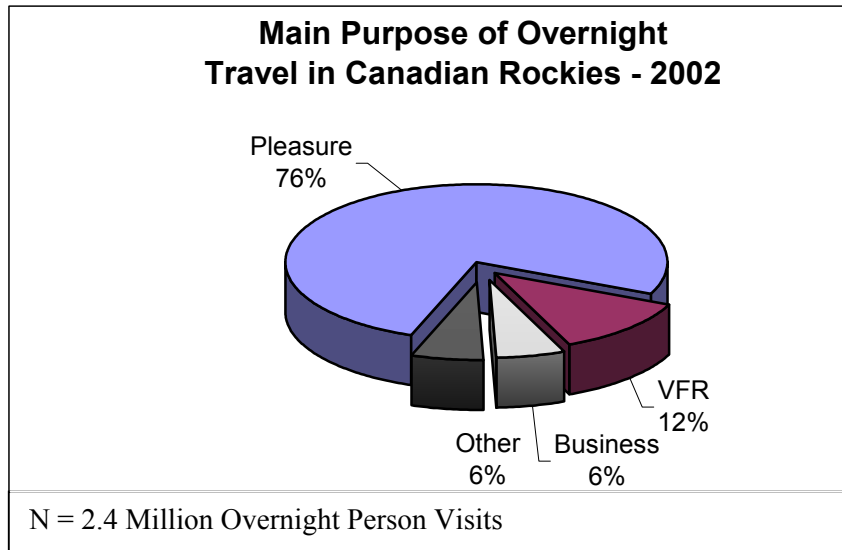
**Overnight visits:** Overnight visits to Canadian Rockies totalled 2.4 million person visits, accounting for 67% of all visits to the region. The largest proportion of these trips (43%) were by Albertans, while overseas visitors accounted for 22% and US visitors 19%.

Overnight visits by Albertans were primarily by residents of Calgary & Area (18% of all overnight person visits) and Edmonton & Area (16%).

The largest proportion of US visitors was from the Pacific Census Division (four per cent of overnight person visits), followed by residents of the South Atlantic Division (three per cent)\*. Visitors from the UK and Japan each made up five per cent\* of overnight visitors, respectively.

**Main purpose of overnight travel**

The most often reported purpose for a trip with an overnight visit in Canadian Rockies was pleasure trips (76%). Visiting friends and relatives (VFR) came second, with 12%.

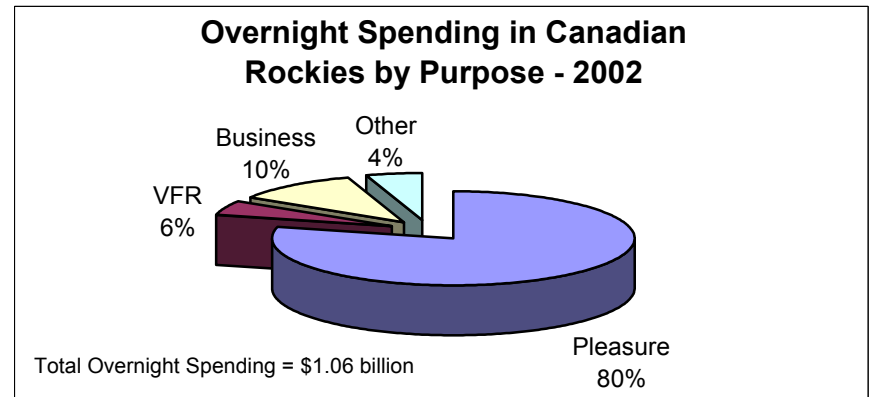


**Spending in Canadian Rockies**

**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 Canada<sup>3</sup>. 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, \$1.10 billion was spent in Canadian Rockies. Canadians spent \$462 million (42% of all expenditures in the region), while overseas visitors spent \$394 million (35%) and American visitors \$252 million (23%).

Pleasure trips accounted for 80% of all overnight trip expenditures in the region, followed by business trips (ten per cent) and trips to visit friends and relatives (six per cent)\*.



\*Interpret with caution due to small sample size

**Length of stay in region:** Same-day trips to Canadian Rockies accounted for only four per cent\* of all money spent in the region (\$46 million). Spending by visitors staying one or more nights totalled \$1.06 billion or 96% of all money spent in the region.

**When spending took place:** The largest proportion of all visitor expenditures in the region (41%) were spent in the third quarter (July to September). One quarter (25%) of expenditures in the region were made between April and June. The first quarter accounted for an additional 22%. The remaining 12% of spending took place in the fourth quarter (October to December).

**Overnight spending:** Of the \$1.06 billion spent in the region by overnight visitors, \$436 million (41%) was spent on accommodations, while \$229 million (22%) was spent on food and beverages. Visitors spent 11% on retail purchases in the region (\$122 million), 11% (\$114 million) on vehicle operations/car rental in the region, and ten per cent (\$105 million) on recreation/entertainment. The remaining five per cent\* (\$58 million) was spent on local/public transportation.

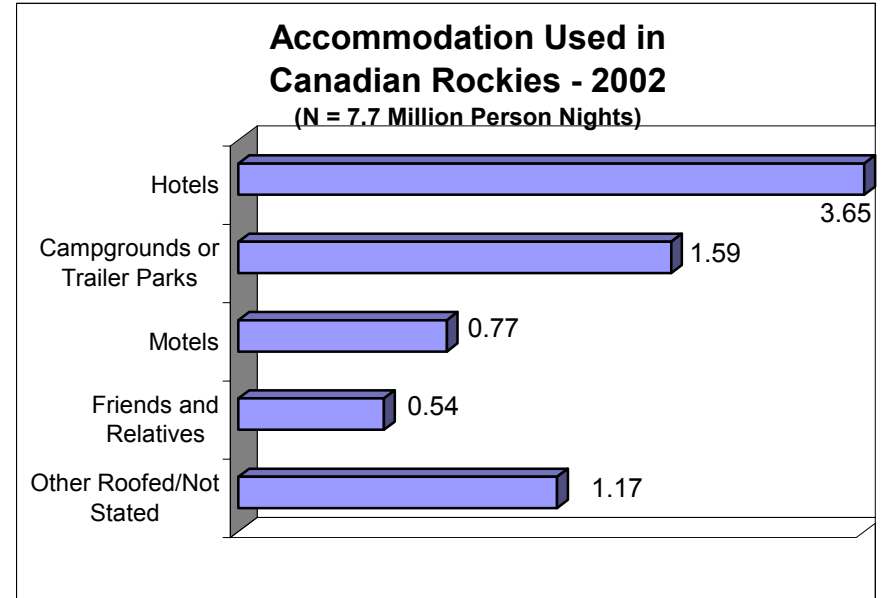
**Accommodation used in the region**

In 2002, overnight visitors to Alberta spent a total of 45.7 million person nights in the province. Of these, 17% (7.7 million person nights) were spent in Canadian Rockies. Visitors stayed in hotels for 47% of the person nights spent in the region. Camping was the second most popular form of accommodation, accounting for 21% of nights spent in the region. Ten per cent of person nights were spent in motels and another seven per cent\* with friends and relatives.

Canadians spent one half (50%) of all the nights spent in the region, while overseas visitors spent 30% and US visitors 20%.

The average length of stay in the region by overnight visitors was 3.2 nights.

\* Interpret with caution due to small sample size.



**Activities on overnight trips**

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

**Seasonality**

When do people visit Canadian Rockies? The largest proportion of all overnight person visits (43%) took place between July and September, while one quarter (25%) took place in the second quarter. Fourteen per cent of the overnight visits took place between October and December, and the remaining 18% took place between January and March.

## Notes

<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;  
Fax: 780 422-0061; email: [sid.nieuwenhuis@gov.ab.ca](mailto:sid.nieuwenhuis@gov.ab.ca)

<sup>3</sup> 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).