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Short Term Economic Indicators*

Canada & Ontario

		Q3 2004	Q4 2004	2004	2005
Real Gross Domestic Product - ROC	Can	0.9	0.8	3.0	3.1
	ON	0.9	0.8	2.8	3.4
Consumer Price Index - ROC	Can	0.4	0.3	1.9	1.9
	ON	0.3	0.5	1.9	2.1
Unemployment Rate	Can	7.2	7.1	7.2	6.9
	ON	6.8	6.5	6.8	6.5
Personal Disposable Income - ROC	Can	0.9	1.2	4.8	5.4
	ON	0.7	1.2	4.1	5.3

*forecast data, ROC = Rate of change over previous period

Source: Conference Board of Canada

International Border Crossings: Overseas market returns, but same day visits from the US remain down.

- Total international border crossings into Ontario increased by 0.7% over the first three quarters of 2003, but decreased by 16.8% over the same period of 2002. Total overnight crossings increased by 15.9% over the first three quarters of 2003, but decreased by 7.1% over the first three quarters of 2002. Same day border crossings decreased by 7.6% over the first three quarters of 2003, and by 22.4% over the same period of 2002.
- Border crossings from the U.S. dropped by 1.3% over the first three quarters of 2003 and by 18.1% over the same period of 2002. Border crossings from overseas countries increased by 35.5% over the first three quarters of 2003 and increased by 3.1% over the same period of 2002.
- Travel by Ontario residents to the U.S. and overseas countries increased by 6.3% in the first three quarters of 2004 over the same period of 2003 and by 2.9% over the same period of 2002.

Ontario Travel Information Centres (TICs)

Ontario TICs visitation down in January to October period of 2004

- Visitation to Ontario Travel Information Centres (TICs) decreased by 10.1% in October 2004 over October 2003.
- Visitation remained down in the January to October period of 2004 (-1.1%) over the same period of 2003.
- Of the 18 TICs across Ontario, only 6 experienced increases in visitation during the January to October period of 2004.

Source: Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation

International Border Crossings into Ontario

July to September and January to September 2004
Percent Change Over Same Periods of 2003

	July 2004	August 2004	September 2004	Jan - Sept 2004
Total US	3.5%	-7.4%	4.8%	-1.3%
Overnight US	20.5%	-0.6%	23.6%	13.1%
Total Overseas	40.8%	42.7%	47.9%	35.5%
Overnight Overseas	40.0%	39.9%	36.9%	33.0%
Total International	5.6%	-0.2%	8.0%	0.7%
Overnight International	23.2%	4.2%	26.1%	16.0%

Source: Statistics Canada

Accommodations: Hotel occupancy rates and average daily rates increase during the first three-quarters of 2004

The following table outlines actual occupancy and average daily rates for several different markets across the province for the first nine months of 2004.

Accommodations:

Hotel occupancy rates and average daily rates increase during the first three-quarters of 2004

Occupancy and Average Daily Rates - Jan to Sept 2004

Market	Occupancy Rate		Avg. Daily rate	
	Jan-Sept 2004	% point ch*	Jan-Sept 2004	%ch
Greater Toronto Area	67.0%	10.6	\$118.70	5.2%
Downtown Toronto	70.4%	13.9	\$154.91	7.4%
Toronto Airport	71.6%	9.9	\$110.48	0.3%
GTA West	62.2%	4.9	\$101.14	1.6%
GTA East/North	61.4%	9.3	\$107.41	1.4%
Eastern Ontario	60.2%	3.0	\$98.70	3.7%
Kingston	62.5%	1.1	\$111.36	4.0%
Other Eastern Ontario	58.9%	3.9	\$91.43	3.2%
Ottawa	64.3%	0.5	\$123.48	-1.5%
Downtown Ottawa	66.6%	1.2	\$129.93	-1.6%
Ottawa West	56.3%	-0.8	\$107.17	0.8%
Ottawa East	61.5%	-0.7	\$98.77	1.5%
Southern Ontario	58.0%	1.8	\$114.08	8.6%
London	63.5%	3.8	\$96.53	3.2%
Windsor	56.1%	-3.7	\$102.49	-1.7%
KW/Cambridge/Guelph	62.3%	-0.3	\$95.93	1.2%
Hamilton/Brantford	60.8%	3.4	\$95.11	2.9%
Niagara Falls	58.9%	4.9	\$141.34	12.7%
Other Niagara Region	47.3%	-4.7	\$93.46	5.2%
Other Southern Ontario	50.0%	-1.0	\$96.91	3.9%
Central Ontario	52.5%	-2.5	\$129.89	0.3%
North Eastern Ontario	65.3%	3.2	\$81.77	0.1%
North Bay	62.5%	2.4	\$85.79	-2.3%
Sudbury	63.4%	-2.7	\$86.25	1.5%
North Central Ontario				
Sault Ste Marie	56.6%	-3.6	\$87.78	0.4%
North Western Ontario	68.2%	-1.6	\$89.13	2.3%
TOTAL ONTARIO	63.2%	5.5	\$119.93	5.0%

- Hotel occupancy rates increased in the first three quarters of 2004 by 5.5 percentage points over the same period of 2003 in Ontario and were only 0.2 percentage points below the same period of 2002.
- The overall increase in hotel sector performance was driven by increases in occupancy rates over 2003 in the Greater Toronto Area (increase of 10.6 percentage points), North Eastern (3.2 percentage points) and Eastern Ontario (3.0 percentage points).
- Suburban Ottawa, some regions in Southern Ontario, Central Ontario, Sudbury, Sault Ste. Marie and North Western Ontario all experienced decreases in occupancy in the first three quarters of 2004.
- Downtown Toronto hotels experienced the highest average daily rate (\$154.91) in the first nine months of 2004, an increase of 7.4% over the same period of 2003. Niagara Falls experienced the second highest average daily rate in the province (\$141.34).
- Revenue per available room (RevPar) reached \$75.78 in the province during the first nine months of 2004, a 15.0% increase over the same period of 2003. The highest RevPar was achieved in the Downtown Toronto area (\$109.07) and the lowest in Other Niagara Region (\$44.19).

* percent point change over the same period of 2003

Data based on PKF's unweighted sample, which tends to be branded properties of 30 rooms or more.

Source: PKF Consulting Inc.

Visitor Inquiries - More inquiries via web site, toll-free telephone line down

- In October 2004 there were over 230,000 user sessions on www.ontariotravel.net, an increase of 54.5% over October 2003 and 83.3% over October 2002.
- During the January to October period of 2004, user sessions increased by 62.0% over the same period of 2003.
- Inquiries to 1-800-ONTARIO decreased in October 2004 by 18.0% over October 2003. Inquiries were down by 37.4% over October 2002.
- Total inquiries to 1-800-ONTARIO decreased by 6.1% in the January to October period of 2004 over the same period of 2003 and by 20.5% over the same period of 2002.

Source: *Electronic Data Solutions*

Special Topics - Tourism in the Niagara Region

This article is the fourth in a series that highlights a tourism region in Ontario. The following provides a profile of visitors to Niagara Region, which includes the Niagara Regional Municipality (Census Division 26).

In 2003, Niagara Region received 12.7 million person visits, which represents a 16% decrease over 2002 and an 18% decrease over 2001. Ontario as a whole received 114.9 million person visits in 2003; a 12% decrease over 2002 and a 9% decrease over 2001. Niagara Region received 11% of the total person visits to the province in 2003.

Of the 12.7 million visitors to Niagara Region, 40% were Canadians (of which 98% were Ontario residents travelling to or within the region), 56% were Americans and 4% were from overseas countries. Most (70%) of the visitors to Niagara Region did not spend any nights there in 2003.

Of the 5.1 million Canadian visitors, 40% or 2.0 million stayed in the region for one or more nights. Of the 7.2 million visitors from the USA to the Niagara Region, 22% or 1.6 million stayed overnight and of the 513,000 visitors from overseas countries, 49% or 249,000 stayed overnight.

These visitors spent \$1.3 billion in the region in 2003 or an average of \$105 per person visit. Residents of Niagara Region spent an additional \$115.5 million on Canadian carrier fares to travel outside of the province.

The majority (58%) of visitors primarily travelled to Niagara Region for a pleasure trip compared to 42% of the total visitors to Ontario. Visiting friends and/or relatives was the primary reason for travelling to Niagara Region for 21% of visitors in 2003 compared to 34% for Ontario as a whole. Business was the primary reason for visiting Niagara Region for 4% of the total visitors to the area compared to 9% for Ontario as a whole.

Visitors to Niagara Region were very active. They participated in an average of 2.9 activities per person trip to the region. The top activities in 2003 were sightseeing (56%), shopping (45%), visiting friends and/or relatives (39%), visiting historic sites (23%) and participating in sports or outdoor activities (20%).

Visitors from overseas countries stayed in the region for an average of 1.8 nights, while Americans stayed for an average of 0.5 nights and domestic visitors for an average of 0.8 nights. Niagara Region tends to be a same day market with only 30% of total visitors spending one or more nights in the region.

What's New in Research?

The ServiceOntario website was recently launched, which includes the business bundle "How to Start and Run a Tourism Business". This is a gateway to online tourism business information, including research, funding and finance, start up information, marketing and partnerships, industry associations, and human resources and training. The site also links to information and services in the Workplace Gateway. The Workplace Gateway provides compliance assistance whereby employers, workers and stakeholders might easily access and understand their rights, responsibility, resources and what is topical in the field of workplace standards.

Visit the site at www.serviceontario.ca.

The Investment and Development Office (IDO) is developing a Culinary Tourism Strategy for Ontario. The Strategy is being undertaken by a consortium of academic and industry partners and is expected to be ready by mid-February 2005.

Upcoming Conferences and Workshops

The Ontario Tourism Education Corporation offers courses throughout the winter on customer communications, teamwork and developing designated in-house trainers. Please visit <http://otec.org/hrd/otrain04.htm> for more information.

Statistics Canada offers several different workshops that cover a range of topics. Please visit <http://www.statcan.ca/start.html> (and click "products and services") for more information.

The Culinary Tourism Symposium will be held in Toronto on March 6-8, 2005. Please visit www.culinarytourism.ca for more information.

The Tourism Federation of Ontario will hold its 7th Annual Forum at Deerhurst Resort in Huntsville on March 30-31, 2005. Please contact Georgina Smith at (416) 691-4001 or gd.smith@sympatico.ca for more information.

New Research Tool

The Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation (MTR) is proud to announce the launch of a valuable new tourism research tool. The Regional Tourism Profiles tool was developed to provide a web-based system capable of real-time delivery of tourism statistics at the Census Division level. Data are also available at the Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) and Travel Region level. You can access the Regional Tourism Profiles at <http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca/english/tourdiv/research/rtp/index.html>.

The reports include historical travel statistics and a trip profile for the most recent year from Statistics Canada's

Useful Web Sites

Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Recreation - <http://www.tourism.gov.on.ca>

Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership - <http://www.tourismpartners.com>

Canadian Tourism Commission - <http://www.canadatourism.com>

Statistics Canada - <http://www.statcan.ca>

TTRA Canada - <http://www.ttracanada.ca>

TTRA International - <http://www.ttra.com>

Tourism Research Links - <http://www.waksberg.com>

Tourism Research Exchange - <http://www.trex.uwaterloo.ca>

World Tourism Organization - <http://www.world-tourism.org>

US Department of Commerce, Tourism Industries - <http://tinet.ita.doc.gov>

Ontario Tourism Education Corporation - www.otec.org

Canadian Travel Survey (CTS) and International Travel Survey (ITS), hotel occupancy rates, average daily rates and revenue per room from PKF Consulting, the economic impact of visitor spending and total economic impact from MTR's Tourism Regional Economic Impact Model and the number of establishments in a CD by type. You may also access comparative reports from across Canada. Historical statistics are provided by province and major CMA from CTS and ITS.

This RTP tool is useful for making a business case, writing a marketing plan, conducting a comparative analysis, or for general information on the current tourism market in your area.

Visit our website www.tourism.gov.on.ca for information on the industry's current performance, historical statistics, provincial forecasts, market reports and much more.



Questions? Suggestions?

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