



Tennis – Rogers Cup

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Build visitation through Ontario's festival and events

Festivals and events are major economic drivers for Ontario communities



Ottawa Bluesfest
Photo Credit: Ottawa Tourism

Ontario plays host to thousands of festivals and events each year in every corner of the province. These dynamic events not only contribute to the quality and diversity of community life, but they also provide significant opportunities for economic activity and tourism leading to increased employment, tourism visits and spending, and infrastructure development.

Statistics Canada data indicates that attending festivals or sporting events was part of **3.9 million overnight trips** in Ontario in 2010. Over one third of these trips or **1.4 million** were taken by visitors from outside the province. According to the [Discovering Ontario report](#), events inject an estimated **\$100 million to \$400 million** in new money to Ontario from out-of-province overnight visitors.

Whether residents or visitors to the province, some people make attending events their reason to travel, while others include events as one of many activities on their trip. At the top of the list of festival and events motivators that drive overnight pleasure trips in North America are **exhibitions and fairs** (6.3 million), **music** (5.6 million) and food and drink **festivals** (5.1 million), according to the [Travel Activity and Motivation Study](#).

"Festivals and events mean business for everyone," says Gary Masters, Executive Director, Festivals and Events Ontario. "They are a drawing card to attract visitors into local communities. Once visitors are there, they have to sleep somewhere, eat somewhere and often want to check out local attractions."

G Adventures launches Ontario tours

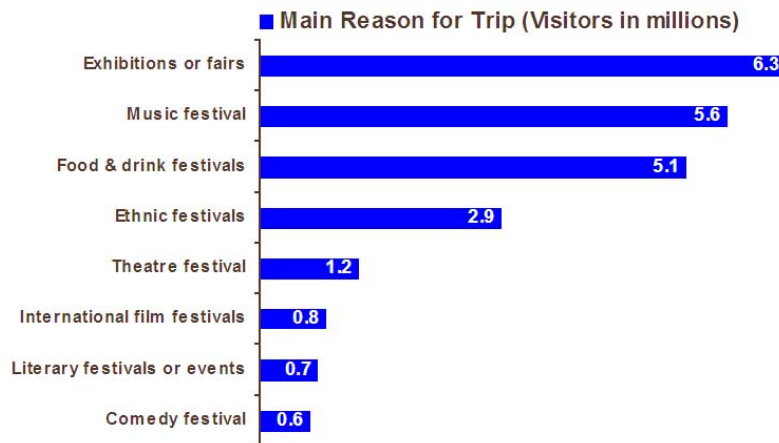


[G Adventures](#), a tour company offering adventure and eco-tours to travellers around the world, has developed three Ontario tours to be added to their portfolio of offerings. The tours consist of: **Northern Ontario Active Escape**, which includes kayaking among the 30,000 islands of Georgian Bay, canoeing at Algonquin Provincial Park and hiking at Killarney Provincial Park; and **Quebec and Ontario Explorer**, which includes wine tasting in Niagara, urban exploring in Toronto and Ottawa, and a wilderness stay at a log cabin in Algonquin Provincial Park. The tours will be included in their September/October brochure launch with departures

Each of Ontario's 13 regions has annual festivals and events, ranging from sporting events to wine and culinary to arts, culture and heritage. Annual events that have been in operation for years have become major tourist attractions and economic stimulators for their region. The [Rogers Bayfest](#) music festival in Sarnia and the [Niagara Wine Festival](#) are just two examples of festivals that annually attract more than 75,000 people across Canada, the U.S. and internationally and generate more than \$6 million in visitor spending.

For more information about festivals and events in your region, visit www.festivalsandeventsontario.ca or download the Discover Ontario mobile app at www.ontariotravel.net/mobile.

Festival and Event Activities as the Main Reason for Trips Among North American Visitors (during the past two years).



Source: Travel Activity and Motivation Study 2006, calculated from data provided in Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport Activity Profile Reports

Attract festivals and events visitors

Leverage regional events to engage visitors

Travellers attending festivals and events tend to stay longer, spend more and make more use of tourism facilities than many other visitors. For tourism operators, festivals and events happening in their backyard can be used as a springboard to engage out-of-town visitors and to develop timely new experiences.

"There's always something happening every weekend. You just have to know where to look," says Gilbert Mondoux, Super 8 Hotel owner, who has been involved in the Kapuskasing Lumberjack Festival for many years. Mondoux sees the value for many local businesses that participate in events and host out-of-town visitors. "It's not just about giving money, you can be involved in so many different ways. You just have to reach out to the event organizers and find out how you can be involved," advises Mondoux who provides sponsored hotel rooms for festival performers. Due to demand, Mondoux is opening hotels in other northern Ontario communities and will seek out opportunities with local festivals and events in those locations.

starting in summer 2013. A third tour, **Weekend Escape to Lake Superior**, is under development.

The tours were created as a result of an OTMPC-led workshop on April 4th which brought together Ontario outdoor operators with G Adventures. "The impact of the workshop was not only to introduce us to the amazing operators available to us, but more importantly to inspire us to want to deliver Ontario product to the market," says Jeff Russill, VP Product Innovation at G Adventures. "As a primarily long haul, exotic destination operator, Ontario has really not been on our radar. The workshop and your passion for the destination has put Ontario front and centre for us."

Register for the Ontario Tourism Summit

Register for the 2012 Ontario Tourism Summit in London before September 20th and take advantage of early-bird and group rates. You can also save when you register for both the Ontario Culinary Tourism Summit and the [Ontario Tourism Summit](#).

Don't miss an outstanding line-up of workshops and panel discussions including:

- Aligning with International Visitor Preferences
- Engaging Newcomers to Ontario
- Making the Shift to Experiential Travel Product Development and Marketing
- Creating a Sports Tourism Strategy
- Applying Consumer

Looking for an opportunity to drive visitation to southwestern Ontario during the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, the [Western Corridor 1812-1814 Bicentennial Alliance](#) developed the Route 1812 app. The app links visitor's real-time location to historic sites so they can completely tailor their bicentennial tourism experience. "The app is becoming the centre core for the industry to develop experiences and activities that will attract more visitors," says Adrienne Horne, Regional Project Manager for the Alliance. Horne points to partners who are getting creative with their product development such as the [Southwest Ontario Barn Quilt Trails](#), which tells the regional story of the war through quilts and themed bus tours, which are being developed by local communities. For more ideas, check out the War of 1812 industry [toolkit](#).

Interested in learning more about developing experiences? A two-part workshop to help tourism operators develop and market experiential travel is being offered at this year's Ontario Tourism Summit in London on October 23rd. To register, visit www.ontariotourismsummit.com.

Target major events to build visitation and spend in Ontario

OTMPC is using a series of upcoming events to build Ontario's international profile and inspire people around the world to visit the province.

This summer, OTMPC is using various tactics to promote Ontario's **War of 1812 Bicentennial** celebrations to encourage visitors to immerse themselves in Ontario's heritage and culture in order to drive consumer visitation. In mid-June, [OTMPC and Canada AM joined forces for a live broadcast](#) at Niagara-on-the-Lake's Fort George. [Ongoing](#) media relations activities, a [consumer web presence](#), [Ontario magazine feature coverage](#) and a [contest](#), serve to round off activities.

Until the end of August, OTMPC and tourism partners are reaching out to newcomers at Ontario festivals and events to encourage them to discover their own province with family and friends. OTMPC and partners are participating at several [multicultural festivals and events](#) in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) to offer attendees travel advice, access to [special travel offers](#) and packages.

In two years, Toronto and Ontario will play host to [WorldPride 2014](#), an international event which celebrates the diversity of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) communities through festivals and cultural events. OTMPC and tourism partners are already working with Ontario and international media and tour operators to raise global awareness of Ontario as a welcoming LGBT destination.

OTMPC is also working to leverage Ontario's hosting of the **2015 Pan/ParaPan American Games**. To increase travel to Ontario from markets which avidly follow the games including South American countries, OTMPC and partners are working to develop media relations and travel trade strategies to profile Ontario as a top destination. OTMPC also plans to work with Regional Tourism Organizations (RTO) to explore opportunities for new regional

Insights to Attract
North American
Visitors

For the first 54 delegates who register, VIA Rail is offering complimentary return transportation from Toronto's Union Station to London. For more details, [click here](#).



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Extend your market reach! Partner with OTMPC on marketing programs that maximize your investment. Choose from a variety of programs geared to offer opportunities for all budgets.

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If you would like to receive our advertising opportunities, please send your full contact information to OTMPC Sales by clicking [here](#).

A sample of upcoming events:

- [Fort William Historic Park](#), Thunder Bay, July 28-29, 2012
- [Military Heritage Days at Fort Malden National Historic Site](#), Amherstburg,

Ontario tourism products to be developed.

Festivals and events are also the theme for OTMPC's new [Discover Ontario mobile app](#), which makes it easy for travellers to quickly locate activities nearby. To be included, festivals, events and attractions are encouraged to [register online](#) today.

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August 4 & 5, 2012

- [Brock's Walk](#), throughout southern Ontario, August 5 to 12, 2012
- [Rogers Cup](#) in Toronto (August 2012)
- [Mosaic South Asian Heritage Festival](#), Mississauga, August 16-19, 2012
- [Fort Erie Siege](#), Fort Erie, August 11-12,
- [Battle of Queenston Heights](#), Niagara-on-the Lake, October 12-13, 2012
- [The Burial of Sir Isaac Brock](#), Niagara-on-the-Lake, October 14, 2012
- [Cinéfest Sudbury International Film Festival](#) September 2012
- [International Children's Games](#) in Windsor (2013)
- [ISU World Figure Skating Championships](#) in London (2013)
- [World Pride](#) in Toronto (2014)
- [Pan Am/Para Pan Am Games](#) in GTA (2015)
- [FIFA Women's World Cup in Ottawa](#) (2015)

2012 Ontario Tourism Summit Sponsors



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