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Québec's Ministère du Tourisme, in cooperation with the Tourism Intelligence Network of the Transat Chair in Tourism, publishes this northern tourism intelligence newsletter to support the implementation of the Québec Tourism Strategy North of the 49th Parallel. The newsletter is intended to inform all the Strategy's stakeholders about developments in northern and polar tourism around the world, as well as related trends and innovations in terms of products, services and marketing.

Newsletter
STRATÉGIE49

Issue 1 – October 2011

NEWS

Unconventional cruises in the polar zone: expensive but in high demand

A two-week stay on an icebreaker in the Arctic, popular with Russians, costs at least 16,500 euros per person, which is three times as much as just a few years ago. Despite high prices, places are sold out according to Andrej Zmirnov of nuclear icebreaker fleet operator Rosatomflot, which will be organizing four trips with tourists on board this summer. According to Zmirnov, polar tourism has been successful over the past 20 years but only accounts for 3% of the fleet's revenues.

More bears to be hunted in Finland this year

There are now more than 1,600 bears in Finland; their population doubled in the 2000s. The Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry proposes to reduce the bear population by allowing 243 bears to be hunted this year compared to 198 last season. The hunting season begins in August.

A label for Sami handicrafts

To preserve their tradition, the indigenous Sami people, who live in communities stretching from Norway to Russia by way of Sweden and Finland, teach their children traditional handicrafts. In addition, the Sami handicraft foundation promotes the "Sàmi Duodji" label to guide visitors toward souvenirs made by Sami craftspeople. Duodji is the Sami word for handicraft.



Source: VisitSápmi

Decline in visits to Antarctica; tourism is still a key sector

Although the French Ambassador responsible for international negotiations concerning the Arctic and Antarctic poles, Michel Rocard, is worried about the dramatic increase in the number of tourists to Antarctica, rising from 0 to 55,000 over more than 30 years, the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO) expects a decline in tourist numbers for the coming years. In 2010–2011, IAATO counted 33,824 passengers on board its vessels (all types of cruises and yacht expeditions), which is a drop of 8.3% compared with the previous season. A little more than half of these travellers landed, the others only took a cruise. In addition, the ban on the use and carriage of heavy fuel oil in Antarctic waters starting next August will probably result in a drop in the number of visitors (from 14,373 to less than 5,000) in 2011–2012 for cruises with over 500 passengers. For all types of cruises, a 25% decline is expected in the region for the next season.

Antarctica, governed by the Antarctic Treaty involving nearly 50 partner countries, has been designated a nature reserve. The Protocol on Environmental Protection to the Antarctic Treaty sets standards for all human activity on the continent. Tourism is a legitimate activity according to the Treaty; any traveller who visits Antarctica becomes aware of the Earth's fragility and becomes an ambassador. The following tables show trends in tourist numbers and the destination's markets.

TRENDS IN ANTARCTIC TOURIST NUMBERS

SEASON	2010–2011 estimate	2009–2010	2008–2009	2007–2008	2006–2007
Seaborne tourism with landings	18,385	21,277	26,648	31,941	28,448
Seaborne tourism, no landings	14,350	15,026	10,652	13,015	6,930
Air & cruise combination, with landings	558	345	285	257	174
Air & land-based tourism	375	233	273	439	908
Over-flights, no landings	0	0	0	613	1,046
TOTAL	33,668	36,881	37,858	46,265	37,506

Source: IAATO, *Antarctica Tourism Fact Sheet 2010-2011*

2009-2010 SEASON: VISITORS BY NATIONALITY

NATIONALITY	TOTAL VISITORS	% TOTAL
United States	11,953	32.41 %
Germany	5,211	14.13 %
United Kingdom	3,789	10.28 %
Australia	2,582	7.00 %
Canada	2,082	5.65 %
Netherlands	1,439	3.90 %
Japan	1,194	3.24 %
Switzerland	1,018	2.76 %
France	897	2.43 %
Argentina	866	2.35 %
Other	5,844	16 %
TOTAL	36,875	100 %

Source: IAATO, *Antarctica Tourism Fact Sheet 2010-2011*

Swedish safaris growing in popularity with international visitors

The observation of animals such as elk, bears, wolves and eagles is attracting more and more visitors. Eagle safaris in the Skåne region are fully booked every weekend; bird watchers and wolf enthusiasts come from the United States to observe owls and woodpeckers in Västmanland and wolves in Dalarna. Summer bear tracking tours in Hälsingland are 80% booked.

The number of tour operators offering bird watching and wildlife viewing activities has rocketed in Sweden in the past ten years. Ecotourism operators lead the development and all have the Nature's Best Swedish quality certification.

Links to operators:

- [Birdsafarisweden](#) (Västmanland): has the largest number of bird watchers from abroad.
- [Landskapet JO](#): landscape, heritage and history are as important as bird watching for this operator; clients use a 17th century map to better understand the history and geology of the region, explained by the owner.
- [Vargas Wilderness Lodge](#): the operators receive their guests without electricity or running water in this environmentally certified venue.
- [Wild Sweden](#): Wolf, beaver and elk safaris; thousands of visitors from more than 70 countries have been guided through the forests of Bergslagen.
- [Birdwatching](#)
- [Safaris & Wildlife tours](#)

Destination location map: [Click here](#)

Cooperation between the Sami and RAIPON

A centre for the promotion of indigenous peoples' culture opened in Moscow last June thanks to a partnership between the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North, Siberia and Far East (RAIPON), the Riddu Riđđu Festivála and the Sami organizations of Norway. The centre will promote cooperation between the indigenous peoples by pooling their resources and networks.



ACTIVITIES

Hove Stott: outdoor experience company in Geilo

Formerly known as an event agency, Hove Stott today defines itself as an “experience producer” in Geilo. Its objective is to set new standards for customer experience through the authentic ecotourism of Norway. It offers specialized programs in both winter and summer. Most are customized for each tour operator’s market (UK, Belgium, Norway). Summer activities (glacier hiking, rappelling and the “Forge a Hook” activity) draw families and young couples from Norway, the Netherlands and Germany. The winter season features ice climbing, ice fishing, snowshoeing, dogsledding and riding on a kick-sledge, traditionally used for winter transportation in the mountains. A Kick Sledge Safari is also offered in and around Geilo and the 31st edition of the kick-sledge world championship will be held in January.



Source: [Visit Norway](#)

Hove Stott is involved in schools, local educational programs and contributes to the community’s local and economic development. It produces training manuals for employees to achieve the high level of competence required. These guides meet the standards of the Norwegian Ecotourism certification.

Destination location map: [Click here](#)

A mine tour in Lapland

Two guided tours are available in mines of the Gällivare region in Lapland: an open pit mine and an iron mine.



Source: www.gellivarelapland.se

Destination location map: [Click here](#)

The northernmost winter hot air balloon event

From February 9 to 17, 15 hot air balloon teams from 10 countries will be visiting Gällivare. Tickets will be available for visitors to see Lapland from the air.



Source: www.gellivarelapland.se

“Kaffemik” with a local family in Greenland

A Kaffemik is a social gathering around a cup of coffee, the central activity of the day for Greenlanders. “Kaffemik” can be roughly translated as: “Drop by our house at any time for coffee, cake, and a chat.” A specific tour is available to discover the everyday lives of Inuit families in Greenland and learn more about their culture.

“Big Five Safari” in Manitoba

For CAD\$5,649 the Big Five Safari in Manitoba offer visitors the opportunity to see moose, black bears, bison, beluga whales and polar bears in a single adventure. Activities on the menu: visiting national parks, viewing polar bears in Churchill, boat trip, dogsled expedition with a local expert, and more.

MARKETS

Principal European markets for Aboriginal tourism

An Omnibus survey conducted for the CTC in August 2010 identified three strong markets for Aboriginal tourism in Canada. The United Kingdom, Germany, and especially France show growth potential for long-haul travel involving Aboriginal tourism experiences. The following table presents a portrait of these markets.

PORTRAIT OF THE THREE PRINCIPAL EUROPEAN MARKETS FOR ABORIGINAL TOURISM

UK	Germany	France
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 57% travel for pleasure • 38% have family or friends in Canada • Travel longer than the French and Germans • Average age: 44 • 57% are men • 54% are married • 42% of households have incomes of CAD\$52,000 or more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 70% travel for pleasure • Largest expenditures: CAD\$8,000 • 48% bought a package on their last trip • Average age: 43 • 53% are women • 40% are married • Are less educated than the French and the English 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 71% travel for pleasure • 18% have family or friends in Canada • 50% bought a package on their last trip • Average age: 45 • 39% have a college or university degree • 52% of households have incomes of CAD\$47,000 or more

Source: INSIGNIA. *Aboriginal Tourism Opportunities for Canada (U.K., Germany, France)* Canadian Tourism Commission, 2010.

SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

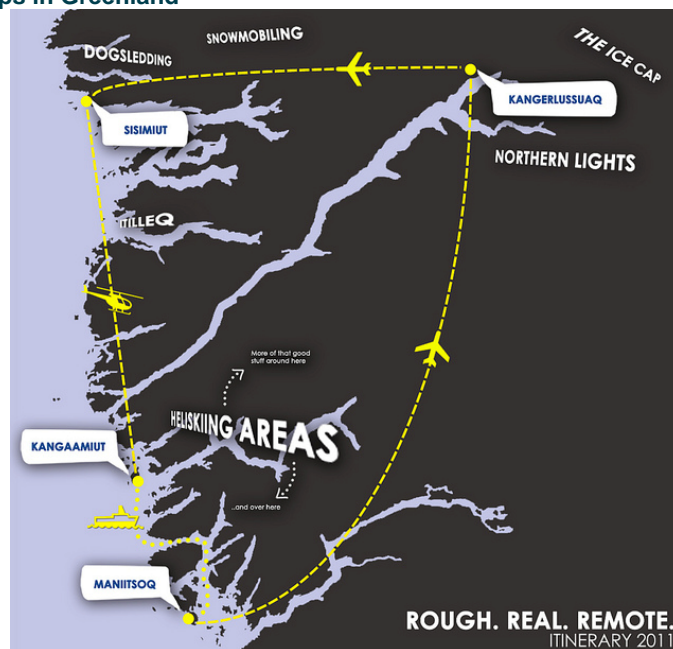
Investments in tourism in Canada's three territories

Several investments have been made in the Canadian territories recently through CanNor's Strategic Investments in Northern Economic Development (SINED). This program focuses on growth, economic diversification and capacity building in the three Canadian territories. Here is a summary of the projects supported:

- [Adäka Cultural Festival](#), held in Whitehorse from July 1 to 9, 2011
- [Pan-territorial francophone tourism marketing strategy](#) in the territories of the Conseil de développement économique des Territoires du Nord-Ouest (CDÉTNO) over a three-year period
- [Design and display project](#) at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport to provide tourists with a glimpse of Yukon's way of life, culture and landscapes.
- Five [tourism-related projects in Nunavut](#) including the second phase of developing the Tourism Hospitality Program at Nunavut Arctic College and funding for a Train the Trainer program for the Inuit Heritage Trust

PICTURING THE NORTH

A series of adventure video clips in Greenland



Source: [Destination Arctic Circle](#)

Because pictures fuel travellers' dreams, Greenland has produced a series of video clips to attract people looking for adventure, soft or extreme. Adventure buffs will be able to follow a Greenlandic héli-ski guide and two Olympic athletes (ski and snowboard) at Greenland's Destination Arctic Circle as they discover the locals' culture and way of life, a mixture of urban and tradition. The series of clips is distributed via social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) and hosted on <http://www.arcticcircle.gl/roughrealremote>.

Each clip reflects a specific theme and inspires future clients. The clip's webpage has links to the featured tours and to make reservations. The project's three partners are Greenland Tourism, Destination Arctic Circle and Air Greenland.

(Videos can be added to the webpage or the extranet via YouTube)

INTERVIEW WITH AN EXPERT

Chat with Stéphane Niveau about cruises in the polar zone

Stéphane Niveau is Director of the Paul-Émile Victor Polar Centre of Prémonon, Arctic/Antarctic guide and speaker

Here are a few key excerpts from this interview drawn from the “Blog de glace” of polar tour operator Grand Nord Grand Large:

- “The people who book Antarctic cruises are the same ones that you meet in the Arctic. They are well travelled, looking for a new destination and sensitive to the mythical dimensions of the poles. In the Arctic, contact with the inhabitants will appeal to them, while in the Antarctic the focus is on wildlife.”
- “When people see the Antarctic for the first time, they get a big shock: the wildlife is incredibly huge and everywhere. But its size is inversely proportional to the fragility of the environment.”
- “This tourism is not a threat as long as rules are set and the activity is supervised.”
- “The number of tourists who visit the Antarctic each summer is estimated at 50,000, compared to 5,000 scientists. Personally, I think that a tourist in Antarctica is an ambassador for 100 people. I try to make every visitor a spokesman for those who don’t get the chance to come and see for themselves.”
- “The Antarctic is protected by a Treaty until 2042. Several countries didn’t sign the Treaty, and no one knows whether it will be renewed. . . . The Antarctic protects itself, especially with its gigantic icecap. It reacts to climate change more slowly than the Arctic, which will very soon be within reach of industry. The issue of the Antarctic brings up questions about the Arctic: who owns it? What legislation is needed to make sure that it isn’t indiscriminately looted?” On the initiative of Michel Rocard, the European Commission is currently considering an Arctic Treaty. “When you’re aware of the political issues in the region—the Russians had no qualms about planting their flag at the North Pole, 3,000 metres under water, taunting the US, Denmark, Norway and Canada—it’s hard to be really optimistic.”

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