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[La Stratégie et le programme d'aide](#)

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 2 – November 2011

**NEWS**

**For a safe trip to Iceland**

Iceland, a volcanic island at the edge of the Arctic Circle, is known for its unique but unstable natural features. To limit the number of accidents for travellers, the Icelandic Association for Search and Rescue ICE-SAR and companies, public institutions and individuals got together to create [Safetravel](#). A website was created as part of this project. Divided into two seasons (summer/winter), it provides information on practices to adopt on the road and during outdoor activities, as well as nature-related risks, such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. It also informs travellers about means of communication, road conditions and weather alerts.



Source: [www.safetravel.is](http://www.safetravel.is)

**Geotourism: Labrador and Newfoundland position themselves**

With an investment of \$102,388 from the provincial government, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society, Newfoundland and Labrador Chapter (CPAWS-NL), will develop an interactive website and a printed MapGuide, in partnership with National Geographic's Center for Sustainable Tourism. Geotourism is defined as "tourism that sustains and enhances the geographical character of a place, its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage and the well-being of its residents." This project will highlight the area's natural, cultural and historical attributes while spotlighting businesses and sites that subscribe to the principles of geotourism. Starting in September, for a period of three months, residents will be able to provide information for the communication tools before their official publication.

### Helping Arctic communities to deal with cruises

Researchers met with residents of six coastal villages (Ulukhaktok, Cambridge Bay, Gjoa Haven, Pond Inlet, Nain and Kuujuaq) to find out what they thought about cruise lines, how they were dealing with cruise tourism, and what they wanted to see in the future if cruise numbers increased. This discussion is part of a three-year federally-funded research project focusing on cruise tourism in the Canadian Arctic. Currently, the top concern is that cruise tourism provides few financial benefits, followed by the fact that many passengers don't appreciate Inuit hunting traditions, not to mention the risk of accidents, garbage and sewage dumping and disturbance to wildlife.

The people of Gjoa Haven suggested strategies to researchers to get more out of cruises; for example, actively involving schools, offering tourism and small business training programs, charging a landing fee (similar to Alaska cruises companies), adding research activities and planning first aid training. The community also recommended appointing a local liaison person to improve communication and co-ordination between ship, shore and the community. This worked in Cambridge Bay, where there is now a full program of activities for cruise passengers.

To locate the towns mentioned, see the [destination location map](#)

### Alaska tourism marketing changes hands

After more than ten years under the control of the Alaska Travel Industry Association (ATIA), the destination's marketing campaign, with its \$12 million budget, is now the responsibility of the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development.

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## ACTIVITIES

### Explorers' base camps reinvented for tourists

On the Arctic island of [Spitzberg](#), part of Norway's Svalbard Archipelago, travellers have the opportunity for an out-of-the-ordinary stay in former base camps. These camps make it possible to experience the everyday lives of trappers, hunters or even explorers and to observe wildlife. The options include an ice-bound hotel ship, luxury timber hotel, remote radio station surrounded by wildlife, and a trapper's camp with a full complement of sled dogs. These attractions are accessible by dog sled or snowmobile. All stays are available with a guide to ensure traveller safety.



Source: [www.basecampexplorer.com](http://www.basecampexplorer.com)

Interested in other unusual types of accommodation? See [Sleep under the stars... in a glass igloo!](#) (in French) and [Glamping: 7 luxurious, sustainable camping sites](#)

### Top 10 in the Euro-Arctic Barents region

The BarentsObserver news service listed its top ten destinations in the Euro-Arctic Barents region. The countries bordering the Barents Sea have a setting and history very different from Québec's, but most activities bear an uncanny resemblance to the tourism products offered here, including river kayaking, visiting caves and other historical remains, admiring the Arctic landscape on a cruise, visiting coastal villages and cultural sites, whale watching, visiting a Puffin island, crab fishing, horseback riding, and enjoying beaches and water sports.

#### A fall Icelandic tradition

After a summer spent roaming free around the fjords, sheep and horses have to be rounded up to return to their respective farms. That is what is known as Rettir, an Icelandic tradition that has become an attraction for residents and visitors alike. Participants spend several days in the rugged Icelandic landscapes rounding up the animals, which are collected together by a long line of horsemen and driven down to the lowlands. Before the owners leave with their animals, time is set aside for storytelling and festivities.  
Source: [www.nollur.is](http://www.nollur.is)



#### River rafting in Sweden

Travel agency Evaneos offers 2- to 8-day adventures on the Klarälven River aboard log rafts built piece by piece by the participants.  
Source: [www.evaneos.com](http://www.evaneos.com)



#### Fit for Trips, the adventure travel fitness specialists

Named as one of the "100 Brilliant Companies" of the year by *Entrepreneur Magazine*, Fit for Trips helps to get travelers in shape for adventure travel. It offers programs tailored to the type of trip and level of difficulty. Fitness programs are conducted virtually and include access to professional coaches. According to tour operators and travel agencies, offering Fit for Trips to their travelers increases bookings for adventure trips as well as traveller satisfaction.

## MARKETS

### Visitor spending is up in the Northwest Territories

After declining since 2006, visitor spending in the Northwest Territories (NWT) rose to \$111 million (Table 1) in 2010–2011. The increase is noticeable in all categories except hunting, affected by the ban on caribou hunting. The Department of Industry, Tourism and Investment’s goal is to increase the value of the industry to \$130 million by 2015–2016.

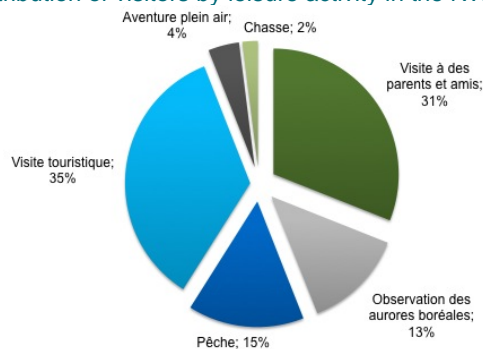
Table 1

| Northwest Territories Visitor Spending (in millions) |                |                |                |                |                |                |                |              |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Year   | 2003-04        | 2004-05        | 2005-06        | 2006-07        | 2007-08        | 2008-09        | 2009-10        | 2010-11      |
| Visiting Friends & Relatives                         | \$3.1          | \$3.2          | \$3.8          | \$3.8          | \$5            | \$4            | \$5.4          | \$6.5        |
| Hunting  | \$15.1         | \$17.3         | \$17.4         | \$16.2         | \$13           | \$12.4         | \$10.1         | \$3          |
| Aurora Viewing                                       | \$12.2         | \$12.5         | \$13.4         | \$9.3          | \$9.6          | \$7.2          | \$7.2          | \$7.9        |
| Outdoor Adventure                                    | \$6.0          | \$5.6          | \$7.1          | \$6.8          | \$6.9          | \$6.8          | \$6.1          | \$8.6        |
| Fishing  | \$18.2         | \$17.1         | \$16.9         | \$18           | \$17.5         | \$17           | \$12.6         | \$14.3       |
| General Touring                                      | \$9.1          | \$8.7          | \$7.5          | \$7.5          | \$8.5          | \$8.3          | \$8.1          | \$9.2        |
| Total Leisure Visitors                               | \$63.8         | \$64.4         | \$66.1         | \$61.6         | \$60.5         | \$55.7         | \$49.5         | \$49.5       |
| Total Business Travellers                            | \$46.1         | \$50.2         | \$54.7         | \$78.8         | \$77.4         | \$74.6         | \$58.1         | \$61.5       |
| <b>Total spending (millions)</b>                     | <b>\$109.8</b> | <b>\$114.6</b> | <b>\$120.8</b> | <b>\$140.4</b> | <b>\$137.9</b> | <b>\$130.3</b> | <b>\$107.6</b> | <b>\$111</b> |

Source: GNWT

In terms of visitors, the latest available data is from 2009–2010. However the highest numbers were in general touring (35%), visiting friends and relatives (31%), and fishing (15%). Figure 1 shows the distribution of visitors by leisure activity in the Northwest Territories. In Yellowknife, three outfitters received funding from a business assistance program supporting entrepreneurs. One of them, J Group, used this money to diversify its activities. The company now offers photography workshops, tours of Yellowknife and a familiarization tour for people moving to Yellowknife.

Figure 1. Distribution of visitors by leisure activity in the NWT in 2009–2010



Source: GNWT and [Tourist spending tops \\$111 million](#)

### Growth in international tourist arrivals in Northern Europe

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), international tourist arrivals in the countries of Northern Europe grew in the first four months of 2011 (+7.6%), compared to the same period last year. Global growth for the same period was 4.5%. In April 2010, the ash cloud following the eruption of an Icelandic volcano closed European airspace for nearly a week. This situation, along with a late Easter holiday, partly explains the difference for April between the two years (+13.6%) in Northern Europe. In 2010, the number of international visitors in this region reached 58.1 million arrivals, up 0.8% from the previous year.



## SUPPORTING COMMUNITIES

### **Piqqusilirivik: new Inuit cultural learning facility**

Located in Clyde River in Nunavut, this facility is used by the communities to transfer traditional culture, knowledge, lifestyle, values and ancestral skills. Activities are in the Inuit language and based on the guiding principles of Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (Inuit societal values). Two satellite campuses provide additional access. (<http://www.gov.nu.ca/hr/site/beliefsystem.htm>)

Source: [www.piqqusilirivik.ca](http://www.piqqusilirivik.ca)

### **The Government of Nunavut will support communities in hosting cruise ships**

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation is funding communities that host events and tours for travellers. In addition, the Department has also begun posting cruise ship itineraries and their capacity on its website. Nunavut's tourism strategy, to be released in 2012, will probably focus on cruise ship tourism and is expected to include a code of conduct for cruise companies.

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## PICTURING THE NORTH

### **Nunavut's inspiring culture**

Click on the image to see the video.



## INTERVIEW WITH AN EXPERT

### Russia ready for an increase in Arctic tourism

The Russian Arctic National Park, which stretches across the [Franz Josef Land Archipelago](#), the northern part of the [Novaya Zemlya Archipelago](#), and Victoria Island, is getting ready to welcome more tourists and scientists in the near future.



Source: [Russian Arctic National Park](#)

The national park, which is half the size of Belgium, is located between Russia and the North Pole. The Franz Josef Land Archipelago is the land closest to the North Pole in the Eastern hemisphere and consists of 191 islands. Also, 85% of the territory is permanently ice bound. Currently a natural area with significant wildlife and vegetation, it used to contain many Russian military stations. A BarentsObserver journalist met with Roman Viktorovich Ershov, Director of the Russian Arctic National Park, to discuss the next phases of the park's development.

*(Summarized from the [English article](#))*

- "The decree establishing the national park was signed a little more than two years ago. Some of the staff has already been recruited, and an information centre, museum, exhibition centre and conference hall will soon be established."
- "The first field expedition of the year was made up of six people. The members of the expedition started setting up a base station for the park. We eventually intend to expand it to be suitable for tourists, students and researchers."
- "The park's main activities are defined by the federal law on protected areas; they include protection, tourism and environmental education but also research and scientific work."
- "In terms of tourism, there are already cruises with large tour operators. This year, we had 11 tours and received more than 800 tourists, 90% from abroad. They crossed the border at [Murmansk](#) or [Arkhangelsk](#)."
- "Spitzberg Island is interesting for exchanges and cooperation. There is already a tourism product linking the islands. Of course, such Arctic tours are quite expensive; a tour to Franz Josef Land costs more than US\$8,000."
- "One of our goals is to make tourism not only regulated and controlled, but also affordable. To do this, we need to develop infrastructure for accommodation and tourism services. This will reduce costs related to cruises and will allow visitors to stay on the islands. Vehicles and small boats can be put at tourists' disposal to travel around the national park."
- "We will receive funds from the federal budget but we are also searching for partners, such as private investors and organizations interested in building their own permanent bases or stations in the park, for tourism, educational or research purposes."

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[Destination location map](#)

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