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Final numbers confirm tourism terrific in 2016

All major indicators increased last year as more people visited Greater Victoria; Accommodation occupancy averaged four per cent higher than 2015

VICTORIA, B.C. – Greater Victoria’s tourism industry experienced a terrific year in 2016, with major indicators recording significant growth in this vital economic sector.

“We know that tourism has been very strong and these numbers match our expectations,” said Bill Lewis, Chair of Tourism Victoria. “All the fundamentals are in place for another strong year as we look to build on the momentum of the last two years. With Canada turning 150, and the [New York Times](#) and [Lonely Planet](#) naming our country as the No. 1 place to visit, there is every reason to believe the tourism industry will continue to be a major driver for Greater Victoria’s economy in 2017.”

Greater Victoria also benefited from positive international coverage, gaining tremendous exposure after being spotlighted as a “must visit” destination in [Vogue](#), and featuring prominently as the backdrop for stories about the [Royal Visit](#).

Our region has joined the Big Leagues, with Victoria earning the No. 7 spot on a list of Best Cities in the World (outside the U.S.) by [Conde Nast's 2016 Readers' Choice survey](#). Remarkably, Victoria was ranked one spot behind Vancouver and ahead of world-class cities such as Paris and Barcelona.

Greater Victoria’s accommodation sector reported an average occupancy of 74.23 per cent in 2016, up more than four per cent from the average of 70.16 per cent in 2015, according to statistics released Tuesday by Chemistry Consulting. The average daily room rate was \$159.55 in 2016, up \$11.81 from \$147.74 in 2015. Revenue per available room was also up, jumping \$14.78 to reach \$118.43 in 2016.

“There are many factors favouring the tourism industry across Canada, but I think what we’re seeing is that everyone in Greater Victoria is rowing in the same direction,” said Paul Nursey, President and CEO of Tourism Victoria. “Our team works closely with business and all levels of government to make sure we’re ready when opportunity knocks. Most importantly, Tourism Victoria has a strategy to put more conference business on the books outside of our traditional high season, and we are working to diversify our leisure travel business. Combined, this will create more reasons for people to visit and invest in our destination.”

Tourism Victoria will hold its annual Business Plan Launch in early March, marking the third year of a three-year strategic plan implemented in 2015.

Statistics compiled by Chemistry Consulting also show more people travelled to Greater Victoria in 2016 compared to the year before. Victoria International Airport reported 1,856,099 people arrived in 2016, the most ever recorded. And B.C. Ferries had increases in the number of vehicles (1,924,872), passengers (6,131,210) and buses (22,539) in 2016.

It was also a banner year for the Victoria Conference Centre. The VCC had a double-digit increase in the number of delegate days, recording 106,808 in 2016 compared to 96,590 in 2015.

“The tourism sector is key to Victoria’s economy and we will work with our partners at Tourism Victoria to ensure future success,” said Victoria Mayor Lisa Helps.



Marketing our favourite destination

Chemistry Consulting's latest tourism newsletter is available at Chemistryconsulting.ca.

ABOUT TOURISM VICTORIA: Tourism Victoria (Greater Victoria Visitors and Convention Bureau) is our region's official, not-for-profit destination marketing organization working in partnership with more than 900 businesses and municipalities in Greater Victoria.

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