

Tourism Nova Scotia COVID-19 Research Insights

Based on the webinar presented by Anna Moran, Director of Policy & Research, with [Tourism Nova Scotia on Tuesday, June 23, 2020](#)

Tourism Nova Scotia offers valuable COVID-19 research insights to help Nova Scotia tourism businesses navigate the current tourism environment. Research reports, including Destination Canada's weekly Resident Sentiment Survey results, are available [here](#).

What the Research Shows

Tourism recovery in Nova Scotia will begin with local travel first, followed by travel from closer drive markets like New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, and travel from farther away markets recovering last.

Atlantic Canadians tend to take shorter trips to and within Nova Scotia but are likely to make more frequent trips than visitors from other markets and travel in the province in the fall and winter. Most visits tend to be with couples or alone, although a significant number are with children.

Putting the Research into Action

Tourism Nova Scotia conducted focus groups with travellers from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island to better understand the impacts of COVID-19, get a sense of travel plans for 2020, and their perceptions of Nova Scotia. Based on the information gathered, the following are opportunities to position your business to appeal to regional travellers:

Optimize Your Online Presence

COVID-19 restrictions have driven consumers online more than ever and they now have an increased comfort level searching, booking, and purchasing online. Your online content is critical and it's more than just the product you offer. Customers are looking for information about the safety protocols in place to give them confidence in visiting your business.

For tips see [Five Free or Low-cost Ways to Get Your Online Presence in Order](#).

Provide Information and Policies to Mitigate Travel Concerns

People are increasingly planning their travel in advance, even within the Maritimes. There are concerns about cancellations and desire to avoid crowds. People will travel when they feel it is safe to do so.

Ensure you have policies in place and clearly communicate those policies to help mitigate some of the hesitations people may be feeling about travelling.

Travellers want to be reassured that they will be kept safe when they visit your business. Provide detailed information about how customers' safety is prioritized at every step of their visit. Be sure to clearly demonstrate all the healthy and safety protocols that you have put in place to make your guests feel both welcome and safe!

[Clean it Right](#) is a new training program provided through TIANS to provide awareness and education on cleaning your establishment with the goal of regaining consumer confidence.

Promote Your Strengths

Nova Scotia has a strong reputation. Our stunning coastal landscape is foundational. Our key strengths include:

- Halifax's large urban centre
- Scenic driving
- Lots to see and do
- Exciting festivals & events
- Ability to explore without having to drive too far

Use these qualities to your advantage to show your business's appeal to regional travellers.

Encourage Exploration Beyond the Familiar

Regional travellers feel comfortable in Nova Scotia and tend to revisit their favourite places. Friends and family often dictate where they visit. Think of ways to encourage people to explore something new or do something they love in a new location – kayak in a different bay or hike a different trail.

Highlight Family-Friendly Activities and Attractions

New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island are perceived as more family-friendly destinations than Nova Scotia.

This is an opportunity to promote family-friendly activities and attractions. Be sure to highlight safety as it's more important than ever to families.

Demonstrate Value

Regional travel is generally seen as less expensive – travel costs are lower because people don't need to fly. Regional travellers may not be looking for overly expensive, luxury experiences so it is important to keep prices realistic. But this can be an opportunity to demonstrate the value of your product or service.

Leverage the Wide Range of Highly Appealing Activities

Nova Scotia offers a wide range of activities and attractions that are highly appealing to regional travellers. Consider how you can incorporate these activities into your business or service.

Highest appeal / consideration:

- Food & restaurants
- Beaches
- Cabot Trail
- Halifax Waterfront
- Historic sites
- Boating
- Fall touring
- Whale watching



High appeal / consideration:

- Hiking
- Festivals
- Glamping
- Resorts
- Lobster
- Local food producers
- Museums
- UNESCO Sites
- Kayaking
- Peggy's Cove
- Wineries
- Shopping
- Live music
- Tidal bore rafting
- Craft beer

