



PRINCE RUPERT
DISCOVER OUR NATURE

TOURISM PRINCE RUPERT
2020
ANNUAL
REPORT



INTRODUCTION

Tourism Prince Rupert is an independent not-for-profit society with a mandate to market Prince Rupert externally to strengthen economic viability for our members and the community. By collaborating with community and external stakeholders, we aim to lead tourism marketing, destination, and product development initiatives. In 2020, a number of factors resulted in Tourism Prince Rupert's organizational activities looking quite different from past years. Firstly, in early March of 2020, a new Executive Director role was created at Tourism Prince Rupert, with the intention of providing increased capacity to our organization for long-term planning, sectoral growth, and destination development.

In mid-March, the COVID-19 pandemic brought all worldwide travel & tourism to a near-standstill; Tourism Prince Rupert was forced to quickly pivot operations and develop a response strategy that would support local tourism-reliant businesses while remaining compliant with the Province's recommendations around travel and social distancing. As a result, Tourism Prince Rupert's main outputs for 2020 look quite different than in past years.

With that said, with a strong focus on local support and advocacy, some regional marketing in the summer, participation in a number of shared regional strategies, the revitalization of our corporate brand assets, and finally, a renewed long-term planning process put in place for 2021, Tourism Prince Rupert's staff & Board of Directors are confident that the local tourism sector remains resilient and the outlook for long-term growth continues to maintain a positive trajectory.



COVID-19 RESPONSE & RECOVERY

In March of 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a complete shut-down of the Canadian tourism and travel sector. With the prevailing recommendation to cancel or postpone all non-essential travel and the Canadian government's decision to severely limit international entry into Canada, it quickly became clear that Prince Rupert's tourism sector would be severely affected for the 2020 season, and potentially for years to come. In order to help our local tourism sector survive the summer and recover in the pandemic's ultimate aftermath, Tourism Prince Rupert immediately developed a response & recovery strategy, activating a number of key initiatives to help support Prince Rupert's tourism-reliant businesses weather the storm. Tourism is an extremely important part of British Columbia's economy, bringing in over \$18 billion dollars annually. Northern BC is British Columbia's largest tourism region, covering 569,000 km² of the province with more than 60 provincial, national, and marine parks, and wildlife refuges that offer access to globally unique ecosystems and priceless cultural heritage treasures.. In Prince Rupert, tourism revenue supports a significant section of the local economy, from charter fishing, fishing lodges, and wildlife tours, to seaplane charters, museums, hotels, and restaurants.

But the economic benefits generated by the tourism sector in Prince Rupert reach beyond just tourism-specific businesses: retail, hospitality, and dining establishments that operate all year round rely on the busy summer tourist season as well. Tourism is also a significant factor in Prince Rupert's quality of life offerings, which play a role in every major local employer's ability to recruit and retain their workforce, affecting Prince Rupert's economy as a whole.

The reason why COVID-19 has affected and will continue to affect the tourism sector so severely is simple enough: tourism relies on people's ability to travel, and while most of the world is advised against non-essential (including leisure) travel for the foreseeable future, the tourism sector will continue to suffer. Since the Canadian government first started taking steps to protect Canadians and stop the spread of COVID-19, a number of travel-related orders, advisories, and closures have been announced that specifically hurt the tourism sector. The Canadian border remains closed to all non residents of Canada, all Canadian federal & provincial parks were closed initially, and locally, all municipal parks & trails were closed in the spring, with some closures extending into the summer.



COVID-19 RESPONSE & RECOVERY

Commercial marine vessels with more than 12 passengers, including cruise vessels, remain barred from docking in Canada, and a number of local tour operators such as the North Pacific Cannery and Prince Rupert Adventure Tours announced closure for the 2020 season entirely. In the hospitality sector, occupancy rates plummeted, and most local restaurants moved to take-out only to observe the social distancing recommendations of the provincial health authority.

While many local small businesses such as retail & dining establishments were able to find creative ways to serve the local population during this time, including offering take-out and delivery options, many tourism-specific businesses did not have this option and waited anxiously to see if they would have any clients in the summer of 2020. Businesses in the tourism sector also have some unique characteristics that resulted in them sometimes not qualifying for the provincial and federal support programs that were announced, such as seasonal hiring practices and short annual revenue-generating windows. Organizations such as Northern BC Tourism, Destination BC, and the Tourism Industry Associations of BC and Canada worked hard to advocate for a specific tourism-relief package through the summer of 2020, with Tourism Prince Rupert supporting their work in addition to our own COVID-19 response locally.

The following activities encompassed Tourism Prince Rupert's initial response to the COVID-19 pandemic in March 2020:

- Official closure of the Visitor Information Centre March 18th, 2020, in partnership with the Prince Rupert Port Authority / Port Interpretive Centre.
- Official freeze of Tourism Prince Rupert's marketing budget for 2020, to discourage travel & preserve funds for COVID-19 recovery efforts.
- Launch of a new weekly COVID-19 email newsletter with up-to-date resources for local tourism stakeholders.
- Weekly updates on tourism sector outlook provided to Destination BC, the Prince Rupert & District Chamber of Commerce, and Northern BC Tourism on weekly roundtable calls.



COVID-19 RESPONSE & RECOVERY

- Development of the Prince Rupert Small Business Recovery Task Force, in partnership with the Prince Rupert & District Chamber of Commerce and the City of Prince Rupert's Economic Development Department, resulting in:
 - A successful request to City of Prince Rupert to waive \$350 patio permit fee, for restaurants to increase table volume while observing social distancing policies.
 - A successful request to City of Prince Rupert to refund seasonal business licences for sports fishing businesses.
 - Launch of the 'Small Business Sweepstakes' social media campaign, providing weekly prizes in the form of \$150 gift cards to Prince Rupert small businesses.
- Advocacy work including, but not limited to:
 - Chairing a series of group calls with local marinas to determine up-to-date information for charter fishing operators.
 - Formal letter sent to Prince Rupert Mayor & Council asking for increased collaboration on tourism-related announcements, as well as advocating for some tourism-specific relief measures, such as a refund on business licence fees for seasonal operators.
 - Increased communication with Federal MP office to discuss his letter regarding out-of-province fishermen coming to BC.
 - Weekly calls with Northern BC Tourism & Destination BC to discuss state of tourism in BC & advocate for Prince Rupert needs.
 - Support for the launch of the Northern BC Tourism Resiliency program with Northern BC Tourism Association.

In June of 2020, Tourism Prince Rupert also launched a resident travel sentiment survey, in partnership with the Small Business Task Force, which gave us insight into not how Prince Rupert residents felt about travelling throughout the summer of 2020 and about the local attitude towards visitors once the Province announced Phase 3 of the Restart Plan, which would allow intra-provincial travel once again.

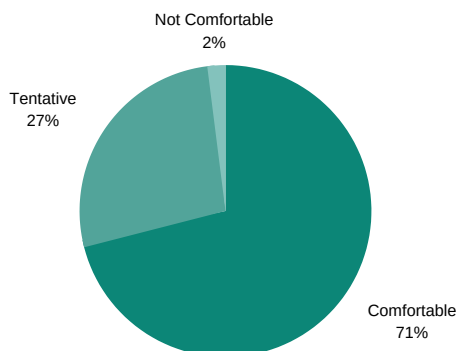


RESIDENT TRAVEL SENTIMENT SURVEY

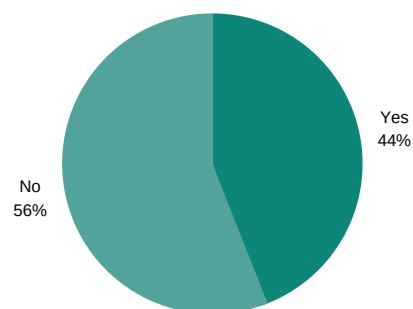
Prince Rupert residents have a reputation for being welcoming and friendly to our adventurous visitors, and many local businesses rely on tourism for their bottom line. Concentrating on building a recovery marketing campaign for the summer of 2020 aimed at bringing increased revenue to local tourism-reliant businesses by welcoming visitors to Prince Rupert from within BC, Tourism Prince Rupert was particularly interested to know how residents would react to visitors. This survey helped Tourism Prince Rupert and the Small Business Recovery Task Force understand how residents feel about welcoming visitors back so we could build a recovery strategy to help support our local tourism-reliant businesses through this difficult time, while remaining sensitive to local concerns.

A summary of the survey results are included below:

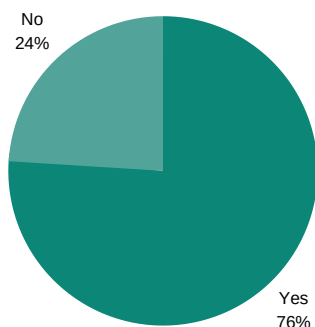
SINCE BC MOVED INTO PHASE 2 OF THE RESTART PLAN, HOW COMFORTABLE DO YOU FEEL VISITING & SUPPORTING LOCAL BUSINESS IN PERSON AGAIN?



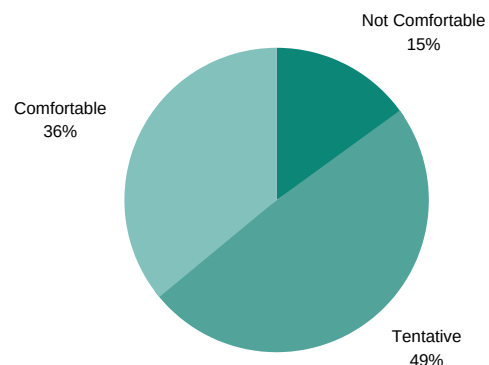
IN PHASE 3 OF THE RESTART PLAN, DO YOU PLAN ON HOSTING FRIENDS OR FAMILY FROM ELSEWHERE IN BC TO PRINCE RUPERT THIS SUMMER?



DO YOU PLAN ON TRAVELLING OUTSIDE OF PRINCE RUPERT, WITHIN BC, THIS SUMMER?



HOW DO YOU FEEL ABOUT PEOPLE FROM ELSEWHERE IN BC VISITING PRINCE RUPERT THIS SUMMER?



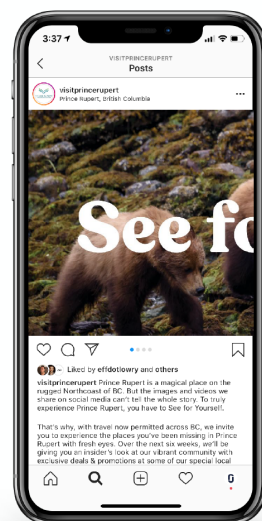
Survey open between June 12th - June 19th, 2020 | Total responses: 508

MARKETING

Marketing is traditionally a large component of Tourism Prince Rupert's annual activities in support of its mandate to increase visitation to the area through marketing, destination development, and collaboration with local and regional stakeholders. Tourism Prince Rupert is responsible for marketing Prince Rupert as a world-class tourism destination. We promote Prince Rupert all year-round through our website, social media, visitor guide, and email list. We also launch new campaigns to increase awareness & visitor rates every year. In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic caused our marketing activities to unfold much differently than in past years, but with the announcement of Phase 3 of the Province's Restart plan in early July 2020, we were able to engage in some regional marketing strategies to help support the resiliency of our local tourism sector through this challenging time.

SEE FOR YOURSELF

Building off the awareness and engagement created through our 2018 and 2019 campaigns, 'See for Yourself' was all about converting social media engagement into real-life trip planning. There is more in Prince Rupert than can be seen in just one day, or just one social media post. This campaign brought wildlife, drinks & dining, boutiques, and R&R to travellers by teasing them with limited-time offers, peek-a-boo style content that gradually revealed the subject of the photos, and messaging targeted specifically at the people most likely to take action: Those who had expressed interest in the past, or who are within driving distance of Rupert.



MARKETING

SEE FOR YOURSELF

Our goal was achieved by putting the Prince Rupert experience front and centre and encouraging regional travellers to visit by offering limited-time promotions from local operators via social media posts & ads, as well as emails to the people along Highway 16 who signed up in the first two campaigns. Travellers were then directed to a campaign landing page that shared all of the potential experiences and invited them to choose all of the things in Rupert that they'd like to see for themselves. This campaign was about painting a picture for travellers to let them know that if they're not here in person, they're missing out. By partnering with 21 local businesses to offer exclusive deals and promotions, we highlighted all the different ways a Prince Rupert trip can be planned out, and all there is to do in our unique community. The campaign was executed on Facebook & Instagram for a period of 6 weeks, from July 6th to August 17th, 2020.

CAMPAIGN RESULTS

21

local business partners /
exclusive promotions

156,423 social media reach

373,135 social media
impressions

9,443 social media
engagements

3,418 visits to the
campaign
landing page

551 requests for promotion
information from partner
businesses

74 unique campaign images,
shot by local photographer
Mike Ambach



MARKETING

SEE FOR YOURSELF

KEY TAKEAWAYS

One of the most powerful things that this campaign achieved was an overwhelmingly positive response in the wake of widespread concern about travelling during the COVID-19 pandemic. With self-aware messaging, and advertising carefully tailored to local audiences, it was clear that Prince Rupert was a safe destination for a close-to-home getaway. The few comments expressing concern that did arise were reasonable questions, with reasonable answers provided by our Visit Prince Rupert social accounts.

The vast majority of comments and engagement expressed excitement about visiting and appreciation for the city itself. That translated to the campaign's ability to get people to take the last step towards visiting Prince Rupert, which was successfully achieved through a combination of social media, paid advertising, and email. We can see spikes in website traffic and conversions exactly at the moments when there was notable content published.

**See for
yourself** 

The email list generated in previous campaigns showed up in a big way this year. 25% of the experience requests in 2020 were subscribers from the awareness and intent campaigns in 2018/19, who converted via email, custom audience advertising, and/or organic social content. An unsung hero of the campaign was Instagram Stories, which not only added significant impressions and engagement, but also creatively and frequently celebrated each operator, and resulted in nearly 150 direct visits to partner accounts.

It's clear that Tourism Prince Rupert's audience is exploring a variety of digital channels, and that's supporting an increasingly dynamic presence and opportunities to continue to explore new channels and creative outlets for Visit Prince Rupert. Overall, each channel supported the campaign in reaching different and new audiences in different ways, each returning measurable results.



MARKETING

BC FERRIES CAMPAIGN

TPR is a major partner in the annual Northern BC Tourism BC Ferries and Communities Campaign again, which was extremely successful in 2019, and was scheduled to run again in 2020. Tactics include television promotions and commercials, newsprint features, and a targeted online presence:

- Television promotions and brand commercials generally run on Global BC, primarily in the Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island markets starting in early April. Two versions of a 15-second commercial ran in the target geographic markets. Prince Rupert and the northwest coast was the featured destination in one version and the secondary community partners (Smithers and Prince George) shared the second version.
- Space for online ads is secured through Media Experts, accessing BC Ferries' existing preferential relationship with the company. A programmatic buy started mid-April for six weeks.
- Newsprint advertorials in the Vancouver Sun and Province generally run in April as well.
- The campaign also generally includes a contest that has received over 11,000 entries for a grand prize of one BC Ferries Vacations Inside Passage Wilderness Circle Tour (value: \$2,500).



Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 travel restrictions & limited marketing budgets in 2020, this campaign was put on hold this year, to hopefully be resumed in 2021.



MARKETING

VISIT NORTHWEST BC

JOINT REGIONAL CAMPAIGN

The development of a Northwest BC shared marketing campaign was a joint project between Tourism Prince Rupert, Tourism Smithers, Kermodei Tourism, Tourism Kitimat, and Nisga'a Tourism, with support from the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine. Each community destination marketing organization (DMO) engages in their own regular/annual marketing activities to promote their individual communities across BC, Canada, and internationally; however, in the light of the COVID-19 pandemic's severe impact on the tourism sector, a shared close regional strategy was developed as part of our recovery efforts.

The Travel Northwest BC Regional Marketing Campaign included the development of a documentary-style video highlighting the main tourism & outdoor adventure offerings of each community, tying them together with scenes of the drive between each community down Highway 16 along the spectacular Skeena River. The video promoted the driving circuit between Smithers, Terrace, Kitimat, Stewart, the Hazeltons, the Nass Valley, and Prince Rupert. The video was put together with existing b-roll and new footage by Red Bike Media out of Terrace, completed on August 25th, 2020.

The video was then promoted through paid social media advertising on Facebook and Instagram, with sponsored ads linking back to our shared website, in partnership with the Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine, at visitnorthwestbc.ca. The paid social advertising was managed by Tourism Prince Rupert, sub-contracted to Campfire Collective, a media agency out of Vancouver.

A new landing page was developed for the Visit Northwest BC website, titled 'Special Deals,' on which each community listed between 3-6 special deals, including accommodation, outdoor adventure, and local business deals & discounts with exclusive promo codes. Each community page on the Visit Northwest BC website was also updated as part of this campaign, and a new page was added for Smithers, to ensure that every community was equally represented. Sponsored social media advertising pushed traffic back to the new landing page for the entirety of the campaign, which ran for a period of 8 weeks, from September 1st to October 27th, 2020.

The campaign successfully promoted the Northwest BC Region by generating significant engagement with sponsored social media ads, as well as surge a in website traffic back to the "Special Deals" page of the Visit Northwest BC website.

MARKETING

VISIT NORTHWEST BC

KEY DELIVERABLES:

- Development of four new promotional videos for the Northwest BC regional, including one longer "main" video, and three shorter "social media clips"
- Development of "Special Deals" page on visitnorthwestbc.ca
- Update of all community pages on visitnorthwestbc.ca
- Addition of Smithers community page on visitnorthwestbc.ca

CAMPAIGN RESULTS:

45,372 social media reach

502,468 social media impressions

716 post reactions

330 post shares

5,951 clicks to "Special Deals" page



Visit Northwest BC

Sponsored · 🌐

...

Within a few hours' drive of Prince Rupert, you'll find no shortage of adventures to explore close to home this fall.

Charming communities that each offer unique & surprising experiences are all right in your own backyard.

So whether you're looking to find solitude in the vast wilderness or enjoy a weekend of fine dining & shopping, you'll find it all, close to home.

[#visitnorthwestbc](#)

When travelling in Northwest BC this fall, please be respectful of the communities and businesses that remain closed to visitors.

Please practice social distancing at all times and respect all health & safety guidelines to help stop the spread of COVID-19. For more information on COVID-19 and planning your trip, please visit:

<https://www.hellobc.com/know-before-you-go>.



VISITNORTHWESTBC.CA

Now Is The Time To Explore Your Own Backyard!

[LEARN MORE](#)

NORTHWEST BC

[CONTACT](#)

[SPECIAL DEALS](#)

[SELECT LANGUAGE](#) ▼

[TERRACE](#) [KITIMAT](#) [STEWART](#) [NISGA'A LANDS](#) [STEWART-CASSIAR HIGHWAY](#) [THE HAZELTONS](#) [PRINCE RUPERT](#) [SMITHERS](#)

PRINCE RUPERT

Welcome to Kaien Island on the wild north coast of British Columbia, where you'll find the city of Prince Rupert ready to welcome you. Enjoy local seafood and wander the unique shops in historic Cow Bay, before adventuring into the endless surrounding wilderness of BC's rugged coastline. Whether you're looking for a relaxing weekend getaway at a luxury hotel, or a wild adventure in the outdoors, you'll find what you're looking for in Prince Rupert.

OFFERING #1

The Crest Hotel

[More Info](#)



OFFERING #2

Inn on the Harbour

[More Info](#)



OFFERING #3

Prestige Hotel

[More Info](#)



OFFERING #4

Eagle Bluff BnB

[More Info](#)



OFFERING #5

Prince Rupert Golf Club

[More Info](#)



OFFERING #6

Ocean Pacific Air

[More Info](#)



MARKETING

DESTINATION BC COOP MARKETING PROGRAMS

In addition to developing our own unique marketing campaigns, Tourism Prince Rupert participates in a number of Coop Marketing Programs endorsed by Destination BC each year. In each of these programs, multiple communities or organizations contribute financially, and funds are often matched by Destination BC through their official Coop Marketing program. These programs are usually regional (meaning they support the promotion of a specific area or region) or sectoral (meaning they support the promotion of a specific activity or sector, such as fishing or golf). Due to COVID-19 travel restrictions and subsequent changes to marketing plans for 2020, each of these partnerships unfolded in different ways than they might in a normal year, but for most, we were still able to produce some marketing materials for 2020 and engage the relevant audiences in interesting ways.

FISHING BC

Fishing BC is a new marketing initiative launched as a partnership between the BC Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association (BCFROA), Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC (FFSBC), and the Sport Fishing Institute of BC (SFI) - supported by Destination BC. Tourism Prince Rupert joined Fishing BC in 2020. Marketing efforts under this coop program are new to our annual strategy.

The initiative joins together fishing sector tourism-related stakeholders in one collaborative effort to market BC as the world-class fishing destination that it is. The initiative is intended to bring together BC's fishing tourism sector stakeholders, both freshwater and tidal water to generate greater marketing impact, raise the profile of the sector and increase the number of anglers in BC. Better alignment of marketing messages and improved effectiveness of investments has attracted participation from a wide array of partners, including freshwater and saltwater fishing resorts, angling guides, charter operators and community and sub-regional destination marketing organizations. The Fishing BC marketing initiative also aligns with the provincial and regional fishing tourism marketing strategies, including BC's refreshed *Super, Natural British Columbia®* brand. 2020 was Tourism Prince Rupert's first year participating in the Fishing BC Coop. Marketing efforts were altered due to COVID-19. Rather than release any in market promotions this year, Fishing BC visited Haa-Nee-Naa Lodge in the summer to collect content for social media, YouTube, and their website. A new page for Prince Rupert was created on Fishing BC's website and trip idea blog posts are under development for 2021. Video content will be released for Prince Rupert under the Fishing BC brand, as well as new social media & print media advertising the North Coast as a world-class fishing destination

MARKETING

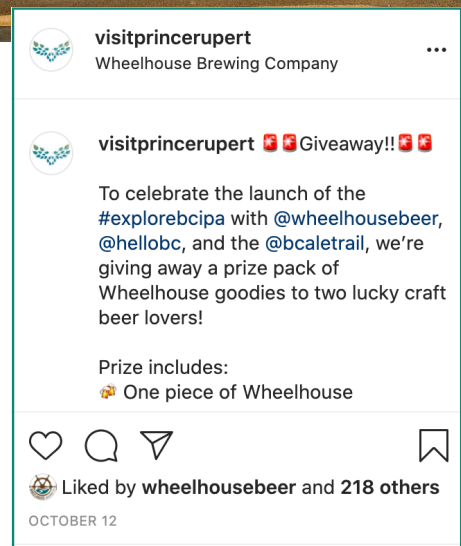
DESTINATION BC COOP MARKETING PROGRAMS

BC ALE TRAIL

The Northern BC Ale Trail launched in 2018 showcasing craft breweries and tourism products from Prince Rupert to Valemount. In Prince Rupert, Wheelhouse Brewing and other tourism stakeholders were showcased through the BC Ale Trail website and digital marketing campaigns. Photo and video assets were also delivered to TPR for future promotion. The national launch date in September 2018 showcased the new northern BC Ale Trail video and website, where Prince Rupert was heavily featured. In 2020, Tourism Prince Rupert once again supported the BC Ale Trail. The main output of the BC Ale Trail partnership in 2020 was the launch of the *Explore BC IPA*, which featured our own Wheelhouse Brewing Co. as the Northern BC brewery chosen to consult on the recipe development. The *Explore BC IPA* invited residents to taste the flavours of British Columbia and support BC's tourism and hospitality industries during Craft Beer Month (October) by touring BC's ale trails.



The recipe celebrates the best of BC bounty, showcasing local ingredients from BC farmers such as haskap berries, blackberries, hops and malted grains. Residents could purchase the product in select BC Liquor Stores, private liquor retailers, craft breweries and restaurants around the province. To celebrate the launch of the *Explore BC IPA*, Tourism Prince Rupert held an Instagram giveaway in partnership with Wheelhouse, offering a prize package to two lucky winners.



The prize included one piece of Wheelhouse merchandise, one growler filled with Wheelhouse craft beer, and two pints of the *Explore BC IPA* to enjoy in the Wheelhouse tasting room.

MARKETING

DESTINATION BC COOP MARKETING PROGRAMS

BIG COAST TV / GREAT BEAR RAINFOREST PROJECT

The Great Bear Project is a community-building communications and marketing initiative designed to promote awareness and development of tourism and consume assets within Great Bear Rainforest (GBR) and its access points, including Prince Rupert in the north. The GBR and North and Central Coasts provide a unique challenge in consortium and partnership building. The Great Bear Project has aimed to assist with developing marketing assets, access, promotion and destination development. Through working with community partners to showcase the West Coast and GBR, the project delivers high-quality content and consumer marketing assets for traditional, online, and social media. These include HD video features, short-form vignettes, still images, and social media activity covering the area from Prince Rupert to Bella Coola to Rivers Inlet. From ocean boating to nature and wildlife, First Nations culture to ecotourism and sustainable sport fishing, the Great Bear Project tells wild stories from BC's true frontier.

TPR worked again with Big Coast TV in 2020. In July of 2020, the Big Coast team visited Prince Rupert to film new Prince Rupert episodes, as well as to capture content for the coastal consortium, "The Great Bear Project." The Destination BC supported Co-op consortium includes Tourism Prince Rupert, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association, Central Coast Regional, District, Spirit Bear Lodge, Bella Coola Valley Tourism, and Owekina / Duncanby Lodge. Much of the content captured in 2020 will be used for renewed marketing efforts in 2021.

NORTHERN BC GOLF CORRIDOR



The Northern BC Golf Corridor is a coop program supported by Destination BC as part of the Golf in British Columbia program. The mandate of Golf in British Columbia is to grow the game of golf in BC by generating incremental rounds from golf tourism, thereby driving green fees, overnight accommodation, food and beverage, and transportation spending.



MARKETING

DESTINATION BC COOP MARKETING PROGRAMS

They also do advocacy work on behalf of golf tourism in British Columbia. Northern BC joined the program in 2018, with a number of communities along the Highway 16 Corridor participating including Prince George, Terrace, Smithers, and Kitimat to create the Northern BC Golf Corridor. In 2020, a number of marketing & promotional activities were conducted for Northern BC communities, including Prince Rupert:

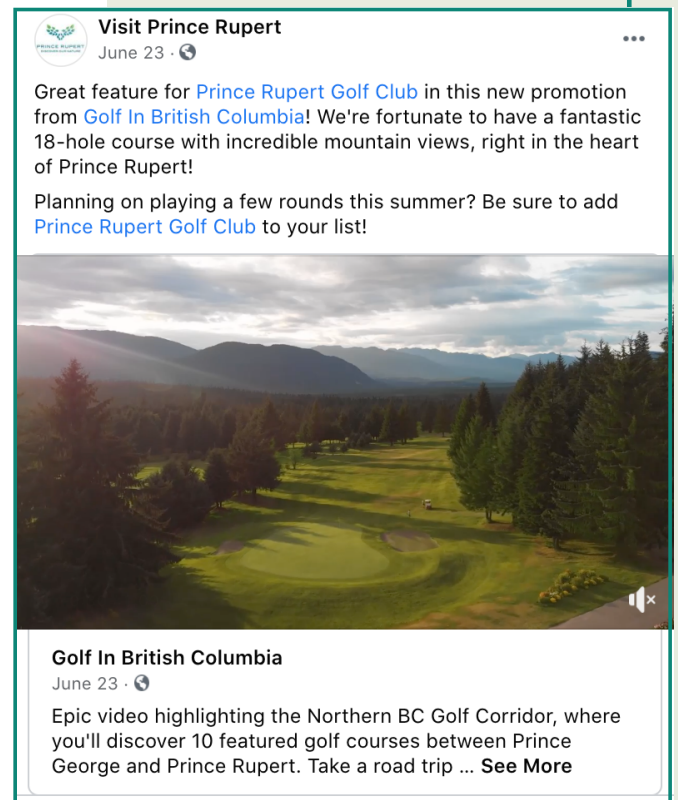
PAGEVIEWS AND DOWNLOADS

- 43,979 Page Views of the Home Page, up from 8,878 last year.
- 5,757 Page Views of the Map, up from 3,400 last year.
- 2,405 Page Views of /northern-bc-golf-courses, up from 645 last year.
- 1,231 Maps Mailed, up from 400 last year.
- 48 Page Views of /category/golf-destination/northern-bc (53 last year).

E-NEWSLETTER INCLUSION FOR NORTHERN BC & DISTRIBUTION

- BC Golf Road Trips May 2020
- BCGolfCourses Opening Schedule – March 2020
- BC #GOLFBCShots from 2019
- Fall Colours & Wildlife Aug 2019
- Elevate Your Game with Cool BC Golf Destinations July 2019
- BC Golf Road Trips April 2019
- Northern BC Golf Corridor – Mar 2019

In addition, a new series of videos highlighting golf in Northern BC were developed and released this year, promoted on YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram.



HIGHWAY 16 CONSORTIUM

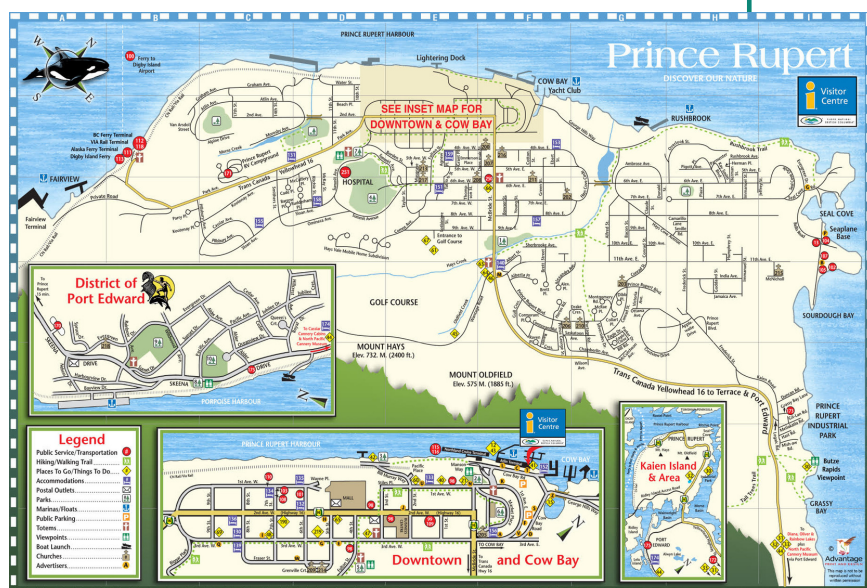
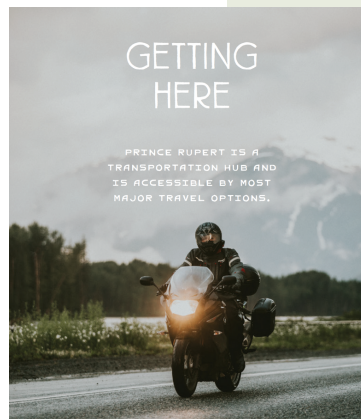
In 2020, Tourism Prince Rupert once again participated in the Route 16 consortium project, through which the Highway 16 corridor is promoted as a destination and touring route. In 2020, a mini video series following motorcycle influencers along the corridor was released. Social media efforts continued, but most major campaign planning for this program was put on hold due to COVID-19, and is now being planned for launch in the spring of 2021.

VISITOR GUIDE

Each year, Tourism Prince Rupert produces & distributes an annual Visitor Information Guide, printing 25,000 copies & distributing them on BC Ferries' main routes, at YVR, with the City of Prince Rupert, at local hotels, and finally, to Visitor Centres across the province. In 2020, the guide was produced earlier than usual, with all copies printed & delivered across the Province by the end of February 2020. Due to low travel volumes in 2020 as a result of COVID-19 restrictions, the 2020 copies were not fully distributed as normal, with 14,000 copies remaining at the end of 2020.

For this reason, we have elected not to print any physical copies for 2021; rather, we will be adding a sticker to the cover of our existing 2020 copies with a QR code directing to the redesigned and updated 2021 version on our website.

This will also serve as a test-run for the feasibility of a heavier digital focus on our Visitor Guide in years to come, which will reduce printing costs, and subsequently, advertising costs for our stakeholders.



BRAND ASSET RENEWAL

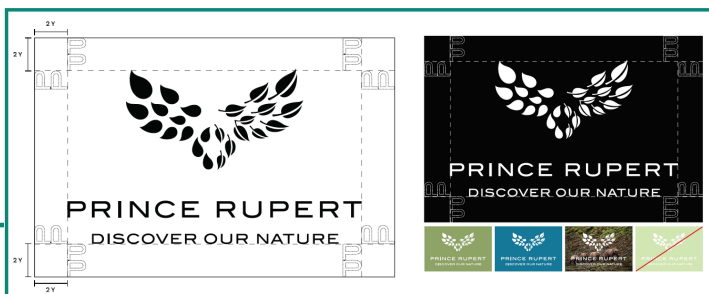
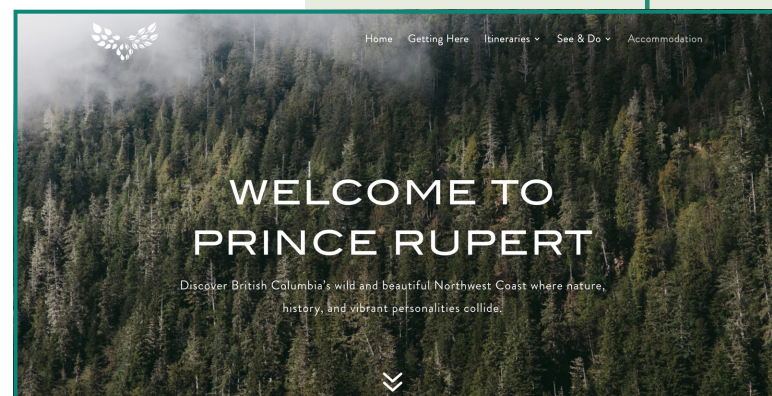
As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, much of Tourism Prince Rupert's normal marketing efforts were put on hold. We took this opportunity to complete an audit of our existing assets and start a renewal process that will continue in 2021.

BRAND GUIDELINES

To help correct inconsistencies and realign our brand, included in this month's board package, Tourism Prince Rupert has created an updated Brand Guidelines Manual for 2020. A complete brand refresh has not been deemed necessary, as our existing logo & font usage still feel relevant and are in use community-wide. In the revised brand guidelines, our logo itself, primary colour palette, and font recommendations remain the same. Our colour systems, tone of voice recommendations, and imagery styling have been updated to take inspiration from Destination BC's brand guidelines, as recommended. The document itself has also been re-designed to match our updated brand, as well as to include updated Prince Rupert imagery. The new Brand Guidelines will help steer the course for our Visitor Guide, websites, brochures, marketing materials, and any other public-facing products as we continue our long-term planning to grow tourism in Prince Rupert.

WEBSITE REFRESH

In the fall of 2020, Tourism Prince Rupert elected to move our visitor website at visitprincerupert.com to a new hosting provider in order to create better functionality for staff to make changes, to lower our annual website maintenance and update costs, and to update the site with new imagery, updated fonts, and a revised colour palette to match our new brand guidelines.. Now that the site has been moved and refreshed, we will be able to plan for further enhancements and improvements to the site over the coming months & years, including a potential blog page highlighting local businesses, a tour operator booking functionality, and more. As we move more into digital advertising and potentially a mostly-digital annual Visitor Guide in the coming years, the new website also presents an opportunity to advertise specific local deals & promotions



BRAND ASSET RENEWAL

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

Though we could not market Prince Rupert to the wide audience we normally do in 2020, we were able to utilize the summer of 2020 to address content gaps in both our tourism marketing assets and our licensed photography gallery. Over the course of the summer, we successfully gathered a significant amount of new photography & videography to help fill some of the content gaps identified over the past few months.

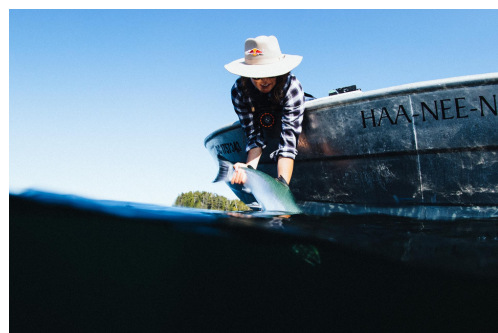
The following content development occurred this summer and will provide us with new content for future marketing & promotion efforts:

- Mike Ambach was hired locally to shoot 74 images for our "See for Yourself" campaign, profiling all of the individual campaign partner businesses.
- Shayd Johnson (@shayd_johnson on Instagram), an accomplished photographer who has worked with Destination BC, Tourism Tofino, Visit Mexico, and Fishing BC, was hired to collect 27 images for us while in Prince Rupert this summer.
- Destination BC sent a film / photography crew through Prince Rupert on July 28th, managed by Northern BC Tourism, providing us with new photography & b-roll for the Destination BC Content Hub.

- Big Coast TV was in Prince Rupert in early July and will be providing us with new photography & video content of both the Khutzeymateen Wilderness Sanctuary and more general fishing footage.
- Fishing BC visited Haa Nee Naa Lodge this summer & will be providing us with new content to help promote Prince Rupert, as part of our participation in the Fishing BC Coop Marketing program. This will be leveraged through their website & social channels, which we can cross-promote.



Shayd Johnson



Fishing BC



Destination BC

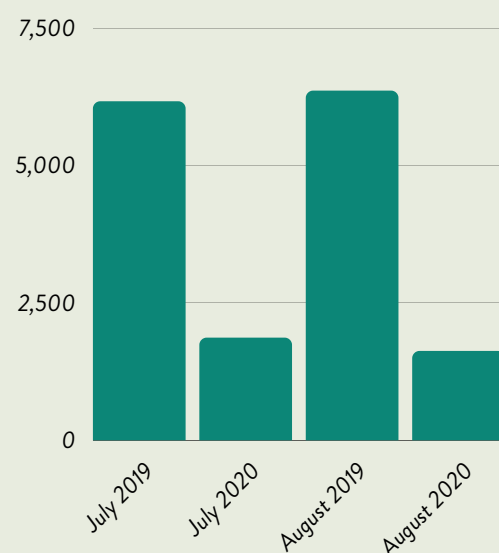
VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The year 2020 was an extraordinary year for the Prince Rupert Visitor Information Centre (PRVIC). On March 16th, 2020, the PRVIC closed operations due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Destination BC did not demand these restrictions, however each Visitor Centre within the province had autonomy in deciding if they wanted to close or not. The PRVIC ultimately decided to close physical frontline service operations, and instead moved to virtual service by telephone or email.

After reopening in July 2020, the PRVIC saw an extreme decrease in visitor volume. Due to COVID-19, there were no cruise ships at Northland Terminal and hardly any international visitors, both of which usually comprise a large segment of visitors to Prince Rupert every summer. From January to September 2019, the PRVIC counted 25,734 visitors. With the impacts from COVID-19, no cruise ships, and a closure from March-June, the PRVIC saw only 5,305 visitors in 2020. Surprisingly, despite the implications on travelling, most of the visitors still came in July, August, and September, correlating with previous years. Some infrastructure upgrades were added to the PRVIC this year, in light of COVID-19. Standing sanitization stations were installed at both the entrance and the exit, plexiglass was installed at the front counter where staff delivered information, and floor decals marking 6-foot distances were customized according to Tourism Prince Rupert (TPR) and PRPA brand guidelines.

The trends in visitors due to COVID-19 saw an overall reduced rate during the summer season. A typical year would also hire five summer students to staff the VIC, however this year there was only one summer student hired to work in addition to the part-time casual staff member. There was also a reduction in tourism operators available for visitors, which was reflected in one of the challenges staff faced when delivering information. One of the most distinctive trends was the increase in intra-provincial travellers to Prince Rupert. In previous years, visitors from Europe and other international countries were among the most predominant number of visitors however, after the COVID-19 quarantine, the spike in visitors from within BC, in particular from Northern BC, increased significantly. Masks were encouraged for visitors coming to the PRVIC, and staff wore them at all times.

VISITOR VOLUME COMPARISON



OUTLOOK FOR 2021

As we look to 2021 in the tourism sector, there remains a significant amount of uncertainty related to the continued evolution of the COVID-19 pandemic and the associated travel restrictions. While we await the development of a widely-available vaccine, British Columbia's tourism sector will continue to be affected by the absence of international, and potentially even inter-provincial, travellers.

In 2021, we will continue to monitor the COVID-19 travel restrictions and recommendations from the provincial health authority extremely closely, as well as to provide up-to-date information and resources to our local and regional stakeholders. It's likely that Tourism Prince Rupert's marketing efforts in 2021 will remain regionally-focused.

Tourism Prince Rupert will continue to focus on long-term planning and supporting the resiliency of our local sector well into 2022. In late 2020, Tourism Prince Rupert's Board of Directors began the process to renew our five-year Strategic Plan, which currently extends from 2016-2021. Throughout 2021, we will look to long-term planning, including developing increased strategies for destination development, local business support and advocacy, and refreshed marketing strategies.

In addition, we will continue to execute our annual marketing activities, carefully encouraging support of Prince Rupert's tourism-reliant businesses in a way that is considerate of travel restrictions and recommendations put forward by the provincial health office.

THANK YOU

For more information about the tourism sector and our work locally, please visit our website at www.visitprincerupert.com, or contact us by email at admin@visitprincerupert.com.

