PRINCE RUPERT

DISCOVER OUR NATURE

TOURISM PRINCE RUPERT

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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ABOUT TOURISM PRINCE RUPERT

Mission and Vision

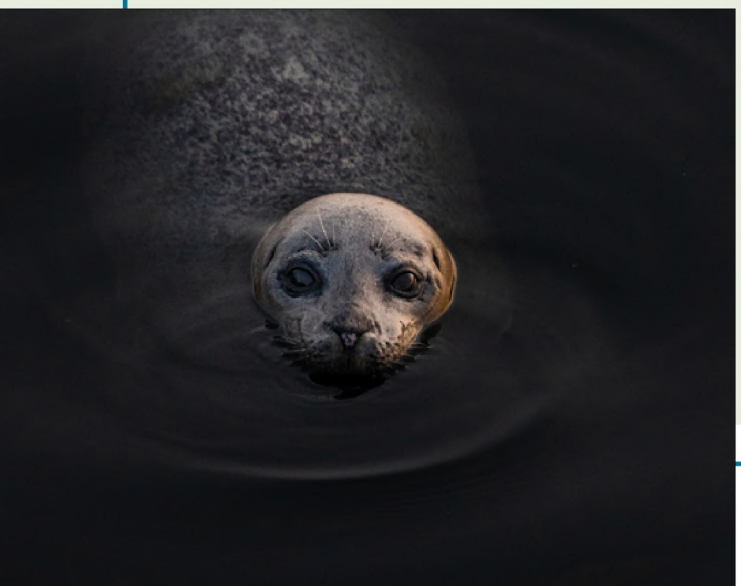
Tourism Prince Rupert is an independent not-for-profit society whose purpose is to promote and grow Prince Rupert as a world-class destination for leisure travel, outdoor adventure, and coastal amenities.

Vision

Prince Rupert is a dynamic, unique, and fulfilling place to live, supported by a thriving and respectful visitor economy.

Mission

Sharing Prince Rupert's unique spirit by leading tourism marketing and destination development initiatives.



Values

Authentic

Tourism Prince Rupert believes that Prince Rupert's unique experiences, culture, history, and geography are what set it apart from other destinations. We strive to maintain a genuinely authentic representation of the community across all initiatives.

Entrepreneurial

Tourism Prince Rupert makes strategic use of its resources by acting in an entrepreneurial way, engaging in creative initiatives that address industry challenges and developing compelling campaigns that promote Prince Rupert as a unique destination.

Collaborative

Tourism Prince Rupert strives to be collaborative with community partners, tourism businesses, and sectoral organizations across all programs and initiatives to ensure that our work is informed, timely, and making optimal use of the resources available.

ABOUT TOURISM PRINCE RUPERT

Objectives

Prince Rupert already has all the components of a dream travel destination. We have access to pristine & unique wilderness, a beautiful natural setting, excellent dining venues showcasing local foods, funky retail stores, and best of all, genuine & welcoming locals. Tourism Prince Rupert's job is to spread the word about everything our community has to offer, and help support even more growth & development in the tourism sector.



(1) Destination Marketing

Tourism Prince Rupert will execute a comprehensive marketing strategy that reflects Prince Rupert's authentic diversity and culture to increase annual visitor volume and economic impact.

(2) Indigenous Tourism

Tourism Prince Rupert will highlight Ts'msyen culture and language in marketing and destination development initiatives and support the development of new Indigenous-led tourism products and experiences.

(3) Destination Development

Tourism Prince Rupert will initiate and support destination development opportunities resulting in new market-ready, authentic tourism products and experiences.

(4) Industry Development

Tourism Prince Rupert will foster collaborative relationships with key tourism partners to create and enhance local opportunities for education, training, and industry advocacy, stimulating the development of new tourism ventures and bolstering the resilience of existing tourism operators in Prince Rupert.

2023 HIGHLIGHTS & REFLECTIONS

Prince Rupert experienced a busy summer season in 2023, with visitor volume continuing to rise, bolstered greatly by a strong cruise season. Tourism Prince Rupert completed a number of complex destination development projects, including the final installation of new community welcome and wayfinding signage, the launch of the Lax Süülda Container Market, and community engagement on new park revitalization initiatives.

The Prince Rupert Visitor Information Centre, operated in partnership with the Prince Rupert Port Authority and their Port Interpretive Centre, was closed for renovations between February 15th and September 1st this season. Between February and May, Tourism Prince Rupert offered online and telephone visitor services only. Between May and September, we opened a temporary Visitor Information Centre in a modified shipping container at the Lax Süülda Container Market, a new initiative developed by Tourism Prince Rupert. Between May and August, we over 19,000 total visitors through the temporary Visitor Information Centre, showing that even with the renovation, we did not see a reduction in visitor traffic.

In 2024, we will look to further activate the newly renovated Visitor Information Centre and provide continued support to the growing cruise sector by way of visitor services and print materials for passengers.

In 2023, Tourism Prince Rupert also ran a number of successful marketing campaigns, including a “Road Trip Journal” campaign in partnership with the BC Ale Trail, a partnered campaign with BC Ferries and Northern BC ferries to promote the Inside Passage Route to Northern BC, multiple influencer campaigns, a series of cooperative marketing campaigns with other Northwest BC communities, and a number of monthly promotions highlighting local businesses in the tourism sector.



2023 HIGHLIGHTS & REFLECTIONS

We saw significant engagement with all marketing efforts this year, proving that the pent-up demand for travel over the past two years provides a unique opportunity for the strong return of the visitor economy. In 2023, Tourism Prince Rupert also continued to operate the Volunteer Visitor Ambassador program, taking care of the recruitment, training, and deployment of over 30 volunteer ambassadors on cruise ship days and for community events. This program was further amplified by the introduction of the Lax Süülda Container Market this season, providing them with a vibrant new space to operate out of.

Finally, in 2023 Tourism Prince Rupert also launched a new line of community merchandise, including over 20 new products designed to reflect the unique attributes of Prince Rupert. This was a huge success, with both locals and visitors making purchases and expressing their appreciation for the line.

Overall it was a busy season with many new initiatives either in development or launching for the first time. There is a thriving tourism economy on the North Coast, and Tourism Prince Rupert continues to lead destination marketing, destination development, and local industry development efforts.



DESTINATION MARKETING

Marketing is traditionally a large component of Tourism Prince Rupert's annual activities in support of our 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 paid print and digital advertising, social media channels, visitor guides, and email newsletter.

We also launch new campaigns to increase awareness & visitor volume every year. In 2023, we continued to participate in several co-operative marketing programs with other communities in BC, such as the BC Ale Trail, Route 16 and more. In addition, we launched a campaign in partnership with BC Ferries, supported multiple influencer and FAM trips, and worked with photographers and videographers to capture new content for the Prince Rupert area.





INFLUENCER MARKETING

In 2023, Tourism Prince Rupert supported an influencer trip in partnership with Northern BC Tourism, BC Ferries, and the Visit NW BC Co-op bringing content creators Bella Buchiotti, filmmaker Geoff Heith, and photographer Kimberley Kufaas from Port Hardy through the Inside Passage to Northwest BC. The deliverables for this campaign included:

- Prince Rupert highlighted as a feature destination on all three influencer channels over the course of their visit, shared by @visitprincerupert.
- 1 blog post specific to Prince Rupert on xoxobella.com + reels on social media channel.
- Inclusion in inside passage blog post overview of whole trip.
- 90 second video highlight reel specific to Prince Rupert.
- Inclusion in 2-3 minute feature video promoting the Inside Passage to Northwest BC road trip.
- 5-10 images of the Prince Rupert area with full third party licensing for Content Hub, ability to license more.
- Associated collection of b-roll with full third party licensing.

DESTINATION MARKETING

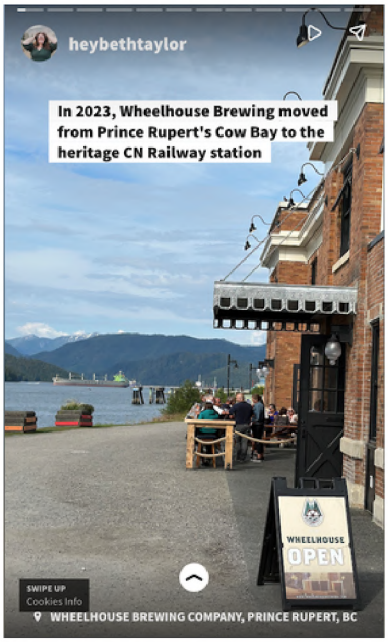
INFLUENCER CAMPAIGNS



Tourism Prince Rupert also supported a trip with HeyBethTaylor, who will be providing us with licensed imagery from her trip. Beth leveraged her Prince Rupert content into pieces for Destination BC and the BC Culinary Tourism Alliance.

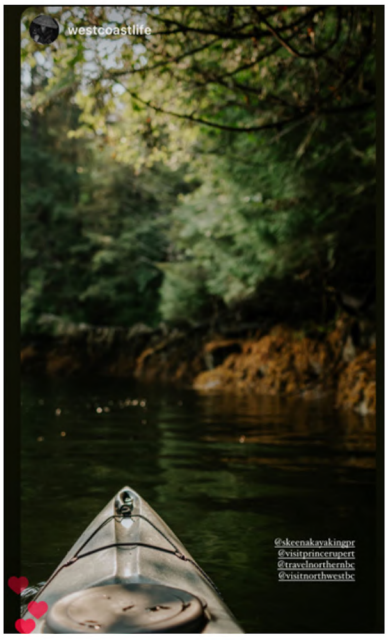












DESTINATION MARKETING

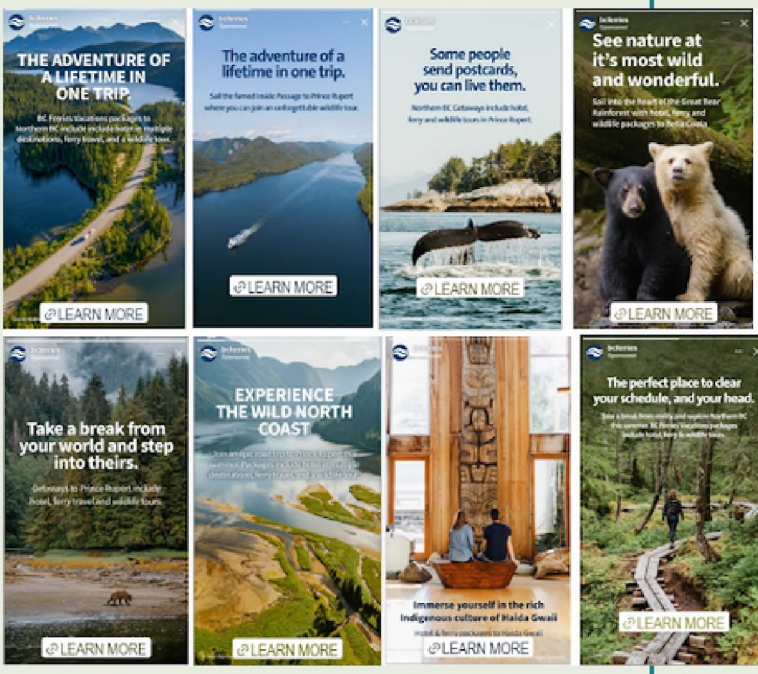
BC FERRIES CAMPAIGN

TPR is one of three major partners in the annual Northern BC Tourism BC Ferries and Communities Campaign again. It yielded fantastic results again in 2023 on social media with high engagement. Marketing tactics include television promotions and commercials, newsprint features, radio ads, a targeted online presence, and a giveaway component:

- Global News Contest / CKNW Mornings.
- Media posts on Global BC & CKNW pages
- Live on-air mentions with Global News Mornings, as well as pre-produced contest mentions with CKNW Mornings.
- Features on BCF website, Global website & CKNW website.

In addition to the media included, we also separately purchased additional media to augment promotion of Northern BC, including:

- eNewsletters
- Vessel & Terminal Posters / Signage
- Signage at BCF Downtown Centre
- Radio spots
- Facebook & Instagram Ads
- Print Insertions
- Display Advertising
- Paid Social on Instagram & Facebook
- Story Ads



The campaign also includes a contest component that received over 13,000 entries, up from 9,000 in 2022, for a grand prize of one BC Ferries Vacations Inside Passage Wilderness Circle Tour which include hotel, ferry travel including an Inside Passage sailing, and a wildlife tour in Prince Rupert.



DESTINATION MARKETING

DESTINATION BC COOP MARKETING PROGRAMS

In addition to developing our own unique marketing campaigns, Tourism Prince Rupert participates in a number of Co-op 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 Co-op 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)

Tourism Prince Rupert participated in the following coop marketing programs in 2023:

- BC Ale Trail
- Ride North
- Visit Northwest BC
- Go North RV



BC ALE TRAIL

In 2023, Tourism Prince Rupert once again supported the BC Ale Trail. The investment goes towards funding all of the Ale Trail's Global Tactics which benefit the BC Ale Trail as a whole including our Digital Marketing Campaigns, mobile app, blogs, social media, PR, YouTube and more. Our Road Trip Journal is mid-campaign. Our paid campaign to amplify the Road Trip Journal content is now scheduled to run in February 2024 to inspire spring travel.

The BC Ale Trail also represented and poured Wheelhouse Brewing beer at the inaugural BCNE Trade Route Ale Festival in Prince George in August which saw over 800 guests over 2 days.

Tourism Prince Rupert also worked with the BC Ale Trail to promote Wheelhouse Brewing's new location with custom blog content, features on the "Hoppy Hour," and a feature Reel on the Ale Trail Instagram.



DESTINATION MARKETING

DESTINATION BC COOP MARKETING PROGRAMS

GO NORTH RV

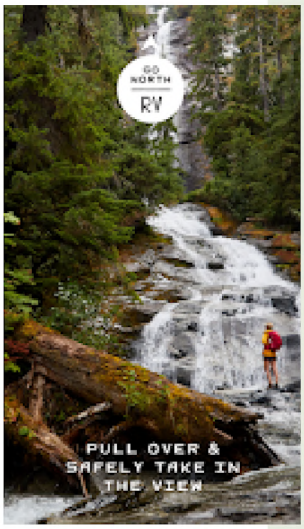
In 2023, Tourism Prince Rupert once again supported Go North RV. In collaboration with Northern BC Tourism, the Go North RV coop launched a connections plan that built off the success of 2022 and drove awareness and interest in Northern BC camping & RV experiences. The goal of the campaign was to target residents of Northern BC, Alberta, the Lower mainland, and those individuals that utilize data-specific RV targeting and related lifestyle interests. The target audience was towards a 50+ demographic while testing a younger, more southern-based audience.

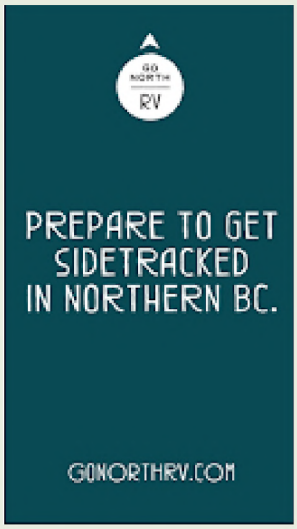
Strategy and activity:

- Develop further learning by tracking and measuring those who have seen ads and taken action by traveling north.
- Utilize a combination of data-driven Paid Social and Programmatic Display to drive prospects to gonorthrv.com.
- Feature route-based itineraries to draw interest and provide the spark of a trip idea for RV-goers.
- Establish a baseline attribution measurement for programmatic advertising.

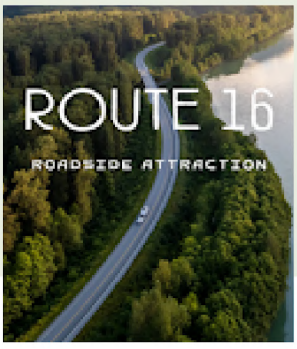
Key Metrics from Summer Campaign:

- Southern BC/Alberta drove the most clicks, 2,689 at a CTR at .60%
- Northern BC 1,672 clicks .67%
- US Market 953 clicks and a CTR of .64%
- Route 16-Yellowhead Highway, followed by the Great Northern Circle Route, saw the most effective static ads.
- Route 16-Yellowhead Highway followed by Roadside Attraction, were the most effective motion ads.
- The 2023 campaign had a final CTR 0.62% throughout its full run.









DESTINATION MARKETING

DESTINATION BC COOP MARKETING PROGRAMS

ROUTE 16

In 2023, Tourism Prince Rupert once again participated in the Route 16 consortium project. In partnership with Tourism Prince George, Regional District Fraser Fort George, Regional District Bulkley-Nechako, Tourism Smithers, Kermodei Tourism, and Tourism Kitimat, the Highway 16 corridor is promoted as a destination and motorcycle touring route.

In 2023, the Ride North campaign targeted primarily BC & Alberta residents using video content for paid social posts across Facebook and Instagram to promote Route16.ca which provides bookable tours.

Summer Campaign:

- Highlighted the Ride16 Guided Tours and Father and Son's two-wheeled journey, made in partnership with Vahna, publications focused on inspiring stories about motorcycles, the places they take us, and the people who ride them.

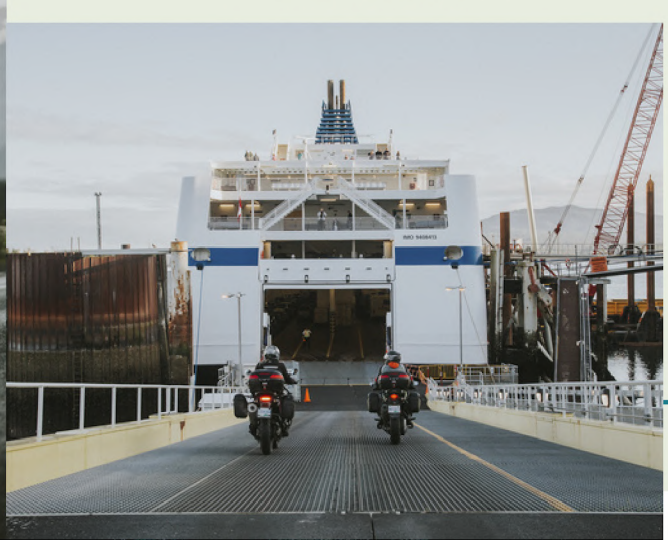
Winter Campaign:

- For the winter campaign, we highlighted Unpaved a story of Golnoosh Namazi. Created in the summer of 2022.

Key 2023 results:

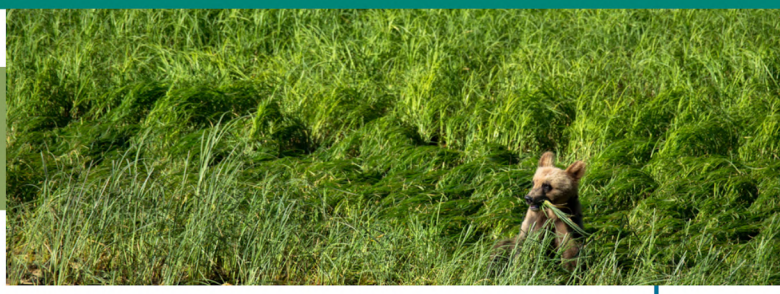
- Meta ads:
- Banner Impressions: 998,951
- Banner Clicks: 20,634
- Video Impressions: 562,958
- Video Clicks: 18,700
- Digital Programmatic Display:
- Banner Impressions: 704,915
- Banner Clicks: 711
- Video Impressions: 293,730
- Video Clicks: 270





DESTINATION MARKETING

DESTINATION BC COOP MARKETING PROGRAMS



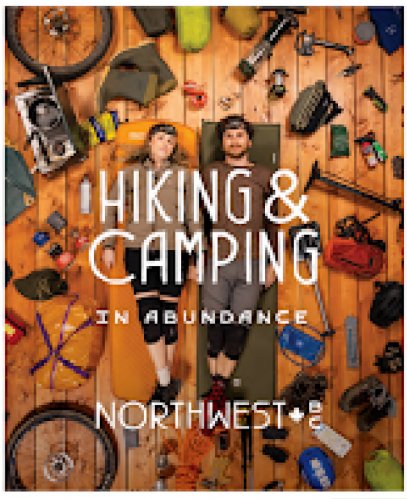
VISIT NORTHWEST BC

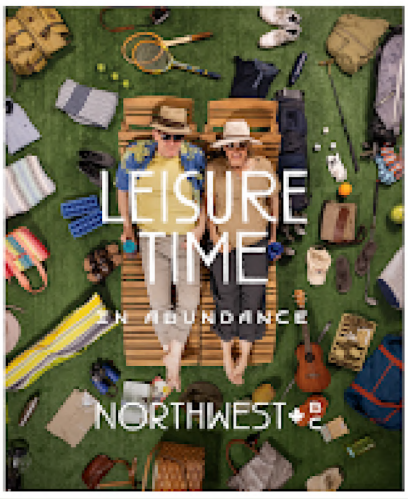
In collaboration with the marketing agency Partner & Hawes, the Visit Northwest coop launched a successful 2023 campaign titled "In Abundance," a targeted digital marketing campaign to promote the Northwest. The campaign used stop-motion imagery and video clips to show the various activities available across the ten partner communities.

The objective was to expand on the storytelling and narrative established in 2021/22 to focus on the abundance and proximity of activities and experiences to be discovered in the Northwest. Dig deeper and promote the many cultural and activity-based activities. The Northwest is held together by close-knit communities. Northwest is BC's next great road trip destination.

Campaign Summary:

- 1.19% link click-through rate (CTR)
- $0.66 average cost per link click (CPC)
- 10,540 engagements (likes, reactions, shares, comments, or video views)
- $0.28 cost per engagement (CPE)
- Regional North had higher CPCs across all ad types due to more refined targeting and concentrated budget.
- The "Hiking and Camping" motion ads were the best creative for maximizing clicks and engagement, particularly with the Free Spirits audience.
- The "Hiking and Camping" static ad in the Southern BC and Alberta targeting Free Spirits outperformed others in terms of post-saves.







DESTINATION MARKETING

CONTENT PRODUCTION

PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEOGRAPHY

During the 2023 summer season, Tourism Prince Rupert successfully partnered with three influencers and three photographers to capture content gaps within our media gallery. In 2023, we licensed over 100 new images, providing professional photography to more than 20 local businesses.

ORGANIC SOCIAL MEDIA

Tourism Prince Rupert posts daily to Instagram stories, promoting our campaigns and content, in addition to sharing posts and information from local businesses and partners in the tourism sector. We have implemented a weekly “What’s Happening This Week” story to help promote local events and highlight the Community Calendar on our website. We are always on the hunt for new content, and new content creators. Our posts are a mix of user generated content and professional licensed content. We aim for at least 3 posts a week with a mixture of photos, reels, and blog content. In 2023, we hit a milestone of 5k followers on Instagram, celebrated with a Whale Watching Tour giveaway in partnership with Prince Rupert Adventure Tours.

BLOG

In 2022, Tourism Prince Rupert developed a new blog feature on the website. We sought to develop evergreen material that could be used in both the blog and social media. Since the new blog launched, we have 15 blogs published on the website. We also work regularly with local writers and have several written entries waiting to be posted.

REELS

In 2023, Tourism Prince Rupert continued to develop reels on social media. The short, entertaining videos have a special way of grabbing users' attention, which has caused an increase in audience engagement. Since the end of 2022, TPR has produced 34 reels that have captured:

- 6810 likes (200 average per post)
- 162,157 views (4769 average per post)
- 428 comments (12 average per post)
- The highest viewed reel has just shy of 20k views!



DESTINATION MARKETING

MERCHANDISE

In 2023, TPR launched a new line of "Prince Rupert" themed merchandise, available for purchase at the Lax Süülda Container Market between May-September, and online at visitprincerupert.com/store.

Highlights:

- 20 products included in the line, ranging from tshirts and sweaters to hats, stickers, and candles.
- Inspired by classic "Jim West" signage & designs throughout Prince Rupert, as well as Prince Rupert's geography.
- Made locally in Prince Rupert and Smithers, BC.
- Merchandise was well-received by locals and visitors, with over 90% of inventory sold throughout the 2023 season.

Top Selling Products:

- Metal Magnets: 445 units
- Stickers: 209 units
- Graphic T-shirt Black: 160 units
- Crewneck Sweater: 150 units
- Shot glass: 144 units













DESTINATION MARKETING

VISITOR GUIDE

Tourism Prince Rupert manages the design, printing, and distribution of all official Prince Rupert visitor materials. These are made available at our Visitor Centre, at local hotels and attractions, and at other Visitor Centres along the highway 16 corridor. Each of the print materials is also available for download on our website. Each year, we review and update the materials to ensure the information is up-to-date and the design is reflective of the community with new imagery, information, and visitor recommendations.

We produce the following materials:

- Visitor Guide Booklet
- Walking Guide Booklet
- Dining brochure
- Hiking brochure
- Accommodation brochure
- Wildlife Viewing brochure
- Shopping brochure
- Outdoor Adventure brochure
- Fishing brochure
- History & Culture brochure
- Official City Map

With the closure of our Visitor Centre in 2023 and a stock of remaining guides from 2022, we ordered only a small print run of 5,000 city maps (for cruise passengers in particlar) and 800 of the History & Culture, Walking Trails, and Wildlife Viewing Brochures, to ensure our inventory would be complete for the season. In an effort to get rid of the surplus of Visitor Guides in stock, we distributed extra copies to the local hotels in early November and handed out map pads and rack cards as needed.

As we embark on a rebranding process in 2024, we will not be doing a large print order until the new designs are complete, but we will strive to distribute all remaining stock to make way for the new inventory. In the fall of 2023 however, we have reviewed all print materials and updated them as necessary to ensure the digital copies on our website reflect the most up-to-date community information.





DESTINATION MARKETING

VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Prince Rupert Visitor Information Centre also saw a lot of change this year. The space, operated in partnership with the Prince Rupert Port Authority and their Port Interpretive Centre, was closed for renovations between February 15th and September 1st. Between February and May, we offered online and telephone visitor services only. Between May and September, we opened a temporary Visitor Information Centre in a modified shipping container at the Lax Süülda Container Market, a new initiative developed by Tourism Prince Rupert.

Between May and August, we tracked a total of 19,182 total visitors through the temporary Visitor Information Centre, outside of cruise, showing that even with the renovation, we did not see a reduction in visitor traffic. In 2024, we will look to further activate the newly renovated Visitor Information Centre and provide continued support to the growing cruise sector by way of visitor services and print materials for passengers.

Overall positive feedback given verbally by travellers who were impressed with Prince Rupert's natural beauty and walking trails. Travellers love passport stamps and the Prince Rupert merchandise.

Negative feedback was given by travellers who found a lack of washroom options while the Port Interpretive Centre was closed. Cruise Ship passengers were able to use the Northlands Cruise Ship terminal. This was not available for visitors on non-cruise ship days.

The Port Interpretive Centre renovations were completed in September 2023 and the Centre will be open for the entirety of the 2024 season. PRPA will once again hire summer students to assist with operations and visitor services in the Port Interpretive Centre. In 2024, our staff will no longer be sending out guides and brochures. We will encourage the use of QR codes linking to digital downloads of our brochures and guides with one scan.



INDIGENOUS TOURISM

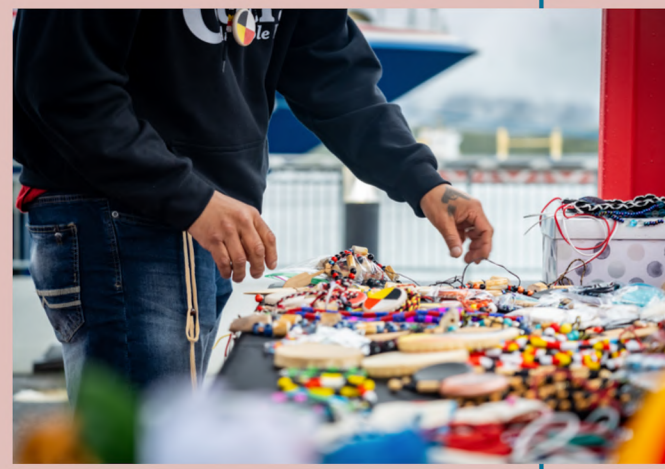
INTRODUCTION

Prince Rupert is a culturally diverse community, with over 35% of Prince Rupert's population identifying as having North American Aboriginal origins, per the 2016 Canadian Census. There are multiple First Nations represented in Prince Rupert, including but not limited to Metlakatla First Nation, and Lax Kw'alaams First Nation. In Prince Rupert, the strong presence of local First Nations culture and heritage is strongly felt in day-to-day life, but for visitors, it remains difficult to find meaningful and culturally appropriate Indigenous experiences while visiting Prince Rupert.

2023 OUTPUTS

- Working with the Ts'ymsen Sm'algyax Language Authority, Sm'algyax language was successfully incorporated into the new wayfinding & welcome signs, installed in early 2023.
- Of the five local artists highlighted on the new signage, three Indigenous artists are featured.
- In 2023, work continued on our partnered project with the Ts'ymsen Sm'algyax Language Authority to develop interpretive trail signage for Prince Rupert's main walking trails. Funding for this project was secured in 2021.
- Our Sm'algyax Travel Pledge was activated in 2023 with signage at the YPR airport, container market, and Visitor Centre.
- In April of 2023, we hosted an Indigenous history training session for VIC staff and cruise ambassadors with Chief Alex Campbell from Metlakatla, with funding from DBC.
- Tourism Prince Rupert commissioned a new mural at the Container Market site by local Indigenous artist Lucy Trimble that includes a welcome message in Sm'algyax.





DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

Destination development is a key priority for Tourism Prince Rupert for a number of reasons. Firstly, increasing the number of market-ready tourism products has repeatedly been identified as not only critical to the long-term resiliency of Prince Rupert's tourism sector. Secondly, destination development projects also improve the overall attractiveness and liveability of Prince Rupert as a whole, which is crucial to the recruitment efforts of local employers in all sectors, and therefore, to bolstering Prince Rupert's local economy over the coming decade.

Throughout 2023, we implemented multiple new destination development initiatives and secured for new projects in 2024.



COMMUNITY SIGNAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT

Improving Prince Rupert's entry & wayfinding signage, bolstering downtown appeal through the addition of public art, and providing opportunities for the inclusion of Sm'algyax language locally.

In 2021, Tourism Prince Rupert secured funding to install new signage throughout Prince Rupert. This project had two main components:

(1) The installation of new highway welcome signs at each main entrance to the community: at the Highway 16 West entrance from Galloway Rapids Bridge and at the Highway 16 South entrance from the BC Ferries terminal.

(2) The installation of new wayfinding and informational signage throughout the downtown and main tourism areas, highlighting main attractions, activating new City districts identified in the Prince Rupert 2030 Vision, and showcasing the work of local artists.



DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

WELCOME SIGNS

The replacement of the welcome signs at both entrances to Prince Rupert has long been a desired destination development project, with the sign at the BC Ferries entrance removed due to disrepair and the other sign off Highway 16 from Terrace displaying no sense of community identify or visitor information. The replacement of these signs is an opportunity to showcase Prince Rupert's unique culture and community vibrancy at all main entrances to the city. The new signs include a welcome message in Sm'algyax as well as artwork created by local artist Russell Mather.

WAYFINDING SIGNAGE

Tourism Prince Rupert aims to help both locals and visitors more easily locate key retail, dining, hospitality, and outdoor adventure business and attractions in the downtown core by installing vibrant new wayfinding signage featuring designs from local artists in key downtown districts. The new wayfinding signage features artwork from local artists Kristen McKay, Lucy Trimble, Roddy Tasaka, and Chris Fraser. The new wayfinding signage network include small informational panels, fingerboard directional signs, and large informational kiosks.







DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

PROJECT GOALS

- Improve the visitor experience through new wayfinding & welcome signage across Prince Rupert.
- Support local business recovery from COVID-19 by helping direct more traffic to key areas.
- Remove and replace outdated & inconsistent signage.
- Create opportunities for local artists to display more public art in Prince Rupert's downtown.
- Align with the Prince Rupert 2030 Vision's placemaking & downtown improvement strategies.
- Create opportunities for the inclusion of Sm'algyax language and Indigenous art in public spaces.

ARTISTS

- Russell Mather
- Chris Fraser
- Lucy Trimble
- Kristen McKay
- Rod Tasaka





KEY RESULTS

- Both official highway welcome signs replaced.
- 24 unique wayfinding signs, of three different varieties, installed.
- Wayfinding signage design guidelines officially adopted by the City of Prince Rupert for future signage work.

PROJECT PARTNERS

Tourism Prince Rupert would like to thank our partners at the Province of BC, the Ministry of Transportation & Infrastructure, the Prince Rupert Port Authority, the Prince Rupert Community Arts Council, and the City of Prince Rupert for their support of this project. We would also like to thank all of the incredible local artists who contributed their work to this project – Chris Fraser, Lucy Trimble, Kristen McKay, Rod Tasaka, and Russell Mather – as well as the Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Language Authority for working so closely with us to include Sm'algyax Language on all signage.

Finally, we extend our thanks to Will Creative for their creative design work, to Innovative Signage for their fantastic work fabricating this custom signage, and to the team at Broadwater Industries for all their hard work installing the new signage.

DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

LAX SÜÜLDA CONTAINER MARKET

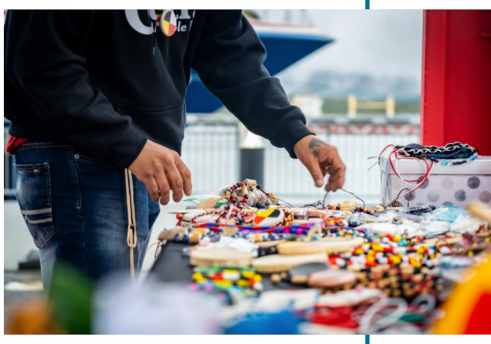
The Lax Süülda Container Market is a new waterfront vendor market located on the Atlin Promenade in Prince Rupert aimed at showcasing regional small businesses and artisans to visitors.

The name was selected with support, direction, and permission from the Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Language Authority. In Sm'algyax, the language of the Ts'msyen People, "Lax Süülda" means "on the ocean." The name choice highlights the importance and significance of Ts'msyen language and culture in Prince Rupert, as well as the community's deep-rooted connection to the ocean and surrounding environment.

In lieu of market stalls, refurbished shipping containers have been used, providing shelter and calling to Prince Rupert's role as an economic driver in international trade. The marketplace not only created a unique and colourful market area for cruise passengers to explore, but it also provided a new opportunity for regional artisans, small business owners, and vendors to showcase their products to an international audience.

The market opened to the public on May 3rd, 2023, operating through the 2023 cruise season until the final cruise call on October 10th, 2023.











DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

PILOT SEASON HIGHLIGHTS

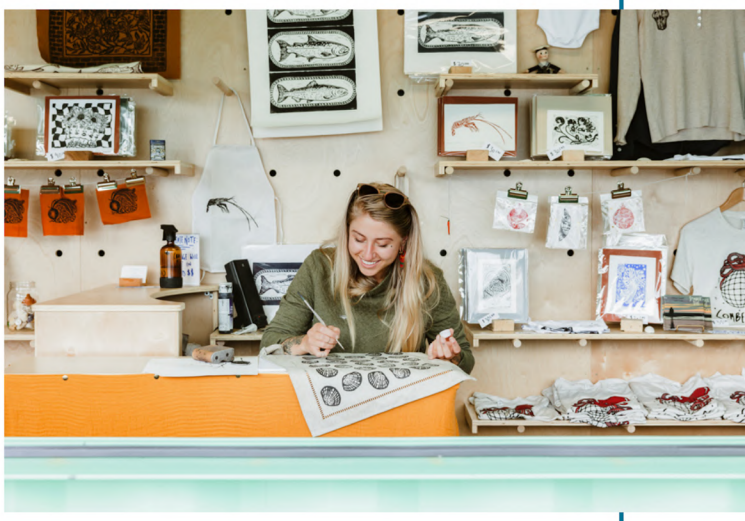
- $165,000 raised for the site development and setup, managed by Tourism PR.
- Over 30 temporary employment opportunities created in the site development.
- Vendors recruited from the Northwest between Haida Gwaii and Prince George, with 33 participating vendors in the pilot season.
- Dedicated Visitor Information Container operated by Tourism Prince Rupert.
- Market site is fully accessible with ramps installed at each container.



Seed Funding for the Development of the Lax Süülda Container Market was provided by Northern BC Tourism Association (NBCTA) through the Province of BC's Targeted Regional Tourism Development Initiative Fund (TRTDI).

Support for land-use and the installation of electrical at the site is provided by the Prince Rupert Port Authority.

Thank you to all of our partners and sponsors!





DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT

CRUISE SECTOR DEVELOPMENT

Prince Rupert experienced a busy cruise season in 2023, with a 100% increase in cruise passenger volumes from 2022. Between May 3rd and October 10th, 2023, 80,812 cruise passengers transited through the Prince Rupert Cruise Port, the management of which was recently taken over by the largest cruise operator in the world, Global Ports Holdings, making it the busiest cruise season in Prince Rupert in over a decade.

With the return of cruise to Prince Rupert, Tourism Prince Rupert has become more heavily involved in supporting the sector in a number of different ways.

- Cruise Ambassador Program: we provide off the dock information to cruise passengers.
- Visitor Services: Tourism Prince Rupert provided in-person visitor services to cruise passengers out of the Container Market for the 2023 season.
- Merchandise: Many visitors mentioned a lack of "Prince Rupert" souvenirs. TPR launched merch in 2023 that was well-received by cruise passengers.
- Passenger Amenities: Tourism Prince Rupert added to the product capacity for cruise passengers by supporting fundraising efforts for the newly introduced trolleys, and by introducing a new retail component with the Container Market.

CRUISE AMBASSADOR PROGRAM

In 2022, Tourism Prince Rupert took over the management of the Cruise Ambassador Program. We now provide training each year in advance of the season, print materials, apparel, and scheduling services for the Ambassadors. Approximately 24 volunteers participate in the program, providing directions, information, and general knowledge of Prince Rupert for cruise passengers.





INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT

INTRODUCTION

In a remote community such as Prince Rupert, local tour operators and small businesses are the backbone of the tourism sector. In order to ensure the long-term resiliency of tourism in Prince Rupert, it will be crucial for Tourism Prince Rupert to not only support the success of existing local businesses, but also to encourage the development of new local businesses to service the tourism sector.

This objective was identified to help create more opportunities for local entrepreneurship in the tourism sector, to provide resources and support for local businesses, and to bring a new approach to Tourism Prince Rupert's stakeholder outreach model.

2023 OUTPUTS

- Tourism Prince Rupert worked with Aquila Training to bring a Cruise Service Excellence Certification training opportunity to Prince Rupert in April 2023, for tour operators and visitor services staff.
- We continued to distribute a monthly stakeholder newsletter with tourism sector supports & other information.
- "Tourism Talks" engagement series continued in January themed around different tourism sectors such as paddling, fishing, arts & culture, etc
- Monthly giveaways in partnership with local businesses were promoted throughout the year, offering promotional opportunities to small businesses.
- Vendor opportunity offered to 33 unique vendors local to the Northwest through the Container Market.
- Sponsorship of community events such as the Shames Scramble and the Downpour Beer Festival.
- Hosted community engagement sessions on improvements for Mariner's Park, in partnership with City of Prince Rupert.
- Hosted Destination Development workshop with Destination BC, Northern BC Tourism, and Indigenous Tourism BC.
- Hosted Ts'msyen history training session for cruise operators, visitor centre staff, and volunteer ambassadors.



OUTLOOK FOR 2024

As we embark on the journey into 2024, Tourism Prince Rupert anticipates a promising revival within the tourism sector, as forecasted by Destination Canada. Projections indicate that the industry will surpass pre-pandemic levels, marking a significant milestone in its recovery. While nominal spending is expected to surpass 2019 figures due to inflation, the number of overnight leisure and business visits may fall slightly short.

Despite ongoing challenges, the trajectory of recovery for Canada's tourism sector is becoming clearer, fueled by the enthusiasm of both domestic and international travelers eager to explore the diverse offerings of Canadian destinations.
The updated forecast is particularly encouraging, considering 2019's status as the strongest-performing year for Tourism Prince Rupert. The domestic market is poised to lead the sector's recovery, with optimism surrounding the resurgence of the US market —an opportunity of paramount importance for Canada's tourism industry.

Looking ahead to 2024, Tourism Prince Rupert has outlined key initiatives aimed at further enriching the local tourism landscape:

Return of Dine Out Prince Rupert (February 2024):
Building on the success of previous years, the much-anticipated return of Dine Out Prince Rupert in February 2024 will once again celebrate the culinary diversity of the region, enticing both locals and visitors to indulge in a gastronomic journey.

Tourism Prince Rupert Brand Refresh Project:
A pivotal undertaking for 2024, the Tourism Prince Rupert Brand Refresh project is set to breathe new life into our identity. This initiative reflects our commitment to staying relevant and resonating with the evolving preferences of travelers, ensuring a compelling and contemporary representation of our destination.



OUTLOOK FOR 2024

Marketing Focus on Shoulder-Season:
To maximize the potential of the shoulder seasons, Tourism Prince Rupert will launch marketing campaigns targeted at increasing visitation in the shoulder seasons. These initiatives will provide incentives, such as gift cards to local businesses, tied to hotel stays during these periods, encouraging visitors to explore the region during times of lower traditional tourist activity.

"Rainbow Registered" Designation:
Demonstrating our dedication to inclusivity, Tourism Prince Rupert aims to achieve the "Rainbow Registered" designation, signaling our commitment to being a welcoming and safe destination for the LGBTQ+ community.

Sm'algyax Language Trail Signage Project:
In collaboration with the Ts'msyen Sm'algyax Language Authority, Tourism Prince Rupert is set to complete the Sm'algyax language trail signage project. This initiative not only preserves cultural heritage but also enhances the visitor experience by offering insights into the rich linguistic tapestry of the region.

Visitor Services in Cow Bay and Operation of Lax Süülda Container Market:
To better serve our visitors, Tourism Prince Rupert will provide enhanced Visitor Services in Cow Bay. Additionally, the operation of the Lax Süülda Container Market for the 2024 season will offer a unique and vibrant marketplace, showcasing local products and culture.

In conclusion, with these strategic initiatives and a positive industry outlook, Tourism Prince Rupert looks forward to a dynamic and prosperous 2024. Together, we will continue to shape our destination as a must-visit location, fostering memorable experiences for all who come here to explore the beauty and charm of our region.

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.

