

TORONTO REACHES MILESTONE IN TOURISM PERFORMANCE

TORONTO (January 30, 2012) – 2011 was another record year for tourism in Toronto as the number of hotel room nights sold surpassed 9 million for the first time ever, Tourism Toronto announced today. Additionally, for the first time since 2006, Toronto has seen an increase in overnight visitors from the U.S., while emerging overseas markets continued to show growth.

“The momentum of the past several years and repositioning of our product has propelled Toronto into another strong year,” said David Whitaker, President and CEO of Tourism Toronto. “Although not without some challenges, in 2011 we continued to focus on high-value visitors from the U.S. and looked to key overseas markets such as China, India, Brazil and Western Europe for growth.”

In 2011, Toronto welcomed 10 million overnight visitors. Visitor spending, including same day trips, totalled \$4.6 billion in the Toronto region across a range of businesses and activities, employing 242,000 people in the tourism and hospitality sectors.

Overseas market: China and India lead growth

The fastest growing markets are from overseas travellers which rose by 6.2 per cent and now account for 14 per cent of all visitors to Toronto.

The biggest growth is coming from China (34.5 per cent increase), India (13.2 per cent), Italy (9.3 per cent) and Brazil (9.2 per cent).

The top international visitor arrival markets for Toronto in 2011 were:

		<u>2011</u>	<u>Change</u>
1	U.S.	2,043,900	+2.7%
2	U.K.	191,300	-2.6%
3	China	154,100	+34.5%
4	India	75,200	+13.2%
5	Germany	72,100	+0.2%
6	France	63,600	+1.3%
7	Japan	63,400	+0.7%
8	Italy	51,200	+9.3%
9	Brazil	44,700	+9.2%
10	S. Korea	39,900	-0.1%

“Visitors from overseas tend to stay longer and do more while they’re here,” said David Whitaker. “They also often visit other parts of Ontario and Canada on the same trip.”

“The McGuinty Government is proud to partner with Tourism Toronto, actively engaging new and emerging markets to enhance Ontario’s tourism industry,” said Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport. “Our decisive steps have firmly placed Ontario on the map as a premier global travel destination by offering one-of-a-kind festivals, cultural attractions,

conventions and world-class sporting events that generate jobs and growth in Toronto and across the province."

U.S. market: on the rebound

Tourism Toronto estimates show that in 2011, Toronto saw a 2.7 per cent increase in overnight visitors from the U.S. In addition, the U.S. traveller profile continued to shift toward high-value urban dwellers who are likely to fly to Toronto, stay longer and spend more. Air arrivals to Toronto from the U.S. grew by 6.7 per cent over 2010, and 19 of the previous 20 months showed increases in U.S. air arrivals.

"Toronto has a new lustre among sophisticated U.S. travellers, illustrated by its inclusion as one of Travel + Leisure magazine's 'Hottest Destinations in 2012,'" said David Whitaker. "Getting that kind of recommendation is a real coup and we should all be proud that the efforts so many have put into building this city over the past decade are being recognized."

Canadian market: largest source of visitors

Toronto continues to benefit from Canadians' propensity to visit Toronto as 6.4 million came in 2011 (a slight increase of 0.6 per cent over 2010) and spent \$2.56 billion in the region. The overwhelming majority are from Ontario (79.2 per cent), as Toronto continues to be a major attraction with more than 5 million overnight visits from within Ontario in 2011. Among the Canadian provinces, Quebec and Alberta accounted for the second- and third-most visitors to Toronto at 10.2 and 3.3 per cent, respectively.

Hotel performance and growth

Toronto sold a record 9,181,769 hotel room-nights in 2011 up from 8,928,958 in 2010, an increase of 2.8 per cent.

Due in part to continued increased demand, hotel room supply has increased significantly with 1,118 new rooms coming on-line in 2011, placing Toronto third in growth in North American cities at 3.4 per cent, behind only New York City and Nashville. Even with the increase in room supply, Toronto was again among the top 10 in occupancy rankings of major North American cities (those with more than 20,000 hotel rooms--Toronto now has over 37,000 rooms).

The majority of the new hotel room inventory is in the luxury category with the recent openings of the Ritz-Carlton Toronto, Thompson Toronto and Le Germain Maple Leaf Square. With the Trump International Hotel & Tower Toronto, Shangri-La Hotel Toronto and new Four Seasons Hotel Toronto all set to open in 2012, the availability of luxury hotel options is increasing and will continue to attract high-value visitors.

Major wins in 2011

Business travel and in particular, convention and meetings bookings continue to provide solid, long-term business for the region. In July 2011, Toronto won one of the most prestigious and sought-after meetings in the world as Microsoft chose the city for its 2012 Worldwide Partner Conference. More than 15,000 people are expected to attend, representing technology companies in 130 countries. Over 500 events take place during the conference and at least 30 hotels across the Toronto region will host delegates.

"Winning a prestigious meeting for such a widely admired company is not only a boost to the local economy but a testament to Toronto's ability to host major events," said David Whitaker.

“There’s a new buzz about Toronto that is translating into a growing awareness and interest in this community as a visitor and meetings destination that can deliver on our guests’ expectations.”

In 2011, Toronto hosted several significant events such as SWIFT-Sibos (one of the largest international banking conferences in the world), Greenbuild International Conference (for the first time outside of the U.S.) the American Bar Association, the JUNO Awards and the International Indian Film Academy Awards.

In 2011, in addition to the Microsoft Worldwide Partner Conference, Tourism Toronto and partners also won significant future meetings including Rotary International (20,000 attendees in 2018), the American Academy of Neurology (10,000 in 2020) and the International Confederation of Midwives (4,000 in 2017) and booked a total of 526,554 future hotel room-nights.

About Tourism Toronto

Tourism Toronto, Toronto’s Convention and Visitors Association, is an industry association of more than 1,200 members established to sell and market the greater Toronto region as a remarkable destination for tourists, convention delegates and business travellers around the globe. Tourism Toronto operates in partnership with the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport as Regional Tourism Organization 5. For more information please visit www.seetorontonow.com.

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