

*Gary  
Sadler*

SENIOR VICE-PRESIDENT OF SALES  
UNIQUE VACATIONS  
(SANDALS & BEACHES RESORTS)



SPECIAL FEATURE

**GOLDEN YEARS:**  
A LOOK AT TODAY'S SENIOR TRAVELLERS

CRUISE INDUSTRY

**CRUISING WITH PRIDE:**  
A LOOK AT THE LGBTQ  
CRUISE MARKET

DISCOVER

DUBLIN, NAXOS,  
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Beachside bliss in Cuba

# Letter from the publisher



## From sea to sea

PAX Global Media Inc. is much more than what readers call 'PAXnews.'

Of course, we remain the most important source of information for travel industry professionals and have continued to evolve over the last 27 years, in large part due to the rapid growth and significant changes in our Toronto office, located in the heart of downtown Toronto.

Nancy Benetton-Sampath is now Vice President, Media. Earlier this fall, we also hired our Managing Editor for English Canada, Michael Pihach, who is committed to raising the standards of our print, video and social media platforms through his expertise in the television industry.

I'm also pleased to announce that we recently hired Brad Hopkins as Business Development Manager. With more than 15 years of sales experience, including roles with Postmedia (the parent company of The National Post and Sun Media) and the Globe and Mail, Brad will be responsible for making the various products in the PGM portfolio more efficient, attractive and competitive.

We still have several projects on the drawing board that I cannot wait to share with you.

It's such a privilege to be able to continue to publish daily web stories and monthly print articles. I'm incredibly proud of it!

In the meantime, I invite you to flip through our June edition, which profiles a major player in the travel industry: Gary Sadler, senior vice president of sales with Unique Vacations Inc./Sandals Resorts.

A part of the Sandals team for more than 30 years, Gary perfected his craft while working in Canada, where he helped raise the profile of Sandals to one of the most-recognized resort brands amongst Canada's travel agents.

Elsewhere in this month's magazine, you'll be able to travel to Roatan, Naxos and Dublin in our Destinations to Discover section and explore our LGBT Cruise Guide, which takes a look at a growing market segment across the country.

Finally, be sure not to miss our special feature by Associate Editor Blake Wolfe, focusing on trends for senior travellers – where they're going, how they're travelling and what you can do to increase your sales in this demographic.

We'll meet again when our joint July/August edition hits the shelves next month.

Until then, happy reading, and enjoy your start to the summer!

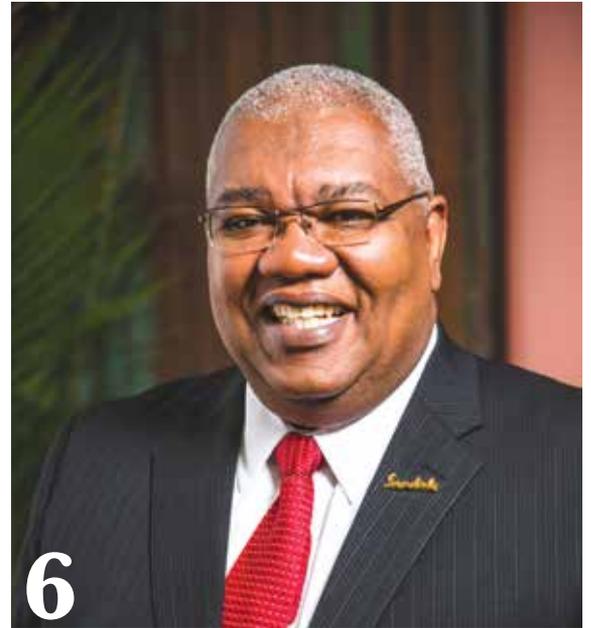
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# Contents

June 2019, No 52

## Business

- 3 **Publisher's Note**
- 6 **Business Meeting**  
Gary Sadler, Senior Vice-President of Sales,  
Unique Vacations (Sandals & Beaches Resorts)
- 12 **Business Sense**  
How to connect with your clients without scaring them off
- 14 **Numbers of the Month**  
Take Pride
- 16 **MICE**  
Analyzing the results of your event
- 20 **Special Feature**  
Golden years: a look at today's senior travellers
- 60 **Aviation**  
Behind the briefcase: a look at Canada's business travellers



## Travel

- 28 **Vogue**  
Paint the town: The world's most colourful cities
- 34 **Cruise Industry**  
Cruising with pride: a look  
at the LGBTQ cruise market
- 42 **Destinations to Discover**  
Dublin, Naxos, Roatan
- 48 **Experience**  
Costa Rica: Finding your inner Schwarzenegger  
  
Emilia Romagna: Is this Italy's most  
underrated gourmet destination?
- 56 **Hotel Visit**  
Zoëtry Villa Rolandi: Isla Mujeres' earthy paradise



## Innovation

### 30 The Digital Age

Digital marketing tools to help grow your business



## Extra

### 66 My Suitcase

PAX picks for a great trip



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paxmagazine@paxglobalmedia.com  
Canada, 10 issues (one year): \$49.50 (plus tax)

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2 Carlton Street, Suite 602	782 rue Principale
Toronto, ON, M5B 1J3	Laval, QC, H7X 1E6
416 581-1001	450 689-5060

**Printer:** Imprimerie Héon-Nadeau Ltée

**Distribution:**  
Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement No. 42658017

**Legal deposit:**  
Bibliothèque Nationale du Québec & National Library of Canada

**Legal deposit number:** ISSN 2367-9921



**Corporate website:** paxglobalmedia.com

Travel industry news: [news.PAXeditions.com](http://news.PAXeditions.com), [newsWest.PAXeditions.com](http://newsWest.PAXeditions.com), [nouvelles.PAXeditions.com](http://nouvelles.PAXeditions.com)

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BUSINESS MEETING





## Gary Sadler

Gary Sadler, Senior Vice-President of Sales,  
Unique Vacations (Sandals & Beaches Resorts)

# Up to the challenge

Sandals' **Gary Sadler** left corporate Jamaica for a career in hospitality. More than 30 years later, he reflects on why he's never looked back.

Story by Blake Wolfe / Photos by Geoff Fitzgerald

**I**t's 1988 and a young Gary Sadler has just been told that he'll never cut it in Jamaica's corporate sector. Undeterred and looking to take on a new challenge, Sadler secures a job interview with "a little hotel company called Sandals" – and the rest, as they say, is history.

Fast forward to 2019: Sadler is fondly looking back on his time in travel from the confines of a cozy Jamaican restaurant in downtown Toronto. It becomes quickly apparent that he was more or less destined for a role in this industry, where a jovial spirit and larger-than-life personality are among the keys to long-term success. →

“The minute that you tell me something can’t be done, you’ve got me so excited because I’m going to prove that it can in fact be done.”

It’s a very different world from his brief tenure as a top salesperson for a Jamaican furniture distributor.

### A new direction

“My managing director told me ‘you don’t fit a corporate profile – you fit tourism. I would strongly recommend that you never consider a job in a corporate, nine-to-five environment ever again in your life.’”

Taking that advice to heart, Sadler applied for and landed a role as a ‘playmaker’ at the then newly-opened Sandals Ochi in Ocho Rios, entertaining travel agents and promoting both the resort and Jamaica as

an enticing travel destination, in the months following the devastation of Hurricane Gilbert in 1988.

“I was put in there by chance – Jamaica had just endured the hurricane and Sandals was bringing in hundreds of travel agents to show that we were up and running and that Jamaica is a happening destination,” Sadler says. “My job was to ensure that the travel agents had a good time. That was like putting a kid in a candy store! It wasn’t nine-to-five – it was all about entertainment and taking care of the travel agents. At that age, I had no idea what a travel agent was!”



### Coming to Canada

Sadler’s personality and people skills would soon lead him to a sales position with Sandals and, as the growing resort chain began viewing Canada as a separate market from the U.S., he was eventually tasked with blazing those new trails. Landing in Toronto in July 1992, Sadler would establish both himself and the Sandals brand there over the next 12 months, including the opening of the company’s Canadian headquarters.

However, Sadler says it was his five years in Vancouver that truly shaped his travel career, where the challenge of selling Western Canada’s travel agents on a then-little known all-inclusive Caribbean resort experience was integral to his growth. To that end, Sadler spread the word about Sandals to both trade and consumers in Western Canada and was also instrumental in securing the first charter service in the region to offer direct flights from Vancouver and Calgary to Jamaica.



Gary Sadler with Maureen Barnes-Smith, director of sales & marketing, Unique Vacations Canada Inc.



“Vancouver was the best thing that ever happened to me!” he says. “The biggest challenge was being in Vancouver and handling Alberta, Saskatchewan, the Yukon and Northwest Territories. I enjoyed Western Canada because it was brand-new territory and I just said, ‘here’s an opportunity.’”

“In those days, you would walk into a travel agency and say you’re from Sandals; they would reply ‘we’re not buying any shoes.’ There was zero awareness in Western Canada – why would there be? You have Hawaii and Mexico on the west coast. People knew Jamaica because of Bob Marley but they weren’t aware of Sandals Resorts. We only had five hotels at the time so we were still a small company.”

With the Sandals brand now known across Canada, Sadler would head south to take the reins in New York as regional director for the northeastern U.S. market. Now armed with a taste of leadership, Sadler would soon take that

“You can either stay on the sidelines and watch or you can join in and help me.”

experience and return north in 1998 as manager of the entire Canadian operation, eventually leading to his appointment in 2009 as senior vice-president of global sales for Unique Vacations Inc., the worldwide sales representative for the Sandals brand.

“The scary thing was that you’re going into a new market – it’s not just the U.S., it’s the rest of the world!” Sadler says. “How do you take the Canadian model – a remarkable model that says ‘let’s build and grow against all adversity’ – and adapt that to the globe?”

“It was scary because the U.S. at the time was heading into a recession. I landed in the U.S. and there were bankruptcies everywhere. I thought ‘you’ve got to be

kidding me.’ But you have a choice – you can either sit down and complain or find a way to muscle your way through it.”

### Challenge accepted

The economic downturn of 2008 was just one of the storms successfully weathered by both Sadler and Sandals, with one of the biggest challenges occurring when Sadler was in charge of the company’s Canadian operations.

Like the travel industry at large, the resort chain was rocked by the economic ripple effect of Sept. 11, 2001; faced with a choice to either recede or expand, Sandals chose the latter and added more BDMs across Canada – a decision which would ultimately prove fruitful and pay dividends down the road. →



“Our Chairman (Butch Stewart) believed that we must find a way through it; when life throws adversity your way, there’s usually a way around it,” Sadler recalls. “While everyone else was contracting, we expanded across the board. Our mission was to support the travel agents in the grand scheme of things. Because of that response, it’s the reason why we enjoy such good business in Canada.

“When things got tough, we didn’t just sit there. Our advertising campaigns doubled in size; you would see billboards and TV ads – everything that we did said ‘Call your travel agent.’ It was something that we believed in and did naturally.

“After we managed to brace ourselves through the bankruptcies, things started to get stable – and then we had SARS. But because we had such a great infrastructure in Canada – the reps across the length and breadth of Canada – we were able to provide support to the industry and, in turn, the industry provided support to us.... We could never be as successful as we have become without travel agents.”

That approach to adversity is embodied by Sadler himself, who prefers uncharted waters – and the challenges they bring – to treading familiar territory.

“I don’t shine in a routine or when everything is fine and hunky-dory,” he says. “But the minute that you tell me something can’t be done, you’ve got me so excited because I’m going to prove that it can in fact be done. You can either stay on the sidelines and watch or you can join in and help me.”

### Follow the leader

Describing his leadership style as “engaged and involved,” Sadler points

to the mentorship he received from Sandals Founder and Chairman Gordon ‘Butch’ Stewart, to whom he attributes his management approach.

“He’s not a boss, he’s a motivator; if you go to him and say that you can’t do something, he’ll just laugh and give you 10 reasons why you can. I’ve spent time with him driving from my favourite hotel – Beaches Turks and Caicos – to the airport; it couldn’t have been more than 20 minutes

she was in the hospital. When you work for a company where the chairman has such a kind soul, everything else is fun and exciting. It’s the key to what you do.”

And as the only Sandals executive in the history of the company to start as a playmaker and work his way up to the position of senior vice-president, Sadler is eager to share his wisdom with others.

“With age comes experience and when youth departs, wisdom proves enough. You just make decisions – even if they’re difficult – without the emotional attachment.”

and in that time, he had made 10 major decisions about marketing, engineering, construction, design and landscaping.”

His relationship with Stewart goes beyond business, speaking to the strong sense of family at Sandals; when Sadler’s daughter was diagnosed with leukemia in 2013, he says that he was supported every step of the way.

“I put everything on pause and Sandals as an organization was amazing,” says Sadler, who is also a director with the Sandals Foundation, the company’s charitable arm. “Butch called my daughter every Saturday for the six months that

“For the sales people, I caution them of one thing: I’ve been there and I’ve done it,” he says. “And because I’ve been there and I’ve done it, I understand that the day-to-day hurdles which I’ve been through as a salesperson, the sales team is going through the same things today.”

“With age comes experience and when youth departs, wisdom proves enough. You just make decisions – even if they’re difficult – without the emotional attachment. My advice to people is that life is short – you’ll have some life-changing moments that make you realize you need to enjoy it for what it is and do the best that you can.” ●

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*Special thanks to Chubby’s Jamaican Kitchen for hosting this month’s cover photo shoot. Check out the menu at [www.chubbysjamaican.com](http://www.chubbysjamaican.com).*

# How to connect with *your clients* without scaring them off

By Jean-François Venne

**T**he first point of contact with a potential client is crucial. This is your opportunity to pique their interest without coming across as too pushy. So, how do you successfully make it happen?

## Two methods

Alain Samson, a lecturer and trainer who specializes in sales and communication tactics, says that there are two strategies in marketing that allow you to approach new customers: encirclement and the frontal offensive.

The encirclement strategy helps you capture the interest of the customer in order to secure their attention, so that they are more receptive to your proposals. This often involves sending information in advance, for example in the form of an e-newsletter, a link to a text on your website or even an invitation to an event.

Consider, for example, a typical conference on Tunisia, where mint tea and dates are served, while presenting a short film showing the charms of this destination.

The frontal offensive, on the other hand, is a good old "cold call," which is now sometimes distributed through emails to get the information across quickly.

"The most important thing in this case is not to get into a sales message right away," says Samson.

Instead, he recommends focusing on the benefits to the client and to address their needs. In other words, the conversation must be about what the customer wants to buy rather than what you want to sell to them.

Do they need to escape? Are they in search of adventure or do they wish to chase the sun? To find out, you need to listen.

"It's very rare to close a sale by approaching a prospect for the first time, so we contact them first and foremost to create a good relationship," says Samson.

## Focus on your prospects

With these kinds of exchanges, one must have specific objectives.

First, you'll need something to establish your credibility.

By the end of the initial introductory conversation, your prospect should be convinced that you know what you're talking about, so that they're confident in doing business with you.

Then, show a little kindness.

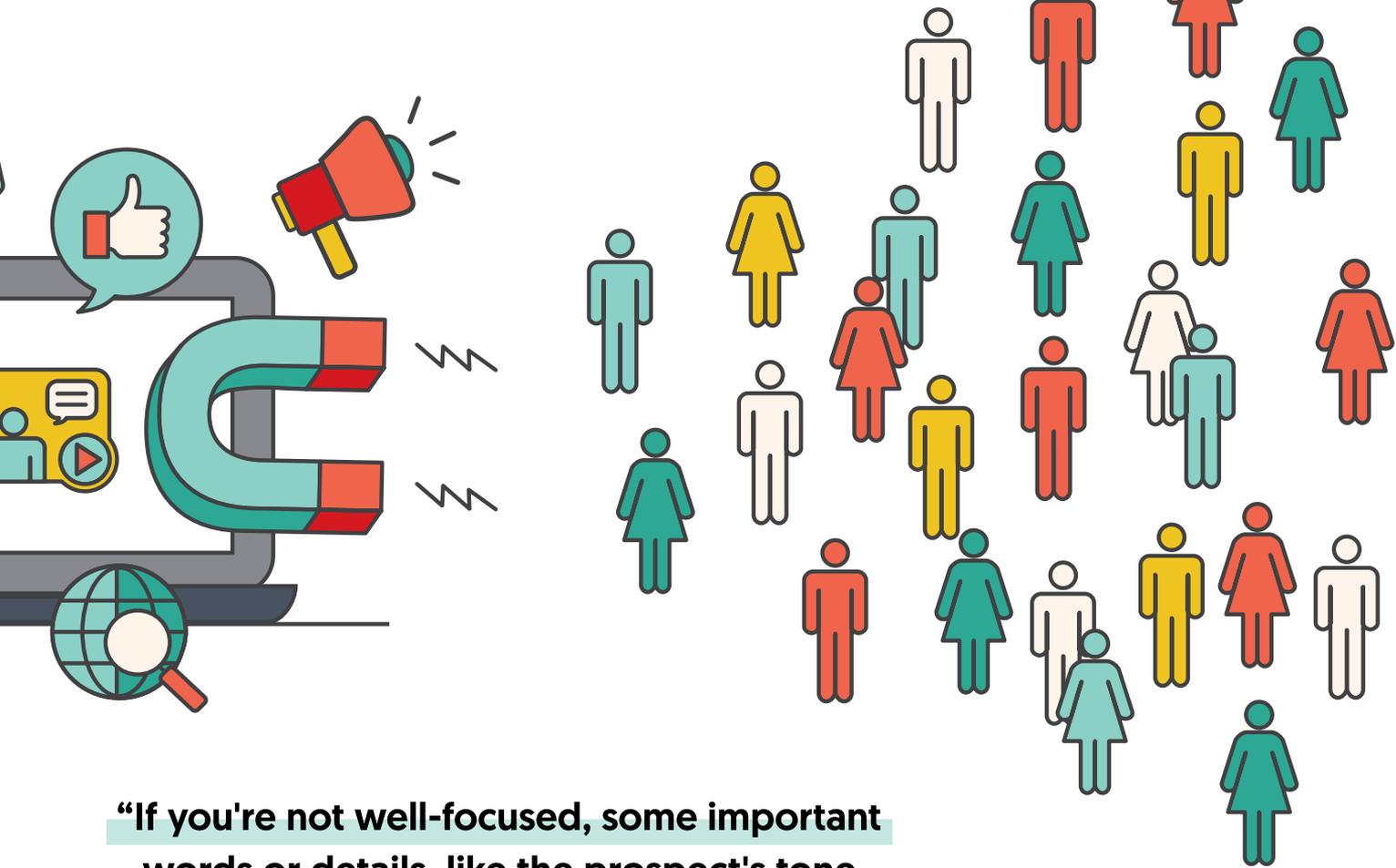
The client must feel that you want to genuinely help them meet their needs, and that you're truly listening.

By leaving a lasting impression, you're increasing your chances of the client acting upon their intentions when the time comes.



**“It’s very rare to close a sale by approaching a prospect for the first time, so we contact them first and foremost to create a good relationship.”**

- Alain Samson



**“If you're not well-focused, some important words or details, like the prospect's tone of voice when mentioning certain things, may escape our attention.”**

- Alain Samson

It's also important to avoid conducting this type of conversation when you're concerned or distracted. Making phone calls while driving, for example, is never a good idea.

"If you are not well-focused, some important words or details like the prospect's tone of voice when mentioning certain things may escape our attention," warns Samson. "In addition, the prospect might feel that you lack attention, which will damage your relationship with them."

As for how often you follow-up after your initial outreach, it really depends on each person.

A passionate traveller will be contacted more often than someone who travels once a year or less. The way you re-establish contact can also vary.

After the first call, an email follow-up may be more appropriate than a second phone call. It's not about harassing people, either.

The information gathered from the first point of contact between you and your prospect is also used to plan the next steps.

Try to find out the time of year this person plans their trips so that you can get in touch with them in the most opportune moments.

The key to a successful first contact is curiosity. The more you learn about your prospect, the easier it will be for you to approach them in the best way. ●



Well-written e-mails improve the click-through rate by 14 per cent and the conversion rate (sales) by 10 per cent, according to the Aberdeen Group.



Long blog posts generate nine times more leads than short blog posts, according to Curata.

# Take Pride

**1** The rank assigned to Canada, Portugal and Sweden as the world's top LGBT-friendly travel destinations, as detailed in the 2019 Spartacus Gay Travel Index. The annual ranking across 197 nations is determined by 14 criteria assessing each country's stance on issues such as anti-discrimination measures and same-sex marriage.

**2** The number of leisure trips taken in a year by 20 per cent of respondents in Community Marketing Inc's 2018 Canadian LGBTQ Tourism & Hospitality Survey. By comparison, an additional 16 per cent of respondents had taken six or more annual vacations.

**4 million**

The approximate number of attendees at São Paulo's 2011 Pride parade, the largest event of its kind in recent years. Brazil's most populous city knows how to throw a party – attendance records at both its 2006 and 2018 Pride events swelled to more than 3 million people taking part in the celebrations.

**7.1 billion**

The value, in U.S. dollars, of the Canadian LGBT travel market, as assessed by travel industry consulting firm Out Now in its LGBT2030 research program. The figure includes both domestic and international travel spend and represents an average annual growth rate of 1.7 per cent.

**86%** The percentage of respondents in Community Marketing Inc's 2018 Canadian LGBTQ Tourism & Hospitality Survey who hold a valid passport. Of those respondents, 73 per cent had travelled within the last 12 months. ●

Sources: Spartacus, Out Now, PinkNews, Community Marketing Inc.



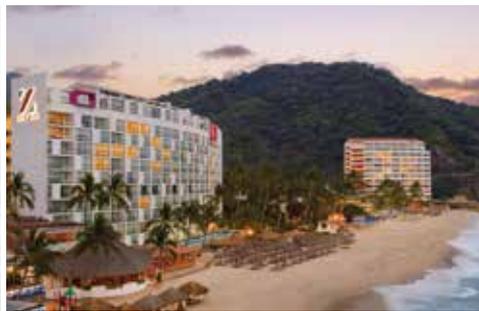
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# Analyzing *the results* of your event

By Aurore Bonvalot



**M**ore often than not, the analysis of an event focuses exclusively on tangible quantitative data. Why not incorporate qualitative data, too?

### Quantitative data

In order to obtain the customer acquisition cost of a specific event, you must first quantify the real total cost versus the monetary impact generated.

You can then compare the sum to other events you've done, or other marketing techniques you've implemented (magazine advertising or buying name lists / e-mail addresses, for example).

You also need to analyze related figures, as they are interesting metrics to explore:

- The number of direct sales
- The number of interactions
- The amount of traffic to your website
- How many subscriptions you receive to your newsletter

- Movements on your social networks
- The amount of Google Alerts related to your company name
- Even the amount of calls you got

Not to mention, of course, any media coverage you might have obtained. Specific mentions in blogs, magazines or newspapers, on the radio or elsewhere on the web usually speak volumes to the success of an event.

This coverage (though it's true value may never be known) generates more impact than any paid advertising (on Facebook, for example), not only at a financial level, but also as far as the credibility of your business with your customers and sponsors is concerned.

While it's almost impossible to truly measure the quantitative and empirical reach, the truth of the matter is that media coverage (as long as it's positive!) is a hugely beneficial gain for your company. →



Image from Freepik.com

Finally, try to split the results between your current customers and potential prospects: these two categories of people can respond very differently to your event. These results will tell you the quality of your performance in relation to your existing customers versus those you covet.

Not to mention, of course, that the cost of replacing an existing customer is far higher than the price of retaining a new one.

If you are organizing a conference, measure the participants' appreciation by observing their reactions: calculate the number of questions asked, analyze the facial expressions during speakers' speeches, listen to the conversations when people are leaving the room.

This information can reveal a lot about the relevance of the messages conveyed and the receptivity of the participants. ●



### Qualitative data

This type of data will help play up the image and notoriety of your company. It can also measure the impact of your event on an emotional level.

This is where the participants' comments should be used in a survey; this can be done by completing an electronic form sent by email or by QR code during the event.

Ask open-ended questions to get the most comments:

- "What did you like?"
- "What should we change next time?"
- "Do you want to subscribe to our newsletter?"
- "What was your favourite part?"
- "Are you already planning on attending the next event?"
- "Are you already following us on social media?"



# Agents are the reason for our Growth and Success!



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# Golden years: a look at today's *senior travellers*

By Blake Wolfe





**I**t's no secret that Canadian seniors like to travel. Considering the annual migration to southern climates, the term 'snowbird' has long been synonymous with Canadian retirees looking to escape winter's icy grip for months on end.

But the seasonal southbound exodus is just one aspect of this market; the preferences and habits of senior travellers

2031, this number could grow to as many as 9.6 million seniors or 23 per cent of Canada's total population.



### Where to?

Peter Wong, president and co-owner of Cruise Holidays & Luxury Travel Boutique in Mississauga, Ontario, has numerous senior travellers among his client base. He has contributed travel

## ““ They have been waiting for retirement and once they do retire, they have a list of trips that they want to take. ””



Peter Wong, president & co-owner, Cruise Holidays & Luxury Travel Boutique, on senior clients.

are as varied as any other segment and with extra time and money available, many boomers are spending their retirement travelling the world, either returning to favourite holiday spots or exploring new destinations.

And boomers are a lucrative market for travel advisors, one that will only continue to grow in the coming years.

According to Statistics Canada, the first baby boomers turned 65 in 2011, leading to the largest increase – 20 per cent – in the number of seniors in Canada in 70 years. While the 2016 Census found there were 5.9 million seniors in Canada – representing 16.9 per cent of the total population – StatsCan estimates that by

tips for seniors to organizations such as CARP (the Canadian Association of Retired Persons).

Considering the wide range of travel that Wong's senior clients are booking, there's no singular definition of what a senior traveller looks like in 2019; while mainstays such as ocean and river cruises remain popular choices, more seniors are branching out in their travel choices.

“River cruises are very popular these days,” Wong tells *PAX*, touting benefits such as security, accessibility and value. “It's a great way to visit Europe. Compared to the traditional bus tour, your valuable vacation time is not wasted checking →

in and out of hotels or sitting on buses to travel from one destination to another.

“Trips to the most remote parts of the world are now available to most seniors,” he continues. “Some of the more popular trips and destinations include river cruises in Europe or Asia, cruises to Asia, the Mediterranean, the Baltic and South America, land tours of Australia and New Zealand, safaris in Africa and expeditions to Antarctica. These trips are now available to seniors of all ages.”

### Travel patterns & frequencies

With increased free time and a flexible schedule, the length of trip and level of travel experience can also vary from traveller to traveller, Wong explains. While some of his clients will take up to six shorter trips per year, others prefer to make one or two annual journeys lasting several weeks, enjoying freedom from the time constraints of building a career and raising a family.

“Recently-retired seniors tend to travel the most,” Wong says. “They have been waiting for retirement and once they

do retire, they have a list of trips that they want to take. Even if you are an experienced traveller, you may not have travelled on a particular cruise line or to a specific destination.”

“We get a range of experience in our senior clients,” he continues. “Many are experienced travellers that use us to plan their trips. Others are new and want us to help them learn to travel.”

This flexibility also allows senior travellers to take advantage of shoulder season pricing and availability, Wong explains, or to book travel around important dates such as holidays or family milestones. And while last-minute travel is a possibility for seniors, Wong adds that the best prices tend to be for early bookings, adding that he advises senior clients to book trips to popular destinations or itineraries well in advance to ensure availability.

### Preferences and spend

When it comes to group sizes, less is more for senior travellers, Wong says, explaining that seniors are happy to pay extra for exclusive experiences.

“We find seniors, especially those that like luxury travel, tend to avoid the large group travel where you move around en masse following a guide with an umbrella. Our clients prefer a more intimate trip with smaller groups and more flexibility in tours, meals and travelling companions.”

He explains that senior clients generally fall into one of four preference categories based on spend, which in turn determines what kind of experience they’re willing to pay for: those looking for authentic experiences who opt for local restaurants and accommodations, accounting for approximately 20 per cent of the seniors’ market; “contemporary travellers” seeking comfort and convenience on their journeys (60 per cent); luxury travellers (10 – 15 per cent) seeking four- and five-star experiences; and ultra-luxury travellers (five to 10 per cent), only wanting the best of the best.

### Planning ahead

Among the biggest considerations for senior travellers planning a trip is the limitations of personal health and accessibility. While modern cruise ships and many destinations are relatively barrier-free, Wong says that travel agents and their senior clients need to be realistic about their travel expectations and plan ahead for any special requirements such as wheelchair accessibility

With health in mind, travel insurance is a must for senior clients, he says.

“Health and accessibility eventually are the main limiting factors affecting senior travel. Accessibility for people with mobility challenges has improved significantly, especially in the cruise industry.

“But eventually health catches up with everyone and there will be a day when →





we are not able to travel any more. We suggest travelling farther afield while you are a younger senior and save the destinations closer to home as you age. We also encourage our newly-retired seniors to travel as much and as far as they can while they are still active.”



### A portrait of two senior travellers

Penny and David McArthur are no strangers to travel.

In fact, the Toronto couple began travelling in the mid 1960s – culminating in a 15-month backpacking journey through Asia, the South Pacific, Russia and Europe – and haven’t stopped since.

While they’re continuing to explore long-haul destinations – including plans to see

Kenya, Tanzania and Vietnam within the next few years – travelling the world as a senior is a much different experience from youthful globetrotting.

“When you’re older, you need more comfort,” says Penny. “You also have to take more stuff with you; you really have to work at packing light. We don’t have the same energy and we take a lot of vitamins now, for example – all of that must be brought along to keep going.

“When we went around the world 50 years ago, we only needed a backpack each; during that trip, older people would come up to us and say, ‘You’re so smart to be doing this at your age.’ At the time, we really didn’t understand what they were talking about!”



Penny and David McArthur

A desire for more comfortable travel also extends to airline bookings, particularly on longer flights.

“For longer trips we book business class, because 19 hours in economy is not fun at our age!” explains David, adding airline loyalty programs come in handy when booking upgraded airfare.

Although their recent trips have also included resort stays and cruises, the McArthurs still prefer to explore while travelling, with Central and South America their current favourite regions, opting for FIT travel over group tours.

“As you get older, sometimes you want to just have a relaxing holiday, as opposed to learning and exploring,” says David. “We took our first cruise on our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary and discovered that was a way to really relax; we’ve done five cruises since.”

“However, an exploration trip is still our first choice and Latin America is for us now a place where we can go and stay for a longer period of time at a reasonable cost,” he continues. “There’s fascinating culture and the food is fantastic.” ●





## A closer look at the four types of senior travellers

### Contemporary travellers (60 per cent)

- Looking for the conveniences of home while travelling to new destinations.
- Prefer to stay in hotels with familiar brand names as opposed to local hotels, with TV and internet readily available.
- Prefer guided tours as opposed to exploring on their own; they would like a tour bus as opposed to local taxi or public transportation.

### Local experiences (approximately 20 per cent)

- Looking to experience the culture, food and history of a destination on a very local level.
- Seeking locally-owned and operated hotels, restaurants, music venues and historic sites far away from the mainstream.
- Interested in immersing themselves in the local environment, including travelling on public transit.
- Willing to give up the comforts of home for the 'real and authentic' experience of a new destination.

### Luxury travellers (10 – 15 per cent)

- Likes to experience the local culture, food and history but with more luxury amenities.
- Prefer 4- or 5-star hotels and resorts and top-rated restaurants.
- Prefer semi-private or small group tours, but also like to go to local concerts and performances.
- Would like to be met at the airport with semi-private transportation.

### Ultra-luxury travellers (five to 10 per cent)

- Seeking 'the best of everything' while they travel. This includes travelling in business or first class, with private limousine transfers and transportation, private guided tours, the best suites in 5-star hotels or cruise lines and Michelin star restaurant dining.
- Looking to experience the best that each destination has to offer. If it means planning their trip around the available dates for a dinner reservation, they will adjust for that.
- Desires high-end experiences and looks to make each trip the pinnacle of what it could be: think Antarctic expeditions, an African safari paired with a luxury beach resort in Zanzibar or private helicopter and hot air balloon tours in Turkey.

# START WITH A DREAM

Allianz Global Assistance



## Seniors' trips of a lifetime start with a dream and good travel protection

From bucket-list trips to impromptu getaways, travel can represent endless possibilities for adventure, especially among mature travellers who, after years in the working world, are fulfilling long-held dreams of discovering the globe.

On average, 14% of Canadians aged 55+ plan trips from two to six months in advance<sup>1</sup>. When they do, they tend to splurge, spending close to \$4,000<sup>1</sup> annually on travel experiences. These may vary from seasonal trips down south to more extravagant adventures such as culinary explorations of Southeast Asia, eco-excursions in the Patagonian rainforest and luxury cruises along the Volga River. While mature travellers might not realize it, preparing for unexpected events is as important as planning for those journeys they have been looking forward to for a lifetime.

When seniors plan a holiday months ahead, they may only think about securing medical travel protection for that one "big trip". But what if they also decide to hop across the border for the weekend, snap up a last-minute seat sale, or drop a small fortune on another bucket-list trip within the same year?

*"Fortunately, seniors are among the most aware of the medical benefits of travel protection, and many do plan accordingly," says Dan Keon, Vice President, Market Management. "However, they also need to view their getaways as investments to be protected from financial loss – much like auto, home or life insurance."*

An easy, convenient and affordable way to also cover those spontaneous trips is with multi-trip travel insurance. Travellers who take two or more trips in a year can benefit from the fact that one policy provides 365 days' worth of coverage on unlimited trips of up to 125 days each. For seniors, that also means the freedom, flexibility and security of knowing they'll get the help they need for planned – and unplanned – travel.

Besides thinking about what could happen during their trip, mature travellers also need to consider that the time between when they book and when they arrive at their destination increases the possibility of something happening to jeopardize their investment. Sudden and unforeseen health, legal, external and work-related situations could ruin their exotic 16-day trip to Borneo, Malaysia and Singapore, for example, and force them to forfeit \$16,000 in pre-paid costs for flights, hotels, tours, and more.

Trip cancellation insurance can help offset such losses as well as out-of-pocket expenses for meals and accommodations when a flight has been delayed or in the event of a missed connection.

*"We always encourage Canadians of all ages to review their credit card, workplace and any other coverage they may have before travelling to understand their benefits, be they for emergency hospital and medical travel insurance or trip cancellation and interruption insurance," says Keon. "We also recommend consulting a trusted travel insurance advisor to confirm they have appropriate coverage in place for their travels."*

With seniors starting to plan their winter getaways now, this is also the time to ensure they have the right protection to help them enjoy the experience of their dreams.

## Elements of a senior's dream travel experience

(among Canadians aged 55+)

At least 1 destination of a lifetime



2 to 6 months advance planning



A budget of close to \$4,000



1 good travel investment protection plan



Source: 2018-2019 Canadian Winter Vacation Confidence Index, Allianz Global Assistance

**If it's worth experiencing, it's worth protecting.**

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'2018-2019 Canadian Winter Vacation Confidence Index, Allianz Global Assistance  
Travel insurance does not cover everything. For full terms and conditions, including limitations and exclusions, refer to the policy booklet. Travel insurance is underwritten by CUMIS General Insurance Company and administered by Allianz Global Assistance.  
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**Allianz**

# Paint *the town* The world's most colourful cities

By Blake Wolfe

**Some cities are renowned for their architecture, others their place in history.**

**Yet others are still famed for adding a splash of colour to the lives of residents and visitors alike, including these five cities. Don't feel blue or be green with envy – anyone can visit these red-hot locations!**



Photo courtesy of Curacao Tourist Board

## Willemstad, Curacao

Curacao's capital Willemstad boasts a kaleidoscope of colour in the Dutch Caribbean, in the city's brightly-coloured Pietermaai district.

Named after Dutch Captain Pieter de Meij, the neighbourhood is known for rows of colourful houses; according to legend, 19th century Curacao Governor-General Albert Kikkert mandated that homes in the area could not be painted white, after attributing his painful headaches to sunlight reflected by the buildings.

Dubbed the "SoHo of Curacao," Pietermaai boasts numerous boutique hotels, shops, cafés and top-rated restaurants for tourists to enjoy and explore.

## Cartagena, Colombia

Colombia's Caribbean hotspot, Cartagena, has many colourful sides for travellers to take in.

The old city centre is where many of the renowned coloured homes can be found, particularly in the San Diego neighbourhood. Keeping the character of these neighbourhoods in mind, Cartagena residents who paint their homes are encouraged to use colours that contrast those of their neighbours.

Colour of a different kind can be found in Getsemani, a formerly gritty neighbourhood which is now home to some of Cartagena's best street art.





## Copenhagen, Denmark

While the statue of Hans Christian Andersen's *The Little Mermaid* is the official symbol of Copenhagen, the city's Nyhavn district and its multi-coloured townhouses also comes to mind when discussing the Danish capital.

Just a few blocks away from *The Little Mermaid*, Nyhavn was once home to Andersen, who lived at No. 20, where his first story was written; and later, at No. 67, where he lodged from 1848 to 1865, now the site of Café HC Andersen.

## Cape Town, South Africa

Established in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Bo-Kaap neighbourhood of Cape Town is among the city's earliest communities – and it's most colourful!

The *huurhuisjes* (rental houses) were originally built and leased to slaves; while slavery-era laws required the homes to remain white, the vibrant colours appeared as an expression of freedom after the properties were sold to former slaves post-emancipation.

Historically a Muslim neighbourhood, Bo-Kaap is home to Auwal Mosque, the oldest mosque in South Africa, which also contains a copy of the Quran written from memory by the mosque's first imam, Tuan Guru.



Photo courtesy of South African Tourism

## Chefchaouen, Morocco

Known for its many blue houses, the Moroccan city of Chefchaouen is located just inland from Tangier in the Atlas Mountains.

Many theories on the origins of the city's blue homes have persisted over the years, from the colour acting as a mosquito repellent to the feature being introduced to local homes by Jews fleeing Nazi Germany in the 1930s.

While the answer may remain a mystery, the blue homes of Chefchaouen have become a popular tourist attraction, drawing thousands of (mainly European) visitors every year. ●



# Digital marketing tools to help grow your business

By Frédéric Gonzalo, speaker digital marketing consultant



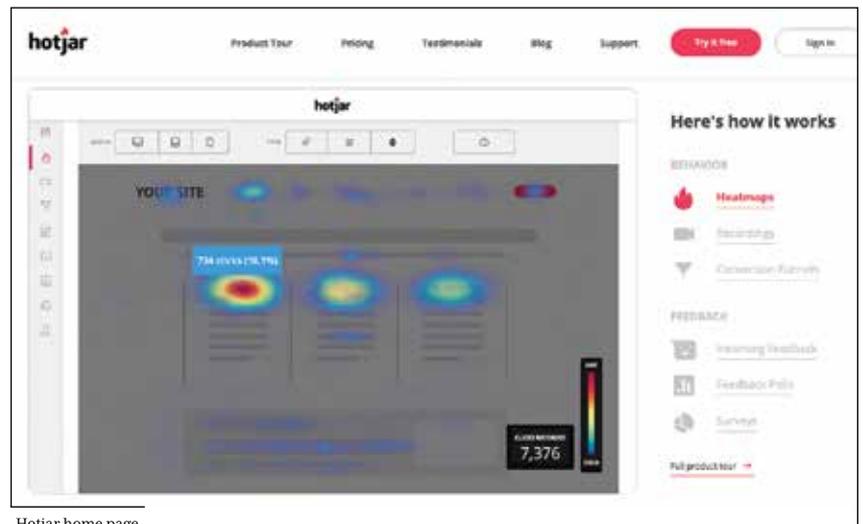
Last month, I offered up some insight on practical tools that can successfully optimize your performance on Facebook, Instagram and your own website. Now I'm introducing you to several tools that can help you craft successful newsletters and videos.

If you are self-managing your video creation and digital marketing, you are missing out on some great tools offered by various online platforms that are designed to take your digital marketing to the next level. While most of them cost money, some are free, too!

## Sending newsletters

I'm always surprised when a travel agency (or any other client) admits that they've never sent out a newsletter to their customer base.

It has been shown time and time again that it's always better to retain a past or current clientele than to fall into the trap of acquisition at any price.



Hotjar home page

Most travel agency networks offer home-based solutions with templates and content already prepared for sending newsletters or promotional e-mails, from TravelSavers to The Ensemble Travel Group, via Voyages en Direct or the TDC group.

If you're not currently part of any group, there are several solutions for sending emails at your fingertips:



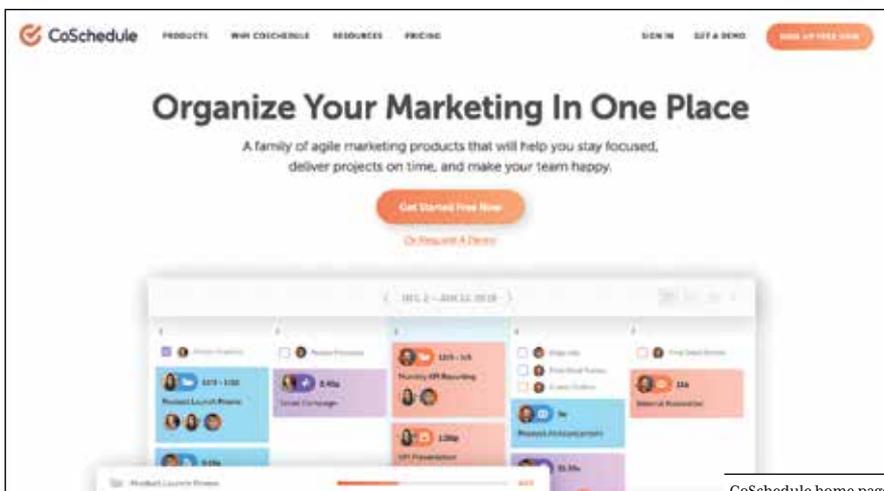
- **CyberImpact:** a Montreal-based solution offering a full range of services in both official languages, and in compliance with laws such as C-28 (Federal Anti-Spam Law).
- **DialogInsight:** another Quebec-based solution, with offices in Montreal and Quebec City, also offering automated mailings, dedicated landing pages and several interesting features.
- **MailChimp:** the best-known global solution, which is completely free for mailing lists that have less than 2,000 contacts! We like its ergonomics and user-friendly interface, but the costs can increase quickly depending on the size of your database.

Several additional tools including Active Campaign, Campaign Monitor, Cake Mail, SendinBlue and Constant Contact are other great examples.

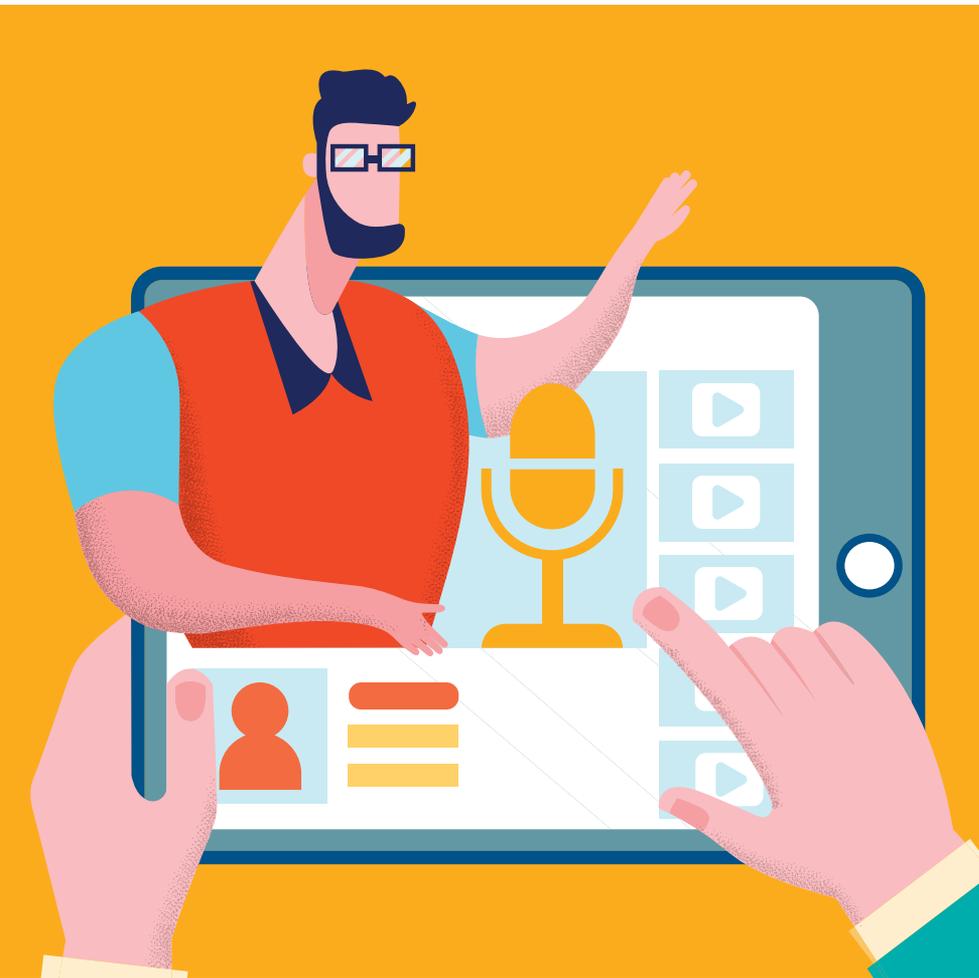
No solution is free, and prices will vary depending on the features you want, the volume of your database and the frequency of your mailings.

### Writing subject headlines

Writing subject titles can be trial and error before you find a catchy solution that works for you. →



CoSchedule home page



In my last column, I talked about Google Ads, advertising placement on Google and YouTube. Curious to see what your competitors are up to, in terms of ad buying via Google? You can find out, thanks to tools like Spyfu or SE Ranking, and SEMrush.

### Video creation

I don't want to leave out the importance of using tools to create dynamic videos or slideshows that we can share later via social media or your newsletter, among others.

Animoto was one of the first applications to turn static photos into an animated slideshow with sound, text and special effects.

Available for free or for a fee depending on features, it's an absolute must.

I highly recommend using the CoSchedule Headline Analyzer tool for making a strong subject line (title) of your newsletter, which is ultimately what will make people want to open your email in the first place.

### Other tools for your website

Distributing newsletters can result in an increase in website traffic, more calls on your 1-800 line, or downloading a form or brochure.

In all these scenarios, you'll want to measure the conversion no matter how you define it.

A tool like Hotjar is very useful for knowing how people are browsing your website or a dedicated landing page. It allows you to do eye tracking (heat maps), which lets you see exactly what people are looking at when they visit your website.

Additional tools like Easil, CutStory or Storeo are useful to make your stories more professional, especially with more fluid and uninterrupted videos in the stories news feed, both on Instagram and Facebook. ●

“In all these scenarios, you'll want to measure the conversion no matter how you define it.”

# WIN BIG

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IN APPRECIATION of all that you do to recommend Windstar Cruises to your clients, we've created a rewards program just for you! During Travel Advisor Appreciation Month, you can earn points for learning about our brand, promoting our cruises, and making bookings – and win a 5-day cruise aboard the newly transformed *Star Breeze*, fresh from the \$250 Million *Star Plus Initiative*, sailing from Miami along with other opportunities to win gift cards.

### EARN POINTS TO WIN!

Graduate from our Star Specialist Academy and attend webinars to learn more about what makes Windstar Cruises different from other cruise line.

**bookWINDSTAR ONLINE** makes it easy to book your clients on a vacation that leaves crowds and commonplace behind to find unique ports of call, and local, exotic cultures that are at once fascinating and wondrous. Share your Windstar experiences on social media and highlight what a Windstar adventure feels like first-hand for your clients -- as an added bonus during the contest, you'll scoop up points and will be that much closer to your opportunity to win these incredible incentives.

### HOW TO EARN POINTS

#### EDUCATION

Graduate Star Specialist Academy	180 pts
Attend a Windstar Webinar	180 pts

#### SOCIAL

Windstar Social Media Post - Facebook	180 pts
Windstar Social Media Post - Instagram	180 pts
Windstar Social Media Post - Twitter	180 pts
Send out a Windstar Cruises Promotional Email	180 pts

#### SALES

Make a Windstar Booking*	90 pts
Register to use bookWINDSTAR ONLINE	180 pts
Make a Windstar Booking using bookWINDSTAR ONLINE*	180 pts
Make your first bookWINDSTAR ONLINE booking	360 pts

\* Can be earned multiple times

### MANY OPTIONS FOR PRIZES

At the end of June, we'll count up the points you've earned to see what you've won. Be sure to register your earned points at the website below by the end of July to qualify. Good luck and get started today!

### PRIZES\*

1000 pts	\$100 Gift Card
1500 pts	\$150 Gift Card
2000 pts	\$200 Gift Card
3000 pts	\$300 Gift Card
4000 pts	\$500 Gift Card
5000 pts	\$750 Gift Card

\*Gift cards are awarded for the total cumulative points you've earned at the end of June.

### GRAND PRIZE WINNERS\*

Top 5 Advisors will be awarded an elegant suite for two guests on the *Star Breeze* 5-day sailing from Miami in 2020. The Top 5 Advisors will be determined by highest number of cumulative points earned by the conclusion of the contest.

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During May and June 2019, Windstar is sponsoring a promotion for licensed US and Canadian Travel Advisors. Travel Advisors will earn points for booking cruises and engaging in other educational and promotional activities involving Windstar Cruises from May 1 – June 30, 2019. Travel Advisors must register for the promotion and claim their activity points via the designated submission form no later than July 31, 2019. Travel Advisors will be eligible to earn a gift card if a minimum number of points is earned. Higher value cards are awarded if the Travel Agent earns certain higher levels of total points. Five Grand Prizes will be awarded to the participants who earn the highest number of points. The Grand Prize is a 5-day cruise embarking and disembarking in Miami, Florida. The promotion and calculation of points will be administered at Windstar's sole discretion. All bookings are eligible to earn points with the exception of Interline, Friends and Family, and TA rate bookings. Gift cards will be sent to the Travel Advisor once all his/her eligible bookings have been fully paid and have sailed. All card issuer terms and conditions for gift cards apply. Information contained herein is accurate at the time of publication and subject to change without notice. Please see the Official Rules of the promotion at [AdvisorHub.WindstarCruises.com/Appreciation](http://AdvisorHub.WindstarCruises.com/Appreciation) for eligibility requirements and all terms and conditions; this is only a summary. Offer expires on June 30, 2019. Ships' registry: Bahamas.



A WORLD OF UNFORGETTABLE EXPERIENCES





# Cruising *with pride:* a look at the **LGBTQ** cruise market

By Ming Tappin

**W**ith an increasing number of global destinations and resorts proudly flying the rainbow flag to welcome LGBTQ travellers, it isn't a surprise that the cruise industry is also a big player in this demographic.

Cruising is popular with the LGBTQ community as it offers a safe environment, with fine dining, attentive service, planned entertainment and activities, plus all the facilities of a world-class resort. Travellers can also select a cruise to suit their budget and travel style, from mass-market to luxury, large or small ships, on the ocean or river.

### From FIT to charters

All cruise lines welcome LGBTQ travellers. On mainstream ocean ships, an LGBTQ social typically takes place after dinner on the first evening of the cruise. Hosted in a lounge by a member of the ship's staff, this introductory event allows LGBTQ travellers to meet each other right away. Throughout the voyage, additional get-togethers will be scheduled, with a meeting time and place listed on the ship's daily program. LGBTQ travellers who meet at these events may decide to plan additional activities on their own, such as attend dinners and entertainment together, or go on the same shore excursions. →

For those looking for an exclusively LGBTQ cruise experience, several tour companies offer full-ship charters. These departures include a fully-customized program. Special entertainers are brought on board, group excursions are offered and there is a full roster of activities.

### Same-sex weddings available

Several cruise lines are now offering legally recognized same-sex weddings aboard their ships. Couples can either tie the knot at sea or in port (in countries where same-sex marriages are legal).

Cruise lines offering nuptials include:

- Carnival Cruise Lines
- Celebrity Cruises
- Norwegian Cruise Line
- Paul Gauguin Cruises
- Royal Caribbean Cruise Line.

Wedding packages range from an intimate ceremony for two to grand celebrations for large groups and families.

- The global LGBTQ travel market is valued at **\$200 billion**
- More than **1.2 million Canadians** who have identified themselves as LGBTQ
- There were **64,575 same-sex families** in Canada in 2011
- **29 per cent of LGBTQ travellers** spend more than \$2,000 per trip on average
- A few countries that have **legalized same-sex weddings**, and have since become key players in the LGBTQ segment:

- |                |                  |
|----------------|------------------|
| - Australia    | - Iceland        |
| - South Africa | - Brazil         |
| - Israel       | - New Zealand    |
| - Austria      | - Uruguay        |
| - Sweden       | - United Kingdom |
| - Belgium      |                  |



Image from Freepik.com



### LGBTQ travel is booming

According to the International Gay & Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA), the global LGBTQ travel market is valued at \$200 billion. Fierté Canada Pride, the official association of Canadian Pride events, reports that there are more than 1.2 million Canadians who have identified themselves as LGBTQ. With these growing numbers and higher average spend per trip, travel providers are focusing their efforts to promote LGBTQ travel.

So, how do you capture LGBTQ business? First and foremost, learn and understand the diversity and

travel needs of this market. The Canadian LGBT+ Chamber of Commerce ([www.cglcc.org](http://www.cglcc.org)) offers workshops for the tourism industry on how to “effectively understand, value and serve” LGBTQ clients. Get involved with your local LGBTQ community by attending or volunteering at events. Engage with LGBTQ-friendly suppliers, consider hiring travel consultants who have experience with the LGBTQ market. You may also wish to join the IGLTA - a leader in providing resources for LGBTQ travellers, with travel provider members in more than 75 countries. Visit [www.igltta.org](http://www.igltta.org). ●



The following is a list of major companies offering cruises for the LGBTQ community. All companies are U.S.-based, work with travel agents and pay commission. Visit each website to browse sailings, check FAQs and to inquire about booking arrangements.



---

### Atlantis Events

[www.atlantisevents.com](http://www.atlantisevents.com)

With more than 25 years' experience, Atlantis is the largest vacation provider for the LGBTQ community, booking more than 20,000 guests every year. The company arranges several full-ship charters sailing to global destinations.

### Brand G Vacations

[www.brandgvacations.com](http://www.brandgvacations.com)

Founded in 2011, Brand G specializes in river and expedition cruising for LGBTQ travellers looking for something different from the mainstream gay cruises. All cruises are full-ship charters, for LGBTQ travellers and straight allies age 21 and up.

### Olivia Cruises

[www.olivia.com](http://www.olivia.com)

The company has been providing travel for the lesbian market since 1990. To date, more than 300,000 women have travelled with Olivia on trips that include full charters of large ocean liners, river ships, and expedition vessels.

### R Family Vacations

[www.rfamilyvacations.com](http://www.rfamilyvacations.com)

Established in 2003, R Family Vacations provide chartered cruises for LGBTQ families and their friends, where "everyone is welcome and there is something for everyone." The company has taken more than 20,000 clients on cruises all over the world.

### RSVP Vacations

[www.rsypvacations.com](http://www.rsypvacations.com)

A company with 34 years of history, RSVP Vacations has welcomed more than 100,000 guests on its customized vacations, including full-ship charters.

# Congratulations to our April 2019, Jet Set FAM 3 Five Star Academy Graduates!



**Josée Allard**  
Vasco Mercier



**Chantal Allen**  
Vasco Mercier



**Mylène Arcand**  
Voyages en direct  
Beleoil



**Andrea Arkell**  
TTAND - Arkell Travel



**Amanda Armstrong**  
TTAND



**Suzie Baril**  
TTAND - Travel  
Essence



**Rosemary Bartello**  
Cruise Holidays of  
Oakville



**Taryn Bastead**  
Cruise Holidays of  
Burlington



**Annie Benayoun**  
Vision Voyages



**Joceline Côté**  
Club Voyages  
Guertin



**Manon Cronier**  
Voyages Aqua Terra



**Laura De Leon Sandoval**  
Voyages CAA-Québec



**Sheila Dertinger**  
Travel Only



**Debbie Dimmick**  
ECSC Milton



**Diane Donato**  
ECSC Vaughan



**Janet Donegan**  
ECSC Courtice



**Patty Dreyer**  
Vision Travel - Paris



**Stéphanie Dubé**  
Voyages  
CAA-Québec



**Julie Gauthier**  
ECSC Repentigny



**Dominique Graham**  
TTI Travel



**Marie-Pier Guilmette**  
Voyage Vasco La  
Chaudière



**Line Haché**  
Voyage Vasco La  
Chaudière



**Qadir Hakimi**  
CAA Travel Call  
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**Diane Haskill**  
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**Tomas Maebræ**  
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**Nathalie Marcotte**  
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Voyages Gendron



**Delia Pereira**  
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**Rebecca Peterson**  
ECSC Ottawa



**Martine Phaneuf**  
Vacances le  
Faubourg



**Elizabeth Piquette**  
Voyages Vasco  
Ste-Thérèse



**Carmelina  
Pirocco - Crawford**  
ECSC Oakville South



**Lucie Prévost**  
Club Voyages  
Guertin



**Ian Proctor**  
Migrations Travel  
and Cruises



**Ruth Ruddy**  
TTAND



**Madeleine Salem**  
Voyages Synergia



**Tammy Templeton**  
Tripcentral



**Svetlana Topalovska**  
ECSC Vaughan



**Ana Tremblay**  
Algonquin Travel -  
Gloucester Centre



**Deborah Usprich**  
ECSC London



**Debbie Vachon-Collier**  
ECSC Courtice



**Angela Van Lanen**  
ECSC London



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Voyages CAA  
Québec



**Francine Bleau**  
Voyages Vasco  
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**Christian Bornais**  
Voyages Synergia



**Marie-Claude Boucher**  
Exotantik Voyages



**Manon Carrier**  
Club Voyages  
Mont Tremblant



**Josée Charbonneau**  
Vacances le  
Faubourg



**Vivian Cheung**  
RVT



**Winnie Cheung**  
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**Chantal Clément**  
Voyages Gaby



**Pascale Dubuisson**  
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**Pierre Dupuis**  
Club Voyages  
ailes d'or



**Janice Emond**  
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**Georgia Filis**  
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**Deana Fishman**  
Travel Edge



**Mel Fishman**  
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**Sophie Fontaine**  
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**Nicole Francis**  
Travel Only



**Sébastien Gagnon**  
Voyages Bergeron



**Tara Huk**  
Flight Centre



**Vanessa Jasmin**  
Club Voyages  
St-Lambert



**LeeAnn Jensen**  
TTAND



**Darolyn Jones**  
ECSC Peterborough



**Sylvie Kinderstuh**  
Voyages CAA-  
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**Crystal Kusik**  
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**Julie Lanouette**  
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**Gail McDermott**  
Voyages Aquarelle



**Marilyn Montpetit**  
Voyages Traditours



**Marie-Eve Morneau**  
Club Voyages  
Dumoulin



**Sylvie Murray**  
Voyages Synergia



**Marie-Claude Nantel**  
Voyages CAA-Québec  
Brossard



**Monica Nienhaus**  
ECSC Oakville South



**Veronica Oliveros**  
ECSC Mississauga



**Claudia Pagé**  
Voyages Gendron



**Barbara Paquin**  
Voyages  
Charterama



**Gillian Scott**  
Nexion Canada ULC



**Gail Lea Scullion**  
Contact Amérique  
Voyage



**Leena Shah**  
Flight Centre



**Teresa Simon**  
Vision Travel - Paris



**Elaine Simpson**  
Algonquin Travel -  
Gloucester Centre



**Wendy Singh**  
Cruise Holidays of  
Metro East



**Gowrey Somas**  
Travel Brands



**Peter Stapylton**  
ECSC London



**Nadia Svoboda**  
Cruise Holidays of  
Oakville



**Debbie Watson**  
Maritime Travel



**Jonathan Watt**  
Travel Only



**Julie Welsh**  
ECSC Courtice



**Laurie Whittaker**  
ECSC Kanata



**Justen Wilson**  
CAA Niagara -  
St. Catharines



**Marilu Wright**  
ECSC Mississauga



**Ruth Wright**  
ECSC Milton

**Graduates without photo:**

- Diane Accardi** CAA Sco Oshawa
- Cathy Bower** ECSC Oakville
- Lindsay Butterworth** ECSC Whitby
- Liz Byrnes** ECSC Peterborough
- Francine Chenier** Voyages CAA Québec
- Jennifer Coulter** CAA South Central Ontario
- Sandra Crozier** ECSC Peterborough
- Natalia Hopman** Flight Centre - Burlington Mall

- Virginia Keating** ECSC Peterborough
- Nancy Labelle** ECSC Ottawa
- Cindy McDonnell** CAA Sco Oshawa
- Janet McVeigh** Vision Travel - Cambridge
- Kimberly Munnings** ECSC Oakville
- Valerie Murphy** Vision Travel - Cambridge
- Francine Turcotte** ECSC Ottawa
- Melissa Woodhouse** Flight Centre - Burlington Mall

# Strolling through Dublin

By Blake Wolfe

**Like many historic European capitals, Dublin is wonderfully walkable.**



**B**oasting a population of approximately 500,000, Ireland's capital is still somewhat small and compact, with many key attractions situated in and around the downtown core.

Lace up your sneakers or hiking boots and explore Dublin on foot!

## Walk this way

With Dublin bisected east to west by the River Liffey, the city boasts a number of key attractions located within a short walk of each other, especially south of the river.

Starting on the south side of the Ha'Penny Bridge, Dublin's famous Temple Bar is a few blocks west, where guests can enjoy a meal and a beverage (or two!) to prepare them for their stroll. Heading southwest, visitors can explore Dublin Castle and continue on to St. Patrick's Cathedral, or head east to Trinity College and its renowned library.

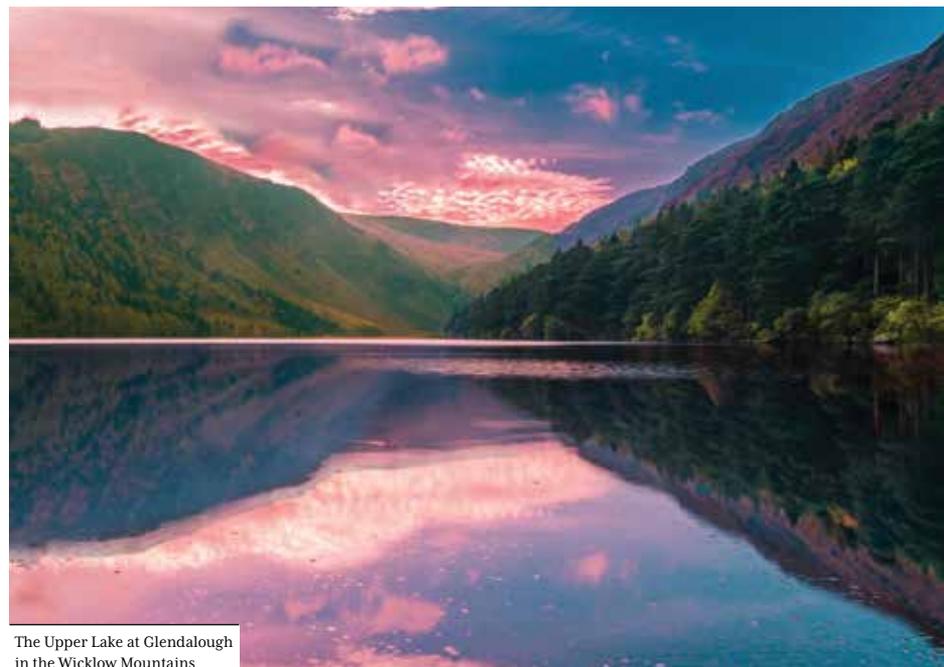
Access to many of these attractions is also included in The Dublin Pass, a sightseeing card that provides free entry to more than 30 attractions throughout the city.

And if your clients get tired, the pass also includes transportation!

## Well-read, well-played

One of UNESCO's Cities of Literature (a designation commemorating a city's commitment to literacy, education and the arts), Dublin has been the home

to four Nobel-winning authors – W.B. Yeats, Samuel Beckett, George Bernard Shaw and Seamus Heaney – along with several other renowned writers including *Dracula* creator Bram Stoker, Jonathan Swift of *Gulliver's Travels* fame (buried at St. Patrick's Cathedral) and *Ulysses* writer James Joyce.



The Upper Lake at Glendalough in the Wicklow Mountains



Photo courtesy of Tourism Ireland

The Temple Bar

Tours of Dublin based on Joyce's works are available throughout the year hosted by the city's James Joyce Centre.

In addition to classic literature, Dublin is also known for its contributions to the world of rock 'n' roll.

Numerous sites throughout the city can be discovered on foot, from the guitar sculpture dedicated to blues guitarist Rory Gallagher in Temple Bar to the statue of Thin Lizzy frontman Phil Lynott, along

with numerous sites associated with U2 such as The Clarence Hotel, a hang-out spot for the band in its early days.

Another commemoration of the city's rock 'n' roll heritage will take place in 2020, when travellers will be able to stay at Hard Rock Hotel Dublin, the chain's first property in the city featuring 120 rooms spread across two adjacent buildings.

### Daytripper

Is hiking more your clients' speed?

While it requires a rental car or taking a bus tour, Ireland's Wicklow Mountains are just an hour south of Dublin. One of six national parks in Ireland – and arguably the most popular – the Wicklow Mountains span 20,000 hectares with plenty of trails to explore.

Several lakes and rivers can be found in the mountains, such as Upper Lake in the Glendalough valley, which can be explored by certified scuba divers with a permit.

Entry to the park is free, although there is a small charge to park. ●



## GETTING THERE

- Air Canada offers service to Dublin from major gateways across the country (including seasonal service from Montreal and Vancouver, along with year-round flights from Toronto), as does Air Transat during its summer service running from April to October.
- WestJet offers direct service to Dublin from Halifax up to six times weekly during the peak summer schedule and starting in June, will launch service from Calgary.
- In addition, Norwegian Air has recently launched service from Hamilton, Ontario and starting in summer 2020, Aer Lingus will offer service to Dublin from Montreal.

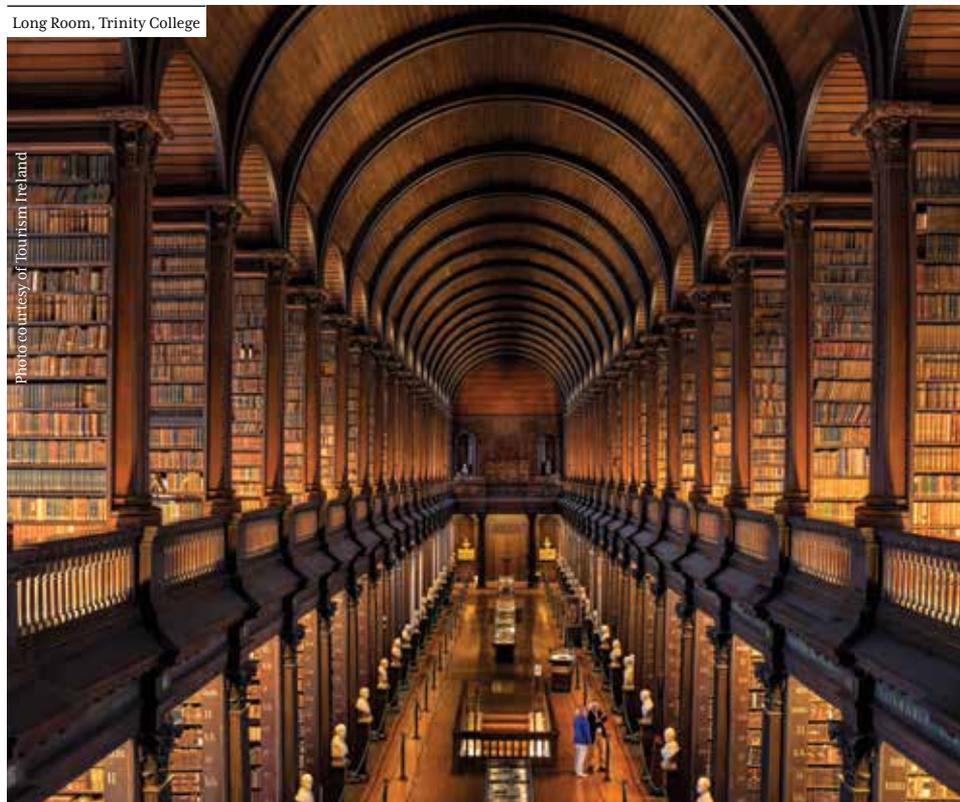


## DID YOU KNOW?

- You won't be thirsty in Dublin, as the city is home to more than 1,000 pubs! The oldest is The Brazen Head, located in a building which dates back to 1198.
- At 1,252 acres, Dublin's Phoenix Park (which contains the Dublin Zoo) is the largest enclosed park in Europe.

Long Room, Trinity College

Photo courtesy of Tourism Ireland



## DESTINATIONS TO DISCOVER

# Naxos:

## the mesmerizing island of the Cyclades

Text and photos by Marie-Eve Vallières



If you're in Santorini and Mykonos and become overwhelmed by the hordes of camera-clicking cruise passengers, then Naxos is for you, as it's where you'll find an authentic Greek experience.

It must be said that the largest island of the Cyclades has an undeniable charm, which has not (yet) been affected by mass tourism. A true pole of Hellenic and Byzantine culture, Naxos offers a small foray into the Greek way of life as it is now.

### Chóra, a charming port

The "metropolis" of Naxos (a very relative title, since it has only a few thousand inhabitants) is a photogenic port known for its blue Aegean boats, its labyrinth of winding cobblestone streets and its jovial traders.

The culinary traditions of the island were born there. Just think of the freshly caught

octopus or the decadent yogurt garnished with candied grapes – so creamy that a spoon can easily stand upright.

It has heritage of the Venetian era and it is even possible to attend a classical music concert in an old dungeon, organized by an extravagant aristocrat.

The steep pedestrian alleys of the Kastro, once a haunt of Roman Catholics (as opposed to the Bourgos neighborhood that encircled the Greek Orthodox community), are punctuated with pretty shops that are worth visiting, according to the fuchsia azaleas and countless cats that frequent them.





## GETTING TO NAXOS

- Air Transat offers seasonal flights to Athens. The tour operator also offers several land and sea packages throughout Greece.
- A ferry serves the central Cycladic island three times a day from the two ports of Athens. It is also possible to get there by plane.
- Once there, guests have two options: rent a car and stay in various places on the island or book a villa near Naxian Collection in Chóra and proceed from there by motorcycle.

The topological and touristic pinnacle of Chóra is only a few strides away from the historic centre.

On the one hand, there is the temple of Apollo on the peninsula of the port, with its large arch that seems to peer into another world. On the other, a huge mountainous expanse where villages hide, and time seems to stand still. Therefore, it's impossible to go to Naxos and not admire the vermeil sunset glittering on the sea and igniting with its rays the fertile hills of the hinterland dominated by Mount Zeus.

### Unsuspecting beaches

If those who love gastronomy and culture find their calling in Naxos, sun-seeking tourists will appreciate just how close the beaches are to the island.

Here, the beaches fall into two categories: wild and managed. The former are devoid of furniture and toilets, while the latter

are usually more lively and equipped with a small tavern offering food and drink in addition to spaces to change into bathing suits.

In any case, visitors can count on experiencing very fine golden sand and very pleasant waters.

Some names to remember: Georgios, Prokopios, Orkos, Mikri Vigla and Kastraki.

### Apeiranthos and Halki, millennial villages

Hiding out beyond the hills that contain quarries of marble and emery, two of Naxos' biggest exports, more than 30 pretty villages that have stood the test of time can be spotted.

In streets that date back thousands of years, both in Apeiranthos and Halki, we meet artisans whose happiness is



contagious; selling all kinds of things, like figs, pottery, olives, jewellery, textiles, honey - a Naxiote specialty - and kitro, a citron liqueur.

The two villages are similar because of their terraces shaded by holm oaks and endearing residents (often elderly) who often sit and play dice, discussing everything and nothing, laughing at tourists who indulge in selfies while sipping the occasional small glass of kitro to stay healthy.

Occasionally, the village donkey clumsily walks the stone paths to transport food from farms to homes, a typical scene unfolding in Greece that couldn't be more idyllic. ●



Meet sloths, monkeys and more at Mayan Eden Ecopark

Situated in the crystal-blue waters of the Western Caribbean, Roatan is the largest of the Islas de la Bahía, a three-island archipelago off the north shores of Honduras.

Located near the Mesoamerican Barrier Reef – second in size only to Australia’s Great Barrier Reef – Roatan has become Honduras’ star attraction for scuba divers and ecotourists looking to immerse themselves in the island’s renowned biodiversity.

paradise, the waters of Roatan are teeming with a wide variety of marine life, from schools of fish to walls of colourful coral clinging to the undersea landscape.

Many of the island’s best dive sites are located off the western end of Roatan, and different areas are known for particular types of flora and fauna. Want to swim with sharks? Head over to the West End Wall, where multiple species can be observed looking for

## Dive into

# Roatan

By Blake Wolfe

Hop on a zipline or zip up your wetsuit and explore all that Roatan has to offer your clients!

### Under the sea

Renowned for its white sand, Roatan boasts several popular beaches including West Bay, Sandy Bay and Anthony’s Key.

While many visitors enjoy the water from the shore, the secrets of Roatan are revealed under the waves. A world-renowned divers’

their next meal. If coral and sponges are what you’re after, Pablo’s Place in Flowers Bay is the place to be.

Located near West Bay, El Aguila is one of the island’s top dive spots. Here, a wrecked ship purposely sunk in 1997 broke into three parts in 1998 when Hurricane Mitch hit the island, creating the ideal dive spot in the process. Here, visitors can explore the wreck and its aquatic inhabitants, including numerous species of tropical fish, eels and corals that call El Aguila home.

## GETTING THERE

- Numerous cruise lines call in Roatan on their Caribbean itineraries, including Norwegian Cruise Line, Royal Caribbean, Celebrity, Oceania, Regent Seven Seas and MSC Cruises.
- Planning to fly? Packages are also available from both Sunwing and Transat from several Canadian gateways each winter.



The waters of West Bay are teeming with sea turtles

And thanks to average water temperatures of 25 – 29 C, scuba diving is a year-round activity in Roatan.

### A range of resorts

An array of accommodations await travellers in Roatan, from boutique villas to all-inclusives and all points in between.

Have clients who want to check out sea turtles in their natural habitat? The shores and waters of West Bay are known hotspots for sea turtle sightings, with all-inclusive properties including Infinity Bay Spa & Beach Resort and Henry Morgan Hotel & Beach Resort (each offered by Sunwing and Transat respectively).

Dive packages are also available from many local resorts, with options for activities such as wreck diving, cave diving and shore diving.

### Meet the neighbours

To the east and west of Roatan lie two other islands of note, Utila and Guanaja, accessible by charter flight or boat.

Not only are these two islands the go-to spots for Roatan visitors seeking a vibrant nightlife, there's unique opportunities to explore the natural environments: on Guanaja, travellers can hike mountains and take in numerous waterfalls, while the waters of Utila boast more than 80 dive sites, including spots where whale

sharks are known to swim. Also of note on Utila is Jade Seahorse Garden, a unique attraction decorated in pearls, glass bottles and ceramic.

### Get natural on land

For travellers that prefer to stay dry, there's lots to see and do on land.

Located in Coxen Hole (the largest community on Roatan), the Mayan Eden Ecopark gives guests the chance to see sloths and monkeys up close and personal, while providing a sanctuary for hummingbirds and butterflies.

In addition, the Gumbalimba Park in West End allows guests to explore the lush hillsides, where multi-coloured macaws can be seen in the treetops, with the best views available from the park's zipline. ●



## DID YOU KNOW?

- Roatan has just one main road: the Carretera Principal, a winding seaside highway which spans 60 km from West End to East End.
- Amateur divers rejoice – thanks to currency exchange rates, Honduras has one of the lowest prices for PADI certification (Professional Association of Diving Instructors) in the world.



# Costa Rica

## Finding your inner Schwarzenegger

From volcanic mud bathing to zip-lining through the leafy canopies, *PAX* explores the rainforests, volcanoes and hot springs of Guanacaste, Costa Rica.

By Michael Pihach



Adrenaline in Rincon de La Vieja

**T**here's a scene from the 1987 science fiction film *Predator* where the lead character Major Alan "Dutch" Schaefer (played by Arnold Schwarzenegger) realizes he can use mud as camouflage to hide from a killer space alien in the Central American jungle.

This scene played out in my mind as I slapped thick, grey volcanic mud across my bare chest, arms, legs and face in the rainforest of Costa Rica.

Volcanic mud, it's believed, holds a range of possible health benefits, from softening the skin to improving blood circulation to relieving muscle tension.

What's for certain is that mud bathing is a relaxing activity one can find in the



rainforests of Costa Rica, and while the thought of channeling Schwarzenegger hunting down a space monster seemed adventurous at the time, the only things I was killing that day were blackheads and blemishes.

### Soaking up Guanacaste

Mud bathing, still, is one natural (and exfoliating) way to truly become one with Guanacaste, Costa Rica.

Located along the coast of the Pacific Ocean, the province of Guanacaste lies on the northwestern corner of Costa Rica with Nicaragua to the north, Alajuela Province to the east and Puntarenas Province to the southeast. →





Hiking in Chirripó

The province is named after the guanacaste tree (also known as the elephant ear tree), the national tree of Costa Rica.

The sparkling shorelines, mountain ranges, sprawling rainforests, misty waterfalls and active volcanoes make Guanacaste a vacationers' paradise – and there are countless exciting activities one can pursue.

Sun-soaked Tamarindo is a buzzing hot spot, a beach town in Guanacaste well-known within surfing circles.

Here, one can find some of Costa Rica's most prized wildlife; Playa Grande beach, for one, is a nesting site for the majestic

leatherback turtles (the beach also forms part of Las Baulas National Marine Park). The Tamarindo Wildlife Refuge, too, protects local critters such as the howler monkey and crocodiles.

### Hugged by nature

On this weekend jaunt, however, we ventured to the edge of laid-back Matapalo Beach, home to the all-inclusive RIU Guanacaste, our hotel, which is about a 40-minute drive from Liberia Airport (Liberia being the capital city of Guanacaste).

Upon entering the grounds of this RIU, an exclusive Sunwing property, an immediate feeling of “being hugged” by nature washed

over us. Palm trees were everywhere, forming leafy canopies over the walkways that led to a chillaxed beach and freshwater pool, where the swim-up bar was poppin'.

The property was a pretty picture to absorb on the first day of the trip. Guanacaste's lush, green mountains surround the hotel's perimeter, which starts at a palm-tree peppered driveway and ends at a grab-your-book-and-sit beachfront where the only interruptions are the licks of gentle waves and sea turtles nesting nearby.

### Rainforest thrills

“Yaaaaaaaaaaaaas!” I hollered as I zip-lined over hills, creeks and valleys of rugged rainforest as far as the eye can see.

Our lazy piña colada-laden life at the RIU had quickly turned into a sky-high thrill ride the next day as we whizzed down a mountain slope, suspended by nothing but a secure steel cable and harness, and landed on a series of elevated platforms as part of an adrenaline-pumping zip-line circuit.

Zip-lining, a must-do activity when visiting Costa Rica, is part of Sunwing Experiences' Mega Combo Buena Vista excursion, which unfolded on the outskirts of Vulcan Rincon de le Vieja, an active andesitic complex volcano.

While zipping through rainforest canopies from great heights is certainly an adventure worth writing home about, our excursion, which lasted a full day, gave us plenty of opportunities to take in Costa Rica's beauty, beyond the stellar views afforded on a zip-lining course.

There's a rugged and rocky side to Guanacaste's backroads, which

we experienced first-hand on the bumpy back of a horse. There are many horseback riding routes in Costa Rica, from the soft surfaces of a buttery beach to steep rocky inclines.

By the end of our excursion, it was time to unwind – and what better way to do that than in the thermal pools at the peaceful Buena Vista Lodge & Adventure Center. With more than 200 volcanic formations, Costa Rica produces scores of geothermal energy, which fuels many local hot springs – a selection of which can be found here.

It was the perfect caper to a weekend full of delightful thrills, hills and frills. Whether hiking, horseback riding or zip-lining, Costa Rica brings out the daredevil in you – a side of life sometimes missed in sun-and-sand destinations.

Costa Rica makes you feel alive – and that alone is well worth getting muddy for. ●



RIU Guanacaste

## Fun facts about Costa Rica



Costa Rica has more than 161 national parks, biological reserves, wildlife refuges, and privately protected areas.



There are more than 850 bird species in Costa Rica, representing almost 10 per cent of the species in the world!

While monkeys are the most common mammals in the country, the white-tailed deer (yes, Bambi) is the country's national animal. You can spot a deer on the country's 1,000 colones bill.



As many as 100,000 olive ridley sea turtles come ashore on Ostional National Wildlife Refuge's beaches during Costa Rica's *arribada* ("mass arrival"). The turtles are believed to leave behind as many as 10 million eggs.

Coffee is one of Costa Rica's main exports. On the street, words such as "yodo" or "yodito" are synonymous with coffee. Yodo, in Spanish, means 'iodine' (but is slang for coffee because of both liquids' dark, deep colour).





# Emilia Romagna

## Is this Italy's most underrated gourmet destination?

Text and photos by Marie-Ève Vallières

*PAX* visits the north of Italy and samples six iconic Italian dishes endemic to the charming, tourist-free region of Emilia-Romagna.



Cleto Chiarli winery in Castelvetro

**I**t's amusing to me that so many visitors fantasize about driving in the rolling hills of Tuscany, walking along the canals of Venice and exploring the galleries of Florence... while blatantly overlooking what is possibly the most well-rounded, genuine region in all of Italy.

Wedged between Lombardia, Veneto and Tuscany, the region is truly a hidden epicurean gem that has left countless gourmet visitors speechless thanks to its deep-rooted tradition of gastronomy – it is, after all, home to the esteemed Osteria Franceseana, a three-Michelin-star restaurant in Modena and rated the world's best restaurant in 2018, the first Italian eatery to earn the award.

As such, Emilia-Romagna left a lasting impression not only on my taste buds but also, consequently, on my clothing. Because no one goes to Italy thinking their waistline will remain intact – I know I didn't! – for there is no such thing as being on a diet in this country.

### Drink Lambrusco wine

Lambrusco is a sparkling and pleasant red wine very dear to the heart of Emilians. In fact, the eponymous grape has a long winemaking history with archaeological evidence indicating that the Etruscans cultivated the vine in 100 BC.

The grapes are now a *denominazione di origine controllata*, a severe and tightly-controlled quality assurance label for Italian food products.

Lambrusco wine is not aged; the grapes are harvested in late summer and bottled almost immediately, which confers a unique and refreshing zing. Served fresh as an aperitif, it's the perfect introductory red for fervent white devotees.

**Where to go:** Cleto Chiarli in Castelvetro. A picture-perfect, family-owned winery open since 1850 with generous tastings! Most bottles on-site are sold under the €20 mark. Guided visits every day.

### Eat tortelloni

Although your guess is as good as mine when it comes to determining the genuine origins of the ring-shaped pasta, Emilians do like to mock gullible tourists with this preposterous tale.

Rumour has it that the owner of the inn where Lucrezia Borgia, famed femme fatale and Duchess of Ferrara, once stayed was in fact so enamoured by her beauty that he couldn't resist the urge to peek into her room through the keyhole after she had gone to sleep; as the bedroom was only lit by a few candles he merely caught a glimpse of her *ombelico* (navel), which apparently was enough to inspire him to create the now-iconic pasta that night. Because Italy.

**Where to go:** Da Danilo in Modena. Here, tortelloni are stuffed with ricotta and spinach, and glazed in sweet balsamic vinegar.

### Taste balsamic vinegar

As it turns out, artisanal balsamic vinegar is actually quite sweet and potent – just a few drops are necessary to fully exploit the flavours – worlds away from the tangy, sour stuff we have in supermarkets back home.

Much like winemaking, the traditional method of producing this rich elixir →



Ageing balsamic vinegar



involves boiling down just-harvested white Trebbiano grapes to create a must, which will be fermented and aged in wooden casks for at least 12 years.

One of the best ways to enjoy superior balsamic vinegar? By sprinkling it over aged parmesan cheese, or, if you're feeling adventurous, over vanilla ice cream. Trust me on this one.

**📍 Where to go:** Giuseppe Giusti in Lesignana. The world's oldest producer of balsamic vinegar! Guided visits every day.

### **Sample Parmigiano-Reggiano**

Lo and behold, ladies and gentlemen – we are about to enter what some will think of as heaven on earth. Visiting a parmesan dairy and warehouse, where countless ageing wheels line up from floor to ceiling (a few million euros' worth in total), is an absolute must-do when visiting Emilia-Romagna.

Legit Parmigiano-Reggiano can only be produced in a small, designated area around Modena and Bologna and must be aged for a minimum of 12 months. The younger it is, the easier it is to grate over pasta; but as it gets older, it is best enjoyed in chunks and sprinkled with balsamic vinegar.

**📍 Where to go:** Madonne Caseificio dell'Emilia in Lesignana. Guided visits every day.

### **Fill up on prosciutto**

Give me prosciutto wrapped around a piece of melon, as a topping on my pizza, in a sandwich with freshly baked bread, on its own as an aperitif – I'm not picky: I'll take any prosciutto I can get!

And it just so happens that the addictive cold cut is produced in high volumes in the agrarian precincts circling Modena. *Prosciutto di Parma* is a Protected Designations of Origin in the European Union and must, therefore, adhere to certain rules to be considered authentic. For starters, only a handful of breeds are eligible; pigs have to be from Northern Italy where they are fed a diet that contains a secret blend of cereal grains and whey from the Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese production. The meat is heavily salted, trimmed, dried, and hung to cure for anywhere between 12 to 40 months.



Cleto Chiarli winery in Castelnuovo Rangone

**Where to go:** Museo della Salumeria Villani in Castelnuovo Rangone. Guided visits every day.

**Try traditional tagliatelle al ragù**

Sitting down on a sun-drenched, sprawling terrace complete with red-checked tablecloths, I didn't even bother looking at the menu before I swiftly ordered a *tagliatelle al ragù* (the local way of asking for bolognese, which, by the way, isn't served with spaghetti) – which I generously covered in Parmigiano-Reggiano and slurped my way through in less time than I care to admit.

This “bolognese” is really more of a ragout with two kinds of meat (pork and beef) and a healthy dose of veggies chopped so finely they're barely perceptible to sight or taste. I've been trying to recreate it at home ever since, to no avail.

**Where to go:** Trattoria del Rosso, Via Augusto Righi, 30, Bologna. ●

## Discover Ferrari & Pavarotti Passport



If renting a car isn't an option, fear not: it's still possible to visit the gourmet attractions on the outskirts of Bologna and Modena thanks to the Discover Ferrari & Pavarotti Land passport program, which includes entrance fees for the museums plus shuttle service.

- Entrance to several museums
- Guided tours and culinary experiences
- Departures from both the Bologna and Modena train stations
- Rates for one day: 48€ per adult / 24€ per children from 5 to 18 y.o.
- Additional days: 12€ per day per adult, 10€ per day per child.
- Advance purchase on [www.ferrari-pavarottiland.it](http://www.ferrari-pavarottiland.it)
- Pickup at the *ufficio turistico* in Modena (via Paolo Ferrari 98 c/o Vivara Viaggi) or Bologna (Piazza Maggiore)

# Zoëtry Villa Rolandi:

earthly paradise in

# Isla Mujeres

At the Zoëtry Villa Rolandi, you experience the art of living in its simplest form.

An intimate property with just 35 suites, the hotel is worth discovering by sophisticated clientele in search of a peaceful getaway.

Text and photos by Marie-Ève Vallières

**F**rom the outside, Zoëtry Villa Rolandi channels subtle luxury; with its rocky outlines and compact size, the property boasts undertones of a European flair that are sure to appeal to the continent's regular visitors.

Taking a boat to the property (it's on an island, after all) bears resemblance to the vaporettos in Venice. What a stylish arrival!

### A very chic stay

The European charm of Zoëtry Villa Rolandi is felt everywhere on the property, which stands out from its neighbors thanks to its intimate boutique spirit. →







With a signature cocktail in hand, prepared with care at the lobby bar, the pool at Zoëtry Villa Rolandi is a great place to relax and unwind for a few hours.

Flanked by suites with wrought iron balconies brightened by abundant azaleas, all of the rooms feature ocean views, meaning guests will enjoy breathtaking sunsets — a privilege few properties in the region can brag about.

### Discover Isla Mujeres

Located only 25 minutes by ferry from Cancun, the pretty island of Isla Mujeres (which translates to “island of women”) is also a designated “Pueblo Magico” — a program led by the Mexican government meant to promote the most picturesque and culturally-significant towns — that can easily be discovered in a few hours, following the mazes of the main road.

And the best way to go about that?

A golf cart, of course! They can be rented from the hotel’s concierge, allowing guests to venture out on excursions in no time at all.

Several places of interest are worth a visit: from the vast expanses of Playa Norte and the magnificent but vertiginous cliffs of Garrafon Punta Sur Park, to the agricultural estate of the notorious pirate Fermin Mundaca and the eco-friendly sea turtle sanctuary La Tortuga Granja, Isla Mujeres offers plenty to occupy a whole day. ●

In contrast to the noisy and festive mega-complexes elsewhere in the Caribbean, the Zoëtry Villa Rolandi offers its guests a high-class stay that focuses on epicurean pleasures.

The hotel’s unique location on the shores of Isla Mujeres features a private beach with calm and translucent waters - a few steps from the main terrace - and fine sand devoid of stones. It’s arguably one of the nicest in all of eastern Mexico, despite its small size!

The pool overlooks the strait separating the island from the mainland where, in the distance, the tops of Cancun’s tall buildings can be seen through the haze.



# THE ZOËTRY VILLA ROLANDI IN A NUTSHELL

## Accommodations

Four room categories (between 500 and 2,000 square feet):



Junior Suite



Veranda  
Junior Suite



Junior  
Suite Superior



Presidential  
Suite

### All equipped with:

- Modern Caribbean decor with Italian marble finishes, Bvlgari bath products, lounge area with sofa, private terrace with whirlpool tub and spa-style bathroom with therapeutic shower
- Direct ocean view
- Veranda-level rooms have direct access to the main terrace and pool
- Housekeeping three times a day
- Bottle of tequila upon arrival
- Fresh fruit and bottle of sparkling wine in the room every day
- Small dogs accepted in certain room categories

## Eat and drink



Two restaurants without reservations named Casa Rolandi (Italian-Swiss specialties) and Le Métissage (French-Mexican), combining health and gourmet menus



A bar stocked with world-class spirits



24-hour room service at no charge



Possibility to organize in-room dining for two



Sip, Savor & See program in collaboration with other AMResorts complexes in the Yucatan region (Zoëtry, Secrets, Dreams and Now brands); four guests per reservation, transportation not included.

## Relax



Thalasso spa with seven massage cabins, a saltwater pool and a steam room, as well as a full menu of holistic face and body treatments.



Fully-equipped gym, overlooking a large terrace where yoga workshops are offered by the sea.

# Behind the briefcase: a look at Canada's *business* travellers

By Blake Wolfe

**T**hey represent a range of industries, they travel to numerous destinations and ironically, they can most likely be found flying in economy class: they're Canada's business travellers – and business travel is booming!

According to Statistics Canada's National Travel Survey, in the third quarter of 2018, Canadians reported that business-related trips – 16.2 million – were the third most commonly-cited reason for travelling within Canada, with these travellers spending approximately \$2.8 billion.

By comparison, business travel to the U.S. saw 628,000 Canadian travellers spending \$505 million, while international business trips were taken by 168,000 Canadians, spending \$374 million.

However, according to the results of Ipsos Reid's 2018 Canadian Business Traveller Survey, that latter figure is increasing. The survey, conducted among business travellers who took a minimum of six round-trip flights for business in 2018, international business travel from Canada increased the most on trips to Europe, Asia and other global destinations, growing by five percentage points over 2017.

## Where are they heading?

Patrick Doyle, vice-president and general manager for Canada at American Express GBT, tells *PAX* that in 2019, Canadian business travellers likely hail from one of four main industries requiring travel of their employees: financial services; consulting; energy and resources; and computers/software/AI.

With each industry having its related routes and hubs – such as the energy



Photo courtesy of Air Canada

Air Canada's Business class cabin



“When it comes to air travel for business, a combination of cost, company policy and trip duration will determine how these travellers get from point A to B.”



- Patrick Doyle, vice-president and general manager for Canada at American Express GBT

get from point A to B. As such, most business travellers flying domestically or transborder aren't flying business class, with most companies booking economy fare for employees. Most business class travel these days is taking place on

international flights, he says, representing approximately 50 per cent of business trips on international routes and with notable growth in the premium economy segment on airlines where the product is available. →

sector's predominantly Western Canada-based presence – the list of top business destinations is likely unsurprising.

Within Canada, Doyle says the cities of 'The Triangle' – namely Toronto, Montreal and Ottawa – remain popular, as do Calgary, Vancouver and Winnipeg, while across the U.S. border, New York City, San Francisco and Las Vegas are the top draws.

Internationally, Canada's business travellers, many of them within the financial services industry, are flying to centres such as London, Paris, Hong Kong and Santiago, he adds.

### How are they getting there?

Doyle explains that when it comes to air travel for business, a combination of cost, company policy and trip duration will determine how these travellers



Porter Airlines flies between popular business destinations in Canada and the U.S.



“If you’re flying from Toronto to Vancouver, it’s more likely that their company policy will allow for at least some business class travel,” Doyle says, “but for the most part, the majority of domestic business travel takes place in economy.”

### Travel costs on the grow

While business travel costs vary between industries and depend on the size of an individual company, Doyle says that Canada’s expanding economy – expected to grow by two per cent this year – will prompt more companies to travel in order to grow their business both at home and abroad.

In addition, he tells *PAX* that airfare prices are expected to increase this year, especially on business class flights: according to American Express GBT’s Air Monitor 2019 report, these flights will increase in price by 6.6 per cent on domestic/transborder

services, while on international routes, increases of 6.2 per cent and 5.3 per cent can be expected for flights to Europe and Africa respectively.

However, he adds that within North America, some economy routes could see a drop in price due to factors such as

excess capacity generated by LCCs and Air Canada’s active promotion of its basic economy product.

The joint-venture between WestJet and Delta, slated to go live in 2019, could also help sustain the price level on transborder business class flights, he added. ●



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# Business offerings by airline



## Air Canada

Business Class cabins with 2-2 seat configuration are offered on flights in North America and to and from the Caribbean and Central America; in addition, Air Canada Signature Class cabin, featuring Executive or Classic pods (converting to lie-flat beds) is available on international flights and select North American routes.

The Signature Class also offers guests a menu created by Chef David Hawksworth, a selection of wine chosen by Air Canada's sommelier Véronique Rivest and a South Asian menu by Chef Vikram Vij on flights to New Delhi and Mumbai.

Two programs for businesses based on size – Air Canada for Business and Air Canada for Corporate – are also available for companies, along with Air Canada for Business and Air Canada Flight Pass for Business: prepaid packages of 30, 60, 100 and 200 credits which can be shared by multiple employees for travel in Flex, Latitude and Business Class (domestic, transborder and international flights).

## WestJet

Evolving from its early days as a low-cost alternative to other Canadian carriers, WestJet has made business travel a key focus in recent years.

Earlier this year, WestJet's new B787-9 fleet introduced the airline's first business class cabin, offering travellers 16 private pods (in a 1-2-1 configuration) that convert into lie-flat beds.

The carrier also offers a WestJet Biz corporate booking tool and the WestJet Simplicity program, which provides travellers with enhanced flexibility for short trips between Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal and New York.

## Porter

Operating in eastern North America from its home at Billy Bishop Toronto City Airport, Porter connects a number of Canadian and U.S. business centres including 'The Triangle' of Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal, plus New York and Chicago.

In addition to Porter's own route network, business travellers heading to the U.S. can also connect with JetBlue in Boston and Newark to another 28 U.S. cities, including business hubs such as Atlanta, Dallas, Los Angeles and Seattle.

While the airline's fleet of Bombardier Q400s don't offer a separate business class cabin, two seating upgrades – Premium and Premium PLUS – are available on all flights, situated near the front of the plane.

The airline also operates a Porter Corporate Travel Program, offering participating companies discounts on airfare.

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