



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Canadian Gay Travel Market \$9.4 Billion Annually

83% of gay Canadians believe Canada “goes out of its way” for gay travelers

(Toronto, ON) June 22 -- The Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce announced today, the findings of Canada’s first lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-identified (LGBT) travel study showing a market size of \$9.4 billion annually. An estimated market of 1.8 million gay, bisexual, lesbian and transgender travelers spent on average \$1,166 per trip last year. The study determined the size of the Canadian gay travel market at \$5.4 billion in Canada; \$2.4 billion traveling in the US and \$1.7 billion elsewhere.

The study also found that 83% of gay travelers believe Canada to be a place that goes out of its way to welcome gay travelers. Canada was ranked highly along with Netherlands, Australia, Great Britain and France.

The study, conducted by the Bay Charles Consulting Company, surveyed Canadian LGBT travelers through early 2007. When compared to the general travel market the following was found:

- LGBT travelers spend nearly twice as much per trip (\$1,166 vs. \$627) as their straight counterparts.
- LGBT travelers are almost twice as likely to go on vacation or leisure trips as the general public.
- LGBT travelers are more likely to travel in the winter (23% of trips occurring during this time frame compared to 14% of the general public).

Laurence Bernstein the Managing Partner of Bay Charles Consulting Company says “This study confirms that there is a pent-up demand for increased travel within Canada among the gay community. This business could help to compensate for the loss of business coming to Canada from the US.”

“The domestic LGBT market is an important one for Canada,” said Bruce McDonald of the Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. “Gay travellers’ travel more frequently, spend more per trip and are more likely to travel in the off-season than the mainstream market,” he added.

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The Chamber's research substantiates other research that has been conducted on gay travel, an important market identified by federal, provincial and regional tourism stakeholders. However, for McDonald the critical findings are the domestic market's size.

"For much of the Canadian tourism market, the gay market is still undeveloped and an untapped market. This research demonstrates that the domestic gay market is a force in itself," said McDonald. "At \$5.4 billion dollars in Canada, gay travelers have significant impact. Certainly when we include gay travelers from the US and other countries, the market size becomes even more significant,"

McDonald points to the fact that gay travelers perceive Canada as a place that goes out of its way for gay travelers as an opportunity for the tourism sector.

"Now is the time for businesses and destinations to invest in marketing initiatives and product development targeting gay travelers" he added.

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