

Ottawa Journal by David Tilson MP ? Federal government working on growing Canada's tourism sector

Canada is a top tourist destination.

This is due to our country's rich natural heritage, vibrant cities and unique festivals, which offer visitors a world-class tourism experience. Our government is proud to promote tourism in Canada and support the continued growth of Canada's tourism sector, an important contributor to the Canadian economy. It is an \$88.5-billion industry, employing more than 600,000 Canadians in every region of the country. And, Economic Action Plan 2015 takes important steps to grow the tourism industry.

Destination Canada (formerly the Canadian Tourism Commission) has a strong record of promoting tourism in Canada to visitors from all around the world. The budget provides Destination Canada additional support to launch a new marketing campaign, in partnership with the tourism industry that will promote Canada to travellers from the United States. This campaign is expected to attract American visitors to destinations across Canada, helping promote economic activity in the tourism sector.

To help facilitate the ease of access and movement for travellers, Economic Action Plan 2015 expands the Electronic Travel Authorization eligibility for low-risk travellers from countries like Brazil and Mexico, where a visa is required for citizens travelling to Canada. This will help make Canada a more attractive destination for personal and business travel. It also allows more resources to be focused on high-risk travellers.

These measures build on important gains under our government that help ease travel and grow tourism in Canada, like the agreement reached with China to give Canada Approved Destination Status for Chinese tourists. Since then, Chinese tourism to Canada has significantly increased, helping support jobs and growth across the country.

The Budget also introduces Canada 150. As we near 2017, the 150th anniversary of Confederation, Canada 150 will help celebrate this landmark occasion, by providing \$210 million over four years to support activities, events and celebrations across Canada. This includes support for local community events, as well as Canada Day celebrations in the National Capital Region and other major cities.

In addition, Economic Action Plan 2015 delivers significant support to Canada's small business community. It includes measures like reducing the small business tax rate to 9 per cent by 2019, providing relief on EI premiums paid in 2015 and 2016 and improving access to financing through the Canada Small Business Financing Program. These measures are helping the many small businesses in Canada's tourism sector grow and create jobs.

Our government is proud to help showcase Canada's rich natural and cultural heritage. We are strengthening Canada's tourism sector, helping grow the industry and creating jobs in every region of the country.

