Tourism in Alberta Central Tourism Region 2014

# A Summary of 2014 Visitor Numbers, Expenditures and Characteristics

## July 2016

Tourism.alberta.ca
July 2016

Alberta Government

## Introduction

Whether to see their friends and relatives, for business or for pleasure, 8.45 million total visits were made in 2014 to destinations in the Alberta central tourism region by residents of Alberta, other parts of Canada, the United States and overseas countries.

To better understand the volume and characteristics of these visitors, Alberta Culture and Tourism has prepared special analyses of the 2014 Travel Survey of Residents of Canada (TSRC) and the 2014 International Travel Survey (ITS), which are both conducted by Statistics Canada. These consumer surveys provide tourism information for travel in Alberta by Canadians and trips to the province made by visitors from the U.S. and overseas. Data in this publication includes same-day and overnight trips for Albertans and residents from other parts of Canada, and overnight trips only for U.S. and overseas visitors.

Readers are cautioned that estimates between 2014 and previous years are not comparable, as Statistics Canada has made a major file structure change. Data was suppressed so that the 2014 data has considerably less detail than was the case in 2012 and earlier.

This summary highlights key findings only. For more information on tourism in Alberta, please contact Alberta Culture and Tourism or visit http://culture.alberta.ca/tourism/.

## Alberta Central Tourism Region: 2014 Overview

| Comparison of Tourism Numbers[1] | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | **Alberta Central Tourism Region** | **Total Alberta** | **Alberta Central Tourism Region as % of Total Alberta** |
| **Number of Visits (Millions)** | | | |
| Overnight Person-Visits | 3.01 | 13.6 | 22% |
| Total Person-Visits | 8.45 | 34.68 | 24% |
| **Origin of Visits (Total Person-Visits)** | | | |
| Alberta | 7.89 | 29.79 | 27% |
| Other Canada | 0.44 | 3.23 | 14% |
| United States | 0.09 | 0.77 | 12% |
| Overseas | 0.04 | 0.9 | 4% |

[1] Note: Travellers to Alberta may visit more than one tourism region while in the province.

In 2014, central Alberta received 24% of the total visits to Alberta. Residents of Alberta visiting the region accounted for 26% of total visits within the province. Of the total visits from other parts of Canada, 14% visited central Alberta. Visitors to Alberta from the United States and overseas accounted for 12% and 4% of visits to this region, respectively.

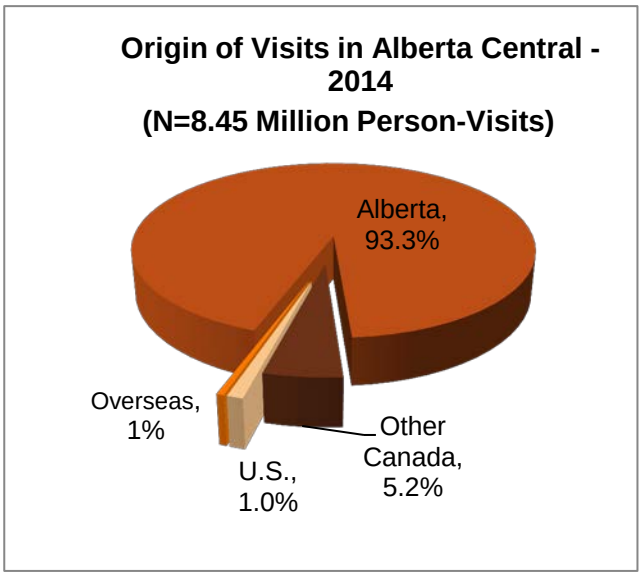
**All trips**

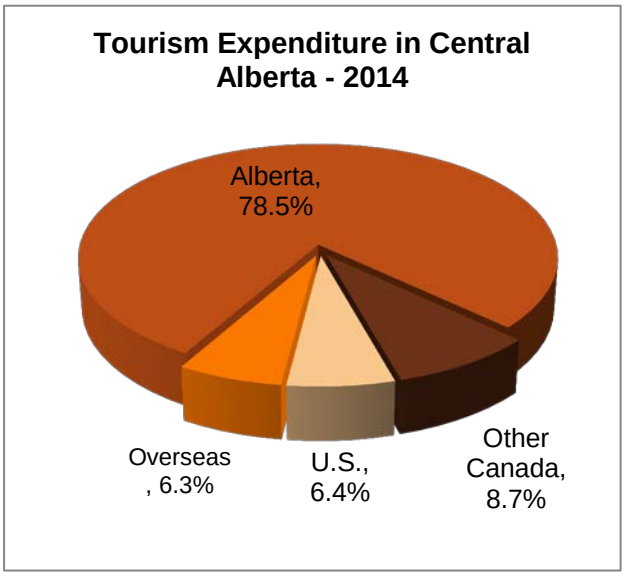
In 2014, central Alberta received 8.45 million visits in total, of which 7.89 million (93%) were by Albertans. Another 437,000 visits (5%) were by other Canadians. Visitors from the United States and overseas accounted for the remaining 130,000 visits (2%).

| Total Visitation and Tourism Expenditures in Alberta Central Tourism Region - 2014 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Alberta** | **Other Canada** | **United States** | **Overseas** | **Total** |
| **('000s)** | | | | | |
| Person-Visits | 7,887 | 437 | 88 | 42 | 8,454 |
| Tourism Expenditures | $941,255 | $104,563 | $77,005 | $75,568 | $1,198,391 |

Residents of central Alberta accounted for 37% of the visits made to central Alberta, while residents from Edmonton and area accounted for 33% and residents of Calgary and area accounted for 16% of visits to the region.

Direct tourism expenditure by these visitors was approximately $1.2 billion. Residents of Alberta accounted for 78.5% of direct visitor spending in the Alberta central tourism region. Visitors from other parts of Canada accounted for 8.7%, visitors from the United States accounted for 6.4% and overseas visitors accounted for 6.3% of direct tourism expenditure in the region.



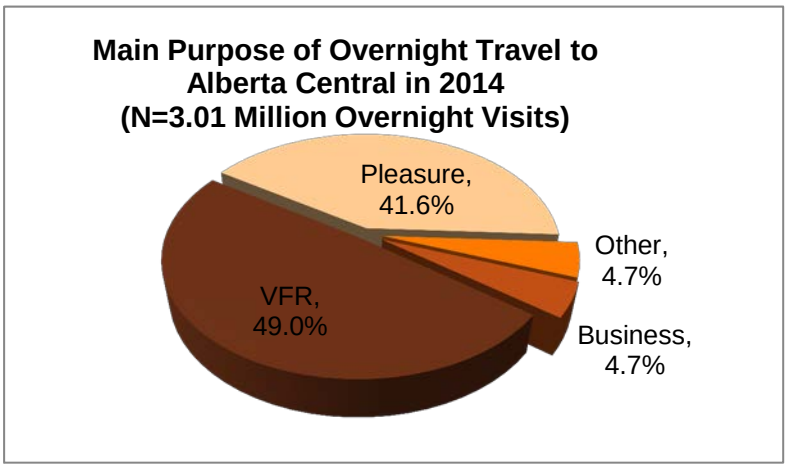
**Overnight trips**

Approximately 36% of all visits to central Alberta included at least one overnight stop, yielding 3 million overnight visits in 2014. Residents of Edmonton and area accounted for 36% of all overnight travel to the region, followed by residents of central Alberta (21%) and Calgary and area (20%).

## Main Purpose of Overnight Travel

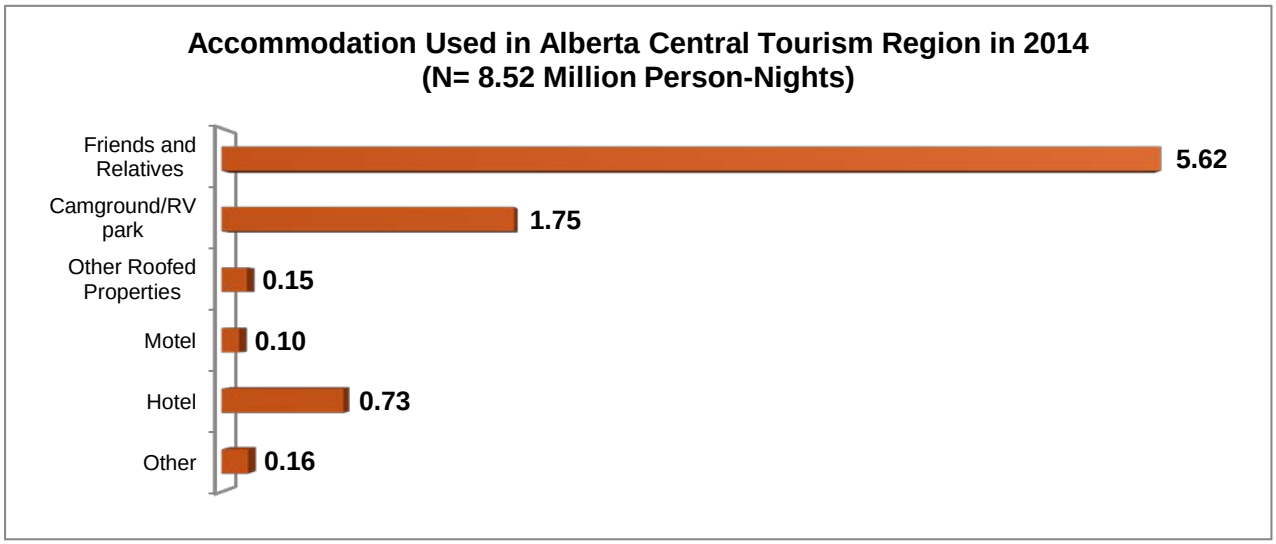
There were 3.01 million overnight visits to central Alberta in 2014. Just under half (49%) of the overnight visitors to the region stated that the main purpose of their trip was to visit friends and relatives (VFR).

Another 41.6% of the visitors to the region stated that the main purpose of their trip was for pleasure. Business travel and 'Other' each accounted for 4.7% of overnight stays in central Alberta.




## Accommodation Used in Alberta Central Tourism Region

Over the course of 2014, visitors spent 46.48 million nights in Alberta, of which 18% (8.52 million) were spent in central Alberta. Sixty-six per cent of these 8.52 million nights (5.46




million) were spent in the homes of friends and relatives. A further 21% were spent in campgrounds and RV parks (1.75 million). Nine per cent of these nights were spent in hotels, 1% in motels and 2% in other roofed properties.

## Average Length of Stay for Overnight Visitors

The average length of stay for all overnight visits to central Alberta is 2.8 nights.

Although Albertans account for the greatest number of visits to central Alberta, they have the shortest average length of stay (2.3 nights). The longest average length of stay is attributed to visitors from overseas, with 22.9 nights on average for each visit. Visitors from the United States followed with 4.2 nights per trip and visitors from the rest of Canada stayed an average of 4.1 nights per trip.

| Average Length of Stay in Alberta Central Tourism Region – 2014 (Nights) | |
|---|---|
| All Overnight Visits | 2.8 |
| Canada | 2.5 |
| Alberta | 2.3 |
| Other Canada | 4.1 |
| United States[2] | 4.2 |
| Overseas[2] | 22.9 |

## Seasonality

Visitation to central Alberta is at its highest in the third quarter (July, August and September), with 42% of overnight visits occurring at this time. This is followed with 26% visiting during the second quarter (April, May and June), 19% visiting during the fourth quarter (October, November and December) and 13% in the first quarter (January, February and March).

| Calendar Quarter of Overnight Visits in Alberta Central Tourism Region - 2014 | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **January-March (Quarter 1)** | **April-June (Quarter 2)** | **July-September (Quarter 3)** | **October-December (Quarter 4)** |
| All Overnight | 13% | 26% | 42% | 19% |
| By Market | | | | |
| Alberta | 12% | 25% | 42% | 20% |
| Other Canada | 15% | 35% | 36% | 14% |
| United States[2] | 19% | 32% | 31% | 18% |
| Overseas[2] | 10% | 31% | 52% | 7% |

Forty-two per cent of overnight visits made by **Albertans** to central Alberta occur in the third quarter (July, August and September). Twenty-five per cent of overnight visits made by Albertans occur in the second quarter (April, May and June). Thirty-six per cent of overnight visits from **other parts of Canada** are made to the region in the third quarter (July, August and September) and 35% are made in the second quarter (April, May and June). Thirty-one per cent of overnight visits made by residents of the **United States** occur in the third quarter (July, August and September) and 32% occur in the second quarter (April, May and June). Fifty-two per cent of overnight visits made by **overseas** visitors occur in the third quarter (July, August and September) and 31% occur in the second quarter (April, May and June).

[2] Small sample size, please use caution.

## Summary of Trip Characteristics for Overnight Visitors to Alberta Central

Albertans spend on average $113 per person per visit to the Alberta Central tourism region, while Canadians from other provinces spend more than double that amount on average per visit ($256). Samples sizes for overseas and U.S. visitors to Alberta Central are too small to report on these averages.

| Selected Characteristics of Overnight Visits to Alberta Central Tourism Region - 2014 | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Description** | **Alberta** | **Other Canada** |
| Average length of stay | 2.3 | 4.1 |
| Average spending per person per visit | $113 | $256 |
| Average spending per party per visit | $198 | $399 |
| Average spending per person per night | $50 | $60 |
| Average spending per party per night | $88 | $94 |
| Average party size | 2.9 | 2.3 |

## Tourism Expenditures by Category

Residents of Alberta rank number one for spending in every tourism expenditure category in the Alberta Central tourism region. Approximately 37% of all visitor spending made by residents of Alberta in the Alberta Central tourism region was on accommodation and food and beverage.

| Total Tourism Expenditures in Alberta Central Tourism Region by Category - 2014 | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Alberta** | **Other Canada** | **United States** | **Overseas** | **Total** |
| **($'000s)** | | | | | |
| Public/Local Transportation | $8,540 | $1,443 | $2,512 | $7,337 | $19,832 |
| Private/Rental Auto | $405,453 | $35,831 | $13,727 | $18,951 | $473,962 |
| Accommodation | $68,039 | $13,210 | $32,350 | $5,490 | $119,089 |
| Food and Beverage | $280,067 | $37,020 | $10,952 | $24,954 | $352,993 |
| Recreation/Entertainment | $72,533 | $5,459 | $7,835 | $8,124 | $93,951 |
| Retail/Other | $106,623 | $11,600 | $9,629 | $10,712 | $138,564 |
| **Total** | **$941,255** | **$104,563** | **$77,005** | **$75,568** | **$1,198,391** |

For more information, please contact Alberta Culture and Tourism:

Tourism.research@gov.ab.ca

ISBN 978-1-4601-3009-4 ISSN 2292-9932