

June 25, 2020

Member Update: COVID-19 (coronavirus)

Dear Members,

Premier John Horgan announced yesterday that BC is transitioning into Phase 3 of our province's Restart Plan, and that provincial health authorities have officially lifted their advisory against non-essential personal travel. This is great news for Whistler, and for the tourism sector across BC. After many months of sheltering in place, British Columbians have finally been given the greenlight by government officials to get out and explore our beautiful province.

Tourism is Whistler's lifeblood, so we are very excited to be welcoming visitors back to our mountain community! In the same breath, we also know that it is a huge responsibility, and that we need to manage the return to tourism carefully, so as not to expose our employees, visitors or residents to health risks, or our destination to reputation risk.

I am pleased to share that we as a community have been working closely over the past months to ensure Whistler's return to tourism is managed thoughtfully and responsibly, with enhanced safety protocols in place, along with a new business directory and communications tools, providing accurate and transparent information on Whistler's new tourism experience. We all have a key role to play in our community's recovery, and we are ready to take that next step.

In addition to hosting regular virtual meetings with the business community, Tourism Whistler has conducted resident surveys to gauge local sentiments on the return of tourism; and visitor surveys to gauge travel intentions and destination expectations on travel.

The feedback from all parties has been aligned:

- Visitors want to know what to expect when they arrive; they want to know that there will be appropriate COVID-19 protocols in place to protect them; and they want to be welcomed when they are here;
- Local residents want the assurance that visitor volumes will be proactively managed, and that visitors will exude responsible behaviors when here to keep the community safe;
- Resort businesses want a measured and manageable return to 'new normal' tourism levels.

While restrictions against international travel and gatherings of more than 50 people will remain in place for the foreseeable future, we do know there is considerable pent up demand from British Columbians for regional leisure travel, and that is where Tourism Whistler will be focusing our efforts in the short term – encouraging extended weekend stays, week-long vacations, and midweek getaways.

Utilizing the insights from our research, and increasing our investments into recovery markets, Tourism Whistler is launching our new Summer Marketing Campaign, **Adventure Differently**, today (June 25) into British Columbia. The campaign redefines what it means to vacation in a COVID-19 world, and provides guests with comfort and confidence in returning to Whistler, while encouraging them to do so mindfully and respectfully, with a focus on responsible behaviours.

With this in mind, Tourism Whistler has developed four key messaging pillars, which provide guidelines for the changes we are asking of everyone who spends time in the resort this summer:

Let's Interact Considerately
Let's Play Simply
Let's Explore Responsibly
Let's Enjoy Patiently

I encourage all Members to learn more about these four pillars at whistler.com/summer.

We have also recently launched our new [Whistler Doors Open Directory](#) on whistler.com to help visitors understand what businesses are open, what experiences are available, and what new COVID-19 protocols are in place to help support their safety. This is an important resource for locals and visitors alike, and will be valuable tool to leverage in our economic recovery efforts this summer.

Finally, to help ensure we are welcoming back our visitors in a thoughtful and coordinated way, we have created a COVID-19 Member Toolkit which can be viewed [here](#). The Toolkit includes marketing resources, visitor servicing tools, and health and safety information. Additional COVID-19 resources for Members are available on the member website at members.whistler.com/covid, and additional COVID-19 information and resources for travellers is available at whistler.com/covid.

This is going to be a very unique summer in Whistler as we conduct business with new capacities and new protocols, but we are delighted that the Resort is again open to invite visitors back in a responsible and welcoming way, and we thank you for your passion, commitment and support in making this a reality.

I look forward to working with you as we take our next steps to recovery.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Barrett Fisher".

Barrett Fisher
President & CEO, Tourism Whistler