

A MESSAGE FROM OUR PRESIDENT & CEO

Yesterday, our provincial health authorities announced [new public health orders](#) to address the rising COVID-19 case counts in British Columbia. These new measures are in effect until April 19 at midnight and include the suspension of indoor dining at restaurants, pubs and bars, as well as the closure of Whistler Blackcomb to prevent community spread of COVID-19 related to non-essential travel.

Unfortunately today, after careful consideration, Whistler Blackcomb has now had to make the even further difficult decision to not re-open for winter operations, so has officially confirmed that their last day of the 2020-21 winter season was yesterday. Whistler Blackcomb is scheduled to open for summer operations on May 21, 2021.

The news over the past few days has been difficult to hear, especially after the monumental challenges local businesses have had to face over the past winter, and past year; but health and safety remain our top priority as we navigate this final leg of the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are hopeful this circuit breaker will be successful in bending our curve back down, and with vaccines ramping up, and the warmer weather approaching, we are optimistic that the non-essential travel advisory will be lifted once again soon – but now with our focus being on spring and summer operations.

As has been communicated previously, Tourism Whistler suspended all short-term winter paid advertising efforts in November to support the province's recommendation against non-essential travel. We will continue to act in accordance with public health officials and will not stimulate travel to Whistler until the travel advisory is lifted.

In the meantime, we continue to share inspirational content through our owned channels to keep people dreaming of Whistler and planning for future travel. We have also planned and created multiple spring and summer marketing campaigns to support local, regional, national and international markets for when the time is right. As always, full overviews of our seasonal marketing plans are available in the [Campaign Toolkit](#) section of the member website.

Details of these recent announcements are being shared through our web, digital, social and database channels, and we are proactively contacting all travellers who have upcoming reservations booked through our Whistler.com sales channel to assist them with modifying and rebooking their travel plans as appropriate. Please note, though, we are not an enforcement agency, nor are we the end-supplier, so it is not our place to proactively cancel reservations. That said, I can confirm Whistler is seeing many cancellations across the resort since the recent news broke yesterday afternoon.

Despite this most recent blow, our sights are set on the upcoming summer season. I would like to remind all Members that information and resources for travellers is available at whistler.com/covid, and we have a COVID-19 information and resources for Members available on the [member website](#). I would also like to remind all Member businesses to keep their [Doors Open Directory](#) listings up to date using the [COVID-19 Member Information form](#).

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me, or any member of our team, if you have any questions or if there is anything we can do to support you during this difficult time. With the accelerated rollout of the vaccine underway, take comfort in knowing there is light at the end of this very long tunnel.

Barrett Fisher
President & CEO, Tourism Whistler