

January 14, 2019

Dear Tourism Whistler Member,

With 2019 officially upon us, Tourism Whistler is pleased to report that 2018 was another successful year for our destination. After exponential growth in overnight visits in 2016 and continued momentum in 2017, Whistler's tourism landscape and the needs of our community shifted. In response, Tourism Whistler focused its efforts on balancing visitation throughout the year in 2018, and our results demonstrate those efforts have moved the dial.

Summer 2018 room nights finished +3% over summer 2017, to be Whistler's new record summer in terms of paid room nights. That said, summer 2018's growth was primarily seen in our need periods, including increased visitation during our shoulder season months (September and October) and more visitation midweek.

Meanwhile, Whistler's 2017/18 winter room nights declined slightly (-1%) season-over-season and occupancy remained flat at 71%, while the resort saw growth in other key performance areas such as hotel average daily rate (ADR). Buoyed by strong economies and exchange rates, new awareness through Vail/ EPIC passes, increased flights through YVR, above-average snowfall, and targeted marketing efforts, growth from U.S., Australia and Mexican markets created longer stays filling the midweek periods. On the flipside, increased pricing across the resort discouraged B.C. and Canadian visits, hence why overall visits were down slightly.

As we move ahead into 2019, Tourism Whistler is anticipating we will see a slight decline in overall room nights for the winter 2018/19 season due to a number of different factors. While economic indications are suggesting 2019 will continue to be another buoyant economic year, experts anticipate we could see the beginning of a recession in 2020. With economic unrest on the horizon, Whistler needs to protect and nurture a diverse portfolio of markets and segments that will continue to support our destination's year-round economy. It is therefore critical that we do not take Whistler's current success and strong business levels for granted.

As such, Tourism Whistler will remain steadfast in our goal of smoothing out the peaks and filling the valleys when it comes to visitation to our resort. Conference business will be the focus of our shoulder/mid-week strategy; regional getaways featuring events and arts & culture activities will be the focus for shoulder season weekends; and targeting destination visitors who stay longer and fill the midweek periods will be our focus in the high-season winter and summer months.

Looking even further ahead, last year Tourism Whistler embarked on a Place Branding tourism visioning exercise, demonstrating our commitment to responsible tourism and balanced year-round visitation. We are grateful for the input we received from our Members, stakeholders and community during the research phase of the project this summer, and we look forward to sharing our findings and next steps later this year.

As the destination marketing organization representing the resort of Whistler, we are committed to providing you with the best return on your investment. In November 2018, the Resort Municipality of Whistler (RMOW) and Tourism Whistler were successful in their joint application to the Provincial government to increase its Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) to 3% to fund incremental tourism marketing promotions, projects and programs. This is a 1% increase from the previous amount of 2% MRDT collected in Whistler. With the approval of this visitor-generated hotel tax, our

resort joined many other destinations across British Columbia who were already approved to receive the full 3% MRDT.

As a result of these new funds for marketing and sales, Tourism Whistler's Board of Directors supported a more conservative 1% increase in member assessment fees in 2019 to both the commercial and common fees. This modest increase will help support the inflationary increases of the administration.

Finally, Tourism Whistler's Member website is a valuable tool for Members where you can find in-depth Member-exclusive information on our initiatives and results. We encourage you to visit the site at [www.whistler.com/members](http://www.whistler.com/members) and if you don't already have access, simply click on the "log in" button to request Member access. For regular updates from Tourism Whistler, you can also subscribe to the Member newsletter via the Member website.

On behalf of Tourism Whistler's Board of Directors, we thank you for your ongoing support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Norm Mastalir".

Norm Mastalir  
Chair of the Board  
Tourism Whistler

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Barrett Fisher".

Barrett Fisher  
President & CEO  
Tourism Whistler