



2024 MRDT Report & Annual Update Experience Comox Valley | May 2025



Welcome - Thank you - Gilakas'la - ?imot

Experience Comox Valley is grateful to live, work and play on the traditional and unceded territories of the K'ómoks First Nation



Brand Strategy

- The Comox Valley's compelling uniqueness lies in its combination of diverse outdoor activities, rich culinary experiences and a welcoming community atmosphere.
- The strategic focus is on articulating this uniqueness in a cohesive, charming, and organized way, ensuring all marketing activities are aligned with a central theme that resonates with potential visitors.

Comox Valley Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC)

- Established in 2022
- 11 members from various sectors
 - Plus CVRD liaison & 4VI staff representatives
- Advise, review and recommend annual marketing and Destination Plan & budgets
- Work collaboratively and represent the best interests of tourism stakeholders in the Comox Valley

Strategic Objectives

- 1. Increase revenue from visitation
 - Generate leads for businesses
- 2. Manage growth and benefit through seasonal and geographical dispersion
 - Build and position destination drivers
 - Invest in market research
- 3. Increase competitiveness of Comox Valley as a desired destination
 - Improve the visitor experience
 - Increase collaboration with & amongst stakeholders
- 4. Support sustainable tourism initiatives and activities
 - Amplify messaging from local tourism businesses who are actively pursuing objectives that increase positive impacts and decrease negative impacts of tourism for humans, the economy and/or the environment
 - Advance Vancouver Island's Biosphere program locally and commit to advancing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals as a DMO and destination



Target Markets

Affluent, frequent travelers who are focused on touring and exploring new destinations. Individuals who seek to immerse themselves in local culture, nature and unique experiences.

- Explorer Quotient (EQ):
 - Rejuvenators, Authentic Experiencers, and Cultural Explorers
 - Free Spirits
- Geographic Locations:
 - Southern Vancouver Island, Lower Mainland
 - Alberta (Calgary, Edmonton), Okanagan (Kelowna)
 - Washington State
- Demographics:
 - \circ Age 30+couples and small groups







2024 Projects

- Consumer Website Content ExperienceComoxValley.ca
 - Optimized for conversion to stakeholder websites
 - Free business listings
 - Events & festivals calendar
 - Submit events for free
 - \circ 250+events submitted
 - Photo & b-roll collection
 - 300+new images
 - 9 new blogs
 - Unique visits: 82k
 - Sources: organic (41%), paid search (31%), direct (12%), paid social (8%), organic social (4%), referral (4%)
 - Origin: Canada, US, UK, Poland, France, Mexico, Germany









Sweating In Paradise: Exploring Sauna Experiences In The Comos Valley

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BRIEF INTRODUCTION TO SAUNAS

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2 SLGBTQIA+ Travel

- New landing page
- 3 blogs
 - Family Adventure Beckons in Cumberland, Courtenay, and Comox
 - Embracing Love: A Romantic Getaway in the Comox Valley
 - Exploring Inclusivity: Outdoor Adventures and Community in the Comox Valley
- Images &b-roll video captured
- Social Media reels & posts



Social Media

- User generated content
 - Real visitors & locals sharing their stories & experiences
- Daily posts of new content & responding to questions/comments about this destination
 - Facebook: @experiencecomoxvalley
 - Instagram: @tourismcomoxvalley
- Amplify stakeholder content & events
- Building an engaged audience
- Facebook
 - 20k followers, 190k engagements
- Instagram
 - 9.8k followers, 8.4k engagements
- 2 Influencer trips in 2024
 - BC Bob
 - o Jensen Kental

Experience Comox Valley July 29 at 7:09 AM · 🕲

Set your compass to the Comox Valley for a generous splash of vineyard vibes, outdoor adventures, delicious eats, and a vibrant local arts scene. This slice of paradise is proudly 2SLGBTQIA+ friendly.

View our 2SLGBTQIA+ Travel Guide, which features Pride events, inclusive businesses, and other helpful trip-planning information: https://experiencecomoxvalley.ca/2slgbtqia-travel-inthe.../

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We ... See more



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Promotional Campaigns

- Partner campaigns:
 - Island Taste Trail
- DBC consortiums
 - BC Ale Trail, Ride Island, Ahoy BC, Golf VI, BC Farmers' Market, Paddle BC
- ECV's seasonal digital campaigns
 - Display ads
 - Paid Social Media ads
 - Consumer emails
- 'Always on' digital/search ads
 - 422k impressions, 43k clicks, 10% CTR



Display ads & **Sponsored content**

- Curiosity Here are 13 things to do in Comox Valley based on your travel personality
- Daily Hive <u>15 fun things to do in Comox Valley based on</u> your travel persona
- Castanet <u>Visit This Valley Region Along Vancouver Island's</u> East Coast for Varied Adventures That Stretch from Mountains to Ocean
- Vancouver Is Awesome <u>This Easily Accessible BC</u> Destination Offers Three Destinations in One
- Okanagan Edge <u>Experience Comox Valley</u>
- Daily Hive <u>Here Are 3 Ways You Can Unwind in the Comox</u> <u>Valley this Fall</u>
- Curiocity <u>Here's How to Make the Most of an Idyllic</u> Weekend in the Comox Valley
- Explore Magazine <u>Your Shoulder Season Guide to Comox</u> Valley's Great Outdoors

2024 Print Advertising

- 2024/25 Comox Valley Vacation Guide
 - 45,000 distribution
 - Full content, new brand alignment
- BC's Guide to Arts & Culture
 - 75,000 distribution, 2-page spread
- Go Vancouver Island magazine
 - \circ 100,000 distribution, full page ad
- Vancouver Island Visitor Guide
 - 50,000 distribution, full page ad
- SOAR Magazine
 - \circ 40,850 distribution, 2 page ad
- Landmark Media Comox Valley Map
 - Cover page
- Vancouver Island Backroad Mapbooks
 - Visitor Centre listing



From thrilling runs down Mount Washington to cozy winter moments in town, Comox Valley brings you the perfect island winter getaway.



To start planning your trip, visit experiencecomoxvalley.ca



Broadcast Marketing

- 15 sec promotional videos on CTV
- 10 second closed captioning
- Connected TV, run of network ads, pause ads
- Geo-targeted to Calgary, Edmonton, and Metro Vancouver
- Results:
 - Ad impressions: 2.8 million
 - $\circ \quad Click Through Rate: 0.18\%$



Destination Development

- Industry engagement
 - Comox Valley Tourism Strategy planning
- Market research
 - Visitor intercept surveys
- Travel trade & media
 - Hosting media
 - Explore VI event
- Events & Experiences Fund grant program
 - \circ 10 successful applicants in 2024
 - \$65k





Visitor Information Services

- Visitor Centre
 - Open 5 days a week, Tuesday to Saturday, 9:30am 4:30pm in Winter, Spring & Fall
 - Open 7 days a week in Summer
- Mobile Visitor Information Kiosks
 - Comox Marina
 - Downtown Courtenay
 - Cumberland
- Advertising opportunities for tourism stakeholders
- Consignment gift shop of local goods
 - \circ 50+local artisans
- Community Outreach
 - NIC, local high schools, engagement workshops, Chamber business after business

Visitor Centre Statistics

Comox Valley visitors over the last 4 years

	2024	2023	2022	2021
January - March	1,978	2,032	1,944	585
April - June	3,418	3,206	2,899	943
July - September	5,675	6,507	4,692	6,888
Summer Mobile Kiosks	2,441	2,398	2,017	1,940
October - December	1,690	1,823	1,689	1,631
Total	15,202	15,966	13,241	11,987

2024 other communities: Nanaimo - 9,730 Duncan - 18,294 Victoria - 180,200 Vancouver Island - 460,599

2024 Financials

- \$1,226,586 Revenue
 - \circ 2024 General MRDT increased by 10.8% over 2023
 - Other sources include: Destination BC co-op marketing grant, local government contributions, Visitor Servicing grant, Canada Summer Jobs grant, VC retail & advertising revenue
- \$1,162,108 Expenses
 - Marketing \$549,241(47%)
 - Visitor Servicing \$491,128 (42%)
 - Destination Development \$71,739 (6%)
 - Contract services fee \$50,000 (4%)
- \$1,205,276 Carry-forward to 2025
 - \$142,743 General MRDT
 - \$1,062,534 OAP (affordable housing)

2025 Upcoming

- New member of Fishing BC
- Arts & Culture campaign
- Enhanced events calendar with calendar grid view
- Slow Coast bikepacking
- Short form video storytelling
- Community & shareholder open house engagements





