



# 2024 MRDT Report & Annual Update

Experience Comox Valley | May 2025



Welcome - Thank you - Gilakas'la - ʔimot

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

# Brand Strategy

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- 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)

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- Established in 2022
- 11 members from various sectors
  - Plus CVRD liaison & 4 VI 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

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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
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# Target Markets

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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:
  - Age 30+ couples and small groups
  - Families, particularly multi-generational groups





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2024 Projects

# Consumer Website Content Experience Comox Valley.ca

- Optimized for conversion to stakeholder websites
  - Free business listings
- Events & festivals calendar
  - Submit events for free
  - 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



# 2 SLGBTQIA+ Travel

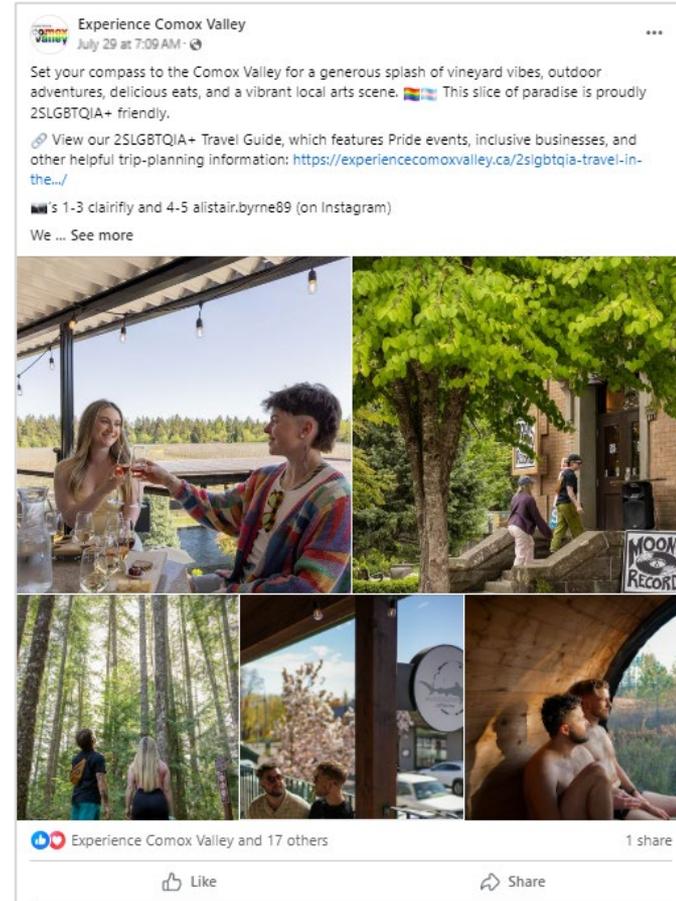
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- New landing page
- 3 blogs
  - [Family Adventure Beckons in Cumberland, Courtenay, and Comox](#)
  - [Embracing Love: A Romantic Getaway in the Comox Valley](#)
  - [Exploring Inclusivity: Outdoor Adventures and Community in the Comox Valley](#)
- 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
  - Jensen Kental





# Promotional Campaigns

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- 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

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- Curiosity - [Here are 13 things to do in Comox Valley based on your travel personality](#)
- Daily Hive - [15 fun things to do in Comox Valley based on your travel persona](#)
- Castanet - [Visit This Valley Region Along Vancouver Island's East Coast for Varied Adventures That Stretch from Mountains to Ocean](#)
- Vancouver Is Awesome - [This Easily Accessible BC Destination Offers Three Destinations in One](#)
- Okanagan Edge - [Experience Comox Valley](#)
- Daily Hive - [Here Are 3 Ways You Can Unwind in the Comox Valley this Fall](#)
- Curiosity - [Here's How to Make the Most of an Idyllic Weekend in the Comox Valley](#)
- Explore Magazine - [Your Shoulder Season Guide to Comox 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
  - 100,000 distribution, full page ad
- Vancouver Island Visitor Guide
  - 50,000 distribution, full page ad
- SOAR Magazine
  - 40,850 distribution, 2 page ad
- Landmark Media Comox Valley Map
  - Cover page
- Vancouver Island Backroad Mapbooks
  - Visitor Centre listing

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**ski,  
savour  
and settle  
in to winter**



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](https://www.experiencecomoxvalley.ca)

# Broadcast Marketing

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- 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
  - Click Through Rate: 0.18%



# Destination Development

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- 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
  - 10 successful applicants in 2024
  - \$65k





# Visitor Information Services

- Visitor Centre
  - Open 5 days a week, Tuesday to Saturday, 9:30 am-4:30 pm 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
  - 50+ local artisans
- Community Outreach
  - NIC, local high schools, engagement workshops, Chamber business after business

# Visitor Centre Statistics

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Comox Valley visitors over the last 4 years

	<b>2024</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2021</b>
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,202</b>	<b>15,966</b>	<b>13,241</b>	<b>11,987</b>

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

# 2024 Financials

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- \$1,226,586 Revenue
  - 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

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- 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





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Questions?