

National Travel Survey, third quarter 2018

Released at 8:30 a.m. Eastern time in *The Daily*, Tuesday, February 26, 2019

Canadian residents made 112 million trips within Canada and abroad in the third quarter, spending \$29.1 billion. Over 90% of all trips by Canadians during the quarter involved travel within the country, with two-thirds (66.5%) of overall travel expenditures spent on travel in Canada.

Most trips by Canadian residents are to Canadian destinations

Out of 112 million overall trips taken by Canadian residents during the third quarter, 101 million were trips within Canada.

Ontario was the most-visited province by Canadians with 41.6 million visits during the quarter, followed by Quebec (21.8 million visits) and British Columbia (13.3 million visits).

Prince Edward Island reported the largest share of Canadian visitors coming from other provinces (64.7%). In comparison, 10.5% of Canadian visitors to Quebec were from out of province, while the lowest proportion was in Ontario (7.4%).

Spending by Canadians on trips in Canada totalled \$19.4 billion in the third quarter. Canadians spent an average of \$191 per trip within Canada, or \$82 per same-day trip and \$389 per overnight trip.

During their trips within Canada, Canadians spent money on accommodation (25.4%), food and beverages in restaurants and bars (20.3%) and gas and other vehicle operation costs (15.2%). Combined, these items represented 61.0% of Canadians' total travel spending within Canada during the quarter. Other significant expense items were in-store grocery purchases (10.7%), entertainment (6.2%) and recreation (5.6%).

Although spending on accommodation represented about one-quarter of trip expenditures by Canadians travelling within Canada, this figure varied across the country. It ranged from 36.8% for Canadians travelling to Prince Edward Island to 17.9% for those visitors to Saskatchewan. In addition to having the highest proportion of out-of-province visitors, Prince Edward Island also had the highest percentage of visits for holidays, leisure or recreation (56.7%) and the lowest percentage of same-day visitors (44.7%).

Canadian residents reported that 40.7% of their trips within Canada (41.3 million) were mainly for holiday, leisure or recreation. Trips to visit friends or relatives, at 33.6 million, accounted for about one-third of trips by Canadians within Canada during the quarter. Travel for business-related purposes (16.2 million) was the third most commonly cited trip purpose.

Over three-quarters of trips outside the country are to the United States

Canadian residents made 8.3 million trips to the United States, or 78.0% of all trips abroad during the quarter, spending \$5.5 billion. Average travel spending in the United States by Canadian residents totalled \$670 per trip. Expenditures on overnight stays in the United States averaged \$1,040 per trip, about seven times more than during same-day visits (\$150).

The largest spending category for Canadians travelling in the United States was accommodation (36.7%), followed by food and beverages in restaurants and bars (18.8%). Canadians spent smaller shares of their total travel spending in the United States on entertainment (7.9%), clothing (6.7%) and in-store grocery purchases (6.1%).

Residents of Ontario and Quebec accounted for 57.0% of total travel expenditures by Canadian residents in the United States in the third quarter.

Holidays, leisure and recreation was the main trip purpose for over half of all trips by Canadian residents (55.2% or 4.6 million trips) to the United States during the quarter.



Another 1.5 million trips to the United States were for visiting friends or relatives, accounting for 18.5% of all trips by Canadian residents to the United States during the quarter. A similar share of trips was for other personal reasons (18.7% or 1.6 million trips).

Residents of Ontario made 42.4% of all trips to the United States, followed by those from British Columbia (21.6%) and Quebec (19.4%). Trips by residents of these three provinces, which together account for three-quarters of Canada's population, represented 83.5% of all trips to the United States by Canadian residents during the quarter.

One in five trips outside the country is to overseas countries

Canadians took 2.3 million trips overseas (countries other than the United States), accounting for 22.0% of trips abroad by Canadians during the third quarter. Spending on overseas trips comprised 43.3% (\$4.2 billion) of total travel spending abroad by Canadians.

On average, Canadian residents who travelled overseas during the quarter spent \$1,800 in overseas countries per trip, a figure that does not include the cost of transportation booked in Canada for travel to or from the overseas destination. This was considerably higher than the average trip spending by Canadians who travelled to the United States (\$670) or within Canada (\$191).

Accommodation (39.4%), and food and beverages in restaurants and bars (23.1%) were the largest expense items for Canadians travelling overseas. Canadians also spent 9.8% on commercial transportation within overseas countries visited and 6.6% on entertainment, the next largest spending categories.

The United Kingdom (261,000 visits), Italy (206,000 visits), France (204,000 visits) and China (162,000 visits) were the countries most visited by Canadian residents from July to September 2018. These four countries represented 27.9% of all visits overseas by Canadians during the quarter.

Residents of Ontario were the most common visitors to the United Kingdom (163,000 visits) and Italy (110,000 visits), comprising 19.7% of all overseas visits from the province. Residents of British Columbia were the most frequent visitors to China (60,000 visits), while residents of Quebec made the most visits to France (94,000 visits) during the quarter.

Over half (54.6%) of all Canadian residents who travelled overseas during the quarter reported holidays, leisure or recreation as their main trip purpose. Visiting friends or relatives (32.0%) was the second-most common reason for overseas travel. Combined, these two reasons represented almost 9 of every 10 trips overseas by Canadian residents during the third quarter.

Table 1
Travel by Canadian residents in Canada and abroad by trip purpose, third quarter of 2018

	Trips	Travel expenditures
	thousands	millions of dollars
Trips by Canadian residents in Canada	101,469	19,363
Business	16,173	2,780
Pleasure	41,273	10,385
Visiting friends/relatives	33,616	4,585
Other ¹	10,408	1,614
Trips by Canadian residents abroad	10,629	9,741
To the United States	8,291	5,525
Business	628	505
Pleasure	4,575	3,981
Visiting friends/relatives	1,535	641
Other ¹	1,554	398
To other countries	2,338	4,217
Business	168	374
Pleasure	1,276	2,675
Visiting friends/relatives	749	868
Other ¹	145	299

1. Other includes travel to shop, to attend a personal conference, convention or trade show, or for other personal reasons.

Source(s): National Travel Survey (5232).

Note to readers

This is the third release of quarterly data for the 2018 National Travel Survey (NTS). The NTS collects information about the domestic and international travel of Canadian residents.

The NTS was developed to fully replace the Travel Survey of Residents of Canada and the Canadian resident component of the International Travel Survey. Please note that NTS data are not comparable with data from these two surveys because the NTS was designed using a different survey methodology.

The target population is the civilian, non-institutionalized population 18 years of age or older in Canada's provinces. Not included in the survey's coverage are persons living on Indian reserves and persons living in the territories. Also excluded are out-of-scope trips such as routine trips and trips taken by commuters and diplomatic or military personnel.

***Domestic trips** are made by travellers residing in Canada who have travelled inside Canada for a period of less than 12 months and who are returning to their place of residency.*

***Same-day trip or visit** is considered a same-day trip and has to be 40 km or more (one way) in which the traveller left and returned home on the same day.*

***Trips abroad** are made by travellers residing in Canada who have travelled outside of Canada for a period of less than 12 months and who are returning to Canada. Foreign citizens who are residing in Canada and travel abroad are included as Canadian resident travellers.*

***A trip abroad** for a person residing in Canada starts when a person crosses the border to exit Canada and ends when they first re-enters Canada.*

***Trips and visits.** A trip can consist of one or more visits. A Canadian traveller on a trip abroad may cross into several countries or states before being recorded as having re-entered Canada. Each of these crossings represents a visit. Similarly, a Canadian resident travelling in Canada may stay in several locations during their trip. Each stay at a Canadian location (for example, a province) within a given trip represents a visit.*

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number [5232](#).

Data from the National Travel Survey for the third quarter of 2018 are now available. Other tables, including statistical profiles of Canadian travellers, are available upon request.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; STATCAN.infostats-infostats.STATCAN@canada.ca) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; STATCAN.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.STATCAN@canada.ca).