

# National Travel Survey, first quarter 2023

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## Highlights

During the first quarter, Canadian residents took 66.5 million trips, 20.0 million more than in the same quarter of 2022. While most of the trips (87.6%) in the first quarter of 2023 were domestic, travel expenditures for those trips (\$13.7 billion) represented just over half (52.5%) of all travel expenditures. Meanwhile, travel expenditures made by Canadian residents in the United States and overseas during the first quarter reached \$12.3 billion.

## Domestic travels higher than pre-COVID-19 pandemic levels

In the first quarter of 2023, Canadian residents took 58.2 million domestic trips, up by 14.7 million from the first quarter of 2022 and 7.3% more than in the same quarter in 2019. In the first quarter of 2023, the number of domestic overnight trips was 17.5 million, while the number of same-day trips was 40.8 million.

Domestic travels accounted for 87.6% of all travel by Canadian residents in the first quarter, surpassing the proportion obtained in the same quarter of 2019 (85.4%). In comparison, this proportion was 93.5% from January to March 2022, when [some restrictions put in place due to the Omicron variant](#) were still in effect and reduced travel outside of the country.

In the first quarter of 2023, domestic travel expenditures by Canadian residents were \$13.7 billion, up 37.0% from the first quarter of 2022 (\$10.0 billion). The largest spending category during the first quarter of 2023 was vehicle operations (\$2.7 billion), followed by accommodations (\$2.6 billion) and restaurants and bars (\$2.3 billion).

## Travel to the United States continues to increase

During the first quarter of 2023, Canadian residents took 6.0 million trips to the United States, more than three times the number of trips from the same quarter in 2022 (1.7 million) and reaching the number of trips taken during the same quarter in 2019 (6.0 million). Holiday, leisure or recreation (3.0 million trips) and visiting friends or relatives (1.3 million trips) were the most reported purposes for the trips.

Total travel expenditures by Canadian residents in the United States reached \$7.4 billion in the first quarter of 2023, exceeding travel expenditures during the same quarter of 2022 (\$3.1 billion) and of 2019 (\$5.6 billion).

Canadian residents in the United States spent most on accommodation (\$3.1 billion) and in restaurants and bars (\$1.3 billion) in the first quarter of 2023.

**Table 1**

**Travel by Canadian residents in Canada and abroad by trip purpose, first quarter of 2023**

	Trips	Travel expenditures
	thousands	millions of dollars
<b>Trips by Canadian residents in Canada</b>	<b>58,207</b>	<b>13,652</b>
Business	5,327	2,197
Holiday, leisure or recreation	18,738	5,582
Visiting friends or relatives	24,786	3,903
Other	9,355	1,969
<b>Trips by Canadian residents abroad</b>	<b>8,274</b>	<b>12,335</b>
<b>To the United States</b>	<b>6,040</b>	<b>7,449</b>
Business	821	1,021
Holiday, leisure or recreation	3,017	5,150
Visiting friends or relatives	1,290	800
Other	911	477
<b>Overseas</b>	<b>2,234</b>	<b>4,886</b>
Business	120	294
Holiday, leisure or recreation	1,533	3,637
Visiting friends or relatives	517	795



**Table 1**  
**Travel by Canadian residents in Canada and abroad by trip purpose, first quarter of 2023**

	Trips	Travel expenditures
Other	65	159

**Note(s):** Figures may not add up to totals as a result of rounding.

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

### Despite the increase, overseas travel remains below pre-pandemic levels

During the first quarter of 2023, Canadian residents returned from 2.2 million trips overseas, nearly double the trips taken in the first quarter of 2022 (1.3 million trips) and representing more than two-thirds (68.0%) of those taken during the same quarter of 2019 (3.3 million trips).

Most Canadian residents travelled overseas for holiday, leisure or recreation purposes (1.5 million trips) and to visit friends or relatives (516,700) in the first quarter of 2023.

Canadian travellers spent \$4.9 billion overseas in the first quarter, and the two largest spending categories were accommodation (\$2.4 billion) and restaurants and bars (\$1.0 billion).

The top three overseas countries visited by Canadian residents during the first quarter were Mexico (717,000 visits), Dominican Republic (238,000 visits) and Cuba (176,000 visits).

### Cruise vacations remain popular

Spending on cruises to the United States and overseas increased sharply from \$28.6 million in the first quarter of 2022 to \$187.7 million in the first quarter of 2023, surpassing the \$105.3 million spent in the same quarter of 2019, before the pandemic.

## Note to readers

The National Travel Survey collects information about the domestic and international travel of Canadian residents.

All spending estimates are based on visit expenditures, and domestic visit expenditures include commercial air expenditures incurred at the point of origin of the trip.

All data in this release are expressed in current dollars unless otherwise noted.

The **target population** is the civilian, non-institutionalized population 18 years of age and older in Canada's provinces, excluding people living on Indian reserves and in the territories. Routine trips taken by commuters and diplomatic or military personnel are out of scope.

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

**Same-day trips or visits** take place within the same calendar day—that is, the traveller left and returned home on the same day—and must be a distance of 40 km or more away (one way).

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

A **trip abroad** for people residing in Canada starts when they cross the border to exit Canada and ends when they first re-enter 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 US 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.

More recent data on international travel by Canadian residents are available from the monthly "[Travel between Canada and other countries](#)."

## Products

[Data from the first quarter of 2023](#) from the National Travel Survey are now available. Other tables, including statistical profiles of Canadian travellers, are available upon request.

Note: Data on visited states during trips made by Canadian residents to the United States are now available upon request.

**Available tables:** [table 24-10-0045-01](#).

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

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; [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)) or Media Relations ([statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.mediahotline-ligneinfomedias.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)).