



2023-2023 Annual Impact Report

October 2023

PREPARED BY THE
CULINARY TOURISM ALLIANCE

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Message from the Chair

2023: A Momentous Year

I am honored to address you as Chair of the Board for such a monumental year. In 2023 we celebrated two significant milestones - the expansion of our organization on a national scale and the remarkable 15-year tenure of our dedicated President and CEO, Rebecca Mackenzie.

I can't help but be awestruck by the journey that the Culinary Tourism Alliance has undertaken. Going national is a testament to the dedication and vision of our team and engaged stakeholders. We are excited to share our country's unique culinary heritage with a wider audience, while continuing to support the local businesses and communities whose stories make the rich tapestries of flavour so special.

This year, we also have the immense pleasure of celebrating the remarkable achievement of our CEO, Rebecca Mackenzie, who has been at the helm of our organization for 15 years. It is no surprise that she was the recipient of Wine Growers Ontario's Wine Champion of the Year Award AND she made Foodism's list of top 40 Tourism Trailblazers.

Rebecca's unwavering commitment and innovative leadership have been instrumental in shaping the Culinary Tourism Alliance into the force it is today. Her passion for our mission has been the fire behind our success.

Under Rebecca's guidance, we have seen the Alliance thrive as an organization that celebrates diversity,

sustainability, and authenticity, becoming a respected and influential voice in culinary tourism across the globe. Her ability to inspire our team, engage our partners, and champion the interests of our members has been truly remarkable.

Looking ahead, we will continue to grow, innovate, and make a meaningful impact on culinary tourism in Canada. This journey will be as exciting as it is challenging, and we are ready to embrace it with open arms, just as we have since our inception.

I am deeply grateful to our members and partners for your unwavering commitment to our cause, and I truly appreciate the trust you have placed in me as Chair of the Board - thank you for being a part of this remarkable journey!

Lynnette Bain

LYNNETTE BAIN

BOARD CHAIR

CULINARY TOURISM ALLIANCE



Message from the President + CEO

2023 seemed to move at lightning speed! We kicked off the new year with a milestone by going national! We set this BHAG (big hairy audacious goal) back in 2022 and achieved it in part due to the funding support we received from the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) to develop the Great Taste of Canada program. We worked diligently to engage members from across the country to invest in this cooperative marketing program and included membership in the investment. I am so pleased to say that we brought on over 40 new members from 10 of 13 provinces and territories! I am confident we'll reach all 13 in 2024.

This year has had some common themes throughout: change, adaptability, and excellence. We had two directors depart from our team in the first quarter and it was incredible to see our team step up to bring new

leadership and perspectives to the management team. In May, we brought on five externs from the Food Tourism Entrepreneurship Post-Graduate program at George Brown College, bringing with them an onslaught of new ideas and fresh energy. We have re-imagined our HR structure moving forward to meet the strategic evolution of the organization in 2024 and beyond.

We designed, developed, and delivered the first ever Taste of Place Summit in partnership with George Brown College. The Summit attracted 200 delegates from around the globe and provided meaningful education and engagement to those in attendance. We are SO excited to announce that the 2nd annual Taste of Place Summit will take place in Montréal, Québec on May 27 & 28, 2024 in partnership with Institut de tourisme et d'hôtellerie du Québec (ITHQ). Make sure to save the date and join

us - there will be ample opportunities to learn how to showcase food and drink in your destination.

The Taste of Place Summit wasn't the only industry event we rocked this year. We were eager to share and tell our members' taste of place stories to the media and travel trade markets, and so in April we were at Rendezvous Canada (presented by TIAC and Destination Canada), in June we attended TMAC (Travel Media Association of Canada), and in September we attended GoMedia, Destination Canada's premier international media marketplace.

Our Programs Team delivered four outstanding Feast On® the Farm events in partnership with Peterborough & Kawartha, Temiskaming Shores, Wellington County and Huron County - delighting consumers and educating culinary tourism value chain stakeholders on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. We currently have a call out for expressions of interest to host one of our new Feast On® Signature Experiences in 2024 and we're excited to continue exploring Ontario through this bespoke events series.

Our Destination Development Team delivered professional services to partners including Lakehead University, Indigenous Tourism Ontario, Tourism Industry Association of Ontario, Explore Waterloo and Shuswap Tourism to name a few. The team will be leading the development of a Canadian Culinary & Agritourism Strategy in 2024.

Our Board is embarking on revising our strategic efforts at our October Board Meeting where we'll be welcoming three new board members from our national network. We'll keep focused on supporting the Sustainable Development Goals and we'll be implementing a new National Culinary & Agritourism Strategy Advisory Group as well as an Academic Advisory Committee to engage our membership to further our efforts.

As a leader, I embrace change and thrive in an environment where I get to work with people who are passionate about what they do. We have an exceptional team, board, and membership network that live and breathe tastes of place. Food connects us all. It connects every traveler to the culture of the destination they visit. It connects us to family and friends. It's around the table

where new relationships are nourished and old ones are celebrated.

October 1st was my 15th anniversary at the Culinary Tourism Alliance. I can say with honesty that I have loved every minute of this journey and I am so excited for the future of the organization. I love how the table at the Culinary Tourism Alliance keeps growing!

Thank you, Merci, Miigwech,

Rebecca Mackenzie

REBECCA MACKENZIE
PRESIDENT & CEO
CULINARY TOURISM ALLIANCE



Meet the Culinary Tourism Alliance



Rebecca Mackenzie
President & CEO



Nicole Brown
Director,
Marketing



Astrid Di Paolo
Programs
Manager



Ian Worte
Destination
Development
Manager



Royden Henry
Accountant
& Executive
Assistant



Mariana Worrall
Events
Specialist



Gabrielle Mueller
Digital Media
Specialist



Zain Alkhouri
Marketing
Specialist



Shayan Lallani
Research &
Engagement
Specialist



Kshitij Ratan
Programs
Sales
Coordinator



James Ton
Digital
Content
Producer



Andréanne Joly
French
Translator

2022-2023

Board of Directors

LYNNETTE BAIN

BOARD CHAIR

Vice President of Vice-President Destination Development, Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island

RICHARD WILLET

VICE CHAIR

Vice President, Resort Operations
Niagara Casinos

KELLY O'BRIEN

SECRETARY

Partnership Manager, Barrett Centre of Innovation in Sustainable Urban Agriculture at Durham College

SARAH JARVIS

TREASURER

Director of Community Engagement, Destination Toronto

NICK SUTCLIFFE

PAST CHAIR

Co-Owner, Southern Cliff Brands and Pommies Cider

ELEANOR MCGRATH

BOARD MEMBER

Owner, Springfield Farms

THOMPSON TRAN

BOARD MEMBER

Owner, Wooden Boat Food

ADAM MORRISON & MONICA MARALIT

BOARD MEMBERS

Ontario Tourism Education Corporation

ANDRIA BARRETT

BOARD MEMBER AT LARGE

The Year in Review

74

Ontario members in good standing

74

[Ontario stories shared](#)

42

National members in good standing

95

[National stories shared](#)

34

Destinations participating in The Great Taste of Ontario

381

Businesses featured in the Great Taste of Ontario

35

Members participating in The Great Taste of Canada

344

Businesses featured in the Great Taste of Canada

138

Feast On® certified businesses

8

Destination Development projects completed

Notable Achievements



LAUNCH OF THE GREAT TASTE OF CANADA

As of January 1, 2023, we amended our bylaws and became a national organization! We began accepting national membership, successfully onboarding over 40 new members from coast, to coast, to coast.

In June, we launched canadaculinary.com and with it, The Great Taste of Canada. We're shouting Canada's food stories from the top of Mount Logan, across the prairies, and over the Great Lakes to the salty sea of the Maritimes.

Check it all out on canadaculinary.com/great-taste

INAUGURAL TASTE OF PLACE SUMMIT

In June we hosted the inaugural Taste of Place Summit in partnership with George Brown College. It was a jam-packed two days!

We explored the beautiful back roads of Waterloo Region and enjoyed an insider look at some of the province's best agritourism stops, and then convened at George Brown's Hospitality and Tourism Campus for a full day of networking and knowledge sharing with industry colleagues from across the globe.

Check out tasteofplace.ca and stay tuned for announcements on next year's Summit!





2023 Membership Report

2023 Ontario Members Network

Algonquin College	Hastings County	South Eastern Ontario (RTO9)
Apple Pie Trail	Heart of Ontario (RTO 3)	Ontario's Southwest (RTO1)
Canadian Food & Wine Institute	Indigenous Tourism Ontario	Stratford Chefs School
CGLCC	Lanark County	City of Temiskaming Shores
Centennial College	Leni Brem	City of Greater Sudbury
Central Counties Tourism (RTO6)	Loyalist College	City of Brampton
City of Kawartha Lakes	Municipality of Chatham-Kent	County of Perth
Conestoga College	Niagara Fallsview Casino	Tourism Kingston
County of Brant	Niagara Parks Commission	Tourism London
County of Grey	Nick Sutcliffe	Tourism Mississauga
County of Huron	Northumberland Tourism	Tourism Muskoka
County of Oxford	Ontario By Bike	Tourism Simcoe County
County of Wellington (Taste Real)	Ontario Craft Brewers	Tourism Vaughan
Destination Markham	Ontario's Highlands (RTO 11)	Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island
Destination Northern Ontario (RTO 13)	Orillia and Lake Country	Town of Bracebridge
Destination Stratford	Ontario Tourism Education Corp	Town of Essex
Destination Toronto	Ottawa Tourism	Town of Halton Hills
Durham College	Ottawa Valley Tourism	Town of Lincoln (Niagara Benchlands)
Eastern Ontario Agri-Food Network	Peterborough & the Kawarthas	Town of Whitby
Elgin County Tourism	Railway City Tourism (St. Thomas)	SGD Counties
Explore Waterloo	Regional Municipality of Durham	University of Guelph
Festivals & Events Ontario	Resorts of Ontario	Visit The County
George Brown College	Kawarthas Northumberland (RTO 8)	Wine Growers Ontario (WGO)
Guelph Tourism Services	Société Économique de l'Ontario	Wine Marketing Association of Ontario
Haliburton Highlands	Six Nations Tourism	

OntarioCulinary.com

POWERED BY OUR MEMBERSHIP COMMUNITY

Activity between October 2022 - September 2023

784,849	Page views	(-47,973)
65,000	Average monthly visitors	(-4,000)
47,811	Destination profile visits	(+6,360)
74	Members stories shared	
0:51	Average time on page	

Social Media Metrics

45,408	Combined followers	(+744)
3,154,549	Impressions	(+1,797)
99,060	Engagements	(+122,610)



2023 National Members Network

Alliance de l'industrie touristique du Québec

Banff & Lake Louise Tourism

Canada Beef

Canadian Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

Culinary Federation of Canada

Culinary Historians of Canada

Centennial College

Conestoga College

County of Oxford

Destination British Columbia

Destination Cape Breton

Destination Osoyoos

Destination Toronto

Discover Halifax

Durham College

George Brown College

Indigenous Culinary of Associated Nations

Institut De Tourisme Et D'hôtellerie Du Québec

Okanagan School of Business

Relais & Châteaux

SAIT, School of Hospitality and Tourism

Shuswap Tourism

Société du réseau ÉCONOMUSÉE

Taste of Nova Scotia

Terroir et Saveurs du Québec

Thompson Okanagan Tourism

Association Tourisme Montréal

Tourism Kamloops

Tourism Kelowna

Tourism Lethbridge

Tourism Medicine Hat

Tourism Osoyoos

Tourism Richmond

Tourism Vernon

Tourism Winnipeg

Tourism Saskatchewan

Travel Alberta

Travel Nunavut Industry Association

Tourism Northwest Territories

Tourism Kingston

Tourism Mississauga

TIA Yukon

CanadaCulinary.com

POWERED BY THE GREAT TASTE OF CANADA

Activity between June 2023 - September 2023

19,329	Page views
4,800	Average monthly visitors
7,788	Destination profile visits
95	Members stories shared
0:40	Average time on page

Social Media Metrics

75,416	Impressions
2,654	Engagements



2022 - 2023 Feast On[®] Report



FEAST ON® is a certification program that recognizes businesses committed to sourcing and celebrating Ontario food & drink.

CERTIFIED BUSINESSES BY REGION

10 in SOUTHWEST ONTARIO
12 in NIAGARA REGION
9 in HAMILTON, HALTON & BRANT
41 in HURON, PERTH, WATERLOO & WELLINGTON
20 in GREATER TORONTO AREA
16 in YORK, DURHAM & HEADWATERS
12 in GREY, BRUCE, SIMCOE
7 in KAWARTHAS NORTHUMBERLAND
19 in SOUTH EASTERN ONTARIO
4 in OTTAWA & COUNTRYSIDE
5 in ONTARIO HIGHLANDS & OTTAWA VALLEY
6 in ALGONQUIN ALMAGUIN & MUSKOKA
6 in NORTHERN ONTARIO

118

ACTIVELY CERTIFIED RESTAURANTS

29

ACTIVELY CERTIFIED PURVEYORS

26

NEW BUSINESSES ADDED TO THE NETWORK

31

BUSINESSES IN THE CERTIFICATION PIPELINE

Feast On® the Farm

Our Feast On® the Farm events were a massive success again this year! Featuring over two dozen chef and beverage teams, we took our events to four gorgeous venues in destinations across the province:

- Lang Pioneer Village, Peterborough & the Kawarthas
- Bison du Nord, City of Temiskaming Shores
- Thatcher Farms, Taste Real Wellington County
- Eddington's Farm, Huron County

Partnerships with these destinations allowed us to bring nearly 500 guests and almost 200 industry colleagues together to celebrate the unique tastes of place in our province. We were also able to promote our zero-waste practices and our commitment to achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

We'd like to extend heartfelt gratitude to our Signature Sponsor, the Royal Bank of Canada, and our key sponsor, the Wine Marketing Association of Ontario - without these organizations our events would not be possible.

2024 EVENTS

We've expanded our offerings for 2024! Interested in hosting a Feast On® Signature Experience?

[Check out our website for more information.](#)



2023

Great Taste of Ontario Report



Ontario's Food Tourism Recovery Program

The Great Taste of Ontario program was a scrumptious success this year! We saw our highest ever amount of Feast On® vouchers awarded which means travellers were checking in and reaping the benefits!

We also saw a significant increase in readership on our content. This was largely due to the success of a new partnership with Destination Ontario through their spring/summer food and drink campaign.

We also continued our partnership with the Globe & Mail to include a fall edition of the Great Taste of Ontario special report. This included 7 articles that appeared in print and online, supported by a paid social media campaign.

While the Great Taste of Ontario will sunset at the end of this year, we are excited to continue to share Ontario's great tastes through custom campaign initiatives in 2024. We are excited to:

- Offer in-market visits from our Content Team to build relationships with our destination partners and industry stakeholders
- Evolve our marketing efforts to grow our following on TikTok and Pinterest
- Continue to leverage strategic our partnerships with key media outlets

3,476

PASSPORTS DOWNLOADED
OCT 2022 to SEPT 2023

381

SMALL BUSINESSES FEATURED

4,729

CHECK-INS

148,000+

VIEWS ON ONTARIO STORIES

647

FEAST ON® VOUCHERS AWARDED

51

FEAST ON® VOUCHERS AWARDED®

Investing Program Partners

- Niagara Benchlands
- Tourism London
- Explore Waterloo Region
- Tourism Thunder Bay
- Windsor Essex (Kingsville)
- Visit the County
- Chatham-Kent Tourism
- Northumberland County
- Perth County Tourism
- City of Guelph
- Middlesex + Sarnia Lambton
- Oxford County
- Peterborough & the Kawarthas
- Simcoe County
- Bracebridge
- Brampton
- Durham Region Tourism
- Kawartha Lakes
- Société Économique de l'Ontario
- Temiskaming Shores
- Whitby



Professional Services



Overview

We believe that culinary and agritourism tourism development are community experiences. The Culinary Tourism Alliance works with communities to grow food tourism by leveraging the history, heritage, and culture behind the food and drink that makes each destination unique. Our team offers Professional Consulting Services across the following core service lines:

- Destination Strategy Development
- Product & Program Development
- Capacity building & business coaching
- Education
- Marketing & Storytelling

We develop methodologies to build capacity within food tourism communities and work tirelessly to provide the knowledge, skills, tools, and resources for them to successfully grow food tourism as a collective.



Project Spotlight

GREAT TASTE OF CANADA CULINARY DNA RESEARCH

July 2023

In anticipation of the national expansion of our organization, our Professional Services Team embarked on a quest to catalogue the “culinary DNA” of each province and territory.

Each profile documents the unique Indigenous and immigrant groups that have contributed to the region’s contemporary foodways. The project also highlights quintessential ingredients, dishes, and culinary products that are culturally important to each province and territory. Finally, the Culinary DNA project features notable food stories from across Canada.



On-Going Projects

EXPLORE WATERLOO REGION

Farm Gate Trail

SHUSWAP TOURISM

Farm Gate Trail

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

Northern Culinary Tourism Experience
Development Microcredential

ONTARIO TOURISM EDUCATION CORPORATION

Diversity Recruitment & Retention

TOURISM INDUSTRY ASSOCIATION OF ONTARIO

Elevating Ontario Experiences

FOOD VENTURE PROGRAM

Culinary Tourism 101 Interactive Virtual
Workshop Series for Food Entrepreneurs



Completed Projects

TOURISM WINDSOR ESSEX PELEE ISLAND

Follow The Flavours Multicultural Food Trail

April 2023

In partnership with Tourism Windsor Essex Pelee Island (TWEPI) and the Multicultural Council of Windsor & Essex County (MCC), CTA developed a food trail showcasing the diverse foodways of Southwestern Ontario. The trail highlights the region's rich migration histories. The 25 businesses featured on the itinerary showcase culinary traditions from all corners of the globe. Following their flavours is sure to delight the palates of visitors from across Ontario and beyond.

OTTAWA VALLEY TOURISM ASSOCIATION

Culinary Tourism Development Strategy

March 2023

CTA worked with the Ottawa Valley Tourist Association (OVTA) to gauge the region's potential as a culinary tourism destination. Through desk research and intensive engagement with stakeholders across the

culinary tourism value chain, CTA crafted a strategy report assessing Ottawa Valley's strengths in food tourism. The report also included opportunities to develop the Ottawa Valley's culinary product in the years ahead, for example by leveraging the region's reputation as an adventure tourism destination to produce innovative experiences for foodies.

GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE

Craft Alcohol Microcredential

January 2023

CTA designed and developed a course on craft alcohol tourism for George Brown College. With an emphasis on case studies, the micro-credential teaches participants how to design, develop, and deliver craft alcohol beverage tourism experiences that promote unique tastes of place. It also shows learners how to apply trends and best practices in cultural tourism to this niche.

TOWN OF ESSEX

Ambassador Program and Toolkit

March 2023

In 2022-2023, the CTA worked with the Town of Essex, Ontario to help them implement their Agritourism Development Strategy. This included the creation of an Agritourism Development Toolkit, and the launching of a new Agritourism Ambassador program. All of these programs and documents can be found on the Town of Essex Agritourism portal.

ONTARIO CRAFT BREWERS

Toolkit: Best Practices for Growing Craft Beer Tourism

October 2022

The Ontario Craft Brewers Association (OCB), as part of its commitment to support strategic projects in alignment with the growth and recovery of the Ontario craft beer sector, engaged the CTA to conduct research into best practices in driving tourism to craft breweries across Ontario. The CTA presented this research at the OCB's annual conference and produced an extensive best practices toolkit, which was distributed to OCB members. We also developed a province-wide craft brewery trail featuring businesses that offer visitor-facing experiences.

INDIGENOUS TOURISM ONTARIO

Indigenous Food Tourism Workshop Series

May 2023

The CTA hosted a series of workshops in collaboration with Indigenous Tourism Ontario, co-hosted by three leaders in the Indigenous culinary field: Chef Zach Keeshig, Chef Jenni Lessard and Chef Aicha Smith-Belghaba. The main goal was to help Indigenous operators develop or enhance culinary tourism experiences that meet standards set out in ITO's Indigenous Food Tourism Standards & Best Practices Checklist. The sessions focused on three topics: delivering community-based experiences, providing transformational experiences, and growing Indigenous food tourism.



Custom Content Trips

Our content campaigns are completely customized for each project, but generally include in-market social media, paid ads, blog content, and full usage rights to the photos and videos captured during our visit.

EXPERIENCE SIMCOE COUNTY

One day | May 2023

SOUTH EASTERN ONTARIO

Four days | May 2023

GUELPH.BEER BUS

One day | July 2023

KINGSVILLE

Two days | July 2023

FIELD TO SHIELD SASKATCHEWAN

Five days | September 2023

EXPLORE WATERLOO REGION

Two days | September 2023

GREY COUNTY

Four days | October 2023

VAUGHAN

Four days | November 2023



Key Industry Events

THOMPSON OKANAGAN TOURISM SUMMIT

Speaker | February 2023
Kamloops, BC

RENDEZVOUS CANADA

Delegate | May 2023
Québec City, QC

DESTINATIONS INTERNATIONAL

Delegate | July 2023
Dallas, TX

GOMEDIA

Delegate | September 2023
Saskatoon SK

TERROIR

Delegate | October 2023
Calgary, AB

QUELL UNBLOCK CONFERENCE

Delegate | April 2023
Ottawa, ON

TMAC

Delegate | July 2023
Sudbury, ON

SEE CONFERENCE

Panelist | September 2023
Denver, CO

TIAO SUMMIT

Award Sponsor | October 2023
Mississauga, ON

TIAC CONGRESS

Award Sponsor | November 2023
Ottawa, ON



Looking Ahead

A scenic view of a valley and a lake seen through a pair of binoculars mounted on a railing. The binoculars are in the foreground, and the landscape beyond includes a large body of water, a town, and rolling green hills under a cloudy sky.

New Initiatives

Canadian Culinary & Agritourism Strategy Advisory Group
to support developing the national strategy

Academic Advisory Committee to support research to
guide strategic and tactical efforts

Increased PR and Media support for our members

READI program in partnership with the Tourism Industry
Association of Canada (TIAC)



Cheers!

For more information about the
Culinary Tourism Alliance, please visit:

CulinaryTourismAlliance.com

Follow us:

@CulinaryTourismAlliance

@OntarioCulinary

@CanadaCulinary

#FeastOn

#GrowFoodTourism

