



THE NEXT PHASE: 2012-2017

A Five-year Strategy for Aboriginal Cultural Tourism in British Columbia



**ABORIGINAL
TOURISM BC**
our story. your experience.

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Front Cover Photo: Klahowya Village in Stanley Park, www.AboriginalBC.com



Seashore Charters, www.SeashoreCharters.com



Message from the Chief Executive Officer

The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC) has become a world leader in the development of authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism. Together AtBC, our Stakeholders, and Aboriginal communities throughout British Columbia have demonstrated a collective ability to work together and produce significant growth in tourism since 2006.

The growth of the Aboriginal cultural tourism sector has been unprecedented and AtBC understands that consumer demands for existing authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism destinations and potential for new Aboriginal cultural tourism products have created a promising future.

I want to acknowledge our Stakeholders and Aboriginal leaders who continue to recognize the tremendous opportunity the Aboriginal cultural tourism sector provides for employment, cultural revitalization, and economic benefits for communities and entrepreneurs.

The Next Phase 2012-2017 has been produced based on timely sector research, consultation with AtBC Stakeholders, and economic assessment of the consumer demand. Therefore AtBC is confident that the strategy provides a formula for future success and continued sector growth that leads global trends.

The future growth for authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism will ensure growth of the entire tourism industry and The Next Phase 2012-2017 will ensure success.

Thank you,

Keith Henry, Chief Executive Officer

Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia

A photograph of three children, two boys and one girl, sitting at a table and working on a craft project. They are using yellow and orange materials, possibly leather or fabric, to create items. The boy in the foreground is wearing a red and white striped shirt. The girl on the right is wearing a black jacket with a red collar. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people and a bright, indoor setting.

OUR VISION is a prosperous and respectful Aboriginal cultural tourism industry sharing authentic products that exceed visitor expectations.

Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre , www.SLCC.ca



Executive Summary

The Next Phase outlines AtBC's strategy for growing the province's Aboriginal cultural tourism industry over the next five years. It builds on AtBC's experience in successfully implementing the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy and is timed to take advantage of the current trend towards increased visitor demand for authentic Aboriginal cultural experiences.

AtBC will invest \$10 million over five years into coordinated capacity building, product development and marketing initiatives. Through this investment, AtBC will increase visitor volume, employment and revenue as well as tax revenue generation.

To be successful, **The Next Phase** will require continued support from both the Federal and Provincial Governments. AtBC will continue to strengthen partnerships with both levels of government and will work to support "Gaining the Edge," British Columbia's five-year tourism strategy, as well as Canada's Federal Tourism Strategy.

AtBC's five-year strategic targets for success for the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry are:

- Revenue of \$68 million (10% growth per year)
- Employment at 4000 full-time equivalent (10% growth per year)
- 100 Market-Ready Aboriginal cultural tourism businesses (10% growth per year in every region)

Key five-year strategies

- Push for Market-Readiness
- Build and Strengthen Partnerships
- Focus on Online Marketing
- Focus on Key and Emerging Markets
- Focus on Authenticity and Quality Assurance
- Regional Approach

OUR MISSION is to provide training, awareness, product development and marketing to support a sustainable authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism industry in British Columbia while contributing to cultural preservation and economic development.



Spirit Bear Lodge, www.SpiritBear.com

Recognized as a World Leader

The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia (AtBC) was formed in 1996 and has since become recognized as a world leader in the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry.

From humble beginnings, AtBC has grown to represent more than 150 stakeholder businesses located in

the six tourism regions of British Columbia.

AtBC is governed by Aboriginal cultural tourism business leaders working in British Columbia who dedicate their time to ensure AtBC represents and meets the needs of the industry.



2012 AtBC Board of Directors: (front row, left to right) Sophie Pierre; Brenda Baptiste; Lillian Rose; Paula Cranmer-Underhill; (stairs, bottom to top) Lori Simcox; Geraldine Thomas-Flurer; Gloria Valencia; Wade Baker; George Taylor; Sharon Bond; Lillian Hunt; (not in photo) Douglas Green; Wade Grant.

AtBC is frequently utilized by other countries and regions as a resource for best practices in Aboriginal cultural tourism.

2010 New Zealand

AtBC hosted a delegation from New Zealand who were researching the successful implementation of the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy.

2011 Taiwan

AtBC hosted an indigenous group seeking best-practices for the creation of their own cultural tourism industry.

2011 Yellowknife

At the request of the Government of the Northwest Territories, AtBC presented “lessons learned” and success stories to a territorial tourism conference.

2011 Belize

AtBC is assisting the Government of Belize in the development of its indigenous cultural tourism industry through the adaptation of front-line training and community awareness training programs.

A Proven Record of Success

In 2005, AtBC designed the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Blueprint Strategy (Blueprint) and subsequently secured \$10 million dollars for its implementation. The Blueprint enabled AtBC and the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry in British Columbia to reach unprecedented levels of success.

Investments into the Blueprint were made by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (formerly known as INAC), Western Economic Diversification, and the Province of British Columbia through the Ministry of Jobs, Tourism, and Innovation.

AtBC achieved all identified and agreed upon performance indicators for the implementation of the Blueprint as established by our funding partners.

The evidence demonstrates that a well coordinated provincial Aboriginal cultural tourism strategy yields strong results and that AtBC is highly capable of implementing such a strategy.

Jobs in the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Industry *(full-time equivalent)*

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
1,718	—	1,984	2,018	2,266

Revenue for the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Industry *(\$millions)*

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
20	26	37	38	40	42

Tax Revenue Generated by the Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Industry *(\$millions)*

2009	2010	2011
11	11	12



Bill Reid Gallery, www.BillReidGallery.ca



The Time is Right

The 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games raised both domestic and international interest and consumer demand continues to increase for authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences. This presents an incredible opportunity for the growth of the province's Aboriginal cultural tourism industry.

More and more visitors to British Columbia want to experience Aboriginal culture, art and lifestyle. The result is that the Aboriginal tourism market has increased by 26% domestically, 8% for US visitors, and 12% internationally (as of 2010).

The emerging Chinese market is substantial and another significant opportunity for Aboriginal cultural tourism.

Overall Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Incidence Rates increased by 69% between 2006 and 2010.

Based on Tourism BC Visitor Survey incidence statistics.

BC's Six Tourism Regions:

Vancouver Coast & Mountains

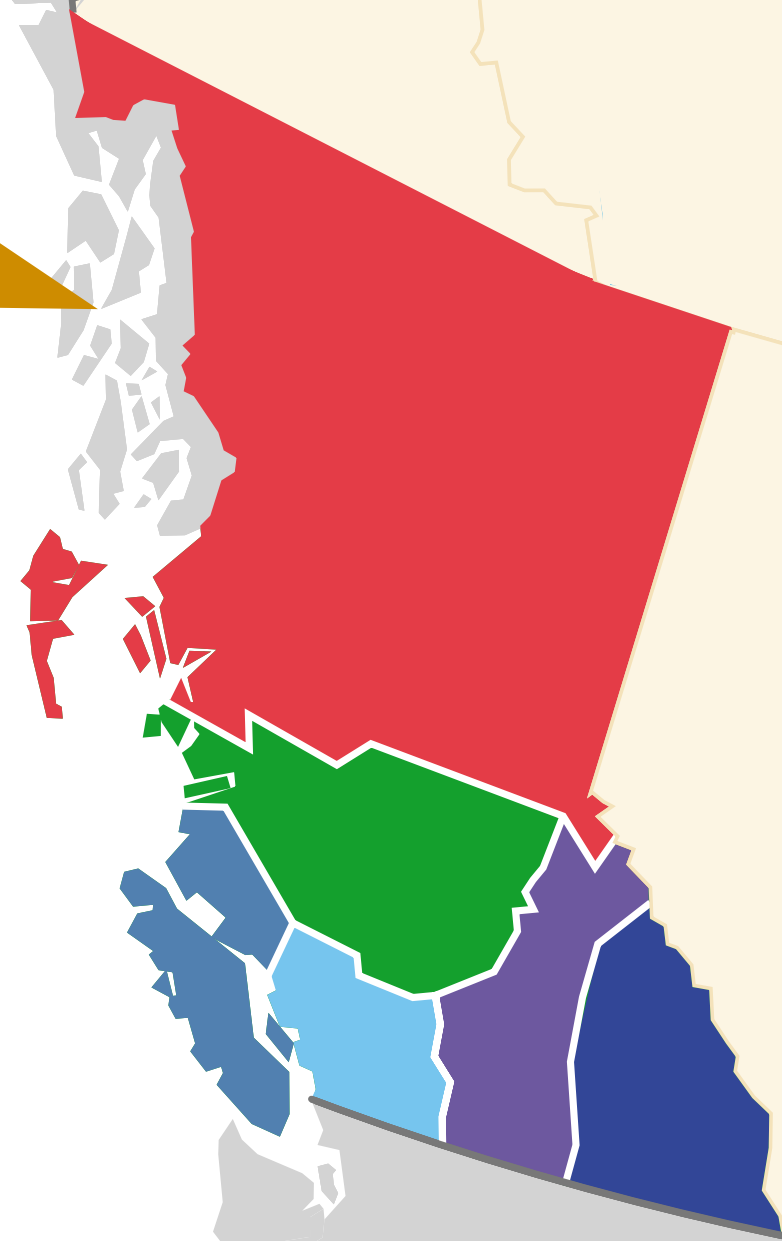
Vancouver Island

Thompson Okanagan

Northern BC

Cariboo Chilcotin Coast

Kootenay Rockies



One in four visitors to British Columbia is interested in adding an Aboriginal cultural tourism experience to their trip.

Nk'Mip Desert Cultural Centre, www.NkMipDesert.com





Quaaout Lodge & Talking Rock Golf Course, www.QuaaoutLodge.com

Targets for Success

The Next Phase, AtBC's five-year Aboriginal cultural tourism strategy, is designed to build on the success of the original Blueprint strategy and to continue to expand the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry in British Columbia.

AtBC will invest \$10 million over five years into coordinated capacity building, product development and marketing initiatives. Through this investment, AtBC will increase visitor volume, employment and revenue as well as tax revenue generation.

AtBC's five-year strategic targets for success for the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry are:

- Revenue of \$68 million (10% growth per year)
- Employment at 4000 full-time equivalent (10% growth per year)
- 100 Market-Ready Aboriginal cultural tourism businesses (10% growth per year in every region)



Capacity Building

Product Development

Marketing

**10%
Annual
Growth**

Push for Market-Readiness

The number of Aboriginal tourism businesses in the province that are not Market-Ready is 192. This number includes businesses that are already Operational as well as businesses that are still in the Start-Up phase.

AtBC has identified a number of barriers that may make it challenging for a business to progress from Start-Up to Operational to Market-Ready. AtBC will deliver programs that will help push businesses along the path to meeting the Market-Ready criteria:

- *Has been operating in a safe and professional manner for at least one year.*
- *Carries adequate insurance totaling no less than 2 million in liability.*
- *Has current business and operating licenses, registrations and permits.*
- *Has a website that honestly and accurately represents Aboriginal tourism business.*
- *Accepts credit cards and debit cards as means of payment.*
- *Handles reservations/inquiries by telephone, fax and email on a year-round basis.*
- *Handles and is able to provide confirmation of booking arrangements within 24 hours.*
- *Has a product that is of interest to tourists, both domestic and international.*

To support the success of this strategy, AtBC will:

- Deliver business and product development training programs that will help Start-Up businesses become Operational.
- Deliver business and product development training programs that will enable Operational businesses to achieve the Market-Ready designation.
- Deliver business and product development training programs that will enable those businesses which are already Market-Ready to achieve the Export-Ready designation.
- Deliver community capacity building training programs to assist Aboriginal communities in planning for successful economic development in the tourism industry.
- Deliver front-line employment skills training programs to assist businesses and communities in meeting tourism staffing needs.



Takaya Tours, www.TakayaTours.com





Spirit Ridge Vineyard Resort & Spa, www.SpiritRidge.ca



Build and Strengthen Partnerships

AtBC recognizes that British Columbia's Aboriginal cultural tourism industry can only grow, prosper and become sustainable through the cultivation of partnerships with other organizations who are also committed to the success of tourism in the province.

These partnerships will begin in the Aboriginal communities of British Columbia and must include all levels of government. All capacity building, product development and marketing efforts must be coordinated between the various partners in order to be most effective and to maximize efficiencies.

To support the success of this strategy, AtBC will:

- Continue to strengthen existing partnerships with the Provincial and Federal governments and work to support the Provincial and Federal tourism strategies.
- Develop and expand partnerships with each of the regional Destination Marketing Organizations.
- Continue to assist Aboriginal communities throughout the province in economic development initiatives related to tourism.
- Increase partnerships with non-Aboriginal tourism businesses in order to increase the availability of authentic Aboriginal-themed vacation packages.
- Continue to create and expand partnerships with educational institutions and other training and development organizations in order to meet industry staffing needs.

Focus on Online Marketing

Recognizing the tremendous technological shift now firmly underway, AtBC will continue to move its marketing focus towards online activities. AtBC will also assist its stakeholders in making the same shift in their own marketing focus.

To support the success of this strategy, AtBC will:

- Upgrade its existing websites and expand online advertising initiatives.
- Ensure that all of its online marketing activities are successful on a range of desktop and mobile devices.
- Integrate social media activity into every marketing campaign.
- Expand its collection of digital image and video assets. The production of engaging content and the cultivation of user-generated content will be primary goals.
- Provide Stakeholders with access to online marketing expertise and resources and deliver related workshops in each region.



‘Ksan Historical Village and Museum, www.Ksan.org







Focus on Key and Emerging Markets

To maximize the benefit of its marketing efforts AtBC will primarily focus on five key markets. These include:

- » British Columbia
- » Alberta
- » Ontario
- » California
- » Germany

As well, AtBC will monitor the potential of emerging markets such as China, India and Mexico and respond with appropriate programs that will take advantage of the enormous potential these markets represent.

To support the success of this strategy, AtBC will:

- Work in collaboration with the Province of BC on international marketing programs.
- Attend consumer, travel trade and media trade shows and events in the five key markets.
- Work in collaboration with Regional Destination Marketing Organizations on domestic marketing campaigns so that Aboriginal experiences are well represented.
- Deliver niche marketing campaigns in specific markets where specific experiences are in high demand.
- Develop German language online marketing and print campaigns.

Focus on Authenticity and Quality Assurance

Cultural authenticity is at the heart of the Aboriginal cultural tourism industry. It will be a fundamental priority as AtBC grows the industry within BC to satisfy rising consumer demand for authentic Aboriginal tourism experiences.

AtBC also recognizes the connection between Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences and the purchase of authentic Aboriginal giftware and art and will work to support the authentic Aboriginal artisan products industry.

Quality assurance is key to the ongoing sustainability of the industry and will also be a fundamental priority for the next five years. Environmental sustainability will be considered to be integral to quality, authentic Aboriginal cultural experiences.

To support the success of this strategy, AtBC will:

- Continue to increase the number of Authentic Aboriginal certified tourism businesses in order to satisfy increasing visitor demand for authentic Aboriginal cultural tourism experiences.
- Expand the existing Authentic Aboriginal certification program to include certification of authentic Aboriginal performers and artisan products.
- Develop a quality assurance program to help ensure that every visitor receives the best possible experience when they include an Aboriginal cultural experience in their visit.



Huupaquinum Gift Shop, www.Ucluth.ca





Haida Heritage Centre, www.HaidaHeritageCentre.com

Regional Approach

To move the industry forward, AtBC will develop regional strategies to promote growth throughout the province while recognizing the unique opportunities and challenges in each region.

These regional Aboriginal cultural tourism strategies will include sub-regional strategies that will cover capacity building, product development and marketing initiatives.

To support the success of this strategy, AtBC will:

- Develop six comprehensive regional Aboriginal cultural tourism strategies.
- Promote packages along routes connecting multiple regions of the province and develop other inter-regional initiatives.
- Develop programs connecting British Columbia's diverse coastal experiences focusing on four niche markets:
 - » BC Ferries
 - » Cruise ships
 - » Pocket cruise ships
 - » Marine tourism
- Work in close collaboration with regional and community Destinations Marketing Organizations.
- Continue to operate the Klahowya Village in Stanley Park and expand this marketing event to include events in Victoria and Kamloops.



Cariboo Chilcotin Jetboat Adventures, www.JetboatAdventures.com

A photograph showing the backs of two people wearing bright yellow life jackets and hats, looking out at a river with white water rapids. The person on the left is wearing a dark green bucket hat and a blue and white striped shirt. The person on the right is wearing a light blue bucket hat and a red top. They are sitting on dark rocks. The water is turbulent and white with foam. A semi-transparent dark rectangle is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image, containing white text.

**Aboriginal cultural tourism
is the fastest growing sector
of the tourism industry in
British Columbia.**



U'mista Cultural Centre, www.Umista.ca

Estimated Five-year Project Expenditures

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	Total
Push for Market-Readiness	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$3,250,000
Build and Strengthen Partnerships	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$200,000	\$1,000,000
Focus on Online Marketing	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$300,000	\$1,500,000
Focus on Key and Emerging Markets	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$650,000	\$3,250,000
Focus on Authenticity and Quality Assurance	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$150,000	\$750,000
Regional Approach	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$100,000	\$500,000
	\$2,050,000	\$2,050,000	\$2,050,000	\$2,050,000	\$2,050,000	\$10,250,000



West Coast Expeditions, www.WestCoastExpeditions.com



Be a Part of the Excitement!

AtBC encourages all interested individuals, businesses and organizations to work together with AtBC to help grow British Columbia's Aboriginal cultural tourism industry. Through committed partnerships, all stakeholders will benefit and communities in every region of the province will see increased prosperity.

The Aboriginal Tourism Association of British Columbia

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Klahowya Village in Stanley Park, www.AboriginalBC.com