

2019 Tourism Annual Report

May 2019

Working with you...



...Working for you

2019 statistics



tourismburlington.com
Over 120,000 sessions
Over 202,000 page views
22% from Burlington
42% from GTA/Halton/Hamilton

Visitor Centre Inquiries

Over 15,909 inquiries @ our Visitor Centre
88% from Burlington
7.3% from GTA/Hamilton/Halton
2.4% International
Over 20,400 visitors at events & Infomobile



Get Social - #BurLON

Facebook 5,700 likes &
25M impressions
Twitter 13,056 followers &
1.9M organic reach
Instagram 6,912 followers 445 stories



Visitor Guide

50,000 copies distributed
across Ontario & locally @
hotels, attractions, events,
conferences, tournaments

Tourism 2019 Highlights

This report provides details on performance measures, events and initiatives undertaken by Tourism Burlington in 2019.

The official **Burlington Visitor Guide** with our beautiful waterfront on the cover was increased by 14 pages and included a what's new section with social media posts and features on adventure, culinary and Made in #BurLON.

In partnership with Burlington **Downtown**, we arranged leisure advertising in the Globe & Mail and special contesting and EBlasts with Attractions Ontario.

The province has enacted legislation to allow

municipalities to collect a **Municipal Accommodation Tax**. Many of the large and mid-size cities in Ontario have begun collecting this tax including Toronto, Oakville, Mississauga and Niagara. Many other municipalities are investigating. It is estimated that this tax could generate over \$1M in Burlington of which 50% would be provided to Tourism Burlington as per the legislation. A report was presented to City Council in the fall of 2019 and a second report originally planned for the spring has been postponed now until fall due to the significant impact of COVID-19 has had on the accommodation sector.

2019 Financial Highlights

| | |
|-----------------------|------------------|
| Revenue | \$506,285 |
| Expenses | \$481,845 |
| Surplus | \$24,440 |
| Net Assets | \$176,118 |
| Reserve | \$89,841 |
| Capital | \$51,744 |
| DMF fund (BHA) | \$13,785 |
| Taste Reserve | \$16,844 |

Tourism Vision

Burlington is seen as a distinctive waterfront destination known for its culture, festivals and outdoor experiences and tourism is recognized as an economic driver.

Cheers to our Tourism Volunteers!

Tourism Burlington depends on our board, committees & centre volunteers to help us deliver our services & we appreciate their dedication and support.
Centre Volunteers: Elaine, Lorraine, Wendy, Cheryl, Anna, Rhoda
2019-20 Board Members: Gord Langford (Chair),

Nancy Brewer (Treasurer), Deanne Rodrique, Jaclyn Jones, Jenny Wilkins, Ed Dorr, Robin Ashton, Dave Whale, Jason Stoner, Councillor Galbraith, Chris Glenn (COB staff)
Awards Committee: Gord Langford, Judi Scetta, Barbara Teatero
Marketing Committee: Nancy Helmers/Laura Buisman,

Nick Kondrat/ Leah Bryden, Janet Stephens, Robin Ashton, Jennifer Gendron, Paulette Palmer, Sheila Wiebe, Samantha Statham, Linda Cvetanovic, Maria Gerow, Michelle Fex, Sara Rams, Angela Paparizo, Judy Worsley/Andrea Dodd, Cameron Stephen, Nicoletta Vella, Brittany Hunter

2019 Tourism Burlington Performance

| | |
|---|---|
| Information Centre visits/calls/emails | 15,909 visits (+2%) 751 (-31%) calls, 331 (-20%) emails 191 (-10%) pkgs mailed |
| Waterfront—Infomobile visits | 16,694 visits (-12%) |
| Events - Booths | 3,708 (+44%) |
| Website Visits | 120,551 Sessions (-16%) 58% used mobile devices |
| Volunteer Hours | 822 hours |
| Souvenir requests groups/individuals | 95 requests |
| Out of country requests | 39 out of country |
| Pins distributed on behalf of city souvenir program | 1563 City pins 3031 Canada flag pins |
| Advocacy—support letters | 3 letters |
| Presentations | 3 presentations |
| Public Relations—Displays/Shows | 5 Displays/Shows |
| Events | 68 Events |
| FAM/tours | 6 FAM/tours |
| Partner contributions— co-op ads, sponsorships, grants, Taste of Burlington | \$108,000 |

Working with our partners, we have been tracking performance in a number of areas: Our Centre visitation was up **2%** compared to 2018.

Travel Counsellors in the Infomobile greeted **16,694** visitors. Our website stats have decreased by **16%**. We distributed over **4,600** pins on behalf of the City. We represented tourism at **68** community/regional/provincial events and had several tours.

Average Hotel occupancy is up significantly to **69%** for the year with ADR of **\$130** per night.

Halton Tourism Profile

Stats Canada 2016

4.3m visitors **3 of 4** were same day visits

\$303m spent in Halton

Majority of visitors are Ontario residents taking same day trips

1,889 Tourism

Businesses &

24,491 Tourism Jobs



2019 Performance Measures continued

- **69** Cycling inquiries
- **164** New Resident Packages
- **10** media stories/ interviews
- **15M** marketing impressions (includes Taste)
- **13** photo requests
- **593** partners
- **1.4M** total attraction attendance
- **69.8%** aver. hotel occupancy (all hotels not reporting)
- **\$130** Average Daily Room Rate

NOTE: Not all partner information provided on a consistent basis.

Hamilton, Halton, Brant Regional Tourism

Burlington is part of Regional Tourism Organization #3 (RTO) which includes Hamilton, Halton and Brant. The RTO works with the local DMO's and industry partners to help develop new tourism products, training through their Tourism Symposium and marketing signature experiences. Their marketing clusters are Outdoor Adventure, Canadian Heritage, Arts & Entertainment and Food & Drink.

Staff from Tourism participate on the RTO board and various committees and task groups as appropriate.

In 2020 HHBRTA will be updating their tourism strategy. Funding for the RTO comes from the province of Ontario and industry partnerships and had been reduced for 2019-20.



Digital & Social Media



We continue to update our websites and social media pages to attract more visitation. It is challenging to stand out and attract attention when people are so inundated with messages.

Stats as of May 13, 2020 for this year
Twitter—**BurlingtonTour** has **13,338** followers, our most popular platform. **Facebook**-**Discover Burlington Ontario** has **6,419** likes. Make sure you like us!

Our **Instagram** site has seen the most growth with **7,925** followers. Instagram stories has increased engagement with **116,000** impressions since January. Working with our summer interns, new tourism videos were added to **YouTube** and our channel has **74,213** lifetime views. We also created an

indoor fun and holiday season video. Check them out & share with friends. A blog subscribe is on our home page and new weekly blogs are added along with niche blogs with **870,000** total views. Our Pinterest site has **28** boards and **344** followers. Our **Visitor ENews** has **2,308** subscribers and is sent to visitors, residents and partners **5** x/yr. highlighting season events, attractions and specials. It is a very useful tool for front line staff who greet visitors, so print and post and subscribe by visiting our website. Our partner Enews goes out twice a month to **435** local partners and stakeholders and we once again received the **All Star Award** from Constant Contact for excellence in email engagement. (For Taste social stats see pg 4.)

2019 Awards & Events

At the Chamber Business Awards Gala in April we presented Barbara Teatero with the 2018 Tourism Builder Award for her efforts on spearheading the renewal of Joseph Brant Museum and her support of Tourism Burlington as Board Chair and Treasurer.



Tourism Builder Award
Barbara Teatero

Our May AGM was held at the beautiful new Courtyard by Marriott where our theme was Festival Partnerships & Benefits. We had speakers from Sound of Music, Canada Day and Bronte Maple Syrup Festivals talk about the economic impact of their events and how they have partnered with the local business community. **41** partners attended this meeting.

At the Tourism Ambassador Training, **30** front-line hotel, attraction and service industry staff and volunteers were trained as **ambassadors**. This event included a tour of downtown attractions and highlights from guest speakers. The morning finished with a customer service video and presentation of 9 customer service pickle awards. Attendees of the training received ambassador pins and certificates.



AGM Speakers Sheila, Christina & Myles



Downtown Tour Ambassador Training

CONTACT

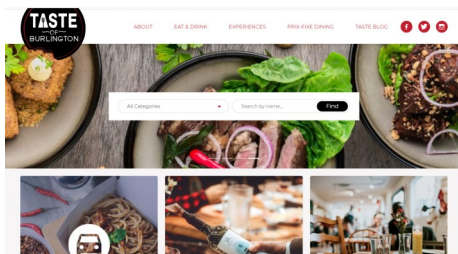
414 Locust St.
Burlington
Ontario L7S 1T7

Phone: 905 634.5594 Fax: 905 634.7220
Email: info@tourismburlington.com
Website: tourismburlington.com
Facebook: [TourismBurlington](https://www.facebook.com/TourismBurlington)
Twitter: [@BurlingtonTour](https://twitter.com/BurlingtonTour)
Youtube: [TourismBurlington](https://www.youtube.com/TourismBurlington)
Linked in: [Tourism Burlington](https://www.linkedin.com/company/TourismBurlington)



Tourism Burlington Team

| | | |
|-------------------|----------------------------|--|
| Pam Belgrade | Executive Director / Sport | pam.belgrade@burlington.ca |
| Kelly Harris | E Marketing Coordinator | kelly.harris@burlington.ca |
| | Leisure, Media, Meetings | |
| Sally Fitz-Gibbon | Administration & Visitor | sally.fitzgibbon@burlington.ca |



The Taste of Burlington website was redesigned in 2019 with a more visually appealing look, that now features culinary events and specials throughout the year. It includes taste blogs and a robust list of restaurants.

Culinary Tourism

Taste of Burlington The prix fixe dining program returned for its 11th year with several changes. The public launch event held prior to each program was sunsetted and instead a sneak peak and media tour with Redback Travel group was hosted in the summer. Taste has a financial impact of **\$250,000/program** not including beverages and non-Taste dinners. There were **39** restaurants participating in the winter and **31** in the summer programs in 2019.

Taste of Burlington was nominated for a Leadership award by the Ontario Culinary Tourism Alliance and we were

There were **48934** Taste website visits since January. Social media as of May 13 2019: **2,546** Facebook likes, **5,329** Twitter & **6,042** Instagram followers & **5,206** Enews subscribers.

The Winter 2020 program included sneak peek tours for media, public and contest winners which all were very successful. The summer program is slated from Aug 17-Aug 30 but will be confirmed once reopenings occur. Sign up to receive the Taste of Burlington Enews so you don't miss out! We also helped a number of other culinary businesses promote their activities in Burlington including numerous new restaurants, food tours, Lakeside a La Carte .

Website: tasteofburlington.ca
Instagram: [tasteofburl](https://www.instagram.com/tasteofburl)

Twitter: [@tasteofburl](https://twitter.com/tasteofburl)
Facebook: [tasteofburlington](https://www.facebook.com/tasteofburlington)

2020 Celebrating 50 Years

This year Tourism Burlington is celebrating 50 years of having a visitor information centre. The first centre was a refreshment shack set up in Spencer Smith Park which opened on July 10, 1970. Over the years the centre evolved with an independent non-profit organization Burlington Visitor and Convention Bureau being formed in 1985. In 2003 the centre re-located to the Team Burlington building at 414 Locust Street after the original centre was demolished to accommodate Spencer Smith Park improvements.

We will be celebrating this milestone throughout the year with various activities.

For more details refer to our **Tourism ENews** or marketing@tourismburlington.com



COVID-19

The virus that has spread world-wide and closed businesses in March 2020 has hit the tourism industry and hospitality sector particularly hard. Tourism Burlington along with our Team Burlington partners have collaborated to share resources, communicate to and promote local services and advocate for business support. Plans are underway to implement campaigns and programs to assist with the recovery of our tourism industry.