

2015 Tourism Annual Report

May 2016

2015 Key Accomplishments:

- Anniversary Celebrations 30th as DMO - 45th as Visitor Info Centre
- Mobile web-based app
- Conservation Hero award—Media/Blogger Conserv-ation Halton
- Toronto Pan Am Games support
- Chocolate Trail review & refresh



Financial Highlights 2015

Revenue	\$490,901
Expenses	\$482,455
Surplus	\$8,446
Un.Surplus	\$117,979
Reserve	\$80,801
Capital	\$55,111
DMF fund (BHA)	\$22,940
Taste of Burlington	\$18,068

Tourism Celebrates 30+ Years

This report provides details on performance measures, events, marketing, and initiatives undertaken by Tourism Burlington in 2015.

2015 marked the **30th anniversary** of Tourism Burlington being an official destination marketing organization and the 45th year of having a visitor centre in the City. We marked this milestone by celebrating at our AGM with displays of old photos, guides, articles and sharing our story via an anniversary blog.

Many initiatives were undertaken in 2015 to refresh existing programs including the updating of our mobile web based app , restructuring our Chocolate Trail and updating other digital

projects.

We were fortunate that the Burlington Hotel Association agreed to utilize their remaining reserve funds for marketing initiatives and incentives so that we could continue to promote Burlington to various audiences in 2015. We appreciate this support as they have provided **\$1.6 m** in funding to tourism in this city since 2007.

We were thrilled that Burlington was recognized as the best city of its size to live in Canada in 2015, so let's invite visitors to see what our residents are so proud of...our great city!

Halton Tourism Profile-

Stats Canada 2011

4.5m visitors 3 out of 4 were same day visits

\$322m spent in Halton

Majority of visitors are Ontario residents taking same day trips

21,050 direct jobs in 1,761 tourism businesses(2010)



Volunteers Give back to Tourism

Tourism Burlington depends on our board, committees & volunteers to help us deliver our services & we appreciate their enthusiasm & support.

Centre Volunteers:

Elaine, Lorraine, Wendy, Jim, Cheryl

Board Members: Tamer Fahmi, Nancy Brewer,

Jason Stoner, Dave Miller, Dave Mammoliti, Duncan Ross, Suzy Godefroy, Gord Langford, Ed Dorr, Councillor Jack Dennison
Awards Committee: Gord Langford, Judi Scetta, Councillor Rick Craven, Sharon Mooney

Marketing Committee:

Dave Miller, Danielle Gibbons, Nick Kondrat, Sylvia Hentz, Robin Ashton, Steve Traver, Janice DeSilva-Pearsey, Susan Stock/Janice Edworthy, Julie Sutton-Yardley, Sheila Wiebe/Andrew Cirtwell, Samantha Stratham, Niki Hilton, Maria Gerow.

2015 Tourism Burlington Performance

Information Centre visits/calls/emails	14,191 visits (+2%) 1,091 (+3%) calls, 448 emails 186 pkgs mailed
Waterfront—Infomobile visits	4,042 visits
Website Visits	167,499 Visits (+12%) 46% used mobile devices
Virtual Tour	2,246 Visits 49 total tours on site
Volunteer Hours	1,103 hours
Souvenir requests groups/individuals	130 requests
Out of country requests	39 out of country
Pins distributed on behalf of city souvenir program	2,381 City pins 2,618 Canada flag pins
Advocacy—support letters	9 letters
Presentations	3 presentations
Public Relations—Displays/Shows	4 Displays/Shows
Events	66 Events
FAM/tours	8 FAM/tours 3 site visits
Partner contributions— co-op ads, sponsorships, grants, DMF, Taste of Burl.	\$120,062

Working with our partners, we have been tracking performance in a number of areas: Our Centre visitation was up **2%** compared to 2014. Travel Counsellors in the Infomobile greeted **3,772** visitors. Our website stats have increased by **12%** with less bounce backs and longer views. We distributed **5,000** pins on behalf of the City. We represented tourism at **66** community/regional/provincial events and **4** shows. Average Hotel occupancy is the same as 2014 at **66%** for year and Feb, July, Sept, Oct & Nov was the highest occupancy over the past 9 years.

2015 Performance Measures continued

- **225** New Resident Packages
- **20** media stories/ interviews
- **52+M** marketing impressions (includes Taste & Chocolate)
- **13** photo requests
- **589** partners
- **700,000*** event attendance
- **1.2m** total attraction attendance (not all provided)
- **23,081** Group tour attendees
- **39,611** Socials/Wedding attendees
- **66%** aver. hotel occupancy (up significantly from 2014)

NOTE: Not all partner information provided on a consistent basis. Group tour, socials, weddings are from attractions only.

* City of Burlington figures



2016—17
Visitor Guide

Hamilton, Halton, Brant Regional Tourism

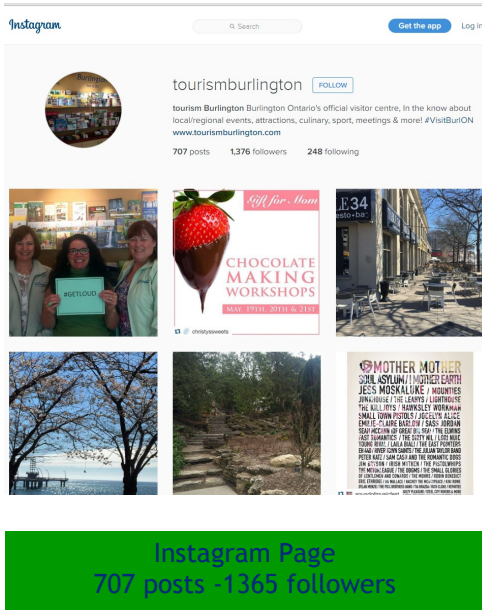
Burlington is part of Regional Tourism Organization #3 which includes Hamilton, Halton and Brant. In 2015 HHBRTA took the lead on Pan Am tourism related initiatives in our area providing marketing opportunities for partners and assisting with visitor services at the two venues (Stadium & Velodrome). They also coordinated trade show participation in the

Outdoor Adventure Show and marketing the Nature Unexpected campaign. Industry development included customer service, social media and packaging workshops with Burlington staff attending some of these sessions. Tourism Burlington partnered with RTO#3 on a photo project and updating translations of our welcome brochures for the Pan Am Games.

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

HAMILTON | HALTON | BRANT
NATURE
— UNEXPECTED —
ourtruenature.ca

Digital & Social Media



This year the mobile site was redesigned to be a responsive web based app which includes a mobile mapping feature, making it easy for visitors to locate points of interest with in-app directions from their current location. We also reformatting Enewsletters to be mobile friendly. Stats as of May 1 2016- **Twitter—BurlingtonTour** has **9,679 followers**, our most popular platform. **Facebook—Discover Burlington Ontario** has **3,293 likes**. Make sure you like us! Our Instagram site is seeing new growth with **707 posts** and **1,365 followers**. Numerous tourism videos are posted and had **39,779 lifetime views**. Check them out & share with friends. A blog subscribe has been added to our home page and new blogs

are added weekly with **53,303** total views. We have worked with guest bloggers for special features. Our Pinterest site has **24 boards** and **270 followers**. Our **Visitor ENews** has **863 subscribers** and is sent to visitors, residents and partners **5 x/yr.** highlighting events, attractions and specials for each season. It is a very useful tool for front line staff who greet visitors, so print and post. Anyone can subscribe by visiting our website. Our partner Enews goes out twice a month to **371** local partners and stakeholders. We also send out targeted Enews to sport organizers **266**, meeting planners **140** and group tour operators **156**. We did not renew our sponsorship of **Trip Advisor.ca & .com** due to the significant cost with US exchange and limited ROI.

2015 Tourism Events

In 2015, Tourism hosted or participated in many local events.

Our May AGM focused on Pan Am Games initiatives with a panel of local partners who highlighted their events. Over **45** attended this event and many joined the tour afterwards at Haber Recreation Centre.

At the Tourism Ambassador Training, **29** front-line hotel, attraction and service industry staff and volunteers were trained as **ambassadors**. This

event included a tour of downtown attractions, attraction highlights from speakers, orientation of Pan Am Games and finished customer service tips.

Burlington's role regarding the Pan Am Games was a supportive one as there was not a games venue in the city. City View Park was used as a training site but was not open to the public. Tourism helped promote packages, event tickets and answered resident and visitor inquiries. We also provided

numerous volunteers with Burlington pins to hand out to visitors during their duties. Tourism Burlington provided visitor services assistance in Hamilton and Milton during both Pan Am and Para Pan Am but overall visitor inquiries were minimal.

We provided **visitor information** at events during the spring/summer season, greeting over **3,772** visitors over **9** days including helping to promote the 20th anniversary of Ribfest.



CONTACT

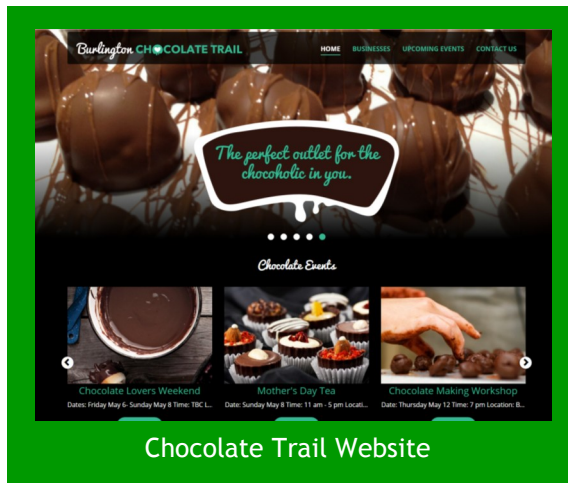
414 Locust St.
Burlington
Ontario L7S 1T7



Phone: 905 634-5594 Fax: 905 634-7220
Email: info@tourismburlington.com
Website & Blog: Tourismburlington.com
Facebook: Tourism Burlington
Twitter: @BurlingtonTour
Youtube: TourismBurlington
Linked in: Tourism Burlington
Instagram: Tourism Burlington

Tourism Burlington Team

Pam Belgrade	Executive Director/Sport	pam.belgrade@burlington.ca
Linda Cvetanovic	E Marketing Coordinator	linda.cvetanovic@burlington.ca Leisure, Media, Meetings
Sally Fitz-Gibbon	Administration & Visitor	sally.fitzgibbon@burlington.ca Service Coordinator/Group Tour



Chocolate Trail Website

Culinary Tourism

Taste of Burlington The prix fixe dining winter and summer program continues to grow from 12 restaurants in 2008 to over 30 with a financial impact for restaurants of **\$250,000/** program. The public & media-launch attracts 350 people and prior to each program and is always a sell out. The participating restaurants enjoy competing for the coveted awards at this launch. Website visits for 2015 total **41,477**.

Social media for Taste of Burlington- **1109** FB likes, **3,624** TW followers & **3,409** Enews subscribers.

The Burlington Chocolate Trail was restructured for 2016 focusing on the month of May rather than a year long initiative. The website (**1735** visits*) was redesigned and other marketing includes flyer, site signs, blogger tour and social media. Visit burlingtonchocolatetrail.ca.
* issues with analytics

2016 Marketing Initiatives

In February Burlington successfully hosted the CSAE Winter summit at the Holiday Inn for **260** association delegates from across Ontario.

The official **Burlington Visitor Guide** is now available and features some great quotes about Burlington being a fabulous place to grow up and live in from Burlingtonian **Mark Oldershaw** and other social media influencers. This guide is distributed to visitor centres across Ontario, plus locally through partners and is downloadable online.

At the Tourism AGM we are launching a new marketing campaign as part of Canada 150 celebrations called **Come Home 2 Burlington**. Focusing on former

residents and the VRF market we are encouraging them to come home and discover revitalized attractions, events and amenities during 2017. Partners can join in by adopting this message and hosting events and activities to celebrate our 150th birthday.

We are celebrating **National Tourism Week** by hosting four families for a social media influencer FAM tour on June 10-12.

Working with the Sound of Music we developed an overnight hotel package for their Kick-off event which sold out immediately!

Congratulations to the Burlington Gymnastic Club who were recognized with a **Tourism Ambassador Award** in April.



**COME HOME
2 BURLINGTON**

The Burlington Cycling Offer is being offered once again and includes 10% off at BHA hotels, a \$20 gift card for local outdoors store plus cycling map and giveaways promoted via various online sites.

We are busy working with our local partners on various sport and meetings bids and confirmed events for 2016 and beyond.

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