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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training  
and Responsible for Labour  
Minister of State for Tourism and Small Business  
Destination British Columbia

### **More international visitors come to B.C. in 2014**

VICTORIA – British Columbia posted a 5.3% increase in international overnight visitors for 2014, surpassing the 3.2% increase in arrivals to Canada as a whole. This was the third straight year of increased visitation to B.C.

Figures released by Statistics Canada show an increase in international overnight visitors across all key markets, including those identified by Destination British Columbia as potential growth markets in its new three-year strategy.

China led the way with a 26.2% increase, adding an additional 53,217 visitors to B.C. in 2014. Visitors from Japan also grew by 12.2%, partly due to increased air access. A new flight by All Nippon Airways was introduced at the end of March 2014.

The United States and Australia were also up, 3.3% and 5.3% respectively. The growth from the United States, B.C.'s largest international market, is partly due to economic growth in the USA and strengthening of the US dollar. From Europe, the United Kingdom and Germany posted 1.4% and 2.2% increases respectively.

The numbers reported by Statistics Canada include international visitors who cross Canada Customs in B.C. Actual numbers of visitors to B.C. are higher, as people crossing into the province from elsewhere in the country are not included in these figures.

Destination British Columbia's International Visitor Arrivals publication summarizes customs entry data to B.C. and Canada from select markets of origin. The International Visitor Arrivals include information for both the particular month and the year to-date, and include percentage changes for the same period over the previous year. It is available on the Destination British Columbia website.

Tourism is a one of the eight pillars of the BC Jobs Plan. In 2013, the tourism industry generated \$13.9 billion in revenue, an increase of 3.6% from 2012 and a 44% increase since 2003. The industry contributed \$7.3 billion in GDP and employed over 132,200 people in 2013.

#### **Quotes:**

Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour

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“Tourism is a key pillar in the BC Jobs Plan and central to our strategy for a diverse and growing economy. The 2014, 5.3 per cent increase in international visitors to B.C. over 2013 confirms

B.C. competes on a global scale - nearly a quarter of a million more people visited our province. That's significant good news for tourism businesses around the province, and helps to create economic and social benefits in every region."

Naomi Yamamoto, Minister of State for Tourism and Small Business –

"British Columbia is one of the top tourism destinations in the world. Our tourism sector is an important economic driver and a key contributor to the prosperity of B.C. communities. I applaud tourism operators throughout British Columbia for the outstanding economic contribution they make by providing world-class services in an increasingly competitive industry."

Marsha Walden, CEO, Destination British Columbia –

"We are delighted to see such positive growth from the province's key tourism markets. With a revitalized tourism brand and a refinement of our marketing strategies, that will see refocused investment into growth markets, we are poised to build upon the accomplishments of last year for the benefit of the tourism industry and the province as a whole, in 2015."

Ian Robertson, CEO, Tourism Industry Association of British Columbia –

"The tourism industry is pleased with these results - clearly the collaborative marketing efforts of industry and government are having a positive effect. This is welcome news given the challenging years our industry has faced. The revitalization of B.C.'s destination brand will go a long way in reinforcing British Columbia as a world-class tourism destination."

#### **Learn More:**

Destination British Columbia is an industry-led Crown corporation that works collaboratively with tourism stakeholders throughout the province to co-ordinate marketing at the international, provincial, regional and local levels. For more information about Destination British Columbia's programs and services, please visit: <http://www.DestinationBC.ca/>

Destination British Columbia's three-year plan: <http://strategy.destinationbc.ca/>

To view the complete list of entries for 2014, please visit Overnight Custom Entries to B.C. and Canada: <http://www.destinationbc.ca/getattachment/Research/Industry-Performance/International-Visitor-Arrivals/International-Visitor-Arrivals-December-2014/International-Visitor-Arrivals-December-2014.pdf.aspx>

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