

Tourism and seafood strengthen Canada – China ties

Tourism between Canada and China is growing with China now being the second largest source of visitors to Canada behind the United States. That's due in part to the more than 1.7 million Canadians who have Chinese ancestry. After English and French, Mandarin and Cantonese are the most widely spoken languages in Canada.

In celebration of the growing strength of Canada-China tourism, the governments of Canada and China officially named 2018 the Canada-China Year of Tourism.

Chinese travellers are taking note of Atlantic Canada as one of the up and coming destinations to explore. Comprised of four east coast provinces – New Brunswick, Nova Scotia,

Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland and Labrador – Atlantic Canada offers a host of relaxing and fun-filled experiences set amongst a breathtaking backdrop of dramatic tides, formidable icebergs and lush coastlines.

"Chinese travellers are looking for the opportunity to explore uncrowded landscapes, to be able to experience new cultures, and to indulge in abundant seafood," says Monette Pasher, executive director of Atlantic Canada Airports. "And that's what Atlantic Canada is all about."

Atlantic Canada consists of 150,000 miles of beautiful coastlines that are dotted with communities with deep roots in the fishing industry. "We have an amazing selection of fresh finfish and shellfish in Atlantic Canada. Add in our famous Atlantic Canada hospitality and friendliness and we're a destination that's definitely worth exploring," adds Pasher.

China is also the fastest growing seafood market for Atlantic Canada. Last year, the volume of seafood exports to China from Halifax

Stanfield International Airport increased by 63 percent over the previous year and was double the average growth of all export destination countries.

Growth is expected to continue this year with additional cargo flights to China. First Catch, a Chinese-owned seafood freight forwarding company based at Halifax Stanfield, is currently offering two flights per week from Halifax to Changsha, a Chinese-owned seafood freight forwarding company based at Halifax Stanfield, is currently offering two flights per week from Halifax to Changsha, the capital of Hunan province. The flights are operated on a Boeing 747-400 freighter aircraft, which has the capacity to carry up to 120 tonnes of seafood.

"We're excited about Chinese demand for Atlantic Canada seafood, but that's just the starting point," says Bert Van der Stege, Chief Commercial Officer at Halifax Stanfield. "Business relationships turn into tourism opportunities and tourism visitors will often create investments in business and trade. It works in both directions and makes Canada-China ties even stronger and more dynamic."

