

# How-to guide: Develop a Culinary Tourism Product



*Discover our true nature*

CANADIAN  
TOURISM  
COMMISSION



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**How-to guide:  
Develop a Culinary Tourism Product**

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## Vision

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Canada will be the premier four-season destination to connect with nature and to experience diverse cultures and communities.

## Mission

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Canada's tourism industry will deliver world-class cultural and leisure experiences year-round, while preserving and sharing Canada's clean, safe and natural environments. The industry will be guided by the values of respect, integrity and empathy.



*Photo: Le Massif*



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## Foreword

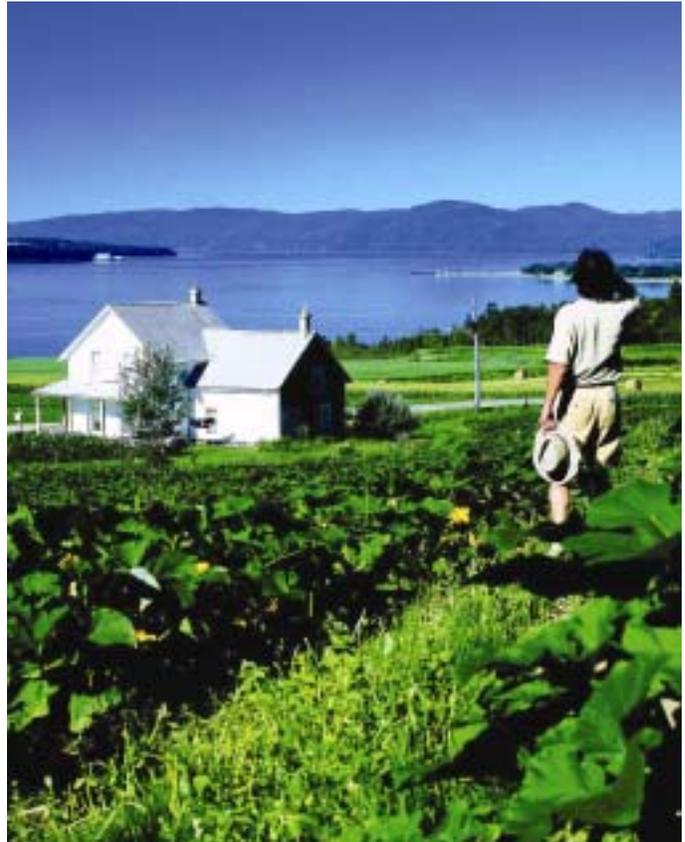
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The **Culinary Tourism Product Development Guide** is intended for businesspeople directly impacted by the culinary tourism concept (hotel and restaurant owners, chefs, cooks, pastry chefs, farmers, commercial fishermen, food processing firms, tour operators, etc.) and for tourism and culinary industry stakeholders.

The **Culinary Tourism Product Development Guide** responds to stated needs for a cooperative packaging project that focuses on discovering Canada's culinary culture and is consistent with the philosophy of the Canadian Tourism Commission.

The **Culinary Tourism Product Development Guide** is intended to serve as a practical and user-friendly tool to facilitate the packaging and enhancement of market-ready products (source: Acquiring a Taste for Culinary Tourism, Strategy 2).

It is a **valuable tool**, with information and references to guide you through every stage of putting together **culinary tourism** products, from conception through to implementation.



*Photo: François Rivard*



# 1. Definition of culinary tourism

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According to the CTC, culinary tourism goes well beyond the dining experience. It includes a variety of culinary, agri-tourism and agri-food activities, developed expressly for tourists, that showcase food and beverages and provide an opportunity for visitors to discover dishes indigenous to each region while learning about the talent and creativity of artisans.

Culinary tourism involves provincial/territorial government tourism departments and agencies, hotels and restaurants, convention centres, producers, commercial fishers, processors, wineries, cooking schools, etc. The culinary tourism industry in Canada consists mostly of small- and medium-sized businesses.

Cuisine in Canada is rooted in the history, characteristics, expertise and flavours specific to each region. It is the creative expression of the cultural values of all those who have helped build and continue to help build Canada.

It is said that each region of the country has its own particular essence. Soil composition, waterways or the lack of them, ocean currents, weather conditions, cold regions with their own microclimates, traditional and modern growing methods all are factors that vary from area to area.



That's why Canada has such a variety of regional products. Not only do conditions fluctuate from region to region, they differ from east to west and north to south. Every time zone has its own environment that impacts local crops, farming and fishing practices, and natural resources. The result is exceptional diversity and abundance from the Maritimes to Quebec and Ontario, to the prairies and all the way to British Columbia

Cuisine and gastronomy enrich the cultural tourism experience. Interest is growing in culinary products, wines and other artisan beverages. On the international scene, competition has sparked creation of cooperative packaging programs like *L'assiette de Pays* (Normandy) and *Taste of Scotland* (Scotland). Canada has also begun developing cuisine as a tourism product with such programs as *Taste the County*© (Prince Edward County, Ontario) and *Route des Saveurs de Charlevoix* (Quebec).

Keen to promote the nation's rich assets to Canadian and foreign tourists, the Canadian tourism industry has begun developing product packaging in specific areas, including culinary tourism.

## 1.1. Examples of culinary activities

### 1.1.1. Festivals

The cuisine component of the Montreal High Lights Festival (Quebec)  
Vancouver Playhouse International [f4] Festival (British Columbia)  
Taste!, Prince Edward County (Ontario)  
St-Clair College Gourmet Food & Wines Festival (Ontario)  
Annual Pumpkin Festival- Genesee (Alberta)  
Annapolis Valley Apple Blossom Festival (Nova Scotia)  
Old Farm Day- Orwell Corner Historic Village (Prince Edward Island)  
Corn and Apple Festival- Morden (Manitoba)  
Humber Valley Strawberry Festival (Newfoundland)  
*Fête du gibier et des vins de Tremblant* (Quebec)

### 1.1.2. Agri-tours

*Circuit du Paysan* (Quebec)  
Travel Country Roads Canada (Manitoba)  
Splendid Scenes and Salad Greens (New Brunswick)

### 1.1.3. Themed agri-tours

Regional wine routes (British Columbia, Ontario and Quebec)  
Quebec cider routes (Quebec)  
Regional Prairies Tour (Manitoba)  
Tours of Abundance Okanagan-Similkameen (British Columbia)

### 1.1.4. U-pick agri-tours

*Circuit Pommes en fête* in the Laurentians (Quebec)

### 1.1.5. Culinary packages offered by tour operators

The Gourmet Trail (First Island Tours, British Columbia)  
Cuisines of Quebec tour (Baillargé Cultural Tours)

### 1.1.6. Agri-tours featuring grower-restaurant partnerships

The *Route des Saveurs de Charlevoix* (Quebec)

### 1.1.7. Associations of restaurants specializing in regional cuisine

Taste of Nova Scotia (Nova Scotia)  
Les Bonnes tables de l'Est du Québec  
The Gourmet Trail Package (British Columbia)

### 1.1.8. Events promoting regional products

*Les Journées nationales du goût et des saveurs* (Quebec)

### 1.1.9. Agricultural fairs

Fall Fair Brandon (Manitoba)  
Green Bay Agricultural Fall Fair- Springdale (Newfoundland)  
Weyburn Agricultural Fair (Saskatchewan)

## 2. Organizational Resources

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### 2.1. Who Does What

#### 2.1.1. By Region

NAME	AREA OF ACTIVITY	CLIENT GROUPS
Canadian Tourism Commission (CTC) <a href="http://www.canadatourism.com">www.canadatourism.com</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Macroeconomic research, market studies and industry surveys.</li> <li>▪ Industry and product development</li> <li>▪ Advertising and promotion on international markets</li> </ul>	The industry Tourists
Government, provincial and territorial tourism agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promoting awareness of products and client groups</li> <li>▪ Product development</li> <li>▪ Intra- and extra-regional positioning</li> </ul>	The industry Tourists
Regional tourism agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ perative Packaging</li> <li>▪ roup marketing</li> </ul>	The industry Tourists
Local tourism agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Product development</li> <li>▪ perative Packaging</li> <li>▪ roup marketing</li> </ul>	The industry Tourists

#### 2.1.2. By Sector

NAME	AREA OF ACTIVITY	CLIENT GROUPS
Industry associations (hotels, restaurants, convention centres, wineries, cooking schools, associations of specialized producers)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creating awareness of customers and markets</li> <li>▪ Corporate positioning, training</li> </ul>	The industry
Specialized groups/tours	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ perative Packaging</li> <li>▪ roup marketing</li> </ul>	The industry Tourists

#### 2.1.3. Training

NAME	AREA OF ACTIVITY	CLIENT GROUPS
Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council and partners <a href="http://www.cthrc.ca">www.cthrc.ca</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training (in partnership) and staffing requirements</li> </ul>	The industry
Provincial tourism human resource councils (provinces and territories) <a href="http://www.cthrc.ca">www.cthrc.ca</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Training (in partnership) and staffing requirements</li> </ul>	The industry
Tourism and cooking schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Specialized continuous training</li> </ul>	The public

## 2.2. How to contact provincial and territorial representatives

### List of tourism sites

PROVINCE	TELEPHONE	WEBSITE
Alberta	(780) 427-4321 800-252-3782	<a href="http://www.travelalberta.com">www.travelalberta.com</a>
British Columbia	(250) 387-1642 800-435-5622	<a href="http://www.hellobc.com">www.hellobc.com</a>
Manitoba	(204) 945-3777 800-665-0040	<a href="http://www.travelmanitoba.com">www.travelmanitoba.com</a>
New Brunswick	(506) 453-3984 800-561-0123	<a href="http://www.tourismnbcanada.com">www.tourismnbcanada.com</a>
Newfoundland and Labrador	(709) 729-0862 800-563-6353	<a href="http://www.gov.nf.ca/tourism">www.gov.nf.ca/tourism</a>
Northwest Territories	(867) 873-7200 800-661-0788	<a href="http://www.nwttravel.nt.ca">www.nwttravel.nt.ca</a>
Nova Scotia	(902) 425-5781 800-565-0000	<a href="http://www.explore.gov.ns.ca">www.explore.gov.ns.ca</a>
Nunavut	(867) 979-6551 866-686-2888	<a href="http://www.NunavutTourism.com">www.NunavutTourism.com</a>
Ontario	(416) 341-0956 800-668-2746	<a href="http://www.ontariotravel.net">www.ontariotravel.net</a>
Prince Edward Island	(902) 368-4444 888-734-7529	<a href="http://www.peiplay.com">www.peiplay.com</a>
Quebec	(514) 873-2015 877-266-5687	<a href="http://www.bonjourquebec.com">www.bonjourquebec.com</a>
Saskatchewan	(306) 787-2273 877-237-2273	<a href="http://www.sasktourism.com">www.sasktourism.com</a>
Yukon	(867) 667-5340 800-667-5340	<a href="http://www.touryukon.com">www.touryukon.com</a>

## 3. The Basics

### 3.1. The Business Plan

Whether you'll be applying for financing or simply want to make the project clear to your partners, a solid business plan that explains your idea clearly is indispensable, and can be consulted throughout the entire project.

#### A) Project presentation

- Project title
- Contact information
- Brief project description (nature and objectives)
- Project background
- Project schedule
- Conformity to local, regional, provincial/territorial and national priorities

#### B) Legal Structure:

- Committee, non-profit organization, cooperative, private company
- Partners, functions, financial participation (revenue and expenses)
- Compliance with laws and regulations

#### C) Description of Products or Services:

- Legalities
- Target markets and customers
- The competition
- Return on advertising investment
- Financing



*Photo: Hillebrand Estates Winery.*

#### 3.1.1. Target Market/Customers

Target tourist markets/customers interested in wine and cuisine and a related product, agro-tourism

##### A) Tourist Motivation: Interest in Wine and Cuisine (summary)

POINT OF ORIGIN	MODERATE/HIGH INTEREST	HIGH INTEREST	LEVEL OF INTEREST	AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME +\$80,000	CORRELATION WITH EDUCATION LEVEL
<b>United States</b>	<b>35.1%</b>	<b>17.9%</b>		<b>52%</b>	<b>Very high</b>
Pacific/Atlantic Central/South			Very high		
Central/North (East/West)			Very low		
<b>Canada</b>	<b>30.1%</b>	<b>12.9%</b>		<b>46%</b>	<b>Very high</b>
QC/BC/ON/AB			Very high		
PE/SK			Very high		

*Source: Survey of traveller attitudes and motivation. Lang Research 1999-2000*

## B) Tourist Motivation: Interest in Agri-Tourism<sup>1</sup> (summary)

POINT OF ORIGIN	MODERATE/HIGH INTEREST	HIGH INTEREST	LEVEL OF INTEREST	CORRELATION WITH AVERAGE FAMILY INCOME	CORRELATION WITH EDUCATION LEVEL
<b>United States</b>	32.7%	7.2%		High	Ø
Pacific/Hawaii			High		
Other States			Moderate		
<b>Canada</b>	34.0%	7.4%		High	Ø
AB/NB/ON			Very high		
QC			Low		

*Source: Survey of traveller attitudes and motivation. Lang Research 1999-2000*

### C) Other activities of tourists who have expressed an interest in wine and cuisine

- Outdoor activities: water sports, sunbathing, physical fitness, nature hikes, golf
- Cultural activities and entertainment
- Shopping, high-end live entertainment, concerts, visiting botanical gardens and casinos

### D) Other activities of tourists who have expressed an interest in agri-tourism

- Canoeing, kayaking, hiking, fishing and cycling
- Cultural activities and entertainment: French-Canadian cultural events, visiting zoos, aquariums and planetariums
- Outdoor activities: team sports, visiting natural sites, swimming and sunbathing

### E) Accommodation preferences of tourists who have expressed an interest in wine and cuisine

- Bed and breakfasts
- Spas
- Fine restaurants with accommodation
- Beach or ski resorts
- Lakeside or wilderness lodges
- Cooking schools or wineries with accommodation

### F) Accommodation preferences of tourists who have expressed an interest in agri-tourism

- Camping (campgrounds or wilderness camping)
- Lakeside or wilderness lodges

<sup>1</sup> Agri-tourism: a tourism activity that complements agriculture and is located within an agriculture operation. Agri-tourism puts tourists and excursionists in touch with host agricultural producers who, by providing accommodation and information, afford them an opportunity to learn about the agricultural community, agriculture and farming ([www.agr.gouv.qc.ca/agrotouqc](http://www.agr.gouv.qc.ca/agrotouqc)).

**G) Information sources of tourists who have expressed an interest in wine and cuisine**

- Previous trips
- Friends or family
- Travel agents
- Internet
- Airline reservation systems
- Advertisements: newspapers and magazines
- Tourism guides and tourist information bureaus

**H) Information sources of tourists who have expressed an interest in agri-tourism**

- Previous trips
- Friends or family
- Internet
- Advertisements: newspapers and magazines
- Travel agents
- Brochures (tourist information bureaus and mail)

**3.1.2. Advertising**

**A) Most effective advertising vehicles for reaching tourists who have expressed an interest in wine and cuisine**

1. General-interest, city-life and travel magazines
2. Travel section (newspapers, newsmagazines, home-decorating magazines)
3. Internet (research and reservations)

**B) Most effective advertising vehicles for reaching tourists who have expressed an interest in agri-tourism**

1. Travel magazines
2.  *ional Geographic*
3. General-interest and leisure magazines
4. Newspaper travel sections

**C) To reach tourists who have expressed an interest in wine and cuisine**

**It is important to:**

- Target wealthier and more educated customers, particularly childless couples;
- Emphasize cultural features, natural sites, entertainment and romance, relaxation and personal indulgences;
- Package outdoor and high-quality cultural activities; packaging shopping is another possibility.

## D) To reach tourists who have expressed an interest in agri-tourism

### It is important to:

- Emphasize the opportunity to learn, to explore and to enjoy the company of spouses or family members;
- Utilize print media;
- Identify the target market (in Canada – families; in the United States – affluent baby-boomer couples and seniors);
- In Canadian provinces and American border states alike, promote short package trips.

### 3.1.3. The Competition

The aim of checking out the competition is not imitate it, but to figure out how to set yourself apart in the market.

The print and electronic media make it easy to find out what the competition is doing, both locally and elsewhere in your province or territory.

### 3.1.4. Return on Advertising Investment

There are a couple of methods for gauging whether an advertising investment has paid off.

#### A) Simple method

The easiest and most popular method for assessing return on your investment is the -off coupon. Several tourism marketing agencies (local, regional or provincial/territorial) recommend the tear-off coupon , either inserted directly in your advertisement (relatively rare) or in a purpose-designed section . Remember, it does not have to be a two-for-one offer to entice people to use the coupon.

After the promotion ends, simply add up the number of coupons redeemed and do the following calculation (pre-tax):

NUMBER OF COUPONS	X NET PROFIT FROM THE PACKAGE	MINUS TIP	MINUS ADVERTISING COST
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A positive result means that the message, the advertising vehicle and the market study were all good choices. If the result is negative, remind yourself that it can take two or three years for a package to really take off; view the investment as a positioning cost. Building a credible reputation is vital in the tourism industry, and it does not always happen overnight.

#### B) More Demanding Method

This method is not more complicated per se, but requires a more sustained effort. It involves asking each customer how he or she found out about your company, package, etc. You need to make sure the question is asked every time. Are all your employees asking the question? Are you? After compiling the data, apply the following formula to the total revenues from the customers surveyed:

TOTAL REVENUES PER ADVERTISING SOURCE	X PER CENT OF NET PROFIT FROM REVENUES	- MINUS ADVERTISING COST
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A positive result represents profits that are attributable solely to the advertising.

### 3.1.5. Financing

Obtaining financing for a tourism initiative or event depends on the project proponent's ability to

present his or her idea clearly (see Business Plan) and demonstrate even more clearly its financial viability, direct (to the company) and/or indirect (spin-offs in the region).

Projects can be financed in one of two ways: with money (loans, loan guarantees, share issue, subsidies, sponsorships, etc.) or with technical support (quantifiable assistance, but free of charge).

**A) Money-lending organizations include**

- Financial institutions
- *Banks, credit unions and insurance companies*
- Government and para-government agencies
- *Provincial and territorial funding agencies (e.g. SGF in Quebec)*
- Government-supported economic development agencies (CFDC [federal], CLD [Quebec], etc.)
- Private foundations (national, provincial/territorial or local)
- *Fond de solidarité syndicale (FTQ, CSN), Fonds Richelieu, Fonds Laprade*

**B) Agencies that provide support include**

- International marketing    
*Provincial/territorial tourism agencies*  
*Federal economic development agencies (FEDNOR, ACOA, WD, CED)*
- Cooperative packaging projects  
*Provincial/territorial tourism, agricultural and fisheries agencies*  
*Some tourism associations (via discounts)*  
 *Regional agencies*
- Market studies  
*Provincial/territorial tourism agencies*  
*Regional agencies*
- Capital investments  
*Various government departments (federal and provincial/territorial) and regional agencies, based on customers, region, unemployment rate, etc., in your region*

Projects initiated by private, for-profit companies are funded less readily than those initiated by NPOs (non-profit organizations). To ascertain a project is a serious venture, funding agencies require that it be between 10% and 50% self-financed. Moreover, this financing must be verifiable, whether it is cash or in-kind.

### C) Sample cost estimate for a cooperative packaging project

COST		FUNDING		
Administration (10% of funding)	\$ 7,500	<b>% Contribution</b>		
Coordination <sup>1</sup>	15,000	Technical support	\$ 90,000	51.1
Technical support (provided by agency)	90,000	Marketing (partners)	20,000	11.4
Marketing (provided by participant)	20,000	<b>Funding</b>		
Cooking demonstrations <sup>2</sup>	5,000	Development funds	52,800	30.0
Expert guides	3,000	Government agency	13,200	7.5
Promotion				
International (exhibition)	5,000			
Local media <sup>3</sup>	9,000			
Electronic media	18,000			
Brochures	35,500			
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$176,000<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>\$176,000<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>100.0</b>

#### NOTES:

1. Service contract for project coordination
2. See list and schedule in Appendix B
3. Locally managed: \$1,500/local tourism agencies and \$1,500 from regional tourism association
4. Excludes 2,500 volunteer hours estimated at \$9.70/hour = \$24,250

## 3.2. Internet

### 3.2.1. Web site

Depending on the target clientele (see Target Markets/Customers,) a website is a must for reaching potential customers.

In terms of cost effectiveness, the first and most important step is to acquire an e-mail address.

If you create a website of your own, be aware that it will require frequent updates, which in turn will take time. Following are a few website options, ranging from inexpensive to costly (in terms of both time and money).

- Have your company included on the site of a local or regional agency, with a link to your e-mail address (minimal annual fee).
- Have your company included on a Web portal or provincial/territorial site, with or without reservations, (e.g., [bonjourquebec.com](http://bonjourquebec.com), [exploralberta.com](http://exploralberta.com), [gov.nf.ca/tourism](http://gov.nf.ca/tourism), etc., annual fee, with a percentage or fee per transaction; secure site).
- Create your own website, with or without transaction capabilities (design costs, renewable every two or three years; annual hosting costs; domain reservation fees; and update costs [you do it yourself or pay to have it done]). If the site is transactional, you'll have to budget for additional costs and a full-time employee to answer reservation requests.)

## A) Website Do's and Don't's

- A website should be attractive and user-friendly for potential customers, rather than owner-friendly. The home page should open quickly, because Web users are an impatient lot and will jump to another site if they have to wait for a page to open.
- Do not have the site translated into another language if you do not have staff who can respond to requests in that language. Keep links to other sites to a minimum, as visitors will be inclined to investigate those sites, thus spending less time on your site. Attracting customers via the Internet is difficult enough, so you want them to spend some time on your site once there.

It's vital to register your domain with as many search engines as possible – google.com, yahoo.com and other specialty or general search engines.

**Culinary tourism is a concept. People commonly search the Web by linking specific words, e.g. vacation + gastronomy + package, so use *key words* on your site like cuisine, gastronomy, vacation, trip and package.**

### 3.2.2. Research

The Internet is a fast, efficient tool for finding out about tourism products in your area and checking out the competition.

Go to a search engine and click on **advanced search**, which takes you to input fields (empty boxes), including one that says **search with all of the words**, or simply **all of the words**, depending on the search engine. Type in **gastronomy** (space) **vacation** (space) **package**, and then click on the sites of interest. You can also include a destination in the search, e.g. **gastronomy package Alberta**, to narrow the search to a particular region.

## 3.3. Training

### 3.3.1. Facilitate Workplace Training

Focus on developing well-researched, practical, niche-oriented training programs that focus on improving the buyer-seller relationship. Foster workplace training that is ongoing and progressive (source: Acquiring a Taste for Culinary Tourism, Strategy 4.2).

Whether you're a seasoned entrepreneur or a novice, training is fundamental to offering quality services and properly managing your business. The Canadian Tourism Human Resource Council (CTHRC) and its provincial/territorial agencies can provide assistance.

### 3.3.2. Launching a Tourism Company

In addition to being a business, with all that that entails, a tourism company is a world unto itself, and the requirements multiply once a culinary component is introduced.

Your local CTHRC office, economic development agency or chamber of commerce can assist you in your business start-up. Companies that benefit from such coaching during start-up are five times more likely to survive the first five years.

If there is no such agency in your area, there are educational institutions that offer business start-up training, whether on-site or through correspondence. In any event, basic tourism training is vital to developing a quality tourism company. Do yourself a favour – take advantage of such training opportunities, and think about them for your employees as well.

### 3.3.3. Existing Tourism Company

Studies show (and real-life practice confirms) that the quality of a tourism experience, particularly a culinary-themed one, is based in large part (30% to 40%) on the customer's impression of the entire experience. A chef may be marvellous, but his or her efforts will be in vain if the service is inadequate or the décor inappropriate. Use the services of an interior designer, and enrol your employees or yourself in short- or long-term service courses. First impressions are lasting, and customers will long remember the kind of reception they get. Search the Internet to find out about training courses accredited by the government or tourism associations (see Internet section; search using the term **tourism training**).

Another option is to consult various local, regional, provincial/territorial or national tourism associations.

### 3.3.4. Certification or Professional Recognition

Some provinces, such as Manitoba, require that operators have a certificate to operate tourism-related businesses. Obtaining professional recognition should be seen as a way of ensuring quality tourism services.

The CTHRC has a professional certification program. Through a rigorous process of assessment, candidates must demonstrate their mastery of the knowledge and skills as defined in National Occupational Standards.

## 3.4. Packaging

### 3.4.1. Group Marketing

Packages bring together a set of products and services, e.g. accommodation, meals, tours, events and/or activities. A gourmet or culinary package should feature accommodation plus an event and/or activity and a tour or meal, depending on the culinary-tourism definition in question (see section 1). The benefits of packaging products and services are obvious. For hotels, a package promotes the hotel itself, and for service and/or activity providers, it is an opportunity to gain visibility and win customers.

### 3.4.2. Customer Perspective

From the perspective of the customer, a package should provide the convenience of one-stop shopping as well as better value than the individual products and services. Indeed, packages are often the most economical way to go. However, the added value can also be in the form of personalized service for participants. For example, even though a customer pays on an individual price basis, the package operator will make the customer's reservations and confirmations.

### 3.4.3. Your perspective

As a businessperson or representative of an organization, you can be the project proponent for a cooperative package (see section 2.1). Once the package has been clearly defined, the product is designed (components defined) by selecting partners who will deliver quality products and services. Partners are put in touch with each other and an agreement among them is then drafted. A budget is drawn up, detailing revenues and expenses (see section 3.1.6). Once the package is implemented and available, the project proponent assesses its quality and the level of customer satisfaction, and can react to any problems (see section 3.5). The project proponent is also responsible for distributing profits in compliance with the agreement binding the partners.

Maintaining communication with the partners is essential. The key to packaging culinary tourism products lies in being involved, and in promoting regional products as well as tourism products.

A tour or package can be exclusively cuisine-oriented (farm tours, visits to food- or fish- processing establishments, cooking courses, etc.) or mainly cuisine-oriented (site tours, visits to natural sites, etc.). When choosing package partners, it's important that you have a good knowledge of the hotels, chefs, agri-tourism or agri-food businesses, museums and parks in your region.

Once the package has been structured in compliance with laws that govern the sale of package tours (see section 3.1.1), the project proponent can choose to sell it direct to customers (particularly if the proponent is a hotel) or through a travel agency or tour operator. In the latter case, the travel agency or tour operator assumes marketing costs (which are passed on to customers). Therefore the marketing costs should be detailed in the submissions.

Vouchers are often used to ensure equitable profit distribution. Once the package has expired, each partner remits an invoice to the project proponent listing the total value of the vouchers, along with the vouchers themselves (retaining copies) that were redeemed at his or her establishment by package participants. The partner agreement should stipulate that all partners receive the amounts owed to them even if a tourist does not use all components of the package.

## 3.5. Quality Assessment

### 3.5.1. External Assessment

The success of your project depends on the products and services provided. Because it is difficult to assess yourself objectively, several associations using a quality approach also have an ongoing evaluation program. The program generally includes compliance with specifications and an accreditation process (e.g., *Fédération des Agricotours du Québec*).

### 3.5.2. Self Assessment

If you do not have access to an association program, below are items to consider in a self-assessment. They should apply to any business developing a culinary tourism product.

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	POOR	VERY POOR	N/A
<b>RECEPTION</b>					
Telephone manner	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Courtesy	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Staff availability	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Management of waiting times	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Staff punctuality	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Languages spoken:					
French	<input type="checkbox"/>				
English	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Foreign languages:					
German	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Languages written:					
French	<input type="checkbox"/>				
English	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Foreign languages:					
German	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Spanish	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Other: _____	<input type="checkbox"/>				
General site atmosphere	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>TRAINING</b>					
Basic staff training	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Continuous training	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Management training	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	POOR	VERY POOR	N/A
<b>SERVICES</b>					
General:					
Standard offerings	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Specific offerings	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Networking / Interacting with other businesses	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Communication tools:					
Web site	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Media presence	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Cooperative advertising (association)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Promotional brochure	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>INFORMATION</b>					
Indoor signage	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Outdoor signage	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Price list	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Description of offering	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Overall tourism offering	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Schedules	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>ENVIRONMENT AND REGULATORY ASPECTS</b>					
Compliance with zoning by-laws	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Sanitation system compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Access:					
Itinerary	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Access plan	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Road signs	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Layout:					
Parking	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Handicap access	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Reception area	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Washrooms	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Site cleanliness	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Security	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Decor	<input type="checkbox"/>				
<b>PRICING POLICY</b>					
Food	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Lodging	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Packages	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Additional proposed activities	<input type="checkbox"/>				

	VERY GOOD	GOOD	POOR	VERY POOR	N/A
<b>QUALITY ASSESSMENT</b>					
Customer survey:					
Satisfaction-measurement tools	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Guest book	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Staff evaluation	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Handling of complaints	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Handling of customer feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Solutions and follow-up	<input type="checkbox"/>				



*Photo: Nova Scotia Tourism and Culture*

## Checklist

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- Am I a member of an association or group?
- Do I have a communication plan?
- Do I have a marketing plan?
- Do I have a training plan?
- What tourism, cultural and agri-tourism attractions are located near my establishment or event?
- Do I have a list of regional events?
- What local restaurants offer regional cuisine?
- Who are my partners?
  - o Restaurant association
  - o Hotel association
  - o Regional tourism associations
  - o Conference centres
  - o Cooking schools
  - o Government
  - o Associations of producers, fishers, processors
  - o Other 



*Photo: Waring House Inn & Cookery School*

## Lexicon

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Agri-food	Any activity directly or indirectly related to food production, food processing, etc.
Agri-tourism	A tourism activity that complements agriculture and is located within an agriculture operation. Agri-tourism puts tourists and excursionists in touch with host agricultural producers who, by providing accommodation and information, afford them an opportunity to learn about the agricultural community, agriculture and farming ( <i>Groupe de concertation sur l'agrotourisme au Québec</i> , <a href="http://www.agr.gouv.qc.ca/agrotouqc">www.agr.gouv.qc.ca/agrotouqc</a> ).
Culinary package	The main components of a culinary package include an event and/or activity, tour or meal that focuses primarily on gastronomy, agri-tourism and/or agri-food activities, along with accommodation.
Gourmet tour	A set of products/services relating to culinary tourism, in the form of a marketing tool (brochure, Web site, etc.) and including addresses, list of suppliers and how to contact them.
Regional products	Food or beverages containing ingredients grown, harvested, fished or processed in a particular region, and which are closely identified with that region.
Special event	One or more tourism or cultural activities packaged around a particular event that takes place on a specific date (e.g. Montreal High Lights Festival, P.E.I.'s  national Shellfish Festival).
Tour operator	Travel wholesaler who sells tourism products through travel agencies.
Travel agent	A retailer authorized to sell tourism products to consumers, i.e., transportation, accommodations, meals, tours and special events.
Voucher	A  off coupon entitling the bearer to a product or service included in a package to  .

## Project Committee

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