



Enhancing Winter/Shoulder Season Tourism in YAS: 3-year Strategy

March 2021

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Disclaimer

The recommendations reported herein are provided on a confidential basis. Recommendations can be used in whatever necessary, including releasing them to travel and tourism industry stakeholders and partners and/or media.

The information and data found in this report are current as of the date of submission and subject to change given market forces and external variables.

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Acknowledgements

Development of the Yarmouth & Acadian Shores (YAS) 3-Year Shoulder/Winter Tourism Strategy is informed by significant engagement with key YAS tourism stakeholders to identify and prioritize the unique opportunities that YAS has to offer visitors in the shoulder/winter seasons.

The YAS 3-Year Shoulder/Winter Tourism Strategy is made possible through the commitment and dedication of these stakeholders.

STAKEHOLDER	ORGANIZATION	ROLE
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Trout Point Lodge

Winter/Shoulder season strategy overview



YAS CAN DIVERSIFY ITS TOURISM PRODUCTS AND EXPERIENCES THROUGH SHOULDER/WINTER TOURISM.

Context & Purpose

On May 21, 2019, the Government of Canada launched a new national tourism development strategy ('Creating Middle Class Jobs: A Federal Tourism Growth Strategy') aim at empowering communities across Canada to grow their tourism economies.

As part of that strategy, the Government of Canada committed to stimulate and diversify Canada's tourism products and experiences to overcome one of five of Canada's perennial tourism challenges: seasonality. With most tourism taking place during the summer months, it identified an opportunity to develop and enhance products and experiences, to create demand for travel beyond the peak summer season.

Additionally, it launched the Canadian Experiences Fund (CEF) to support expansion of distinctive products and experiences in rural communities. And, it selected the Tourism Industry Association of Canada (TIAC) to manage the CEF via a new program called "Elevating Canadian Experiences".

The program, co-led by tourism management consultancy, Twenty31 Consulting, included a series of workshops across Canada to highlight the importance of building winter and shoulder season tourism capacity, the launch of a market-readiness toolkit and the creation of a series of regional winter and shoulder season tourism development strategies for selected regions – including Yarmouth and Acadian Shores (YAS).

This document outlines the strategy for YAS to develop winter and shoulder season tourism. Specifically, it includes:

- Definition of key elements underpinning a destination's Winter/Shoulder strategy like guiding principles, a vision and strategic objectives
- Identification and prioritization of competitive opportunities and their supporting initiatives
- Development of a roadmap for implementation

Taken together, this document provides YAS, along with its travel and tourism industry partners, a 24 to 36 month plan to develop and enhance its winter and shoulder season tourism potential.

THE STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK DEVELOPMENT APPROACH
CONSISTED OF THREE PHASES.

Approach

01

GATHER

- 1/ Situational analysis
- 2/ Winter/Shoulder workshop
- 3/ Stakeholder engagement 1

02

ACCESS

- 4/ Initial assessment
- 5/ Stakeholder engagement 2
- 6/ Initiative prioritization
- 7/ Draft YAS strategy

03

RECOMMEND

- 8/ YAS review
- 9/ Final YAS strategy



A PROVEN STRUCTURE GUIDED DEVELOPMENT OF YAS WINTER/
SHOULDER TOURISM STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK.

YAS Winter/Shoulder destination development structure

Guiding Principles

Values that guide YAS tourism stakeholders in the development of Winter/Shoulder tourism products and experiences

Challenges & Opportunities

Considers barriers identified in the shoulder/winter workshops and engagement sessions as well as opportunities to address those barriers

Vision

Ensures alignment of the direction for shoulder/winter tourism in YAS that reflects industry demands, potential visitors, operators, and the communities that tourism serves

Objectives

Accomplishments that YAS wishes to achieve its vision as it develops Winter/Shoulder tourism - the ultimate outcome

Pillars

Themes that become high-level speaking points to describe the focus of the strategy

Lead Opportunities

“Big idea” or “big opportunity” where there is a competitive advantage

Can be supply driven reflecting a certain currently underleveraged competitive opportunity

Can be demand driven like an under targeted group of prospective customers

Prioritized in order of ease of implementation and impact on tourism objectives

Supporting Initiatives

Complements the lead opportunity

Ensures conditions for success are met and there are sufficient resources to develop the lead opportunity

Can include ensuring there is sufficient tourism infrastructure to support the product

Can include developing a profile, size of market and characteristics of those who might be willing to travel to the region

Winter/Shoulder season strategy details



Le Village Blacksmith. Photo credit: Ayngelina Brogan.

WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM GUIDING PRINCIPLES ARE VALUES THAT GUIDE YARMOUTH & ACADIAN SHORES TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS.

Winter/shoudler tourism guiding principles



Tolerance of a shift in mindset from a summer to year-round destination



Tourism that is valued and supported by government, industry and citizens all year-round



Development of Winter/Shoulder tourism through incremental growth and a focus on Atlantic Canadians



Winter/Shoulder tourism as conduit to enhance and develop other industries such as fishing



Tourism strategy that is co-created by communities, government, industry and key stakeholders



Small-to-medium enterprise development and support through Winter/Shoulder tourism



Focus on existing Winter/Shoulder experiences while building new ones

Winter/Shoulder tourism guiding principles identified and defined by YAS key tourism stakeholders.

WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN YAS INITIALLY FOCUSES ON A CHANGING MINDSET.

Vision

Our vision is to unlock Yarmouth & Acadian Shores in the Winter/Shoulder seasons by taking the steps to becoming a year-round destination, especially for Atlantic Canadians.

They will be encouraged to do more and see more of our Winter/Shoulder products and experiences, which will step up their overall satisfaction and increase their likelihood of returning.

We will achieve our vision by balancing the needs of the people and institutions of Yarmouth & Acadian Shores and visitors, with the recognition of the importance of the visitor economy and benefiting from the expansion of the season.



Winter/Shoulder tourism vision detailed by key YAS tourism stakeholders.

THREE STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES SUPPORT ACTUALIZATION OF THE VISION.

Strategic Objectives

- 1/** Increase Winter/Shoulder (October through May) tourism revenues by 5%*
- 2/** Focus on developing 2-3 distinct Winter/Shoulder (October through May) tourism opportunities per year
- 3/** Continuous communication of the value of tourism to all relevant tourism stakeholders

Winter/Shoulder tourism vision detailed by key YAS key tourism stakeholders.

*Based on 2019 Winter/Shoulder tourism revenue

Pillars & Initiatives



Cape Forchu

WINTER/SHOULDER PILLARS ARE ESTABLISHING A YEAR-ROUND MINDSET, ENHANCING THE SUPPLY, AND ENTICING VISITORS.

Pillars

01

ESTABLISH FOCUS ON YEAR-ROUND TOURISM

INITIATIVES:

- 1/** Communicate the Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy
- 2/** Provide continuous and clear stakeholder communications
- 3/** Research potential markets for Winter/Shoulder (regional at first)
- 4/** Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships

OUTCOME

Establish year-round tourism by prioritizing and communicating aspirations with all relevant stakeholders.

02

ENHANCE THE SUPPLY

INITIATIVES:

- 1/** Inventory existing Winter/Shoulder products and experiences related to (year 1):
 - Astro-tourism
 - Lobster-related events
- 2/** Develop products and experiences related to lead opportunities
- 3/** Develop packages and itineraries focusing on lead opportunities

Lead Opportunities

OUTCOME

Enhance supply by understanding existing opportunities and connecting them with potential source market needs.

03

ENTICING VISITORS

INITIATIVES:

- 1/** Plan and execute 1-2 regional campaign(s) focused on astro-tourism and lobster-related events
- 2/** Work with tourism channels to promote products and experiences related to lead opportunities

OUTCOME

Promote YAS Winter/Shoulder tourism products and experiences to the right people, at the right time.

PILAR 1: ESTABLISH FOCUS ON YEAR-ROUND TOURISM**Initiative 01: Communicate Winter/Shoulder Tourism Strategy****DESCRIPTION****Rationale**

A destination tourism strategy is the first step a destination can take towards developing and enhancing its tourism and other related industries growth. A key next step to ensure the success of the destination's tourism strategy is for the authority that owns it, in this case YASTA, to communicate existence of the strategy to relevant stakeholders to generate buy-in for its implementation and leadership among its stakeholders.

Actions

Complete and approve YASTA's Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy.

Attain buy-in from all relevant stakeholders.

Communicate the region's focus on specific elements, in this case astro-tourism and lobster-related events to develop its Winter/Shoulder tourism season to achieve its vision of becoming a year-round destination.

TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER

Within 3 months of strategy approval

RESPONSIBLE

YASTA (lead)

TIANS (support)

OUTCOMES

Stakeholders aware of YAS Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy

PILAR 1: ESTABLISH FOCUS ON YEAR-ROUND TOURISM**Initiative 02: Provide Continuous and Clear Stakeholder Communications****DESCRIPTION****Rationale**

Destinations that are most successful are those that maintain continuous communication with their key stakeholders (and in some cases, all stakeholders). Having a mindset of continuous communication reinforces the responsibility of execution of the strategy among those responsible for its execution and provides key stakeholders with an opportunity to understand the context and align with initiatives.

Actions

Consider conducting a survey with key tourism stakeholders to better understanding communications needs – i.e., how, what, where and how often.

Develop a yearly organizational communications plan and execute to continue to display leadership required for stakeholders to move together towards the common vision. Of importance would be the communication of YAS approved Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy, the lead opportunities it will focus on, the rationale behind that focus, as well as the initiatives and the status of the initiatives that YAS is taking to implement the strategy.

Consider creating additional simple networking opportunities for YAS' tourism stakeholders.

TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER

Immediately upon strategy approval

Ongoing

RESPONSIBLE

YASTA (lead)

TIANS (support)

OUTCOMES

Plurality of YAS tourism stakeholders satisfied with communications

Constant communication stream of YAS tourism actions

PILAR 1: ESTABLISH FOCUS ON YEAR-ROUND TOURISM**Initiative 03: Research Potential Markets For Winter/Shoulder (Regional At First)****DESCRIPTION****Rationale**

Travel consumer behaviour in the Winter/Shoulder season is different than in the peak summer season and add to that the shift caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. This is true for local, domestic, regional and international travellers.

Actions

Conduct thorough research to understand potential target regional visitor needs, including the types of places and activities they are seeking, how they intend to learn more about products and experiences, their booking behaviours and newly developed interests as a result of COVID-19, and so forth.

Use existing available tools to gain a better understanding of potential target visitors to ensure YAS offers experiences they are seeking and attract them through effective marketing campaigns. In depth digital listening can be a cost-effective way to provide actionable data quickly.

Understand local sentiment towards tourism in general, but also in Winter/Shoulder season to address negative sentiment they may feel towards potential visitors.

Make insights accessible to all tourism and non-tourism partners to evaluate opportunities and make the right business decisions.

TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER

Within 3 months of strategy approval

RESPONSIBLE

YASTA (lead)

TIANS (support)

OUTCOMES

Market intelligence on target markets and Winter/Shoulder season needs

Access to research for tourism stakeholders

PILAR 1: ESTABLISH FOCUS ON YEAR-ROUND TOURISM**Initiative 04: Create Opportunities For Collaboration And Partnerships****DESCRIPTION****Rationale**

When launching into new territory as may be the case for many stakeholders in YAS focusing on the development or enhancement of the potential winter/shoulder, working in collaboration with other stakeholders and partners provides the operational and psychological support for destinations and operators to lean on each other for guidance and advice and reduces the risk that a single destination or operator may take attempting to develop new products and experiences independently.

Actions

Bring together a group of focused destinations and operators that can support development of product and experience clusters, regularly. Potential partnership opportunities includes banding with other stakeholders that can support Winter/Shoulder season market research, marketing and promotion, packaging and itinerary development and efforts to jumpstart the Winter/Shoulder season.

Leverage tools such as video-conferencing and social media platforms to connect groups of stakeholders; this, however, does not replace face-to-face meetings that may be required, when the time comes to re-connect stakeholders to realize opportunities.

TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER

Within 3 months of strategy approval

Ongoing

RESPONSIBLE

YASTA (lead)

TIANS (support)

OUTCOMES

Increased number of partnerships supporting Winter/Shoulder opportunities



PILAR 2: ENHANCE THE SUPPLY**Initiative 01: Inventory Existing Winter/Shoulder Products And Experiences****DESCRIPTION****Rationale**

Stakeholders from across the region identified and prioritized several potential lead opportunities to build momentum towards enhancing YAS' Winter/Shoulder tourism season.

Focusing on the top 1-2 opportunities in the first 12-24 months allows for the best chance of success. If successful, other identified and prioritized opportunities can be reviewed to determine whether YAS ought to begin focusing on them as well. Initial Winter/Shoulder lead opportunities for YAS include focusing on (year 1):

- Astro-tourism
- Lobster-related events

Actions

Understand the universe of Winter/Shoulder products and experiences that relate to these lead opportunities (especially given some operators may have been impacted by COVID-19).

Identify potential gaps to develop new products and experiences and/or related packages based on identified opportunities.

House information online to inform operators/visitors on availability of products and experiences they can link to.

TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER

Within 3-6 months of strategy approval

RESPONSIBLE

YASTA (lead)

OUTCOMES

Listing of products and experiences related to lead opportunities

PILAR 2: ENHANCE THE SUPPLY**Initiative 02: Develop Products And Experiences Related To Lead Opportunities****DESCRIPTION****Rationale**

The inventory of existing YAS Winter/Shoulder tourism products and experiences (Pilar 2: Initiative 01 – Inventory Existing Winter/Shoulder Products and Experiences) will allow YAS to identify the gaps that needs to be filled to provide visitors with a holistic tourism experience.

Actions

Work with key destinations and operators related to the identified lead opportunities to brainstorm options to fill identified gaps leveraging learnings from market research to ensure developed products and experiences are aligned with potential target market needs (Pilar 1: Initiative 03 – Research Potential Markets for Winter/Shoulder – Regional at First).

Consider what other destinations in Canada and beyond are doing related to identified lead opportunities.

Develop a short business case on each opportunity including a description of the idea itself, the market potential, those who would be responsible for its implementation, potential funding sources, steps for implementation, and so forth.

Present business case to required stakeholders to support its implementation (e.g., economic development department, small business hubs or other operators who may be willing to expand their offerings).

TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER

Within 3-6 months of strategy approval

RESPONSIBLE

YASTA (lead)

TIANS (support)

Economic Development/Small Business Development Authorities (support)

OUTCOMES

Development of new products and experiences related to lead opportunities

PILAR 2: ENHANCE THE SUPPLY**Initiative 03: Develop Packages And Itineraries Focusing On Lead Opportunities**

DESCRIPTION	TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER
<p>Rationale</p> <p>In many instances, development of products/experiences alone (Pilar 2: Initiative 02: Develop Products and Experiences Related to Lead Opportunities) may be sufficient to entice travellers to visit and ensure the quality of their experience in the hope of encouraging a return visit or spread of the experience through word of mouth.</p> <p>However, the research (Pilar 1: Initiative 03 – Research Potential Markets for Winter/ Shoulder) may determine that some visitors prefer to have decisions made for them when it comes lodging, food and beverage, activities, attractions and so forth.</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>Work with identified key stakeholders (destinations and operators) involved with the development of lead opportunity product and experiences to identify and develop an inventory of possible inspirational itineraries according to specific product themes and small groups’ travel needs.</p> <p>Coordinate with stakeholders within the region to launch the packages/ itineraries, as well as the agency on record to publicise the itineraries starting with earned media.</p>	<p>Within 3-6 months of strategy approval</p> <p>RESPONSIBLE</p> <p>YASTA (lead)</p> <p>OUTCOMES</p> <p>Development of new products and experiences related to lead opportunities</p>

PILAR 3: ENTICE VISITORS**Initiative 01: Plan And Execute 1-2 Regional Campaign(s)**

DESCRIPTION	TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER
<p>Rationale</p> <p>Stakeholders that informed YAS' Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy identified regional tourism as a lead opportunity, especially those that may be looking to escape major urban areas in pursuit of less crowded destinations.</p> <p>Target markets within this region need to be informed of the attractions that YAS offers with a focus on astro-tourism and lobster-related events.</p> <p>Focusing marketing campaigns on targeted markets as defined by research addressed in Pilar 1: Initiative 03 – Research Potential Markets for Winter/ Shoulder, YAS may be able to entice those travellers in the region to experience a new Winter/Shoulder season product, stay longer, with more family members or friends, and spend more with a focus on the identified market-ready or near-market ready opportunities like astro-tourism and lobster-related events.</p> <p>Actions</p> <p>Development of integrated campaigns, armed with the research conducted in Pilar 1: Initiative 03 – Research Potential Markets for Winter/ Shoulder, aimed at specific target areas within the region, leveraging appropriate messaging, channels and influencers where necessary.</p>	<p>Within 6-12 months of strategy approval</p>
	RESPONSIBLE
	<p>YASTA (lead)</p> <p>Agency of Record (support)</p>
	OUTCOMES
	<p>1-2 regional campaigns</p>

PILAR 3: ENTICE VISITORS**Initiative 02: Work With Tourism Channels****DESCRIPTION****Rationale**

Working with channels such as traditional and online travel agencies accelerates linking visitors with Winter/Shoulder products, experiences, attractions, itineraries, and packages developed for the Winter/Shoulder season.

Actions

Identify tour operators focused on the regional market that may be a good conduit to promote astro-tourism and lobster-related events winter/shoulder products, experiences and packages, and connect with them to promote those products, experiences and packages.

Work with traditional and online travel agencies influencing the local/regional travel market that YAS can explore to further promote Winter/Shoulder season products, experiences and packages online targeting different demo/psychographics.

TIMEFRAME/TRIGGER

Within 6-12 months of strategy approval

RESPONSIBLE

YASTA (lead)

OUTCOMES

Promotion of Winter/Shoulder tourism packages through tourism channels



Trout Point Lodge

EACH INITIATIVE IS SET AGAINST A TIMELINE BASED ON NEED, IMPACT AND EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION.

Tactical Roadmap

	NEXT 0-3 MONTHS	NEXT 3-6 MONTHS	NEXT 6-12 MONTHS
01 ESTABLISH YEAR-ROUND TOURISM FOCUS	<p>Communicate Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy</p> <p>Provide continuous and clear stakeholder communications</p>	<p>Research potential markets for Winter/Shoulder (regional at first)</p> <p>Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships</p> <p>Provide continuous and clear stakeholder communications</p>	<p>Create opportunities for collaboration and partnerships</p> <p>Provide continuous and clear stakeholder communications</p>
02 ENHANCE SUPPLY		<p>Inventory existing Winter/Shoulder products and experiences related to lead opportunities</p> <p>Develop products and experiences related to lead opportunities</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries focusing on lead opportunities</p>	
03 ENTICE VISITORS			<p>Plan and execute 1-2 regional campaign(s) focused on astro-tourism and lobster-related events</p> <p>Work with tourism channels to promote products and experiences related to lead opportunities</p>

Appendix



THERE ARE KEY BARRIERS THAT IMPACT DEVELOPMENT OF WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM IN YAS

Challenges



Businesses Open & Facilities

Businesses close leading to fewer products and experiences (lifestyle businesses)

Limited public Winter/Shoulder assets and amenities (e.g., park closure, programming ends and maintenance reduced)

Summer destination mindset versus a 'year-round' destination mindset

Support required for Winter/Shoulder strategy and business case

Risk aversion to higher operating costs in winter



Labour

Identifying skilled labour

Retaining labour for year-round products



Accessibility & Transportation

Consistency of ferry and general accessibility (e.g., flights or train)

Limitation in getting around – travellers need to rent a car, and for some road conditions are a concern

Public transportation to travel across various communities



Awareness & Perceptions

Limited visitor awareness about mild climate and what there is to do

Visitor perception that YAS is a mainly summer destination leading to reduced marketing efforts

Winter/Shoulder tourism challenges identified by key YAS key tourism stakeholders.

AND SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES THAT CAN ENHANCE WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM.

Opportunities



Events or Festivals

Development of new festivals/events and expansion of existing ones, e.g., Lobster Crawl, dumping day festival)

Ability to start small and scale



Re-branding for Winter/Shoulder

Potential to redefine or add second season

Getaway for seniors/couples

Availability of high-end packages at a higher price points



Sports

Curling clubs, hockey rinks, home of some NHL players, hockey camps post-career



Astro- & Ecotourism

Build on natural features and gems in YAS (e.g., astro-tourism, parks)

Merge/layer with other themes such as culinary or adventure



Leverage Fishing Heritage

Geographic location on gulf stream

Availability of many culinary experiences (e.g., beer, spirits, food)



Small Meetings

Business conventions & meetings (small for e.g., AGMs, etc.)



Acadian & Indigenous Culture/Heritage

Possibility to focus on language, storytelling and celebration of unique culture and heritage of Acadian community and First Nations



Enabling Environment

Degree of support (e.g., wage subsidies)



Hygge ('Coziness')

Demonstration of "hygge" – that feeling of contentment with nature, coziness, etc.

Winter/Shoulder tourism challenges identified by key YAS key tourism stakeholders.



YAS PRIORITIZED SEVERAL OPPORTUNITIES TO ENHANCE WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM.

Winter/Shoulder tourism lead opportunities

HIGH POTENTIAL TO IMPACT OBJECTIVES

3. Medium-term opportunities for next 2-4 years



1. Near market-ready



4. For later consideration/re-evaluation



2. Quick wins for next 1-2 year



LOW POTENTIAL TO IMPACT OBJECTIVES

CHALLENGING TO IMPLEMENT

EASY TO IMPLEMENT

WINTER/SHOULDER TOURISM LEAD OPPORTUNITIES IDENTIFIED BY KEY YAS KEY TOURISM STAKEHOLDERS AND PRIORITIZED BASED ON EASE OF IMPLEMENTATION AND IMPACT ON OBJECTIVES.

WHILE SOME OPPORTUNITIES ARE LONGER-TERM, OTHERS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED SOONER.

Near market-ready opportunities



Astro-tourism

With significant distance from heavily populated urban centres, YAS region is ideally suited to enhancing our stargazing experiences. We have an observatory and there are two or three providers of dark sky experiences.

There is some preliminary evidence to support a growing interest in stargazing and interest in travelling to destinations that offer these experiences.



Lobster-related Events

Lobster fishing not only serves to enhance culinary experiences, but it is also a way of life that is celebrated by local communities and visitors alike.

Developing experiences linked to the YAS' lobster fishing season, which occurs mainly in the shoulder and winter season can support increased visitation by those who may be willing to spend more for a more luxurious experience while at the same time connecting the tourism industry with other sectors such as fishing.

Creating events around the lobster season can entice travellers to come more often and stay longer.

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES CAN BE DEVELOPED IN THE NEXT 2-4 YEARS.

Other opportunities

Quick wins for next 1-2 years

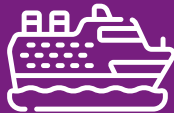


US Market

Post-COVID-19, the US market will again become one of the most significant markets for YAS and there is potential to capture more of this market in the winter/shoulder season.

There would be a significant impact of capturing this market on the YAS travel and tourism industry due to the proximity of the US and the higher yields its visitors have on Canadian destinations.

In prior years, the US market opportunity would be considered a near market-ready developmental opportunity for YAS to develop its winter/shoulder tourism. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this opportunity will take more time to materialize.



Expedition Cruises

Yarmouth's marine port infrastructure is a designated cruise ship operation that may be more efficient than alternative options for expedition cruises, that mainly voyage in the shoulder seasons.

With the increase in expedition cruises exploring northern areas, expedition cruise can have a moderate impact on achieving YAS shoulder season tourism objectives.

While this opportunity has the potential to impact YAS shoulder season tourism, it will require considerable time and effort, including government lobbying and potential legislation, as well as promotion of the opportunity to potential expedition cruise operators to ensure its implementation.

Medium-term opportunities for next 2-4 years



Golf

Many people are not aware that the golf season in the YAS region is longer than the rest of Nova Scotia...in fact, golf in YAS region begins and ends in the shoulder season.

While this opportunity demonstrates clear potential and can be implemented easily, the impact on YAS Winter/Shoulder tourism season revenues would be incremental at best, given existing capacity and with regional competitors vying for the same regional visitor.



Outdoor Adventure

From enjoying nature and wildlife to exploring the Tusket Islands, the Tobieatic or the UNESCO biosphere, YAS has a host of outdoor adventure offerings to share with visitors in the Winter/Shoulder season.

YAS should consider the opportunity as an immediate, packaging and product development and enhancement potential to support marketing after focusing on the near market-ready opportunities of astro-tourism and lobster-related themes.

Some effort would be required in ensuring a holistic experience for visitors wishing to experience outdoor adventure in YAS – more would need to be done package and commercialise them.



Acadian & Indigenous Culture

YAS plays host to a number of Acadian and Indigenous cultural and heritage institutions (primarily indoors) – attractions in and of themselves, but as a feature that can complement outdoor Winter/Shoulder activities for periods of adverse weather.

While is possible to create additional products and experiences around Acadian culture, history and language, and to continue to work with the local indigenous community to assist them in their goals to build tourism capacity, further study is needed as does the extent of demand for these experiences.



Bus Tours

YAS can be an interesting destination for those who prefer bus tours, however there is a barrier in persuading tour operators to stop in the YAS region, especially during the Winter/Shoulder season.

While this opportunity can possibly lead to greater visitation in the Winter/Shoulder season, questions remain about the feasibility of implementation (additional infrastructure may be required to accommodate charter buses) and potential spend of visitors once in YAS.



Snowbirds

Most Canadian destinations will be vying for snowbirds, particularly during and post-COVID, since they are generally unable to travel to the warm destinations they typically fly to in the Winter/Shoulder season. Given YAS' warmer climate (relative to the rest of Canada), it can be an alternative destination to some snowbirds.

More research needs to be done on the medium- to long-term potential of this travel segment. Additionally, it would require significant time, effort and funding to attract this segment to YAS.



Digital Nomads

With the rise of remote working accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, more people are embracing the digital nomad lifestyle. This lifestyle may include spending extended periods of time (beyond a typical vacation), in particular destination. YAS can leverage this opportunity, particularly in the Winter/Shoulder season.

More research needs to be done on the medium- to long-term potential of this travel segment. Additionally, it would require significant time, effort and funding to attract this segment to YAS.





Le Village Historique

Supporting Initiatives

FOCUS IS ON SUPPORTING INITIATIVES TO FACILITATE IDENTIFIED PRIORITY LEAD OPPORTUNITIES.

Astro-tourism

PRODUCT & EXPERIENCES	ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PR
<p>Inventory related products and experiences and identify possible gaps</p> <p>Support creation of additional attractions to address gaps</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries</p>	<p>Communicate prioritization of astro-tourism to key stakeholders and community</p>	<p>Assess existing infrastructure (e.g., viewing platforms, starlight hotel, observatory, bubble sky tents, etc.) to determine possible gaps and how to bridge them</p>	<p>Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially in Atlantic Canada)</p>	<p>Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences</p>	<p>Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets</p>

OPPORTUNITY CATEGORY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Products & Experiences	Inventory related products and experiences and identify possible gaps	<p>Conduct an inventory of existing astro-tourism-related products and experiences, especially for the Winter/Shoulder season</p> <p>Includes identification of complementary assets like lodging, culinary and other attractions</p>
	Support creation of additional attractions to address gaps	<p>Based on the inventory of existing astro-tourism-related products and experiences that can be leveraged for the Winter/Shoulder season, identify possible gaps for a holistic experience</p> <p>Work with economic development authorities to support the development of new products</p>
	Develop packages and itineraries	Once a comprehensive understanding of astro-tourism-related products and experience that can be leveraged for the Winter/Shoulder season is completed, develop packages and itineraries that cater to identified target market needs (see “Target Markets” initiative)
Enabling Environment	Communicate prioritization of astro-tourism to key stakeholders and community	<p>Communicate the YAS’ Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy with all key stakeholders</p> <p>Communicate the Winter/Shoulder astro-tourism offering with relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment with astro-tourism in the Winter/Shoulder season</p>
Infrastructure	Assess existing infrastructure (e.g., viewing platforms, starlight hotel, observatory, bubble sky tents, etc.) to determine possible gaps and how to bridge them	<p>Assess existing infrastructure to support astro-tourism</p> <p>Identify potential gaps in required infrastructure and determine possible ways to bridge them</p> <p>Collaborate with key stakeholders who may be able to fill the gap and provide them with support (i.e., research, business case, etc.) to enable them to bridge those gaps</p>
Target Markets	Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially in Atlantic Canada)	Conduct research to identify potential target markets (especially in Atlantic Canada to begin), to determine their interest and needs in astro-tourism in the Winter/Shoulder season
Channels	Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences	<p>Identify tour operators who may be a good conduit to promote developed astro-tourism Winter/Shoulder packages to target markets, especially in Atlantic Canada</p> <p>Connect with tour operators to promote Winter/Shoulder astro-tourism experiences</p>
Marketing & PR	Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets	Develop 1-2 campaigns, leveraging insight from the “Target Markets” initiatives, to develop 1-2 campaigns specific to astro-tourism in the Winter/Shoulder season

FOCUS IS ON SUPPORTING INITIATIVES TO FACILITATE IDENTIFIED
PRIORITY LEAD OPPORTUNITIES

Lobster-related Events

PRODUCT & EXPERIENCES	ENABLING ENVIRONMENT	INFRASTRUCTURE	TARGET MARKETS	CHANNELS	MARKETING & PR
<p>Inventory related fishing and culinary events and experiences</p> <p>Enhance existing events to provide additional visitation experiences and opportunities</p> <p>Develop packages and itineraries</p>	<p>Communicate prioritization of lobster-related events to key stakeholders and community</p> <p>Develop business plan including identification of possible funding opportunities (e.g., ACOA) to expand events</p>	<p>Assess existing infrastructure (e.g., “living wharves” experiences) to determine possible gaps and how to bridge them</p>	<p>Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially in Atlantic Canada)</p>	<p>Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences</p>	<p>Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets</p>

OPPORTUNITY CATEGORY	SUPPORTING INITIATIVE	DESCRIPTION
Products & Experiences	Inventory related fishing and culinary events and experiences	<p>Conduct an inventory of existing lobster-related events and attractions, especially for the Winter/Shoulder season</p> <p>Includes identification of complementary assets like lodging, culinary and other attractions</p>
	Enhance existing events to provide additional visitation experiences and opportunities	<p>Based on the inventory of existing lobster-related events and attractions that can be leveraged for the Winter/Shoulder season, identify possible gaps for a holistic experience</p> <p>Work with economic development authorities to support development of potential products</p>
	Develop packages and itineraries	<p>Once a comprehensive understanding of lobster-related events and attractions that can be leveraged for the Winter/Shoulder season is completed, develop packages and itineraries that cater to identified target market needs (see “Target Markets” initiative)</p>
Enabling Environment	Communicate prioritization of lobster-related events to key stakeholders and community	<p>Communicate the YAS’ Winter/Shoulder tourism strategy with all key stakeholders</p> <p>Communicate the Winter/Shoulder lobster-related events and attractions with relevant stakeholders to ensure alignment</p>
	Develop business plan including identification of possible funding opportunities (e.g., ACOA) to expand events	<p>Create a business plan that includes possible enhancement of existing events</p> <p>Leverage business plan to connect with possible funding institutions to further enhance lobster-related events and attractions for Winter/Shoulder season</p>
Infrastructure	Assess existing infrastructure (e.g., viewing platforms, starlight hotel, observatory, bubble sky tents, etc.) to determine possible gaps and how to bridge them	<p>Assess existing infrastructure to support lobster-related events</p> <p>Identify potential gaps in required infrastructure and determine possible ways to bridge them</p> <p>Collaborate with key stakeholders who may be able to fill the gap and provide them with support (i.e., research, business case, etc.) to enable them to bridge those gaps</p>
Target Markets	Conduct market research to identify and define target markets (especially in Atlantic Canada)	<p>Conduct research to identify potential target markets (especially in Atlantic Canada to begin), to determine their interest and needs in experiencing lobster-related events in the Winter/Shoulder season</p>
Channels	Work with select tour operators and travel agencies (including Online Travel Agencies) to sell products and experiences	<p>Identify tour operators who may be a good conduit to promote lobster-related events packages in Winter/Shoulder to target markets, especially in Atlantic Canada</p> <p>Connect with tour operators to plan promotion of Winter/Shoulder lobster-related events</p>
Marketing & PR	Create 1-2 campaigns to promote to identified target markets	<p>Develop 1-2 campaigns, leveraging insight from the “Target Markets” initiatives to develop 1-2 campaigns specific to lobster-related events in the Winter/Shoulder season</p>



Thank You

