



PRESS RELEASE

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The Accommodations Sector Bucks the National Trend in 2009

While many destinations in Canada are reporting significant losses in room night sales, St. John's accommodators are reporting a 2.2% increase in sales over 2008.

"Eastern Newfoundland continues to be a magnet for all manner of visitors; reflecting the strength of our people, our culture and the natural beauty of our province" says Destination St. John's CEO, Keith Healey. In 2009 the destination recorded another record year of room night sales; selling a total of 570,190 room nights. This is up from 2008 by almost 12,000 room nights. Average occupancy for the year was 66.58% up from 66.02% in 2008; while the average rate for a room climbed by \$2.50 to \$123.55.

These numbers reflect all accommodations, but are compiled based on statistics submitted monthly to Destination St. John's by the thirteen major hotels in the City, which represent 84% of the total commercial rooms.

Mark McCarthy, Chair of the Board of Destination St. John's says, "2009 was a difficult year for tourism in many parts of Canada and indeed the world. It is clear that our destination fared much better than many other locations and this is reflective of both the strength of our economy and the strong desire that people have to visit here. We will continue to do our part to ensure that we reach the industry goal of doubling tourism revenue by 2020."

Healey says, "With success comes the challenge of closer scrutiny from competitors. Our ability to continuously put up record numbers has drawn attention from other destinations looking to get in on the action and this means we will have to work harder to maintain our favoured position with the business and leisure traveller. We look forward to working with all our partners and our members to ensure that 2010 and beyond are strong years for our destination."

Destination St. John's sells and markets Eastern Newfoundland to the travel trade and tourism sectors throughout North America. Its vision is of 'A vibrant economy in Eastern Newfoundland, driven by a strong sustainable travel trade and tourism business and through productive partnerships'.

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