



GROWING FOOD TOURISM

OPPORTUNITY

Recognizing the growth of food tourism globally, Banff & Lake Louise Tourism (BLLT) has worked alongside members and stakeholders from across the destination to develop a food tourism strategy.

OBJECTIVES

- » Establish a unique and authentic food identity or *Taste of Place* for Banff and Lake Louise
- » Assist members in becoming market-ready to meet the expectations of travellers
- » Strengthen member engagement and industry collaboration to create new or enriched food tourism offerings to enhance visitor experience
- » Build reputation for Banff National Park as a “where to eat” bucket list destination
- » Grow visitation in winter and shoulder seasons

TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for the food tourism strategy remains consistent with the overall EQ segmentation model. We will continue to attract Free Spirits, Cultural Explorers, Authentic Experiencers, and Gentle Explorers.

These audiences are highly social, open-minded, and strongly motivated by culinary experiences including restaurants offering local ingredients, food and drink-related tours, attending farmers markets, and food and drink festivals. They are also very interested in the origin of products, culinary heritage, cultural influences, and how things are grown and made. They seek authentic narratives and value story-telling.

TASTE OF PLACE

Taste of Place refers to the food identity of Banff and Lake Louise—an identity that is grounded in the heritage and culture of our region, food ingredients and products found in Alberta and B.C., and food experiences that create a connection to our destination's brand and the incredible landscape of Banff National Park.

Taste of Place is a broad platform, with some core foundational elements, providing ample opportunity for creativity. Local food products can simply be used and highlighted within existing menu items to establish *Taste of Place*, or *Taste of Place* can be used to inspire exciting new menu options. The palette for *Taste of Place* is broad, and individual interpretation by chefs and organizations is encouraged.

Integrating *Taste of Place* into our menus and food offerings in creative ways will provide travellers with the authentic local experiences that many are looking for, and will help distinguish our food offerings from other food tourism destinations.

CORE TASTE OF PLACE ELEMENTS

- » Local food ingredients, products, and beverages from Alberta and B.C.
- » Food and drink experiences that are inspired by our destination's unique brand attributes and help create a connection to the incredible landscape of Banff National Park

MARKET-READY

Food travellers expect a seamless experience while in destination, so we want to ensure our member businesses are market ready. This means our destination's unique *Taste of Place* is well integrated into our food offerings and that our members have articulated their *Taste of Place* stories. We also want to make sure information about our food tourism experiences are easy to access through defined hours, locations, pricing, and menus.

The following checklist is a great guide to determine if your business is market ready.

MARKET READY CHECKLIST

ATTRACTING AND WELCOMING FOOD TRAVELLERS

- ☐ Maintain an attractive website with *Taste of Place* story, hours, maps, social channels, high quality photos, chef profiles, and videos
- ☐ Clearly post hours of operation on storefronts, on Google Business, and social media profiles
- ☐ Provide visible signage and route markers
- ☐ Offer dedicated retail space for customers to purchase product
- ☐ Offer online restaurant reservations through OpenTable or in-house systems

EMPOWERING FRONT-LINE STAFF

- ☐ Ensure staff are present to greet guests immediately
- ☐ Offer tastings, field trips, and service training to educate staff about *Taste of Place*
- ☐ Ensure staff are knowledgeable about products, menus, and experiences that are offered to visitors
- ☐ Ensure staff are able to communicate *Taste of Place* story
- ☐ Ensure staff are familiar with other "must visit" businesses and attractions

TELLING YOUR UNIQUE TASTE OF PLACE STORY

- ☐ Offer unique *Taste of Place* menu items authentic to the region
- ☐ *Taste of Place* story is evident to guests online, through social media, in menus, marketing materials, and in-person interactions
- ☐ Utilize ingredients and beverages from Alberta and B.C.
- ☐ Promote local ingredients, products, growers, and producers
- ☐ Tag in-destination partners, local producers, growers, and beverage suppliers in social media wherever possible

ENRICHING THE FOOD TRAVELLERS EXPERIENCE

- ☐ Offer tastings and samplings
- ☐ Offer classes or educational opportunities
- ☐ Offer entertainment, host tours, and create experiences
- ☐ Post educational signage
- ☐ Provide calendar of activities in order for BLLT to promote these experiences to prospective visitors

KEEPING FOOD TRAVELLERS ENGAGED

- ☐ Be active with food tourism focused content on social media
- ☐ Be active on social review sites (TripAdvisor, Urbanspoon, Yelp)
- ☐ Display social media handles and encourage guests to tag/share
- ☐ Adopt BLLT food event hashtags where possible
- ☐ Offer incentives, run contests, and promotions
- ☐ Participate in and promote involvement in local events
- ☐ Ask for feedback

If you need more information or support to become market ready, contact rmillican@banfflakelouise.com.

TASTE OF PLACE BRAND ATTRIBUTES (INSPIRATION POINTS)

Taste of Place fulfills the brand promise of indelible awe and these six attributes:



UPLIFTING

A connection to nature and rejuvenation of the soul through inspired food and drink creations.



JAW-DROPPING

Discover new tastes or traditional flavours, where the cuisine inspires as much awe as the surrounding land.



VIBRANT

Inspired by the incredible nature, imaginative food and drink creations will stir senses and make you feel alive.



TRULY CANADIAN

Connecting with friends and family over a delicious meal, a come as you are attitude, and welcoming hospitality all embody the spirit of this great country.



ACCESSIBLE

A vast and diverse array of cuisine options make it easy to find something for every taste.



PROTECTED

Purity of nature is brought to life through ingredients that are inspired and derived from our local lands.

CORE STRATEGIES PRIORITIES

BUILD CAPACITY & FOSTER COLLABORATION

BLLT

- » Support members in becoming market ready from a food tourism perspective
- » Develop an online toolkit of food tourism best practices to support members in establishing *Taste of Place* and becoming market ready (e.g., criteria, best practices, examples of storytelling, and photo assets)
- » Support the creation of a food tourism task force and organize regular meetings to foster collaboration and generate ideas to further develop Banff and Lake Louise as a food tourism destination
- » Support the creation of a Chef's working group to help further define *Taste of Place* and encourage collaboration on relevant topics such as procurement
- » Host workshops and presentations to support market readiness (e.g., social media for food tourism and effective storytelling)

MEMBERS

- » Become familiar with market-ready criteria and invest in becoming market ready
- » Volunteer for the task force or the Chef's working group and contribute to ongoing discussions to help articulate *Taste of Place* and further develop Banff and Lake Louise as a food tourism destination
- » Participate in workshops

PRODUCT ENHANCEMENT & PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

BLLT

- » Create a common understanding and support members in the development of *Taste of Place*
- » Integrate *Taste of Place* into existing BLLT events
- » Begin to explore new events to help establish *Taste of Place* and act as drivers to the destination
- » Begin to explore potential partnerships with leaders in food tourism that will help enhance credibility and awareness of food tourism offerings
- » Host workshops, presentations, and industry event(s) to support *Taste of Place* development (e.g., creating unique food experiences and opportunities for introduction to regional food producers)

MEMBERS

- » Enhance or develop new food and beverage experiences (on an exclusive basis or in partnership with other members) to position food as a demand-generator in alignment with *Taste of Place*
- » Explore partnerships in local food community to enhance and cross promote experiences
- » Participate in BLLT food-related festivals and event programming

MARKETING & PROMOTION

BLLT

- » Market and promote destination with integrated *Taste of Place* messaging with emphasis on winter and shoulder seasons
- » Provide support to assist members with telling their *Taste of Place* story
- » Highlight *Taste of Place* member offerings and experiences
- » Establish key influencer and media relationships focused on food experiences

MEMBERS

- » Align products and experiences with *Taste of Place* criteria
 - » Share food tourism related product offerings and experiences with BLLT
 - » Champion “made in destination” or “made locally” products
 - » Monitor and address online reviews and social media postings
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