



DESTINATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA

ARE YOU TRAVEL TRADE READY?

POPLAR GROVE WINERY
Photo: Andrew Strain

STANDARDS AND SELF-ASSESSMENT

Destination BC, with input from industry partners and overseas travel trade, has developed a set of criteria to help BC's tourism industry remain competitive with other national and international tourism destinations. The Standards have been broken down into three categories to assist tourism-related businesses increase the quality and professionalism of their operation.

1) VISITOR READY

Refers to a business that has all of its licenses, permits and insurance in-place, in order to operate legally, and is ready to offer products to consumers.

Are you Visitor Ready?

(check to indicate your company's compliance)

- ☐ Our company is in good standing with all applicable business licenses, insurance, and BC legislative requirements.
- ☐ Our company is licensed with [Consumer Protection BC](#) (if applicable).
- ☐ We maintain a staffed business location, with a set schedule of operating hours.
- ☐ We provide a contact telephone number and/or email contact year-round. If closed for the season, we provide an automated response through voicemail and/or email.
- ☐ We have branded on-site signage.

2) MARKET READY

Refers to a business that markets itself, communicates with potential visitors year-round, and is ready to accept advance reservations.

Are you Market Ready?

(check to indicate your company's compliance)

- ☐ Our company meets the Visitor Ready criteria, and;
- ☐ Our company provides a published pricing policy.
- ☐ We have published consumer billing, payment, and cancellation policies.
- ☐ We have marketing materials, such as brochures, rack cards, a website and/or business social media account(s).
- ☐ During the operating season, we maintain a 24- to 48-hour or less response time for inquiries, and a 24-hour response time for reservation/booking requests.
- ☐ We are prepared to communicate and accept reservations by telephone and/or email, and provide same-day confirmation of booking arrangements.
- ☐ We have high-resolution images and/or video footage for promotional and training purposes.
- ☐ We have frontline staff who are trained in current customer service standards (such as **SuperHost®** certification or equivalent customer training programs).
- ☐ We work with our Regional Destination Marketing Organisation (Northern BC Tourism, Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Tourism Association, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, Kootenay Rockies Tourism, Northern BC Tourism, Thompson Okanagan Tourism Association, and Tourism Vancouver Island), or with Destination BC for the Vancouver, Coast & Mountains region.

This may include working with the Regions to support travel trade and travel media familiarization tours, and providing regular product information and updates.

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3) EXPORT READY CRITERIA

Refers to a business that:

- a) Markets to and through travel trade sales channels.
- b) Understands rack and/or retail pricing, agent commissions, and wholesale net rates.
- c) Has client relationships at each level of distribution, including corresponding contracts and financial transactions.

Are you Export Ready?

(check to indicate your company's compliance)

- ☐ Our company meets the Visitor Ready and Market Ready criteria, and;

PROVEN TRACK RECORD AND SAFETY

- ☐ Our company has been in business for at least one year, and has a proven track record for safe and professional operation.
- ☐ We carry adequate insurance, including liability insurance (A minimum of \$2 to \$3 million liability insurance for an adventure product supplier is recommended).
- ☐ Our company meets provincial and federal health and safety regulations (Note: some markets, such as the UK and Germany, have strict consumer protection laws, and health and safety requirements that suppliers should be aware of).
- ☐ We have current business and operating licenses.

MARKETING

- ☐ We have an adequate budget and marketing plan that includes international tourism operators.
- ☐ We understand the roles played by receptive tour operators (RTOs), tour operators/travel wholesalers (domestic and international), and retail travel agents.
- ☐ We understand rack or retail pricing, agent commissions, and wholesale net rates at each level.
- ☐ We are willing to include RTOs in our marketing and sales plan, and are willing to provide them with contracted wholesale net rates.
- ☐ We are able to provide travel trade and travel media clients with images or video of the product or operation, for use in brochures, promotions and/or editorials.
- ☐ We provide support (free or reduced rates) for international media and travel trade familiarization tours.



INQUIRIES AND RESERVATIONS

- ☐ We accept reservations, and deal with inquiries on a year-round basis.
- ☐ We provide confirmation of booking arrangements within 24 hours.
- ☐ We are prepared to set up billing arrangements with the operator, agency or RTO.

CONTRACTING AND PAYMENTS

- ☐ We have an understanding of rack and/or retail pricing, agent commissions and wholesale net rates, and client relationships at each level.
- ☐ We can provide detailed pricing and program information to tour operators at least one year in advance of selling season.
- ☐ We are prepared to set up billing arrangements with the operator, agency or RTO.
- ☐ In order to position the product in international markets with receptive tour operators (RTOs), we provide contracted wholesale net rates to RTOs. As a general guideline, a 25% to 30% margin between the net and rack rate is advised.
- ☐ We honour contracted net rates and refrain from raising prices before the expiry of the agreement.
- ☐ We accept client vouchers as confirmation of payment for reservations.
- ☐ We invoice operators for payment to be remitted within 30 days. (It is not feasible for an international operator to provide separate deposits and/or payments for each booking.)