

TIP SHEET #5

AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCERS

Authentic Experiencers travel for learning and personal development. They are curious, independent, and understated travellers. They actively seek the most authentic cultural experiences, enjoy “living like locals”, and will become deeply immersed in a destination - even learning the local language. Authentic Experiencers do their own thing at a destination and prefer to travel off the beaten path.

Many Authentic Experiencers are retired, with time to do the things they enjoy. They welcome surprises, the unexpected, and want to learn more about themselves and the world. They feel it is important to be responsible, upstanding citizens and are concerned about the health of the planet and what that means to future generations.

AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCERS WANT:

- Authentic cultural experiences
- To live ‘like the locals’
- To deeply immerse themselves in the destination they visit
- To travel off the beaten path, at their own pace
- To learn more about themselves and the world



Nova Scotia is a great fit for Authentic Experiencers who make up 12% of the Canadian visitor market. In 2017, our Visitor Exit Survey showed 26% of visitors to our province were Authentic Experiencers. They’re visiting our province more than any other EQ segment. Because they’re a larger market segment, it’s a good opportunity to target this traveller type.

TO ATTRACT AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCERS, CONSIDER:

Top travel motivator: Learning about a destination's history and culture is a top travel motivator for Authentic Experiencers. They are attracted to experiences that help them learn about Nova Scotia and themselves, through direct contact like talking to local experts and immersion into local culture (e.g. exploring museums, historic sites, or small towns).

Preferred trip type: Independent types of travel, such as multi-day touring by car, allowing them to discover on their own. They tend to stay away from group tours and rigid plans. However, they will book an experience that aligns with their interests and allows access to local interaction, experts and cultural immersion.

Preferred accommodations: Bed and breakfast or country inn.

Preferred vacation activities: Like many travellers to Nova Scotia, they enjoy marine and land-based wildlife viewing, seeking an authentic experience like going on a whale watching expedition to see whales in their natural habitat. They also enjoy dining at restaurants featuring

local ingredients, seeing beautiful coastlines and beaches, visiting historic sites, small towns, and natural wonders – such as the world's highest tides along the Bay of Fundy.

Positioning & pricing for Authentic Experiencers: Although they feel financially secure, these travellers are the pickiest when it comes to buying a product. While they aren't looking for trendy brands, they are willing to pay more for a high-quality product. They choose their trips carefully, will travel further, and are not necessarily looking for a discount. They are more likely to pay a premium for experiences that take them behind the scenes and away from the regular "touristy" places, where they can explore the destination's history and heritage.

They are less likely to book a package, as it may include elements they are not interested in. However, they are looking for experiences that help them connect with locals and explore beyond the popular attractions. These travellers do not enjoy touring in large groups, so focus on self-guided or a small guided group with an expert or informed local.

When making travel decisions, Authentic Experiencers are far more likely to place importance on the recommendations of friends and family, an article in one of their favourite magazines or newspapers, or a review on TripAdvisor. More than half of these travellers are over 55 and have higher-than-average level of education.

Images to capture Authentic Experiencers' attention: To catch the attention of Authentic Experiencers, the images in your marketing materials should include lively, mature couples engaged in your experience and away from crowds. Show how your experience connects them with locals and how they will be immersed in our culture, nature, and landscapes. Take a look at these examples of photos that appeal to Authentic Experiencers:

