



Canadian Tourism
Commission

Commission canadienne
du tourisme

Global Tourism Watch

France Summary Report - 2011



Canada

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1. Research Objectives

The Canadian Tourism Commission initiated a Global Tourism Watch (GTW) program in 2007 to expand the consumer-based intelligence in its key markets; the Canadian domestic market was later introduced in 2009. The overall objectives of the GTW study are:

- To monitor awareness, travel intentions and other key market indicators for Canada and the regions;
- To assess perceptions of Canada and track brand performance over time;
- To identify the general experiences sought by travellers, assess Canada's competitive positioning on key products and identify growth opportunities;
- To identify motivators and barriers for travel to Canada, as well as media sources and images that lift Canada's appeal.

2. Methodology

The target population for the online survey was residents aged 18 and older, who had taken a pleasure trip in the past three years where they stayed at least four or more nights with at least one night in paid accommodations or plan to take such a trip in the next two years. Trips had to be outside of Europe, North Africa and the Mediterranean.

Pleasure trips included vacation or holiday trips, trips to visit friends and relatives, and combined business-pleasure trips. In France, the target was n=1,500 long-haul pleasure travellers, with a quota of n=300 recent travellers to Canada. The survey was conducted in June 2011.

3. Market Outlook and Potential

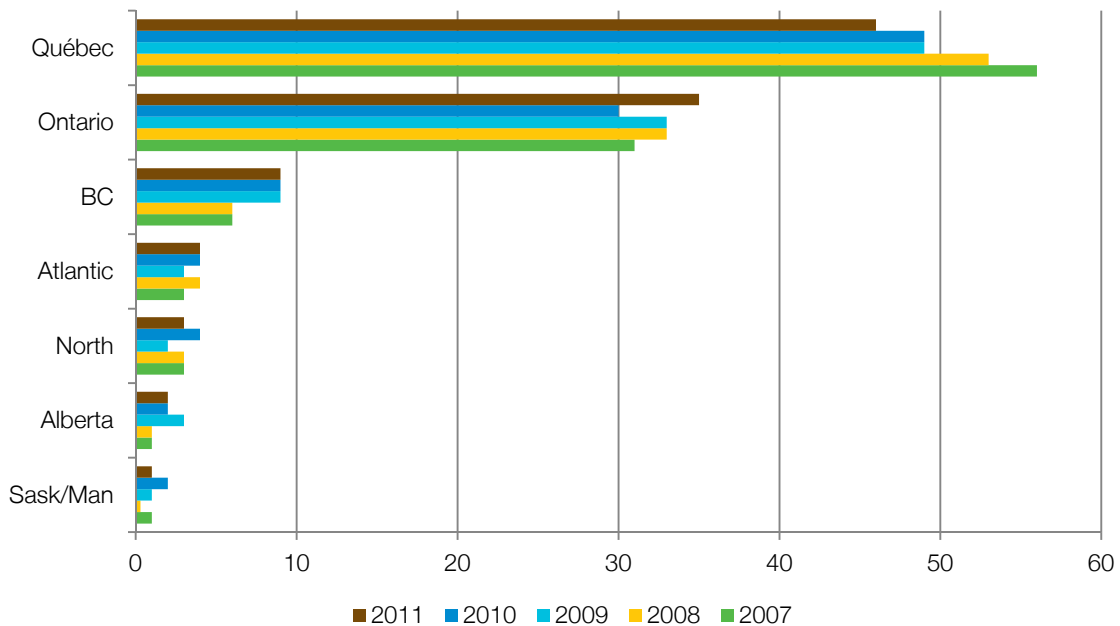
The 2011 GTW results showed that fewer travellers are now making long-haul travel a priority in their lives. At 90%, those who said that long-haul travel is important to them is down by three percentage points (ppt) this year, which is not surprising given the larger planner contingent in the French market.

The GTW market outlook indicator (percentage difference between "will travel more" and "will travel less" in the next 3 years vs. the last 3 years) has risen to +38 this year, up eight points from the +30 seen in 2009. In fact, the market has virtually regained the +39 high recorded in 2008 during the long-haul travel boom. Moreover, the proportion of travellers who said they will travel more in the next three years has risen to 47% (i.e., within 2 points of the 2008 figure), while the proportion who said they will travel less has hit a record low of 9%. Taken together, these results suggest that travel sentiments are generally conducive for further market growth in 2011 and beyond.

In 2011, the likelihood of visiting Canada was up a full 10 ppt over 2007, with intentions for both getaways of one to three nights and longer vacations of four or more nights being upward bound. At 40% in total, the propensity for Canada travel remains far higher in France than in the other European markets (23% to 28%).

When it comes to the destination of choice, Québec continues to veer downward, and at 46%, is now 10 ppt below baseline levels (see [Exhibit 3.1](#)). Ontario, however, is up 5 ppt to a record high of 35%.

Exhibit 3.1 Canadian Destination Most Likely to Visit



Base: Those likely to visit Canada in the next 2 years and/or those who are considering, have decided to visit or have booked a trip there.

[Exhibit 3.2](#) shows the immediate potential for the regional partners of the GTW study based on current levels of interest. Despite its decline relative to other regions, the potential market for Québec is still the largest at over 5.4 million, followed by Ontario (close to 4.8 million) and British Columbia (at around 4.3 million). The French market also offers healthy potential for Alberta, with an estimated 2.1 million travellers.

Exhibit 3.2 Size of the immediate potential for Canada

	CDA	QC	ON	BC	AB	MB	NU	YK
Immediate Interest¹	40%	89%	78%	70%	35%	16%	16%	12%
Potential (M)²	6.1	5.4	4.8	4.3	2.1	1.0	1.0	0.7

Base: Long-haul pleasure travellers (n=1,514)

¹ Base for percentages is those likely to visit Canada in the next 2 years and/or those who are considering, have decided to visit or have booked a trip there.

² Results are from the random telephone omnibus survey undertaken in 2010. Base is general population aged 18 plus.

Note: Regional estimates are not additive since travellers may visit more than one region on a single trip.

4. Unaided Destination Awareness

To measure top-of-mind awareness for Canada, respondents were asked to name destinations that come to mind for a long-haul vacation. Destination awareness among French travellers has remained remarkably stable over the last five years, with the US having a solid leadership position, followed by Australia and Canada. Although still in third place, Canada is actually in a far better competitive position against Australia than it was five years ago, with a mere percentage point now separating the two. However, this results from losses for Australia rather than gains for Canada, with awareness of Canada holding steady at 25% to 26% throughout the tracking period.

Mexico and China have been battling it out for the fourth and fifth spots over the last five years, with Mexico edging ahead in 2011 despite a 3 ppt loss since last year. Mexico's faltering popularity may be related to the escalating drug violence in the country, which has received considerable media attention world-wide since the government released statistics on drug-related killings earlier this year. The only other destination to experience a shift in awareness in 2011 is South Africa, which has suffered steady losses since peaking at 10% in 2008 to rest at only 6% this year.

Beyond the top five, French travellers continue to show an adventurous spirit when it comes to vacation preferences, with places like Thailand, Vietnam, India, Peru, Brazil, Argentina, Egypt and Kenya among their top destinations. Many of these choices are motivated by cost, however, with inexpensive packages and a euro that has upheld its value against local currencies helping to drive interest.

Exhibit 4.1 Unaided Destination Awareness
(showing top 5 countries only)

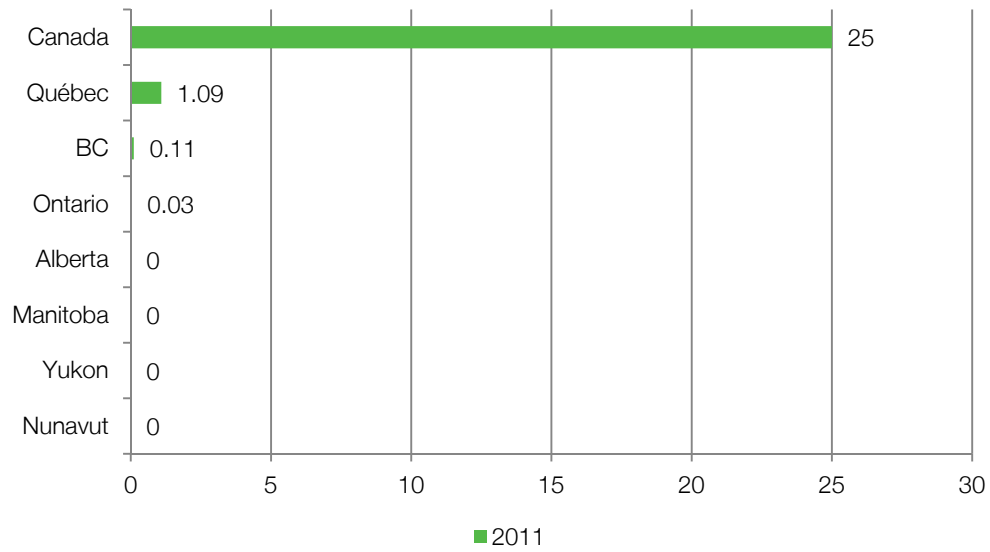
	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
1. US	37%	32%	38%	34%	36%
2. Australia	31%	31%	31%	26%	26%
3. Canada	25%	26%	26%	25%	25%
4. Mexico	13%	18%	15%	17%	14%
5. China	14%	14%	15%	14%	13%

Base : Long-haul pleasure travellers (n=1,514)

Roll-up of brand mentions by country, e.g., percentage who said Canada or any destination in Canada.

Exhibit 4.2 shows that individual provinces in Canada have minimal top of mind awareness in France, collectively cited by about 1% of long-haul travellers, with Québec naturally capturing most of the vote.

Exhibit 4.2 Unaided Awareness of Canada's regions



Base: Long-haul pleasure travellers (n=1,514)

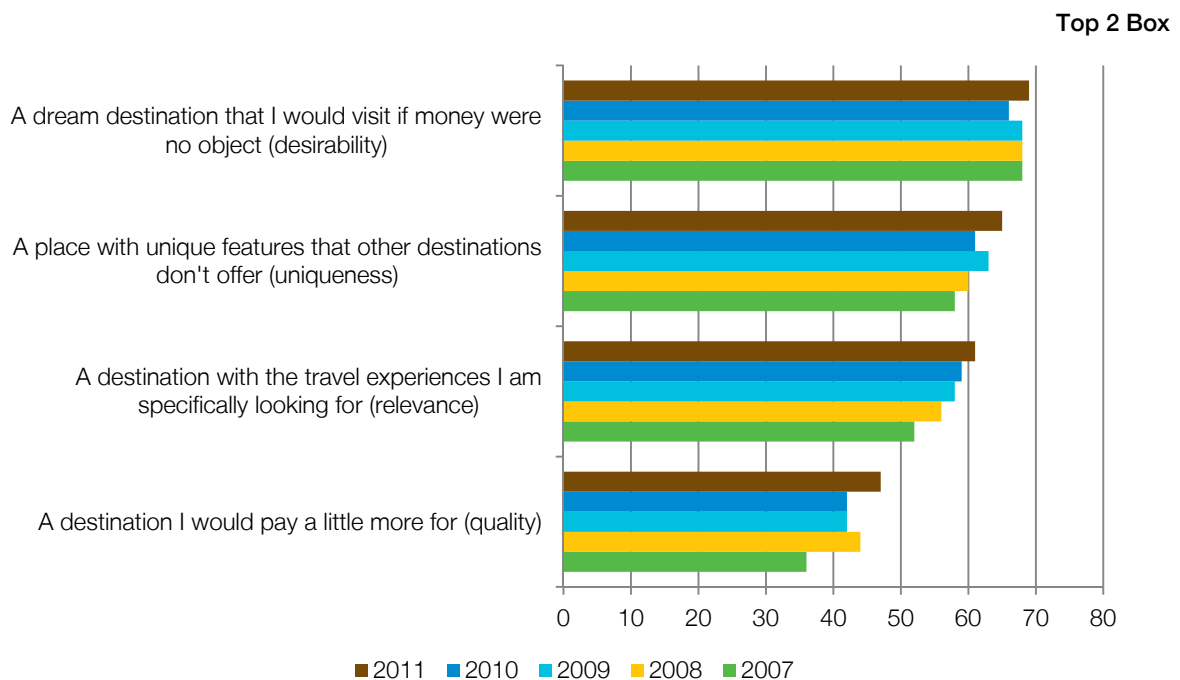
Note: Only GTW regional partners are included.

5. Canada's Value & Price Perceptions

Canada's success as a travel destination cannot be measured only by the degree to which its brand has established itself. It is important for Brand Canada to be perceived as offering value at a good price.

As shown in [Exhibit 5.1](#), Canada continues to make headway in terms of value perceptions in France. An examination of the individual value attributes reveals an over-arching upward trend for Quality (up 11 ppt since 2007), Relevance (up 9 ppt) and Uniqueness (up 7 ppt), with Desirability staying put throughout most of the tracking period. With value accounting for almost 60% of the impact of the three perception indices on purchase intentions, these gains are likely playing a pivotal role in the burgeoning interest and visitation intentions among French travellers.

Exhibit 5.1 Value Perceptions



Base: Long-haul pleasure travellers (n=1,514)

Note: Top 2 Box refers to a rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 1 is "Strongly Disagree" and 5 is "Strongly Agree".

In addition to brand image and value perceptions, cost obviously plays a major role when it comes to destination decision-making. [Exhibit 5.2](#) shows how Canada is perceived by French travellers on various travel cost components.

These Price Perceptions hold still more positive news for Canada. This extends an uphill streak that began in 2008, with a more than 4-point increase over the four year period. In fact, each and every component of the Price Perceptions measure has surged this year, with most of them now 9 or 10 ppt higher than the baseline measure. These results dovetail with the easing of "affordability" attribute as a hurdle for long-haul travel in general. With the French economy riding strong, the euro picking up steam and consumer confidence on the rise at the time of

the GTW fieldwork, it isn't surprising that long-haul destinations like Canada are being viewed in a more positive light.

Exhibit 5.2 Price Perceptions



Base: Long-haul pleasure travellers (n=1,514)

Note: Top 2 Box refers to a rating of 4 or 5 on a 5-point scale where 1 is "Strongly Disagree" and 5 is "Strongly Agree".

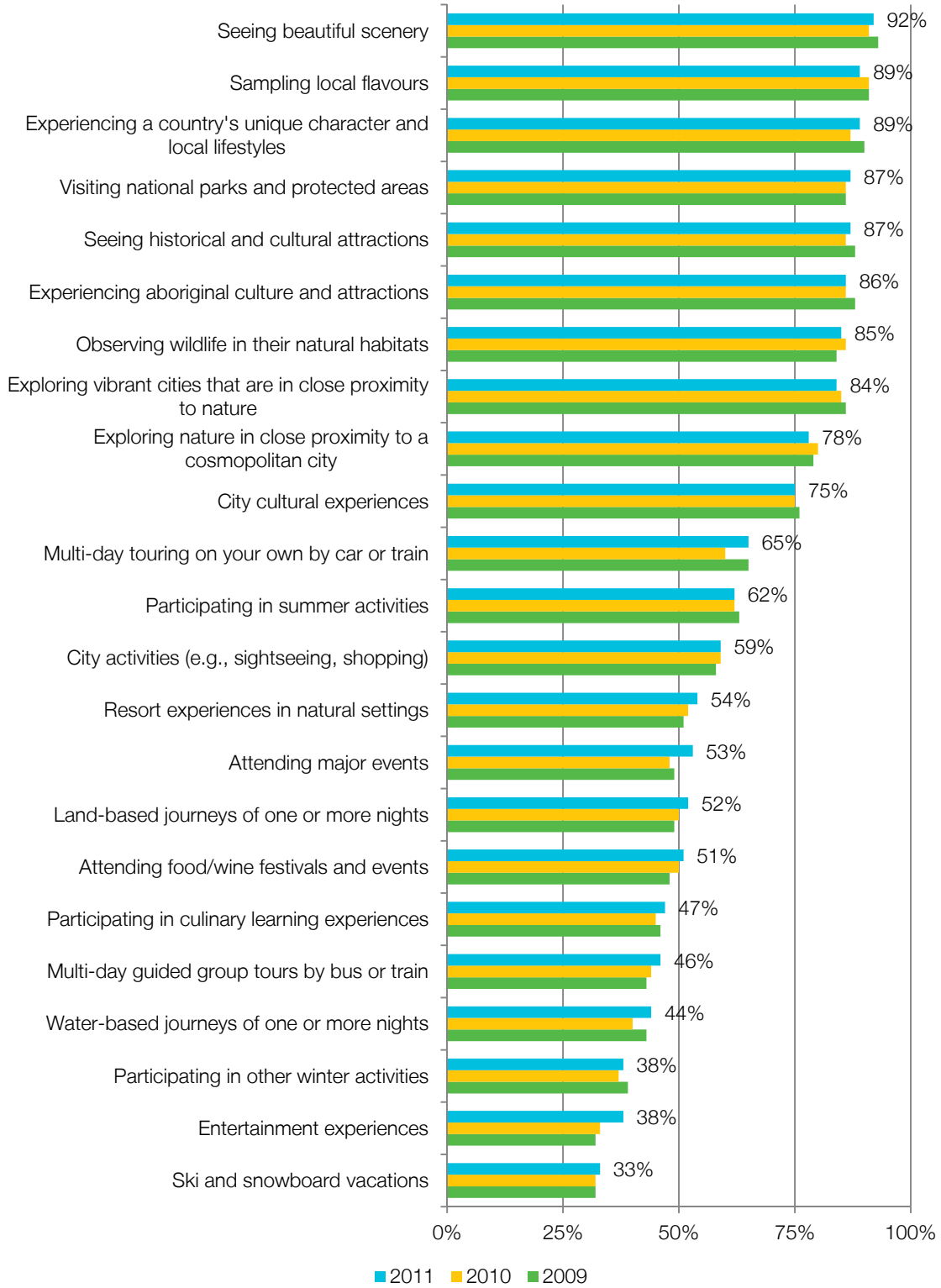
6. Product Interest

Exhibit 6.1 shows that the top vacation pursuits in this market have remained very consistent over the last few years, with a mix of nature (e.g., scenery, national parks, wildlife, nature close to cities) and culture (e.g., local flavours, local lifestyles, historical/cultural attractions, aboriginal culture, city culture) being an irresistible combination for French travellers. In fact, except for one minor shift, the top ten interests are not only the same as last year, but appear in the same rank order, with no emergent trends.

Looking further down the chart, however, it is clear that there are some distinctive trends taking shape in the French market. Touring has grown in popularity this year, with independent touring up significantly to 65% and group tours up directionally to 46%. And although standard city activities like sightseeing and shopping remain flat this year, interest in specific urban pursuits such as major events (53%) and entertainment experiences (38%) are both seeing popularity gains among French travellers.

Interest in outdoor activities is heating up in France, with water-based journeys up significantly (to 44%) and land-based journeys up directionally (to 52%). This appears to be part of a broader trend that is sweeping the GTW markets, with outdoor adventure booming in places as diverse as Germany, China, the US and Australia. Needless to say, this trend bodes extremely well for Canada in terms of improving its market share in France as well as in other long-haul destinations.

Exhibit 6.1 Product Interests



Base: Long-haul pleasure travellers

Note: Top 2 Box refers to a rating of always or often important on a 4-point importance scale.

Results not comparable to years prior to 2009 due to changes to the product list in that year.

7. Competitive Product Positioning

Exhibit 7.1 provides more detailed results showing how Canada ranks against its six competitors on each specific product.

Canada boasts ten first-place ratings in the French market, which is its most solid performance in any international GTW market to date. These results are particularly remarkable when compared with the other European markets, with Canada winning only three number one ratings in the UK and six in Germany. As in past years, however, most of these ten products are related in some way to nature or the great outdoors, with multi-day independent touring being the only real exception.

Compared with 2010, Canada's ratings have remained remarkably steady. The only significant shift is for summer activities, where a loss of 4 ppt has downgraded Canada to 44% and caused it to slide into second place behind Australia. Despite the lack of improvement, Canada's competitiveness against the US has increased in the nature/outdoor arena, with the US relinquishing some ground to Canada on ski vacations, winter activities and resort experiences. It is also trending downward on national parks, giving Canada a chance to pull further ahead.

Relative to other international markets, Canada continues to fare extremely well on city and culinary experiences. Canada is in second place after the US on city activities, major events, entertainment experiences and city culture, making it a destination of choice for vacations in the big city. France is the only international market where this is the case, and Canada would be wise to press this advantage to enhance its perceived diversity in the marketplace. Canada also emerges in third to fifth place on the three cuisine-related attributes, which is again exemplary. However, it continues to fare poorly on cultural products (i.e., fifth or sixth), which is fairly typical of its performance in other markets.

Exhibit 7.1 Competitive Positioning

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Participating in other winter activities	CAN 83%	USA 23%	AUS 7%	CHN 5%	THA 5%	SAF 4%	MEX 4%
Ski and snowboard vacations	CAN 82%	USA 27%	AUS 8%	CHN 5%	SAF 4%	THA 4%	MEX 4%
Seeing beautiful scenery	CAN 56%	AUS 40%	USA 37%	SAF 27%	THA 26%	MEX 21%	CHN 15%
Water-based journeys of one or more nights	CAN 55%	AUS 37%	USA 33%	SAF 16%	THA 15%	MEX 13%	CHN 6%
Resort experiences in natural settings	CAN 50%	AUS 31%	USA 30%	SAF 23%	THA 16%	MEX 13%	CHN 7%
Visiting national parks and protected areas	CAN 48%	USA 44%	AUS 43%	SAF 37%	MEX 13%	THA 12%	CHN 8%
Land-based journeys of one or more nights	CAN 48%	AUS 39%	USA 28%	THA 18%	SAF 18%	MEX 15%	CHN 12%
Multi-day touring on your own by car or train	CAN 48%	USA 47%	AUS 41%	THA 17%	MEX 17%	SAF 15%	CHN 13%
Exploring vibrant cities that are in close proximity to nature	CAN 48%	AUS 47%	SAF 29%	THA 26%	MEX 21%	USA 18%	CHN 14%
Exploring nature in close proximity to a cosmopolitan city	CAN 42%	AUS 40%	USA 29%	SAF 25%	MEX 22%	THA 22%	CHN 16%
Participating in summer activities	AUS 47%	CAN 44%	USA 30%	SAF 21%	MEX 17%	THA 16%	CHN 9%
Attending major events	USA 61%	CAN 37%	AUS 30%	SAF 15%	CHN 14%	MEX 13%	THA 10%
City cultural experiences	USA 55%	CAN 36%	AUS 28%	CHN 26%	MEX 25%	THA 16%	SAF 11%
City activities (e.g., sightseeing, shopping)	USA 72%	CAN 35%	AUS 26%	CHN 18%	THA 18%	MEX 9%	SAF 8%
Entertainment experiences	USA 69%	CAN 25%	AUS 23%	THA 20%	MEX 14%	CHN 8%	SAF 8%
Observing wildlife in their natural habitats	SAF 50%	AUS 47%	CAN 42%	USA 17%	THA 16%	MEX 15%	CHN 10%
Attending food/wine festivals and events	AUS 33%	USA 32%	CAN 25%	SAF 23%	MEX 20%	THA 16%	CHN 12%
Sampling local flavours	THA 53%	MEX 48%	CHN 43%	CAN 21%	SAF 21%	AUS 18%	USA 14%
Seeing historical and cultural attractions	MEX 43%	CHN 39%	USA 34%	THA 31%	CAN 27%	AUS 22%	SAF 15%
Participating in culinary learning experiences	THA 33%	MEX 28%	CHN 28%	AUS 21%	CAN 21%	USA 19%	SAF 19%
Experiencing a country's unique character and local lifestyles	THA 44%	CHN 37%	MEX 35%	AUS 30%	SAF 30%	CAN 23%	USA 16%
Experiencing aboriginal culture and attractions	THA 43%	MEX 36%	CHN 35%	AUS 33%	SAF 33%	CAN 20%	USA 13%
Multi-day guided group tours by bus or train	CHN 36%	THA 31%	MEX 30%	AUS 26%	SAF 26%	USA 26%	CAN 23%

Base: Long-haul pleasure travellers (n=1,514).

Notes: Figures represent the percentage of respondents choosing the destination among the top 3 places to go for each attribute.

Legend: CAN = Canada, USA = United States, AUS = Australia, CHN = China, SAF = South Africa, THA = Thailand, MEX = Mexico.

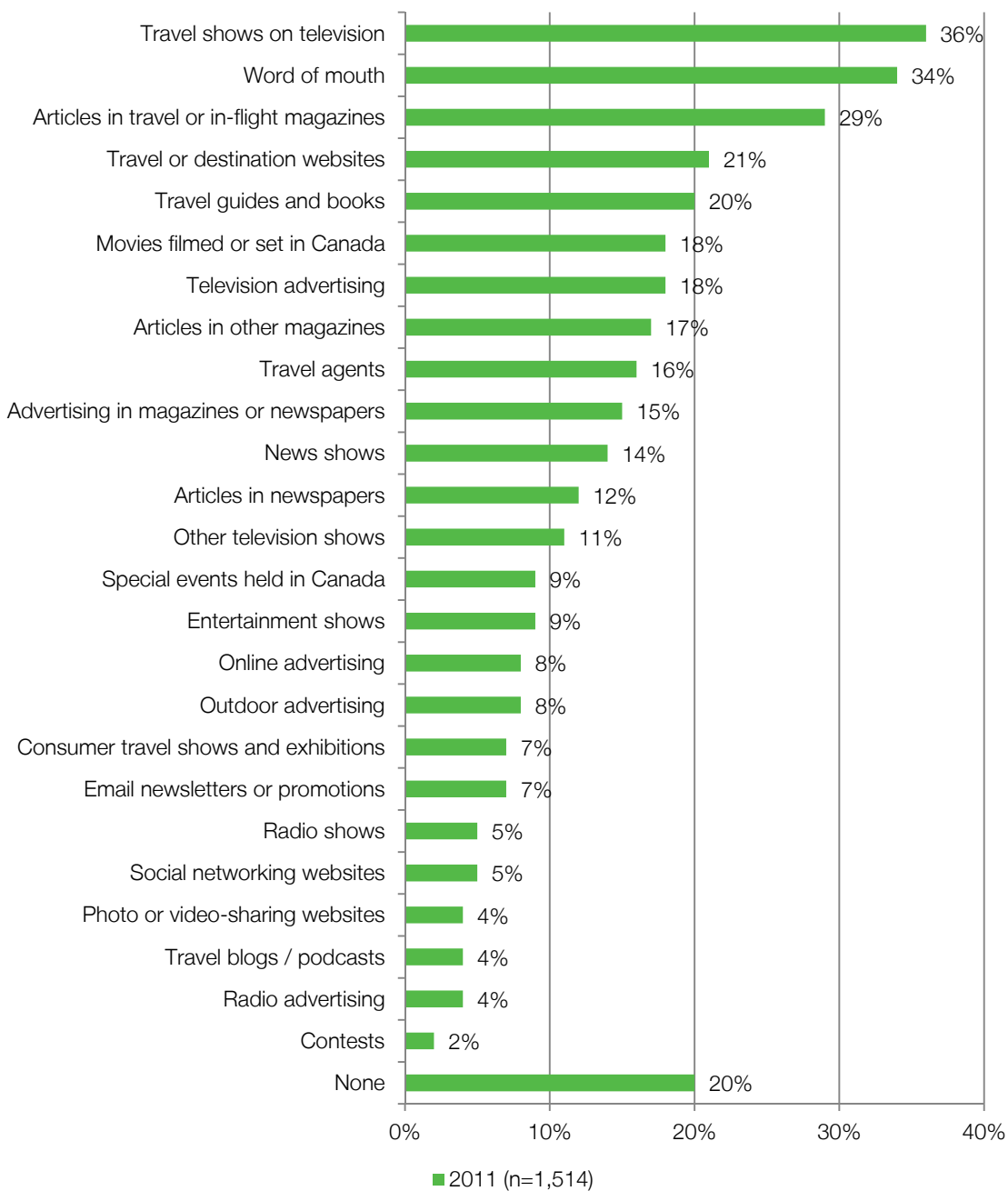
8. Sources of Information on Canada

As [Exhibit 8.1](#) shows, 8 in 10 French travellers have seen or heard information on Canada in the past three months, which is almost on par with penetration levels in the domestic (Canada) market. This is consistent with Canada's exceptionally strong performance in terms of advertising recall this year.

Although the list of information sources was modified in Year 5 of the GTW, the top five sources have remained the same over the last few years, with television travel shows, word of mouth, travel magazine articles, travel websites and travel guides/books all achieving penetration levels of 20% or higher. This suggests that travel-specific editorial remains the ideal way for Canada to reach travellers in France.

In terms of paid advertising, television advertising fares best (18%), although the penetration of print advertising is almost as good (at 15%), offering a more cost-effective option for Canada. Outdoor and online advertising typically reach more limited audiences at 8%, but would work well for more targeted campaigns. With respect to other online channels, email promotions (7%) typically work better than social networking sites, travel blogs or photo-sharing (at 4% to 5%).

Exhibit 8.1 top sources of information on Canada in the past three months



Base: Long-haul pleasure travellers (n=1,514)

Note: Question changed in 2011, so results are not comparable to previous years.

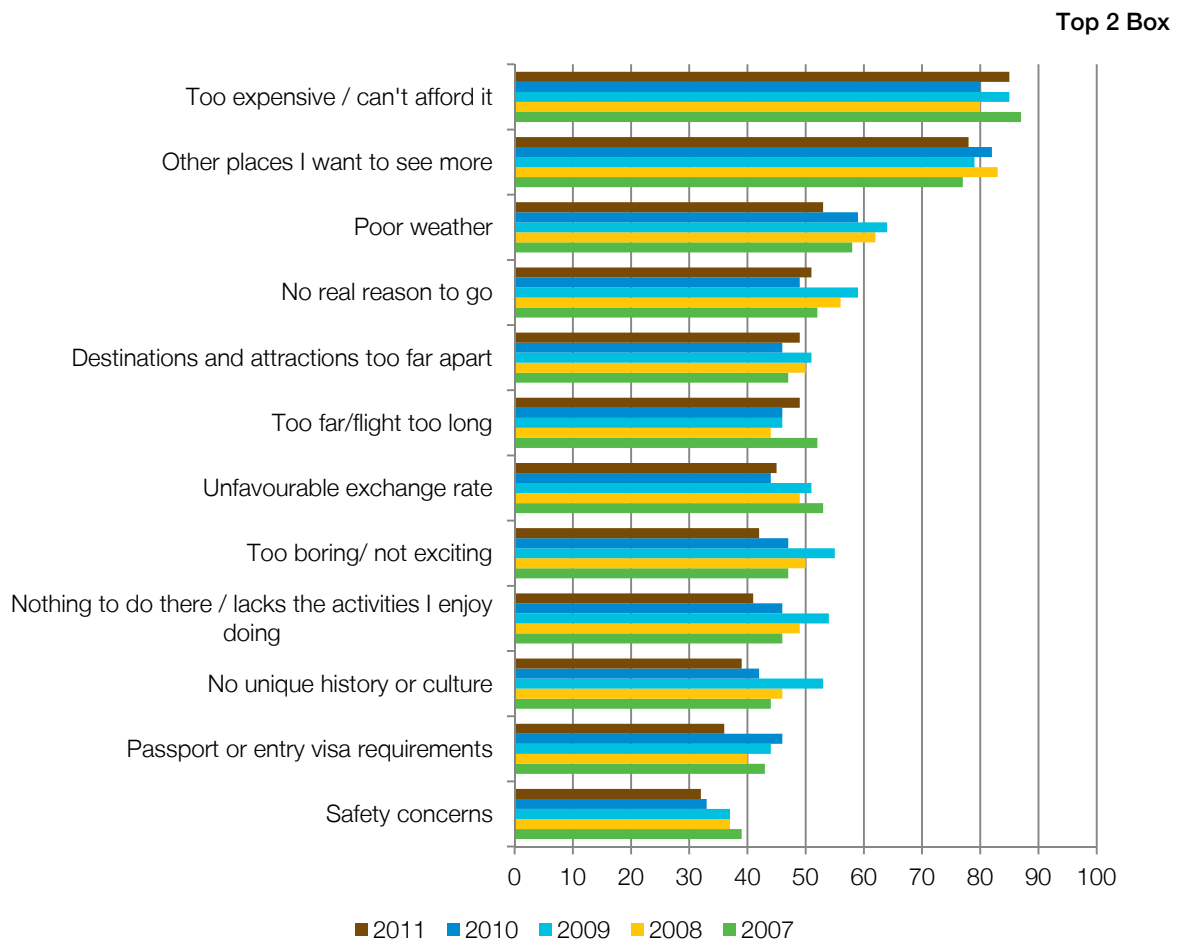
9. Key Barriers for Travel to Canada

Exhibit 9.1 shows why French long-haul pleasure travellers are unlikely to visit Canada in the near-term. These results are important because, more likely than not, travellers that are likely to visit may have similar concerns that could ultimately lead them to select alternate destinations.

As in several other markets, many of the barriers for travel to Canada have eased this year, including both image-related barriers and some of the more practical deterrents to travel. In terms of image, Canada has made some progress in divesting itself of its boring façade, with too boring/not exciting, nothing to do and no unique history/culture all tumbling by 13 to 14 ppt from their 2009 highs. In fact, all three are now sitting under their baseline levels, which is consistent with the enhanced interest and intentions, improved value and price perceptions and more buoyant motivations for visiting Canada in this market.

Some of the more practical hurdles have moderated as well, with poor weather, passport/visa requirements and safety concerns down 5 to 11 points over 2009.

Exhibit 9.1 Key Barriers for visiting to Canada



Base: : Long-haul pleasure travellers who are unlikely to visit Canada in the near future.

Note: Percentage is the sum of major barrier and minor barrier responses.

10. Conclusions: Key Take-Aways

Although France was facing increasing deficit issues and an economy that was losing steam, at the time of the GTW survey (June 2011), conditions were buoyant. Healthy export growth and a recovery in domestic demand combined to produce dynamic GDP expansion, making France one of the main drivers of Eurozone growth.

- The key performance indicators (KPIs) point to strengthening prospects for Canada in the French market, with both interest and travel intentions gaining traction over the last four years. At 40%, the likelihood of visiting Canada is up 10 ppt over 2007.
- While Canada has not seen material gains in terms of awareness, its competitive positioning has improved on the unaided measures as a result of losses for other destinations. Canada is well-positioned to oust Australia from its second-place standing on the unaided measure in 2012.
- 2011 also represented the first time in five years that Canada has emerged in the number one spot for total advertising recall, on the back of a 5 ppt gain over 2010. More than one in three French long-haul travellers heard or saw ads related to Canada, which is its best performance in any of CTC's overseas markets.
- In terms of the perceptual measures, Canada's performance in France was exemplary and unlikely to be equalled by any other international market in 2011. The Value Perceptions and the Price Perceptions have continued their uphill streak, with both perceptions climbing to new heights in 2011. The Value Perceptions have risen since 2007, with all attributes except Desirability seeing solid gains. Not to be outdone, the Price Perceptions have improved, with every component up by a remarkable 9 or 10 ppt. These outstanding results should give Canada a leg up in this price-sensitive and value-conscious market, with value for money and reasonable airfare costs both weighing heavily in the decision-making process.
- Canada's competitive positioning in France is very solid, and arguably the strongest of any international GTW market. Of the 23 products tested in the study, Canada boasts ten first place finishes, winning out over all of the other destinations in the competitive set. Most of the ten are nature or outdoor-related, helping to propel Canada to the head of the Active Adventure and Personal Journeys USPs, with a vigorous lead over Australia.
- Canada also fares extremely well on Vibrant Cities (where it is second to the US), and on Local Cuisine (where it ranks fifth, rather than sixth or seventh as in other markets). While both USPs offer excellent opportunities to improve perceptions of Canada's diversity and craft a more well-rounded image, city experiences are perhaps the best starting point. Not only is Canada in a more advantageous position on Vibrant Cities, but products such as major events and entertainment are surging as motivators for both long-haul travel in general and for trips to Canada in particular. City culture is also picking up steam in terms of its ability to entice French travellers to Canada.

- French travellers are also unique in that, after scenery and touring, their dream vacations to Canada are more likely to be built around winter experiences such as snowmobiling, dog sledding and winter scenery. This is consistent with previous years, when winter imagery emerged repeatedly as appealing icons of Canada. In addition, skiing and other winter activities are growing motivators for travel to Canada, indicating that winter imagery could continue to figure prominently in Canada's marketing efforts for maximum impact.