



BRITISH COLUMBIAN TRAVEL TO WASHINGTON STATE POISED FOR GROWTH

*1.3 Million British Columbians Plan to Visit Washington State in 2004 –
Resulting in \$250 Million in Tourist Revenue*

*Eight in Ten (80%) British Columbians Say Washington State and Seattle
are Good Travel Destinations - Main Draws Include Shopping (36%), the
Outdoors (33%) and Good Attractions (29%)*

*Overall Travel to the U.S. has Negative Momentum but a Better Exchange
Rate is a Key Motivator for Increasing Trips This Year*

Vancouver, BC (Friday March 5th, 2004) – A new Ipsos-Insight poll released today shows that after years of decline, tourism from British Columbia will hold steady or even increase slightly in 2004. In all, 1.3 million British Columbians (representing 43% of the adult population) plan to visit Washington State including Seattle over the course of the next year. On average, visitors are planning 3.7 trips which means British Columbians will inject approximately \$250 million into the State economy in 2004¹.

Among those planning to visit, four-in-ten (36%) say shopping is the best thing about the area while a slightly smaller number (33%) say it is the outdoors (including parks and scenery). Meanwhile sizeable numbers (29%) say they like the wide variety of good attractions such as events, museums, restaurants and entertainment as well as the proximity (23%) and the people (21%). Given these

¹ Total value is calculated in the following way: 1.3 million visitors x 3.7 trips x \$50 average spending per person. Figures used are from Washington State Tourism and can be found at: www.experiencewashington.com/images/pdf/R_InternationalCanadian2002.pdf



findings, it is perhaps not surprising that overall, a large number of British Columbians (80%) say Washington State including Seattle is a good travel destination.

"I think for many British Columbians visiting Washington State is like taking a vacation in their own backyard, and they may have taken it for granted over the last few years." says Peter Weylie, Associate Vice-President with Ipsos-Insight, "But with all the uncertainty in the world today, people are looking closer to home and British Columbians feel Washington State has many quality attractions to offer them."

British Columbians' travel to the United States as a whole is still experiencing negative momentum. Compared to a year ago, three-in-ten (29%) say they are now more likely to visit the U.S. while almost half (49%) say they are less likely to visit the U.S. For those who are planning more trips, the improving exchange rate seems to be the main draw (31%).

"With an improving exchange rate and compelling reasons to visit, I think British Columbians' travel to Washington State is set to increase over the next few years." says Weylie.

These are the findings of an Ipsos-Insight poll conducted between February 3rd and February 13th 2004. The poll is based on a randomly selected sample of 800 adult British Columbians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within ± 3.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult British Columbian population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were statistically weighted to ensure the sample's regional and age/sex composition reflects that of the actual British Columbian population according to the 2001 Census.

-30-

For more information on this news release, please contact:

Peter Weylie
Associate Vice- President
Ipsos-Insight
(604) 891-3771



For full tabular results, please visit our website at <http://www.ipsos-na.com/news/>

Ipsos-Insight

Ipsos-Insight is a member of the Ipsos Group, a leading global survey-based market research company. As the company's flagship marketing research division in the U.S., Ipsos-Insight provides custom and tracking research services to domestic clients, as well as U.S.-based multinationals. Ipsos-Insight offers concept and product testing, package testing, attitude and usage studies, omnibuses, tracking systems, brand equity, volume forecasting, marketing models, advanced analytics and global research. Ipsos-Insight specializes in research for companies in the following industries: agrifoods, consumer packaged goods, energy and utilities, financial services, health, lottery and gaming, retail, and technology & communications. To learn more, please visit www.ipsos-insight.com.

Ipsos

Ipsos is a leading global survey-based market research group, which conducts research in more than 100 countries. Ipsos offers a full suite of research services—guided by industry experts and bolstered by advanced analytics and methodologies—in advertising, customer loyalty, marketing, media, and public affairs research, as well as forecasting and modeling. Member companies in Europe, North America, Latin America, the Middle East and Asia-Pacific also offer a full line of custom, syndicated, omnibus, panel, and online research products and services. Visit www.ipsos.com to learn more about Ipsos offerings and capabilities.