

Travel Media Association of Canada marks 30th Anniversary with Awards Gala saluting our Industry and Media Members

June 19, 2024 (Toronto, ON) – The 2024 national conference of the Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC) attracted unprecedented interest from 260 delegates from across Canada and beyond to St. John’s, Newfoundland & Labrador from June 12th to 16th, 2024, culminating in an Awards Gala celebrating the judged best stories of 2023 authored by Canadian accredited travel media creators. The Awards further recognized the professionalism of destination industry members and acknowledged the dedication of volunteer members that lead the association.

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The conference, which was hosted from June 12 to 16, 2024 in St. John’s, Newfoundland & Labrador, saw registration reach capacity in a mere five hours of the opening and marks the 30th anniversary of the Association. This travel conference represents the largest gathering of Canadian travel media in 2024.

The annual TMAC conference is held in host locations across Canada and occasionally in international destinations. This year, the opportunity to visit St. John’s meant that hundreds of members registered on the first day of opening. In addition to the conference itself, media members participate in one of many pre- and post-conference experiences in Newfoundland & Labrador.

“St. John’s put together a fantastic menu of experiences and opportunities in the city and throughout the province,” said TMAC President and freelance travel journalist Paul Knowles “And our Conference Committee volunteers, led by chair Rod Charles of Vacay.ca, and co-chair Katie Conklin, of Discover Halifax, did a spectacular job of organizing networking, professional development, and entertainment events for our members.”

To find out more about TMAC or becoming a member, visit <https://www.travelmedia.ca/2024-tmac-conference-media-marketplace>

About the Travel Media Association of Canada

Rooted in Canada with an international reach, the Travel Media Association of Canada creates a positive space for travel media and travel industry professionals to cultivate relationships that result in relevant collaborative, comprehensive opportunities and successful outcomes to foster and inspire travel. Its over 375 members include accredited Canadian travel media and representatives of travel destinations in Canada and across the globe. For more information, visit www.travelmedia.ca

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TMAC Volunteer of the Year - Erica Hargreave

President of TMAC, Paul Knowles expressed “Tonight, I want to put the spotlight on our volunteers as we honour one of our members, who is a great example of the difference TMACers make. The Volunteer of the Year Award goes to – Erica Hargreave.

Erica is the kind of volunteer who could easily fly under the radar. She contributes in ways that often go unnoticed. Despite her behind-the-scenes role, her impact has been profound. This anecdote underlines her commitment and her integrity: The first year TMAC offered the Emerging and Broadcast Media Award, Erica recommended a judge, who subsequently bowed out. Her response was to withdraw her own entries, and volunteer to fill that role. One more comment from a colleague: “Erica’s innovative ideas have been instrumental in updating our Awards program to better serve our growing membership. Her talent for making complex technical concepts accessible has been invaluable, ensuring that our awards program remains inclusive and equitable. Without the dozens and dozens of hours Erica put in the Awards Committee would not have been able to achieve even a fraction of what it has”.

Volunteer Honorable Mention Katie Conklin:

Katie Conklin has been a rock star in the TMAC firmament this year. In addition to serving as board secretary since her election to the board in 2023 – which includes providing leadership concerning our annual election of officers and Annual General Meeting – she has also been essential to the planning and execution of our annual conference. Katie served as a very active co-chair of the conference this year, and is already engaged in her upcoming role as Conference Chair in 2025. Both as TMAC board secretary and as Conference Co-Chair, she has carried many extra duties relating to the departure of our CAO, and the transition to our new CAO. She has done all this and more with enthusiasm, a positive attitude, and a clear commitment to the good of TMAC.

Volunteer Honorable Mention Diane Selkirk:

Diane Selkirk embodies the spirit of excellence and community within the Travel Media Association of Canada (TMAC). Her remarkable dedication to fostering inclusivity and engagement among members is evident through her tireless efforts to welcome new members and helping to bring awareness to programs and awards. Diane's commitment extends beyond just engagement; she raises awareness about the importance of diverse stories in tourism. Diane is the Chair of the awards committee, an active and valuable National Board Member, and regularly involved in supplementary projects. Her contributions have enhanced the experience of individual members and elevated the association, making her a deserving candidate for recognition as Volunteer Of The Year.

TMAC Industry Member of the Year - Neil Hodges, Tourism New Brunswick

Paul Knowles says, “Numerous accolades for Neil Hodge made him the obvious choice for TMAC Industry Member of the Year. He was praised for truly understanding -- and delivering -- what media are seeking in terms of story ideas, itineraries, and support. Lauded for his encyclopedic knowledge of New Brunswick and his attention to detail, Neil's background in journalism serves him well. His ability to create unique angles for each journalist he works with is applauded. No wonder his name comes up so often among travel media professionals!

Industry Member of the Year Honorable Mention Irene Knight, Ontario Science Centre:

Over her impressive career, Irene has represented the CN Tower, Destination Toronto, Niagara Falls Tourism, and the Ontario Science Centre. Countless TMAC media members have benefitted from her diligent work and her friendly demeanour, while her vast expertise in PR and media relations is very well respected among her industry peers.

Industry Member of the Year Honorable Mention Nicole Ford, Rocky Mountaineer:

Nicole Ford, Rocky Mountaineer Developing unique story ideas might be a challenge for some who represent a single experience such as the Rocky Mountaineer, but not for Nicole. She shares contacts outside of her employer to enhance stories, hunts down random facts and obscure data, and is quick to answer emails. What's more, she works concretely on decolonization in a process that is Indigenous-led and respectful.



Best Indigenous Tourism Experience in Canada Story sponsored by Destination Indigenous Awards:

1st Place: Tim Johnson

[Encounters in Northern Saskatchewan are also lessons in Preserving Indigenous Languages](#) written by Tim Johnson. Published by Special to the Globe & Mail.

The judges said:

This article immerses readers in the rich cultural tapestry and stunning natural beauty of the Churchill River region in northern Saskatchewan. Through the engaging narrative of Abel Charles, it celebrates the resilience of Indigenous languages and traditions, offering a glimpse into a world where community, spirituality, and the land are deeply intertwined. The vivid descriptions of the landscape and the heartfelt commitment to preserving Indigenous culture leave a lasting impression, making it a captivating and enlightening read.

2nd Place: Christopher Rudder

[Discovering Indigeneity Through Chocolate with Chef Tammy - Raven Rising | EP2](#) by Christopher Rudder. Published on Rudderless Media YouTube channel.

The judges said:

Discovering Indigeneity Through Chocolate with Chef Tammy - Raven Rising | EP2" is a heartwarming journey through Indigenous entrepreneurship. Chef Tammy's inspiring story seamlessly intertwines with the history of the 60's scoop, offering a unique perspective on Indigenous culinary traditions. Beyond promotion, the video delves into human interest aspects, showcasing the resilience of Indigenous communities. It's a captivating portrayal of diverse entrepreneurship, leaving viewers uplifted and enlightened by the richness of Indigenous culture.

3rd Place: Kelsey Olsen

[The Amazing Women of Indigenous Tourism](#) written by Kelsey Olsen. Published by Nations / 2023 Destination Indigenous.ca

The judges said:

An important look at the strong, innovative women at the forefront of Indigenous tourism in Canada today, from coast to coast to coast. While reams could be written about each example, this brief overview encapsulates the impressive work being done in communities throughout the country.

Honorable Mention: Hans Tammemagi

[Sweat Lodge: The Oldest Church on Earth](#) written by Hans Tammemagi. Published by boulevardmagazines.com

The judges said:

A moving, respectful, and deeply personal piece that bravely goes into detail about the cultural, spiritual, and transformative experience of visiting a sweat lodge for a ritual cleanse as guided by an experienced elder. This powerfully written piece serves as a valuable reminder that sometimes it's necessary to go beyond one's comfort zone to learn, grow, and truly travel to new horizons.

Honorable Mention: Jessica Lockhart

[Here's your sign to visit the Yukon this year](#) written by Jessica Lockhart. Published by enRoute Air Canada

The judges said:

A timely, accessible, and thoroughly researched piece that invites readers to reimagine the Yukon and the Klondike Gold Rush through the eyes of diverse First Nation communities. Filled with enticing details, moving quotes, and excellent recommendations on where to stay, what to do, and what to eat!

Best Self-Published Travel Website (includes Blog) sponsored by Le Quebec Maritimes:

1st Place: [Adventure Awaits](#) by Jami Savage

The judges said:

This site is filled with enthusiastic, useful information including valuable insider tips and suggestions. Stunning photography complements the SEO-friendly text and readers aren't distracted by limitless advertising. While intensely personal, the author includes additional information to help a wide variety of travellers.

2nd Place: [Moi, mes souliers](#) by Jennifer Doré Dallas

FRENCH VERSION The judges said:

Ce site se distingue par une excellente stratégie d'image de marque et d'optimisation du moteur de recherche, ainsi que par un grand souci du détail, fournissant pratiquement toutes les informations dont un visiteur a besoin sur une destination : des cartes claires, des conseils précieux qui vont au-delà de la propre expérience de l'auteur, et des photos exceptionnelles. Le style d'écriture est celui d'un ami de longue date.

The judges said:

Exceptional branding and SEO set this site apart, as well as great attention to detail, providing practically all the information a visitor will need about a destination: clear maps, valuable tips beyond the author's own experience, and outstanding photos. The writing style is that of a trusted friend.

3rd Place: [Globe Guide](#) by Tamara Elliott

The judges said:

A well-branded website with beautiful images and easy-to-read format. A nice mix of personal experience, to entice the reader to join you on your journey, and helpful information for future travellers. Embedded maps are very helpful, as well as descriptions of amenities, travel times, and links to activities and accommodations.

Honorable Mention: [Best of Penticton](#) by Gemma Taylor

The judges said:

Best of Penticton provides extremely comprehensive information on this small community. Including maps and information specifically tailored toward a variety of visitors makes planning a stay easy. Boots-on-the-ground knowledge is shared in a way that allows readers to make their own decisions, rather than just hearing one version of what's best.

Honorable Mention: [Parenting to Go](#) by Yashy Murphy

The judges said:

Good SEO, lots of info and a mix of photos, collages, and embedded video make Parenting to Go an excellent resource. It does a good job of linking to tours and other useful tips. We also like the branding



Best Cultural or Historical Story Award sponsored by Explore Louisiana:

1st Place: Zack Metcalfe

[On Easterly Wind - What it means to find Vikings in Newfoundland](#) written by Zack Metcalfe. Published by Your Local Magazine.

The judges said:

This travel article is a breath of fresh air, delving into a familiar place with unprecedented depth. Its meticulous research breathes life into historical details, bringing new information to light and evoking the deep mysteries embedded in the landscape. The author's passion for Viking history in Newfoundland shines through brilliantly in the writing, taking readers on the irresistible journey of adventure and discovery from beginning to end.

2nd Place: Laura Paquet

[Matilda Joslyn Gage: The suffragist who defied the US government](#) written by Laura Paquet. Published by BBC Travel.

The judges said this story is:

Written in an engaging, vivid and entertaining voice, this article dives deep into a unique topic - the largely unknown life of an extraordinary suffragist trailblazer who was far ahead of her time. Based on in-depth research, the article reveals many surprising, unexpected stories related to the woman's suffrage movement, the Haudenosaunee people, and even the Wizard of Oz! An impressive, timely piece that evokes a great sense of place, it successfully entices visitors to make the journey to learn more.

3rd Place: Rod Charles

[At Black Loyalist Heritage Centre, I Feel 'I Am Being Called Home'](#) written by Rod Charles. Published by Vacay.ca

The judges said:

This thoughtful, moving, and well-researched piece draws the reader in immediately. The engaging writing is intensely personal yet also accessible to everyone, inviting all readers to learn more about Canadian Black History. The place is brought to life in detail and the author provides many well-selected links for further reading.

Honorable Mention: Aurélie Resch

[Sami story \(Laponie\) Laponie, un hiver en terre samie HR](#) written by Aurélie Resch. Published by L'Express de Toronto

FRENCH VERSION *The judges said:*

Cet article offre un regard fascinant sur l'hiver parmi le peuple Sami, entremêlant des aspects de la culture, de l'histoire, de la politique, de la nature et du paysage. Il s'appuie sur des expériences authentiques pour raconter une histoire évocatrice et attire le lecteur par une écriture captivante.... on peut presque sentir le froid !

The judges said:

This work offers a fascinating look at winter among the Sami people, weaving together aspects of culture, history, politics, nature, and landscape. It includes authentic experiences to tell an evocative story and draws the reader in with engaging writing.... one could almost feel the cold!

Honorable Mention: Diane Selkirk

[When my stepdad passed away just before our family trip, our journey to Ireland became a gentle farewell](#)
written by Diane Selkirk. Published by The Toronto Star

The judges said:

This is a touching, personal piece that provides a deep sense of connection to place by offering a different perspective on multigenerational travel. By highlighting how travel can be a healing experience after a loss in the family, it opens up fresh insights on grief, memory, place, history and family. The writing is nuanced and evokes unexpected connections to the land.



Best Food and Drink Story Award sponsored by Visit Orlando:

1st Place: Cinda Chavich

[Wild, Gangly and Endlessly Adaptable - Tracing the roots of the rare Ozette potato](#) written by Cinda Chavich. Published by Edible Vancouver & Wine Country.

The judges said:

Proof positive that captivating stories can be found ANYWHERE -- even among potatoes! Linking 18th century Spanish conquistadors, First Nations farmers, and modern seed savers, this story of the Ozette potato is a fascinating read, which should lead British Columbian residents and visitors alike to seek them out.

2nd Place: Amy Rosen

[Canada's Best New Restaurants](#) written by Amy Rosen. Published by enRoute Magazine, Air Canada.

The judges said:

While certainly a plum assignment, the brilliant writing here is impossible to ignore: knowledgeable and confident, fun and witty. Spot-on descriptions and the ability to tease out both broad cross-country trends and local personalities pursuing their passions lead to a fascinating read.

3rd Place: Tim Johnson

[Alligator cheesecake and fried bologna sandwiches — to find the best food in New Orleans, I asked the locals](#) written by Tim Johnson. Published by The Toronto Star.

The judges said:

Tackling the best eats in New Orleans, the author eschews traditional recommendations and instead builds an ever-growing list via characters he meets along the way. Beyond the compelling food descriptions, practical information rounds out the piece, which becomes almost a culinary love letter.

Honorable Mention: Robin Esrock

[Peace by Chocolate: from Syria to Antigonish - How this small town chocolate factory in Nova Scotia is making a big impact](#) written by Robin Esrock. Published by Canadian Geographic.

The judges said:

The author takes the well-known origin story of a beloved chocolate company and finds new details to share. By highlighting Canadian values through this familiar story, the story transcends a narrow food angle.

Honorable Mention: Lisa Kadane

[Spearfishing for Lionfish -](#)

[Spearfishing in Florida for lionfish is turning an invasive species into a dining delicacy](#) written by Lisa Kadane.
Published by Hook & Barrel Magazine.

The judges said:

An interesting look at how some Florida communities are dealing with an invasive fish species by attempting to create a new specialty on local menus! This is a balanced look, too, detailing both successes and challenges, and using great quotes from key players.



Best Landscape or Evocation of Place Story Award sponsored by Tourism Saskatchewan:

1st Place: Roland Bastarache

[Sunset at Mont St. Michel](#) photograph shot by Roland Bastarache. Published by Blog Rolandbast.com

Description: My first experience at Mont St. Michel, France, was unforgettable, leaving me in awe of its breathtaking beauty during this assignment with Air France and RailEurope.

The judges said:

The photographer brilliantly captured this highly considered image. The timing, the camera angle and softness of the light celebrates and highlights the architecture of Mont St. Michel that is set amongst the sea at low tide.

2nd Place: Kevin Wagar

[Fishing boat in the Phi Phi Islands](#) photograph shot by Kevin Wagar. Published by Wandering Wagars - Adventure Family Travel.

Description: Under the warm light of sunset, a lone fisherman casts his net off of a traditional long-tail boat in the Phi Phi Islands in southern Thailand.

The judges said:

This image comes together with the shape of the land, the lushness of the vegetation and the subtle tones of the peach and green colours found in the sky, cliffs and flag of the boat.

3rd Place: Oksana St John

[A night at the Dark Hedges](#) photograph shot by Oksana St John. Published by DrinkTeaTravel.com

Description: This eerie shot of the Dark Hedges was captured late at night - the only way to get this iconic spot without the crowds. With the road deserted, artificial lighting added depth to this moody black-and-white composition.

The judges said:

A striking figure within the landscape leads us into a shadowy entangled forest of The Dark Hedges. Very well composed.

Honorable Mention: Robin Karpan

[Banff at Night](#) photograph shot by Robin Karpan. Published by Photo Journeys.

The judges said:

The framing of the orange hues of the night lights of the town and sunset against the ruggedness of the blue hues of the mountains makes this a compelling image.

Honorable Mention: Jane Canapini

[Forgotten Grasslands](#) photograph shot by Jane Canapini. Published by GrownupTravels.com

The judges said:

The layers, the colours and the textures along with the cultural teepee structure all come together to create a visually striking capture that highlights the importance of human-nature relationship to the land.



Best Tourism For Positive Change Story sponsored Destination BC:

1st Place: Jessica Lockhart

[Kohutapu Lodge: A model for regenerative tourism in New Zealand](#) written by Jessica Lockhart. Published by BBC Travel.

The judges said:

Filled with authentic and thoughtful voices, this examination of a New Zealand resort as a model of regenerative tourism is simply spectacular. The author shares several tangible examples of inspirational projects and highlights appropriate Māori terms while successfully explaining the owner's vision of "changing a town through tourism."

2nd Place: Chloe Berge

[Finding Hope in Bosnia and Herzegovina's Wild Nature and Historic Towns](#) written by Chloe Berge. Published by AFAR Magazine.

The judges said:

A meaningful and thoughtful approach on adventure tourism in this often overlooked destination. The story contained well-researched history, helpful travel tips (including local dishes and wines), and activities. The author provides quotes from a variety of locals, and operators, information about the ecosystem, the tourism industry and so much more. The photography is stunning.

3rd Place: Sandra MacGregor

[I Went on a Safari in Botswana With a Female Guide. Here's why it made all the difference](#) written by Sandra MacGregor. Published by Travel and Leisure.

The judges said:

Breaking down barriers in the safari industry, this article provides a much-needed perspective and a fascinating look at the impact it has on communities. It offers a nice personal experience to follow along with, as well as information for the curious traveler.

Honorable Mention: Arlene Karpan

[Changing our relationship with the Big Bad Wolf](#) written by Arlene Karpan. Published by photojourneys.ca

The judges said:

This story is adept at drawing the reader in quickly via the opening scene containing the howling of many wolves but then delightfully departs from a standard 'animal safari' type piece by revealing this 'Walk With Wolves' would be done side-by-side with a wolf and did a great job explaining all the work the Northern Lights Wolf Centre is doing to improve the wolf's public image.

Honorable Mention: Robin Esrock

[Creating legacies on Costa Rica's Pacuare River](#) written by Robin Esrock. Published by Canadian Geographic.

The judges said:

Excellent example of how to set an opening scene that draws the reader into wanting to know more, with skilful manoeuvring and melding of background information crucial to the story along with the author and his daughter's own experiences in and around the river that is central to the story.



Best Outdoor Adventure, Sport or Recreation Story sponsored by Niagara Parks:

1st Place: Jessica Lockhart

[Bass Rocks](#) written by Jessica Lockhart. Published by the New Zealand Herald.

The judges said:

This article on Flinders Island's transition to responsible tourism offers a comprehensive view of the island's challenges and initiatives. The piece effectively captures the essence of Flinders Island's allure while addressing the impact of increased tourism on its community. Through insightful interviews and vivid descriptions, The author highlights the innovative approach taken by Flinders Island to balance environmental preservation with economic growth.

2nd Place: Jennifer Bain

[Walking Canada's Camino](#) written by Jennifer Bain. Published by Zoomer Magazine.

The judges said:

A captivating story describing a journey of healing and introducing the new 700km long distance trail in PEI. A deeply personal account successfully provides all the practical information a reader would need to know. The use of the "Camino" immediately evokes the spiritual part of this journey, where the "why" becomes secondary. It's beautifully written and life affirming, describing step by step the long winded journey to recover.

3rd Place: Wing Sze Tang

[The Grandest Adventure](#) written by Wing Sze Tang. Published by The Toronto Star.

The judges said:

A surprising take on the mighty Grand Canyon, a frequently covered destination. While few readers would have the chops to tackle this arduous trek on their own, they're effectively brought along as a member of the close-knit team in this well-written piece.

Honorable Mention: Suzanne Morphet

[Snorkelling the tip of the iceberg](#) written by Suzanne Morphet. Published by The Sunday Times - The West Australian.

The judges said:

The article provides a vivid and engaging narrative of the author's snorkeling experience in the Southern Ocean of Antarctica. It effectively captures the excitement and challenges of exploring such a unique environment, from encountering friendly seals to navigating the cold waters and potential risks like hypothermia. The writer's personal reflections and interactions with fellow travelers add depth to the story, offering insights into the

camaraderie and shared experiences on the expedition. Additionally, the descriptions of the underwater scenery and encounters with wildlife paint a vivid picture of the Antarctic ecosystem.

Honorable Mention: Sandra Phinney

[Seven Decades of Paddling in Nova Scotia](#) written by Sandra Phinney. Published by JourneyWoman.com

The judges said:

What a wonderful account of a well-lived life! The seven decades of paddling the author shares is an ode to being in nature. The pictures supplement the story perfectly, and much up-to-date information is included, which is most fortunate because whoever reads this, just feels like packing the gear and heading out to Nova Scotia.

Best People Photo Award sponsored by Tourism Ireland:

1st Place: Tamara Elliott

[Teaching new generations about a traditional kudlik welcoming ceremony](#) photograph shot by Tamara Elliott. Published by Globe Guide.

Description:

Maria Merkuratsuk, an Inuk from Nain, NL, teaches Charlotte and Islay Edmunds about a traditional kudlik welcoming ceremony at the beginning of an expedition cruise with Adventure Canada.

The judges said:

A feeling of taking care of culture and the next generation to carry that culture is perfectly captured in this warm and joyful image. Exceptionally done.

2nd Place: Amy Rosen

[The Geiko of Kyoto](#) photograph shot by Amy Rosen. Published by The Toronto Star.

Description:

The geiko of Kyoto are considered an "intangible cultural asset" by the Japanese government. A geiko, like the beautiful Hidechiyo, pictured, is a geisha in Kyoto. She thrilled us with her traditional makeup and silk kimono, as well as her charming personality, music and song.

The judges said:

This colourful, soft lit portrait perfectly captures the Geiko culture of Kyoto. The strong lines and form of the composition converses with the formality of the performance. Beautiful work.

3rd Place: Sharon Matthews-Stevens

[On the Island of the Great Spirit](#) photograph shot by Sharon Matthews-Stevens. Published by roadstories.ca

Description:

A dancer moves in synchronicity with the beat of Grandfather Drum in a sacred place on a sacred island - Manitoulin.

The judges said:

The strong sense of movement and dance was perfectly captured by the photographer. The blurring of motion created an electric energy while still being grounded to the earth.

Honorable Mention: Sandra Phinney

[Holman Campbell, Trapper in Rigolet, Labrador](#) photograph shot by Sandra Phinney.

Published by JourneyWoman.com

Description:

When I was stranded in Rigolet, Labrador, I had the pleasure of meeting trapper Holman Campbell. Holman invited me into his home where he shared stories (more than once) and moose stew! I took this photo of him in the doorway of "the shed" where he skins his catch.

The judges said:

The strong composition tells us the story of the trapper and evokes a feeling that he is deeply rooted to this place.

Honorable Mention: Christopher Rudder

[The Power Of Dance — Anemki Wajiw Pow Wow](#) (Thunder Bay) photograph shot by Christopher Rudder. Published by Road Trip Ontario.

Description:

Hike Up Anemki Wajiw (Mount McKay)

A must-visit Thunder Bay tourist attraction is Anemki Wajiw, which towers over the city. Located on the lands of the Anishinabek Nation, the name translates to Thunder Mountain, which I can get behind as it's so majestic.

You can hike to the viewing point at 500 feet, where there's a lookout with vistas of Thunder Bay, Lake Superior, and the surrounding countryside. You can either stop here for a picnic to visit the area's monuments and memorials, or you can continue on the hiking trail to the top of the mountain. Either way, you've got a spectacular way to witness this area's beauty.

The judges said:

This image of the Pow Wow Dancer photographed mid-action against the backdrop of the cliffside gives us a feeling of celebration, culture and the beauty of Pow Wow.



Best Spirit of Canada Award sponsored by Tourism Yukon:

1st Place: Claudia Laroye

[A Literary Kitchen Party Flourishes in Woody Point](#) written by Claudia Laroye. Published by Vacay.ca

The judges said:

This story could hardly have been more Canadian. While the list of names of writers and actors involved in both past and present festivals reads like a Who's Who of Canadian culture, the real spirit of Canada lies in the story the author told of how the Writers at Woody Point Festival came into being in the first place, a very Canadian kind of collaboration, and how it has developed into the sell-out festival it has become over the past twenty years.

2nd Place: Jennifer Bain

[Marine Adventures in Nunavut's Protected High Arctic Waters](#) written by Jennifer Bain. Published by National Parks Traveler

The judges said:

This beautifully written and evocative piece takes the reader on a riveting adventure into the High Arctic. The perspective is well-rounded, providing well-researched insights on the local Inuit culture, the extraordinary wildlife, as well as the impacts of resource extraction and climate change. Wonderful storytelling and vivid imagery bring the place alive!

3rd Place: Christopher Mitchell

[What I Learned Spending One Memorable Month in Newfoundland & Labrador](#) written by Christopher Mitchell. Published by travelingmitch.

The judges said:

This story portrays a fine example of how each province in Canada can have a very distinct society. Each of the 'Lessons Learned' gives the reader an in-depth understanding of the topic and why it is particularly an important part of Newfoundland culture.

Honorable Mention: Nancy Bordeleau

[Le Vieux loup de mer](#) written by Nancy Bordeleau. Published by Cinq Fourchettes.

FRENCH VERSION The judges said:

Un regard passionné sur la région du Bas-Saint-Laurent au Québec, passant par les chalets en bois reconstruits, la nourriture et les boissons alléchantes et les merveilles naturelles. Il ne s'agit pas seulement de descriptions arides : le lecteur découvre les personnes talentueuses qui rendent ces expériences possibles.

The judges said:

An extremely passionate dive into the Lower Saint Lawrence region in Québec, from rebuilt wooden chalets to mouthwatering food and drink to gorgeous natural wonders. These aren't just dry descriptions -- the reader is introduced to the talented people who make these experiences possible.

Honorable Mention: Elizabeth Campbell

[Wall Street - The Murals of Islington Village](#) written by Elizabeth Campbell. Published by Romancing Travel Magazine.

The judges said:

A wonderfully fresh perspective on how large-scale murals can take us back in time, drawing us into a memorable encounter with history, a sense of place, and the lesser-known stories of suburban Toronto. The writing is incredibly rich with detail, introducing diverse figures from the neighbourhood and their many surprising stories.

PACIFIC. AUTHENTIC. RICHMONDBC

Best Emerging & Broadcast Media: Stories Over 10 minutes in Length sponsored by Tourism Richmond:

1st Place: William Tang

[Winter in Banff is Epic](#) by William Tang. Published on Going Awesome Places YouTube channel

The judges said:

"Winter in Banff is Epic" offers a comprehensive exploration of Canada's iconic destination, showcasing its wonders through the lens of winter adventure. The charming host adds a personal touch, engaging viewers throughout the journey. The video effectively highlights diverse activities catering to various traveler preferences. Additionally, the use of strong commercial b-roll enhances the overall presentation. "Winter in Banff is Epic" is a captivating glimpse into the allure of this renowned Canadian destination

2nd Place: Mary Anne Ivison

[Adam Shoalts Returns](#) podcast by Mary Anne Ivison Published by Let's Take This Outside.ca.

The judges said:

As the host of this podcast Mary Anne Ivison brings a confident and welcoming tone to this podcast. She has done her homework and is very adept at steering the guest into distinct topics during the interview while letting this long-format podcast unfurl in a very natural fashion.

3rd Place: Ayngelina Brogan

[The REAL CARTAGENA Colombia Afro Colombian History, Bazarro Market & La Maria](#) by Ayngelina Brogan Published on Ayngelina YouTube channel.

The judges said:

This lively, upbeat, and thoughtfully composed piece does a great job of highlighting the more authentic and hidden gems of Cartagena's local culture. It challenges visitors to go beyond the Instagram photo-ops to experience Cartagena's fascinating Afro Columbian culture, local cuisine, and off-the-beaten path markets and neighbourhoods. This colourful piece is well-produced with engaging storytelling delivered by an energetic narrator.

Honorable Mention: Justin St John

[Our Magical Safari in Kenya | Travel Vlog](#) by Justin Max St John. Published by Drink Tea & Travel YouTube channel.

The judges said:

"Our Magical Safari in Kenya" is a visually stunning piece, boasting incredible cinematography that immerses

viewers in the heart of Africa's wilderness. While showcasing the main attraction of animal viewing, it goes beyond by detailing a comprehensive 8-day itinerary accessible to travelers. The video skillfully places viewers in the shoes of the talent, enhancing the immersive experience. Additionally, it expertly showcases a luxurious bucket-list item without alienating a general audience. "Our Magical Safari in Kenya" is a captivating journey that transports viewers to the enchanting landscapes and wildlife of Kenya, making it a must-watch for nature enthusiasts and travelers alike.

Honorable Mention: Arienne Parzei

[Ultimate Visitor's Guide to Sudbury - What to See, Do and Eat in the City](#) by Arienne Parzei. Published by SeeYouSoonTravel YouTube channel.

The judges said:

High production value, engaging narration, and a wide range of suggested destinations makes this piece a great resource for visitors of all ages. It's great to see a mix of indoor and outdoor attractions as well as the varied recommendations for activities. Tons of practical information and gorgeous, vivid photography rounds out the many strengths of this piece.



Parks
Canada

Parcs
Canada

Best Photo Series sponsored by Parks Canada:

1st Place: Robin Karpan

[Photographing Saskatchewan's Living Skies at Night](#) by Robin Karpan Published by Prairies North Magazine.

The judges said:

This series wowed the judges and showcases the other worldly skies of Saskatchewan. We found the images to be mesmerizing. The careful consideration of the image from foreground to sky was thoughtfully done and tells the story. Each image stands on its own as well as pulls together as a series.

2nd Place: Roland Bastarache

[The Daily Meet UP](#) photographs by Roland Bastarache Published by Instagram RolandBast and Blog Rolandbast.com

The judges said:

The choice of depth of field and the camera angle was well done and brought the viewer into an intimate engagement with the puffins. These considerations creates an animated journey within the series. The title was perfect. Congratulations on your very strong series.

3rd Place: Skylar Anderson

[Northern Lights over Lake Ainslie, Cape Breton Island](#) photographs shot by Skylar Anderson. Published by CTV Atlantic, Saltwire, Chronicle Herald, CTV National News, Daveyandsky and Explore Canada.

The judges said:

The lighting, the reflection, the colours, the composition and technical skills create powerful captures that have left the judges in awe.

Honorable Mention: Oksana St John

[Moments from a Japanese Ryokan Retreat](#) photographs shot by Oksana St John. Published by DrinkTeaTravel.com.

The judges said:

The attention to detail, choice of black and white, composition and sense of place make this series deserving of honorary mention.

Honorable Mention: Leigh McAdam

[Burn and regrowth on a canoe trip in Woodland Caribou Provincial Park](#) photographs shot by Leigh McAdam.
Published by HikeBikeTravel.com

The judges said:

This series sends you on a journey. This is a very timely series as we face climate change, altered landscapes from forest fires and how we consider our human footprint.



Best Emerging & Broadcast Media: Stories Under 10 Minutes in Length sponsored by Visit Tampa Bay:

1st Place: Skylar Anderson

[Finding our Ancestry on our Irish Honeymoon](#) by Skylar Anderson. Published on daveyandsky Instagram channel.

The judges said:

Such a unique way to experience a destination with a deep personal connection. Good captions and text on screen for a piece of this length. It allows the user to plan their own adventure with a great starting off point and sense of place. Lovely scenery mixed with useful information, and charm.

2nd Place: William Tang

[Magic of Easter Island](#) by William Tang. Published by Going Awesome Place YouTube channel.

The judges said:

Getting that sense of place with maps/logistics is so helpful. Video caption has lots of useful links. Describes the tours, the food, and the other aspects of the culture on the island, beyond the stones. Very detailed show notes with links to a longer version of the video and much more information to plan this trip on your own. A well done teaser to the longer material.

3rd Place: Lauren Yakiwchuk

[France Canal Cruise: Our Luxury Barge Cruise in Burgundy](#) by Lauren Yakiwchuk. Published by Justin Plus Lauren YouTube channel.

The judges said:

Gorgeous film! The aesthetics of the filming with different cameras and drones evokes a journey of serene moments and wellbeing amongst beauty. The luxury element is present, without bragging or showing off. Some basic information is shown in a playful way. Additional information is available in the detailed show notes.

Honorable Mention: William Tang

[This is Patagonia](#) by William Tang. Published by Going Awesome Place YouTube channel.

The judges said:

This is beautifully shot and impresses with thoughtful narration. The activities are shown as doable and enjoyable. Great job to invite the viewer along on the adventure and giving a sense of place.

Honorable Mention: Arienne Parzei

[Top Things to do in Winnipeg in Winter](#) by Arienne Parzei. Published by SeeYouSoonTravel YouTube channel.

The judges said:

A standout for its focus on winter experiences and travel - Winnipeg does have it all! There was a great use of multiple filming shots and angles in this video, from a person speaking in front of the camera, to drone footage and medium shots. The use of place marker animations on screen were helpful, and it captured a variety of activities, from food, and family fun, to the spa. A nice mix of fast-paced adventure, and slower experiences to savour. Showcasing timely events gives the viewer an idea of when to visit or plan their trip, and having chapters in the video function are also helpful.



The People's Choice Photo Award sponsored by TMAC:

1st Place: Jenn Smith Nelson

[Gary Dalvos slows a hot air balloon Fred Flintstone style by hanging onto the basket's edge, his feet acting as brakes.](#) Photograph shot by Jenn Smith Nelson.

Honorable Mentions:

[Leroy Glinton helps Blue Green Outdoors](#) - photograph shot by Jennifer Bain

[Bill Gilbert, owner of Spirit Reins Ranch](#) - photograph shot by Tamara Elliott

[Warmth in winter is found in the people of Quebec](#) - photograph Shot by Diane Selkirk

[Ready to Ride?](#) - photography shot by Yashy Murphy

Ann Britton Campbell Family Travel Award in partnership with Travel Media Association of Canada: B.C. & Yukon Chapter:

1st Place: Robin Esrock

[A hands-on education in Churchill, Manitoba. Tundra Buggy pioneer Frontiers North invites adventurous families to northern Manitoba for a bucket list summer vacation](#), written by Robin Esrock. Published by Canadian Geographic.

2nd Place: Jennifer Merrick

[Family Travel: Kids' Obsessions Make Awesome Family Vacations. Plan a vacation that lets your young ones live out their ultimate fantasies](#), written by Jennifer Merrick. Published by Boldtraveler.ca

3rd Place: Diane Selkirk

[Travel has helped me see my daughter more clearly. By stripping away everything familiar, all that's left is her. Raising my child with a sense of adventure came with rich—and bittersweet—rewards](#), written by Diane Selkirk. Published by The Star.

Nathan Fong Memorial Award sponsored by the Fong Family in partnership with Travel Media Association of Canada: B.C. & Yukon Chapter:

1st Place: Bianca Bujan

[Malaysian Chef Alex Chen Makes Vancouver's Michelin List](#) written by Bianca Bujan. Published by Canadian Geographic.

The judges said:

We enjoyed this story on Malaysian Chef Alex Chen, and the writing Bianca wove around Alex's story, and what shaped his career and culinary creations. The food descriptives had us salivating and looking forward to indulging in some of Alex's cooking

2nd Place: Carolyn Heller

[On the Steveston Waterfront, a Thai Chef Blends Alchemy, Gastronomy, and Tradition](#) written by Carolyn Heller. Published by Montecristo Magazine.

The judges said:

Carolyn shares a fascinating portrait of Nutchua Phanthoupheng, owner and chef at Baan Lao in Steveston, sharing her journey from medicine to the culinary art, and from Thailand to Canada; ultimately allowing her to chase after her creative dreams and reshape herself professionally within her new country. Not only is this an interesting story of migration, but it also demonstrates Chef Nutchua's creativity and the unique experience of dining at Baan Lao.

3rd Place: Lucas Aykroyd

[A Chinese Tapestry](#) written by Lucas Aykroyd. Published by re:porter Porter Airlines.

The judges said:

Lucas does a wonderful job of weaving vibrant pictures of different aspects of Vancouver's Chinese culture, history and community through eloquent snapshots that highlight various aspects of how it shapes a tapestry in Vancouver.



2023 Host Conference Destination Award sponsored by Destination Sudbury:

1st Place: Arienne Parzei

[Ultimate Visitors Guide to Sudbury](#) by Arienne Parzei.