

**Name of Best Practices Mission**

**Date**

**Location**

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COMPETITIVENESS THROUGH BEST PRACTICES

## **FINAL REPORT**

Craft Retail Theming/Trail  
May 8-12 2007

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### **Introduction**

The key learning objective was to see how successful tourism trails work and how they involved craftspeople and their products. Upper New York State , the Adirondack's, and Circuit de Paysan south of Monreal were the best practices examined

### **Purpose**

While Atlantic Canada has some strong and unique craft products and producers they are often not linked into the tourism itineraries and experiences. Other regions have worked to build culture and heritage into themed trail experiences

### **Primary Expectations**

The participants wanted to meet art and craft producers to see innovative ways they had worked with other tourism sectors and developed products to suit the market

### **Mission Itinerary**

The Adirondack's provided some real insights into a mature region which while near large populations has had to try to renew itself and be innovative in the face of competition from other destinations

The Marketing Tool Kit was useful however the workshop did not get into the detail some participants had expected.

Visits to craft retailers was very useful and a lot of good exchange of information occurred.

Le Circuit du Paysan was viewed as very relevant in the Canadian context and was a region clearly emerging with a strong mix of products.

### **Mission Leader**

The resource people were well chosen and all provided some real value to understanding how the regions dealt with the challenges of working together and presenting a new product

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### **Participants**

A good cross section of industry crafts retailers and government participated from all four Provinces

All participants indicated the mission met and or exceeded their expectations

### **Mission Activities and Presentations**

#### Saranac Lake

A small town off the beaten path and trying to renew itself was a good case study

The crafts people were very well prepared and took time to show in detail the successes and challenges

Tim Fortune an artisan was especially good as were the Young's in Jay who ran a very good retail shop and provided a good experience even though they were out of the way

The Hampton Inn in lake George was just a spot to stay but it was an excellent example of a well designed well run Inn.

Greenwich provided a good walk about and chance to see the good and bad in small town craft retailing

Le Circuit du Paysan route in Quebec provided real insights into combining art, agro – tourism and culinary with good products right for today's market

The use of good signage in the Adirondack's "The Scenic Byways Sign Policy" and the Circuit du Paysan themed route were very valuable insights on how good signage can happen

### **Evaluation of Mission**

The goals of this mission were clearly met through a good itinerary and a good list of resource people.

As in most missions the group learned a lot from one another and new networks were established.

The Circuit du Paysan experience in Quebec won out as the most relevant and insights into the Province of Quebec's product development strategy were very useful

### 3. Lessons Learned / Recommendations

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While focusing on themed craft retailing this mission was useful in looking at regions organizing around themed routes and the value of combining cuisine and cultural activities with crafts

**Conclusion**

The Mission clearly helped participants see how they can play a role in leading new tourism product development in their region back home.

All left with new ideas and energy around involvement in projects within their business and within their region.

It is a mission that could be repeated with a blend of Cuisine and Arts participants