



SIX SENSES

PROGRAM GUIDE

IGNITING INDIGENOUS EXPERIENCES IN ALBERTA



WELCOME *to Your Six Senses Guide*

BEGINNING YOUR JOURNEY



During the first part of our Six Senses Program, you heard, saw, tasted, smelled, touched, tuned in to your inner-self, and immersed yourself in memorable connections with the world around you - gathering insights and inspiration to now have the opportunity to design your own experience.

As you continue your journey through the Six Senses Program and enter your Mentoring stage, this Six Senses Guide will build off the components you were immersed in during the first part of the program. This Guide will provide nourishing concepts that will help you to keep harvesting ideas and cultivate your vision for your own experience. This Guide will bring you learning bits to support your journey through the Mentoring stage as you get ready to work with an important resource:



**THE
EXPERIENCE
MAKER**

When you're ready to dive into the Experience Maker, your Mentor will be supporting you throughout, helping to address any blockers, needs, answering questions, and providing guidance on the next steps.

Building off your 3 day workshop, your Six Senses Guide will lead you through



6 TRAILS

that will ultimately empower you to cultivate your own extraordinary tourism experience with confidence. Each Trail consists of



2 VIEWPOINTS

that will present the topic from different perspectives in a clear and concise way, and will share insights and industry best practices surrounding how to engage the senses.

Within each of these 2 Viewpoints, you will come across:




**NOURISHING
CONCEPTS**

Concepts designed to nurture the growth of extraordinary Indigenous tourism experiences.



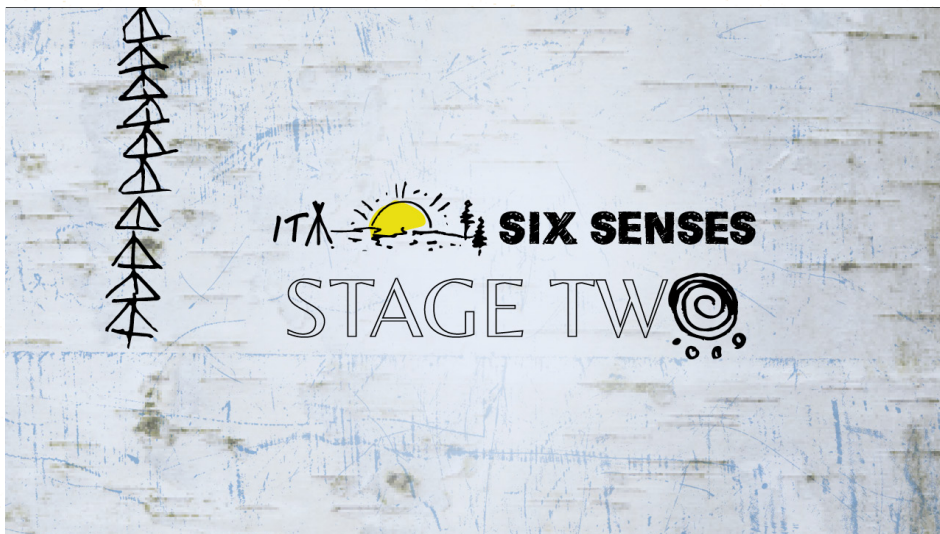
**HARVESTING
IDEAS**

Learning from successful individuals and organizations across Canada and around the world.



These concepts and ideas can be used to inspire and enhance your creativity as you work through the development of your own visitor experience. During this Mentoring Journey, you will become familiar with 2 main resources. This one, your Six Senses Guide and then your Experience Maker, a resource where you will be cultivating your vision, and bringing your new experience to life. Once you've gone through this Guide, Your Experience Maker will then ask you think about, define, and implement the tangible elements of your experience.

This process is designed to be collaborative and you will have the opportunity to develop a close relationship with your Mentor, engage and learn from your peers, and become inspired by industry experts. Your efforts throughout will contribute directly to your journey of preparing market-ready visitor experiences.



TRAIL 1: A WALK THROUGH THE SENSES
Understanding What Makes a Memorable Experience

TRAIL 2: FEELING & TOUCH
Hands on Experiences

TRAIL 3: SIGHTS & SOUNDS
Connecting with the Atmosphere & Surroundings

TRAIL 4: AROMAS & TASTES
Triggering Your Guests' Memories

TRAIL 5: A DEEPER CONNECTION
The Sixth Sense

TRAIL 6: IGNITING YOUR VISION
Bringing Your Experience to Life

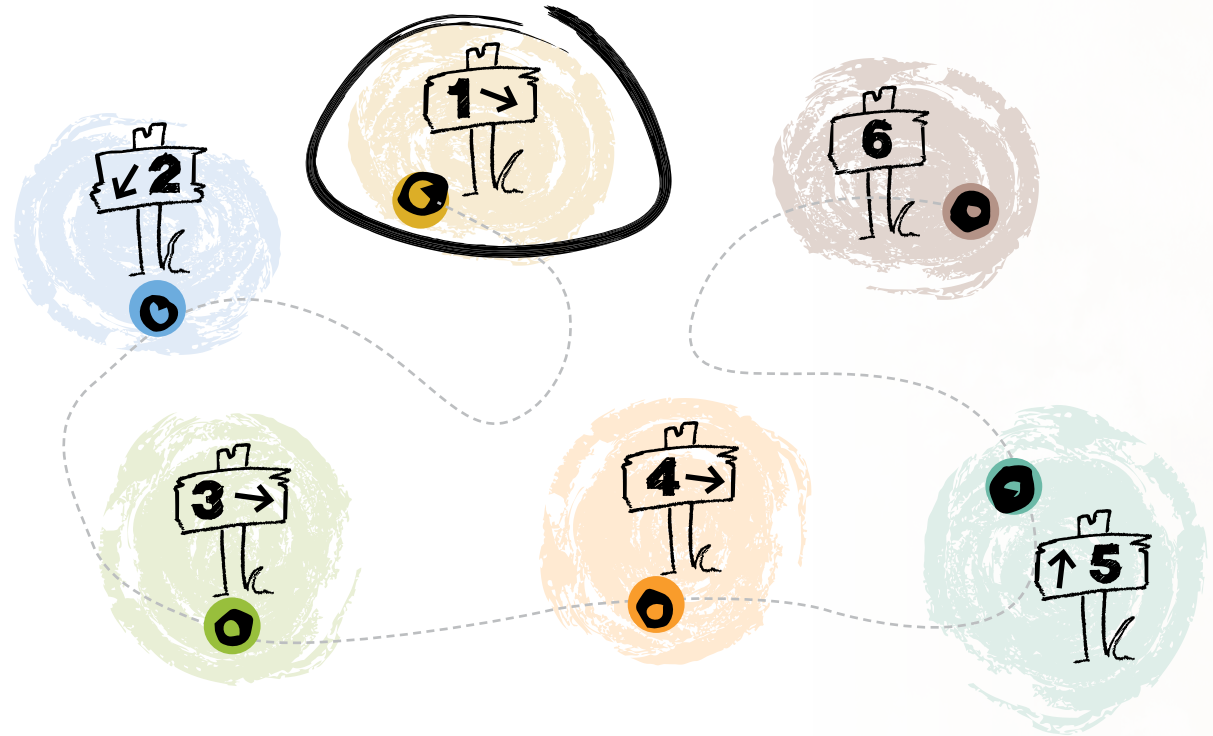


A WALK THROUGH THE SENSES

UNDERSTANDING WHAT MAKES A MEMORABLE EXPERIENCE

VIEWPOINTS

1. A GRASSROOTS EXPERIENCE
2. DESIGNING MEANINGFUL & MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES



TRAIL ORIENTATION

This Trail builds upon lessons learned during your 1st day of the 3-day experiential journey. As you move along this Trail, you will receive nourishing concepts and inspiration on grassroots tourism philosophies as well as how to design meaningful tourism experiences as a Cultural Entrepreneur in your community. The concepts and ideas you will encounter on this Trail will provide the groundwork for bringing your tourism vision to life!

As you move along this trail receive nourishing concepts and inspiration



TRAIL 1



VIEWPOINT 1 - A GRASSROOTS EXPERIENCE

NOURISHING CONCEPTS



A GRASSROOTS PHILOSOPHY

Grassroots tourism is a form of ecotourism that is rooted in the involvement of local people at the fundamental level in guiding tourism visioning and development. This includes community involvement in planning and management, local control of development, equitable flow of benefits, and the incorporation of community values and culture.

Although you are embarking on developing your tourism experience as an individual, grassroots tourism emphasizes an approach that benefits your community as a whole. From developing your initial tourism vision, all the way to accepting your first visitor and beyond, you and your community should remain the central priority of your grassroots tourism journey.



The following key elements are important considerations for successfully developing grassroots tourism:

1. **COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP:** Taking initiative to remove barriers and bring positive benefits to your community by investing in your community's local economy and promoting opportunities that support your community's needs and aspirations.
2. **COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT & INTEGRATION:** Empowering your community to be actively involved in decisions and participate in the development of your tourism experience.
3. **COMMUNITY PRIDE:** Instilling a sense of pride through sharing and celebrating your community's culture while ensuring tourism development is aligned with your community's values and is built upon mutual respect between visitor and host.
4. **RELATIONSHIPS:** Enhancing opportunities, engaging with the industry, and gaining support through building and maintaining reciprocal relationships with both internal community partners, external tourism organizations, and other relevant partners.



QUESTION TO PONDER:

WILL YOUR EXPERIENCE PROVIDE
BENEFITS FOR YOUR COMMUNITY?

HARVESTING IDEAS



Watch this inspirational video that captures the essence of grassroots tourism. Meet Indigenous photographer, Blaire Russell who welcomes visitors to visit his homeland, the Blood-Kainai First Nation.

"I want to invite people in, to learn about us, and to break barriers,"
says Blaire Russell.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)

[Indigenous Voices - Blaire Russell, Alberta, Canada](#)



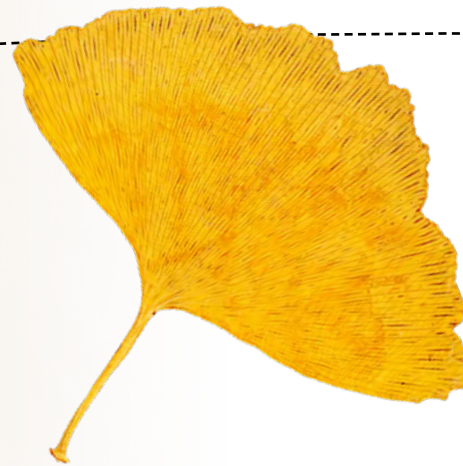
VIEWPOINT 2 - DESIGNING MEANINGFUL & MEMORABLE EXPERIENCES

NOURISHING CONCEPTS

WHY SIX SENSES?

Think about a tourism experience you have had in the past. What do you remember about it? Was it related to something you saw, smelt, tasted, touched, felt, heard, or connected to on a deeper level?

Meaningful and memorable experiences are designed to trigger your senses, because these are long lasting aspects that allow visitors to reflect and remember. Experiences that incorporate the senses and provide hands-on moments where we feel immersed can go a long way and last in our memories for years.



THE SIX SENSES



SIGHT –
What will the visitor see?



SOUND –
What will the visitor hear?



SMELL –
What will the visitor smell?



TASTE –
What will the visitor taste?



TOUCH –
What will the visitor touch and feel?



SPIRITUAL/CULTURAL CONNECTION – Will there be an opportunity for the visitor to have a deeper connection with your culture and land?

When designing your experience it is essential to reflect on the six senses as you develop and cultivate your vision. For grassroots tourism experiences to be meaningful and memorable, draw upon the six senses for inspiration. In addition, the following three essential qualities are recommended to ensure your experience is feasible and sustainable:

1. **CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY:** It is appropriate, respectful, and true to the culture being represented
2. **DEMAND:** There is a strong base of potential customers who desire or could desire the type of products and experiences
3. **PROFITABILITY:** It can be sold at a price that the market is willing to pay while generating a profit

Along with engaging the six senses, these 3 qualities will set you on the path of designing meaningful grassroots tourism experiences, while making you well-positioned to achieve success and sustainability.

HARVESTING IDEAS



In the highlands of Swedish Lapland, Mikael and Anki Vinka live the old way of life as an homage to the people who have roamed this place for thousands of years. Some claim that Geunja is one of the best-kept secrets of Swedish Lapland. As you watch the video, think about which senses an experience like this will trigger.



→ [WATCH VIDEO](#)

[Swedish Lapland stories: Ep. 2 - Geunja the sámí eco-lodge](#)

CULTIVATING YOUR IDEAS

PLANTING SEEDS FOR YOUR EXPERIENCE MAKER

Now, let's take a step back, what exactly is a tourism experience? Difficult to define, it is more of a feeling, a connection of head, heart, and spirit to all the parts of a moment. Soon you will start putting your ideas down, but for now consider the components of a meaningful tourism experience:

INVOLVES EMOTIONS, FEELINGS, AND SENSATIONS by engaging guests in moments that are inherently personal and foster connections on many levels.

CONNECTS TO THE LOCAL HOST AND PLACE such as the land, sky, water, local practices, products, and social interactions, promoting a deep connection to the place and its people.

ENGAGES WITH CULTURE AND STORIES creating a deep intersection between restoring Indigenous culture and values, sharing the culture and land, and imparting knowledge and teachings.

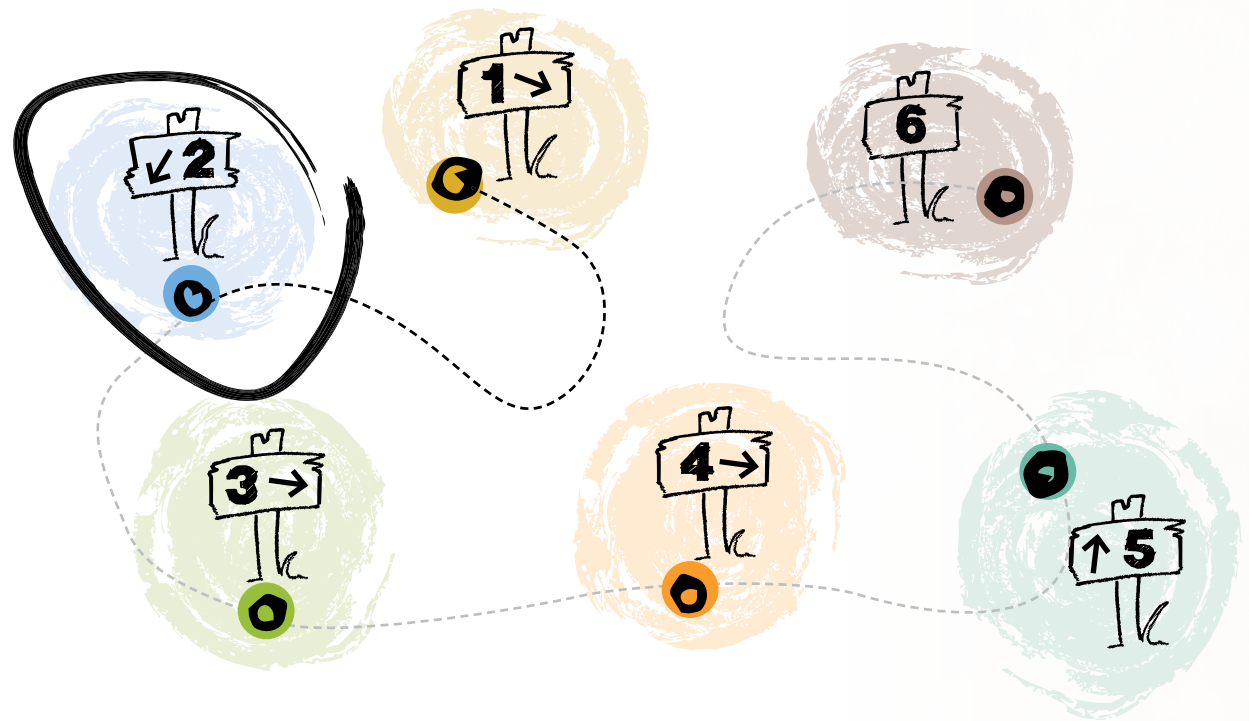


FEELING & TOUCH

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES

VIEWPOINTS

1. CHOOSE YOUR PATH:
DIFFERENT TYPES OF
EXPERIENCES
2. WAYFINDING & ENGAGING
WITH THE ENVIRONMENT



This Trail builds upon lessons learned during your 1st and 2nd day of your 3-day experiential journey. As you move along this Trail with support from your Mentor, you will receive nourishing concepts and inspiration on choosing which type of experience you will offer to your guests and the importance of creating a sense of arrival and wayfinding for your experience. The concepts and ideas you will encounter on this Trail will provide you with essential concepts to better your guests' experience!





VIEWPOINT 1 - CHOOSE YOUR PATH: DIFFERENT TYPES OF EXPERIENCES

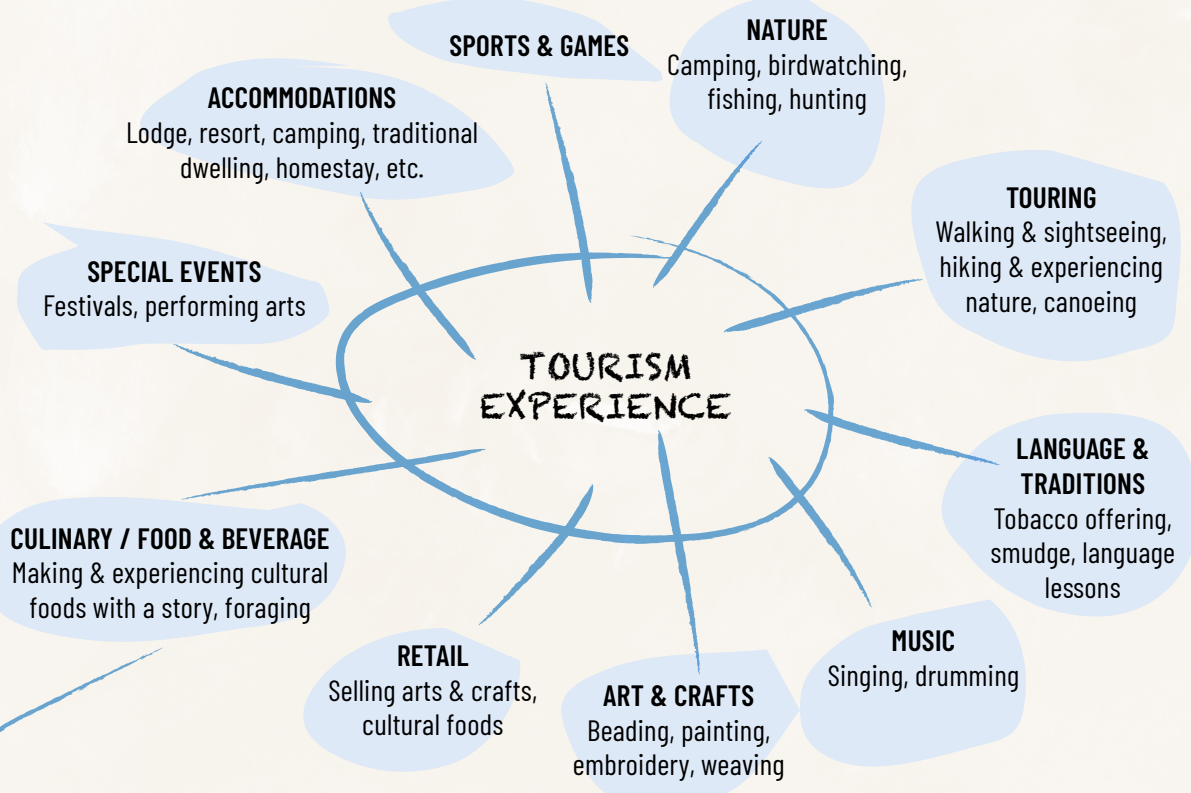
NOURISHING CONCEPTS



A JOURNEY TO HONOUR YOUR PASSION

Joining this program, chances are you have a passion that you want to share with the world. No tourism experience is the same and there are so many different paths to choose from when developing your experience.

A tourism experience has endless possibilities and may include one or more of these elements:



Knowing the different categories of tourism experiences can open your mind to the possibilities of integrating different aspects into your own. Your experience can evolve and grow involving different elements based on your guests and their demands.

To consider... ITA's website organizes tourism products and services into 5 main business categories:

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| 1. ATTRACTIONS | 4. OUTDOOR EXPERINECES/
GUIDED TOURS | 6. CULTURAL EXPERIENCE |
| 2. CULINARY | 5. POWWOWS AND EVENTS | 7. COMMUNITY OWNED
TOURISM |
| 3. RETAIL/ARTISAN | | |

? QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

WHAT EXPERIENCE DO YOU WANT
TO SHARE WITH YOUR VISITORS?

HOW CAN YOU MAKE THIS EXPERIENCE
YOUR OWN AND INCORPORATE
ELEMENTS THAT SHARE
YOUR CULTURE?

WHICH CATEGORIES DOES YOUR
EXPERIENCE ENCOMPASS?



HARVESTING IDEAS

Land, music, food, history, traditions – Not all Indigenous tourism experiences fall under one category. Métis Crossing allows visitors to experience different aspects of culture and feel it in different ways.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)
[Stories Through Our Eyes - Métis Crossing](#)



VIEWPOINT 2 - WAYFINDING & ENGAGING WITH YOUR ENVIRONMENT

NOURISHING CONCEPTS

CREATING A SENSE OF PLACE

Your experience's Sense of Arrival is a powerful moment and is how guests are welcomed into your experience, providing them with their first impression. However, guests' Sense of Arrival starts before they arrive at your experience. Through your marketing and branding, they will become familiar with the vibe of your experience from the moment they research you, locate you on your website/social media, and connect with you over the phone and email during the booking process.

When your guests arrive at your experience, creating a Sense of Arrival through consistent branding will give guests a sense of safety and a feeling of welcomeness. The concept of Wayfinding can help in achieving this.

Wayfinding can be integrated in your experience through:



Signage consistent with your branding

Physical/Digital maps



Pamphlets to guide guests through the experience

Physical place with signage where people arrive & meet- arrival or Welcoming Post / Starting Point / Base / Trailhead / Rendezvous / Gathering Post



Pointing out and familiarizing guests with the environment and landmarks will also contribute to their sense of safety and comfort. Sense of Place means creating a relationship between people and their surroundings and can be a very powerful component of your experience. Guests will become aware of the environment and surroundings and can use this awareness of the environment to guide them to and through your experience with confidence and pleasure.





QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

IS THERE A WAY TO ENGAGE YOUR GUESTS' SENSES THROUGH CREATING A SENSE OF ARRIVAL OR WAYFINDING?

HOW CAN YOU CREATE SENSE OF PLACE FOR YOUR GUESTS WHO PARTICIPATE IN YOUR EXPERIENCE?

CULTIVATING YOUR IDEAS

PLANTING SEEDS FOR YOUR EXPERIENCE MAKER

Imagine you have visitors interested in your experience offering. How do you plan to deliver the experience? Soon you'll be putting your ideas down, but for now, ask yourself these 3 questions to consider the operational requirements for your experience.

- What needs to be in place to deliver the experience?
- What processes do I need to fulfill my visitor/guest expectations?
- What do I need to do to excel at what I want to do?

HARVESTING IDEAS



JASPER TOUR COMPANY

The [Jasper Tour Company](#) brings an experience to visitors that allows them to connect with the land and the environment that surrounds them, encouraging visitors to take that environmental engagement with them wherever they go.



TRAIL 2

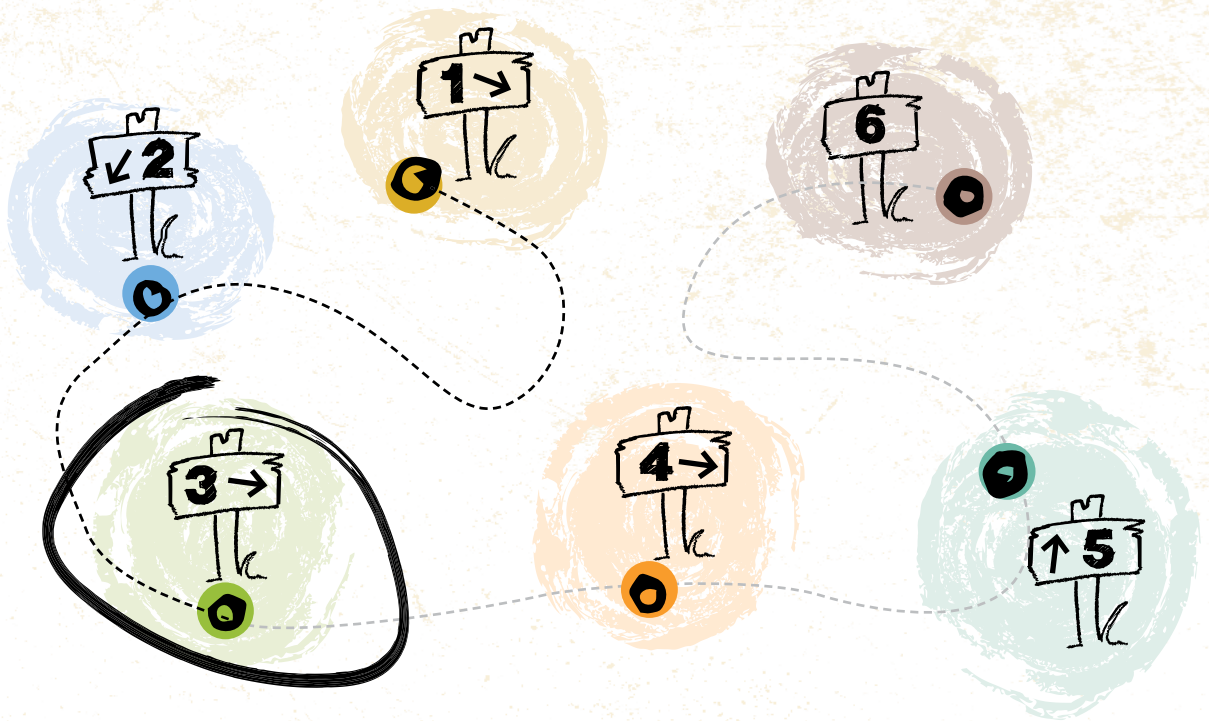


SIGHTS & SOUNDS

CONNECTING WITH THE
ATMOSPHERE & SURROUNDINGS

VIEWPOINTS

1. RURAL & URBAN SETTINGS:
CONNECTIONS TO THE LAND
2. BRIDGING TRADITIONS &
TECHNOLOGY: MOBILE, AR/VR
& DIGITAL INTEGRATION



TRAIL ORIENTATION

This Trail builds upon lessons learned during the 3-day experiential journey. As you move along this Trail with support from your Mentor, you will receive nourishing concepts and inspiration on how to connect with the atmosphere and surroundings of a place and how to add another layer to your experience using digital technology. The concepts and ideas you will encounter on this Trail will target the senses of sight and sound to bring your experience vision to life!





VIEWPOINT 1 - RURAL & URBAN SETTINGS: CONNECTIONS TO THE LAND

NOURISHING CONCEPTS

THE ATMOSPHERE AND SURROUNDINGS

Each community, whether rural or urban, is home to its own unique natural and cultural features, resources, and history. These natural and cultural aspects are deeply rooted in the land, and it is your job as an Indigenous tourism curator to share a part of that connection with your visitors/guests. This can take place through a story, activity, or by being out on the land and providing knowledge of the land's natural and cultural features, resources, and history. This will allow people to come to appreciate, value, and respect the land and all that it gives us.

Every tourism experience is connected to the land in some way. Whether it is held on the land, or uses the resources the land gives us, it will remain important to show appreciation and respect to the land, and to share this philosophy with others so that it can be preserved for future generations.

Take care of the land, and the land will take care of you



? QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

WOULD YOU CONSIDER YOUR EXPERIENCE A RURAL OR URBAN EXPERIENCE?

CAN YOU DEMONSTRATE A CONNECTION TO THE LAND THROUGH YOUR EXPERIENCE, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY?

IN WHAT WAY(S) IS YOUR EXPERIENCE CONNECTED TO THE LAND? (EX. TAKES PLACE ON THE LAND, USES RESOURCES FROM THE LAND, IS SITUATED ON TRADITIONAL TERRITORY)

WHETHER URBAN OR RURAL, IS THERE A WAY TO TEACH YOUR GUESTS ABOUT HOW YOUR COMMUNITY LIVED (ON/FROM THE LAND?) IN THE PAST AND HOW THEY NOW LIVE TODAY?

HARVESTING IDEAS



RURAL SETTINGS: MAHIKAN TRAILS

In the heart of the Rocky Mountains in Canmore, Alberta, Mahikan Trails is an authentic Indigenous guiding experience that allows visitors to learn about traditional and medicinal uses of the plants around us from Medicine keepers.



→ [WATCH VIDEO](#)
[Stories Through Our Eyes - Mahikan Trails](#)



URBAN SETTINGS: TALKING ROCKS TOURS - OVERVIEW

Talking Rocks Tours in Edmonton, Alberta takes visitors on educational hiking and sightseeing tours to share the natural and cultural Indigenous history on the land, through its geological features and wonders.



→ [WATCH VIDEO](#)
[Talking Rock Tours' Edmonton River Valley Discovery Tour](#)



VIEWPOINT 2 - BRIDGING TRADITIONS & TECHNOLOGY: MOBILE, AR/VR & DIGITAL INTEGRATION

NOURISHING CONCEPTS

ADDING ANOTHER LAYER TO YOUR EXPERIENCE

As the world and its travelers become more innovative, tourism experiences are also transforming. Integrating technology can add to experiences by enhancing visuals, adding sounds and music, and bringing in another level of interaction. Through new technologies, people can see a vision of the stories and history behind experiences. Technology also allows experiences to be accessed by more people, reaching a wider audience, as most digital integrations allow anyone to experience a taste of the experience from anywhere in the world.

Bridging traditions and technology not only allows more people to access it, but it also provides a secure way to preserve culture and its traditions, history, stories, and language, as well as a space to save the history of your own experiences and products.

Additionally, rather than researching, reading, and watching videos about a destination or experience, AR/VR, mobile, and digitization of experiences allows visitors to step into and get a taste of the atmosphere of the destination before their visit. This then provides more inspiration and motivation to book the experience and see it firsthand.

Although digital integration can enhance experiences by providing another level of engagement, nothing can replace the experience of interacting and learning firsthand on and with the land, and with people.

HOW CAN YOU BRIDGE TRADITIONS & TECHNOLOGY

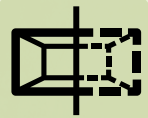


MOBILE APPS

Educational
Language
Storytelling
Cultural etiquette



VIRTUAL REALITY (VR)



AUGMENTED REALITY (AR)



DIGITIZATION OF CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE



GPS / DIGITAL MAPS



QUESTION TO PONDER

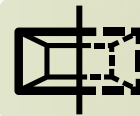
HOW CAN YOU BRING YOUR EXPERIENCE TO LIFE OR ENHANCE IT USING TECHNOLOGY?

HARVESTING IDEAS



SIX NATIONS AR & VR EXPERIENCE

Six Nations' AR experience invites visitors to immerse themselves in an interactive tour through Chiefswood Park in southern Ontario, featuring 10 stops along their journey. At each stop there is an opportunity for visitors to interact with the environment and dive deeper through immersive learning which shares Six Nations' stories, culture, and traditions while they connect with the land. The VR experience is narrated by a member of Six Nations, and guests can become part of the story using their VR headset with hand controls by interacting with the 3 sisters - corn, beans, and squash – to plant, nurture, and harvest the crops; then make 3 sisters soup to share in their virtual world.



CULTIVATING YOUR IDEAS PLANTING SEEDS FOR YOUR EXPERIENCE MAKER

To get you thinking, let's start the conversation around that sticky subject of pricing your experience. It's important to keep in mind that the right price should reflect the value of the experience you're creating, which is beyond the commodities, materials, and costs and is more based on those unique and unforgettable moments. Here are a few quick tips as you begin thinking about a price for your experience:

DON'T UNDERSELL YOUR EXPERIENCE. Indigenous experiences are some of the most sought after in the industry today.

CONSIDER THE EMOTIONAL VALUE. Experiencing local authentic people, intimate settings, and knowledge transfer is high-value.

SET A PRICE YOU'RE COMFORTABLE WITH. Strike a balance between what your target market is willing to pay and remaining competitive and attractive.

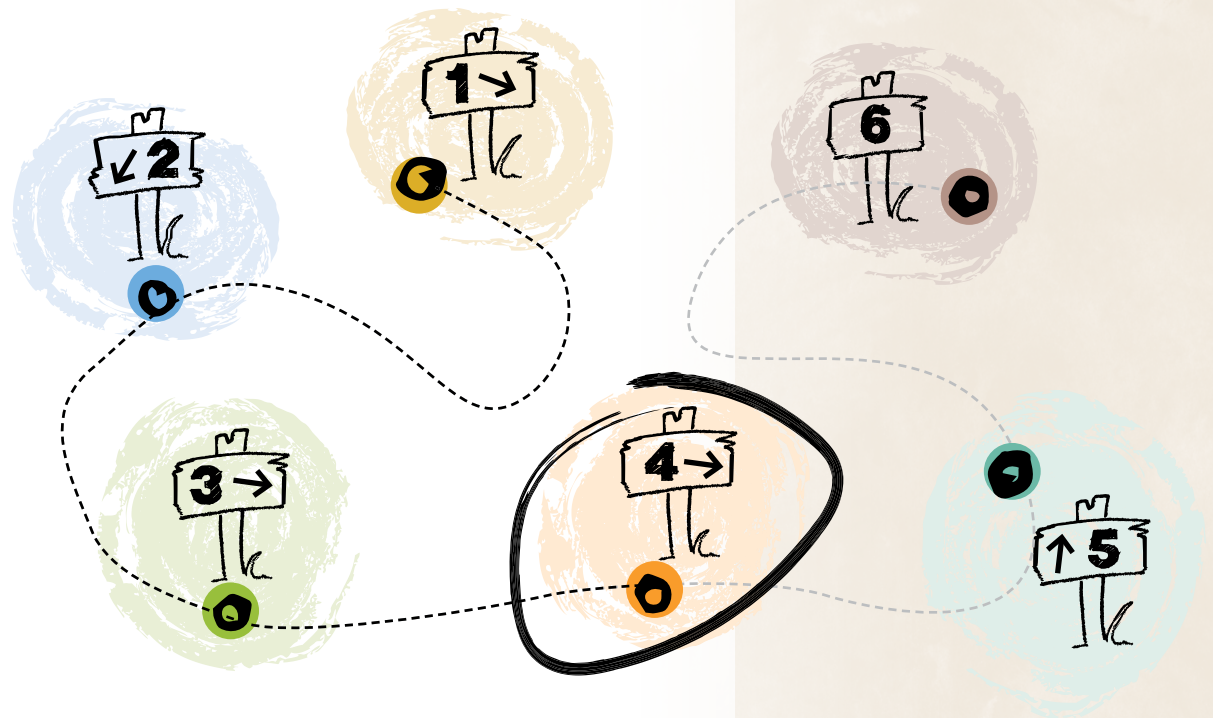


AROMAS & TASTES

TRIGGERING YOUR
GUESTS MEMORIES

VIEWPOINTS

1. THE SPIRIT OF SUSTENANCE:
OUR FOOD
2. VALUE-ADDED
ENHANCEMENTS TO
YOUR EXPERIENCE



TRAIL ORIENTATION

This Trail builds upon lessons learned during your 2nd day of the 3-day experiential journey. As you move along this Trail with support from your Mentor, you will receive nourishing concepts and inspiration on how to involve food within your experience as well as how adding small enhancements and take-aways to your experience can go a long way. The concepts and ideas you will encounter on this Trail will provide you with ideas that will take your experience to another level!



*Your experience
can go a long way!*



VIEWPOINT 1 - THE SPIRIT OF SUSTENANCE: OUR FOOD

NOURISHING CONCEPTS

SHARING STORIES OVER A MEAL...

When you think back to memorable moments and experiences, it's likely that many of the experiences you look back on involved food in some way; sharing stories over a meal, enjoying food during an eventful day, smelling something delicious cooking, trying a new type of food, etc. Because food ignites all the senses, especially when creating new experiences with other people and with a story, deeper emotions are triggered, which in turn makes the experience much more memorable.

Food is one of the most integral pieces of tourism and in creating memorable experiences. Many people travel for the sole purpose of experiencing new foods and cultures through eating and learning about traditional cooking methods, as food allows people to have a deeper connection and understanding of culture. Additionally, food provides comfort and familiarity, as well as curiosity and exploration. Memories are created around food when enjoying it with others, and with a story.

Food is a component of cultural identity and allows us to share culture through stories of the history, meaning, purpose, and connections of local ingredients, foraging, cooking methods, spices and herbs. Each dish has a backstory and its own way of being personal, allowing us to share our story and culture.

FOOD IGNITES SENSE OF:



SMELL – new and familiar
smells of food, ingredients



TASTE – new and familiar flavours,
identifying sweet, salty, sour,
bitter flavours



TOUCH – texture of food, actions
involved with foraging, eating, and
cooking



SIGHT – visuals of what the food looks
like, atmosphere you are eating in



HEARING – hear food being
prepared, stories around food,
talking, music, etc.



QUESTIONS TO PONDER

HOW CAN YOU INTEGRATE
FOOD INTO YOUR
EXPERIENCE?

HOW AND WHO WILL
GATHER AND PREPARE THE
FOOD? AND, WHAT WILL
YOU SERVE?

HARVESTING IDEAS



PAINTED WARRIORS

Through Painted Warriors' experience, located in Rocky View County, Alberta, guests are immersed in many traditions of Indigenous culture, with one of the most integral pieces of the experience being having guests start their own fire where they cook Indigenous food, and then enjoy it together.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)

[Immerse Yourself in Indigenous Traditions and Cultures at Painted Warriors](#)



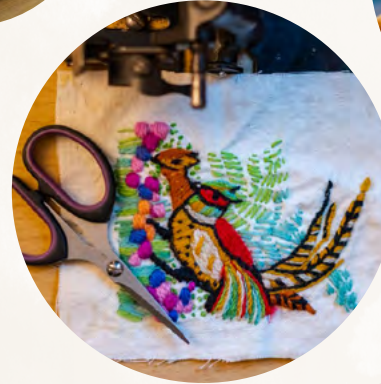
VIEWPOINT 2 - VALUE ADDED ENHANCEMENTS

NOURISHING CONCEPTS

SMALL THINGS GO A LONG WAY

Including value-added enhancements to your experiences, such as providing food or drinks, complimentary gifts that visitors can enjoy that may also support other small businesses, an unexpected aspect of the experience, involving them in activities, and/or simply giving visitors an item that they can hold onto during the experience will help create longer-lasting memories for your guests. These value-added enhancements will ignite more of the senses, and similarly to food, will create more memorable experiences, showing your guests that you truly care.

Value-added enhancements are also the small things that your guests will talk about and share with others. They will trigger positive word-of-mouth advertising and also are things that your guests will love to share on their social media and reviews of the experience.



? QUESTIONS TO PONDER

WHAT TYPE OF VALUE-ADDED ENHANCEMENT(S)
MIGHT YOU WANT TO OFFER WITH YOUR EXPERIENCE?

IS THERE A WAY YOU CAN PROMOTE OR PARTNER WITH
ANOTHER SMALL BUSINESS WHILE PROVIDING YOUR
GUESTS WITH VALUE-ADDED ENHANCEMENTS?

HARVESTING IDEAS

ESKASONI CULTURAL JOURNEYS

Eskasoni Cultural Journeys is a walking tour on Goat Island, Nova Scotia. During tours, guests are guided through many different experiences, which can include a smudging ceremony, games, storytelling, teaching hunting, fishing, and basketry techniques, as well as making food over an open fire. This allows guests to experience a wide range of Indigenous experiences, all packaged into one, with a value-added enhancement of a free traditional snack of luskinigan and tea.



→ [WATCH VIDEO](#)

[Eskasoni Cultural Journeys Promotional Video](#)

ENAGRON ECOTOURISM VILLAGE

Enagron Ecotourism Village, located on the island of Crete in Greece, provides their guests with local tea, a coupon for their onsite spa, and a beautifully designed map of the region that shares a variety of scenic driving routes, hiking excursions, cycling routes, and village tours to celebrate and bring awareness to what the region has to offer. This small package of value-added enhancements creates a feeling that their hosts want them to have the best experience possible during their stay.

<https://www.enagron.gr/>



CULTIVATING YOUR IDEAS PLANTING SEEDS FOR YOUR EXPERIENCE MAKER

As an operator, you already know about the importance of good guest service. A touchpoint is a moment when a guest interacts with any part of your business. Every touchpoint is an opportunity to create a positive impression and exceed your (potential) guest's expectations. Here are some of the typical touchpoints that your guests may encounter:

- Online research about your experience
- Making a reservation
- Arrival at your business
- Being greeted
- Waiting for their experience to start
- Build up during the experience
- Peak of the experience
- Wind down of the experience
- Opportunity for reflection
- Farewell and invitation to return
- Memory upon completion

When designing the visitor experience, it's helpful to think about every touchpoint and how you can make it a positive experience.

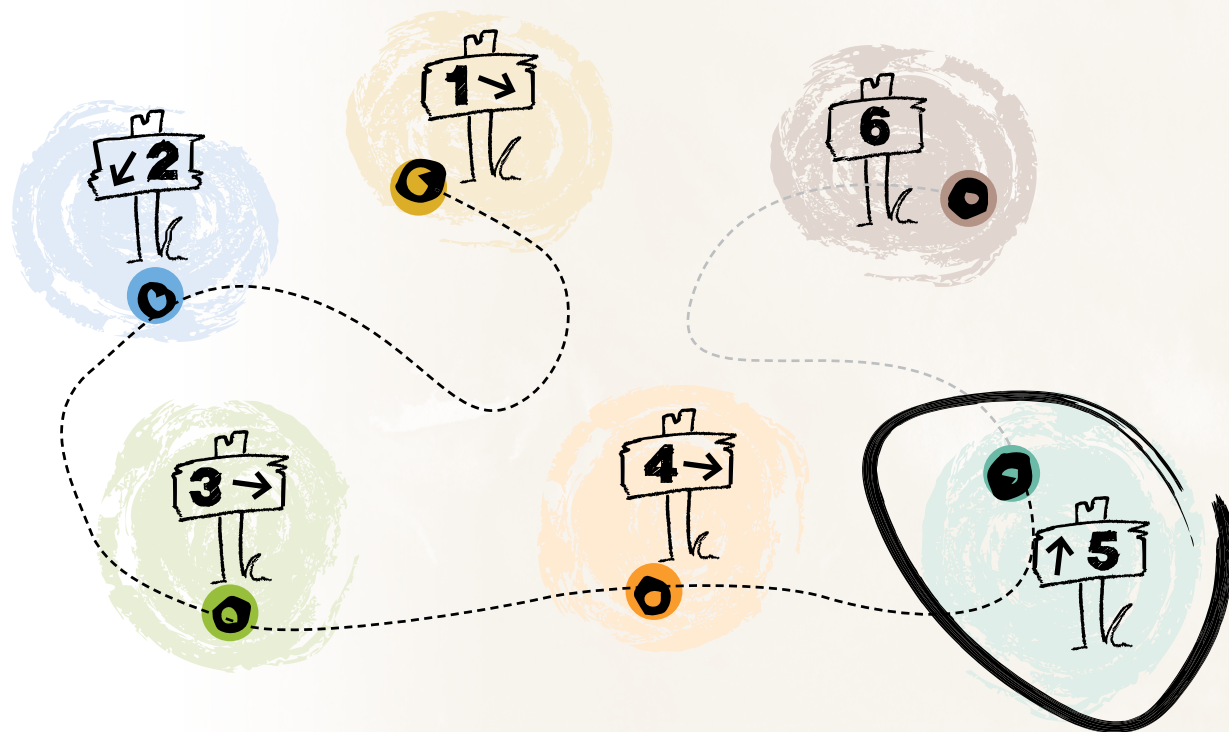


A DEEPER CONNECTION: THE SIXTH SENSE

REFLECTING ON YOUR INNER SELF

VIEWPOINTS

1. CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY: STAYING TRUE TO YOUR CULTURE
2. TELLING YOUR STORY: STAYING TRUE TO WHO YOU ARE



TRAIL ORIENTATION

This Trail builds upon lessons learned during your 1st and 2nd day of the 3-day experiential journey. As you move along this Trail with support from your Mentor, you will receive nourishing concepts and inspiration on how to develop a culturally authentic experience and how to encourage a storytelling approach. The concepts and ideas you will encounter on this Trail will provide you with insights that will allow you to continue your work as a cultural ambassador and confidently share your culture with your guests!



VIEWPOINT 1 - CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY: STAYING TRUE TO YOUR CULTURE



NOURISHING CONCEPTS

SHARING AUTHENTIC EXPERIENCES

Culturally authentic tourism is the balance between offering an experience that maintains the integrity of your community's culture and values while also having wide visitor appeal. In general terms, culturally authentic tourism can be described as:

"A tourism product, service, and/or experience that offers visitors a cultural experience in a manner that is appropriate, respectful, and true to the Indigenous culture being portrayed."

Visitors who desire an authentic Indigenous experience are often seeking the following:

- One-on-one interaction with Indigenous people in small, intimate groups
- To be actively involved in learning about cultures, traditions, arts, food, storytelling, and history
- To learn about Indigenous peoples' connection to the land and nature
- Participation in adventure, both physical and mental
- Unique experiences
- A personal experience rather than a mass-produced experience

Authentic Indigenous tourism experiences are therefore highly experiential and emotional, and are seen as providing the visitor with a different perspective on a destination and the ways of life of the people who live there. These types of experiences may allow your guests to tune into their sixth sense and enter a new world.

As you learned during the 1st day of your experiential journey, while cultural authenticity cannot be objectively measured or assessed, the following **4 Guiding Principles** should be adhered to to ensure authenticity and integrity within tourism products and experiences:

1. Guidance on **CULTURAL PROTOCOLS** is sought from Indigenous Elders or Knowledge Keepers.
2. Products and experiences provide **POSITIVE IMPACTS** for the Indigenous community and their land while minimizing negative impacts.
3. Communication and dialogue are **RESPECTFUL** of the culture being shared.
4. Provides visitor **ENGAGEMENT** including personal and non-personal interpretation that accurately presents Indigenous cultural knowledge, traditions, and/or languages of the past and present.



QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

WHAT ASPECTS OF YOUR COMMUNITY'S CULTURE ARE APPROPRIATE TO SHARE WITH VISITORS?

HOW SHOULD THESE ASPECTS BE SHARED?

WHEN SHOULD THESE ASPECTS BE SHARED?

WHO SHOULD THESE ASPECTS BE SHARED WITH?

HARVESTING IDEAS



SHARING AUTHENTIC CULTURAL EXPERIENCES IN HAWAII

In this video, Hawaiian tourism leaders share their thoughts and insights on the key aspects and the importance of sharing authentic cultural experiences with visitors of the Hawaiian Islands.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)

[HTA - Sharing Authentic Hawaiian Cultural Experiences](#)



VIEWPOINT 2 - TELLING YOUR STORY: STAYING TRUE TO WHO YOU ARE

NOURISHING CONCEPTS



THE POWER OF TELLING YOUR STORY

A large part of sharing authentic experiences is storytelling, and hearing a great story can impact our minds and our hearts. By sharing an impactful story, we have the power to tap into emotions and inspire and engage people, which is what creates the greatest memories. Everyone who steps foot into your experience will have different expectations, perceptions, and knowledge of Indigenous tourism, and engaging them in an impactful story will be sure to ignite a fire in their hearts, piquing their attention and curiosity, and allowing them to see another perspective.

Through the art of storytelling you also provide an opportunity to invite your guests into your world and connect on a deeper level, triggering the sixth sense.

KEYS TO TELLING AN ENGAGING STORY



Think about how the story will make people feel; make it personal



Have a clear objective & message for the story



Choose the right time and place to tell the story



Don't be afraid to use humor



Be yourself and have fun with it!



REFLECTING ON YOUR INNER-SELF TO FIND YOUR OWN VOICE

You have the important role of ensuring cultural authenticity as a cultural ambassador, sharing your community's and perhaps even family's story. There are many different ways to tell stories – it can be through artwork, dance, actions, music, and of course your voice. Always remember to be yourself and find how you want to invite others into your world. Think about what would be special to share with a guest to make people feel connected to you and comfortable. Your voice will end up being the voice of your brand – make it what you want it to be.

Remember that as an Indigenous person, it is likely that storytelling is an important component of your culture. Learn from what your friends, family, and ancestors have taught you.

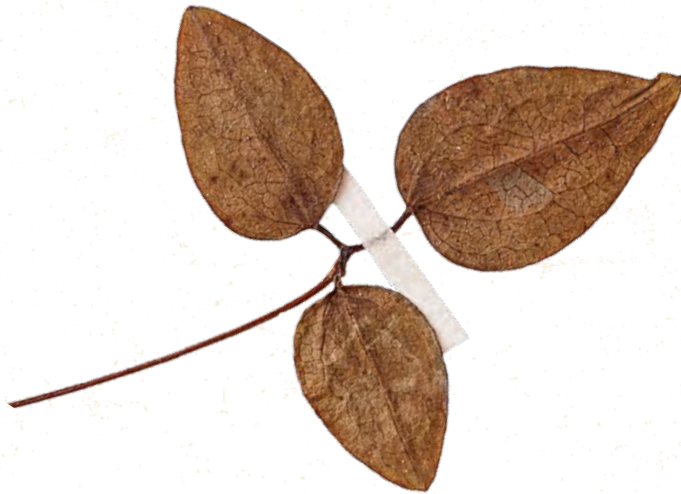
? QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

WHAT KNOWLEDGE DO YOU WANT YOUR GUESTS TO GO HOME WITH? AND HOW CAN YOU EMPHASIZE THAT THROUGH A STORY?

WHAT IS ONE OF YOUR FAVOURITE STORIES? AND WHY?

DO YOU HAVE A PERSONAL STORY YOU WANT TO SHARE?

HOW WILL YOU TELL YOUR STORY?



HARVESTING IDEAS



WE HAVE A STORY TO TELL - POWER OF INDIGENOUS TOURISM

This video highlights how sharing culture through Indigenous tourism allows for the preservation, adaptation, and sharing of culture, told from Indigenous people across Canada and the positive impacts they have seen firsthand.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)
[We Have a Story to Tell](#)

CULTIVATING YOUR IDEAS PLANTING SEEDS FOR YOUR EXPERIENCE MAKER

No one can share your authentic story except you. The same goes for anyone who you work with or is part of your business. Traditionally, stories are told by Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and community members who have earned the title of Storyteller. Think about the power of storytelling and the impact that it can have on the listener. As a storyteller, your stories...

- Act as a bridge to share information, to teach about rules and values of Indigenous communities.
- Lead to reflection and learning lessons about the land and people.
- Contribute to appreciation and deeper understanding of self and others.

Content source: Sharing Indigenous Stories Respectfully and Authentically, Lysandra Nothing, ITA

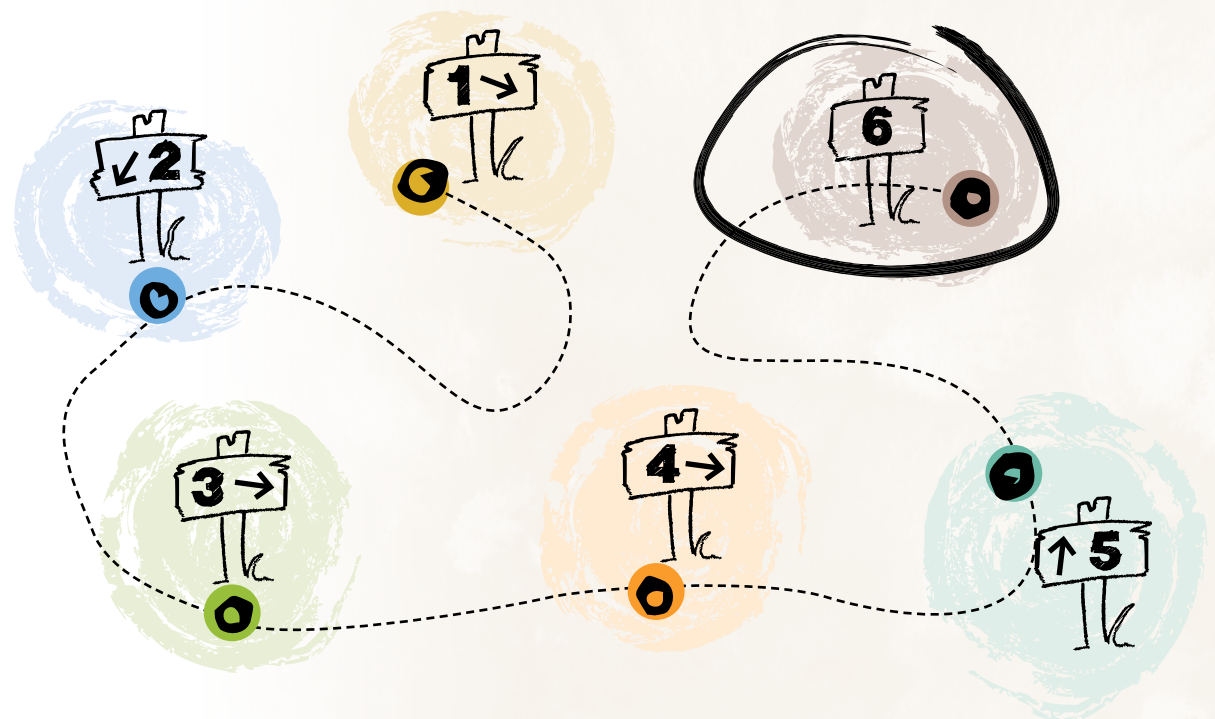


IGNITING YOUR VISION

BRINGING YOUR
EXPERIENCE TO LIFE

VIEWPOINTS

1. PARTNERSHIPS – WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER
2. THE CREATION OF A JOURNEY: FROM IDEA TO REALITY



TRAIL ORIENTATION

This Trail builds upon lessons learned during your 3rd day of the 3-day experiential journey. As you move along this Trail with support from your Mentor, you will receive nourishing concepts and inspiration on how to collaborate with partners to deliver and market your experience as well as putting your ideas into action to bring your experience to life. The concepts and ideas you will encounter on this Trail will allow you to confidently work through your Experience Maker with support from your mentor and later move to the final step of this program – Piloting Your Experience!





VIEWPOINT 1 - PARTNERSHIPS: WE ARE STRONGER TOGETHER

NOURISHING CONCEPTS

IT TAKES A COMMUNITY

Much like the saying 'it takes a community' to raise a child, it takes a community to enhance your experience and bring it to another level. Partnerships are important when it comes to creating cost-effective solutions for your tourism experience, as well as for promoting and creating awareness for your business. By aligning yourself with local, regional, provincial, and national Indigenous tourism partners, you will expand your market reach exponentially.

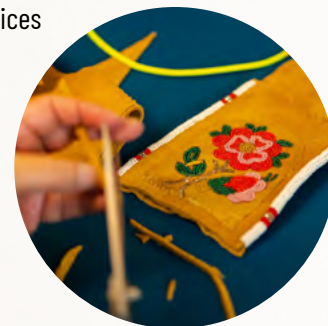
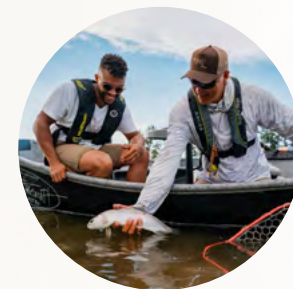
TIP: It is important to ensure that all partners involved are operating at the same quality levels and have the same visitor target markets in order to create a better experience for your visitors.

Packages can be created through partnerships with local businesses to create two-way benefits for the businesses involved. A simple partnership can be working with a local chef or catering company if you want to include food in your experience or working with a local artist or storyteller to add a value-added enhancement. Packages may include multiple types of products and services such as accommodations, transportation, food and beverage, land-based activities, festivals, cultural workshops, and more. Packages can be offered in different lengths such as a half or full day, a weekend getaway, or an extended trip with multiple locations and activities. Packaging your grassroots tourism experience by working with partners can lead to multiple benefits such as expanding market opportunities, cost savings through shared marketing costs, and increased profitability.



PARTNERSHIP IDEAS:

- Accommodations
- Activities
- Attractions
- Food & Beverage
- Transportation
- Festival/Event
- Artisans
- Entertainers
- Workshops
- Other products & services



? QUESTIONS TO PONDER:

WHAT ELEMENT(S) FROM THE
IDEAS ABOVE WOULD ALIGN
WITH AND ENHANCE YOUR
TOURISM EXPERIENCE?

WHO WOULD POTENTIALLY BE
A GOOD PARTNER(S) FOR THIS?



HARVESTING IDEAS



INDIGENOUS TOURISM ALBERTA - COME WALK WITH US

This powerful video by Indigenous Tourism Alberta provides a taste of the different types of experiences and businesses that you may be able to partner with. Also – notice how ITA tuned into the overarching theme of engaging the senses when marketing Indigenous experiences.



[WATCH VIDEO](#)

[Indigenous Tourism Alberta - Come Walk with Us](#)



TRAIL 6



VIEWPOINT 2 - THE CREATION OF A JOURNEY: FROM IDEA TO REALITY

NOURISHING CONCEPTS



REFLECTING ON THE SIX SENSES TRAILS

Congratulations, you've reached the end of the Six Senses Trails! Use the spaces to reflect on your new ideas and inspiration gained throughout this journey.

HANDS-ON EXPERIENCES

Engaging the Senses through Value-added Enhancements

SIGHTS & SOUNDS

Connecting to the Land

AROMAS & TASTES

Connecting through Our Food

A DEEPER CONNECTION

Cultural Authenticity & Telling Your Story

STRONGER TOGETHER

Partnerships & Packages

HARVESTING IDEAS



NEXT STEPS ON YOUR JOURNEY

Now that you have gathered ideas and inspirations along your journey, the next step is to make your experience a reality!

The supportive mindset and approach of the Six Senses Program, along with the knowledgeable guidance of your Mentor, will empower you to reveal your **potential** and to celebrate your **achievements** by delivering an exceptional Indigenous tourism experience in Alberta. This process will respect the uniqueness of who you are so you can **'grow as you go'** and thrive within your community and beyond.

This is your own journey that you are embarking on which will create a steppingstone toward sustainability and growth within your business. Based on the guidance and feedback received as you work with your Mentor on your Experience Maker, you will have to confidence to successfully deliver your new or enhanced experience.



Completing **YOUR EXPERIENCE MAKER** will offer the tools to guide you to the next step of this program: The Piloting Stage! Work with your Mentor to ensure you complete your Experience Maker which provides **tangible steps to bring your experience to life** in the following areas:

- Experience Visioning
- Resources & Operations
- Financials
- Guest Service
- Marketing
- Sustainability



CULTIVATING YOUR IDEAS PLANTING SEEDS FOR YOUR EXPERIENCE MAKER

As the final trail of your Six Senses Program Guide, we will leave you with a quote for reflection and inspiration as it relates to the concept of sustainability.

"We are humbled by the mystery of life, by the fragility of human beings.

Our kin – the trees, the animals, the land, and the waters – without us, they survive, without them, we perish.

Through our intimate relationship with nature, our stories, our languages, our ceremonies, our people, we will endure and adapt for generations to come.

Take care of the land, and the land will take care of you."

Source: Wall display, Indigenous Peoples Experience, Fort Edmonton Park, Edmonton, Alberta



ITA Six Senses Program
developed by:



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ecotourism
services

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