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**TOURISM PARTNERSHIP OF NIAGARA ANNOUNCES MAJOR FUNDING  
COMMITMENTS TO SUPPORT EVENTS AND PROGRAMS ACROSS THE REGION**

Niagara Region, ON – In support of Ontario Tourism Week celebrations from May 31 – June 6, 2015, Tourism Partnership of Niagara (“TPN”) was on hand at the St. Catharines Tourism Information Centre Wednesday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> to help kick-off the 2015 tourism season in Niagara.

“Through a mandate from the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to support the growth of an effective tourism economy for the Niagara Region, Tourism Partnership of Niagara is pleased to announce a major funding commitment of over \$1.5 million to support and sponsor major events and programs in the Region, “ said Janice Thomson, Chair Tourism Partnership of Niagara.

The Ontario Power Generation Winter Festival of Lights and ET Canada’s New Year’s Eve Celebration, considered blockbuster events for the Region are confirmed to receive sponsorship and funding support for their 2015-2016 initiatives.

“On the consumer side of the travel industry, blockbuster festivals and events that attract strong out of market visitation into the Region helps us compete and differentiate ourselves,” added Jody Larose, Executive Director Tourism Partnership of Niagara. “These events are strong enough to motivate travel to the Region and TPN is pleased to support and help them evolve as a strategic partner.”

“The ET Canada New Year’s Eve Celebration that is nationally broadcast, offers a valuable platform for the Region to showcase itself, and inspire future travel for those enjoying the broadcast from home,” she said.

“The renewed vision for the Ontario Power Generation Winter Festival of Lights is exciting and an important undertaking for the festival. It is a proven family memory maker and has tremendous potential to pull visitors in from across the province and along the US border market.”

This event funding along with TPN’s recent funding commitment of \$400,000 towards the Canadian Tourism Commission led Rendez-vous Canada 2015 in Niagara Falls, May 26-29, that brought together top international travel product buyers with Canadian sellers, further solidifies TPN’s commitment to tourism in the Region.

Other notable commitments include major contributions to sport across Niagara with sponsorship of IIHF’s U18 Women’s World Championships in St. Catharines from January 3-10, 2016.



“The Niagara Sport Commission and the IIHF’s U18 Women’s World Championships would like to thank the TPN for their generous support of the Championships. TPN funding has been an important component in securing the event for Niagara,” said Matt Hill, General Manager IIHF’s U18 Women’s World Championships. “Through the support of the TPN, we will be able to reach hockey fans across Canada, the United States, and Internationally and showcase Niagara as an emerging winter destination.”

Family friendly, Niagara Falls Victoria Centre BIA’s free death-defying, Summer of Thrills program from July 2 – September 7, 2015 and the Region’s Icewine festivities, which welcome visitors from across the globe over three weekends in January also benefit from TPN’s sponsorship funding program.

“Niagara is one of Ontario’s tourism showpieces and our government’s ongoing investment is helping raise the profile of this region even further. By providing high-quality experiences and hospitality for visitors, Tourism Partnership of Niagara is demonstrating a commitment to building on what is already an extremely vibrant, dynamic and competitive tourism area and our government is proud to partner with them.”

- the Honourable Michael Coteau, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport.

**About Tourism Partnership of Niagara:** The Tourism Partnership of Niagara (TPN) is a non-profit industry led organization funded by the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport. Our sub-regional partners Niagara Falls Tourism, Tourism Niagara-on-the-Lake, City of St. Catharines Department of Economic Development and Tourism, Twenty Valley Tourism Association and Niagara’s South Coast Tourism Association share our vision to become the #1 international tourism destination in North America. We will enhance and grow a highly competitive tourism region through visitor-centric strategies and build a strong relevant brand that maintains Niagara’s reputation as a world-renowned destination.

### **About ET CANADA NEW YEAR’S EVE CELEBRATION – Niagara Falls**

December 31, 2015

ET Canada’s New Year’s Eve is Canada’s largest annual New Year’s Eve celebration, which draws more than 60,000 people to Queen Victoria Park in Niagara Falls.

In partnership with The Niagara Parks Commission and the City of Niagara Falls, Shaw Media presents top recording artists against the backdrop of the iconic Niagara Falls. Last years show, hosted by ET Canada’s Rick Campanelli and Cheryl Hickey, welcomed superstars Keith Urban, Nick Jonas and Canadian performers, Shawn Mendes and Lights among others.



At midnight, the Falls are illuminated with a spectacular fireworks display presented by The Niagara Parks Commission. The nationally televised broadcast on December 31, 2014 garnered an audience of over 4.2 million viewers (2+, National) at 12am and helped secure Niagara's position as a world-class tourist destination.

[www.niagaraparks.com/niagara-falls-events/new-years-eve-niagara-falls.html](http://www.niagaraparks.com/niagara-falls-events/new-years-eve-niagara-falls.html)

### **About Ontario Power Generation WINTER FESTIVAL OF LIGHTS – Niagara Falls**

November 21, 2015 – January 31, 2016

The Ontario Power Generation Winter Festival of Lights is the largest illumination festival in Canada, transforming the city of Niagara Falls into a winter wonderland from November through January. Holiday light displays, Friday night fireworks and skating amongst the famous backdrop of the Falls has made the Winter Festival of Lights a tradition for visitors from near and far.

With over three million sparkling lights along a 5+km route, the festival is acknowledged by Frommer's Travel Guide as one of the world's best-decorated cities. It is recognized as an Ontario Festival of Distinction by Festivals & Events Ontario and listed as a Top 100 Internationally Known Events in North America by the American Bus Association.

[www.wfol.com](http://www.wfol.com)

### **About IIHF'S U18 WOMEN'S WORLD CHAMPIONSHIPS – St. Catharines**

January 3-10, 2016

The 2016 IIHF Ice Hockey U18 Women's World Championship is a showcase event for the future of women's hockey. For the first time in tournament history, The Ontario Women's Hockey Association, in partnership with the Niagara Sport Commission won the bid to host the world championships in the Niagara Region.

All 22 games will take place at the brand new Meridian Centre in St. Catharines from January 3-10, 2016. The tournament will bring together athletes from 8 participating countries including Canada, Czech Republic, Finland, France, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, and United States. Local economy impact of the tournament has been estimated at \$4.2 million to Niagara.

<http://www.hockeycanada.ca/en-ca/Team-Canada/Women/Under-18/2016-WC>

### **About SUMMER OF THRILLS – Clifton Hill, Niagara Falls**

July 2 – September 7, 2015

Summer of Thrills is a family-friendly, death-defying stunt show with daily performances at the top of Clifton Hill in Niagara Falls from July 2 – September 7, 2015.

Developed in partnership with Tourism Partnership of Niagara, Victoria Centre BIA and Niagara Falls Tourism, Summer of Thrills features three major aerial acts including "Wheel of



Fate" and "High Wire Sky Cycle". Each performance is preceded by fire and chainsaw jugglers from Zero Gravity Circus, a Toronto-based circus production company.

Shows are free to the public and run four times daily (Thursday thru Monday) at 2:00pm, 4:00pm, 6:00pm and 8:00pm.

<http://www.cliftonhill.com/events/summer-of-thrills>

### **About NIAGARA'S ICEWINE FESTIVITIES – Niagara Region**

January 15 – 31, 2016

From January 15 – 31, 2016, Niagara transforms into a winter wonderland in celebration of all things Icewine. Festivities in Niagara-on-the-Lake, Twenty Valley and Niagara Falls offer consumers the chance to taste and learn about this iconic Canadian wine.

Each weekend, one city plays host to a unique Icewine celebration including Niagara-on-the-Lake's Icewine Festival on historic Queen Street, Twenty Valley's Winter WineFest in Jordan Village and Niagara Falls' Icewine Festival at the Scotiabank Convention Centre.

#### *Niagara-on-the-Lake*

Niagara's historic Queen Street transforms itself into an Icewine Village as 26 Wineries of Niagara-on-the-Lake team up with renowned Signature Kitchen Chefs to offer savoury and sweet Icewine-inspired dishes and pour Canada's liquid gold. Unique events including Flash & Panache; an Icewine cocktail competition and outdoor dining experience, White on Ice encourage guests to return year after year.

#### *Jordan Village, Twenty Valley*

The Twenty Valley Winter WineFest takes over Jordan Village with a fun-filled street party that shines the spotlight on the area's VQA red, white and sparkling wines and Icewines. Locally inspired dishes, celebrity chef demonstrations, winemakers' challenges, fashion shows and an unforgettable evening street party round out the festival program.

#### *Niagara Falls*

Live music, over 15 wineries and some of Niagara's best Chefs come together at the Scotiabank Convention Centre to celebrate award winning Icewines from across the region.

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