

Society for
Incentive
Travel
Excellence

site Canada

SITElines



SITE Canada July Chapter Meeting
Photos courtesy of The Image Commission

Welcome to the July edition of 'SITElines' your SITE Canada Newsletter

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PLEASE NOTE: The SITE Canada office has moved.
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'SITElines' is published six times a year to keep you informed of what's happening in Canada and around the world, what's new, upcoming events and linkages to members and other SITE Chapters. Please contact Sandra Eagle, Director of Communications with feedback, suggestions or comments - sandra@ignitemag.ca

published July 25, 2014



President's Message

Summer is Flying By

We just held an amazing members only event at Ravine Vineyard amongst the vines on a beautiful summer evening. Thanks to Nicola and Paul Harber for being such gracious hosts.

Talk is already trending about our annual golf tournament, sold out for both attendees and sponsorship opportunities almost two months early. Congrats to John Crowe and his committee.

Your Board continues to focus on our "theme" of collaboration with many activities with SITE and our fellow Chapters. John Crowe, vice-president golf, recently joined our sister chapter, SITE Florida & Caribbean as they launched the Gain InSite program. Maria da Cunha, director sponsorship, is speaking for SITE Mexico on outbound incentives and how destination decisions are made at an upcoming conference in early August. Vlad Haltigin shared our best practises with other Chapter Leaders at IMEX Frankfurt.

We are also collaborating with SITE Texas Chapter to offer a Chapter Leader joint meeting before IMEX America in Las Vegas in October. All of these initiatives allow us to learn from one another with the focus on continuing to elevate the SITE brand internationally. As discussed at Ravine, we all need to work together to communicate the value of not only SITE as a peer organization, but also the value of incentives. To quote the new SITE branding. "Incentive Travel. Business Results."

As we continue to work with our global chapter peers, we also understand that we need to take collaboration to the next step, which in my mind is engagement. How do we ensure that all of the best practise sharing is offering value to our members, suppliers, volunteers, other Chapters and SITE as a whole? How do we build engagement amongst our Chapter members and beyond? Email me at jglynn@meetingencore.com to share your feedback.

"One must maintain a little bit of summer, even in the middle of winter." Henry David Thoreau

So get out there and enjoy your Summer!

Jennifer Glynn
President, SITE Canada

Home Sweet Home



Photos courtesy of The Image Commission

Geotracking, story time, delicious farm-to-table dining and a roaring bon fire... the July chapter meeting was like a summer vacation at a cottage. Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery was host to this month's chapter meeting, providing SITE members and their guests with a magical experience that demonstrated how impactful an incentive close to home can be.

As incentive travel planners we spend so much time hunting for that next great destination that we overlook all the memorable experiences we can build into programs right here in Canada!

During our educational time, in the cozy atmosphere of the Ravine barrel cellar, SITE Canada president Jennifer Glynn interviewed Lynne Coyne, senior events consultant, retail markets from Manulife. Coyne provided her insight on the value of hosting incentives right here in Canada.



Program budgets within many corporations are remaining flat, while the cost of airfare is rising significantly leaving less available funds to spend on a program once guests are on the ground. This creates a real challenge for planners as they search for locations that will wow their guests and provide unexpected experiences. Coyne highlighted how fortunate we are in Canada to have destinations that essentially provide up to four options based on our changing seasons. A program based in Whistler, BC for instance, is very different in the summer versus the winter. Both seasons offer an incentive quality destination with unique experiences you can't have anywhere else, yet are completely different depending on the time of year.

Budget management can also benefit from staying close to home as you alleviate the unknown factor of exchange rate fluctuations. Coyne provided an example of a program she did in Europe this year. The Euro had changed by three per cent plus her airfare increased significantly from the estimates done the year prior, resulting in a program budget that was stretched to the limits and required changes to her guest's experience on the ground.

Planners also have to consider each guest's travel experience. Travelling within Canada is made easy without the stresses of passport renewals, and with a strategically selected destination, most guests don't need to travel too far. Coyne says participants don't want to be away from family too long. As workloads increase, family time is important and valued. An incentive program that stays close to home and even better, can include the family either during the program or post-program as an extended vacation is very well received.



So what can we do to highlight the value of hosting incentives closer to home? Debbie Miller, account director, Canadian corporate from Tourism Toronto pointed out that events such as the Pan Am Games and the Microsoft convention help to raise Toronto's profile, highlighting the uniqueness of the destination. She has seen greater incentive traffic over the years any time the city has been featured on a global scale.

Planners also need to rely more on tourism boards, DMO's and DMC's to discover the unique experiences that can be done in the location of interest. We are always looking for that next "wow" factor, that memorable experience that was completely unexpected and often times something that as an ordinary tourist or local resident would never get to do. Local industry partners can help you discover these.

And finally, industry suppliers and planners should continue to participate in trade shows and industry events to build stronger relationships and connect with each other so that when the opportunity comes up, you can look at the possibility of designing an incentive program closer to home.

Thank you once again to Ravine Vineyard Estate Winery for setting the stage for a truly unforgettable evening in the beautiful Niagara region.

Melaya Horsten

Telling Our Story: New SITE brand positioning and logo

site Canada

In a play to strengthen brand positioning and tell our association's story, SITE has undergone a brand re-positioning to represent the incentive travel industry and its members. SITE will now be known as the Society for Incentive Travel Excellence. SITE's last rebrand was over six years ago. The change from executives to excellence represents a more inclusive name to represent all of our members and tell our story, which is to reward excellent performance with incentive travel experiences that exceed expectations.

Society for
Incentive
Travel
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In the new wordmark logo, the "i" and the "t" have been raised to represent incentive travel, and the letter "i" is a circle, rather than a square, to represent a globe as well as a person's head, to suggest a community of individuals. The new tagline, Incentive Travel. Business Results. connects incentive travel with its primary purpose of driving business results for those companies that properly invest in it.

Please note SITE Canada will be rolling out the new logos and branding on an ongoing basis as we receive new materials from SITE. Letterhead, envelopes and other printed material will remain with the previous logo until supplies are depleted. We will also be updating the website within the next two weeks.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the new brand and logos please contact the SITE Canada office at office@site-canada.org.

Sandra Eagle
Director Communications

Adventures in Rotterdam



This year, educational sessions at the global conference will align with the new SITE curriculum plan. The four subject areas include performance management; selling to the incentive market; managing incentive travel programs and experience management. The sessions will utilize a number of experiential learning environments including panels, case studies and workshops with keynote speakers to give attendees practical takeaways to increase business and enhance their professional careers.

Attendees at the SITE Global Conference this November can scope out a new SITE initiative with experiential tours in Rotterdam and surrounding areas. Prior to the actual conference, tours of two to four hours in duration will visit four distinct areas of the Netherlands. Discover the sights of Rotterdam, a modern architectural marvel and Europe's largest harbour. Feast your eyes on the largest painting in the world on The Hague tour, the royal residence of Queen Beatrix. A half-day visit to Delft immerses you in the world of Vermeer and the famous Delftware pottery works. Finally, take in the historic windmills of Kinderdijk. Tours are limited to a maximum number of 49 attendees, and are assigned on a first-come first-served basis. You can pre-select your tour once you have registered for the Global Conference.

To register for the SITE Global conference: <http://www.siteglobal.com/p/cm/ld/fid=347>

Sandra Eagle
Director Communications

Welcome New SITE Canada Members

A very warm welcome to our newest SITE members:

Sharon Fleary	Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration
Mary Sistilli	JW Marriott The Rosseau Muskoka Resort & Spa
Melissa Truong	Rogers Communications

SITE Canada Scholarships

Financial assistance to SITE Canada members and Young Leaders

Are you interested in attending the SITE International conference in Rotterdam, The Netherlands but struggling with the costs? SITE Canada will provide \$3,000 towards travel and registration fees for the 2014 conference to two qualified members and one qualified Young Leader. See the SITE Canada website for details: <http://www.sitecanada.org/index.php?page=scholarship>

Important Deadlines for Member and Young Leader Scholarships:

August 8, 2014 - Application submission deadline

August 20, 2014 - Scholarship winners to be announced

November 14-17, 2014 - SITE Global Conference in Rotterdam, The Netherlands

In addition to the Global conference, student scholarships are also available for up to nine students to support some expenses for those interested in attending SITE Education Day on October 29, 2014 in Toronto.

Important Deadlines for Student Scholarships:

September 19, 2014 Submission deadline

September 26, 2014 Winners announced

Pam Graham

Immediate Past President

Upcoming Events...Save the Date

Monday, August 18, 2014

SITE Canada Golf Tournament - SOLD OUT
Angus Glen Golf Course, Markham

Wednesday, September 24, 2014

Chapter Meeting
TBA

Wednesday, October 29, 2014

SITE Canada Education Day
St. James Cathedral Centre, Toronto
Registration Now Open

Tuesday, December 16, 2014

SITE Canada Holiday Social
Hotel InterContinental Toronto Centre

SITE Canada's ICE (Incentive Creative Excellence) Awards



SITE Canada's ICE (Incentive Creative Excellence) Awards were launched in May. Be a part of SITE Canada history as the premiere awards are presented to SITE members who excel in delivering superlative incentive travel programs and showcase destination excellence. The entry forms are available at <http://www.sitecanada.org/iceawards>

Submit an incentive program or destination initiative that you are proud of and be the first to win this prestigious industry award. Entries are due September 30th and the awards will be presented on October 29th at SITE Canada Education Day.

Young Leaders Reception

The SITE Canada Young Leaders Committee is excited to host the next generation of incentive travel professionals at our Young Leader reception during IncentiveWorks. We will be gathering at the Loose Moose (across from the Convention Centre) at 5:00 pm on Tuesday, August 19th for cocktails and refreshments. You do not need to be a SITE member to join us, so if you're new to the industry and would like to build your network, please RSVP at youngleaders@sitecanada.org. If you know someone new to the industry and would like us to extend an invitation to them, please let us know at youngleaders@sitecanada.org. There is no cost to attend, but you must be on the guest list in order to get in.

A special thanks to our sponsor, Marriott Canada, for partnering with us on this great event!

Diane Alexander

Director Young Leaders

Marriott
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SITE Canada Gives the Gift of Sport



SITE Canada's annual golf tournament is just around the corner and is already SOLD OUT! If you signed up already and have a spot on the course, it is guaranteed to be an amazing day. Networking opportunities and a chance to win some great prizes is only part of the fun, we will also be golfing for a cause...kids!

This year we are extremely excited to partner with KidSport. At KidSport, they believe that no child should be left on the sidelines and all should be given the opportunity to experience the positive benefits of organized sports. Removing financial barriers that prevent kids from playing organized sport is their main objective. Their tag line says it all: "So ALL Kids Can Play!"

In 2013, KidSport distributed \$6 million in grants providing children across Canada the opportunity to play organized sport. The grants dispersed enabled more than 57,000 kids from coast-to-coast to get in the game and learn valuable life skills associated with sports participation. In the last ten years, KidSport has provided over \$37 million in grants to Canadian children.

We will be doing some exciting new fundraising efforts at the tournament this year so come ready to play, so that kids can too!

Trina Arjoon

**Thank you to our 2014
Strategic Partners**

Sister Chapter SITE Florida & Caribbean Launch Gain InSite



From left to right: Karen Farquharson - marketing manager - Miami Air, Wichita Villarces - president - ECO Destination Management, Paula Carlson - national sales manager - Turnberry Isle Miami, John Crowe - president - Metracon, Mayte Albaladejo - sales and marketing manager - Visit Orlando, Benoit Sauvage - president - Connect Travel DMC

I was honoured to attend the SITE Florida and Caribbean's chapter meeting prior to AIBTM in Orlando, Florida on June 10th where they launched Gain InSite, an initiative created by SITE Canada last year. Gain InSite encourages members to source, propose and buy services from fellow SITE members. This is the second chapter to launch Gain InSite.

Momentum is obviously building for this initiative and it is both exciting and rewarding to be asked for support from our chapter as it rolls out. Stay tuned for launches from other chapters around the world who want to strengthen business ties with SITE members and realize the ROI of their membership.

John Crowe
VP Golf



Are dietary concerns the new black? When food allergies are not trendy.

I write this after having been badly “glutened” at a recent dinner (a non-SITE event). Each ingredient was checked and verified, yet something still made it into my food. This is not rare. Anecdotally, my reaction is unreasonably severe and systemic, with a full body response to my personal poison. Translation: if a molecule of gluten so much as contemplates getting near my food, I react in almost every bodily system, including a crushing headache, unsightly skin rash and extreme stomach upset. Then, the scariest symptoms arise – swelling and tingling of my lips or throat plus wheezing and coughing. These are clinically coupled by panic and denial, a potentially deadly combination.

The aftermath, for some, is not alleviated by treatment in hospital, unfortunately. I suffer for weeks from autoimmune effects such as brain fog, insomnia, fatigue, temporary asthma and arthritis that attacks my joints. The worst part? It escalates every time. The second worst part? I am a foodie.

My own love/hate relationship with food is outlined simply to underscore the importance of getting it right. Allergy sufferers are not trying to be trendy. It is a three-times-a-day cause for immense distress. I am ‘that’ person at the table.

One might suggest simply avoiding the offensive ingredient, which is, of course, the goal. However, misinformation and cross-contamination are prevalent. And in our industry, avoidance of all social gatherings, which inevitably include food, is an unrealistic tactic. Large group experiences are more treacherous than intimate affairs, due to the sheer volume of meals being made. Anonymity with an allergy is not a possibility. We do not have the luxury of enjoying a meal without hyper-vigilance as each dish is presented to us, asking again and again if the food is safe. Often, there is an unintended communication breakdown somewhere between the planner, chef, and service team. And sometimes, it is sheer carelessness.

So what can be done?

Firstly, let’s understand that issues with food are increasing. Although costly, time-consuming, and frightening for the staff, guests, and especially the attendees with dietary concerns, best practices are needed to minimize the potential for error. Education is paramount and effective communication is essential.

In planning and catering capacities, you should solicit attendees’ allergens during the registration process, which will undoubtedly result in a long list of required substitutions. But do not stop there. Be sure to establish a clear methodology from menu design through execution. Each bite of food must be uncontaminated every time. Diligence and awareness of the very real consequence of food allergies also fall under the customer experience.

There are varying degrees of dietary concerns. It is important to know the distinction, especially when a true allergy is involved, but all should be treated as carefully as the next. Skepticism has no place. Do not assume it is only a preference.

Some express **lifestyle choices or religious and cultural modifications**, like kosher, halal, vegetarian or vegan requirements, to name a few. Others represent those with mid-level **intolerances and sensitivities** who may not encounter a potentially deadly reaction, but will, nonetheless, be made to feel extremely uncomfortable when something containing lactose or gluten is ingested, for instance. These are both valid.

The pinnacle is a food **allergy**, which involves the likelihood of *anaphylactic shock* – the official list includes seafood/shellfish, peanuts, tree nuts, sesame, eggs, milk, soy, wheat, sulphites, and mustard, among a myriad of other potential causes. If not caught early enough, anaphylaxis, characterized by the sudden and severe reaction of two or more bodily systems, can be fatal. It requires an immediate injection of epinephrine and dose of antihistamine, followed by an ambulance trip to the hospital for monitoring while on potent medication – most certainly not the intended outcome of a meal out. *Life and death can be a matter of minutes.*

If you suffer from food-related issues, please help your planning, culinary and service teams keep you safe by thoroughly communicating your triggers in advance, including hidden ingredients. (Those of you who are diligent and still receive the wrong food are gesturing angrily right now, I know!) Sometimes modifications are not possible on-site, especially when abroad. Carry an allergy card that can be given out as many times as needed and have it translated prior to travel. If prone to anaphylaxis, wear a piece of medical jewellery and carry a wallet card with allergen information and emergency instructions. Always have current medication with you. Establish a buddy system – find a trusted friend or colleague who will watch for the signs and react according to your personalized emergency plan. You may not be thinking clearly in the throes of a reaction.

Although it may seem bleak, we at SITE Canada are doing it right. I enjoyed a fabulous meal, entirely devoid of my poison, at both the Spring Social and the July Chapter Meeting. Organizers took the utmost precaution to deliver flavourful dishes, free of unsafe ingredients. My hope is for this to become the norm, not the exception.

Wishing you safe eating. I look forward to breaking (gluten-free) bread with you at the next occasion...

Some helpful resources:

<http://www.anaphylaxis.ca/>

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/securit/allerg/fa-aa/index-eng.php>

<http://www.celiac.ca/>

<http://allergicliving.com/category/travel-with-allergies/>

Hayley Bishop, CMP

President Elect

Catering Liaison, event attendee, gourmand and food allergy sufferer

Spotlight ON SITE Members



Sharon Fleary
Program Coordinator
Ministry of Citizenship & Immigration/International Trade

I moved to Canada from Trinidad in June 1987, newly separated and needing a change.

I worked a variety of different jobs, hotels doing night audit, switchboard operator at Hospital for Sick Children and as an account executive at Trans America Financial.

I have been with the Ontario Government, International Trade Branch since November 2005, as an administrative assistant to the manager of International Markets.

The job and title has evolved into so much more now than when I started, I am more involved with the area directors for the geographical areas that we cover, assisting with their programs and arranging and selecting venues, hotels and managing the events. I am also going to be more involved from start to finish of a program in South America, as well as Mexico, Latin America and the Caribbean.

The International Trade Branch assists Ontario companies to sell their goods and services worldwide, by taking them to trade shows around the world to exhibit their products and arranging one-on-one business meetings and receptions with foreign companies in the same sector. We also do market development and other trade initiatives, such as incoming buyer programs and seminars. We work closely with the Canadian consulates and other partners worldwide and we are the lead department for the Premier and minister's trade missions.

I decided to join SITE Canada primarily because I am interested in getting CMP certified and also the networking and educational opportunities. I really enjoy my job, it is a good feeling when an event really comes together and I love meeting people. I believe that being a member of SITE will play a part in meeting all my objectives.

SITE Canada Education Day 2014 - Registration now Open

Join us on Wednesday, October 29, 2014 at St. James Cathedral Centre for a relevant, engaging and informative day of education. Don't miss out on conversations on industry hot topics with a great line up of industry experts and engaging speakers.

Learn more about some of our speakers:

Patricia Kerr, AVP Meeting & Event Planning, Nationwide. With over 25 years of strategic meeting experience, Patricia Kerr is well-versed in C-suite conversations with insurance executives from event concept to delivery and what makes it all come together. Kerr will breakdown the client perspective to help attendees understand the "client's views" on incentive travel.

Ron Tite, Branding & Creativity Expert. Brought to you by our sponsor, Speaker's Spotlight, Ron Tite is named one of the "Top 10 Creative Canadians" by *Marketing* magazine. Tite will address a variety of topics relevant to the event industry from branding, corporate strategy, creativity and social media. Tite's presentation is guaranteed to have you laughing while you learn.

Back by popular demand, **Michael Dominguez, MGM Resorts International** will start our day with hotel industry insights and how it impacts meetings and incentives.

Stay tuned for more exciting education topics to come....

Registration is now open, sign up early, don't delay as this event always sells out. Register now at: <http://www.sitecanada.org/index.php?mact=EventsManager,cntnt01,detail,0&cntnt01articleid=53&cntnt01origid=15&cntnt01returnid=66>

Mark SITE Education Day in your calendars:

October 29th, 2014

St. James Cathedral Centre
65 Church St, Toronto, ON M5C 2E9

Registration & Continental Breakfast: 8:45 – 9:00 am
Sessions: 9:00 am – 5:00 pm
Reception: 5:00 pm – 6:00 pm

SITE members are encouraged to bring along gently-used sleeping bags, winter coats, hats and mittens for donations to the drop-in program at St. James Cathedral. Every Tuesday afternoon the Cathedral Centre hosts a community drop-in program.

Among the services provided to some of the city's most vulnerable people are a health clinic, medical referral, foot care, hygiene products and counselling.

Kate Short

IMEX Impressions Frankfurt 2014

“There is an air of optimism and a freshness to IMEX that is heartening.” —United Nations World Tourism Organization.

IMEX 2014 Frankfurt was bigger and better than ever, with 60 new exhibitors including Rwanda, Azerbaijan and Georgia, with several countries coming back with much larger, prominent and elaborate stands including Bulgaria, Romania and India.

Upon entering the hall, you are confronted with what I call a wall of opportunity; you can almost feel overwhelmed, and succumb to a “where do I start” mentality, but I found that the pre-set appointment program is very strong it really helps you to focus your time while at the show. You’ve got 24 to 30 time slots in three days that you can effectively use to scope out your preferred suppliers.

Essentially with over 2,000 exhibitors you really need to know where you’re going. The show itself is very strong. The feeling I came away with is that the industry is saying there is confidence and that business is coming back, but in different ways. People are more demanding in terms of value, planners are now beginning to book well into 2015 and 2016. While individual groups vary in size from previous programs, there is a high demand for quality at better value.

I would say that there’s a really good feeling of optimism but it must be tempered with budget realities on a client by client basis. Corporations are looking to maintain the positive impact of incentives on their people and reward outstanding performance. Some companies were saying that budgets are flat or declining but the demand for the same quality is still there. The overall impression is a much more impressive show than ever before, which is good for business confidence and IMEX itself.

On behalf of SITE Canada I attended the chapter leaders meeting. Our chapter is well positioned and respected for its strong programs, action oriented experiences and our Gain InSite program. Our connection with the BEICC is also important as it shows our links within the events industry and relevant government organizations to promote the importance of incentives as a boost to the tourism industry and to the general Canadian economy.

Vlad Haltigin CITE
Director at Large

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