

# EXPERIENCE COMOX VALLEY

2023-24 Visitor Profile



World Leisure  
Centre of Excellence  
@  
VANCOUVER ISLAND UNIVERSITY



Experience Comox Valley is located on the unceded traditional territory of the Puntledge, E'iksan and K'ómoks peoples. The World Leisure Centre of Excellence at VIU is located on the unceded ancestral traditional territory of the Snuneymuxw First Nation.

Experience Comox Valley funded this research with 4VI (Tourism Association of Vancouver Island).

**To contact 4VI**

Attention: Experience Comox Valley  
201-1934 Boxwood Road,  
Nanaimo, BC V9S 5Y2  
Info@experiencecomoxvalley.ca  
experiencecomoxvalley.ca

**To contact the World Leisure Centre of Excellence at VIU**

Dept. of Recreation & Tourism Management  
Building 250 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Vancouver Island University  
900 – Fifth Street  
Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5S5

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## **Introduction**

The Comox Valley is the traditional territory of the Puntledge, E'iksan and K'ómoks peoples of the K'ómoks Nation. Stretching from Union and Fanny Bays in the south to Black Creek and Saratoga in the north. The main communities and attractions in the Valley are the Town of Comox, the City of Courtenay, the Village of Cumberland, Royston, Merville, Mount Washington, 19 Wing Comox, and Strathcona and Miracle Beach Provincial Parks. The Valley can be accessed via the BC Ferries from Powell River, the Comox Valley Airport (YQQ), the Salish Sea, and highways 19 and 19A. There are also several marinas that boaters can use to access the Valley.

This report provides the results of a visitor profile study conducted from the summer of 2023 to the spring of 2024. It provides a socio-demographic profile of study participants, their perceptions of the Comox Valley, and their travel behaviours while visiting.

## **Methods**

Data for this study were collected using an online questionnaire that participants could access on mobile devices or computers. Multiple approaches to convenience sampling were used to recruit participants, including (a) face-to-face intercepts at key visitor locations and events, (b) ballot drop-boxes at core attractions and the Visitor Centre, and (c) social media advertisements. This resulted in 432 people starting the survey; however, once data were cleaned and participants with less than 50% of the questions answered were removed, the final sample was 356.

## **Data Analysis**

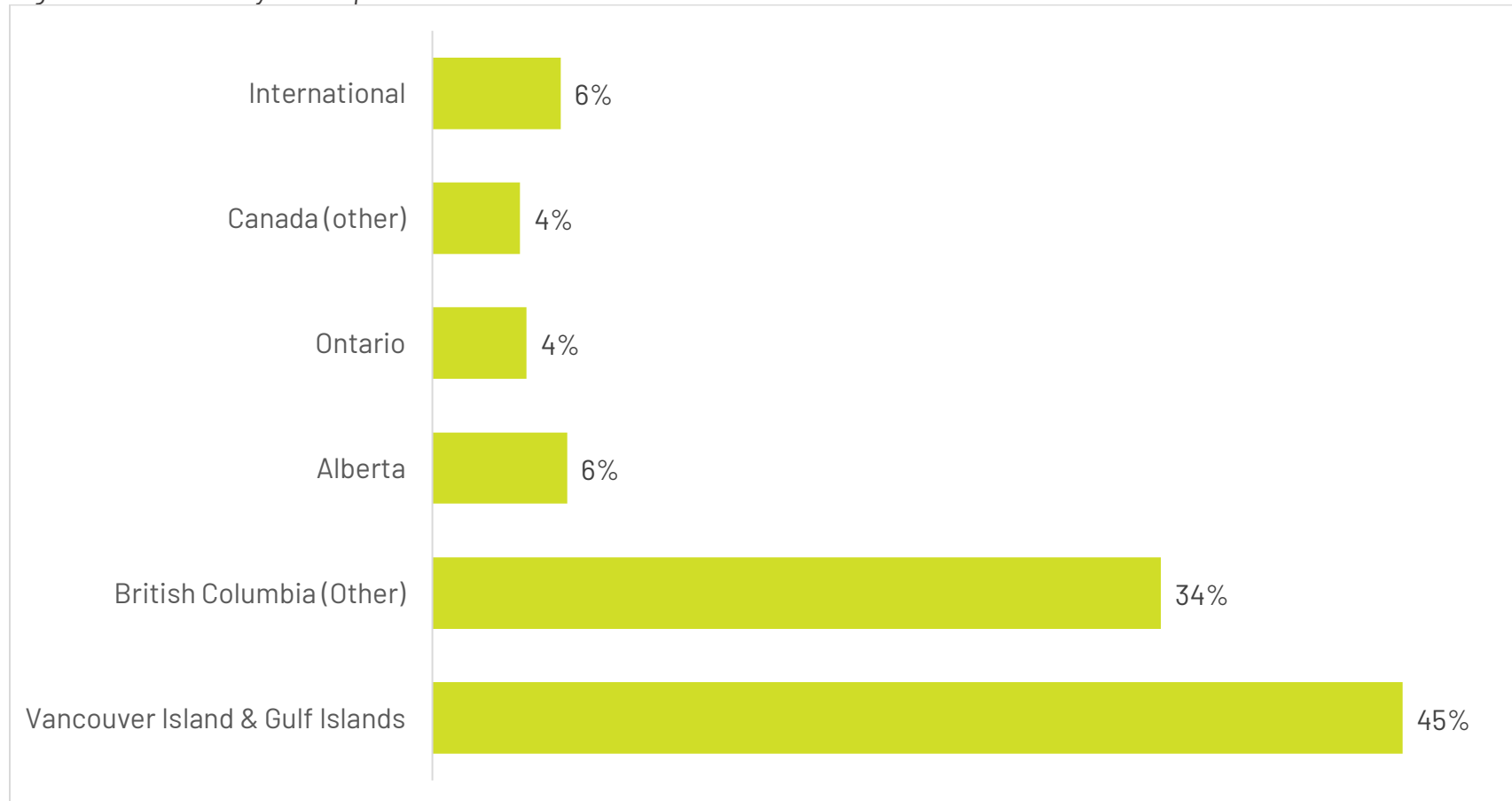
Before analysis, data were prepared by removing only partially completed questionnaires and creating an age variable based on birth year and 10-year age groups. Analysis was conducted using SPSS and focused on exploring visitor characteristics followed by travel preferences and behaviours.

### **Sample Description**

Sixty-three percent of the sample were women, 32% were men, 1% were non-binary, and 4% preferred not to say. Seventy-nine percent of visitors were from British Columbia, with 45% from Vancouver Island or the Gulf Islands and 34% from the rest of BC. Albertans (6%), Ontarians (4%), and international visitors (6%) accounted for the next largest groups of visitors (Figure 1). Participants ranged from 19 to 83 years old, averaging 49 years. Approximately 32% of participants were 60 or older, and 30% were under 40 (Table 1).



Figure 1: Where Study Participants Were From





*Table 1: Participants' Ages (Grouped)*

Age (Years)	Percent
<20	.6
20s	11.5
30s	18.2
40s	21.7
50s	16.2
60s	22.6
70s	8.3
80s	1.0



**Results**

The results of this study are split into three primary sections: visitors' preferences and behaviours and the Net Promoter Score. Preferences were explored by asking about the importance of different destination attributes and features. The behaviours explored included how visitors accessed the Valley, where they stayed, what they did, and how long they stayed in different locations. The final section presents the Net Promoter Score<sup>1</sup>, which measures the likelihood that visitors will recommend visiting the Comox Valley. When possible, each section includes a follow-up analysis to determine whether day-trippers (n=68) significantly differed from overnight visitors (n=271).

**Visitor Preferences**

This section includes an analysis of data focused on why visitors travelled to the Comox Valley and the importance of several destination attributes. The first sub-section focuses on the stated purpose of their trip and compares day-trippers and overnight visitors. The second sub-section compares the importance of different destination attributes and compares the responses of day-trippers and overnight visitors.

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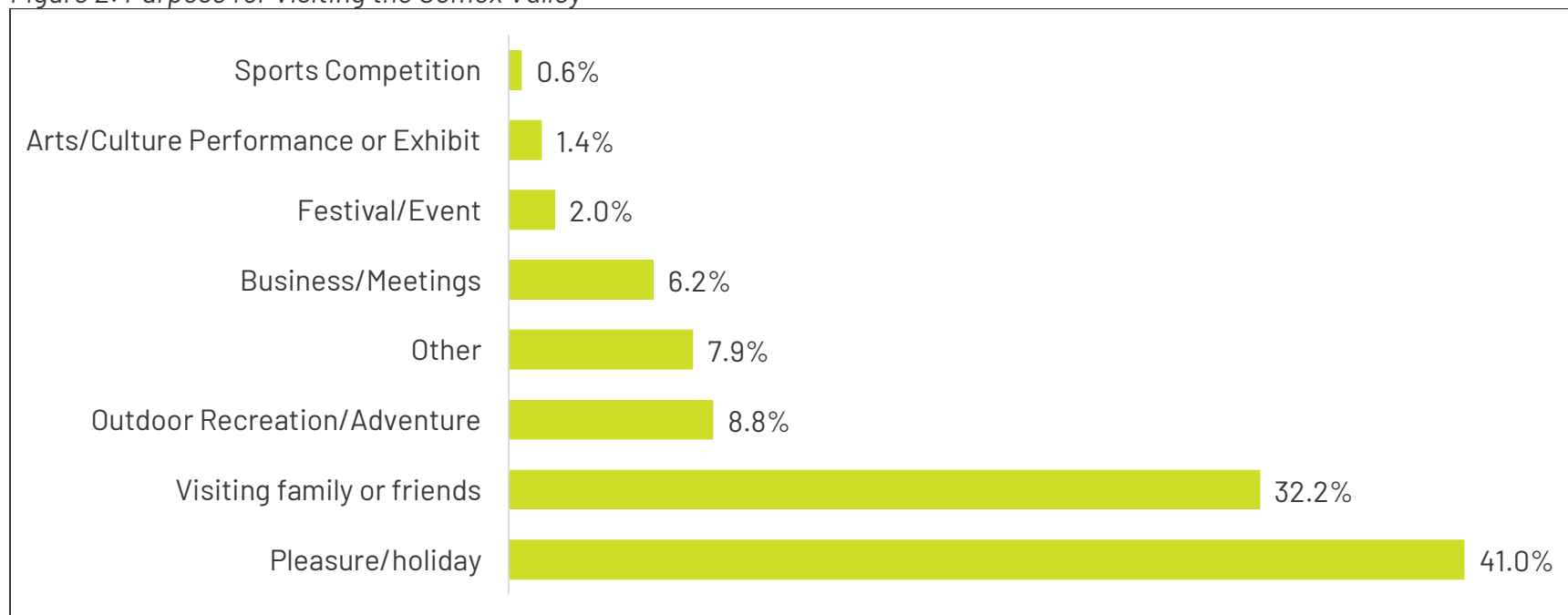
<sup>1</sup>[Destination BC's Summary of How to Measure Net Promoter Score](#)



### The Purpose of Visitors' Travel to Comox Valley

Over 70% of visitors travelled the Comox Valley for a *holiday* (40.7%) or to *visit family or friends* (32.2%). *Outdoor recreation and adventure activities* (8.8%) and *other* (7.9%) were the next largest groups based on purpose (Figure 2). A review of the *other* group revealed that visitors were (a) attending family events (e.g., weddings and funerals), (b) shopping (e.g., Costco), or (c) considering moving to Vancouver Island or the Comox Valley.

Figure 2: Purpose for Visiting the Comox Valley



The comparison of day-trippers (n=67) and overnight visitors (n=271) revealed a statistically significant difference between the groups  $X^2(7, N = 338) = 28.4, p < .01$ , with a greater percentage of day-trippers travelling (16.4%) for business than overnight visitors (3.7%) and a greater percentage of overnight visitors (34.7%) visiting friends and family than day-trippers (19.4%). Table 2 shows the percentage of day-trippers and overnight visitors for each purpose category.





*Table 2: Percentage of Day-Trippers and Visitors Within Each Purpose Group*

Purpose	Overnight Visitors	Day-Trippers
Holidays	42.8	35.8
Visiting Friends or Relatives	34.7	19.4
Outdoor Recreation/Adventure	8.9	8.9
Other	5.9	14.9
Business/Meetings	3.7	16.4
Festival/Event	1.5	2.1
Arts/Culture Performance or Exhibit	1.8	0.0
Sports Competition	0.7	0.0

### **The Importance of Destination Attributes for Visitors' Travel to Comox Valley**

Participants were asked to indicate how important a variety of destination features and attributes were to their decision to visit. Importance was measured on a five-point scale ranging from *not at all important (1)* to *very important (5)*. Average scores of 3.5 and higher can be interpreted as important, 2.4 and lower as unimportant, and 2.5 to 3.4 as neutral. The highest-ranked attributes were *parks and public spaces (4.3)*, *overall atmosphere (4.1)*, *outdoor adventure activities (3.9)*, and *food and dining experiences (3.9)*. As seen in Table 2, the attributes that were not important for study participants included *spas (2.4)*, *fishing (2.3)*, *boating and marinas (2.3)*, and *golf courses (1.9)*.

A closer review of the data showed that some of the items ranked as neutral on average were, in fact, important to nearly half of visitors. Forty-six percent of visitors indicated that wineries, breweries, cideries, *distilleries*, and *camping opportunities* were important destination attributes (Figure 3). Greater than 50% of participants identified all other destination attributes with an average importance ranking of 3.6 or higher as either important or very important (Figure 4).



*Table 3: Importance of Destination Attributes*

Attribute	Average	Standard Deviation
Parks and Open Spaces	4.3	1.0
Overall Atmosphere	4.1	1.0
Outdoor Adventure Activities	3.9	1.2
Food and Dining Experiences	3.9	1.2
Easily Accessed Destination	3.8	1.1
Hiking Trails	3.8	1.3
Quality Accommodations	3.8	1.2
Beaches and Swimming	3.7	1.4
Value for Money	3.7	1.1
Diversity of Attractions	3.6	1.2
Camping Opportunities	3.2	1.6
Availability of Sustainable Travel	3.2	1.3
Wineries, Breweries, Cideries, and Distilleries	3.2	1.3
Marine Activities (e.g., Kayaking, SUP, Boating)	3.2	1.5
Festivals and Events	3.1	1.4
Availability of Accessible Services	3.0	1.4
Alpine Opportunities (e.g. skiing, zip line)	2.9	1.4
Indigenous Tourism Experiences	2.9	1.3
Mountain Bike Trails	2.7	1.5
Spas	2.4	1.4
Fishing	2.3	1.4
Boating and Marinas	2.3	1.3
Golf Courses	1.9	1.2



Figure 3: Total Percentage of Visitors Indicating Destination Attributes as Important

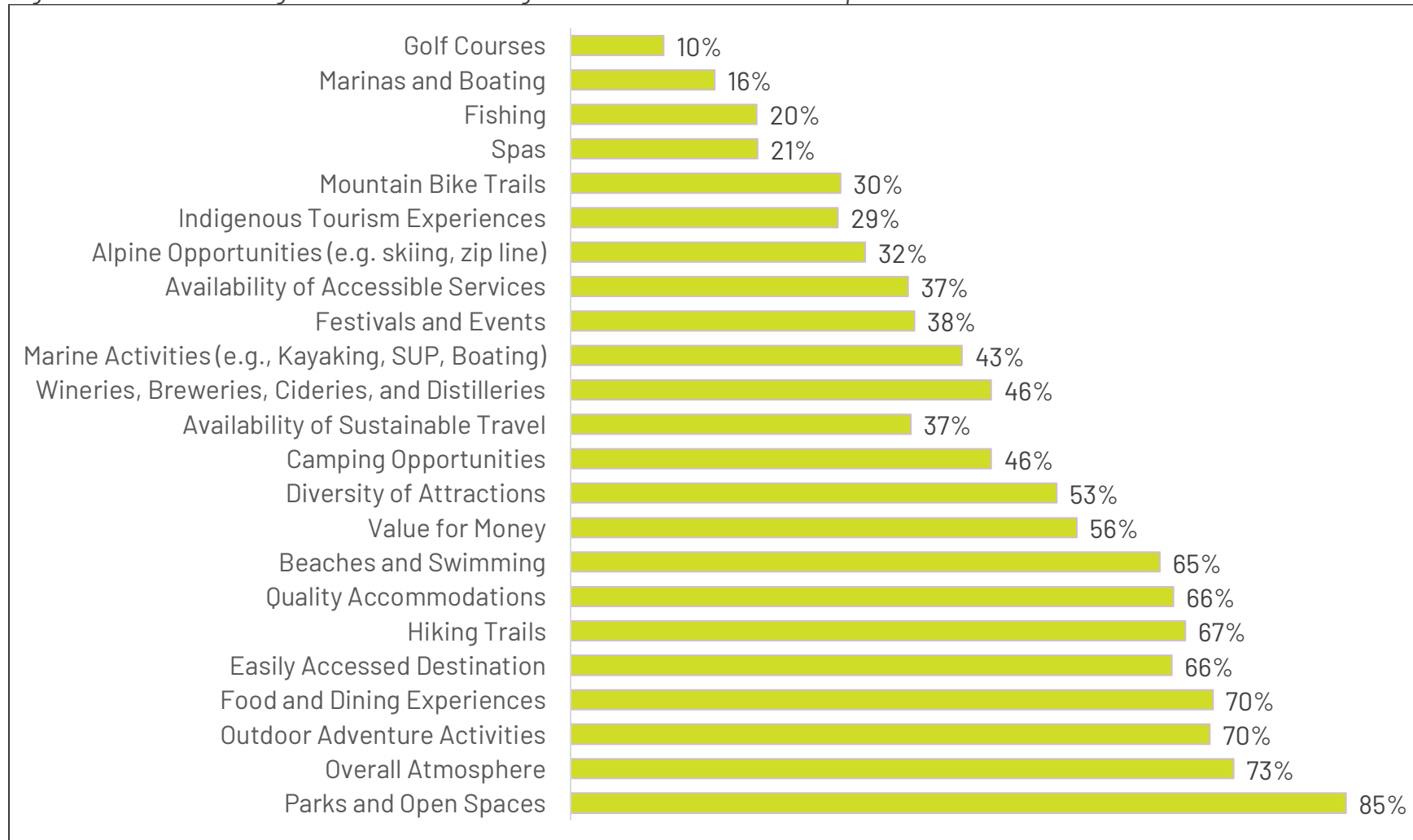
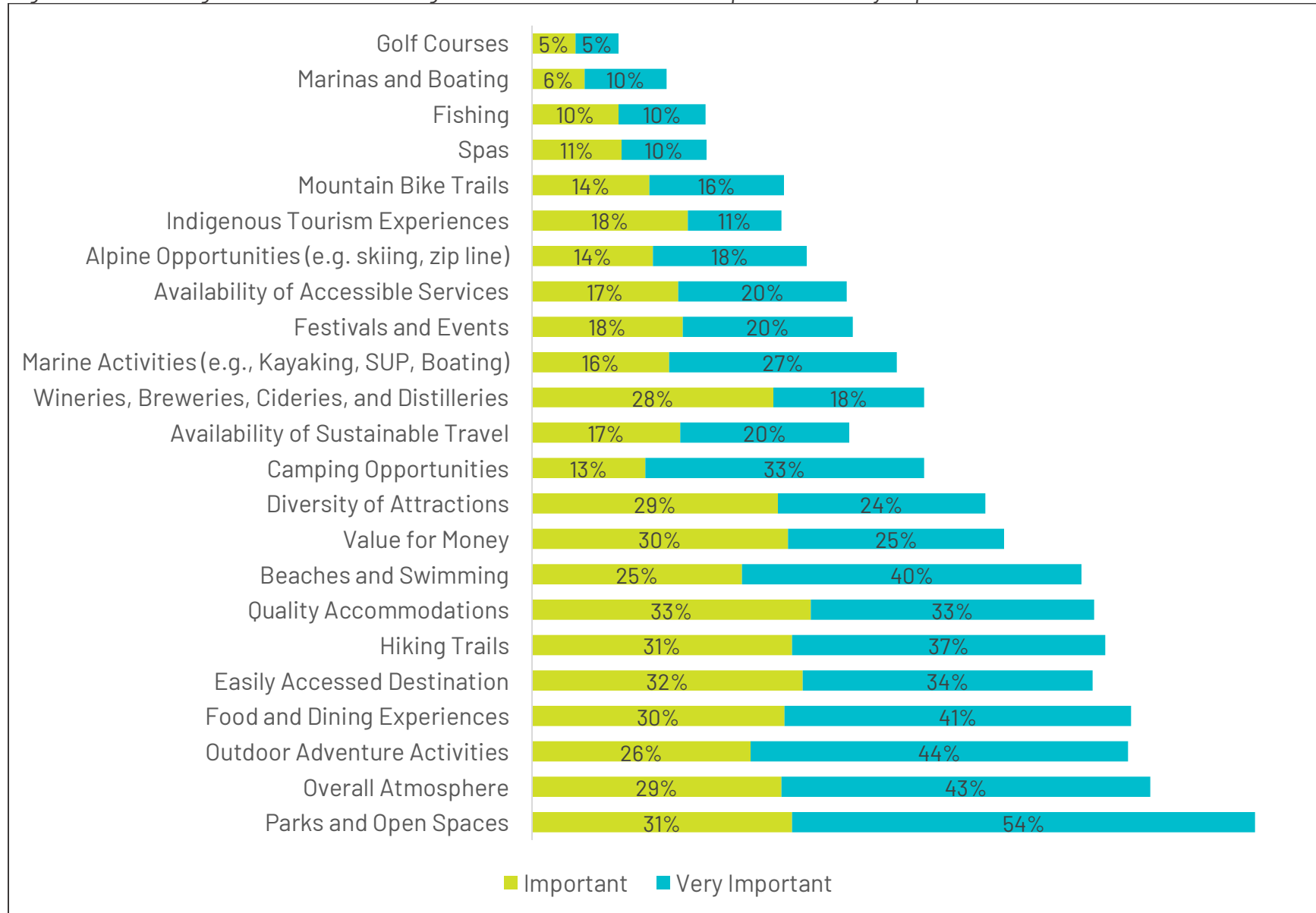




Figure 4: Percentage of Visitors Indicating Destination Attributes as Important or Very Important





### The Importance of Destination Attributes: Day-Trippers vs Overnight Visitors

When comparing day-trippers and overnight visitors, seven attributes were ranked as more important (on average) by overnight visitors than day-trippers (Table 3). Overnight visitors ranked (a) beaches and swimming, (b) hiking trails, and (c) quality accommodations as important rather than neutral, while spas were ranked as neutral versus unimportant.

Table 4: Statistically Significant Differences between Day-Trippers and Overnight Visitors

Attributes	Overnight Visitors		Day-Trippers		t (df)	p =
	Average	Standard Deviation	Average	Standard Deviation		
Overall Atmosphere	4.2	1.0	3.7	1.2	3.5 (336)	.04
Beaches and Swimming	3.9	1.3	3.2	1.5	3.6 (337)	.02
Hiking Trails	3.9	1.2	3.2	1.4	3.9 (334)	.02
Food & Dining Experiences	4.0	1.1	3.7	1.4	1.9 (335)	.01
Spas	2.5	1.4	2.2	1.2	1.4 (332)	.03
Quality Accommodations	3.9	1.1	3.2	1.3	5.0 (335)	.05
Parks and Public Spaces	4.4	0.8	4.1	1.3	2.0 (334)	<.01
Outdoor Adventure Activities	4.0	1.2	3.7	1.4	1.7 (335)	<.01

### Visitor Behaviours

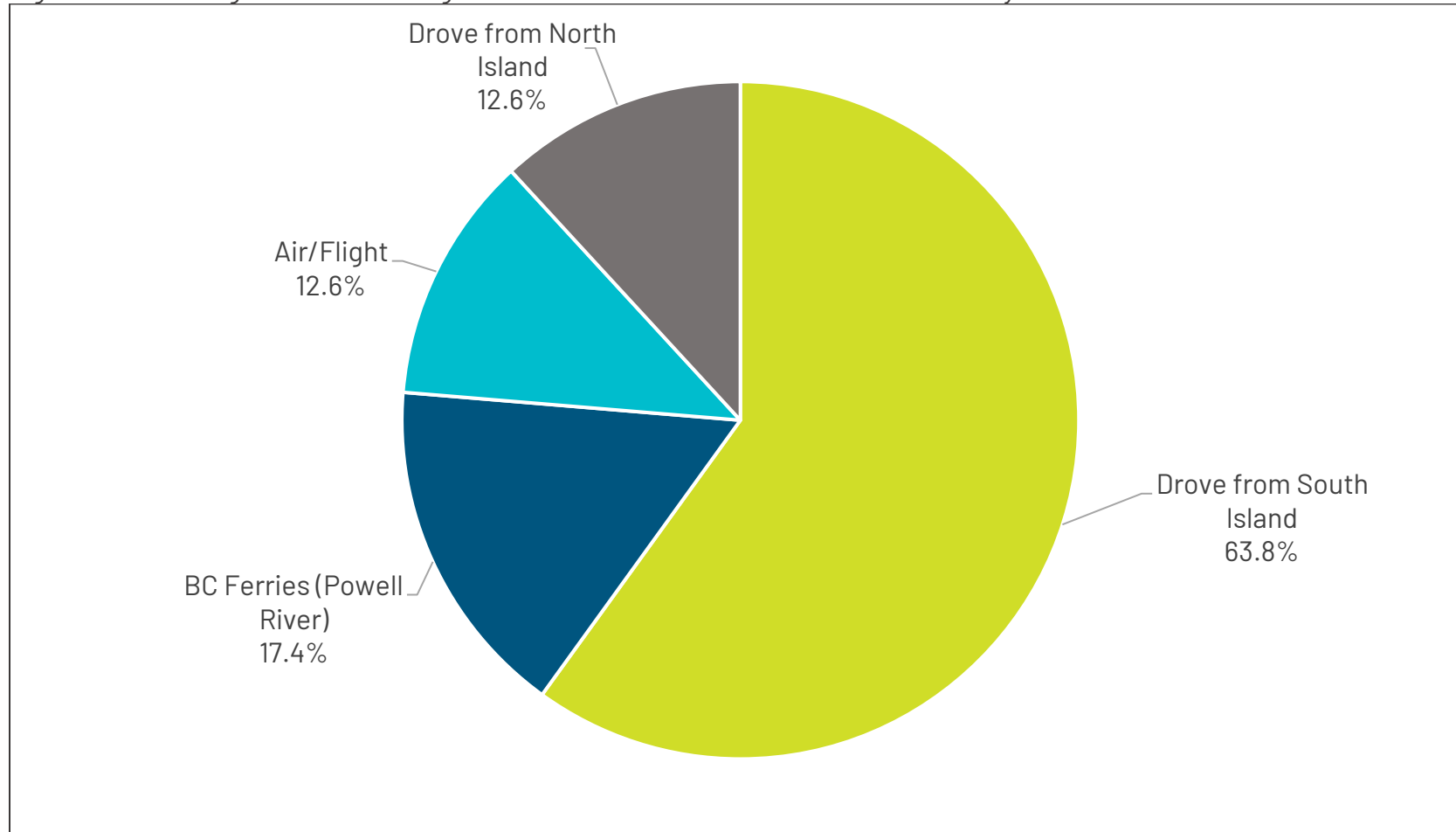
Several aspects of visitors' behaviours were explored, including (a) mode of travelling to the Comox Valley, (b) party size, (c) attractions visited, (d) accommodation type used, (e) location within the Comox Valley they stayed, and (f) duration of visit. The first three sub-sections include an overall analysis of the entire sample, followed by differences between day-trippers and overnight visitors. The final sub-sections relate to overnight visitors only; therefore, they only include data from those who intended to stay at least one night in the Comox Valley.

### Mode of Transport to the Comox Valley

Visitors' primary ways of accessing the Comox Valley were driving from locations south of the Comox Valley on Vancouver Island (63.8%) or the BC Ferries from Powell River (17.4%). The values in Figure 5 do not total 100% because visitors could identify multiple travel methods if they had made multiple trips to the Comox Valley.



Figure 5: Percentage of Visitors Using Different Methods of Travel to the Comox Valley

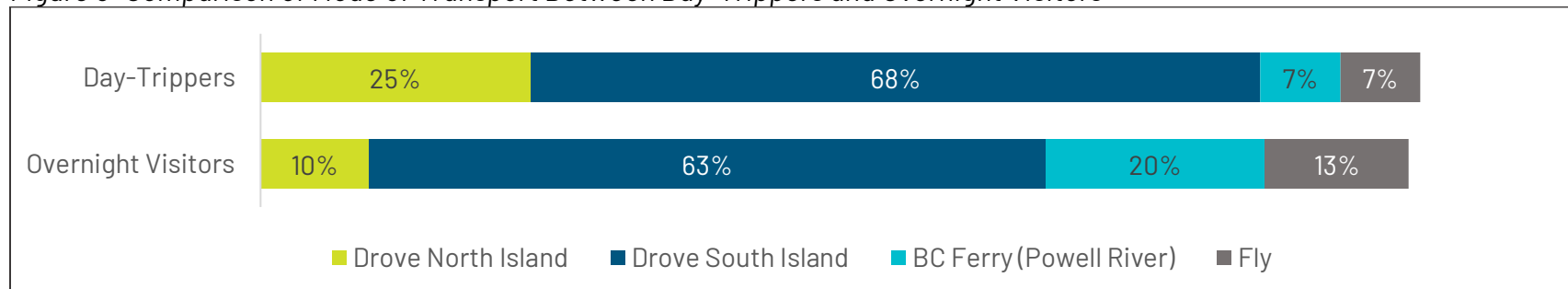


**Mode of Transport to the Comox Valley: Comparison of Day-Trippers to Overnight Visitors**

It was impossible to calculate statistical differences between day-trippers and overnight visitors regarding mode of transportation; however, an exploration of the percentage distribution shows that a greater percentage of day-trippers (25.0%) than overnight visitors (10.0%) drove from the North Island and more overnight visitors (20.3%) than day-trippers (7.4%) travelled via the Powell River ferry. Figure 6 shows the differences between the day-trippers and overnight visitors.



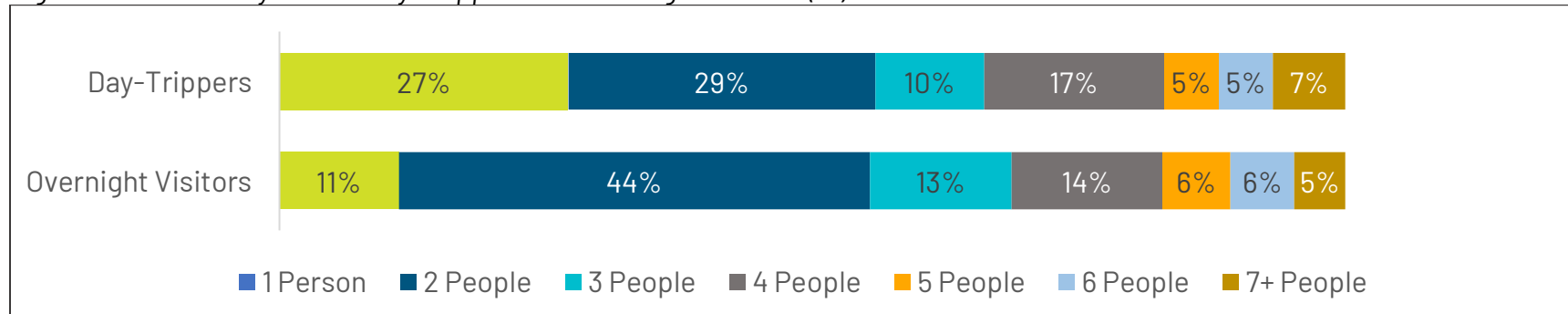
Figure 6: Comparison of Mode of Transport Between Day-Trippers and Overnight Visitors



### Travel Party Size and Composition

The reported travel party sizes ranged from 1 (solo traveller) to 26 people, with an average of three people. The sample represents the travel of 1000 people. There were no significant differences in the size of the travel parties for day-trippers or overnight visitors. Figure 7 illustrates the party sizes of overnight visitors and day-trippers.

Figure 7: Travel Party Size of Day-Trippers and Overnight Visitors (%)



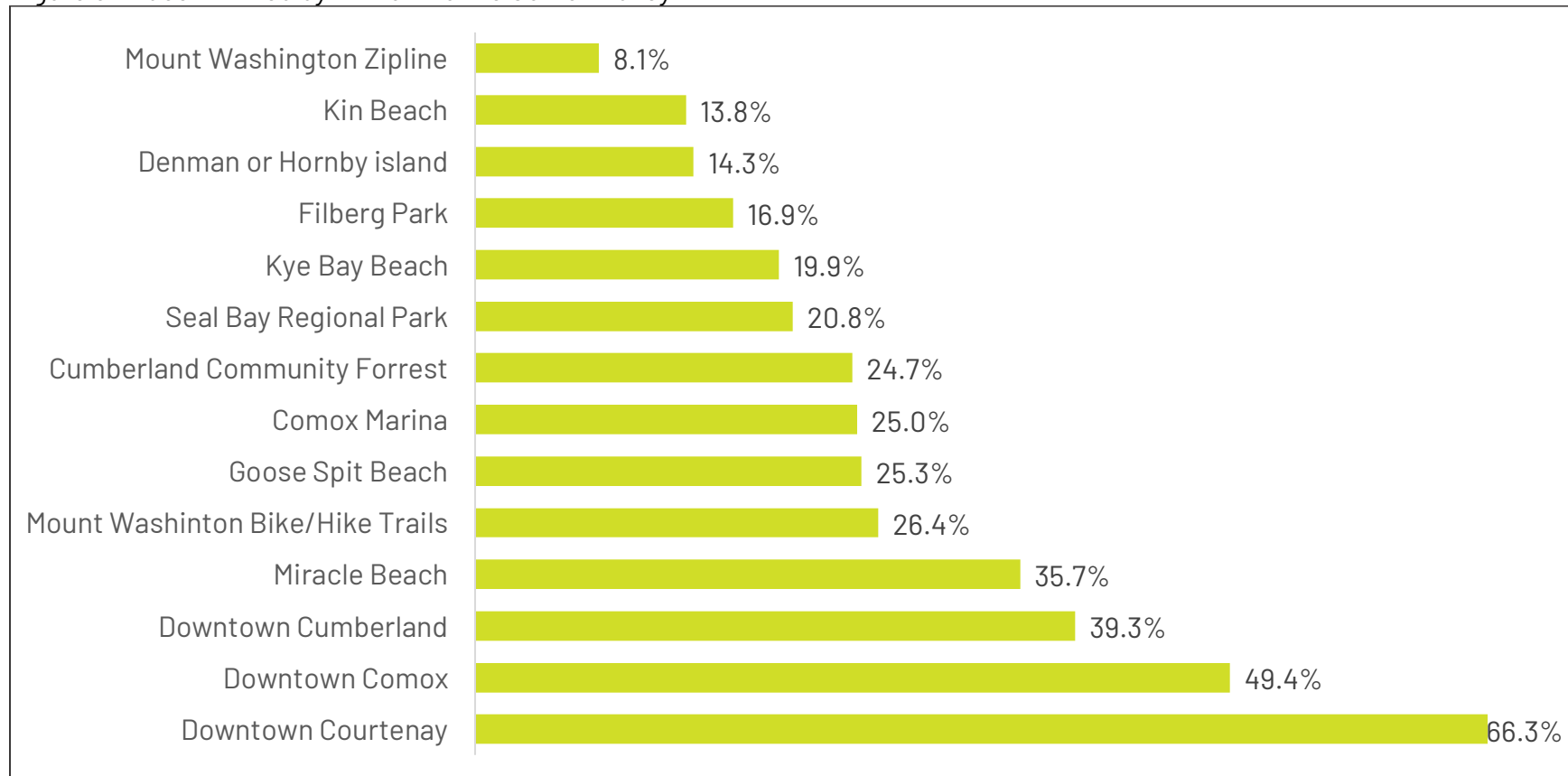
Participants were asked if members of their travel party were 55+ or under 18 years of age and if a member of their party required accessible services. Including only participants who travelled with at least one additional person, 50.8% travelled with someone 55+ years of age, and 37.1% travelled with at least one child under 18 years of age. Approximately 15% of travellers had party members requiring accessible services or accommodation. There were no significant differences between day-trippers and overnight visitors regarding the composition of their travel parties.



### Attractions Visited in the Comox Valley

Participants were provided a list of locations within the Comox Valley and asked whether they visited or intended to (Figure 8). The top three locations visited by participants were the downtowns of Courtenay (66.3%), Comox (49.4%), and Cumberland (39.3%). Miracle Beach (35.7%) was the fourth most visited location; however, this may be partly due to repeated data collection at Saratoga Beach and Miracle Beach Provincial Park. Twelve percent of participants responded to the *other* option, identifying outdoor recreation spaces like Nymph Falls, Saratoga Beach, Comox Lake, and Cumberland Lake Park.

Figure 8: Places Visited by Visitors to the Comox Valley







### Comox Valley Locations Visited by Overnight Visitors and Day-Trippers

There is no way to statistically compare overnight visitors and day-trippers regarding the community locations visited; however, as seen in Figure 9, there are observable differences regarding the order of locations visited by the highest percentage of overnight visitors versus day-trippers. The top five locations for day-trippers were Downtown Courtenay (61.8%), Downtown Comox (48.5%), Miracle Beach (33.8%), Downtown Cumberland (26.5%), and Goose Spit Beach (19.1%). The top five locations for overnight visitors were Downtown Courtenay (70.8%), Downtown Comox (52.8%), Downtown Cumberland (45.4%), Mount Washington bike/hike trails (30.3%), and Comox Marina (29.5%).

### Activity Participation While Visiting Comox Valley

Participants were given a list of activities available in the Comox Valley and asked to identify which they participated in or intended to do. The top five activities overall were beach activities (51.1%), shopping (48.0%), hiking (45.8%), sightseeing (38.5%), and camping (27.8%). As seen in Figure 10, day-trippers and overnight visitors had the same top five but not in the same order. Shopping (58.8%) and beach activities (44.1%) were the top activities for day-trippers, and beach activities (55.4%) and hiking (52.8%) were the top two activities for overnight visitors.





Figure 9: Percentage of Overnight Visitors and Day-Trippers Who Visited Each Location

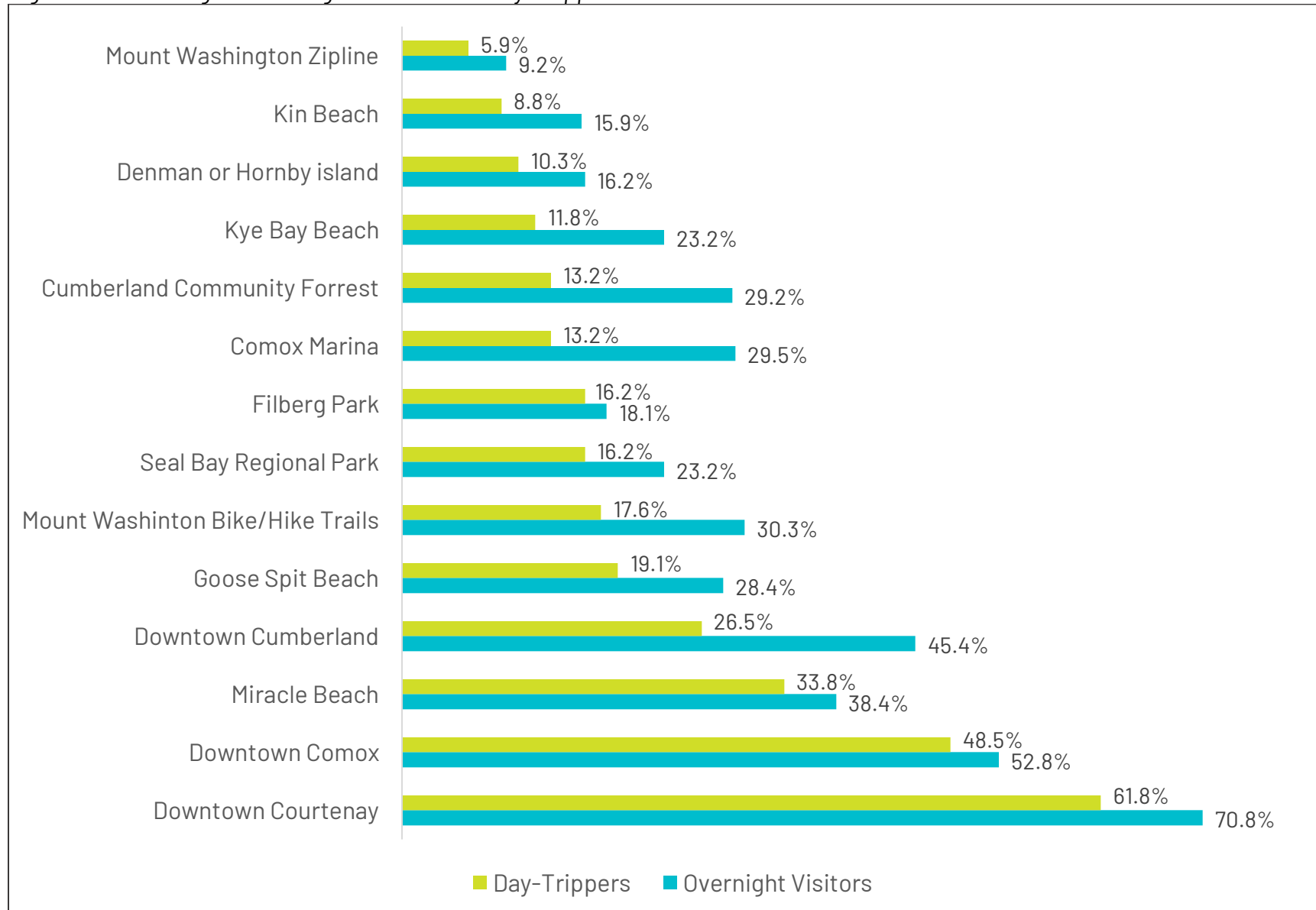
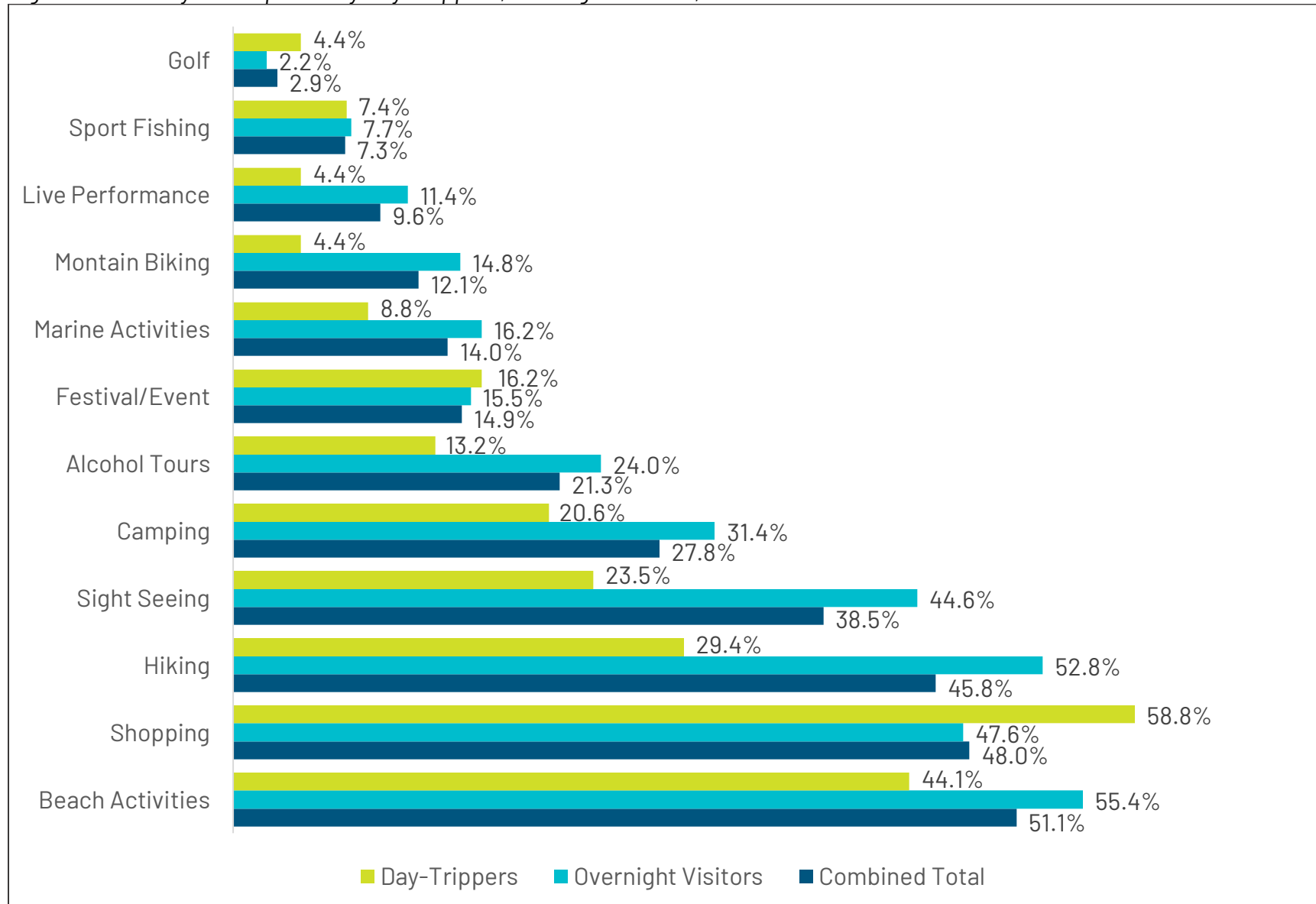




Figure 10: Activity Participation by Day-Trippers, Overnight Visitors, and a Combined Total





### Where Comox Valley Visitors Choose to Eat and Drink

Visitors to the Comox Valley purchased food and beverages from numerous types of establishments. The top three types of establishments for day-trippers and overnight visitors were restaurants, cafes, and grocery stores. As seen in Figure 11, more day-trippers ate at fast food chains (14.7%) than craft breweries (11.8%), wineries or cideries (8.8%), or distilleries (7.4%). In contrast, fewer overnight visitors ate at fast food chains (12.5%) than almost every other type of food and beverage outlet.

### Overnight Visitors Specific Analysis

The remainder of the behaviour analysis focuses only on those who stayed or intended to stay for at least one night (n=283). The analysis included trip duration, the number of nights spent in specific Valley communities, and the accommodation type used.

### Trip Duration and Location

The average duration of overnight visitors' stays in the Comox Valley was 5.6 days, ranging from one night to three months (90 nights). Data analysis revealed that 58.0% stayed one to three nights, 86.6% stayed seven nights or less, and 96.1% stayed 21 nights or less. Table 5 and Figure 12 illustrate the percentage distribution of the nights spent in each major Comox Valley destination.

*Table 5: Duration of Stays Within Each Comox Valley Community*

Communities (n)	Number of Nights Spent (%)								
	0 Nights	1 Night	2 Nights	3 Nights	4 Nights	5 Nights	6 Nights	7 Nights	8+ Nights
Courtenay (n=236)	38.1	16.9	13.6	9.7	3.8	3.8	2.5	3.0	8.5
Comox (n=200)	55.0	16.5	12.5	5.0	3.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	4.0
Cumberland (n=193)	68.9	9.8	7.8	6.2	3.1	1.0	1.0	2.1	0.0
Royston (n=179)	90.5	5.0	0.6	1.7	2.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Union Bay (n=179)	96.1	2.8	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Merville (n=179)	96.1	2.2	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Black Creek (n=191)	86.4	2.1	2.1	2.1	0.5	1.0	1.6	4.2	0.0
Saratoga Beach (n=185)	82.2	5.4	3.2	1.1	1.1	1.6	2.2	3.2	0.0
Mount Washington (n=185)	79.5	7.6	7.6	2.7	1.1	0.5	1.1	0.0	0.0



Figure 11: Percentage of Day-Trippers, Overnight Visitors, and Combined Total

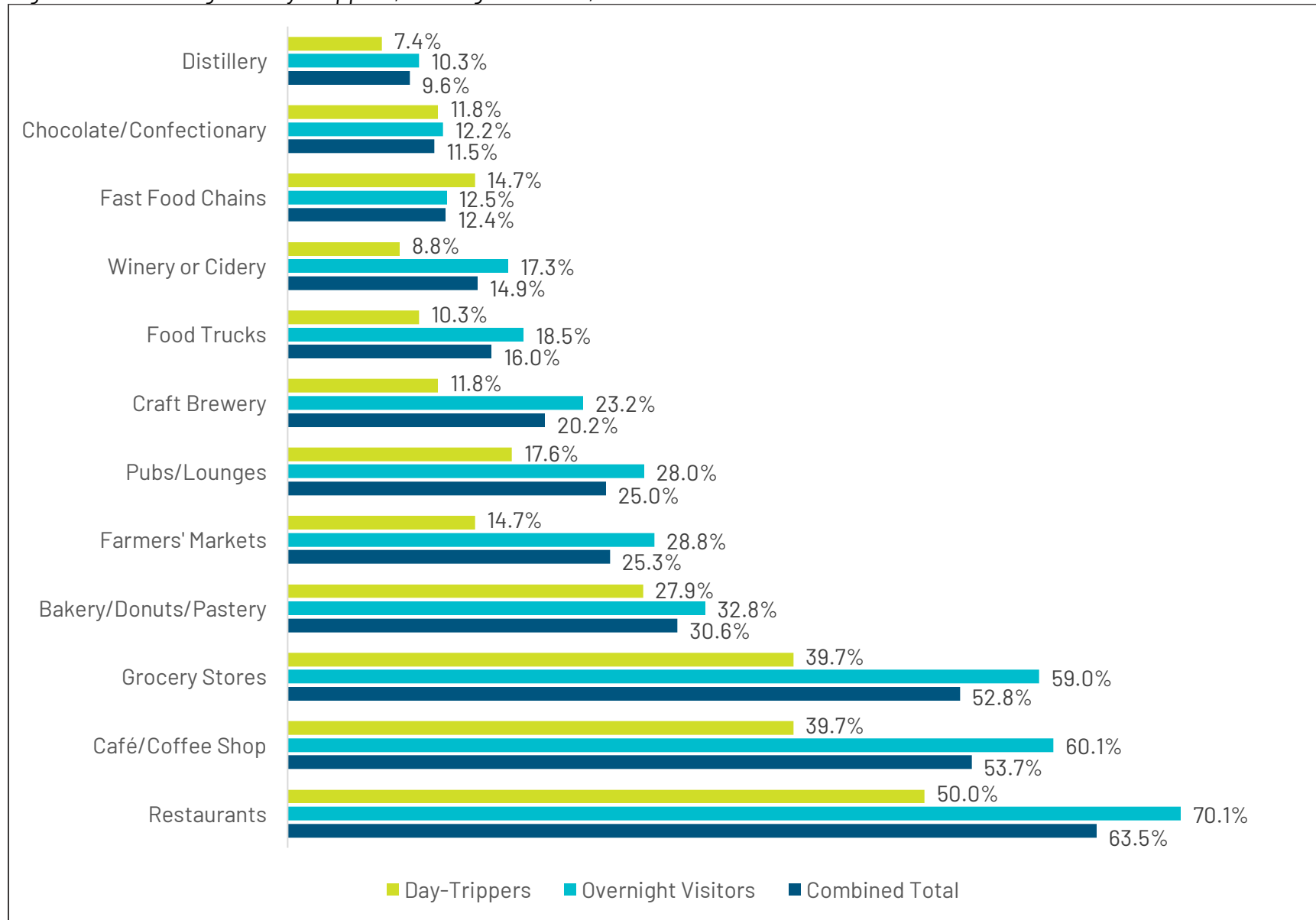
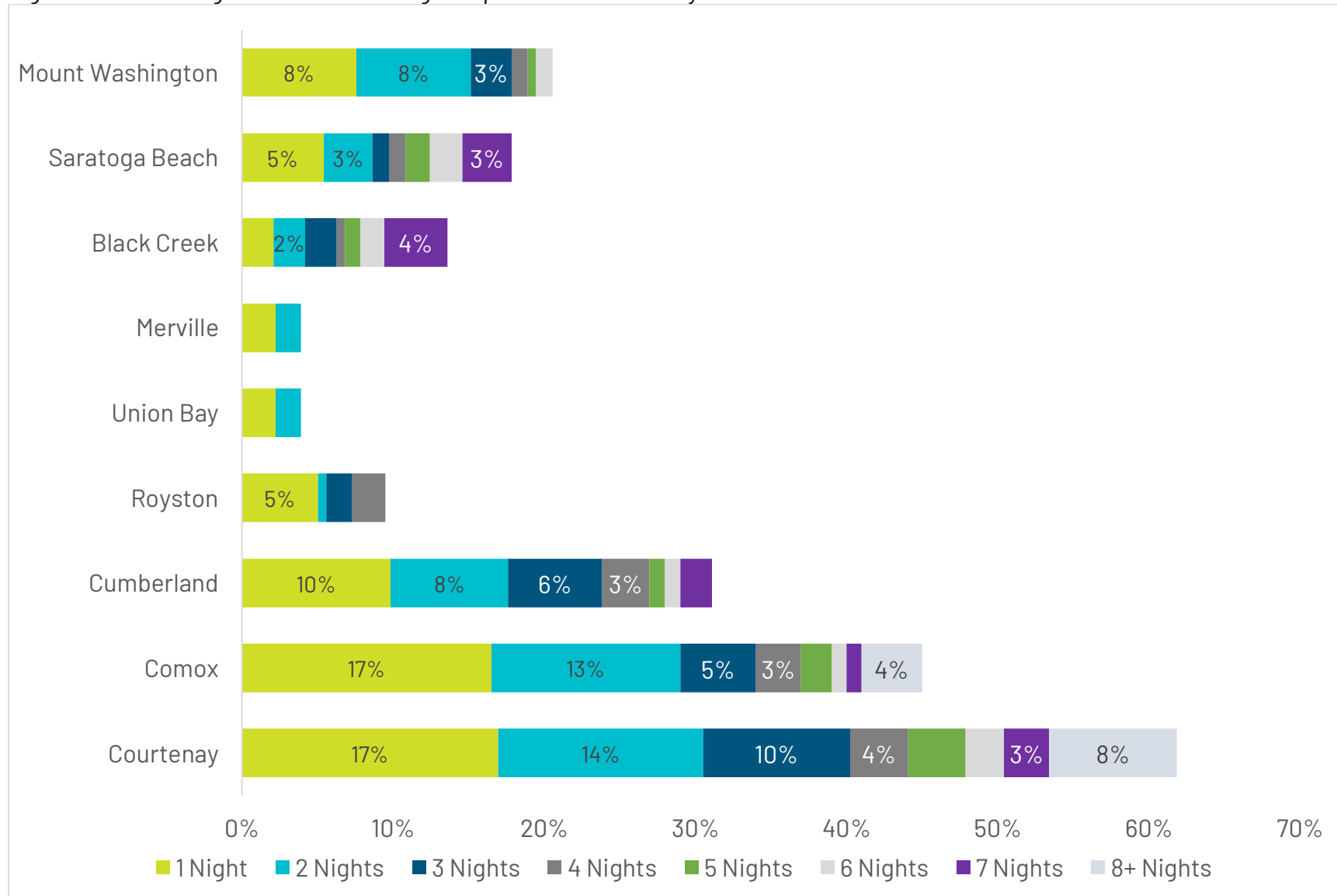




Figure 12: Percentage Distribution of Nights Spent in Comox Valley Destinations

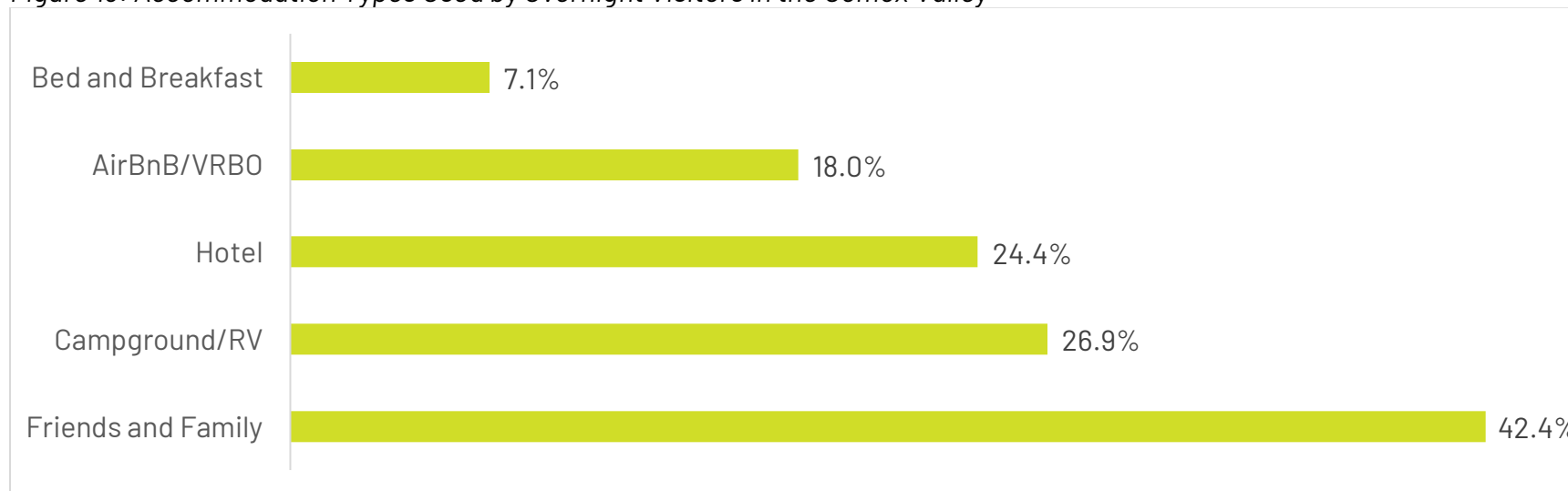




### Accommodation Types Used

Staying with family and friends (42.4%) was the most common accommodation type used by overnight visitors. Campgrounds (26.9%) and hotels (24.4%) were the most used commercial accommodation providers (Figure 13).

Figure 13: Accommodation Types Used by Overnight Visitors in the Comox Valley



### Net Promoter Score

Net Promoter Score (NPS) measures the likelihood that visitors will recommend visiting the Comox Valley to their friends and colleagues. Likelihood is measured on a scale of 0 to 10, and scores between 0 and 6 are detractors, 7 to 8 are passives, and 9 to 10 are promoters. The final NPS is calculated by subtracting the percentage of detractors from the percentage of promoters. Participants are also asked to explain their responses. This section provides a summary analysis of the NPS, followed by three tables that contain comments from promoters, passives, and detractors.

Comox Valley's NPS is 69, which is very good. As seen in Figure 14, the detractors only accounted for 4% of the sample. This means that Experience Comox Valley and its members are providing exceptional visitor experiences. It also means that to improve their NPS, they should focus on those who were categorized as passives. Table 6 includes the unedited comments from promoters, Table 7 includes the comments from passives, and Table 8 includes comments from detractors.



Figure 14: Net Promoter Score for Comox Valley

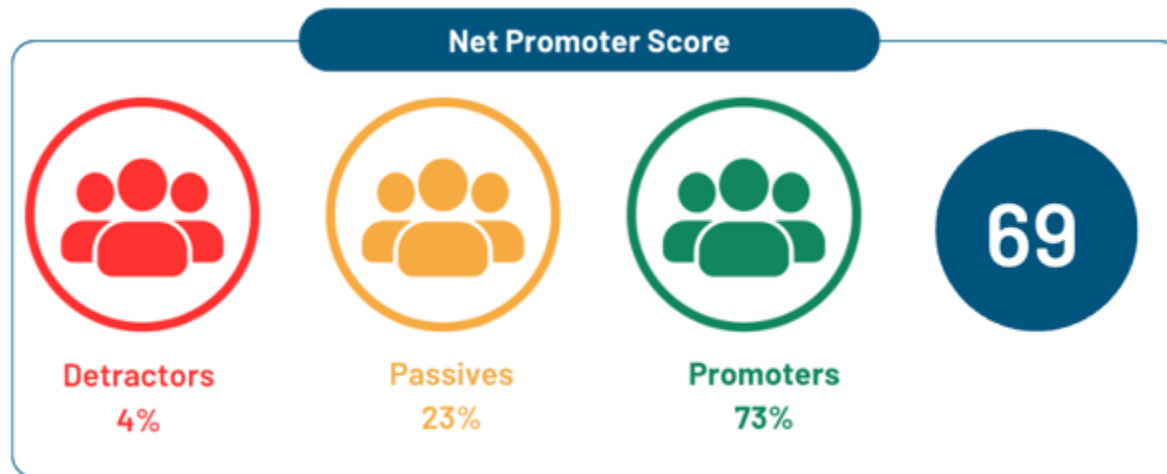


Table 6: Comments by Promoters (Unedited)

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A returning visitor and always enjoy all the area offers.</li> <li>• Affordable accommodation, easy access from Victoria, breweries restaurants shopping, beaches are not too busy, hiking</li> <li>• Always a favourite</li> <li>• Atmosphere, people, swimming holes, food and drink</li> <li>• Beautiful</li> <li>• Beautiful area</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Always gorgeous and lots of activities to do between ocean mountains and all in between</li> <li>• Beautiful area to explore. It has all of the amenities that one could want. Friendly people. So much to see and do. Did not have enough time to spend here.</li> <li>• Amazing location. One of my favourite travel destinations.</li> <li>• Amazing places to visit!</li> <li>• Amazing EVERYTHING every time, so beautiful</li> <li>• Beautiful area to visit</li> </ul> |
|---|--|





- Beautiful area for outdoor recreation: paddling, hiking, swimming, mountain biking
- Beautiful area.
- Beautiful location. Plenty to do. Everything you need nearby.
- Beautiful natural views
- Beautiful scenery
- Beautiful, awesome people and lots to do
- Beautiful, less well-known, less busy, lots to see and do.
- Because I have always come to this area from Parksville mostly RVing and am moving here to Saratoga soon! love it!
- Because I wanted to
- Because it has every facility
- Because of the incredible variety of walking trails and the easy access to beautiful beaches. I, and most of my family and friends, live on very tight budgets so access to free and inspiring outdoor places is crucial for our health and wellbeing.
- Because people are friendly and there are a variety of activities in the area from sea to sky
- Because the Comox valley rocks!
- Been coming here for 20 years. Perfect family beach time
- Courtenay has Costco and doesn't have a noticeable homeless population (like Campbell River does).
- Diversity and culture
- Enjoyable place to visit
- Beautiful area, mount Washington specifically was a highlight for the hiking trails and lakes. It doesn't get a 10 purely because of how steep the driveway is at the Airbnb.
- Beautiful outdoor scenery
- Beautiful place
- Beautiful place with lots of amenities
- Beautiful place, lots to see and do. No reason to be bored.
- Beautiful, friendly
- Beautiful!!
- Because it is a beautiful place. I just wish that people would take their garbage
- Because it is easy get away
- Because it's beautiful
- Because the Comox Valley has three great towns...Courtenay, Cumberland and Comox for eating, great musical venues, historical sites of interest, children friendly playgrounds, great restaurants, craft beer and all the natural beauty of hiking trails...ocean, forests, mountains! Comox Valley has it all!
- Comox valley is a beautiful place with a wide diversity of activities to partake in.
- Camping at the lake and mountain biking are top notch
- Everything we like to do, we can do there, lots of options.
- Everything is wonderful at Saratoga beach. Our 26th year however ferry from Comox should dock in Powell River
- Enjoyed everything about our trip
- Excellent



- Excellent experience, friendly, walkable, educational, restorative
- Great community. A lot to do in Cumberland from biking to camping to enjoying the restaurants.
- Friendly people gorgeous community
- Fun chill place friendly
- Fun friendly
- Great area with friendly people and lots of great walks
- Great area!
- Great experience!
- Great food/drink, parks and outdoor experiences
- great location
- Great place
- I like it there
- I love it here!! So much to do and I love the diversity of things to do. I forgot to mention I go to Lazo beach, I love it there
- Helps
- Hiking is amazing and trails so cared for. Such a beautiful area with so much in a small area - between food, beaches, mountains, different ecosystems. Haven't run across as much local art/crafts as I would like - maybe we don't know where to look.
- I have visited the Comox Valley before and it is a great place to visit.
- I love it. So helpful. Easy to get on and off highway.
- For active people such as ourselves and those we know it offers everything we need and enjoy.
- Friendly and helpful people at our hotel gave great suggestions to places and restaurants to visit that we may not have found on our own.
- Fun friendly atmosphere
- Fun!
- Good experience
- Good experience but do not want to encourage non islanders
- good people
- Great experience
- Excellent festival. Great atmosphere. Lots to see and do
- I \*love\* the Comox Valley
- I always have a great time when I come up to this area.
- I have really enjoyed it so far
- Hiking through the Strathcona park was otherworldly, it felt as if we were no longer on Vancouver Island yet more at home than ever.
- Great place to visit. So much to do
- It is my favourite place to visit from my home in the Lower Mainland: natural beauty, historic interest, easily accessible, reasonable cost of accommodation
- I love it here
- I love it here.



- I love the island, absolutely a beautiful place
- I love the Comox Valley like the food the parks the scenery
- I love the welcoming and friendly atmosphere. The outdoor recreation opportunities are fantastic.
- I've always had a good time when visiting. Lots of waterfront places to access.
- is a beautiful and comfortable place
- It is a beautiful spot to vacation and it has lots of amenities.
- It is an exceptionally beautiful part of the world, that as much quieter than where we come from Vancouver
- It is a peaceful and beautiful place to visit!
- It is beautiful
- It is beautiful, quaint, peaceful
- It was a very beautiful area with lots to offer tourists
- It's a beautiful place
- It's an amazing place and the pace of life really lets you relax and unwind.
- It's beautiful here
- It's friendly, accessible, had great food options and the best river swimming
- It's just the most beautiful, fun, interesting place ever!
- It's super beautiful
- It's very beautiful here.
- I love it here. There's something for everyone
- I love this part of the island, would love to explore it more in the future!
- I love this region. I wish I could live here. It's so beautiful and such great options for things to do here.
- It is a beautiful part of our island. So many things to do in close proximity to each other
- It is a combination of amenities and great scenery.
- It is a lovely place to visit for the weekend. The only real downside is the journey on BC ferries
- I love it here
- It is an outstanding place to visit with a wonderful community
- It is such a beautiful friendly area and community
- It is wonderful here. The natural beauty is outstanding.
- It's beautiful, nature
- It's epic
- It's beautiful here and there's lots to see and do. I'd live here if I could.
- It's great here!!
- It's a charming town, surrounded by nature and mountain views, offering diverse activities.
- It's so beautiful there
- It's quiet and beautiful scenery
- It's a beautiful Location. Lots to do!



- It's a beautiful and well set up place?
- It's a beautiful location with the beaches and hiking and you have everything. It's a perfect getaway from life for a weekend and relax.
- It's a favorite spot for camping and hiking
- It's a great place to visit
- It's a great spot to visit
- It's beautiful and not overrun with people
- it's great
- It's so nice to explore!!
- Its such a beautiful area
- Less City noise, ppl.. Nice scenery, birds, ppl, trails..
- Live it there
- Lots of recreational opportunities. Great weather. Beautiful location
- Lots to do and beautiful scenery.
- Love it!
- Love Comox; easy access; shopping; dining; Jan's glass by the Sea
- Love it/ beautiful here
- Love Saratoga Beach and have been coming for years!
- Love the beaches
- Love the environment, people and attractions
- Love visiting this area. So much to do and great places to eat.
- It's beautiful
- It's got such a variety of activities for all races and ages, the weather has been great, did not stop us from doing anything, people were pleasant to talk to very upbeat, it was smoky because of the wildfires. It's beautiful.
- It's a pleasure to visit the Comox Valley
- It's a very special place. 😊😊
- It's beautiful here!
- It's the most beautiful place on earth
- It's very pretty
- Its great here
- Kingfisher resort and beaches
- Love it
- Love it here
- Lots to see and do in this area, could spend a week at least touring around.
- Love it here.
- Love it up here
- Many options and opportunity to explore and experience the outdoors and events
- Love the friendliness of the locals
- Love the vibe!
- Love the weather and ocean lake experiences relaxing
- Lovely place to visit with so much to do
- Most enjoyable BC vacation in years



- Lovely
- Lovely community. Great festival, enjoyable park & trails, scenic beach
- Lovely locale, nature, friendly people
- nice place to visit
- Nice place to visit
- Peaceful vibe and very nature feeling
- There is so much to see and do!
- Variety of opportunities
- Relaxed atmosphere, friendly people, beautifully maintained hiking trails, scenery - the trees, the water
- So fun, beautiful, lots to do
- So much to do here
- Surf and turf kinda destination, good opportunities year round
- The area is beautiful with many activities
- The beaches are so good
- The CV has something for everyone and distances are not too far.
- We like it here
- Variety of types of vacation visits during different months of the year. This October visit was centred around the spa but since the weather was great for October we also so went to local beaches.
- Mountain biking and community
- Love this region of the Island. It is abundant and welcoming
- Nice place to visit in BC
- Nobody is perfect
- Ocean, mountain activities, good amenities, very relaxing
- specially because you should visit Comox Valley for its stunning natural beauty, including mountains, beaches, and trails. It also offers a vibrant cultural scene, outdoor activities like hiking and kayaking, and a delicious culinary scene with fresh local produce.
- There are lots of things to see and do, nice nature and beaches, good retail as well.
- Unparelled views and beach at Saratoga was spectacular
- The experience was amazing
- The place is adorable and I recommend any plan to go on a vacation and doesn't have a place in mind to go please visit the Vancouver Island
- Very beautiful
- This place is so beautiful and has lots to offer!
- We come every year and plan to continue here for our family reunions
- We love the nature and the friendly people
- We love it in Comox!!! Thinking this would be a wonderful place to live!



- We had such a great time I love it here! I want to move here! Great food, drinks, friendly people, and the best outdoor rec on the island!
  - Very beautiful but pricey
  - Very calm and beautiful, a slower pace for people who live in downtown Vancouver.
  - We enjoy stopping at Miracle Beach on our way to The Comox ferry. It's always an interesting enjoyable stop over.
  - We have been camping at Saratoga Beach for 40 years & it's still the best beach for families & friends to get together.
  - We love going there to see our friends and spend time on the beach. There are cute shops and restaurants.
  - We love it so much we moved to the island. The outdoors and nature ♡
  - We love the Comox Valley, Cumberland and Courtenay area. My wife loves hiking and there's no lack of options there. Comox Lake is beautiful and the ease of riding to the World Famous Mountain Biking trails makes Cumberland Campground the perfect getaway for our family.
  - We love this area of the island
  - Weather, beach, vistas
  - Welcoming people/environment Beautiful surroundings  
Filberg Festival
  - We've had lovely day trips here, the lake is gorgeous and Cumberland is a different town then when I lived on the island 20 years ago - great food and fun atmosphere
  - Very friendly staff
  - We enjoy coming to the valley for regular day trips
  - Very peaceful for people traveling from downtown Vancouver
  - We have spent many years coming back and forth. It's a beautiful and fun place to meet as a family.
  - We love it here and come every year. Perfect for kids and the beaches are amazing!
  - We love it! Great walking, birding, wildlife, climate, friends in Comox,
  - We loved our visit to the Filberg Festival and we are excited to go back next year. The music and the artist were amazing. The park is gorgeous and provides the perfect venue. So many happy people chilling out. I loved it
  - We've had an excellent holiday here in the Comox Valley
  - Wonderful shops. Excellent events!
-



*Table 7: Comments Made by Passives (Unedited)*

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- |  |   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assortment of activities</li> <li>• Beautiful area, been here before, will be back again. It's out of the way from where my friends and family live, so it's an effort to get here. Is worth it though</li> <li>• Because it is a wonderful place to visit Lots to see and do</li> <li>• Because we like the area and people and think others will also</li> <li>• Easy to get to beautiful Friendly</li> <li>• Enjoy the people, the hikes, fresh air, mountain vistas, parks, things to do. Thanks to Dana at the visitor bureau.</li> <li>• Good experience</li> <li>• Good outdoors</li> <li>• Great for outdoor activities</li> <li>• Great people, nice hosts</li> <li>• Helpful staff, but bathrooms have no access if closed</li> <li>• I enjoyed my glamping trip.</li> <li>• I love the area</li> <li>• I love the outdoor activity options in the area and I always enjoy my time in this area.</li> <li>• It is such a beautiful spot that is quiet and perfect for a relaxing time away</li> <li>• It was a great experience</li> <li>• It's a great place with many opportunities for fun and adventure!</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Because we really like Courtenay</li> <li>• Comox valley is great, but you lack things for young people, and unique experiences. Also the traffic is a bit much</li> <li>• because there are beautiful beaches and lovely tourist destinations</li> <li>• Close to beach and nice vibe</li> <li>• Fair rating and value for money</li> <li>• Good food/ well maintained trail for hiking/nice customer service/ good spa hotels</li> <li>• Good nature</li> <li>• Good place to visit.</li> <li>• Great place</li> <li>• Helpful and a nice place to visit!</li> <li>• High level of trail maintenance is appreciated</li> <li>• I love coming here, I have family and friends that live here it's beautiful fun and peaceful</li> <li>• It has a lot going for it</li> <li>• It is a beautiful area for hiking but the air quality is quite poor in the fall from all the slash burning and there is so much smoke up behind Cumberland.</li> <li>• It's a beautiful valley on a great island. Nothing is really all that far away on the island and there's lots to see and do.</li> <li>• It's nice here and we come to camp and see family.</li> <li>• It's nice here. I just wasn't lucky with the weather this time</li> </ul> |
|--|---|



- It's a good town to visit.
- It's nice here
- its quiet
- Lots of things to do and good local services.
- Lots to see here compared to the Okanagan where I am from.
- Lovely beaches and good dining
- Nice place.
- Return visitor
- So many outdoor events
- Still evaluating my stay in Comox Valley
- The place is having breathtaking beauty
- We had a really great time in the Comox Valley. It is worth anyone seeing, whether it be for a night, a week or a month
- It's lovely spot. Not many options for accommodation.
- It's quaint and lovely for a little getaway
- Lots to offer and it is beautiful, especially in the fall.
- Lovely but distances are quite far.
- Nice atmosphere with nice hiking places
- Nice people. Not crowded.
- Seems like a nice place
- Short trip from Vancouver, nice beach, peaceful
- Very Nice place
- Very beautiful
- We really enjoy many aspects of the area and had several great stays in the area.
- We like it here
- We like it

*Table 8: Comments Made by Detractors (Unedited)*

- because there are plenty of outdoor attractions, but fewer quality shopping places
- It was pretty nice, but I didn't always feel safe.
- It's nice but nothing extravagant.
- Lack of public accessed nature but still lots of cool stuff.
- Its a nice place to be with lots to do but not a lot of camping options that are not crowded
- Boring. Came for a meeting, left because nothing for kids to do. Town looked sketchy in some areas.
- The most of the hiking trails are more accessible from the opposite side of the Strathcona park, but it is a nice place for vacation.
- Nothing too special
- We just popped into Miracle Bay Beach on our way up coast from BC Ferry Port up to Campbell River





## Conclusions

Tourism services in the Comox Valley are plentiful and diverse, like the individuals who travel to enjoy them. Like many Island destinations, staying with family and friends, enjoying outdoor recreation, and spending time in nature are all key elements of the visitors' attraction to the Comox Valley. Spending time in the town centres of Courtenay, Comox, and Cumberland or on beaches, parks, and public spaces were common trends for most visitors. Keeping the downtown cores unique will be an essential element of ensuring the ongoing success of the Comox Valley.

Day-trippers shared many similarities with overnight visitors; however, several identified shopping at larger stores (e.g., Costco) and medical visits as reasons for travelling to the Comox Valley from other regions on the Island. Day-trippers were less likely to visit family and friends but more likely to travel to the Valley for business. The results of this study suggest that day-trippers have different behaviour patterns than overnight visitors beyond the length of stay; this includes those who are visitors to Vancouver Island but stay in a different area. Therefore, Experience Comox Valley may want to continue monitoring this group and consider promoting full- and half-day experiences to disburse visitors into less-visited areas or away from crowded places.

The Comox Valley's Net Promoter Score was very strong, and staff and the Board should celebrate this achievement. It clearly indicates that tourism operators provide exceptional experiences for most visitors. Monitoring the NPS from year to year and season to season is something to consider moving forward. Do not ignore the concerns identified by the detractors, but remember that it will be easier to convert passives to promoters than detractors to promoters. Also, remember that detractors reflect a very small percentage of visitors.







### **Appendix C: Unedited Comments from Study Participants**

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- A great place to visit lots to see excellent restaurants great pubs. Lots of cute little shops variety.
- A place to visit, work & live
- Advertise
- Always enjoy going there
- Being an island resident, the valley is a fabulous gem
- Brief but full of beauty, natural and the locals alike
- Bus system
- Can't think of anything
- Come visit
- Comox is an extremely special spot
- Comox is very beautiful and full of options, a few new ideas and options would really help bring it to todays times.
- Do not over-build on the beaches.
- Easy drive from Nanaimo
- Fanny bay
- Find the center of town a bottle neck for driving, wish it was a better design.
- Good oysters
- Gorgeous
- Hats off to Dana at Tourism booth. Polite, helpful.
- Have access to tourist information on Sunday or Monday.
- Have breakfast at Plates in Courtney
- Highly recommended
- I enjoyed the Indigenous artwork
- I have also been to a couple of wineries on a separate trip. Very enjoyable.



- I live in a rural area half way between Courtenay and Nanaimo. Most of my family and friends, young and older, would sooner drive north rather than south for two reasons –travel is much faster, and we can opt for a scenic drive to pick up oysters and other goodies along the old highway, or stop at the Fanny Bay Inn; shopping and appointments can be done quickly in the morning leaving us with a long afternoon to explore the valley. I spent a big chunk of my childhood and teen years in the valley and am still finding new and beautiful places to explore.
- i love it here... and will move here!
- I love the continued improvement to trails and public access to waterways. I would like to continue to see added bike lanes from fanny bay to Courtenay to make it safe to bicycle in. Thanks so much for your time
- I love the term “Choral Valley” because of the number of choirs.
- I loved it
- I really love the fall colours up Mount Washington.
- I think that 5th street in Courtenay should be pedestrian only (no cars)
- I thought Comox was a cute little town that had changed since my last visit.
- I want to come back and visit Goose Spit and Courtenay Museum and Hornby Island and travel up to Campbell River
- I was a bit surprised that the people in the visitor center could not really help with recommendations and directions although the center itself was very nice and inviting
- I was grateful for the piece BC Tourism did on Comox Valley. Made me want to go there.
- I will be back.
- I would definitely consider moving here after only being here for a few hours.
- I'm originally from the Okanagan, living in Vancouver right now. The Comox Valley reminds me of the Okanagan, but with the ocean
- If there was a map or brochure of areas with accessibility in the Comox Valley (maybe there is) that would help me to plan my next multi-generational family trip.
- incredible picturesque mountain and coastal views
- It is a community friendly place with a beautiful outdoors



- It was a unique experience to watch smoke come from someone's house burning down while eating dinner at a restaurant. Watching the moon on the horizon was very beautiful.
- It's a beautiful part of Vancouver Island
- It's a happy place to be on a rainy day
- It's too bad there is still much obvious over harvesting of timber in the area as it casts a negative pall on otherwise wonderful experiences in nature.
- It's a nice pace of life here
- It's hiking paradise
- Just love it here
- Just please add shopping for art/crafts or craft fairs in the area - perhaps there just isn't much during October. Many Thanks for welcoming us. The student who met us at Nymph Falls and encouraged us to do the survey was lovely and engaging.
- Keep your visitor centers open. The young man that helped me (near Cumberland) was enthusiastic, welcoming and fantastic in sharing information about the area. I wish I had asked his name.
- Less expensive hotels
- Love it
- Love the shops, restaurants, trails and beaches
- Lovely town !!!
- More bike trails please!! Haha
- More cost efficient rental cars
- More destination highway signs. More speed limit signs More signs to show how far and when to exit to reach the destination
- More indigenous values everywhere please
- More reasonably priced accommodation for short stay
- Mt. Washington needs more accommodation



- Must have a car to travel to most attractions. Nice to plan visits for ourselves since most prior visits were to take our children to sporting tournaments. Comox Valley caters to couples or family vacations not solo vacation package deals.
- My husband and I have recently moved here, and I wanted to see what the visitor centre was like. I don't think this survey incorporates people that have chosen to move here but still need the services of a visitor centre to see what is on offer.
- Nature in Comox is beautiful
- Need better access ability for walkers and wheelchairs!
- Need kids attractions.
- Nice area
- No just move ferry to Powell river
- Our favourite place on the Island to visit.
- Overall map would be helpful.
- Parking for Saratoga beach is a little tricky
- Pools and Parks in the area are fantastic.
- Promote Indigenous attractions more
- Public BBQ's would be awesome!!
- Regenerating at a slower pace
- Restroom facilities need a refresh and need expansion for amount of visitors
- shops
- Skitakhut is the best ski store on the island
- So happy to be able to access such an incredibly beautiful place.
- So many diverse things to do
- Target your near-by communities to visit and explore. Especially in the off season. Participate in Culture Days too!  
[culturedays.ca](http://culturedays.ca)



- Thank you! Enjoy your beautiful area!
- The beaches and hikes are amazing and the amenities are good. It is a good balance of city and peaceful countryside. I love little villages with a pedestrian only core that has a lot of things for families and people of all ages to really engage with the community. Comox Valley is great in general; my note is just a thought!
- The community feel, the creativity of artisans and artist spaces, plus the beauty of the place really make the area special
- the Comox valley community is very friendly, i thoroughly enjoyed my trip and will definitely be coming back.
- The Comox valley is a nice place to visit
- The locals are friendly and welcoming
- The memorial to the former Japanese settlement at Cumberland was beautiful and the experience sacred
- The public transit to and around the valley is atrocious. Given the urgency of climate change and the image of the region, I would expect regular public transit up and down the entire island and between Mt. Washington and Courtney. Unless this is resolved, I don't plan to visit this region again.
- The train from Victoria should come back!
- There is a wide range of delicious restaurants and one particularly good food truck. Costco also is an attraction. When I last went to Costco, I was shopping for 4 families.
- There's lots of history here - which is new to me even though I grew up on the island. The community drive to preserve the area and the amazing newness that's been added without taking away from the roots of the area.
- Traffic congestion is vexing
- Unexpected fun place
- Visitor centre could use more "updated" tourist Knick knacks, ie magnets & postcards
- We are returning in 2024!
- We really enjoyed the visitor centre
- We were very upset with the loose dogs on the beach that ran all over our towels and mats. There is supposed to be an on leash policy but there is no one to enforce this and this is not acceptable.
- We'll be back





- Will be back
  - Will be back!
  - Wish there was more beach accommodation
  - Wonderful place to visit
  - Yes, in regards to our time spent on Saratoga Beach we were absolutely disgusted with the fact that there is no dog leash policy or rather anyone to enforce not having dogs running wild on the beach. This is the only beach where we have experienced such a lack of respect for following a leash policy and further to that picking up the feces of your dog as well. We were extremely disappointed that such a lovely beach allows this to go on! Hornsby has excellent policies for keeping dogs off the beaches from June to September, as does Rath Trevor Beach in Parksville. Really people in this day and age you should be on top of this and enforcing a leash only policy or better yet no dogs on the beach from June to September!
  - yes, surveys done with the prospect of reward aren't useful
  - you should definitely visit mount Washington
-