

LEARNING TOUR NICHE GOING MAINSTREAM

A survey of US travellers taken last year by the Travel Industry Association found that 56% said they were interested in taking an educational trip and 22% said they were more interested now compared with five years ago, according to a report by David Wilkening (TravelMole February 22, 2007).

Universities and museums have organized learning-oriented trips in the past, but the trend has been booming in recent years and is now becoming part of the mainstream business of the travel industry.

An article in USA Today reports that, for universities, alumni travel programs offer another method of fundraising and "a means of tightening bonds with their alumni and encouraging future donations".

For travel companies, extra features like lectures from scholars help sign up customers for group travel, especially sophisticated baby boomers and people who have ever more options for booking discounted flights and hotels online.

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March 5, 2007

YUKON - North to Knowledge (N2K)

N2K was launched in October 2002. A Yukon initiative, it focused on the creation of learning travel products that positioned the North as a vibrant, exciting, high quality destination for learning travel experiences. N2K emphasized the development of cultural, arts, educational, adventure and First Nation related learning travel products.

N2K also produced **The Learning Travel Product Development Workbook** which can be found on-line at the following websites: www.wtay.com/n2k.aspx or through www.tirc.gov.yk.ca . Printed copies can be picked up at the Department of Tourism and Culture, 100 Hanson Street, Whitehorse. *Please inquire about Learning Travel workshops for your community.*