

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release

Sherbrooke, Quebec, July 14, 2025 – What began as a heartfelt invitation to American travelers has now become an international sensation. The Eastern Townships' [Come Hug It Out](#) tourism campaign, designed to remind visitors from the U.S. that they're always welcome in this charming Canadian region, has gone **viral**, racking up millions of views and even catching the attention of **Hollywood icon Sharon Stone, former star of Basic Instinct**.

Launched in late May across the U.S. Northeast, the campaign features a humorous yet touching video of an American traveler being quite literally embraced by the warmth and authenticity of the Townships. It is a simple, powerful message: ***"You're not just expected in the Eastern Townships, you're truly welcome."***

And now it seems everyone's talking about it! The campaign has struck a powerful emotional chord south of the border, with countless comments and shares from U.S. viewers expressing how much they appreciate its heartfelt, genuine tone. To date, it has garnered millions of views across social media platforms and earned prominent coverage in major outlets including CNN, CBC News, Seven Days, CTV News, MSN, Yahoo, BuzzFeed, and many more.

When [BuzzFeed](#) featured the story, [Sharon Stone](#) herself chimed in, saying "Thanks we need a hug", a spontaneous, heartfelt reaction that reignited conversations about the power of authentic tourism marketing and the enduring bond between the U.S. and Canada.



"It's incredible and unexpected to see our message resonate so widely, and Sharon Stone's comment was the cherry on top," said Isabelle Charlebois, General Director of Tourism Eastern Townships. "We're proud to see our warm welcome recognized far beyond our borders — and we're ready to greet our American neighbors with open arms this summer."

A Warm Welcome That Transcends Borders

Renowned for its four-season appeal, peaceful countryside, abundant outdoor activities, culinary delights and European charm, the [Eastern Townships](#) has long been a favorite destination for American travelers seeking a breath of fresh air. But in recent months, travel from the United States to the province of Quebec has slowed. In response, the region launched this advertising campaign to bring back the road-tripping spirit, with humor, heart and a hug (literally).

The response is already being felt on the ground: businesses report increased bookings from U.S. travelers, including some from as far afield as California, Arizona, and other western states. An ambassador program is also visiting regional businesses to ensure visitors feel the genuine welcome that inspired the campaign in the first place.

Tourism Eastern Townships intends to build on this momentum, with plans already in motion to extend and adapt the campaign into the fall season.

To watch the campaign video, click on the picture below :



Campaign credit: Tourism Eastern Townships

Thank you to [La Bande](#) team

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About Tourism Eastern Townships

Tourisme Cantons-de-l'Est (Tourism Eastern Townships) is one of Quebec's 21 regional tourism associations (ATR) and the official representative of Quebec's Ministry of Tourism in the region. Since 1978, TCE's mission has been to foster the region's tourism development, promote, coordinate, support and represent the entire tourism sector, while focusing on the quality of the visitor experience. TCE brings together nearly 600 members representing more than 1,000 tourism offerings throughout the 9 regional county municipalities (MRCs) and in all sectors of the tourism industry: accommodation, restaurants, attractions, activities and events.

The Eastern Townships is the fourth most popular tourist region in Quebec, with volumes reaching 10 million visitors annually, accounting for 6.5 million overnight stays and a tourism spend of more than \$900 million per year. Tourism in the region generates over 20,000 jobs, making it the region's fifth largest employment sector among all tourism regions.

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