



# KAHNAWÁ:KE TOURISM?

## IITC Ottawa 2024

From February 26-29th, Jordan Diabo (Interim Office Manager) and Kyah Montour (Public Relations Officer) took part in the International Indigenous Tourism Conference (IITC) which was held in Anishinabeg Territory at Ottawa, Ontario. IITC is an annual tourism industry event where all things Indigenous tourism are discussed; forecasted tourism industry trends, awards of excellence which recognize food, hospitality and experiences across Canada, and where emerging research can be shared. This is also a chance for new faces to network with existing tourism professionals.



A diverse range of keynote speakers addressed the conference united behind the 2024 theme of ‘Where Nations Meet,’ while breakout rooms allowed for individual attendees to learn from experienced tour operators and consultants in more focused talks. An exciting global Indigenous tourism effort called Destination Original Indigenous Tourism was launched as a new marketing milieu to better promote authentic Indigenous tourism destinations, which reaches beyond the current spans of the Indigenous Tourism Association of Canada.

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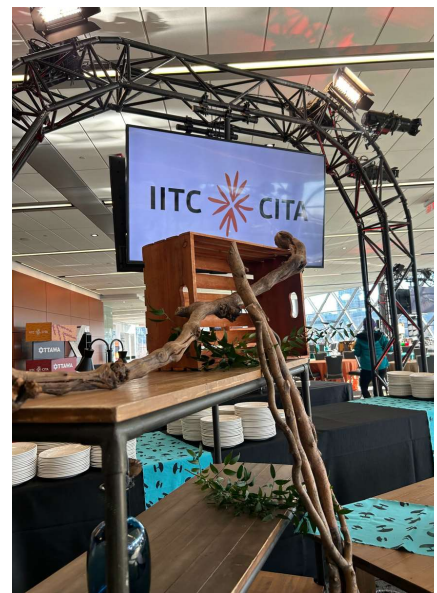
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The Kahnawà:ke Tourism Team was treated to a special culinary evening aptly called the ‘Tastes of Turtle Island,’ where First Nations, Inuit and Métis chefs displayed the finest upscale country-food for all to sample. Throughout the conference, artisans and vendors were set up in an adjacent hall where conference-goers could shop between breakout sessions and into the evening for all Indigenous-made clothing, jewelry and foods. All in all, the IITC made for an eye-opening

experience spotlighting authentic Indigenous tourism in the face of cultural appropriation, the importance of youth engagement for the future of the industry, and emergency preparedness as many tourism businesses are struggling to adjust post-pandemic. The Kahnawà:ke Tourism Team are waiting with bated breath for the upcoming conference theme as we are excited to be the host nation for next year’s IITC 2025 in Montreal!



## Musical Park Project

The Riverside Musical Park, a project created by Owisokon Lahache, was publicly demonstrated to the community from March 4-9th at the Kahnawà:ke Youth Center. The project is a few years in the making, from idea phase, to finding, to reality. The playground consists of 11 musical structures, handmade and painted by Owisokon herself. The instruments are weatherproof to be permanently fitted outdoors. The Kahnawà:ke Tourism team and Kanien'kehá:ka Onkwawén:na Raotitióhkwa Language and Cultural Center applied for funding from the Canada's Economic Development for Quebec Regions' Tourism Relief Fund.



Each sculpture tells a part of the Ohén:ton Karihwatéhkwen – “the words that come before all else” – including elements of nature. The intent was to have cultural content accessible for all. QR codes will be placed in the park for people to use their smartphones to access language, stories, songs, and history within the park. Being a public safe space for gatherings, and a venue for learning and sharing, it was a delight to see so many Kahnawa'kehró:non come out and enjoy the different instruments on display.

The Kahnawà:ke Tourism Team is still working to find the perfect spot to install the park within Kahnawà:ke. During the week-long demo, all attendees were asked to participate in the survey and many great discussions were had. Results will be shared with the planning team and the Lands Management committee to determine the future location chosen to be the park's permanent home.



Approximately 70 visitors came in during the week to play, hang out and share stories. All ages were amused and perhaps discovered their musical abilities in this inviting atmosphere. Overall, the demonstration was well enjoyed! We look forward to revealing the park this spring or summer.

For more information about the project and further updates, contact the Kahnawà:ke Welcome Center.

## Cultural Awareness Month

Throughout the month of April, free noon hour tours will be given every Monday:

**Monday, April 8th,**

**Monday, April 15th**

**Monday, April 22nd**

**Monday, April 29th**

Join Kahnawà:ke Tourism as we participate in Cultural Awareness month with a free guided walking tour of the historic village area by the Kahnawà:ke Welcome Center (1 River Road Kahnawà:ke, QC J0L1B0), Mondays from 12h00-13h00.

LIMITED SPOTS - RESERVE NOW  
[Kahnawaketourism.com](http://Kahnawaketourism.com)



## Tours February

Kahnawà:ke Tourism welcomed three groups who toured the community throughout the month of February. The first group from Concordia University had seven visitors for a guided tour of the Language and Cultural Center.

The second group of seven visitors from the University of Toronto met with staff of the Language and Cultural Center to discuss the plans of the new Multi-Purpose Building. After their discussion, the group stayed and enjoyed a tour of the museum to learn about Indigenous culture and people.

The third group from Action Canada-Public Policy Forum with twenty-six visitors enjoyed the tour of Kahnawà:ke.

## Visitors

In February, Kahnawà:ke Tourism had 17 visitors. Visitors came from as far away as South Africa, Korea, Mexico City, Missouri and The Sayisi Dene First Nation of Northern Manitoba.



## Interested in becoming a Tour Guide? This is what we look for!

In an effort to serve as many tourists as we can and meet their requests, our local guides have much to do as ambassadors of our culture. We ask for some experience in customer service since this work assumes qualities of approachability and articulation, a degree of comfort with public speaking as these are the tools for the more practical parts of the job i.e.: giving tours. Behind the scenes we are looking for someone who especially enjoys research, culture and history. If being a cultural ambassador sounds intriguing, we would be delighted to train a junior tour guide and help them to develop the necessary skills. This is a great opportunity to learn from our roster of Kahnawà'kehró:non guides who draw on various careers and disciplines, each bringing something different into the fold. Guiding a tour is giving a crash course education of a particular space and its people to our visitors.

Since the discovery of the 215 children in mass graves at Kamloops, BC, tourists are coming to the Kahnawà:ke Welcome Center to educate themselves about the painful truths our people have lived through. As Kanien'kehá:ka people, we are proud storytellers since much of our culture is steeped in oration, telling a history that pre-dates and eventually becomes intertwined with Canadian and the USA. We are incredibly fortunate to have so much of our history living and breathing all around us and the best part of it is that we are finally put in a position to tell our own story. Visitors learn about all of the historical context but are also able to see our community's resilience – that we've been able to maintain our culture in the face of erasure.



We aim to provide our tour guides with opportunities to research and develop their own interests about the community and to reflect this in their tours. As one of his more niche outputs, our resident tour guide Dwayne Stacey pulled out all the stops for a visitor who requested to be shown the works of graffiti art around Kahnawà:ke. The tour proved to be exactly what the client had been looking for and more; the Montreal photographer was so pleased with the effort that he gifted Dwayne a copy of his latest photography book as a 'thank you' for specially accommodating his request. Stories like this inspire us to keep doing research to make room for educating our guests, all the while pushing us to discover new things about our community we may not have even known!

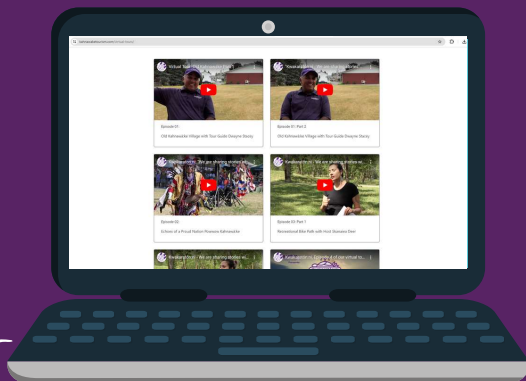
If you've ever wanted to learn more about our own people, history and this place we call Kahnawà:ke, we invite anyone interested to book a tour with one of our experienced guides to see if this is a career you would be interested in pursuing. We may think we know everything there is to know about the place we call home, but discovering what you didn't know can inspire a whole new pride of place. We firmly believe that educating ourselves and our visitors could be the catalysts to building a more understanding relationship between settlers, visitors and Onkwehón:we.

HOURS	
MON .....	8:30AM - 4:00PM
TUES .....	8:30AM - 4:00PM
WED .....	8:30AM - 4:00PM
THU .....	8:30AM - 4:00PM
FRI .....	8:30AM - 4:00PM
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SAT & SUN .....	CLOSED

The Kahnawà:ke Welcome Center is open from Monday to Friday from 8:30am to 4:00pm. Our visitor center is located on 1 River Road, Kahnawà:ke QC, J0L1B0.

**CLICK HERE TO BOOK A TOUR!**

**CHECK OUT OUR VIRTUAL TOURS ONLINE**



[kahnawaketourism.com/virtual-tours](http://kahnawaketourism.com/virtual-tours)

  **Kahnawake Tourism**

## SHOP KAHNAWÀ:KE

Shop Kahnawà:ke Gift Certificates are now available for purchase at the Welcome Center! Gift certificates can be given as a gift for that special occasion and can be redeemed in over 100 business locations in Kahnawà:ke. Visit the Shop Kahnawà:ke Facebook page and website for more information.

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

