NEWS LESSON

The Discounts That May Not Bring the Visitors Back



BEFORE YOU READ

1 Warm up

Talk about these questions with a partner.

1. Would a political disagreement change where you went on holiday?
2. How much do you think about a country's reputation before visiting?
3. Would you rather return to a favourite place or try somewhere new?

2 Key words

These words are in the article. Write the letter of the meaning (A to H) in each box.

1	**appeal**	☐	A	people who buy things
2	**familiarity**	☐	B	groups of family members born at about the same time
3	**promotions**	☐	C	connected with buying and selling
4	**consumers**	☐	D	a way of explaining what something means
5	**generations**	☐	E	special offers to make people buy something
6	**interpretation**	☐	F	a space with nothing in it
7	**commercial**	☐	G	the feeling that you know a place or thing well
8	**vacuum**	☐	H	the quality that makes people like something

3 Read

Read the article and underline the key words from task 2. The paragraphs are numbered.

American destinations are offering deals to win back Canadian travellers. But a family that has discovered Mexico may be in no hurry to return.

1 Canadians have traditionally been among the United States' most important international visitors. A short drive across the border can lead to a shopping trip, a weekend away or an extended winter holiday. Yet political tensions and trade disputes have encouraged some travellers to reconsider a journey that once felt entirely routine.

2 For decades, the appeal was never only the destination. Closeness, a shared language and a sense of familiarity made an American trip the obvious default, which is exactly why a change of mood has been so visible. Once a journey stops feeling automatic, travellers start comparing it with alternatives they had never bothered to consider.

3 Reporting in September 2026 described American tourism organisations trying to persuade Canadians to come back. Discounts and special promotions were rolled out in destinations that depend on cross-border spending. The campaigns followed a noticeable decline in Canadian visits and growing concern about the money hotels, shops and restaurants were losing.

4 The reasons for staying away are not identical for everyone. Some travellers object to political rhetoric or trade policies. Others are uneasy about how they might be treated, while practical factors such as prices and exchange rates also weigh on their decisions. A number have chosen to holiday within Canada or head somewhere else entirely, which suggests the money has not disappeared so much as moved.

5 There are competing ways of interpreting this behaviour. Avoiding a destination can be a peaceful form of political expression, since consumers get to decide where their money goes. Critics call it a blunt instrument. The people who suffer first tend to be hotel employees, restaurant owners and small businesses rather than the politicians responsible for the tension.

6 The situation is especially complicated along a border where personal and economic connections have built up over generations. Families, workers and businesses on both sides depend on regular travel, and some communities are used to welcoming the same visitors year after year. A disagreement between governments can therefore spill over into relationships that have very little to do with national politics.

7 It is also worth asking how long the effect will last. Travel habits are not easily broken, and a traveller who has discovered a new destination may be in no hurry to go back. That is only an interpretation, and nobody can yet say whether habits have changed for good. Tourism organisations may find that winning customers back takes longer than losing them did.

8 The industry often promises an escape from everyday problems, but holidays never take place in a political vacuum. Canada's changing travel patterns show how quickly ideas about hospitality, national identity and trust can affect a commercial relationship that previously looked secure.

Sources: Associated Press. Picture: AI illustration.

4 True, false or not given

Circle **T** (true), **F** (false) or **NG** (the article does not say).

1. Everyone stayed away for the same political reason. T F NG
2. Canadian airlines have cut flights to the United States. T F NG
3. The writer says winning customers back may take longer than losing them. T F NG
4. Some Canadians chose to holiday within Canada or in another country instead. T F NG
5. The writer is certain that travel habits have changed for good. T F NG

5 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed.

alternatives	campaign	decline	hospitality	persuade	reconsider	reputation	rhetoric

1. The tourist board hopes a free night will _____ families to book again.
2. Sales fell sharply, and the _____ in visitor numbers worried local shops.
3. After the news report, several couples decided to _____ their winter plans.
4. Cheap flights give travellers real _____ to a long drive.
5. Guests praised the warm _____ they received at the small family hotel.
6. Politicians often use angry _____ before an election.

6 Verb forms

Write the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1. By the time the discounts appeared, many families _____ their plans. (CHANGE)
2. Hotels along the border _____ on Canadian visitors for many years, and they still do. (DEPEND)
3. Last September, special discounts _____ to Canadian travellers. (OFFER)
4. Several families _____ after the first discount offer. (NOT / RETURN)
5. The tourist board _____ that more families will visit next year. (HOPE)

7 Language focus: linking words

Complete the sentences with words from the box. Two words are not needed. Sentence adverbs such as nevertheless, therefore and moreover start after a full stop or a semicolon and are followed by a comma.

despite	moreover	nevertheless	otherwise	since	therefore	unless

1. Many Canadians love the American coast. _____ , they have started looking elsewhere.
2. The shops depend on Canadian spending; _____ , a fall in visits hits them hard.
3. Many Canadians cancelled trips _____ the exchange rate had made everything more expensive.
4. The drive is short and the hotels are familiar. _____ , the shopping is cheap.
5. Tourism offices must win back trust; _____ , the discounts will not bring visitors back.

SPEAK

8 Talk about it

Discuss in pairs or small groups. Give reasons for your answers.

1. Can choosing where to travel be an effective way to make a point?
2. Who feels the effect when visitors stay away?
3. What would persuade you to return to a destination you had stopped visiting?

9 Role-play: winning back a regular guest

Work in pairs. Read your card, then have the conversation. Swap roles and do it again.

Student A · the hotel manager

You run a hotel in an American border town. Your Canadian guests have stopped coming. Phone a regular guest. Offer a deal and ask what would bring them back.

Student B · the Canadian guest

You stayed at this hotel every winter. This year you went to Mexico. Explain why, listen to the offer, then decide if you will go back.

Useful phrases

We've missed you at the hotel.
I'd like to offer you a special price.
It's not only about the price, to be honest.
We're thinking about trying somewhere new.
What would make you change your mind?
I'll think about it and let you know.

Afterwards, tell the class: did the guest agree to return, and what finally decided it?

ANSWER KEY

2 Key words

1 H · 2 G · 3 E · 4 A · 5 B · 6 D · 7 C · 8 F

4 True, false or not given

1 F · 2 NG · 3 T · 4 T · 5 F

5 Vocabulary

1 persuade · 2 decline · 3 reconsider · 4 alternatives · 5 hospitality · 6 rhetoric

6 Verb forms

1 had changed · 2 have depended · 3 were offered · 4 did not return · 5 hopes

7 Language focus

1 Nevertheless · 2 therefore · 3 since · 4 Moreover · 5 otherwise

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