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AFTER TEN YEARS, THE COUNTDOWN IS ON TO THE END OF AN ERA!



HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE



**THE BIG QUESTION ISSUE
INSIDE SOVEREIGN
CANNABIS IN CANADA!**

**TALKING ABOUT THE
FUTURE WITH
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With the help of these industry authorities, HCM offers fresh, timely and accurate information about natural health and wellness as it applies to cannabis. The board members lend their expertise to our process of developing and commissioning our editorial lineup, and a post-publication review of each issue which is invaluable in maintaining our more than nine year reputation as Canada's most trusted cannabis health and wellness resource.

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CANADA'S LEGAL CANNABIS
CULTURE MAGAZINE

PHOTO BY TRACEY LYNN PHOTOGRAPHY



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Issue #99 - May 2025



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Our High! Canada Magazine Family of Contributors includes:

- Cy Williams -
- Tammi Stanhope -
- Sarah Gamer -
- Sabrina Mohamed -
- Tony Lawand -
- Richard Kern -
- Karli Thiessen -
- Harry White -

Photo By
Tracey Lynn Photography

The top of the page features a textured, stone-like background. On the left and right sides, there are green marijuana leaves. In the center, the title 'HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE' is written in large, bold, white capital letters with a black outline. Below the title, the text 'APRIL 2025 - ISSUE NUMBER 99/100' is written in a smaller, bold, white font. In the bottom right corner, there is a small, white, bowl-like object.

HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE

APRIL 2025 - ISSUE NUMBER 99/100

THE COUNTDOWN IS ON! AN END OF AN ERA IS UPON US...

A single green marijuana leaf is positioned to the left of the author's name.

BY CY WILLIAMS

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF AT HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE

Welcome to the second last issue of High! Canada Magazine. This is issue number ninety-nine and our 'Big Question issue. After issue #100 we will be shuddering the High! Canada platform for the time being. Our time has come and now the sand in this particular hourglass has almost run out on this era. We cannot wait to celebrate in style at the Fundraising Gala Party on May 28th in Burlington, Ontario.

Our 'End of an Era' party is the same day that the GrowUp Conference and Expo closes out in Toronto - as as you may or may not know - we love, LOVE hosting Parties. This one will be

legendary. Proceeds go to assisting us in start-up costs for the new platform as well as donating a sizable portion of proceeds to the "Keep Live Alive" campaign organizers - the Artist Venue Trust AND to the creation of a new Creativity Bursary so that we can continue to elevate exceptional minds through project based creativity.

This event hosts a guestlist that reads like a who's who in our sector and the event will have lots of live entertainment - all of which you can dance too, food, prizes, giftbags and sampling. Did I mention our venue has both a indoor pool and a sauna? It does... So besides your gown, dress or



HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE



tuxedo or sportscoat - make sure you pack your dancing shoes because we are ending this era on a high note!

It really has been a distinct honour to have been able to work in this sector in this role and my heart is full of deep gratitude as I write this.



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MEMBER OF THE
PIKWÀKANAGAN
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THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC Page
ORIGIN NATURAL **79**

Photo By

Tracey Lynn Photography



Last fall, I connected with a friend of mine - Andrew Niigaan - who runs the Four Winds Sovereign Dispensary in the roughest of rough areas in Hamilton, Ontario. At any given time there are a dozen people out front or out back who are absolutely wasted on something much harder than cannabis. They scream, they nod off standing up.

I told him about what I was doing with this issue and he agreed to guide me. Later that week Andrew showed me how to build and set up a traditional sweat lodge and

we spent two days preparing the area, cutting and binding the lengths of tree, carrying the rocks and preparing the fire pit. It was a lot of work but finally we were able to sweat and Andrew led me and others through ceremony and as we connected over the winter.

Andrew continued to teach me about tradition and he shared many stories with me of problems he kept encountering in this neighborhood besieged with hard drug use.

As the winter deepened Andrew started to tell me about success stories and was beaming with pride every time he told me about

HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE

someone switching over to cannabis from hard drugs. It is amazing to me that Andrew helps to heal these people..

I am grateful for the sweats and for what I have learned over the winter. I am grateful to Andrew

for all he has taught me over the winter and spring. I admire him for taking on such a challenge as he has in Hamilton and serving a part of our country that desperately needs cannabis as an option to step away from much harder drugs.



AUDREY WONG Page 89

SARAH GAMER Page 95

CANNABIS TOURISM? Page 99

THE STATE OF CANNABIS FOR VETERANS Page 117

Photo By
Tracey Lynn Photography

HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE

This issue is dedicated to people like Andrew Niigaan in Hamilton, like Chief Greg Sarazin of Smoke Signals on the Pikwàkanagàn Nation and Jay Greenwood of Oasis, and Whiteducks Wellness and Greassroots Healing of the Pikwàkanagàn Nation's Nation

This issue is dedicated to people like Josée and Eve and Natebe and Aaron and Ty and jamie and all the other people out there I have spoken with who are fighting to make the world a better place.

To be heard in a world where traditional medicine is taxed and regulated until it is unrecognizable.

Keep going! Keep fighting.



This issue is also dedicated to people like you - who like myself - believe unjust laws are meant to be broken and voices of change are meant to be amplified!

One more issue left!
Come dance at our party!

Stay Lifted!
Cy Williams



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**HIGH! CANADA
MAGAZINE**

GREEN TIE GALA A HIGH END-OF-ERA ESTATE PARTY

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CONGRATULATIONS TO HIGH CANADA ON ISSUE #99
THANK YOU FOR THE YEARS OF SUPPORTING THE
CANADIAN CANNABIS INDUSTRY. WELL DONE.

INTERVIEWED BY
TONY CHAPMAN

4:45PM • CLOSING KEYNOTE: DRAGON'S DEN'S

MICHELE ROMANOW


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HIGH! CANADA
MAGAZINE
BIG QUESTION

#1

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH
**SOVEREIGN
CANNABIS?**

The most frequently asked question we get here at High! Canada Magazine is what's going on with the Sovereign cannabis market in Canada???

In our deep dive over the past year we encountered much confusion and misinformation. The conventional media and law enforcement want us to think that the sovereign cannabis market in Canada is the wild west. Unregulated and untaxed - this market has continued to evolve nationally. The Liberal government should have really invited indigenous decision-



to the table when they first started discussing legalization. They did not and this vibrant independent part of the Canadian cannabis sector has thrived in response.

The cannabis landscape in Canada has undergone a significant transformation since the legalization of recreational cannabis in October 2018. This paradigm shift not only altered the legal status of cannabis but also opened avenues for economic development, particularly for Indigenous communities. While the legal framework has encouraged entrepreneurship and

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THE BIG QUESTION ISSUE INSIDE SOVEREIGN CANNABIS IN CANADA!

economic growth, it has also introduced a myriad of complexities and challenges—especially for sovereign cannabis shops that operate under the jurisdiction of Indigenous Nations.

As the cannabis market burgeoned, various Indigenous communities across Canada began to harness this opportunity. Prominent among them are the Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory, Pikwàkanagàn First Nation, Oka and the Six Nations of the Grand River. Each of these communities has approached the cannabis market differently, navigating the intricate interplay between sovereignty, legality, and economic development.

Historically, Indigenous communities have had a unique relationship with cannabis, traditionally using the plant for various purposes, including medicinal and ceremonial uses. The legalization of cannabis opened up a commercial avenue that many tribes were eager to explore. The sovereignty

enjoyed by Indigenous nations allows them to operate businesses independent of provincial regulations and taxes, provided they adhere to federal laws.



A Point of View to Consider from Josée Bourgeois - Some Southern Nations in Canada do not historically have access to the hemp plant, especially my nation of people, the Algonquins. I do know that in the Southern Tribes of the US, for example, archeological evidence has been shared showing the hemp plant's integration in many different forms.

Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory serves as a prime example. Located in Ontario, Tyendinaga has emerged as a cannabis hub, with various retail outlets selling both legal and unregulated cannabis products. The community has not only seen an influx of revenue but has also created jobs and reinvested in local infrastructure. The proceeds from cannabis sales have facilitated economic development

initiatives, further
empowering the
community.

While the marijuana boom
has generated significant
economic benefits, the
complexities
accompanying the
sovereign cannabis market
cannot be overstated.

Inuit people of Canada use plant
medicine in diverse and intelligent ways,
but my ancestors did not use hemp.
Indigenous tribes/nations in other parts
of the world that are different, yes, it's
likely the hemp plant is much more
ingrained in their history. I'm mentioning
this to help navigate the "pan indigenous
" narrative that often gets used.

*For communities like
Pikwàkanagàn, which
navigates this
position of
sovereignty, they
create structures
conducive to business
while understanding
and navigating legal
implications that has
now become a priority.*

The potential for economic
independence through
cannabis sales is tempered
by the realities of
enforcement actions, legal
disputes, and for some, the
fear of raids from
provincial forces.

Several tribal
establishments have faced
legal challenges regarding
the sale of cannabis.
Outside authorities,
namely the provincial and
federal police, have often
conducted raids on
unregulated sovereign
cannabis shops. This
tension between
Indigenous sovereignty
and the regulations
imposed by non-
Indigenous entities
underscores the
complexities inherent in
this burgeoning market.

The balance between self-
governance and
compliance with
overarching laws creates a
unique business
environment.

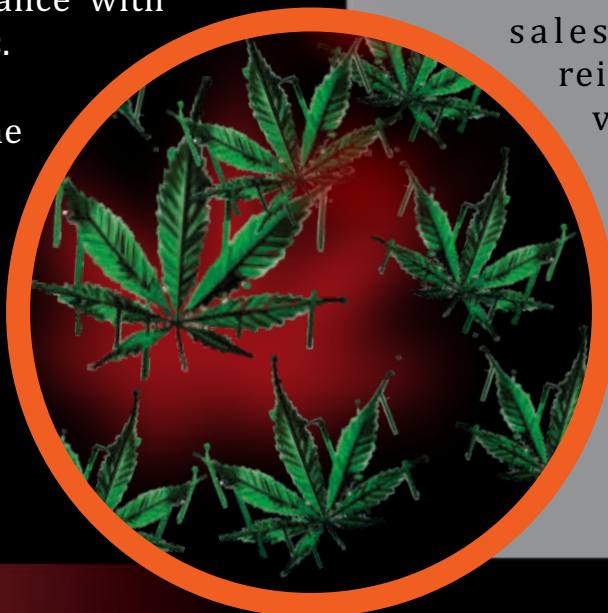
The legalization of
cannabis in Canada has



encouraged some Indigenous communities to pursue licensing agreements, allowing them to operate within the framework of federal law. Six Nations of the Grand River, one of the largest First Nations in Canada, has seen substantial growth in its cannabis sector, emphasizing the role of formal licensing.

This approach allows the community to navigate the legal landscape while ensuring economic benefit and compliance with existing laws.

However, the path to legalization is fraught with challenges.



Many communities feel that the current system is heavily influenced by non-Indigenous interests, which may seek to undermine Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. The disparity between federally sanctioned cannabis businesses and those that operate under Indigenous laws raises questions about respect for treaty rights and the inherent rights of Indigenous nations.

One of the most significant benefits of the sovereign cannabis market is community empowerment. Through the establishment of cannabis businesses, many Indigenous nations have prioritized economic initiatives focused on job creation, community health, and education.

Revenues from cannabis sales have been reinvested into vital community projects, including education and health

services, thus fostering a cycle of empowerment.

For instance, the Oka Nation has leveraged cannabis revenue to support social programs and infrastructural development. By investing in education and healthcare, the tribe is aiming to create a sustainable model for community growth, tackling issues such as unemployment and access to essential services. Cannabis has proven to be a catalyst for broader socio-economic development within many Indigenous communities.

The sovereign cannabis market in Canada presents a complex tapestry woven with threads of opportunity, challenge, and resilience.

While communities like Tyendinaga, Pikwàkanagàn, the Oka Nation and Six Nations have found economic

empowerment through cannabis, they must also navigate the intricacies of sovereign rights versus mainstream regulations. The landscape continues to evolve, requiring careful consideration of both the benefits and challenges presented by this burgeoning industry.

As Indigenous communities increasingly assert their sovereignty and rights to govern cannabis within their territories, the cannabis market undoubtedly symbolizes a avenue for potential economic



independence and
community revitalization.

Continual dialogue,
advocacy, and collaborative
efforts are essential to
ensure that the true
promise of sovereign
cannabis is truly
realized—achieving both
economic growth and
respect for Indigenous
rights in a complicated
legal framework.

*The journey of
Indigenous nations in
the cannabis industry is
far from over, and its
future will depend on
balance, respect, and
collaboration between
Indigenous and non-
Indigenous frameworks.*

Stay Lifted!
Cy Williams



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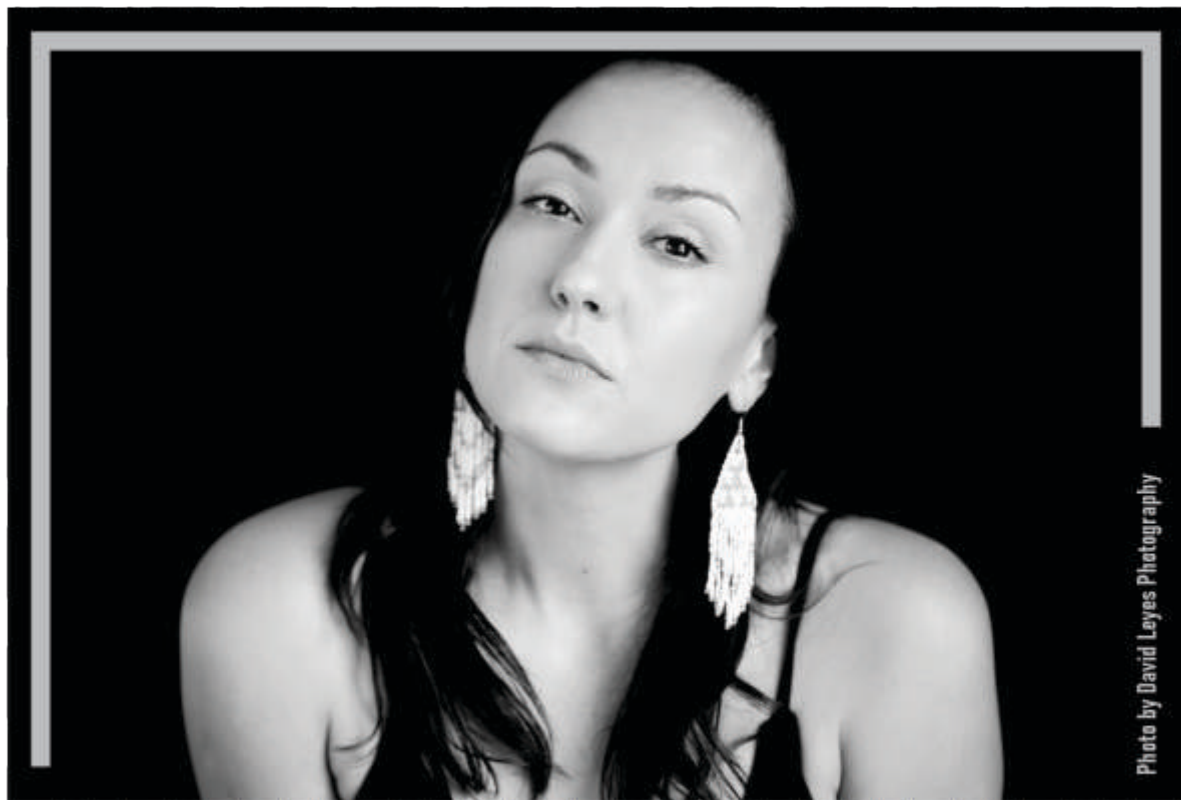
SOVEREIGN CANNABIS ADVOCATE

JOSÉE BOURGEOIS

MEMBER OF THE PIKWÀKANAGÀN FIRST NATIONS



Photo By
Tracey Lynn Photography



Josée Bourgeois is a proud member and resident of the Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nations.

Josée is a well-known professional dance artist and powerhouse fancy shawl dancer on the eastern pow-wow trail. As a young woman in the 2000's, Josée was one of Canada's first Native high-fashion models.

Mother to a 15-year-old giant teenager, Little Thunder, and newly inducted full ACTRA member Josée is breaking out as a new Indigenous talent.

Josée has many skills that have taken her center stage many times over, all this hard work and independence comes from an innate drive to ensure that she changes the intergenerational cycles of trauma and oppression her families have faced.

Her Father, a 60's scoop survivor, and grandmother, a residential school survivor, Josée has a personal mission as an artist and advocate to contribute to the next generations' joy and happiness.

Photo by David Leyes Photography



Through sovereign cannabis, not only has her own life been changed for the better, but she is determined to continue the long road ahead to helping communities gain access to decolonized wellness and self-determination.

Josée has built a reputation for conveying honest and powerful presentations, that have extended into Academia, the regulated market, and far within the sovereign industry. Josée's career began as a grassroots community engagement manager of a sovereign

manager and distributor. She was also the brand Development Manager for AKI Wellness. She can warm your heart while educating audiences on in-depth cultural content, and she can also pierce your perceived realities with brutal honesty and insight.

To know Josée is to know someone who seeks depth of meaning and belonging, and is absolutely on a journey to something great. I was so very pleased to meet Josée last year at a cannabis conference and we have been working on this feature issue



"Our reservation is a part of 9 million acres of **STOLEN** land under the current crown authority."



since then. Josée arranged for me to take a tour the Pikwàkanagàn First Nations cannabis scene and I was so impressed by what I saw and experienced. We did some video of our favorite stops and those are available on our YouTube channel. Now we are going to jump right into it with the first question.

Josée... what does Sovereign Cannabis mean to you?

Each season, my understanding of the sovereign cannabis industry evolves. I've witnessed community growth because of decolonized access to wellness, and economy. The sovereign cannabis industry is an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to assert their inherent rights and self-determination to create a sustainable economy with natural resources through a nation-to-nation capacity.

This industry is a portal to solidify a position in a sector that has an incredible capacity for great intergenerational change.

I grew up in Toronto in the early 2000s, I was a part of a particular relationship to cannabis culture shaped by my beaches high



school, Malvern. I was introduced to cannabis when Eminem and Dr. Dre hit the music scene. **(Shout-out to Big Head!)** if someone told me back then, I would be on the cover of High Canada Magazine in 2025 for my advocacy work, I would honestly not believe it. All I know is that people in the cannabis industry all together are awesome

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"This industry is a portal to solidify a position in a sector that has an incredible capacity for great intergenerational change."



PHOTO BY DAVID LEYES

people, and I am forever grateful for all the intersections that I have been able to create.

What were some key moments for you within the Canadian cannabis sector that reinforced your advocacy efforts?

Consistently, the women I come across, prove to support my work for the long haul. This authentic offering has touched my heart repeatedly. They have been able to look beyond an "opportunistic or tokenistic" relationship and have integrated my advocacy and knowledge into their organizations with intent and purpose.

My relationship with **EduCanNation** has evolved into an ongoing solution to many barriers I have faced in the advocacy and engagement work I do with First Nations communities. What started as an advisory dynamic and grew to 2 years on the Board of Directors holding the Policy and Advocacy portfolio. I'm very intrigued by the potential capacity this organization surely has. Visit **www.educannation.info** for more details.



Photo By Tracey Lynn Photography

Another key moments of engagement work would be advising **CWIC** (Canadian Women in Cannabis) and multiple keynote industry presentations including The Sprott School of Business with Carleton University.

From the very beginning, I have received an immense amount of support from WOMEN!



What are some of the changes you would like to see happen in Canada when it comes to the Sovereign cannabis sector?

Unfortunately I have come to live the experience first hand over many decades of the disconnect general society has towards Indigenous sovereign politics. This has led to often grave misunderstandings of how

and at times perpetuates the violence and disregard to our inherent rights by both law and society. In turn, the lived experience of First Nations people in the pursuit of sustainability and self-determination is once again and always; threatened and challenged.

Indigenous people have treaty rights protected under UNDRIP (United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People), and Canada has an obligation to uphold them.

I would like to encourage our First Nations leaders to continue to be more vocal and demand cannabis politics be more prioritized amongst Health Canada, AFN (Assembly of First Nations) and the provincial governments.

Having worked in Corrections and Rehabilitation for 8 years prior to my career in cannabis, I have continuously seen first hand what is happening to First Nations and Inuit communities when we look at the various health crisis.

My own reservation, of Pikwakanagan is under a prolonged State of Emergency declaration from an Opioid Crisis.

This alone is a testament to how deeply the pharmaceutical industry has effected generations of people.



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*"Consistently, the women I come across, prove
to support my work for the long haul."*



industry has effected generations of people. I work in cannabis to create decolonized access of wellness with this reality in mind, always.

In your opinion who is leading by example and doing it right within Sovereign cannabis in Canada?

The Algonquins of Pikwàkanagàn First Nations. Are we the only example? no, but since the beginning, the entrepreneurs here have contributed to a sustainable sovereign industry that has created a significant amount of opportunity for community members and families. Our reservation is a part of 9 million acres of STOLEN land under the current crown authority.

We, the Algonquin peoples, be it from Pikwàkanagàn or other parts of the territory, never gave up or surrendered this land, The Algonquin peoples have endured displacement, cultural erasure attempts and government assimilation tactics.

Therefore, I'm incredibly proud of every individual who has put in the hard work, taken risks, and made moves to assert self-determination and inherent rights to create a sustainable economy despite the enormous



barriers many generations have faced. From grassroots initiatives that supports dozens of families with homecooked meal delivery services, or endless generosityes of many shop owners supporting cultural and community events, what has developed here in Pikwàkanagàn is something to be proud of.

Consumers near and far, appreciate the fact that many sovereign products are manufactured here on the first nations and then distributed nation to nation is a very appealing component to the experience of consumers in this sector of the industry. Pikwàkanagàn First Nations is about an hour from Algonquin National Park and along many beautiful lakes and rivers, it is worth a day trip to the reservation and the territory.

I'm so lucky to descend from many generations of this land.

Any advice to our readers on how to support the fight for Sovereign cannabis in Canada?

Let's begin with honesty regarding "the fight". In general terms, Indigenous people are perpetually "fighting" for our rights because generation after generation, governments choose to continue the modern-day genocidal tactics of modern-day erasure of our inherent rights as the first people to this land.

Facts need to be respected, despite what a deed may state, all land on Turtle Island (North America) is Indigenous land.

How people may feel about this fact does not negate this reality. And with that, my sincere advice to people who are looking for a starting point in helping support "the fight" is to stop networking within the sovereign industry



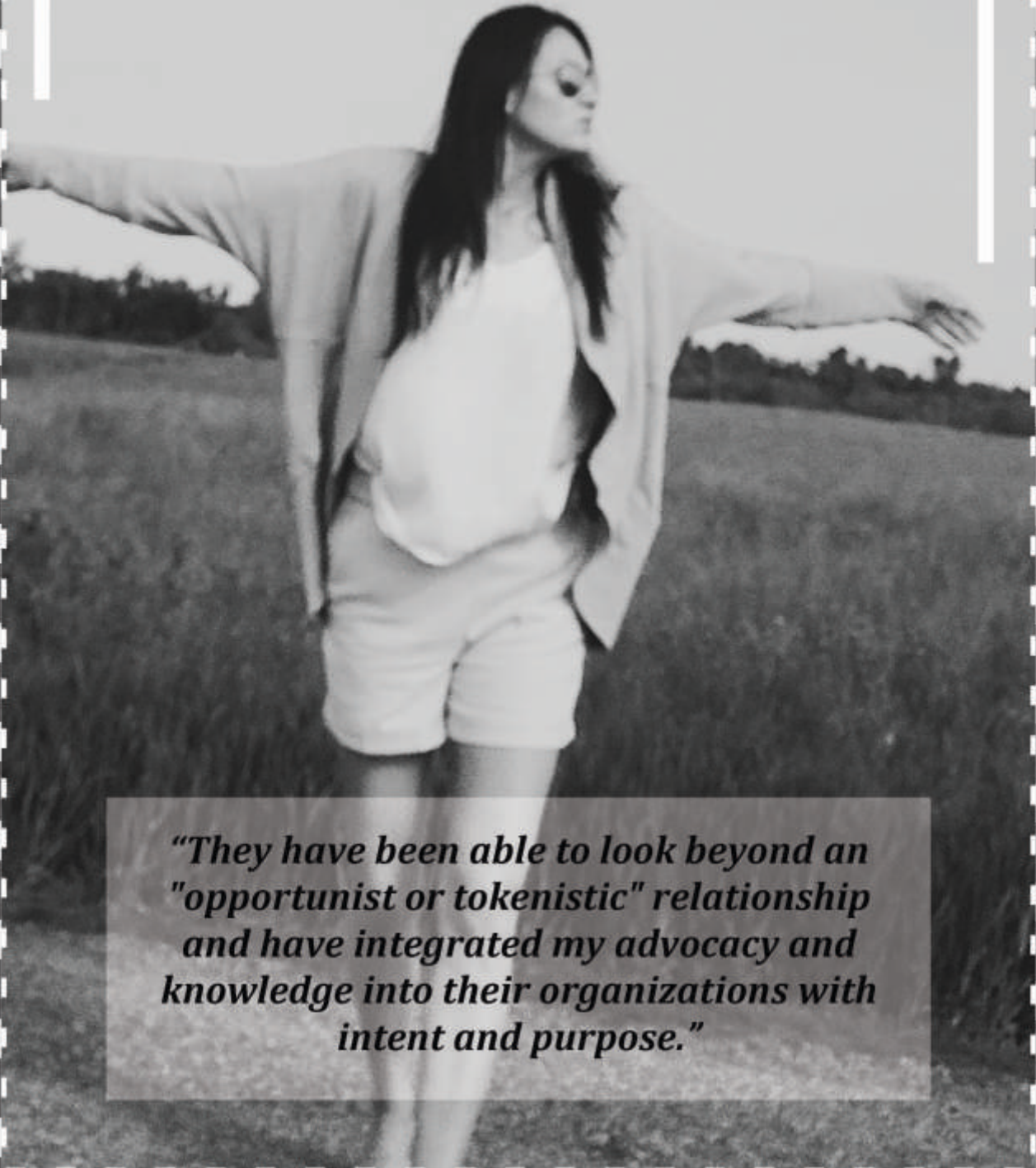
just to capitalize off of our success and rights in pursuit of "equalizing the playing field".

It has become suffocatingly obvious and business people in the sovereign industry are on high alert for this type of mentality.

Canada has a habit of removing joy and prosperity from the realities of indigenous communities, this is a time for people to back off and let us determine

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"This authentic offering has touched my heart repeatedly."



*"They have been able to look beyond an
"opportunistic or tokenistic" relationship
and have integrated my advocacy and
knowledge into their organizations with
intent and purpose."*

fact does not negate this reality. And with that, my sincere advice to people who are looking for a starting point in helping support "the fight" is to stop networking within the sovereign industry just to capitalize off of our success and rights in pursuit of "equalizing the playing field". It has become suffocatingly obvious and business people in the sovereign industry are on high alert for this type of mentality. Canada has a habit of removing joy and prosperity from the realities of indigenous communities, this is a time for people to back off and let us determine our industry. Citizens of Canada can easily get behind this advocacy if they truly understand their privileged positions as citizens of this land.

Advice to other people within the Sovereign cannabis space? How can we best move forward?

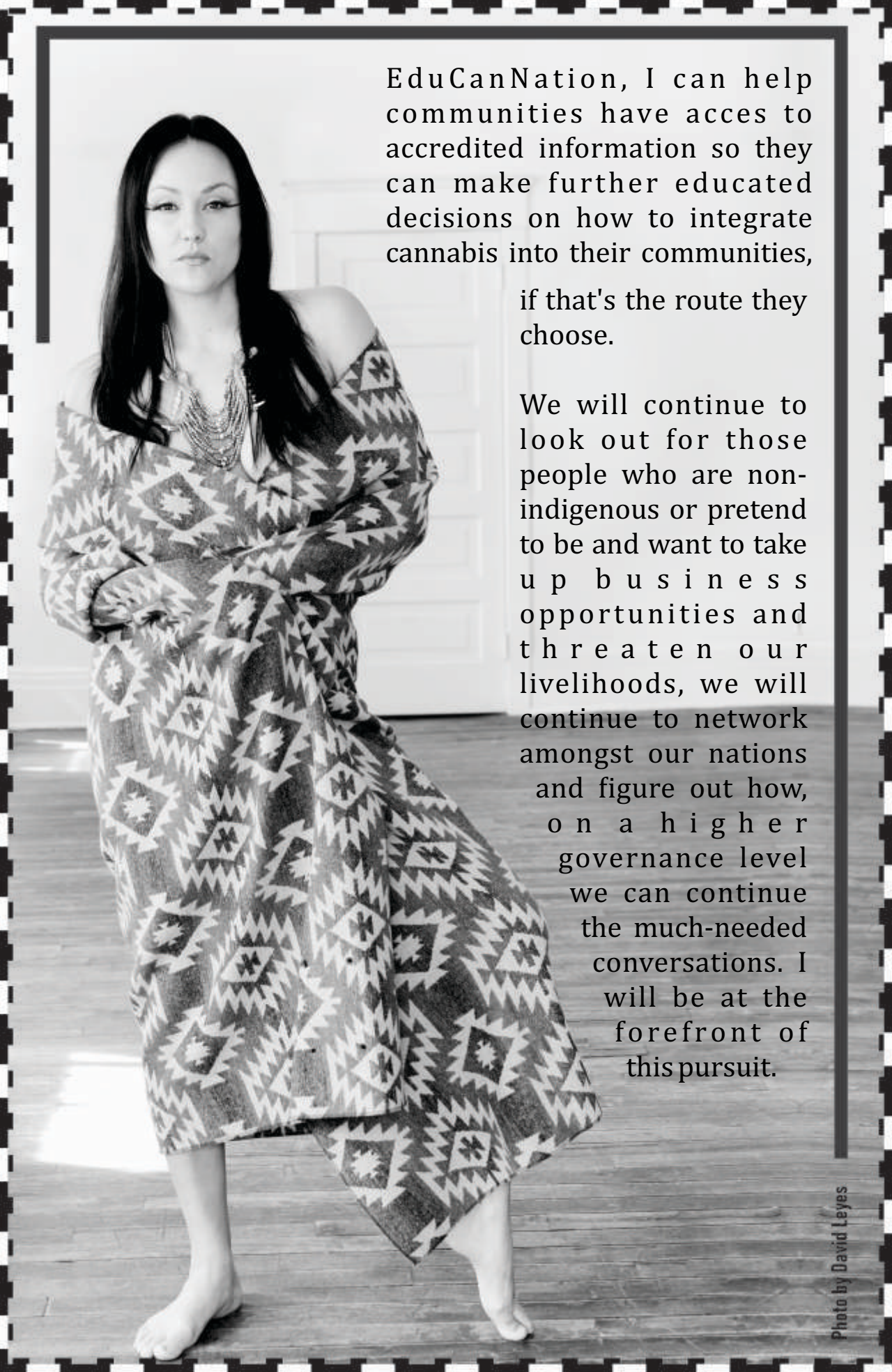
We've been moving forward, we're lightning speed in many capacities, and in the areas that



are proving to not work, I continue to encourage our leaders to engage nation to nation conversations to address a unified approach, the time will come.

Each community is doing what they need to do at this time, but who's involved will always be shifting and changing, I continue to value and respect that. It is my hope that other territories see that an Algonquin woman from Pikwakanagan has been advocating for this industry to be better understood and respected, and I intend to continue, I am just one person but I'm deadly and strong.

One day I envision through the work I do especially with



EduCanNation, I can help communities have access to accredited information so they can make further educated decisions on how to integrate cannabis into their communities,

if that's the route they choose.

We will continue to look out for those people who are non-indigenous or pretend to be and want to take up business opportunities and threaten our livelihoods, we will continue to network amongst our nations and figure out how, on a higher governance level we can continue the much-needed conversations. I will be at the forefront of this pursuit.




Final thoughts? What does the future bring? What do you hope Sovereign cannabis in Canada looks like in 5 years in the year 2030?

Globalization without government interference and discrimination.

Cannabis education to be integrated into the mandate and operations of all health and wellness sectors.

I know it would seem biased, but I would like to see Educannation be recognized by Health Canada and other governing bodies as the "go to resource" and non for profit leading organization of cannabis education for both the recreation and the medicinal sectors of the industry.



I dream of a day when Cannabis education is integrated within all health sector systems and education curriculum. I will continue to work hard and advocate for the destigmatization of cannabis and to collaborate with organizations like EduCanNation.

This is not just my dream but one that many parents and people in society know, is just the right thing to do. We must respect the plant!! This would be a huge milestone marker of decolonizing the wellness industry.

Three things that you think everyone needs?

My three would be **SuperKid Laura Secord Ice Cream, Waynes World and Gun's N Roses.**

On behalf of High! Canada Magazine - Thank you Josée - I am very grateful to have had the chance to highlight you in the magazine and wish you nothing but continued success!

Cy Williams

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Photo By Paul Couvrette



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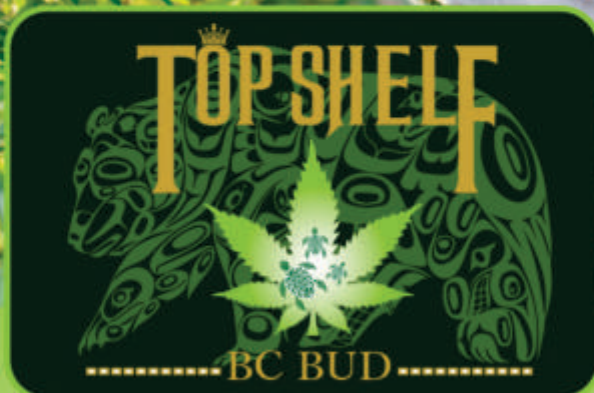
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BUD



Natalia Norton-Muñoz
A k a N a t y B e
(@NortonNatalia) IS
a powerhouse! How did you
find yourself in the cannabis
sector? What is your
cannabis origin story?

During Covid since most of us lost our jobs I decided to get a budtender licence and pursue one of the only jobs that still could go to work. I was already pretty knowledgeable on the subject. Feb 2021 I became a budtender for Paradise Cannabis. I wanted at the time to pursue management, while always running Human people Productions on the side.

I also went on and opened another store, Pot Spot, but my love was at Paradise, I became a key holder, the assistant manager and it was the best place I ever worked a regular style job. They sold us to a larger investor in 2023 and we all got fired.

I went on to other Jobs but eventually have picked up



creative contracts and am running Human People productions full time, and am COO for a passion project called The Dope Creative.

We are an Events and DEI Consulting team of entrepreneurs. We help other entrepreneurs with resources and education, run events with DEIA in mind, and consult other events companies on accessibility holes in their event plans and executions.



I smoked a lot as a teenager and was introduced to many strains and names for what I was smoking. 15 was the first time I smoked. I was a raver kid, so there was lots of drug use and cannabis was always part of that. At 19 I found myself with a drug issue as the overuse of drugs was due to many traumas that happened from the age of 4. I abandoned any form of consumption and went to 6 months of rehab for drug addiction.

12 years into sobriety I start having terrible pains and autoimmune reactions in my body. Specifically during menstrual cycles and food starts to become an issue. My stomach is in constant inflammation, the meds they give me make it worse. I need pain relief. My ex husband suggests that I should try cannabis. After much contemplation I decided that yes I will. 15 years later I am diagnosed with Endometriosis after lots of medical tests that never bring answers.

They want to put me on a pain regime, I refuse the narcotics and have stuck to cannabis. Never looked back and now I am in the best health of my life.

Challenges and adversity you have faced in the sector?

Like in all sectors as a POC and disabled I see lots of mis opportunities and lack of solidarity in Diversity in workplaces. Also the lack of knowledge and utter ignorance of accessibility and accommodation is non-existent on the part of not just companies but our society as well.. Our Community which is amazing has embraced the concepts and tries their best to include all the accommodations they can. Even if they have to make one.

As a Woman in Cannabis I have been embraced by many and also used and abused by others. I am misinterpreted often as I

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am Adhd and I don't think as most people do. Societal norms don't resonate with me.

I understand it all, I just don't see the point, making it invalid to my brain. This has caused me much grief and unacceptance in my whole life. In this space it is no different.

I have been bullied by other women and men in this space, and also ostracized.

Not that this should be the norm, but these behaviors extend to the Canadian workforce, I had already experienced this in many other places.

Humans actually do not have the skills to live in a true community. Most often we are all just living in proximity, and we all have a ways to go for it to become the norm.

I am focused on recreating how we view community, our world has changed and we need to change with it.

How did you get past these challenges and what lessons did you learn from these?

I got past these challenges by staying in my own lane, being honest and transparent when I needed to be, and trying to remember if they don't accept me it's just a redirection. I have goals that need to be focused on and a whole team to help Lead.

I do much self care and breathwork to get past any ill feelings and situations with more ease and being conscious. And I remember that we are not really humans living in community but more in Proximity. Most of us have no clue how to do this well, so I excuse myself and move away and beyond. I like to see myself as the sun at the center of my universe, all the noise is just planets and asteroids, crashing into me and taking up my orbit. But I am the sun. I can burn up

those asteroids and also send planets back to their own orbits. I transmute the unkind and daft behavior into power and strength for myself.

Advice for other women wanting to work in this sector?

Be yourself. Be Kind. Take no Shit!!

Don't believe the hype of having to be friends with everyone.

Any final thoughts?

Finding contracts in Sovereign Cannabis has helped me to thrive better than I could in the OCS space. My Clients Supreme Green Canada are doing amazing things for their community and Nation. Giving back is what attracted me to them and aligning with the best cannabis I could find. Being Indigenous South American I have no idea what my roots look like, and I was told that



hiding this was my best option. But the roots are strong and I am the generational breaker in my family. Being part of Sovereign resonates with my soul and I need to connect and help my indigenous brothers and sisters. Always about the bigger picture.

Three things you think everyone needs.

Communication, reassurance and reciprocity.



Natalia Norton Muñoz, also known as NatyBe, is a multifaceted artist and entrepreneur born in Santiago, Chile, on August 11, 1979. She moved to Canada as an infant and grew up in Timmins and Brampton before spending her teenage years in Mississauga. Natalia's artistic journey began in childhood, inspired by her father's teachings in drawing. Over the years, she has excelled in various art forms, including drawing, painting, photography, makeup art, costuming, music, and event production. With a decade of experience as Creator, she has collaborated on murals at festivals across Ontario, sold over 1000 energy paintings and custom landscapes, sang on many stages and produced multiple events.

As a Level 1 and 2 Cannabis Sommelier and COO of The Dope Creative Club, Natalia integrates her passion for creativity and community helping lead an amazing events team in the cannabis space.

In addition to her cannabis tourism and artistic endeavors, Natalia founded Human People Productions, an

amazing umbrella to run her creative ideas as a jane of all trades. Moreover she is a certified breathwork and self-healing guide, exploring themes of compassion, spirituality, and the cycles of life through all of her work. Her visionary creations reflect the fragile yet explosive nature of our galaxy, weaving together life's intricate narratives and emotions in every piece.

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MAGAZINE
BIG QUESTION

#2

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH
CANNABIS
IN QUÉBEC?

Our Guest contributor - Mr. Luc Prévost is a tireless creator who has carved out a path at the crossroads of media and social innovation.

With international experience in advertising, communications, and marketing, Luc has led a wide range of projects, from custom training programs to explorations in cellular agriculture and podcasts on the use of drones in cannabis cultivation. An entrepreneur at heart, he has founded several businesses, taught multimedia, and launched alternative projects such as co-housing communities and green rooftops.

After writing, recording and producing 137 episodes of toPot — the only true

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MAGAZINE



WITH GUEST
CONTRIBUTOR
LUC PRÉVOST

**BON
STOCK**

Quebec-based media outlet dedicated to the science, industry, and consumption of cannabis — he started Bon Stock, the media who loves cannabis. Bon Stock publishes articles, interviews and as well a producing a new potcast called «Le Bon Stock» with l'Entourage, a crew a four enlighten consumers

Luc embodies
intelligent curiosity
and social



and social engagement. His journey reveals a rare ability to connect disciplines, ideas, and communities in order to better tell the story of our time — always with precision, boldness, and a touch of humor.

ON CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC

OR HOW TO LEGALIZE CANNABIS WITHOUT LETTING IT GO TO ANYONE'S HEAD

La Belle Province is distinct in its love and acceptance of cannabis. Just like every other province in Canada. Compare the state monopoly in Québec to OCS in Ontario, who competes online with its clients.

What kind of capitalism is that? Future historians and anthropologists will have a very fertile dataset to explore with all the private-public variations deployed in Canada. And will they say about la SQDC?

Everything starts with the low social acceptability of cannabis in Québec. The legislator is so biased on cannabis that it reneged on its own law. The profits generated by la SQDC were supposed to be used to study cannabis. The dozens of millions available are mostly used for other purposes: a r e g r e t t a b l e misappropriation. Leading the world in medical cannabis research was a distinct possibility.

Confidence? I recently discovered I had my own



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cannabias. Among all Canadian big cities, the levels of cannabis metabolites in the city's wastewater were the highest in Halifax. But where is the lowest appetite for cannabis in Canada? With the same data made available by Statistics Canada, I calculated that it was... Montréal.

To get another perspective, I spoke with Jason Moscovici, a lawyer, biochemist and founder of Provisions Legal, a law firm specializing in the space.

"The LPs from Québec have a distinct relationship with la SQDC because it is the only buyer in town." As a professional who also deals with clients in the ROC (Rest of Canada), as well as internationally, Jason finds that the provincial government tends to show a non-participatory and reactive attitude when compared to others. But nothing is simple. Playing devil's advocate, Jason also argues that the nature of the relationship between the

LPs and the monopoly encourage a form of stability that the markets from Alberta or Ontario aren't able to offer. My take? By design, la SQDC will never go bankrupt like a chain of cannabis stores. It pays its bills easily because it takes absolutely no risk, unlike the Casino de Montréal.

La SQDC is supervised by a Board of Directors appointed by the Société des Alcools du Québec (SAQ) and it sometimes takes orders directly from some "important persons" in the government. That creates a situation where both harmonisation with the rest of Canada and forward-looking innovation (as opposed for innovation for the sake of



compliance) has been restrained. Jason gave me a great example. "We have been talking about transparent packaging for almost a year as an industry. The amended regulations are now coming into force and the Quebec government has yet to issue indications on how suppliers should proceed with these changes. They could have been in front of this."

Terroir is a French word and it resonates very strongly in Québec. Since 2018, Health Canada has delivered 124 Micro-Cultivation licences (17 in 2024) and 76 standard licenses (4 in 2024) to businesses operating in Québec. The trend is clear: we are witnessing the birth of legal craft cannabis. But what is going on for the humans behind these licences? Julien Raymond, the soul of Juste Feu, a micro producer established in Lachute, shared his thoughts with me. He is the master grower of the legendary Runtz Bio. "Microproducers are operating with love money.

That's it. Nothing else. No subventions. No loans. If you get one, that is a fortunate mistake." He took me through the maths of the new regulation with the maximum grow surface going from 200 m² to 800 m² and showed me how it made no sense for a "normal" micro-cultivator. "Some institutions tell me that I am not in the agriculture business. So they can't help me. Others will refuse me a loan because I am a Cannabis grower. Micro-culture is like an afterthought. We've been forgotten." Do a simple test: ask your SQDC advisor to name only two micro-producers. At my convenience store, employees can recite the whole alphabet of craft beer brands.

I exchange every day with people who are legalization militants. Canada is the envy of the world. So what do Québécois feel about cannabis? For most people, legalization is a total success. The conclusion of the study by Russell C. Callaghan in 2019 is clear: "The upper 10% of Canadian cannabis users accounted for 66% of all cannabis consumed." Most Québécois are occasional cannabis consumers. All political parties avoid any discussion about cannabis with a dismissive attitude. The only explosive subject is left fallow: four out of ten Quebecers are technically forbidden to smoke cannabis because they rent their apartment with a non-smoking pot clause in a city where it's illegal to smoke outside your home.

The initial honeymoon between the industry and consumers is over. The erosion of the original fervour is palpable

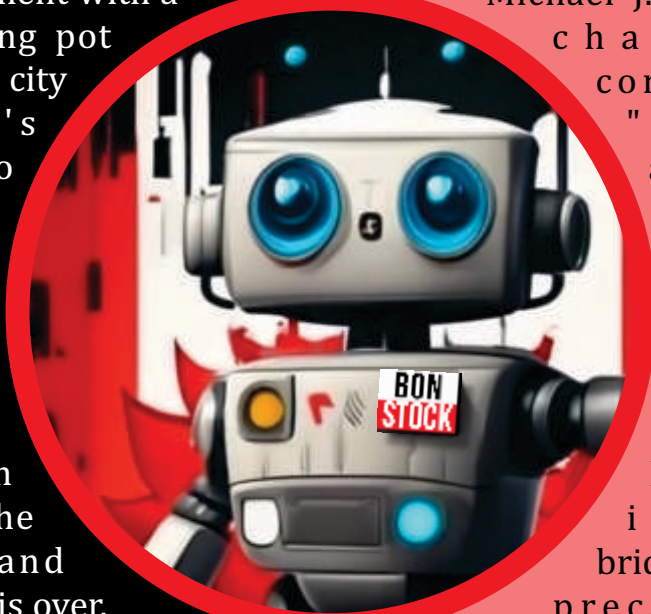
by the sheer numbers of participants on the different social networks. In 2025, Facebook killed a few big private groups dominated by Québec brands who are now facing new challenges to reach consumers.

For the industry, there are not enough stores in Québec. Not attractive enough edibles. Not enough THC (30% THC cap on all non-medical cannabis). Not enough marketing... Does la SQDC want to push consumers into black markets? It is a reasonable question.

But what if la SQDC was a visionary?

According to the researcher Michael J. Armstrong, changes in consumption "showed associations with falling prices but not rising store counts".

Is having an industry bridled by some precautionary measures a bad thing?



That is also a reasonable question. The devastation caused by the rise of sugar consumption should be a reminder that legalization is a global experiment. And the latest tests made by Health Canada on 50 legal products and 50 illegal products are not reassuring.

According to the auditor general, consumers are not getting the best products because la SQDC "selects products on the basis of, among other things, discretionary criteria that, in many cases, are not documented". Anyway, the best flowers grown in Québec are exported.

Bye-Bye Excise tax!

We consume locally the best of the rest. Another method adopted by more and more LPs is to sell directly to consumers by opening a medical platform. That is the closest thing to a forbidden farmgate.

In a nugzshell, Québec's imperfect system does one thing perfectly: it grows skepticism and pot in equal measure.

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[Provisions Legal Services](#)
[Juste Feu](#)

[Halifax wastewater survey shows 'high
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[Who consumes most of the cannabis in
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**GREAT WHITE NORTH
GROWERS**



THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC



**GREAT WHITE NORTH
GROWERS**

The Shining Star in Quebec: George Goulakos & Great White North.

In the vibrant landscape of Quebec's business environment, George Goulakos stands out as a remarkable entrepreneur and innovator. His contributions to the local economy and community have made him a significant figure in the province. Goulakos is best known for his leadership in the food industry, particularly through his company, which specializes in high-quality products that cater to both local and national markets.

George Goulakos has built a reputation for excellence and integrity in business. With a background in culinary arts and business management, he founded his company with the vision of providing premium food products that reflect the rich cultural heritage of

Quebec. His commitment to quality and sustainability sets him apart from competitors, allowing him to carve out a niche in an increasingly crowded market.

Goulakos's journey began with a passion for cooking

THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC

instilled by family traditions. He honed his skills at culinary schools and gained experience working in various kitchens before deciding to launch his own brand. This blend of formal training and practical experience has equipped him with the knowledge necessary to navigate the complexities of running a successful food business.

What truly distinguishes George Goulakos from others in the industry is his unwavering dedication to sourcing local ingredients. He believes that supporting local farmers not only enhances product quality but also strengthens community ties. This approach resonates with consumers who are increasingly looking for transparency and sustainability in their food choices.

Goulakos emphasizes innovation within traditional recipes, combining modern culinary techniques with time-honored practices. This fusion creates unique offerings that appeal to both traditionalists and adventurous eaters alike. His products often feature bold flavors and creative presentations, making them



stand out on grocery shelves across Quebec and Canada.

Moreover, Goulakos actively engages with customers through social media platforms, sharing recipes, cooking tips, and stories about ingredient sourcing. This direct communication fosters a sense of community among consumers who appreciate knowing where their food comes from.

In addition to his success in the food industry, George Goulakos has ventured into the burgeoning cannabis market with Grite White North Cannabis Company. This new venture reflects his adaptability and keen sense of market trends.

Great White North aims to provide high-quality cannabis

THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC

products while maintaining a strong commitment to sustainability and ethical sourcing practices similar to those established in his food business. The company focuses on cultivating premium strains that are organically grown without harmful pesticides or chemicals.

The product offerings from Great White North include:

Premium Flower: Carefully cultivated cannabis flower available in various strains tailored for different consumer preferences—whether for recreational use or medicinal purposes.

Edibles: A selection of cannabis-infused edibles designed for those seeking alternative consumption methods without compromising on taste or quality.

Concentrates: High-potency concentrates aimed at experienced users looking for stronger effects.



Topicals: A line of topical products infused with cannabis extracts aimed at providing localized relief without psychoactive effects.

George Goulakos' impact extends beyond just product offerings; he plays an active role in promoting economic growth within Quebec by creating jobs and supporting local agriculture through both his food company and now through Great White North Cannabis Company. His commitment to ethical business practices has

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garnered respect from peers and consumers alike, positioning him as a leader not only in the food industry but also as a model for sustainable entrepreneurship within emerging sectors like cannabis.

Honestly, we like George Goulakos and he exemplifies what it means to be a shining star in Quebec's business landscape through his innovative approach to food production alongside his recent expansion into cannabis with Great White North Cannabis Company. His contributions have significantly enriched both the culinary scene and the economic fabric of Quebec.

Dedicated to delivering excellence and ensuring customer satisfaction, this team specializes in top-notch services encompassing the distribution, sourcing, and transportation of premium cannabis products, offering a comprehensive range of solutions and variety, GWNG ensures that customers have access to a plethora of premium cannabis products designed to cater to their unique preferences and desires.



THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC

Great White North

Cultivation lead is Patrick Pagé one of Canada Leading Cultivator assuring GWNG commitment to excellence. Bringing terpenes level to a new high with offerings such as

Amnesia Haze

Presented in its dried flower manifestation, this Sativa-dominant Hybrid boasts a potent impact with elevated THC levels complemented by a subtle touch of CBD. Experience heightened concentration, enhanced creative impulses, and immerse yourself in the invigorating aura of its natural terpenes, which emit a delightful blend of zesty lemon, earthy, and woody aromas. Notably, this strain features an impressive 5.9% terpene profile, adding an extra layer of complexity to its rich and invigorating experience.

Docteur Haze - pre-rolled Sativa

This pre-rolled Sativa offers a potent THC kick, potentially complemented by CBD. It enhances focus, sparks creativity, and bolsters concentration without a discernible scent.



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Vieux Port Hash

Experience our CBD-infused Hybrid hash: a product of icy extraction and abundant THC content. Transitioning from

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deep, dark hues to lighter shades of brown, this hash takes you on a fragrant odyssey, characterized by hints of fruitiness, lemon zest, and underlying sweetness.

Villeray Vapes

Experience the essence of Montreal's Villeray neighborhood with Villeray Vape 1g by 514. Inspired by the vibrant culture of Villeray, this vape cartridge offers a unique cannabis experience. Immerse yourself in the sensory journey, reminiscent of the neighborhood's cozy atmosphere. Villeray Vape 1g is a testament to Montreal's rich heritage and the passion of 514 for crafting exceptional cannabis products. Elevate your vaping experience with the essence of Villeray, where every inhale is a journey into Montreal's charm.

St-Pierre Pre Rolls

Discover the essence of relaxation and invigoration with Ville St-Pierre Pre-Rolls, available in both Sativa and Indica variations. Whether you're seeking an uplifting and energizing experience or a tranquil, calming journey, our pre-rolls cater to your specific preferences. Crafted with care and precision, Ville St-Pierre Pre-Rolls offer a convenient and enjoyable way to savor the distinct qualities of Sativa and Indica strains.

Great White North Growers is certainly home to seasoned passionate growers who bring their extensive experience to deliver unparalleled cultivation, merging skill with expertise.



**GREAT WHITE NORTH
GROWERS**



AN INSIDE LOOK AT

EduCanNation



The Association of Certified Cannabis Educators dedicated to providing the highest standard of responsible education, supporting respect for holistic Cannabis plant medicine.



train - learn - support - grow

EduCanNation: Elevating Cannabis Education & Community

Who is EduCanNation?

In a world where Cannabis is rapidly evolving from stigma to science, EduCanNation is leading the charge in education, advocacy, and community support. This nonprofit isn't just about sharing information—it's about empowering individuals, professionals, and businesses with the knowledge needed to navigate Cannabis confidently and responsibly.

EduCanNation is a hub for education and collaboration, founded by Executive Director, Shawna Dunbar, and supported by Executive Director, Jay Jay O'Brien, and their team of dedicated volunteer Board and Subcommittee members; an Advisory Committee of over 20 members with a vast array of expertise, providing guidance



**Executive Director,
Jay Jay O'Brien,**

and accountability; along with a growing community of members, partners and sponsors who believe that credible, evidence based Cannabis education should be available to all. But it's not just about learning—it's about building a community that supports and encourages responsible, sustainable and inclusive industry practices.

EduCanNation sees that education has the capacity to bridge gaps, not just between

AN INSIDE LOOK AT

EduCanNation



train - learn - support - grow

industry and consumer but across the vast landscape of the industry itself. Anchoring themselves in unbiased education that embraces the full spectrum of industry players and practices, ECN understands the need to encourage healthy conversations that recognize the value of all aspects of the industry, including the regulated, legacy, and Sovereign markets as well as the pharmaceutical industry, in order to move forward in a positive direction.

No matter one's opinion on these existing markets, it's time to move past our competitive natures and start forging pathways that allow room for respectful alliances. Time to get over our colonial approach of owning and exploiting a plant that every individual should have the right to access and benefit from and recognize that communication, collaboration

and education are key to creating a thriving and harmonious industry.

EduCanNation is committed to driving forward sustainable policies, advocacy for patients' access and Indigenous rights, and breaking the stigma surrounding Cannabis so that more people can make informed choices, access life-changing medicine, and benefit from the full potential of this plant.



What do they offer?

A three-tiered membership makes it easy for anyone to join—whether you're a patient seeking education and support or a Certified Cannabis Educator or industry professional looking to deepen your knowledge and develop and grow your business.

Members benefits include:

A continually growing library of recorded educational content; Bi-monthly Friday Speaker Series sessions covering everything from the Endocannabinoid System (ECS) and therapeutic applications to responsible consumption, harm reduction, and industry regulations. These expert-led workshops ensure knowledge is accessible, up-to-date, and practical;

A dynamic support system for Cannabis coaches, educators, and advocates through Business Support Group sessions, where members can grow and strategize together while they get things done.

Water Coolers and Chill & Chats offer casual networking, sharing of insights and a safe space to find support and answers to your questions.



ECN also offers:

Individualized patient education and support services through its Alternative Wellness Access Centre for Education (AWACE); Customized educational programming through its Alternative Wellness Outreach Education for Communities (AWOEC) services; As well as peer-led content review, and research and development services.

By promoting collaboration, ethical knowledge, and patient-centric care, ECN is shaping the future of the Cannabis industry—one educated and empowered individual at a time.

Why should you join?

EduCanNation is Canada's first and only Association of Certified Cannabis Educators, committed to raising the standard for Cannabis education. Proud to have been voted Best Educator at the 2023 CannExpo Awards, a testament to their

dedication to sharing accurate, unbiased, and impactful information about the plant.

Putting respect for plant medicine and patients first.

Every member of ECN's community has a unique journey that led them to Cannabis—whether through personal healing, advocacy, or a drive to break the stigma.

What unites them is a deep passion for the plant and an unwavering commitment to ensuring that knowledge reaches those who need it most.

A simple mission to: educate, empower, and advocate. Supporting patients, industry professionals, and educators through community, resources, and networking opportunities. Providing spaces where knowledge is shared and connections are made.

If you believe in Cannabis education and want to be part of a movement dedicated to changing lives and shaping the industry, EduCanNation is your home.

Join them in making Cannabis education accessible for all.

Apply to join today at educannation.info/membership

Connect with Them!

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420 Cannabis Tourism
Extravaganja**

**EduCanNation is CCTA's
educational partner for this
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**Executive Director,
Shawna Dunbar,**

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THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC

Alexandre Gauthier & Origine Nature

By Tammi Stanhope
Photos by Jonathan Gaudreau

Nestled in the heart of the breathtaking Laurentians, Sainte-Agathe-des-Monts serves as the home for Origine Nature, a beacon of innovation and quality in the Canadian cannabis industry. Founded in 2017, this dynamic company has rapidly risen through the ranks, and in 2022, its Master Grower and VP of Research and Development, Alexandre, was crowned Top Grower of the Year in Canada's Top Grower Award category by Grow Opportunity. I am thrilled to take you behind the scenes of Origine Nature as we uncover the secrets of cultivating exceptional cannabis—locally grown by Quebecers, for Quebecers.

Our adventure began in June 2024 when the Canadian Dab-A-Doo, held in Kanesatake, gave us the perfect opportunity to explore the expertise and passion that lies within the walls of Origine Nature.

Welcomed with warm hospitality by Alexandre and his dedicated team, we stepped into a state-of-the-art, 23,000 square foot facility. A remarkable 14,000 square feet of that space is exclusively dedicated to the

THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC



cultivation of premium cannabis strains.

The journey of Origine Nature is one of resilience and dedication. After obtaining a standard cultivation license in March 2020 and a standard processing license just a few months later in July, the company debuted its first product at the Société Québécoise du cannabis (SQDC) in October 2020. As one of the founding members of

the Association Québécoise de l'Industrie du cannabis (AQIC), Origine Nature has not only set the standard for quality but has also become a prominent advocate for the thriving cannabis community in Quebec. Origine Nature also received 1st place for Best Flower "Golden Goat" at the 2024 Grow Up Conference in Edmonton.

Through my exclusive interview with Alexandre,

THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC



we dive into the heart of what it means to cultivate cannabis with care and precision. His deep commitment to producing the finest recreational cannabis has established a brand that Quebecers can trust. With a

focus on quality strains and a passion for continual improvement, the team at Origine Nature stands ready to meet the evolving needs of consumers.

Join us as we uncover Alexandre's insights on the

future of cannabis cultivation, the importance of local production, and his vision for Origine Nature. With every bud harvested and every product sold, they are not just growing cannabis; they are cultivating a legacy—one that embodies the vibrant spirit of Quebec's cannabis culture.

What inspired you to become a master grower, and can you share a pivotal moment in your cultivation journey that

significantly shaped your approach to growing cannabis?

First, I want to clarify that I am not a "master grower." In a regulated industry filled with some of the brightest minds striving to make the world a better place, titles such as Chief Horticulturist or Director of Production are more fitting for those managing cultivation facilities. Growing cannabis felt natural to me, almost as if it were destiny.

Being hyperactive, I struggled in traditional, sit-down learning environments. Cannabis provided me with relief—an opportunity to learn, experiment, and grow at my own pace. It also offered a much-needed alternative to traditional medications often prescribed to young people, which can be harmful when overused. From then on, I loved producing quality cannabis and creating something beneficial for others, and it's all I've wanted to do.

I have always had an affinity for contact sports and the idea of the stereotypical kung-fu-style mentor. I

appreciate the value of discipline and hard work in achieving new levels of mastery. The cannabis industry, with its legacy roots, has no shortage of mentors, and I've been fortunate to learn from some of the best in the field. These mentors have been instrumental in shaping my career and advancing cannabis cultivation in Quebec, helping us to build a level of expertise that stands out globally. Quebec's cannabis industry is like hockey: with around 10% of NHL players coming from a population of just 6 million, cannabis is also deeply ingrained in Quebec's culture and community.

With so many strains emerging in the market, how do you choose which varieties to cultivate, and what characteristics do you prioritize when selecting a strain or phenotype?

We let the consumers decide. Instead of assuming we know what's best, we use a sommelier program that conducts blind tests on different products to identify what

THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC



resonates with our consumer base. Most newer cultivars lack longevity in the market; instead, classic legacy strains like Amnesia Haze, Purple Kush, and Pink Kush continue to hold value.

These strains, proven winners in Canada's legacy days, transition beautifully into the legal market. Rather than reinventing the wheel, we listen to what consumers have consistently valued.

When selecting a new phenotype, we look for: potency (though we may not

favor it ourselves, consumer demand strongly favors strains over 25% THC), terpene profiles, yield, ease of cultivation, consumption experience, and visual appeal. This approach allows us to deliver products that consumers consistently appreciate.

Sustainability is a significant topic in modern agriculture. What innovative techniques or practices do you employ in your growing operations to promote environmental sustainability?



REPEAT...

THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC



Although regulations still restrict our handling of waste, we are working toward a circular economy in Quebec.

One major effort is converting cannabis waste into construction materials, with our first success being the transformation of cannabis stems into cannabis-based concrete.

We are also conducting R&D projects to modify our environmental control and irrigation systems, with a target to reduce energy, nutrient, and water usage by 30-50%.

Stay tuned for more on this!

THE BEST CANNABIS IN QUÉBEC

What are some of the biggest challenges you face, and how do you overcome them? Can you share any specific incidents where you turned a potential setback into a successful outcome?

Consistency remains our biggest challenge. Cannabis is highly adaptive to its environment and external stressors, which can lead to variations in the flowers. Achieving pharmaceutical-grade cannabis requires a high standard of consistency to ensure safe and predictable experiences for consumers. We overcome this by establishing robust workflows, data collection, and data-driven decisions to meet these standards consistently. With the right team of passionate professionals, we've been able to achieve this goal at Origine Nature.

For consumers, understanding the effects and uses of different cannabis strains can be complex. How can cultivators help educate patients and consumers to make informed choices?

There is no one-size-fits-all approach; the endocannabinoid system is complex and has unique variations for each individual. Our role as cultivators is to make consistent



medicine accessible for patients. One major issue patients face is continuity—finding and staying with a strain that works for them.

The most important thing we can do, and a personal goal of mine, is to normalize cannabis consumption and end the stigma around it.

It's challenging to educate on cannabinoids and terpenes when there is still a stigma attached to cannabis use. By normalizing it, increasing research, and fostering comfort around it, we can provide patients with a world of natural, side-effect-free medicine.

Ideally, cannabis-based medicine will one day be as commonplace as other medications, valued simply for its efficacy.

As the cannabis industry continues to evolve in Canada, how do you see the future of cannabis

cultivation progressing? What trends or changes are you most excited about?

To put things into perspective, Canada's historical cannabis market was largely export-driven, with an estimated 90% of legacy cannabis going abroad, mostly to the U.S. Even California is familiar with the reputation of BC bud. I see Canada taking its rightful place as a major global cannabis producer and exporter. Not necessarily because we're better growers, but because we have the resources and infrastructure to produce high-quality, consistent cannabis at competitive prices.

The "second green rush" in Canada is exciting, as we continue developing expertise that surpasses what was ever thought possible.

With the support of scientists worldwide, we are on the brink of discovering new medicinal and industrial uses for cannabis and hemp, making positive impacts that will last for generations.

Thank-you!

By Tammi Stanhope



HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE

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**HIGH! CANADA
MAGAZINE**

Inna Gadda DaVida Baby...

**Let's face it...
This is not...
What we expected...**

**By
Audrey
Wong**





HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE

The glory days from Canada being the first G7 country to legalize cannabis are long gone. For those of us in the industry, our time of basking in glory has been replaced by the stress of constant price compression, even as the rest of the CPG world prices go up, and counting our loonies to pay our excise tax debts. Speaking of excise tax, given that half of us Canadian cannabis producers are behind on our excise tax payments, we have to ask ourselves: have we built an industry that can actually survive let alone thrive?

Sure, we should still be proud of Canada for taking the lead on cannabis reform, we've always relished the chance to differentiate ourselves from our neighbors to the south. And particularly at this moment in time when Trump is escalating conflict with us and other countries across the world. But now that the initial high has worn off, we have to face reality. Our industry is teetering, and many businesses are left holding our breath for a lifeline that isn't coming. Like Jack and Rose, there's just not enough room for all of us on that last floating piece of Titanic debris.

What Now?

What happens next, now that the new regulations have been released and we definitely know that the government isn't swooping in to save the cannabis industry? Cannabis hasn't been a political priority since 2015 when Trudeau used it as a pathway to his "sunny ways", and with Canada bracing for a trade war and recession fueled by American foreign economic policy, it's been pushed even further down the list.

But that doesn't mean we should accept the status quo. If anything, with the right positioning, now is the time to rally and push for change.

If you're a reader of this 'zine, you've likely noticed that things aren't running as they should. Overregulation, crushing taxes, and a difficult to navigate licensing system aren't just minor inconveniences—they're massive roadblocks. The Canadian government may have had good intentions, but in practice, their policies have stifled small businesses while allowing large corporations to gobble up distressed the assets that keep popping up.

The illicit market, which legalization was supposed to eliminate, has unsurprisingly continued to be tenacious. While it took a temporary hit, many who tried their hand at the legal market found it unsustainable and returned to the grey market for (oddly enough) stability and consistency.

Us legal players, meanwhile, are trapped in a system with sky-high regulatory fees, restrictive marketing opportunities, and provincial distribution monopolies with behind-the-scenes mandates to favor in-province businesses over out-of-province competitors.



**HIGH! CANADA
MAGAZINE**

The U.S. Trade War and an Opportunity for Cannabis

As if things weren't already challenging, the looming threat of a trade war with the U.S. makes the situation even more precarious. Tariffs and shifting trade policies will massively disrupt the Canadian economy. With this looming, cannabis presents a unique opportunity.

Let's be real: our government isn't going to slash taxes on cannabis anytime soon. Most politicians see the industry either with a mix of apathy or mild disdain, and without any pressing catalyst most would just like to do nothing. So instead of waiting for a tax break, why not shift our focus, to cannabis tourism. It is perfect for the current "we need to diversity and fend for ourselves" climate and would allow us to focus on something that is distinctly Canadian, something where we can excel without any ties to the United States. This is our opportunity to bolster the Canadian economy and set us ahead of our southern neighbours.

Learning from Wine Tourism

There's a roadmap for this already: just look at the wine industry. Napa Valley as well as our own Okanagan Valley don't just produce wine—they turn it

into an experience. Tasting rooms, vineyard tours, high-end pairings, and luxury experiences make wine tourism a lucrative industry.

In the late 1980s, the federal and BC provincial governments pumped the equivalent of \$56 million (adjusted for inflation) into the wine industry to improve production, quality, and tourism. Today, a weekend in the Okanagan means hopping between wineries, tasting flights, and buying bottles probably wouldn't have considered if you weren't caught up in the moment. Cannabis can do the same.

Canada's Untapped Potential

We already have the foundation: a legal framework, world-renowned quality, and breathtaking landscapes that would be perfect for cannabis tourism.

Imagine luxury consumption lounges where visitors can sample craft strains paired with fine dining and curated experiences. Manufacturing tours showcasing the entire seed-to-sale process, from cultivation to extraction to product packaging. Farm stays where tourists can immerse themselves in the growing process. Cannabis and wellness retreats that

combine spa treatments with cannabis-infused therapies.

The only thing missing is government support.

Time to Take Action

While some U.S. states have legalized cannabis, there is no national framework—and that gives Canada a window of opportunity to establish ourselves as the global leader in cannabis tourism. But time is running out. Once the U.S. legalizes cannabis federally, it will have the infrastructure, marketing power, and investment capital to dominate the market unless we act now.

For cannabis businesses struggling under the weight of regulation and taxation, tourism could provide a much-needed financial lifeline. But that won't happen unless policymakers recognize the economic potential of the industry.

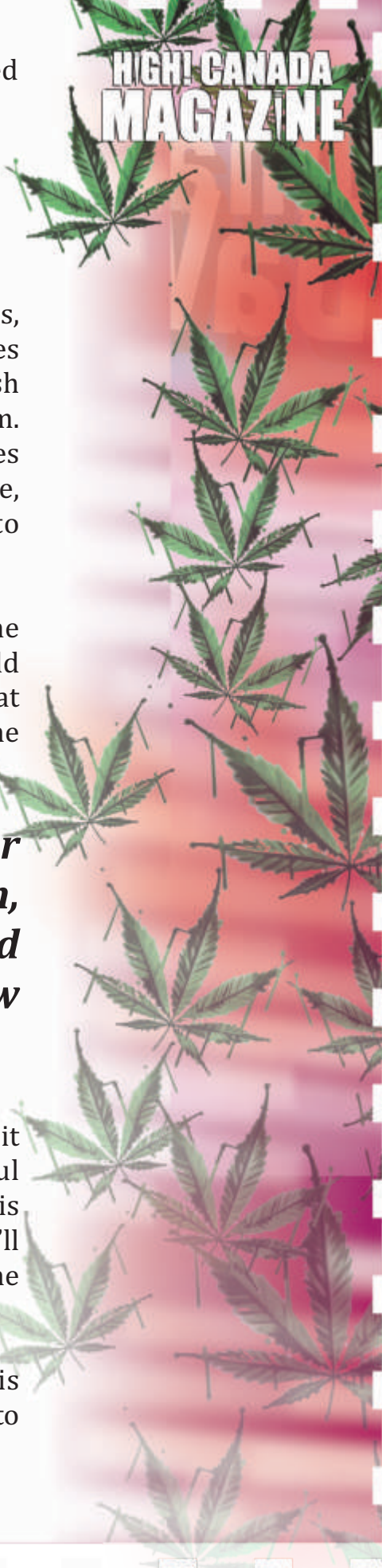
We need lower taxes, clear guidelines for cannabis tourism, and relaxed branding and marketing restrictions that allow businesses to actually grow.

Canada's cannabis industry can survive—but it won't thrive unless we push for meaningful change. If we want to lead the world in cannabis tourism, now is the time to act. Otherwise, we'll find ourselves watching from the sidelines if the United States gets a jump on us.

The question isn't just whether the cannabis industry can survive. It's whether we're ready to fight for it.

By Audrey Wong

**HIGH! CANADA
MAGAZINE**



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CCCTA

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- ACCESS TO CONVENTIONS AND INDUSTRY TRADE MARKETING ACTIVATIONS
- MONTHLY MEETINGS UPDATING ON THE STATE OF CANNABIS AS IT RELATES TO TOURISM
- JOIN A NETWORK OF INDUSTRY PROFESSIONALS PIONEERING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW CANADIAN CANNABIS TOURISM INDUSTRY.



HIGH CANADA
MAGAZINE
BIG QUESTION

#4

WHAT'S GOING ON WITH
**CANNABIS
TOURISM?**

Cannabis tourism in Canada is emerging as a vital sector within the broader tourism industry, fueled by the legalization of cannabis and the increasing acceptance of its use.

With the **Canadian Cannabis Tourism Alliance (CCTA)** leading the charge, this burgeoning market is set to transform not only



how tourists experience Canada but also how local economies thrive.

The Rise of Cannabis Tourism

Since Canada legalized recreational cannabis on October 17, 2018, there has been a notable increase in interest from both domestic and international travelers seeking cannabis-related experiences. This trend encompasses a wide array of activities, including guided tours of cannabis cultivation facilities, participation in workshops on cannabis cooking or crafting, and visits to wellness retreats that incorporate cannabis into their therapeutic offerings.

According to a report by Deloitte, the Canadian cannabis market could

LIST...

reach approximately \$7 billion annually by 2025, with a significant portion attributed to tourism¹. As provinces develop their own regulations regarding cannabis consumption and sales, opportunities for businesses catering to tourists are expanding rapidly. For instance, cities like Vancouver and Toronto have begun to establish themselves as hubs for cannabis tourism, offering unique experiences that attract visitors from around the globe.

The Canadian Cannabis Tourism Alliance (CCTA) plays an essential role in advocating for this emerging market. Formed to represent stakeholders involved in cannabis tourism—from tour operators to accommodations—the CCTA aims to create a cohesive framework that supports sustainable growth within this sector. Their mission includes educating government officials about the economic benefits of cannabis tourism and working towards creating an environment conducive to its expansion.

One of the primary goals of the CCTA is to influence legislation that affects how cannabis can be marketed and consumed by tourists. They are actively pushing for clearer guidelines on public consumption spaces and events centered around cannabis use². By engaging with policymakers at all levels—federal, provincial, and municipal—the CCTA seeks to ensure that regulations do not stifle innovation or limit opportunities for businesses looking to attract cannabis tourists.

The economic implications of a thriving cannabis tourism sector are profound.

Local economies stand to gain significantly from increased visitor spending on accommodations, dining, entertainment, and retail purchases related to cannabis products. A study conducted by the Tourism Industry



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Association indicates that ***every dollar spent by tourists generates additional revenue for local businesses.***

Moreover, as more regions embrace this form of tourism, job creation will follow—ranging from hospitality roles in hotels and restaurants to positions within the burgeoning legal cannabis industry itself. The CCTA estimates that thousands of jobs could be created across various

sectors as demand for cannabis-related experiences grows.

Successful implementation of cannabis tourism can also lead to enhanced community engagement. Local businesses can collaborate with tour operators to create unique experiences that highlight regional culture while promoting responsible consumption practices⁴. This synergy enriches tourist experiences while fostering community pride and involvement.

Despite its potential, several challenges remain for the future of cannabis tourism in Canada. Regulatory inconsistencies between provinces can create confusion for both tourists and businesses alike. For example, some provinces may allow public consumption while others may impose strict restrictions or outright bans⁵. Furthermore, there is still stigma surrounding cannabis use that may deter some travelers from exploring these offerings.

The CCTA continues to address these issues through advocacy efforts aimed at harmonizing regulations across provinces and promoting responsible consumption practices among tourists⁶. By fostering dialogue between stakeholders—including government entities, businesses, and consumers—the CCTA seeks to build a robust framework that

supports sustainable growth in this emerging sector.

Cannabis tourism represents a promising frontier for Canada's economy, supported by organizations like the CCTA that champion change at all levels. As regulations evolve and public perception shifts further toward acceptance, Canada stands ready to welcome visitors eager to explore its vibrant cannabis culture. The future looks bright for this niche market as it continues to grow and adapt within an ever-changing landscape.

CCTA LEADERS

Karen Mariano
Director of Memberships



Karen brings to the CCTA 30 + years of Tourism experience in every aspect of the Tourism industry in Niagara Falls. Holding many key relationships with MPP's, MP's and the Mayor, her experience is invaluable to the Organization.

Also, she is an equity owner at On The Ridge Cannabis Co. Niagara Falls, a Tour Agent/Tour Guide for a Major Hotel and Tour Company in the area, and previously VIP concierge for Niagara Falls Tourism (tourism, travel agents, media, tour operators, and site inspectors). She also has many years of experience in winery tours and experiential tours.

She also has acted as the Sales Manager at the Imax Theatre where she increased traffic by 15,000 annually with creative programs she installed.

She has won a Misty award for Hospitality Recognition for her administration of food services at Niagara Parks for 6 years.

Karen is a key player in the organizing of the CCTA's Cannabis Tourism Summit and Music Festival every 420 in Niagara Falls.

Karen Mariano
CCTA

Twitter: @CCTA_Advocacy
Linkedin:
@canadiancannabistourism
canadiancannabistourism.com

Brendon Roberts

Chair, Research and Policy Committee

What does cannabis tourism mean to me?

For me, cannabis tourism is a way to bridge cannabis culture, economic development, and social change. My approach emphasizes authentic experiences, cultural integration, and economic opportunities for local communities. Given my deep involvement in both cannabis cultivation and policy, cannabis tourism aligns with my broader mission of education, accessibility, and sustainability.

Key Aspects of Cannabis Tourism That Resonate with me:

Authenticity & Local Impact: I advocate for experiences rooted in local cannabis culture, this includes farm tours, immersive workshops, or unique cannabis-infused experiences. I see cannabis tourism as an opportunity for small farmers and craft growers to connect directly with consumers.

Economic & Social Development: I recognize its potential to generate jobs and revenue for local communities, particularly in areas where cannabis has been historically stigmatized. This aligns with my work in policy, research, and advocacy, where I push for fair and inclusive market opportunities. For example, in my book *Cannabis Development*, I wrote an extensive chapter which embarks on a captivating exploration of cannabis tourism, revealing the allure of cannabis-friendly destinations and the profound cultural experiences they offer to travelers worldwide. [Learn More About the Book:](#)

Cannabis & Mainstream Tourism: I'm interested in how cannabis tourism can integrate with traditional tourism



CCTA LEADERS

industries, such as wellness retreats, food pairings, and adventure tourism. My interviews on the Cannabis Tourism Chronicles Show have spotlighted industry leaders like Brian Applegarth, Founder of Applegarth Strategies, and the Cannabis Travel Association International in the U.S, and Norman Lawrence, CEO of Ganja Vacations Jamaica, highlight my focus on creating high-quality, destination-worthy cannabis experiences.

Regulatory Challenges & Solutions: I engage with legal frameworks and market expansion strategies, ensuring cannabis tourism remains safe, compliant, and accessible. My interview with Bryan Bergman, Events Director of the Cannabis Travel Association International, on the 2026 FIFA World Cup

highlights my strategic thinking about integrating cannabis experiences into major global events.

Education & Advocacy: I see cannabis tourism as a tool for destigmatization, allowing consumers to experience the plant firsthand, learn from experts, and engage with diverse cannabis cultures worldwide. This aligns with my work at the Universal Plant Medicine Association and my consulting efforts in international cannabis markets.

For me, cannabis tourism is about shaping the industry's future, creating equitable opportunities, and redefining how cannabis is experienced globally.

Brendon Roberts
President & CEO

Author | Award Winning
Cannabis Consultant: Year 2024
& 2025

Cannabis Leadership & Educator
Award: Oxford University, UK
2025

Leadership Badge: Governor
General Office, Ottawa, ON,
Canada 2022

ganjapapa@outlook.com



Walid Farah
President

Walid has deep roots in the Cannabis Industry going back 20 years. From operating dispensaries and consumption lounges, he has built trusted relationships within the community and with local Health Officials and has helped the City of Toronto build the parameters around which Consumption Lounges may operate. Walid's efforts were critical in the progression of cannabis legalization in Canada. Hosting Industry nights at the Yongesterdam lounge (2016-2021), Walid has grown an extensive contact list with cannabis cultivators, product inventors and trendsetters in the Canadian cannabis industry. Through his hard work and dedication, Walid secured his current Cannabis Retail Operator License and operates a chain of Retail Stores with his wife Jane called Cosmic Gardens. Using his wealth of experience, Walid was able to secure



experience, Walid was able to secure licenses with the clean reputation he built alongside his wife Jane who is a Registered nurse and Cannabis Advocate.

Walid also brings to the table 20 years experience in the Electronic Music Industry working with world class Touring DJ's and operating Record Labels, Radio Stations and Large Scale Music Festivals.

He was part of the Founding Board and took over as President in November 2023.

Cannabis Tourism for me is defined as any travelling in which the traveller plans on spending their dollars on Cannabis related activities.

It is Global in Scope.

It could include infused dining experiences, visiting lounges, attending music festivals, or engaging in Medical Cannabis Tourism. It helps to create sustainable jobs and contributes to GDP and has a positive economic impact on municipalities.

Walid Farah
President, CCTA
- Co-Chair, Events

Linkedin:
@CanadianCannabisTourism
Instagram: @cctasocial
(New)



Jeremy Smith

**Vice-President / Government
Relations Chair**

One of CCTA'S founding members and established the advocacy for our members as the Director of Government Relations.

Jeremy is member voice driven that led him to becoming the Vice President and open the doors with our government across Canada.

Prior to the CCTA, Jeremy worked at Joseph's Hospital, managed security and graduated from Police Foundations.

Jeremy is passionate about making Canada the number one global destination for cannabis hospitality and tourism.

After thirteen years of experience in the alcohol industry, he knows that it is time for cannabis to drive and grow tourism across Canada.

Reverend Kelly

Event Co-Chair, Administrative
Director

Reverend Kelly, founder of The KGL Network (Kelly's Green Lounge), is a leading Canadian cannabis advocate and activist dedicated to integrating cannabis into mainstream society. Through the creation of The KGL Network and its associated brands, Reverend Kelly has cultivated a safe, inclusive space for spirituality, education, community building, and the celebration of cannabis culture.

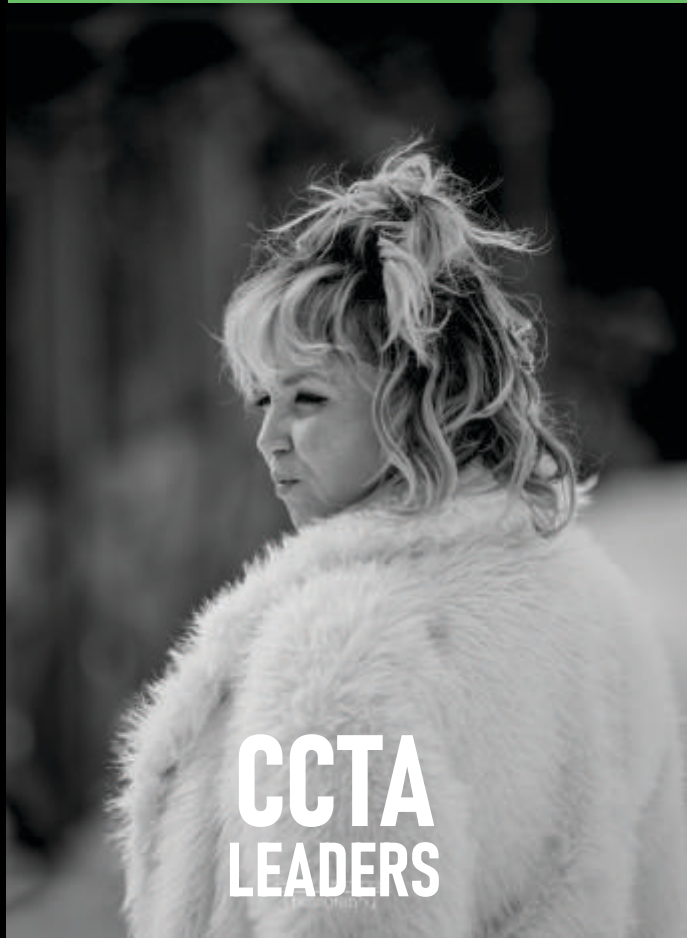
As a founder and elected board member of the Federal Not-For-Profit organization; the Canadian Cannabis Tourism Alliance (CCTA), Reverend Kelly acts as co-chair of the events committee, and administrative outreach liaison.

Priscilla Ren

Finance Chair



Priscilla Ren is a dedicated member of the Canadian Cannabis Tourism Alliance (CCTA), holding pivotal roles as Finance Chair and



Board Member. In her professional sphere, she excels in product commercialization and category management for a group of licensed producers, showcasing her comprehensive expertise in the cannabis industry.

Within the CCTA, Priscilla transcends her finance duties by actively fostering community engagement, whether through direct interactions on Discord or by curating compelling content for newsletters. Her efforts are instrumental in driving the alliance forward, leveraging her keen business insight.

Priscilla is committed to broadening the scope of cannabis tourism in the Maritimes, underlining her dedication to enhancing the industry's landscape and the CCTA's mission.



Anisha Reindorf

HighKu.Co / Diversity Equity & Inclusions Chair

Anisha Reindorf is a leader in Canada's evolving cannabis industry, dedicated to fostering inclusion, accessibility, and ethical practices.

As the founder of HighKu.Co, Anisha has been at the forefront of cannabis culture, curating innovative experiences that bridge the gap between the industry and diverse communities. Their work emphasizes education, advocacy, and creating spaces where cannabis is celebrated responsibly and inclusively.

Now, as the Inclusion, Diversity & Ethics Chair for the Canadian

Cannabis Tourism Association (CCTA), Anisha is committed to ensuring that cannabis tourism in Canada reflects the rich diversity of its people.

She strives to make the industry more accessible, ethical, and representative, advocating for equitable opportunities and meaningful engagement across all sectors.

With a deep passion for community-driven initiatives and industry growth, Anisha continues to push boundaries, shaping a future where cannabis is embraced with integrity and inclusivity at its core.



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Climbing the Mountain: Michelle O'Flynn Cozzuol, Count Canna Inc., & Joint Connections

This is the story of Count Canna Inc., Joint Connections, and the BC Canna Trail—a story rooted in legacy, driven by purpose, and powered by community. It's a story of climbing the mountain, and now, with momentum building and the view ahead finally clearing, Michelle O'Flynn Cozzuol is ready for the next chapter.

Born and raised in North Delta, British Columbia, Michelle O'Flynn Cozzuol never envisioned cannabis as her calling. A proud wife, mother of four, and now grandmother—Michelle was raised with values steeped in doing what's right and avoiding saying what's "wrong". Like many who came from a generation taught to fear the stigma around cannabis, her path into the green frontier was not a direct one. But when life opened the door, she walked through with vision, grit, and an unstoppable fire.

Before cannabis, Michelle spent over 25 years immersed in the liquor and hospitality industry.



Working with everyone from corporate giants to mom-and-pop operations, her career was a crash course in business life cycles: build-ups and takedowns, supply and demand, what works and what doesn't. The job didn't just teach her logistics and leadership—it shaped her ability to understand a variety of perspectives, and, most importantly, how to offer real, effective solutions.

Her entry into the cannabis industry was as personal as it was professional. Michelle's son Jesse's legacy-to-legal journey presented her with an opportunity to apply that lifetime of experience to a space that desperately needed it. Cannabis, though a "new" industry by government standards, was

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as old as time. And with her unique lens, she could see something others were missing: a massive disconnect between the growers, the retailers, and the consumers. From that recognition, Count Canna Inc. was born.

Originally, Count Canna provided inventory services to retailers in the tightly regulated cannabis environment. It didn't take long to recognize that the biggest issue wasn't on the shelf—it was everything that came before. Between strict marketing laws, limited access to buyers, and a complete void in brand recognition, micro producers in British Columbia—many of them family-run operations—had no clear path to success. High costs, zero budget for sales reps, and a fragmented system meant many of BC's best growers were fading into the background.

So Michelle shifted focus. They weren't just going to inventory cannabis—they were going to connect it. Their mission: bridge the gap between the

farm, the shelf, and the consumer.

By late 2022, the idea had evolved. The vision was simple but revolutionary—create one space, one place for all things CANNABIS.

A collaborative hub. A workspace. A platform that allowed everyone—from cultivators to consumers—to communicate, market, educate, discover, and buy. But first, Michelle had to learn.

So she listened. Michelle made herself a student of the industry. A wallflower at events, quietly soaking up knowledge, asking questions, and volunteering for anything and everything that would give her insight. She became a budtender. Managed a retail store.



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Worked in processing and packaging. Each job deepened her understanding and strengthened her resolve. She was building something for the people who would use it—and she wanted to get it right.

The Result: jointconnections. Think of it as the 411 meets Angie's List meets the Yellow Pages—except fully dedicated to cannabis. One centralized, live, dynamic platform where brands could showcase themselves authentically, within legal boundaries. Where consumers could shop, learn, and explore. Where retailers could connect directly with growers. A real solution to a very real problem.

Each panel or listing on Joint Connections is controlled entirely by the brand behind it. They manage the content, the images, the links.

There's no middleman, no altered narrative—just raw, authentic, brand-owned storytelling. This makes Joint Connections not only innovative but proprietary—developed with

intentionality to serve both the B2B and B2C sides of the industry.

One of Joint Connections' most impactful offerings is its Direct Delivery platform, designed specifically to uplift BC's Certified Craft Cannabis producers. This feature offers a catalogue-style live listing with collective ordering. Retailers can shop around the site, add items from various brands to a single cart, check budgets, edit orders, submit with one click—and immediately receive invoices. They connect directly with cultivators, track orders, and ensure the freshest BC-grown product lands on their shelves. It's simple, effective, and made for everyone.

There's also an "Order" tab built into every user's dashboard that allows for report generation by time frame, supplier, or buyer—a feature built on collaboration, the very foundation of legalization.



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ROYAL HARVEST

CRAFT CANNABIS



Thank you Canada!
Your support in 2024 really made a difference!
Placing at the Canadian Cannabis Championship
in Edmonton this September really showcases
what we are capable of! The best is yet to come!

With a system in place, Michelle turned her attention to exposure. How could the world know about these amazing producers if they weren't being seen?

Enter The Hotbox Tours.

Born from a desire to eliminate the distance between growers and retailers, the Hotbox Tours were designed to do what digital alone could not—physically bring product to the people. Travelling across the province, Joint Connections began showcasing multiple brands at once, connecting brands directly to retailers, offering facetime with producers, and creating unforgettable cannabis experiences.

Retailers loved it. Producers loved it. And consumers loved what came next.

The Road Back to Legacy—the crown jewel of the Hotbox Tours—made its debut in 2024 as a celebration of legalization, community, and the legacy that

started it all. Held annually in the lead-up to 4/20, this event shines a light on the hard work, beauty, and brilliance of BC's cannabis scene.

As Joint Connections grew, so did its branches.

The BC Canna Trail was the next step—a live, interactive map that guides users through all the cannabis-related offerings in the province. Categories include: BC Legacy Cultivars, BC Grown, BC Indigenous, Tourism, Events, Experiences, Resources, Services, Advocacy, Education, and Artisans.

Each listing connects directly to the brand's Joint Connections panel, keeping it all under one roof and offering a seamless experience for those who want to discover more.



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THE ROAD BACK TO LEGACY



Discover the roots and the future of BC Bud with The BC Canna Trail — a curated collection of trailblazers, hustlers, and community champions shaping the cannabis landscape. One space. One place. All things cannabis.

Michelle has always made it clear: everything added to the platform has been done because it "just makes sense." If something is requested multiple times or just makes sense,, she found or will find a way to build it.

The platform has even had its share of attention, including the chance to appear on CBC's Dragons' Den—a bucket list dream that unfortunately didn't result in the opportunity she'd hoped for. Heavily into the cannabis industry - with a platform custom built for cannabis, the airing showed zero evidence of cannabis, therefore, really making no sense. But thats television. Instead of feeling defeated, Michelle walked away more fired up than ever, determined to continue providing a space free from stigma, shame, or suppression.

That fire led to one of the most inspiring components of Joint Connections yet—The Legacy Series, a documented collection of stories from BC's legendary cannabis pioneers.



These are the people who built the industry long before it was legalized.

The Legacy Legends:

- Remo Colasanti of Remo Farms
- Kevin Varner of Royal Harvest Craft Cannabis
- Rohan Gardiner of RÖGWorld Cannabis
- Jeff Auburn of Smoker Farms
- Packaged and processed by Papa Joe Micro Grow.

The Legacy Legends represent the passion, hustle, and authenticity that built Canadian cannabis from the ground up. Their stories are not only shared, but honored—soon to be

featured in a one-of-a-kind Legacy Legends Collaboration Pre-Roll Pack—a tangible celebration of their combined expertise and dedication.

Through the Legacy Series and the Road Back to Legacy, Michelle has created more than a business—she's curated a cultural archive. A space to record the past, empower the present, and shape the future of Canadian cannabis. Michelle is clear to point out that our history is full of legacy and that this is only the beginning of the story.

Michelle is quick to point out she didn't do it alone. She credits her journey to the amazing individuals she's met along the way—mentors, advocates, growers, retailers, and supporters. She's especially grateful to her family, her rock, and the unwavering support they've shown throughout this climb.

Because this journey hasn't been easy. The cannabis world is still full of challenges, politics, and yes, even snakes in a world full of farmers. But Michelle's learned that alongside all that, you'll also find blessings, sunshine, and the most incredible people you'll ever meet.

She remains committed to creating solutions, advocating,



and listening—doing all she can to make the space better for everyone.

And she's just getting started.

This is the story of Count Canna Inc., Joint Connections, and the BC Canna Trail—a story rooted in legacy, driven by purpose, and powered by community. It's a story of climbing the mountain, and now, with momentum building and the view ahead finally clearing, Michelle O'Flynn Cozzuol is ready for the next chapter.

To everyone who grabbed the rope along the way—thank you.

Now it's time to go.

Tell us what it has been like facilitating the Legends Legacy project?

Well Cy... as a facilitator in the Legends - I could not be any more proud to connect and showcase all things cannabis - in the most beautiful place in the world ! OH Cannadaaaa:)

I really wanted to make sure that the Legacy Legends main focus is the fantastic history and documentation - it is such an honor to work with these amazing individuals and the history is so rich and so important that it be recognized.

I guess what I am trying to say - I want to make sure that The Road Back to Legacy - THE LEGACY LEGENDS - it is not about the preroll pack - the t-shirts - the hype - its about rooted preservation honouring the culture, the people and the journey that laid the foundation for where we are today.

I guess its just really important to me that this above all messages - is received right.

I have travelled over 49,000km in a year - travelled and visited over



55% of our retailers, seen places and spaces across our province I am so excited to share - over 12,000 photos , 3400 video clips - 2,000 social media posts - to name a few of my analytics. I am so truly truly blessed.

I am just truly honoured to be in this space and sometimes I just have to pinch myself.

Michelle? Where do you think that cannabis tourism stands today?

Well Cy... Cannabis tourism is finally stepping out of the shadows. With platforms like the BC Canna Trail and partnerships with local businesses. It's been recognized as a legitimate, thriving tourism category that blends culture, wellness, and education.

What are you looking forward to in the next 3-6 months?

- Launching and Loading the BC Canna Trail
- Legends LTO preroll pack,
- Releasing the legacy stories and history and expanding the overall reach of JointConnections.ca across Canada.

Recognizing the Legacy Legends through the Legacy Series has been one of the most profound honors of my journey. These individuals are not just pioneers—they are the bedrock of an industry built long before legalization, before policy, before recognition. They took risks, fought stigma, nurtured their craft in the shadows, and paved the way for what we have today.

The Legacy Legends, the OGs—Remo Colasanti, Kevin Varner, Rohan Gardiner, and Jeff Auburn—represent more than just skill; they embody resilience, passion, and authenticity. To share their stories is to preserve history, to ensure the roots of Canadian cannabis are never forgotten.

This is only the beginning of a long line of legacy I look forward to recording and sharing. I have always believed that true progress

comes from honoring where we've been, and the Legacy Series does just that. It's a living, breathing tribute to those who made the impossible possible.

The opportunity to work closely with these legends, to learn from them, and to help bring their voices to the forefront is not only a privilege—it's a responsibility. In every story shared, every product showcased, and every connection made, their legacy lives on.

The Legacy Series isn't just a feature of Joint Connections—it's the soul of it.

Where is the sector heading?

Through my eyes—Toward community focused, experience-rich tourism that supports education, destigmatization and

economic development in rural and legacy rooted areas.

Advice to women entering cannabis?

Trust your instinct, stand in your story and always be accountable & never underestimate the power of authenticity.

The Cannabis space needs more women at every level.

Thank You Michelle. Can you expand on the Legacy Legends™ a bit more?

There is so much buzz and excitement about this collaborative project and I know our readers are hungry for additional details on this historic meeting of minds.



LEGACY LEGENDS™



COUNT CANNA

Legacy Legends™ is a once-in-a-lifetime celebration of BC's original cannabis trailblazers—those who carried the industry on their backs long before legalization. Founded and curated by Michelle Cozzuol, Legacy Legends is both a story and a product: a premium preroll pack featuring contributions from iconic cultivators and a multi-channel storytelling campaign capturing the legacy behind the bud.

This inaugural LTO release is produced in collaboration with Papa Joes Organics and will feature:

Remo of UrbanRemo
Jeff & Sherri
of Smoker Farms
Kevin of Royal Harvest &
Rohan of RogWorld

These names are more than brands—they are history-makers, educators, risk-takers, and mentors who shaped what BC Bud means to the world. Their stories are woven into the fiber of Canadian cannabis and are now being immortalized through high-quality storytelling, exclusive packaging, media showcases, and collector merchandise.

Legacy Legends™ is a key part of The Legacy Series—a product and event initiative documenting cannabis culture

in real time. These experiences, featured stops on the BC Canna Trail, give consumers and tourists a glimpse into the people behind the plants. It's cannabis history, live and unfiltered—honoring the roots while paving the path forward.

Legacy Legends™ is a celebration of BC's original cannabis trailblazers—those who carried the industry on their backs long before legalization.

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Remo of UrbanRemo, Jeff of Smoker Farms, Kevin of Royal Harvest, and Rohan of RogWorld. These four are more than names—they are the original Legacy Legends, the OGs, the foundation of the Legacy Series. Their impact runs deep—their stories an integral part of our Canadian cannabis culture and community. As I mentioned, those stories are now being immortalized through storytelling, packaging and in media.

Legacy Legends™ is a key part of The Legacy Series—a product and event initiative documenting cannabis culture in real time.

These experiences, featured stops on the BC Canna Trail, give consumers and tourists a chance to connect directly with the people behind the plants. It's cannabis history, live and unfiltered—honoring the roots while paving the path forward.

The Legacy Series has so much more in store as we take BC Cannabis on the road for our second annual Road Back to Legacy Tour—a full documentation of our legacy trailblazers, the shakers, the movers. So much respect. Everything our industry needs—collaboration, integrity, passion—can be found in our legends



Michelle Cozzuol is the visionary force behind Count Canna Inc., JointConnections.ca, and the BC Canna Trail. With over 25 years in hospitality—managing venues, producing events, and advocating for policy reform—Michelle brings a depth of experience rarely seen in the cannabis space.

Thank you Michelle!





THE ROAD BACK TO LEGACY

British Columbia's
ORIGINAL CANNA TRAIL

**ONE SPACE
ONE PLACE**

All Things

CANNABIS



jointconnections.ca

Ringo's GIFT

THC 9.33% CBD 8.40%

NOW AVAILABLE!



PLAID TROUT PRESENTS

Ringo's Gift is a balanced Type II Cultivar, packin' over 2.5% total terps. This one's got that feel-good buzz that'll put a smile on your face. Offerin' up hints of lavender and vanilla, it's a great opportunity to explore a high CBD Cultivar with the perfect amount of THC.



COMING UP REAL

FRICKIN' FAST BUD

STORMRIDER SATIVA BLUE GELATO

THC 22.71% 2.25% TOTAL TERPS



PLAID TROUT PRESENTS

Straight outta the gate, we got that Alberta Grown Blue Gelato, bred by Barry's Farm. It's a cross of GSC x Sherbert x Blueberry, and this phenotype's got a smooth, earthy base with hints of citrus 'n' maple syrup. Get ready for a high as big as Alberta's skies.



0.5g GANTS



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BY SARAH GAMER



NOW AVAILABLE!
AT A BOOKSTORE NEAR YOU!

Since the dawn of tourism and the changing landscapes of legalization & decriminalization across the globe, tourists have made canna friendly locations a factor in deciding their destinations.

Many Canadians consider cannabis access before leaving the country, and even travelling within our nation, differing regulations are important considerations. Vancouver is known as a central point in Canada to experience the cannabis culture that is long established across the province and sample the world famous BC bud.

International travellers know that the 300 W. Hastings block is the spot in the city to visit if they are wanting to experience cannabis in Vancouver.

This location is the site of both historic and current lounges where tourists can enjoy sampling and socializing.

Earlier this year, one of these iconic spaces took on the task of hosting the inaugural Vancouver Cannabis Hospitality Summit. a two day event that featured panel discussions on all topics

concerning cannabis tourism as well as b2b networking and consumer opportunities to engage with the plant. The team at the New Amsterdam Cafe are already integral pieces of regional canna-tourism, perhaps more so than anyone else in the city. Every day they act as stewards of the industry by representing what cannabis consumption spaces can and should be.

Unfortunately the Vancouver Cannabis Hospitality Summit coincided with Spannabis in Barcelona, a major industry event that took a number of our local leaders out of town, dampening the attendance and potential of this new event.

However the March '25 event, spearheaded by Kaylz Szanto, running through her seventh year at the New Amsterdam Cafe, established a good foundation for what could become a leading series on cannabis hospitality nationwide.

The Vancouver summit included a live CCTA stream

of panels, and brought international speakers to the cafe via teleconferencing. A major value add, for the summit organizers, participants and everyone else for that matter, are the recorded talks available for viewing through the cafe's YouTube channel. Their team has a cart of gold with the content accrued over the summit weekend, there are many valuable nuggets that can be shared through their media, creating the sound bytes that will keep us talking about cannabis hospitality, particularly in Vancouver.

Alberta is the next target for a cannabis hospitality summit, hosted by the café team.

We'll look forward to learning more about how regionality plays a role in the limitations around promoting or hosting 420 friendly events, and an update on the ever changing regulations and breakthroughs within this sector.

Perhaps the fall 2025 Alberta summit will be something worth traveling for, creating its own tourism bubble.

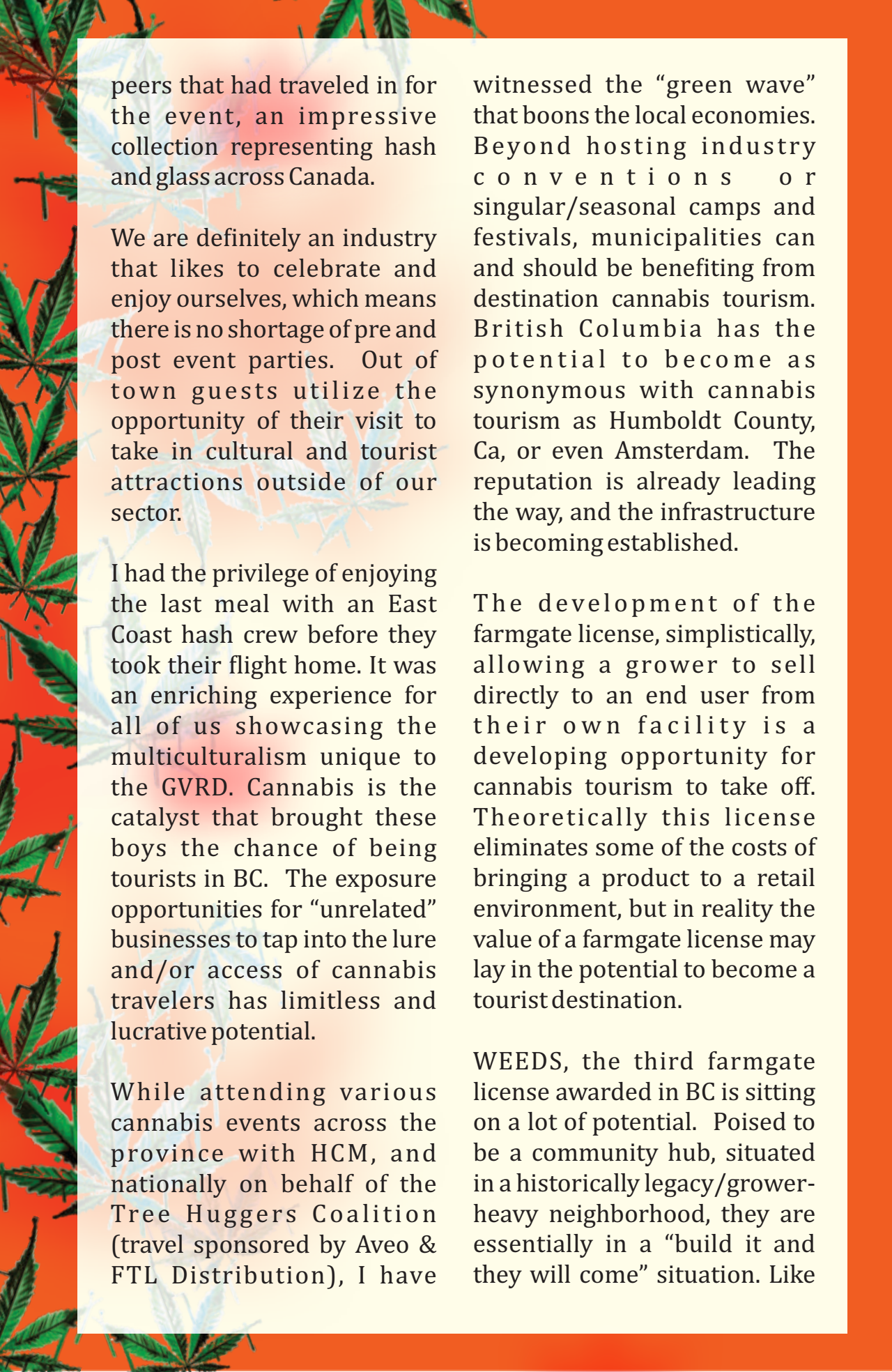
Kicking off April, another weekend-long cannabis event brought in a slew of tourism dollars to Vancouver and the



Heady Happenings event series hosted the sixth Hash it Out Cup as well as a handful of both educational, social and sampling focused occasions. These events blended the free and rec markets of our industry as seamlessly as I have ever seen done. A critical ingredient for cannabis tourism to flourish.

The Heady Happenings series brought industry colleagues and cannabis enthusiasts (in particular, endearingly referred to as Hash Heads), together, connecting pallets from coast to coast. Exchanging jars and stories, the ripple of a gathering such as this will shape consumer trends and market floods.

It was a constant pleasure to see face after face of friends and



peers that had traveled in for the event, an impressive collection representing hash and glass across Canada.

We are definitely an industry that likes to celebrate and enjoy ourselves, which means there is no shortage of pre and post event parties. Out of town guests utilize the opportunity of their visit to take in cultural and tourist attractions outside of our sector.

I had the privilege of enjoying the last meal with an East Coast hash crew before they took their flight home. It was an enriching experience for all of us showcasing the multiculturalism unique to the GVRD. Cannabis is the catalyst that brought these boys the chance of being tourists in BC. The exposure opportunities for “unrelated” businesses to tap into the lure and/or access of cannabis travelers has limitless and lucrative potential.

While attending various cannabis events across the province with HCM, and nationally on behalf of the Tree Huggers Coalition (travel sponsored by Aveo & FTL Distribution), I have

witnessed the “green wave” that boons the local economies. Beyond hosting industry c o n v e n t i o n s or singular/seasonal camps and festivals, municipalities can and should be benefiting from destination cannabis tourism. British Columbia has the potential to become as synonymous with cannabis tourism as Humboldt County, Ca, or even Amsterdam. The reputation is already leading the way, and the infrastructure is becoming established.

The development of the farmgate license, simplistically, allowing a grower to sell directly to an end user from their own facility is a developing opportunity for cannabis tourism to take off. Theoretically this license eliminates some of the costs of bringing a product to a retail environment, but in reality the value of a farmgate license may lay in the potential to become a tourist destination.

WEEDS, the third farmgate license awarded in BC is sitting on a lot of potential. Poised to be a community hub, situated in a historically legacy/grower-heavy neighborhood, they are essentially in a “build it and they will come” situation. Like

the plethora of successful vineyards within the area, the WEEDS Farmspot experience could offer some local competition once it completes its construction stages.

A cannabis farm that is already fully operating and producing award winning products on the legal market, Dabble, and their collection of family businesses are leading the way as an established tourist destination. HiPoint Ranch is a 420 friendly bed and breakfast that treats their guests to options of farm tours and infused dining (terms and conditions considering). Dabble CEO, Alannah Davis has previously hosted monthly gatherings on her farm on the basis of building community and supporting the cultures associated with cannabis.

She dreams of the day you may see an official route marker sign helping people find their way to the Duncan, BC farmstead.

Cannabis tourism is not new, but it is evolving.



The Vancouver scene remains a melting pot of industry connections and experiences, and as we roll into spring celebrations the entire province is becoming a destination to enjoy cannabis.

Sarah Gamer

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@MJBizCon Las Vegas: December 3-6, 2024, Las Vegas Convention Center

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THE STATE OF CANNABIS FOR VETERANS: CHALLENGES WITH MEDICAL ACCESS, EXPORTS, AND PRIORITIES IN CANADA

As Canada's cannabis industry continues to grow, the intersection of veteran healthcare and cannabis remains a complex and often overlooked issue. Veterans, particularly those struggling with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), chronic pain, and other service-related ailments, have increasingly turned to cannabis as an alternative or supplement to traditional medications. However, despite its potential, both medical access and exports leave much to be desired for veterans who need it most.

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WITH GUEST
CONTRIBUTOR
AMY GREEN



Cannabis has shown promise in treating conditions that disproportionately affect veterans, including PTSD, chronic pain, and anxiety. For many, it offers an alternative to prescription medications, which often come with undesirable side effects.

In Canada, the legalization of medicinal cannabis in



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2001 allowed veterans to access cannabis as part of their treatment plan. Veterans can access cannabis through Health Canada's Special Access Program or by obtaining a prescription from a healthcare provider. However, significant barriers prevent many veterans from fully benefiting from this treatment.

Access to high-quality medical cannabis remains inconsistent for veterans. One of the biggest challenges is the limited selection of cannabis strains available through official channels. Veterans often struggle to find the right products suited to their specific medical needs. This lack of variety in strains and formats means that veterans may not have access to the treatments that could provide the most benefit.

Product quality is another ongoing issue. While Canada's cannabis market is large, not all licensed producers offer products that meet the unique needs of veterans. The inconsistency in the quality of cannabis available makes it difficult for veterans to reliably find the right products. In some cases, veterans turn to unregulated sources to find what works for them, which adds an element of risk to their treatment.

While Canada has one of the most developed and regulated

cannabis industries globally, the export market remains focused primarily on Medical cannabis. As a result, veterans—who require medical-grade cannabis—often find that their options are limited. Export markets have been booming, but most products are aimed at recreational consumers, which leaves veterans with fewer choices.

The Veteran Community: Prioritizing Profit Over Health?

If the veteran community hadn't aligned itself with the cannabis industry in the early stages, would the situation be different? Some members of the veteran community have worked with the cannabis industry, benefiting financially, but the focus was often on profit rather than meeting the healthcare needs of veterans.

Now, with the export sector booming and retail sales beginning to sink, the industry has shifted focus. Suddenly, veterans are being prioritized, but this late recognition raises questions about the industry's commitment to supporting veterans. For many years, the health and well-being of veterans weren't a priority—only now, when sales are struggling, are veterans seen as a market to be catered to.

This shift in priorities is a troubling reminder that, while the industry has the potential to do great things for veterans, the financial motivations of the cannabis industry have sometimes come at the cost of addressing their medical needs.

The current state of cannabis access in Canada leaves veterans with limited options.

While there are some medical cannabis products available, they remain inconsistent in quality and selection. Veterans, who need specialized treatments, often find themselves without the products best suited for their needs.

Moreover, the Canadian cannabis industry has largely catered to recreational users, meaning medical cannabis has often been an afterthought. Veterans who rely on cannabis for relief from PTSD or chronic pain may feel overlooked in favor of recreational markets.

The challenges veterans face in accessing cannabis highlight a clear need for reform in the cannabis industry. More focus should be placed on improving the quality and selection of medical cannabis products. Veterans need access to high-

quality cannabis that is consistent, affordable, and tailored to their medical needs.

The Canadian government, alongside licensed producers, should work to ensure that veterans have access to the best possible cannabis products. Expanding the range of medical strains, improving product quality, and providing affordable options should be top priorities. Additionally, facilitating access to international cannabis exports could help veterans find better, more affordable treatments.

Prioritization

Cannabis holds significant promise for veterans, but there are many hurdles that need to be overcome for them to fully benefit from its therapeutic potential. With the growing recognition of its benefits, now is the time for the industry to prioritize veterans and ensure that their needs are met. Canada has the potential to lead the way in supporting veterans through cannabis, but this can only happen if the industry commits to putting veterans' health at the forefront.

Amy Green

**Veterans Wellness Alliance
CEO**

Email: Amygreen@thevwa.ca

**Website: [Helping Veterans
Achieve Wellness and Success |
Veterans Wellness Alliance](https://www.thevwa.ca)**

A close-up portrait of a middle-aged man with dark hair, smiling slightly and resting his chin on his hand. He is wearing a white button-down shirt with blue patterned sleeves and a gold watch. The background is dark and out of focus.

**TONY LAWMAND
& RICHARD KERN**

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**TOKE
TALK**

Great Green North Meets Blunt Force Sovereignty: A Tribal Tale of Cannabis, Borders, and Bureaucracy

BY TONY LAWAND AND RICH KERN

Welcome to Indian Country! Or is it First Nations Territory? Or maybe "Please-Don't-Call-Me-Indian-Unless-You're-a-Government-Census-Form" land. Either way, light one up and settle in as we take a not-so-sober tour through the hilarious and high-stakes world of cannabis sovereignty on Turtle Island—also known as North America, or what your GPS still calls "this side of the border."

Let's start with the basics. In the United States, Native Americans are often called "American Indians," a term that's only marginally less confusing than trying to roll a joint in a canoe during moose mating season. Why Indians? Because Columbus was very lost and even worse at geography than he was at diplomacy.

Despite this mislabeling, the U.S. government continues to refer to their oversight agency as the Bureau of Indian Affairs, or BIA for short. Many Natives just call it the Bureau of Interference Always.

Meanwhile, up north in Canada, our Indigenous cousins prefer to be called First Nations, mostly because they were here first, and also because the term "Indian" is about as welcome as a Mountie at a Mohawk poker night. The difference in naming is more than semantic; it's about pride, sovereignty, and avoiding awkward Thanksgiving dinner conversations with well-meaning but clueless suburban in-laws.



But despite the cultural and terminological differences, one thing unites the First Peoples across this great land: cannabis.

Yes, the sticky green goddess has become the unlikely poster child for Indigenous economic development, sovereignty, and just a tiny bit of bureaucratic chaos. Whether it's hemp for rope, CBD for grandma's arthritis,



or good ol' THC for philosophical ponderings about treaty rights, Native communities across both countries have embraced the cannabis industry with a passion matched only by their disdain for government overreach.

The Great Sovereignty Smoke-Out

Here's where it gets fun (and by fun, we mean legally ambiguous). Across Canada and the U.S., many tribes and First Nations operate cannabis operations on sovereign land. Sovereign, in this case, being a fancy legal term meaning: "We'll do what we want, thanks."

For example, in the U.S., many tribes operate dispensaries, grow ops, and even entire vertically integrated cannabis companies, all without bothering to get a state license. "Why

would we," they ask, "when we've got treaties older than your state constitution?"

In Canada, a similar pattern has emerged. On First Nations territories, particularly in Ontario and British Columbia, you can find unlicensed dispensaries that laugh in the face of Health Canada's cannabis regulations. "We've got our own health codes," they say. "It's called smell it, smoke it, survive it."

Of course, this doesn't sit well with the authorities. But the problem is: the authorities can't really agree on whose job it is to sit. Is it federal? Provincial? Municipal? Or is it a polite standoff where everyone pretends the other person is in charge, so they don't have to file any paperwork?



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Spiritual Grassroots

Some Indigenous groups go even further and claim religious freedom as their exemption.

You see, for many Indigenous cultures, plant medicine is sacred. And cannabis? Well, let's just say it makes prayer circles very circular.

"We're not just getting high," says one spiritual leader. "We're getting closer to Creator."

And hey, if your sacrament just happens to be available in a nicely sealed glass jar with a holographic sticker and 30% THC, who are we to judge?

The courts, that's who. But even they seem unsure how to handle a situation where sacred traditions meet stoner innovation. It's one part peyote ritual, one part Shark Tank, and all parts confusion.

Borderline Ridiculous

Here's where things get even greener—the U.S.-Canada border. Now, let's imagine a world where tribal land exists on both sides of the international line. Oh wait—that world already exists. The Mohawk, Blackfeet, and other nations have land and family that span what Canada calls "immigration enforcement" and what Natives call "just going to Auntie's house."

So what happens when tribal members use this historical cross-border connection to move a few... herbal products... across the line?

Well, technically, that's international drug smuggling. But spiritually? It's just relocating sacred medicine from one smoke lodge to another. A kind of joint venture, if you will.

Border agents don't find it as funny. But then again, they're not usually high.

HIGH! CANADA MAGAZINE

The Great Dispensary Divide

Let's talk retail. Some Native dispensaries operate like your standard hipster weed boutique—think bamboo flooring, cashless kiosks, and staff that look like they were grown in a terrarium. Others?

Let's just say it's a converted shipping container with a dream and a whole lot of Sour Diesel.

Still, business is booming.

In many communities, cannabis profits are used to fund housing, education, healthcare, and that all-important gas station-slash-smoke shop combo that every rez needs.

Some Nations have even launched their own brands—"Smoke Signals," "Tribal Treez," "Ojibweed," and my personal favorite, "Wampum Waxy."

Even better, because they don't have to play by the same rules as off-reserve businesses, they can undercut prices, avoid taxes, and keep their operations delightfully free of accountants with clipboards.

The result? A booming economy run entirely by people who also believe that federal taxes are a colonial fever dream.

High Hopes and Hazy Futures

Of course, not everyone is thrilled. State and provincial regulators grumble. The RCMP pouts. The DEA sends passive-

aggressive emails. And somewhere, a white guy named Chad is writing a report titled "Tribal Cannabis Operations: A Threat to Market Stability."

But the truth is, Indigenous cannabis operations are not just about profit. They're about power. About sovereignty. About using the very plant that was once demonized to revitalize economies and assert the rights that were trampled under treaties and broken promises.

Plus, let's be honest—no one can smuggle like a tribal grandma with a Buick full of baked goods and a Band Council resolution taped to the windshield.

Final Puff

So, whether you call it Indian Country, First Nations Territory, or simply "the place with the best weed this side of Saskatchewan," remember this: Native peoples were here long before legalization, and they'll be here long after the last overpriced government dispensary shuts down for lack of chill.

Cannabis might be the plant that brings healing, but sovereignty? That's the real trip.

Now if you'll excuse me, I need to cross a border, say a prayer, and pick up a few grams of that sacred Skywalker OG.

For medicinal purposes, obviously.

By Tony Lawand & Richard Kern



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