



BRITISH COLUMBIANS READY TO SPEND THIS HOLIDAY SEASON: RBC

Holiday spending in B.C., on average, expected to be up \$110 from last year

TORONTO, November 15, 2012 — Most British Columbians (86 per cent) are planning to give [gifts](#) to others this holiday season, up 10 per cent from last year, according to the latest RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook. On average, British Columbians intend to spend a total of \$1,326 this holiday season, including gifts, decorations, entertaining and travel, up \$110 from last year.

Among B.C. consumers who will buy gifts, on average, they plan to [spend](#) \$678, about the same as last year (\$674). British Columbians intend to increase expenditures on [other](#) holiday items (such as decorations, clothing, food and drink, travel and entertainment) by more than \$100 to \$648 up from \$542 last year.

“A little preparation before you start your holiday shopping can keep the bills from adding up and help you stay debt-free this holiday season,” said Chris McEachern, financial planning role strategist, RBC Financial Planning. “Whether you plan to cover your purchases with savings, credit cards or other means, creating a budget and sticking to it will ensure you only spend what you can really afford.”

Sixty per cent of B.C. consumers plan to [fund](#) their holiday cheer with savings and one-in-four (24 per cent) plan to use credit cards. One-in-five (20 per cent) say they have not thought about how they will pay for the holiday season.

RBC offers the following tips and secure payment options for holiday spending to help ensure that you stick to your holiday budget while enjoying the spirit of the season:

- **Take control by preparing a budget** – A budget will help you live within your means, during the holidays and throughout the rest of the year, and avoid unnecessary debt. A [Financial Planner](#) can help you put a plan with a budget in place or online budgeting and savings resources available on websites such as www.rbc.com/savingsspot can be of great assistance to help keep holiday spending plans under control. [myFinanceTracker](#) is another online customizable financial management tool that will help keep tabs on your monthly spending so you know exactly where your money is going and how to budget properly.
- **Use cash and credit wisely** – If you plan on using savings for your holiday costs, make your credit card work for you by using it for purchases and then immediately pay off the balance. Many rely on their credit cards for larger purchases but may not use it for everyday shopping instead of using cash. Holiday spending on groceries, gas, restaurants and clothing can add up quickly, but using your card can help you keep track of your expenses and also earn rewards more quickly while taking advantage of a temporary interest-free loan on purchases.

- **Shop online with confidence** – E-commerce sites are a great way to avoid crowds at the mall. Use the [RBC Virtual Visa Debit](#) for shopping online with funds coming directly from your bank account. This is a simple and secure way to make purchases that will be processed over Visa's network, providing the protection of Visa's multiple layers of security including: Visa's Zero Liability Policy, Verified by Visa, E-Promise, AVS (Address Verification Service) and CVV2 (the three-digit code).
- **Have someone that's "hard to buy for"?** – More secure than cash, [RBC Visa Gift Cards](#) can be used anywhere around the world where Visa cards are accepted, including online, giving friends and family more options than traditional store gift cards. RBC Visa Gift Cards are available at all RBC branches.
- **Get peace of mind with purchase protection and extended warranty** – Take advantage of these insurance features on gifts (e.g. electronics) that [RBC credit cards](#) offer. Need help finding the right card? Visit the [RBC Advice Centre](#).

About RBC savings and other financial advice and interactive tools

Canadians can access [RBC Financial Planning](#) and www.rbc.com/savingsspot for free planning, budgeting and savings advice and resources, or to find an [Investment and Retirement Planner](#) near you. In addition, all personal RBC [online banking](#) clients can use [myFinanceTracker](#), a no-cost interactive financial management tool, to create and track their budget, savings goals and spending habits. Whether Canadians want to get more from their [day-to-day banking](#), protect what's important, save and invest, borrow with confidence or take care of their businesses, the [RBC Advice Centre](#) can help answer their questions. Interactive tools and calculators provide customized information covering many facets of personal finance. In addition, online advice videos are updated regularly to reflect current trends and to answer the questions that are top of mind with Canadians. With the guidance of RBC advisors who are available to chat live, Canadians have access to free, no-obligation professional advice about RBC products and services and personalized one-on-one service at www.rbcadvicecentre.com.

About The RBC Canadian Consumer Outlook Index

The survey is conducted online via Ipsos Reid's national I-Say Consumer Panel to 3,375 Canadians (including 540 British Columbians). Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. Data collection was October 1 to 10, 2012. The precision of Ipsos Reid polls are calculated using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within +/- 1.9 percentage points of the entire Canadian population.

Media contacts:

[Kate Yurincich](#), RBC, (416) 974-1031

[Suzanne Willers](#), RBC, (416) 974-2727