



NEWS

ONTARIANS INTEND TO KEEP HOLIDAY SPENDING IN CHECK THIS SEASON: RBC

Plan to spend about the same as last year on the holidays – \$1,204

TORONTO, November 15, 2012 — Most Ontarians (80 per cent) plan to give [gifts](#) to others this holiday season and, overall, intend to spend \$1,204 on the holidays - including gifts, decorations, entertaining and travel - about the same as the national average (\$1,182).

This year, Ontarians expect to [spend](#), on average, \$643 on gifts, only \$20 less than last year's \$663. They also intend to spend about the same on [other](#) holiday items, such as decorations, clothing, food and drink, travel and entertainment – an average of \$561 compared to \$572 last year.

“Having a holiday budget and sticking to it is a great way to ensure that you don't go overboard with your purchases,” said Chris McEachern, Financial Planning Role Strategist, RBC Financial Planning. “Also, knowing how you will cover the costs is important to ensuring you avoid those unwanted bills when the new year begins.”

Fifty-two per cent of Ontarians expect to [fund](#) their holiday expenses with savings, while 24 per cent plan to use credit cards and almost the same amount (26 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 735 Ontarians). 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.

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