

Entertainment

TIFF: Tourism dollars stretch across the city

From beauty to music, fringe industries benefit from Toronto's annual celebrity-filled festival.

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By: [Gemma Karstens-Smith](#) Staff Reporter, Published on Fri Sep 05 2014

Toronto's five-star hotels are chock-full and the city's fanciest restaurants have become more exclusive than ever with the [Toronto International Film Festival](#) in town this week.

Thousands of celebrities, movie buffs and media descend on the city each year for TIFF, pouring millions of dollars into the local economy. A 2013 study showed the festival and the TIFF Bell Lightbox [contributed \\$189 million to Toronto's economy](#) between April 1, 2012 and March 31, 2013.

Restaurateurs and hotel magnates aren't the only ones benefiting, however. Musicians and beauticians alike are experiencing a boom in business thanks to the festival.

Here's a look at how different industries take advantage of the annual swell in Toronto tourism:

BEAUTY AND FASHION

Red carpet appearances are a TIFF staple for celebs, media and star watchers alike, giving designers a place to showcase their latest wares, and local salons an opportunity to transfix and transform.

Shoppers Drug Mart is running an invitation-only prep palace for the fifth time this year, giving media types a place to get dolled up for red carpets, galas and after-parties.

"Basically everything you need to get outfitted for the red carpet, we have available to media in our suite," explains Tammy Smitham, the company's vice-president of communications.

About 240 TV hosts, beauty editors and other media folks have booked in to get their hair, makeup, nails and more done this year. The pampering is "chill time" for media, and gives Shoppers representatives a chance to talk about the latest products and trends with people who plan product segments and write fashion features.

"Because we're a Canadian brand, it's not necessarily going to build our brand to have a celebrity come in and get a free item. So we decided to focus on media because we know how busy they are this time of the year," Smitham says.

Smaller companies are taking advantage of the chance to wow industry insiders, too. The Ten Spot has offered about 30 beauty bloggers and media mavens the chance to get an eyebrow wax and gel manicure at one of their locations across the city during TIFF.

This is the first time the Ten Spot has offered a promotion during the festival, and they picked services that would last the festival and showcase their best work, says Kristen Wood, the chain's founder.

"We're just letting people know that we're the hot spot for getting red carpet ready and glammed up for TIFF," Wood says.

MUSIC

There's a natural bond between movies and music, so creating a space to show off some of Canada's best acts at TIFF made perfect sense to Jeffrey Remedios, co-founder and president of Arts & Craft Productions.

"Music and film have a long, intertwined, symbiotic relationship," he says.

Five years ago, Remedios was part of the team that started Festival Music House, an exclusive venue at Adelaide Hall where actors, directors and other industry types can watch performances by the likes of Stars, The Sheepdogs and City and Colour.

Music supervisors don't always make it out to film festivals, so Festival Music House makes a point of flying in about 10 each year to make sure Canadian artists are seen by the right industry folks.

The efforts seem to be paying off, with Festival Music House alumni going on to big Hollywood gigs. Timber Timbre's hit "Magic Arrow" has appeared in episodes of both *Breaking Bad* and *The Good Wife*, and Dan Mangan scored *Hector and the Search for Happiness*, part of this year's festival lineup.

Festival Music House is about more than simply getting a song into a film, however. It's about raising the profile of Canadian artists more generally.

"It's this overall sort of collective consciousness that sort of rises," Remedios explains.

This year, some bands such as BADBADNOTGOOD will reach beyond the exclusive Music House audience and play for the public as part of TIFF's new street festival.

There are other public concerts happening, too, including performances by Hollerado and Kreesha Turner at the "Pepsi Pop Up" at Richmond and John Sts. Rdio, the festival's official music provider, is also putting on a show featuring Ellie Goulding and HAIM at Massey Hall on Sept. 6.

CHARITY

The plethora of famous faces at TIFF makes the festival an ample opportunity to raise funds and awareness for good causes . . . under the right circumstances.

Natasha Koifman is a veteran of throwing fundraisers during TIFF and is putting on two this year. While having a crush of celebrities present is great, the fame is only useful when everyone present genuinely believes in the cause, says Koifman, founder and president of NKPR.

That's certainly the case for Artists for Peace and Justice, she says. The charity was started by director Paul Haggis to raise money for education and health care in Haiti, a cause many Hollywood celebrities have supported over the years. Every year, several A-listers make room in their festival schedule to attend the Artists for Peace and Justice Gala, being held this year at Casa Loma on Sunday.

"TIFF is a busy time for everyone, but they want to be there, they want to increase awareness for what's going on and they want to raise funds," Koifman explains. "It sounds corny, but you can actually feel the love in the room."

The AJP gala isn't the only charity event during this year's festival. Koifman is also helping to put on the annual Best Buddies Gala, which will honour Goldie Hawn for her years of support on Sept. 10. The Producers Ball on Wednesday raised money for World Vision and TIFF itself was the benefactor of a lavish fundraising gala featuring Al Pacino at the TIFF Bell Lightbox on Wednesday night.