Rural, lower-middle-income older couples and singles

Who They Are

A collection of remote villages of which half are found in the Atlantic provinces, Backcountry Boomers is about as rural as it gets. The householders in this segment are mostly older, empty-nesting couples and those living alone. Forty percent of maintainers are over 65, and nearly three-quarters of households contain only one or two people. Although most adults are out of the labour force, those still working hold a mix of blue-collar and service sector jobs in farming, natural resources, construction, transportation and the trades. The pay is modest— incomes are 25 percent below average—but it’s enough to own an unpretentious, single-detached house. And pride of province holds a special place in this segment, where almost 85 percent are third-plus-generation Canadians and one of their top-ranked values is Parochialism. Backcountry Boomers members like to fish, hunt and garden, for the camaraderie as much as the opportunity to put food on the table. Their hobbies are the old-fashioned, pre-Internet variety: making crafts, knitting and collecting coins and stamps. And their motorized vehicles are their prized possessions: large pickups, power boats, ATVs and snowmobiles—preferably made in Canada.

“Life in the country is much more satisfying than in the city,” Backcountry Boomers members tell researchers of their rural lifestyles. These residents enjoy their natural surroundings with outdoor pursuits like hiking, cross-country skiing and snowmobiling. They’ll spend an evening out at a local community theatre or concert featuring popular or country music. Many don’t roam far on holidays, staying in the Atlantic provinces and sometimes arranging a golf package or romantic getaway. Despite their remote communities, they prefer in-store shopping to e-commerce, and they stock up during regular trips to chains like Walmart and Canadian Tire. In Backcountry Boomers, television is the chief form of entertainment: these households often keep their sets tuned to CBC News, occasionally switching to CMT, Discovery or the W Network. While driving their old country roads, they listen to news, oldies, classic rock and any kind of country music radio station. Many like to relax in their recliners with a community newspaper or Outdoor Canada magazine. But they’re not big fans of the Internet, occasionally going online for classified ads, auctions or health-related information.

How They Think

The members of Backcountry Boomers are proud, selfless Canadians who believe in caring for others before themselves (Duty), even though they’re worried that their finances will worsen in the coming years (Financial Concern Regarding the Future). Protective of their slice of heaven, they’re concerned that too much immigration threatens the Canadian culture and think that newcomers should relinquish their own traditions and take on their new country’s ways (Xenophobia, Cultural Assimilation). These older Canadians can find it difficult to adapt to the complexities and changes in modern society, but they try to remain unruffled and make decisions based on logic and reason (Aversion to Complexity, Emotional Control). When things get complicated and they need to escape the hassles of everyday life, they often seek the restorative powers of nature through their favourite outdoor activities (Need for Escape, Attraction to Nature). In the marketplace, these consumers typically like practical, easy-to-use products (Utilitarian Consumerism), but they consider the ethical practices of the companies that make them (Ethical Consumerism). And marketers should note that they’re completely indifferent toward brand names (Brand Apathy).
Where They Live

How They Live

LEISURE
- snowmobiling
- walking/hiking
- community theatre
- volunteer work

SHOPPING
- Walmart
- Eddie Bauer
- Canadian Tire
- eBay.ca

TRADITIONAL MEDIA
- TV figure skating
- CBC News
- classic hits radio
- Our Canada

INTERNET
- food/recipe sites
- weather sites
- music streaming on computer
- play games online

FOOD/DRINK
- Coors Light
- almond milk
- dry soup
- coffee/donut shops

FINANCIAL
- high-interest savings account
- term life insurance
- will/estate planning with trust
- use financial planner

AUTOMOTIVE
- domestic intermediate cars
- domestic large pickups
- 2009 and older model years
- Ford

SOCIAL
- Pinterest
- Facebook videos
- read online article comments
- use social media while watching TV

MOBILE
- read newspapers on phone
- send/receive messages on tablet
- bank on tablet
- take pictures on tablet

HEALTH
- Have mobility assistance aids

ATTITUDES
- “I am very concerned that I will not have enough money to live comfortably in the future”
- “New technologies are causing more problems than they are solving”
- “No-name products are as good as nationally advertised brands”
- “I buy goods produced by my own country whenever I can”