

RALEIGH, N.C. — North Carolina tourism generated record visitor spending in 2017 with a total of \$23.9 billion, a 4.2 percent increase from 2016, according to new data released today. Additionally, tourism industry-supported employment topped 225,000 jobs to set another record for the state.

“North Carolina is a welcoming place for the nearly 50 million visitors who travel here each year, and tourism continues to be an economic engine for our state, employing 225,200 people across more than 45,000 businesses last year,” Governor Roy Cooper said. “I’m proud of the way the tourism industry continues to fuel growth in communities across our state.”

Gov. Cooper, who proclaimed May 6-12, 2018, as [Travel and Tourism Week in North Carolina](#), applauded the growth in direct tourism employment, which was up 2.6 percent from 2016. Payroll income grew even more, increasing 7.1 percent to top \$5.9 billion.

The figures are from research commissioned by Visit North Carolina, a unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina, and conducted by the U.S. Travel Association. Other findings from the study showed state and local tax receipts from visitor spending rose 3.7 percent to more than \$1.9 billion. Visitors spent more than \$65 million per day in North Carolina last year and contributed about \$5.36 million per day in state and local tax revenues as a result of that spending.

The Travel Economic Impact Model reflects preliminary estimates for 2017 domestic travel in North Carolina based on national travel studies conducted by the U.S. Travel Association, the Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Survey of Consumer Expenditures, STR lodging data, data from local/state/federal government organizations, and other public and private data sources. More information about the study can be found online at partners.visitnc.com/economic-impact-studies.

“Tourism means jobs in all of North Carolina’s 100 counties,” said Anthony M. Copeland, North Carolina Commerce Secretary. “In addition, dollars spent by tourists visiting North Carolina save our state’s residents money. Each North Carolina household saves an average of \$512 annually in state and local taxes as a result of tax revenue generated by visitor spending.”

Travel and Tourism Week in North Carolina is part of National Travel and Tourism Week. The state’s nine Welcome Centers, celebrating their 50th anniversary this year, will host activities throughout the week.

- Domestic travelers spent a record \$23.9 billion in 2017, up from \$23 billion in 2016. That’s an increase of 4.2 percent.
- Visitors to North Carolina generated about \$3.7 billion in federal, state and local taxes in 2017. That total represents a 4.4 percent increase from 2016.
- State tax receipts as a result of visitor spending rose 3.1 percent to more than \$1.2 billion in 2017.
- Local tax receipts from visitor spending grew 4.7 percent to \$731.6 million.
- Direct tourism employment in North Carolina increased 2.6 percent to 225,200.
- Direct tourism payroll increased 7.1 percent to more than \$5.9 billion.
- Visitors spend more than \$65 million per day in North Carolina. That spending adds \$5.36 million per day to state and local tax revenues (about \$3.35 million in state taxes and \$2.0 million in local taxes).
- Each North Carolina household saves on average \$512 in state and local taxes as a direct result

of visitor spending in the state.

- More than 45,000 businesses in North Carolina directly provide products and services to travelers, with travelers directly contributing more than 26 percent to their total products and services.
- For every \$1 invested in paid media advertising by Visit North Carolina (a unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina), the state receives \$184 in new visitor spending, \$9 in new state taxes and \$6 in new local taxes.
- For every \$1.21 invested by Visit North Carolina in paid media advertising, one trip is generated to the state.
- North Carolina enjoys a 15-to-1 return on investment of tax dollars invested in paid media advertising through Visit North Carolina.

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<https://media.visitnc.com/Record-Visitor-Spending-Highlights-NC-Tourism-Week>