



**CALIFORNIA ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND TOURISM INFORMATIONAL HEARING**

The Current Outlook of California's Tourism Industry

August 20, 2025

10:00 am to 12:00 Noon

State Capitol, Room 444

CALIFORNIA

Honorable Christopher M. Ward, Chair

Tom Lackey, Vice Chair

Members:

Sade Elawary, Jeff Gonzalez, Tina S. McKinnor, Liz Ortega,
Sharon Quirk-Silva, Avelino Valencia, Rick Chavez Zbur

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Assembly
California Legislature
ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON
ARTS, ENTERTAINMENT, SPORTS, AND TOURISM
CHRISTOPHER M. WARD, CHAIR
ASSEMBLY MEMBER, SEVENTY-EIGHTH DISTRICT



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Informational Hearing:
The Current Outlook of California's Tourism Industry

August 20, 2025 - 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
State Capitol, Room 444 – Sacramento, California

Opening Remarks

Honorable Christopher M. Ward, Chair
Members of the Committee

I. Overview: California's Tourism Industry

Caroline Beteta, President and Chief Executive Officer
Visit California

II. Destination Marketing Organizations: Impacts and Projections

Mike Testa, President and Chief Executive Officer
Visit Sacramento

Lauren Salisbury, Vice President of Communications
Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

Rhonda Salisbury, Chief Executive Officer
Yosemite Sierra Visitors Bureau

Kerri Verbeke Kapich, Chief Operating Officer
San Diego Tourism Authority

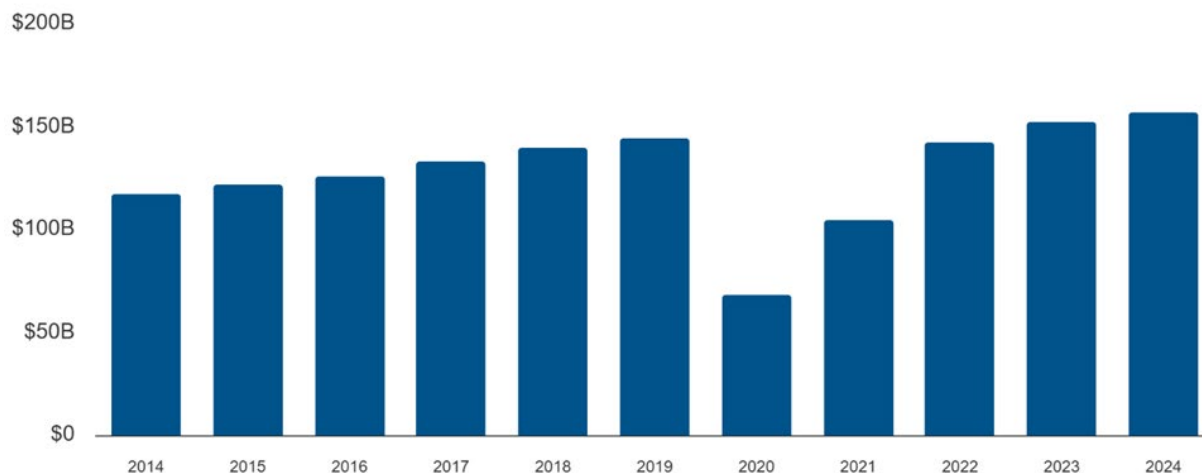
Public Comments

Closing Remarks

I. Overview of Tourism in California

California's tourism industry, like many others around the world, was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. With venues and travel destinations closed, and domestic and international visitation plummeting, travel spending in California declined sharply from a record high of \$144.9 billion in 2019. Although there continued to be a dip in number of tourists from Asia, and more specifically China, due to visa wait time issues in the years following the pandemic, travel spending has rebounded and set a new record of \$152.7 billion in 2023. This new record was short lived, as travel spending increased by 3% the following year, to \$157.3 billion in 2024. This relatively quick bounce back by the industry is sometimes attributed to a phenomenon referred to as "revenge travel," with people taking trips as payback for vacations that were lost or unable to happen while travel restrictions were in place.

Travel spending in California



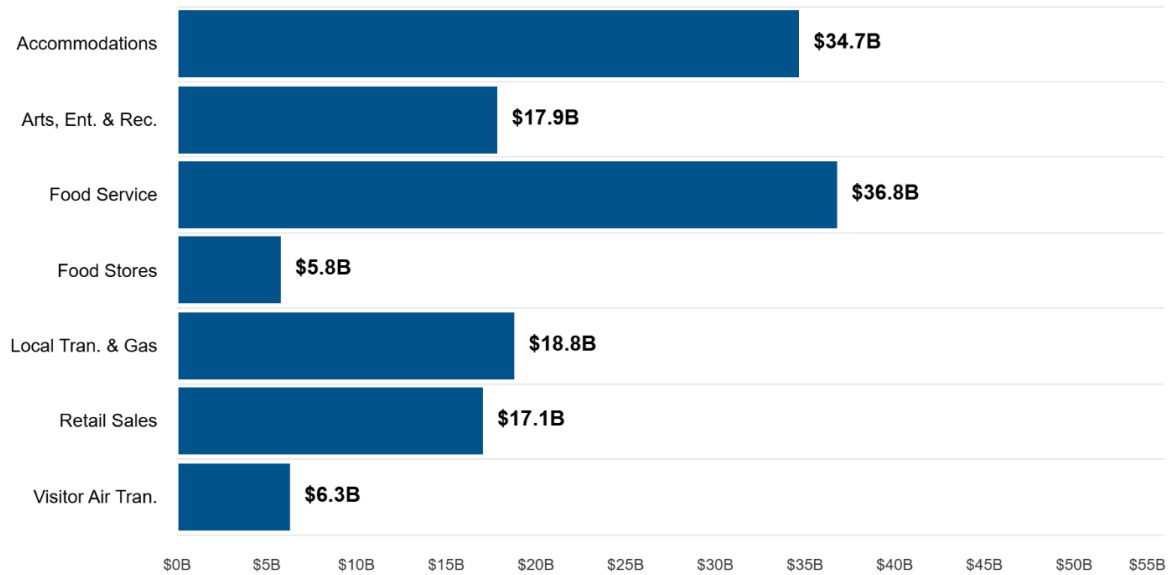
As travel-related spending has increased in the years since the pandemic, travel-generated employment has recovered as well. In 2024, the number of travel-supported jobs in the state reached approximately 1.2 million, an increase of 24,000 from the previous year. There were similar increases in spending on food services, and of visitors staying in hotels, motels, and short-term rentals, reaching \$36.8 billion and \$81.1 billion respectively in 2024. These contributed to growth in travel-generated state and local tax revenue, up from \$12.3 billion to \$12.6 billion from 2023 to 2024.¹

Travel spending is typically broken down by the following industry segments: accommodations; arts, entertainment, and recreation; food services; food stores; local transportation and gas; retail sales; and visitor air transportation. California attractions, including amusement parks, zoos, museums, natural attractions, and more, generated \$12.4 billion in revenue, supported 131,000 jobs, and hosted 121 million visitors in 2023.²

¹ "2024 Economic Impact of Travel" by Visit California, May 5, 2025. <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/reports/economic-impact?selectedCounty=&selectedRegion=&selectedScope=state>

² California Attractions and Parks Association - Sources: International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions (IAAPA) <https://capalink.org/>

Travel spending by industry segment



II. Recent Projections

Visit California released an update to their visitation and spending forecast for 2025 in May of this year. Although tourism spending is projected to increase modestly to \$158.1 billion, visitor volume is expected to experience a slight decline. While the number of domestic tourists is expected to reach 253.5 million and spending to rise by 1.4% in 2025, international visits are projected to decline by 9.2%, with spending by international travelers declining by 4.3%.³

According to Visit California, who had originally forecasted visitor spending to be around \$166 billion in 2025, shifts in federal policies relating to tariffs and immigration are having the biggest impact on the slowdown of international travel. Canadian travelers are seeing the sharpest decline, going from a projected annual increase of 15% as of February 2025, to a projected decline of 15% as of May 2025.⁴ According to a Los Angeles City Councilmember, the city is anticipating a 25-30% decline in tourism this year, with impacts felt by all industries that fall under the umbrella of tourism, including restaurants, car services, and tourist attractions. This decline will also lead to reductions of the city's share of hotel occupancy taxes.⁵

These impacts are not just causing issues in California alone. The quick decline in international tourism, especially from Canada, is part of a larger trend that is affecting the entire U.S. travel industry. Washington, New York, Florida, Nevada, and Maine are among other states experiencing a significant drop in Canadian tourist visits. Canadian tourists have long been a vital source of revenue for states across the U.S., but political tensions, economic factors, and changing travel preferences have all played a role in this downturn. The reasons for this

³ <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/research/reports/travel-forecast>

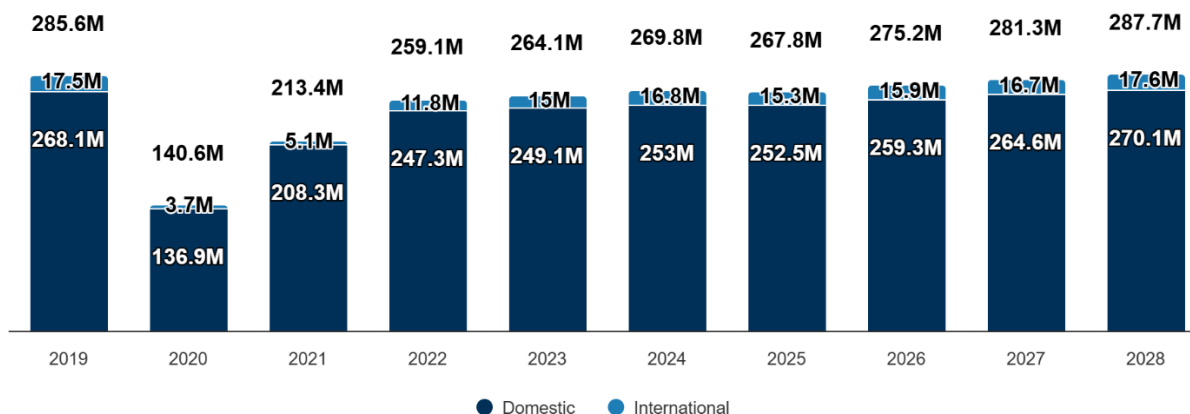
⁴ "Canadians pull back on travel to California because of Trump: 'I will miss the desert'" by Levi Sumagaysay. CalMatters – April 7, 2025 <https://calmatters.org/economy/2025/04/california-tourism-canada/>

⁵ "Los Angeles has a Donald Trump problem. It's making the city's bad budget even worse" by Jim Newton. CalMatters – May 21, 2025 <https://calmatters.org/commentary/2025/05/los-angeles-donald-trump-budget/>

downturn are a combination of rising tariffs, strained diplomatic relations, and the weakening Canadian dollar, with many opting to explore other international destinations or enjoy vacations closer to home.⁶

Visit California also acknowledges that while the current decrease of international visits is concerning, 80% of travel spending in California is attributed to domestic visitors.

Total Annual Domestic and International Travel: Visitation



Employers in the tourism industry, who are being affected by the decline in foreign visitors to a large degree, also point to another concern. There are plans in certain areas of the state, including Los Angeles, to increase wages for workers in the tourism industry to \$30 per hour. Airlines including Delta and United have been pushing back against the increase, as well as the American Hotel & Lodging Association. Due to the lowered projection of international travelers, they are claiming that wage policies could lead to layoffs as anticipate revenue has not met expectations.⁷

III. Reasons for Optimism in the Years Ahead

While it is unknown to what extent U.S. foreign policies will have an effect on international travelers in the years ahead, the numerous globally significant events that will be held in California from 2026 to 2028 are set to have a massive economic impact on the state.

From 2026 to 2028, California will host a remarkable lineup of world-class sporting events poised to draw unprecedented attention from global audiences. The 2026 FIFA World Cup will bring matches to both the Los Angeles region (SoFi Stadium in Inglewood) and the Bay Area (Levi's Stadium in Santa Clara), with each city expecting hundreds of thousands of visitors and hundreds of millions of dollars in spending. That same year, the Bay Area will host Super Bowl LX, an event with a proven record of filling hotels, restaurants, and attractions for a week or more. In 2027, the Super Bowl returns to Inglewood for Super Bowl LXI, following the high-

⁶ "Washington Links with New York, Florida, California, Nevada, Maine in Seeing Significant Canadian Tourists Drop, Resulting US Travel Industry Decline" by Tuhin Sarkar - July 26, 2025 <https://www.travelandtourworld.com/news/article/washington-joins-us-tourism-decline-canadian-tourists-drop/>

⁷ "Is anyone in charge of Los Angeles?" by Emily Schultheis. Politico – August 10, 2025 <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/08/10/business-labor-battle-olympics-00502230?nname=california-playbook-pm&nid=00000177-6f21-d412-abff-6ff78f190000&nrid=00000168-2e87-d8ec-a57f-ffa70ff20000>

profile NBA All-Star Game at the new Intuit Dome in 2026. California will also host professional golf tournaments, including the 2026 U.S. Women's Open in Los Angeles and the 2027 U.S. Open at Pebble Beach, both of which attract elite athletes and golf fans from around the world.

Capping this run of mega-events are the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles, expected to generate billions in economic activity and draw millions of visitors from across the globe. These events are global television spectacles with massive international fan bases, and their location in California is expected to increase visitation to cities and tourism destinations throughout the state.

- Super Bowl LX is projected to generate a total economic impact of approximately \$500 million, with an estimated 90,000 visitors from outside the Bay Area to be expected.
- The total estimated economic impact for the Bay Area is approximately \$555 million with an estimated 260,000 out-of-town visitors. Los Angeles is projected to see an economic impact of approximately \$594 million with approximately 180,000 out-of-town visitors.
- Independent analysis from Beacon Economics estimates that LA28 could generate between \$13.3 and \$14 billion in statewide economic output, support up to 94,000 full-time equivalent jobs, and result in \$690 to \$742 million in combined state and local tax revenues.

IV. Conclusion

While the state has seen a very strong post-pandemic rebound in overall travel spending, the recent projections particularly relating to international visitation may be a significant cause for concern, with much depending on the at times unstable relationship between the state and federal government. Economic pressures, including inflation and higher travel costs, are influencing consumer behavior, while geopolitical factors and federal visa processing delays are compounding the challenges. The sharp decline in Canadian travel alone underscores the vulnerability of California's tourism economy to global policy shifts.

At the same time, the state faces internal challenges that affect its competitiveness as a global destination. Labor and employment issues in the hospitality sector could threaten service quality, while public perception issues around homelessness, safety, and cleanliness in urban centers risk deterring visitors. Climate-related disruptions such as wildfires and flooding further add uncertainty, with the potential to limit access to iconic natural destinations and drive up business costs.

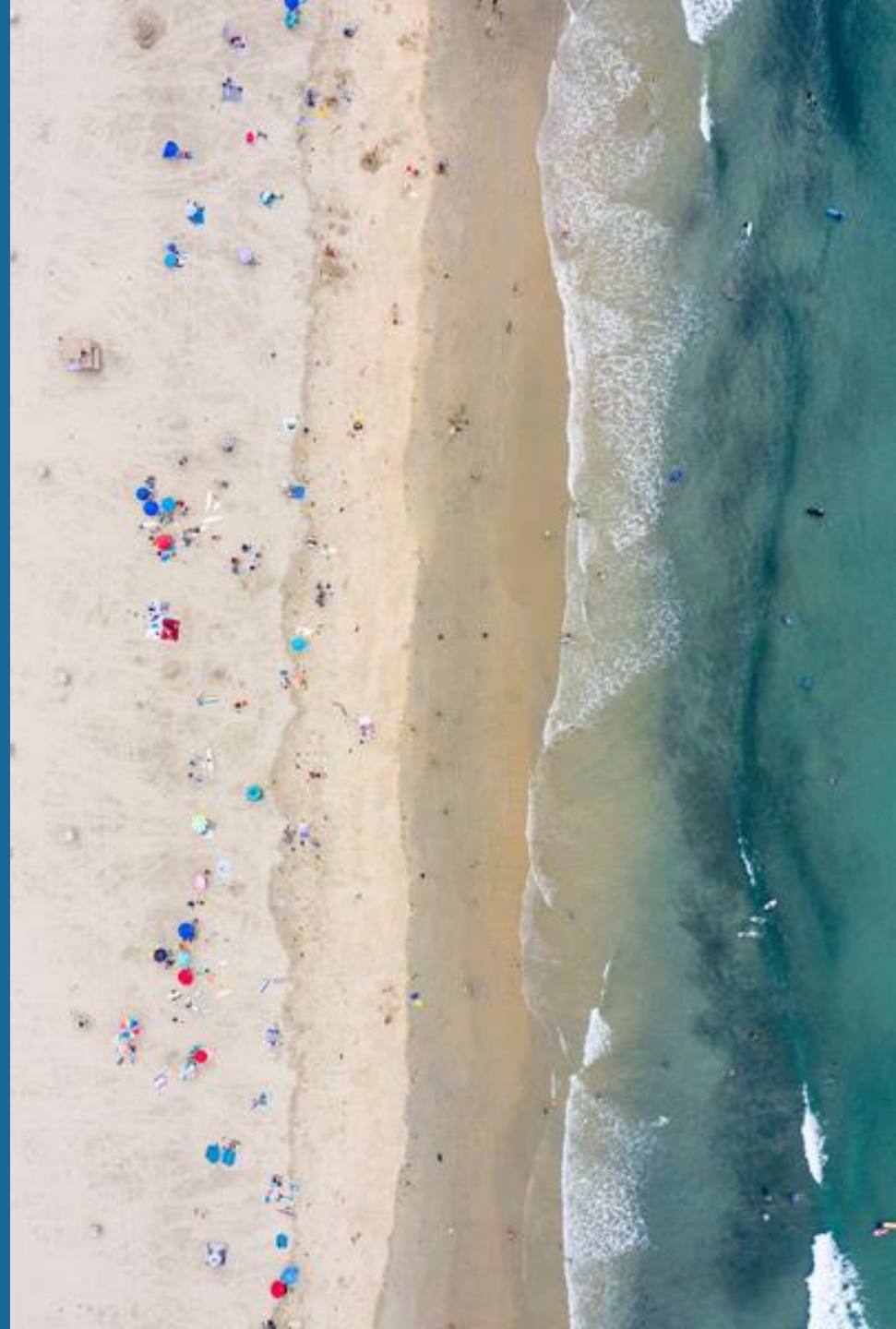
The many events being held in California in the years ahead promise potentially billions in economic activity, millions of international arrivals, and the chance to showcase California's unparalleled cultural and natural assets to a global audience. As the state looks to strategically address barriers, supporting workforce development, enhancing destination infrastructure, improving public safety, and strengthening international marketing, the goal is for California to not only weather today's challenges but emerge as an even stronger leader in global tourism for the future.



Assembly Committee on Arts, Entertainment, Sports, and Tourism

*The Current Outlook of California's
Tourism Industry*

August 20, 2025





visit★ California

- Officially formed in 1996
- 501(c)6 nonprofit corporation
- Funded by 18,000+ tourism businesses
- 37-member board of directors

Tourism powers California economy

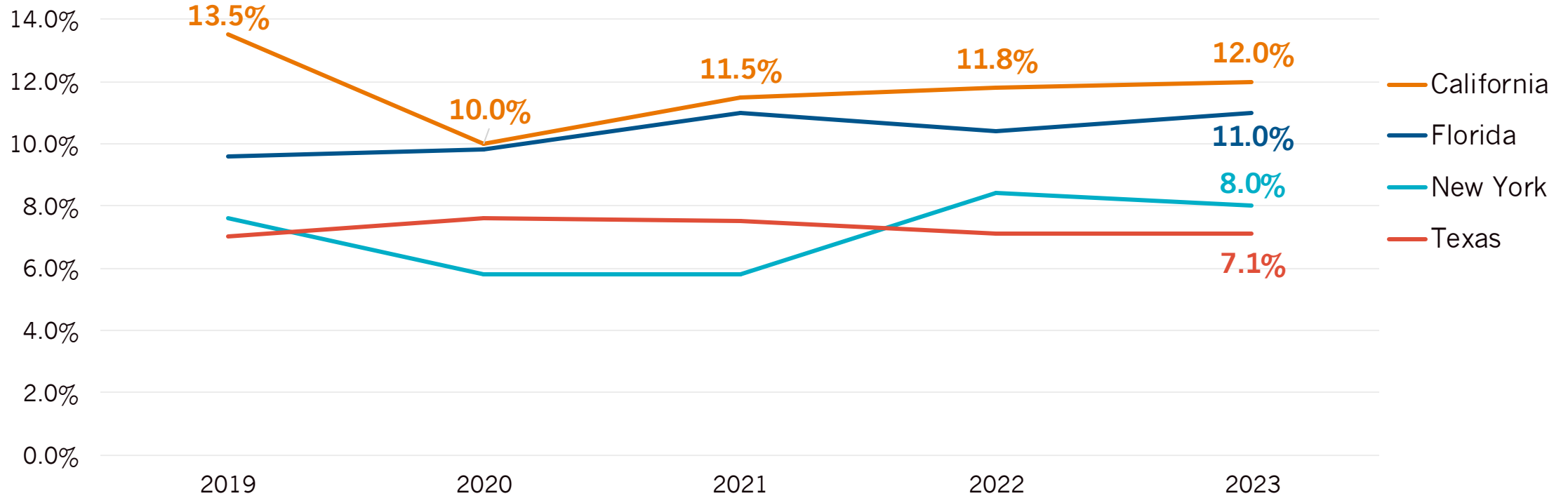
2024

Visitor spending	\$157.3 billion	+3% YOY
Tax revenue	\$12.6 billion	+3.1% YOY
Jobs	1.2 million	+2.1 % YOY (+23,950 jobs)

Source: Dean Runyan Associates



California is No. 1 tourism economy in U.S.



Source: U.S. Travel Association, Dean Runyan Associates, Tourism Economics

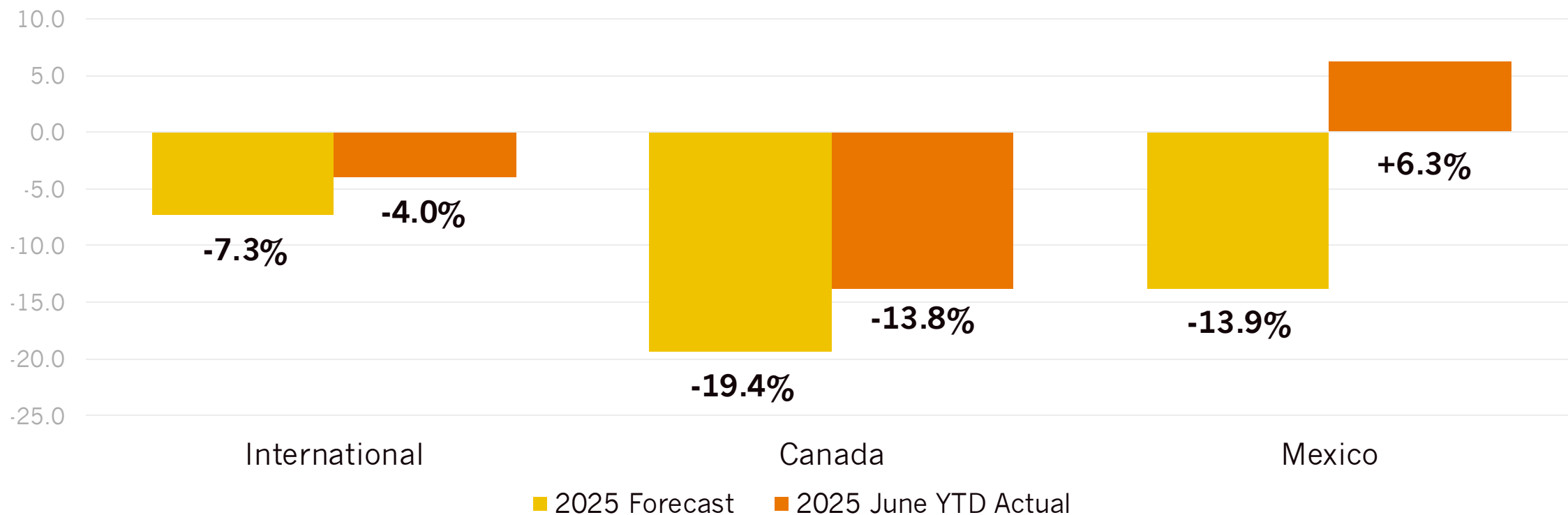
Visitation expected to decline in 2025

	2024 actual	2025 forecast	YOY % change
Domestic	253.0 million	252.5 million	-0.2%
International	16.8 million	15.3 million	-9.2%
Total visits	269.8 million	267.8 million	-0.7%

Source: Tourism Economics (May 2025)

California 2025 forecast vs. actual

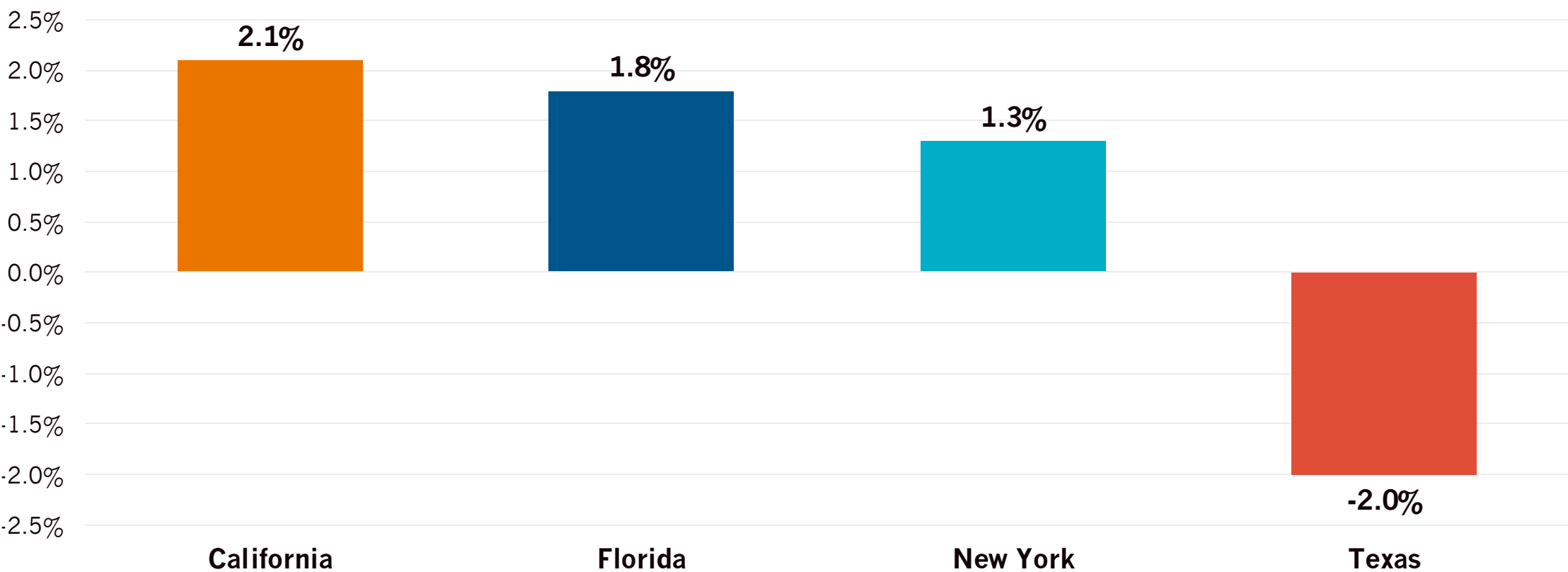
International air arrivals into California



Source: *Tourism Economics (May 2025), NTTO/CIC*

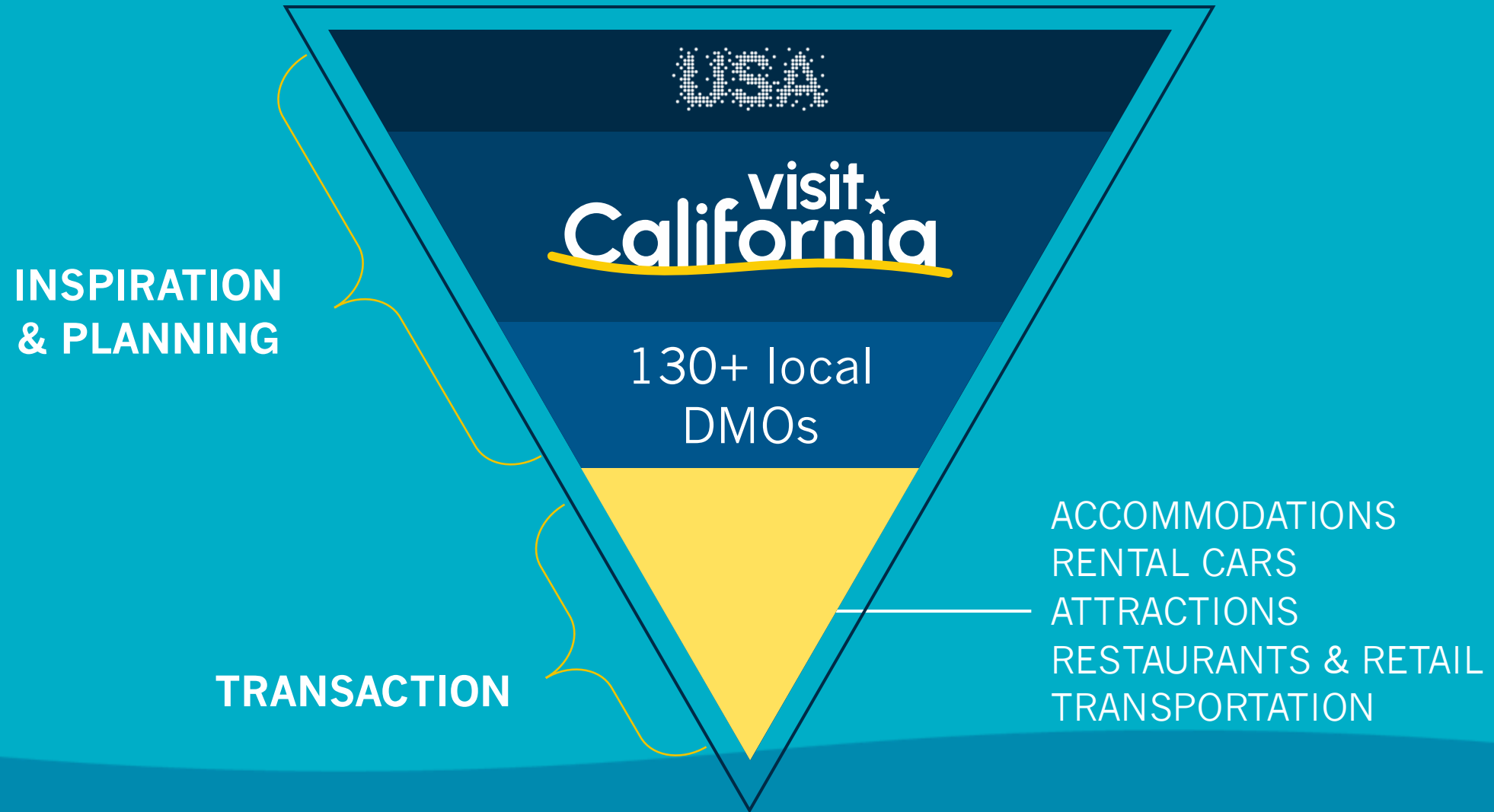
California room demand outpaces competition

Overnight Lodging Demand, YTD June 2025



Source: CoStar

Tourism ecosystem



FY25/26 Ultimate Playground framework

BRAND CAMPAIGNS

Global
Leisure
Travel



‘Let’s Play’



‘Childhood Rules’



‘Road Trips’

DYNAMIC FOUNDATIONAL CAMPAIGN



Leveraged Media Base – SEM –
Programmatic Digital – Paid Content Distribution

Global
Business
Travel

PROFESSIONAL MEETING & EVENTS CAMPAIGN



‘Meet What’s Possible’

‘Let’s Play’



LET'S
PLAY★



‘Childhood Rules’



CHILDHOOD
RULES



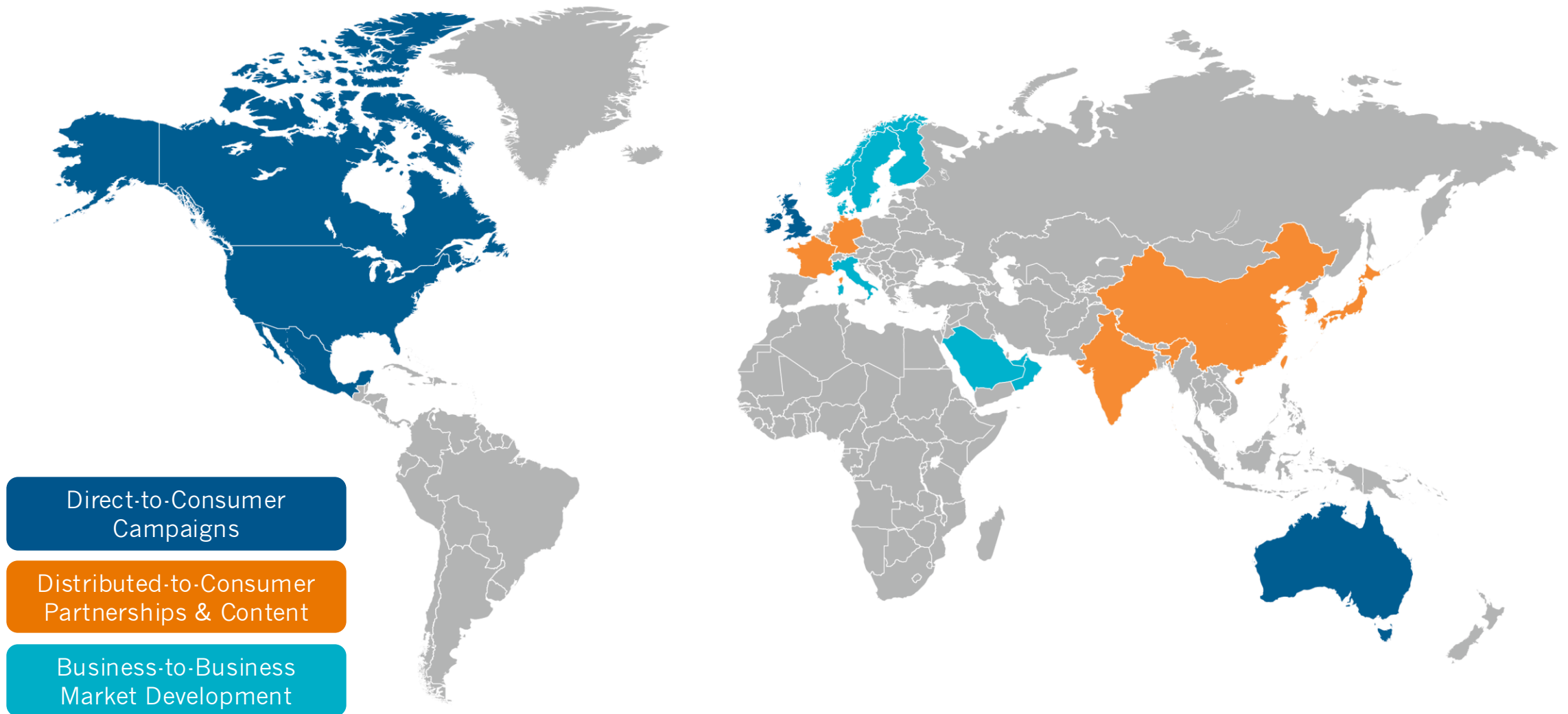


‘Up Around the Bend’

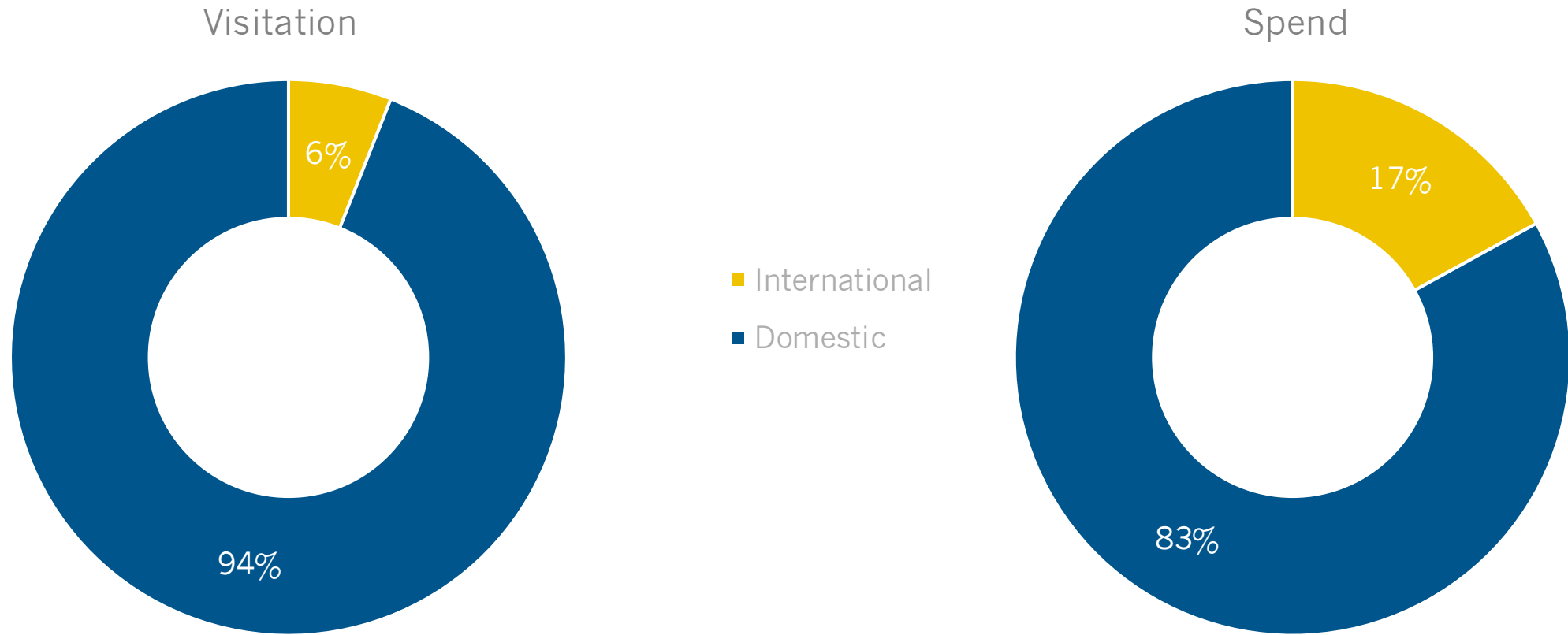




Global marketing strategy and investment



International travelers stay longer, spend more



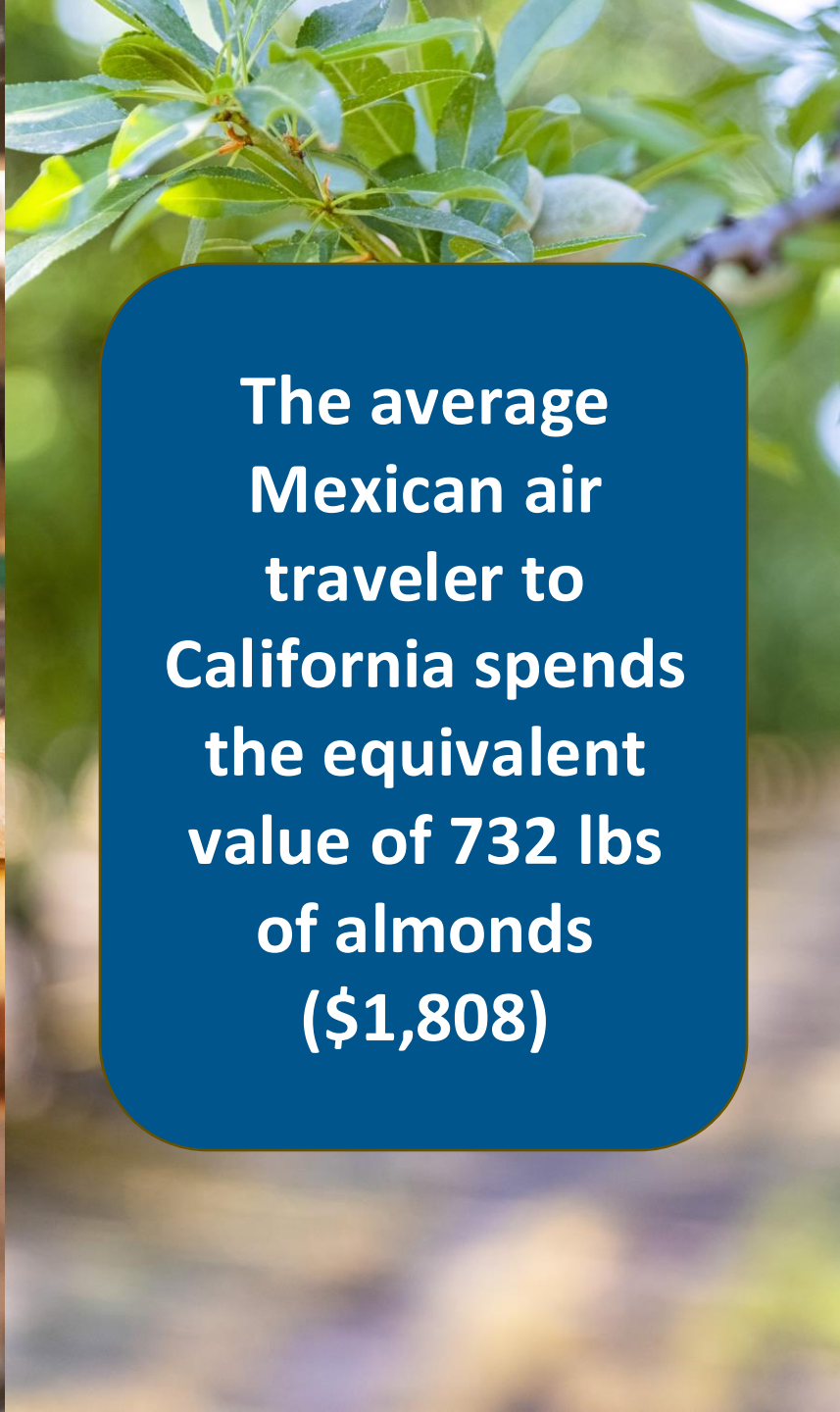
Source: Tourism Economics, 2024



The average
Canadian traveler
to California
spends the
equivalent value
of
2,000 lbs of citrus
(\$2,087)



The average
Chinese traveler
to California
spends the
equivalent value
of
545 lbs of cheese
(\$3,064)



The average
Mexican air
traveler to
California spends
the equivalent
value of 732 lbs
of almonds
(\$1,808)



Leveraging mega events

- Postcard to the world
- Maximize global coverage to drive visitation across the state
- Minimize travel displacement

Key Takeaways

1. Tourism continues to power California's economy.
2. Full recovery to prepandemic levels remains elusive.
3. Economic and geopolitical uncertainty exacerbate challenges.
4. California's brand remains strong.
5. The benefit of mega events is showcasing the state on a global stage.



Thank you!

Caroline Beteta

President & CEO

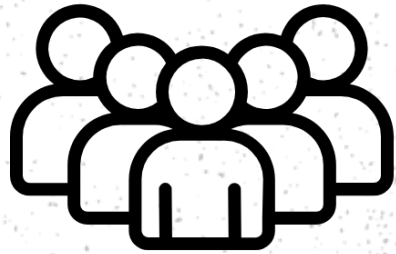
Caroline@VisitCalifornia.com

Visit S A C R ★ M E N T O

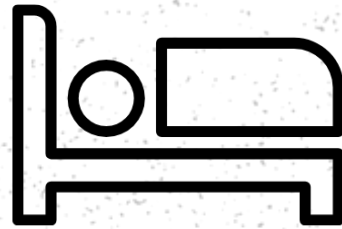
Tourism Opportunities
and Threats

Aftershock

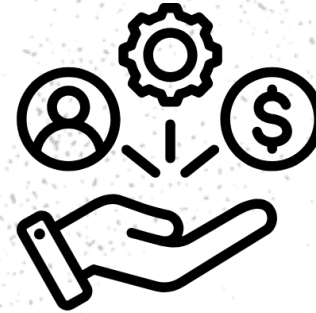
2025 Expected Impact



160,000
Total Attendee's



67,709
Hotel Rooms



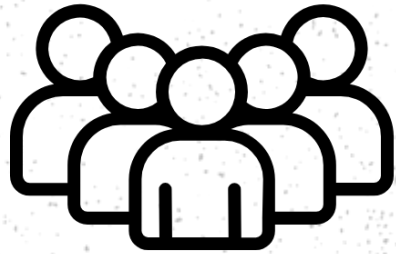
\$39.8M Est. Economic
Impact



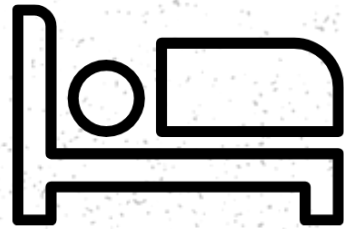
9,000+
Jobs Supported

GoldenSky

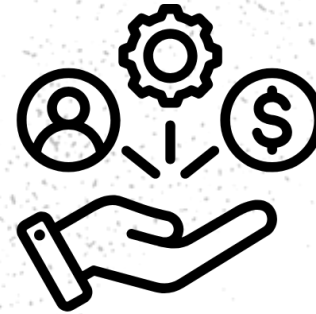
2024 Impact



75,000
Total Attendee's



25,635
Hotel Rooms



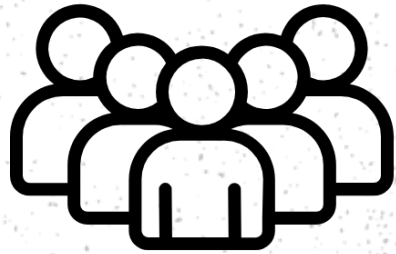
\$13.3M Est. Economic
Impact



5,500+
Jobs Supported

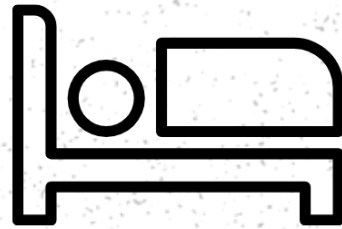
IRONMAN California

2025 Expected Impact



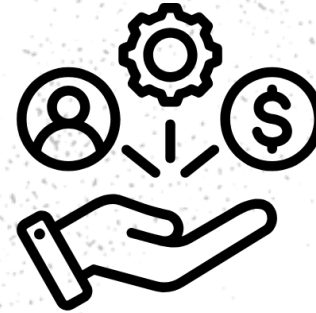
29,052

Unique Attendee's



14,032

Hotel Rooms



\$14.6M Est. Economic
Impact



6,600+

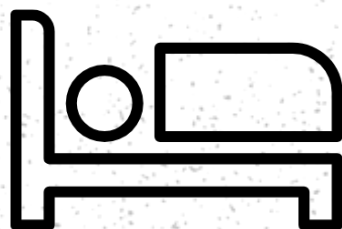
Jobs Supported

Terra Madre Americas

2024 Terra Madre Italy, Salone del Gusto Impact



300,000
Visitors



5
Days



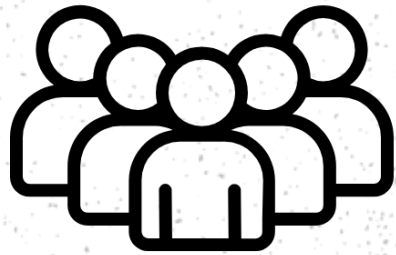
1,527
Events



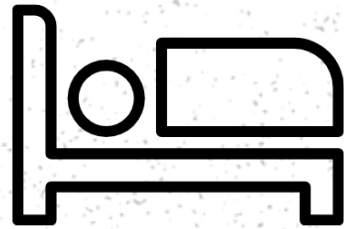
120
Countries Represented

California International Marathon

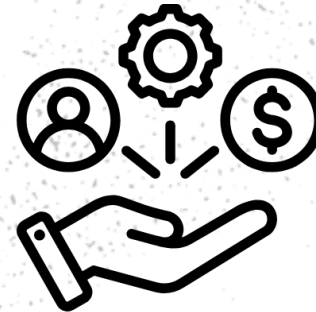
2025 Expected Impact



12,250
Unique Attendee's



32,326
Hotel Rooms



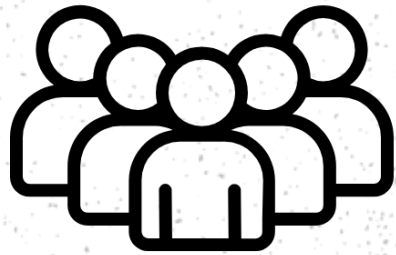
\$15.6M Est. Economic
Impact



4,000+
Jobs Supported

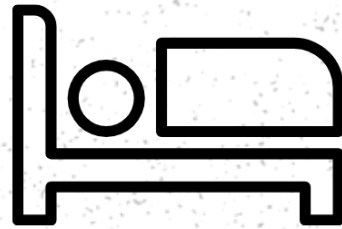
Holo Holo

2025 Expected Impact



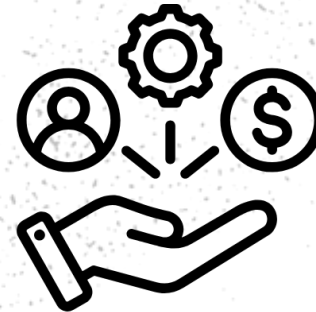
10,000

Unique Attendee's



746

Hotel Rooms



\$615K Est. Economic
Impact

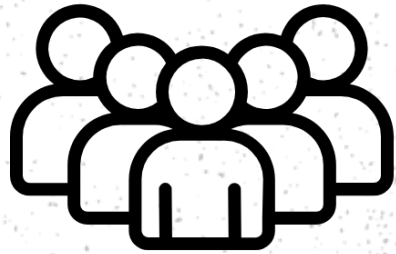


300+

Jobs Supported

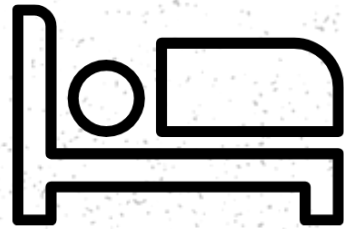
Sol Blume

2023 Expected Impact



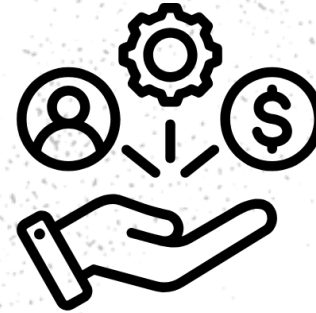
22,200

Unique Attendee's



10,723

Hotel Rooms

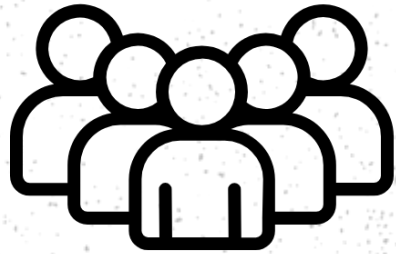


\$3.1M Est. Economic
Impact



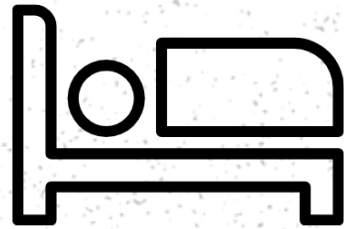
1,600+
Jobs Supported

Totals



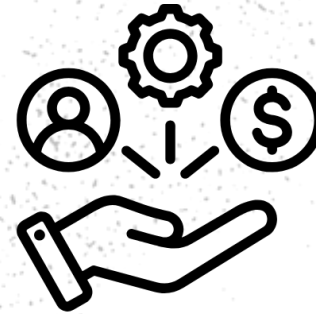
308,502

Unique Attendee's



151,171

Hotel Rooms



\$87M Est. Economic
Impact



27,000+

Jobs Supported

Aftershock

~~GoldenSky~~

Terra Madre Americas

Holo Holo

~~Sol Blume~~

California International Marathon

2015 vs 2024

Total Hotel Room Nights

2015 - 308,184

2024 – 409,754

101,570 Increase
in Hotel Room Nights

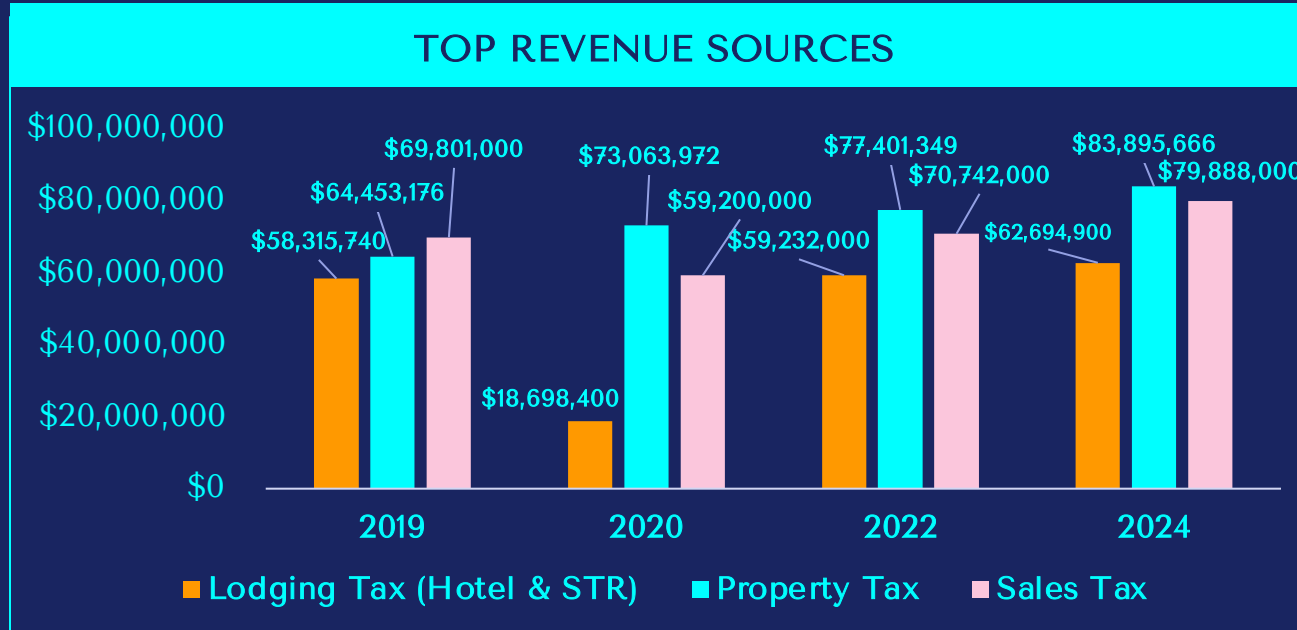
SANTA MONICA TOURISM

Wednesday, August 20, 2025

SANTA MONICA 

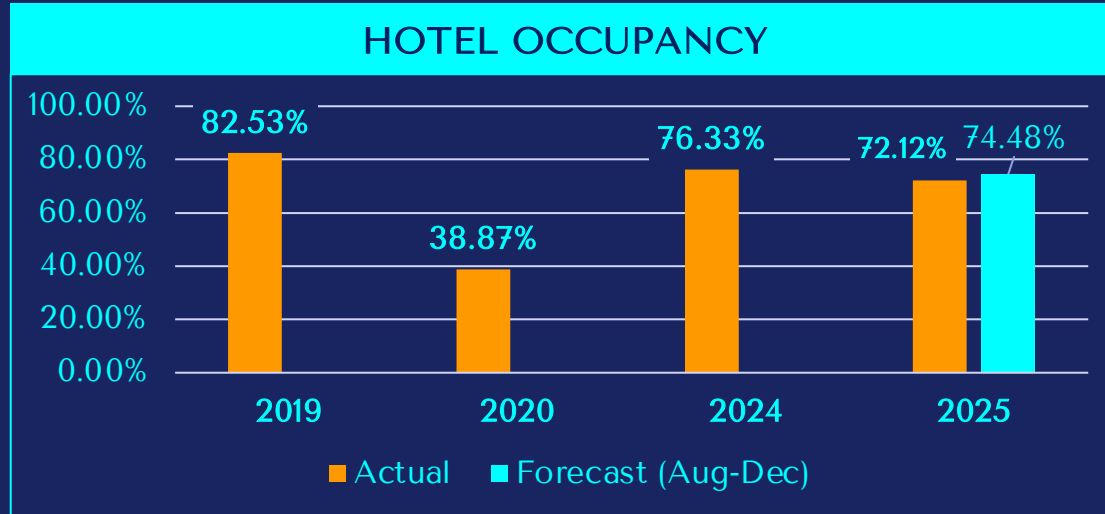
TOURISM REVENUE & ECONOMIC IMPACT

Top revenue sources in Santa Monica from 2020, 2019, 2022 & 2024:



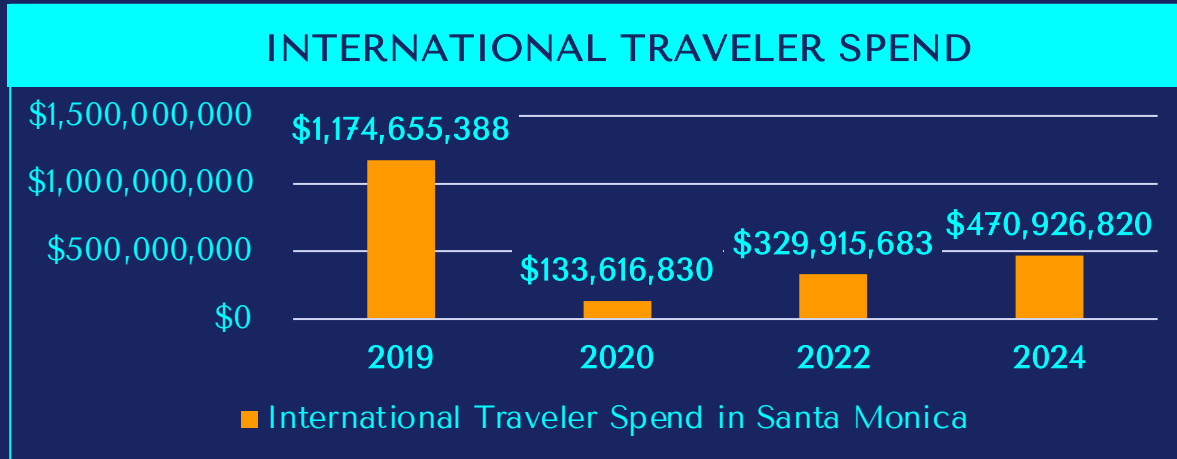
HOTEL OCCUPANCY & FUTURE OUTLOOK

Average hotel occupancy rates in Santa Monica from 2019 to 2025 YTD



INTERNATIONAL TOURISM & SPENDING TRENDS

- International visitors have historically been a vital part of Santa Monica's tourism economy, with spending surpassing \$1.17 billion in 2019. Despite challenges during the pandemic, international demand has shown remarkable resilience, with 2024 marking a strong recovery.
- In 2024, international visitation increased by 67% to an estimated 1.87 million visitors, driving total international spending to \$470.9 million, up 29% from \$366.6 million in 2023. This growth has significantly contributed to boosting local tax revenues and sustaining Santa Monica's global appeal, even amid increasing U.S. domestic competition.



LA WILDFIRE MEDIA COVERAGE



THANK YOU!

“The Current Outlook of California’s Tourism Industry”

Rhonda Salisbury, CEO
& Film Commissioner
for Visit Yosemite |
Madera County

August 20, 2025



Tourism Impact – Yosemite Gateways



- Direct Travel Spending – \$1.9 B
- Tourism Related Employment –
20,190 jobs
- Local Tax Revenue – \$103.7 M
- State Tax Revenue – \$70.5 M

Yosemite's Fragile Tourism Ecosystem...

'Honestly terrifying': Yosemite National Park is in chaos

"Opinion: Did America ruin Yosemite?"



Tripadvisor

<https://www.tripadvisor.co.uk> > ShowTopic-g61000-i3...

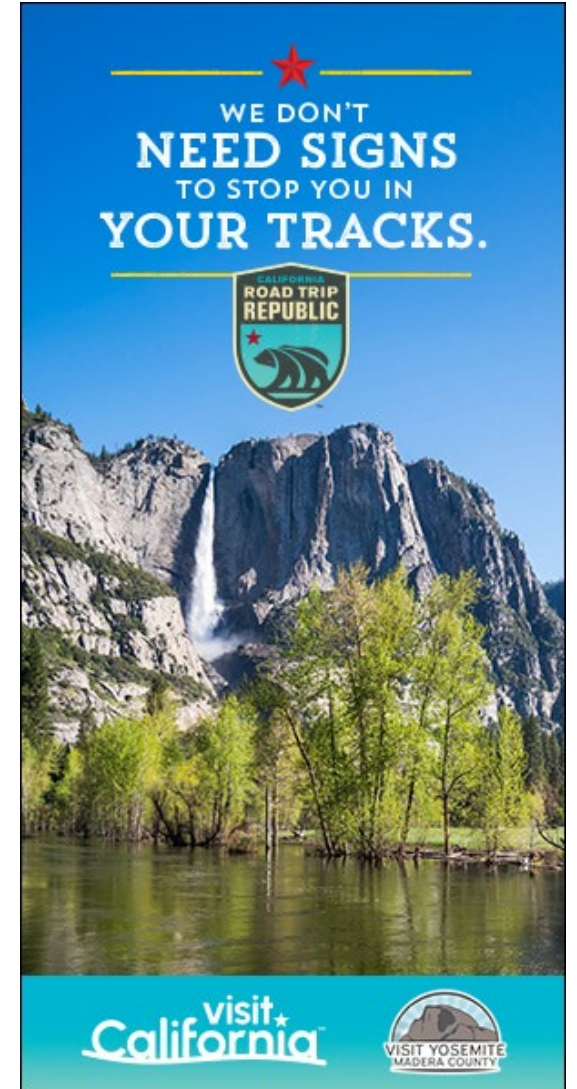
Sort of a scary article about Yosemite

A life-changing visit to ailing Yosemite National Park

Yosemite
Hantavirus
Peak-Hour Reservations
Wildfire
overcrowding
Plague
rockfalls
flooding



Partnerships



Current Tourism Situation and Future Outlook....

- 2025 – Projecting 15% down
- Hotel summer occupancy at 75% vs 95%+
- International visitation way down...

Canada -62%	Mexico -66%
France -70%	Germany -70%
- 2026 – Projecting growth
 - World Cup visitation
 - Booking window
- Threats
 - Wildfire (always a threat)
 - Insurance rates raise hotel rates!
 - Possible increased fee for Internationals to visit our National Parks
 - Yosemite Reservation restrictions are unknown
 - Federal policies



Thank you!

Rhonda Salisbury

559-683-4636

Rhonda@YosemiteThisYear.com

www.YosemiteThisYear.com

TOURISM ECONOMY UPDATE

August 20, 2025



Importance of San Diego's Tourism Economy

San Diego's 2nd largest traded economy

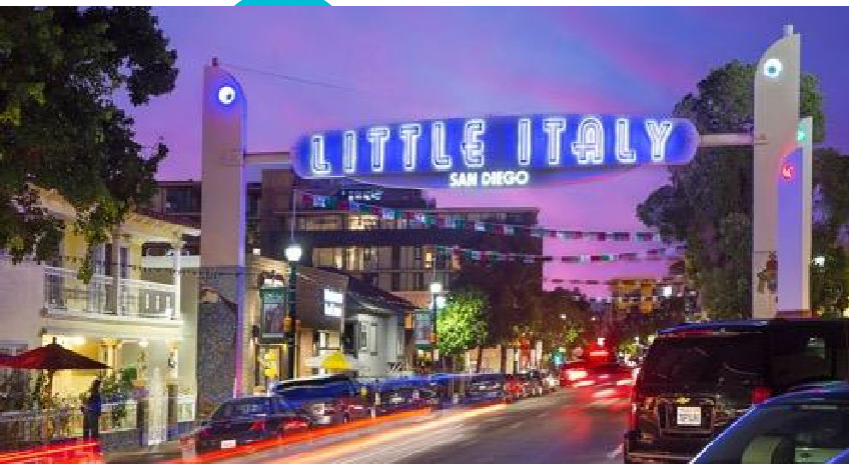
**32.5
million
visitors**

**\$14.8B
visitor
spending**

1 in 8 jobs

**80% Leisure
20% Business**

**\$22B
economic
impact**



General Trends

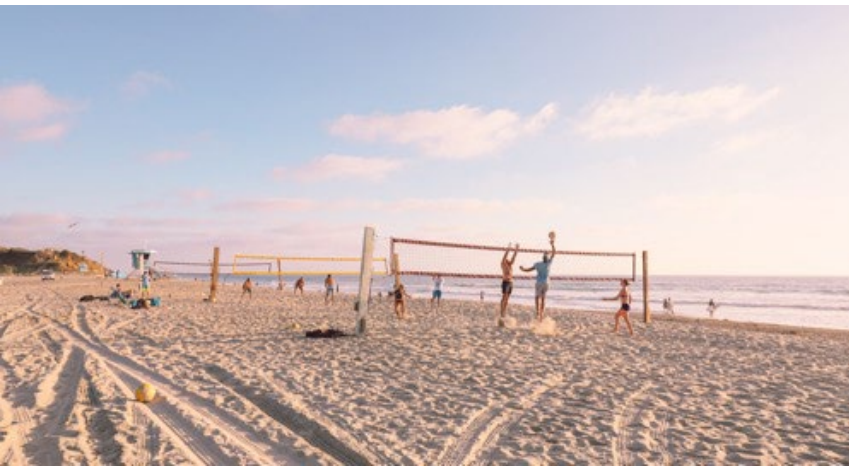
Travel in 2025 generally weaker than 2024:

- Through May, total visitor volume up 1.5%, with **overnight visitation up 1.8%**.
- However, they're spending less. **Total visitor spending** through May **down 1.9% YoY**. **Total overnight spending** in the region **down 2.6% YoY**.
- **Convention Center** room nights up 20.7%, but attendee **spending** still **down 2.5%**, with sizeable YoY differences in February and June.
- San Diego County **Hotel Occupancy** at 72.9% CYTD through June (down 1.1% YOY)

Market Overview

- **Group & Business** travel remain relatively **resilient**.
- **Leisure** travel showing **some softness**.
- **Economic Headwinds:** Financial uncertainty driving shorter-distance travel; reduced discretionary spending.
- July **Lodging Forecast** (Tourism Economics) matches 2024 demand.
- **International Travel:** Solid from Mexico; other markets down, Canada far below 2024 levels.
- Full **international recovery** expected by **2029**.





Bright Spots Ahead

- **Drive Market Resilience**

- Stable visitor base that has sustained other downturns
- 40 to 50 million residents within driving distance

- **Strong Convention Pipeline Through Year-End**

- Estimated 206K room nights from Aug-Dec
- Twitch-Con (Oct)
- Society for Neuroscience (Nov)

- **High-Profile Future Events**

- WWE Survivor Series (Thanksgiving 2025)
- NASCAR (June 2026)
- World Cup (Summer 2026)



San Diego-Tijuana Border

- Major trade corridor and 2nd largest border crossing in the world
- U.S. Customs and Border Patrol – stretched across land, sea and air
- Negative press on international travelers and VISA requirements
- Tijuana River Valley Pollution





AUGUST 2025

Tourism powers California's economy

OUR IMPACT

\$157.3 billion
visitor spending statewide

\$12.6 billion
state and local tax revenue

1.2 million
tourism-related jobs

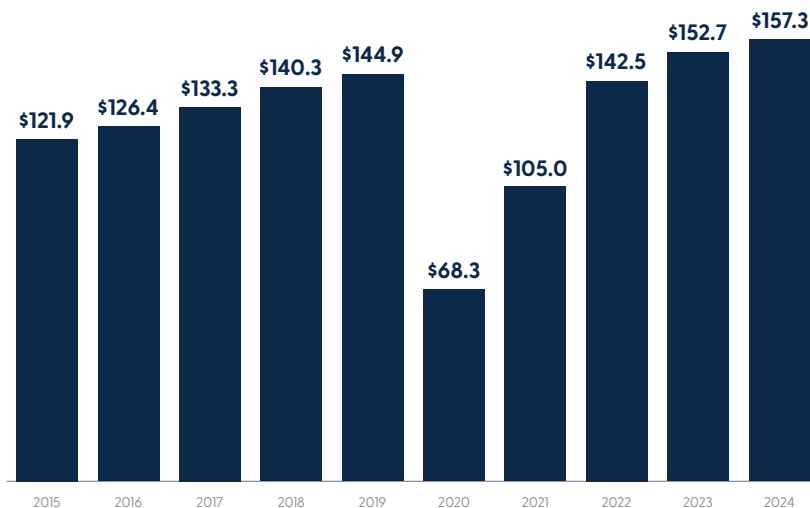
Source: Dean Runyan Associates, Inc.

Visitor spending fuels job creation, business growth and public services across every region of California.

In 2024, visitors spent \$157.3 billion at California businesses, generating \$12.6 billion in state and local tax revenue and supporting 1.2 million jobs for California workers.

Travel spending increased by 3.0%, and the sector gained 23,950 travel-related jobs compared to 2023. While California's tourism industry has seen modest recovery since the pandemic, visitor spending has not kept pace with inflation. Full recovery remains elusive.

Visitor spending (billions)



These numbers are not adjusted for inflation. Prepandemic visitor spending is equivalent to \$182.5 billion in today's dollars.

Source: Dean Runyan Associates, Inc.

For the first time since the pandemic, overall visitor volume in California is predicted to decline in 2025. International visitation is expected to drop 9.2% due to economic weakness, shifts in consumer sentiment and safety concerns about travel to the U.S.

California visitation forecast

	2024 Actual	2025 Forecast	YOY % change
Domestic	253 million	252.5 million	-0.2%
International	16.8 million	15.3 million	-9.2%
Total visits	269.8 million	267.8 million	-0.7%

Source: Tourism Economics, May 2025

International travelers are vital to California’s tourism economy. They stay longer, spend more and travel midweek. However, 83% of visitor spending last year was from domestic travelers. Visit California will continue to make strategic marketing investments to ensure California remains the No. 1 tourism economy in the nation.

International air arrivals, June 2025 YTD

Country	CA YOY % change	U.S. YOY % change
Australia	-5.6%	-1.3%
Canada	-13.8%	-9.6%
China	6.0%	4.5%
France	-7.6%	-7.2%
Germany	-14.4%	-9.0%
India	1.4%	0.4%
Italy	7.9%	7.9%
Japan	0.7%	4.0%
Mexico	6.3%	2.4%
Middle East	-5.4%	-2.7%
Nordics	-10.7%	-7%
South Korea	-3.2%	-11.0%
United Kingdom	-3.9%	1.6%

Source: National Travel & Tourism Office, CIC Research

2024 VISITOR SPENDING

\$102 billion
domestic

\$29 billion
California residents

\$26 billion
international

Source: Dean Runyan Associates, Inc.

2024 California Assembly District economic impacts of travel

AD	District name	Visitor spending	Tax revenue			Jobs
			Local	State	Total	
01	Northeast California	\$3.1M	\$107M	\$125M	\$232M	32,500
02	North Coast	\$2.6M	\$114M	\$106M	\$221M	24,500
03	Chico/North Central	\$1.1M	\$33M	\$53M	\$86M	11,500
04	Napa	\$2.9M	\$142M	\$120M	\$262M	28,700
05	Loomis-Rocklin	\$1.3M	\$67M	\$61M	\$128M	14,000
06	Downtown-Capitol	\$2.6M	\$69M	\$78M	\$147M	16,500
07	East Sacramento-Rancho Cordova	\$1.1M	\$37M	\$53M	\$90M	9,300
08	Sierras	\$3.2M	\$140M	\$124M	\$264M	31,200
09	Ione-Oakdale-Lodi-Galt	\$1.1M	\$33M	\$57M	\$90M	9,100
10	Elk Grove-Sacramento	\$691M	\$23M	\$37M	\$60M	5,700
11	Delta communities	\$1.2M	\$30M	\$57M	\$87M	9,800
12	San Rafael-Petaluma-Fairfax	\$1.9M	\$88M	\$73M	\$161M	15,000
13	Stockton-Tracy	\$655M	\$22M	\$35M	\$57M	5,600
14	Berkeley	\$909M	\$35M	\$45M	\$80M	6,400
15	Antioch-Concord	\$817M	\$27M	\$43M	\$70M	6,900
16	Tri Valley	\$1.2M	\$45M	\$52M	\$97M	8,500
17	Downtown San Francisco	\$12.3M	\$430M	\$320M	\$750M	48,000
18	Alameda-Emeryville	\$1.7M	\$67M	\$60M	\$126M	11,200
19	San Francisco-Daly City	\$1.6M	\$122M	\$92M	\$214M	7,700
20	Hayward-San Leandro	\$911M	\$44M	\$43M	\$87M	5,800
21	San Mateo-Redwood City-Burlingame	\$3.4M	\$213M	\$173M	\$386M	33,300
22	Modesto-Turlock	\$528M	\$16M	\$30M	\$45M	5,300
23	Mountain View-Palo Alto	\$2.1M	\$93M	\$86M	\$180M	12,100
24	Milpitas-Fremont-Newark	\$1.5M	\$72M	\$62M	\$134M	9,800
25	San Jose	\$2.7M	\$79M	\$72M	\$151M	11,000
26	Santa Clara-Cupertino-Sunnyvale	\$2.1M	\$90M	\$77M	\$167M	12,700
27	Merced-Madera-San Joaquin	\$725M	\$24M	\$39M	\$63M	7,700
28	Santa Cruz	\$1.6M	\$67M	\$69M	\$136M	10,700
29	Hollister-Salinas-Gilroy	\$1.4M	\$84M	\$69M	\$153M	11,000
30	Monterey-Morro Bay-Paso Robles	\$4.9M	\$232M	\$197M	\$429M	46,600
31	Fresno-Selma-Fowler	\$772M	\$23M	\$37M	\$60M	6,700
32	Exeter-Maricopa-Bakersfield	\$1.5M	\$50M	\$76M	\$125M	15,300
33	Farmersville-Tulare-Hanford	\$621M	\$20M	\$34M	\$54M	6,500
34	High Desert-Apple Valley	\$3.3M	\$86M	\$138M	\$224M	30,300
35	McFarland-Delano-Wasco	\$616M	\$23M	\$35M	\$58M	6,100
36	Eastern Coachella Valley	\$2.4M	\$66M	\$105M	\$171M	21,00
37	Santa Maria-Santa Barbara	\$2.2M	\$113M	\$90M	\$203M	20,400
38	Oxnard-Port Hueneme-Fillmore	\$1.3M	\$43M	\$59M	\$102M	10,800
39	Palmdale-Victorville-Lancaster	\$720M	\$37M	\$35M	\$72M	5,800
40	Santa Clarita-Los Angeles	\$1.2M	\$65M	\$55M	\$119M	7,200
41	Pasadena-Claremont-Monrovia	\$1.6M	\$78M	\$72M	\$150M	11,400

AD	District name	Visitor spending	Tax revenue			Jobs
			Local	State	Total	
42	Thousand Oaks-Simi Valley-Malibu	\$1.4M	\$60M	\$65M	\$126M	10,800
43	San Fernando-Los Angeles	\$577M	\$39M	\$33M	\$72M	3,900
44	Burbank-Glendale	\$1.7M	\$80M	\$63M	\$143M	10,400
45	Fontana-Rialto	\$652M	\$26M	\$34M	\$59M	5,900
46	West Valley	\$1.1M	\$52M	\$44M	\$96M	6,100
47	Coachella Valley	\$4.9M	\$133M	\$186M	\$318M	45,600
48	Baldwin Park-West Covina	\$733M	\$45M	\$37M	\$82M	4,700
49	Rosemead-San Gabriel	\$1.6M	\$71M	\$56M	\$127M	8,900
50	Loma Linda-Colton	\$1.1M	\$41M	\$50M	\$91M	10,000
51	West Hollywood-Santa Monica	\$3.7M	\$172M	\$124M	\$296M	23,600
52	Glendale-Los Angeles	\$800M	\$50M	\$43M	\$93M	5,100
53	Montclair-Pomona	\$1.5M	\$53M	\$50M	\$102M	9,400
54	Commerce-Montebello-Vernon	\$1.9M	\$100M	\$74M	\$174M	12,600
55	Culver City-Los Angeles	\$1.4M	\$71M	\$56M	\$126M	8,500
56	Walnut-Whittier-Industry	\$1.2M	\$67M	\$55M	\$122M	7,400
57	Downtown Los Angeles	\$1.8M	\$92M	\$68M	\$161M	12,500
58	Jurupa Valley-Grand Terrace	\$1.0M	\$44M	\$49M	\$93M	9,200
59	Chino Hills-Yorba Linda	\$1.2M	\$58M	\$59M	\$117M	10,100
60	Perris-Moreno Valley	\$911M	\$39M	\$45M	\$84M	8,100
61	Inglewood-Hawthorne	\$6.3M	\$203M	\$149M	\$351M	45,300
62	Lakewood-Huntington Park	\$792M	\$49M	\$41M	\$90M	5,000
63	Norco-Menifee-Canyon Lake	\$1.2M	\$50M	\$59M	\$109M	10,400
64	Sante Fe Springs-La Mirada	\$905M	\$58M	\$47M	\$106M	6,300
65	Compton	\$1.1M	\$56M	\$46M	\$103M	6,400
66	Lomita-Torrance-Redondo Beach	\$2.3M	\$113M	\$83M	\$196M	15,400
67	Cerritos-Buena Park-Cypress	\$4.4M	\$206M	\$155M	\$360M	42,200
68	Santa Ana-Orange-Anaheim	\$2.7M	\$96M	\$76M	\$172M	17,200
69	Signal Hill-Avalon	\$2.1M	\$99M	\$76M	\$174M	13,600
70	Westminster-Stanton-Garden Grove	\$1.7M	\$85M	\$73M	\$158M	15,300
71	Wildomar-Mission Viejo-Temecula	\$1.5M	\$64M	\$70M	\$134M	13,200
72	Laguna Hills-Newport Beach	\$2.8M	\$114M	\$107M	\$222M	25,800
73	Costa Mesa-Irvine	\$2.4M	\$98M	\$80M	\$178M	19,800
74	Oceanside-Vista	\$1.7M	\$76M	\$69M	\$146M	13,700
75	Santee-Poway	\$2.1M	\$94M	\$82M	\$175M	13,100
76	San Marcos-Escondido	\$1.2M	\$55M	\$48M	\$103M	7,500
77	Carlsbad-Encinitas	\$7.1M	\$278M	\$178M	\$456M	40,700
78	San Diego-El Cajon	\$2.8M	\$114M	\$87M	\$201M	16,500
79	Lemon Grove-La Mesa	\$1.0M	\$47M	\$45M	\$92M	6,200
80	Chula Vista-National City	\$1.6M	\$74M	\$62M	\$136M	10,000

CALIFORNIA

ATTRACTIONS INDUSTRY (2023 ANNUAL DATA)

1,603 **ATTRACTIONS**
Spanning all seven
IAAPA categories with
visitor attendance exceeding **121 million** in
2023—representing **14%** of total U.S. attendance.

\$4.2 **BILLION IN TAXES**

Attractions generated direct revenue of
\$12.4 billion, which supported **77,600** jobs
and generated labor income of nearly
\$4 billion.

\$26.6 **BILLION ECONOMIC IMPACT**

Industry generated a total economic impact
of **\$26.6 billion** and supported **131,000** jobs
in California.



Indirect and
induced impacts
from California's
attractions generated
revenue of **\$14.2
billion** and supported
53,400 jobs.

1,603 **TOTAL COMPANIES**

Amusement/Theme Parks	25
Water Parks	22
Entertainment Centers	531
Zoos/Aquariums	59
Museums/Science Centers	775
Historical/Cultural Attractions	47
Natural/Adventure/Eco/ Scenic Attractions	144

121.1 **TOTAL ATTENDANCE (mn)**

ECONOMIC IMPACTS (2023 ANNUAL DATA)

Direct	\$12.4	\$26.6 TOTAL REVENUE IMPACT (USD Bn)
Indirect & Induced	\$14.2	

Direct	77,600	131,000 TOTAL EMPLOYMENT (JOBS)
Indirect & Induced	53,400	

Direct	\$4.0	\$8.5 TOTAL LABOR INCOME (USD Bn)
Indirect & Induced	\$4.5	

Arts, Entertainment, Sports and Tourism Committee

Informational Hearing

August 20, 2025

Participant Biographies

- Caroline Beteta, President and CEO of Visit California
- Lauren Salisbury, Vice President of Communications at Santa Monica Travel & Tourism
- Rhonda Salisbury – CEO of the Yosemite Sierra Visitors Bureau
- Mike Testa, President and CEO of Visit Sacramento
- Kerri Verbeke Kapich - COO of the San Diego Tourism Authority

Caroline Beteta

President and Chief Executive Officer
Visit California

Caroline Beteta serves as president & CEO of the industry-led Visit California, a nonprofit organization created to market California as a premier travel destination to increase the state's share of tourism-related revenues. She simultaneously serves as a strategic advisor for the Governor's Office of Business & Economic Development (GO-Biz). Beteta is responsible for implementing Visit California's global marketing program on behalf of the organization's 21,000 investors and serves as the lead spokesperson for California's travel industry. In her tenure, she has overseen a decade of growth for California's travel industry, peaking in 2019 with a record \$144.9 billion in economic benefit to the state. She has shepherded the growth of Visit California into a global marketing franchise and helped restore travel and tourism following numerous natural and economic crises.

Caroline has served as Chair of the Board, as well as, Acting CEO for Brand USA, where she provided strategic direction for the \$200 million global program, interfacing with national congressional leaders and the administration. During a two-year term as National Chair of the U.S. Travel Association, she guided the successful merger of the Travel Industry Association with the Travel Business Roundtable and the creation of Brand USA. Caroline currently serves on the Executive Committee of the World Travel and Tourism Council — Visit California was the first destination marketing organization invited to join the WTTC.

Caroline has received numerous awards for her creative work and leadership in the travel industry, including induction into the U.S. Travel Association's Hall of Leaders.

Caroline holds a bachelor's degree in International Relations from the University of California, Los Angeles and a master's degree in Public Administration/Intergovernmental Affairs from the University of Southern California. She also completed the Stanford Graduate School of Business Executive Marketing Management Program.

Lauren Salisbury

Vice President of Communications
Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

Lauren Salisbury serves as Vice President of Communications at Santa Monica Travel & Tourism. A storyteller at heart, she brings over 15 years of experience in public relations, corporate communications, and social media strategy for global brands.

Born in Northern California to a family of avid road trippers, Lauren visited 46 states by the time she was 16, cementing her love for travel at an early age. She holds a B.A. in Journalism from the University of Maryland College Park. After graduation, she pursued her dream of working at Walt Disney World in Florida before venturing overseas to broaden her professional experience with roles in Spain and Costa Rica.

Rhonda Salisbury
Chief Executive Officer
Yosemite Sierra Visitors Bureau

Rhonda Salisbury has lived and worked in tourism marketing and hotel management in the southern Yosemite area since 1985. She moved from the Bay Area and immediately fell in love with mountain life and the community. She was promoted to CEO for Visit Yosemite | Madera County in September 2014 after holding the Director of Marketing position for 4 years and being on the Bureau Board of Directors for 10 years prior to being employed by the organization.

When she's not promoting tourism, she spends her time with her husband, cat and adorable grandson. She is an avid traveler, loves wine tasting, a good book and laughing with the Bunco girls.

Mike Testa
President and Chief Executive Officer
Visit Sacramento

Mike Testa is the President and CEO of Visit Sacramento, leading a talented team dedicated bringing visitors to California's Capital City.

Through Mike's vision, community collaboration and consistent innovation, Sacramento's identity has evolved from a sleepy Gold Rush town to an exciting West Coast option for leisure, sports, music festivals, culinary exploration and business travel. Beyond sales and marketing, Mike has placed special emphasis on destination development, enhancing Sacramento's destination profile and attracting new tourism revenue streams to the market. Mike has pioneered new events such as the Tower Bridge Dinner, was instrumental in attracting music festivals and sporting events like Aftershock, GoldenSky, Ironman, World's Strongest Man and X-Games, and led the conversation to bring the famed Michelin guide into the market. Mike often serves as a thought leader in the tourism space, offering fresh perspective on a DMO's evolving role in shaping communities.

Kerri Verbeke Kapich
Chief Operating Officer
San Diego Tourism Authority

Kerri Verbeke Kapich is the Chief Operating Officer for the San Diego Tourism Authority (SDTA), one of the nation's leading destination marketing organizations. The SDTA represents over 900 hospitality organizations and serves as the San Diego region's tourism marketing engine.

Kapich is a frequent speaker at community meetings, industry conferences and for LEAD San Diego. She was named as one of the "Top 100 Marketers" in the nation by *Advertising Age* and is the recipient of numerous marketing, advertising and tourism awards including 2025 LEAD "Visionary Award" for Regional Collaboration, San Diego Magazine "2025 Celebrating Women Awards" finalist, 2024 "Marketer of the Year" by American Marketing Association San Diego Chapter, San Diego County Hotel-Motel Association Gold Key "Allied Person of the Year" Award, San Diego Daily Transcript "Women of Influence" Recognition, San Diego Magazine "Woman of the Year" Honoree, San Diego Business Journal Women Who Mean Business Finalist and Multi-Cultural Conventions Services Network "Women In Tourism & Hospitality" Honors.

In 1997, Kapich joined the San Diego Tourism Authority. In her role as COO, she is responsible for strategic planning, brand stewardship, community engagement and revenue development. She is the driving force behind major initiatives such as the National Geographic "World's Smart Cities" San Diego documentary and 2024-2034 San Diego Tourism Stewardship Plan. During COVID 19, she led numerous task forces and served on two Mayoral Advisory Boards on rebuilding the tourism economy.

Kapich is a recent past chair of the LEAD San Diego Board of Directors and serves on the Downtown San Diego Partnership Advisory Board, and the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank Board of Directors, CalTravel Executive Board Committee, Visit California Marketing Advisory Board, U.S. Travel Association Communications Committee, and iHeartMedia Community Advisory Board. Past board positions include the Cal Poly SLO Experience Industry Management Advisory Board, Forever Balboa Park, World Design Capital 2024 San Diego-Tijuana Advisory Board, SAN Regional Advisory Board, California Restaurant Association San Diego Chapter, Junior League of San Diego, U.S. Destinations Council, and the Advertising Club of San Diego. She is a graduate of the LEAD Influence San Diego class of 2017.

A San Diego native, Kapich is a graduate of the University of California, Santa Barbara.