

**VISIT CALIFORNIA’S 2021 TRAVEL IMPACT REPORT: SAMPLE LOCAL PRESS RELEASE**

Below is a sample press release that you can issue to local media contacts on or after **10 a.m**. on April 29, 2022. Please customize the release to fit your organization’s style and choose the report findings and messages that you would like to highlight. If you plan to release your own local economic impact data, we encourage you to contact dsmith@visitcalifornia.com to discuss opportunities to collaborate on messaging and media outreach. Replace all the [highlighted] text below with information from Visit California’s newly released economic impact report that is specific to your county or region and details specific to your organization.

Embargoed for release: Media Contact:

**10 a.m**. April 29, 2022  *[Name of Media Contact]*

 *[Phone Number]*

 *[Email]*

**[YOUR COMMUNITY]’S TOURISM ECONOMY GREW IN 2021, BUT LAGS BEHIND 2019 LEVELS**

**[Insert Destination], Calif. (April 29, 2022)** – [YOUR COUNTY’S] tourism economy made great strides toward recovery in 2021, yet more work remains to fully restore the tourism economy in [YOUR COUNTY] and across the state.

According to Visit California’s newly released report prepared by Dean Runyan Associates, detailing the economic impact of tourism across the state in 2021:

* Visitor spending in 2021 increased by [%] over 2020 to $[X] in [YOUR COUNTY].

* Visitor-generated tax revenue in [YOUR COUNTY] increased to $X billion in 2021.

* Tourism jobs in [YOUR COUNTY] rose [%] to [#] in 2021.

* [YOUR COUNTY’S] visitor spending number remained just [%] of the levels recorded in 2019, before the pandemic lockdown and subsequent waves of government restrictions.

*[Insert quote from a representative of your organization discussing the 2021 economic impact numbers, the importance of reviving 2019 visitor spending levels and how the tourism economy will drive your community forward.]*

*[Insert paragraph describing the local work your organization is doing to attract visitors and the benefits tourism provides.]*

Statewide, visitor spending reached $100.2 billion in 2021, up 46% from 2020. Visitor-generated tax revenue for state and local governments also increased by a third to $9.8 billion in 2021. Tourism jobs, which were halved at the dawn of the pandemic in 2020, recovered slowly in 2021, increasing to 928,000.

California’s visitor spending levels in 2021 amounted to just 69% of the record $144.9 billion reported in 2019. Employment levels in California’s tourism industry remained at only about three-quarters of the 1.2 million workers recorded in 2019.

“The increases in 2021 overall show Visit California’s marketing programs are working,” said Caroline Beteta, president and CEO of Visit California, the state’s tourism marketing organization. “After a devastating 2020, visitor spending is on the stairway to recovery, but we still have a long way to go,” Beteta said. “Cities continue to suffer without the critical international and group business segments.”

California’s meeting market was unable to operate for most of 2020 and into 2021 and has been slow to return. Spending by international visitors, which stood at nearly $28 billion in 2019 and was California’s largest export, plummeted with travel restrictions and amounted to just $5.4 billion in 2021.

Aided by marketing stimulus funds approved by the Legislature in mid-2021, Visit California has launched initiatives to promote leisure and business travel across the state, including a new domestic brand campaign with “Am I Dreaming?” that premiered during the Super Bowl pregame show. The organization has also reestablished marketing programs in priority international markets to tap into pent-up demand and inspire travelers to choose California for their first long-haul vacations.

Economic projections, prepared by Tourism Economics and released by Visit California earlier this year, showed travel-related spending will reach $144.6 billion in 2023, nearly the same as 2019. If achieved, the tourism economy will have returned to 2019 levels a year sooner than projected a year ago. Spending now is projected to reach $155.9 billion in 2024.

The release of the economic impact report annually coincides with the beginning of California Tourism Month in May, which the Legislature designated in 2016.

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*[Your boilerplate]*

***ABOUT VISIT CALIFORNIA:***

*Visit California is a nonprofit organization with a mission to develop and maintain marketing programs – in partnership with the state’s travel industry – that keep California top-of-mind as a premier travel destination. For more information about Visit California and for a free California Official State Visitor's Guide, go to* [*visitcalifornia.com*](https://www.visitcalifornia.com/)*. For story ideas, media information, downloadable images, video and more, go to* [*media.visitcalifornia.com*](https://media.visitcalifornia.com/)*.*