

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2022 was a year of recovery and growth for Chattanooga's tourism industry. Air travel and leisure & hospitality jobs moved closer to 2019 pre-pandemic levels. Lodging saw record numbers for demand, supply and revenue, with short-term rentals leading the growth in accommodations. Chattanooga Tourism Co. expanded marketing into the Midwest, Florida, and Texas, and trackable data showed increased travel from those markets. Group travel also saw a solid return in 2022.

EMPLOYMENT

In July of 2022, employment in the hospitality industry reached a record high of 31,300 jobs in Hamilton County. By the end of the year, employment was down 1.7% vs. 2019. This is partially explained due to the high number of unfilled jobs at 8.8% in Dec.

Source: Bureau Labor and Statistics (BLS)

LODGING

Lodging had a record year by all measures. Demand (rooms sold) in 2022 was up 5.4% vs. 2019 and 2.6% vs. 2021. In 2022, 2.6 million rooms were sold in Hamilton County. Demand (+5.4%) outpaced supply (+4.3%) over the past three years.

Source: Smith Travel Research (STR) & AirDNA

AIR TRAVEL

Air travel to Chattanooga still lags behind 2019 numbers, however, there was a 14.6% increase in enplanements in 2022 vs. 2021. International travel hit a new high in overall air-travel visitors, making up 7.5% of all passengers. Dallas moved into the number 1 domestic origin market for the first time. New York has been making a comeback since the loss of the direct flight and currently sits as the number 3 domestic origin market. The Chattanooga Tourism Co. has been marketing in 7 of the top 10 origin destinations to increase visitation and develop new direct flights.

Source: Chattanooga Airport & OAG Aviation Worldwide Limited

MARKETING

The Chattanooga Tourism Co.'s advertising reached about 250 million potential visitors. Social media led the growth with 3.5 million engagements, which is 21% more than in 2021 and 496% growth since 2019. Website traffic on VisitChattanooga.com was up 21% over 2021, pushing 2019 numbers, with nearly 3 million sessions in 2022.

Source: Chattanooga Tourism Co. & Miles Partnership

PR & INFLUENCERS

Public Relations efforts yielded 129 articles about Chattanooga reaching 351 million readers/viewers. A new social media influencer program that started in May 2022 has drawn 11 influencers to Chattanooga who created 450 posts. Those posts generated 44.2 million impressions and reached 1.3 million potential visitors.

Source: Development Counsellors International (DCI)

GROUP SALES

Chattanooga Tourism Co.'s business development team serviced 177 groups with 200,000 attendees in 2022.

Source: Chattanooga Tourism Co.

2023 OUTLOOK

The future hotel booking pace for leisure and group travel is very positive. As of March 10, 2023, vs. the same time last year, Chattanooga anticipates a strong spring break for March (up 13%) and April (up 38%). Summer 2023 is looking to make a rebound from last summer's high gas prices during June (up 2%) and July (up 18%). These percentages indicate continued growth in travel to Chattanooga in 2023.

Source: TravelClick

