



Loudoun again leads visitor spending for the Commonwealth

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LEESBURG (September 16, 2024)- Loudoun's visitor spending topped \$4.5 billion in 2023, with Washington Dulles International Airport being a major contributor to the local economy, according to the latest data released by Virginia Tourism.

Overall visitor spending in Loudoun was up 12.5% from 2022, with \$2.7 billion of that coming from transportation, according to the data, which is collected by Tourism Economics. Loudoun is the largest generator of tourism spending in the Commonwealth.

"Building on last year's momentum, Loudoun remains the top generator of visitor spending in Virginia. While the airport is key to the entire region, what Loudoun has that not every destination does is a robust rural economy," Visit Loudoun President and CEO Beth Erickson said. "Loudoun is home to 50 wineries and celebrates 40 years of winemaking in 2024. What we know is this segment welcomes 1 million visitors a year and generates more than \$48 million for Loudoun's economy. It also remains the number one visitor attraction."

According to the economic impact report, in 2023 tourism supported 18,213 jobs, up almost 6.3% and resulted in \$1.1 billion in salaries and wages in Loudoun. It generated \$147.4 million in local taxes as well as \$80.3 million in state taxes, increases of 8% and 10.6% over 2022 respectively.

"Washington Dulles International Airport works closely with our partners to play a vital role in Loudoun's thriving economy," said Chryssa Westerlund, executive vice president and chief revenue officer of the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority. "With a record-breaking 9.3 million international passengers and the addition of 793,710 annual seats including expanded capacity to South America, Washington Dulles was named the fastest-growing international airport in the U.S. in 2023. The expansion of our network, including the introduction of five new airlines and 18 new routes, strengthens the airport's position as a key driver of economic growth, supporting local businesses and tourism."

Across the state, tourism in Virginia reached a record high of \$33.3 billion in visitor spending in 2023, up almost 10 percent from 2022. This spending supported 224,000 jobs, an increase of 13,000 jobs relative to 2022. All five categories of visitor spending in the Commonwealth have now fully recovered to pre-pandemic levels and beyond. Those categories include recreation, transportation, lodging, food & beverage and retail. Recreation was the fastest growing category in 2023, up 12% over 2022 and 24% beyond pre-pandemic levels as travelers continue to show a strong preference for experiences.