



## **Tourism Matters: Monterey County Reaches Record Tourism Spending in 2019** *Annual Report Underscores the Critical Importance of Hospitality Industry*

Monterey, Calif., May 5, 2020 – According to the annual travel impacts report conducted by Dean Runyan Associates on behalf of Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau (MCCVB), traveler spending totaled a record \$3.24 billion in 2019, an increase of 3.3 percent from 2018. Tourism is the number one industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest industry in Monterey County. The new report showed visitor spending in the destination supported more than 27,000 jobs and generated \$153 million in local tax revenue.

Global tourism is facing an unprecedented crisis due to COVID-19. Monterey County has been impacted with an estimated loss of \$500 million in the first 90 days of the pandemic, as well as lay-offs of more than half the 27,000 hospitality jobs supported by tourism. Yet this report demonstrates the power of the tourism economy to the County and each jurisdiction within.

“The importance of tourism is not a surprise,” said Rob O’Keefe, MCCVB’s president & CEO, adding “but this report illustrates just how incredibly valuable tourism is for jobs, local taxes and our destination’s economic vitality.”

Since the beginning of the crisis, MCCVB has worked with the Monterey County Hospitality Association, Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce and other chambers throughout the County, as well as Visit Carmel and local governments to gauge impact and plan a comeback. MCCVB has assembled a task force of key community partners to collaborate on a marketing recovery plan in conjunction with the business recovery protocols to bring tourism back. The plan will begin by targeting local residents to explore the destination like tourists and then expand to drive markets and beyond over time.

The comeback will be challenging. Destinations that compete with Monterey County are also consolidating resources to aggressively attract valuable visitor spending. However, Monterey County has advantages that MCCVB will leverage.

“While we need to balance our hope with a healthy dose of reality, our destination is positioned with some unique advantages,” said John Turner, MCCVB board chair and general manager of The InterContinental The Clement Monterey. “We have a strong leisure base, a robust drive market, low population density and unparalleled nature with beautiful, wide open spaces.”

The annual report comes at a time when the nation celebrates the value tourism brings to the economy with National Travel and Tourism Week and, statewide, California Tourism Month. While travelers are not able to come to Monterey County now, MCCVB is encouraging the local community to support the hospitality industry. Community support ranges from buying take out at local restaurants to playing a round of golf, purchasing gift cards to area attractions and eventually booking a staycation at hotels.

To learn more about MCCVB and for a list of ways to help the Monterey County tourism community, visit [www.SeeMonterey.com](http://www.SeeMonterey.com). To review the complete 2019 travel impacts report compiled by Dean Runyan Associates, visit [www.SeeMonterey.com/Members/Tools/Reports](http://www.SeeMonterey.com/Members/Tools/Reports).

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#### **ABOUT MONTEREY COUNTY CONVENTION & VISITORS BUREAU**

The Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau (Monterey County CVB) is a 501c6 organization that drives tourism for Monterey County. Tourism is the largest industry on the Monterey Peninsula and the second largest in the County. The MCCVB is a partnership of the hospitality community and local governments that aims to drive business growth through compelling marketing and targeted sales initiatives that maximize the benefits of tourism to its guests, members and the community. Travel spending in Monterey County was \$3.24 billion in 2019, representing a 3.3 percent increase from 2018. This \$3.24 billion in visitor spending supported 27,120 jobs, contributed \$296 million in total taxes and generated \$153 million local tax dollars that directly benefited the community. For more information, visit [www.SeeMonterey.com](http://www.SeeMonterey.com) and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).

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