



# THE IMPACT OF TOURISM

BHMVA  
Black History Museum  
& Cultural Center of Virginia

FY 2021-2022 Annual Report

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# Mission, Vision and Values

Richmond Region Tourism recently engaged its staff and Board of Directors to develop new mission, vision, and about us statements, as well as changes to its core values, to showcase its commitment to being a community cornerstone and a dynamic economic player.

## MISSION

Share a passion for the Richmond Region with the world.

## VISION

As a thriving community, the Richmond Region is known for being inclusive and welcoming to all.



## ABOUT US

As the Region's destination organization, we are experts who have a deep love for the community in which we live, work, and play.

We enrich the lives of our residents and visitors by sharing the unique culture and humanity that is the Richmond Region.

We generate economic prosperity through tourism by attracting conventions, meetings, sports tournaments, and visitors and ensuring that all have an unforgettable experience.



We enhance the quality of life for the people in our community by supporting the places that make the Richmond Region wonderful.

We strengthen local programs that drive tourism through our Richmond Region Tourism Foundation.

We do all of this through a lens of diversity, equity and inclusion.

## CORE VALUES



Passion



Inclusiveness



Integrity



Innovation



Stewardship



Courage

# TOURISM STIMULATES OUR ECONOMY

Destination promotion is an engine of economic development in our community.

In 2021, the Richmond Region hosted

## 16.9 million visitors

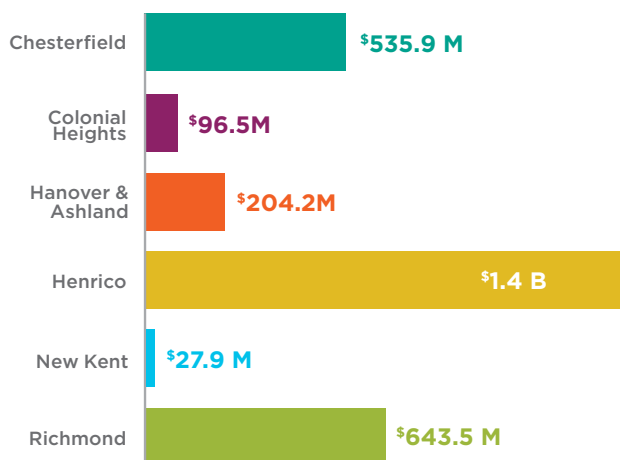
WHO SPENT **\$2.9 billion**

OR **\$7.9 million** PER DAY\*

Source: Longwoods International, calendar year 2021  
Number of visitors includes overnight and daytrip visitors

### 2021 VISITOR SPENDING

in Millions



### TOURISM SUPPORTS

**23,908**  
JOBS

WITH WAGES  
AND SALARIES  
TOTALING:

**\$914 million**



LOCAL TAXES  
COLLECTED:

**\$138 million**



HOTEL SALES  
& OCCUPANCY  
REVENUE:

**\$472 million**

▲ 74% INCREASE

Source: Tourism Economics, calendar year 2021

## Message from the President: Record Year

To our Richmond Region Tourism Partners,

We're especially proud to share this year's annual report with you. Local hotel lobbies are abuzz with excitement again as young athletes, professionals and leisure travelers alike swap plans to explore the Richmond Region during stays. Visitors are back and we're seeing the results: During the last fiscal year, the total lodging tax revenue exceeded the previous record in 2019. Well done, RVA.

We continue to champion diversity, equity and inclusion in every aspect of our work. You'll see this in our recently updated mission and values on pg. 1, which will guide our organization in the years to come. We are committed to developing a clear, honest and positive image of our community that reflects everyone. The stories we share and uplift are an important aspect of this work. For example, we're incredibly proud that OutRVA has been welcoming LGBTQ travelers to the region for 12 years. And since its launch in 2019, BLK RVA has evolved into an important platform to highlight the region's Black culture and businesses.

**“Visitors are back and we're seeing the results.”**

We remain focused on our Tourism Master Plan, a 10-year strategic plan launched in 2020, designed to thoughtfully improve the visitor experience while balancing the quality of life of residents. One important element will be advocating for the development of a downtown headquarters hotel to help the region recruit larger conventions and events. Meanwhile, we're working with regional partners to launch a collaborative, high-investment marketing campaign to bring even more visitors to the region. We can't wait to introduce it.

Along with our successes, we know partners continue to struggle with workforce challenges as we recover from the pandemic. We're working to support students on their pathways to successful hospitality careers, while raising awareness about the opportunities in the hospitality field.

While tourism's impact on the economy and small businesses will always drive our team, it's the immeasurable moments that continue to inspire us. The unspeakable joy of watching a sunset over the James River, laughing with friends at dinner or discovering a new artist at a museum. That's RVA, and it's the place we're proud to call home.

**Jack Berry**  
President and CEO



# Recruiting Events

## MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS AND TOURNAMENTS BOOKED BY RRT

**\$113,060,592** ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT ▲ 63%

**309,383** ESTIMATED ATTENDEES ▲ 48%

**163,229** ESTIMATED HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS ▲ 36%

133 repeat events and 59 new events

## FUTURE MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS AND TOURNAMENTS BOOKED BY RRT

**\$69,707,172** ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT ▲ 15%

**200,183** ESTIMATED ATTENDEES ▲ 32%

**92,557** ESTIMATED HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS ▲ 5%

## TOP CONVENTIONS BOOKED based on attendance

1. National Genealogical Society Family History Conference 2023
2. Southeast Chapter of the American Association of Airport Executives 2023
3. Presbyterian Church in America General Assembly 2024

## TOP 5 CONVENTIONS HELD based on attendance

1. Business Network for Offshore Wind 2021 International Partnering Form
2. Hendon Media Group 2021 Police Fleet Expo
3. Community Transportation Association of America 2021 Community Transportation Expo
4. International Association of Operative Millers 2022 Conference & Expo
5. National Main Street Center, Inc 2022 Main Street Now Conference

## TOP 10 ATTRACTION ATTENDANCE<sup>2</sup>

1. James River Park System →
2. Virginia Capital Trail
3. Maymont
4. Virginia Museum of Fine Arts
5. Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
6. Meadow Farm
7. Children's Museum of Richmond
8. Three Lakes Park & Nature Center
9. Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen
10. Virginia Museum of History & Culture



<sup>2</sup>Counts provided by local attractions.

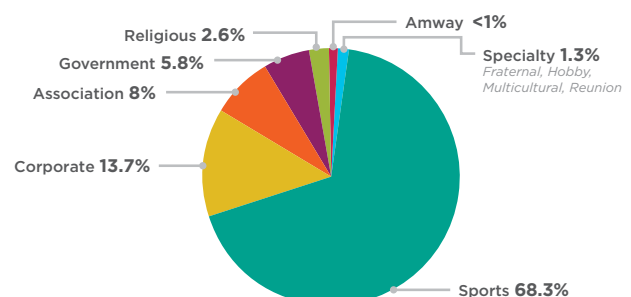
## TOP 5 SPORTS TYPES BOOKED BY RRT based on total contracted room nights

1. Softball
2. Soccer
3. Lacrosse
4. Volleyball
5. Field Hockey

“RRT found the perfect balance of providing professional event experience while allowing us as a client to feel like family.”

- BJ Berteges, Executive Director,  
United States Collegiate Athletic Association

## HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS BY MARKET SEGMENT



# VISITOR INSIGHTS

## 5 TOP FIVE ORIENTATION MARKETS<sup>3</sup>

- 1 • D.C./Northern Virginia
- 2 • Hampton Roads
- 3 • Roanoke/Lynchburg
- 4 • Raleigh/Durham, NC
- 5 • Harrisonburg, VA

## LENGTH OF STAY<sup>3</sup>



DAYTRIP • 53%



1-2 NIGHTS • 20.1%



3+ NIGHTS • 13.1%

## TRIPS BY DAY OF THE WEEK<sup>3</sup>

SUN	12.3%
MON	9.5%
TUES	9.8%
WEDS	10.5%
THURS	13.7%
FRI	20.9%
SAT	23.4%

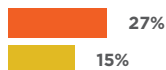
## VISITOR DEMOGRAPHICS<sup>3</sup>

Richmond Region ■  
U.S. Norm ■

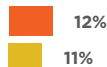
### WHITE



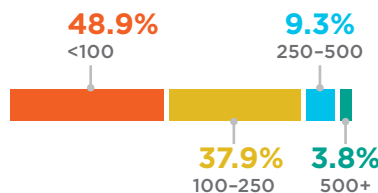
### AFRICAN-AMERICAN



### OTHER



## TRIPS BY DISTANCE<sup>3</sup> (IN MILES)



## SEASON OF TRIP<sup>3</sup>

JAN - MAR	24%	APR - JUN	23%
JUL - SEP	25%	OCT - DEC	27%

# ADVERTISING & DIGITAL ROI

Marketing made several strategic moves this past year:

- Expanding our drive market to include western PA and eastern Ohio
- Continuing to specifically target cities such as New York City
- Created *Get Here on a Tank of Gas or Less* to encourage travelers to proceed with vacation plans
- Rolled out an innovative Pet Friendly campaign to encourage people who adopted dogs during the pandemic to bring them to Richmond Region.

## 5,553,586

COMPLETED VIDEO VIEWS

1.88M ON LIVING-ROOM QUALITY SCREENS

## 324,314

clicks on  
Richmond RegionContent

## 725,540

HOTEL SEARCHES

## 27,687

HOTEL BOOKINGS

## \$7,828,058

HOTEL REVENUE GENERATED

## 29,070

FLIGHT SEARCHES

## 2,119

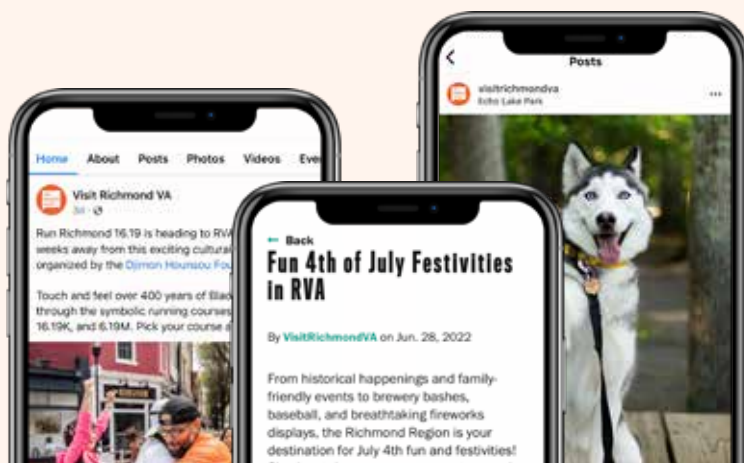
FLIGHT BOOKINGS GENERATED

## 51,474

ARRIVALS INTO THE REGION

## CONTENT

Content shared through the Visit Richmond social media channels and RVA Blog kept Richmond Region experiences top of mind for visitors.



Source: Arivalist

<sup>3</sup>Numbers rounded to the nearest tenth.



## What They're Saying

Accolades | In the News | Local Awareness

“The arts scene is bubbling, the breweries are taking their place among the nation's elite and it's still the only metropolis in the country with Class III and Class IV rapids within the city limits.”  
— *MSN*

“One of the country's fastest growing culinary scenes.”  
— *Redbook*



“Richmond has one of the largest street art collections in the country with over 100 murals on vibrant, colorful walls popping up all over the city, painted by local and international artists.”  
— *Bella Magazine*

“Historic Richmond is alive with summer events.”  
— *Insider*

“This Southern capital of cool has transformed itself over the past decade, proving that it has much more to offer beyond its centuries-old history.”  
— *TripSavvy*



“From whitewater rafting to festivals to charming neighborhoods, Richmond really does have it all.”  
— *Livability*

**The South's Best Cities 2022**

*Southern Living*

**redbook**

**The Up-and-Coming Travel Destinations You Should Check Out ASAP**

*The New York Times*

**Celebrating Black History Month? These 5 Cities are Going All Out**

**50 US Cities Worth Exploring in 2022**

**msn**

**HGTV**

**The 50 Best Cities to Live in the US**



# RICHMOND REGION TOURISM FOUNDATION

## OUR FOUNDATION MISSION

The Richmond Region Tourism Foundation's mission is to advance the impact and benefit of tourism on the Richmond Region by supporting and investing in three important areas:

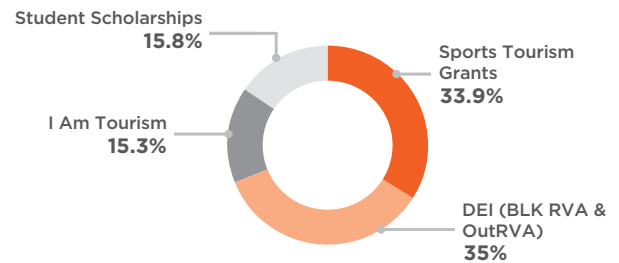
1. Local education
2. Diversity, equity and inclusion
3. Sports tourism

## OUR FOCUS

This 501(c)(3) organization raises funds to support educational efforts like the free I Am Tourism ambassador training program, diversity and inclusion efforts like BLK RVA and OutRVA, and programs that help the world recognize the Richmond Region's importance as a sports tourism destination. Through the Foundation, we are also able to award scholarships each year to students entering a tourism-related profession.



## OUR PROGRAMS



## OUR FUNDING

The Richmond Region Tourism Foundation raises funding through individual and corporate contributions and gifts, and also through three key events: the Richmond Region Open, the RVA Sports Awards, and the Tourism Awards & Annual Meeting.

Your support of the Richmond Region Tourism Foundation can help preserve and expand the success we've experienced as a visitor destination. Please, consider making a tax-deductible donation to Richmond Region Tourism's Foundation.



**DONATE NOW**

## EVENTS

### RVA Sports Awards



### Tourism Awards & Annual Meeting



### Richmond Region Open





401 N. 3<sup>rd</sup> Street,  
Richmond, VA 23219  
804.782.2777

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## THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### Chairman, Daniel J. Schmitt

Henrico County Board of Supervisors

**Kathy Abbott**, Ashland Town Council

**Neil Amin**, Shamin Hotels

**Brian Anderson**, ChamberRVA

**Bridgette C. Bywater**, Kings Dominion

**John Cario**, Hilton Richmond Downtown

**T. Patrick Collins**, TowneBank

**James Holland**, Chesterfield County  
Board of Supervisors

**Lester Johnson**, Mama J's Kitchen

**Angela Kelly-Wiecek**, Hanover County  
Board of Supervisors

**Greg Kochuba**, Colonial Heights Mayor

**Jen Kostyniuk**, Dominion Energy

**Jon Lugbill**, Sports Backers

**Rita McClenny**, Virginia Tourism Corporation

**Perry J. Miller**, Richmond International Airport

**Patricia Page**, New Kent County Board of Supervisors

**Todd "Parney" Parnell**, Richmond Flying Squirrels

**Danielle Ripperton**, Children's Museum of Richmond

**Ellen Robertson**, Richmond City Council

**Lisa Sims**, Venture Richmond

**Nancy C. Thomas**, inUnison

**Christopher C. Tsui**, EAT Restaurant Partners

**Jennifer Wakefield**, Greater Richmond Partnership

**Lori Collier Waran**, Richmond Raceway

## TOURISM IS A REGIONAL EFFORT

Regional investment in travel promotion  
leverages resources for great impact.  
Tourism is a leader in regional collaboration.

### RICHMOND REGION TOURISM INVESTORS

**Budget:** \$8 million

**Investment sources:** Counties of Chesterfield, Hanover, Henrico, New Kent, city of Richmond, city of Colonial Heights and the Town of Ashland, ChamberRVA and various sponsorships

