



The Tri-City Chili Peppers' new take on America's pastime has the whole universe taking notice, generating more than 100 unique articles with a total ad value of \$4.8 million.

FY 2023-2024 ANNUAL REPORT

THE IMPACT OF TOURISM

**Inside,
you'll find:**

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from the
President**

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**TID First Year
Highlights**

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**Inspiration
Campaign
Results**

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TOURISM IN THE RICHMOND REGION: DRIVING IMPACT, INSPIRING GROWTH

Dear Stakeholders,

This past year, our team tirelessly promoted the Richmond Region as a top travel, meeting and event destination, celebrating our rich history, vibrant culture, and dynamic communities.

As the new President and CEO of Richmond Region Tourism, I am thrilled to share our vision for the future: harnessing tourism as a force for good, amplifying our impact, and becoming the best destination marketing organization in the country.

“ Tourism drives our economy, supporting the places that make living here wonderful. ”

First: Tourism as a Force for Good. Tourism drives our economy, supporting the places that make living here wonderful. It shapes the stories we tell the world—and ourselves—about our community. We are committed to increasing our positive impact by:

- Recruiting events that our residents care about
- Shifting outdated perceptions about our region
- Fostering economic mobility through career pathways in the hospitality industry

Second: Leveling Up Our Impact. The Region is developing game-changing tourism products: City Center, GreenCity, the Diamond District, expansion at River City Sportsplex, new hotels, attraction expansions, and more. Richmond Region Tourism will collaborate with local partners to leverage new developments to attract more visitors to RVA.

Virginia's first Tourism Improvement District (TID) changes the game for our Region. We are now well-resourced to compete for group business and leisure market share (See page 3). Under the guidance of the 10-year Tourism Master Plan, we will ensure that tourism benefits the entire community.

Finally, we will make Richmond Region Tourism the best destination marketing organization in the country. For years, the team at RRT has been leading-edge. We have the right team in place now to build on our strong foundation and reach new heights. I am proud to work alongside them every day.



I wholeheartedly believe our best days are ahead, and I look forward to working with all of you to make the Richmond Region a top tourism destination.

With gratitude,



Katherine O'Donnell
President and CEO

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.

VALUES:



PASSION



INCLUSIVENESS



INTEGRITY



INNOVATION



STEWARDSHIP



COURAGE

TOURISM STIMULATES OUR ECONOMY

DESTINATION PROMOTION IS AN ENGINE OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN OUR COMMUNITY.

2023 VISITOR SPENDING² in Millions



In 2023, the Richmond Region hosted **17.9 million visitors¹**

(62% DAY TRIPS, 38% OVERNIGHT TRIPS)

WHO SPENT **\$3.7 billion²**
▲ 7.4% INCREASE

OR **\$10.1 million** PER DAY

TOURISM SUPPORTS

29,035²

JOB

WITH WAGES AND SALARIES TOTALING:

\$1.3 billion²



LOCAL TAXES COLLECTED:

\$176.4 million²



HOTEL SALES & OCCUPANCY REVENUE:

\$602.3 million²

▲ 4.9% INCREASE

Source: ¹Longwoods International, calendar year 2023

²Tourism Economics, calendar year 2023

Number of visitors includes overnight and day trip visitors

TID FIRST YEAR A SUCCESS

An assessment collected by most local hotels to support tourism promotion activities, the TID is a game changer that helps level the playing field against our destination competitors. The full annual report is available at www.RichmondRegionTID.com.

Highlights:

- 14 ad campaigns generated 30K+ trackable hotel room nights booked all over the Richmond Region
- 56 bid incentives (15 conventions, 41 sports) approved, worth an estimated economic impact of \$115 million and 139,000 room nights
- 11 new trade shows attended to recruit meetings and tournaments
- Four familiarization tours hosted bringing potential meeting and group tour clients to RVA
- 70 hotels opted in for a Threshold 360 video paid for by the TID
- Virginia Restaurant, Lodging & Travel Association membership for all TID hotels



EVENT RECRUITMENT

MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, AND SPORTS EVENTS HELD

\$298,078,199	ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT	▲ 105%
441,287	ESTIMATED ATTENDEES	▲ 30%
205,626	ESTIMATED HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS	▲ 16.5%

FUTURE MEETINGS, CONVENTIONS, AND SPORTS EVENTS BOOKED

\$76,103,972	ESTIMATED ECONOMIC IMPACT	▲ 1.5%
147,247	ESTIMATED ATTENDEES	▼ 3%
91,884	ESTIMATED HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS	▲ 7%

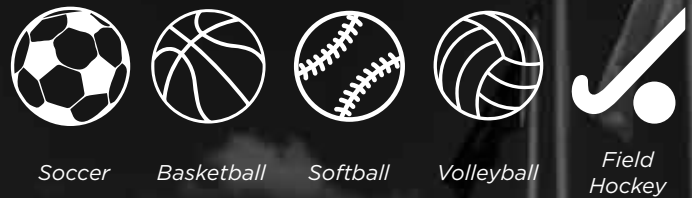
5 TOP MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS HELD

1. National Center for School Safety STOP School Violence National Conference
2. National Rural Electric Cooperative Association 2023 Regional Meetings 1 & 4
3. National Council on Education for the Ceramic Arts 58th Annual Conference
4. Presbyterian Church in America 51st PCA General Assembly
5. Jalsa Salana USA Ahmadiyya Muslim Community 74th Jalsa Salana Annual Convention

5 TOP MEETINGS & CONVENTIONS BOOKED

1. Association of Kannada Kootas of American 12th AKKA World Kannada Conference 2024
2. Every Coast Helicopter Operations (ECHO) 2024 Public Safety Aviation Conference
3. Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. 2025 Mid-Atlantic Regional Conference
4. Association of Professional Dog Trainers 2025 APDT Annual Conference
5. American String Teachers Association (ASTA) 2028 National Conference

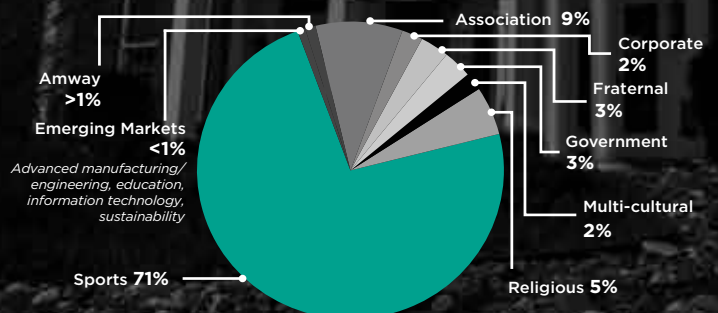
5 TOP SPORT TYPES HOSTED



“Working with Richmond Region Tourism has been an absolute pleasure. Their dedication to hosting adaptive sports events in Richmond is truly commendable. The team consistently goes above and beyond to ensure that every event is a success, providing outstanding support and fostering an inclusive environment for all athletes. We couldn’t ask for a better partner in bringing our events to life.”

- Forrest Lodge, Sportable, 2024 River City Slam Wheelchair Tennis Tournament

HOTEL ROOM NIGHTS BOOKED BY MARKET SEGMENT



VISITOR INSIGHTS

5 TOP ORIENTATION MARKETS¹

1. D.C./Northern Virginia
2. Hampton Roads
3. Roanoke/Lynchburg
4. Raleigh/Durham, NC
5. New York, NY

LENGTH OF STAY¹

 DAY TRIP • 45.5%

 1-2 NIGHTS • 25.4%

 3+ NIGHTS • 15.1%

SEASON OF TRIP¹

JAN - MAR APR - JUN

22% 26%


JUL - SEP OCT - DEC

25% 27%


VISITOR DEMOGRAPHICS³

WHITE
 62%

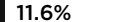
AFRICAN-AMERICAN
 30%

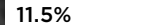
OTHER
 13%

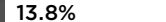
TRIPS BY DAY OF THE WEEK¹


SUN  10.9%

MON  13.0%

TUE  11.6%

WED  11.5%

THU  13.8%

FRI  20.7%

SAT  18.3%

\$323,115,834

CREDIT CARD EXPENDITURE²

DIGITAL MARKETING & ADVERTISING

 **4.4 million**
WEBSITE PAGEVIEWS²

 **188,724**
referrals to
PARTNER WEBSITES²

 **469,931**
HOTEL SEARCHES²

 **26,193**
FLIGHT SEARCHES²

31,904
HOTEL BOOKINGS
GENERATED²

1,979
FLIGHT BOOKINGS
GENERATED²

\$8,394,787
HOTEL REVENUE
GENERATED²

32,304
ARRIVALS INTO THE
REGION²

Source: ¹Arrivalist, ²Arrivalist, ³Longwoods

Note: Arrivalist data is enriched data numbers consistent to what we've used in the past.

SOCIAL MEDIA

15,204

TOTAL NEW FOLLOWERS

9,587,409

TOTAL ACCOUNTS REACHED

153,064

TOTAL INTERACTIONS

TOP CONTENT OVERALL

BLACK-OWNED RESTAURANTS
INSTAGRAM REEL PT. 2

187,900 **13,000**
ACCOUNTS REACHED LIKES

9,100 **5,400**
SHARES SAVES

172
COMMENTS



WHAT THEY'RE SAYING

ACCOLADES | IN THE NEWS | LOCAL AWARENESS

"This dynamic city on the James River deserves more of the tourist attention enjoyed by the nation's capital two hours to the north...Now's a great time for visitors to see for themselves how Virginia's capital city has evolved."

- *CNN Travel*

"RVA is one of America's best kept secrets. It's a triple threat of delicious food, impressive arts & culture, and beautiful vistas."

- *Geek Girl Travel*



These 10 Destinations Elevate Black Culture Year-Round



Most LGBTQ-Friendly Cities in the U.S.

"Prepare to eat your way through Richmond. From fine dining to food trucks, fill your belly with some of the best food in the South and elsewhere."

- *Essence*



#2 Best City for Street Art

"Richmond is not only a treasure trove for history lovers, but it is also a vibrant hub for cultural and culinary delights."

- *Past Lane Travel*



The South's Best Cities

"[Richmond] has become a dynamic and luxurious escape in recent years, with some wildly good dining, cultural and accommodation options...A weekend in Richmond is an eye-opening mélange of heritage and creativity."

- *JRNY Magazine*



Richmond Named #1 Town to Visit 2024

"With more than 30 craft breweries, Richmond, Virginia, continues to stake its claim as a craft brewery destination."

- *USA Today 10Best*

THE INSPIRATION CAMPAIGN RESULTS

SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

The Inspiration Campaign, funded by ARPA monies given to our localities, has to date resulted in numbers that greatly surpassed our goals - so we will continue the campaign into 2024-2025 and it will now be funded by RRT and the TID.

THE RICHMOND REGION

SPEAKS FOR ITSELF

123.3 million
TOTAL IMPRESSIONS

21.3 million
CTV IMPRESSIONS

35.6 million
SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

5.5 million
SOCIAL MEDIA ENGAGEMENTS

51.2 million
DIGITAL RICH MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

9.7 million
INFLUENCER IMPRESSIONS

BRAND LIFT SURVEY

51.2%
INCREASE IN PERCEPTION OF THE RICHMOND REGION

34%
INCREASE IN "VERY LIKELY" TRAVEL CONSIDERATION

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:

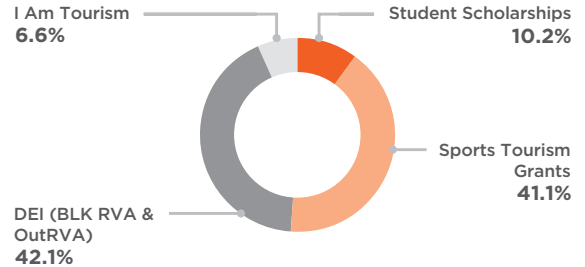
- Local education
- Diversity, equity and inclusion
- Sports tourism

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 the Richmond Region Tourism Foundation.



DONATE NOW

THE 3rd ANNUAL RVA SPORTS AWARDS

The 3rd annual RVA Sports Awards showcased our Foundation and Richmond Region Tourism as an integral regional partner.

- 278.6 million total media impressions across all channels
- 90-minute Saturday broadcast on CBS 6 reached 50,500 households, a 24% increase from 2023
- CBS 6's dedicated web page reached 6,000 unique visitors, 1,200 video views via the news app, and 600 views on their OTT channel
- 1100 users of the RVA Sports Awards YouTube playlist.



HIGHLIGHT REEL



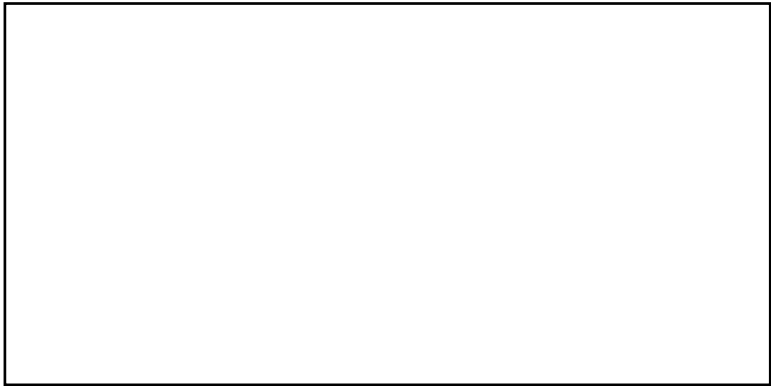


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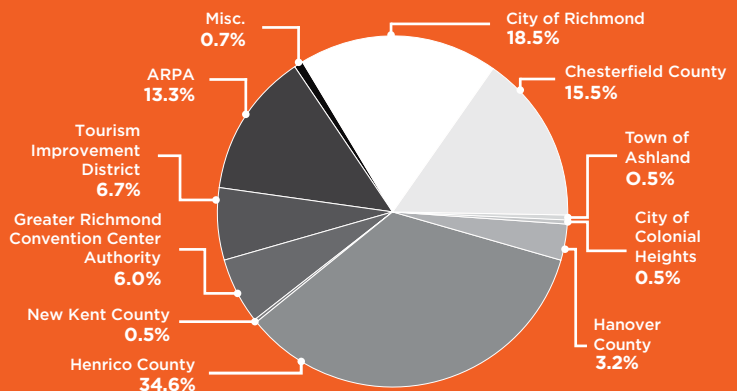
TOURISM IS A REGIONAL EFFORT

RICHMOND REGION TOURISM INVESTORS

Jurisdictional Support: \$7.7 million

Total Support: \$10.5 million

Investment sources: Chesterfield County, Hanover County, Henrico County, New Kent County, City of Richmond, City of Colonial Heights, Town of Ashland, Greater Richmond Convention Center Authority, Tourism Improvement District, ARPA and various sponsorships



All stats are Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (July 2023 - June 2024) unless otherwise noted.