



**Shelby County Celebrates  
Record-Breaking \$91 Million in Economic Impact  
from Tourism in 2023**

*Visitors to ShelbyKY supported 500 full-time jobs*

Shelbyville, KY (June 4, 2024) — The economic impact of travel and tourism in ShelbyKY broke a record in 2023. According to ShelbyKY Tourism—the destination marketing organization for Shelbyville, Simpsonville, and Shelby County, Kentucky— visitor spending in Shelby County reached \$91.1 million in 2023, an \$11 million, or 13%, increase from 2022.

The tourism organization's data was released in a report commissioned by the Kentucky Department of Tourism and collected by ShelbyKY Tourism's research partner, Zartico. The achievement of \$91 million in visitor spending marks the destination's highest economic impact ever recorded, and such year-over-year growth is indicative of ShelbyKY's growing appeal as a premier bourbon travel destination.

*Key data points include:*

- Tourism supported 541 full-time jobs last year, contributing more than \$17 million in wages to the local economy.
- Year-round lodging occupancy in ShelbyKY averaged nearly 70%, a 5% increase from 2022.
- Out-of-state travelers outnumbered in-state travelers three to one in 2023.
- Visitors from ShelbyKY's six key feeder markets of Chicago, Cincinnati, Indianapolis, Atlanta, Detroit, and Nashville accounted for nearly a quarter of all visitors to ShelbyKY, an increase of 11% from 2022.
- For every \$1 ShelbyKY Tourism invested in marketing, advertising, and public relations, visitors spent \$328.91 in ShelbyKY's restaurants, stores, accommodations, and attractions.
- Residents are saved nearly \$400 in annual property taxes due to state and local taxes generated by visitor spending.

"By every measurable metric, 2023 was a banner year for ShelbyKY. Tourism is a key pillar of the economy of ShelbyKY, and we're thrilled that visitors love supporting our locally owned attractions, boutiques, stores, and restaurants," said Janette Marson, President & CEO of ShelbyKY Tourism. "It's wonderful to see sustained and robust growth in tourism's economic impact in our community, and we are committed to continuing our efforts to promote ShelbyKY as the premier bourbon destination. We look forward to building on the great momentum of the tourism and hospitality industry in ShelbyKY, with two bourbon distilleries being built, locally owned restaurants in development, and a new hotel opening soon."

ShelbyKY is a destination with global appeal, boasting charming character alongside jaw-dropping horse farms, two celebrated distilleries, stunning places to stay, and delicious restaurants. ShelbyKY Tourism leverages a comprehensive advertising and public relations strategy to market the region to both domestic and international travelers. By collaborating with local attractions, lodging partners, and

visionary community leaders, as well as statewide organizations like the Kentucky Department of Tourism and the Kentucky Bourbon Trail, ShelbyKY Tourism ensures that the county's small-town charm, coupled with unforgettable and iconic experiences, remain key attractions for visitors to ShelbyKY

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**About ShelbyKY** — ShelbyKY (Shelbyville, Simpsonville and Shelby County) is *Your Bourbon Destination*. Home to two distilleries, Bulleit Distillery and Jephtha Creed Distillery, and located on the Kentucky Bourbon Trail®, ShelbyKY offers an array of bourbon-centric lodging, shopping, and dining. ShelbyKY is perfectly positioned for easy access to Louisville, Lexington, and Northern Kentucky. Pair dining at classic favorites like Claudia Sanders Restaurant and local staple Bell House Restaurant with Kentucky's only designer outlet mall, and there's much to see, do, and taste in ShelbyKY. Home to 90-plus Saddlebred horse farms, ShelbyKY offers a rare peek into the world of the Saddlebred show horse and is known as the Saddlebred Horse Capital of the World. Outdoor adventures await those who enjoy fishing, canoeing, horseback riding, and golf. We invite you to follow @visit\_shelbyky on Instagram and @visitshelbyky on Facebook and learn more about ShelbyKY at [www.visitshelbyky.com](http://www.visitshelbyky.com).

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