

## *South Florida's beaches to be open for Labor Day*

Unlike past holidays during this pandemic, the upcoming Labor Day weekend will offer daring travelers more choices for outings.

The latest Florida figures show COVID-19 has eased its grip on Florida. As a result, local officials are leaving South Florida's beaches open, and hotels are offering deals for a pandemic staycation. Their goal is offering these amenities with the hope the public follows the rules on wearing masks and social distancing.

The beaches are scheduled to stay open for Labor Day weekend Sept. 4-7 after South Florida kept them closed over Independence Day as a precaution.

But leaders in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties are closely watching the COVID statistics that track new cases, positive cases, hospitalizations and deaths.

The three counties have been coordinating beach operations during the pandemic. Although COVID-19 cases are on an apparent decline, officials have warned against parties on Labor Day.

– *sun-sentinel.com*

**Fort Lauderdale beach recently.**  
– South Florida Sun Sentinel



@tofinotourismawareness

**An illegal campsite in Tofino, BC, illustrates the problems with the opening up to tourism that are being experienced by numerous destinations.**

## **Tourists are returning & leaving a mess**

Destinations want to welcome tourists back as soon as possible in hopes of regaining the billions in lost revenue, millions of jobs, and closure of local businesses.

But what happens when those tourists behave in odious ways?

Here are three examples of destinations that are dealing with a messy problem:

### **Vancouver, BC**

Recent floods of tourists to popular towns on Vancouver Island's west coast have been an economic blessing — but many residents and businesses say they've also been a social curse.

While the influx of tourist dollars has been welcome for communities like Tofino and Ucluelet, locals have reported an increase in rude behavior, messiness and disregard for laws.

“There is just absolutely no respect for the people living here, nor the environment,” said Aaron Turner, a

long-term resident of Tofino.

Starting June 22, when B.C. entered Phase 3 of its pandemic response plan, provincial leaders including Premier John Horgan encouraged British Columbians to explore their own backyard. And for many that meant visiting Vancouver Island's west coast.

Turner, who captains whale-watching boats and ferries visitors to Hot Springs Cove up the coast, says the economic importance of tourism is undeniable — but this year's crop of almost exclusively Canadian tourists is like nothing that has come before.

He says many have left trash on beaches and trails, camped illegally and have been drinking and doing drugs, while some have even demanded special treatment at local grocery stores.

Scores of locals have taken to social media to share similar complaints.

Tofino Mayor Josie Osborne says

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# Tourists are returning & leaving a mess

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she's also concerned. After shuttering for months during the lockdown, the community had hoped to reopen gradually.

Instead, the number of daily visitors is as high as, if not higher than last year, she said.

"The municipality and the community were just not prepared for this kind of pressure and unfortunately we are seeing some really terrible behavior," said Osborne.

"Some people seem to be making a choice that the beach is a garbage dump and an outhouse."

Mayor Osborne says the district is no longer handing out warnings for illegal camping and is instead directly handing out \$200 fines.

– cbc.ca

## South Lake Tahoe, CA

South Lake Tahoe residents are fed up with the trash-littered beaches and the constant stream of tourists flowing into Lake Tahoe despite the pandemic and have demanded officials do more to handle the influx of visitors.

Josh Lease, a 20-year resident, tells the Tahoe Daily Tribune he wrote a Facebook post recently to vent about city officials not properly handling tourism and the traffic issues that come with it.

"Tahoe is being thrashed," Lease said.

Lease said that people are flocking here because most parts of the other states are closed and Tahoe is accommodating them, making it difficult for locals.

"We can't lock everyone out," said city spokesman Chris Fiore, the communications manager. "We

recognize people from out of town view Tahoe is a safe haven."

Fiore said officials recognize trash is an issue and that different agencies are collaborating to find a solution.

"During this crisis, the city has gone above and beyond to keep people safe, keep Tahoe safe and keep Tahoe open," Fiore said.

Fiore said that if people see egregious violations, they should call the police's non-emergency line.

– sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com

## Adirondacks, NY

Trashing by tourists isn't a new problem.

Overuse, litter, crowding and trail degradation were among the top concerns in a report released in August by Adirondack stewardship advocates.

The report released by the Leave No Trace Center for Outdoor Ethics called for more funding to implement the changes as crowds flock to popular destinations within the park like the High Peaks Wilderness Area. And it comes as overuse of the Adirondacks, jammed with tourists now year-round, has become a growing concern for state officials.

The report's recommendations include better education for a "leave no trace" policy and potentially limiting crowd sizes.

The report was based on a multi-year survey and study of use issues within the park, which has become an increasingly popular destination, highlighted in both tourism ad campaigns and on social media.

The region has long had to balance the natural beauty of the Adirondacks along with tourism.

– spectrumlocalnews.com

## By the numbers...

There's one sector of **North Carolina's** battered tourism industry that is racing back -- vacation rentals.

Vacation rentals are running ahead of last year's sales, according to Marlise Taylor, director of tourism research for Visit North Carolina.

Sales, measured as "guest nights," dropped sharply March to April, but then spiked steeply, the data shows. They peaked in July at nearly 307,000 guest nights. This compares to the annual peak in July 2019 of almost 279,000, and of almost 281,000 in July 2018.

– starnewsonline.com

From the views at Glacier to the geysers of **Yellowstone**, when the national parks do well, Montana tourism does well.

2020 tells a different story. In June, Glacier was down 62% and Yellowstone 32% from last June. But Yellowstone was up 2% this July over July of last year, which UM researcher Jeremy Sage said was "rather shocking." Sage said the increase could have to do with the lack of international travel due to COVID-19 and an increase in domestic travel.

– nbcmontana.com

U.S. Travel Association numbers that showed tourism in **Michigan** from mid-July to mid-August was down about 35 percent from last year, vs. average national declines of about 50 percent.

Statewide hotel occupancy in July was 56 percent, vs. the national average of 47 percent, according to data from Tennessee-based hotel-industry analytics firm STR.

Last year in July, Michigan and U.S. occupancy rates were 73 percent.

– crainsdetroit.com