

Economic forecasts:

Florida's vital tourism industry could start to experience an uptick midway through 2021, although foreign travel will continue to lag for several years, according to state analysts.

Short- and long-term outlooks from a panel known as the Florida Economic Estimating Conference indicate people, mostly from other states, could travel to Florida in close to pre-coronavirus pandemic numbers in 2022.

The outlooks indicate the state could be back to 30 million visitors a quarter by the third quarter of 2021. Meanwhile, overall visitor numbers would be just short of the fiscal year 2019 total by fiscal year 2022 and surpass record-setting 2019 by fiscal year 2023.

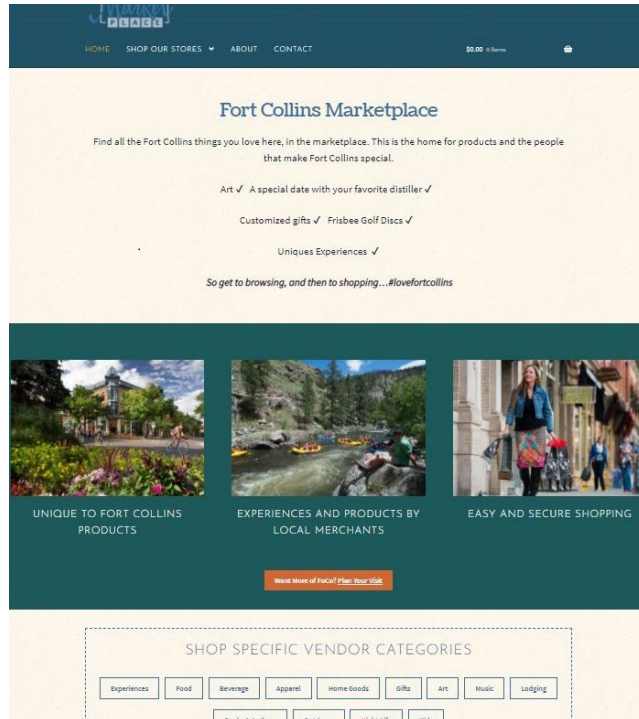
— cbs12.com

Los Angeles' tourism industry has been decimated by Covid-19, and while travel is predicted to increase in 2021, visitors are not projected to reach 2019 levels until 2024, according to the LA Tourism and Convention Board.

Continued on page 2



A still from an ad promoting safe family travel to Los Angeles



The website fortcollinsmarketplace.com also allows companies to sell future passes to events, such as exclusive brewery tours or whitewater rafting.

Fort Collins DMO develops single website allowing 40 local businesses to sell online

After months of development, Fort Collins' (CO) visitor bureau has launched a new service to let customers in the city and across the country buy goods and services from local vendors from one centralized website and payment system.

The Visit Fort Collins Marketplace, at fortcollinsmarketplace.com, counts more than 40 retailers and businesses as participants, says Visit Fort Collins CEO Cynthia Eichler.

The idea for the marketplace formed early during the pandemic as shutdowns shifted overnight the sales patterns for local businesses. As consumer spending overwhelmingly went online, the visitors bureau and its partners spent 13 weeks developing the site and bringing on merchants.

If people couldn't come to Fort

Collins, they reckoned, the online marketplace would bring Fort Collins to the people during the most important time of year for a retail industry that has taken a beating during the pandemic.

"It really was that desire to also make sure that when we come out on the other side of this, our folks are in their buildings," Eichler said.

— reporterherald.com

In Manitou Springs, the eCommerce platform ManitouMade.com is now up and running. The site allows shoppers to purchase items from the city's unique stores and galleries.

It's a brainchild of the Manitou Springs Chamber of Commerce and the Visitors Bureau & Office of Economic Development.

— koaa.com

Economic forecasts

Continue from page 1

Visitor numbers in LA fell from 50.7 million in 2019 to 28.3 million in 2020, and are expected to rebound to 39.3 million in 2021, according to the LA Tourism and Convention Board. Full recovery to pre-pandemic visitor levels is not predicted until 2024.

In **Santa Monica**, tourism slowed in February, tanked in April, and began a modest recovery during late summer due to an increase in staycationers and drive market visitors. Even with this uptick, year-end occupancy is expected to be down by 48 percent compared to 2019.

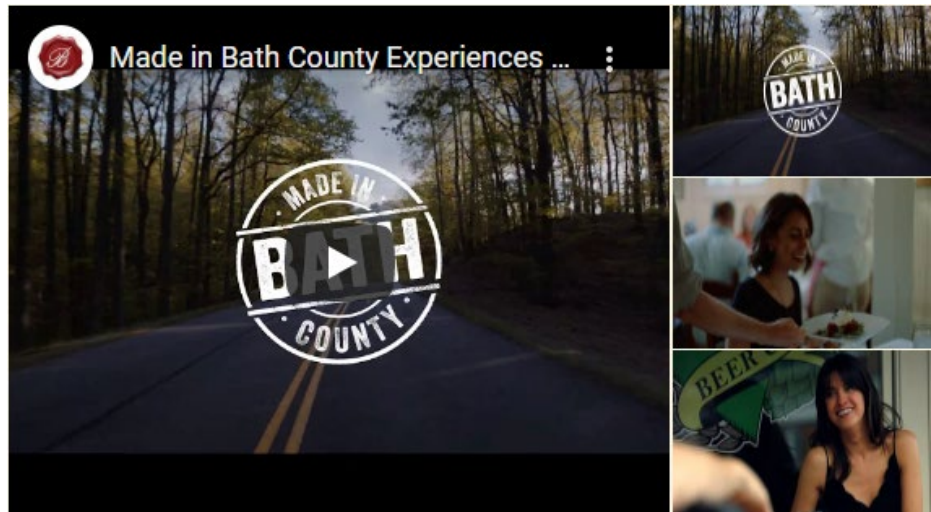
The effects on Santa Monica's economy are severe. In 2019, tourists spent \$1.89 billion, and supported 12,010 jobs. This year, Santa Monica Travel and Tourism estimates that around 50 percent of local hospitality workers have lost their jobs due to COVID-19.

"According to a forecast of Santa Monica hotel performance compiled by Lauren Schlau Consulting, we expect 2020 to end with \$149 million of total room revenue, off by \$244 million or 62% below 2019 performance," said SMTT President Misti Kerns.

In August and October alone, online users exposed to SMTT campaigns booked 6,200 nights of local hotel rooms on Expedia.

Promotional efforts will continue in 2021, when tourism is predicted to continue growing modestly in the first half of the year with the most significant growth forecasted for Q4.

– *smdp.com*



discoverbath.com

Three DMOs receive monetary help from Virginia's recovery program

The **Bath County Office of Tourism** and **Allegheny Highlands Chamber** have each received \$10,000 from the Virginia Tourism Corporation's (VTC) Recovery Marketing Leverage Program (RMLP), designed to help local and regional tourism entities attract more visitors by using limited local marketing dollars with a local match of the state grants funds.

More than \$1.9 million in matching grant funds were awarded to 161 local tourism initiatives through this program. This funding cycle, local partners will provide more than \$5.6 million in-kind value to match the VTC grants. The grants will impact 483 statewide tourism entities.

The **Bath Office of Tourism** will use the VTC grant funds to expand the reach of its "Made in Bath County Experiences" campaign, including the addition of a new ad in the series about destination dining and farm-to-table experiences.

The **Allegheny Chamber** will use the grant funds to market the Allegheny Highlands as a premier outdoor recreation & arts community in the heart of Virginia's Mountain Region.

The campaign will further the "Uniquely Allegheny" tagline and its relevance to the attractions of the Allegheny Highlands.

– *wdbj7.com*

The **Farmville Area Chamber of Commerce** has received \$2500 from the Recovery Marketing Leverage Program.

The Farmville Area Chamber will use the VTC Recovery Marketing Leverage grant funds to promote chamber members' businesses as well as businesses within the Farmville downtown district with paid ads on social media.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a devastating impact on the tourism and hospitality industries in Virginia.

– *southsidemessenger.com*