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Wisconsin Tourism Surges in 2021

Economic impact report shows double-digit growth in all 72 Wisconsin counties

MADISON, Wis. (June 8, 2022) – The Wisconsin Department of Tourism released its 2021 [economic impact data](#) today, showing Wisconsin tourism generated \$20.9 billion in total economic impact. Statewide, total economic impact increased 21 percent, with all 72 counties reporting double-digit growth over 2020.

In 2021, tourism supported more than 169,700 full and part-time jobs across diverse sectors of the industry, up 7 percent over 2020. Wisconsin also hosted over 102.3 million visitor trips in 2021, up 12 percent from 2020.

Visitors generated \$1.4 billion in state and local taxes because of tourism spending. Without this tax revenue, each Wisconsin household would need to pay \$580 to maintain the current level of government services generated by tourism. For more data, including individual county figures and year over year growth, visit industry.travelwisconsin.com.

“With a \$20.9 billion economic impact and \$1.4 billion generated in state and local taxes, there’s no question that Wisconsin’s travel and tourism industry is a major economic driver for our local and statewide economies,” said Governor Evers. “That’s why we’ve worked hard over the course of the past few years to make strategic investments to ensure the industry, as well as the dedicated folks who make up the industry, could rebound, recover and thrive, and it’s great to see that happening.”

Gov. Evers has invested \$1 billion of Wisconsin’s federal funds in small businesses and other industries impacted by the pandemic, about \$200 million of which was invested in the travel and tourism, hotels and lodging and entertainment industries alone, including more than \$70 million for lodging grants, more than \$14 million in grants for movie theaters, summer camps and minor league sports teams, more than \$27 million in grants that went to 204 event venues and live event small businesses and \$15 million for destination marketing organizations, among other initiatives. The governor also invested \$21.9 million in grants for the [Tourism Capital Investment Grant Program](#) which assisted 27 local governments and organizations with major tourism-related capital improvement projects across the state that help promote, maintain or bolster Wisconsin's tourism industry.



In addition to federal relief funds allocated by Gov. Evers, the hard work of tourism industry partners and hospitality workers combined with Travel Wisconsin’s strategic statewide campaign to support the industry’s ongoing recovery. Wisconsin is well-positioned for continued recovery, as more travelers are opting for road trip vacations closer to home amidst rising gas prices.

“Wisconsin’s tourism recovery is something to be proud of. These successes are the result of intentional and strategic action by everyone who makes up our industry,” said Secretary-designee, Anne Sayers. “I feel so fortunate to work alongside all of our hospitality partners every day who provide travelers with incredible opportunities to make memories while driving economic impact.”

Wisconsin tourism continues to recover but has not fully recovered to Wisconsin tourism’s record-setting year of 2019, which saw \$22.2 billion in total economic impact. Meanwhile, 2022 is off to a strong start, with Travel Wisconsin’s summer campaign boasting its biggest spend and deepest reach than in any previous campaign in Travel Wisconsin’s history. The [“Here’s to Those Who Wisconsin”](#) campaign, which launched in April, showcases the fact that Wisconsin is ready to deliver on exactly what travelers are looking for — joyful moments shared between friends and family in the perfect place for making lasting memories.

Start your summer getaway at TravelWisconsin.com.

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About the Wisconsin Department of Tourism

The mission of the Wisconsin Department of Tourism is to inspire travelers to visit Wisconsin. Because we believe in the power of exploration and travel, we work to market the state as a premier travel destination. By executing industry-leading marketing programs and establishing strategic partnerships, the Department plays a significant role in generating greater economic impact for Wisconsin through tourism. Learn more at industry.travelwisconsin.com.