



2021 NORTH CAROLINA VISITOR PROFILE

A Publication of Visit North Carolina

A Unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina

2021 NORTH CAROLINA VISITOR PROFILE

- Visit North Carolina contracts with research company OmniTrak Group, Inc. for data on North Carolina visitors through its TravelTrakAmerica product.
- Each month, TravelTrakAmerica research program conducts over 10,000 Internet-based interviews among past 12-month travelers who have traveled more than 50 miles from their homes (excluding commuters).
- From this sample, data from 4,500 – 5,500 past month travelers are also collected for even greater insights.
- Information collected includes purpose of trip, mode of travel, travel party characteristics, places visited, number of nights, accommodations, activities, spending, and demographics. Data collected are weighted to match US Census variables, market size, age of household head, household income, and household size.
- The research staff of Visit North Carolina created this report based on this data from TravelTrakAmerica.
- The purpose of this report is to profile the average North Carolina visitor, both overnight visitors and daytrippers. The report also includes comparisons between out-of-state and resident visitors where applicable.
- At the end of the report, an appendix offers definitions of key travel terms.

Table of Contents

North Carolina Visitor Profile Summary - 4

Overnight Visitor Profile Summary - 5

Daytripper Visitor Profile Summary - 6

Visitor Profile - 7

Glossary of Terms - 24

TOTAL VISITOR SUMMARY

- In 2021, approximately 44.4 million person-trips were taken in North Carolina and the state ranked #5 in the U.S. in terms of domestic visitation.
- Eighty-seven percent of all domestic visitors came to North Carolina for leisure purposes, while five percent came to conduct business.
- The majority of travelers to and within North Carolina in 2021 visited during the summer followed by fall and spring.
- The party size for the average North Carolina visitor party was 2.5 in 2021. 29 percent of travel parties included children under the age of 18.
- The average North Carolina visitor party trip expenditure was \$620 in 2021. Overnight visitors spent \$749 while daytrip parties spent \$267 on average.
- The top states of origin in 2021 were NC, SC, VA, FL, GA, TN, NY, PA, OH and TX.

NORTH CAROLINA OVERNIGHT VISITOR SUMMARY

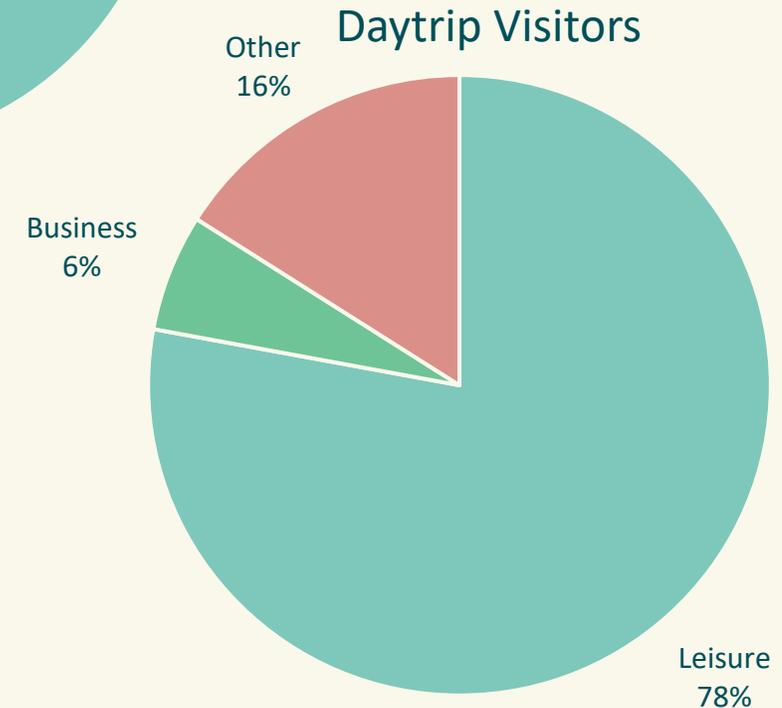
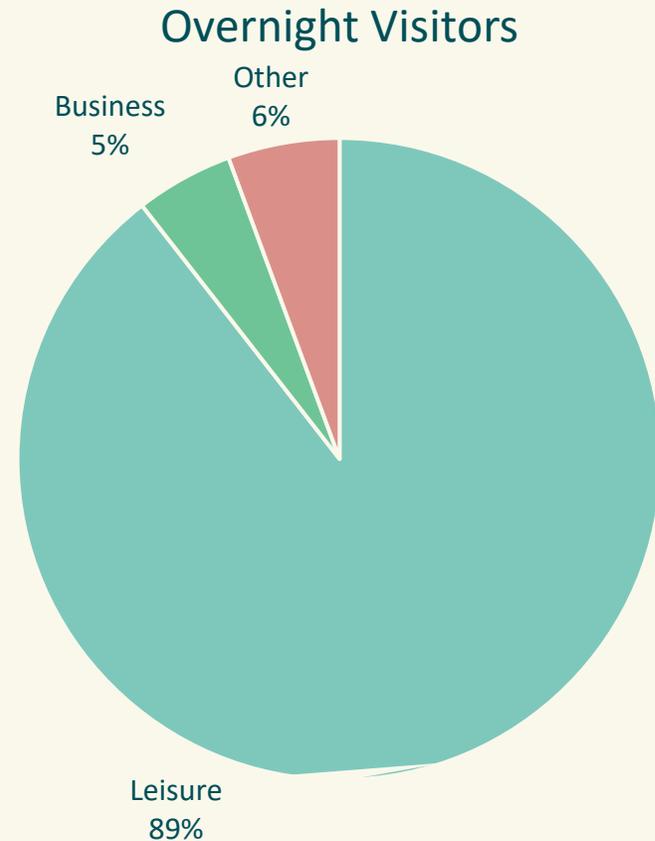
- In 2021, approximately 32.7 million overnight person-trips were taken in North Carolina.
- Eighty-nine percent of domestic overnight visitors came to North Carolina for leisure purposes, while five percent came to conduct business.
- The majority of travelers to and within North Carolina in 2021 visited during the summer and spring, followed by fall and winter.
- The party size for the average North Carolina overnight visitor party was 2.6 in 2021. 30 percent of travel parties included children under the age of 18.
- The average North Carolina overnight visitor party trip expenditure \$749 in 2021.
- The top states of origin of overnight visitors in 2021 were NC, VA, SC, FL, GA, PA, NY, TN, OH, and TX.

NORTH CAROLINA DAYTRIP VISITOR SUMMARY

- In 2021, approximately 11.7 million daytrips were taken in North Carolina.
- Seventy-eight percent of all daytrippers came to North Carolina for leisure purposes, while six percent came to conduct business.
- The majority of daytrippers to and within North Carolina in 2021 visited during the fall, followed by spring and summer.
- The party size for the average North Carolina daytrip visitor party was 2.4 in 2021. 26 percent of travel parties included children under the age of 18.
- The average North Carolina day visitor party trip expenditure \$267 in 2021.
- The top states of origin of daytrip visitor parties in 2021 were NC, SC, VA, TN, GA, and FL.

Main Purpose of Visit to North Carolina

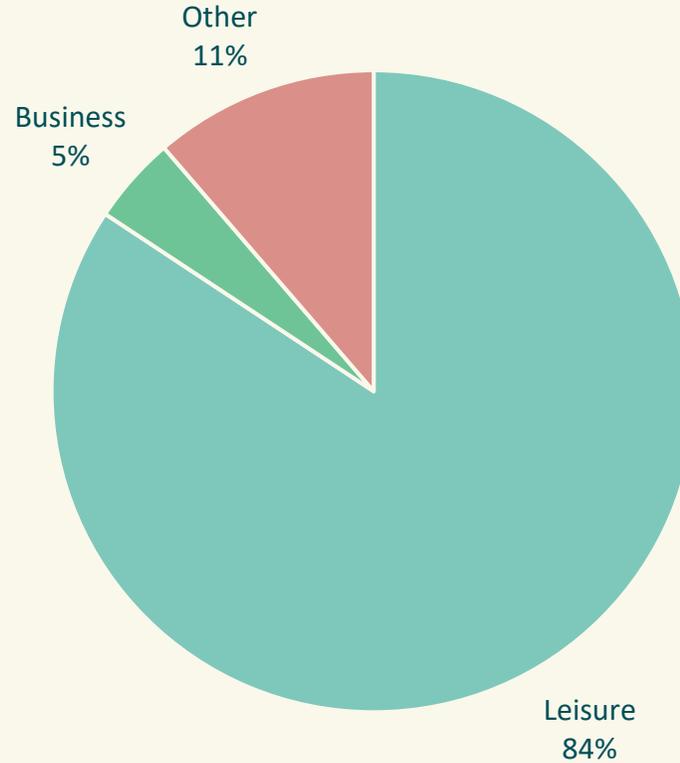
- The majority of NC visitors traveled to and within the state for leisure purposes, both overnights and daytrippers.
- Approximately 5% of overnights and 6% of daytrippers were business travelers in 2021.
- 37% of overnight business travelers say that they extended their business trip for leisure.



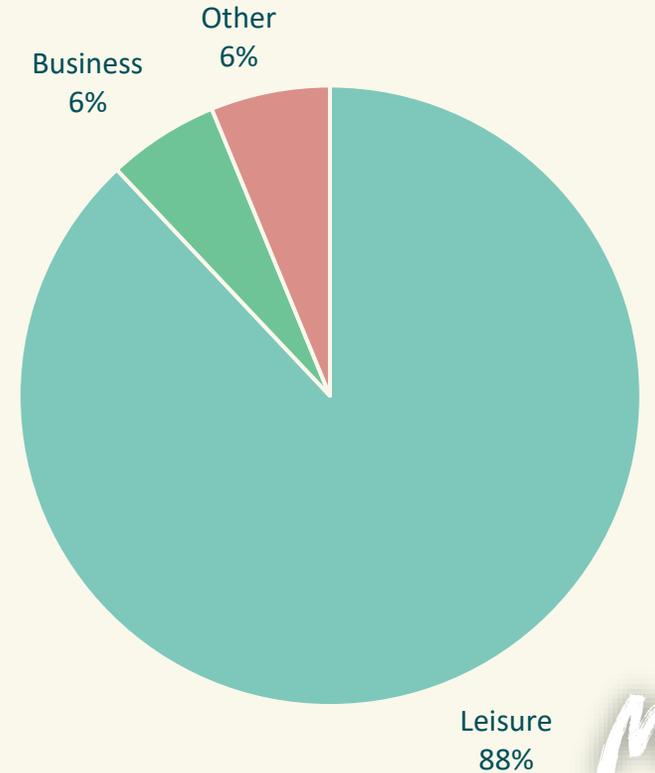
Main Purpose of Visit to North Carolina

- A slightly larger proportion of out-of-state travelers to North Carolina were leisure visitors than that of daytrippers.

Resident Overnight Visitors



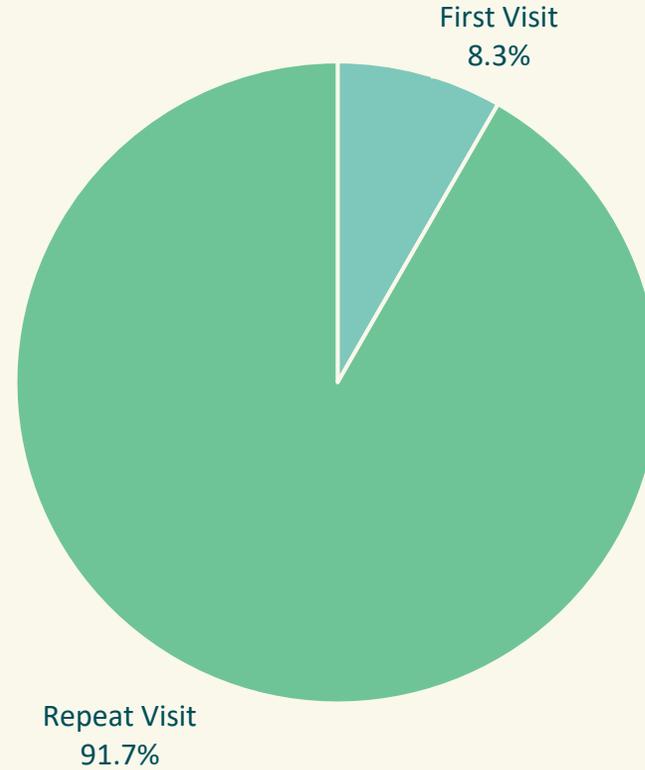
Out-of-State Overnight Visitors



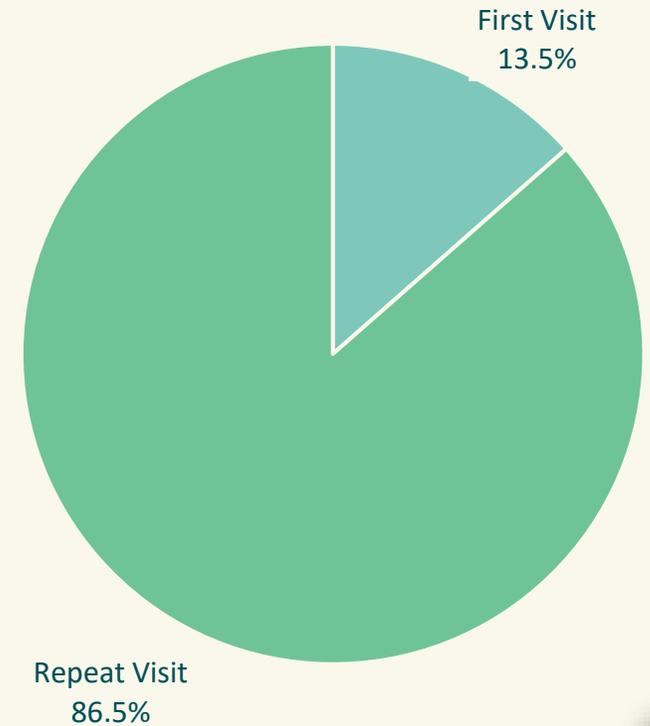
First Overnight Visit to North Carolina

- More out-of-state visitors were first time visitors to the state in 2021.
- The majority of overnight visitors, both resident and out-of-state, were repeat visitors.

Resident Overnight Visitors

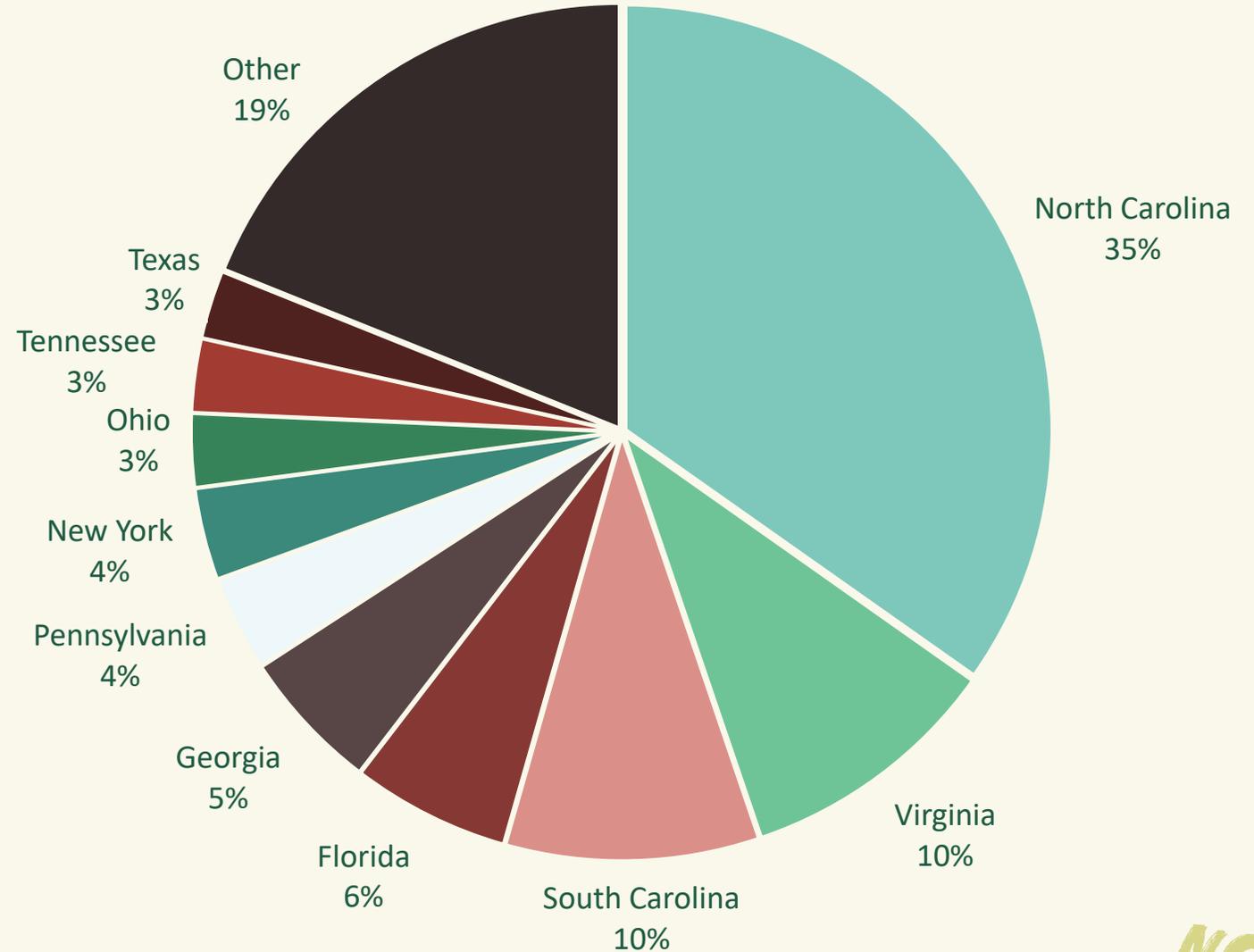


Out-of-State Overnight Visitors



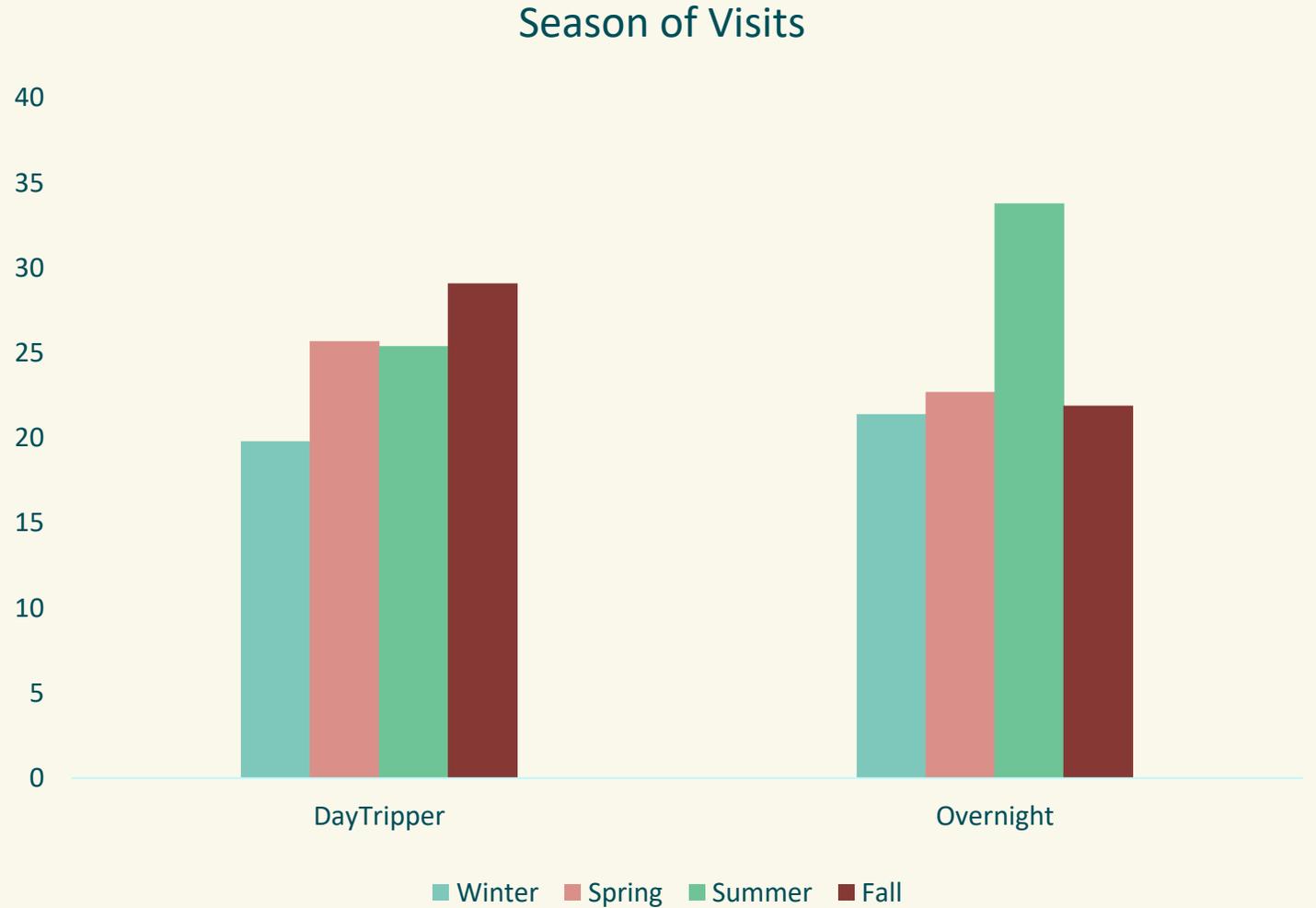
State of Origin of Overnight Visitors to North Carolina

- 35 percent of overnight visitors in 2021 were in-state residents.
- Typically, the proportion of in-state visitors is between 30-40%
- The next nine states represented 46 percent of visitors to NC.



Season of Visit

- Overnight visitors were most likely to visit in the summer season, followed by spring and fall.
- Daytrippers were more likely to visit in the fall, followed by spring and summer.
- Note that spring and summer historically have more visitation with fall closely following.



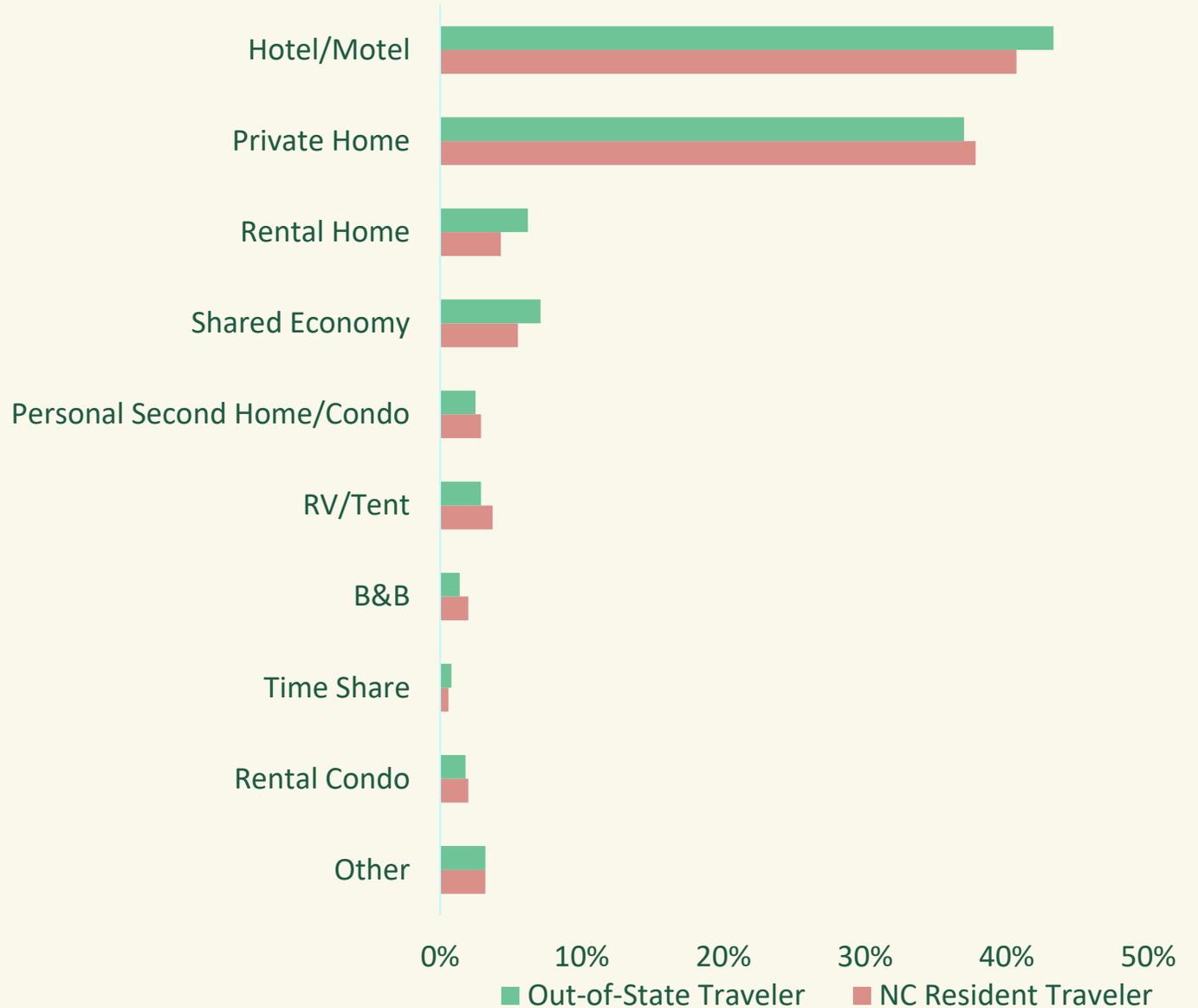
Average Length of Stay for NC Overnight Visitors

- Overnight visitors – 3.7 nights
- Resident overnight visitors – 2.8 nights
- Out-of-state overnight visitors – 4.1 nights
- Leisure overnight visitors – 3.7 nights
- Business overnight visitors – 4.2 nights



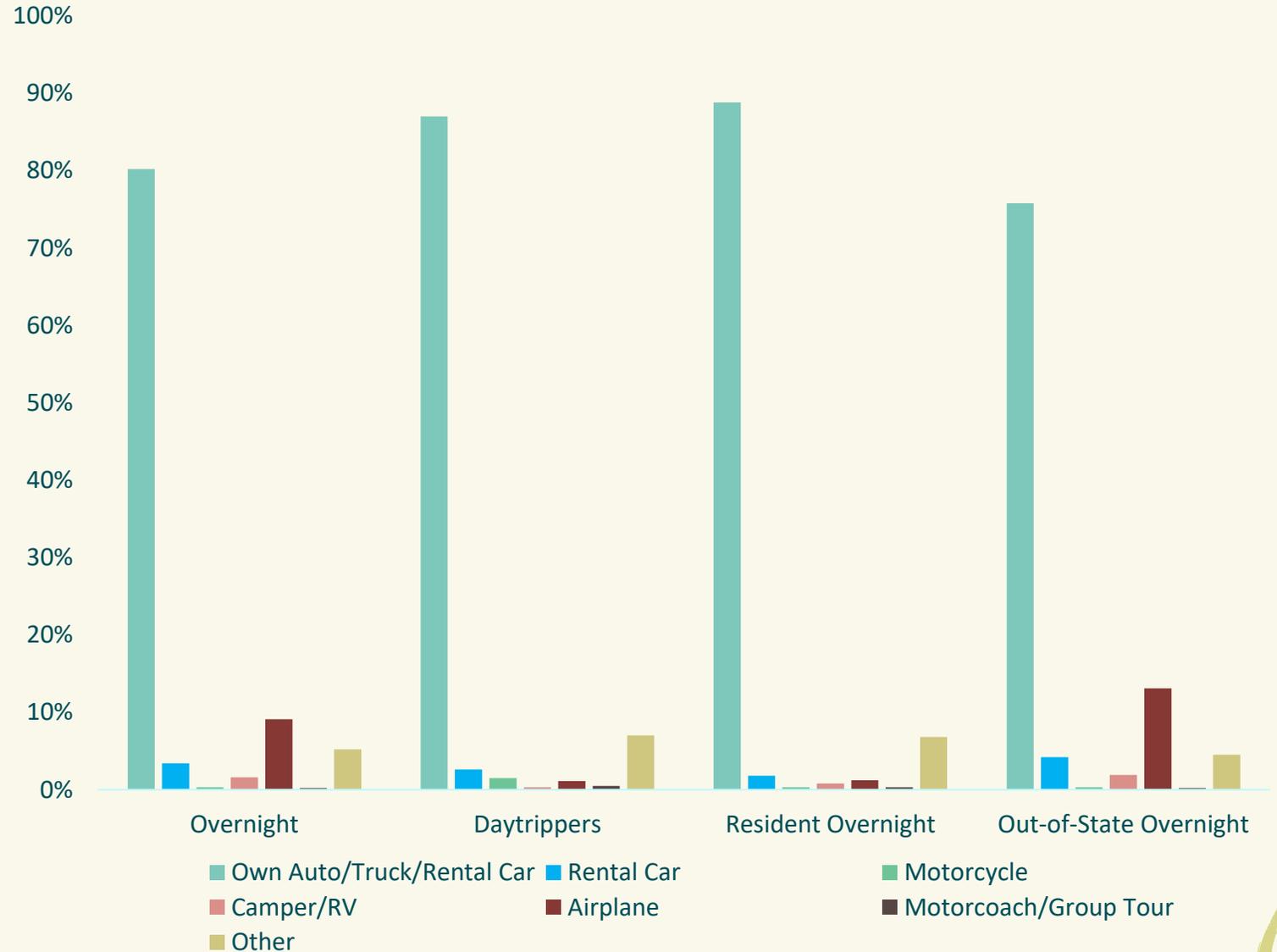
Accommodations Used in North Carolina

- Both out-of-state and in-state travelers to NC were most likely to use hotels/motels while traveling in the state, followed closely by private homes.
- Out-of-state visitors were slightly more likely to use a shared economy accommodation or rental home, while in-state visitors were slightly more likely to camp.



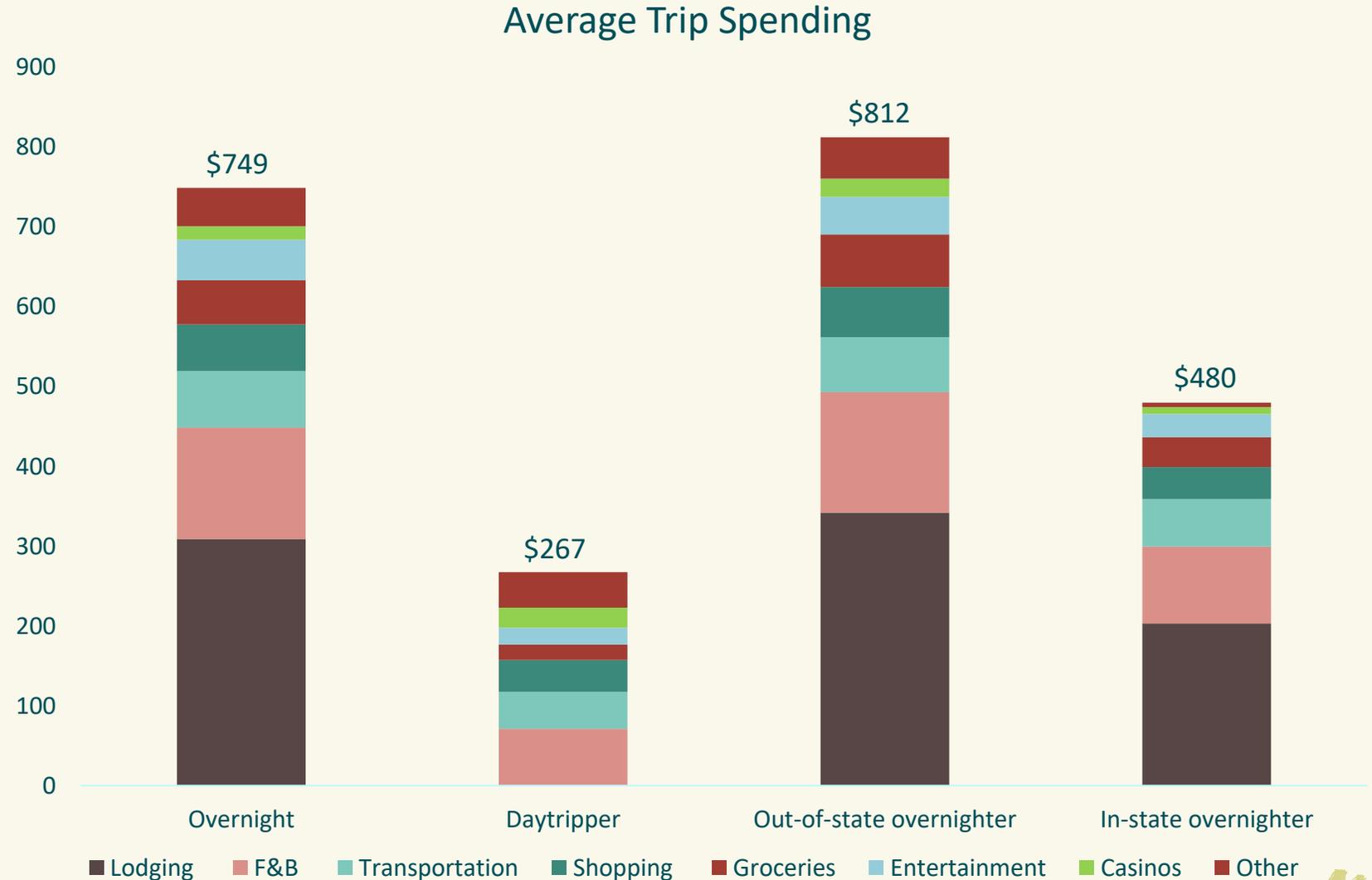
Transportation Used to Travel to North Carolina

- Not surprisingly, most North Carolina visitors traveled to and within the state via automobile, either personal or rented.
- About 13 percent of out-of-state travelers flew to the state in 2021.



Average Trip Spending for NC Visitor Parties by Type of Visitor

- The top categories for spending for overnight visitors include lodging, food and beverage and transportation.
- Overnight visitors spent 95% more on average than daytrip visitors in 2021.
- Out-of-state visitors spent 51% more than resident travelers in 2021.



Top Activities Participated in by NC Visitors in 2021

Top activities of overnights and daytrippers were similar in 2021.

The top activities for both were visiting friends/relatives and shopping.

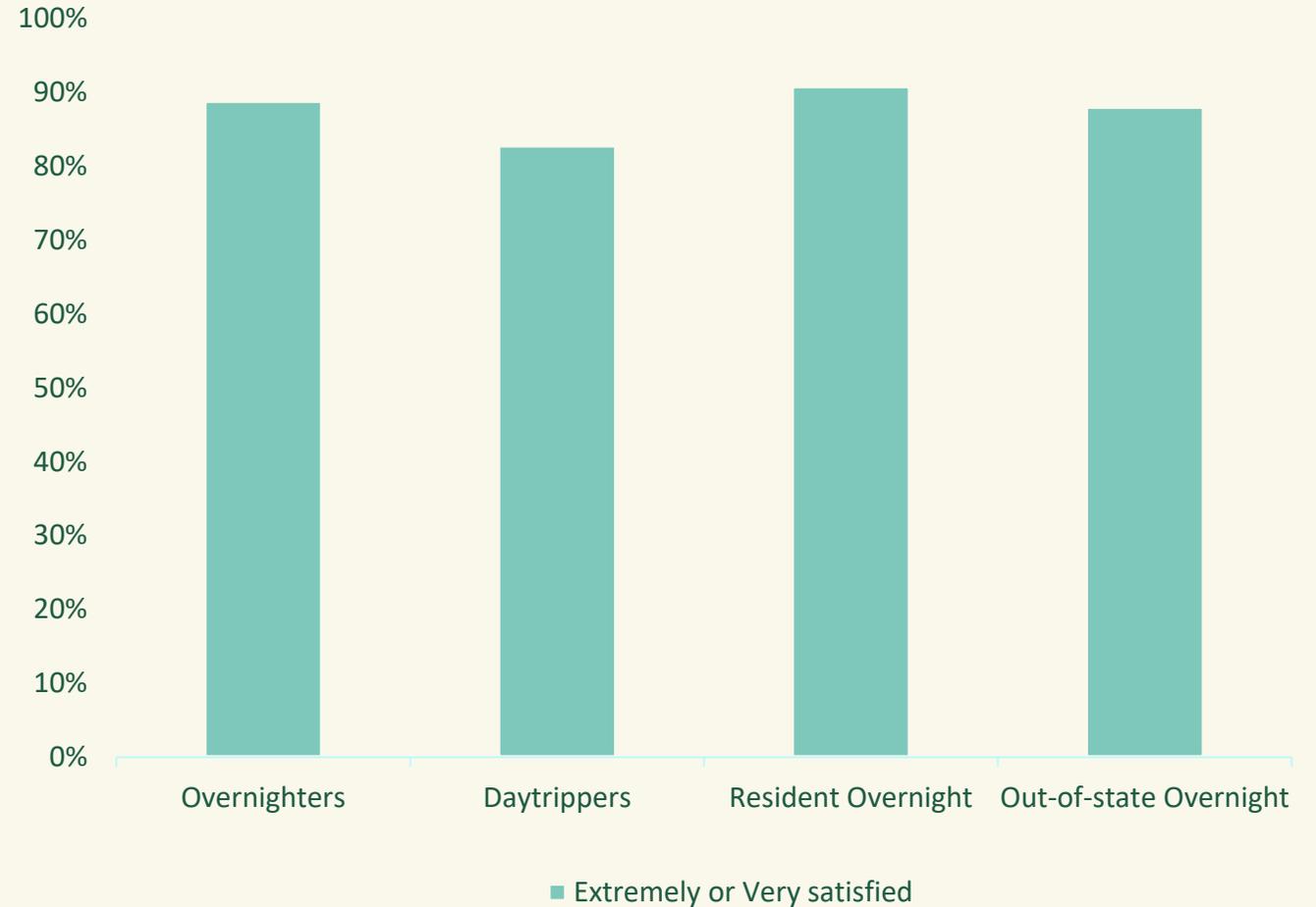
Visiting a beach, historic sites and sightseeing were also popular, as were many outdoor activities.

Overnight Visitors	
Visiting friends/relatives	42%
Shopping	24%
Beach	23%
Historic sites	19%
Fine dining	16%
Rural sightseeing	15%
Hiking/Backpacking/Canyoneering	12%
Local/folk arts/crafts	10%
State park/Monuments/Recreation areas	9%
Craft breweries	9%
Wildlife viewing	8%
Fishing	8%
Urban sightseeing	8%
Museums	8%
Swimming	7%
Unique local cuisine	7%
National park/Monuments/Recreation areas	7%
Gardens	6%
Bird Watching	6%
Nature travel/Ecotouring	5%
Zoos/Aquariums/Aviaries	5%
Other nature (photography, rockhound, etc)	5%

Daytrippers	
Visiting friends/relatives	30%
Shopping	15%
Rural sightseeing	11%
Beach	8%
Historic sites	7%
Local/folk arts/crafts	6%
Urban sightseeing	6%
Fine dining	5%
Hiking/Backpacking/Canyoneering	5%
Museums	5%
Unique local cuisine	5%
Other nature (photography, rockhound, etc)	4%
Casino/Gaming	4%
Wildlife viewing	4%
Gardens	4%
Nature travel/Ecotouring	4%
State park/Monuments/Recreation areas	4%
National park/Monuments/Recreation areas	4%
Art galleries	4%
Zoos/Aquariums/Aviaries	3%
Craft breweries	3%
Bird watching	3%

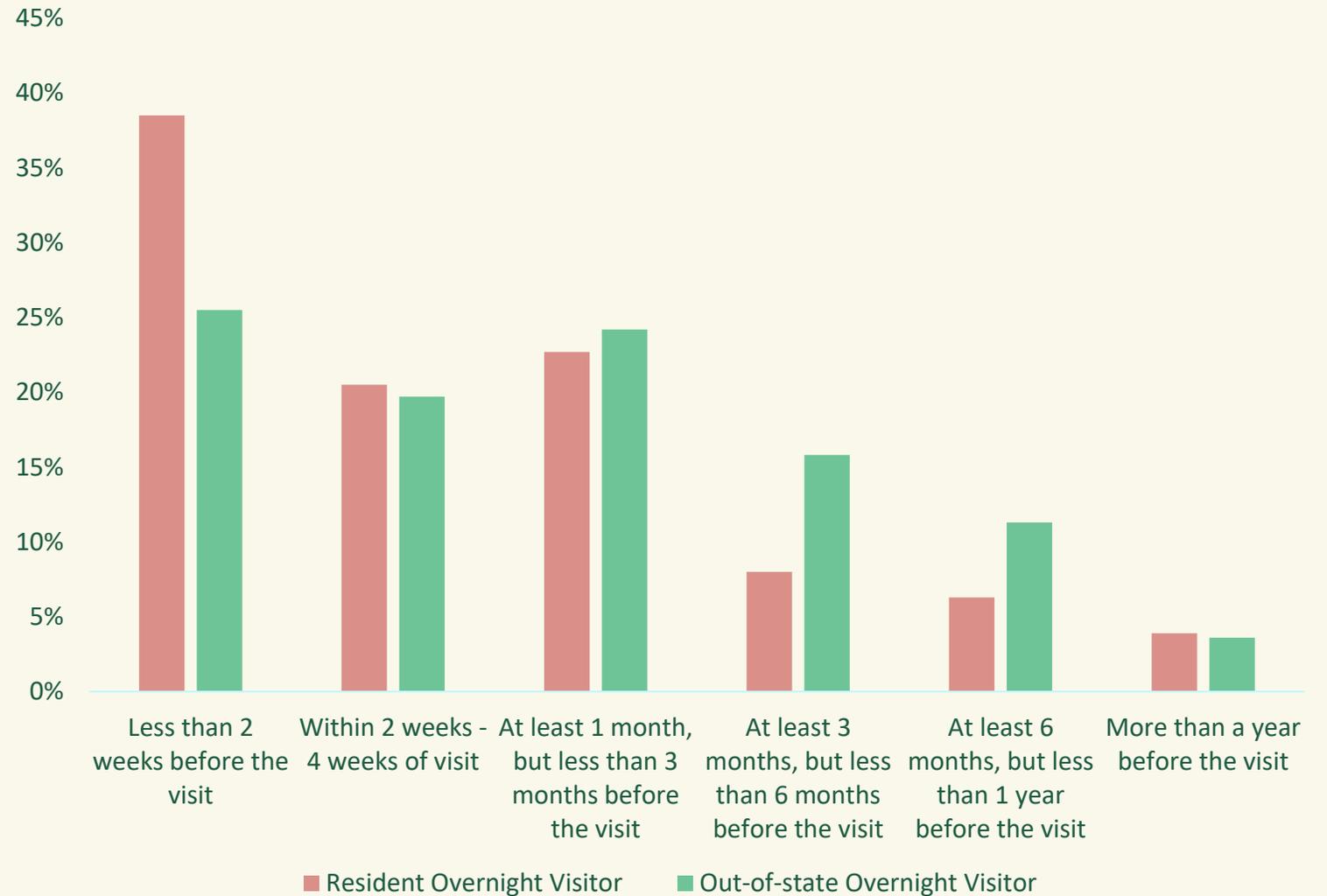
Satisfaction with Visit to North Carolina

- All visitors to and within NC reported high satisfactions rates with their visits in 2021.



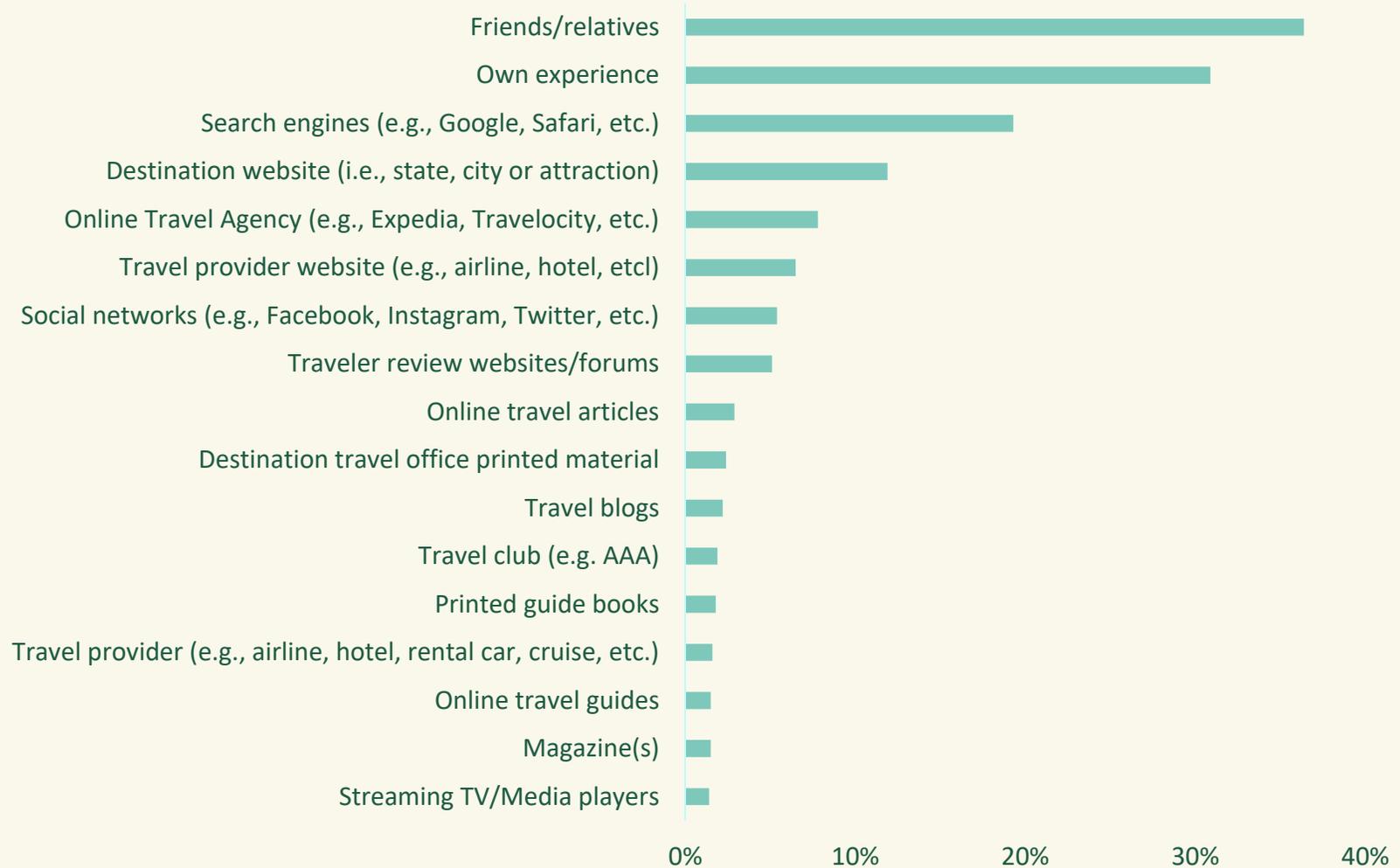
Advance Decision for Overnight Visit to North Carolina

- In 2021, 59% of resident overnight visitors made the decision to visit within 4 weeks of the visit.
- Just over 69% of out-of-state overnighters decided on a visit less than 3 months out.



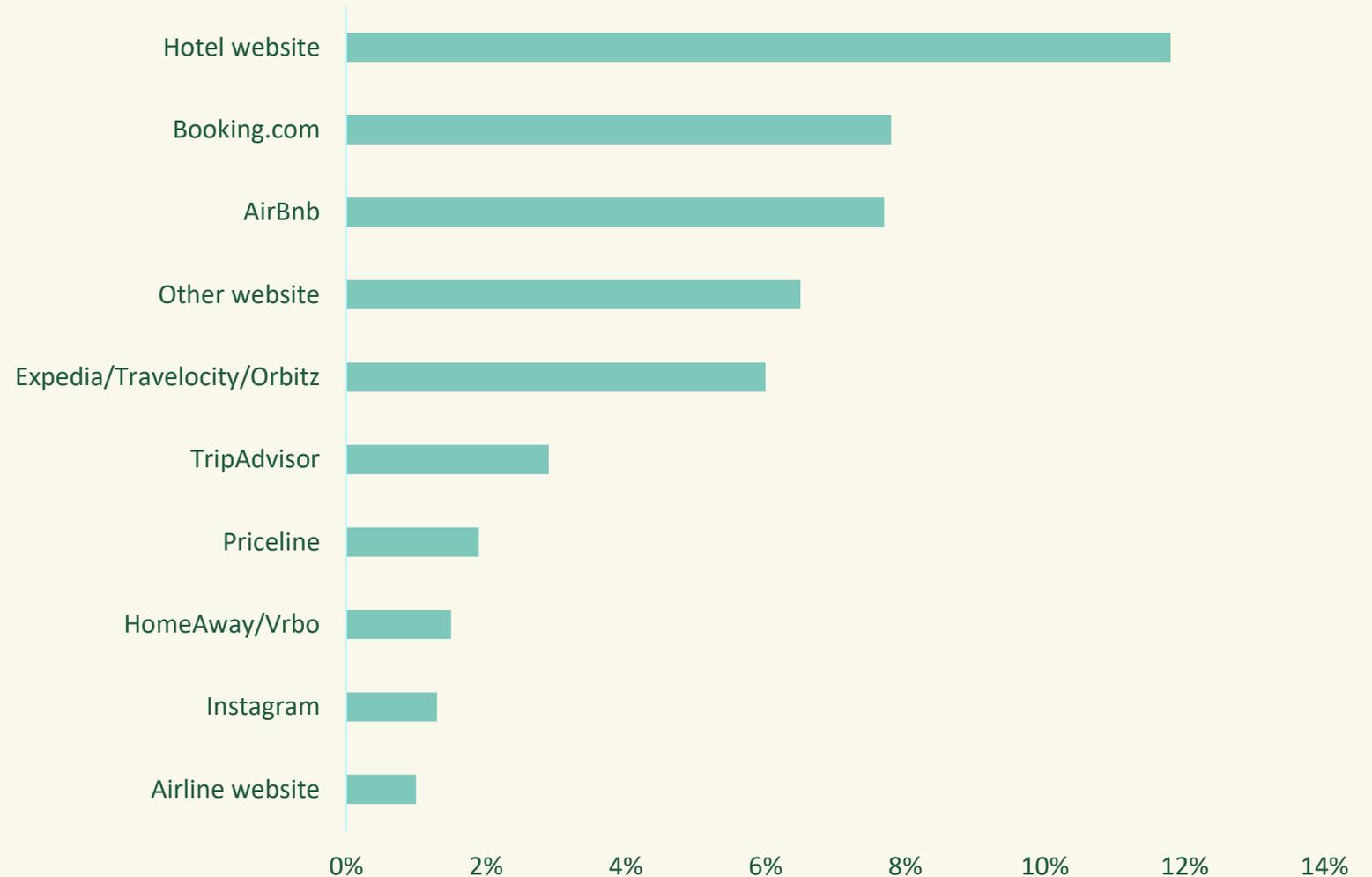
Planning Sources for Overnight Travel to North Carolina

- Friends/relatives, previous experience and search engines were the top sources of planning an overnight trip to NC in 2021.
- Visitors also used destination websites, online travel agencies and travel provider websites for planning.



Bookings Methods for Overnight Travel to North Carolina

- Hotel website, Booking.com and Airbnb were the top methods of booking travel in 2021.
- Expedia/Travelocity/Orbitz and Trip Advisor were also booking sources used by visitors in 2021.



Top Advertising Markets

In-state markets and those close by were the top DMAs of origin in 2021.

Atlanta, DC, Norfolk and New York also ranked in the top ten.

DMA of Origin	2021 Percentage of Total Overnight Visitors
Raleigh-Durham (Fayetteville)	10.8%
Greensboro-High Point-Winston-Salem	8.2%
Charlotte	7.9%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville-Anderson	4.9%
Atlanta	4.6%
Washington DC (Hagerstown)	3.4%
Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News	3.2%
Greenville-New Bern-Washington	3.1%
New York	3.0%
Wilmington	2.6%
Richmond-Petersburg	3.6%
Roanoke-Lynchburg	2.3%
Philadelphia	3.0%
Columbia, SC	2.1%
Charleston, SC	1.8%
Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne	1.6%
Florence-Myrtle Beach	1.5%
Tampa-Saint Petersburg (Sarasota)	2.0%
Knoxville	2.7%
Cleveland	1.1%

Travel Party Characteristics

Average Party Size

Overnight visitor parties – 2.5, 30% of parties include children

Daytrip visitor parties – 2.4, 26% of parties include children

Resident overnight visitor parties – 2.4, 31% of parties include children

Out-of-state overnight visitor parties – 2.5, 29% of parties include children

Average Age

Overnight visitor – 47 years

Daytripper – 48 years

Resident overnight visitor – 46 years

Out-of-state overnight visitor – 48 years

Marital Status

Overnight visitor – 61% married

Daytripper – 59% married

Resident overnight visitor – 61% married

Out-of-state overnight visitor – 62% married

Ethnicity

Overnight visitor parties – 84% white, 9% black, 5% Hispanic, 2% other

Daytrip visitor parties – 85% white, 10% black, 3% Hispanic, 2% other

Resident overnight visitor parties – 84% white, 8% black, 5% Hispanic, 3% other

Out-of-state overnight visitor parties – 84% white, 10% black, 5% Hispanic, 1% other

Children in Household

Overnight visitor – 35%

Daytripper – 31%

Resident overnight visitor – 36%

Out-of-state overnight visitor – 34%

Average Household Income

Overnight visitor – \$90K

Daytripper – \$71K

Resident visitor – \$76K

Out-of-state visitor – \$93K



Glossary of Terms

Travel - A trip over 50 miles one-way from home *or* any night away from home

Overnight Visitor - A visitor who spent at least one night away from home during travel

Daytripper - A visitor who did not spend any nights away from home, but traveled at least 50 miles one-way from home

Designated Market Area - Also referred to as a DMA and is a term used by Nielsen Media Research to identify an exclusive geographic area of counties in which the home market television stations hold a dominance of total hours viewed. There are 210 DMA's in the U.S.