

2024 NORTH CAROLINA REGIONAL VISITOR PROFILE

A publication of Visit North Carolina

A Unit of the Economic Development Partnership of North Carolina

Visit North Carolina



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- Visit North Carolina contracts with a research company OmniTrak Group, Inc. for data on North Carolina visitors through its TravelTrakAmerica product.
- Each month, TravelTrakAmerica research program conducts over 9,000 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 3,000-4,000 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 the U.S. 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 the data provided by TravelTrakAmerica.
- The purpose of this report is to profile the average North Carolina visitor to the three geographic regions of the state.
- At the end of the report, an appendix offers definitions of key travel terms.

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2024 COASTAL VISITOR SUMMARY

- Ninety percent of all Coastal Region overnight visitors traveled for leisure purposes, while nine percent came to conduct business.
- The majority of overnight travelers to the coast in 2024 visited during the summer followed by fall.
- The party size for the average Coastal Region visitor party was 3.3 in 2024. 39 percent of travel parties included children under the age of 18.
- The average Coastal Region overnight visitor party trip expenditure was \$1,252 in 2024. In-state overnight travelers spent on average \$880 and out-of-state overnight visitors spent \$1,370.
- The top states of origin for overnight visitors to the Coastal Region in 2024 were NC, VA, PA, NY, OH, MD, SC, FL.

2024 MOUNTAIN VISITOR SUMMARY

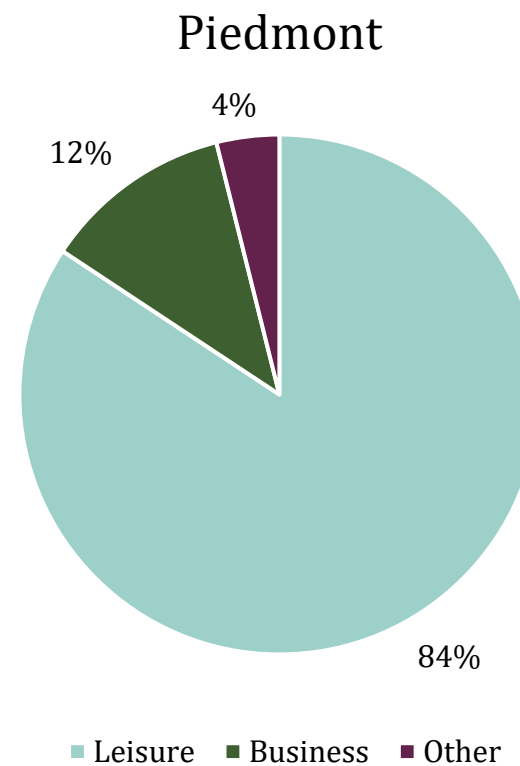
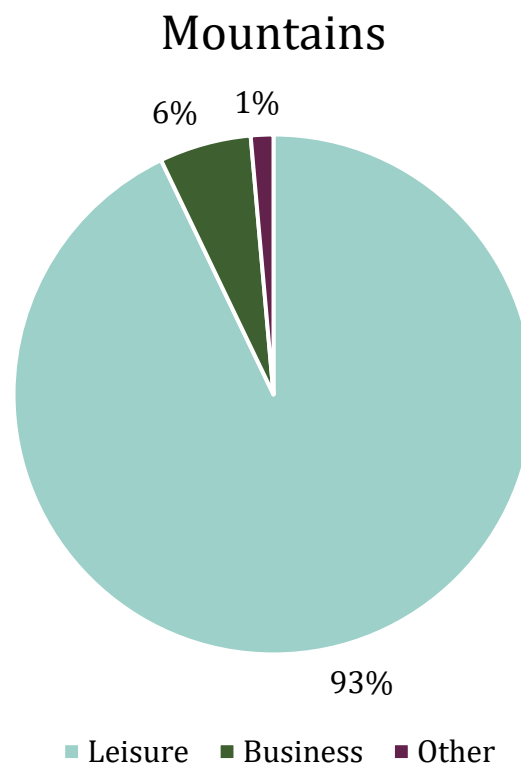
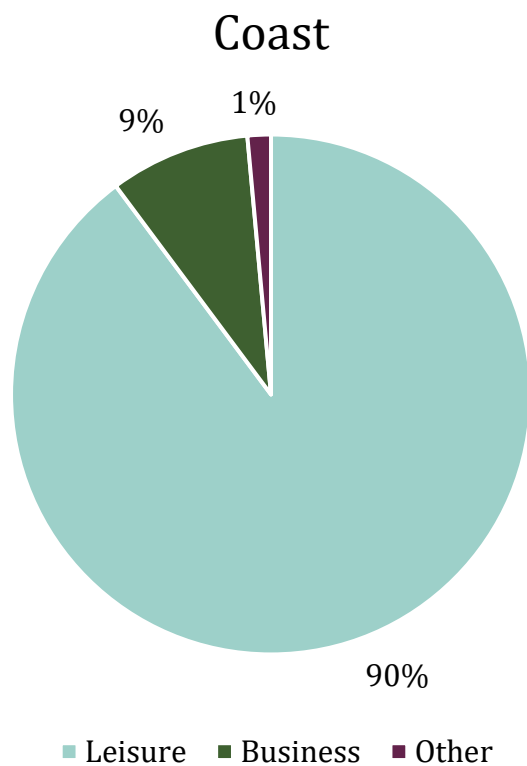
- Ninety- three percent of all Mountain Region overnight visitors traveled for leisure purposes, while six percent came to conduct business.
- The majority of overnight travelers to the mountains in 2024 visited during the summer followed by spring.
- The party size for the average Mountain Region visitor party was 2.8 in 2024. 32 percent of travel parties included children under the age of 18.
- The average Mountain Region overnight visitor party trip expenditure was \$1,001 in 2024. In-state overnight travelers spent on average \$582 and out-of-state overnight visitors spent \$1,072.
- The top states of origin for overnight visitors to the Mountain Region in 2024 were NC, SC, GA, TN, FL, VA, CA, KY.

2024 PIEDMONT VISITOR SUMMARY

- Eighty-four percent of all Piedmont Region overnight visitors traveled for leisure purposes, while twelve percent came to conduct business.
- The majority of overnight travelers to the piedmont in 2024 visited during the summer followed by winter.
- The party size for the average Piedmont Region visitor party was 2.5 in 2024. 30 percent of travel parties included children under the age of 18.
- The average Piedmont Region overnight visitor party trip expenditure was \$783 in 2024. In-state overnight travelers spent on average \$386 and out-of-state overnight visitors spent \$841.
- The top states of origin for overnight visitors to the Piedmont Region in 2024 were NC, SC, VA, MD, NY, FL, GA, PA.

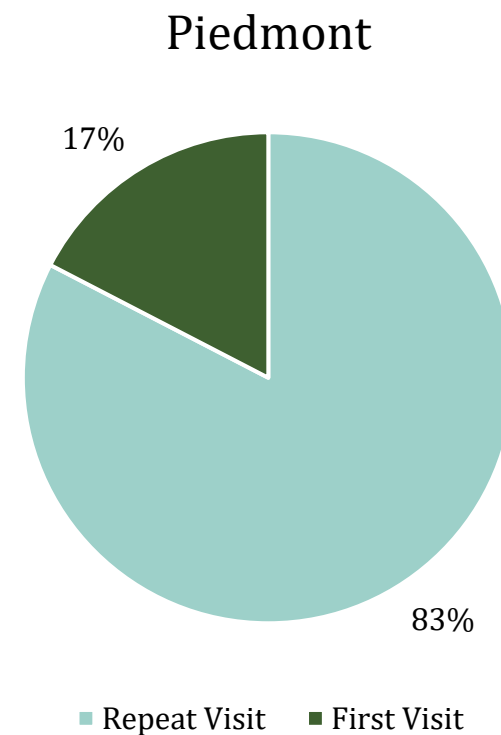
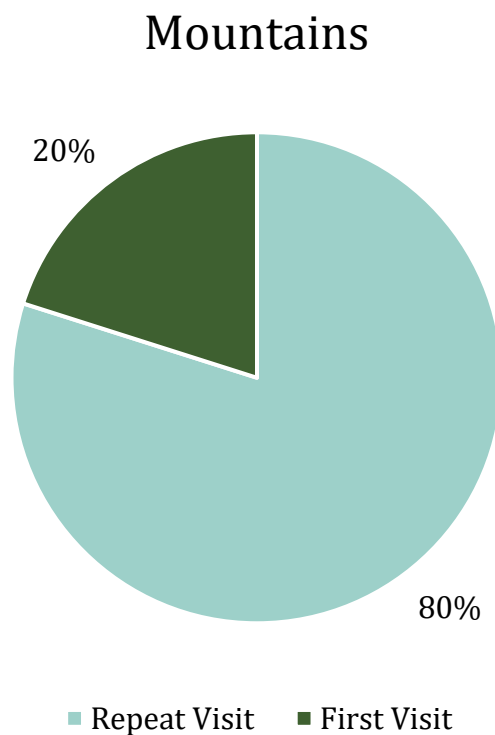
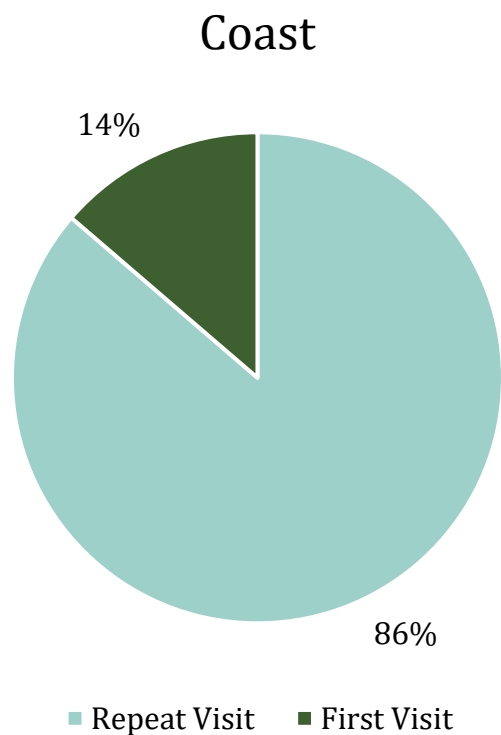
MAIN PURPOSE OF VISIT TO OVERNIGHT VISITORS TO NORTH CAROLINA REGIONS

- Leisure is by far the top primary purpose of visit for each region of the state.
- 69 percent of business travelers to the mountain region say that they extended their business trip for leisure in 2024, while 28 percent of piedmont visitors and 30 percent of coastal visitors extended their stays.



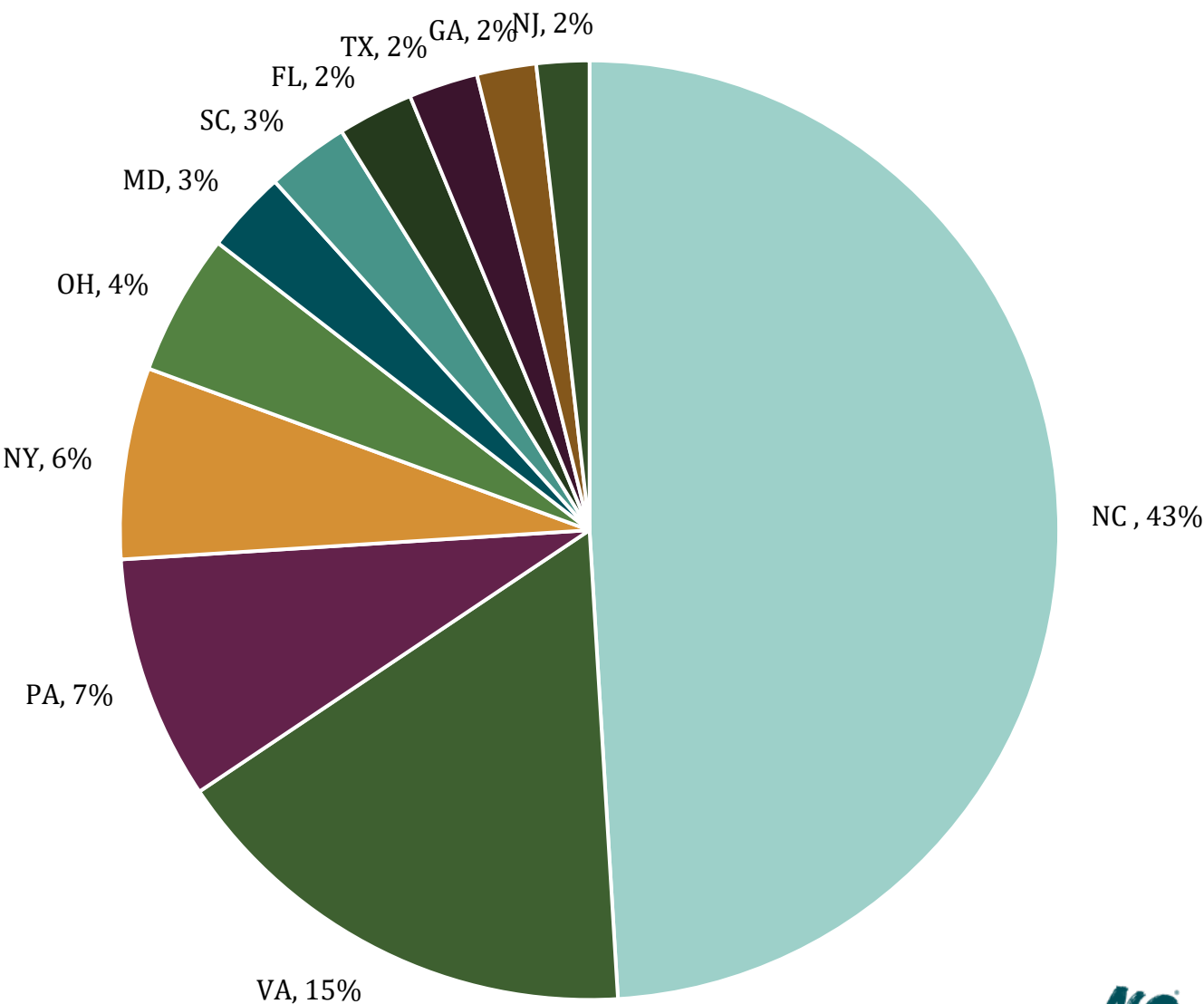
FIRST VISIT TO NORTH CAROLINA FOR OVERNIGHT VISITORS

- All three regions welcomed similar proportion of first-time North Carolina visitors in 2024, while the majority of visitors are repeat visitors to the state.



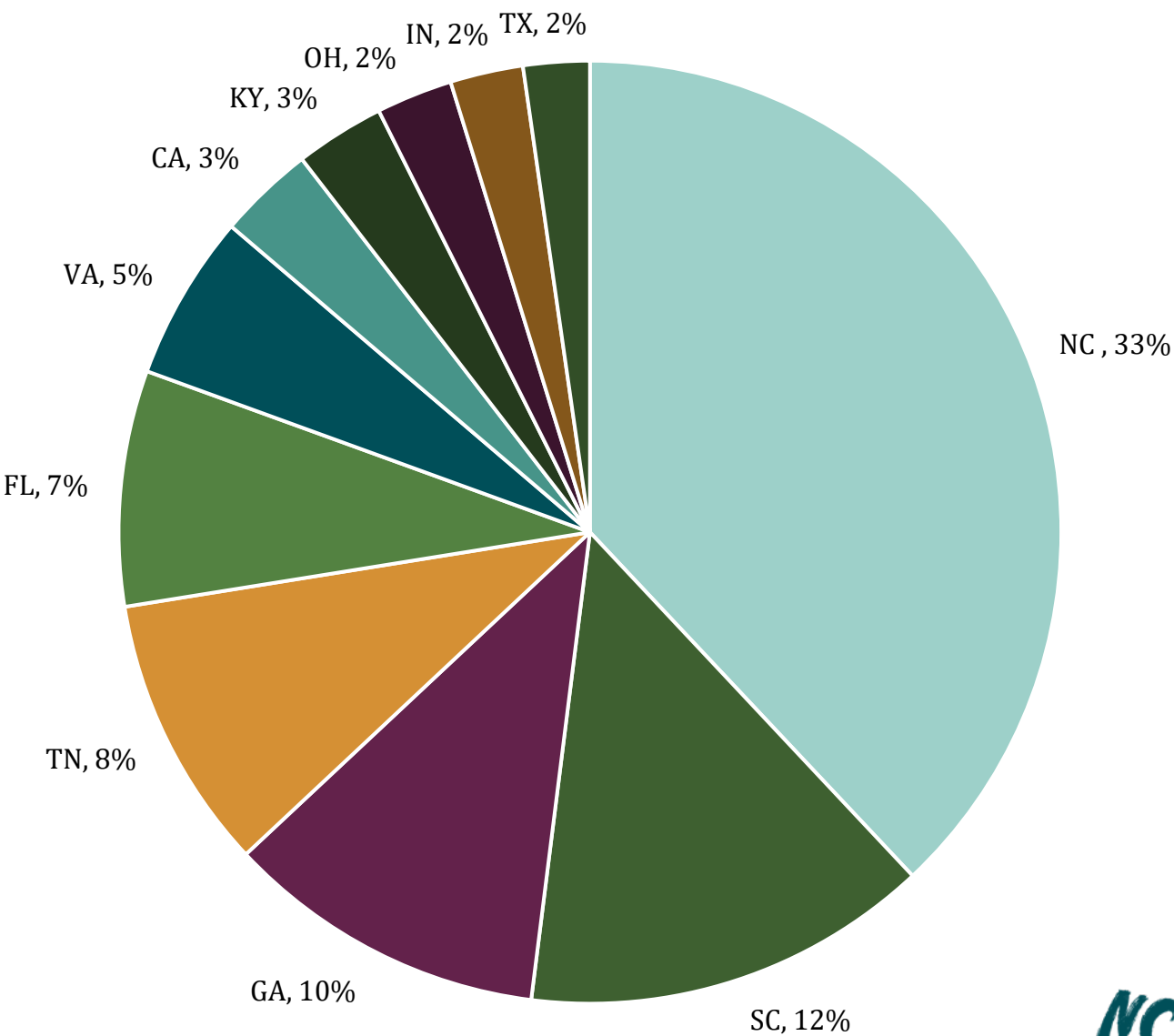
STATE OF ORIGIN OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS TO NORTH CAROLINA - COASTAL

- 43 percent of overnight visitors to the coast in 2024 were in-state residents.
- The next ten states represented 45 percent of overnight visitors to the coastal region.



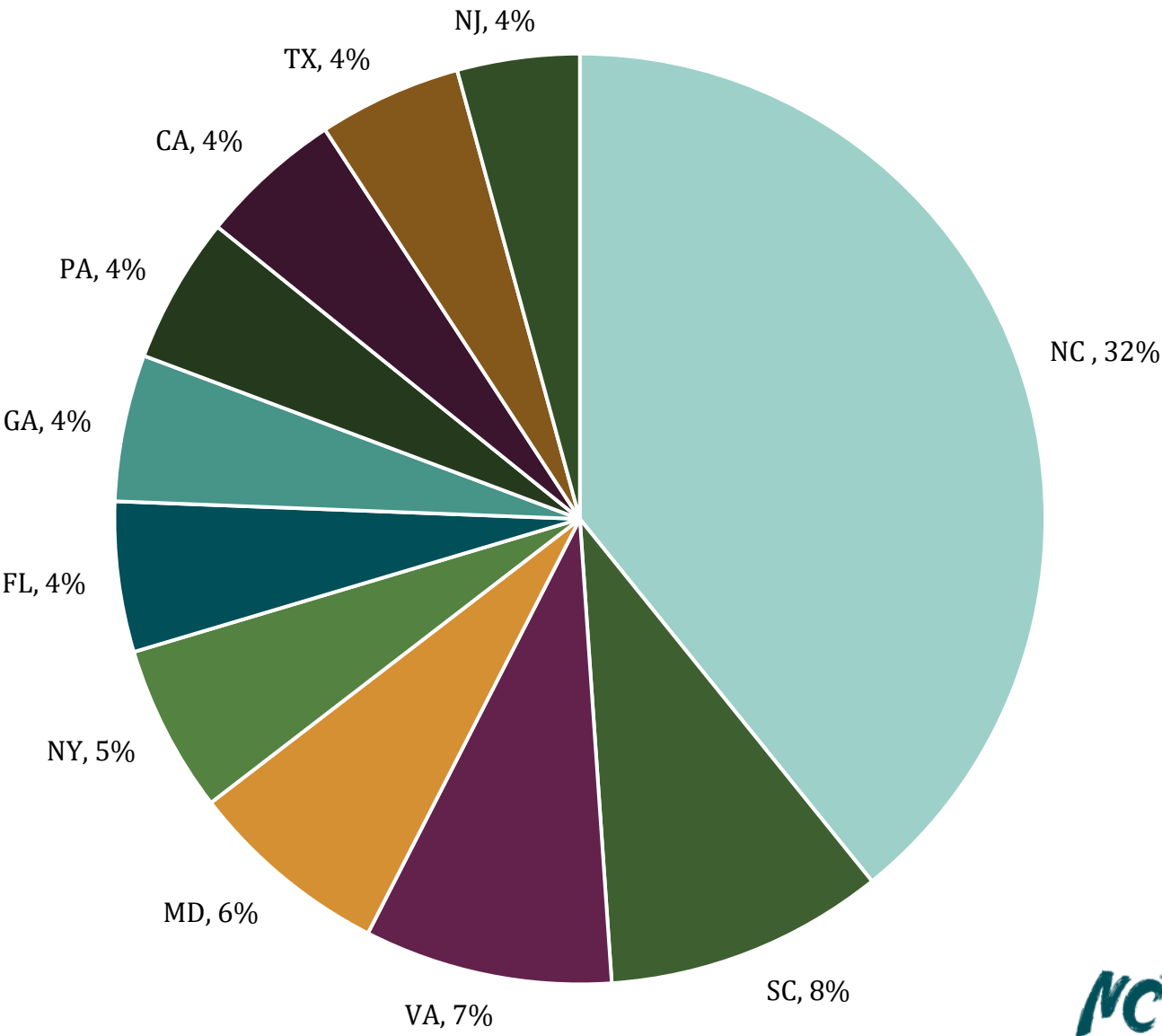
STATE OF ORIGIN OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS TO NORTH CAROLINA - MOUNTAIN

- 33 percent of overnight visitors to the mountains in 2024 were in-state residents.
- The next ten states represented 55 percent of overnight visitors to the mountain region.



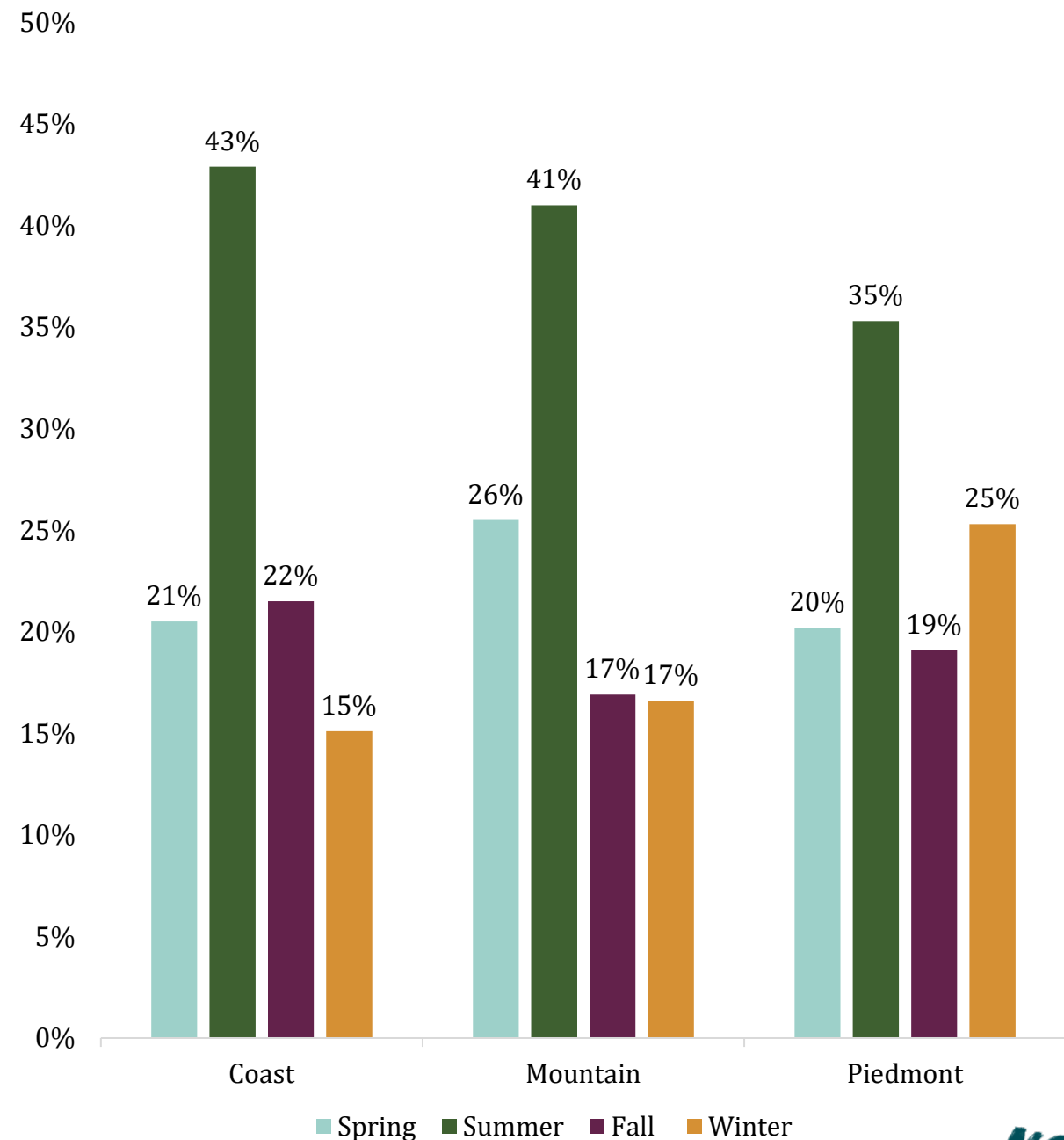
STATE OF ORIGIN OF OVERNIGHT VISITORS TO NORTH CAROLINA - PIEDMONT

- 32 percent of overnight visitors to the piedmont in 2024 were in-state residents.
- The next ten states represented 50 percent of overnight visitors to the piedmont region.



SEASON OF VISIT

- The summer season was the most popular for overnight visitors to each region in 2024.
- Spring and fall were similar in terms of visitation to each region.



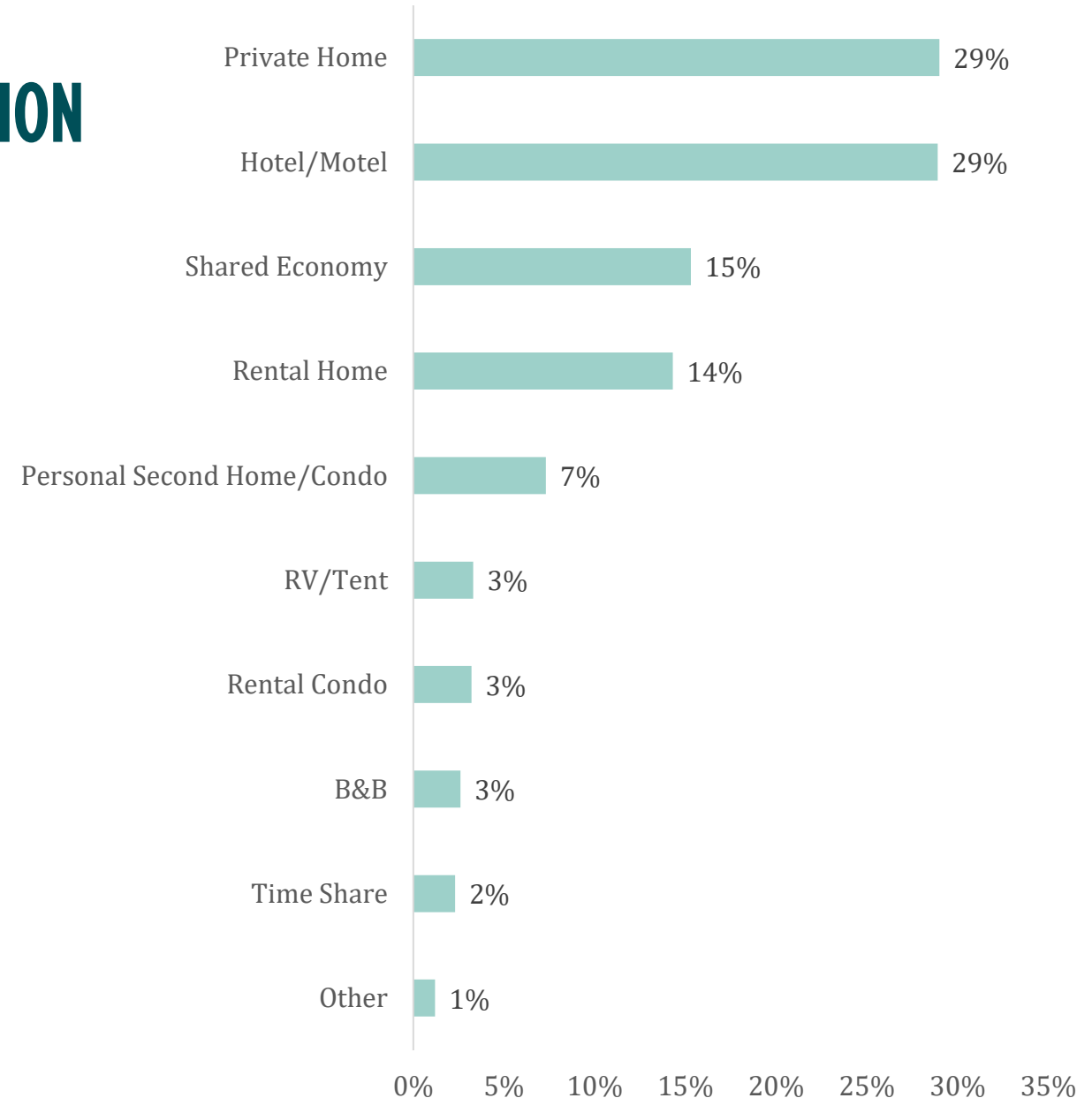
AVERAGE LENGTH OF STAY FOR NORTH CAROLINA OVERNIGHT VISITORS

- Coastal Region – 3.4 nights
- Mountain Region – 2.5 nights
- Piedmont Region – 2.3 nights



ACCOMMODATIONS USED IN COASTAL REGION

- Coastal Region visitors were more likely to stay in a private home or hotel/motel while in the state, followed closely by shared economy and rental home.
- Approximately 3 percent of overnight visitors to the coast reported a stay in a bed and breakfast.

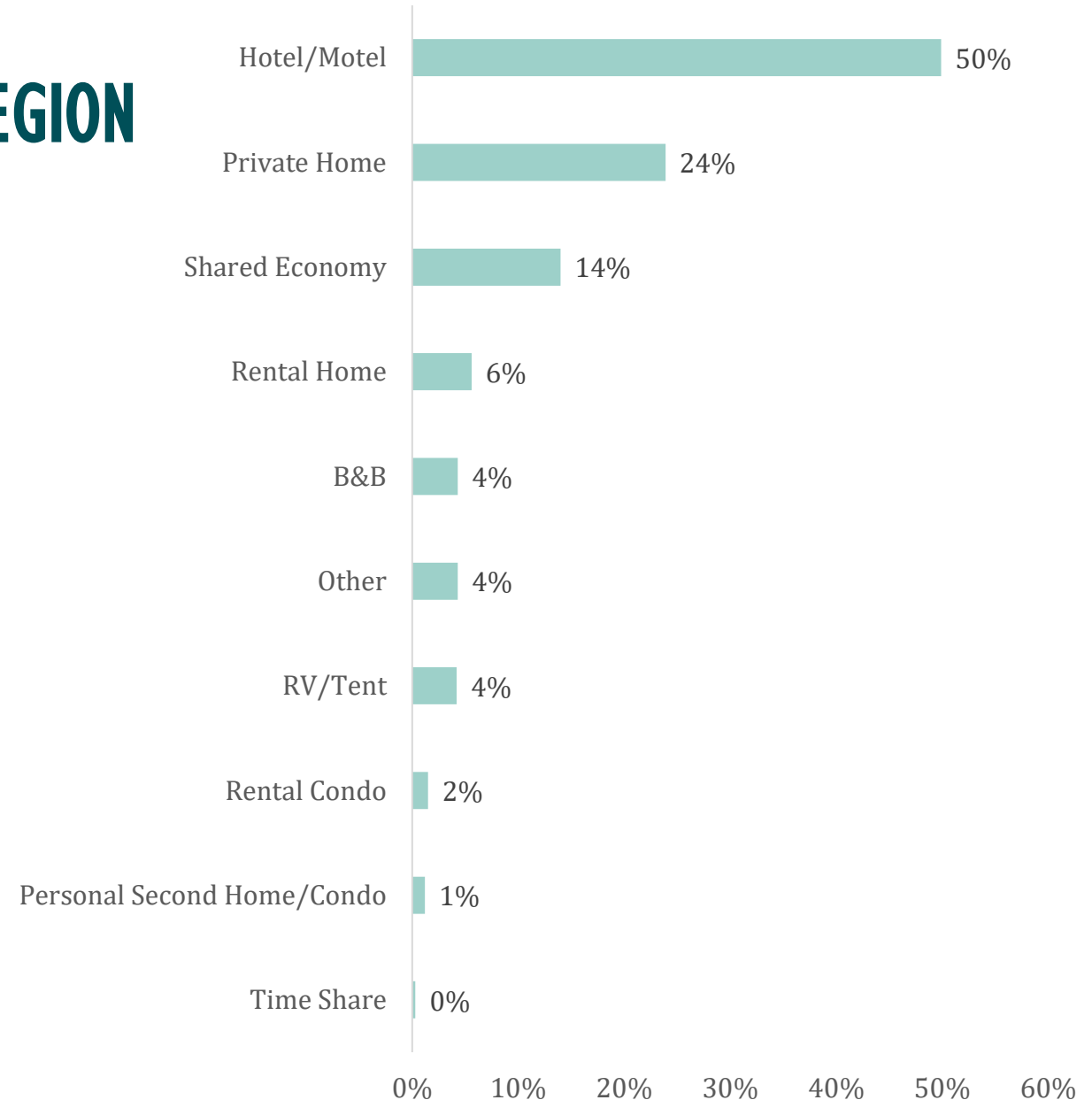


* Multiple responses allowed; thus, percentages do not add to 100%

ACCOMMODATIONS USED IN MOUNTAIN REGION

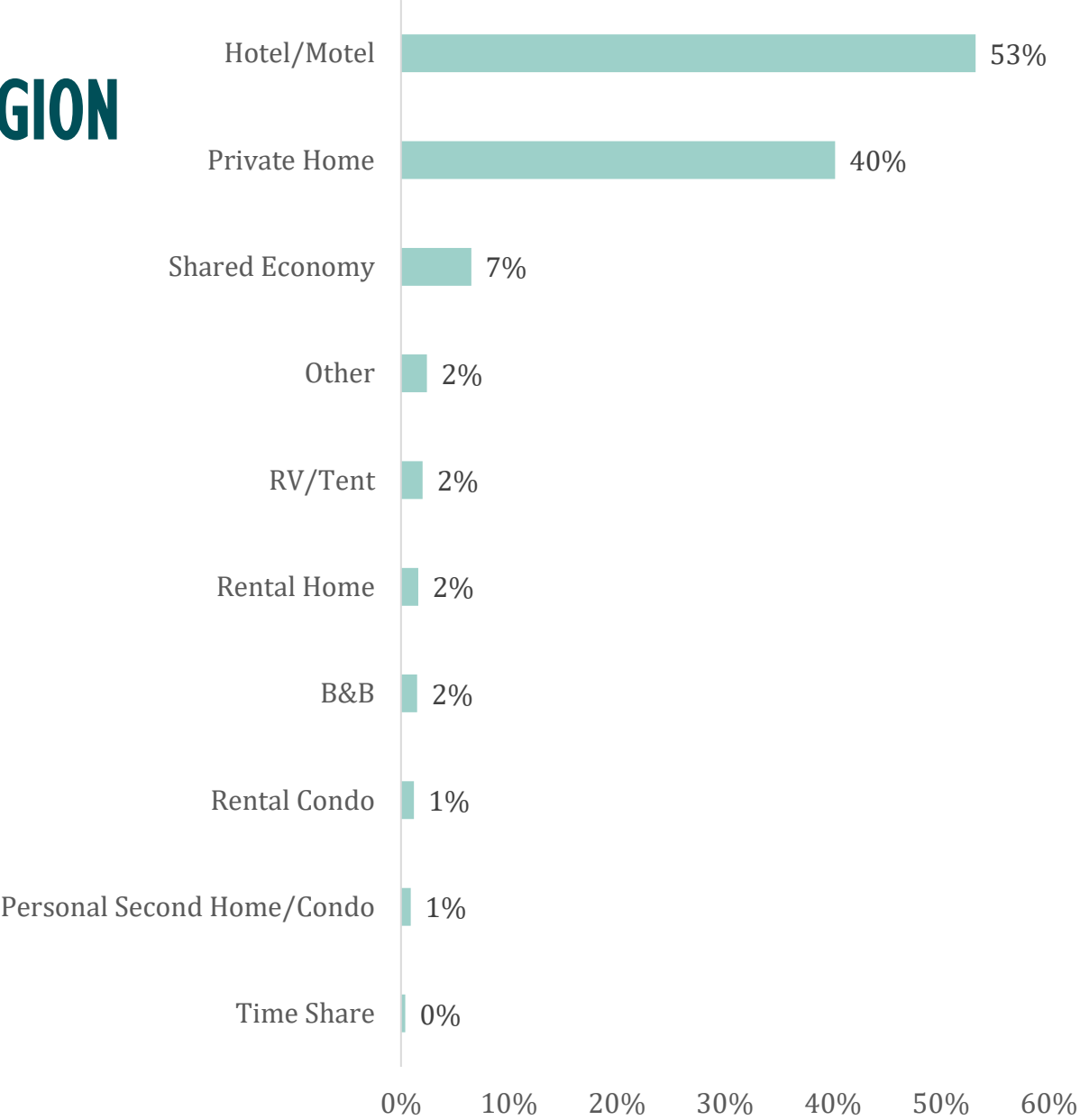
- Coastal Region visitors were more likely to stay in a hotel/motel or private home while in the state, followed closely by shared economy rentals and rental homes.
- Approximately 4 percent of overnight visitors to the mountains reported a stay in a B&B.

* Multiple responses allowed; thus, percentages do not add to 100%



ACCOMMODATIONS USED IN PIEDMONT REGION

- Piedmont Region visitors were more likely to stay in a hotel/motel or private home while in the state, followed closely by shared economy rentals.
- Approximately 2 percent of overnight visitors to the piedmont reported a stay in a rental home.

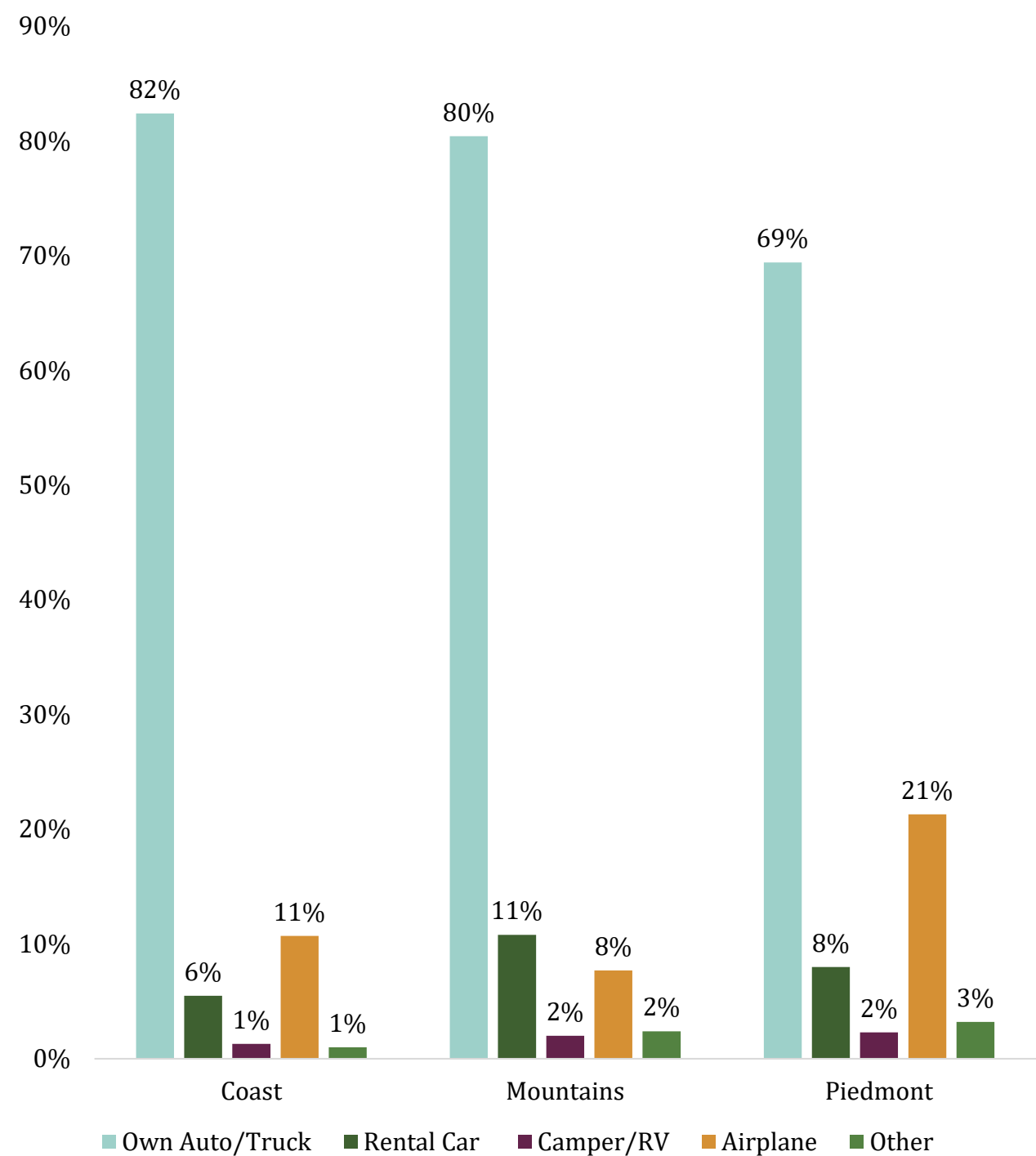


* Multiple responses allowed; thus, percentages do not add to 100%

TRANSPORTATION USED TO TRAVEL TO NORTH CAROLINA

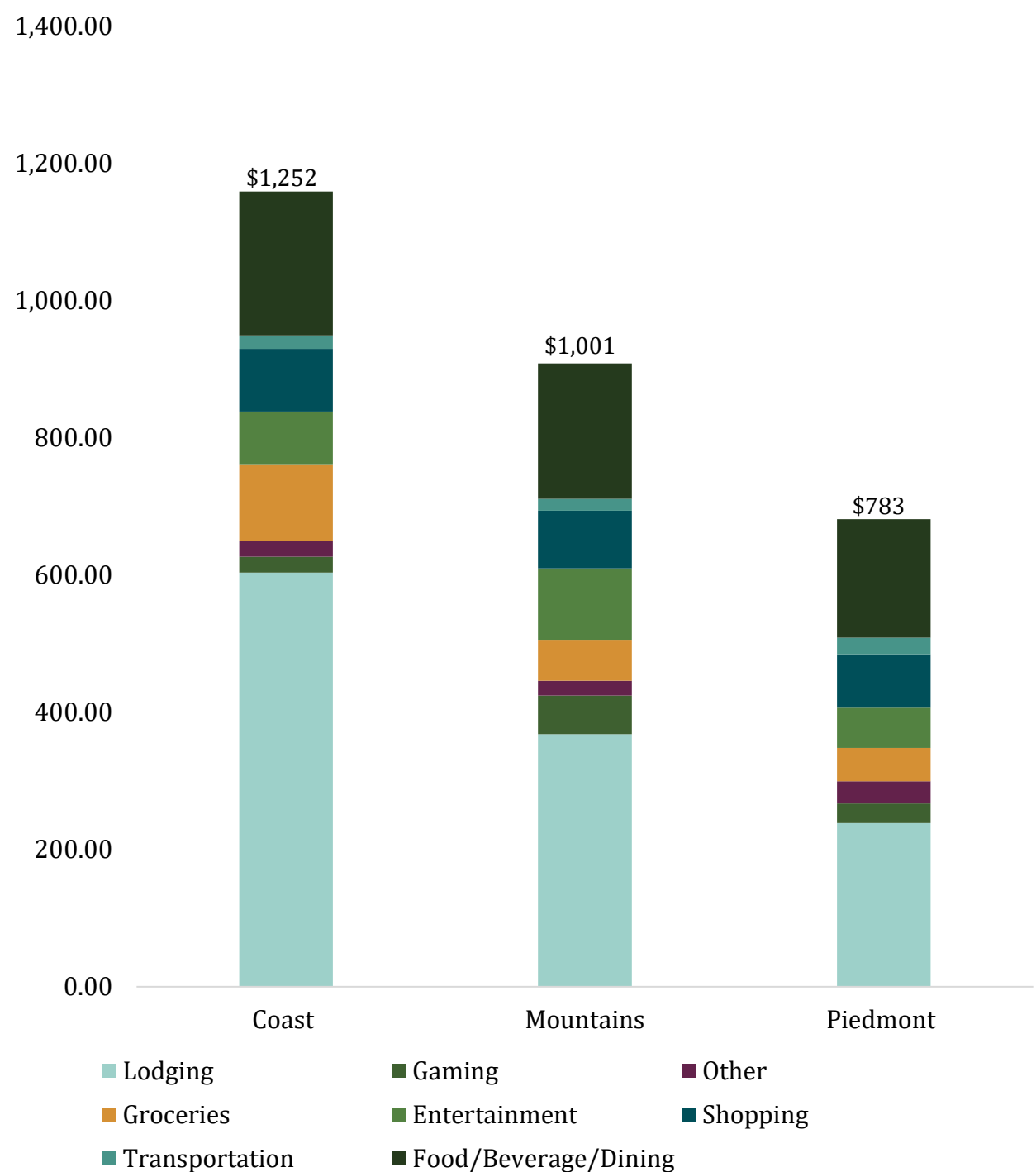
- Not surprisingly, the majority of overnight travelers to each region traveled to the state via automobile, primarily personal.
- Air travel was the second most popular mode of transportation for travel to North Carolina in 2024, particularly for Piedmont Region visitors.

* Multiple responses allowed; thus, percentages do not add to 100%



AVERAGE TRIP SPENDING FOR OVERNIGHT NORTH CAROLINA VISITOR PARTIES BY REGION

- Overnight visitors to the coastal region spent more per trip in 2024 than visitors to other regions.
- However, the length of stay for coastal visitors is longer.



TOP ACTIVITIES PARTICIPATED IN BY OVERNIGHT REGIONAL VISITORS IN 2024

Coastal Region Visitor Parties	
Beach	65%
Visiting friends/relatives	34%
Shopping	27%
Historic sites	18%
Swimming	17%
Fine dining	15%
Fishing	12%
Local/folk arts/crafts	12%
Unique local cuisine	12%
State park/Monuments/Recreation areas	11%
Museums	10%
Wildlife viewing	9%
Rural sightseeing	9%
Golf	7%
Craft breweries	7%
Urban sightseeing	7%
Zoo/Aquariums/Aviaries	7%
Bird Watching	5%
National park/Monuments/Recreation Areas	5%

Mountain Region Visitor Parties	
Visiting friends/relatives	38%
Shopping	32%
Rural sightseeing	28%
Local/folk arts/crafts	26%
Historic sites	26%
Hiking/Backpacking/Canyoneering	21%
Wildlife viewing	21%
State park/Monuments/Recreation areas	20%
Fine dining	16%
Craft breweries	16%
Other nature (photography, rockhound, etc.)	16%
Unique local cuisine	15%
National park/Monuments/Recreation Areas	15%
Gardens	13%
Museums	13%
Casino/Gaming	12%
Urban sightseeing	12%
Bird watching	11%
Swimming	11%

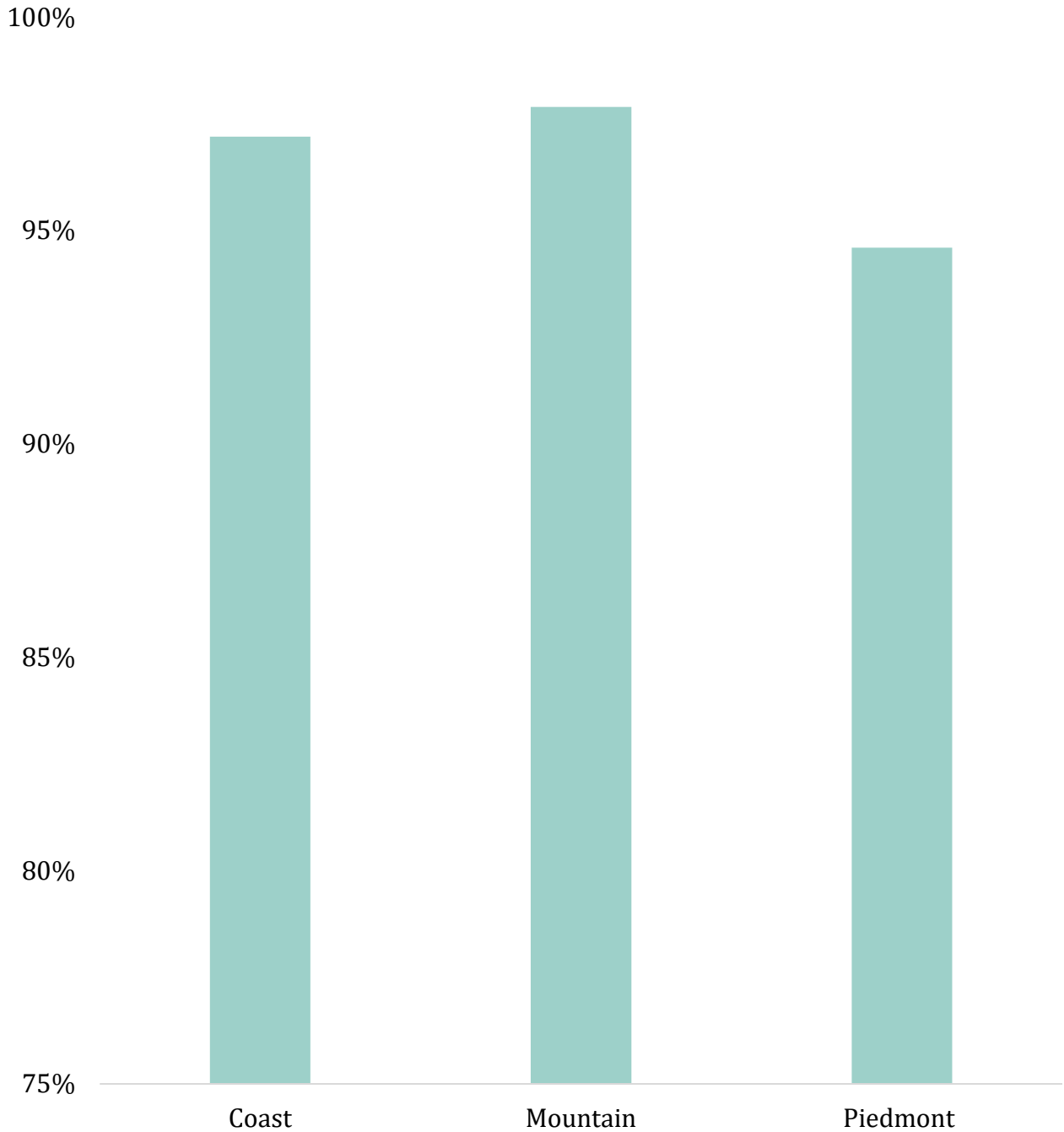
Piedmont Region Visitor Parties	
Visiting friends/relatives	45%
Shopping	23%
Fine dining	16%
Historic sites	13%
Museums	12%
State park/Monuments/Recreation areas	10%
Urban sightseeing	9%
Rural sightseeing	9%
Hiking/Backpacking/Canyoneering	8%
Local/folk arts/crafts	8%
Craft breweries	8%
Unique local cuisine	7%
Gardens	7%
Wildlife viewing	7%
Swimming	7%
Fishing	6%
Art galleries	6%
Golf	5%
Nightclubs/Dancing	5%



SATISFACTION WITH VISIT TO NORTH CAROLINA REGIONS

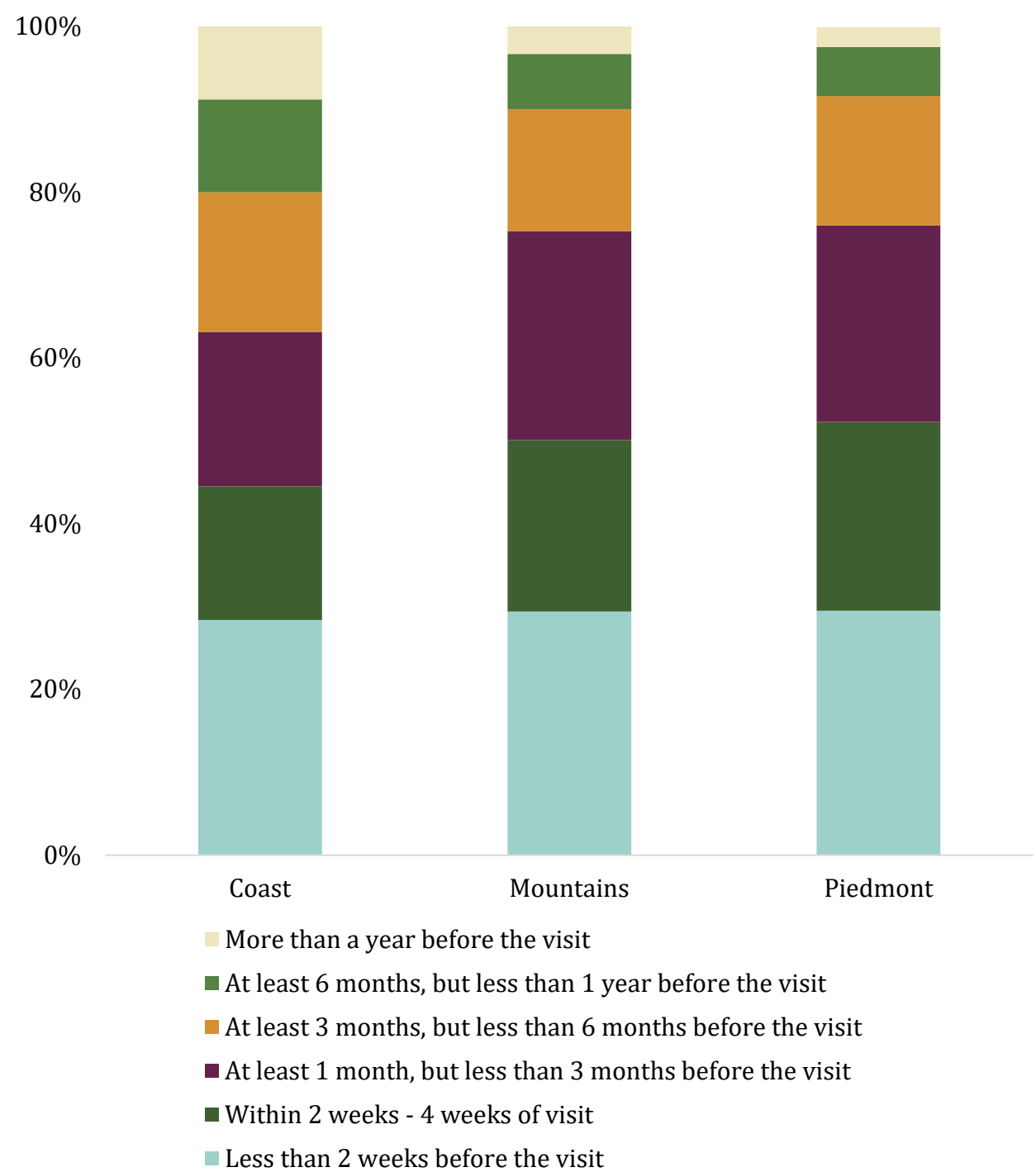
- All visitors to and within each region reported high satisfactions rates with their visits in 2024.

*Note that responses to this question ranked a satisfaction on a scale of 1-10. Totals are averaged from those ranking 6 or higher in satisfaction.



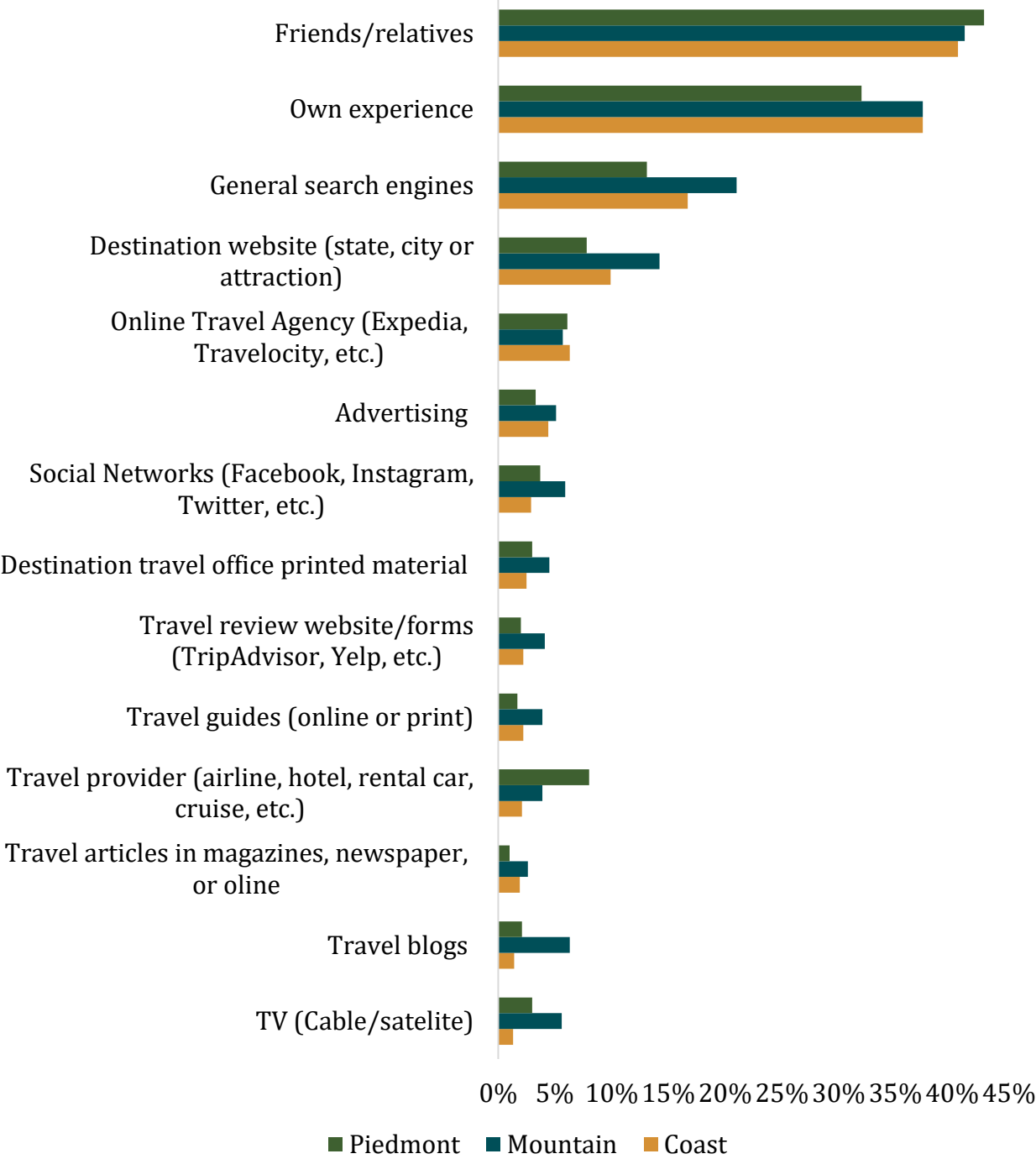
ADVANCE DECISION FOR OVERNIGHT VISIT TO NORTH CAROLINA BY REGION

- Coastal Region visitors also made the decision to visit farther in advance than other regional visitors.
- Approximately 37 percent of coastal visitors decided to visit North Carolina three months or more before the visit.
- Over one-half of visitors to the Piedmont Region made the decision to visit less than four weeks in advance and nearly one-third less than two weeks before the visit.



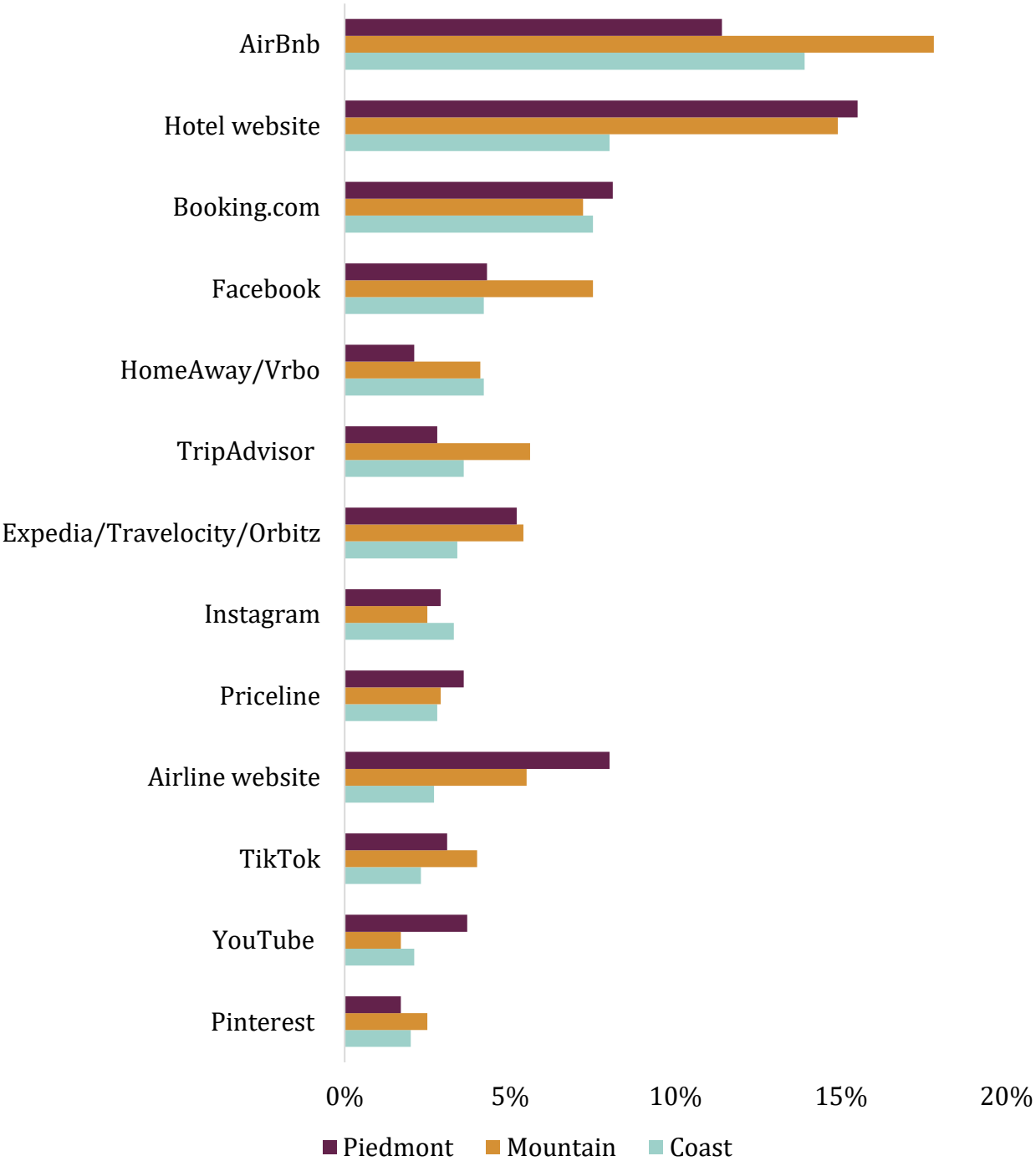
PLANNING SOURCES FOR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL TO NORTH CAROLINA

- Visitors to the Mountain Region are more likely to use destination websites, general search engines and their own experience to plan travel to NC than visitors to other regions.
- Piedmont Region visitors are most likely to rely on friends/relatives for planning sources.
- Coastal Region visitors are most likely to rely on friends/relatives or their own experience in planning, as well as general search engines.



RESEARCH SOURCES FOR OVERNIGHT TRAVEL TO NORTH CAROLINA REGIONS

- Visitors to the mountain and piedmont regions are more likely to use hotel websites to research travel than coastal visitors.
- Coastal Region visitors are more likely to research travel through Instagram and social media platforms.
- Mountain Region visitors are more likely than visitors to the other regions to use Facebook and Trip Advisor for research.



TOP ADVERTISING MARKETS FOR REGIONAL VISITORS

Coastal Region Visitor DMA of Origin	
Raleigh-Durham-Fayetteville	16%
Greensboro-High Point- Winston-Salem	9%
Charlotte	9%
Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News	6%
New York	5%
Richmond-Petersburg	4%
Greenville-New Bern- Washington	4%
Washington DC	4%
Philadelphia	3%
Florence-Myrtle Beach	2%
Harrisburg-Lancaster-Lebanon- York	2%
Cleveland	2%
Wilmington	2%
Charlottesville	2%
Pittsburgh	2%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville-Anderson	2%
Albany-Schenectady-Troy	1%
Dayton	1%
San Antonio	1%
Baltimore	1%

Mountain Region Visitor DMA of Origin	
Charlotte	14%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville-Anderson	9%
Raleigh-Durham-Fayetteville	8%
Atlanta	8%
Greensboro-High Point- Winston-Salem	7%
Tri-Cities, TN-VA	5%
Orlando-Dayton Beach- Melbourne	3%
Lexington	2%
Florence-Myrtle Beach	2%
Charleston, SC	2%
Savannah	2%
Roanoke-Lynchburg	2%
Nashville	2%
Ft. Myers-Napels	2%
Knoxville	2%
Los Angeles	2%
Wilmington	2%
New York	2%
Cincinnati	2%
Washington DC	2%

Piedmont Region Visitor DMA of Origin	
Raleigh-Durham-Fayetteville	9%
Charlotte	8%
New York	6%
Washington DC	6%
Greensboro-High Point- Winston-Salem	5%
Greenville-Spartanburg-Asheville-Anderson	4%
Greenville-New Bern- Washington	4%
Florence- Myrtle Beach	3%
Atlanta	3%
Wilmington	3%
Roanoke-Lynchburg	3%
Baltimore	2%
Philadelphia	2%
Columbia, SC	2%
Los Angeles	2%
Norfolk-Portsmouth-Newport News	1%
Richmond-Petersburg	1%
Tampa-St. Petersburg- Sarasota	1%
Detroit	1%
Dallas- Fort Worth	1%



OVERNIGHT TRAVEL PARTY CHARACTERISTICS

Average Party Size

Coastal visitor parties - 3.3, 39% of parties include children

Mountain visitor parties - 2.8, 32% of parties include children

Piedmont visitor parties - 2.5, 30% of parties include children

Marital Status

Coastal visitor - 62% married

Mountain visitor - 60% married

Piedmont visitor - 57% married

Average Age

Coastal visitor - 47 years

Mountain visitor - 48 years

Piedmont visitor - 46 years

Average Household Income

Coastal visitor parties - \$98K

Mountain visitor parties - \$97K

Piedmont visitor parties - \$97K

Ethnicity

Coastal visitor parties - 84% white, 8% black, 8% other

Mountain visitor parties - 85% white, 3% black, 12% other

Piedmont visitor parties - 72% white, 18% black, 10% other

Children in Household

Coastal visitor parties - 30%

Mountain visitor parties - 26%

Piedmont visitor parties - 24%



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 DMAs in the United States.