What Does Tourism Mean to North Carolina’s Economy?

*The Economic Contribution of Tourism in North Carolina*

**Total Impact**
- Travel and Tourism generates $22.2 billion a year in total economic demand in North Carolina.
- Nearly all sectors of the North Carolina economy benefit from tourism activity directly and/or indirectly.
- Visitors spend more in retail (including grocery stores) than in any other sector, followed closely by restaurants and lodging.
- The significant second home market generates $1.9 billion in direct economic activity within the real estate sector.

- This economic activity sustains 378,000 jobs, and 8.6% of all wage and salary employment in the state is directly or indirectly dependent on tourism. $9.9 billion in compensation is generated by tourism demand.
- The $22 billion in tourism related expenditures generates $17 billion in tourism impact (full GDP), or 4.3% of the state economy.
In terms of employment, tourism sustains 88% of the air transport sector, 100% of the lodging sector, 31% of the recreation/entertainment sector, and 25% of the food & beverage sector.

Including indirect and induced impacts, tourism in North Carolina generates $2.6 billion in state and local taxes and $2.7 billion in federal taxes.

**Direct Visitor Spending**

- Domestic visitors to and within North Carolina spent $16.9 billion in 2008, a 2.1% increase over 2007. Since 2000, it has grown by 36.2%.
- Direct visitor spending in North Carolina generates over $1.4 billion in state and local tax revenues.
- Twenty-three counties in North Carolina generate over $150 million in visitor spending. These counties are: Mecklenburg, Wake, Guilford, Dare, Buncombe, Forsyth, Durham, New Hanover, Brunswick, Cumberland, Moore, Cabarrus, Carteret, Swain, Nash, Catawba, Henderson, Watauga, Gaston, Iredell, Pitt, Johnston, and Onslow. The top three generate over $1 billion in visitor spending.
- Twenty-five counties in North Carolina have over 1,500 direct tourism jobs. These counties are: Mecklenburg, Wake, Guilford, Dare, Buncombe, Durham, Forsyth, New Hanover, Moore, Brunswick, Cumberland, Cabarrus, Swain, Carteret, Nash, Watauga, Catawba, Henderson, Pitt, Orange, Gaston, Iredell, Johnston, Onslow and Currituck.

**Average Trip Spending for Overnight Visitors to North Carolina**

- North Carolina Average Visitor Party Spending $562
- North Carolina Out-of-State Visitor Party Spending $673
- North Carolina Resident Visitor Party Spending $349

**Average Trip Spending for Overnight Visitors to North Carolina by Primary Purpose of Trip**

- Average Overnight Business Travel Party Spending $776
- Out-of-State Business Travel Party Spending $973
- North Carolina Resident Business Travel Party Spending $378

- Average Overnight Leisure Travel Party Spending $517
- Out-of-State Leisure Travel Party Spending $607
- North Carolina Resident Leisure Travel Party Spending $347

Sources: The Economic Contribution of Tourism to the State of North Carolina, Tourism Economics & U.S. Travel Association, 2009
TNS TravelsAmerica, 2009
The 2008 Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties, US Travel Association of America, 2009