

Industry: Tourism

The tourism industry continues to be one of the largest economic drivers of Savannah. Travel to Savannah remains strong as the readers of *Travel & Leisure Magazine* ranked Savannah among the “Top 10 Cities in the U.S. and Canada” (July 2008) and *Facilities & Destinations Magazine* recognized Savannah with a “Top Destination Award” in 2009.

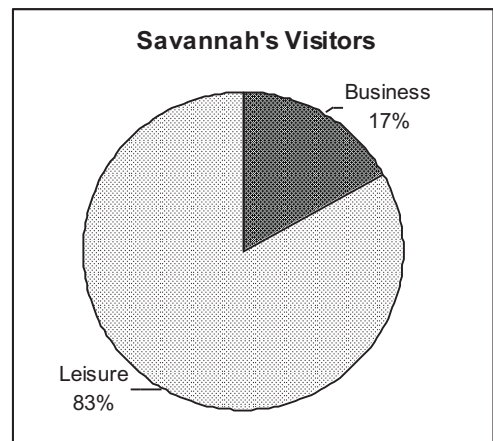
As tourism has struggled during the recent recession so has the demand for lodging. Visitor numbers declined for the first time (down 7.2 percent) from record numbers posted in 2006 and 2007. Despite the loss of visitors, direct spending showed only a modest decline, totaling nearly \$1.9 billion. Tourism in Savannah generates more than \$300 million in federal, state and local taxes. The number of jobs directly supported by tourism is more than 21,000, with an economic impact of \$1.18 billion.

Tourism’s Impact on Savannah/Chatham County

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Number of Lodging Rooms 1	11,085	11,721	12,448	13,110	13,898
Person-Stays 2	6.08 Million	6.35 Million	6.5 Million	6.88 Million	6.15 Million
Room Night Demand 1	2.867 Million	2.845 Million	2.807 Million	2.886 Million	2.805 Million
Direct Spending 2	\$1.213 Billion	\$1.385 Billion	\$1.8 Billion	\$1.98 Billion	\$1.94 Billion
Room Tax Revenue 3	\$10.47 Million	\$11.41 Million	\$13.19 Million	\$14.37 Million	\$14.04 Million

Sources: Savannah Area Convention and Visitors Bureau
 1 Smith Travel Research – Chatham County
 2 D. K. Shifflet and Associates, Ltd. – City of Savannah Only
 3 Local Municipalities – Chatham County

Savannah is full of activity year-round. The busiest months in terms of hotel occupancy are March, April, May and June. The visitor mix is 83 percent leisure travel, 17 percent business/convention/meetings. Visitors to Savannah are loyal: 60 percent return, half of whom return four or more times.



Savannah exudes an authentic beauty and charm that not many destinations can match. Some of the top reasons people visit Savannah: beauty/visual appeal, variety of restaurants and shops, unique/relaxing place to visit.

