

Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Governor Pritzker Announces Record Tourism Growth in 2023

*Investments in Illinois' Tourism Industry Drive Longer Stays and Increases
in Visitor Spending, Tax Revenue, and Local Jobs*

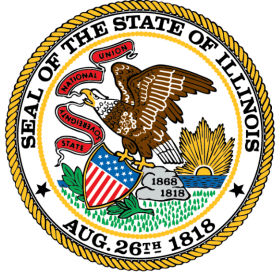
CHICAGO – Today, Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Office of Tourism announced Illinois welcomed 112 million domestic and international visitors who spent \$47 billion in 2023 – an increase of 1 million visitors and \$3 billion in spending from 2022, according to data provided by Tourism Economics. This surge in tourism also led to a new all-time high in hotel tax revenue figures in FY24, totaling \$322 million —a 4.5% increase over the previous record set in FY23.

"I'm proud to announce that Illinois had a record-breaking year for visitor and hotel tax revenue, which is a testament to our state's thriving tourism industry," **said Governor JB Pritzker**. "This impressive growth is a reflection of the millions of visitors who are eager to experience the incredible attractions that make our state a world-class destination—all while providing a significant boost to small businesses and local communities."

In 2023, leisure travelers spent more time exploring Illinois, with overnight leisure stays increasing by 4.3% statewide. The city of Chicago, in particular, saw an impressive 19.6% rise in overnight visitors, further highlighting the state's appeal as a premier destination for both domestic and international tourists.

"Illinois continues to make substantial investments in the travel and tourism sector, leading to an increase in visitors who are spending more time in our state and supporting local businesses," **said DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. "We're excited to continue this momentum and further enhance tourism in Illinois, building on this record-breaking success."

"Illinois' tourism momentum is evident as we deliver another record year of growth across various metrics including average length of stay, visitor spend and visitor growth, all while shining a light on a range of regional experiences," **said Daniel Thomas, deputy director of DCEO, Office of Tourism**. "From our big global city of Chicago, to our small town charm, we have launched new initiatives like LUXE By Illinois focusing on high-end luxury experiences, to enhanced specificity across our Outdoor experiences through Real People, Real Stories, Real Outdoors, giving visitors more compelling reasons to stay longer in Illinois and spend more."



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Visitor spending in 2023 surpassed 2019 levels for the first time, reaching 4% above its pre-pandemic benchmark. As a result of tourist spending and visits in 2023, the overall economic impact – which includes indirect and induced impacts – amounted to \$83 billion, which is a 6.4% increase from 2022 figures.

State hotel tax revenue collections are provided by the Illinois Department of Revenue, representing all taxable revenue from hotels, motels and lodging establishments across Illinois. The number of visitors is compiled by DK Shifflet and included in the report provided by Tourism Economics which also measures the economic impact of visitor spending.

“These record-breaking numbers are a testament to all the great state of Illinois has to offer,” **said Senator Steve Stadelman (D-Rockford)**. “I’m thrilled to see Illinois’ continued success in the tourism industry and the immense impact it has on the state’s local economies.”

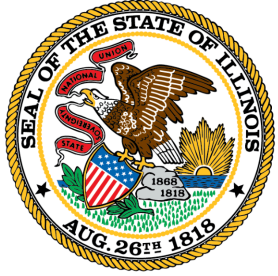
“Our tourism industry plays a critical role in driving Illinois’ economy and economic growth,” **said Senator Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago)**. “This record-breaking success is a great example of what makes Illinois a prime destination for folks from all across the globe.”

“Illinois is truly the Middle of Everything, and these record-breaking numbers prove it,” **said Representative Joyce Mason (D-Gurnee)**. “Our world-class state continues to be a premier destination for people near and far.”

Illinois has made significant investments in the travel and tourism industry, including \$4 million annually since FY 22 to support projects along Route 66, ahead of the Route 66 centennial in 2026, \$2.6 million for tourism marketing grants, and \$4.6 million for tourism and festivals grants, \$500,000 for international tourism grants and \$12 million in tourism attraction grants in FY 24. The Department also funded a new \$15 million tourism incentive grant program in FY 24 to attract new events to the state. Illinois has also distributed hundreds of millions of dollars directly to hotels, restaurants, and other tourism businesses through its Back to Business (B2B) and Business Interruption Grant programs.

In 2023, visitor spending generated \$4.6 billion in state and local tax revenue, according to Tourism Economics. This boost in revenue has stimulated various sectors of the state’s economy while directly supporting 278,200 jobs in the state’s tourism and hospitality industry, an increase of 7,600 jobs from 2022.

Another key component of Illinois tourism’s success is the state’s award-winning [“Middle of Everything”](#) tourism campaign. The campaign has contributed to an additional 2.4 million trips generating over \$1 billion spent in Illinois hotels, restaurants, small businesses, and attractions



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in 2023, according to data from Longwoods International. Additionally, every \$1 spent on the campaign equated to \$75 in visitor spending while generating \$7 in state and local tax revenue for every dollar spent – a significant return on investment.

About the Illinois Office of Tourism

The Illinois Office of Tourism leads tourism industry efforts to inspire visitation to, and within Illinois, resulting in significant economic impact and quality-of-life benefits for all Illinois residents. We are committed to making Illinois a model of inclusivity and celebration of diversity.

Illinois is a state that embodies innovation, craft, surprise and creativity. Whether domestic and international visitors are traveling for business or leisure, the Illinois Office of Tourism is their trusted guide in crafting an unforgettable experience.

To learn more, [EnjoyIllinois.com](https://www.enjoyillinois.com).

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