



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

May 7, 2024

DCEO Contact:

DCEO.media@illinois.gov

Illinois Office of Tourism Announces International Visitor Growth in 2023

Illinois Experienced 39 Percent Increase in International Visitors from 2022 - Highlighting State's Rising Global Appeal

CHICAGO – The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO), Office of Tourism, is proud to announce a significant increase in international visitors to the state in 2023, marking a momentous milestone in tourism growth for Illinois.

Illinois welcomed 2.16 million international visitors in 2023, reflecting a substantial 39% increase from the previous year, according to data provided by Tourism Economics. This surge in international visitation showcases Illinois as an increasingly sought-after global destination. Additionally, international visitors injected nearly \$2.7 billion into Illinois' economy in 2023, representing a 47% increase in spending compared to the previous year.

“This significant achievement highlights the growing global appeal of our great state and the hard work of our tourism and hospitality industry partners to make Illinois a world-class destination,” **said Governor JB Pritzker**. “Whether you call the Land of Lincoln home or are visiting from afar, we welcome everyone looking to discover all the amazing things that our state and cities have to offer.”

“Illinois is thriving! The growing interest in our state as a destination showcases the unique experiences we offer,” **said Lt. Governor Juliana Stratton**. “From our vibrant landscapes and iconic Chicago skyline, there is something for everyone to enjoy. As we continue to welcome visitors from around the world, we invite them to immerse themselves in the rich tapestry of experiences that make Illinois truly extraordinary.”

“The tourism sector plays a vital role in Illinois' economy, driving job creation, economic growth and supporting our small businesses and communities across the state,” **said DCEO Director Kristin Richards**. “The record growth in international visitors is a testament to the strength of Illinois' tourism industry and its ability to attract visitors from around the globe.”

“Illinois is truly in the Middle of Everything, and there’s no better place for international travelers to visit,” **said Sen. Sara Feigenholtz (D-Chicago)**. “The significant growth among Illinois’ tourism sector solidifies our state’s position as a welcoming, world-class destination for visitors from near and far.”

The top five markets for visitation to Illinois in 2023 include Canada, Mexico, India, the U.K. and Germany.

- Canada emerged as the leading market for international visitation, with an impressive increase from 425,000 to 627,000 visitors, representing a substantial 48% growth.
- Overseas visitors (defined as visitors not from Canada and Mexico) also showed significant growth, surging from 963,000 visitors in 2022 to 1,347,000 in 2023, marking a 40% increase.
- India demonstrated substantial growth in visitors to Illinois, with an increase of 55% from 2019 to 2023.
- Mexico contributed to the upward trend, with visitation numbers climbing from 164,000 to 183,000, reflecting a notable 12% rise.

Today's announcement of international tourism growth comes on the heels of IPW 2024 in Los Angeles, the largest annual travel trade show in the U.S. Next year, Chicago will host IPW 2025, June 14-18, 2025.

The Illinois Office of Tourism attributes this growth to strategic marketing initiatives, enhanced partnerships and a wide array of unique attractions and experiences that appeal to international travelers. The Illinois Office of Tourism partners with offshore offices in the U.K., Germany and Mexico to promote and market Illinois to international travelers.

Illinois welcomed a total of 111 million visitors who spent \$44 billion in 2022 (the latest data available) – representing 14 million additional travelers spending \$12 billion more than calendar year 2021.

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 visit [EnjoyIllinois.com](https://www.enjoyillinois.com).