



NEWS RELEASE

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TOURISM REVENUE REACHED \$53 MILLION IN ORANGE COUNTY IN 2019

Orange County, VA – Tourism revenue for Orange County reached \$52,922,809.00 in 2019, a 3% percent change over 2018. Local tourism-supported jobs totaled 624 and local tourism-related taxes totaled \$1,529,611.00.

According to the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) and the U.S. Travel Association, tourism in Virginia generated \$27 billion in visitor spending in 2019. The state-wide tourism industry supported 237,000 jobs and provided \$1.8 billion in state and local revenue. Virginia ranks 8th in the nation for domestic travel spending. Virginia's travel industry has consistently grown over the last ten (10) years with a compounded annual growth rate of 3.9 percent since 2010. However, these figures do not account for the negative impacts the COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted on the tourism industry.

"While tourism has been hit hard in Orange County, these numbers demonstrate how important it is to support our industry partners as a vital part of our diverse economy. Our Bounce Back Orange grants are intended to help get tourism back up and running safely in our beautiful community," said Ted Voorhees, County Administrator.

The coronavirus pandemic placed the Virginia travel and tourism industry in crisis, and imposed a devastating strain on hotels, restaurants, attractions, and communities. The pandemic triggered decreased revenue and a reduced workforce which caused some businesses to shutter either temporarily or completely. As a result, early state-wide numbers for 2020 project a decrease in overall tourism spending.

"Orange County tourism business was hitting strong strides in 2019 which is evident in the current data. The strength and resilience of those businesses became even more evident as 2020 brought many changes to business operations. With new obstacles placed in their way, and a loss of travelers over many months, our tourism businesses have been able to adapt while continuing to provide safe quality services. The difficulties brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has enabled our tourism businesses to discover innovative solutions that gives them a more robust toolbox of experiences to be prepared for whatever comes their way in the future," comments Lori Landes-Carter, Tourism Manager for Orange County.

While the coronavirus has had a significant impact on Virginia’s tourism economy, the industry remains hopeful for a robust return to 2019 numbers in the future. Tourism is key to economic recovery as the pandemic stabilizes and leisure and business travel resumes. As folks begin to travel again, Orange County remains proactive in its effort to assist the tourism economy into returning to a vibrant economic engine for our community.

Lori Landes-Carter added, “We are fortunate to have our small towns and outdoor spaces as a safe haven for everyone during these trying times, and we are appreciative that our community has supported these businesses in so many ways. Our tourism destinations will keep doing all they can to provide safe ways for visitors to enjoy and reconnect with the beautiful region we treasure.”

About Orange County Tourism

The Orange County Tourism department functions as the destination marketing organization for Orange County, which promotes Orange County as a leading travel destination in Central Virginia. In 2019, visitors to Orange County spent over \$53 million, which supported 624 jobs and added \$3.8 million in state and local taxes. Orange County Tourism manages a state-certified Visitor’s Center, fully supported by volunteer staff, located in the historic Train Depot in Downtown Orange. The Visitor Center welcomes visitors to the county, promotes businesses and attractions, and provides community-related information to residents.

To learn more, visit www.VisitOrangeVirginia.com

Orange County Tourism Economic Impacts	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Percent Change YR/YR
Total Employment	568	604	601	613	624	1.8%
Total Expenditures	\$ 45,209,545	\$ 48,334,002	\$ 48,771,158	\$ 51,367,695	\$52,922,809	3.0%
Local Tax Receipts	\$ 1,331,038	\$ 1,450,815	\$ 1,439,295	\$ 1,485,520	\$ 1,529,611	3.0%
Total Payroll	\$ 10,819,904	\$ 11,810,192	\$ 11,943,498	\$ 12,477,208	\$ 13,215,140	5.9%
State Tax Receipts	\$ 1,932,701	\$ 2,104,192	\$ 2,097,599	\$ 2,178,321	\$ 2,265,104	4.0%

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