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Tourism Revenue Grew in Charlottesville and Albemarle County in 2015

All Virginia localities saw increased tourism revenue
while Virginia topped \$23 billion

Charlottesville, Virginia – September 15, 2016 - Data released by the U.S. Travel Association reveals that all regions in Virginia posted an increase in tourism revenue last year. According to the U.S. Travel Association, tourism in Virginia generated \$23 billion in travel spending. Tourism also supported 223,000 jobs in the Commonwealth and \$1.6 billion in state and local taxes. The increase is largely attributed to Virginia's authentic, local travel experiences, diversity of tourism product, and the notable efforts of the destination marketing organizations and their leadership.

Tourism was again an important contributor to the local economy in 2015. Tourism revenue for Charlottesville & Albemarle County reached \$569.6 million, a 3.0% percent change over 2014. Local tourism-supported jobs totaled 5,583 while local tourism-related taxes were \$19.5 million. All data was received by the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) from U.S. Travel Association and is based on domestic visitor spending (travelers from within the United States) from trips taken 50 miles or more away from home.

"We're especially pleased to see positive numbers across the board. The Charlottesville Albemarle area has been on a steady upward trajectory since climbing out of the recession. Travel is a discretionary item and by continuing to telegraph positive and alluring messaging about our destination in a crowded global arena, we are able to increase visitor conversion, which ultimately leads to additional visitor spending, jobs that are created and sustained, and additional local revenue that helps contribute to a healthy, local economy," said Kurt Burkhardt, CACVB Executive Director.

"Having a strong tourism industry is vital to job creation and economic growth in Virginia," **said Governor McAuliffe**. "Travelers are coming to Virginia from across the country and the globe to experience our world-class restaurants, wineries, craft breweries, music festivals, oyster farms, beaches, mountains, and more. Our rich history, scenic beauty, vibrant arts, and burgeoning culinary scene make Virginia a destination like none other. It's easy to see why travelers are eager to discover why Virginia is for Lovers."

"Tourism is one of Virginia's top five industries, and is an instant revenue generator for the Commonwealth," **said Todd Haymore, Secretary of Commerce and Trade**. "With \$23 billion in tourism revenues, 2015 was another record-breaking year for the Virginia tourism industry, thanks to the hard-working professionals across the state that help to showcase Virginia as a premier travel destination."

The Virginia Tourism Corporation is the state agency responsible for marketing Virginia to visitors and promoting the [Virginia is for Lovers](#) brand. *Virginia is for Lovers* is the longest-running state tourism slogan in the country. *Virginia is for Lovers* stands for love, pure and simple, and promotes the state as the ideal destination for loved ones to completely connect on a great vacation. *Virginia is for Lovers* was named one of the top 10 tourism marketing campaigns of all time by Forbes and was inducted into the National Advertising Walk of Fame in 2009.

Love is at the heart of every Virginia vacation. Go to <http://www.virginia.org/> and start planning a trip or call 1-800-VISITVA to request a free, Virginia is for Lovers Travel Guide.

The Virginia Tourism Corporation receives its annual economic impact data from the U.S. Travel Association. The information is based on domestic visitor spending (travelers from within the United States) from per-person trips taken 50 miles or more away from home. Detailed economic impact data by locality is available on www.vatc.org under Research.

About the Charlottesville Albemarle Convention & Visitors Bureau (CACVB):

In addition to serving as the global resource for marketing the tourism assets of [Charlottesville](#) and [Albemarle County](#), Virginia, through www.visitcharlottesville.org, the CACVB assists tour operators, meeting planners, reunions and other groups in planning visits to the destination. CACVB's mission is "to enhance the economic prosperity of City and County by promoting, selling and marketing the City of Charlottesville and County of Albemarle, as a destination, in pursuit of the meetings and tourism markets." CACVB operates the [Downtown Visitor Center \(610 E Main St\)](#) which is open daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., and a second visitor center, the [Albemarle Tourism and Adventure Center](#) in downtown Crozet ([5791 Three Notch'd Rd](#)) at the historic train depot; it is open Wednesday - Saturday 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. and Sunday Noon - 5:00 p.m. The CACVB also provides a touch-screen kiosk at Monticello's Thomas Jefferson Visitor Center. The official website of the CACVB is www.visitcharlottesville.org. In addition, the organization manages powerful social media channels; ExperienceCharlottesville on Facebook, @VisitCVille on Twitter, CVilleVA on Pinterest, and @CharlottesvilleVA on Instagram and Vimeo.

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