

NEWS RELEASE

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Orange County, NC Visitor Spending Tops \$192 Million in 2016

Chapel Hill, NC - (August 16, 2017) – Visit North Carolina announced yesterday that domestic visitors to and within Orange County, NC spent \$192.63 million in 2016, a 4.4% increase from 2015. This represents a tax savings of \$103.32 per county resident.

“We’ve been fortunate to see continued tourism growth in our communities,” said Laurie Paolicelli, Director of the Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau. “Based on visitor research, we know that UNC, Healthcare, walkability, arts, food and climate are key draws. In addition the Visitors Bureau, in partnership with the hospitality industry, works hard to tell our story to the traveling public day after day.”

Paolicelli said that the Atlantic Coast is the top source of visitors for Orange County, from Washington D.C., to Atlanta.

Orange County Tourism impact highlights for 2016:

- The travel and tourism industry directly employs 1,890 in Orange County, up 3.5% over 2015.
- Total payroll generated by the tourism industry in Orange County was \$37.41 million, a 5.4% increase.
- State tax revenue generated in Orange County totaled \$10.48 million through state sales and excise taxes, and taxes on personal and corporate income. This is a 5% increase over 2015.
- \$4.16 million in local taxes, an increase of 4.7%, were generated from sales and property tax revenue from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.

These statistics are from the “[Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties 2016](#).” The study was prepared for [Visit North Carolina](#) by the U.S. Travel Association. Economic impact is represented by measures of spending, employment, payroll, and tax revenues from travel-generated and travel-supported businesses.

"I am proud to be part of the tourism industry in Chapel Hill and Orange County," said Pheron Sledge, supervising chef with The Carolina Inn's Crossroads Chapel Hill restaurant. "Seeing our customer base increase and knowing that more are people visiting and coming back means greater employment opportunities."

Gov. Roy Cooper announced in May that visitors to North Carolina set a record for spending in 2016. The \$22.9 billion in total spending represented an increase of 4.4 percent from 2015.

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About the Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau

As the official accredited destination marketing organization of Chapel Hill and Orange County, the mission of the Chapel Hill/Orange County Visitors Bureau is to develop and coordinate visitor services in Orange County and to implement marketing programs that will enhance the economic activity and quality of life in the community. The Visitors Bureau is a department of Orange County, NC Government. For information: www.VisitChapelHill.org

Photo courtesy of Pheron Sledge, supervising chef with Crossroads Chapel Hill, The Carolina Inn

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Photo courtesy of Pheron Sledge, supervising chef with Crossroads Chapel Hill, The Carolina Inn.

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