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Labor Day Weekend to Mark Change in Visitor Profile

While the summer officially ends in three weeks, peak travel season in Newport continues through the fall.

Newport (R.I.) August 31, 2018 – With students returning to school and pumpkin spice flavor reappearing in everything from cookies to cappuccino, Labor Day weekend has long marked the proverbial end of summer, but in Newport, Rhode Island, and many of its neighboring coastal communities, the busiest travel time of the year continues.

“Labor Day weekend marks a shifting of gears, so to speak, but let me be clear: our destination does not see a decline in visitors this time of year. Instead, we simply welcome different demographics,” says Evan Smith, President & CEO of Discover Newport. “As fall approaches, we see our highest concentration of international travelers. We welcome hundreds of motor coaches – sometimes more than 60 a day – with travelers eager to experience our attractions, restaurants, shops and most especially, New England’s famed fall foliage. We’ll be welcoming 50 cruise ships from now through early November, our event venues collectively host dozens of weddings weekly, and we have a robust event schedule which welcomes thousands of visitors including the Newport International Boat Show, the Newport Mansions Wine & Food Festival, the Norman Bird Sanctuary Harvest Fair, the Bowen’s Wharf Seafood Festival, Newport Restaurant Week and many more.”

Fall is also the busiest time for meetings and small conventions in Newport. “Historically, our convention-style hotels see a transition from predominantly leisure travelers to meeting and convention delegates after Labor Day weekend, though they host both demographics throughout the year,” says Tim Walsh, Vice President of Sales for Discover Newport. “We’re looking forward a busy autumn calendar full of corporate, government and association meetings in addition to wedding and group business.”

Reflecting on lodging data from the past six months, Smith says it’s been a successful year thus far for the destination. Year-to-date, lodging revenue in Newport is up 9.4% and surrounding Newport County

is up 3.3%, according to STR (formerly known as Smith Travel Research). “These are undeniably positive indicators and notably, they do not include AirBnB and other short-term rental stays which account for about 15% of the local lodging marketplace,” adds Smith. “All signs are pointing towards a prosperous year as we wrap up third quarter, though we’re mindful of possible disruptors like weather events and unforeseen impacts to the economy. With consumer confidence up, we’re cautiously optimistic that robust travel will round out the year here on the Classic Coast.”

ABOUT DISCOVER NEWPORT

Discover Newport is the official destination management organization (DMO) dedicated to promoting the City of Newport and the eight surrounding coastal townships in Newport and Bristol counties, Rhode Island. These include Barrington, Bristol, Jamestown, Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth, Tiverton and Warren. As a non-profit organization, Discover Newport partners with stakeholders throughout our tourism and hospitality industry to market the region as a premier destination for business and leisure travel.

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