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JANUARY 24, 2019

**OAKLAND WELCOMED 3.8M TRAVELERS & A RECORD \$668M VISITOR SPEND IN 2017**

*Visit Oakland Reports on Economic Impact Numbers and Unveils New Strategies for 2019*

**Oakland, CA — Visit Oakland**, the city's official destination marketing organization, is showing strong tourism growth with interest from domestic and international travelers, in new economic impact numbers. In 2017, 3.8 million visitors traveled to Oakland and spent \$668 million, an increase of 6.5% from 2016. Visit Oakland is announcing these results and their 2018 key accomplishments at the Chamber's 2019 Economic Forecast breakfast presentation to be held this morning at Yoshi's in Jack London Square.

Visitor spend has been increasing year after year and has grown an impressive 28% over the past five years. Tourism has also had a significant impact on Oakland's employment sector, with jobs in the industry increasing 17.3% in 2017. Visitors contribute \$50.6 million to state and local tax coffers, helping offset the average Oakland household tax burden by \$505 per household.

"A combination of factors, including improving consumer confidence, rising incomes, strategic tourism initiatives and strong partnerships within the local hospitality industry, has really helped build momentum for a robust tourism economy with all indicators pointing towards a positive outlook for 2019," said **Visit Oakland CEO Mark Everton**.

Recently named a "2019 Best Trip" by *National Geographic Traveler*, this year is going to be eventful for tourism in Oakland. Oakland will welcome new hotel properties this year, as well as new restaurants, breweries, wineries and bars. Oakland Museum of California will celebrate their 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and will unveil exciting new exhibits for visitors to enjoy. This May, Visit Oakland will relaunch Oakland Art Month for the second year with new programming to highlight Oakland's diverse arts and culture.

Visit Oakland will execute new marketing campaigns in 2019 to solidify Oakland as a leading destination for innovation and thought in arts and culture; including the Oakland Style Guide, which will showcase Oakland's fashion through its talented designers and boutique offerings; and a Cannabis-tourism campaign, which will highlight Oakland's innovative cannabis businesses and experiences.

Other projects include making the Visit Oakland website ADA accessible, adding 360 degree images of Oakland businesses on the website and launching a digitized map and passport program for the Oakland Ale Trail, Urban Wine Trail and more of the city's experiences.

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**ABOUT VISIT OAKLAND**

Visit Oakland is a private, not-for-profit, 501(c)(6) organization, with a 21-member board of directors and full time staff whose goal is to increase tourism's economic impact to Oakland through destination development and brand management. For more information, visit [visitoakland.com](http://visitoakland.com).

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