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## **SLO CAL's TOURISM INDUSTRY SOARED AND VISITOR SPENDING SURGED TO AN UNPRECEDENTED \$2.15 BILLION 2022**

*Announcement coincides with U.S. Travel Association's  
National Travel and Tourism Week*

**San Luis Obispo County, California, [May 8, 2023]**– Today, Visit SLO CAL, the countywide Destination Marketing and Management Organization for San Luis Obispo County, announced tourism has soared to a record-breaking \$2.15 billion in direct travel spending impact in SLO CAL (San Luis Obispo County), underscoring the massive impact that tourism contributes in the region. This represents a remarkable 13.8 percent increase in year over year numbers and a 6 percent increase from 2019, the previous record high (\$2.02 billion).

In 2022, SLO CAL welcomed 7.47 million visitors, nearly 2019 levels, meaning visitors spent more money during their trips.

"We are ecstatic to share the news of our record-breaking year for tourism," said Chuck Davison, President and CEO of Visit SLO CAL. "Tourism is the number two economic driver in the region, second only to agriculture. Travel impacts every sector of business and supports local economies across the globe, including right here in SLO CAL. Visitors support numerous sectors across SLO CAL including accommodations, transportation, food and beverage, attractions, retail and more. Between the taxes tourism generates and the local businesses it supports, tourism plays an important role in positively contributing to the quality of life for our residents."

In 2022, tourism provided \$116 million in local tax revenue, which aids essential services in the community. Without the tax generated by tourism, each local household would need to pay an additional \$1,929 in taxes to maintain a similar level of community support. Furthermore, each household would need to spend an additional \$20,152 to create the same economic impact for local businesses.

Other notable metrics achieved in 2022 include:

- SLO CAL's tourism industry earnings (total after-tax net income for travel including wages and salary disbursements) \$865 million. This is an increase of 16.9 percent year over year as well as an increase of 6.13 percent from 2019.
- Tourism comprises 9.78% of SLO CAL's countywide GDP.
- Tourism contributes \$62.7 million in transient occupancy tax revenue, which was a 6.3 percent increase year over year.

The news comes as the nation celebrates U.S. Travel Association's National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) May 8-12. Now in its 40th year, the annual tradition recognizes the essential role travel plays in stimulating economic growth, cultivating vibrant communities, creating quality job opportunities, inspiring new businesses, and elevating the quality of life for Americans every day. Marking a 15 percent year over year increase, tourism puts over 22,000 residents to work



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each day in SLO CAL, including lodging, food service, arts, entertainment, recreation, ground transportation, wineries, breweries, distilleries, and more.

“Visit SLO CAL recently commissioned a resident survey to gauge sentiment of tourism,” continued Davison. “Findings will be released in June, but early reports show that more than two-thirds of residents say that tourism makes the community a better place to live. This study shows locals are more educated than originally thought about the positive impact tourism plays on our region, the dollars it injects into our county and city coffers and its broader significance across the community.”

NTTW also coincides with California Tourism Month, a bipartisan declaration established in 2016 for the month of May. With the annual designation, the state-wide travel organization, Visit California, relies on in-state tourism partners, such as Visit SLO CAL, to continue recognizing the future of travel hinges on a collective resiliency and resolve to create a more efficient, innovative and sustainable industry. Visit SLO CAL was proud to [release](#) the SLO CAL Mural Trail in coincidence of California Tourism Month to give Californians, and all travelers, another reason to plan their travel to the Center of California’s Central Coast.

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**ABOUT NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK:**

National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) is an annual tradition to celebrate the U.S. travel community and travel’s essential role in stimulating economic growth, cultivating vibrant communities, creating quality job opportunities, inspiring new businesses and elevating the quality of life for Americans every day. Celebrated annually the first full week of May, NTTW was created by Congress in 1983 to elevate the economic power of travel in the U.S. The 40th annual NTTW will spotlight the essential role that travel will play in driving economic growth and innovation through the theme #TravelForward. For more information, go to [ustravel.org/NTTW](http://ustravel.org/NTTW).

**ABOUT CALIFORNIA TOURISM MONTH:**

Celebrated annually in May, California Tourism Month is an official state observance first designated by the Legislature in 2016 and re-authorized in subsequent years to spotlight the economic power of tourism across California communities and urges citizens to support tourism and local businesses by traveling in state as an act of civic pride. California Tourism Month also serves as a reminder to lawmakers that tourism doesn’t just happen but requires concerted marketing and favorable policies. For more information, go to [VisitCalifornia.com](http://VisitCalifornia.com).

**ABOUT VISIT SLO CAL:**

Visit SLO CAL is the countywide non-profit destination marketing and management organization (DMMO) for San Luis Obispo County (SLO CAL). Visit SLO CAL is responsible for promoting SLO CAL as an attractive travel destination and enhancing the public image as a dynamic place to live and work. Through the impact of travel, Visit SLO CAL strengthens the economic position and provides opportunity for all people in the community. Built on research with a strategy of continuous improvement, Visit SLO CAL aims to establish SLO CAL as a favorite West Coast destination known for its signature slower pace of life and unique mix of incredible, immersive guest experiences. For more information, go to [SLOCAL.com](http://SLOCAL.com).