



Greater Williamsburg CHAMBER & TOURISM ALLIANCESM

York County Experiences Greatest Tourism Dollars Increase Among Historic Triangle Localities;

Tourism revenue increased by 2.8% in Greater Williamsburg in 2015

-All Virginia regions saw increased tourism revenue while Virginia reached \$23 billion-

Williamsburg, VA

(September 14, 2016) - Data released by the U.S. Travel Association reveals that tourism was again an important contributor to the local economy in 2015. **Tourism revenue for York County increased by 3.5% to \$218,300,519 in tourism expenditures while local tourism-related taxes totaled \$8.2 million in York County.**

Local tourism-supported jobs totaled 11,709 for the region while local tourism-related taxes were \$44.1 million including \$16.8 million in James City County, \$19 million in the City of Williamsburg. 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.

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.

"We are pleased to see an increase in tourism revenue, payroll, employment and local tax receipts for the full year 2015," **said Karen Riordan, President & CEO of the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance.** "Visitors are enjoying the full range of vacation experiences we have to offer from the arts to ecotourism to culinary to theme parks and water parks, as well as our world-class living history museums. We will continue to work with our tourism partners in the region and the state to increase visitor appeal and visitation to our amazing destination."

"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. For information to help plan your trip to the Williamsburg area go to www.VisitWilliamsburg.com.

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 Greater Williamsburg Chamber and Tourism Alliance

The mission of the GWCTA is to advocate, collaborate and create networking opportunities so that new businesses can emerge and existing businesses can grow and prosper, while promoting our region as a premier year-round travel destination. Representing nearly 800 businesses, non-profit organizations, and educational institutions, the Greater Williamsburg Chamber & Tourism Alliance aims to advance the best interests of the community.

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