

Tourism impact in Wisconsin up 21 percent in 2021, report shows

Posted on Thursday, Jun 9, 2022

The economic impact of tourism in Wisconsin last year increased 21 percent over 2020 but remained below 2019 levels, according to a new state report.

A report from the state Department of Tourism shows tourism in the state had a \$20.9 billion economic impact in 2021, marking an increase from the \$17.3 billion seen in the prior year. But it fell short of the \$22.2 billion “record-setting” impact from 2019.

It also notes every county in the state saw double-digit growth in tourism spending, ranging from 11.9 percent in Wood County to 44 percent in Sauk County.

Several counties had over \$1 billion in tourism spending last year, the report shows. These include: Brown, with nearly \$1.1 billion; Dane, with just under \$2 billion; Milwaukee, with nearly \$3.4 billion; Sauk, with about \$1.8 billion; and Waukesha, \$1.4 billion.

On a statewide basis, visitors generated \$1.4 billion in state and local taxes through tourism spending.

“There’s no question that Wisconsin’s travel and tourism industry is a major economic driver for our local and statewide economies,” Gov. Tony Evers said in the release. “That’s why we’ve worked hard over the course of the past few years to make strategic investments to ensure the industry, as well as the dedicated folks

who make up the industry, could rebound, recover and thrive, and it's great to see that happening."

Meanwhile, the state also saw an increase in tourism employment and the total number of visitors last year. Over 169,700 full- and part-time jobs were supported by tourism in 2021, which is 7 percent higher than in 2020. And the state saw 102.3 million trips last year for an increase of 12 percent from 2020.

See the release:

<https://www.wisbusiness.com/2022/wisconsin-department-of-tourism-wisconsin-tourism-surges-in-2021/>

See the report, including the county-level breakdown:

<https://www.industry.travelwisconsin.com/research/economic-impact/>

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