

2024 Santa Monica Tourism Economic & Fiscal Impacts and Visitor Profile Summary

Summary: In 2024, an estimated 4.2 million people visited Santa Monica, 9% lower than the 4.6 million in 2023. Length of stay also decreased to 1.39 days (from 1.46 last year), resulting in 5.39 million total visitor days, a 14% drop from 6.8 million in 2023. Visitors spent a total of \$916.6 million in 2024, off just 2% from \$938 million in 2023, helped by the 13% spike in daily per-capita spending of \$156 (\$138). Visitor generated taxes rose by .3%, due to a .7% rise in lodging tax to \$62.7 million (\$62.6 million), and a 1.5% uptick in retail sales tax to \$4.22 million (\$4.17 million). Visitor activity and spending supported 6,487 (7,182) local jobs, a 10% drop. For the indicators rising in 2024, much was due to the 67% growth in international visitation, to 1.87 million (1.117). Coupled with their \$169 (\$174) per-capita spending, total international spending reached \$470.9 million (\$366.6 million), a robust 29% spike. Conversely, domestic U.S. volume fell by 33%, to 2.36 million (3.52 million). Their higher per-capita spend at \$145 from \$122, was not enough to increase total spending, which dipped to \$445.6 million (\$571.5 million). Thus, in 2024, Santa Monica’s vital tourism industry saw strong recovery of international demand, which helped grow spending and tax receipts, while mitigating softening and increasingly competitive U.S. origin visitation.

1. 2024 SANTA MONICA – KEY VISITOR INDICATORS (2024 vs. 2023)

Indicator	2024		2023
	Number	% Change	
Total Number of Visitors	4,222,400	-9.0%	4,637,700
Average Length of Stay (days, all visitors)	1.39	-4.8%	1.46
Total Visitor Days	5,869,900	-13.9%	6,787,600
Total Annual Visitor Spending	\$916,563,200	-2.3%	\$ 938,116,500
Per-capita Daily Visitor Spending	\$156.15	13.0%	\$ 138.21
Hotel & STR Tax Revenue to City (non-local visitors) ¹	\$62,694,900	.7%	\$ 62,557,600
Visitor Retail Sales Tax Revenue to City ¹	\$4,229,100	1.5%	\$ 4,166,200
Equivalent Tax per SM Household from Visitor Spend	\$1,441	3.5%	\$ 1,392
Santa Monica Jobs Supported by Tourism	6,487	-9.7%	7,182

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting Inc., and CIC Research, Inc., for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

2. ANNUAL 2024 VISITOR SPENDING IN SANTA MONICA IN TOTAL & BY CATEGORY (2024 vs. 2023)

Indicator	2024			% Change 2024/ 2023	2023		
	Per-Capita Daily	Total Spending	Ratio		Per-Capita Daily	Total Spending	Ratio
Lodging	\$ 83.02	\$ 487,295,197	53.2%	-4.8%	\$ 75.39	\$ 511,745,371	54.6%
Shopping/Gifts	\$ 27.73	\$ 162,794,344	17.8%	56.4%	\$ 15.34	\$ 104,100,334	11.1%
Meals (out)	\$ 25.86	\$ 151,823,620	16.6%	-17.8%	\$ 27.20	\$ 184,640,683	19.7%
Beverages	\$ 9.26	\$ 54,342,282	5.9%	-35.3%	\$ 12.37	\$ 83,942,881	8.9%
Local Transportation/Parking	\$ 5.60	\$ 32,867,653	3.6%	25.0%	\$ 3.87	\$ 26,292,967	2.8%
Groceries/Other Items	\$ 1.52	\$ 8,942,556	1.0%	64.4%	\$ 0.80	\$ 5,439,150	0.6%
Admissions Fees	\$ 1.48	\$ 8,684,248	.9%	-27.7%	\$ 1.77	\$ 12,015,796	1.3%
Activities	\$ 1.47	\$ 8,655,823	.9%	74.5%	\$ 0.73	\$ 4,959,657	0.5%
Amenities: Wellness/Health/etc.	\$.20	\$ 1,157,458	.1%	-76.8%	\$ 0.73	\$ 4,979,704	0.5%
Total	\$156.15	\$ 916,563,182	100.0%	-2.3%	\$ 138.21	\$ 938,116,544	100.0%

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc., and CIC Research, Inc., for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

3. SANTA MONICA – 2024 VISITOR VOLUME & ECONOMIC IMPACT BY SEGMENT

Visitor Segment	Annual Visitors	Ratio	% Chg. Vis. (prior)	Avg. Stay (days)	Total Annual Visitor Spending	Ratio	% Chg. Spend. (prior)	Daily Avg. Spend per-person
Hotel/Motel	534,825	12.7%	-7.9%	3.02	\$ 699,465,848	76.3%	5.7%	\$ 433.34
Private (unpaid) Lodging	69,055	1.6%	13.0%	5.24	\$ 19,266,318	2.1%	-54.4%	\$ 53.25
Other Paid Lodging	61,126	1.4%	-17.7%	5.51	\$ 71,214,244	7.8%	15.5%	\$ 211.61
Day Visitors	3,557,422	84.3%	-14.2%	1.00	\$ 126,616,773	13.8%	-38.9%	\$ 35.59
International	1,866,400	44.2%	67.1%	1.49	\$ 470,926,820	51.4%	28.5%	\$ 168.83
U.S. Domestic	2,356,000	56.8%	-33.1%	1.31	\$ 445,636,350	48.6 [^]	-22.0%	\$ 144.66

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc., and CIC Research, Inc. for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

¹ Lodging (hotels + short term rentals) and Sales tax based on direct taxable visitor spending; will vary from City reported tax revenues.

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4. SUMMARY – 2024 SANTA MONICA VISITOR PROFILE (2024 & 2023)^{1, 2}

Characteristic	2024	2023
International Visitor share (of total visitors)	44%	24%
U.S. Resident visitor share (of total visitors, excl. California)	41%	53%
California Resident visitor share (of total visitors)	15%	23%
First-Time Visitor / Repeat Visitor (past three years)	65% / 35%	51% / 49%
Avg. number past visits in past 3 years by repeat visitors (excl this trip)	2.6	2.6
Mainly visiting Santa Monica for pleasure/vacation	51%	44%
Santa Monica <i>main</i> destination of this trip	22%	25%
Arrived in Southern California by commercial air	56%	31%
Walking to get around in Santa Monica	63%	40%
Day Visitor / Overnight Visitors in Santa Monica	84% / 16%	77% / 23%
Staying in a Santa Monica hotel: All visitors / Overnight visitors	13% / 80%	17% / 77%
Staying in a Santa Monica hotel - International visitors: All / Overnight	13% / 83%	21% / 81%
Staying in Santa Monica hotel - Other U.S. (excl. Cal): All / Overnight	14% / 81%	18% / 76%
Average stay in Santa Monica – all / overnight visitors (nights)	1.29 / 3.1	.69 / 3.1
Average stay in Santa Monica - hotel guests (nights)	2.9	2.8
Average stay in Santa Monica – other paid lodging guests (nights)	3.8	4.5
Average travel group size (persons)	2.7	3.4
Average daily per-person spending in Santa Monica (all visitors)	\$156	\$138
Median annual household income	\$95,700	\$89,900

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc. and CIC Research, Inc., for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

5. VISITOR ORIGIN – SANTA MONICA 2024 TOP U.S. & INTERNATIONAL FEEDER MARKETS

Top 10 U.S. Feeder States		All International Feeder Markets	
State	Share of U.S.	Country/Region	Share of Int'l.
California	27.5%	Europe: Western	19.7%
Arizona	7.5%	Europe: Central and Eastern	19.5%
Texas	7.1%	United Kingdom/Ireland	13.2%
New York	5.6%	Scandinavia	7.7%
Nevada	4.8%	Australia/New Zealand	6.0%
Colorado	3.3%	Eastern Canada	5.7%
Utah	3.2%	Far East Asia	5.6%
Ohio	2.9%	South America	4.3%
Minnesota	2.9%	Mexico/Central America	3.9%
Washington	2.7%	Western Canada	3.6%
Top 10 states	67.4%	Middle East	2.8%
		Asia Pacific (Indonesia, Philippines, other)	2.4%
		South Asia/Indian subcontinent	2.2%
		Africa	1.0%

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc., and CIC Research, Inc. for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

¹ A visitor resides *outside* of Los Angeles County, and is in Santa Monica for the day or overnight, for leisure, business, a meeting, special event, or other temporary purpose, except regular work or to attend school.

² Profile data based on 1,462 on-site interviews during four quarters of 2024 among Santa Monica visitors as defined above.

* When quoting these data, attribution to: *Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc., and CIC Research Inc. for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism* 04/2025