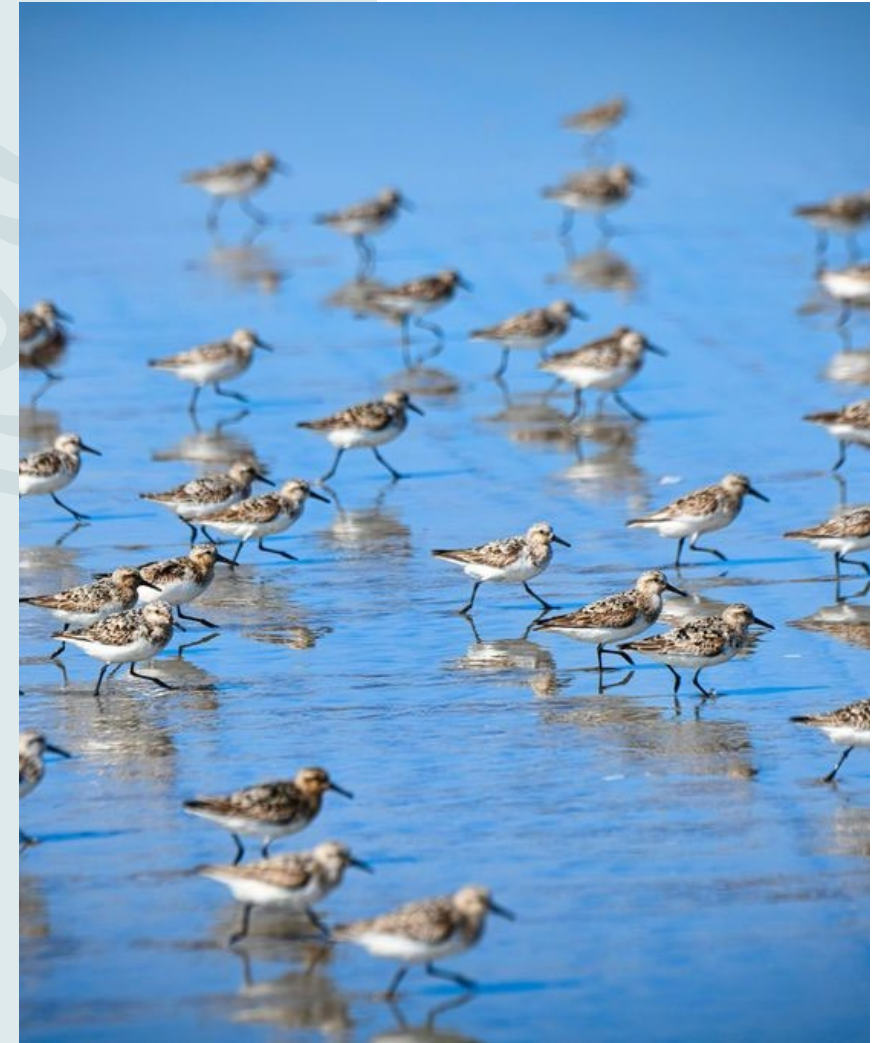




CAPE MAY COUNTY TOURISM CONFERENCE

SNAPSHOT OF TOURISM'S IMPACT IN 2024

Cape May County Board of Commissioners
Leonard C. Desiderio, Director
Andrew Bulakowski, Vice Director
Bobby Barr, Commissioner
Melanie Collette, Commissioner
Will Morey, Commissioner
Kevin Lare, Administrator



Diane Wieland, Director
Cape May County Department of Tourism
Diane.Wieland@capemaycountynj.gov

2024 Impacts of Tourism in Cape May County

2024 Tourism Highlights

- Cape May County experienced record tourism growth, with a 5% increase and an economic impact with \$8.1 billion in direct tourism spending in 2024.
- The county welcomed 12.11 million visitors, supporting 4,703 jobs and generating \$668.5 million in state and local taxes.
- In 1994, Cape May County generated \$2 billion in direct tourism spending.
- By 2025, this figure grew to \$8.1 billion, marking an increase of \$6.1 billion over 31 years.
- 84% of visitors return; 44% have been coming for 20+ years.
- 48% take 2 or more vacations in Cape May County.
- 90% said their vacation met their expectations.
- 57% travel with families (3-6 in group); 34% are couples.
- 50% stayed a week or longer.
- 15% are first time visitors.



Cape May County Tourism Economic Impacts

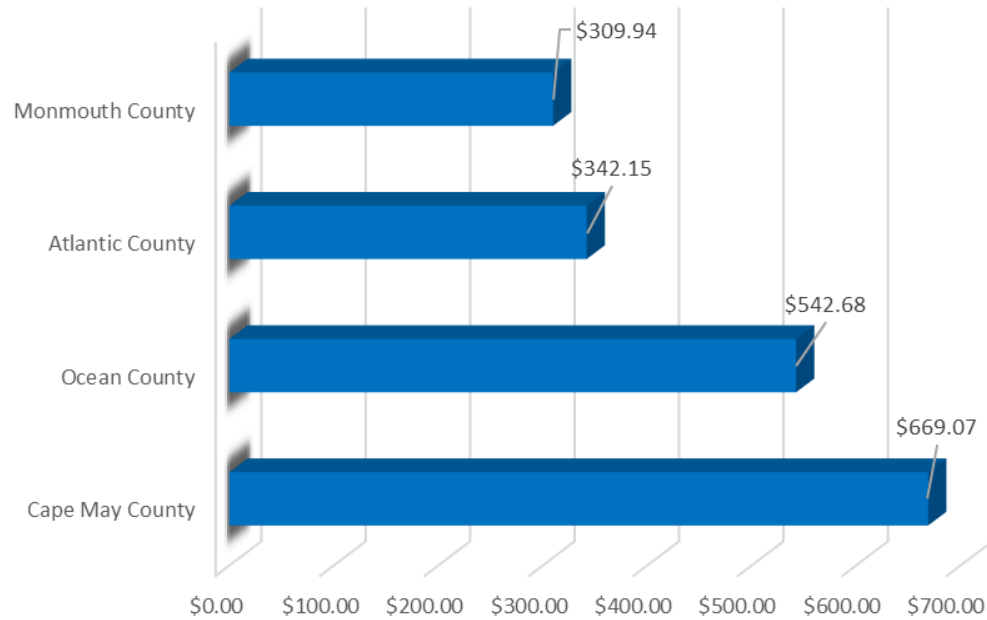
Total Direct Tourism Expenditures in 2024 - \$8.102 Billion

This represents a 5% or \$388 million increase in visitor spending over 2023.

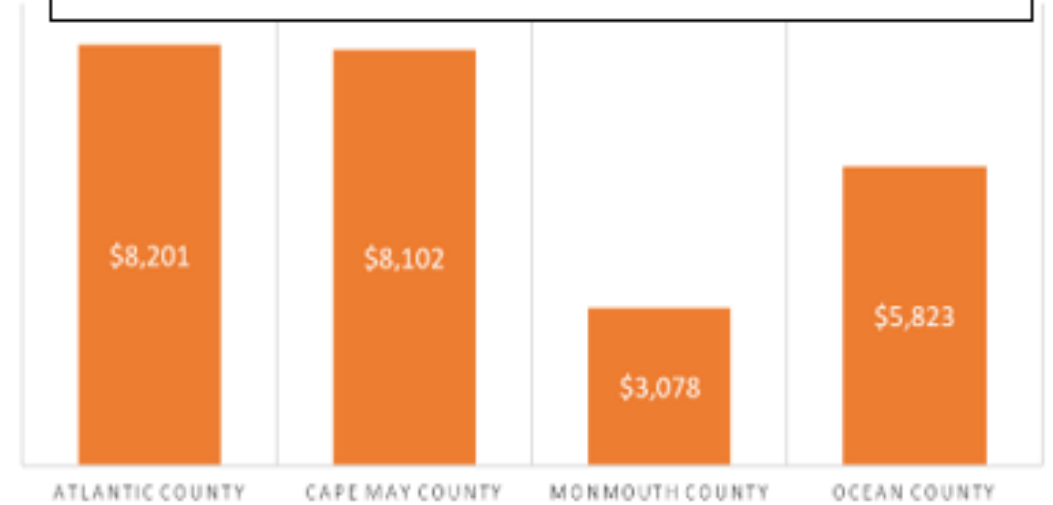
Lodging	Food & Beverage	Retail	Recreation	Transportation
\$3.344 billion	\$1.87 billion	\$1.52 billion	\$828.1 million	\$546.3 million

- Cape May County ranks second to Atlantic County in total direct spending. Lodging included rentals and casino spending. Transportation includes both ground and air transportation. In-person spending in Atlantic City was \$2.81 billion.
 - Cape May County outpaced all other counties in Food & Beverage, Retail, and Recreation.
 - All sectors measured experienced growth in 2024, with a 5% total increase in visitor spending.
 - Cape May County generated \$668.5 million in State and Local Taxes, an increase of 4.9%. (\$1.83 million per day) 13.4% of the total share collected in New Jersey.
 - Visitor-supported direct jobs 32,051, an increase of 2.3%; 44.7% share of local employment, and 9.6% share of total tourism jobs in New Jersey.
 - Total visitor-supported direct and indirect tourism jobs 41,703 or 58.1% of total county jobs.
 - Total visitor volume 12.11 million, an increase of 4.6%, and 9.8% of total visitors to New Jersey.
- 7.41 million Overnight trips, up 3.2%; and 13.8% total share of overnight trips in New Jersey. 4.70-million day trips, up 6.8%, and 6.7% of the total share of day trips to New Jersey.

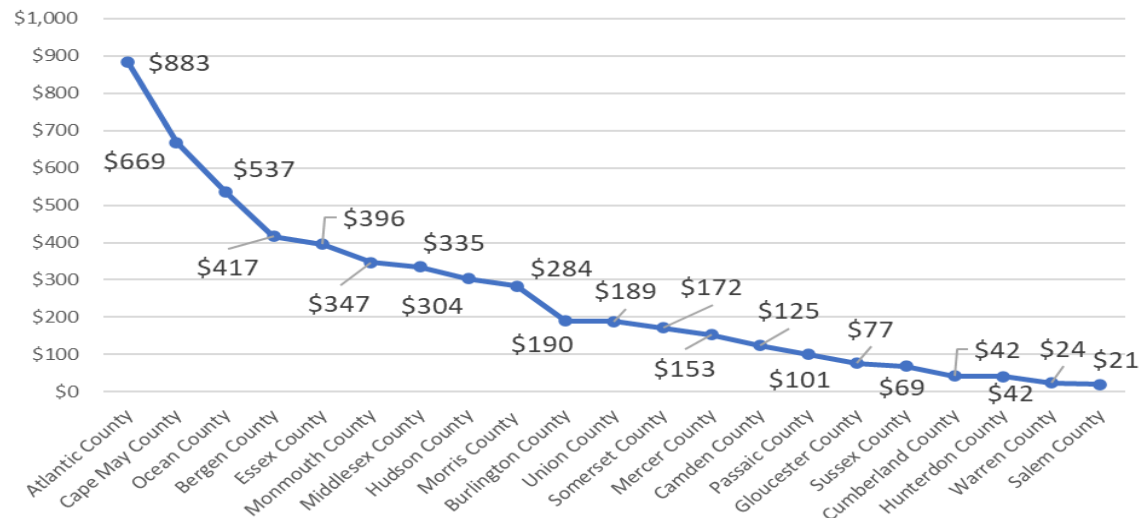
Tourism Dollar Generated per Visitor



BEACH COUNTIES IN TOURISM EXPENDITURES IN BILLIONS OF DOLLARS

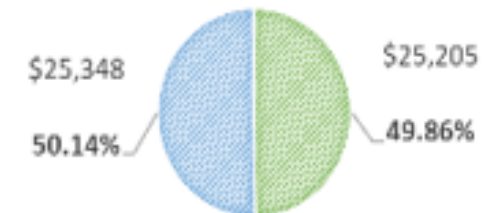


County Tax Impact in Millions of Dollars

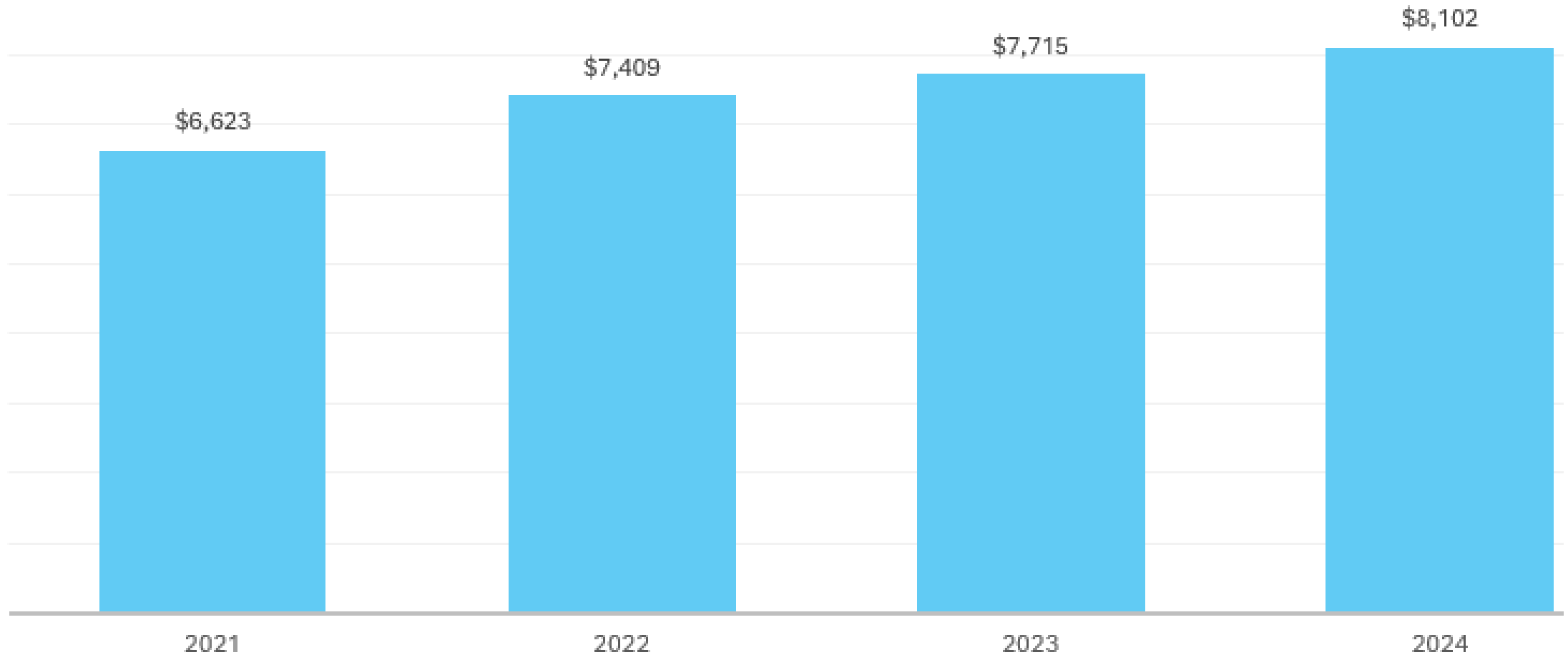


BEACH VS. NON-BEACH COUNTIES IN TOTAL REVENUE IN BILLIONS OF DOLLARS

Beach Counties Total Revenue Non Beach Counties Total Revenue



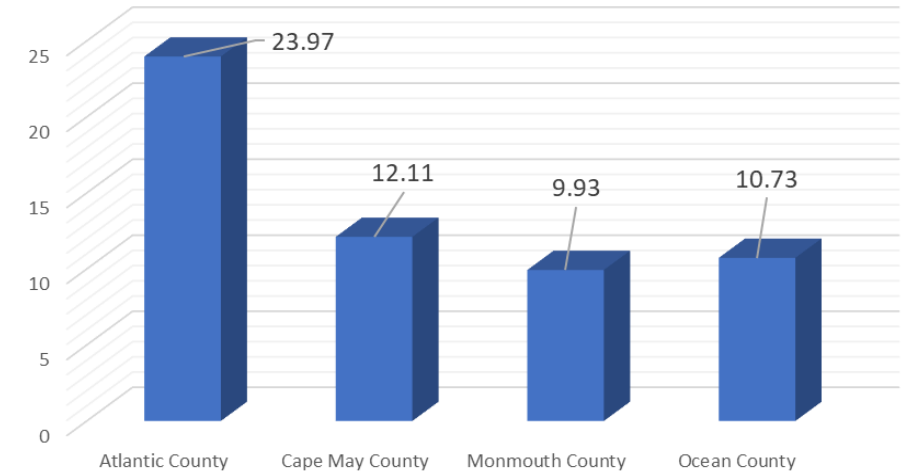
Cape May County Tourism Expenditures Represented by Billions of Dollars



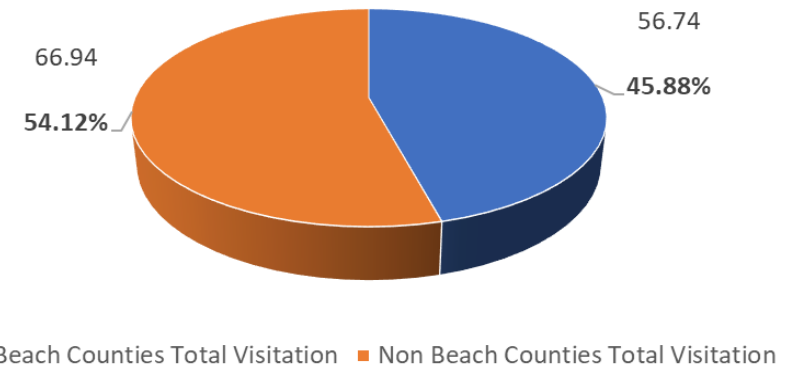
Impact of Beach Counties

- Atlantic County generated \$8.2 billion with 23.97 million visitors in 2024. (\$4342.24 per visitor)
- Cape May County generated \$8.1 billion in visitor spending with 12.11 million visitors in 2024. (\$669.07 per visitor)
- Ocean County generated \$5.8 billion with 10.73 visitors in 2024. (\$542.68 per visitor)
- Monmouth County generated \$3.07 billion with 9.93 million visitors in 2024. (\$342.15 per visitor)

Total Visitation for Beach Counties in Millions of Visitors



Beach vs Non-Beach Counties Visitation in Millions of Visitors



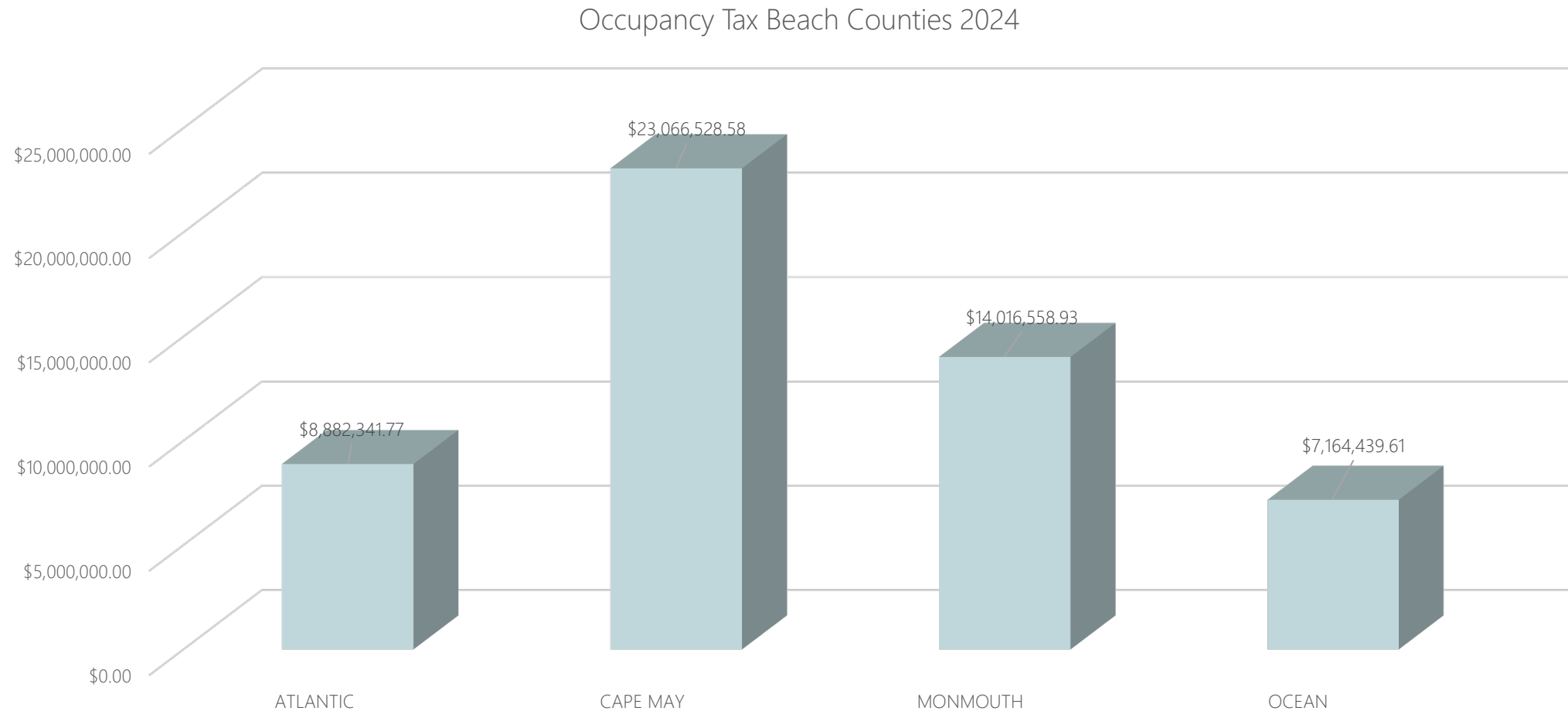
Occupancy Tax

Occupancy Tax was established in 2025, 2 years ago. the amount collected has significantly increased, but the grant awards returned to many recipients, particularly those generating the most revenue, have not kept pace. From 2016 to 2024, Cape May County's Occupancy Tax revenue more than doubled, rising by over 50% from \$11.418 million to \$23.067 million. In 2024, Cape May County, which is the second-highest generator of Occupancy Tax in the state, collected \$23.067 million and received a return of only 6%, amounting to \$1.4 million. In contrast, two other counties received returns exceeding 100%, while one county received an 88.5% return. The top 5 generators of this tax include –

- Bergen County - \$24,224,494 collected and 5.72% return or \$1.38 million
- Cape May County - \$23,066,528 collected and 6% return or \$1.4 million
- Middlesex County - \$22,436,931 collected and 12.48% return or \$2.3 million
- Hudson County – 17,254,876 collected and 8% return or \$1.38 million
- Morris County - \$15,810,967 collected and 14.5% return or \$2.29 million

Five of 21 counties generated \$80.36 million of the \$194 million collected statewide and saw a return of \$8.75 million in 2024. The breakdown equates to those 5 counties generated 41% of the total dollars collected in Occupancy Tax and received 21.5% of the dollars allocated through Tourism, Arts, and History grants. The formula is flawed, with no incentive to work harder.

The four beach counties generated \$53.13 million, or 27.46% of the statewide Occupancy Tax collected in 2024, and received in total grant awards \$6.8 million or 12.8% return.



Cape May County 2024 Occupancy Tax by Month

	2022	% Change	2023	% Change 2022	2024	% Change 2023
Jan	\$185,209.26	103.27%	\$318,002.47	71.70%	\$449,363.46	41.31%
Feb	\$229,955.47	107.70%	\$424,966.12	84.80%	\$502,668.10	18.28%
Mar	\$322,408.96	39.90%	\$549,409.91	70.41%	\$656,919.97	19.57%
Apr	\$641,567.13	49.02%	\$807,684.39	25.89%	\$772,867.88	-4.31%
May	\$1,340,917.61	17.10%	\$1,555,113.96	15.97%	\$1,675,755.94	7.76%
June	\$2,973,752.60	17.72%	\$3,297,817.05	10.90%	\$3,537,897.67	7.28%
July	\$4,719,041.68	12.74%	\$5,288,929.09	12.08%	\$5,373,561.19	1.60%
Aug	\$4,811,223.97	16.94%	\$5,211,879.08	8.33%	\$5,374,967.74	3.13%
Sept	\$2,394,749.20	19.47%	\$2,439,872.30	1.88%	\$ 2,298,262.58	-5.80%
Oct	\$854,630.52	8.01%	\$941,229.04	10.13%	\$1,088,286.02	15.62%
Nov	\$409,804.53	32.93%	\$485,834.08	18.55%	\$565,884.08	16.48%
Dec	\$519,014.17	44.29%	\$666,683.88	28.45%	\$770,093.95	15.51%
Total	\$19,402,275.10	19.05%	\$21,987,421.37	13.32%	\$23,066,528.58	4.91%
1st Quarter	\$737,573.69	70.62%	\$1,292,378.50	75.22%	\$1,608,951.53	24.50%
2nd Quarter	\$4,956,237.34	20.83%	\$5,660,615.40	14.21%	\$5,986,521.49	5.76%
3rd Quarter	\$11,925,014.85	15.73%	\$12,940,680.47	8.52%	\$13,046,791.51	0.82%
4th Quarter	\$1,783,449.22	22.22%	\$2,093,747.00	17.40%	\$2,424,264.05	15.79%
Jun-Aug	\$12,504,018.25	15.50%	\$13,798,625.22	10.35%	\$14,286,426.60	3.54%
April-Oct	\$17,735,882.71	16.70%	\$19,542,524.91	10.19%	\$20,121,599.02	2.96%

#lovewhereyoulive

Visitors have a deep affection for the Jersey Cape, and for many families, visiting has become a cherished tradition. In 2024, Cape May County welcomed a record 12.11 million visitors, an increase from 11.58 million in 2023.

They came. They stayed. They spent \$8.1 billion.

- 9.8% of total visitors to New Jersey – nearly 1 in 10 visitors to the state visited Cape May County
- Spending \$669 per person
- 67% have been coming for 10+ years
- 26% vacation in Cape May County 2 times a year
- 21% vacation 3-4 times a year
- 6.8% growth in Day Trips – 4.7 million
- 3.2% growth in Overnight stays -7.1 million
- 57% of visitors come because they find the county charming
- 82% come because they feel safe
- 69% come for relaxation
- 76% come for value
- 42% come because a referral from family and friends
- 84% come for the beaches
- 34% come for the Zoo
- 36% come for the eco/nature/outdoor options



The Economy's Impact on Visitor Spending

Data taken from 2025 Visitor Survey

Did the economy impact your vacation plans?

42% YES

58% NO

Of the 42% who responded yes,
58% reduce spending

42% did not reduce spending

How did they reduce spending?

18% Canceled their vacation

51% Took fewer vacations

14% Took staycations

30% Took weekend getaways

37% Took more daytrips

28% Reduced length of stay

Where did they make the cuts?

42% cut spending on meals

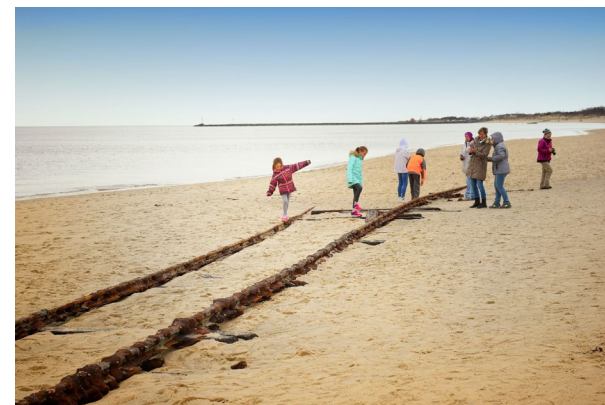
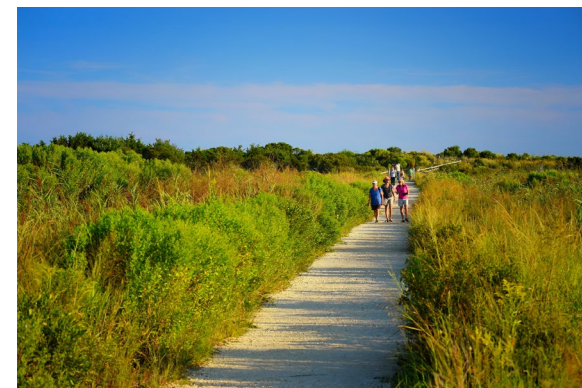
29% cut spending for attractions

44% cut spending on shopping

21% cut spending for recreation

39% cut lodging options to fit budget

13% cut spending in other ways



International Visitors

Rising costs, debt, and financial stress are impacting travel in the U.S. Foreign travel to the country has decreased and now represents only a small percentage of our visitors. In the first quarter, some reservations from Canadian travelers were canceled, although reports of new bookings made in recent weeks.

International travel plans to Europe have dropped by 8%, from 45% to 36%, marking the lowest level since 2021. Only 18% of those surveyed indicated they would travel to Europe, a decrease from 28% in 2024. Travel warnings issued in several European countries have contributed to this decline.

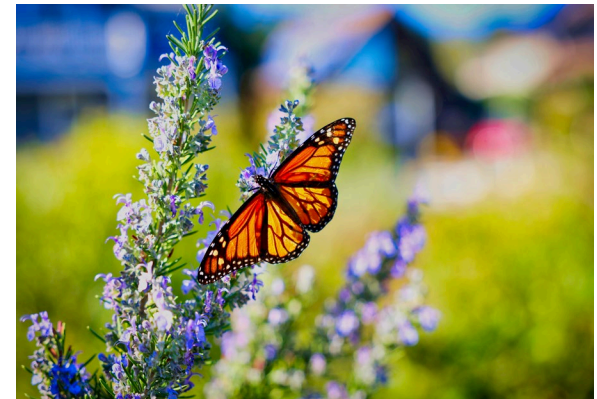
29% of Americans surveyed by MMGY reported that they will shift from international to U.S destinations in 2025, with 24% planning to choose less expensive modes of transportation. 72% of U.S. travelers are expected to take road trips. This trend is promising for Cape May County as a drive-to destination.



Important Factors When Choosing a Vacation

(2025 Cape May County Visitor's Survey)

SAFETY & SECURITY	<u>81.49%</u>
VALUE	<u>75.9%</u>
QUIET	<u>46.83%</u>
ROMANTIC	<u>16.87%</u>
FAMILY ORIENTED	<u>46.75%</u>
RELAXATION	<u>68.67%</u>
CLOSE TO HOME	<u>22.69%</u>
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	<u>27.3%</u>
CHARMING SURROUNDINGS	<u>56.81%</u>
Other	<u>9.23%</u>



Canada

Cape May County has been marketing to Quebec visitors since 1968 and maintained a full-time office from 1970-1995. Visitors from Quebec, who usually come in July and August, made up 7-9% of our pre-pandemic guests, while Ontario visitors were less than 1%.

We are monitoring cancellations and reduced bookings from hotels, motels, campgrounds, and rentals. Reports from the lodging sector indicate that not all Canadians have canceled, and new reservations are trickling in.

- The reduction in the number of Canadian visitors is influenced by several factors beyond tariffs, annexation discussions, and general political dissatisfaction.
- The economic situation in Canada has affected travel to the U.S. over the past three years and has not yet returned to pre-2019 levels.
- Soaring debt, inflation, a housing crisis, a lack of private investment, and stagnant growth have affected core Canadian household expenses, leading to reduced discretionary spending.
- The Canadian dollar has, on average, been trading at below 69 to 70 cents against the U.S. dollar. During the 1970s, the dollar traded at par.
- March 2020 to November 2021, the U.S.-Canadian border was closed, representing two summer seasons with no travel between the two countries.

Sample of French Ads – Print, Digital, Social Media

CAPE MAY COUNTY NEW JERSEY: OCEAN CITY, SEA ISLE, AVALON, STONE HARBOR, THE WILDWOODS, CAPE MAY

TELEMENT CHARMANT
Sincèrement vôtre.

BIENVENUE dans un endroit réel...
et vraiment charmant. Une des dix premières destinations mondiales pour l'observation des oiseaux, entourée de petites villes pittoresques, tout pleins d'aliments provenant directement de la mer et du sol, ainsi que de brasseries artisanales et de distilleries qui reflètent notre environnement local...

Détachez-vous de la routine et optez pour la passion
www.escapetothejerseycape.com ou 1.800.227.2207



#escapetothejerseycape

Évadez-vous
VERS LE CAP JERSEY

NEW JERSEY SOUTHERN SHORE
CAPE MAY & CUMBERLAND COUNTIES
SUPPORTED IN PART BY A GRANT FROM THE NEW JERSEY DEPARTMENT OF STATE, DIVISION OF TRAVEL & TOURISM. WWW.VISITNJ.ORG

TELEMENT CHARMANT
Sincèrement vôtre

Évadez-vous!

ESCAPETO THEJERSEYCAPE.COM

New Jersey visiting.org

Évadez-vous!
VERS LE CAP JERSEY

Échappez à la routine et poursuivez vos passions.

TELEMENT CHARMANT
Sincèrement vôtre.

New Jersey visiting.org

1.
LES ACTIVITÉS GRATUITES DANS LE COMTÉ DE CAPE MAY

Le Cap de Jersey

2.
LE ZOO DU CAPE MAY COMTÉ

OUVERT À L'ANNÉE, ACCÈS FACILE POUR TOUS, STATIONNEMENT GRATUIT. LE PRIX D'ENTRÉE EST LAISSÉ À VOTRE DISCRÉTION

Ouvert tous les jours entre 10 ans et 16h. Surveillez les horaires saisonniers.

3.
LES PLAGES DES WILDWOODS

L'ACCÈS À TOUTES LES PLAGES DES WILDWOODS SONT GRATUITES.

Les plages des Wildwoods s'étendent sur 8 km. Elles sont propres et sécurisées et sont les mieux quatrées du littoral New Jersey.

Aussi gratuite, la plage de Sea Isle City les mercredis.

4.
LES PISTES CYCLABLES

LE COMTÉ DE CAPE MAY OFFRE DES DOUZAINES DE PISTES. PLUSIEURS ONT DES STATIONNEMENTS GRATUITS ATTENDANTS

Les plus populaires sont entre autres celle de la Promenade de Cape May, Cold Spring Bike Path, et celle de Wildwood Crest Bike Path. Il y a des kilomètres de pistes entre le Boardwalk et les Wildwoods.

5.
FILMS SUR LA PLAGE

APPORTEZ VOS CHAISES DE PLAGE, RELAXEZ DANS LE SABLE BLANC. PROFITEZ DE LA PROJECTION HEBDOMADAIRE QUI DÉBUTE AU COUCHER DE SOLEIL.

Aussi sur les plages de Cape May, Sea Isle City et Wildwood Crest.

6.
FEUX D'ARTIFICE

À VOIR TOUTS LES VENDREDIS SOIRS DE JUIN À AOÛT SUR LE BOARDWALK

Si la température est inégalement, c'est remis au dimanche soir. Celui du 4 juillet explosa partout dans le Jersey Cape.

7.
CONCERTS EXTÉRIEURS

ILS SONT OFFERTS TOUT L'ÉTÉ À WILDWOOD CREST, SEA ISLE CITY ET STONE HARBOR

Wildwood Crest, tous les samedis et mercredis à 19h au Continental Park.
Sea Isle City, tous les samedis à 19h30 au Excursion Park.
Stone Harbor, les mardis à la Tower.

Cape May County Visitor Profile

Visitor Return Rate	85%
How many in travel group?	
1-2	34.79%
3-4	35.4%
5-6	21.7%
7 or more	8.21%
Who did they travel with?	
SPOUSE-NO CHILDREN	19.81%
CHILDREN ONLY	1%
FAMILY (SPOUSE & CHILDREN)	36.97%
COUPLE AND/OR FRIENDS	7.66%
EXTENDED FAMILY (PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS, SIBLINGS, ETC.)	24.05%
GROUP	1.27%
TRAVEL ALONE OR SOLO	7.23%
Other	2.02%
Length of Stay	
DAY TRIP	12.26%
1 NIGHT	7.31%
2-5 NIGHTS	30.39%
6-7 NIGHTS (1 week)	29.89%
8-10 NIGHTS	2.41%
2 WEEKS	6.21%
MORE THAN 2 WEEKS	4.2%
Other	7.34%
Did the Economy impact your Vacation Spending?	
Yes	41.55%
No	58.45%
Vacations planned for 2025	
1	52.01%
2	26.1%
3	6.02%
4 or MORE	8.43%
Other	7.43%

Age	
18-35	14.28%
36-45	19.07%
46-53	24.5%
54-71	28.09%
72 AND OVER	14.23%

Travel Season	
SUMMER	81.67%
FALL	46.14%
WINTER	18.43%
SPRING	37.43%

Top Markets	
New Jersey	33%
Pennsylvania	31%
New York	19%
Maryland/DC	8%
Other	9%

Vacation met expectations.	
YES	89.47%
NO	10.53%

Years vacationing in CMC?	
FIRST TIME	15.16%
1-2 YEARS	7.24%
3-4 YEARS	7.29%
5-6 YEARS	3.61%
7-8 YEARS	0%
9-10 YEARS	2.41%
11-15 YEARS	9.64%
16-20 YEARS	11.04%
20 PLUS YEARS	44.38%

Vacation Spending	
\$100 - \$300	6.59%
\$300 - \$500	7.69%
\$500 - \$700	12.66%
\$700 - \$1,000	13.94%
\$1,000 - \$1,500	15.19%
\$1,500 - \$2,000	18.4%
\$2,500 - \$3,000	10.16%
MORE THAN \$3,000	15.19%

Top Reasons for Vacationing in CMC	
SAFETY & SECURITY	81.49%
VALUE	75.9%
QUIET	46.83%
ROMANTIC	16.87%
FAMILY ORIENTED	46.75%
RELAXATION	68.67%
CLOSE TO HOME	22.69%
OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES	27.3%
CHARMING	56.81%
Other	9.23%

Top Attractions	
BEACH	<u>84.49%</u>
SHOPPING	<u>76.27%</u>
RESTAURANT/DINING	<u>79.49%</u>
CULTURAL/HISTORIC ATTRACTIONS	<u>27.71%</u>
BOARDWALK	<u>67.45%</u>
ECO/NATURE-BASED (eg. Whale Watching Excursion)	<u>14.46%</u>
BIRDING	<u>8.43%</u>
FISHING/BOATING	<u>13.25%</u>
GOLFING	<u>3.2%</u>
WATERSPORTS	<u>9.61%</u>
CAMPING	<u>3.61%</u>
ZOO	<u>33.92%</u>
SPECIAL EVENTS	<u>20.07%</u>
AGRI-FARM MARKET- FARM T2TABLE	<u>13.61%</u>
WINERIES, BREWERIES, DISTILLERIES	<u>29.89%</u>

Travel Trends - If the trend fits, wear it!



Travel trends are crucial for tourism marketers. Understanding these trends, identifying how your business fits, and incorporating them into your messaging is essential for developing an effective marketing plan.

Cultural tourism is an emerging trend incorporates many of the attractions Cape May County offers visitors. Local culture and nostalgia trends fit us perfectly.

2025 Travel Trends

Detour Destinations – stop along the way to visit lesser-known spots on road trips.

Eco-friendly – prioritizing environmental options.

Local Immersion – experiencing local culture

Sports Tourism – more travelers are interested in sports and sporting events.

Stargazing – Growing interest in stars and space.

Slow Travel – emphasis on relaxing and enjoying the moment.

Nature-focused travel – more interest in the outdoors

Food-Focused travel – rising interest in culinary tourism.

Cultural Tourism – understanding different cultures, cuisine, and values.

Local Culture Travel Trends include

- Connecting with local communities
- Immersing in local culture
- Seeking authentic experiences
- Prioritizing neighborhoods and local culture
- Exploring history and political tours.
- Focusing on economic opportunities in sharing heritage, stories, and traditions with visitors.

More Trends



Road Trips continue to grow and are popular with Millennials, Families, and Baby Boomers. Rising airfare, cancellations, and delays are changing the focus to drive destinations. 72% of Americans are planning a summer vacation.

With falling fuel prices, more travel planners are hitting the road for both day trips and extended trips. Cape May County is within 300 miles of 30 million people.

- Shopping - 39 % of our visitors are cutting costs by shopping for better prices and deals as a result of the economy. This is common among travelers.
- Experiential travel remains high on the trend list as travelers are spending their money on more adventures and experiences over 'stuff'.
- Last-minute bookings are more common, with 29% of travel planners booking 30 days or less. The reason,
 - Deals,
 - Spontaneity in traveling.
 - Flexibility
 - Budget constraints
- Baby Boomers are increasingly taking more SKI vacations.



THANK
YOU

