

Wisconsin Outpaces National Average for Travel Spending 24 Months in a Row

Written by GOV Press Wisconsin

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MADISON — Gov. Tony Evers, together with Wisconsin Department of Tourism Secretary-designee Anne Sayers, today announced Wisconsin has outpaced the national average for travel spending compared to 2019 for the past 24 months, according to data from the Travel Recovery Insights report released by the U.S. Travel Association (USTA) in collaboration with Tourism Economics. This news comes as the state and industry recognize National Travel and Tourism Week, celebrating the strength of Wisconsin's travel and tourism industry and the critical role it plays in the state's economy.



“Tourism plays a critically important role in our state's economy, and that's why we've directed more than \$200 million to support our tourism economy and industries—today, it's clear our

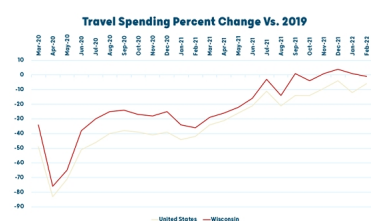
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work is paying off,” said Gov. Evers. “This good news wouldn’t be possible without the hardworking folks in the industry who show an unparalleled dedication to sharing all Wisconsin has to offer every day and who have displayed remarkable resilience and leadership over the past two years. I look forward to continuing our work together to bolster this industry and our economic recovery in the months ahead.”

In February 2022, Wisconsin was down one percent compared to 2019 travel spending while the national average was down 6 percent. Wisconsin also fared better than tourism powerhouses like Texas (-4), Michigan (-4), North Carolina (-4), Hawaii (-9), California (-12), Minnesota (-14), Illinois (-15), and New York (-18) compared to February 2019.



While final 2021 economic impact data won’t be available until June, this data from USTA and Tourism Economics uses data sources including lodging demand, air travel, and auto trip activity to provide directional guidance for travel spending compared to competitors. The preliminary data is subject to change as more data is reported over time, but the directional trends have remained consistent during the last 24 months.

“Our guests could go anywhere in the world, but they choose to make memories and discover the unexpected right here in Wisconsin, and that just tells you all you need to know about Wisconsin’s spirited nature,” said Secretary-designee Sayers. “We’ve made historic investments in tourism and are putting those dollars to fast work, creating a brand we can all be proud of. I am also grateful for a bipartisan budget, signed by the governor, that allowed us to double our advertising markets to spur this recovery when we needed it most.”

Wisconsin’s tourism industry sustained \$17.3 billion in business sales in 2020, supporting more than 157,000 jobs. While 2021 economic impact data is expected to be released in June 2022, monthly visitor spending compared to Wisconsin’s record-setting 2019 has been above zero percent for four of the past six months, showing Wisconsin’s recovery continues to trend in a

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positive direction despite ongoing challenges.