



LEE COUNTY
TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Report to the Industry

August 8, 2019

April – June 2019 Statistics

During April – June of 2019, The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel hosted more than 1.2 million visitors who spent an estimated \$728 million while visiting. Visitors staying in paid accommodations spent an estimated \$458 million (63 percent of the total). Lee County’s lodging industry experienced a year-over-year decrease in average occupancy and in average daily rate, resulting in a decrease in revenue per available room (RevPAR).

Occupancy Summary

	Average Occupancy Rate		Average Daily Rate		RevPAR	
	2018	2019	2018	2019	2018	2019
Hotel/Motel/Resort/B&B	71.4%	69.2%	\$148.11	\$148.80	\$105.75	\$102.97
Condo/Cottage/Vacation Home	70.8%	75.5%	\$197.98	\$195.91	\$140.17	\$147.91
RV Park/Campground	50.2%	45.1%	\$49.46	\$53.30	\$24.83	\$24.04
OVERALL	65.5%	63.6%	\$131.24	\$130.52	\$85.96	\$83.01

Visitation and Visitor Origins

Total Visitation				
	%		Visitor Estimates	
	2018	2019	2018	2019
Paid Accommodations	64%	62%	865,500	777,700
Non-Paid Accommodations	36%	38%	479,700	484,800
Total Visitation			1,345,200	1,262,500

Visitor Origins	2018	2019
	United States	84%
Canada	3%	4%
UK	2%	3%
Germany	7%	5%
Other Europe	2%	3%
Other International	2%	1%

Visitor Origin Cities	2018	2019
	Chicago	6%
New York	5%	4%
Boston	7%	4%
Minneapolis-Saint Paul	3%	4%
Tampa-St. Pete-Sarasota	5%	3%
Detroit	3%	3%
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale	3%	3%
Cleveland-Akron	4%	3%
Indianapolis	3%	2%
Milwaukee	3%	2%



June Smith Travel Research Summary

Average Occupancy Rate			Average Daily Rate			RevPAR		
2018	2019	% Change	2018	2019	% Change	2018	2019	% Change
68.7%	65.3%	-4.9%	\$133.16	\$131.54	-1.2%	\$91.50	\$85.91	-6.1%

Bed tax collection

The preliminary resort tax collected for June 2019 was \$2,918,447, a 1.0 percent decrease over June 2018 preliminary collections of \$2,948,364. Fiscal year-to-date preliminary tourist tax collections are \$36,283,578, a decrease of 0.2 percent year-over-year.

Airport news

During June 2019, 586,319 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW). Figures represent an increase of 7.4 percent in passenger traffic compared to June 2018. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is up 9.3 percent from the same period last year.

VCB Departmental Reports

Jill Vance, director of sales, reported that the majority of the FY2018-19 sales goals are ahead of pace or attained. She presented highlights of third-quarter activities for the domestic group, travel agent and consumer sales. They including Connect NYC, the CCRA Power Solutions Live Trade Show, along with the faith-based meeting planner FAM and the Midwest corporate meeting planner FAM. Vance also presented upcoming sales activities for fourth quarter including IMEX America and the Going on Faith Group Traveler Show.

Stefanie Zinke, international sales manager, reported that the team covered consumer and trade events in five countries. The newest item on the list was the PR and Sales mission with Visit Florida to four cities across China training more than 340 trade professionals and engaging with influencers and travel writers. Collectively, the international team trained and met with more than 700 professionals and held 162 appointments in three months.

Judi Durant, director of visitor services, reported that 55,067 visitors were assisted at RSW between April and July 2019, helping 143,341 visitors since January. The volunteer Tourism Ambassador team of 133 full and part-time volunteers has given more than 16,000 in-kind hours to the county and RSW by working at the Visitor Information Booths, as part of the Customs Concierge team and at events and conferences.

Francesca Donlan, director of communications, went over recent media coverage and visits, including the “Ding” Darling & Doc Ford’s Tarpon Fishing Tournament in May. Chef and TV host Tyler Florence of The Food Network’s “The Great Food Truck Race” visited the destination, [click here to see the clip](#). Upcoming events in September include media missions to Boston’s Fenway Park and a tap takeover in Philadelphia with industry partners Fort Myers Brewing Co. and Point Ybel Brewery. Shooting wrapped up last week for [“Raw Travel,”](#) a half-hour syndicated travel show airing in more than 170 markets. The destination will be featured in the Season 7 premiere, which airs locally on WINK-TV at 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Oct. 12.

2nd Quarter Research Report

Phillip Downs, DSG, reported both visitation and visitor spending is down year-over-year for the period between April and June. Four out of 10 domestic visitors staying in paid accommodations during the spring of 2019 came from the Midwest. Chicago, New York and Boston were the top domestic feeder markets for Lee County. Germany delivered the largest share of international visitation in the spring season at five percent. Guest satisfaction remains high at 95 percent.



Sports Development Update

Pamela Johnson, deputy director, Sports Development, reported that 16,554 room nights sold in the months of April and May 2019 with direct visitor spending of \$6,480,689 million.

New Business

1. The TDC formalized recommendations for BoCC approval of FY 2019-20 Events Marketing funding, which included seven requests totaling \$111,350.
2. The TDC formalized recommendations for BoCC approval of FY 2019-20 Attractions Marketing funding, which included requests from 40 organizations. \$400,000 was awarded to the Southwest Florida Community Foundation to administer 39 funding requests, and \$50,000 was awarded to the Edison and Ford Winter Estates.
3. The TDC unanimously approved the 3rd quarter FY19 budget reports for the VCB and Sports Development.
4. The TDC recommended that the BoCC approve the additional \$127,038 needed for the Town of Fort Myers Beach to complete the Newton Beach Park restroom renovation project. Project total cost is now estimated at \$212,038.

Mark your calendars for the upcoming E-Awards celebration

The annual E-Awards will be held from 8 to 11 a.m., Thursday, Aug. 29, at The Westin Cape Coral Resort at Marina Village. The popular recognition awards program is one of the area's most prestigious industry awards events, drawing 1,028 nominations this year for outstanding service providers in Lee County.

FY 2019/2020 Co-op Buy In set for 8/20

The VCB's FY 19/20 Co-op Advertising Program was unveiled last week at an industry meeting. The presentation and plan details are available at leevcb.com/. Partners may begin placing their orders at 10:30 a.m. Tuesday, Aug. 20, on a first-come, first-served basis by logging onto coop.leevcb.com/.

Next TDC meeting

There is no scheduled TDC meeting for September. The next TDC meeting will be at 9 a.m. Thursday, Oct. 10, 2019. The meeting will be held in Room 118 of the Admin East Building, 2201 Second St., Fort Myers. To view a complete tax collections report, go to LeeVCB.com. Contact: Tamara Pigott, TPigott@leegov.com, Lee County VCB, 239-338-3500.