WALTON COUNTY TOURISM

2024 Visitor Tracking & Economic Impact Study

January – December 2024

WALTON COUNTY TOURISM

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METHODOLOGY

Visitor Tracking Study

This report is based on 3,013 internet and in-person surveys of out-of-county guests who stayed at beach communities across Walton County and with visitors at various locations along the beaches between January 2024 and December 2024.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ANNUAL SNAPSHOT

CY2024

4,782,600
TOTAL **VISITORS**
vs. CY2023 ↓ 7.5%

3,607,200
ROOM **NIGHTS**
↓ 2.9%

$4,152,879,200
DIRECT **SPENDING**
↓ 13.3%

$4,932,597,700
ECONOMIC **IMPACT**
↓ 13.2%

$59,836,621
TDT
vs. CY2023 ↓ 0.4%

48.3%
OCCUPANCY
↓ 7.1%

$351.66
ADR
↓ 8.4%

$169.85
RevPAR
↓ 15.0%

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STUDY OBJECTIVES: MAP THE VISITOR JOURNEY

This report is organized along the visitor's journey as shown below.

Pre-Visit

- Visitor origin
- Planning cycle
- Planning sources
- Visitor Guide usage
- Other destinations considered
- Trip influencers
- Reasons for visiting
- Exposure to promotions
- Booking
- Mode of transportation

Travel Party Profile

- Party size
- Party composition
- Demographics

Trip Experience

- Accommodations
- Length of stay
- Number of times in destination
- Activities in destination
- Visitor Spending

Post-Trip Evaluation

- Likelihood of recommending
- Likelihood of returning
- Evaluation of destination attributes
- Painting a picture for others

Economic Impact on Destination

- Number of visitors
- Expenditures
- Economic impact
- Room nights generated
- Occupancy, ADR, RevPAR

VISITOR JOURNEY: ECONOMIC IMPACT

The bottom line is the economic impact of the visitor's journey, so we start there.

DIRECT SPENDING

Visitors who traveled to Walton County in CY2024 spent

$4,152,879,200

in Walton County on accommodations, restaurants, groceries, transportation, attractions, entertainment, and shopping

A decrease of **13.3%** from CY2023

ECONOMIC IMPACT

Visitor spending in CY2024 generated a total economic impact of

$4,932,597,700

in Walton County

A decrease of **13.2%** from CY2023[1]

[1] The economic impact analysis process has been updated to align more closely with current IMPLAN data models. As a result, previous years' figures have been revised using the updated methodology. IMPLAN models are based on government data sources (e.g., BLS, Census) that lag behind this report's calendar year, therefore future updates may occur as newer datasets become available.

VISITORS

Walton County attracted

4,782,600

visitors in CY2024

A decrease of **7.5%** from CY2023

ROOM NIGHTS

Walton County visitors generated

3,607,200

room nights in paid accommodations in CY2024

A decrease of **2.9%** from CY2023

TOURISM DEVELOPMENT TAX[1]

Lodging expenditures by visitors to Walton County in CY2024 generated

$59,836,621

in TDT collected[2]

A decrease of **0.4%** from CY2023

[1]Includes TDT collections from North and South Walton.
[2]TDT collections for November were disrupted by the transition to the new tax portal. Many accounts, including those of major companies, faced unforeseen technical issues, preventing timely remittance. While some of these collections were partially recovered in December, the minimal rebound suggests either November or December collections remain significantly below previous year levels.

JOBS & WAGES[1]

Tourism in Walton County supported

33,800

jobs[2] in CY2024, generating

$1,400,623,500

in wages and salaries

[1] The economic impact analysis process has been updated to align more closely with current IMPLAN data models. As a result, previous years' figures have been revised using the updated methodology. IMPLAN models are based on government data sources (e.g., BLS, Census) that lag behind this report's calendar year, therefore future updates may occur as newer datasets become available.

[2] Includes direct (24,500) and indirect jobs (9,300).

VISITORS SUPPORT JOBS

An additional Walton County job is supported by every

142

visitors

NET TAX BENEFIT[1]

Visitors to Walton County in CY2024 generated a net tax benefit of

$68,309,500

to Walton County government

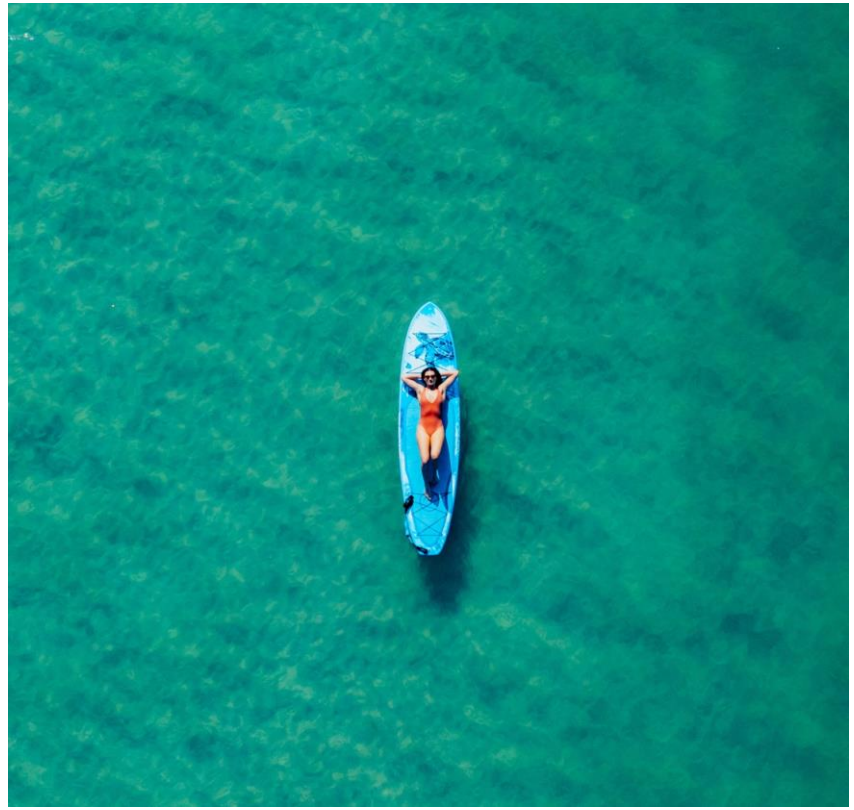
[1] Visitors contribute revenue to Walton County government via taxes and user fees. Visitors, by using county services and infrastructure, cost Walton County government money. The net tax impact of local government revenue for visitors less the cost of servicing visitors is $68,309,500.

HOUSEHOLD TAX SAVINGS

Visitors to Walton County save local residents

$2,092

in local taxes per household each year.



[1]Revenue to Walton County government emanating from visitors ($224,979,957), less costs to Walton County government for servicing visitors ($156,670,455) results a net tax benefit to Walton County government ($68,309,502); spread across 32,659 households in Walton County translates to a savings of $2,092 per household in local and state taxes.

VISITOR JOURNEY: PRE-VISIT

PLANNING CYCLE

- **Nearly 7 in 10** visitors plan a Walton County vacation at least 3 months in advance (+3% points from 2023)
- Average trip planning cycle begins **103 days** before the trip (101 days in 2023)
- **65%** (+4% points from 2023) of visitors in 2024 considered only 1 of the Walton County beaches as opposed to deciding among several

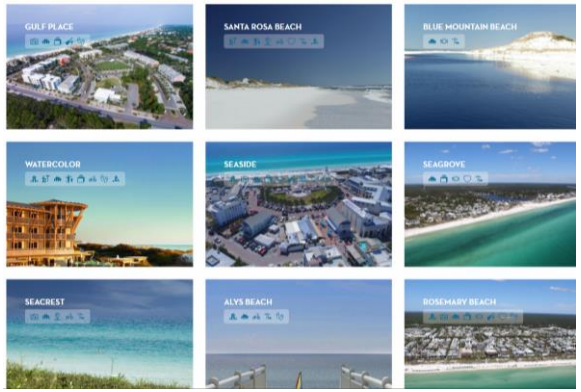
TOP TRIP PLANNING SOURCES*

Vacation rental website **50%**
(52% in 2023)

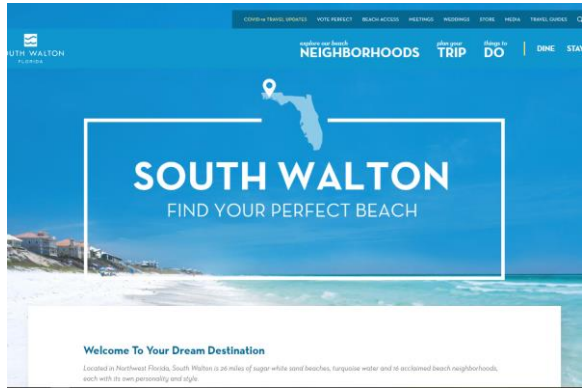
Friends/family **35%**
(39% in 2023)

Search engines **21%**
(23% in 2023)

Website for 1 of 16 beaches **15%**
(17% in 2023)



VisitSouthWalton.com **12%**
(13% in 2023)



Hotel Website **11%**
(11% in 2023)

*Multiple responses permitted.

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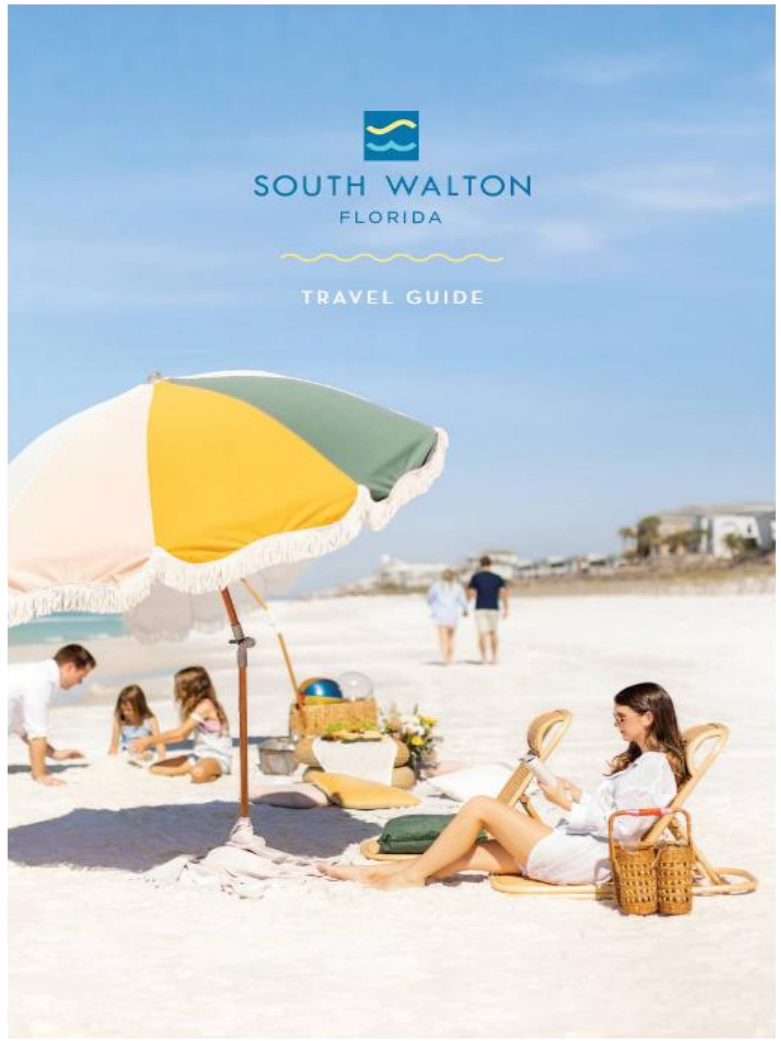
WALTON COUNTY VISITOR GUIDE

- **Over 1 in 5** visitors viewed the Walton County Visitors Guide before going to Walton County[1]

- Visitors give the Visitors Guide a rating[2] of **8.7 out of 10** (8.4 in 2023)



[1]17% used the online version & 4% used the print version.
[2]10 = Extremely useful; 1 = Not at all useful.

TOP REASONS FOR VISIT*

Family vacation **66%**

(67% in 2023)

Relax & unwind **54%**

(55% in 2023)

Annual routine **22%**

(22% in 2023)

Special occasion **14%**

(13% in 2023)

*Multiple responses permitted.

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EXPOSURE TO ADVERTISING

- **25%** (26% in 2023) of visitors recall promotions about Walton County
- This information influences **7%** (Consistent with 2023) of all visitors to visit Walton County

TOP WALTON COUNTY PROMOTIONS*

Base: 25% of visitors who recall advertising

Other social media accounts **25%**

(23% in 2023)

Television **21%**

(23% in 2023)

Magazine article **17%**

(19% in 2023)

Magazine ad **16%**

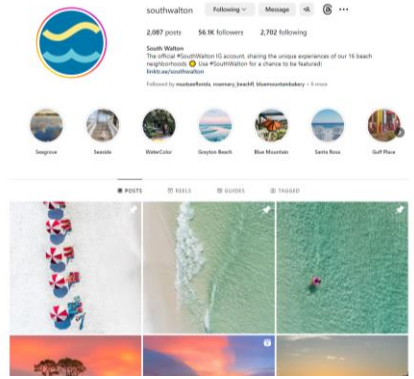
(17% in 2023)

Online article **16%**

(15% in 2023)

South Walton social media **16%**

(18% in 2023)



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*Multiple responses permitted.

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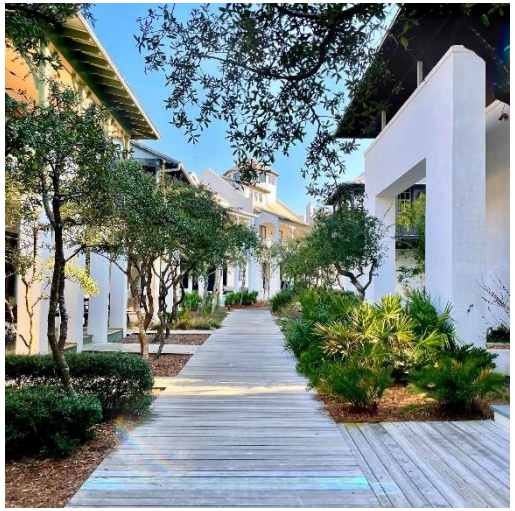
TOP BOOKING SOURCES



Vacation Rental Company **61%**

Directly with hotel/condo **21%**

Vrbo **9%**

Airbnb **6%**

VISITOR TRANSPORTATION

- **74%** (75% in 2023) of visitors drive to Walton County
- **26%** (25% in 2023) who fly use the following airports:

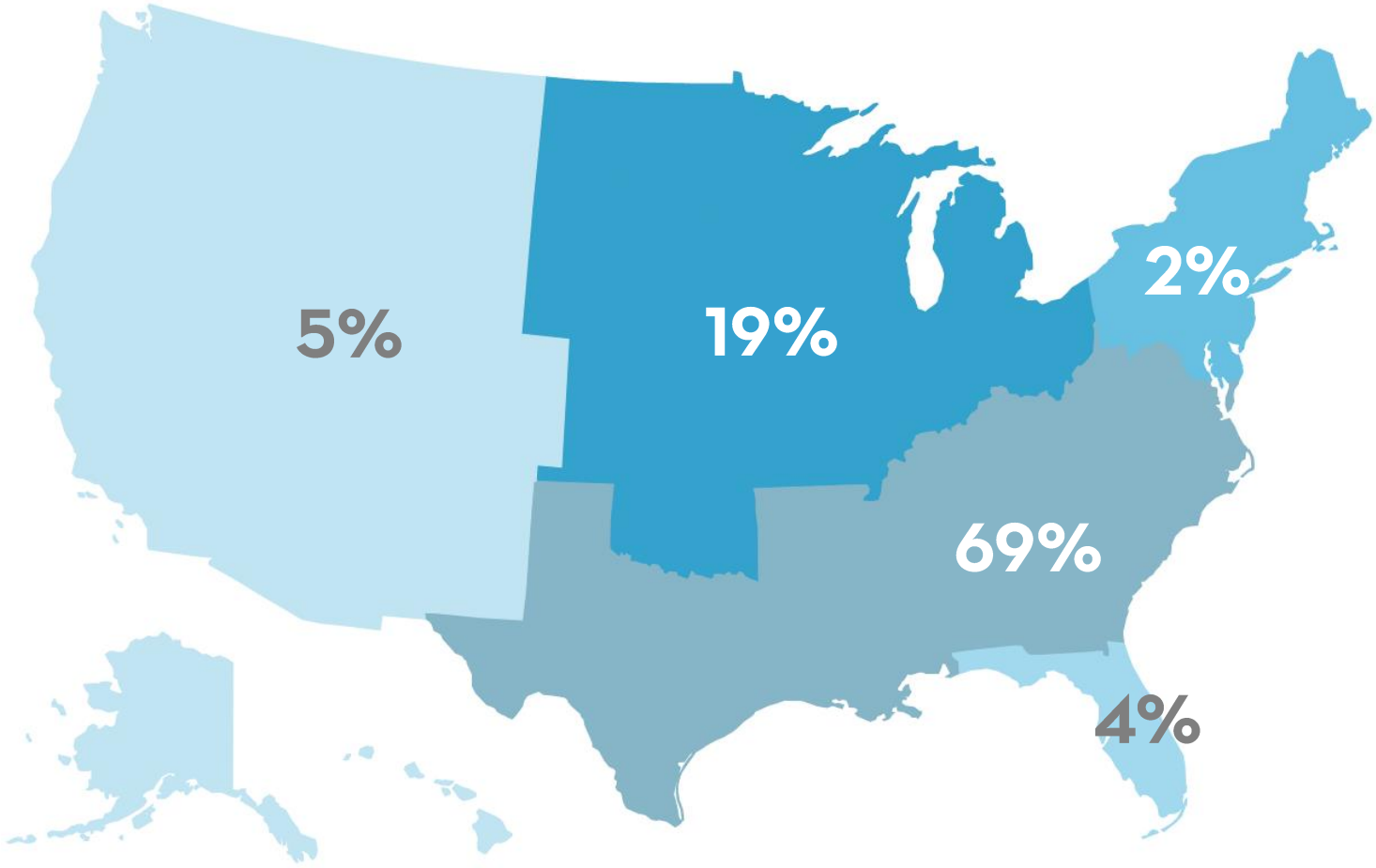
65%
Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport

26%
Destin-Ft. Walton Beach Airport

5%
Pensacola International Airport

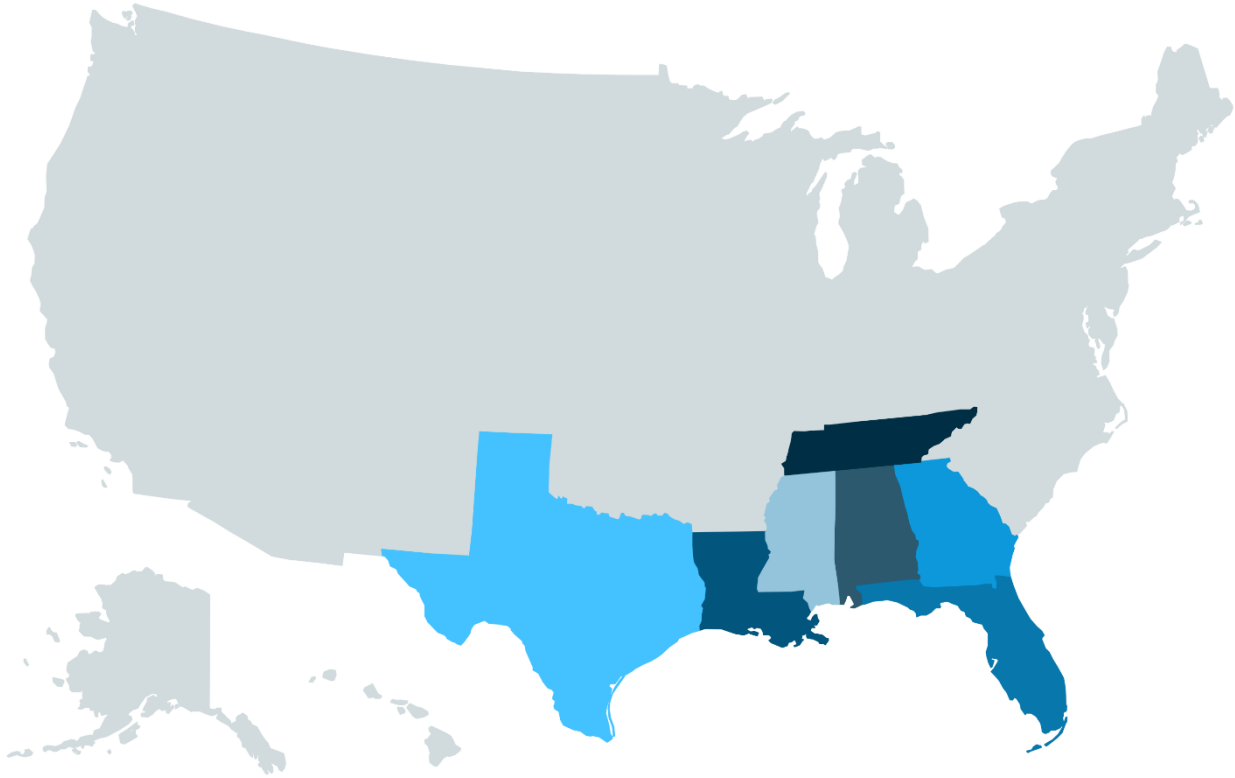
VISITOR JOURNEY: TRAVEL PARTY PROFILE

ORIGIN OF VISITORS



1% of visitors traveled to Walton County from outside of the U.S.

ORIGIN OF VISITORS



67% of visitors are from 7 states

14%	Georgia
13%	Tennessee
13%	Texas
10%	Alabama
7%	Mississippi
6%	Louisiana
4%	Florida

42% of visitors are from 7 markets

12%	Atlanta
9%	Nashville
5%	Dallas–Fort Worth
4%	Birmingham
4%	Houston
4%	New Orleans
4%	Columbus-Tupelo-West Point

TRAVEL PARTY SIZE AND COMPOSITION

The typical visitor travels in a party composed of **4.7** people

(5.0 people in 2023)

52% travel with at least one person under the age of 20 in their travel party

(-2% points from 2023)

2024 VISITOR PROFILE

The typical Walton County visitor:

- **53** years old (consistent with 2023)
- Median household income of **$147,200** (156,300 in 2023)
- 69% from the Southeast (67% in 2023)

VISITOR JOURNEY: TRIP EXPERIENCE

TOP ACCOMMODATIONS

50% Condos, rental houses, etc.

16% Personal home/condo

13% Friends and relatives

11% Hotel

8% Airbnb

LENGTH OF STAY

- Visitors[1] stay **6.1** nights in Walton County (5.9 nights 2023)
- Visitors staying in paid accommodations stay an average of **6.4** nights[2] in Walton County (6.4 nights in 2023)

[1]Includes visitors staying in paid accommodations, non-paid, and day trippers.
[2] Visitors who stayed in Walton County up to 30 nights.

FIRST-TIME AND EXPERIENCED VISITORS

- **13%** (consistent with 2023) are first-time visitors
- **37%** (+2% points from 2023) have visited more than 10 times

TOP VISITOR ACTIVITIES*

Beach **91%**
(92% in 2023)

Restaurants **88%**
(87% in 2023)

Relax and unwind **80%**
(78% in 2023)

Shopping **72%**
(69% in 2023)

Family time, reading, cooking **66%**
(65% in 2023)

Biking, running **51%**
(48% in 2023)

*Multiple responses permitted.

TRAVEL PARTY EXPENDITURES[1]

- The typical travel party spends **$680** ($785 in 2023) a day while in Walton County.
- The typical travel party spends a total of **$4,131** ($4,652 in 2023) while visiting Walton County.
- Compared to 2023, total trip expenditures per travel party decreased 11% despite a longer length of stay, with the largest decreases in Shopping (-21%) and Entertainment (-14%).
- The decrease in spending reflects national trends of visitors prioritizing travel while exercising economic caution by spending less during trips.

[1] Visitors who stayed for up to 30 nights. Includes day trippers.

BEACH SAFETY

- **81%** (84% in 2023) of visitors know there are flags posted along the beaches to indicate how safe it is to go into the water

- **Over 4 in 5** visitors are aware of the beach flag warning meanings

- **67%** (63% in 2023) of visitors are aware of the consequences of entering the Gulf during double red flag conditions

VISITOR JOURNEY: POST TRIP EVALUATION

RATING AND LIKELIHOOD OF RETURNING TO WALTON COUNTY

- Visitors give Walton County a rating[1] of **9.2**[1] as a place to vacation (consistent with 2023)

- **78%** will definitely return to Walton County[2] (consistent with 2023)

[1] 10 = Excellent; 1= Poor

[2] 3% of all visitors will probably not return to Walton County for the following reasons: 1. Too crowded 2. Too expensive 3. Traffic was a problem.

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VACATION ATTRIBUTE IMPORTANCE VS. RATINGS

Importance[1]		Walton County Ratings[2]	GAP[3]
9.7	Beautiful beaches and clear water	9.4	-0.3
9.7	Sense of comfort and safety	9.1	-0.6
9.4	Total relaxation	8.9	-0.5
8.7	Sense of seclusion	7.8	-0.9
8.6	Nightlife that is getting ice cream with the kids	8.7	+0.1
8.5	An experience that is enjoyable for everyone	8.7	+0.2
8.3	Family growth & exploration	8.5	+0.2
7.8	Safe environment where children can run free	8.2	+0.4
7.6	Friendly atmosphere with similar types of people	8.0	+0.4
7.1	Having a variety of neighborhoods	8.1	+1.0
6.1	Nature activities	7.4	+1.3
6.0	Off beach activities	7.6	+1.6
5.9	An energetic atmosphere with lots of activities	7.4	+1.5
5.6	A variety of cultural events and festivals	6.8	+1.2

[1] Rated on a scale from 1 to 10 where 10 is very important and 1 is not at all important.
[2] Rated on a scale from 1 to 10 where 10 is excellent and 1 is poor.
[3] GAP equals the difference between the importance of an attribute and the rating of WC on that attribute.
For example, "Beautiful beaches and clear water" is extremely important to visitors with a score of 9.7. Visitors rated WC as 9.4 on its beaches. Hence, the GAP is -0.3.

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VISITOR DESCRIPTIONS OF WALTON COUNTY

"Absolutely beautiful! The sand is so soft. The water was gorgeous! The temperature was perfect. So much to do there. beautiful but to go back and visit the places we didn't get a chance to go to."

"Idyllic family-friendly beach community."

"My husband and I travel across the country & the world but feel you truly can't beat the quality of accommodations, dining options, and walkability to the most beautiful beaches. We choose to celebrate most of milestones & relaxation along 30A."

YEARLY COMPARISONS

VISITOR PROFILE

Visitor Metrics	2023	2024
Travel party	5.0	4.7
Kids <20	54%	52%
Median age	53	53
Estimated median household income	$156,300	$147,200
Drove	75%	74%
Nights spent[1]	5.9	6.1
Direct expenditures (travel party for entire trip)	$4,652	$4,131
1st time visitor	13%	13%
10+ visits to Walton County	35%	37%

[1] Visitors staying 30 days or fewer.

VISITOR ORIGIN

Top Origin States	2023	2024
Georgia	14%	14%
Tennessee	13%	13%
Texas	13%	13%
Alabama	10%	10%
Mississippi	5%	7%
Louisiana	5%	6%
Florida	5%	4%

Origins - Regions	2023	2024
Southeast	67%	69%
Midwest	19%	19%
West	5%	5%
Florida	5%	4%
Northeast	3%	2%
International	1%	1%

TRIP EXPERIENCE

Top Visitor Activities	2023	2024
Beach	92%	91%
Restaurants	87%	88%
Relax and unwind	78%	80%
Shopping	69%	72%
Family time, reading, cooking	65%	66%
Biking, running	48%	51%
Water sports	30%	31%
Golf or tennis	24%	27%
Bars, nightclubs	23%	24%
Special events	23%	22%
Hiking, nature walks, eco tours	17%	19%
Attractions	16%	18%
State parks	14%	14%
Spas	7%	9%
Art galleries, museums, cultural events	7%	8%
Dune lakes	8%	8%
Business meetings, conferences	2%	2%
Other	2%	2%

TRIP PLANNING

Visitor Metrics	2023	2024
Will return to Walton County	95%	95%
Rating for overall experience[1]	9.2	9.2
Viewed Visitors Guide[2]	21%[2]	21%[2]
Planned trip 6+ months out	26%	24%
Used VisitSouthWalton.com	13%	12%
Used 1 of 16 beaches' websites	17%	15%
Use the term "South Walton"	12%	11%

[1] 10-point scale with 10=Excellent & 1=Poor.
[2] 17% used the online version & 4% used the print version.

DETAILED FINDINGS

VISITOR JOURNEY: ECONOMIC IMPACT

ECONOMIC IMPACT[1]

Visitor Metrics	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
All visitors[2]	4,466,600	5,365,500	5,303,300	5,170,700	4,782,600
Direct expenditures	$3,595,702,900	$4,854,067,200	$4,886,893,300	$4,792,254,400	$4,152,879,200
Economic impact	$4,252,387,800	$5,989,283,200	$6,055,131,800	$5,684,880,200	$4,932,597,700
Room nights	2,815,500	3,743,900	3,691,300	3,713,200	3,607,200
TDT collections	$34,768,913	$59,246,775	$62,676,644	$60,088,287	$59,836,621
Occupancy	49.8%	61.3%	56.0%	52.0%	48.3%
Room rate	$291.70	$359.15	$413.29	$384.06	$351.66
RevPAR	$145.27	$220.16	$231.44	$199.71	$169.85
Direct jobs created	30,500	34,100	30,700	28,600	24,500
Total jobs	40,400	46,300	42,300	39,600	33,800
Wages paid	$1,249,661,300	$1,761,468,300	$1,567,203,200	$1,612,515,900	$1,400,623,500

Data sources: Walton County government, properties in Walton County that rent to visitors, Key Data, and visitor and property surveys by Downs & St. Germain Research.

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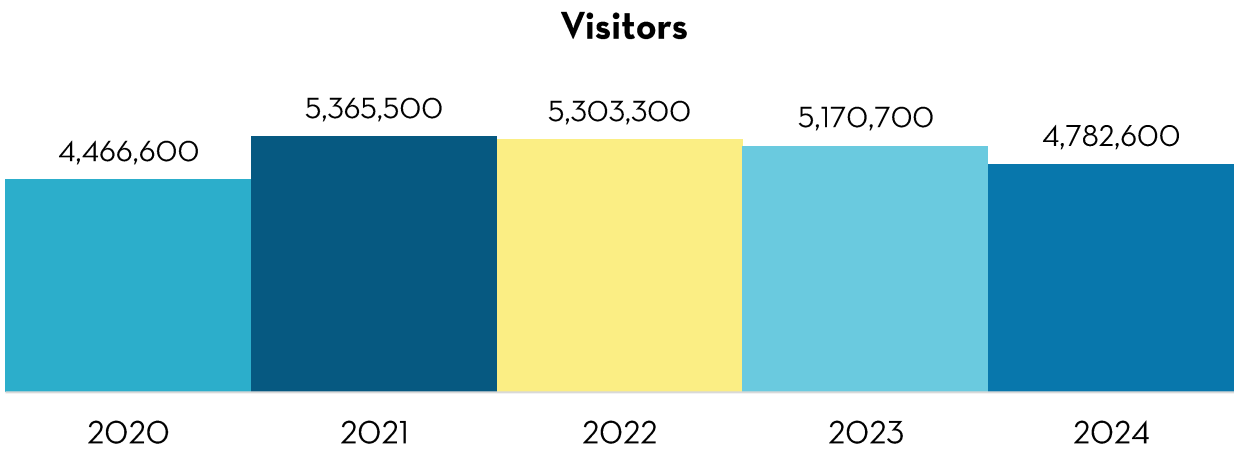
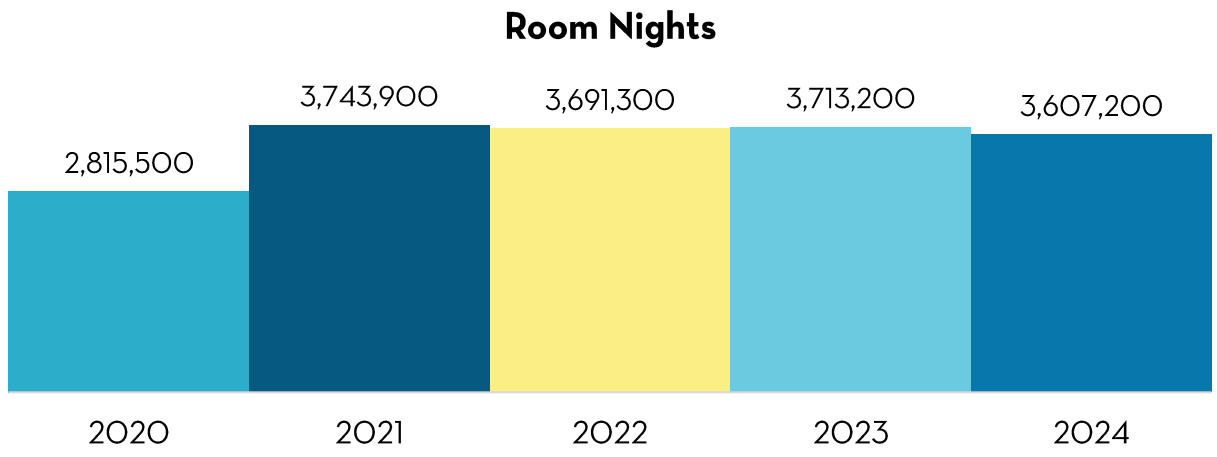
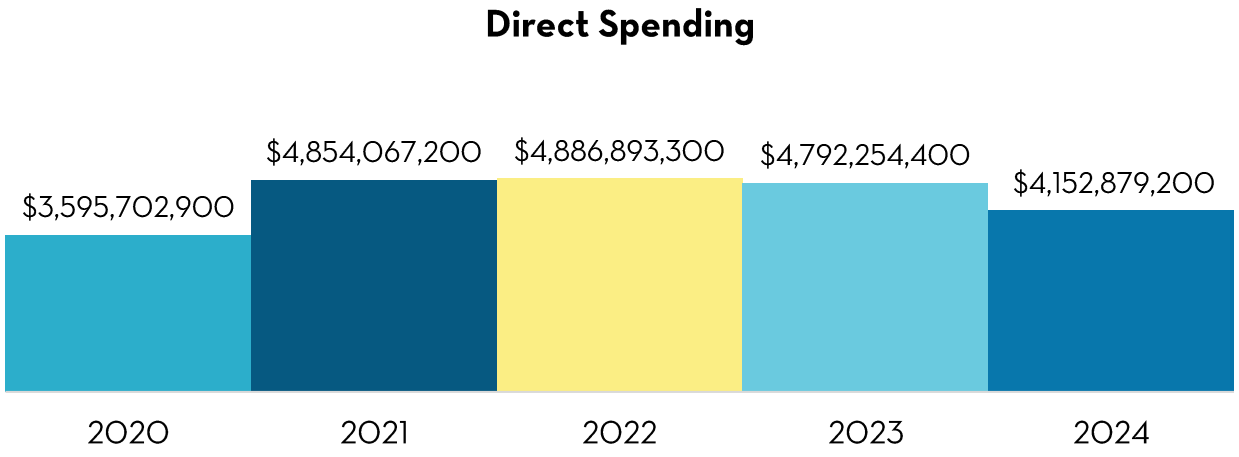
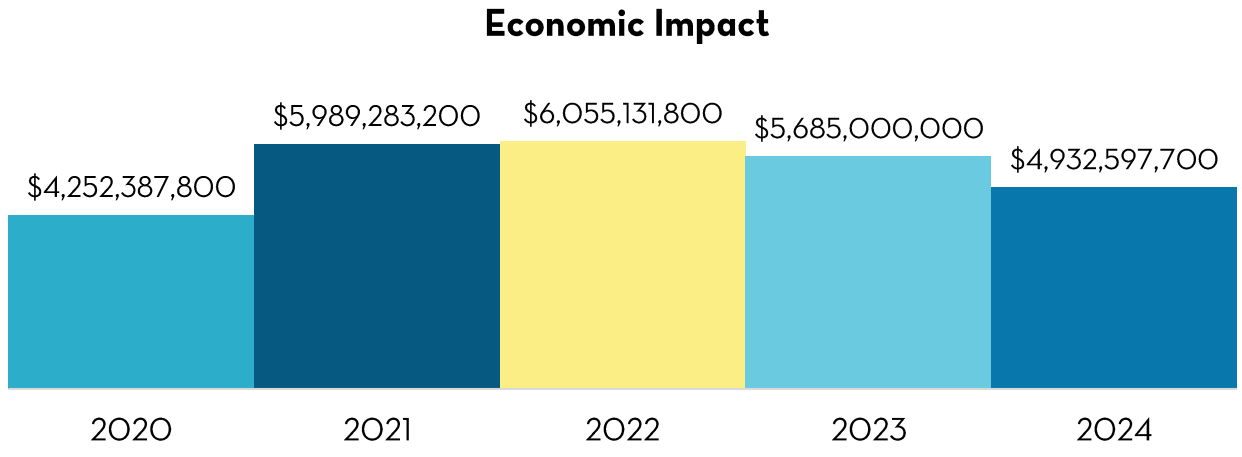
[2] Includes visitors staying with friends and relatives and in their own condos and timeshares and day visitors.

5-YEAR OVERVIEW – TOURISM METRICS[1]









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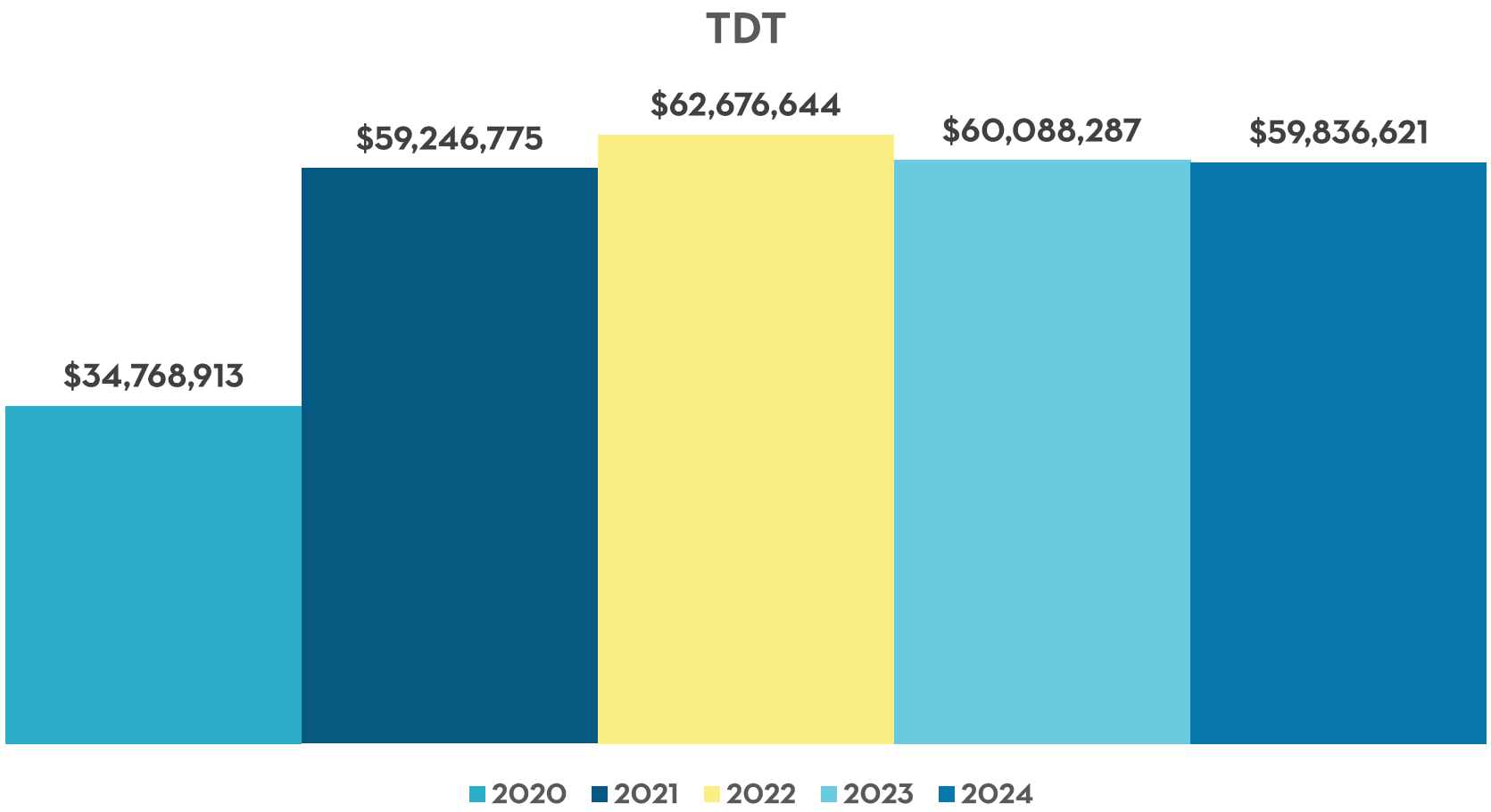
TOURISM DEVELOPMENT TAX TRENDS: 2020 – 2024[1]



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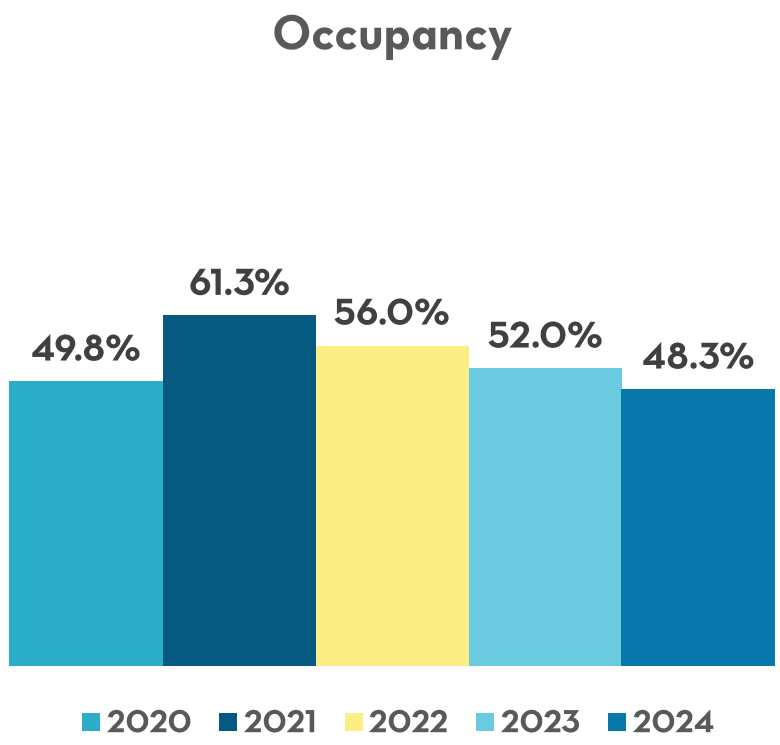
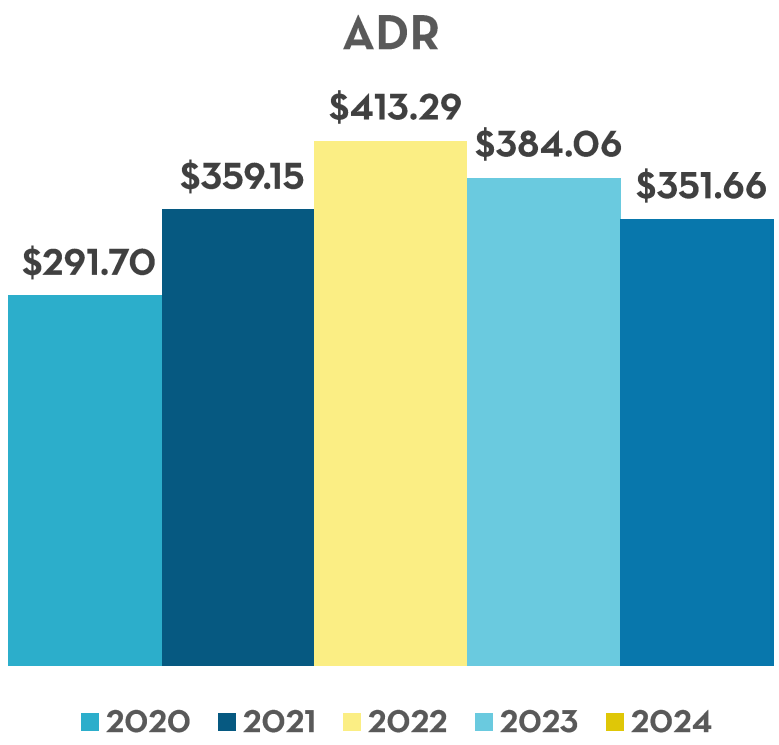
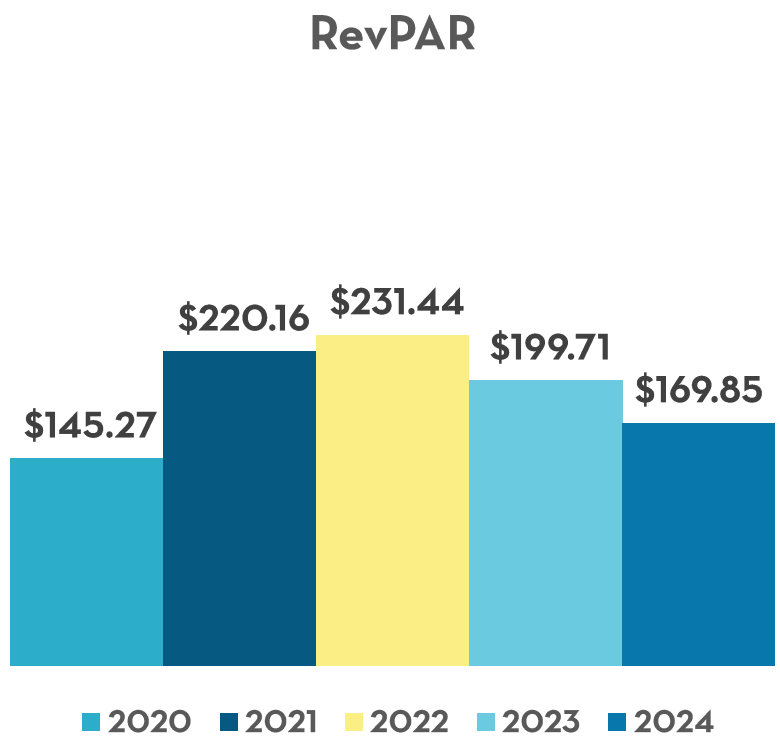
ACCOMMODATION METRIC TRENDS: 2020 - 2024







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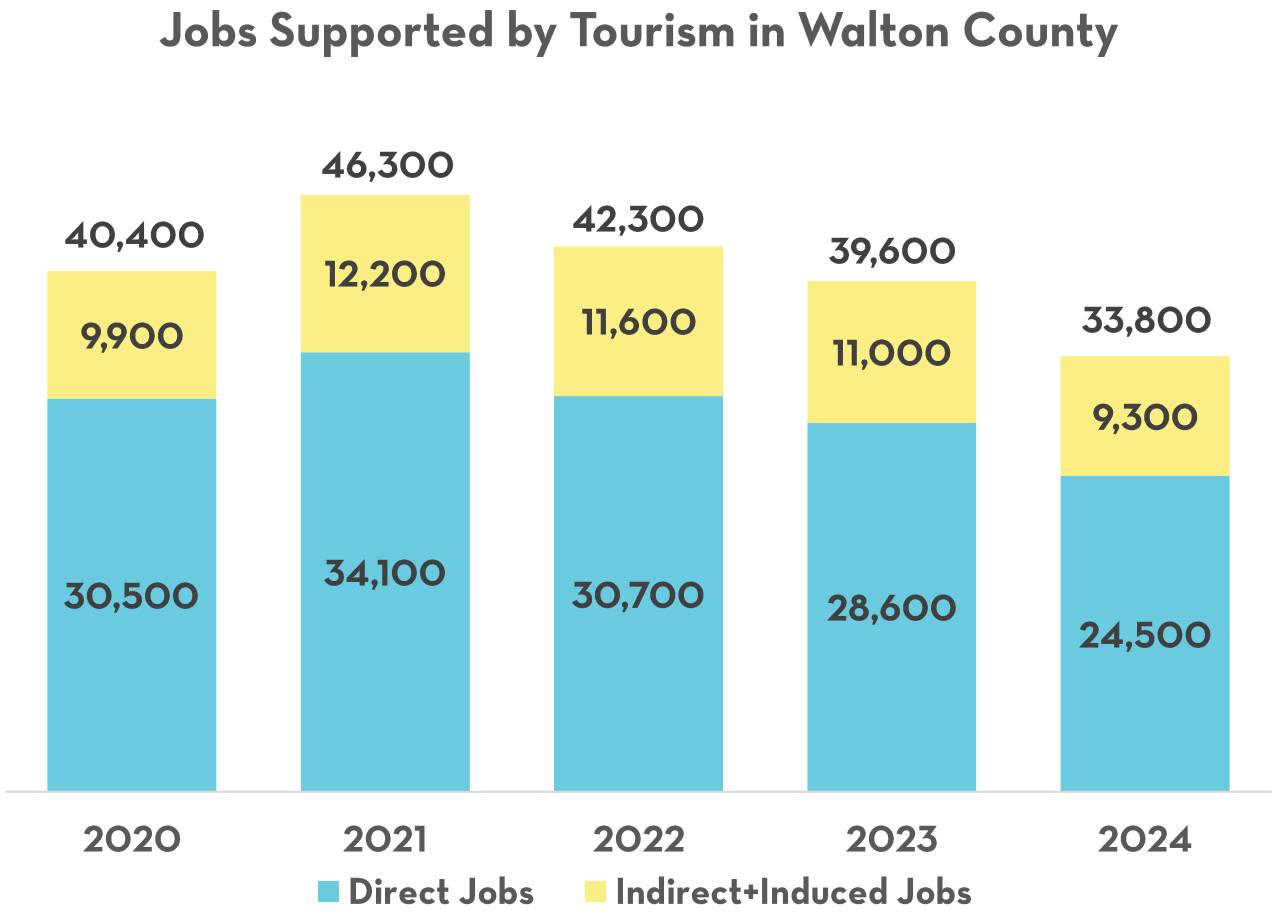
JOBS FROM TOURISM TRENDS[1]: 2020 – 2024



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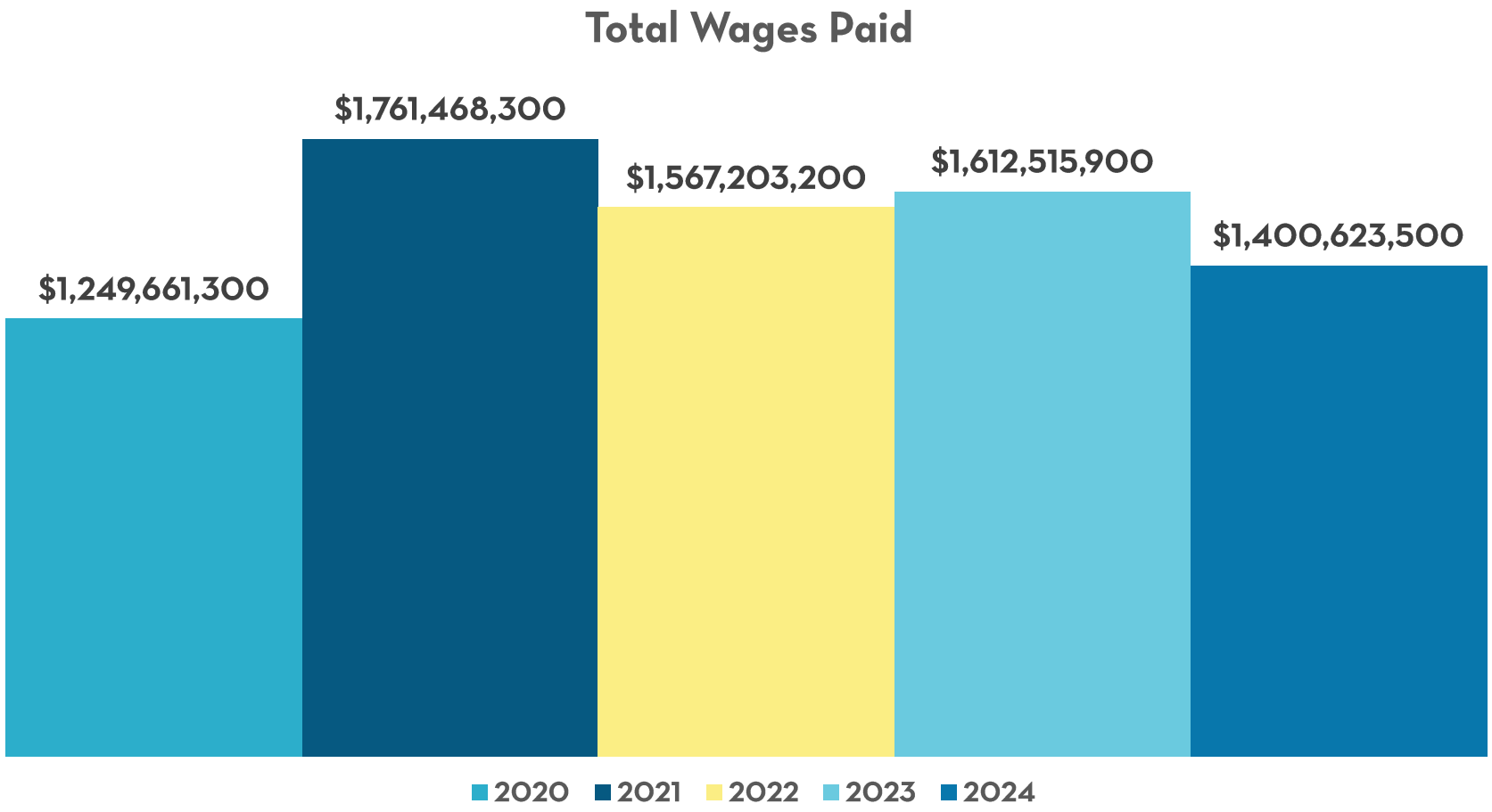
WAGES AND SALARIES FROM TOURISM TRENDS[1]: 2020 - 2024



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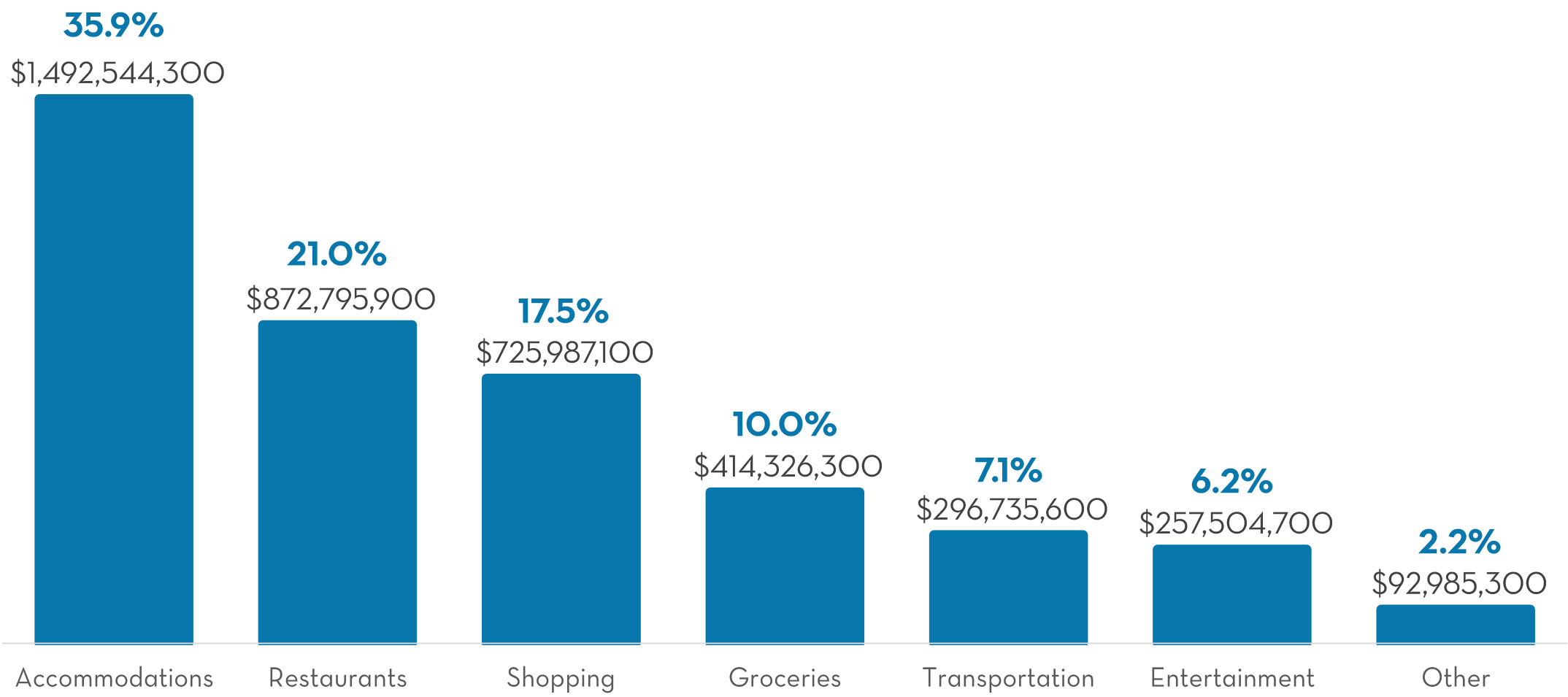
VISITOR DIRECT SPENDING CY2019 - CY2024

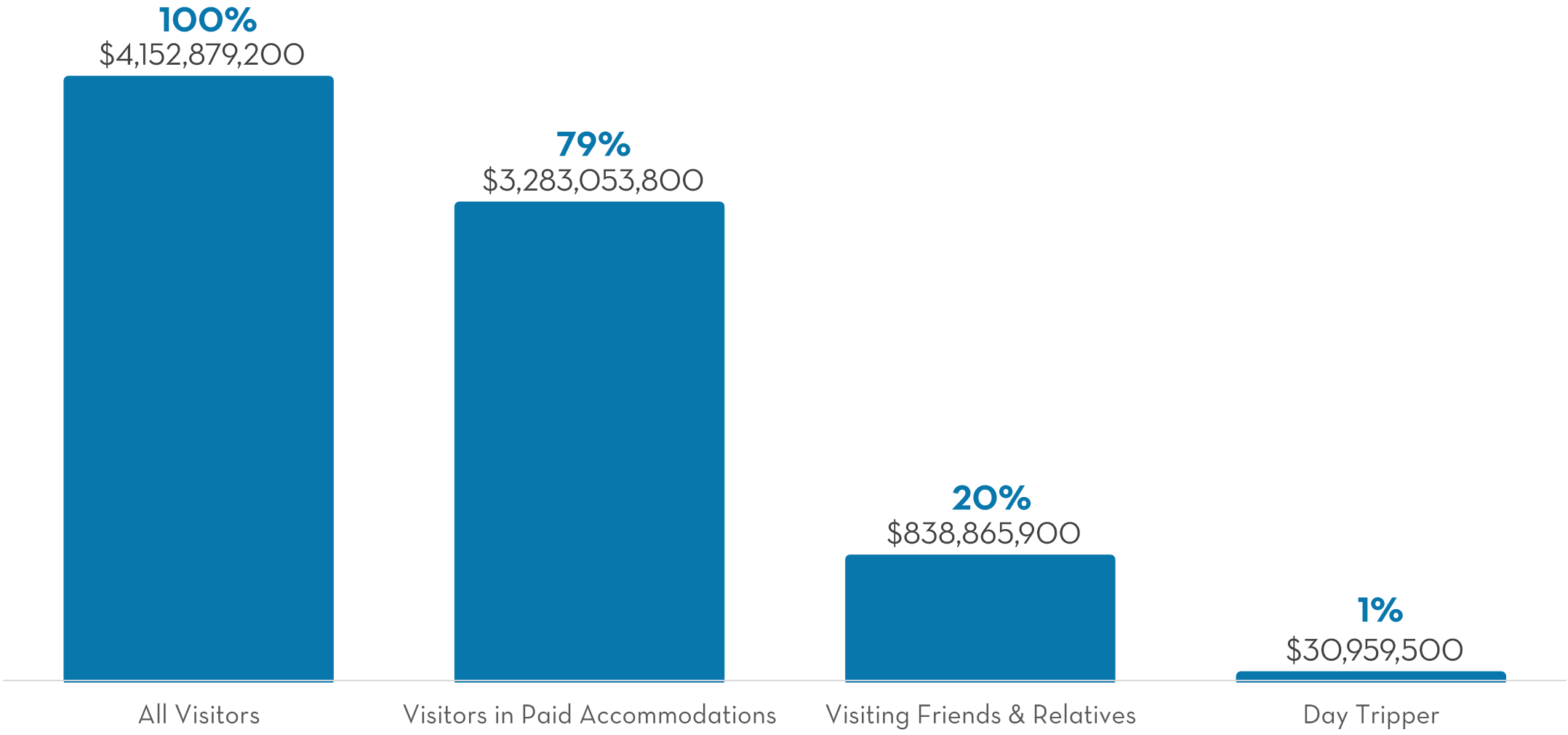
Category	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Accommodations[1]	$1,083,651,400	$1,781,266,900	$1,913,198,700	$1,733,059,600	$1,492,544,300
Restaurants	$767,973,300	$902,896,600	$881,579,700	$968,461,000	$872,795,900
Shopping	$674,528,000	$990,284,800	$918,578,900	$906,838,900	$725,987,100
Groceries	$454,601,200	$371,583,600	$386,399,300	$451,698,800	$414,326,300
Transportation	$243,310,500	$322,282,300	$324,404,500	$329,674,100	$296,735,600
Entertainment	$208,797,200	$371,567,900	$344,140,900	$301,079,400	$257,504,700
Other	$162,841,300	$114,185,100	$118,591,300	$101,442,600	$92,985,300
Total	$3,595,702,900	$4,854,067,200	$4,886,893,300	$4,792,254,400	$4,152,879,200

[1]Includes room rate, sales tax, tourist development tax, cleaning fees, resort fees, and services such as golf, spa, parking, etc., and some food charges that visitors do not differentiate from their room rate on their invoice.

DIRECT SPENDING



DIRECT SPENDING BY VISITOR TYPE

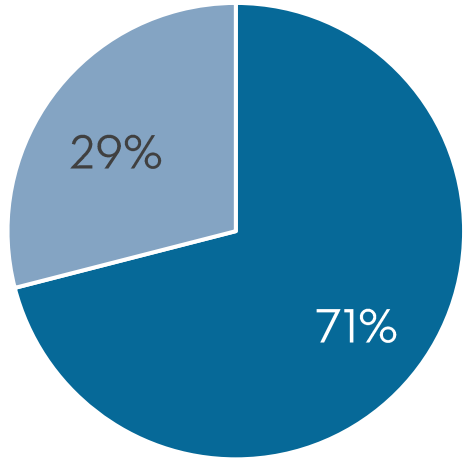


RETAIL SPENDING IN WALTON COUNTY CY2024

Visitors to Walton County account for over 7/10 of retail spending in Walton County.

Spending in Walton County	Dollar Amount	Percentage
Local residents' spending[1]	$1,683,004,800	29%
Visitors' spending[1]	$4,152,879,200	71%
Total spending	$5,835,884,000	100%

[1]Local residents' spending derived from US Census data; visitors' spending derived from Visitor Tracking surveys conducted for Walton County Tourism by Downs & St. Germain Research.



- Visitors' contribution to Walton County's economy
- Locals' contribution to Walton County's economy

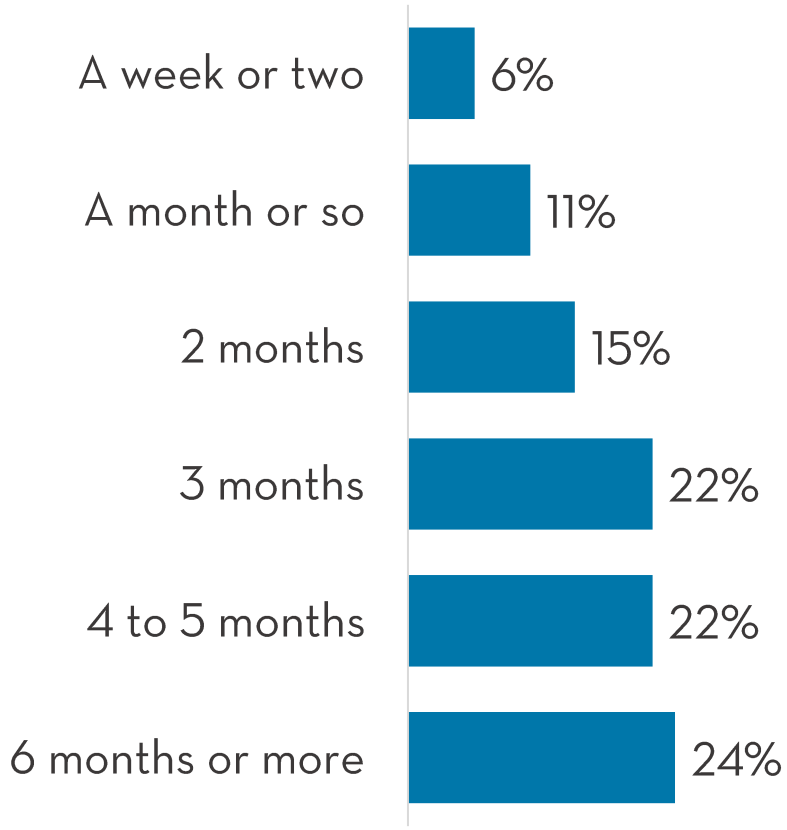
VISITOR JOURNEY: PRE-VISIT

PLANNING CYCLE

Nearly 7 in 10 visitors plan a Walton County vacation at least **3 months out**

Over 1 in 6 visitors to Walton County have **a short (a month or less) planning cycle**

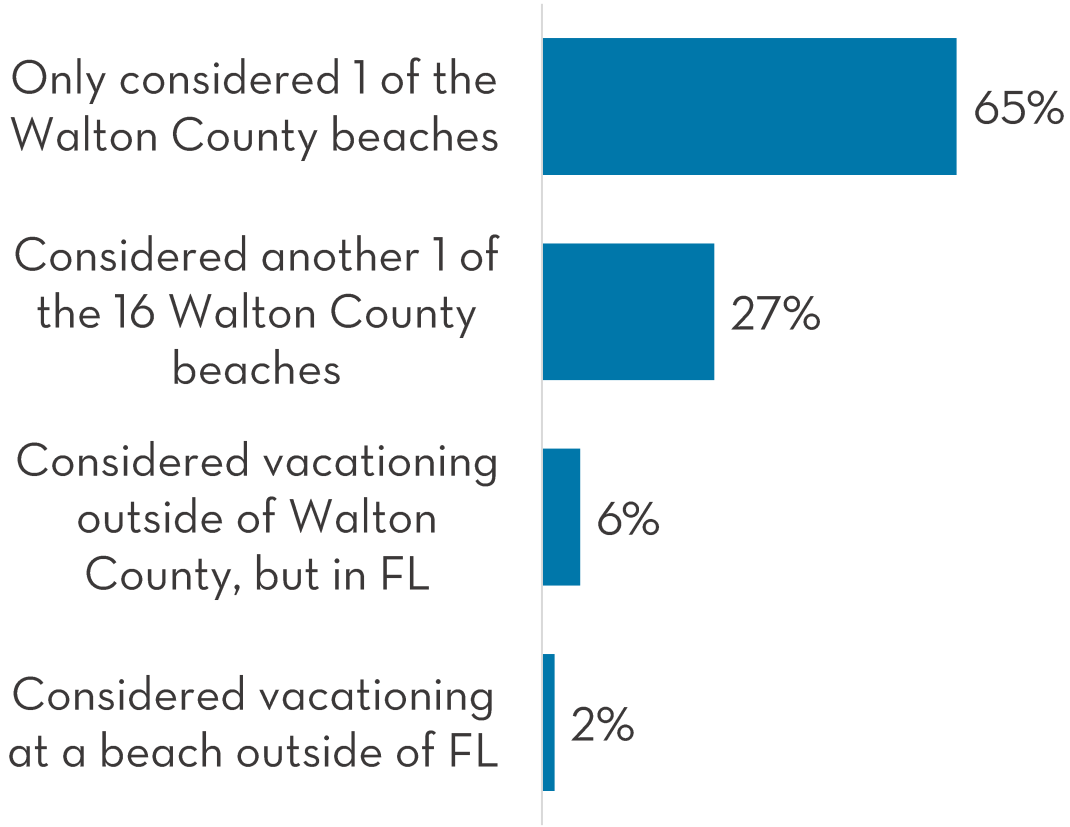
Average trip planning cycle begins **103 days** before the trip (101 days in 2023)



OTHER DESTINATIONS CONSIDERED

65% (+4% points from 2023) of visitors only consider going to the Walton County beach neighborhood where they stay

11% use the term "South Walton" when referring to the area

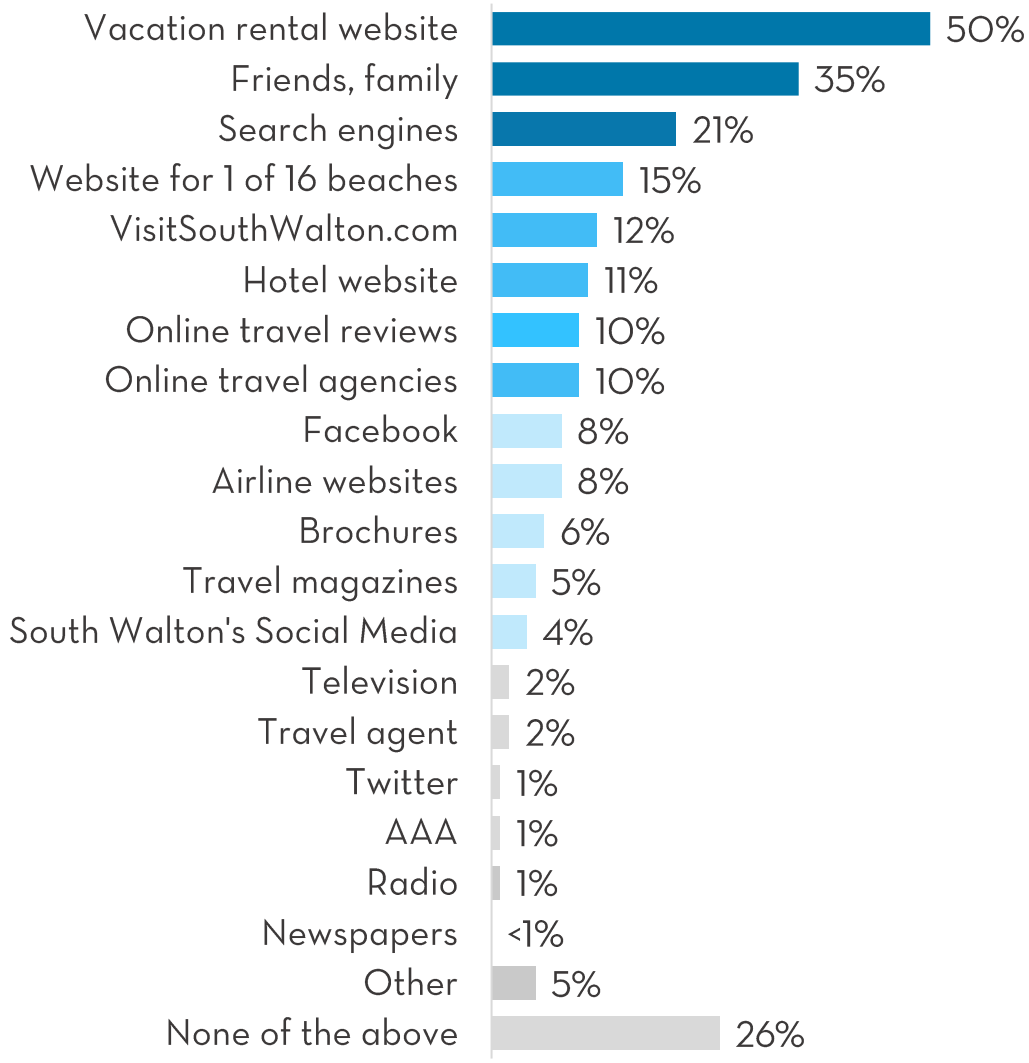


TRIP PLANNING SOURCES[1]

Half of visitors use a vacation rental website to help plan their trip to Walton County

Over 1 in 3 visitors ask friends and family for help to plan their trip to Walton County

Over 1 in 5 visitors use search engines, such as Google, to help plan their trip

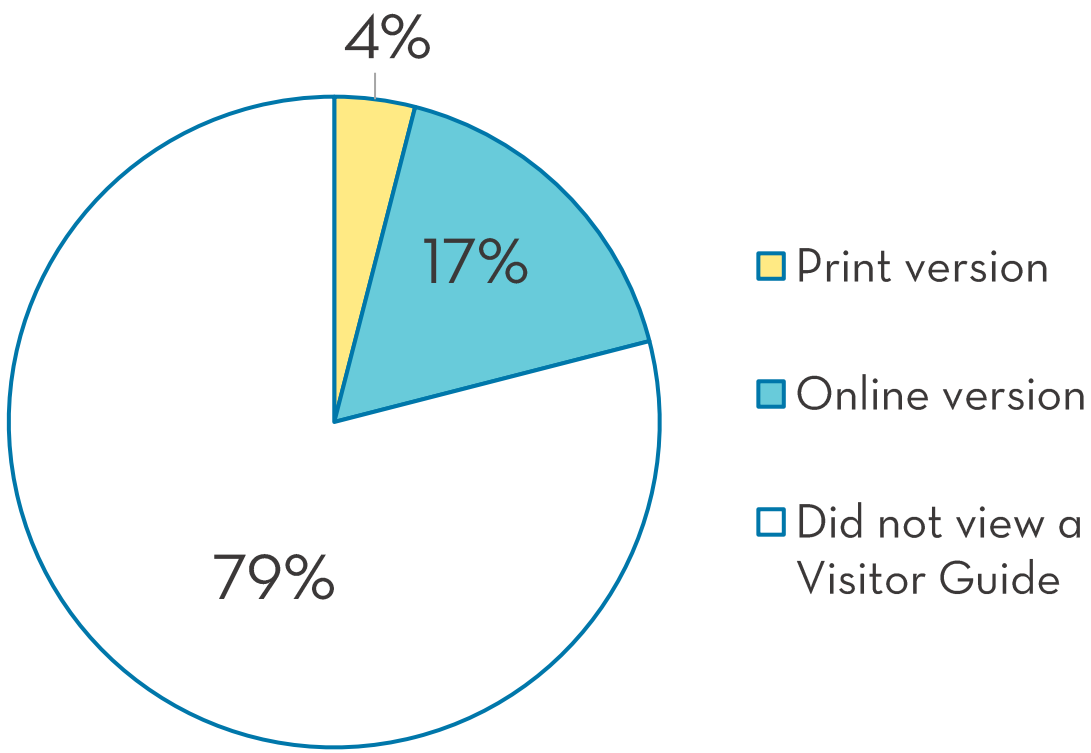


[1] Multiple responses permitted.

WALTON COUNTY VISITOR GUIDE

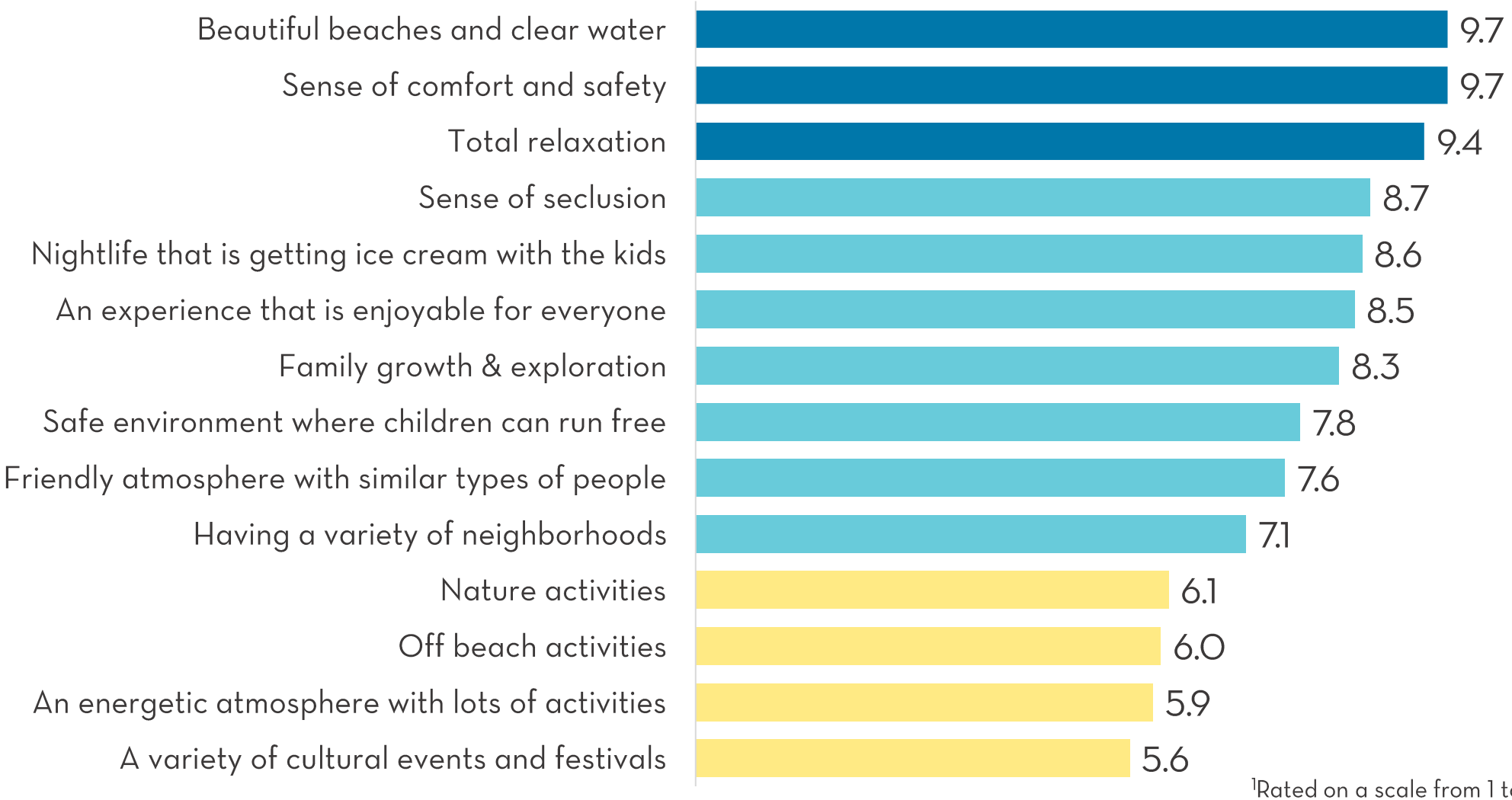
Over 1 in 5 visitors view a Walton County Visitors Guide before going to the area

Visitors give the Visitor Guide a rating of **8.7 out of 10**[1] (+0.3 points from 2023)



[1]Rated on a 10-point scale where 10 is extremely useful and 1 is not at all useful.

IMPORTANT VACATION DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES[1]



[1]Rated on a scale from 1 to 10 where 10 is very important and 1 is not at all important.

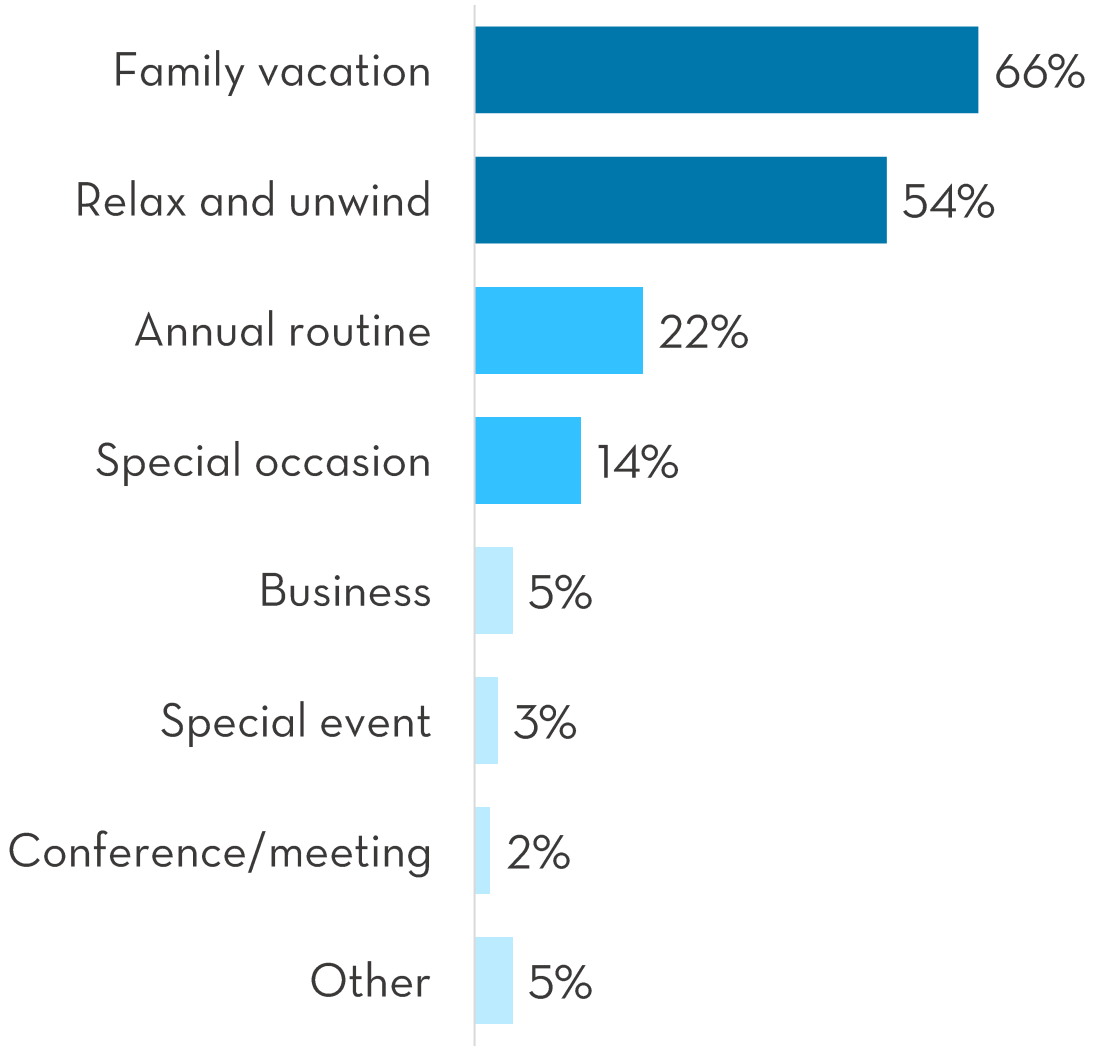
WALTON COUNTY TOURISM

downs & st. germain RESEARCH

REASONS FOR VISITING[1]

2 in 3 visitors come to Walton County for a **family vacation**

Over half of visitors come to **relax and unwind**



[1]Multiple responses permitted.

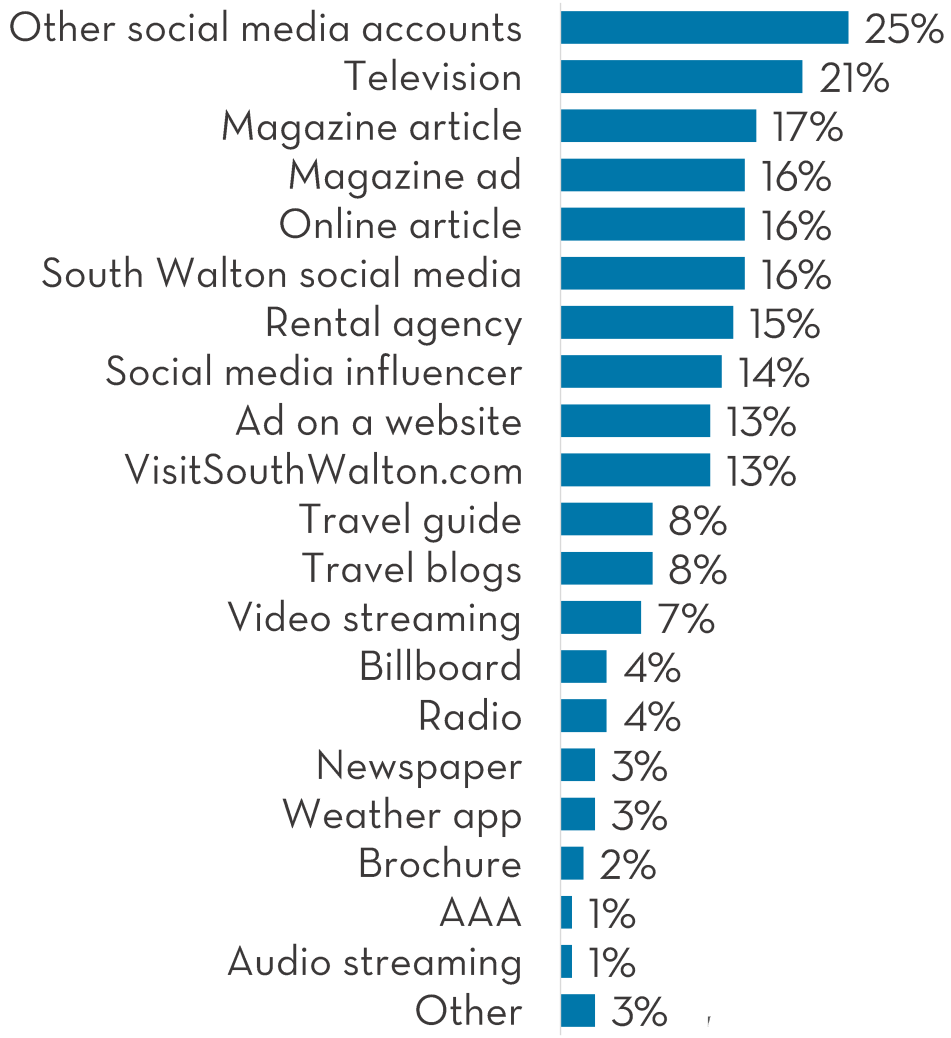
WALTON COUNTY PROMOTIONS[1]

1 in 4 (-1% points from 2023) visitors recall advertising, promotions, or travel stories for Walton County

This information influences **7%** (Consistent with 2023) of all visitors to visit Walton County

1 in 4 (+2% points from 2023) visitors recall information about the destination on **other social media accounts**[2]

Base: **25%** of visitors who noticed advertising

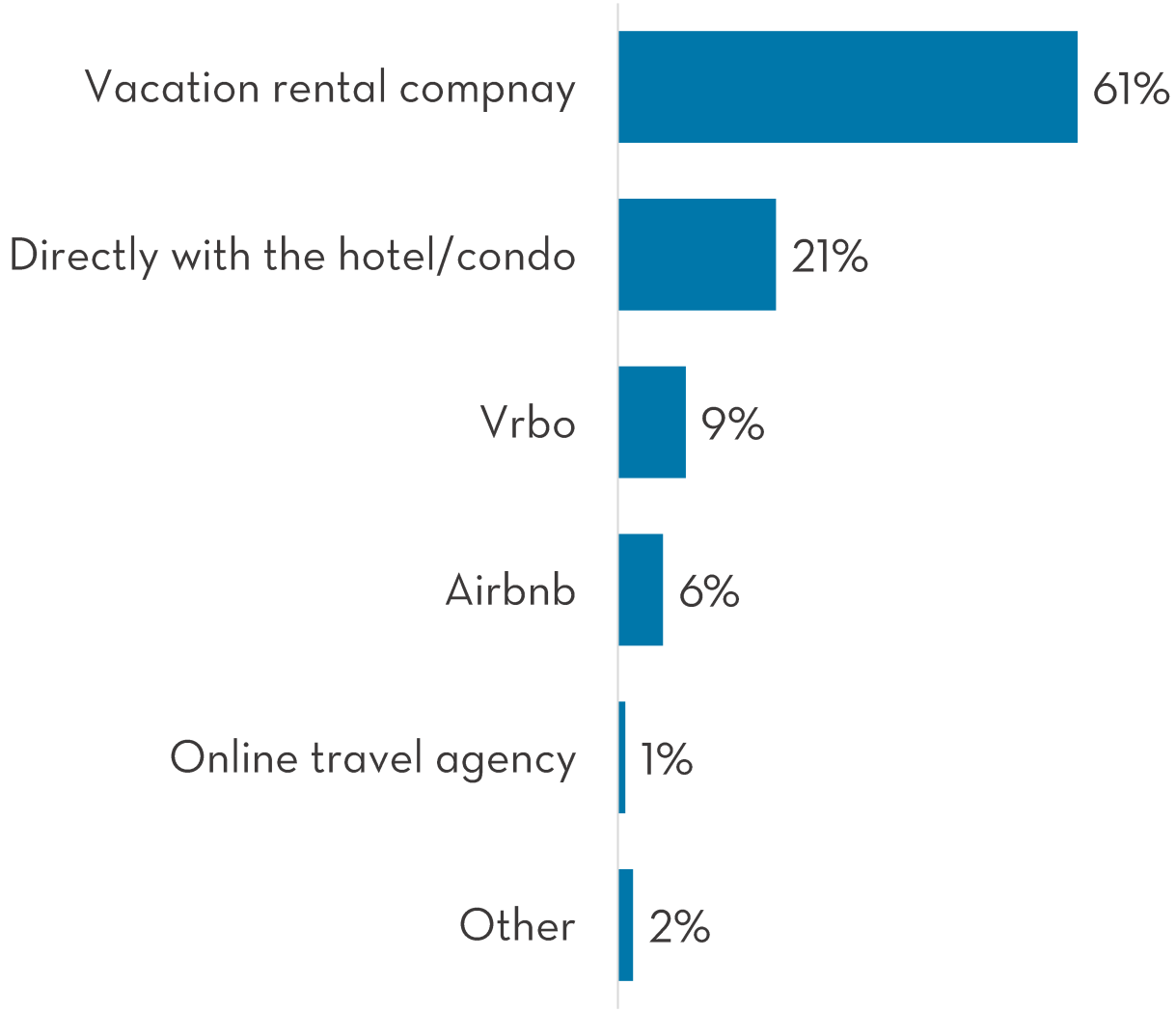


[1]Multiple responses permitted.
[2]These refer to social media accounts not associated with Walton County Tourism

BOOKING ACCOMMODATIONS

Over 3 in 5 visitors book accommodations through a **vacation rental company**

Over 1 in 5 visitors book **directly with a hotel or condo**

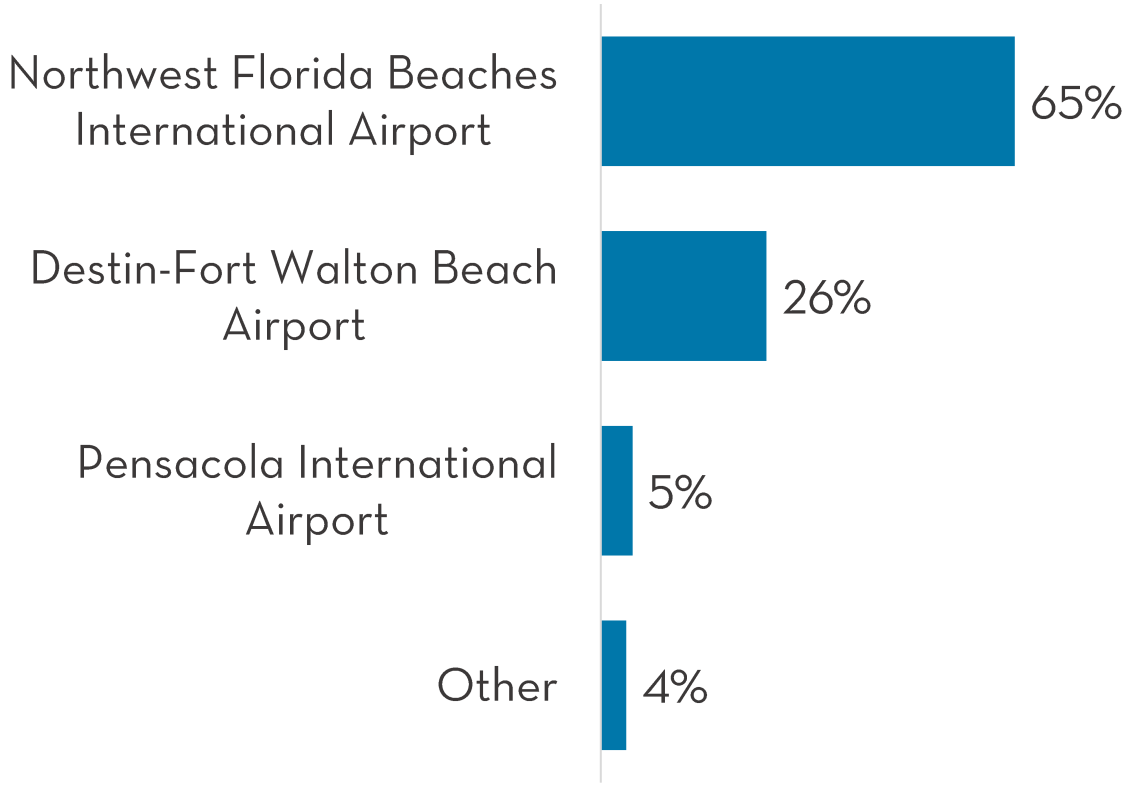


VISITOR TRANSPORTATION

74% (-1% points from 2023) of visitors drive to Walton County

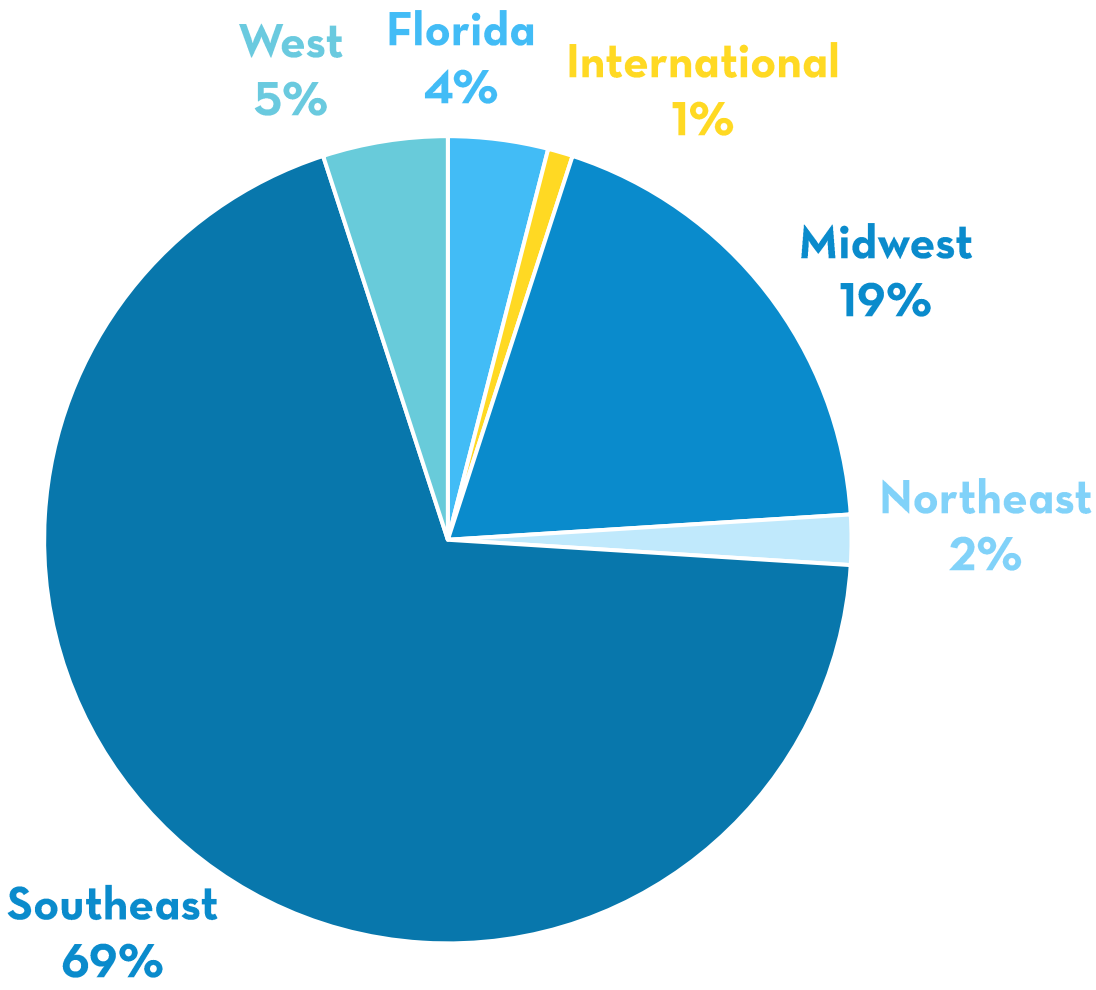
28% (-4% points from 2023) of those who drive are aware that there are direct flights from their city to the Walton County area, and **24%** are not sure if there are direct flights available

26% who **flew** used the following airports:



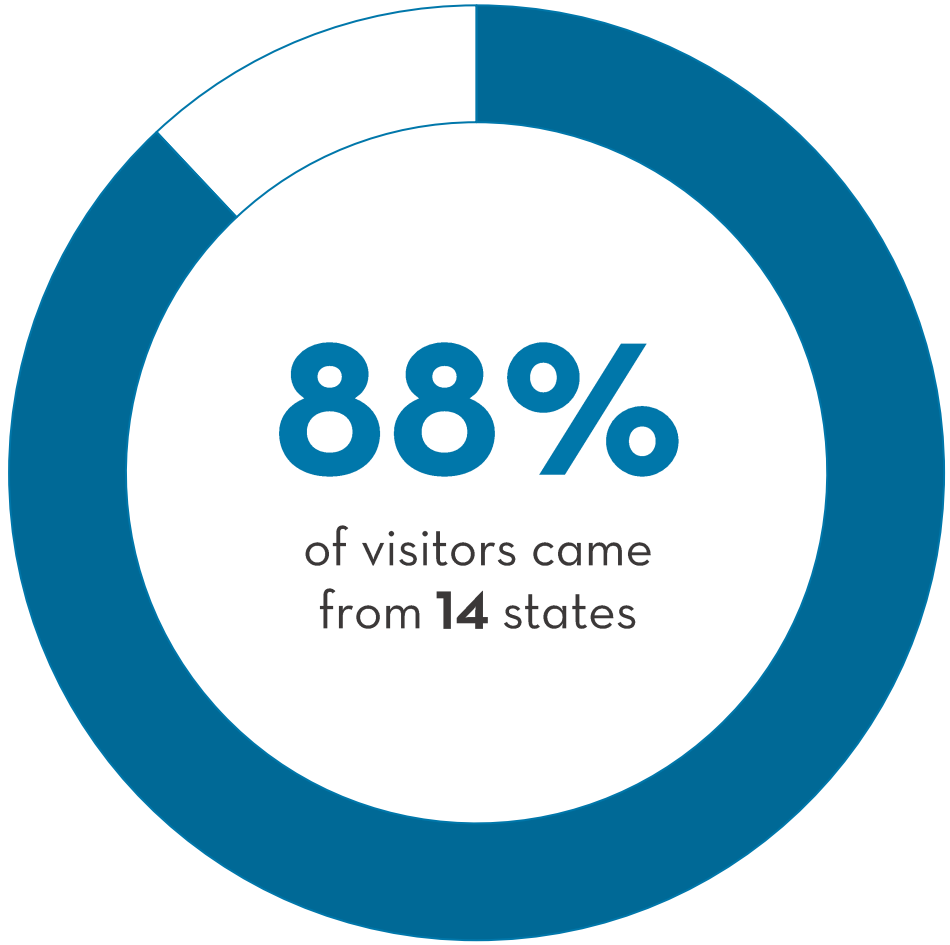
VISITOR JOURNEY: TRAVEL PARTY PROFILE

ORIGIN OF WALTON COUNTY VISITORS



ORIGIN OF WALTON COUNTY VISITORS

State	% of Visitors
Georgia	14%
Tennessee	13%
Texas	13%
Alabama	10%
Mississippi	7%
Louisiana	6%
Florida	4%
Arkansas	3%
Illinois	3%
Indiana	3%
Kentucky	3%
Missouri	3%
Ohio	3%
Oklahoma	3%



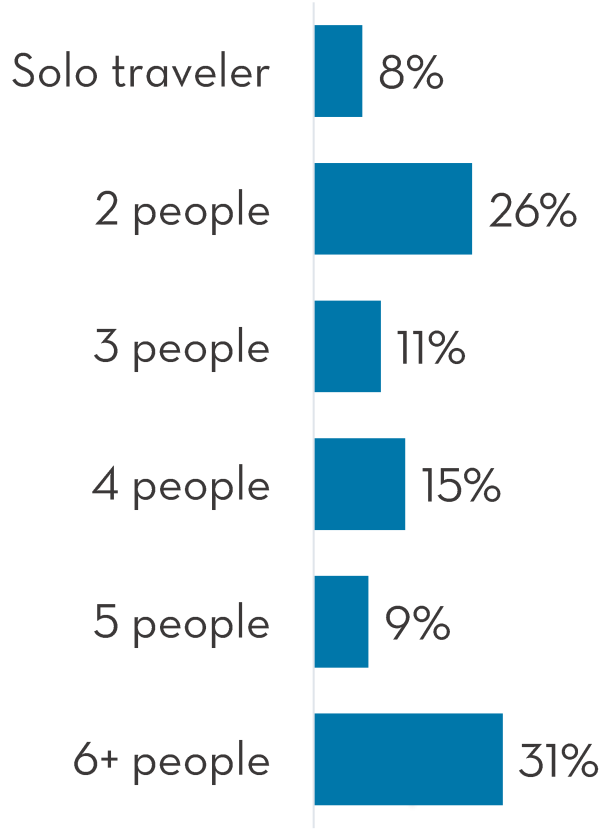
ORIGIN OF WALTON COUNTY VISITORS

Top Origin Markets	% of Visitors
Atlanta	12%
Nashville	9%
Dallas-Fort Worth	5%
Birmingham	4%
Houston	4%
New Orleans	4%
Columbus-Tupelo-West Point	4%
Memphis	3%
Mobile-Pensacola	3%
Saint Louis	2%
Chicago	2%
Little Rock-Pine Bluff	2%
Montgomery	2%
Austin	2%
Columbus, OH	2%
Louisville	2%

TRAVEL PARTY SIZE AND COMPOSITION

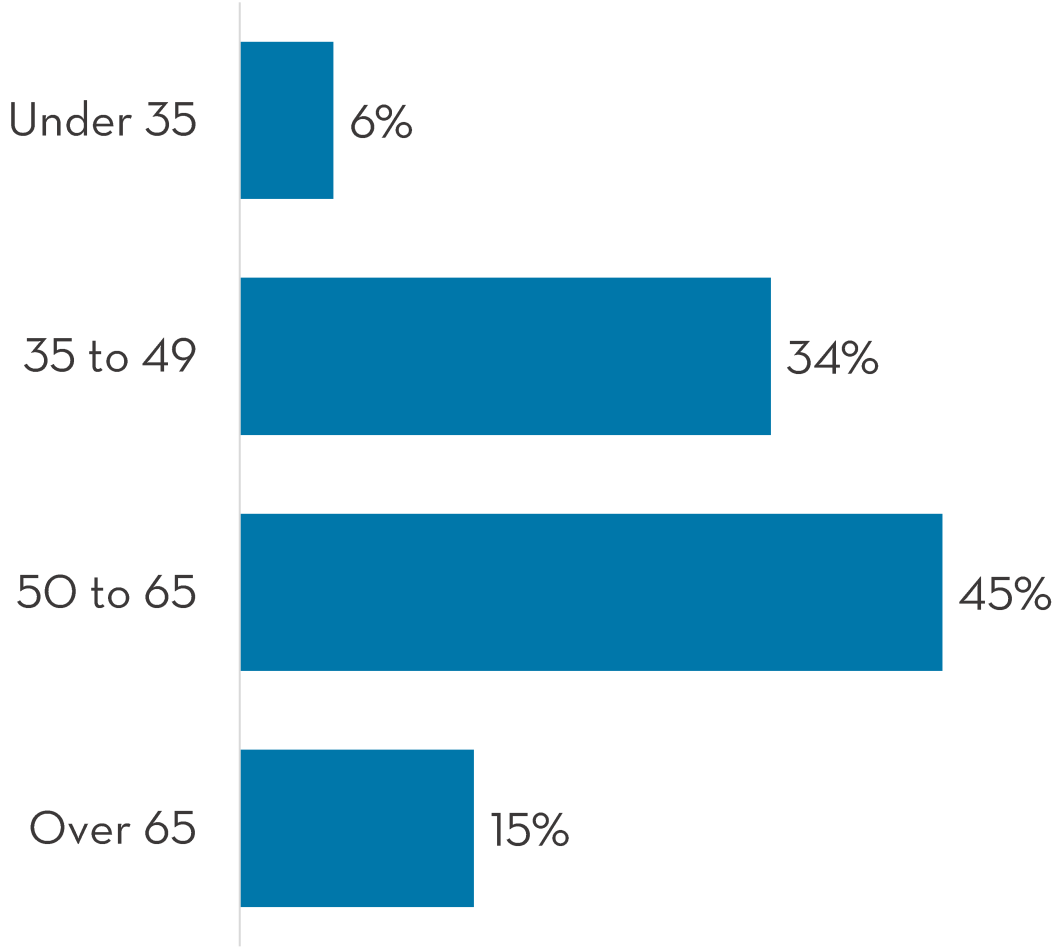
Visitors travel in a party composed of **4.7** people (5.0 people in 2023)

52% (-2% points from 2023) of visitors travel with children under the age of 20



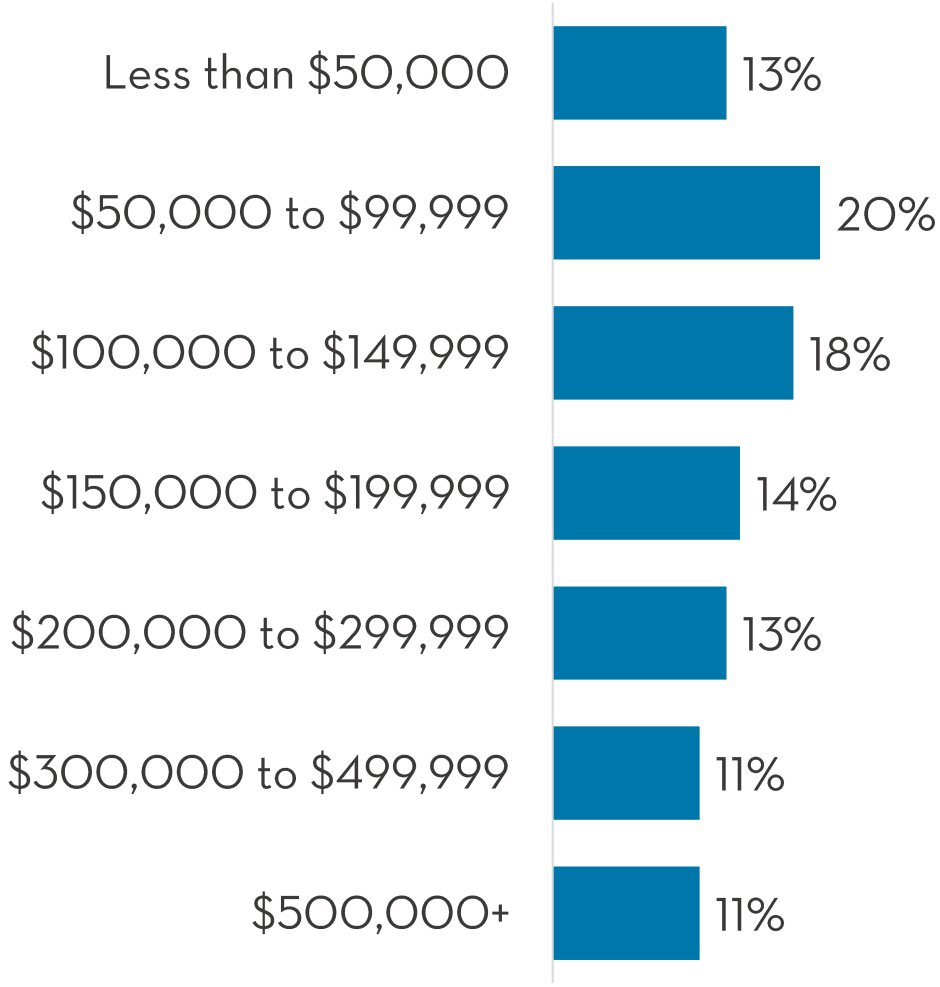
AGE OF WALTON COUNTY VISITORS

Median age of visitors is **53 years old** (53 years old in 2023)



TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME

Visitors have a **median** household income of **$147,200** ($156,300 in 2023), while estimated **average** household income is **$200,00** ($203,800 in 2023)



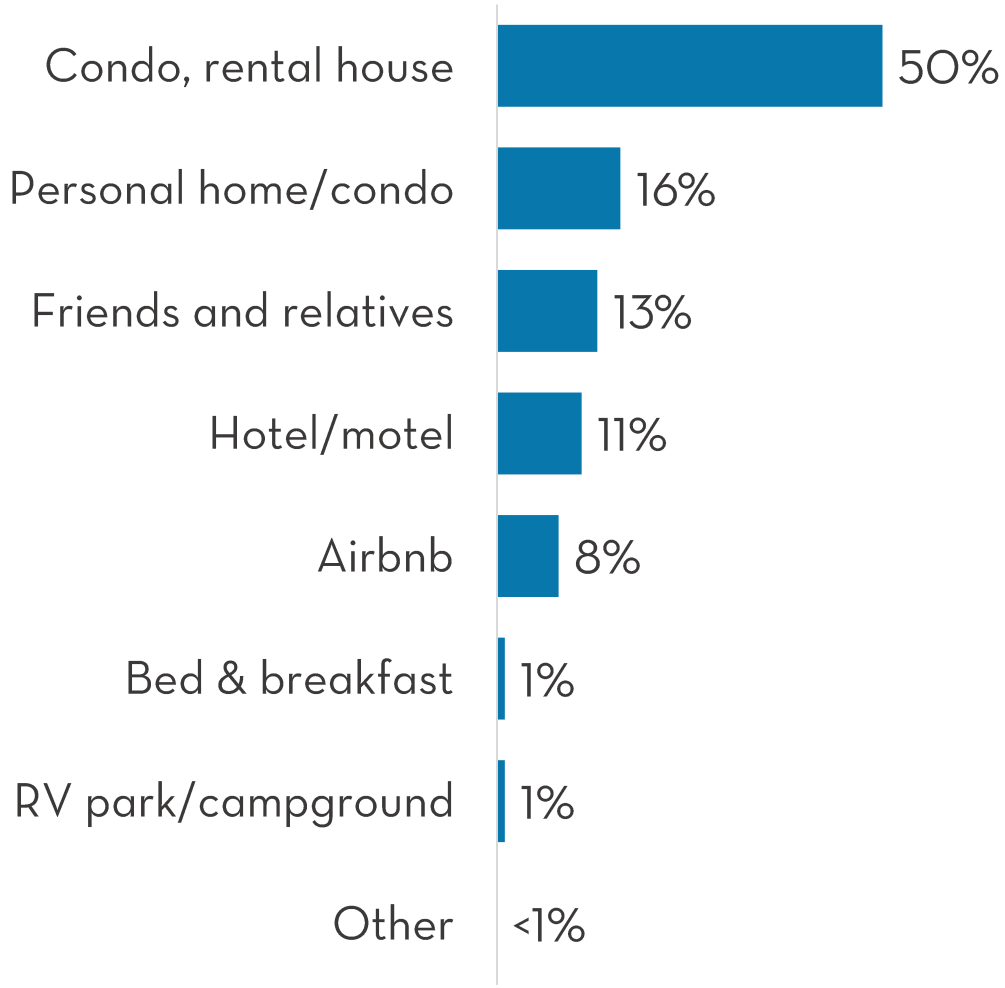
VISITOR JOURNEY: TRIP EXPERIENCE

VISITOR'S ACCOMMODATIONS

Half of visitors stay in a condo or rental house

16% visitors stay in their personal home or condo

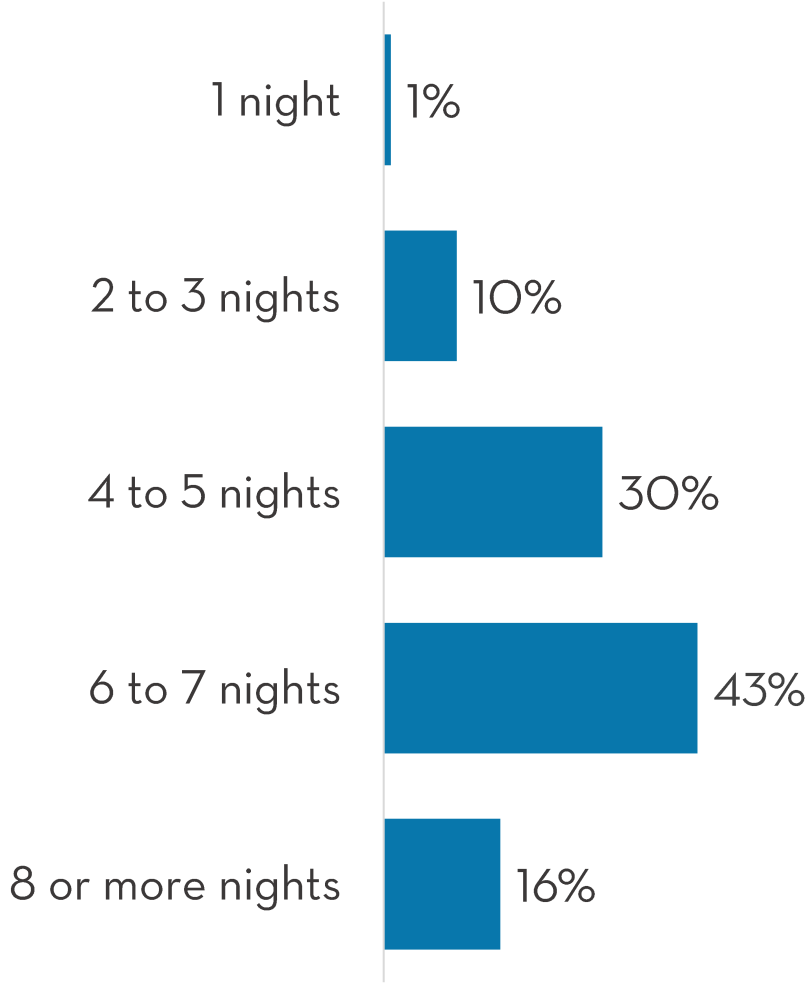
13% stay with friends or relatives



LENGTH OF STAY

Visitors[1] stay an average of **6.1** nights[2] in Walton County (5.9 nights in 2023)

Visitors staying in paid accommodations spend an average of **6.4** nights[2] in Walton County (6.4 nights in 2023)

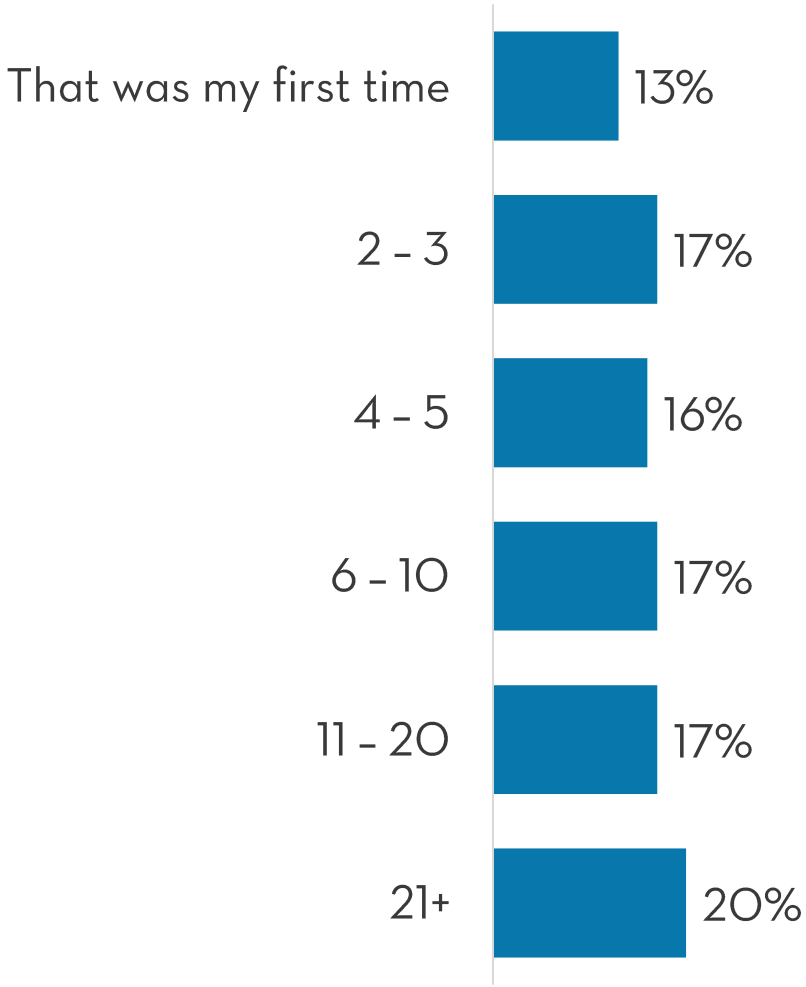


[1]Includes visitors staying paid in accommodations, non-paid, and day trippers.
[2] Visitors who stayed in Walton County up to 30 nights.

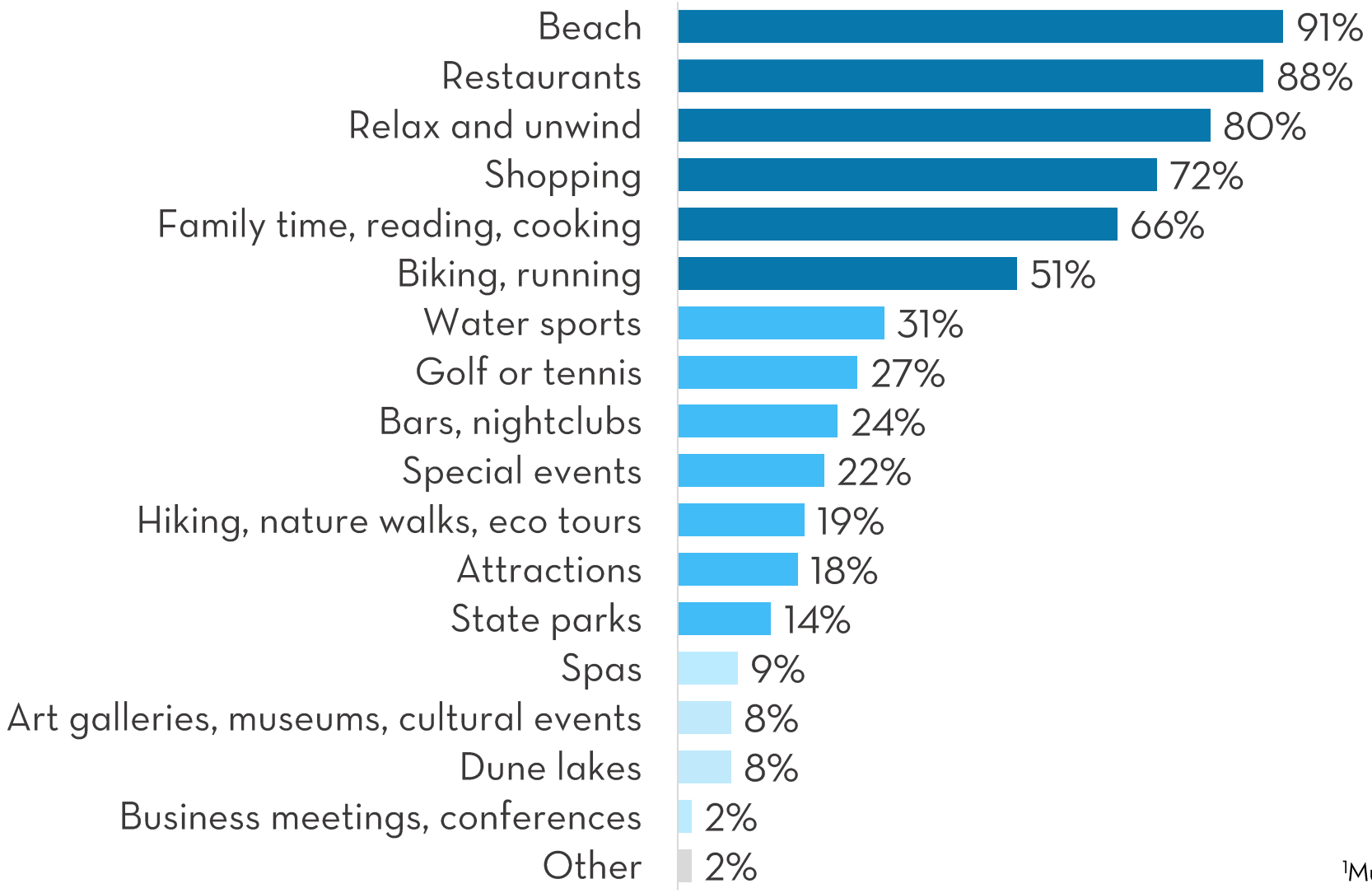
NUMBER OF VISITS TO WALTON COUNTY

Over 1 in 8 visitors are visiting for the first time

37% (+2% points from 2023) of visitors have visited Walton County more than 10 times



VISITOR ACTIVITIES[1]



[1]Multiple responses permitted.

WALTON COUNTY TOURISM

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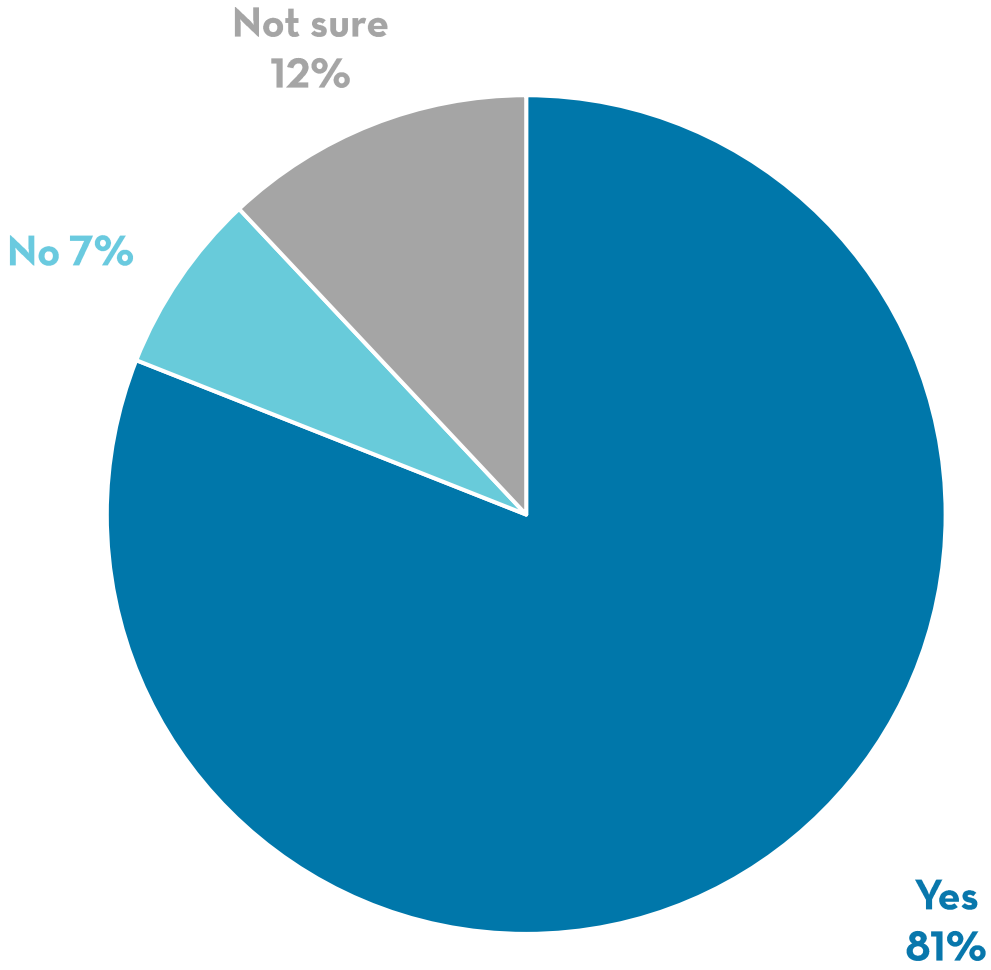
BEACH SAFETY

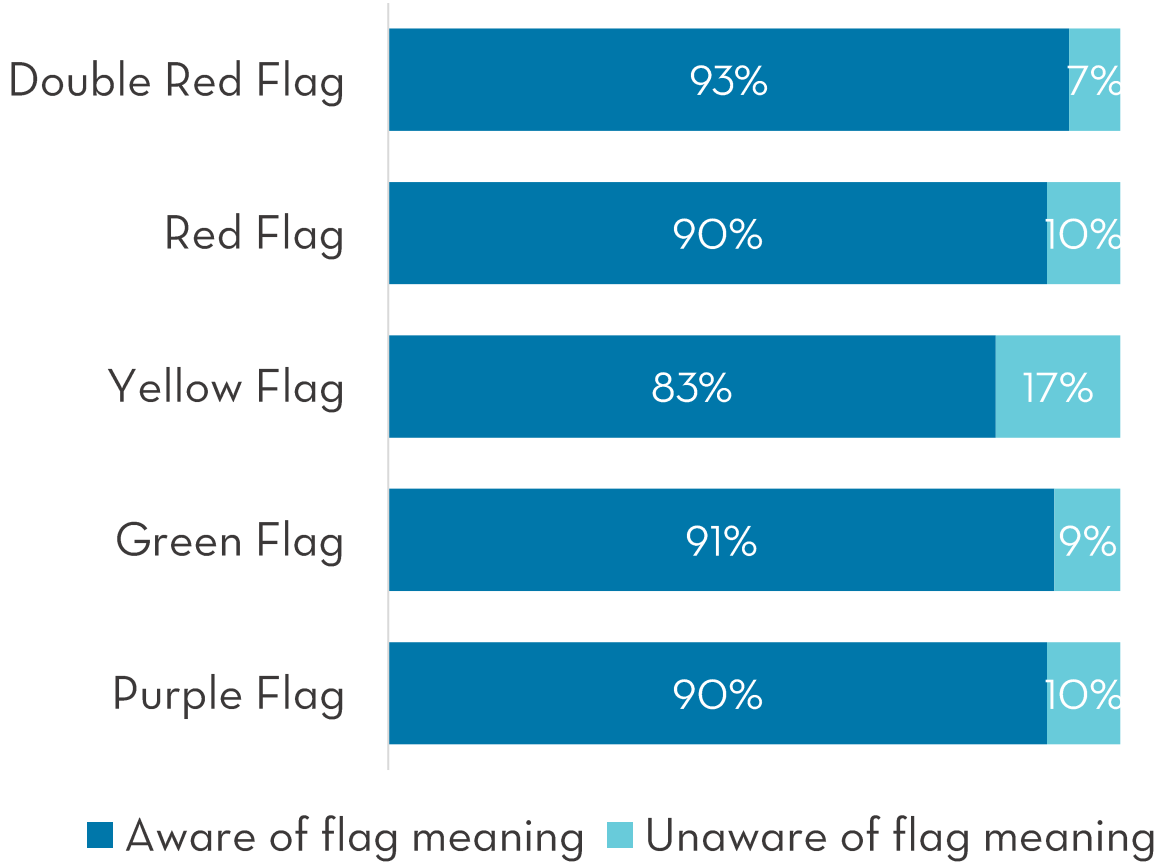
81% of visitors know there are flags posted along the beaches to indicate how safe it is to go into the water



BEACH FLAG AWARENESS

Over 4 in 5 visitors are aware of the meaning of each flag color

67% (+4% points from 2023) of visitors are aware that entering the Gulf during double red flag conditions can result in a $500 fine and criminal charges



TYPICAL WALTON COUNTY TRAVEL PARTY EXPENSES[1]

- The typical travel party spends **$680** ($785 in 2023) a day while in Walton County.
- The typical travel party spends a total of **$4,131** ($4,652 in 2023) while visiting Walton County.
- Compared to 2023, total trip expenditures per travel party decreased 11% despite a longer length of stay, with the largest decreases in Shopping (-21%) and Entertainment (-14%).
- The decrease in spending reflects national trends of visitors prioritizing travel while exercising economic caution by spending less during trips.

Spending Category [1]	Average Daily Expenditure	Total Trip Expenditure
Accommodations	$256	$1,550
Restaurants	$142	$863
Groceries	$64	$388
Shopping	$113	$688
Entertainment	$42	$256
Transportation	$48	$293
Other	$15	$93
Total	**$680**	**$4,131**

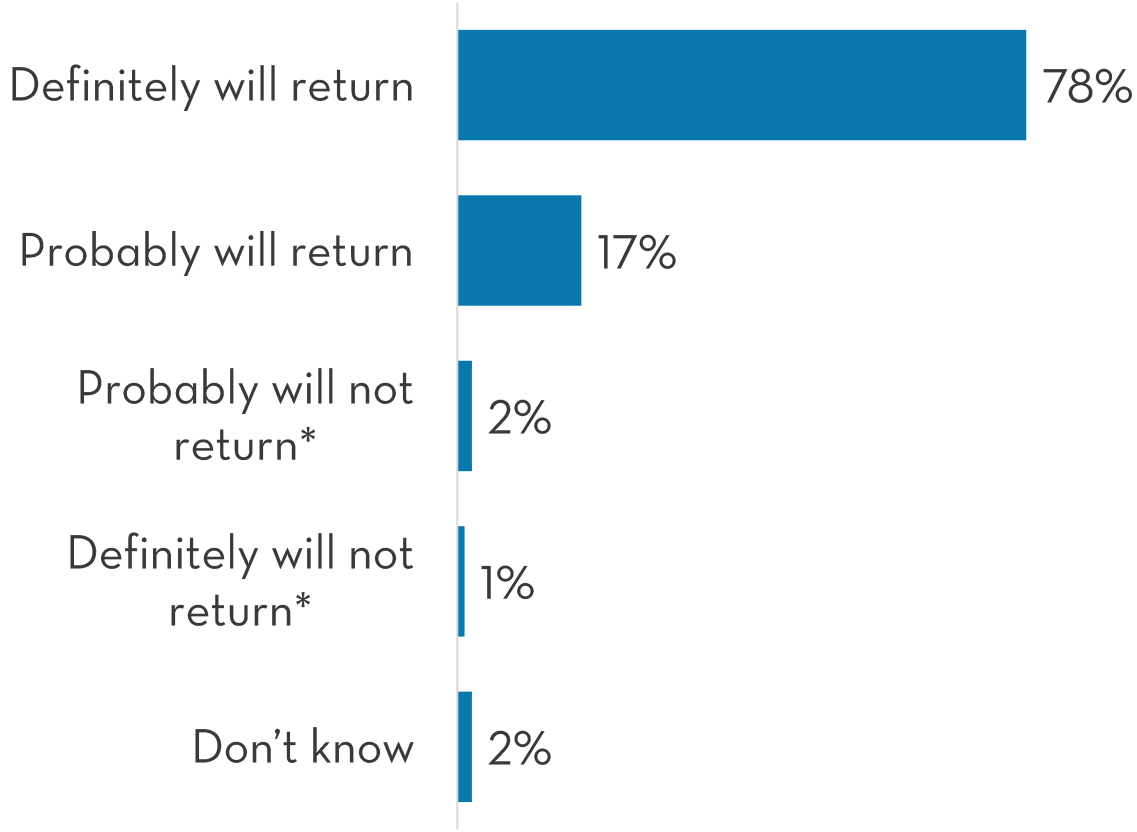
[1] Includes overnight visitors and day trippers.

VISITOR JOURNEY: POST-TRIP EVALUATION

SATISFACTION WITH WALTON COUNTY

Visitors gave Walton County a rating of **9.2**[1] (consistent with 2023) as a place to vacation

78% of visitors will definitely return to Walton County



[1] 10 = Excellent; 1= Poor

* 3% of all visitors will probably not return to Walton County for the following reasons: 1. Too crowded 2. Too expensive and 3. Traffic was a problem.

WALTON COUNTY TOURISM

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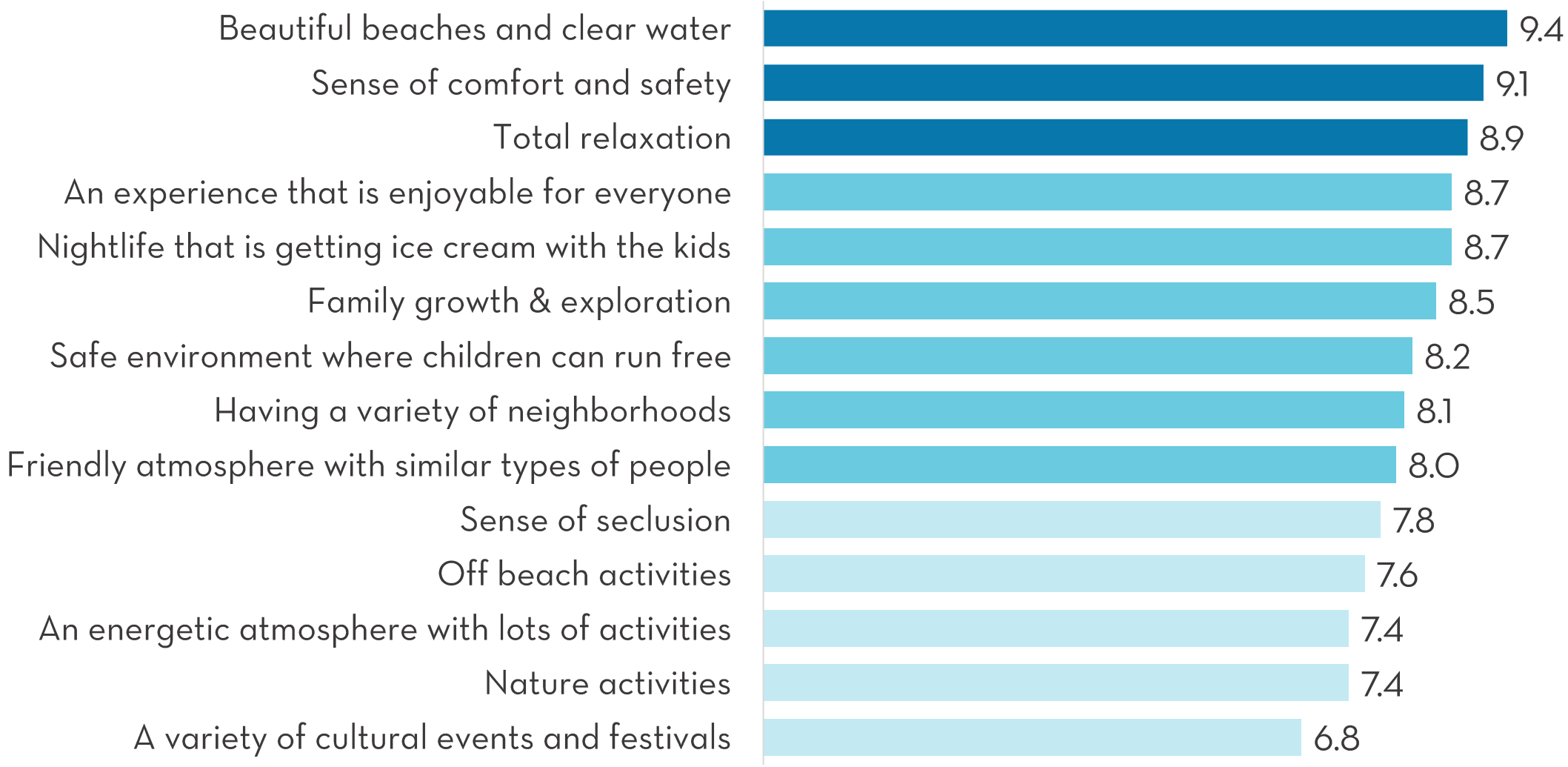
RATING WALTON COUNTY[1]

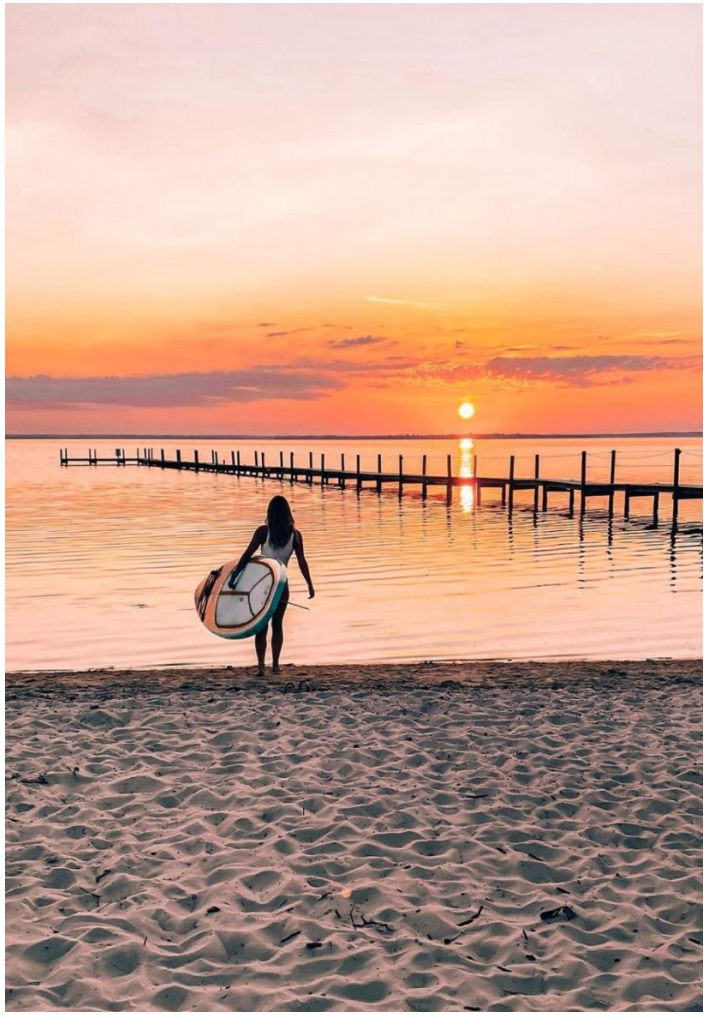


[1] Rated on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent.

WALTON COUNTY TOURISM

downs & st. germain RESEARCH

AREA DESCRIPTIONS



"Absolutely beautiful! The sand is so soft. The water was gorgeous! The temperature was perfect. So much to do there. beautiful but to go back and visit the places we didn't get a chance to go to."

"Best beaches with clear water and a great beach vibe."

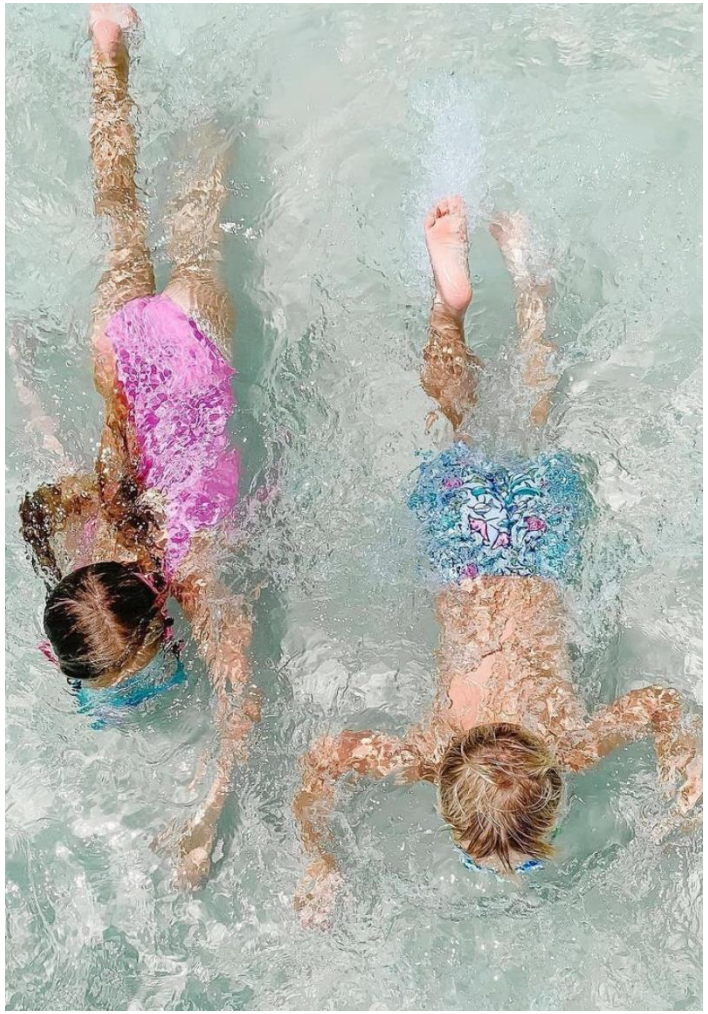
"An eclectic collection of walkable beach communities with good restaurants and shopping. Gorgeous beaches and water."

"Most beautiful beaches in America."

"You must go! It is not only beautiful but also has everything you could possibly want on a vacation. Such a fun place to be with everything right there for you to enjoy in one place. The beach and water were like being in Bahamas. Gorgeous! We will definitely be back!"

"Beautiful! Perfect beaches, quaint peaceful neighborhoods, wonderfully preserved nature spaces, excellent amenities, bike and walking friendly, great shops and restaurants. Well kept."

AREA DESCRIPTIONS



"Great beaches, friendly people, and wonderful relaxation! Has everything you need for an awesome vacation!"

"Feels like home"

"Beautiful ocean and beaches, wonderful charming architecture, fun shops & restaurants in a relaxed but fun and safe atmosphere."

"Upscale, family-friendly, good selection of nice restaurants, good shopping, walkable."

"I would describe South Walton as the perfect place to take your family on a relaxing and beautiful beach trip. South Walton feels like visiting an out-of-country luxury destination while still being in the US."

"The most beautiful beaches in the U.S. and the friendliest neighborhoods!"

"Idyllic family-friendly beach community."

AREA DESCRIPTIONS

"Very idyllic. It's become better known, but it still feels like Old Florida with everything you could need."

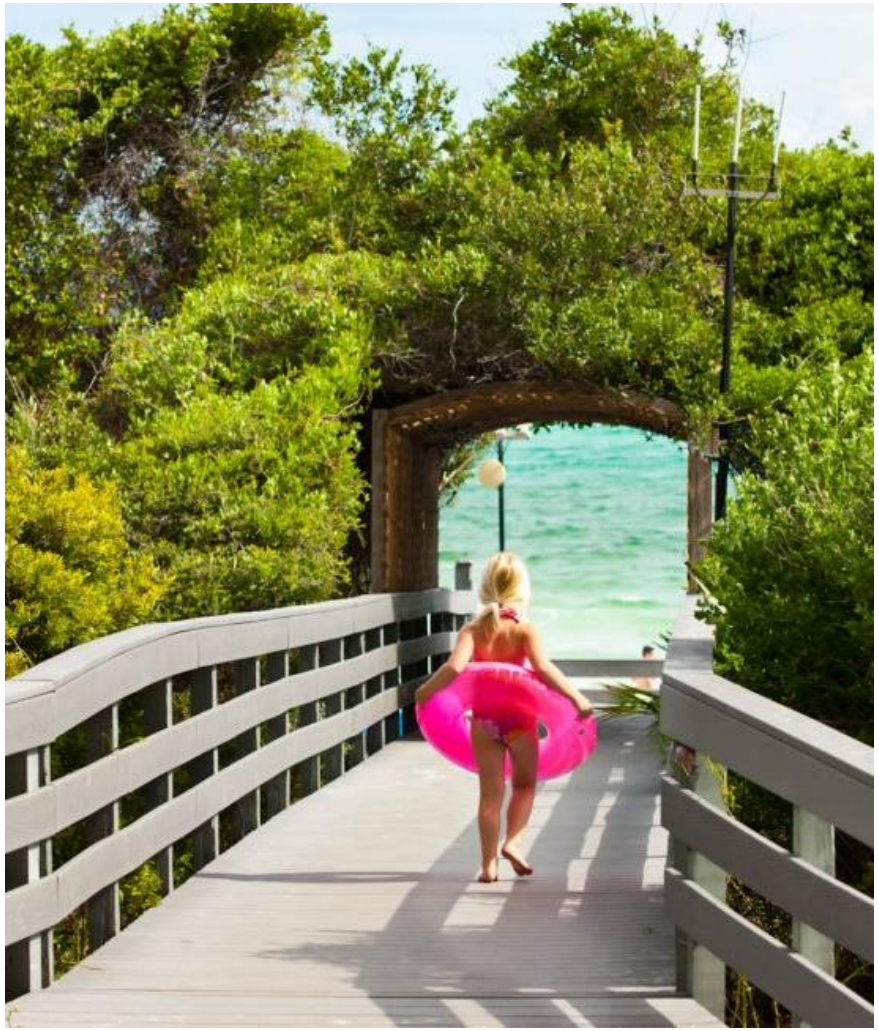
"The best place to relax on the beach, enjoy the weather, and walk to so many close by places. It is such an enjoyable and relaxing atmosphere."

"My husband and I travel across the country & the world but feel you truly can't beat the quality of accommodations, dining options, and walkability to the most beautiful beaches. We choose to celebrate most of milestones & relaxation along 30A."

"Visiting South Walton is unique and not like your typical Florida beach vacation with high rises, businesses, and fast paced living built right up to the beach. It's like taking a classic Mediterranean beach vacation without having to travel halfway around the world."

"Classic - the way America should be."

EMOTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH WALTON COUNTY



"Beautiful area, great feeling of comfort and relaxation. Friendly. Safe."

"Healthy, peaceful and clean."

"Happiness, cute small shops, local feeling, home feeling."

"I love the feeling of my family coming closer together."

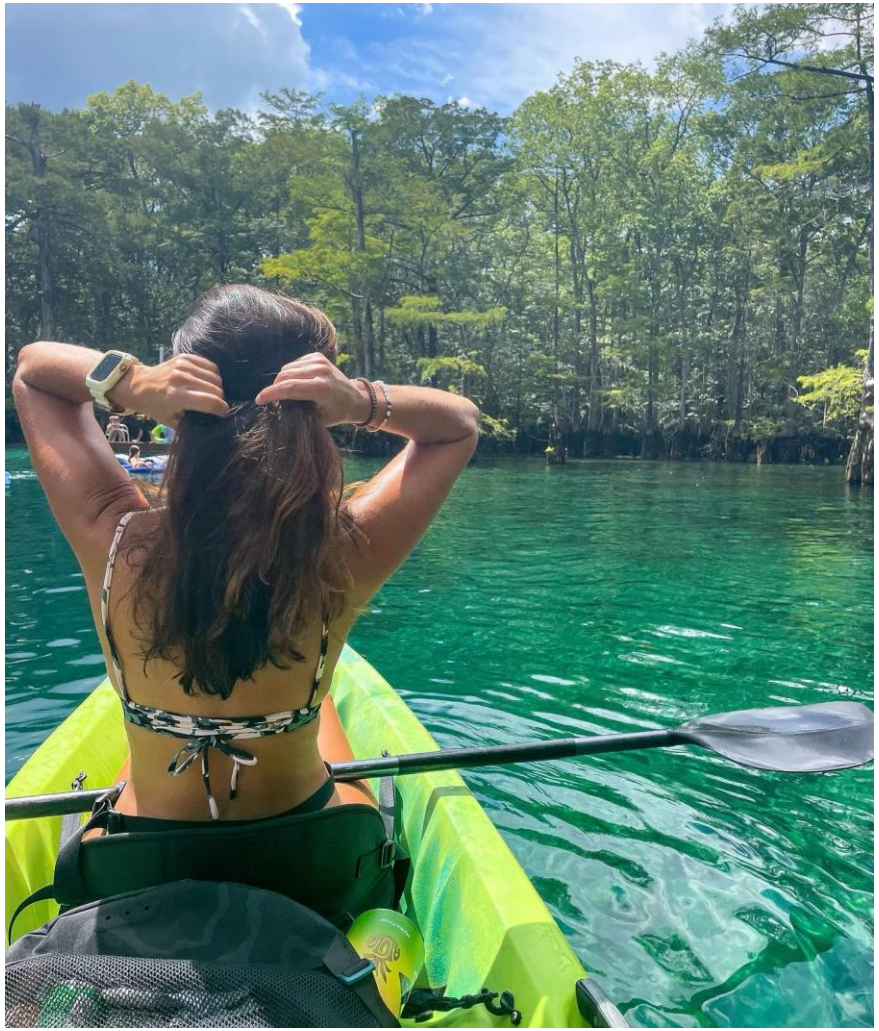
"Happy to get here and sad when we have to leave."

"I feel a sense of pride."

"Glam!"

"It feels very safe, and the beaches are amazing."

OPPORTUNITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT



"The most beautiful place, but also the most difficult to actually access a beach. It would truly be my favorite place if beaches were not so restricted. I've never seen another place with such difficulty, confusion, and challenges around beach access. It's truly a shame."

"Great in the winter or off-season. Very expensive and crowded in summer. Beautiful place and very enjoyable. Would also tell them to beware of where you rent and be prepared for the ridiculous private beach property."

"I like it there. My only complaint is the crowds that have picked up the last few years, teenagers running around like crazy, and I've always disliked that nothing stays open later to accommodate all that."

WALTON COUNTY
TOURISM

2024 Visitor Tracking & Economic Impact Study

Downs & St. Germain Research
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850-906-3111 | www.dsg-research.com

WALTON COUNTY TOURISM

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