



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

GOV. MALLOY: CONNECTICUT KICKS-OFF 2014 TOURISM SEASON

New Attractions, Events and Activities Indicate Strong Year for Visitation

(HARTFORD, CT) - Governor Daniel P. Malloy today announced that the state Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) and its Office of Tourism released new tracking results that demonstrate the \$22 million Statewide Tourism Marketing Fund investment over the course of 18 months has generated measurable gains in overall tourism spending to the state and has helped increase positive awareness of Connecticut as a place to visit. Since its inception, "Still Revolutionary", the state's award-winning marketing campaign, has reached target consumers in key markets with its message nearly 646 million times.

"Tourism has always been a good investment for the state — it is a sector that generates billions in spending and represents more than 100,000 jobs for residents," said Governor Malloy. "The positive numbers we have seen since the launch of 'Still Revolutionary' demonstrate the effectiveness of this campaign. We will continue making strategic investments, with a focus on the long-term, to promote all that Connecticut has to offer and let employers and tourists alike know our state is a great place to live, work and visit."

According to a study conducted by strategic research firm Harrison Group, the effort is estimated to have generated dramatic shifts in perception about the state, with survey respondents seeing Connecticut as a more inviting, welcoming, unique and engaging place. In addition:

- 53 percent of people who saw the campaign ads are interested in visiting, claim to have visited or plan to visit as a result of seeing the ads. In fact \$219 million was directly linked to the State's new marketing efforts.
- Traffic to CTvisit.com (the state's official tourism website) has increased dramatically – up 70 percent over the same time last year, and up 215 percent since 2011 (prior to the launch of the campaign).
- In 2013, the number of website visitors through August surpassed the total number of visitors for all of 2012.
- Travel counseling assistance is also up – with 55 percent more potential visitors in 2013 compared to 2012.

- Travel assistance includes traditional inquiries, web traffic and counseling in State welcome centers.
- State lodging revenue is up 8.5% since the same time last year – outpacing U.S. averages and the New England states combined.

“For the past two years, we’ve been investing in tourism and it’s working – we’ve seen increases in jobs, tourism spending and a more positive reputation for the state,” said Randy Fiveash, Director of Tourism. “It’s critical that we continue to maximize this momentum and bring new visitors to the state. The exciting line-up of new offerings will help do just that.”

People from across the country also continue to flock to Connecticut’s social media channels, which now boast a community of more than 190,000 across Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube. After starting 2012 at #44 nationally, the state’s Facebook page is now #14 nationally and virtually tied for #1 in New England. The state’s tourism eNewsletter now reaches more than 580,000 opt-in subscribers monthly with news about Connecticut getaways, deals, activities and events statewide.

New attractions and events that will inspire and thrill:

- The brand new Powder Ridge Mountain Park & Resort in Middlefield is home to 20 feature-rich trails for all skill levels, complete with log-style rails, cascading jumps and the only full-size half pipe in Connecticut. The park will also be opening Fire at the Ridge, where renowned chef Kevin Cottle, who competed on the hit show Hell’s Kitchen, will create artfully-inspired regional cuisine. This year-round destination also offers miles of trails for spring, summer and fall mountain biking.
- This March, the first annual 4B Festival, featuring specially curated beer, bourbon, barbecue and bacon, will be brought to life at The Old Trolley Barn. The event will be one of the state’s largest indoor events that will provide a mouthwatering experience of delicious drinks and meats.
- Infinity Music Hall & Bistro, the popular dining and concert venue in Norfolk, will be opening a second, larger location in Hartford’s Front Street District. The hall will include a bistro for dining, as well as unique intimate musical experiences.
- Launch Trampoline Park, opened by former New England Patriots football player Ty Law, includes a 15,000 square foot literal launch pad that includes wall to wall trampolines, foam pit, basketball hoops and dodgeball.
- This summer the 1841 whaleship Charles W. Morgan, a National Historic Landmark and the last wooden whaleship in the world, will start its 38th Voyage to historic ports in New England. The three-month journey will begin in the Mystic River on May 17 and will be the first time the ship has been below the Mystic River Bascule Bridge since she arrived at Mystic Seaport in 1941.

- Lake Compounce will be launching its very own campground, Bear Creek Campground, this June. The campground will include 20 cabins, 56 RV sites and 50 tent sites.
- The Connecticut Antiques Trail is a new statewide trail of antique shops and centers. The Office of Tourism will debut a new website, roadway signage and marketing efforts to support the trail this spring.
- The Department of Economic and Community Development (DEEP) has also extended hundreds of activities to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the state parks.

“We think still revolutionary is a smart campaign that is effective in helping to drive tourism to the state,” said Mitchell Etes, Chief Executive Officer, Mohegan Sun. “It shows that Connecticut is fresh and innovative, while maintaining the cultural gravitas and roots of our revolutionary past.”

For more information on Connecticut’s revolutionary past and present, events, 52 getaway ideas and great deals, visit www.CTvisit.com. Join the community on social media by becoming a fan/follower via Facebook, Twitter, Pinterest and YouTube.

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