

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**CONNECTICUT UNVEILS ALL-NEW STATE TOURISM WEBSITE**

*New CTvisit.com Site Offers More Than 4,000 Reasons to Visit Connecticut*

**HARTFORD, Conn. (April 21, 2016)** - Travelers can now find information on more than 4,000 places to visit, stay and eat in Connecticut as well as hundreds of inspirational travel stories, vacation deals and event listings all in one place — [www.CTvisit.com](http://www.CTvisit.com).

The completely redesigned and rebuilt website, launched today by the Connecticut Office of Tourism, makes it easier for visitors and residents alike to learn more about the state's major attractions as well as its hidden gems and to plan their next getaway in just a few clicks.

Just in time for summer travel, the new site is highly visual, content rich and entirely mobile responsive. Leveraging the latest interactive technologies, it features:

- **Information on 4,000+ tourism attractions, accommodations and restaurants** – more than double the number of listings offered on the previous website
- **Intuitive navigation** that organizes information based on types of activities (*Do*), styles of accommodations (*Stay*) and options for dining (*Eat*)
- **Suggested getaway itineraries and travel stories** for visitors looking for *Ideas* based on the type of experiences they enjoy
- **Calendar of events** that can be filtered by date range, type of event or region and a special “what to do this weekend” feature
- **Regional site views** which provide visitors with an in-depth opportunity to explore the unique offerings in each region of the state
- **Individual pages highlighting each destination**, which are free to the businesses and allow them to showcase photos, videos, upcoming events, travel deals and can even automatically bring in their social media feeds and TripAdvisor® ratings
- **“While You're in the Neighborhood”** feature which serves up suggestions and directions for other attractions, hotels and restaurants that are close by the destination you're viewing

“Connecticut now has a state-of-the-art website to support our \$14 billion tourism industry, which supports 80,000 direct jobs,” said Catherine Smith, Commissioner, Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development. “The new site, a key component of our *still revolutionary* Connecticut marketing efforts, makes it easy for visitors to find and explore our state's rich array of destinations, which will help keep tourism a thriving industry in Connecticut.”

Nearly a year in the making, this new site was a collaborative effort involving the state's many different kinds of tourism businesses, local associations and other Connecticut state agencies.

"In our research, we learned that potential visitors, even our own residents, wanted more specific ideas of things to do in Connecticut. So we designed the new CTvisit.com to bring our state's dynamic blend of offerings to life using lots of great imagery, engaging content and streamlined navigation," said Randy Fiveash, Director, Connecticut Office of Tourism.

Regional tourism districts also worked closely with the state's tourism office to enhance content and aggregate listings so that visitors could enjoy a seamless experience of all Connecticut has to offer.

"The new site gives the tourism regions the best tools we've had in years to market not only destinations and experiences in our own footprints, but also to build interest and exposure for events and attractions a short drive away," said Ed Dombroskas, Executive Director, Eastern Connecticut Regional Tourism District. "The whole state benefits," he added.

At every key milestone in the process — from identifying what the site should do to evaluating how it should look — the team reached out for quantitative and qualitative feedback from consumers (both in-state residents and out-of-state travelers) as well as from tourism business partners across the state. This research guided every phase of the site development process.

"This has truly been a team effort involving tourism businesses from all across the state, the Connecticut Office of Tourism, the regional tourism districts, the regional visitors' bureaus and many local organizations," said Andrew Wood, SVP, External Relations, Mystic Aquarium. "We couldn't be happier with the process — and the result. Potential visitors to Connecticut now have such a breadth and depth of information and inspiration at their fingertips."

The site is also built on a Content Management System (CMS) that empowers tourism partners to manage their own free feature page. They can edit their information, post events, add deals, update imagery — making it easier to keep the entire site's content fresh.

"It's exciting to see it all come together," said Matt Fleury, President and CEO of the Connecticut Science Center. "This has been a research-driven, inclusive process. Since the first input session last year, we've all been focused on one key objective: to provide potential visitors and our residents with a great online experience — one that inspires them, maybe even surprises them, and ultimately motivates them to explore more of Connecticut."

### **About The Connecticut Office of Tourism**

The Connecticut Office of Tourism, a division of the State of Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD), created the Connecticut *still revolutionary* strategic marketing initiative to build pride among residents and bolster the state's reputation as a tourism and business destination. Connecticut offers such a diverse mix of activities and attractions, all in such close proximity to each other, that visitors can enjoy multi-dimensional experiences within a short drive – from the exciting and relaxing to

the historic and innovative to the culture and nature-focused. For more information, visit [www.CTvisit.com](http://www.CTvisit.com) and join the Connecticut *still revolutionary* community on social media on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#), [YouTube](#) and [Instagram](#).

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