

Visitor's Index MARCH 2003

The Visitor's Index is a tool that provides a snapshot of the local tourism economy. It is compiled monthly by the Convention and Visitors Bureau of the Asheville Area Chamber of Commerce. Unless otherwise noted, the figures reflect activity and sales for the month of March 2003.

	Activity	Current Month	This Month Last Year	Variance Monthly	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	Variance YTD
Overall	Hotel Occupancy (February)*	41.8	39.8	2	37.3	35.4	1.9
Impact	Hotel Sales (February) (six properties not reporting)	\$4,917,140	\$5,043,619	-2.5%	\$78,800,869	\$74,623,358	5.6%
	Average Hotel Rate (February)*	\$53.92	\$53.29	1.2%	\$53.29	\$51.59	3.3%
	Revenue Par (February)	\$26.12	\$27.17	-3.9%	\$48.24	\$46.33	4.1%
	Total Retail Sales (November 2002)**	\$283,694,584	(see note below)	NA	\$3,146,745,867	(see note below)	NA
	Total Airport Passengers (February)*	24,019	26,963	-10.9%	47,270	55,259	-14.5%
	Visitor and Convention Services	Asheville Visitor Center	9,027	9,358	-3.5%	107,034	100,956
	Black Mountain Visitor Center	1,497	1,791	-16.4%	22,320	22,326	0.0%
Convention Services	Groups Serviced - Meetings/Conventions	20	16	25.0%	223	225	-0.9%
	Groups Serviced - Motorcoach	2	8	-75.0%	53	44	20.5%
Meetings And Conventions	Convention Bookings	8	19	-57.9%	119	120	-0.8%
	Room Nights Generated	1,985	16,805	-88.2%	43,576	52,223	-16.6%
	Number of Delegates	960	14,090	-93.2%	42,544	37,765	12.7%
	Estimated Spending	\$541,123	\$8,103,228	-93.3%	\$21,673,773	\$25,940,024	-16.4%
	Sales Leads Distributed	27	32	-15.6%	198	222	-10.8%
Group Tour	Group Tours	29	36	-19.4%	645	537	20.1%
	Room Nights	684	746	-8.3%	15,902	14,453	10.0%
	Estimated Spending	\$103,899	\$113,317	-8.3%	2,415,513	\$2,184,017	10.6%
	Sales Leads	38	20	90.0%	156	162	-3.7%
International	Sales Leads	0	13	-100.0%	43	53	-18.9%
Visitor Inquiries	ExploreAsheville.com (Unique Visitors)**	26,601	21,255	25.2%	285,752	142,906	100.0%
	ExploreAsheville.com (User Sessions)**	59,479	47,101	26.3%	582,184	328,040	77.5%
	Visitor Inquiries	9,843	11,103	-11.3%	75,767	82,889	-8.6%
Public Relations	Advertising Value (February)	\$41,004	\$173,031	-76.3%	\$2,509,804	\$4,446,265	-43.6%
	Column Inches (February)	454	1,713	-73.5%	12,220	23,848.00	-48.8%
	Total Circulation (February)	6,381,107	10,513,905	-39.3%	169,667,569	162,214,767	4.6%
	Significant Placements (February)	24	23	4.3%	349	362	-3.6%
	Journalists Assisted	17	15	13.3%	197	208	-5.3%

* Year-to-date numbers reflect a 2003 calendar year. All other figures reflect a July 1, 2002 - June 30, 2003 fiscal year.

** Official tracking of exploreasheville.com Web stats began Sept 1, 2002. There were no tourism pages on the site prior to that date. YTD figures will not reflect any calculations for July & August 2001..

Note: Occupancy rate and ADR figures come from Smith Travel Research; Hotel/Motel Sales figures comes from Buncombe County Finance Dept.

***Note: Beginning March 2002, retail sales totals are not comparable to previous reports. NC Dept of Revenue has changed the method for calculating sales totals.