

Visitor's Index MARCH 2004

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 2004.

	Activity	Current Month	This Month Last Year	Variance Monthly	YTD Actual	YTD Last Year	Variance YTD
Overall	Hotel Occupancy (February)*	43.8	41.3	2.5	39.5	37.2	2.3
	Hotel Sales (February) (8 properties not reporting)	\$5,359,441	\$4,917,140	9.0%	\$81,804,976	\$78,800,869	3.8%
	Average Hotel Rate (February)*	\$55.66	\$54.06	3.0%	\$54.71	\$52.73	3.8%
	Revenue Par (February)**	\$29.20	\$26.79	9.0%	\$50.38	\$48.53	3.8%
	Total Retail Sales (July 2003)	\$304,922,615	\$289,360,453	5.4%	\$1,981,023,943	\$1,987,915,104	-0.3%
	Total Airport Passengers (March)*	16,253	14,371	13.1%	86,593	76,040	13.9%
Visitor and Convention Services	Asheville Visitor Center	10,213	9,027	13.1%	111,229	107,034	3.9%
	Black Mountain Visitor Center	1,244	1,497	-16.9%	20,388	22,320	-8.7%
	Groups Serviced - Meetings/Conventions	13	20	-35.0%	230	223	3.1%
	Groups Serviced - Motorcoach	4	2	100.0%	54	53	1.9%
Meetings And Conventions	Convention Bookings	11	8	37.5%	126	116	8.6%
	Room Nights Generated	3,534	1,985	78.0%	45,560	36,031	26.4%
	Number of Delegates	4,605	960	379.7%	44,933	30,794	45.9%
	Estimated Spending	\$1,167,826.00	\$461,269.95	153.2%	\$19,362,740.29	\$17,064,047.82	13.5%
	Sales Leads Distributed	32	27	18.5%	176	198	-11.1%
Group Tour	Group Tours	40	29	37.9%	585	645	-9.3%
	Room Nights	991	684	44.9%	16,863	15,902	6.0%
	Estimated Spending	\$150,235	\$103,899	44.6%	2,552,709	2,415,513	5.7%
	Sales Leads	36	38	-5.3%	163	156	4.5%
Visitor Inquiries	ExploreAsheville.com (Unique Visitors)	44,318	26,601	66.6%	392,873	285,752	37.5%
	ExploreAsheville.com (User Sessions)	93,146	59,479	56.6%	804,616	582,184	38.2%
	Visitor Inquiries	15,782	9,843	60.3%	94,304	75,767	24.5%
Public Relations	Advertising Value (February)	\$917,031.19	\$41,044.21	2134.3%	\$5,871,980	\$2,509,804	134.0%
	Column Inches (February)	9,173	454	1920.5%	32,386	12,220.00	165.0%
	Total Circulation (February)	33,911,864	6,381,107	431.4%	193,720,566	169,667,569	14.2%
	Significant Placements (February)	106	24	341.7%	557	384	45.1%
	Journalists Assisted	43	17	152.9%	223	216	3.2%

* Year-to-date numbers reflect a 2003 calendar year. All other figures reflect a July 1, 2003 - June 30, 2004 fiscal year.

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

**An adjustment in room count was made on April 5, 2004, reducing the number of available rooms beginning January 1, 2003.