

# WHO WE ARE

Visit St. Pete-Clearwater is the official tourism marketing and management organization for Pinellas County and its 24 municipalities. Visit St. Pete-Clearwater (VisitSPC) is the name by which the Pinellas County Convention & Visitors Bureau does business.

VisitSPC is charged with:

- Inspiring travel to Pinellas County, a destination of unique communities, distinct cultures and vibrant experiences.
- Driving the economic engine of tourism by attracting local, national and international visitors with our expertise, innovation and creativity.

Thirty-five miles of spectacular white-sand beaches, abundant sunshine and a wide variety of attractions, world-class museums, sporting and beach activities, arts, culture and nature-related experiences make Pinellas County an unparalleled vacation destination.

# WHAT WE DO

VisitSPC works domestically and internationally to bring sustainable consumer tourism, corporate meetings and impactful events to the St. Pete-Clearwater area. We reach consumers, media, the travel industry, meeting and conference planners, sports promoters and film producers with research-driven marketing programs highlighting our beaches as well as sports, arts and culture and nature-based opportunities.

VisitSPC also leads a community-based team to highlight the value and benefits of tourism to residents and to work in the development of new attractions and the redevelopment of others.





# VALUE OF TOURISM

**\$10.9  
billion**

An annual economic impact of more than \$10.9 billion in tourism spending.



**14.65%  
of all jobs**

in Pinellas County are in tourism. From restaurants to flower shops, education programs to museums, tourism impacts it all. This leads to more than 60,000 total jobs per quarter.

**\$3.46  
billion**

Our local economy benefited from over \$3.46 billion visitor-generated wages in fiscal year 2022-23.

Bureau of Labor Statistics — (derived from average of Q1-Q3 jobs)  
2022-2023 Fiscal Year Visitor Profile Study, Future Partners

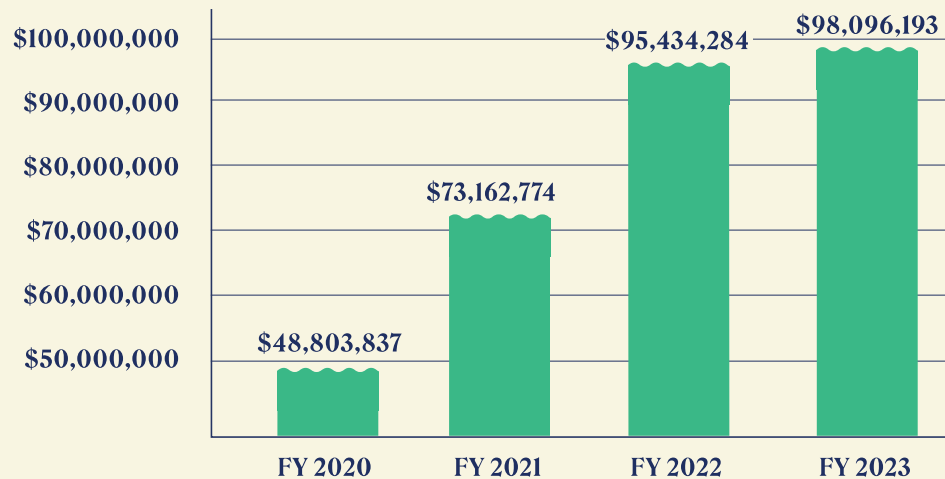
# VISITSPC FUNDING

VisitSPC is funded exclusively by a portion of the Tourist Development Tax. Commonly referred to as the “Bed Tax,” it is a six percent (6%) tax collected by Pinellas County on overnight hotel stays and accommodations rented for less than six months.

VisitSPC seeks to strengthen the county’s economy and employment level by investing the Bed Tax in effective marketing, sales programs, events and capital programs. The Pinellas County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) is responsible for oversight of these funds. The Tourist Development Council (TDC) is a 12 member advisory council appointed by the Pinellas Board of County Commission to make recommendations to the Board of County Commission on matters relating to the bed tax.

## Tourist Development Tax “Bed Tax:”

Proceeds from Pinellas County’s Tourist Development Tax not only fund tourism marketing programs, but also several important community functions, including beach nourishment, construction of stadiums and museums and reserves to be used in the event of an emergency.



Source: Pinellas County Tax Collector Gross Tax Collections



# OUR VISITORS



**Day Trip Visitors (Regional):** Pinellas County visitors who came for the day and reside in the region surrounding Pinellas County.

**Day Trip Visitors (Travelers):** Pinellas County visitors who came for the day, stayed overnight outside Pinellas County and reside outside the region surrounding the county.

**Hotel Guests:** Pinellas County visitors who stayed overnight in a Pinellas County hotel, motel, resort or inn.

**Visiting Friends/Relatives (VFRs):** Pinellas County visitors who stayed overnight in the private residence of a friend or family member who lives in Pinellas County.

**Vacation Rental Guests:** Pinellas County visitors who stayed overnight in a condo, vacation home or other private home rental in Pinellas county.

**Other:** Pinellas County visitors who stayed overnight in other types of lodging.

**\$81,591**  
average household income

**52.4**  
average age

**2.5**  
average party size

**1.7**  
nights in market

**2.7**  
average length of stay (days)

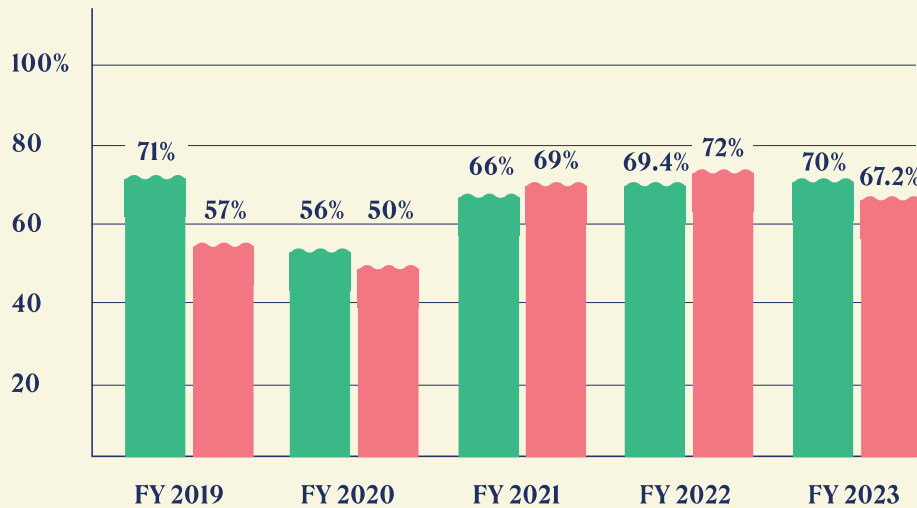
**\$278**  
average daily spend per travel party

# LODGING SNAPSHOT

(FISCAL YEAR OCT-SEPT)



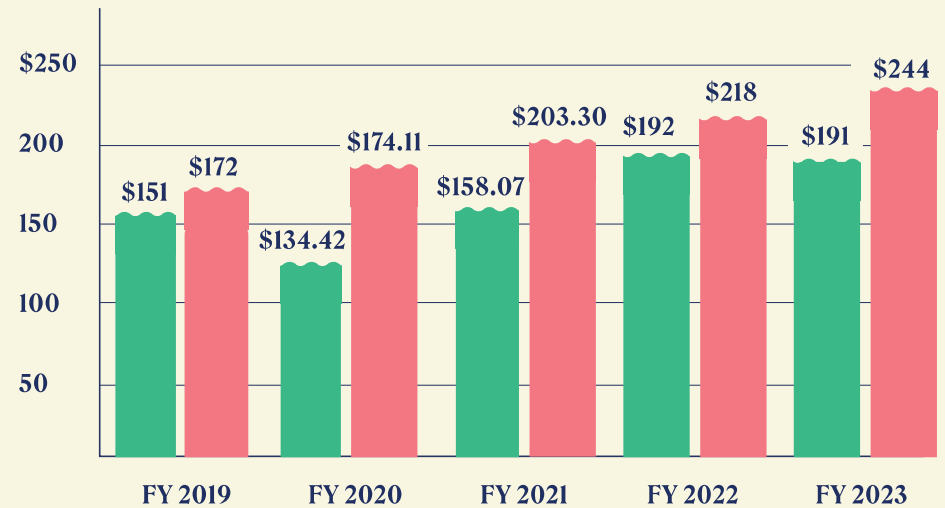
Total  
Occupancy



■ Hotel  
■ Rental



Average  
Rate



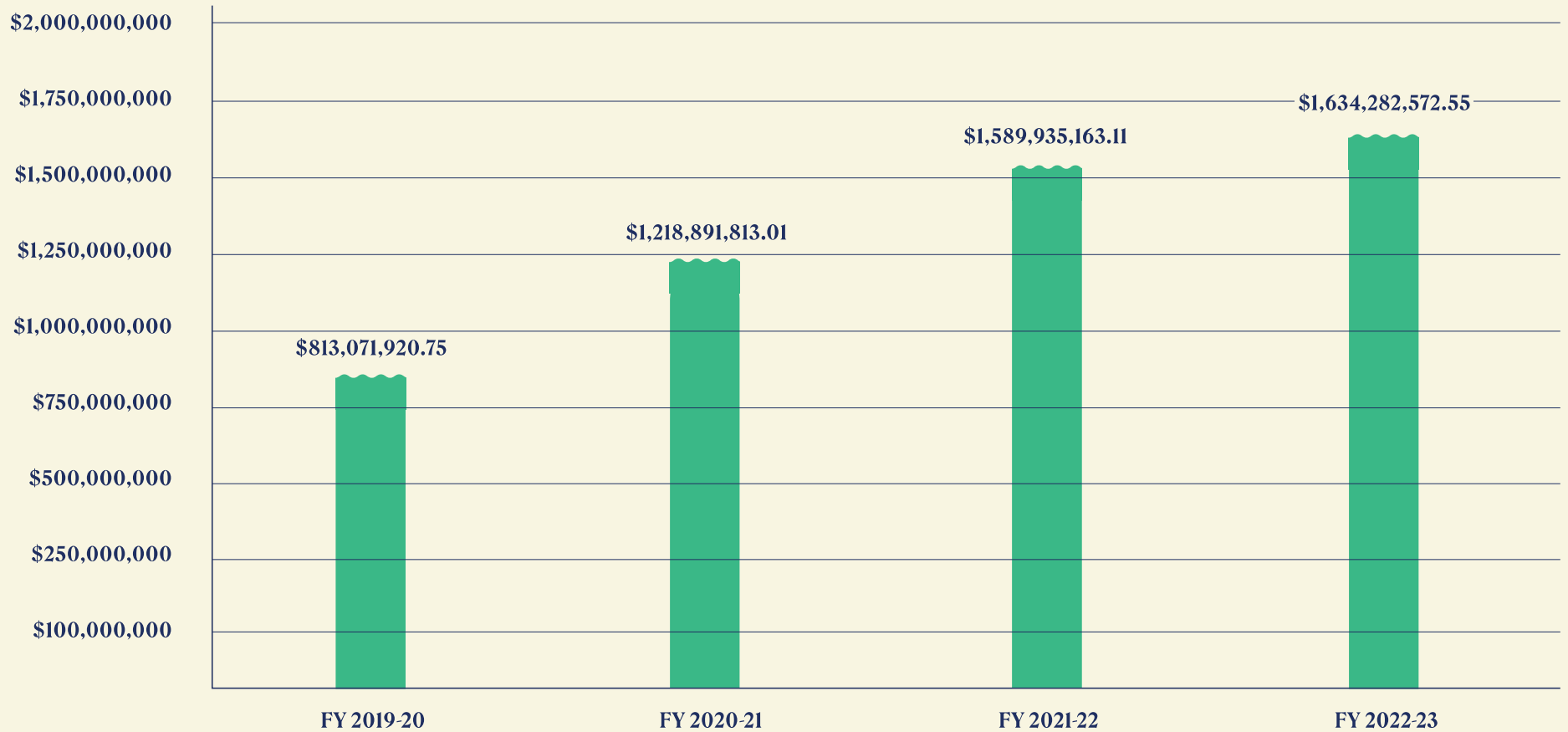
■ Hotel  
■ Rental

# LODGING SNAPSHOT

(FISCAL YEAR OCT-SEPT)



Revenue\*



Gross TDT Collections

# TRAVEL OUTLOOK

Travel continues to be a priority for American consumers in the second half of 2024 and into 2025. 72% plan to travel by the end of the year.\* The high costs to travel are cited as a barrier keeping consumers from traveling as much as they would prefer.+ However, families are more optimistic about their finances and are prioritizing travel. As post-COVID travel options increase, competition has intensified with more travelers opting for cruises and international destinations.

Areas of opportunity are:

**Authentic and unforgettable experiences:** A recent survey by travel booking platform GetYourGuide.com found that American tourists are seeking “authentic and unforgettable experiences.” More than half (51%) said experiencing a place as a local is a priority.\*\*

**Unique Cuisine:** 81% of travelers are most excited about trying local foods. With our award-winning cuisine, St. Pete-Clearwater is well positioned to attract these travelers.+++

**International travelers:** International travel volume to the U.S. is expected to recover to pre-pandemic levels in 2025, but spending levels are not expected to recover until 2026.\*\*\*

- Pinellas County forecasts indicate increases in visitation and spending from all of our international targeted origin markets with Canada (103.4% increase) and the UK (106%) driving the most volume and spend.

\*MMGY

\*\*Fast Company 2/1/2023

\*\*\*U.S. Travel Association

+Future Partners. *The State of the American Traveler*. April 2023.

+++ <https://discover.hotelbeds.com/resources/insight/2024-travel-trends-luxury-culinary-tourism>



# VISION, STRATEGY AND OBJECTIVES

Visit St. Pete-Clearwater is committed to excellence in destination management, focusing on sustainable growth, innovative marketing and exceptional visitor experiences. In 2025, we will continue to follow The Destination 2027: Strategic Plan.

## **Our Mission**

Visit St. Pete-Clearwater drives the economic engine of tourism by attracting local, national and international visitors with our expertise, innovation and creativity.

## **Our Vision**

To inspire travel to Pinellas County, a destination of unique communities, distinct cultures and vibrant experiences.

Four pillars were defined to provide overall guidance with key objectives:

### **1. Increasing the economic impact of each visitor**

Recognizing that Pinellas County already receives a tremendous amount of visitors every year, this strategic plan focuses on obtaining visitors that stay for multiple nights, utilize multiple attractions and amenities of the region and generally increase the economic activity of the region.

### **2. Developing the assets of the region**

Understanding that tastes change and expectations constantly increase, this strategic plan emphasizes the importance of adding new capital investments that promote the tourism sector as well as improving existing assets, from hotel inventory to parks and preserves.

### **3. Increasing the economic benefits of tourism to the local community**

Ensuring that tourism is an industry in which locals can earn gainful employment and that all Pinellas County residents both receive and are aware of the economic benefits that out-of-town visitors bring to the area.

### **4. Deepening partnerships across Pinellas County**

Working towards including more of Pinellas County in the tourist landscape and also including tourism as a key consideration in planning, transportation, economic development and other aspects of how Pinellas County is developed and improved.

These objectives are segmented into the three fundamental roles of ownership, partnership and advocacy. While objectives owned by VisitSPC will be the primary focus of the organization's staff over the next five years, the importance of partner organizations cannot be understated. Expanding VisitSPC's roll through local and regional partnerships will help transform Pinellas County as a tourist destination for years to come.

Each department's goals, programs and KPIs support one of these four priorities.



# ORGANIZATION-WIDE KPIs

