



**HARRISONBURG | VA**  
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## **Harrisonburg Tourism sees rebound in visitors, spending in 2021**

*Local tourism spending increased 52 percent in 2021 from 2020*

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Recently released numbers from the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) have revealed that Harrisonburg had a very good 2021 when it comes to visitors and the money they spent locally.

Harrisonburg's tourism economy saw tremendous growth in 2021, returning to near 2019 pre-pandemic levels and seeing a 52 percent increase in tourism spending compared to 2020. Tourism spending in Harrisonburg reached \$214 million in 2021, according to data released by VTC and provided by Tourism Economics, which accounted for 2,295 jobs and resulted in \$10.9 million in local tax dollars being generated.



*(Above) The Friendly City Trail and Heritage Oaks Golf Course, located on the western side of Harrisonburg, are just some of the draws for those visiting The Friendly City. Its location as the perfect basecamp for an outdoor weekend adventure lured many tourists in 2021.*

“Every local tax dollar collected from tourists goes to support services and resources for the citizens of Harrisonburg,” Harrisonburg Tourism Manager Jennifer Bell said. “It leads to residents of Harrisonburg getting more without having to pay more.”

Harrisonburg Tourism implemented a marketing campaign focused on Harrisonburg as the Outdoor Recreation Capital of the Shenandoah Valley in 2021, leading to an increase in visitors looking to enjoy the local natural environment. More than 41,000 people visited the Hardesty-Higgins Visitor Center in Downtown Harrisonburg last year, and the Visit Harrisonburg app managed by Harrisonburg Tourism saw more than 5,500 users during that time.

Tourism across Virginia continues to be a large economic driver in the state, with travelers to Virginia spending \$69 million a day in 2021, up from \$48 million in 2020, according to VTC. Virginia's tourism revenues reached \$25.2 billion in 2021, marking an 87 percent recovery to pre-pandemic spending in 2019. This spending supported 185,000 jobs, \$7.1 billion in salaries and wages, and \$1.8 billion in state and local taxes.

“Tourism has seen an incredible comeback thanks to the hardworking leaders in the travel and tourism industry across Virginia,” Rita McClenny, president and CEO of Virginia Tourism Corporation, said. “As travelers continue to visit communities across the state, Virginia is on pace to restore the tourism industry into the vibrant and highly performing economic engine it always has been. We look forward to an even stronger recovery in 2022.”

Harrisonburg Tourism started a new social media marketing campaign in Fall 2021 focused on engagement and increased use of videos on Instagram. You can follow the page at [www.instagram.com/visitharrisonburgva](https://www.instagram.com/visitharrisonburgva).

**The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to 51,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is online at [www.HarrisonburgVA.gov](http://www.HarrisonburgVA.gov).



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