

# TENNESSEE

## SOUNDS PERFECT

TENNESSEE DEPARTMENT OF TOURIST DEVELOPMENT  
2024



# GREETINGS,

2023 was a banner year for Tennessee Tourism. Our industry now ranks 11th nationwide in travel spending, marking our highest ranking ever and solidifying Tennessee's status as the fastest-growing state among the top 40 since 2018.

Because of the continued support and investment from Governor Lee and the General Assembly, we are driving record visitor tax revenue. **We have proven additional funding creates added tax revenue for Tennesseans, resulting in more tourist spending and more visitor memories – that “Sounds Perfect!”**

Tourism's role in generating new revenue streams and economic opportunity in rural Tennessee helped our state celebrate its fewest distressed counties in history last year. We continue to facilitate strategic tourism roadmap session in our rural counties to assist with destination development and teach communities how to grow their local economy.

We are grateful for the tourism industry, all it does for our state and, most importantly, your valuable involvement. Yes, tourism is thriving in Tennessee, but the potential for growth is even greater as we promote our great state's diverse tourism offerings, resulting in more visitor spending and tax revenue to benefit Tennessee residents.

Blessings,



*Mark F. Ezell*

**Commissioner Mark Ezell**

Tennessee Department of Tourist Development

**FROM OUR PARTNERS** *“We finished the construction of the additional campsites at Anderson County Park the second weekend in June 2023. We added 19 RV sites with water and electricity including one handicap site. The campground was open until November. From June to November, the new spots accounted for 14% of our overall revenue. Overall our revenues were up 11% compared to the previous calendar year. We used the Tourism Enhancement Grant for this project. The project was \$345,824 and the grant was for \$100,000.”*

**Stephanie Wells, Anderson County Tourism**

Launch of new programs



71 Markers



Marketing reach of **35M** people



Marketing reach of **45M** people



Nashville hosts NFL Draft - largest tourism event in TN



Installation of technology & traffic counters at welcome centers

**2018**



**#15** in US States for Tourism Spending



Marketing reach of **35M** people

**2019**



Launch of Kid Reviewed campaign



Visitor spending reaches all time high of **24.5B**



**#15** in US States for Tourism Spending

**2020**



**#14** in US States for Tourism Spending



Introduction of Rural Tourism Program serving **45+** rural counties

# TENNESSEE SOUNDS PERFECT



Total travel spending achieved a record spending level



Due to success of Tourism & Hosp. industry, TN is 1 of 7 states to be economically successful during the recovery of the pandemic with thriving outdoor attractions



For the Love campaign launch



Marketing reach of **75M** people



**#11** in US States for Tourism Spending

2021

2022



Marketing reach of **45M** people



**#11** in US States for Tourism Spending



Record year in visitation at Tennessee State Parks



Launch of rural outreach Roadmap Sessions



Civil Rights Trail expands to **14** sites

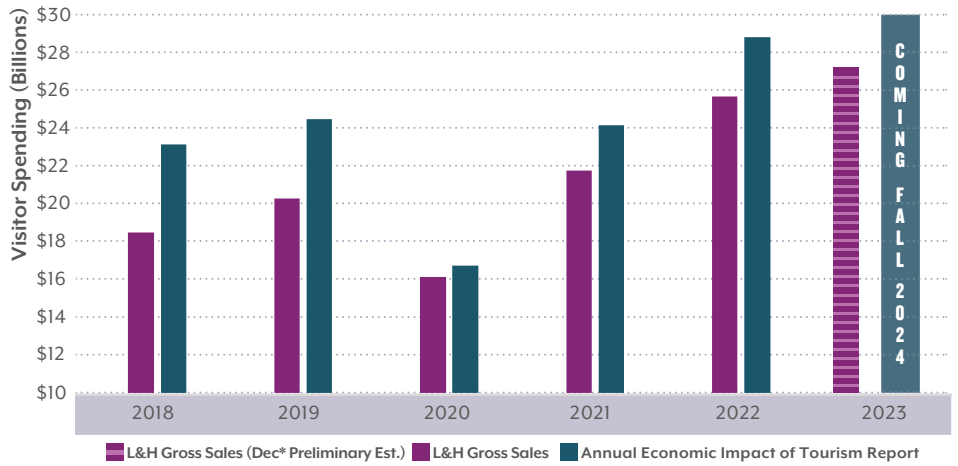
# CY 2023 PRELIMINARY DATA

Data on Leisure & Hospitality sector (lodging, food/dining, attractions) performance from the TN Dept of Revenue monthly tax collections reports.

**\$1.925B** **RECORD!**  
leisure, hospitality and tourism state sales tax collections

**+ \$630M**  
in annual state sales tax collections vs CY2018

Leisure & Hospitality (Dept. of Rev) vs. Annual Economic Impact Report



# LABOR & WORKFORCE UPDATE

Leisure & Hospitality **3RD** LARGEST EMPLOYMENT SECTOR in TN for CY22

Arts, Entertainment & Recreation **#1** SECTOR FOR NEW JOB GROWTH Projected By 2030

Source: TN Dept. of Labor & Workforce Development "Tennessee Economy 2022-2023" Report released October 2023

**TENNESSEE PLAYCATION** Launch of TN Playcation Guide

**BIKE TN** April – Launch of Bike TN

**Bill Dance SIGNATURE LAKES** Launch of Bill Dance Signature Lakes

**TENNESSEE CIVIL RIGHTS TRAIL** Civil Rights Trail expands to **15** sites

Record visitor tax revenue for TN **1.925B**

**2023**

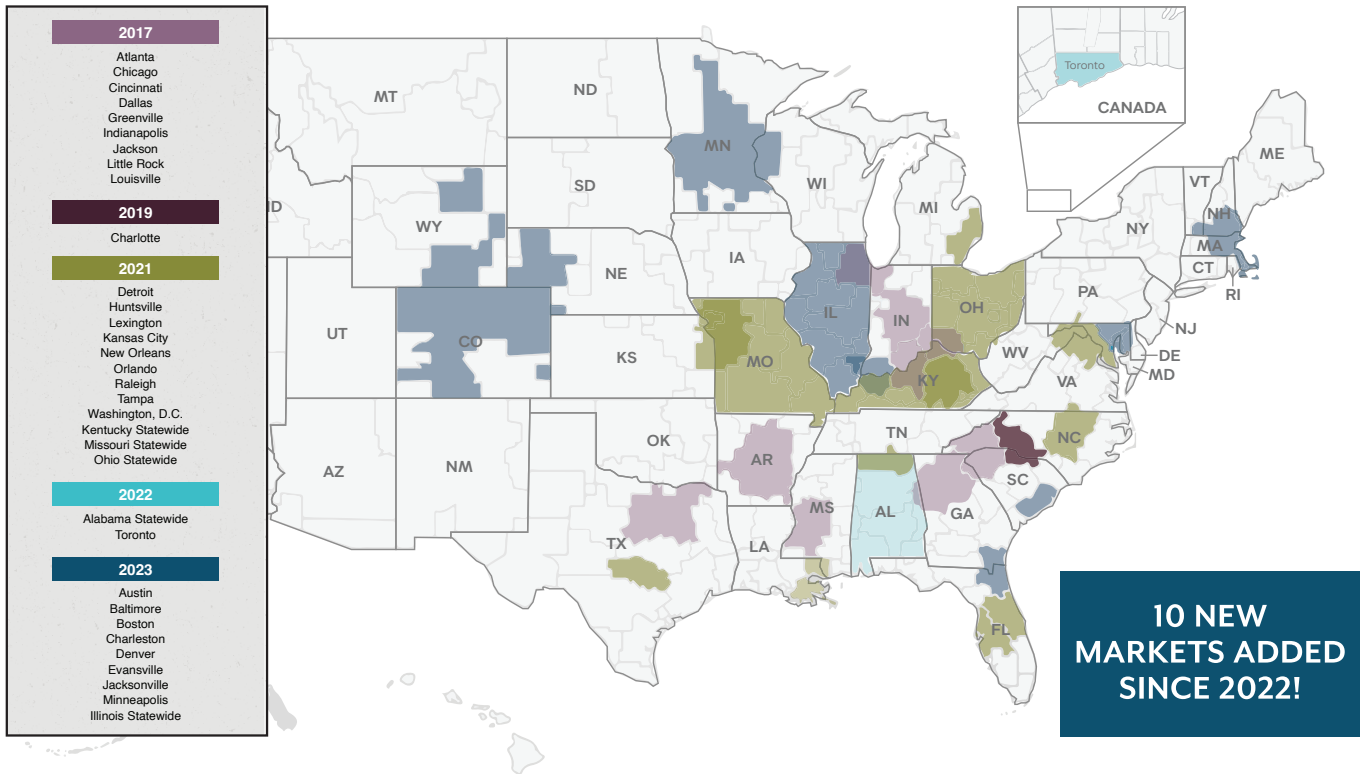
**2024**

Marketing campaigns ran in Canada for the first time ever, including Little TN activation in Toronto.

Marketing reach of **100M** people

**TENNESSEE SOUNDS PERFECT** Launch of brand creative to be more inclusive of TN diverse assets

# 2024 MARKET MAP BY YEAR



## 22/23 HIGHLIGHTS

### Sales

**140** international **tour operators\*** hosted at Travel South International Showcase in Memphis **RECORD!**

**1,039** domestic **tour operators\*** hosted at American Bus Association in Nashville **RECORD!**

\* Travel agent specializing in package vacations.

### Marketing

**237M** video views

**13M** social & influencer engagements

**111k** vacation guide requests

**1M** increase in website sessions YOY (5.8M unique visits)

### Communications

**11.3B** earned domestic media impressions

**108M** earned international media impressions

**56** media members hosted throughout Tennessee

### FROM OUR PARTNERS

"Since the Department of Tourism started an advertising campaign in Washington, D.C., my percentage of room nights for that DMA has increased from .7% to 1.1% and is ranked in the top 25 of my visiting DMAs. This is actual room nights rented and tax dollars collected."

**Jackie Leatherwood, General Manager - Greystone Lodge on the River**

**WELCOME CENTERS**

Wayne County Welcome Center in Collinwood, TN

**12.5M+** Visitors in 2023

**16** Welcome Centers

**4.93/5** Guest Satisfaction Rating

**2024 TENNESSEE VACATION GUIDE**

**RECORD!**

**41,548** Guide requests in first 20 days!



Launching in Spring 2024, the Bike Tennessee road cycling initiative will showcase the state's scenic backroads and rural communities to the growing cycling consumer group and is something rural communities across the state can embrace and build on into the future.


- 7 of 9 regions mapped
- Routes through 24 at-risk or distressed counties

Find out more at [Tnvacation.com/biketn](https://Tnvacation.com/biketn)

### A WORD FROM A RURAL COUNTY EXECUTIVE

*"Pickett County, home to Dale Hollow Lake, adopted a 4% visitor tax in 2022. We can now use these funds, rather than local business dollars, to chase fishing events that bring even more folks to our community, growing tax collections and economic impact for our residents and businesses."*

**Stephen Bilbrey, Pickett County Executive**



## RURAL OUTREACH

In keeping with Executive Order 1, the Office of Rural Tourism has risen to meet Governor Lee's challenge to serve rural communities efficiently and effectively.

The rapid growth of the program, new initiatives and continued success of Rural Outreach Roadmap Sessions and follow ups has played a major factor in Tennessee's fewest distressed counties in history. Additional programs include:

- Itinerary Building (new)
- Branding Tool Kit and Assistance (new)
- Trip Advisor audits (new)
- Short Term Rental Workshops (new)
- Bill Dance Signature Lakes

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For staff directory and additional data, visit [industry.tnvacation.com](https://industry.tnvacation.com)