

The Virginia Tourism Corporation's FY2007-2008 Profile of Travel in Virginia

Introduction and Methodology

The FY2007-2008 Profile of Travel in Virginia is based upon data collected monthly by TNS' TravelsAmerica survey between August 2006 and July 2008. TravelsAmerica uses a nationally representative sample from the TNS 6th dimension USA Panel, described by TNS as America's highest quality, most expertly managed online access panel. Each month, TNS conducts over 10,000 Internet-based interviews among participants who have traveled more than 50 miles from their homes (excluding commuters) in the past 12 months. From this sample, data from 5,000-6,000 participants that had traveled in the previous month is collected for greater detail at the state level. Annually, this results in approximately 65,000 completed interviews among past month travelers. Participants are able to provide details on up to 3 trips taken in the past month and specific state-level data is collected for up to 3 states visited on each trip.

Data was collected on 4,850 household-trips taken to Virginia between July 2006 and June 2008. A household trip is defined as any time one or more members of the same household travel 50+ miles, one way, away from home or stay one or more nights away from home. For profiling purposes, travelers that indicated Virginia was a "pass-through" destination were weighted more heavily to adjust for trips that included Virginia but did not provide additional details. These weights were adjusted on a quarterly basis.

Beginning in July 2007, the VTC introduced a follow-up study that re-contacted participants in order to gain more specific information on travel party characteristics and the attractions and cities visited within Virginia. Data collected from this study is identified in the profile.

The FY2007-2008 Profile of Travel in Virginia is not directly comparable to previous studies because of differences in the methodology employed.

How to Read the Profile

The 24 page FY2007-2008 Profile of Travel in Virginia provides detailed trip characteristics, visitor origin, destination, and demographic information on numerous Virginia travel segments. The first of the two columns on each page contains data representing "All Travel Parties" to Virginia. The second column contains the statistical data for the specific "profiled travel segment." This provides a quick comparison of the profiled travel segment with ALL visitors to easily view similarities and differences that may exist.

Attraction and Locality Profiles

Respondents to the survey were not asked to provide information specific to any attraction or locality, only whether or not they "experienced" that activity, attraction, or locality on their most recent trip. Since many travel parties "experience" multiple attractions and destinations on their trip, the trip activities are not necessarily specific to the locality or attraction.

Traveler Spending

The traveler spending represents the spending in all of Virginia by all party members of the specific profiled travel segments. Similarly to the activity data, respondents were not asked how much their travel party spent in each destination and therefore the data represents spending that took place anywhere in Virginia not necessarily in that locality or at that attraction.

The average spending per travel party, average spending per person, average spending per day, and average spending per person per day are provided. In addition, a breakdown of spending by category details how the travel dollar is being spent.

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Top DMAs of Origin

"Destination Marketing Area" (DMA) represent the origin markets of visitors for the profiled travel segment. In addition, these geographic areas represent potential media buying markets.

Demographics

Demographics include: Race, Age, Marital Status, Household Size, Education, Employment, and Income.