

# SUCCESS STORY



## SOUTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF TOURISM REGIONS

South Carolina's tourism marketing efforts are "SCATRed". Literally, SCATR translates into the South Carolina Association of Tourism Regions and its 11 regions who market the state to visitors. The 11 regions are Capital City/Lake Murray Country, Explore Charleston, Lake Hartwell Country, Lowcountry and Resort Islands, Myrtle Beach & The Grand Strand, Old 96 District, Olde English District, Pee Dee Country, Santee Cooper Country, The Upcountry and Thoroughbred Country.

The 11 regions work closely on a variety of marketing projects with South Carolina Parks, Recreation and Tourism (SC PRT) including promoting the varied State Parks in their area. They collaborate with their regions' Convention and Visitor Bureaus and Chambers to gain maximum promotion. SCATR works the SC booth at the Volvo Car Tennis Tournament on Daniel Island, the SC RV and Camping Show in Greenville, SC and the World Am Golf Show in Myrtle Beach each year. A new project, promoting Revolutionary War history in SC, will increase tourism visitation throughout the state.

Legislation is vital to tourism growth and SCATR works closely with state legislators so that they understand the importance of tourism in their districts, including being a sponsor for SC Hospitality Day. They make an annual visit to Capitol Hill with SC PRT to call on SC Congressional members and their staff to talk about national tourism issues effecting South Carolina.

SCATR interacts regularly with the state's nine Welcome Centers, including providing literature bags for visitors imprinted with SCATR.com so visitors can easily find out more about the region they are visiting. Each year during National Tourism Week, SCATR representatives help the centers with a celebration and thank you to visitors. Annually, different regions host familiarization tours for Welcome Center staff so they can experience firsthand what attracts visitors in that region and share it with the hundreds of thousands who walk through their centers.

While the 11 regions work together, we also work independently and market our attractions differently. Each region knows its niche and strives to increase visitation and visitor spending through its promotions.

## IMPACT STATEMENT

In the most recent US Travel Association statewide study, The Economic Contribution of Tourism in South Carolina, some of the findings are as listed here:

- Spending on travel or on behalf of tourism in South Carolina totaled \$21.2 billion in 2016, a 4.7% increase over 2015. Indications show that there has been a 5.2% increase during 2017 and we expect to see a similar increase, if not larger, in 2018.
- Tourism supported 1 in 10 SC jobs.
- Tourism generated nearly \$1.6 billion in state and local tax revenue.
- Out of state domestic visitors spent \$10.9 billion, International visitors spent \$824 million and SC residents spent more than \$3.6 billion.
- More than \$740 million was spent on tourism capital investment, the government spent \$490 million and SC-manufactured goods consumed by the tourism industry generated \$4.6 billion in sales.
- Tourism generates \$1.6 billion in State and Local taxes. This saves each SC household \$860 in taxes that our visitors pay for us.
- State Parks Revenue is up 15.9% YTD. Revenue per available room continues to grow and is at a 2.2% increase this year compared to last year.



South Carolina Association of Tourism Regions