



Report to the Industry

Jan. 16, 2025

November STR summary

STR reports hotel data in Lee County.

Average Occupancy Rate			Average Daily Rate			RevPAR		
2023	2024	% Change	2023	2024	% Change	2023	2024	% Change
68.3%	68.8%	0.7%	\$147.42	\$144.06	-2.2%	\$100.67	\$99.09	-1.5%

November key data summary

Key Data reports vacation rental data in Lee County.

Average Occupancy Rate			Average Daily Rate			RevPAR		
2023	2024	% Change	2023	2024	% Change	2023	2024	% Change
28.6%	31.5%	9.0%	\$186	\$207	11.6%	\$53	\$65	21.6%

Bed tax collection

The preliminary resort tax collected for November 2024 was \$2,800,641, a 2.54% increase compared to November 2023 preliminary collections of \$2,751,560. Fiscal year-to-date preliminary tourist tax collections are \$4,916,402, a decrease of 2.95% year-over-year.

Airport news

During November 2024, 919,108 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport, a decrease of 3.6% compared to November 2023. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is up 10.4% from the same period last year.

Special presentation

John Lai, Sanibel Captiva Chamber of Commerce President & CEO, gave updates on the recovery of the islands. By their calculations, this month, they are hovering around a 35% hotel room open rate on Sanibel and Captiva but are excited that they are forecasted to be at a 46% open rate by February 2025. Lai highlighted the Luminary Stroll event which occurred on Dec. 6 & 7 as a top 20 high traffic event with nearly 9,000 attendees counted. The Wander app available on mobile devices allows visitors to see what businesses are open on the islands, where they are located, and the hours they are open. Lai showcased some new media emphasizing welcoming back visitors to the islands as part of their comeback story.

Communications report

Ray Sarracino, VCB communications director, reported that their department has hosted 22 journalists from four countries since Oct. 1. 10 of these visitors were the direct result of coordination with Visit Florida. Total impressions for Q1 of the FY are 1,553,620,239. Upcoming media visits include two Canadian broadcasters, one British, and one German journalist.

Sales report

Erin Lester, VCB senior sales manager, reported that the sales team surpassed all six sales goals for FY23-24 and are ahead of pace for two of the six goals for FY24-25. She shared highlights of some successful fall group media buys and Q1 sales activities. The sales team attended a variety of in-person meeting planner and travel trade shows, including IMEX America, Meetings Today Live! South, NTA Travel Exchange, and Retreat Resources Southeast Showcase. Lester also presented upcoming sales activities for January through March including RCMA Emerge, Florida Encounter and Travel & Adventure Show, Washington, DC. Charm Evans, VCB global sales manager, provided a recap on the international sales and marketing activities including Brand USA Travel Week and CEO Summit in London. Evans also presented an update on the international travel trade activities taking place in the coming months such as Visit USA Switzerland's Island-Hopping Event, Florida Huddle, and ITB Berlin taking place in March.

Visitor services report

Simone Behr, VCB visitor services director, reported that our tourism ambassador volunteers assisted a record number of 724,478 visitors and residents during calendar year 2024. During Q1, tourism ambassador volunteers worked 8,178 volunteer hours, a value of \$260,061 to Lee County. Highlights during the fall months included Tourism Ambassadors assisting at Roy Hobbs World Series, American Sand Sculpting Championship and greeting Breeze Airlines' inaugural flights, as well as attending a wide variety of 10 Destination Education Training sessions compliments of our industry partners. Visitor Services looks forward to hosting the 35th Annual Volunteer Tourism Ambassador Appreciation Luncheon on April 4.

Sports update

Jeff Mielke, Sports Development director, reported that 44,123 room nights sold in the months July through September 2024 with direct visitor spending of more than \$18.5 million.

Next TDC meeting

The next TDC meeting is scheduled for at **9 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 13, 2025** at the Lee County Administration East Building, 2201 Second St., Room 118, Fort Myers. To view a complete tax collections report, visit www.LeeVCB.com. Contact: Tamara Pigott, TPigott@leegov.com, Lee County VCB, 239-338-3500.