



# Lake Charles Southwest Louisiana Travel Market Research

## OBJECTIVE:

To provide a travel market research study that:

- Identifies the current segmented visitor markets, visitor geo/socio-demographic profile and spending levels
- Identifies the attractors/motivators to visit Lake Charles, Louisiana
- Identifies the perception of community leaders of Lake Charles as a travel destination
- Establishes current awareness of the Lake Charles area as a destination
- Analyzes lodging guest segmentation and potential for increases in occupancy and lodging tax
- Identifies target markets, segments and strategies with the optimal ROI

## Research:

- Lodging Market Research & Analysis
- Segmented Visitor Profile
- Community Leader Survey
- Resident Survey



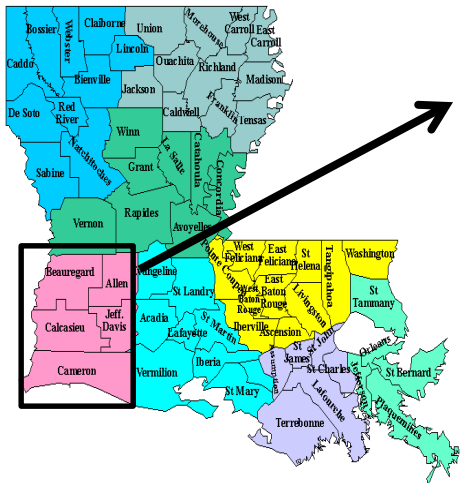
# Lake Charles/Southwest LA Travel Economic Impact

## Lake Charles Travel Impact

- In 2013, domestic travelers directly spent \$10.2 billion in Louisiana, up 3.3 percent from 2012.
  - Domestic travel expenditures directly supported 103,900 jobs within Louisiana in 2013, an increase of 2.6 percent from 2012.
  - The wage and salary earned by the employees, part-time workers, and seasonal workers who directly served domestic travelers in Louisiana reached just over \$2.0 billion in 2013, up 3.3 percent from 2012.
  - On average, every \$98,238 spent by domestic travelers in Louisiana during 2013 generated one job.
  - Additionally, domestic travel generated more than \$1.2 billion in tax revenue for federal, state, and local governments in 2013, up 3.1 percent from 2012.
  - Fifteen of Louisiana's 64 parishes received over \$100 million in domestic travel expenditures in 2013.
- Source: USTA TEIM model & LA Office of Tourism

Parish Name	Rank within Louisiana	Visitor Spending FY2013 in millions
ORLEANS	#1	\$4,102.80
JEFFERSON	#2	\$1,082.34
EAST BATON ROUGE	#3	\$843.97
CADDO	#4	\$542.90
LAFAYETTE	#5	\$461.05
<b>CALCASIEU</b>	<b>#6</b>	<b>\$384.48</b>

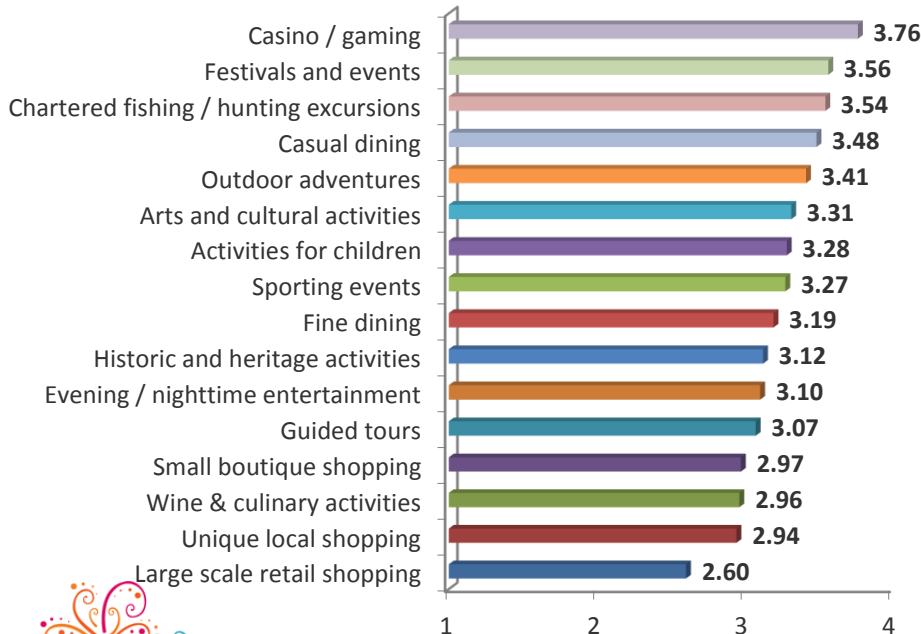
Contiguous Parishes of Calcasieu	Rank within Louisiana	Visitor Spending FY2013 in millions
<b>CALCASIEU</b>	<b>#6</b>	<b>\$384.48</b>
ALLEN	#10	\$172.98
BEAUREGARD	#36	\$19.98
JEFFERSON DAVIS	#38	\$19.10
CAMERON	#57	\$4.25



# Lake Charles/Southwest LA Community Leaders & Residents

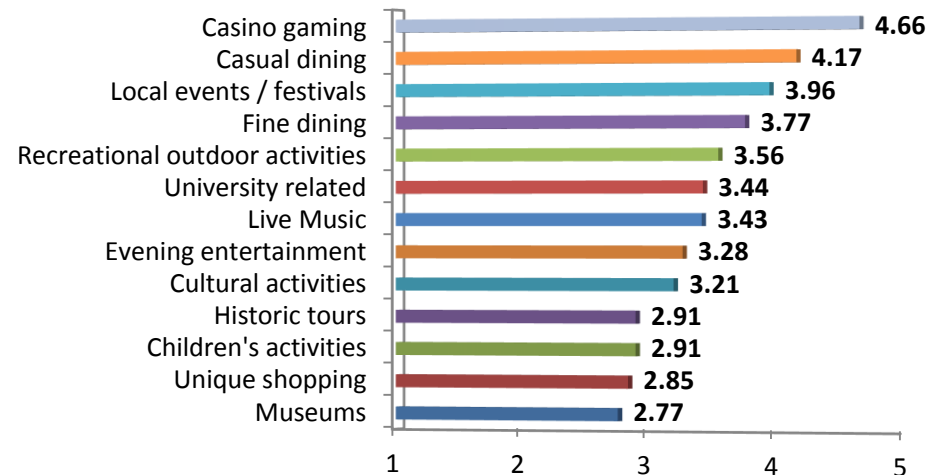
## Leaders

- 108 online surveys completed, 27 interviews on site
- Leaders represented a wide range of careers and longevity in the area.
- Good familiarity with LC/SWLA CVB & CVB programs.
- Leaders rate the area highly as a place to live, work and visit.
- Describe the area as beautiful, diverse and unique with friendly people.
- Most desired new visitor development initiatives include lakefront dining/shopping, workforce training, new attractions/activities, lakefront nightlife, live music entertainment venues.
- Rate the area highly as a destination to host friends and family. The lowest rated visitor aspects of the area were small and large scale retail shopping, unique shopping and wine/culinary activities.



## Residents

- 234 online surveys completed
- Respondents were 76% female, 77% some level of college education, 21 – 82 years old – average age = 48, 18% - retired, 12% - educators, 8% - hospitality, 8% - professional/manager, 8% - healthcare, 70% work in Lake Charles, wide range of longevity in the area.
- Residents typically come to downtown Lake Charles often for work, dining, shopping and banking.
- Residents rate highly some aspects of the area as a destination to host friends and family (gaming, casual dining, festivals/events), rate the following aspects as average: fine dining, outdoor recreation, live music, evening entertainment, but are more critical than leaders desiring improvements in historic tours, children’s activities, unique shopping and museums.



## Lodging Market Analysis

- Overnight visitors spend 2-3 times that of day-trippers therefore understanding lodging trends is vital to understanding the impact of travelers to the area.
- The Calcasieu Parish lodging inventory has grown with new hotels added every year for the last six years representing 30% of the current room inventory! Rapid development of lodging requires aggressive destination marketing to make sure demand keeps up with supply.
- A breakdown of the 6,248 lodging rooms in the 2015 market is as follows: 4 casinos = 2,436 rooms (39%); 31 hotels in East Calcasieu = 2,325 (37%); 22 hotels in West Calcasieu = 1,487 rooms (24%).
- When casino rooms are combined with hotels, the 2015 inventory is 4,065 in East Calcasieu (65%) and 2,183 (35%) in West Calcasieu.
- U.S. hotel occupancy peaked in 2014 at 64.4%. 2014 hotel/motel occupancy (non-casino) was 63% in East Calcasieu and 70% in West Calcasieu so the combined market outpaced the national average. East Calcasieu 2014 hotel/motel occupancy remained above 55% every month of the year except January (51%). West Calcasieu 2014 hotel/motel occupancy remained above 60% in every month except December (59%).

- Weekend hotel/motel occupancy (66% - 71%) is typically higher than weekdays with Sunday night the slowest night of the week (43% - 50%).
- Surveys with hoteliers revealed the following segmentation of 2014 room nights sold, found in the table below. The data confirms that Calcasieu Parish is a leisure destination (49% of rooms occupied) with 28% occupied by business transient, 11% meetings/conference, 7% group tour and sports and 4% passing-through.
- Houston was reported as the top feeder market for leisure visitors.

Calcasieu - ALL		East Calcasieu	West Calcasieu	Market Segmentation
Without Casinos	Includes Casinos	Includes Casinos	Includes Casinos	
15.0%	48.8%	49.3%	42.9%	Leisure Transient
51.5%	28.3%	27.0%	32.5%	Business Transient
14.3%	11.3%	12.0%	10.5%	Meetings/Conference
12.6%	7.1%	6.1%	11.2%	Group
6.6%	4.5%	5.6%	2.9%	Passing Through

# Lake Charles/Southwest LA Community Leaders & Residents

## Overall Visitor Profile

- An online survey was completed 1,133 people who had visited the Lake Charles/Southwest Louisiana area.
- Surveys were segmented by primary trip purpose: Leisure (60%), casino (30%) and business/conference/meeting (10%).
- Survey demographics were typical of the travel planner that comes to Louisiana with Texas (30%) and Louisiana (20%) accounting for half of all respondents.
- Respondents are well-educated with nearly 70% in each segmentation have some college; College degrees were reported by respondents as: Leisure (42%), Casino (33%) and Bus/Conf/Mtg (60%).
- Repeat visitors are 92% of leisure respondents, nearly 96% of casino respondents and 84% of business respondents having been to Lake Charles more than once. 29% of Casino repeat visitors have visited seven or more times. Only 8% of leisure, 4% of casino and 16% of business visitors reported it was their first visit to Lake Charles.
- The demographic profile of visitors is primarily adults-only couples, reported as: Leisure (75%), Casino (92%) and Bus/Conf/Mtg (90%).
- Respondents came from a wide range of ethnicities with white/Caucasian most prevalent.
- Most appealing new activities: live music venue, farm to table dining, lake excursions, historic home / cultural tours, craft/handmade artisan center, brewery/distillery, music & movie tours, blues club.

	Leisure	Casino	Bus/Conf/Mtg
First time visitor	16.4%	3.7%	8.7%
Booked room within 30 days	75.9%	92.7%	80.1%
Travel party size	2.8	3.3	2.8
Adults only travel Party	74.9%	92.1%	90.0%
Length of stay (nights)	3.41	1.93	2.95
Daytrip / Overnight	34.2% / 65.8%	35.5% / 64.5%	33.7% / 66.3%
Visit Satisfaction (5 point scale)	4.43	4.45	4.12
Intent to Return	93.8%	97.4%	80.6%
Spending per party (overnight)	\$758	\$1,038	\$478
Spending per party (daytrip)	\$204	\$509	n/a