

2025 Santa Monica Tourism Economic & Fiscal Impacts and Visitor Profile Summary

Overview: Santa Monica’s 2025 tourism visitation and dynamics reflect growth and change, with a shift to higher yield visitors. While total visitor volume declined, total spending grew, driven by higher per-capita spend—notably by international and long-haul U.S. visitors—thus, a higher-value traveler. However, declines in domestic volume, their visitor days, and total lodging tax revenue underscore continued softness in the U.S. market (nationally and locally). Thus, in 2025, Santa Monica’s vital tourism industry saw strength of international demand and spending, but continued to experience softened and competitive U.S. origin visitation.

Summary: In 2025, Santa Monica attracted nearly 3.9 million visitors, 8% below the 4.2 million in 2024, largely due to both fewer overnight and day visitors. Coupled with slightly lower length of stay, 1.37 versus 1.39 days (last year), and smaller groups of 2.6 persons versus 2.8, resulted in 5.34 million total visitor days in 2025, off 9% from 5.87 million. However, 2025 total visitor spending rose to \$996.6 million, up 9% from \$916.6 million in 2024, helped by a 19% spike in daily per-capita spending, \$187 versus \$156, chiefly from day visitors whose per-capita amount more than doubled. Despite higher spending, 2025 visitor taxes fell by 10% to \$60.2 million from \$66.9 million; due to 13% lower lodging tax, \$54.4 million versus \$62.7 million in 2024; however, retail sales tax grew by 36% to \$5.8 million from \$4.2 million. Visitor activity and spending supported nearly the same number of local jobs, 6,444 versus 6,487 (-.7%).

1. 2025 SANTA MONICA – SUMMARY KEY VISITOR INDICATORS (2025 vs. 2024) ^{1, 2}

Indicator	2025		2024
	Number	% Change	
Total Number of Visitors	3,893,700	-7.8%	4,222,400
Average Length of Stay (days, all visitors)	1.37	-1.4%	1.39
Total Visitor Days	5,343,300	-9.0%	5,869,900
Total Annual Visitor Spending	\$996,627,300	8.7%	\$916,563,200
Per-capita Daily Visitor Spending	\$186.52	19.4%	\$156.15
Hotel & STR Tax Revenue to City (non-local visitors) ²	\$54,426,000	-13.2%	\$62,694,900
Visitor Retail Sales Tax Revenue to City ¹	\$5,764,700	36.3%	\$4,229,100
Equivalent Tax per SM Household from Visitor Spend	\$1,267	-12.1%	\$1,441
Santa Monica Jobs Supported by Tourism	6,444	-0.7%	6,487

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc., and CIC Research, Inc., for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

Spending by Category: Lodging led all categories with \$422 million, accounting for 42% of the total, with a 13% drop from \$487 million in 2024. Visitor spent nearly \$228 million on shopping, up a notable 40% from nearly \$163 million in 2024. The other key category was meals out with total spending of \$196 million, also a strong rise of 29% from \$152 million last year.

2. 2025 VISITOR SPENDING IN SANTA MONICA - TOTAL & BY CATEGORY (2025 vs. 2024)

Indicator	Per-Capita Daily	2025		% Change	Per-Capita Daily	2024	
		Total Spending	Ratio			Total Spending	Ratio
Lodging	\$ 79.08	\$ 422,524,807	42.4%	-13.3%	\$ 83.02	\$ 487,295,197	53.2%
Shopping/Gifts	\$ 42.63	\$ 227,774,485	22.9%	39.9%	\$ 27.73	\$ 162,794,344	17.8%
Meals (out)	\$ 36.69	\$ 196,034,976	19.7%	29.1%	\$ 25.86	\$ 151,823,620	16.6%
Beverages	\$ 15.41	\$ 82,313,779	8.3%	51.5%	\$ 9.26	\$ 54,342,282	5.9%
Local Transportation/parking	\$ 9.72	\$ 51,929,086	5.2%	58.0%	\$ 5.60	\$ 32,867,653	3.6%
Admissions Fees	\$ 1.30	\$ 6,930,546	0.7%	-20.2%	\$ 1.48	\$ 8,684,248	.9%
Activities	\$ 1.19	\$ 6,355,257	0.6%	-26.6%	\$ 1.47	\$ 8,655,823	.9%
Groceries/Other Items	\$ 0.35	\$ 1,895,068	0.2%	-78.8%	\$ 1.52	\$ 8,942,556	1.0%
Amenities: wellness/health/etc.	\$ 0.16	\$ 869,220	0.1%	-24.9%	\$.20	\$ 1,157,458	.1%
Total	\$ 186.52	\$ 996,627,230	100.0%	8.7%	\$156.15	\$ 916,563,182	100.0%

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc., and CIC Research, Inc., for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

¹ Estimated visitor volume, days, spending, taxes, and local tourism jobs are calculated using an economic impact model by CIC Research Inc. based on quarterly visitor on-site intercept surveys, City sales and lodging tax data, and STR lodging reports.

² Lodging (hotels + short term rentals) and Sales tax based on direct taxable visitor spending; will vary from City reported tax revenues.

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By Visitor Lodging Segment: Guests in Santa Monica hotels/motels spent the most, 68% of the total, at \$674 million, a nearly 4% decrease from \$699 in 2024. Day visitors spent \$266 million, a 28% share of the total, and a 109% spike from \$127 million last year. The other two lodging sector visitors, private residence and other paid lodging (e.g. short-term rental) guests accounted for a 6% share of total spending at \$56 million, a 38% drop from \$91 million last year.

By Visitor Origin: 2025 origin *share* was divided about 50%, with 1.9 million each for international and domestic visitors. However, international volume grew by 4% from last year while domestic volume fell by 17%. Coupled with their \$310 (\$169) per-capita spending, total international spending reached \$602 million (\$471 million), a robust 28% spike, while U.S. domestic spending fell by 11% to \$395 (\$445.6) million.

3. SANTA MONICA – 2025 VISITOR VOLUME & ECONOMIC IMPACT BY SEGMENT

Visitor Segment	Annual Visitors	Share	% Chg. Visitors (2024)	Avg. Stay (days)	Total Annual Visitor Spending	Share	% Chg. Tot. Spending (2024)	Daily Avg. Spend per-person	% Chg. Per-Capita Spend. (2024)
Hotel/Motel	422,833	10.9%	-20.9%	3.58	\$674,326,036	67.7%	-3.6%	\$445.31	2.8%
Priv. (unpaid) Lodging	29,497	0.8%	-57.3%	7.60	\$ 14,237,441	1.4%	-26.1%	\$ 63.49	19.4%
Other Paid Lodging	25,629	0.7%	-58.1%	7.37	\$ 42,358,793	4.3%	-40.5%	\$224.15	5.9%
Day Visitors	3,415,782	87.7%	-4.0%	1.00	\$265,704,959	26.7%	109.9%	\$ 77.79	118.6%
Total International *	1,942,982	49.9%	4.1%	1.46	\$601,870,880	60.4%	27.8%	\$ 211.68	25.4%
Total U.S. Domestic *	1,950,759	50.1%	-17.2%	1.28	\$ 394,756,350	39.6%	-11.4%	\$ 157.91	9.0%

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc., and CIC Research, Inc., for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

*Day and overnight visitors

Visitor Profile: 2025 Santa Monica visitors were from farther away as noted, and as such more were first time visitors, visiting for vacation purposes, arrived to the region by air, and walked to get around the city, were day visitors, hotel and other paid lodging guests stayed longer than last year; both per-capita spending and median household income rose. .

4. SUMMARY – 2025 SANTA MONICA VISITOR PROFILE (2025 & 2024) ^{1, 2}

Characteristic	2025	2024
International Visitor share (of total visitors)	50%	44%
U.S. Resident visitor share (of total visitors, excl. California)	35%	41%
California Resident visitor share (of total visitors)	15%	15%
First-Time Visitor / Repeat Visitor (past three years)	70% / 30%	65% / 35%
Avg. number past visits in past 3 years by repeat visitors (excl this trip)	3.2	2.6
Mainly visiting Santa Monica for pleasure/vacation	56%	51%
Santa Monica <i>main</i> destination of this trip	21%	22%
Arrived in Southern California by commercial air	69%	56%
Walking to get around in Santa Monica	82%	63%
Day Visitor / Overnight Visitors in Santa Monica	88% / 12%	84% / 16%
Staying in a Santa Monica hotel: All visitors / Overnight visitors	11% / 89%	13% / 80%
Staying in a Santa Monica hotel - International visitors: All / Overnight	14% / 93%	13% / 83%
Staying in Santa Monica hotel - Other U.S. (excl. Cal): All / Overnight	9% / 84%	14% / 81%
Average stay in Santa Monica – all (days) / overnight visitors (nights)	1.37 / 4.0	1.39 / 3.1
Average stay in Santa Monica - hotel guests (nights)	3.6	2.9
Average stay in Santa Monica – other paid lodging guests (nights)	7.4	3.8
Average travel group size (persons)	2.6	2.8
Average daily per-person spending in Santa Monica (all visitors)	\$186	\$156
Median annual household income	\$99,300	\$95,700

Source: Lauren Schlau Consulting, Inc. and CIC Research, Inc., for Santa Monica Travel & Tourism

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VISITOR ORIGIN – SANTA MONICA 2025 TOP U.S. & INTERNATIONAL FEEDER MARKETS

Top 10 U.S. Feeder States		All International Feeder Markets	
State	Share of U.S.	Country/Region	Share of Int'l.
California	29.6%	Europe: Western	23.5%
Texas	7.6%	Europe: Central and Eastern	14.4%
Arizona	6.7%	United Kingdom/Ireland	12.9%
Illinois	4.2%	Australia/ New Zealand	7.9%
Utah	3.8%	Scandinavia	7.6%
Washington	3.3%	Far East Asia	7.4%
New York	3.2%	Middle East	4.2%
Florida	3.0%	Western Canada	4.2%
Virginia	2.8%	Asia Pacific (Indonesia, Philippines, other)	3.7%
Georgia	2.5%	Eastern Canada	3.4%
Top 10 States	66.7%	South America	3.3%
		Mexico/Central America	3.1%
		Africa	0.8%
		South Asia/Indian subcontinent	0.7%
		Other	2.9%

¹ A visitor resides *outside* of Los Angeles County, and is in Santa Monica for the day or overnight, for leisure, business, a meeting, special event, or other temporary purpose, except regular work or to attend school.

² Profile data based on 1,462 on-site interviews during four quarters of 2025 among Santa Monica *visitors* as defined above.

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