

FY23/24 Annual Plan

the
PATH
forward

fort
MYERS
ISLANDS, BEACHES
& NEIGHBORHOODS



Table of Contents

Introduction	3
County Brand	8
The Travel Landscape	13
FY23/24 Plan	26
Marketing	27
Sales	60
Sports Development	72
Public Relations	75
Visitor Services	79
Guests First Program	83
FY22/23 Performance	89
Staff Directory and Contractors	100



A couple walking on a beach at sunset. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light from the setting sun. The couple is walking away from the camera, towards the ocean. The woman is wearing a light-colored dress and the man is wearing a white t-shirt and shorts. The beach is sandy and the waves are gentle. The sky is filled with soft, golden clouds.

1

Introduction

Letter from Executive Director

My Fort Myers

Maybe it goes without saying, but My Fort Myers is you. This has been a year unlike any other. We have faced many challenges and overcome them, with still more on the horizon. Yet our resilient spirit has grown stronger and it will continue to flourish as we move along the path forward. This journey to restoring and rebuilding our tourism industry over the next several years is one we will accomplish together.

While we have seen an unprecedented drop in tourism following Hurricane Ian, many indicators are now increasing. These trends are a welcome sign that provide hope for the year ahead.



Traffic Numbers Are Taking Off

Southwest Florida International Airport (RSW) traffic numbers are on the upswing and we're so happy to see travelers are beginning to choose our destination again. Passenger count has picked up and in September, traffic increased nine percent compared to September 2022 — the first year-over-year increase of the year. New carriers and nonstop flights continue to launch, including Canadian airline Porter, which will offer daily service to and from Toronto. The Lee County Port Authority is anticipating a 15% increase in the number of flights between November and the end of January compared to the same period last year.

Accommodation Inventory and Demand is Climbing

While we're years away from being back to pre-lan inventory, the progress made over the last year is astounding. With more rooms becoming available each month and a number of reopenings and new properties on the horizon, we are encouraged and poised to welcome more visitors in the coming year. Concurrently, demand for flights, hotel and vacation rentals has steadily increased, per TripAdvisor reporting.

International Visitors Return

We continue to see more international travel led by Canada, followed by Germany and the United Kingdom. Although it's not back to pre-pandemic levels, the increase in visitation over the last year as well as uptick in future bookings are positive indicators that further fuel our optimism for the future.



The Path Forward

The best part of my job is working with so many dedicated, passionate people. Our industry is full of kind, caring, and positive members of our community who enjoy what they do. While it may feel frantic at times, we can depend on each other. The staff at the Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau is here to support you.

I am confident that what we are doing now will position our destination for success in the decades ahead. It is with respectful optimism I say that our challenges are temporary and will lead to greater growth and learning. We know how to succeed as a community because we have overcome numerous challenges before and we will do it again. My Fort Myers has a very bright future. Let's trust the process and collectively take the steps that keep us on the path forward.



With much hope and warm regards,

Tamara Pigott

Tamara Pigott

Executive Director, Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau



Vision

To enhance our position as the premier tourism marketing organization by working with our partners to promote one of the world's best tourism destinations.

Mission

The Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau serves the broader interests of the economy of Lee County by acting as an industry leader to market the entire area globally, facilitate travel to the area, and preserve and protect the area's unique attributes for the continual benefit of its residents and the travel and tourism industry.



2

Country Brand



📷 [steve_zeinner](#)

County Brand

The role of destination marketing organizations (DMOs) has evolved in recent years, creating an opportunity to refocus the Lee County brand. The objective of this process was to build a strong destination brand, boost local pride and increase our collective sense of community within one identity. To achieve this, we engaged residents, industry partners, business leaders, and elected officials to better understand the goals of our community. We also began to identify overarching themes related to Lee County's brand while collecting and analyzing facts and data related to the Lee County experience.

We connected the insights gained from our community engagement survey to traveler data from our proprietary research. Understanding how these motivations are so closely tied allowed us to create a brand that speaks to and emotionally connects with residents and travelers as well as the business and economic development communities.

Travelers are already familiar with our destination as “Fort Myers” — they’ve booked flights to our airport and seen signs calling out our destination while driving. We built on that familiarity in an inclusive way, showing that our area encompasses more than just the city of Fort Myers, with a secondary line that acknowledges our many communities and their strong identities as islands, beaches and neighborhoods. This name also provides the flexibility to identify on a county, regional and departmental level.

fort
MYERS
ISLANDS, BEACHES
& NEIGHBORHOODS

fort
MYERS
LEE COUNTY, FLORIDA

fort
MYERS
SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

fort
MYERS
LEE COUNTY SPORTS
DEVELOPMENT OFFICE

Our process culminated with the creation of Lee County's brand architecture. Fueled by the insights we gained along the way, the architecture is an articulation of what the Lee County brand stands for, how it is positioned against the competition, and how it emotionally connects with and motivates our audiences.

Following Hurricane Ian, our brand remains strong. The unique qualities of our destination are even more valued by our customers. These key features continue to shape how we promote the area. At its core, the new brand combines the fundamental need all travelers share with what Lee County naturally provides: the gift of time. People need time to relax and time to actively pursue their passions with the people they love most.

Above all else, this balance is what Lee County offers.



Brand Architecture

BRAND VALUES	Active • Connecting • Inspiring • Fresh • Fun
BRAND PURPOSE	We are a change of pace from the rest of the world. We create an environment that inspires visitors to take time to pursue their passions and make the most of every moment.
BRAND EXPERIENCE	This is our time. • Always at our own speed. Connected to the water. • More time, more living.
BRAND VOICE	Comfortable • Confident • Refreshing • Empowering • Passionate

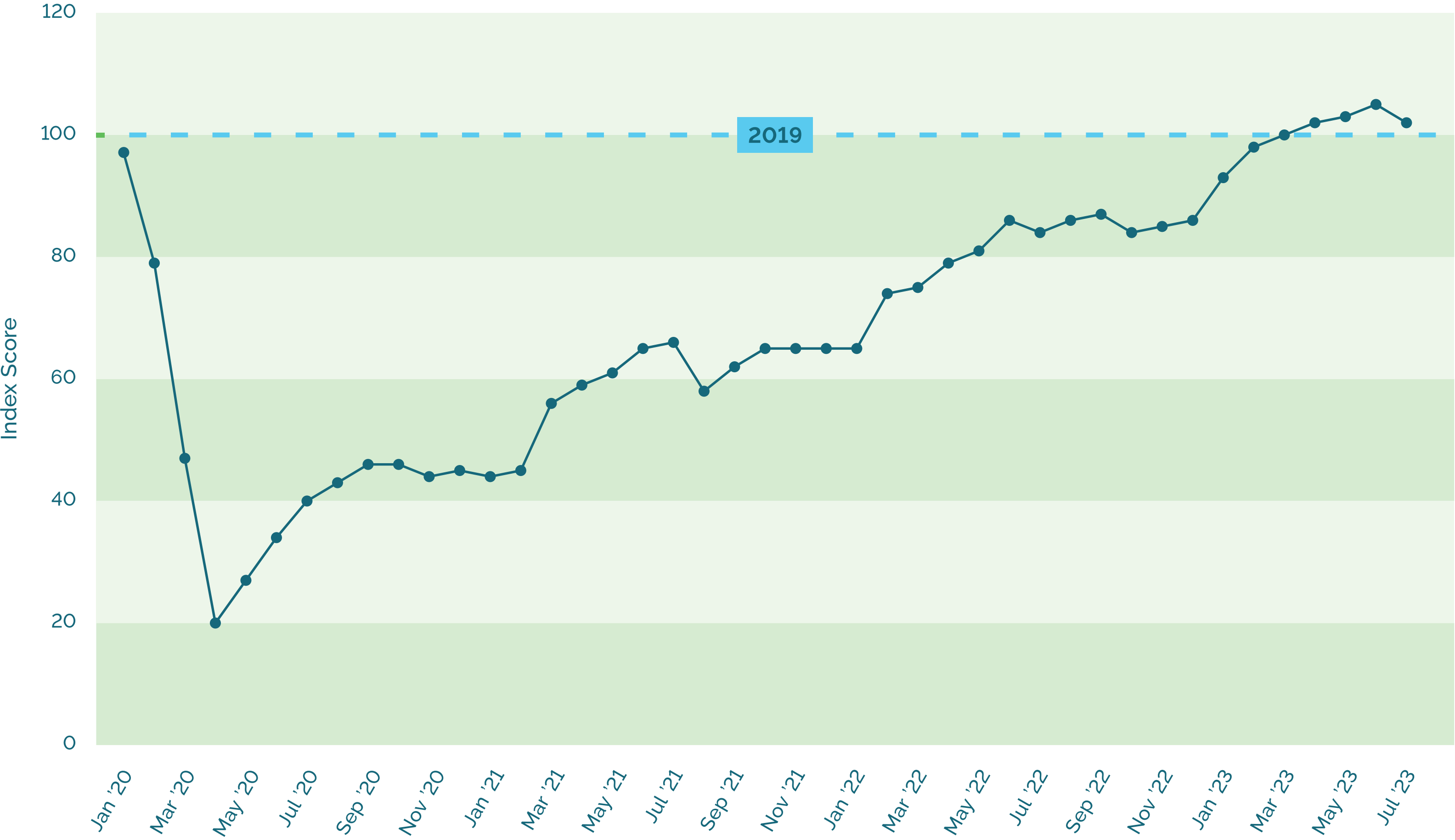


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The Travel Landscape

Global Travel Health Index Score

Weighted Average
Index Score (2019 = 100)



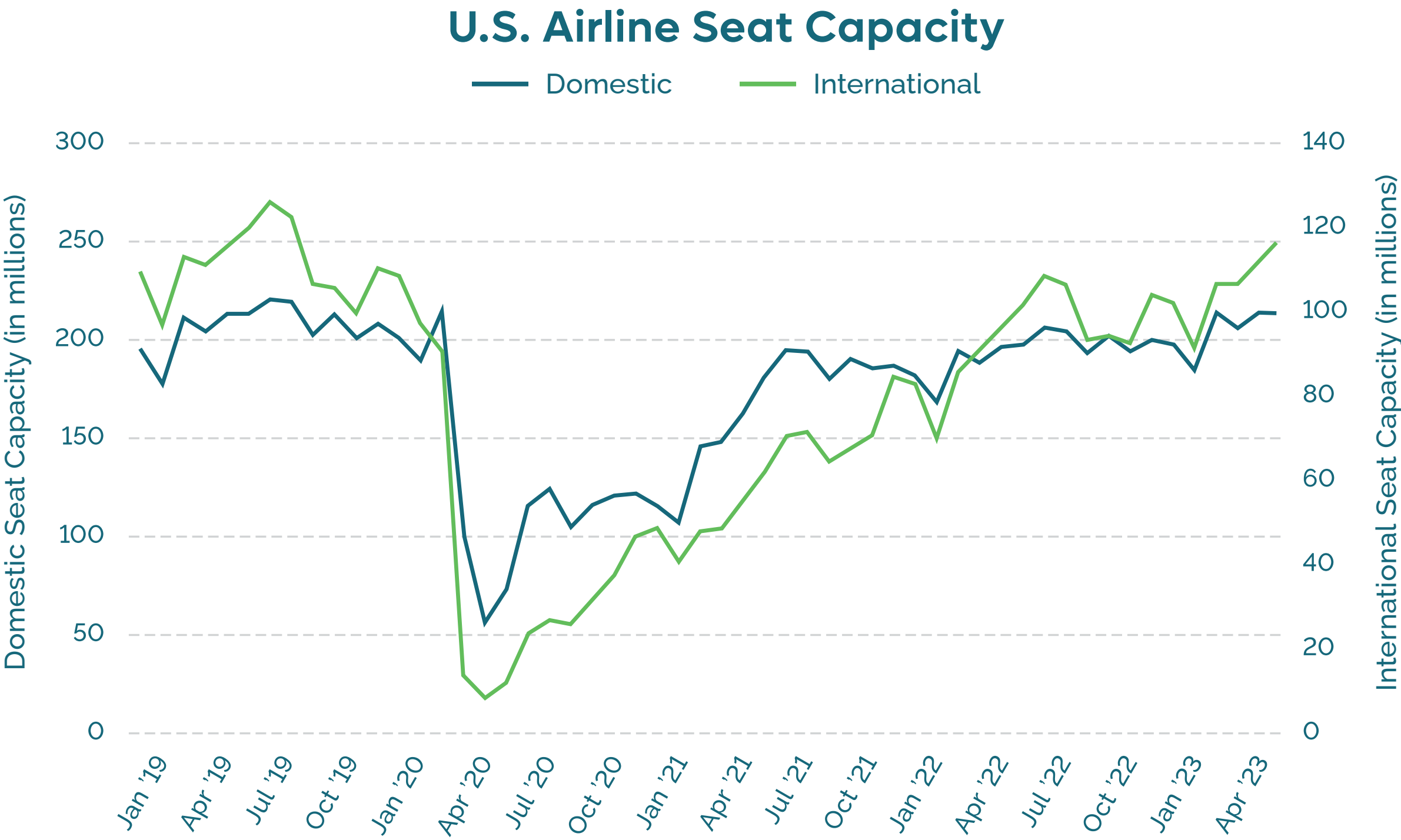
Source: Skift's State of Travel 2023

Global Travel Makes a Strong Comeback

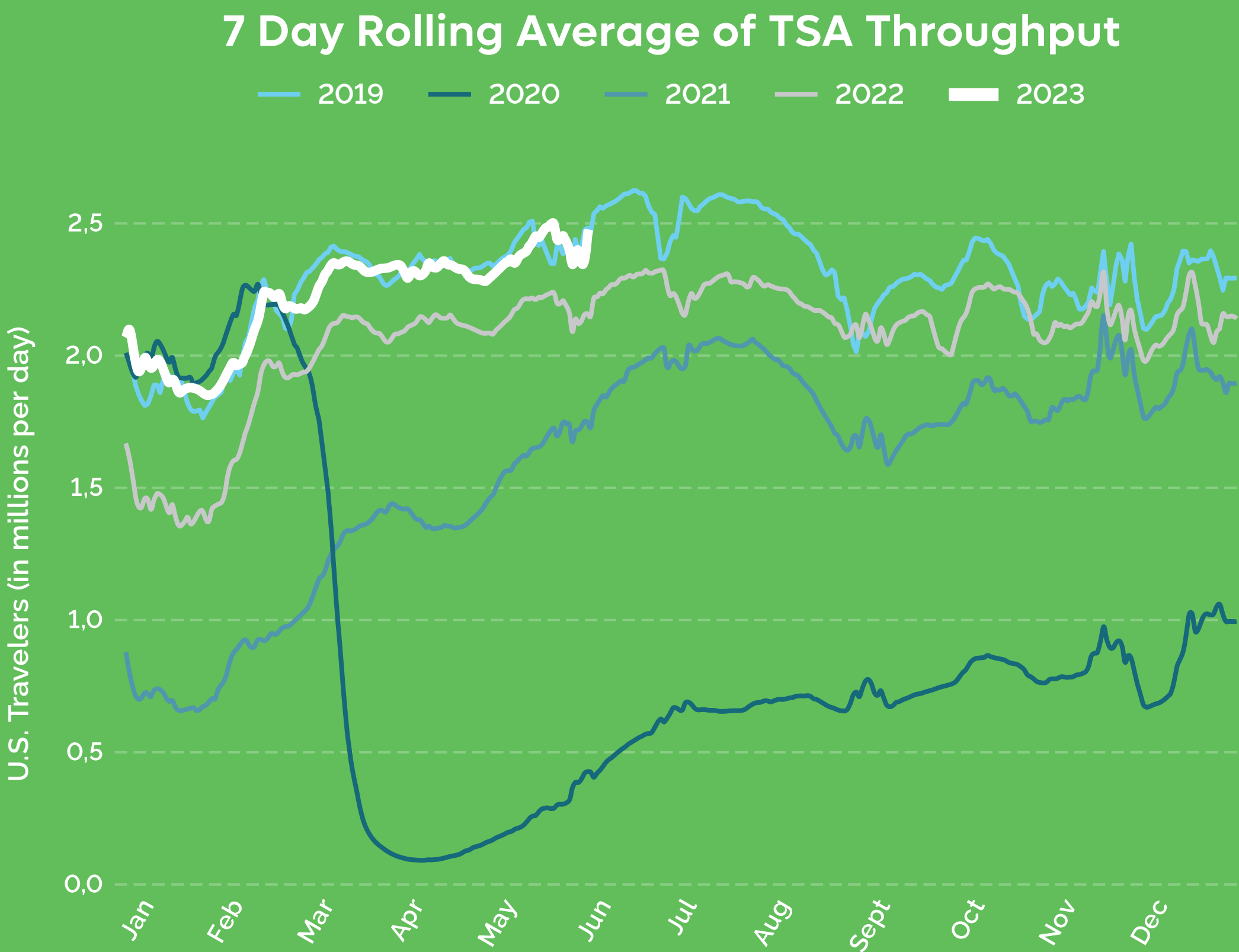
Skift Research's Global Travel Health Index is a real-time measure of the performance of the travel industry at large, and the core verticals within it. It tracks 84 travel indicators across 22 countries with data from 22 partners. Per this index, the first time that global travel rebound surpassed 2019 levels was in April 2023 – exactly three years after its lowest point in April 2020. The industry underwent an impressive recovery in a relatively short amount of time.

International Flights Are Catching Up With Domestic Flights in the U.S.

While international travel in the U.S. has been slower to recover, domestic travel within the U.S. has been back to pre-pandemic levels since mid-2021. *Source: Skift Research*



Source: Skift's State of Travel 2023



U.S. travel volumes are back.

Source: Skift's State of Travel 2023

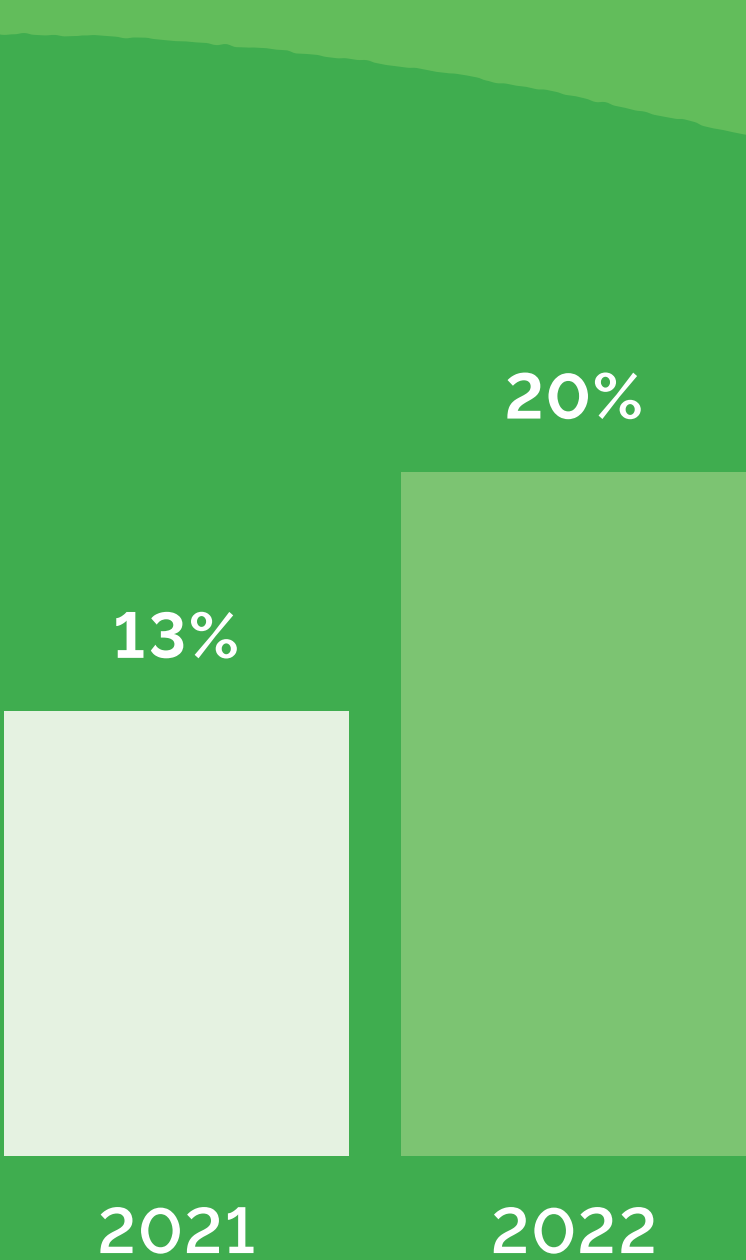
Some Pandemic Booking Habits Seem to Last

While the pandemic has been left behind in many ways, there are some habits that have not reverted to pre-pandemic levels.

Source: *Skift's State of Travel 2023*

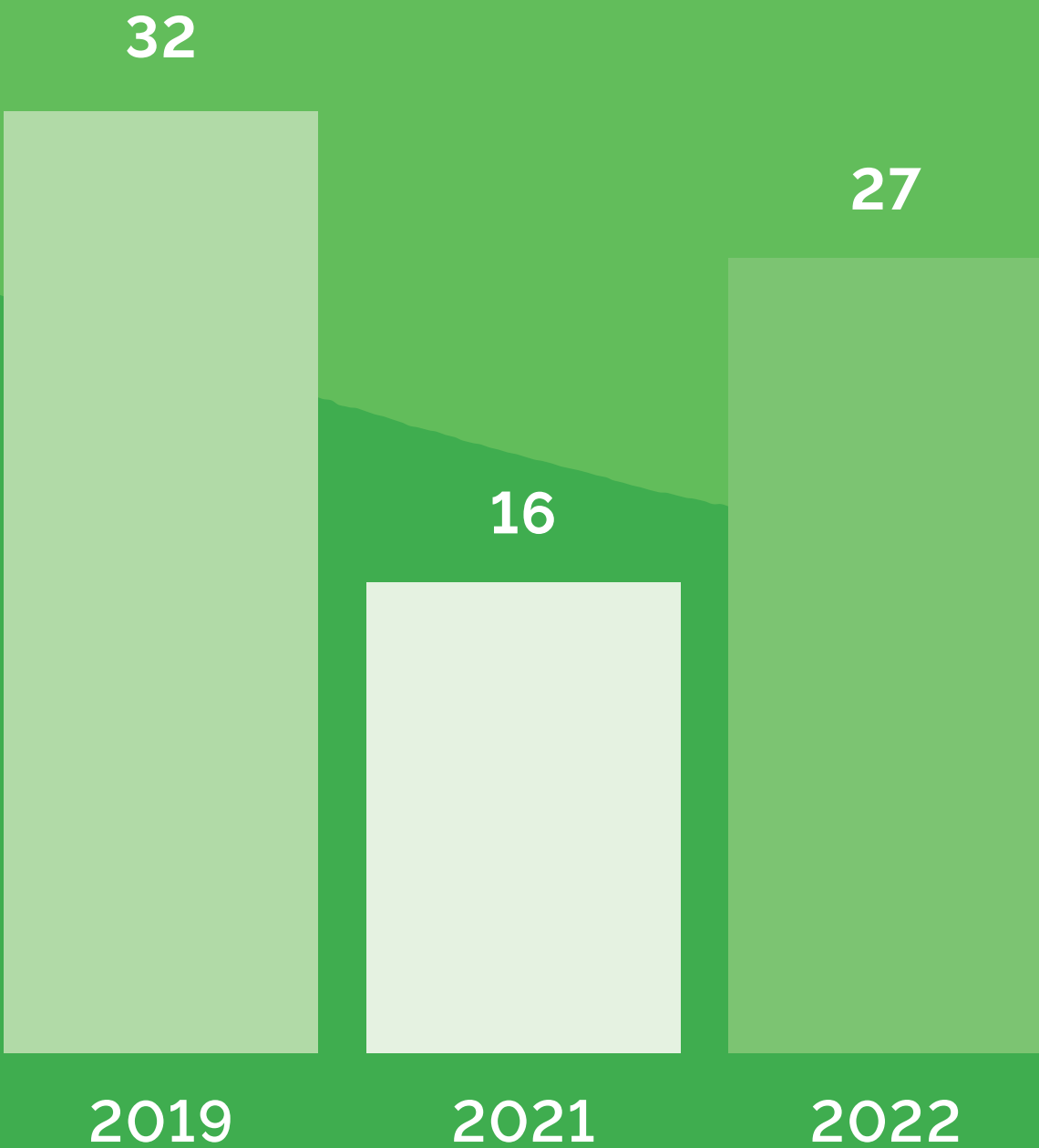
Flexible Bookings

Percentage of travelers for whom the cancellation policy is important when booking a flight



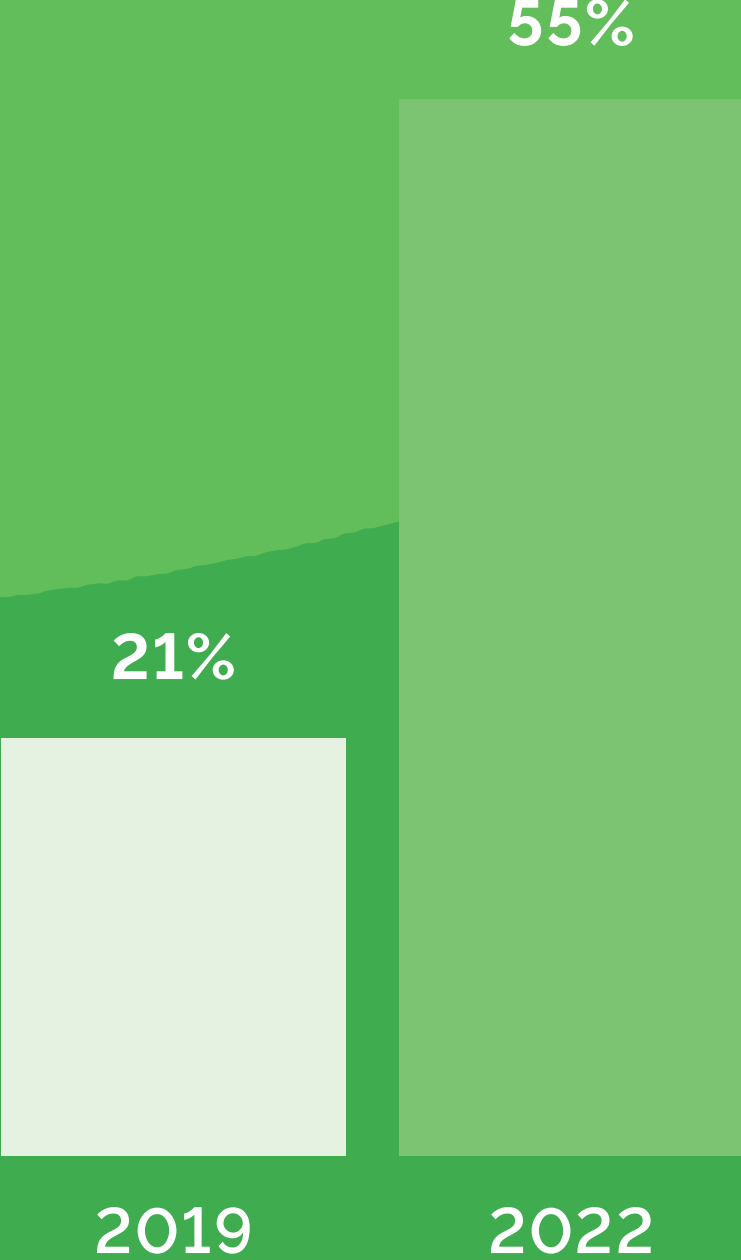
Flight Booking Window

By number of days



Travel Insurance

Percentage of travelers who intend to buy travel insurance



Sources: *Skift's Research* and *World Travel and Tourism Council*, data as of June 2023.

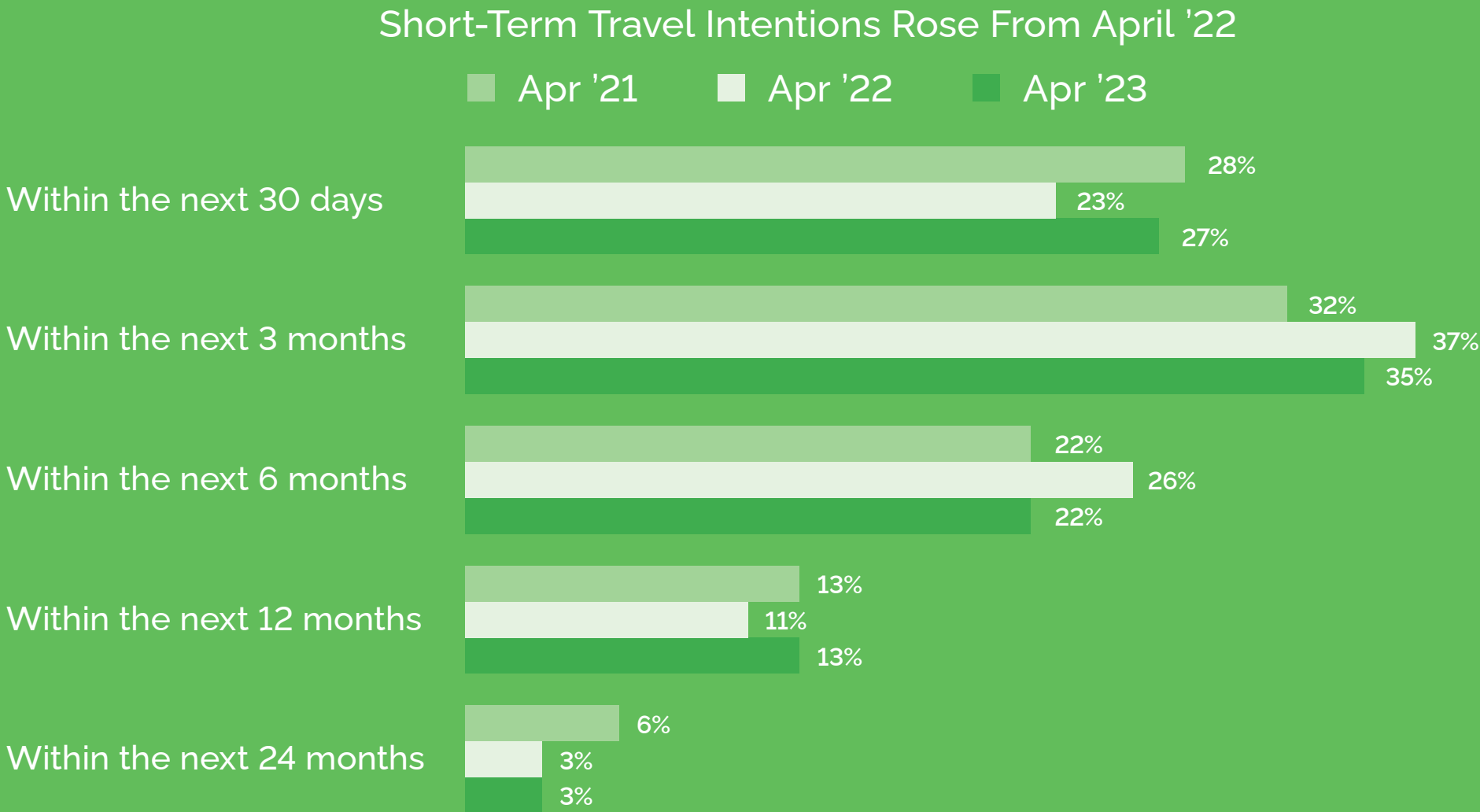
Fort Myers Prospect Leisure Travel Indicators:

- Short-term travel intentions rose from April '22, with **84%** of Fort Myers prospects intending to take a leisure vacation within the next six months.
- Spending intentions have continued to increase significantly, rising by more than **\$1,000** since April '22.
- The number of overnights, however, continues to remain slightly above **4 nights**.

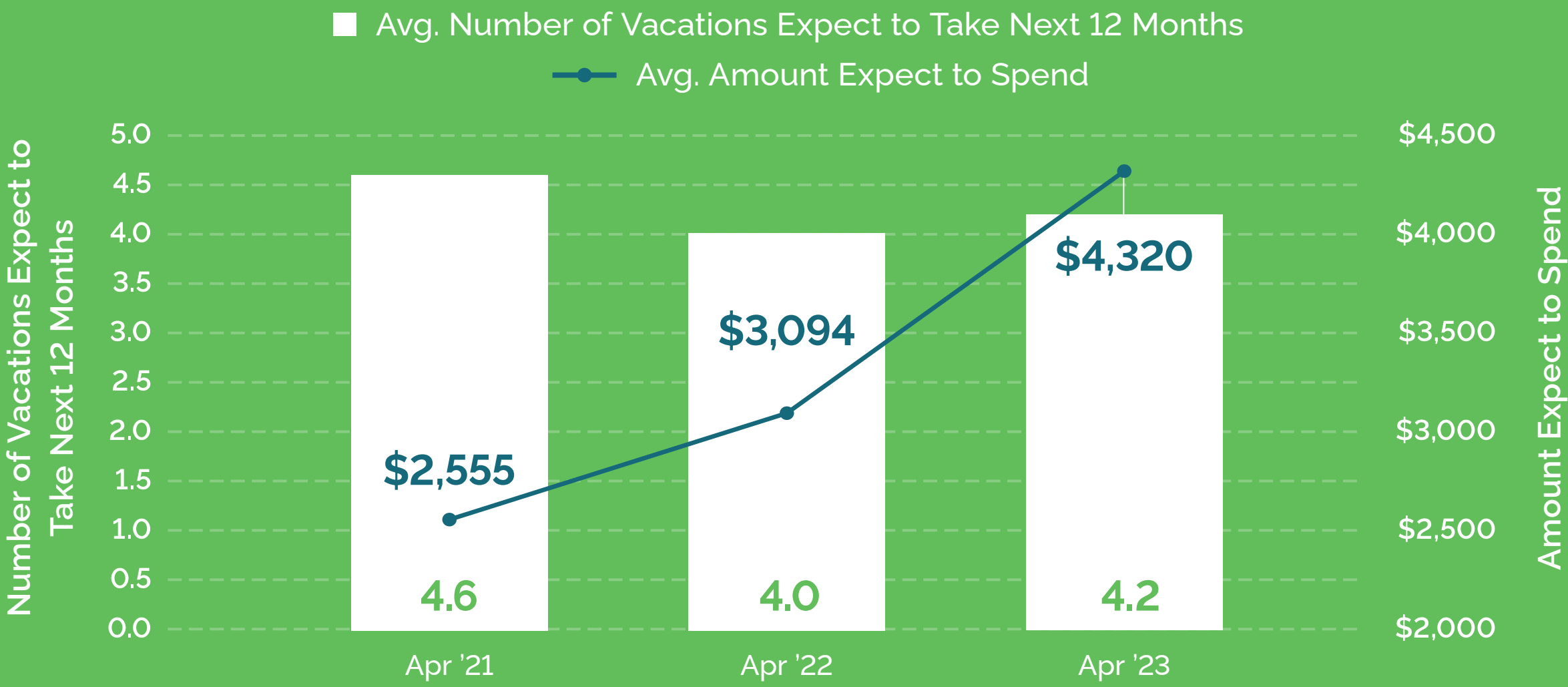
The Fort Myers Prospect is defined as those who intend to take at least one overnight leisure trip during the next 24 months and are interested in visiting our area on a vacation in the next 24 months.

Source: MMGY Global's 2023 *Portrait of American Travelers*® “Summer Edition”

Expected Timing of Next Leisure Vacation Among Fort Myers Prospects

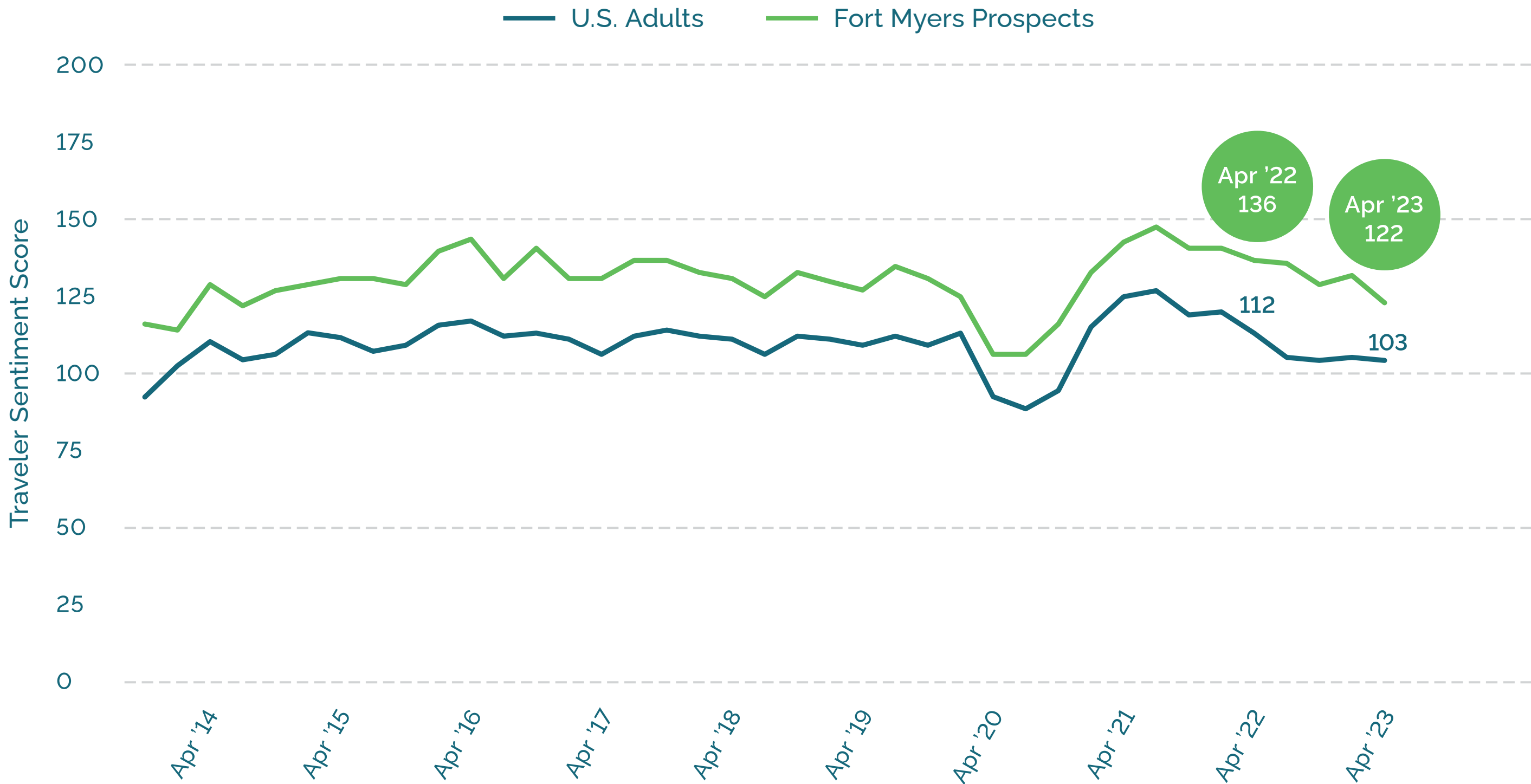


Leisure Travel and Spending in the Next 12 Months Among Fort Myers Prospects



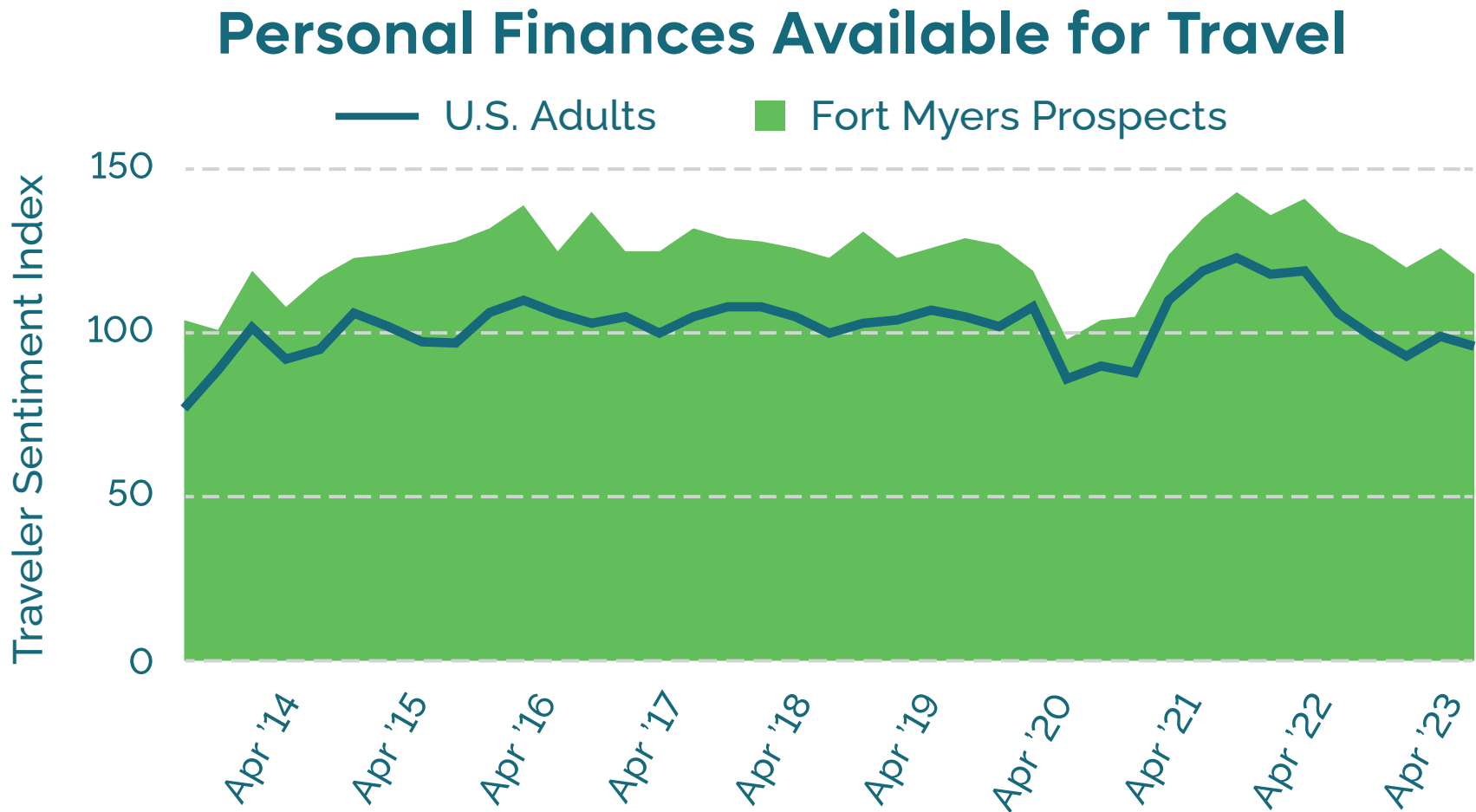
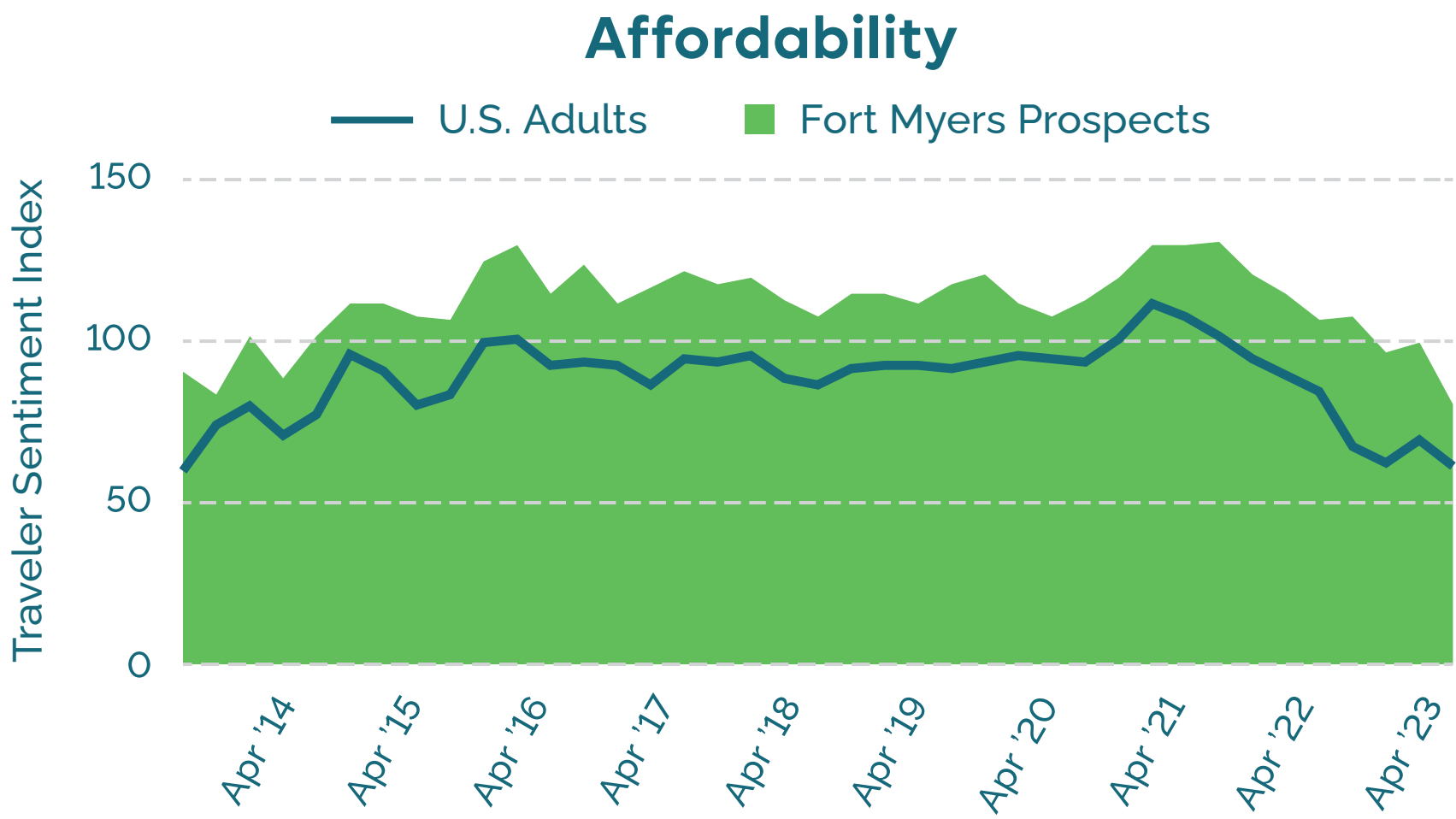
Traveler Sentiment Score

The Traveler Sentiment Index™ (TSI) consists of six variables, including interest in travel, time available for travel, personal finances available for travel, affordability of travel, quality of service and safety of travel. It provides a glimpse into how U.S. adults are feeling about travel this year compared to the same time a year ago. The most recent Traveler Sentiment Score for Fort Myers prospects stands at 122, down 14 points from the past year. However, Fort Myers prospects continue to score higher than the overall U.S. adults average.



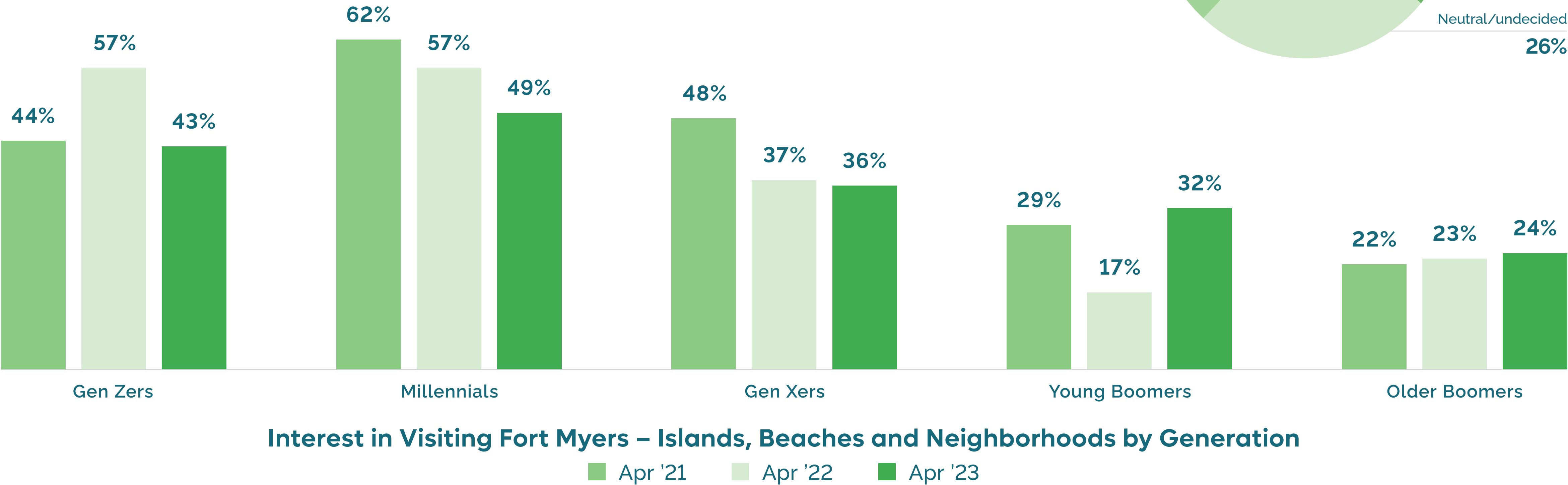
Source: MMGY Global's 2023 *Portrait of American Travelers*® “Summer Edition”

Affordability decreased the most, down 26 points, followed by personal finances, which is down 13 points.



Travel Intent

According to MMGY Global's 2023 *Portrait of American Travelers*® “Summer Edition,” 35% of U.S. leisure travelers are interested in visiting our destination. Millennials (49%) and those with higher household incomes (\$100,000–\$149,999: 38%; \$150,000 or more: 39%) are showing the most interest.



Source: MMGY Global's 2023 *Portrait of American Travelers*® “Summer Edition”

Travel Intent (continued)

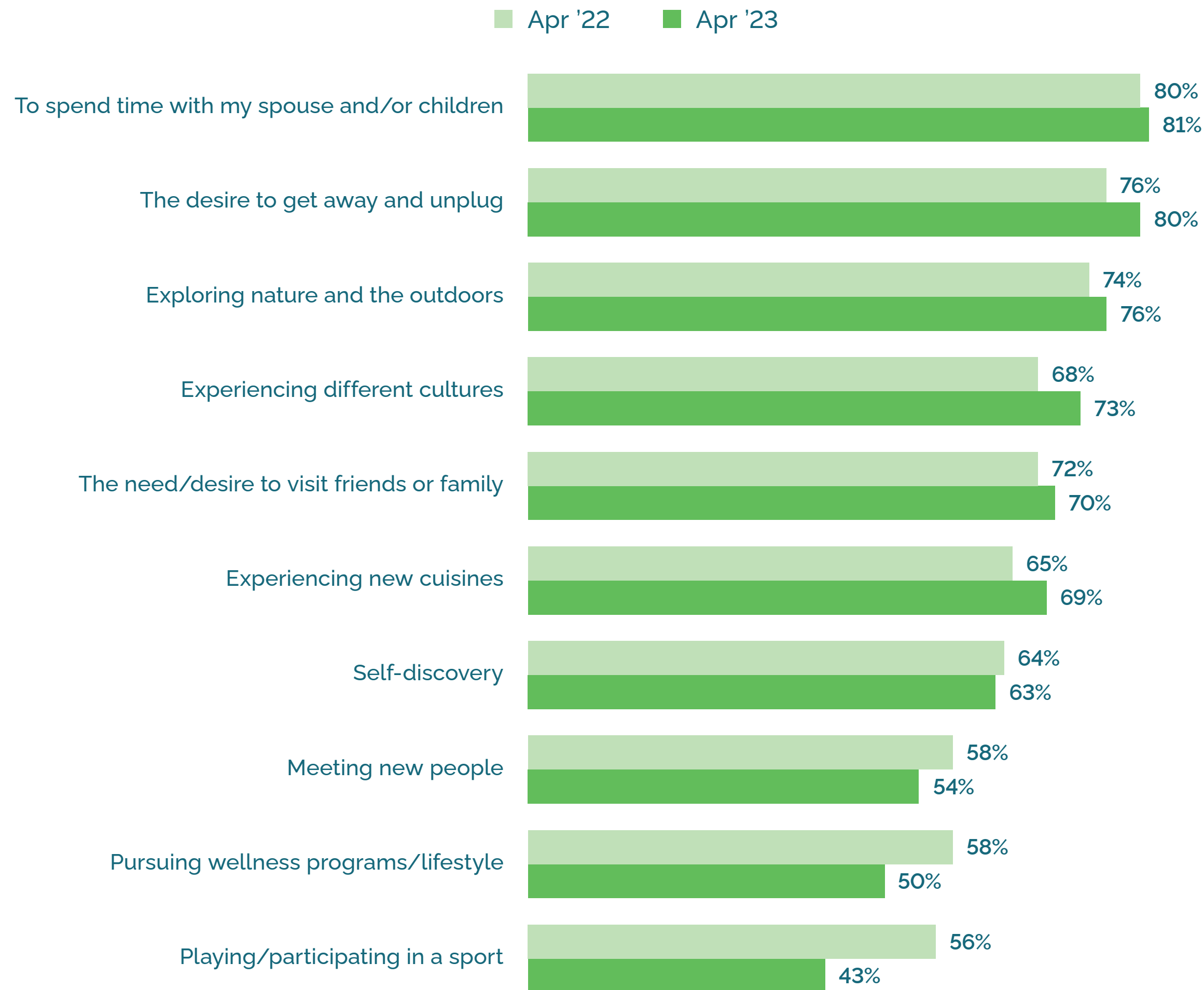


Interest in Visiting Fort Myers – Islands, Beaches and Neighborhoods by Household Income

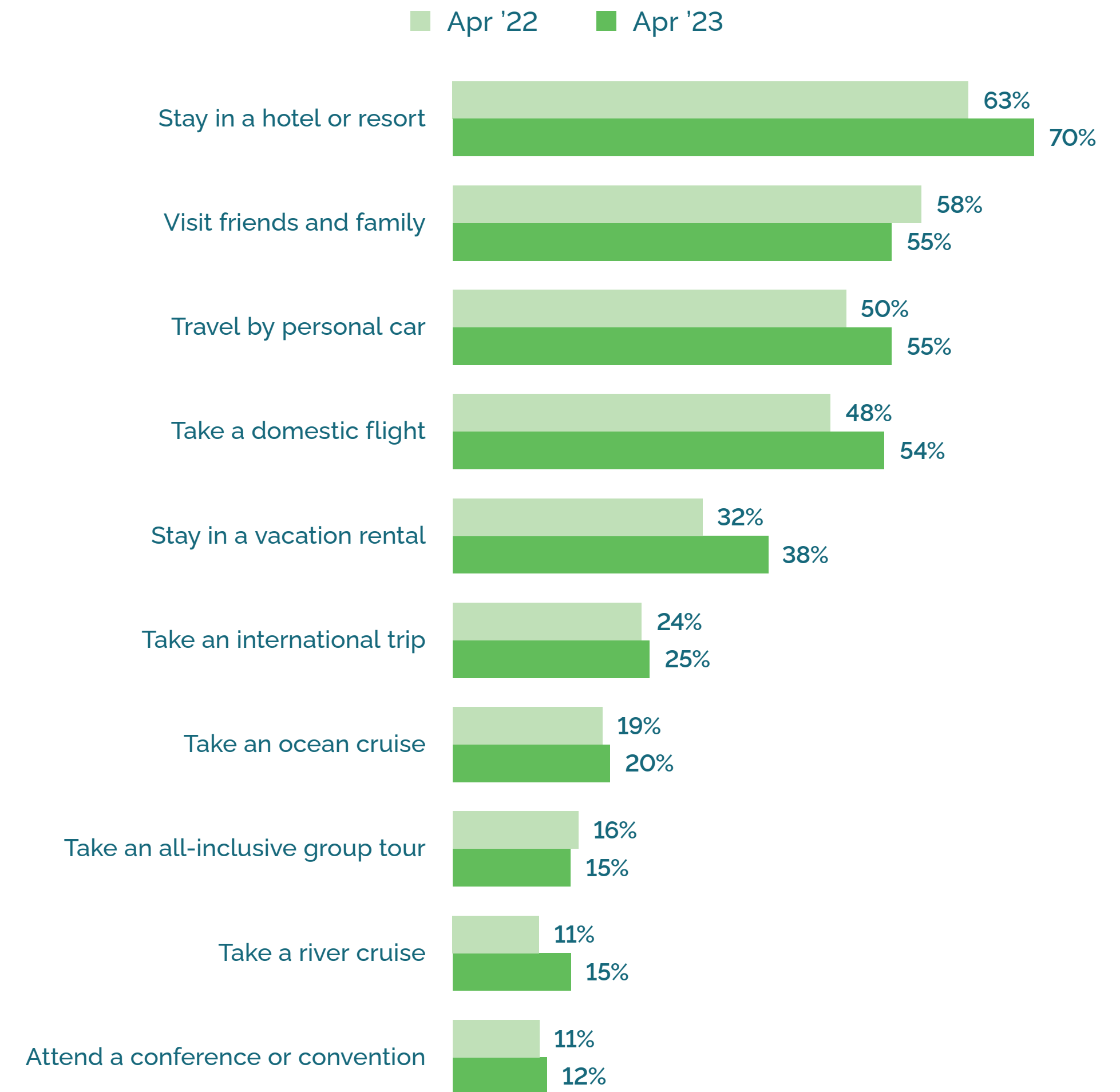
■ Apr '21 ■ Apr '22 ■ Apr '23

Spending time with family and unplugging continue to be top motivators to travel for those interested in visiting our destination

Vacation Motivators



Travel Expectations in the Next 6 Months



Source: MMGY Global's 2023 *Portrait of American Travelers*® "Summer Edition"

Arrivals

During FY22/23, Arrivalist observed 3.2 million trips to Lee County, with 71% of visitors spending at least one night in the destination. Visitors tended to stay an average of 2.3 nights, and the majority arrived between Friday and Sunday. Saturdays stood out as the most popular day for visitors to arrive in the Fort Myers area, nearly doubling trip visitation compared to any other weekday.

Origin markets continued to favor the upper Midwest/Great Lakes region, featuring cities like Chicago and Minneapolis, as well as the upper East Coast, including New York City and Philadelphia. Tampa landed as the top origin market with over 644,000 trips to Lee County. Last fiscal year, in-state Florida markets accounted for 56% of our total visitation after Hurricane Ian. Chicago and New York City continued to be the leading out-of-state markets for visitation, with Minneapolis not far behind, especially during the spring season. These markets align with this year's seasonal marketing strategy.

Source: *Arrivalist*





Booking Windows

According to recent Sojern data, before Hurricane Ian, average flight booking windows to Lee County were 30+ days. However, after the hurricane Sojern saw FY22/23 booking windows become more fragmented, with 27% of potential visitors booking their flights an average of 60+ days out, while 22% did so zero to seven days in advance. Over 50% of hotel bookings were made for one to three nights, with an average stay of 2.3 nights, suggesting short-term visitation to Lee County. *Source: Sojern*

Similarly, Expedia data showed nearly 21% of all bookings completed within zero to six days of the trip, while another 20% occurred 31–60 days out. Expedia data saw longer stays with vacation rentals compared to hotel stays, with vacation rental bookings lasting between six and nine days. *Source: Expedia*

Visitor Sentiment Surveys

In the months following Hurricane Ian, we conducted a series of sentiment surveys among our loyal visitors and top domestic markets. The results of the surveys showed increasing optimism among visitors regarding the readiness of the destination to welcome them back. In particular, four in five surveyed loyal visitors are planning to visit Lee County in the near future, with three in five planning a visit in the next year. Mental and physical relaxation, warm weather, and engaging in outdoor activities are considered the most important factors in the decision to visit.

3 out of 5 loyalists
are planning to visit in the next year

 [paddleboard_adventures](#)

 [gulfcoastkayak](#)

 [trinityy.t](#)

Meetings Today Market Trends January 2023

The top challenges when planning meetings in the coming year:

- 68% increasing costs (hotels, suppliers, food and beverage, etc)
- 31% declining attendance
- 30% facility staffing levels

What types of off-site options do you use most often:

- 68% restaurants
- 42% historic buildings/landmarks
- 34% museums

What are the most important factors you consider when selecting a meetings hotel:

- 80% location
- 75% room rates
- 61% food and beverage

MMGY Global's December 2023 Portrait of Meeting & Convention Travel

Top valuable information sources for meeting planners:

- Complimentary in-person experience or destination tour
- Downloadable online brochures
- 360° tours of the destination and venue options
- Event or conference sponsorships





4

FY23/24 Plan



Marketing

Overarching Plan Objective:

Drive increased visitation and visitor spend.

Core Pillars of Success

Defined Measurement Strategy

Provide a clear purpose for each objective and associated measures of success to match the consumer journey. Expand the VCB's research program so that data and KPIs can be used more easily to share market insights over time, including quality of place.

Purposeful Planning

Maintain a full-funnel approach, aligning media, messaging and audiences with travel motivators, organizational objectives and the evolving destination attributes.

Friends and Relatives

Establish visiting friends and relatives (VFR) as a target market.

Data-Led Strategies

Leverage vendor data and insights to reframe targeting strategy, aligning segments with changing guest patterns.

Be Ready

Keep an agile approach, knowing that changing destination conditions may require ongoing pivots in strategy, targeting and execution.

Uplift Partners

Support consumer brand messaging with co-op programming based on partner needs and feedback.

Thought Leadership

Identify opportunities and support placemaking efforts that positively impact the visitor economy and enhance quality of life for residents.

Champion Brand and Tourism Impacts

Seek out opportunities to educate partners and residents on the new brand and demonstrate the impacts of optimizing the visitor economy.



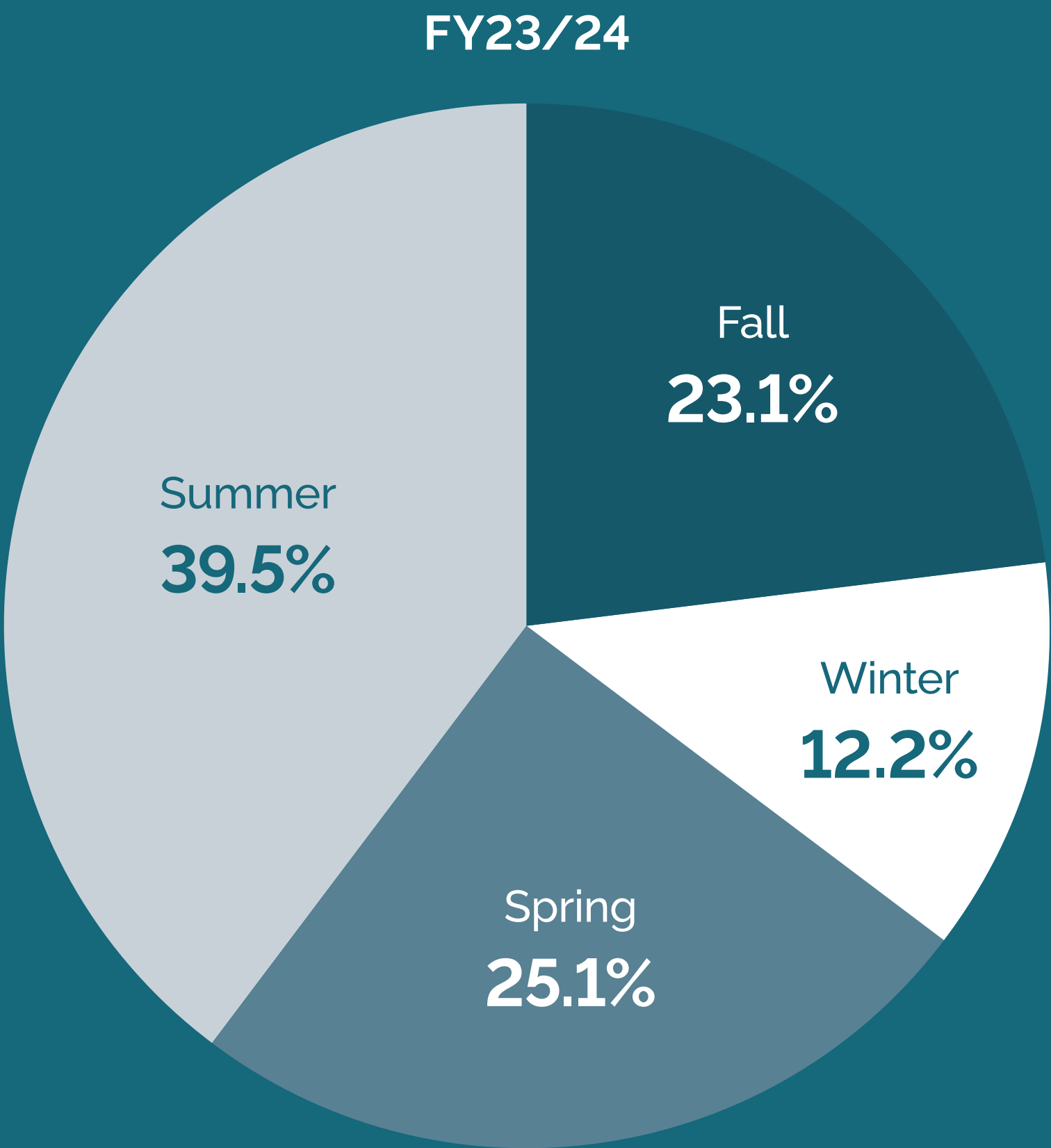
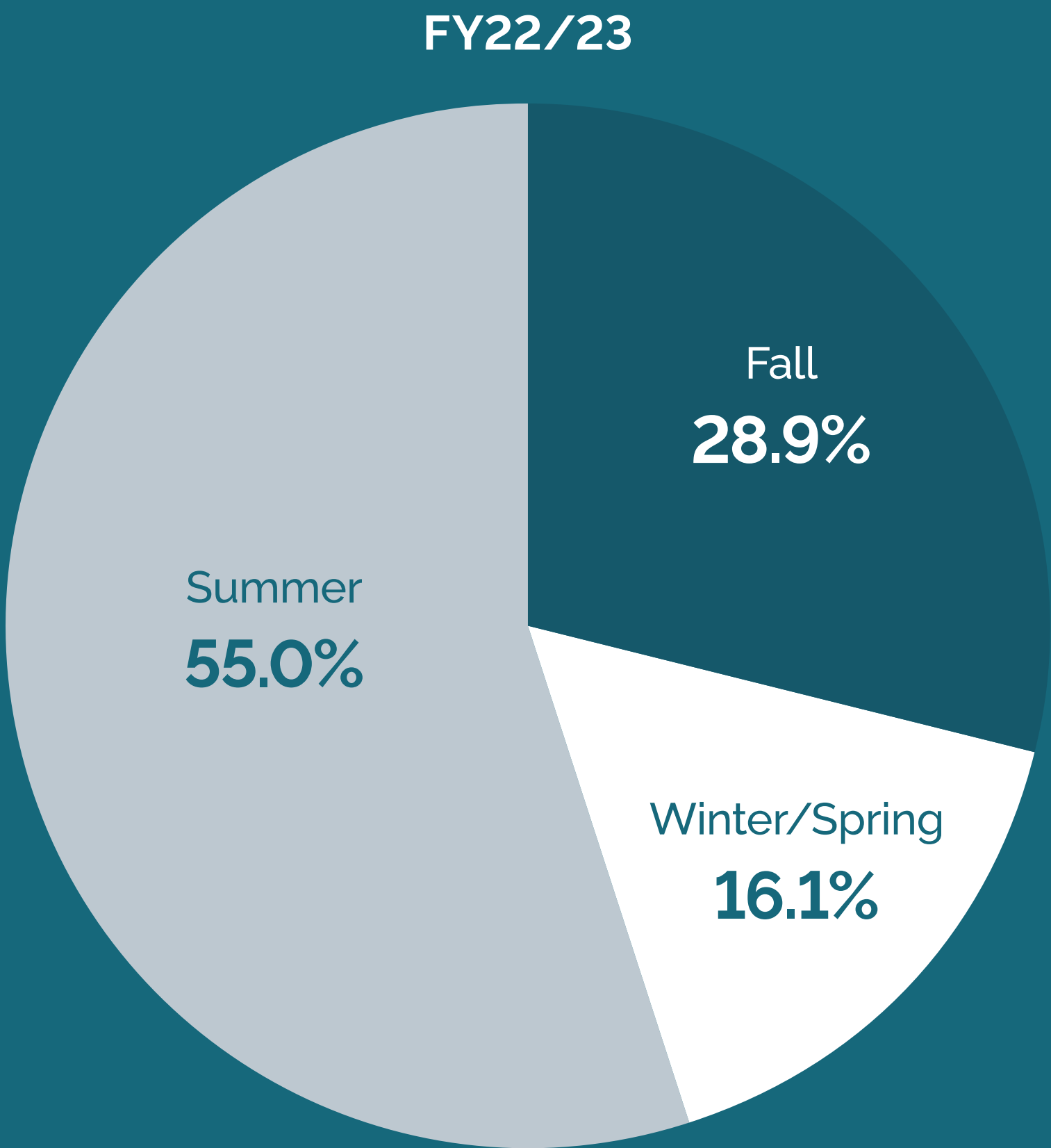
Approach to Seasonality

- Evaluate seasonality and target markets in light of shifting visitation patterns and booking windows post-hurricane.
- Launch in-market media 60 days before each season to align with search and booking windows as travelers begin planning their trips.

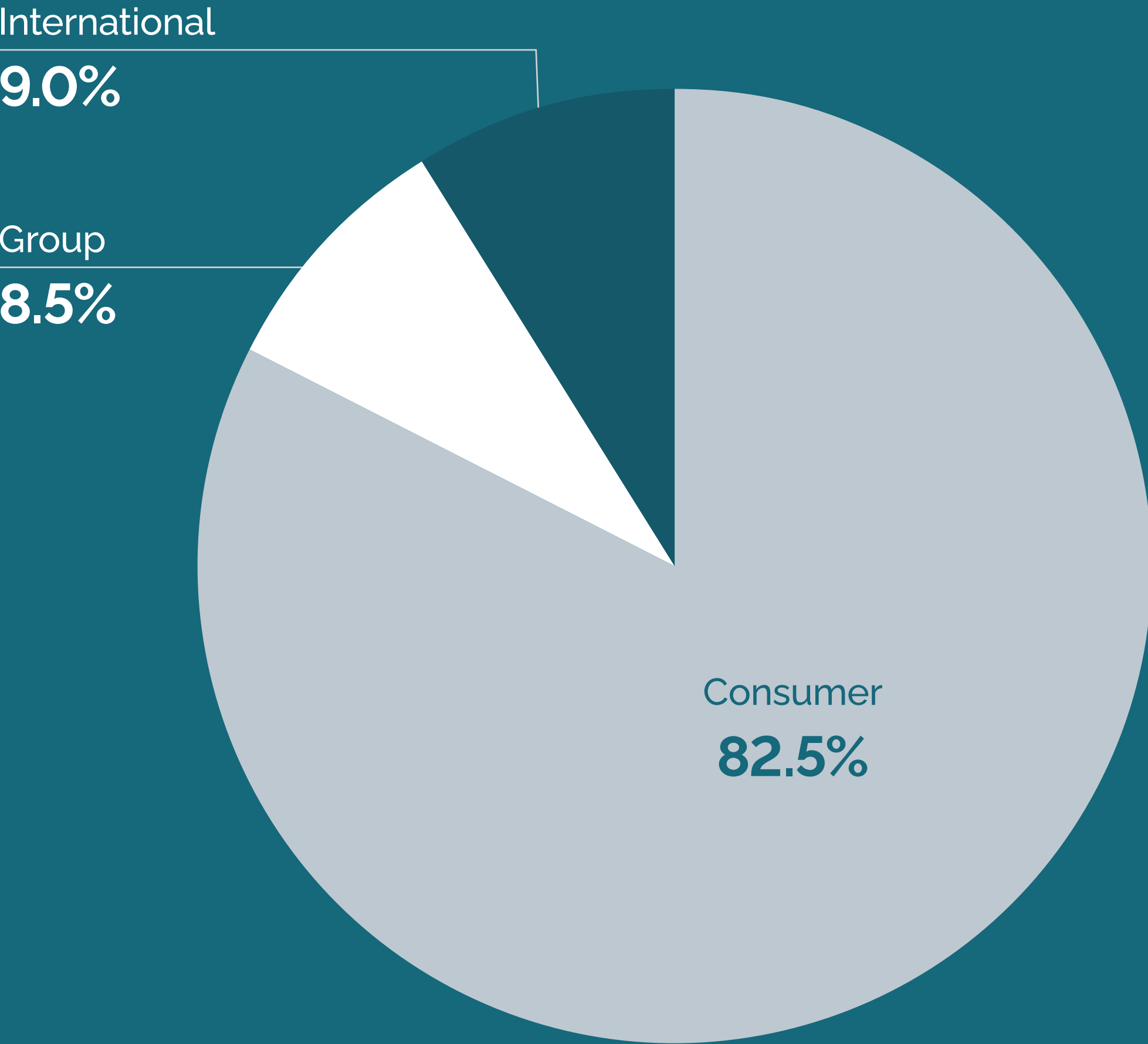
- Consider seasonal visitation for family and couples and incorporate into messaging.

SEASON	TRAVEL PERIODS	MEDIA FLIGHTING
Winter	Dec 1–Mar 14	Oct 1–Dec 31
Spring	Mar 15–May 31	Jan 1–Mar 31
Summer	Jun 1–Aug 31	Apr 1–Jul 4
Fall	Sep 1–Nov 30	Jul 5–Sep 30

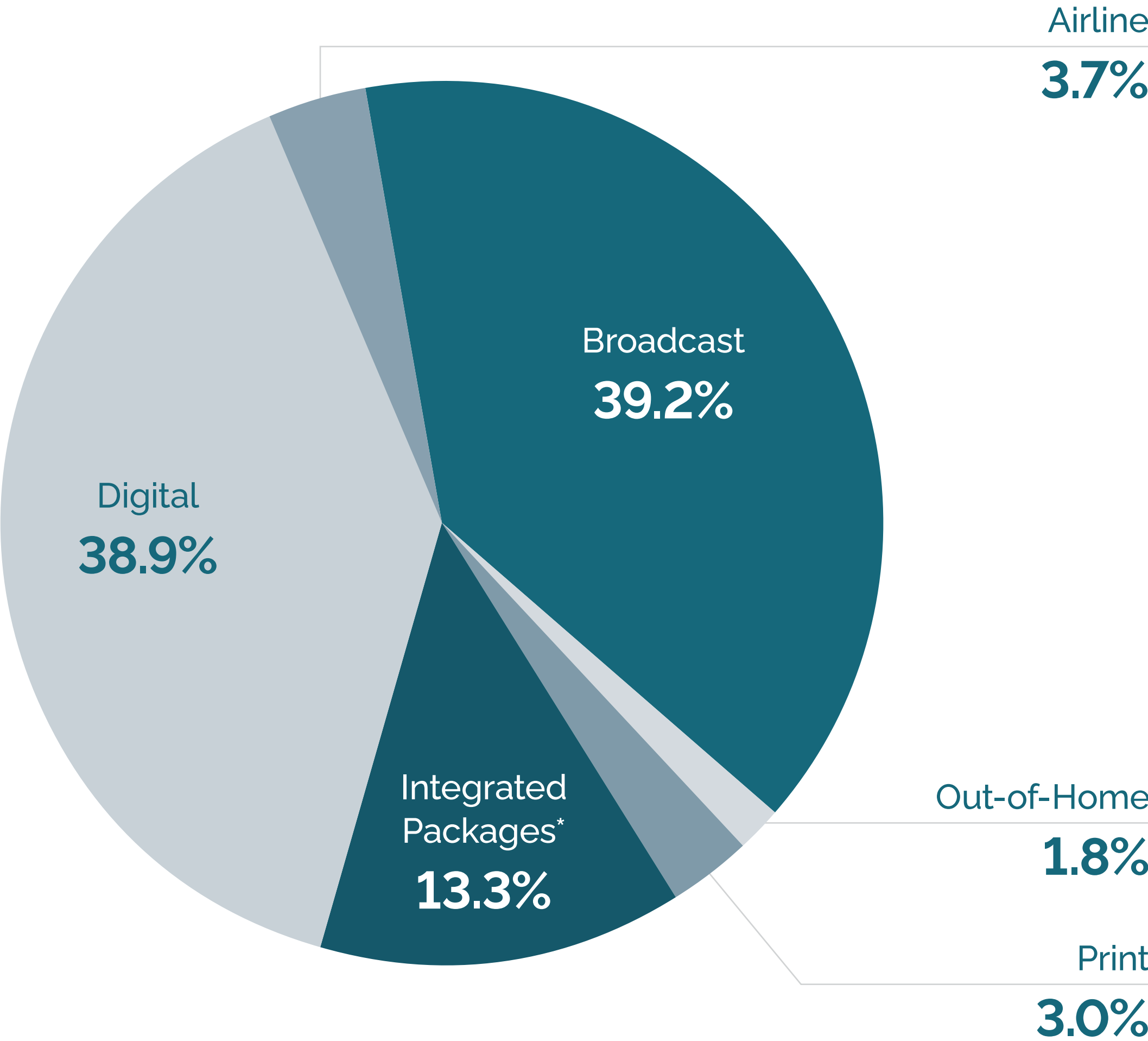
Seasonal Consumer Investment



FY23/24 Audience Allocation



FY23/24 Consumer Media Mix



*Integrated packages can include print placements.

Approach to Markets

- Deploy a data-driven approach to evaluate both historical and emerging markets based on evolving travel intent.
- Consider repeat visitation and market size opportunities to re-engage loyalists.
- Customize markets and seasonal weighting for vacation rental tactics based on travel patterns.
- Weight media budget seasonally based on market tier, shifting to account for the unique needs of each season.



© moundhouse

Domestic Seasonality and Target Markets

MARKET	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
Travel Periods	Dec 1–Mar 14	Mar 15–May 31	Jun 1–Aug 31	Sep 1–Nov 30
Media Flighting	Oct 1–Dec 31	Jan 1–Mar 31	Apr 1–Jul 4	Jul 5–Sep 30
In-State	Atlanta, Miami, Orlando, Tampa, West Palm Beach	Atlanta, Miami, Orlando, Tampa, West Palm Beach	Atlanta, Miami, Orlando, Tampa, West Palm Beach	Atlanta, Jacksonville, Miami, Orlando, Tampa, West Palm Beach
	30%	20%	30%	50%
Out-of-State Tier 1*	Chicago, Detroit, Indianapolis, Minneapolis	Boston, Chicago, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Indianapolis, Minneapolis	Chicago, Detroit, Grand Rapids, Indianapolis, Minneapolis	Chicago, Cleveland, Detroit, Minneapolis
	40%	50%	45%	30%
Out-of-State Tier 2*	Cleveland, Columbus, Grand Rapids, Milwaukee	Cincinnati, Cleveland, New York City	Boston, Cincinnati, New York City	Boston, Columbus, New York City
	30%	30%	25%	20%
ALWAYS-ON: NATIONAL TARGETING BASED ON TRAVEL INTENT				

*Market tiers ranked based on a proportionate scale of population size and total arrivals by season.

Domestic Seasonality and Target Markets: Vacation Rentals

MARKET	WINTER	SPRING	SUMMER	FALL
Travel Periods	Dec 1–Mar 14	Mar 15–May 31	Jun 1–Aug 31	Sep 1–Nov 30
Media Flighting	Oct 1–Dec 31	Jan 1–Mar 31	Apr 1–Jul 4	Jul 5–Sep 30
In-State	Florida	Florida	Florida	Florida
	30%	20%	25%	50%
Out-of-State Tier 1*	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota	Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois	Illinois, Indiana, Michigan, Minnesota	Illinois, Ohio, Michigan, Minnesota
	40%	50%	45%	30%
Out-of-State Tier 2*	Ohio, Wisconsin	Ohio, New York	Massachusetts, Ohio, New York	Massachusetts, New York
	30%	30%	30%	20%
ALWAYS-ON: NATIONAL TARGETING BASED ON TRAVEL INTENT				

*Market tiers ranked based on a proportionate scale of population size and total arrivals by season.



Target Audiences

Audience Strategy

- Focus audience strategies to reach a more qualified audience based on who is currently visiting the destination.
- Continue leaning into addressable audiences and leverage for year-round, 1:1 prospecting messaging.
- Utilize contextual, behavioral, purchase, search, and social targeting to capitalize on demonstrated intent.
- Target past visitors from 2021–2022, encouraging them to come back to the destination.



Addressable Audiences

Social Sophisticates

Social Sophisticates are active and affluent travelers. They are conscientious consumers who value quality over price, are extremely brand loyal, and have high expectations of the services they receive. They read reviews before they purchase and want their brands to be environmentally friendly and socially responsible.

Travel Interests:

Parks, Wildlife, Nightlife, Active Vacations





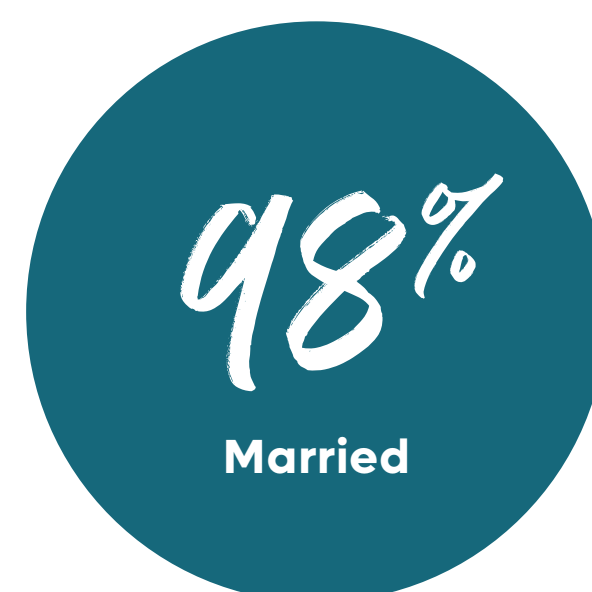
Addressable Audiences

Family Fun-Seekers

Family Fun-Seekers are family-focused, sociable trailblazers. They lead busy lives, so spending time together and making new memories are important to them. They prefer vacations where they can do a lot of activities together as a family, and lifestyle presentation is also a high priority.

Travel Interests:

Parks, Amusement Parks, Boating, Camping, Golfing





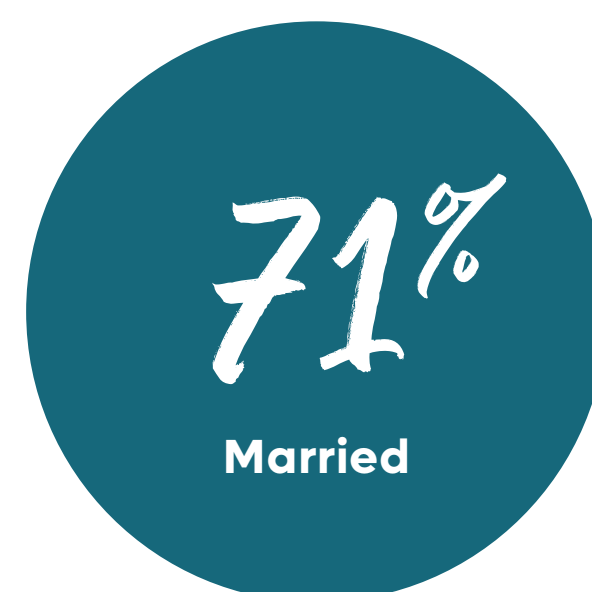
Addressable Audiences

Savvy Explorers

Savvy Explorers are community-centric, bring diverse perspectives and immerse themselves in local culture. When traveling, having new experiences is a big deciding factor in their choices, and they place an emphasis on unique culinary opportunities. They also like to research online recommendations ahead of time.

Travel Interests:

Eco-Travel, Arts and Culture, Photography, Zoos





Addressable Audiences

Timeless Travelers

Timeless Travelers are health-conscious, easygoing and put comfort first. Most are retired or empty nesters. Spending time and celebrating special occasions with friends and family are important to them. They enjoy their leisure time and a slower pace of life.

Travel Interests:

Parks, Wildlife, Boating, Camping, Golfing, Personal Health



Channel Mix

Consumer Approach

- Deliver data-driven strategy that is focused on reaching a new leisure audience and encouraging repeat visitation.
- Reprioritize data strategy to align with evolving travel motivators as the destination continues its recovery.
- Match messaging to media execution.
- Realign partner programs based on current needs and past performance.

Key Vendors

- Condé Nast
- Dotdash Meredith
- Garden and Gun
- The New York Times
- SXM Media (Pandora, Stitcher)
- Spotify
- Sojern
- Matador
- Expedia
- Priceline
- Tripadvisor
- Meta
- Pinterest

Channel Mix

Group Approach (Meeting Planners, Travel Advisors, Weddings)

- Maintain partnerships with proven performers while testing new publishers, platforms, placement types, and targeting.
- Deploy always-on approach to align pulses with key windows of planning activity and relevant publisher content.
- Continue focus on educational editorial alignments.
- Grow database of qualified leads for remarketing.
- Support group brand messaging with co-op programs featuring conversion tactics.

Key Vendors

- **Meeting Planners:** EproDirect, Florida Trend, FSAE, Meetings Today, Northstar, Prevue Meetings & Incentives, Skift/EventMB, The Meetings Magazines
- **Travel Advisors:** Expedia TAAP, Northstar, Questex, Recommend, VAX Vacation Access, Wellness Travel University
- **Weddings:** Bridal Guide, Honeyfund, The Knot, Maharani Weddings, Pinterest

Channel Mix

International Approach

- Continue presence in the well-established markets of Canada, Germany and the UK.
- Flight media to focus on key travel-planning windows.
- Monitor search and booking patterns for a return to pre-pandemic patterns.
- Support consumer brand messaging with co-op programming that features expanded conversion tactics.

Key Vendors

- AirMiles
- Expedia/Vrbo
- Last Minute
- Sojern
- Travelzoo
- Tripadvisor

International Market Mix and Seasonality

		2023			2024											
		OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
CANADA	Brand															
	Co-Op															
	Travel															
GERMANY	Brand															
	Co-Op															
	Travel															
UNITED KINGDOM	Brand															
	Co-Op															
	Travel															

Integrated Media Approach

Overview

- Prioritize partners with historical success in driving awareness and visitation.
- Focus on working media and opportunities that will provide the highest value.

Dotdash Meredith

This multimedia campaign will include print spreadvertorials and matching digital custom content in Midwest Living and Southern Living. Midwest Living will focus on wellness and nature, and Southern Living will focus on an itinerary featuring attractions, culinary experiences and accommodations.

Garden and Gun

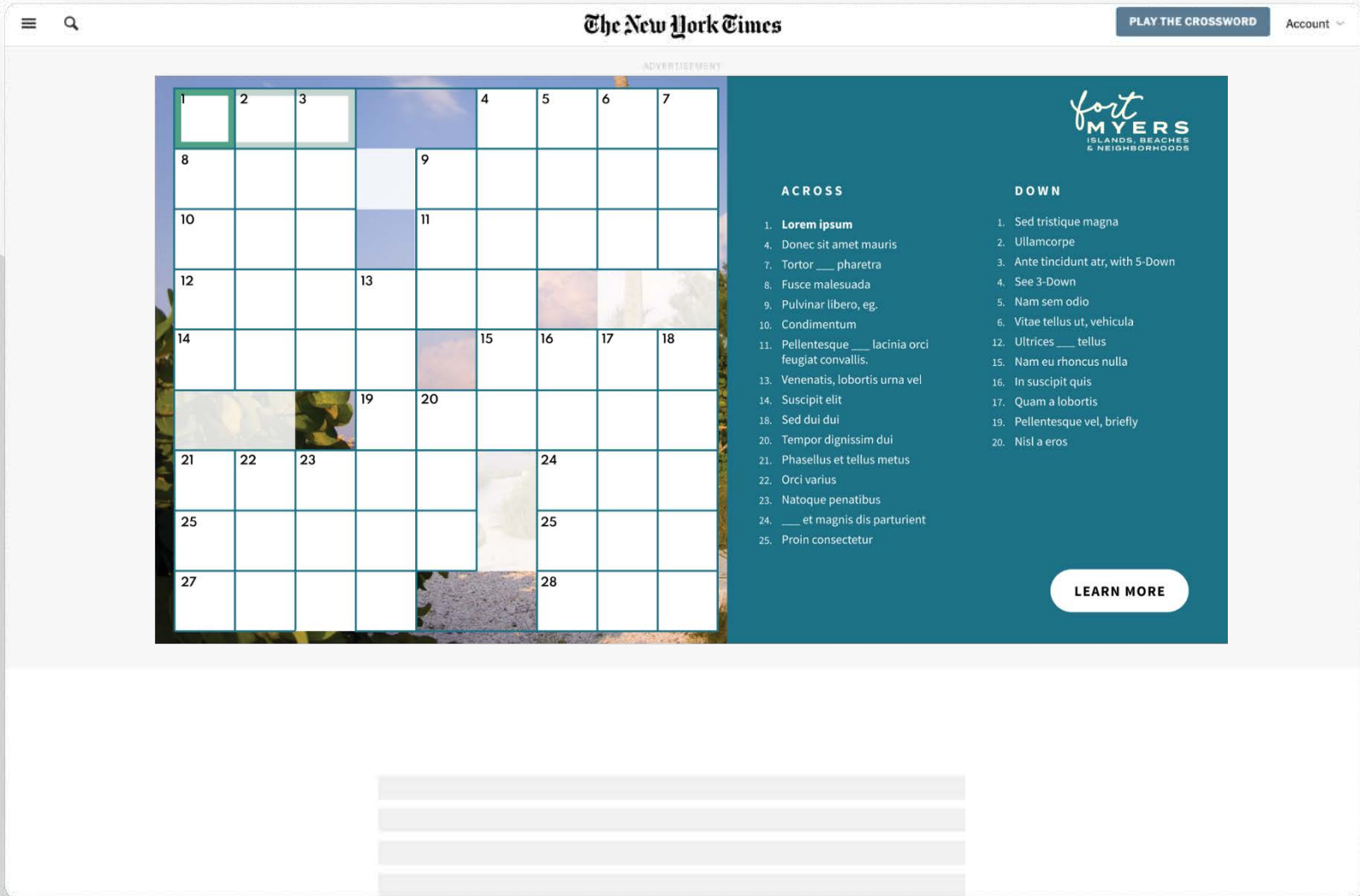
This Southern-focused publication will feature a custom interactive field guide highlighting different cocktail and dinner-with-a-view options through an illustrated map. The content will be leveraged across their website, social channels and email promotions.

Tripadvisor

Tripadvisor will create a custom destination landing page, including a video hub. The landing page will include custom content promoting things to do in the destination as well as an interactive quiz. Tripadvisor will also promote the landing page through native traffic drivers, social amplification and display.

The New York Times

Partnership with The New York Times will include a custom crossword puzzle featuring words inspired by the destination. In addition, The New York Times will also create a mini-story, high-impact unit highlighting experiences geared toward the outdoors, family adventures and sunny relaxation to inspire visitors to start planning their trip.



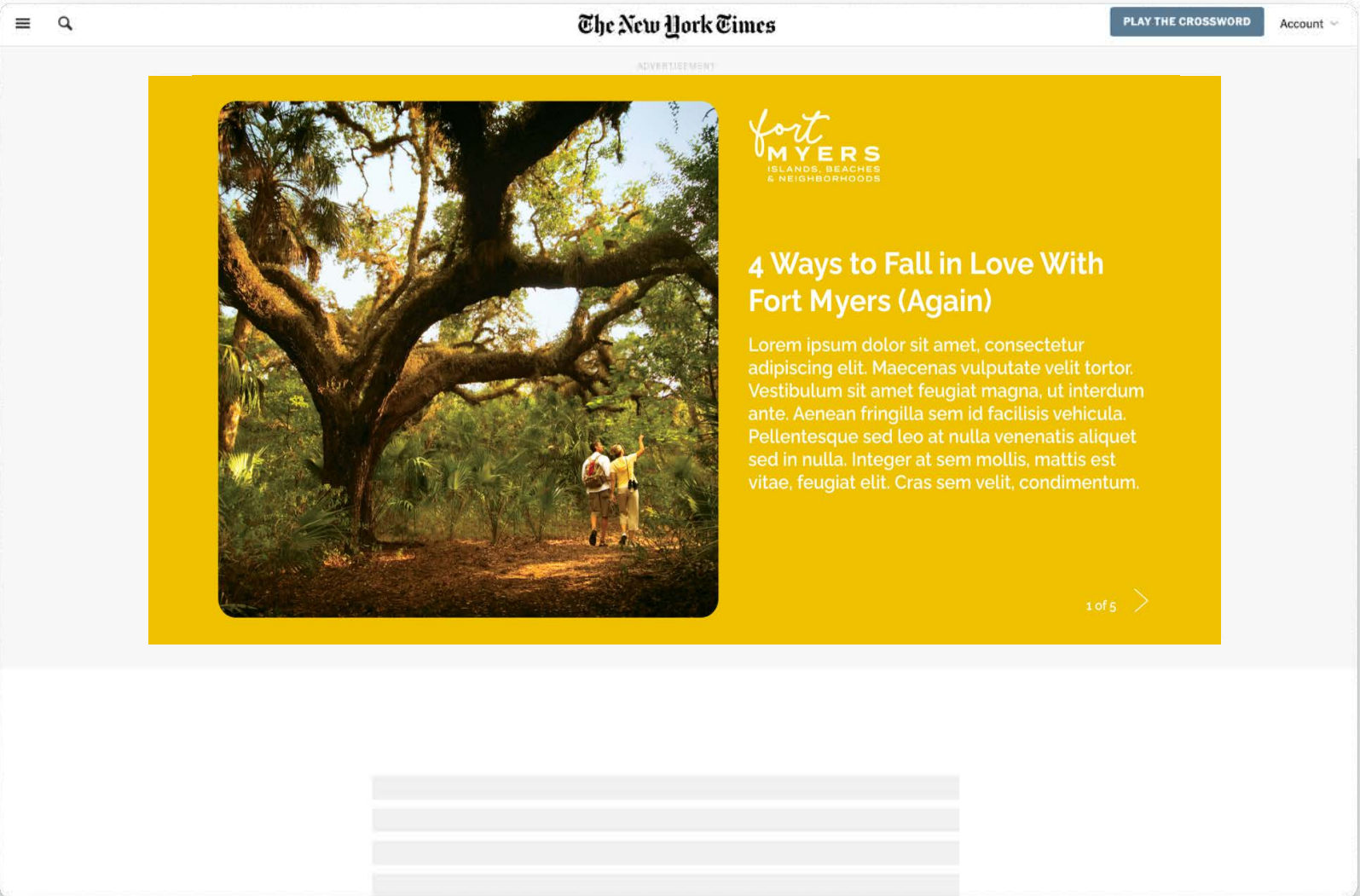
ENTER VACAY MODE

With an NYT Custom Crossword



HEAR THE REASONS

Learn about a Fort Myers getaway in NYT podcasts



REASONS TO VISIT

Fall in love with Fort Myers again in an NYT Mini Story FlexXL unit

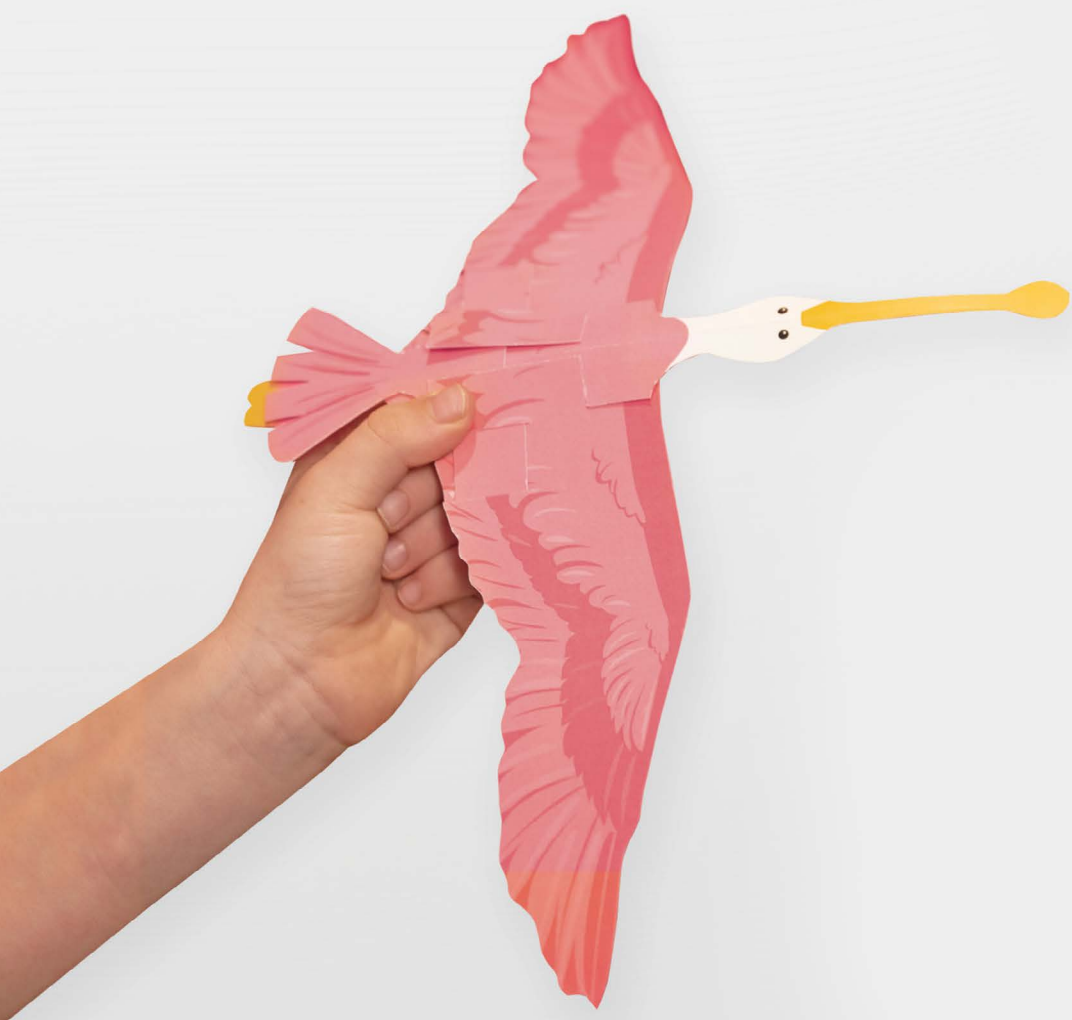
Matador

We will leverage momentum gained through last year's custom golf content with Matador. This campaign will execute an in-destination video shoot featuring a well-known influencer, various golf courses and other destination activities.

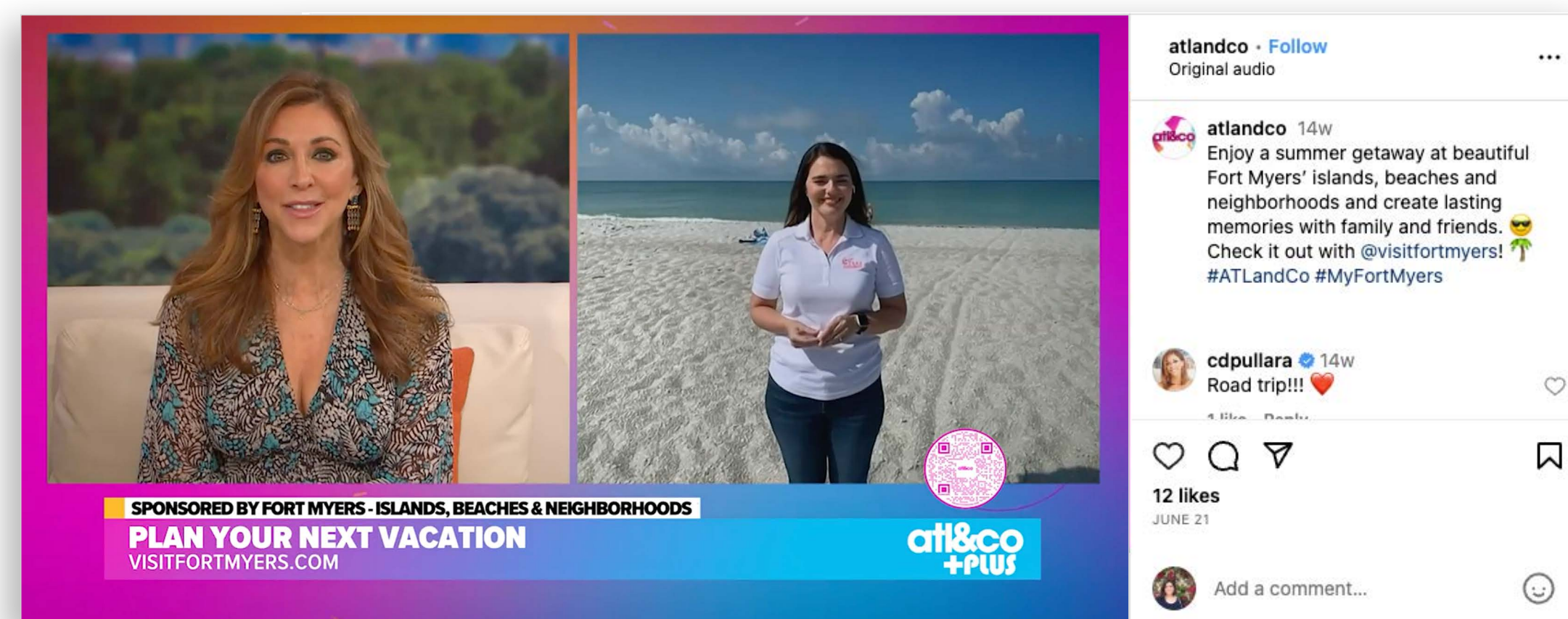


📷 [loulou_gonzalez](#)





Direct Mail Example from FY22/23



Local Station Custom Promotion

Market Blitz

We will execute a dedicated blitz campaign across four markets that have delivered strong visitation numbers during peak season with the goal of influencing visitation during our core spring/summer need period. These include Cincinnati, Detroit, Grand Rapids, and Minneapolis. Tactics within each market will include a custom segment and schedule with a local TV station, paid social, high-impact advanced TV, streaming audio, direct mail, and dedicated email.

Owned Channels: Overviews, Strategies and Tactics

ControlTower Platform

- Introduce Multitouch Embedded Content Campaigns
 - As leisure website content is edited and republished, we will unleash the potential of ControlTower.
 - ControlTower allows us to make several personalizations across the website based on known user data. This means we are able to observe if a particular user is interested in family-oriented content, for example, and be able to personalize the homepage and other pages throughout the website against that interest with images, videos, headlines, supporting content, unique calls-to-action, and recommended content.



Creating a unified digital ecosystem.



📷 robinbright



📷 na_biezniku



📷 rachelguzmaan



📷 araammie

- Geotarget Key Markets
 - We will track and serve personalized content to the local, drive, first-tier, and second-tier target cities as well as international markets.
- Integrate Closer With Media Audiences
 - We've set up ControlTower to track specific media audiences with their own segments, and we act on that segmentation with overlay campaigns (modals, banners and fly-ins) as well as the multitouch embedded content campaigns.
- Expand Email Activation
 - We've integrated with Salesforce Marketing Cloud to run personalized email campaigns based on website activity to promising early results.
 - We will expand on these results throughout the year with initiatives focused on spring training, Savor the Shore and more.
- Push First-Party Segments to Paid Social and Paid Search
 - We will leverage Meta and Google APIs to drive remarketing efforts and look-alike audience creation based on ControlTower segments and known profiles.

Web

- We are planning to introduce three more neighborhood webcams in 2024 for a total of 12 in the following locations:
 1. Cape Coral – Butterfly House in Rotary Park
 2. Pine Island – Bokeelia Fishing Pier
 3. Sanibel Island – J.N. “Ding” Darling National Wildlife Refuge
 4. Fort Myers – Manatee Park
 5. North Fort Myers – North Shore Park
 6. Downtown Fort Myers – Sidney & Berne Davis Art Center Rooftop
 7. Bonita Springs – Wonder Gardens
 8. Boca Grande – Port Boca Grande Lighthouse Museum
 9. Captiva Island – Turner Beach
 10. Captiva Island – Andy Rosse Lane Access
 11. Sanibel Lighthouse Beach Park
 12. Matlacha – location TBD

- We will integrate webcam pre-roll ads into the co-op program.
- We’ve seen interest and success with a livestream for Freedom Fest in downtown Fort Myers. We will pursue other livestreaming opportunities, such as Art Walk and the annual lighting of the Port Boca Grande Lighthouse.

Social

- Prioritize content creation efforts on social channels that users spend the most time on, ensuring unique, inspirational messaging is reaching the largest share of our target audience.
- Continue to strengthen our focus on producing social-first video to increase engagement and time spent with content.
 - Leverage influencer-created content across all owned channels, including web and email.
- Use influencers and content creators to build stronger awareness around Fort Myers’ islands, beaches and neighborhoods.
 - Continue to identify local content creators to develop long-term relationships, resulting in year-round promotion of the Fort Myers area.





Messaging Strategy

Brand Story Pillars

Purpose

- Align core assets and values of Lee County with overlapping core values of our audience while connecting functional and emotional benefits.
- Engage our audiences in messages they are interested in and motivated by to ultimately drive conversion.
- Establish a foundation from which to learn and optimize messaging with what resonates most among our travelers, including diversity and being inclusive.

Brand Story Pillars

On the Water

Being on, in and around the water is key to local life. From the Gulf to the islands and every waterway in between, Lee County protects its nature and wildlife for all to enjoy.

Bright Spots

Every Lee County neighborhood has its own unique identity. They're what make the area so special and set the backdrop for stories that inspire visitors to have a different experience every time they visit.

Off the Water

On land, Lee County's unique geography and abundant natural offerings provide sights, sounds and adventure unavailable elsewhere. This includes visual arts and culture, musical performances, breweries and distilleries, and walkable downtown areas.

Shoulder-Drop Feeling

There's a relaxed vibe in Lee County that puts visitors at ease as soon as they arrive, from our slower-paced lifestyle to locals' friendly, laid-back nature, and from regional flavors to a variety of museums, historic sites, shopping, and more.

My Fort Myers Campaign

My Fort Myers

While many travelers have a desire to visit or return to the greater Fort Myers area, their readiness to do so varies in the wake of Hurricane Ian. Though the scenery in some areas might look different post-storm, many people still have very strong and nostalgic feelings about our islands, beaches and neighborhoods.

The “My Fort Myers” campaign taps into the emotional attachment and fondness people have for our destination and reignites their passion and commitment to visiting. As a result, the campaign centers on personal testimonials from visitors and residents who speak firsthand about the human connections and great memories they have made here.



Campaign Extensions

These executions extend “My Fort Myers” beyond traditional media and meet our audiences where they are. The following extensions have been executed or are currently in development.

#MyFortMyers Influencers — Social

Local and in-state creators enjoyed unique stays across the area in early 2023. Their #MyFortMyers stories showcased available experiences and encouraged our online audiences to share memories. From outside the greater Fort Myers area, influencers visited to aid recovery by planting trees, cleaning paths at nature preserves and removing debris from mangroves. This content went beyond recovery efforts by showcasing the area's natural landscape.

Defining #MyFortMyers — Social

Everyone has a story to share, and where better to share it than our social channels? Fans and followers are encouraged to share what Fort Myers means to them in an online gallery. In addition, people can share their #MyFortMyers stories through Instagram Stories.

Voluntourism Beach Cleanup — Social | PR

These influencer and press trips drive awareness of Fort Myers' recovery efforts and educate audiences on volunteer opportunities happening in the area to inspire future eco-friendly travel plans.

#MyFortMyers Email Series — Email

These dedicated emails feature themes inspired by “My Fort Myers” ambassadors and encourage visitors to make their own #MyFortMyers memories. Each email promotes website visitation through relevant and engaging content and gives each neighborhood an opportunity to shine.

“My Fort Myers Profiles” — Public Relations

We targeted publications and editors that cover human interest stories, putting an emphasis on the recovery and resilience stories happening in the destination. Profile examples include business owners who helped out their community, wildlife returning and more.

Destination Anthem — Brand Partnership | Content

We enlisted BMI recording artists with deep connections to our area to write and produce a destination anthem that will resonate with both locals and visitors. Their personal destination experiences resulted in a passionate song about how our area makes you feel, and gives us all something to sing about.

What's next for the "My Fort Myers" campaign?

Fort Myers has made an undeniable emotional connection with visitors and residents. It remains a source of confident, positive energy. We will expand on that connection to extend the campaign into 2024.

My Fort Myers 2.0

Fort Myers has faced numerous challenges over the past year, emerging with newfound confidence. People outside the area should recognize our community's resilient spirit and feel encouraged to create more "My Fort Myers" memories.

Inspired by the ambassadors and their personal stories, the "My Fort Myers" campaign now paints a picture of the emotional connections we all have with the area. Captured in a destination declaration that projects optimism and spirit from a place that has earned that confidence, this declaration serves as inspiration for the work to come — such as audience-targeted 15-second videos.



THE ISLANDS, BEACHES AND NEIGHBORHOODS OF FORT MYERS ARE UNSTOPPABLE. THEY'RE BIGGER THAN ANY MAP CAN HOLD BECAUSE WE BELIEVE THIS IS MORE THAN JUST A PLACE. WE CARRY FORT MYERS WITH US, HOLD IT CLOSE AND LIFT IT UP. WE FIND BALANCE ON PADDLEBOARDS AND TRANQUILITY AMONG THE TREES. WE WATCH FOR DOLPHIN JUMPS AND MANATEE CROSSINGS, AND FIND JOY IN SEEING SOMETHING NEW ON THE WATER. WE BELIEVE IN STICKY FINGERS AND BRAIN FREEZES, HIGH-FIVES AND HOLES-IN-ONE. WE'LL FORGET TODAY'S PLANS TO MAKE LASTING MEMORIES. WE ENJOY COLD DRINKS IN THE SHADE AND HOT MUSIC ON STAGE. WE SAVOR LOCAL EATS AND MOUTHWATERING TREATS. WE APPLAUD SUNSETS AND COLLECT SEASHELLS AT SUNRISE. WE BELIEVE BRIDGES REACH ACROSS MORE THAN WATER AND BOARDWALKS CONNECT US TO THE PAST. WE BELIEVE IN THE SPIRIT OF NATURE AND THE TRIUMPH OF RENEWAL, AND THAT EVERYONE HERE FINDS THEIR VERSION OF PARADISE.

[Click here](#) to see
Destination Declaration
Video.



Weddings Campaign

Weddings

After a stunning photo shoot in cooperation with Bridal Guide magazine, this new campaign showcases our beautiful backdrops and the special feeling of a destination wedding in Fort Myers' islands, beaches and neighborhoods.



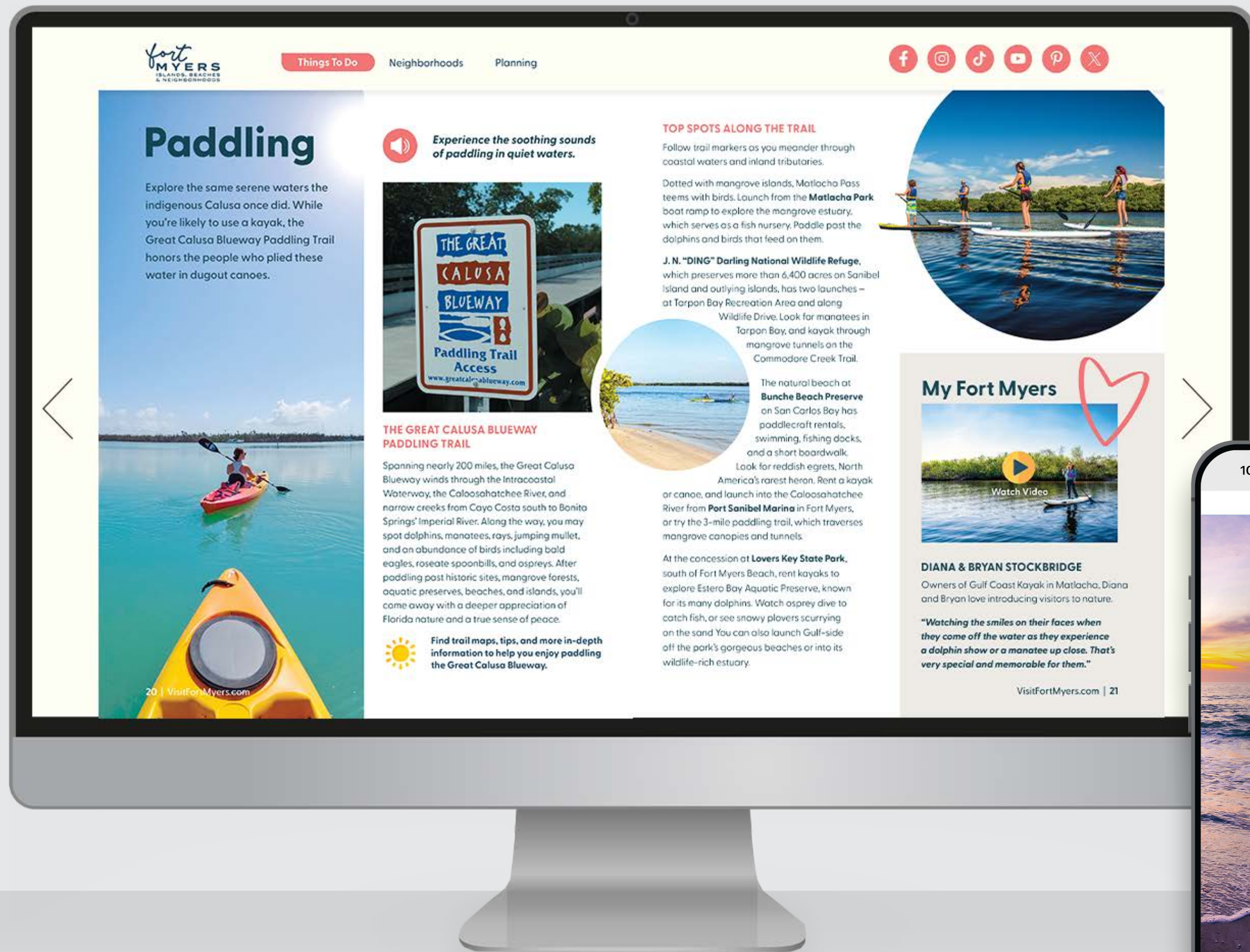
Meetings Campaign

Meetings

Meeting planners are extremely busy people who want specific details about prospective destinations. Our new interactive video launches this year with seamless functionality to tailor the viewing experience to the exact Fort Myers meetings content each planner desires. Our cheerful video host guides viewers throughout the experience while delivering personality and poise.

Additionally, a new meetings print and digital campaign is currently in development and is also slated to launch in 2024.





Digital Visitor Guide

As our destination continues to recover and rebuild following Hurricane Ian, the new 2024 Visitor Guide takes a digital-only approach that provides flexibility to make more frequent updates throughout the year. It also allows us to feature more engaging seasonal content as we inspire visitors with beautiful imagery, captivating video, and peaceful sounds from our area. With direct links to our website throughout, we can further direct people to specific information they seek and help guide them in their planning journey.



Sales



Essential to the VCB's mission is the sales effort. The pursuit of our sales team is to promote the area and source business through the Fort Myers – Islands, Beaches and Neighborhoods brand. Business targets include meeting professionals, the travel trade, and wedding and leisure groups, all of which positively influence the visitor economy in Lee County.

Core Pillars of Sales Success

Data-Led Strategies

Utilize attained data and seek the most efficient, appropriate and highest-producing sales activities for targeting markets identified by data insights.

Purposeful Planning

Align sales activities with media messaging and target audience profiles.

Friends and Relatives

Establish visiting friends and relatives (VFR) as a transient market.

Thought Leadership

Identify opportunities and support placemaking efforts that positively impact the visitor economy and enhance quality of life for residents.

Uplift Partners

Take advantage of memberships, value-adds and sponsorships. Support consumer, travel trade and group sales activities with cost-effective co-op programming featuring trade show and sales mission partnerships.

Defined Measurement Strategy

Provide clear purpose for each objective and associated measures of success to match the travel professional journey. Expand the VCB's research program so that data and KPIs can be more easily used to share market insights over time, including quality of place.

Champion Brand and Tourism Impact

Seek out opportunities to educate partners and residents on the destination brand and demonstrate the impact of optimizing the visitor economy.

Be Ready

Keep an agile approach, knowing that changing destination conditions may require ongoing updates to strategy, targeting and execution.

Domestic Sales

Overview

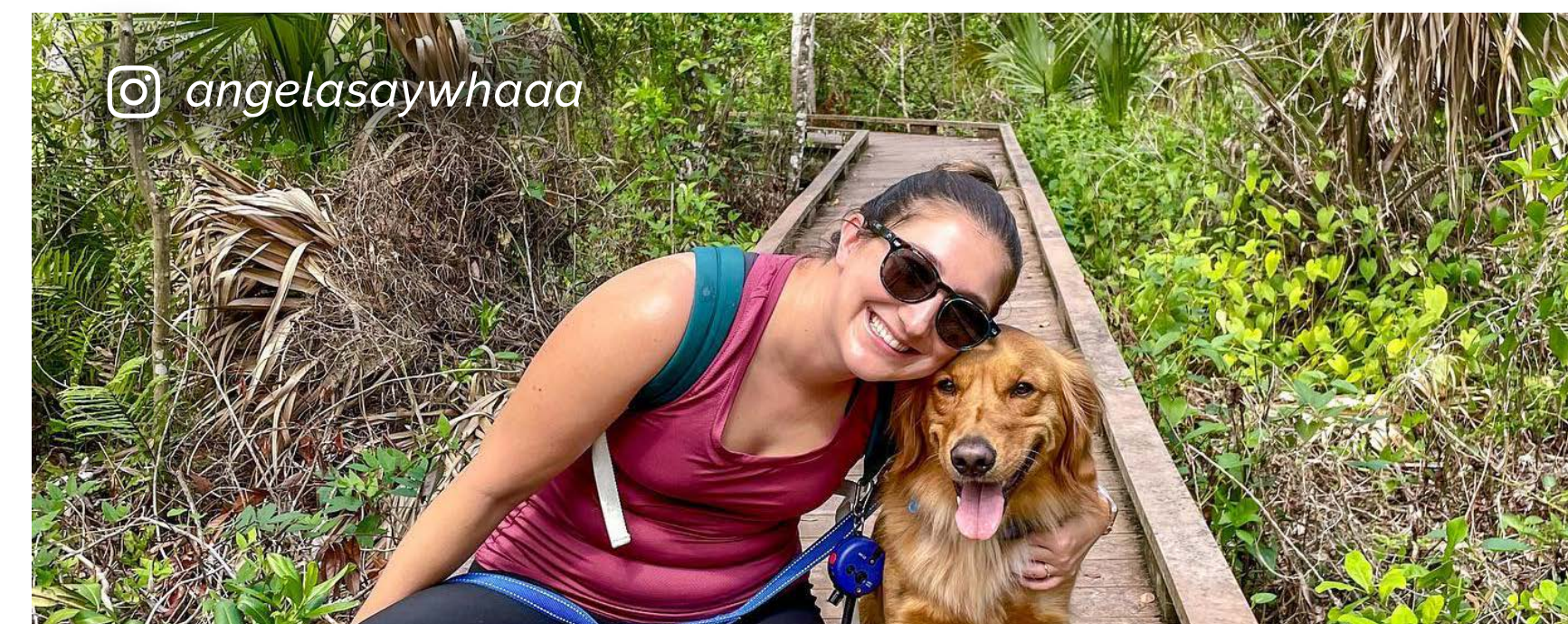
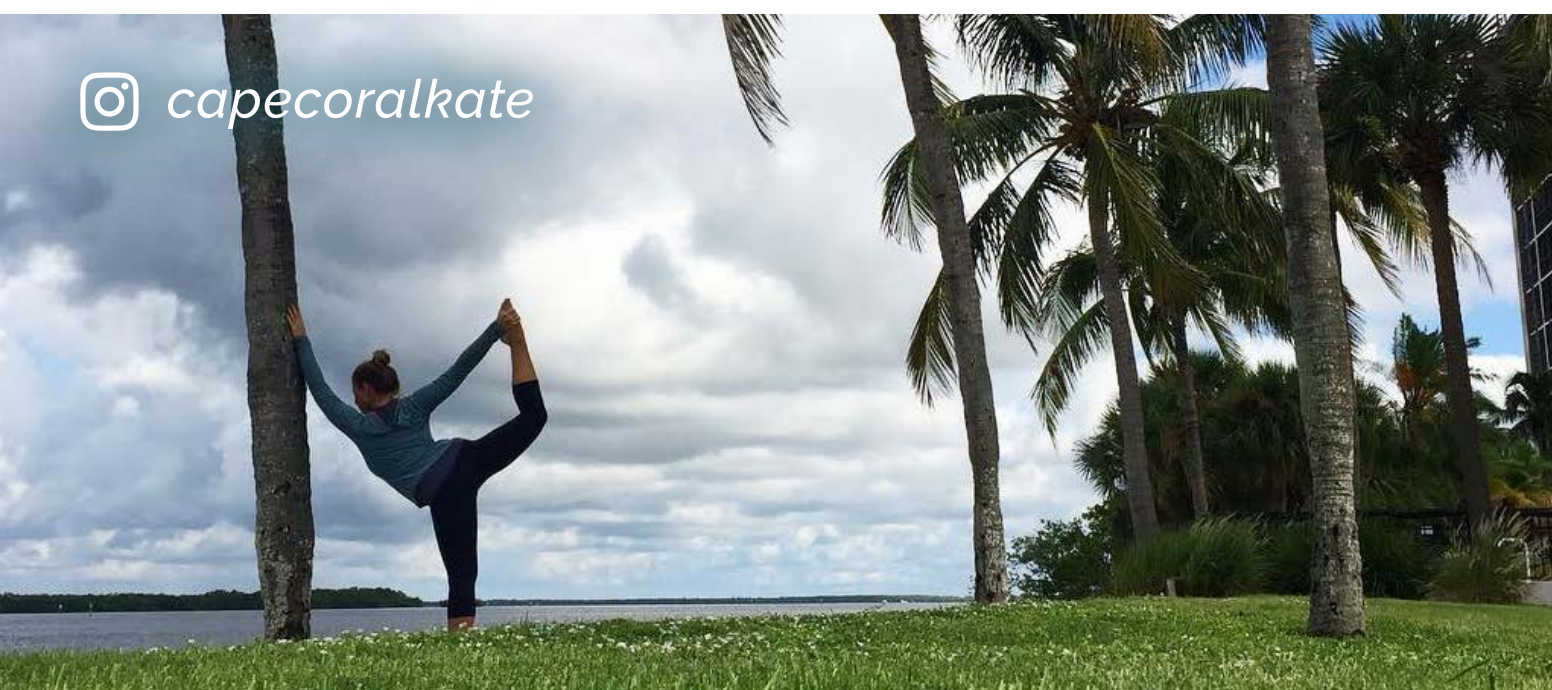
Group sales RFP sourcing in 2022 was strong — far exceeding pre-pandemic levels (146%). Although we began 2023 with over 4,500 hotel rooms not operational, which included four of our larger meeting hotels, we were transparent in our messaging and maintained a strong position with our top-producing markets. As a result, group RFPs sourced in 2023 once again far exceeded pre-pandemic levels (141%). We are continuing to press forward with market opportunities through the sales activities cited in the strategies that follow.



We will continue to watch closely for trends and opportunities to generate business for our open hotels and resorts (about 10,000 total guest rooms).

Here are some trends we believe are in alignment with what the Fort Myers area has to offer visitors:

- **Sustainability keeps evolving.** This includes regeneration of economic, social and environmental impacts, like post-lan voluntourism and group corporate social responsibility (CSR), from which both Lee County residents and the visitor economy graciously benefit.
- There has been a nationwide rise in corporate group retreats and conferences due to the need to build company culture and strengthen relationships within remote work environments. Do attendees extend their stay? You bet. **“Bleisure” or “business/leisure” travel is back on the rise.** Whether it’s tacking a leisure weekend onto a business trip or enjoying unique local experiences in the evenings, professionals want to make the most of their time.
- The **work from anywhere** trend also blurs the line between business and leisure travel. Whether these are “hush” trips or fully sanctioned, remote workers can experience a new destination (or a favorite) for an extended period of time while still fulfilling work commitments.
- Unplugging is the new connection. An increased focus on **wellness and well-being** is causing both business and leisure travelers to seek restorative experiences. This includes breaks from their devices and connecting with nature, local heritage and culture, and each other. Mental and emotional well-being resulting from travel is considered a top form of self-care.





At a time when uncertainty is the new certainty, our strength is in our partnerships and the conviction that we are a resilient industry and community. Uncertainty requires agility, flexibility and experimentation, which we have incorporated into this sales plan. The VCB Sales team is committed to being on the front lines to accelerate the continued recovery efforts of travel and tourism in our area.

We are confident as we step into an uncertain future together.

Domestic Sales

Strategy #1: Drive Demand and Optimize Yield

Tactics:

- Cultivate new and grow existing travel professional relationships through participation in a reimagined imprint of industry trade shows, sales missions, client events, destination education training classes, webinars, podcasts, FAMs, and site tours.
- Utilize the Sojern marketing platform to pair travel intent data with the MICE custom audience based on planner search activity to deliver target-driven digital messaging.
- Enhance messaging to travel trade and group planners by participating in travel ambassador influencer campaigns that target these markets.
- Develop and promote experiences and activities within the destination with a focus on unique offerings in our neighborhoods with open businesses.
- Analyze the multitude of in-market festivals and events and target similar group markets to cultivate concurrent visitation.
- Target travel trade and high-volume producers of small to mid-size events with sales engagement, enhanced destination landing pages (e.g., VAX VacationAccess), and virtual and webinar sponsorships to attain greater visibility.
- Pursue sales activities in cities with expanded nonstop flight air service to RSW and PGD.
- Focus on key vertical markets as identified in collaboration with the Lee County Economic Development Department (logistics, manufacturing, technology, life sciences/biotechnology, and health care fields).
- Promote the meeting incentive offer to grow and secure new group business.
- Enhance the growth of affinity groups, such as visiting friends and relatives (VFR), trending travel (e.g., babymoons), multicultural weddings, and faith-based and military markets.



Strategy #3: Industry and Community Alignment

Tactics:

- Facilitate partner participation in a full schedule of co-op trade shows, sales missions and client event opportunities.
- Refine the collaborative lunch-and-learn program to continue to leverage resources, work cohesively with Lee County Economic Development, and utilize local business and community organizations' existing relationships to attract new conferences to Lee County (e.g., Bring Your Meetings Home), and promote the VFR audience.
- Through the accommodations and attractions outreach program, continue to educate partners on the destination brand and VFR audience, and demonstrate the impact of optimizing the visitor economy.
- Educate area businesses and residents on the destination brand and VFR audience, and demonstrate the impact of optimizing the visitor economy through participation in the local chamber of commerce and other local organizations' community meetings and events.
- Provide amenities, promotional materials and volunteer ambassador support to meetings, conferences and events taking place in the area through our conference services program.
- Provide updates in the monthly industry stakeholder enewsletter, citing sales activity results and defining future intentions.



International Sales

Overview

According to the U.S. Travel Association (USTA), the restoration of international travel continues to be a critical part of a full U.S. economic recovery. USTA estimates international tourist arrivals remain at 26% below pre-pandemic levels with slower spending, according to its June 2023 monthly report. At the close of 2022, international visitor spending in the U.S. was at \$99 billion, just over 50% of where it stood in 2019 — a far cry from that year's 79.4 million visitors who spent \$181 billion.

International inbound travel to the U.S. is not expected to make a full recovery until 2025, and — due to Hurricane Ian — the recovery of international visitors to Lee County will take longer. USTA's recent forecast shows that international inbound travel's recovery remains inhibited by visa wait times, a global economic slowdown and a historically strong U.S. dollar.

In Lee County, we continue to see the return of international travel being led by Canada followed by Germany and the United Kingdom.

International Sales

Strategy #1: Drive Demand and Optimize Yield

Tactics:

- Implement an integrated plan to market the Fort Myers area to the international traveler, trade media and tour operators to incrementally increase travel to the destination from the target markets of Canada, Germany, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Nordic countries.
- Develop a schedule of owned and earned initiatives in all international markets, including organic social, enewsletters and proactive publicity to engage consumers.
- Stimulate demand in key and emerging markets through public-facing content and consumer promotions.
- Monitor booking windows and travel periods for returns to pre-pandemic norms.
- Maintain a strong presence with travel-intent partners to drive future bookings.



Strategy #2: Brand Engagement

Tactics:

- Strengthen consumer-direct channels and campaigns in Canada, Germany and the UK.
- Leverage Brand USA, Visit Florida and Visit USA global trade programs by joining their sales activities and virtual events in core global markets.
- Partner with Visit Florida and Brand USA in various sales and advertising activations targeting European markets.
- Enhance social media efforts on owned channels that are specifically created for and geared toward each country. Strengthen international tour operator partnerships through virtual FAM tours/sales support and encourage tour operators to increase their hotel product within Lee County's inventory.
- Collaborate with key tour operators on sales education for buyers, travel professional training, and live and virtual events to drive economic impact in-destination.
- Support international airline recovery through FAM trips and collaborative efforts with Visit Florida and Florida destination marketing organizations.





Strategy #3: Industry and Community Alignment

Tactics:

- Engage with and educate industry partners through the accommodations and attractions outreach program.
- Work with local businesses and organizations through participation in community meetings and events to forge new partnerships for the greater good of our community and residents' quality of life.
- Partner with Visit Florida and Brand USA on international co-op campaigns, media receptions and sales missions in Canada, the UK and Germany, leveraging opportunities with industry partners as appropriate.
- Collaborate with other Florida DMOs to leverage sales and marketing efforts internationally, reach a wider audience, and jointly create a more competitive product to regain market share lost to non-U.S. destinations.
- Provide international sales activity results and future intention updates in monthly industry stakeholder enewsletters.
- Strengthen advocacy and stewardship of the destination's natural assets through engagement with local preservation and sustainability organizations.
- Protect and preserve the area's natural assets by educating others about Lee County's conservation efforts.



Sports Development

Sports Development's mission is to attract, promote and retain amateur athletic events and sports-related conferences in Lee County. As the premier destination for leisure tourism and sporting events, the team's goal is to foster growth and economic development for the local community through new and repeat events.

Sports Development

Strategy #1:

Drive Demand and Diversify Lee County's Tourism Economy Through Sports

Tactics:

- Produce 180,000 hotel room nights in Lee County through sports tourism events and business activities in FY23/24.
- Enhance the sports tourism initiative by identifying and diversifying markets of opportunity.
- Identify and host a new sports association meeting annually.
- Attract a minimum of 10 international teams to participate in Lee County sports tourism events.
- Retain 90% of our sports business as repeat business.
- Identify opportunities with VCB brand integration to promote Lee County as a premier global sports destination.
- Evaluate ROI of current and future local events.
- Attend industry trade shows, including but not limited to the Florida Sports Foundation Summit, TEAMS Conference, ConnectSports Marketplace, etc.

Strategy #2:

Expand Collaboration Across Government Organizations and the Community

Tactics:

- Use sporting events (e.g., MLB spring training, City of Palms Basketball Classic, Fort Myers Tip-Off) to build relationships and assist other departments in attracting media, clients and site selectors to interact with Lee County leaders.
- Identify new shared-use sports facilities within the community.
- Collaborate with the VCB's Sales team to attract sports-related conferences and events.
- Maintain up-to-date sports metrics on the Lee County Performance Dashboard.



Strategy #3:

Improve Communication About the Value of Sports With Residents and Local Businesses

Tactics:

- Increase communication about sports activity to the Lee County hospitality industry.
- Partner with Lee County Community Engagement and Communications to share sports tourism successes and ensure “quality of life” stories are communicated to residents.
- Report regularly to the hospitality industry, educating them on past and future sports activity, business development and economic impact derived from sports events.
- Work collaboratively with Parks & Recreation to ensure that sports tourism does not negatively impact residents when facility access is desired.



Public Relations

We begin a new fiscal year as our destination continues advancing its tourism offerings. While rebuilding remains a priority for those affected by Hurricane Ian, there's an important progress and improvement narrative throughout the area to share. Our story is about the destination's plans for new attractions and improvements to existing ones.

Our natural setting and community's reputation as a lovely place to visit encourage people to return, and it is incumbent upon the Communications team to tell that story to as many influential journalists as possible. Our team works directly with journalists and influencers from around the world to produce captivating images, articles and videos that tell our story and show potential visitors just how memorable a trip to our destination will be.

The Communications team remains engaged with our media contacts to ensure that we are informed and ready to respond to new media trends. By aligning our PR efforts with marketing and sales objectives, we will continue to support the destination with strategies to tell our story to the widest audience. Our plan is to ensure coverage that benefits our industry partners and Lee County.

Each objective connects to the VCB's overarching objectives.

Core Objectives and Strategies for FY23/24

- Increase awareness (via international and domestic media) of tourism opportunities in the destination.
- Increase visitation for domestic and international leisure travelers.
- Tell our story to leisure travelers in European markets through media encounters.
- Collaborate with Florida DMOs in nonstop-flight cities (Tampa, Miami and Orlando) to increase awareness of Fort Myers as a destination for a great vacation experience.
- Identify opportunities to promote activities throughout the entire community.

Public Relations

Strategy #1:

Increase Brand Awareness of Our Destination to Visitors, Residents and Business Partners in the Lee County Hospitality Community Through Effective PR Initiatives

Tactics:

- Host individual and group press trips throughout the year that highlight the best of the destination: fishing, boating, wildlife, arts, culture, spring training, history, breweries, and what's coming soon.
- Promote various themes pitched to editorial contributors and content creators.
- Participate in media missions, trade shows and travel writer conferences (e.g., IPW, Brand USA, IMM/TravMedia, TMAC, etc.) in core markets to promote the destination and deliver critical messaging and destination updates to consumer and trade media.
- Introduction of targeted, in-market media missions in conjunction with desk-side media appointments to be held in key feeder and developing markets throughout the U.S., Canada and Europe.

Strategy #2:

Maximize Domestic and International Exposure Through Media Opportunities

Tactics:

- Continue to work closely with Lee County Public Relations leadership to identify subject matter experts who can effectively communicate on tourism-related topics.
- Respond quickly to media requests for interviews to ensure our messaging is effectively disseminated to as wide an audience as possible.
- Work with the Marketing team to target media buys in specific locations to maximize awareness of the destination to new and returning visitors.

Strategy #3:

Utilize Videos (Partner Spotlight) and Podcasts (“Shellcast”) to Enhance Storytelling to Potential Visitors

Tactics:

- Produce new and compelling content for each product monthly.
- Continue to promote the “Shellcast” podcast and Partner Spotlight videos on the consumer website.
- Let them tell the story — interview locals and partners to create authentic experiences.
- Continue to make the “Shellcast” podcast available on major platforms (Spotify, Apple, etc.), and post Partner Spotlights to social media, encouraging sharing.
- Update and maintain the media b-roll library of stock video and photography available to assist journalists in telling our story.
- Provide technical support for both video and audio interviews.





Visitor Services

Visitor Services embraces community and volunteer relation efforts to provide a positive tourism experience for visitors and local residents in the Fort Myers area. We assist travelers with tourism information and guidance as well as honor our tourism partners through the Elaine McLaughlin Outstanding Hospitality Service Awards (E Awards).



Visitor Services is based at Southwest Florida International Airport. In addition to the Tourism Ambassador program, we serve as an emergency liaison to travelers. We offer support to airport and airline partners through programs such as Project Cookie, which aids stranded or delayed passengers. Another initiative is the Visitor Assistance Program through which special assistance is provided to travelers during emergencies or crises. We collaborate with local accommodations, law enforcement, transportation, government, and medical professionals to offer emergency help to visitors and their families.



Tourism Ambassadors:

- Our team is comprised of a 130-person Tourism Ambassador volunteer corps that greets and provides information to visitors and the traveling public, including VCB representation at special events.
 - Five visitor information booths that offer local information about accommodations, attractions, things to do, transportation, and other resources are located on the departure and arrival levels at RSW.
 - Booths, staffed by Tourism Ambassador volunteers, are open year-round (excluding major holidays) from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. January to April and 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. May to December.
 - Tourism Ambassador volunteers provide tourism information at mobile information kiosks during spring training games at JetBlue Park and Lee County Sports Complex/Hammond Stadium.
 - We provide trained Tourism Ambassador volunteers for conference and special event programming through the VCB Sales department and Sports Development.
- To assist the Marketing department with core objectives and strategies for FY23/24, the Visitor Services department plans to employ the tactics detailed on the following pages.

Visitor Services

Strategy #1:

Continue to Nurture and Grow a Team of 130 Well-Trained Volunteer Tourism Ambassadors to Assist Visitors at the Visitor Information Booths at Southwest Florida International Airport

Tactics:

- Assign two designated RSW Roamers per shift to cover all public areas in the airport and offer direct assistance as required.
- Increase the number of volunteers who speak a second language, with a focus on German and Spanish.
- Continue to train volunteers to provide assistance inside U.S. Customs & Border Protection at RSW by greeting international visitors.
- Set up interactive touch-screen kiosks in four visitor information booths with customized content to enable the traveling public to build their own itinerary.

Strategy #2:

Community Outreach and Engagement

Tactics:

- Make personalized customer service the top priority during every interaction at the visitor information booths, ensuring that visitors leave with a positive impression they'll share with friends and family.
- Encourage more nominations in the Other Services/Businesses category of the Elaine McLaughlin Outstanding Hospitality Service Awards to recognize local residents for their powerful impact on our community.
- Provide the traveling public at RSW with listings of local events in support of our local partners.



Guests First Program

The start of a positive visitor experience begins with a warm smile and friendly welcome. This customer service behavior not only generates goodwill but often results in an extended stay or a return visit to the place of business. In partnership with the American Hotel & Lodging Educational Institute, the Guests First (GF) program is a nationally recognized certification training program for Lee County hospitality employees. Through Guests First, front-line staff and management professionals learn how to anticipate the needs of guests, deliver memorable experiences and turn around difficult situations.



The GF program centers around three key elements —

communication, emotional intelligence and problem-solving. As the hospitality industry continues to face a shortage of trained employees, our intent is that GF will help familiarize front-line employees with our destination's assets as well as provide visitor information tools, resources and customer service training. The complimentary learning sessions are interactive, original, and provide a unique opportunity to understand customer expectations and how to exceed service standards. Participants learn how to build consumer loyalty through quality customer experiences that lead to repeat business and ultimately positive revenue.

Core Objectives and Strategies for FY23/24

- Increase visitation and length of stay in paid accommodations by providing consistent and superior customer care to all visitors.
- Secure repeat visitation by training local businesses to adopt a strong service culture.
- Create guest service-oriented employees who know how to engage with visitors in order to provide a memorable experience.

Guests First Program

Strategy #1:

Promote the Value of Guests First to Achieve Greater Customer Satisfaction, Increased Revenue and Repeat Visitation

Tactics:

- Communicate the benefits of improved employee competence and a more satisfying workplace culture.
- Ensure GF customer service training is accessible to Lee County hospitality businesses.
- Use the GF education modules to prepare participants for the Certified Guest Service Professional (CGSP®) exam. Recognized worldwide, the CGSP® is one of the highest acknowledgments of guest service excellence for hospitality and tourism employees.

Strategy #2

Keep Guests First Educational Content Relatable and Relevant

Tactics:

- Engage participants through technology and other digital tools.
- Develop new GF training content to keep the information shared up to date.
- Tailor and customize training for positive learning outcomes and our destination's culture.

Strategy #3:

Monitor and Analyze Results

Tactics:

- Establish the target of a 95% pass rate for the CGSP® exam.
- Monitor, report and evaluate the overall program success based on VCB metrics.

FY23/24 Targets Summary

SOURCE		FY23/24 TARGETS PROJECTIONS BASED ON \$7.2M SPEND Note that the full spend will be \$9.7M, but \$2.4M (25%) has not been planned yet.
OVERARCHING		
Bed Tax	Audited Returns	Project \$42M (up 25% over FY22/23)
PAID MEDIA (including Paid Search and Paid Social)		
Impressions	Google Ads/Google Campaign Manager/Paid Social	517,000,000
Total Engagements	Google Ads/Google Campaign Manager/Paid Social	40,000,000
Total Inquiries	Google Ads/Google Campaign Manager/Paid Social	383,589
CPM	Contracts	\$14.39
Added-Value Placements	Contracts	\$3,000,000
SOCIAL MEDIA		
Website Referrals	Sprout Social	Drive 780K website visits
Video Views	Sprout Social	25M Video Views
Total Social Media Engagements	Sprout Social	3.6M Engagements
Total Social Impressions	Sprout Social	115M Impressions

FY23/24 Targets Summary

SOURCE		FY23/24 TARGETS PROJECTIONS BASED ON \$7.2M SPEND
WEBSITE		
eNews Sign-Ups (Leisure, Meetings and Weddings)	FY22/23 measured using GA3; FY23/24 targets based on GA4	20,000
Average Pages/Visit	FY22/23 measured using GA3; FY23/24 targets based on GA4	1.85
Average Session Duration	FY22/23 measured using GA3; FY23/24 targets based on GA4	1:45
Accommodations Referrals (Jan–Sep)	FY22/23 measured using GA3; FY23/24 targets based on GA4	5.50%
Dining Referrals (Jan–Sep)	FY22/23 measured using GA3; FY23/24 targets based on GA4	0.55%
Activities Referrals (Jan–Sep)	FY22/23 measured using GA3; FY23/24 targets based on GA4	1.10%
Engagement Rate of Organic Search Sessions	GA4	70.0%
EMAIL		
Website Leads: Unique Open Rate	Exact Target/GA4	Increase open rate to 33%
Website Leads: Click Rate	Exact Target/GA4	Increase click rate to 3%
Unsubscribe Rate	Exact Target/GA4	0.90%
All Leads: Partner Referrals	Exact Target/GA4	25,000
MEDIA RELATIONS/PUBLIC RELATIONS		
Media Impressions	Ad Service	3.7B
Group and Individual Media FAMs	VCB Count	Host 15 journalists in-destination through a combination of individual and group press trips
Partner Mentions	VCB Count	Increase number of members (partners) mentioned in articles to 75

FY23/24 Targets Summary

SOURCE		FY23/24 TARGETS PROJECTIONS BASED ON \$7.2M SPEND
SALES: DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL		
Meeting/Conference Conversion	Simpleview	Achieve 36,000 room nights contracted by partners from VCB leads
Meeting Leads	Simpleview	Achieve 325,000 group lead room nights* sourced by VCB
FAM Trips/Site Inspections	VCB Count	40 domestic and international travel professionals
Wedding Leads	Simpleview	150 leads generated by VCB
Destination Education/Client Events (Webinars, Podcasts, Training Classes, Events)	VCB Count	50 destination education events
Community Engagement	VCB Count	50 local organization meetings or events
PRODUCTION DEVELOPMENT		
Event Development	Events/Venues	12 events funded/2 new events
Attractions Marketing	Applications	35 attractions funded/3 new attractions
Attractions Marketing	Placemaking Initiatives (Bandwango/Murals)	3 passport challenges/6 murals
INDUSTRY RELATIONS		
Guests First Participants	VCB Count	500 Guests First participants
Guests First Trainings	VCB Count	Host a minimum of 50 training sessions
Team Tourism Events	VCB Count	Host a minimum of 3 events
Awards Recognition	VCB Count	Encourage 800 nominations
Tourism Ambassadors	VCB Count	Add 15 new Tourism Ambassadors



5

FY22/23 Performance

FY22/23 Targets Reporting

SOURCE		FY22/23 TARGETS \$6.3M SPEND <div>Targets and results were significantly affected by Hurricane Ian, which made landfall on Sep 28, 2022.</div>	FY22/23 RESULTS
OVERARCHING			
Bed Tax	Audited Returns	Projected \$33M	\$36,571,906 (Down 45% over FY21/22)
PAID MEDIA (including Paid Search and Paid Social)			
Impressions	Google Ads/Google Campaign Manager/Paid Social	528,977,774	577,656,666
Total Engagements	Google Ads/Google Campaign Manager/Paid Social	55,970,866	54,625,219
Total Inquiries	Google Ads/Google Campaign Manager/Paid Social	459,946	371,247
CPM	Contracts	\$13.39	\$10.93
Added-Value Placements	Contracts	1,500,000	\$2,047,634
SOCIAL MEDIA			
Website Referrals	Sprout Social	Drive 150K visits	769,777
Video Views	Sprout Social	Generate 5M Video Views	20,037,202
Total Social Media Engagements	Sprout Social	Generate 3M engagements	3,465,447
Total Social Impressions	Sprout Social	Generate 115M impressions	109,406,039

FY22/23 Targets Reporting

SOURCE		FY22/23 TARGETS \$6.3M SPEND	FY22/23 RESULTS
WEBSITE			
eNews Sign-Ups (Leisure, Meetings and Weddings)	FY22/23 measured using GA3, FY23/24 targets based on GA4	13,000	12,018
Average Pages/Visit	FY22/23 measured using GA3, FY23/24 targets based on GA4	1.7	1.46
Average Session Duration	FY22/23 measured using GA3, FY23/24 targets based on GA4	1:30	0:52
Accommodations Referrals (Jan–Sep)	FY22/23 measured using GA3, FY23/24 targets based on GA4	5.00%	4.68%
Dining Referrals (Jan–Sep)	FY22/23 measured using GA3, FY23/24 targets based on GA4	0.30%	0.46%
Activities Referrals (Jan–Sep)	FY22/23 measured using GA3, FY23/24 targets based on GA4	1.20%	0.98%
Engagement Rate of Organic Search Sessions	GA4	NA	67%
EMAIL			
Website Leads: Unique Open Rate	Exact Target/GA4	Increase open rate to 30%	32%
Website Leads: Click Rate	Exact Target/GA4	Maintain click rate of 2.5%	2.70%
Unsubscribe Rate	Exact Target/GA4	Achieve lower than a 1.5% unsubscribe rate	0.93%
All Leads: Partner Referrals	Exact Target/GA4	10,000	12,073

FY22/23 Targets Reporting

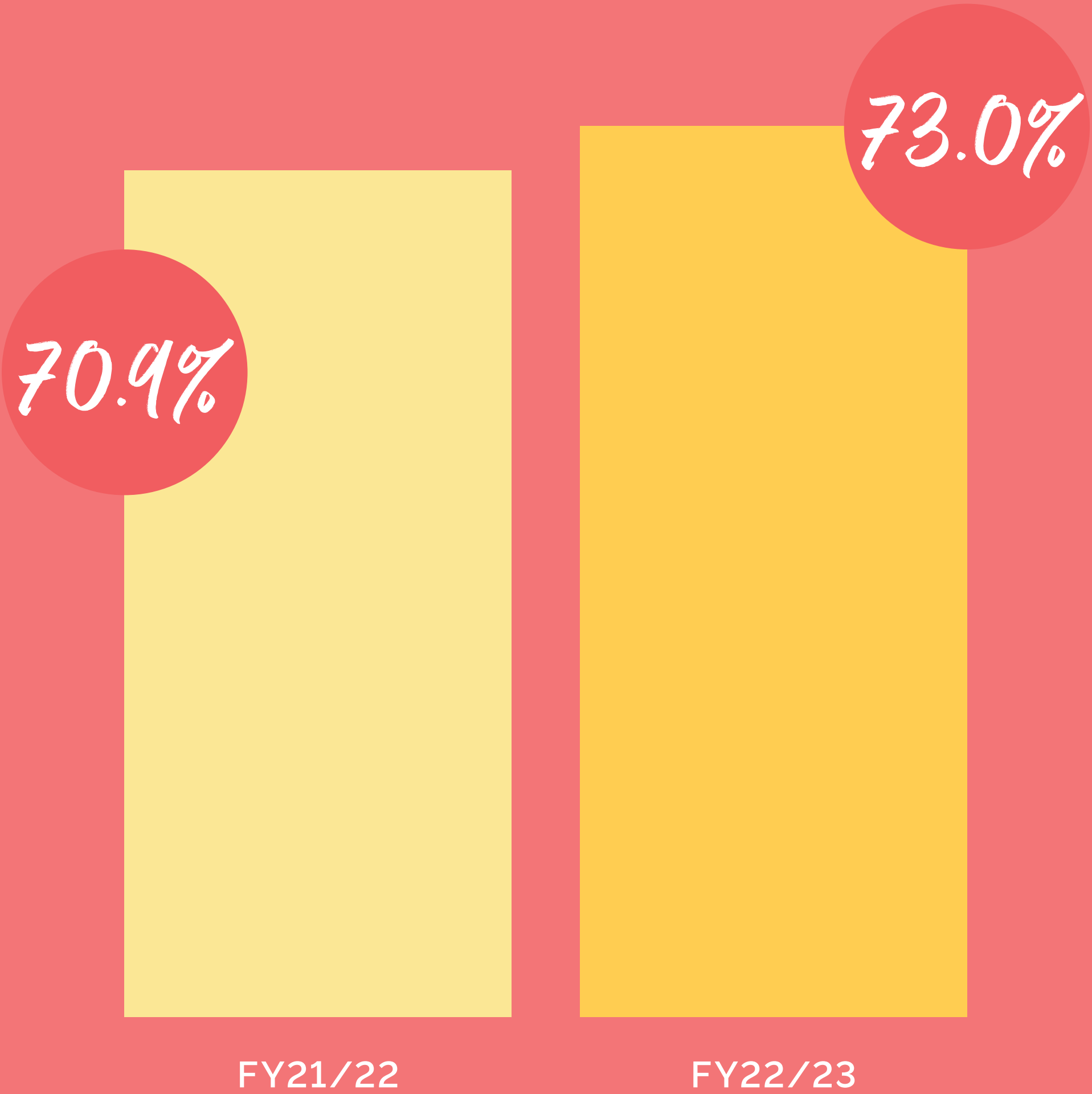
	SOURCE	FY22/23 TARGETS \$6.3M SPEND	FY22/23 RESULTS
MEDIA RELATIONS/PUBLIC RELATIONS			
Media Impressions	Ad Service	Increase impressions goal to 3.5B	3,723,430,831 impressions
Group and Individual Media FAMs	VCB Count	Host 6 group press trips throughout the fiscal year with 3–4 press in attendance	1 group trip 2 individual trips 5 total media hosted (Please note: Goals were set pre-hurricane and hosting capabilities changed following.)
Partner Mentions	VCB Count	NA	62
SALES: DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL			
Meeting/Conference Conversion	Simpleview	Grow number of VCB leads contracted to 116	116 leads 100% of target attained
Meeting Leads	Simpleview	Increase number of leads generated by VCB to 520	864 leads 166% of target attained
FAM Trips/Site Inspections	VCB Count	30 domestic and international travel professionals	40 travel professionals 133% of target attained
Wedding Leads	Simpleview	Increase leads generated by VCB to 100	149 leads 149% of target attained
Destination Education/Client Events (Webinars, Podcasts, Training Classes, Events)	VCB Count	Conduct 35 destination education events	59 events 169% of target attained
Community Engagement	VCB Count	Participate in a minimum of 50 local organization meetings or events	58 events 116% of target attained

FY22/23 Targets Reporting

SOURCE		FY22/23 TARGETS \$6.3M SPEND	FY22/23 RESULTS
PRODUCT DEVELOPMENT			
Event Development	Events/Venues	10 events/3 new events	10 events/4 new events
Attractions Marketing	Applications	35 attractions funded	32 attractions funded
Attractions Marketing	Placemaking Initiatives (Bandwango/Murals)	3 passport challenges 6 neighborhood murals	3 passport challenges 4 neighborhood murals
INDUSTRY RELATIONS			
Guests First Participants	VCB Count	NA due to hurricane recovery	
Guests First Trainings	VCB Count	NA due to hurricane recovery	
Team Tourism Events	VCB Count	Host a minimum of 2 events	1 event
Awards Recognition	VCB Count	Encourage 700 nominations	751 nominations
Tourism Ambassadors	VCB Count	Add 15 new Tourism Ambassadors	Added 18 new Tourism Ambassadors

Lodging Performance

OCCUPANCY



ADR



RevPAR



SUPPLY

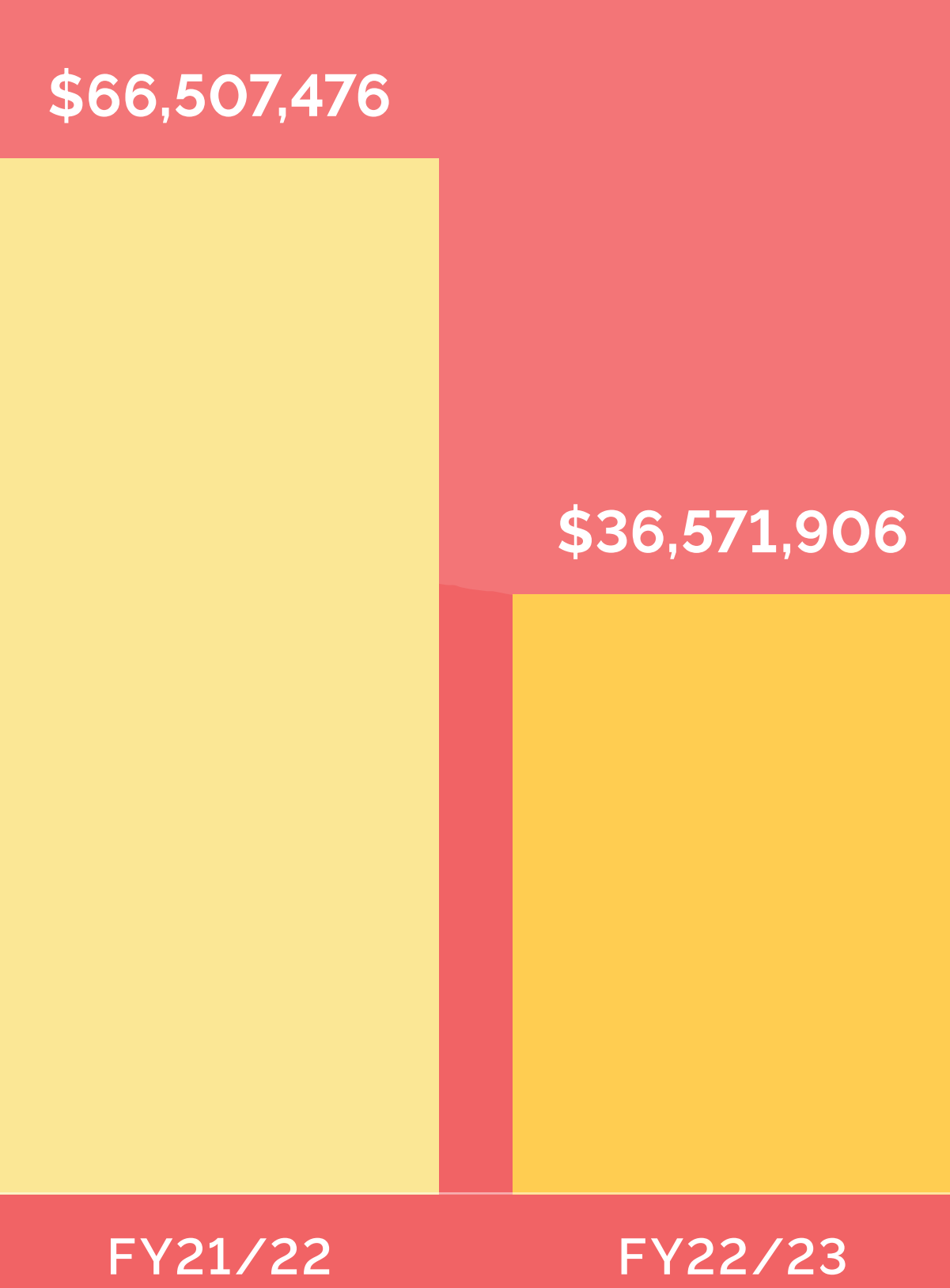


■ FY21/22 ■ FY22/23

Performance

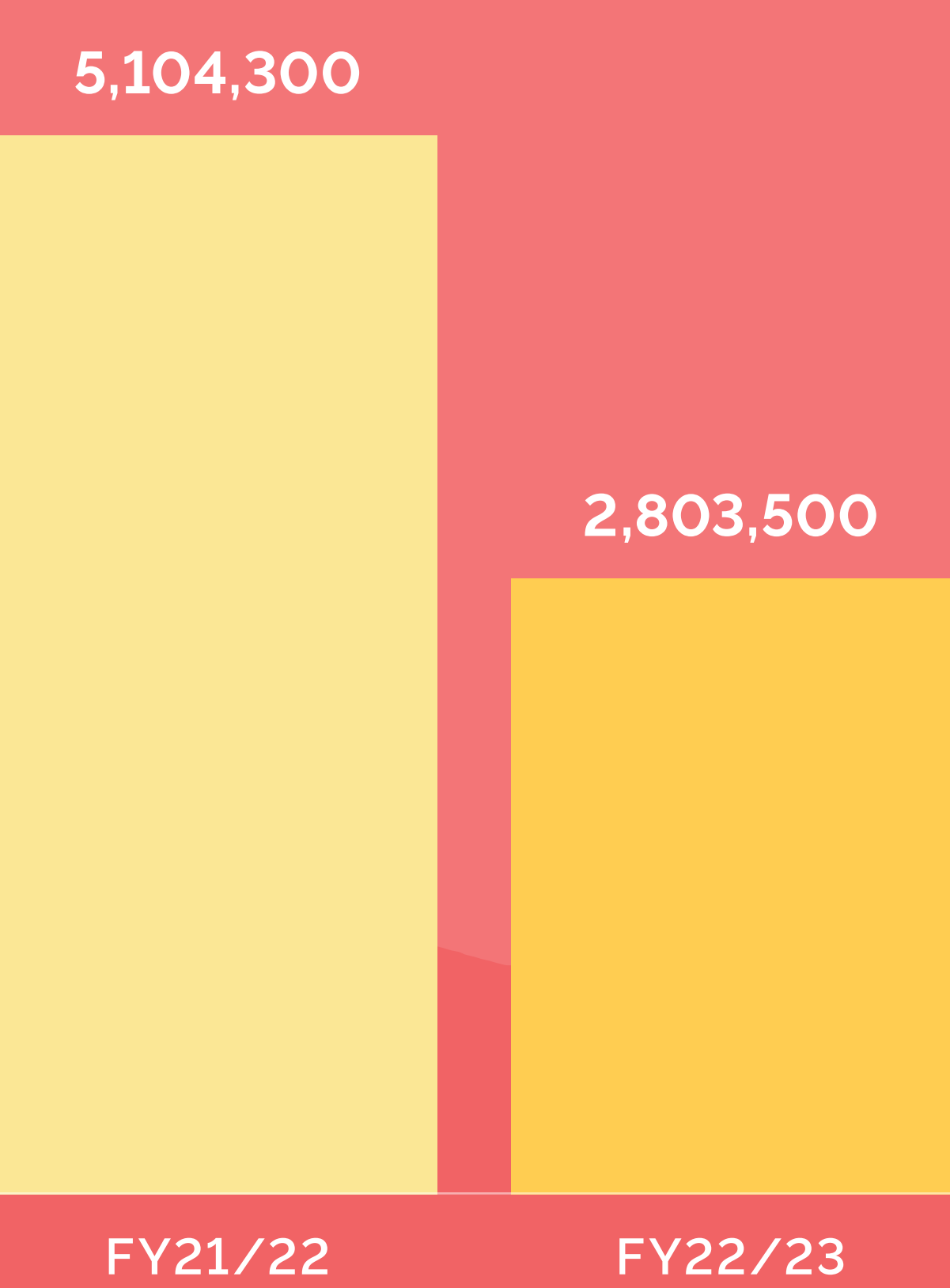
BED TAX

Source: Lee County Clerk of Court



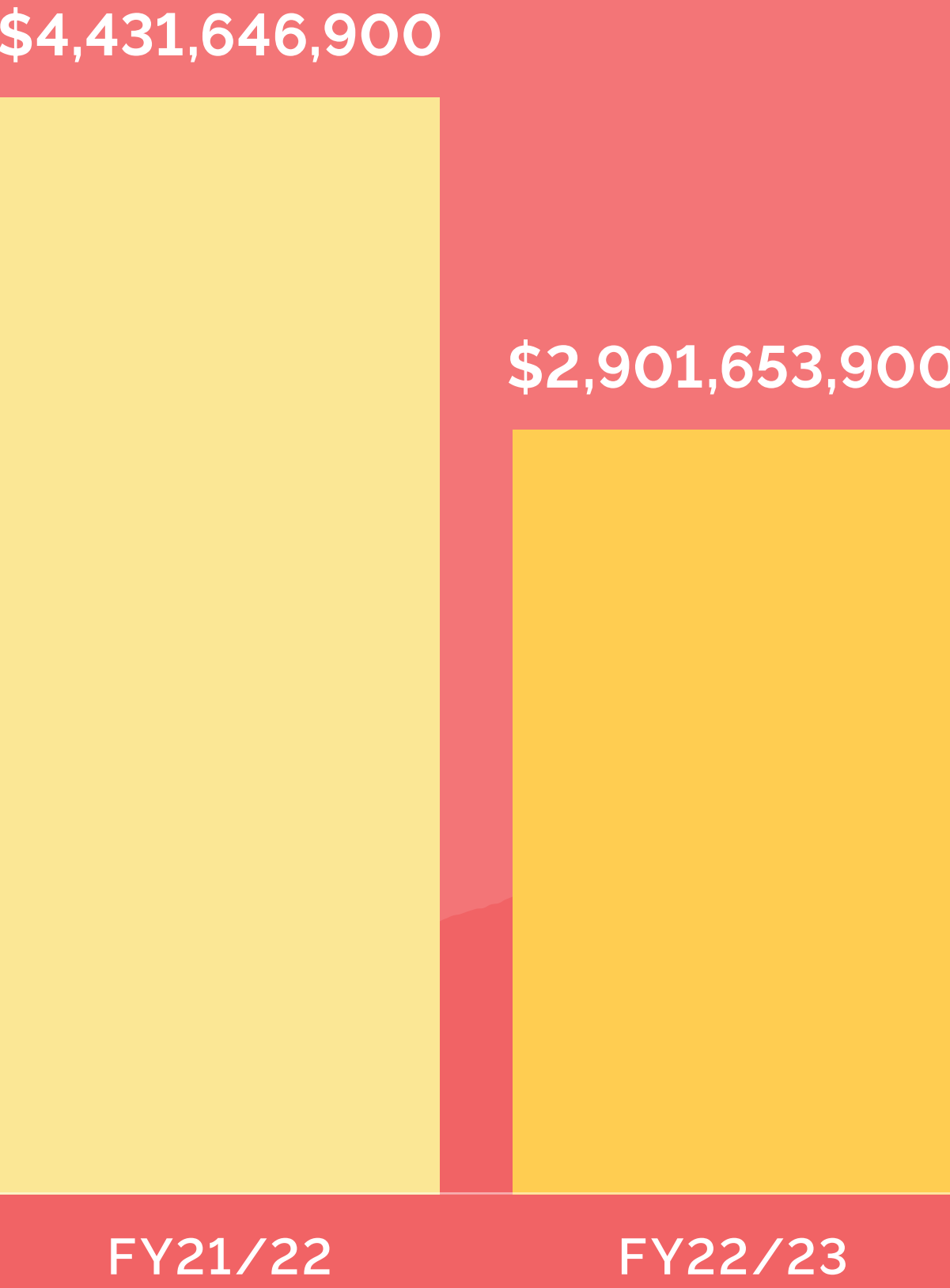
NUMBER OF VISITORS

Source: Downs & St. Germain Research



VISITOR EXPENDITURES*

Source: Downs & St. Germain Research



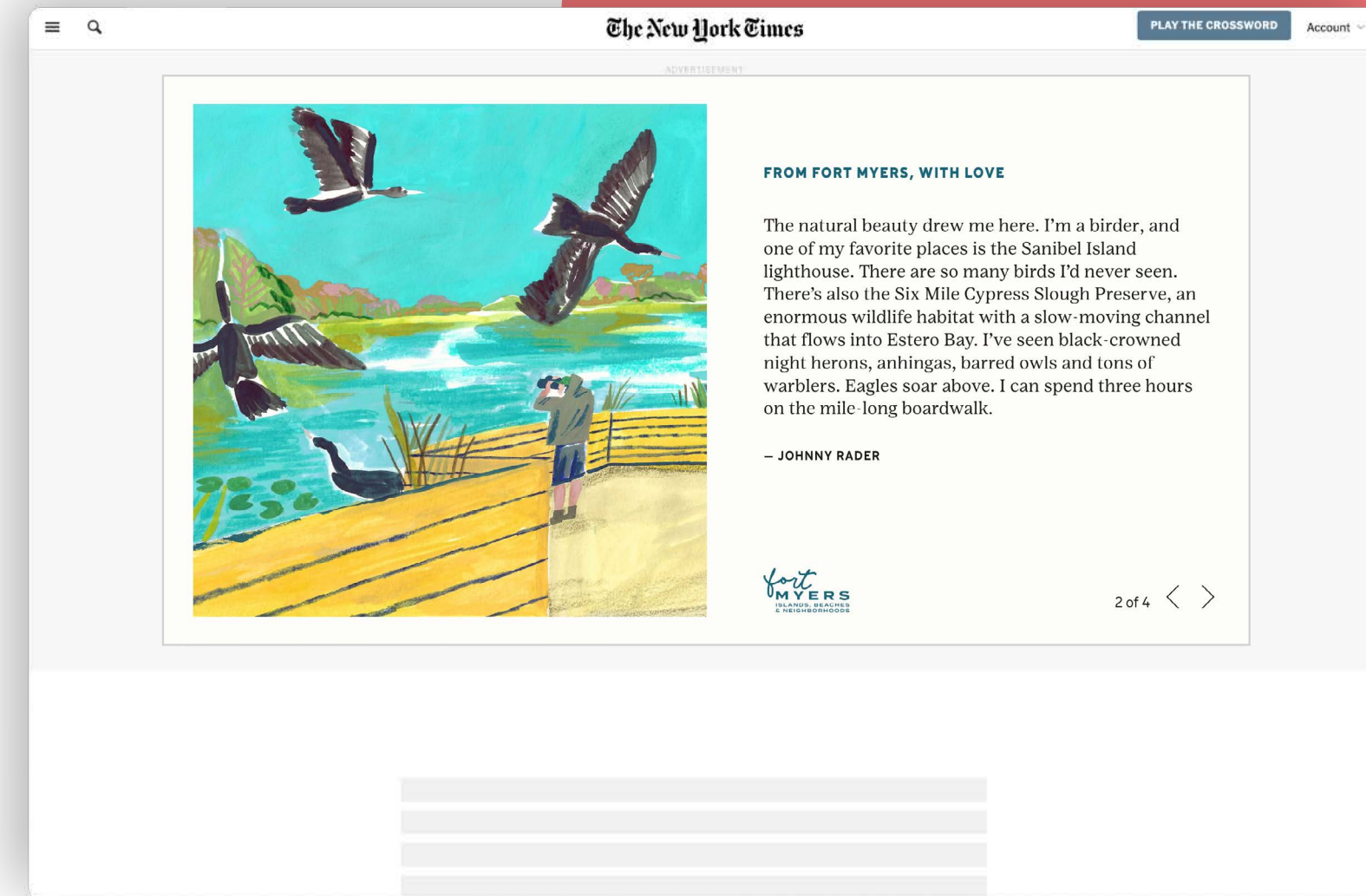
For more detailed information, please visit our [Performance Dashboard](#) on LeeVCB.com

*Visitor Expenditures includes accommodations, restaurants, entertainment, shopping, transportation, groceries, and “other” expenses.

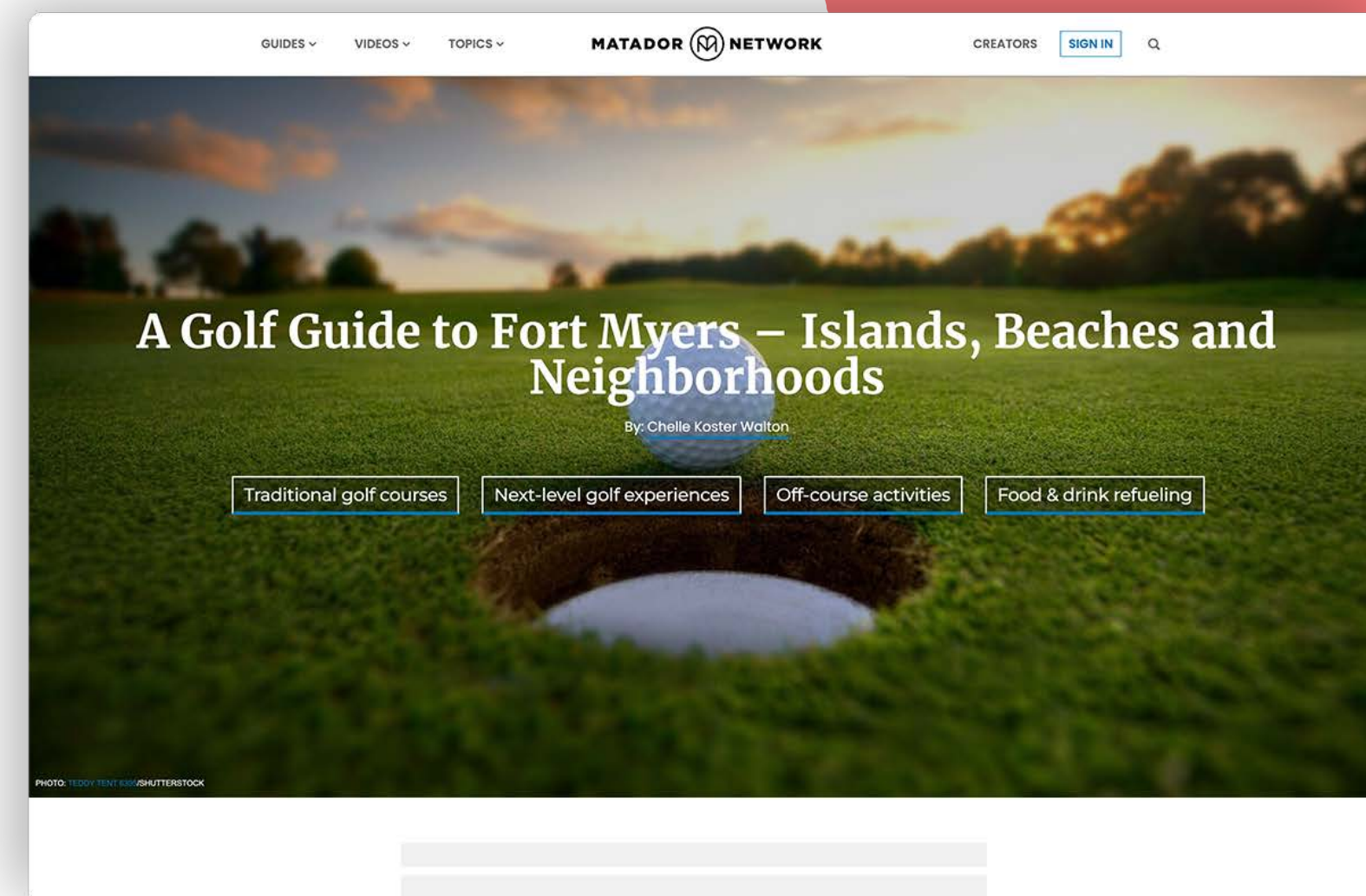
FY22/23

Paid Media Highlights

- [Matador](#) – Golf Guide to Fort Myers
- [Garden & Gun](#) – Custom Quiz
- [The New York Times](#) – Mini Story FlexXL Units
- [Local Palate](#) – Custom Content
- [Honeyfund](#) – Getaway Sweepstakes
- [The Knot](#) – Avalanche unit preview link
- [ConventionSouth](#) – Virtual Rotating Tour
- [Bridal Guide](#) – Custom Sub Channel

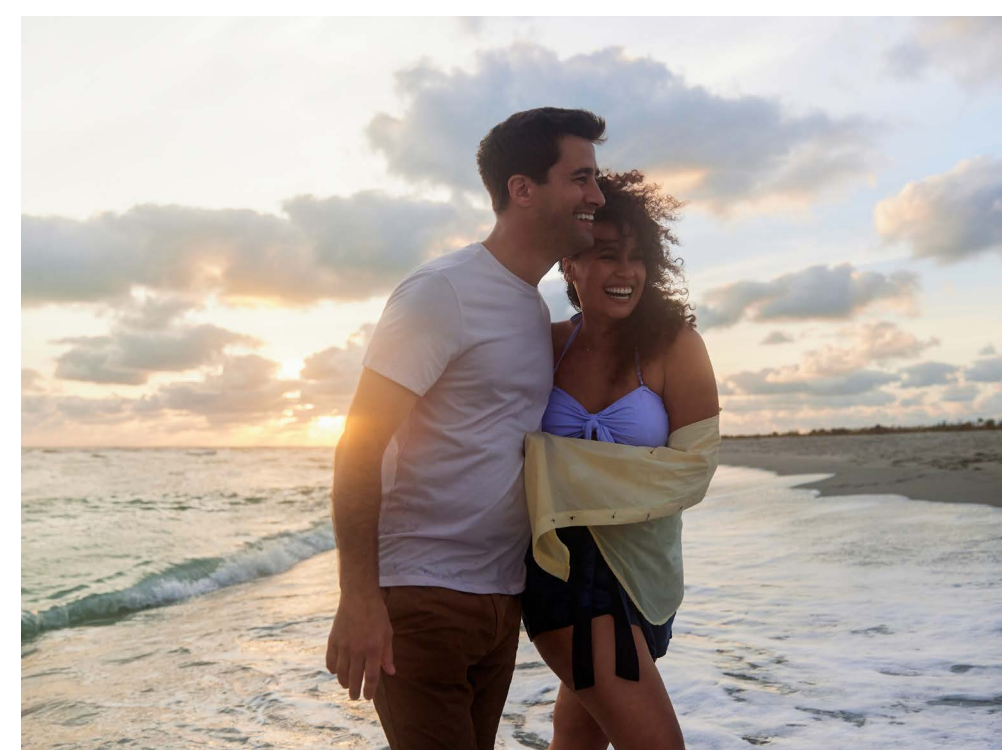
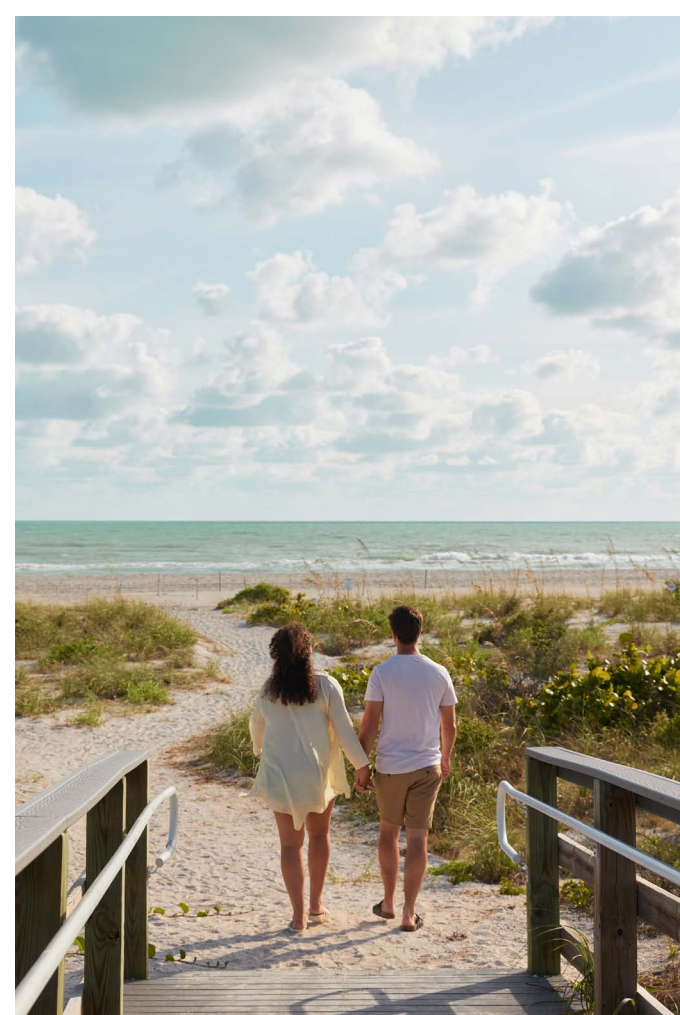
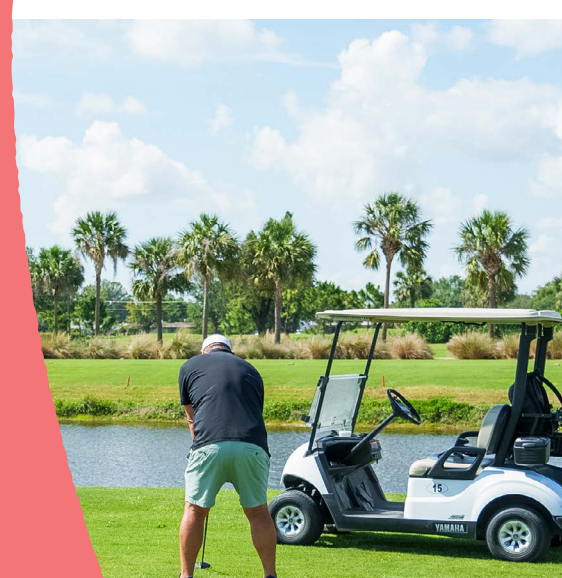
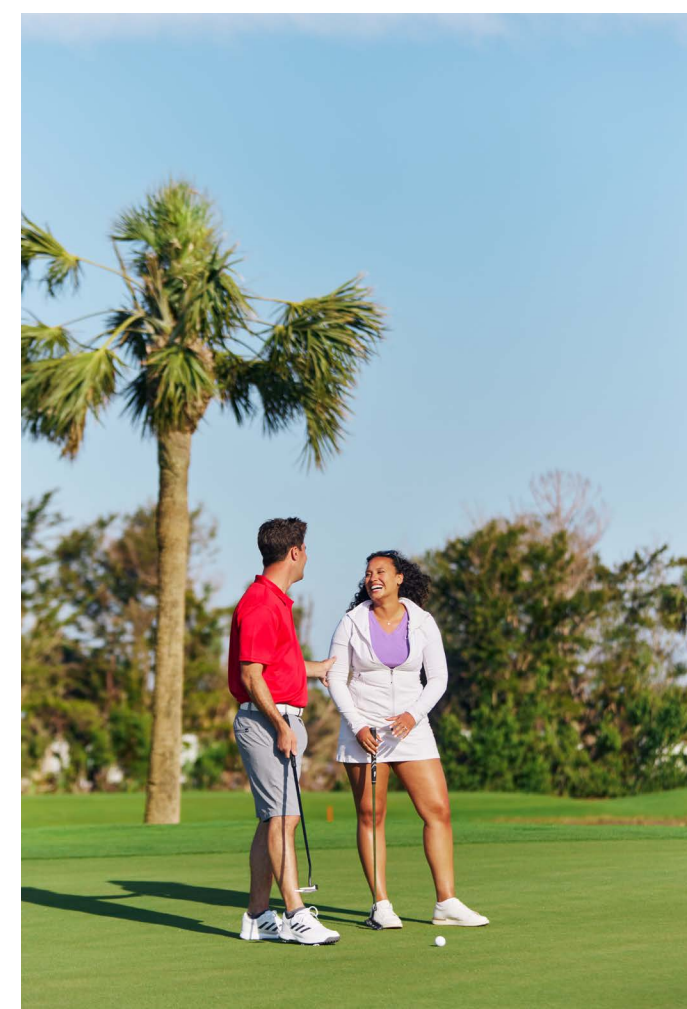


The New York Times –
Mini Story FlexXL Units



Matador – Golf Guide to Fort Myers

[Click here](#) to view a highlight reel of photo and video assets captured during FY22/23 showcasing our islands, beaches and neighborhoods.



Awards:

- **Flagler Awards 2023** – Direct Marketing Gold (Henry) Award for Good Day Direct Mail Piece
- **Adrian Awards 2022**
 - Communications Feature Online Placement Gold Award for Matador Network “5 Wildlife Adventures Near Fort Myers To See Manatees, Spoonbills, Sea Turtles and More”
 - Print Collateral (Traditional) Silver Award for Good Day Direct Mail Piece
 - Multimedia Multichannel Silver Award for Good Day Campaign Launch
 - Social Media Campaign Bronze Award for Accidentally Wes Anderson + Whalebone Partnership
 - Influencer Marketing Bronze Award for Good Day Ambassadors Influencer Campaign
- **Sunsational Awards 2023**
 - First Place for Island Hopper Songwriter Fest Street Banner
 - Second Place for Island Hopper Songwriter Fest Promotional Video





Accolades

- “Florida’s Top Five Cities For Craft Beer Lovers” – Forbes
- “10 Best Coastal Small Towns in the US” – USA TODAY
- “10 Top Destinations to Visit in June” – TODAY
- “15 Best Beaches in Florida Locals Want to Keep Secret” – Reader’s Digest
- “10 Best Islands in Florida for Beautiful Beaches, Laid-back Vibes, and Charming Small Towns” – Travel + Leisure
- “15 Best Beach Towns in the South” – Travel + Leisure
- “Travel + Leisure Readers’ 15 Favorite Islands in the Continental U.S. of 2023” – Travel + Leisure
- “America’s Best Small Towns of 2023” – Travel + Leisure
- “9 Best Beach Towns in Florida” – Travel + Leisure
- “The South’s Best Beach Towns For Girlfriend Getaways” – Southern Living
- “The 50 Best Small Towns In The South 2023” – Southern Living
- “The Best Family Beach Vacations In The South” – Southern Living
- “21 Best Gulf Coast Beaches” – HGTV
- “The Best Spring Break Destinations for Families” – The Points Guy
- “Best Road Trips to Take with Your Family this Summer” – The Points Guy

A tall, white lighthouse with a black metal framework stands on a rocky island. The lighthouse has a lantern room at the top. The background is a bright green sky with some clouds. A large, semi-transparent green circle is on the right side of the image. A dark blue circle with a white number '6' is on the left side of the image.

6

Staff Directory and Contractors



VCB Staff Directory

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