



## Report to the Industry

*Jan. 11, 2024*

### November STR summary

STR reports hotel data in Lee County.

| Average Occupancy Rate |       |          | Average Daily Rate |          |          | RevPAR   |          |          |
|------------------------|-------|----------|--------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| 2022                   | 2023  | % Change | 2022               | 2023     | % Change | 2022     | 2023     | % Change |
| 82.0%                  | 68.3% | -16.7%   | \$179.10           | \$147.42 | -17.7%   | \$146.89 | \$100.67 | -31.5%   |

### November Key Data summary

Key Data reports vacation rental data in Lee County.

| Average Occupancy Rate |      |          | Average Daily Rate |       |          | RevPAR |      |          |
|------------------------|------|----------|--------------------|-------|----------|--------|------|----------|
| 2022                   | 2023 | % Change | 2022               | 2023  | % Change | 2022   | 2023 | % Change |
| 25%                    | 28%  | 12.4%    | \$173              | \$184 | 6.3%     | \$44   | \$52 | 18.1%    |

### Bed tax collection

The preliminary resort tax collected for November 2023 was \$2,731,183, a 14.5% increase compared to November 2022 preliminary collections of \$2,386,100. Fiscal year-to-date preliminary tourist tax collections are \$5,065,807, an increase of 10.0% year-over-year.

### Airport news

During November 2023, 953,025 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport, an increase of 17.3% compared to November 2022. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is down 5.3% from the same period last year.

### Communications report

Tam Pigott, VCB executive director, reported total impressions for October, November and December 2023 were 431,463,374. The communications team ended 2023 with a strong showing of group press trips including a group of Georgia outdoor writers, a group of travel writers from Germany and domestic writers with assignments for The Boston Globe and Cosmopolitan already resulting in positive coverage of the destination. More notable coverage came from a partnership with Visit Florida and photographer, Michael Meyers who posted impressive photos of Fort Myers Beach, Sanibel and Captiva. He enjoyed the destination so much he extended his stay. The communications team also hosted individual journalists including Germany’s premier golf writer Dr. Bernard Obst. In early December, the team hosted a media event to show off the destination anthem, “Feels Like Home to Me” co-written by Fort Myers native, Brian Sutherland and Clint Daniels, both alums of Island Hopper Songwriter Fest. The communications team is also the recipient of two gold Adrian awards from the Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association’s (HSMIA) Adrian Awards competition. Our winning entries were a series featured on Fox Weather focusing on recovery following Hurricane Ian and our work to showcase J.N. ‘Ding’ Darling National Wildlife Refuge on CBS Sunday Morning’s “A Moment in Nature.”

### **Sales report**

Jill Vance, VCB sales director, reported that the team is ahead of pace on five of the six sales goals for FY23-24. She shared highlights of successful third-quarter group media buys and sales activities. The sales team attended a variety of in-person meeting planner and travel trade shows, including AMX INTERaction, IMEX America, NTA Travel Exchange, and CCRA Power Solutions. Vance also presented upcoming sales activities for January through March including PCMA Convening Leaders Conference, Rendezvous South and CMP Advance. Charm Evans, global sales manager, provided a recap on the sales activities including Brand USA Travel Week and CEO Summit, FTI North America Roadshow, and Visit FL Canadian and German Discover Airlines familiarization trips. Evans also presented an update on the international sales activities such as the Pre-Florida Huddle product manager familiarization trip and ITB Berlin taking place in March.

### **Visitor Services report**

Simone Behr, VCB visitor services director, reported that tourism ambassador volunteers assisted 390,448 visitors and residents during calendar year 2023, resulting in 27,411 volunteer hours worked, a value of \$847,596 to Lee County. Highlights during the fall months included Tourism Ambassadors assisting at Roy Hobbs World Series, Fort Myers Tip-Off and greeting Breeze Airlines' inaugural flight from Norfolk. Ambassadors attended 14 unique destination education training sessions compliments of our industry partners. Visitor services looks forward to hosting the 34<sup>th</sup> Annual Volunteer Tourism Ambassador Appreciation Luncheon on April 12.

### **Beach & Shoreline Guidelines Update**

Nancy MacPhee, product development manager, shared the updated Beach and Shoreline Program guidelines as the application cycle for fiscal year 2024-25 funding will open with a webinar on January 18. The program timeline, guidelines and eligibility information related to this program can be viewed at <https://www.visitfortmyers.com/lee-vcb/funding-programs/beach-and-shoreline/funding-request-information>.

### **Events & Attractions Subcommittee**

After a request for volunteers by Chairman Pendergrass, the following members were unanimously approved to serve as the Events & Attractions Subcommittee: Pamela Cronin, Jay Johnson, Councilwoman Holly Smith, Councilman Bill Steinke, and Bill Waichulis.

### **Next TDC meeting**

The next TDC meeting is scheduled for at **9 a.m., Thursday, Feb. 8, 2024** at the Lee County Administration East Building, 2201 Second St., Room 118, Fort Myers. To view a complete tax collections report, visit [www.LeeVCB.com](http://www.LeeVCB.com). Contact: Tamara Pigott, [TPigott@leegov.com](mailto:TPigott@leegov.com), Lee County VCB, 239-338-3500.