



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
GOVERNOR DANIEL P. MALLOY

**GOV. MALLOY: CONNECTICUT SAW SIGNIFICANT SUMMER
TOURISM GROWTH**

*Building on the Success of Summer Gains, State Touts Foliage and Holiday
Attractions with Fall Iteration of the Connecticut 'still revolutionary'
Campaign*

(HARTFORD, CT) – Governor Daniel P. Malloy today announced the results of new, end-of-season tourism data, indicating that Connecticut saw a strong 2015 summer, with indicators showing significant rises in visitation to tourism destinations, as well as a significant increase in spending levels per visitor.

A survey of 23 leading attractions in Connecticut revealed the summer months showed a dramatic 12 percent increase in visitors to some of the state's top tourism destinations during June through August 2015. Tourism destinations in the state also report an increased level of spending this summer, rising to \$906 per party – up four percent when compared to last year. In addition, Connecticut has seen a three percent increase in visitor numbers during January through August 2015 when compared to the same period over the prior year.

“This demonstrates we’re making gains – jobs are growing significantly each month, our efforts to make our state a tourist destination are paying off, and the needle is no doubt moving in the right direction. These numbers are significant. Connecticut’s economy is reinforced by a strong tourism sector, which not only directly supports a large number of workers, but also has a significant indirect impact on job creation and business development. Destinations in Connecticut are reporting positive growth – an indication that the state’s commitments to boosting this sector are generating results,” Governor Malloy said. “Connecticut is an incredible place to live and visit, and we’re proud of the attractions and destinations we have to offer residents and visitors to our beautiful state alike. We hope the fall season sees the same kinds of growth as we saw in the summer.”

According to research data, Connecticut’s hotel industry also reported positive results in key performance metrics from June to August 2015, and outpaced national metrics in

percentage increases, which is further indication of increasing demand throughout the state:

- Lodging occupancy increased four percent compared to last year. That's compared to one percent for the entire nation.
- Revenue per available room (RevPAR) was up 7.6 percent, or 1.7 higher than the rest of the U.S.
- Lodging revenue exceeded \$285 million this summer – an indication of higher demand – which is up 7.1 percent compared to last year.
- Regionally, markets such as Groton/Norwich and New Haven/Waterbury are leading the state in the areas of occupancy, up six percent and 8.6 percent, respectively. RevPAR in those areas is up 12.9 percent and 12.7 percent, respectively.

“The marked increase in summer visitors is an indication of the effectiveness of our Connecticut *still revolutionary* marketing efforts,” Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) Commissioner Catherine Smith said. “We’re welcoming an increased number of visitors to our state who are spending more per party, which helps boost our economy. Under the Malloy administration, tourism in Connecticut has evolved into a \$14 billion industry, and we’re even more proud that it supports more than 80,000 direct tourism industry jobs statewide.”

The State of Connecticut launched the fall version of its *still revolutionary* tourism campaign, featuring two new [television ads](#) that highlight seasonal pairings of attractions in Connecticut and underscore the broad range of activities within a short driving distance. The \$1.1 million ad campaign will also receive ongoing support through engaging digital creative and is designed to strengthen Connecticut’s tourism business this year.

“Governor Malloy’s efforts together with the state’s terrific hotels, attractions, restaurants and other tourism partners are to be commended for their collective partnership,” DECD Deputy Commissioner Tim Sullivan said. “In addition to Connecticut’s success in attracting more visitors, we’re also proud that the tourism industry is growing, and we anticipate another promising season through the holidays.”

“The success of the state’s tourism industry depends on the hospitality and service of our partners, which is why we’ve featured more than 1,000 hotels, attractions and other business owners in the marketing efforts of the Connecticut *still revolutionary* campaign,” Randy Fiveash, Director of the Connecticut Office of Tourism, said. “We’re proud that Connecticut offers visitors a wide range of attractions such as Mystic Seaport, the Connecticut Science Center and Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk, just to name a few, within close proximity. We thank our many partners and visitors for making this summer one of our best yet and look forward to continuing to highlight Connecticut as a great destination during our spectacular fall foliage season.”

The award-winning Connecticut *still revolutionary* summer campaign featured several new TV, digital and OOH advertisements and public relations and social media initiatives:

- **A refreshed Connecticut *still revolutionary* ad campaign** featured 130 destinations and targeted residents within Connecticut, as well as surrounding target areas including Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York City and Philadelphia.
- **Roar Tour**, a self-guided itinerary of dinosaur-themed attractions, as well as roar-worthy accommodations and culinary offerings around the state.
- **Connecticut *still revolutionary* Express**, immersive familiarization trips throughout the state for New York- and Boston-based press and digital influencers.
- **Ongoing social channel campaigns** that complement efforts and engage fans of the state.

The state's tourism partners have credited the Connecticut *still revolutionary* campaign for notable increases in visitor numbers and overall awareness among consumers. A sampling of partner quotes includes the following:

- "The enthusiastic response to our concerts, cuisine, and special events has been tremendous and we look forward to continued growth and to contributing to making Connecticut an entertainment destination," said **Dan Hicks, owner and founder of Infinity Hall in Norfolk**.
- "The Connecticut DECD's Office of Culture and Tourism is a key player in our attendance support this year including direct co-op support for highway billboards, ads in tourism publications and TripAdvisor advertising. Certainly the latter helped contribute to the Aquarium being named by TripAdvisor reviewers as one of the top 25 aquariums in America and ranked as number one in New England," said **Brian Davis, PhD, president and CEO of The Maritime Aquarium at Norwalk**.
- "This has been another great summer of fun in Connecticut," said **Matt Fleury, president and CEO of the Connecticut Science Center in Hartford**. "We are projecting family vacation attendance to be up this year, thanks to our new exhibits and ongoing marketing in partnership with the Connecticut *still revolutionary* campaign."
- "Mystic Seaport is coming off of a very successful summer with a marked rise in visitation over the same period last year. We attribute the strong performance in part to the partnership the tourism industry has with the Connecticut Office of Tourism and the Connecticut *still revolutionary* campaign. Our investment in two

new exhibits and related programming was supported by the Commission's promotional efforts and helped make summer 2015 one of substantial growth for us and other institutions and businesses in the Mystic area," said **Steve White, president of Mystic Seaport.**

Visitors from coast-to-coast also continue to engage via Connecticut's social media channels, which now boast a community of more than 240,000 followers across [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Pinterest](#), [Instagram](#) and [YouTube](#). The state's official tourism website, [CTvisit.com](#), and tourism e-newsletter provide travel advice and features news about Connecticut getaways, deals, activities and events statewide.

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