

FY 2025–2026

TOWN OF BLUFFTON

STRATEGIC DESTINATION MARKETING PLAN



bluffton

HEART OF THE LOWCOUNTRY™

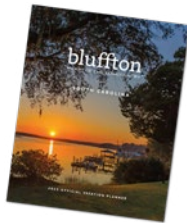


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Year In Review

Vacation Planner



Mail Fulfillment:
25,980

Paid Media Partnerships

GARDEN & GUN



TRAVEL Bluffton's Natural Abundance

The undeniable appeal of this tranquil corner of South Carolina is rooted in traditions driven by the water and the land—and the families who preserve them

September 9, 2024



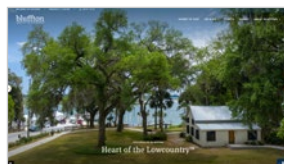
IN PARTNERSHIP WITH
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TOWN OF THE LOWCOUNTRY

Website

Pageviews:
24.7K+

Ad Impressions:
40K+

Referrals:
38K



Average Time on Site:
(0.43 industry average)

2:32

Social

Total Followers:
56,210

Impressions:
9,899,919



Occupancy Metrics

Occupancy:
77.4%

ADR:
\$129

REVPAR:
\$100

Public Relations

Mentions:
192

Impressions:
4,450,719,059

Ad Value:
\$2,293,984

Accolades

The Knot

12 Small Wedding Venues in South Carolina Across the Entire State

MICHELIN Guide

*The First MICHELIN Key Hotels:
All The Keys In The United States*

Condé Nast Traveler

*Hotel Review:
Montage Palmetto Bluff*

World Atlas

*9 Oldest Founded Small Town in
South Carolina to Visit in 2024*

HGTV

*Tour HGTV Dream
Home 2025*

Southern Living

*The 12 Best Summer
Spa Resorts*

Atlanta Magazine

*8 Quick Getaways From Atlanta
That Make For Perfect Vacations*

Forbes

*Go Boating And 'Porching'
in South Carolina Lowcountry*

Southern Living

*The 9 Best Bottles of Bourbon,
According To Southern Chefs
And Bartenders*

Executive Summary

2025-2026 Bluffton Marketing Plan Executive Summary

The Hilton Head Island-Bluffton Chamber of Commerce/Visitor & Convention Bureau continues to be the leader in promoting tourism for Bluffton. The organization as a whole utilizes national economic and tourism trends, consumer research, prior program performance, and demographics and takes into consideration the needs of our community (residents and businesses) to be in the best position as the steward of the destination.

The Visitor & Convention Bureau has partnered closely with the Town of Bluffton's leadership team to identify these pillars of marketing:

1. Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor
2. History, Culture and Arts
3. National Historic Register Designations
4. Natural Beauty, Waterways, Parks
5. Local Culinary and Local Market Experiences
6. Palmetto Bluff / Montage





Vision

A welcoming world-class community embracing nature, culture, and economic vibrancy to residents and visitors.

Mission

Stimulate the regional economy while enhancing the quality of life for all.

Brand Commitment

Bluffton, Heart of the Lowcountry™, speaks to the town's central location, its loveable characteristics, and that Bluffton is the pumping, economic life force of the Lowcountry. Most importantly, it's a tone and a feeling. When you're in the Town of Bluffton, you can see and feel the love. It's real and authentic. It's the heart symbol in your logo, on a window, the pride residents have in their downtown or the warmth shared with strangers at an oyster roast. The Town of Bluffton is a well-kept secret. Nowhere else in the Lowcountry do you feel the love you do when you are in Bluffton.

2025-2026 Goal, Strategies & Tactics

Goal: The overarching goal of the marketing plan is to drive qualified visitation to the destination through a series of demand creation and demand capture activations.

Strategies

1. Build brand awareness and support qualified visitation to the destination among target out markets.
2. Drive the discovery and exploration of the destination with deeper storytelling of the destination's key attributes.
3. Leverage a strategic mix of targeted methods to identify and reach the most qualified users.
4. Create an understanding of, and respect for, the delicate ecosystem of the destination.
5. Enhance Leisure and Group business through qualified visitation.

Tactics

1. Paid and organic social media strategy across all platforms with creation of new assets and content for videos/ reels/stories, and sourcing of user-generated content (UGC).
2. Search engine marketing, search engine optimization, social prospecting and remarketing, and digital media.
3. Development and production of the Official Bluffton Vacation Planner.
4. Traditional ad placements in print and digital with partners, as an example, Garden & Gun and Southern Living.
5. Strategically target audiences according to the demographic and persona profiles specific to Bluffton through paid, owned, and organic efforts.
6. Develop additional content (social posts, videos), designed to tell stories about the destination, its history, culture, and beautiful scenic touchpoints, such as the May River, historical locations, and parks, in engaging and informative ways and include tips and itineraries to guide visitors through the destination for deeper experiences.
7. Public relations efforts with media outreach.

The overarching goal, strategies and tactics were developed for the 2025-2026 plan, depending on budget, things like the traditional media placements may need to be adjusted. The remaining tactics will continue to help support the overarching destination goal.

Budget

Bluffton/Southern Beaufort County Budget (FY 2025-2026)

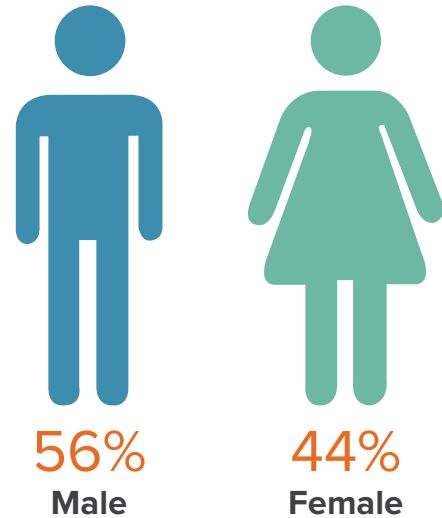
	FY 2026 VCB TOTALS	FY 2026 BLUFFTON (65%)	FY 2025 SBC (35%)
REVENUES	Bluffton & SBC		
Town of Bluffton DMO	\$365,000	\$365,000	
Southern Beaufort County DMO	\$200,000		\$200,000
TOTAL REVENUES	\$565,000		
EXPENSES			
Digital Promotions / SEM	\$40,000	\$25,992	\$14,008
Website Maintenance	\$30,000	\$19,494	\$10,506
Website Hosting	\$1,800	\$1,170	\$630
Social Marketing & Content Strategy	\$30,000	\$19,494	\$10,506
Paid Social	\$42,850	\$27,844	\$15,006
SEO	\$18,000	\$11,696	\$6,304
Bluffton Insiders (enews)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Bluffton Vacation Planner/Fulfillment	\$125,000	\$81,225	\$43,775
Regional Vacation Planner/Fulfillment	\$25,000	\$16,245	\$8,755
Media Partnerships	\$0	\$0	\$0
Photography/Videography	\$10,000	\$6,498	\$3,502
Research & Planning	\$20,000	\$12,996	\$7,004
Contingency	\$0	\$0	\$0
Ops & Management	\$222,350	\$142,350	\$80,000
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$565,000	\$365,004	\$199,996

Demographics & Personas

We use multiple primary and secondary data sources to understand who our visitors are and what motivates them to visit Bluffton. Our real-time data sources include Google Analytics and Zartico, in addition, we partner with the College of Charleston Office of Tourism Analysis. Using these insights we can extract visitor persona detail which allows us the ability to further refine our messaging to a more qualified potential consumer.

Today, as we continue to adjust to the traveler's needs, we will keep our demographics and key personas at the forefront, adapting where necessary to address consumer travel sentiment.

Our Target Leisure Traveler for the Region



—
Self-Identify

Source: 2024 Bluffton Visitor Profile Study,
College of Charleston Office of Tourism Analysis



\$100-\$199K+
Affluent Traveler



60.1%
Undergraduate
Degree or Higher



2-4 Trips per Year

5 Nights Average Length of Stay

Source: 2024 Bluffton Visitor Profile Study, Office of Tourism Analysis, College of Charleston

Persona	Tactic
Family	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital video/connected TV advertising Facebook /Instagram advertising Social and blog itineraries Search advertising Influencer family partnership
Weekenders	<p>Social media partnerships with influencers including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Couples Paid search targeting branded and category terms such as “weekend getaway” Friend groups Weekend itineraries for blog/site/social Social advertising
Arts, Culture & History Buffs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Google Display Network and social display Digital video/connected TV advertising Culture & History itineraries Influencer partnership content Long-form content (blogs)
Culinary Travelers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital /connected TV advertising Restaurant listings Social advertising Organic social posts focused on food and drink Festival & Event information and promotions Food itineraries and tour information
Activities & Recreation Enthusiasts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Social advertising Digital video/connected TV advertising Maps and itineraries outlining convenience of staying in Town of Bluffton / proximity to nearby activities and experiences
Snowbirds	<p>Seasonal campaign featuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Digital video advertising Search advertising Social advertising Accommodation aggregated offers





Marketing Plan Strategies & Tactical Details

The ultimate goal of the marketing strategy is to drive visitation to the destination through a series of demand creation and demand capture marketing activations. The strategies support the discovery and exploration of experiences that exist throughout the Town of Bluffton.

Digital Marketing

The proposed approach to the Town of Bluffton's marketing plan, outlined below, is meant to communicate how Bluffton, Heart of the Lowcountry™ - can best be experienced by a diverse group of target audiences.

From the May River to arts and culture, culinary, and outdoor activities, and a vibrant and authentic local community, the Town of Bluffton is perfectly positioned to meet the needs and interests of today's travelers.

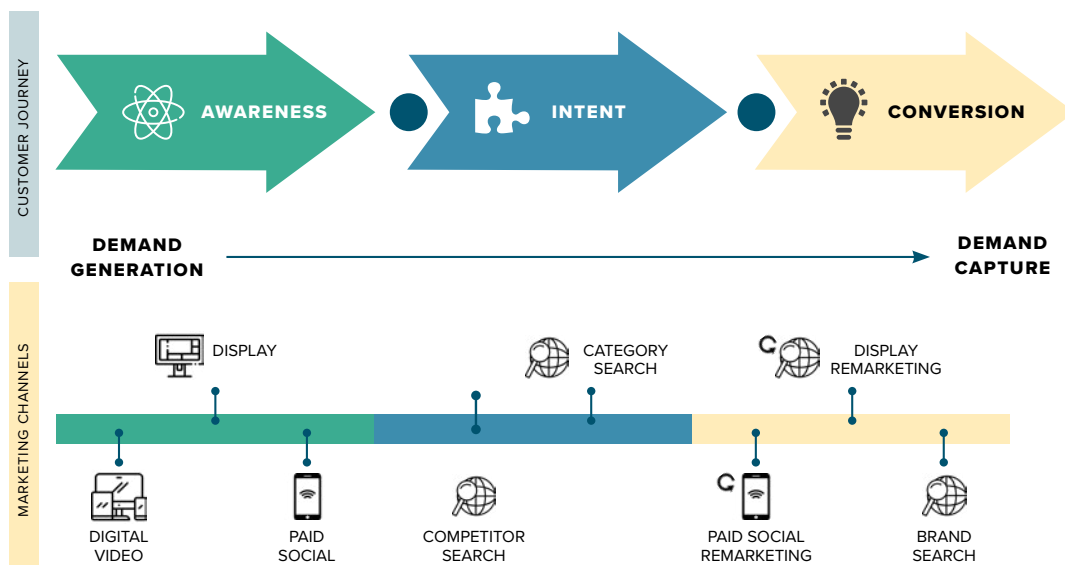
The marketing plan is designed to be highly personalized, flexible, and results-oriented. Each individual campaign that is implemented to drive exposure for the destination will be deployed based on a series of defined goals that align with each persona, and the overarching goal for the marketing plan.

The Customer Journey

Our role as a destination marketing organization is to captivate qualified travelers by creating an emotional connection to the destination through targeted communications and compelling brand storytelling. A full-funnel marketing strategy to drive increased optics and referrals to partners throughout the region is required. Our efforts will place a specific emphasis on more awareness-focused marketing channels, using immersive and authentic brand content to reach new, qualified prospects the brand can deliver for our partners. We will feature locals and businesses throughout our efforts with authentic storytelling. We will continue to nurture repeat visitors and brand loyalists with our mid-funnel tactics.

Conversion Focused Digital Marketing

The digital strategy is simple in that regardless of the channel strategy, each campaign is continuously optimized to drive increased conversions for the Town of Bluffton. The strategy will remain nimble, and scalable and all media purchased to drive exposure for the Town of Bluffton brand will be 100% measurable. As each phase is focused on a different goal and intent, measurements and benchmarks unique to Awareness, Intent, and Conversion are established to provide a holistic view of success.



Content Commonwealth

The production of data-informed content that showcases the destination using our authentic lens is core to the ongoing integrated marketing strategy. The destination no longer operates in an environment where one-off artifacts of content are produced to serve a specific purpose in a particular channel. Instead, as content is produced to support the overall goal of the marketing plan, the strategies will focus on how content can live across the entire marketing ecosystem. This helps all content work harder for the destination while ensuring we connect with the right audience at the right time in their journey with the most relevant content based on their key travel motivators.

The website, digital marketing, and social media efforts will share a consistent creative tonality to ensure the brand tone and voice are effectively communicated through each medium.

Search Engine Marketing

We will continue to execute a search engine marketing (SEM) strategy to expand and broaden our organic rankings on major search engines. We will use a targeted list of key search terms that best correlate with the Town of Bluffton's core audience segments and align with the key pillars mentioned in the executive summary.

Our efforts will align with our target consumers and influence them to visit the Bluffton website, ultimately directly increasing partner referrals.

Display & Remarketing

The primary goal of display marketing efforts for the Town of Bluffton is to cultivate consumers who have expressed interest in visiting Bluffton as noted by their online behavior, and then push them to the VisitBluffton.org website to explore, engage and ultimately book travel to the destination. Prospecting and responsive display advertising is targeted at users through:

- Facebook
- Instagram
- Google Performance Max
- Google Demand Generation
- Google Display Network

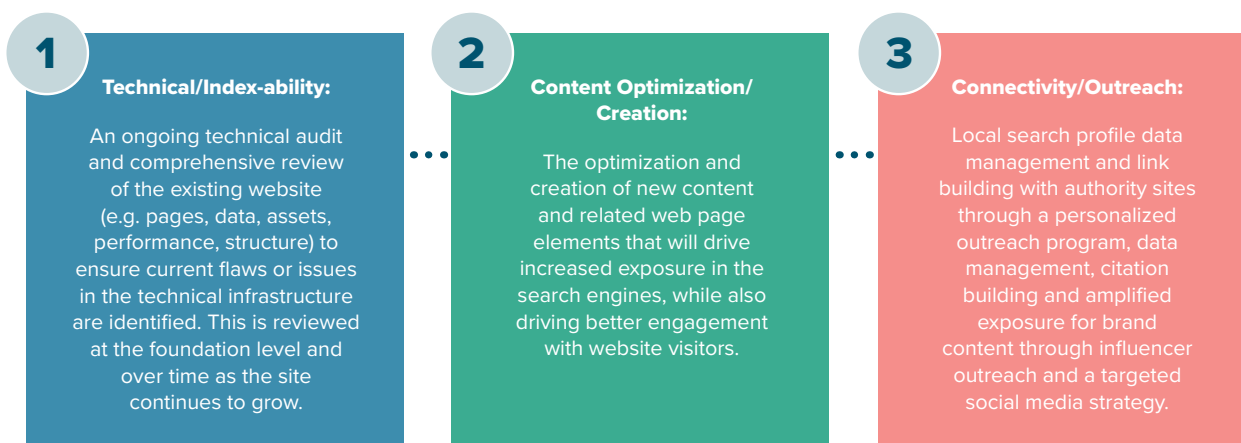
Display remarketing is used to reinforce the Town of Bluffton as the ideal vacation destination by serving ads to those who have visited VisitBluffton.org. By implementing multiple windows, we can adjust bids and messages depending on where the consumer is in the process.

Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Search engine optimization (SEO) and content marketing is about getting found for the right reasons by people who matter to our brand. Our approach to ongoing SEO marketing initiatives is multifaceted and comprehensive. SEO starts with the very basic concepts of accessibility and indexability—being discovered by the right people for the right types of content—and spans to site architecture, social

media engagement, and long-term content marketing programs and backlink strategies.

To put it simply: we assess, build a strong foundation, analyze the results, and continue to build on the strategy over time. The ongoing SEO program for the Town of Bluffton can be broken down into 3 core areas:



We will work with the Town of Bluffton to create and enhance the content strategy for the destination. Fresh, quality content must be created to drive increased engagement and more natural search traffic to the website. This will be done with the publishing of regular blogs on the website, developed by the content team.

We will conduct research to identify content marketing opportunities to optimize blog content. This will open the site to new opportunities to build traffic from a natural search traffic perspective. Blog URLs should also be used in social media posts to help increase website traffic and engagement.

Specifically, we will provide recommendations about optimizing current content and creating new content and related page elements that will drive increased search engine exposure, leading to better engagement with website visitors. Initially, optimization will be focused on identifying content areas on the website that require attention, while identifying gaps for future content creation that will need to be addressed based on ongoing competitive analysis and the monitoring of search interest trends. We will also regularly monitor the site for duplicate content and reduce or remove where possible to avoid redundancies.



The Destination Website

The VisitBluffton.org website is an integral part of the destination marketing efforts for the brand and serves as one of the first touchpoints for Bluffton. We will continue to dive deeper into identifying qualified visitors, ensuring a streamlined experience and ultimately sending relevant leads, in the form of qualified traffic, to partner sites. We will refresh copy as needed and create new engaging content to keep the website updated and current. Ongoing optimizations of content and structure will be made based on SEO research, trends data, and referral insights.

Data Strategy & Personalization

Utilizing first-party and zero-party data, the brand will work to gain a clearer understanding of our prospective visitors' behaviors and implicit desires to build a personalized, one-to-one communication strategy. This starts at the VisitBluffton.org website and extends to our email communication and throughout our entire digital marketing strategy.

The Visitor & Convention Bureau will create a data-driven, always-on, relevant, and compelling content strategy that matches the visitors' mindset and interests. As prospective visitors move through their journey the brand will continue to tailor messaging utilizing sequential storytelling to make the destination experience more relevant to each individual visitor. Ultimately, the ongoing analysis of audience data will provide us with insights to make informed choices about market opportunities and high-value audience segments, which will lead to higher engagement with the destination and more outbound referrals to partners.

Social Media

Social media continues to be a strong performing platform for the destination. In 2025–2026, we will continue to strategically grow our following and engagement.

Tangible Goals:

- Grow total social media following by 15%.
- Increase video views across all platforms by 15%.
- Grow total engagements across all social media platforms by 5%.
- Drive more overall awareness of Bluffton as a destination, by highlighting its key pillars such as History, Arts, Culture, May River, Culinary, and Natural Beauty.

These are the channels that best support Bluffton's tangible goals:



Facebook: Known for its vast user base of 3.07 billion monthly active users, Facebook is a hub for community engagement, sharing news, and fostering connections through groups, posts, and interactive content. With a focus on engaging, authentic content, Bluffton will prioritize posts that encourage interaction and conversations among followers. Whether it's showcasing local businesses, spotlighting events, or celebrating community stories, Bluffton will hop on trends for short-form video and interactive formats. By mixing in community-driven content, informative posts, and fun, interactive elements, Bluffton's social media presence in 2025 will focus on fostering a sense of belonging while keeping things fresh, dynamic, and aligned with what the audience loves to engage with.



TikTok: TikTok thrives on short-form, creative video content that often includes trending sounds, challenges, and viral moments, offering an interactive space for entertainment and discovery. This year Bluffton's approach to TikTok will focus on creating engaging content that leverages the platform's algorithm by creating content that engages users and encourages them to explore Bluffton as a must-visit destination. By hopping on trending sounds, hashtags, and challenges, we'll increase the chances of our videos appearing on users' For You pages. We'll prioritize creating short, punchy videos that captivate viewers within the first few seconds to boost completion rates and engagement, which the algorithm favors. We will closely monitor the evolving situation with TikTok, particularly concerning its legal status in various regions like the US, and adapt our strategy as needed based on how these situations unfold.



Instagram: Instagram is renowned for its visually-driven content, offering a platform for sharing stunning photos, short videos, and Stories. In 2025, our main goal will be to drive more visitors to the town by showcasing its unique charm and local experiences. We'll define our target audience as potential travelers, locals, and those interested in Southern hospitality and Lowcountry culture. To achieve this, our content will focus on high-quality visuals that highlight Bluffton's attractions, hidden gems, and events, with a strong emphasis on storytelling through engaging posts and stories. We'll encourage followers to save, share, and visit Bluffton through consistent posting, trends, and calls to action that promote the town as a must-visit destination.



Pinterest: Pinterest is known for its visual discovery engine, allowing users to find and share inspiration through pins focused on home décor, fashion, recipes, and DIY projects. For Bluffton's Pinterest strategy in 2025, we'll focus on creating high-quality, shareable content that drives saves, as Pinterest now rewards saves with increased visibility. With the removal of 'Idea Pins,' we'll prioritize traditional pins like infographics and guides showcasing local attractions, businesses, and events. Leveraging Pinterest Trends each month will be key, aligning our content with seasonal topics to stay relevant and discoverable. We'll maintain consistency in posting, especially during the Grow Phase from January to June, and use the Maintain Phase from August to November to refine our best-performing content, ensuring we stay top-of-mind year-round while capitalizing on organic growth opportunities.



YouTube: YouTube is the go-to platform for long-form video content, ranging from tutorials to vlogs, educational material, and entertainment, offering a space for creators to reach a global audience. With the growing impact of YouTube Shorts, we'll dive deeper into short-form video content, embracing both Shorts and traditional long-form videos to reach a broader audience. Our focus will be on producing high-impact, engaging Shorts that align with emerging trends. To increase visibility, we'll cross-promote content from YouTube on other platforms like Instagram, TikTok, and Facebook.

Social Media Activation – Bluffton Art Month



Dates:

April 1 – 30, 2024

Activation:

In April, we focused our organic social efforts on Bluffton Art Month, a brand new initiative hosted and promoted by Bluffton. We produced captivating videos showcasing local galleries and artists, created interactive stories, and actively promoted Arts & Culture in Bluffton.

Results:

- Art Month Posts Shared: **93**
- Impressions: **195,057**
- Engagements: **4,374**
- Engagement Rate: **2.2%**
- Link Clicks: **37**

Strategy for 2025

Overview: Bluffton Art Month is a thoughtfully crafted social media campaign designed to celebrate and promote Bluffton's vibrant arts and culture scene. Through a mix of trending content, engaging captions, and eye-catching visuals, the campaign highlights the creativity of local artists and showcases Bluffton's art scene in a distinctive way.

Now in its third year, the Bluffton Art Month social strategy builds on last year's successes, incorporating fresh ideas to broaden our reach, infuse more creativity into our content, and generate excitement across social channels. This campaign is designed to captivate art enthusiasts, locals, and visitors alike, shining a spotlight on the artistic heart of Bluffton while also having an in-person event to create further connection.

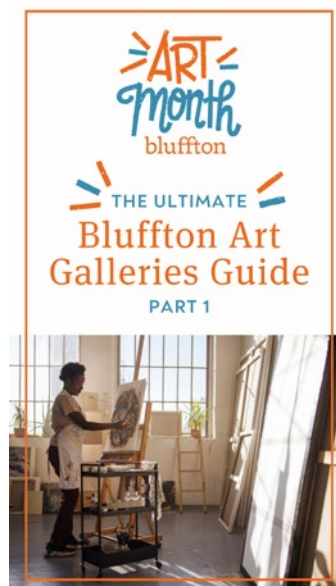
Target Markets:

Art Enthusiasts: Individuals passionate about art, including collectors, artists, and those seeking unique creative experiences.

Bluffton Community: Local residents interested in supporting Bluffton's art and cultural scene.

Regional Tourists: Visitors to the area or nearby destinations, such as Hilton Head Island, looking for enriching experiences beyond the beach.

Experience-Driven Generations: Millennials and Gen Z seeking authentic and Instagram-worthy travel experiences.



Goals:

- Elevate Bluffton’s arts and culture scene as a primary draw for visitors.
- Drive social media engagement through creative and interactive content.
- Promote Bluffton as a center for creativity and authentic cultural experiences by showcasing the work and stories of its talented artists.
- Inspire visits to Bluffton and support local businesses by promoting events and cultural experiences.

Tactics:

Consistent Content Schedule: Publish two in-feed posts per week, alternating between Reels and carousels, and two Instagram Story series per week to complement in-feed content.

Art Month Promotion: Develop a two-part promotional campaign leading up to Art Month, culminating in a recap post after the event.

Content Repurposing: Re-edit and repurpose existing street interview content from last year into engaging Reels and Stories.

Compelling Captions: Craft short, engaging captions designed to capture attention and encourage audience interaction.

Arts & Culture Highlight: Create a dedicated Instagram Highlight on the Explore Bluffton profile showcasing the town’s arts and culture scene, serving as a permanent resource.

Engagement Giveaway: Host a giveaway to increase engagement and expand reach.

Deep Dive Content: Create informative posts exploring the stories behind Bluffton’s art, including artist inspiration, creative processes, and the meaning behind their work.

Immersive Art Experiences: Highlight immersive art experiences, aligning with the “art-venture” travel trend for 2025.

LoveBlufftonSC Blog

Our Bluffton blogs drive qualified, engaged traffic to VisitBluffton.org. It’s a landing place to bring people in from our social feeds, and a great jumping-off point to show users what is happening in Bluffton. Tied closely to search engine results, we will consistently update content to stay relevant and create new content to capitalize on search interests. Our goal with the Bluffton blog is to optimize the existing long-form content on the site to improve the organic visibility of the website and provide useful, fun, and informational trip ideas and stories for future visitors.

Long-form, editorial pieces

- Recipes and “insider tips” from partner restaurants, hotels, and attractions

Itineraries:

- For Different Demographics
- For Different Interests
- For Different Vacation Lengths
- Bluffton Local Features

Leisure Media Campaigns

Bluffton is well positioned with the product travelers are looking to experience. They are looking for open spaces and deep connections with culture, history, cuisine, and natural beauty. Accolades and inclusion on top publication lists bring our brand top of mind for travelers as they look to plan their next vacation.

Our media strategy will focus on infusing local personality into our media efforts that allows the consumer to connect with the destination and inspires them to travel to Bluffton to discover more. We will further our reach with existing partners we have developed relationships with over the years as well as look to new partnerships to create a more diverse profile, ultimately expanding our visitor demographics. Examples could include, but not limited to: Garden & Gun,

Southern Living, Essence Magazine and O Magazine (Oprah Magazine).

By utilizing these platforms and endorsements to further amplify our voice, we are able to tell our brand story and leverage our overall marketing to help differentiate the destination from the competitive set and drive awareness and visitation to Bluffton. Growing these relationships with these media partners will also help with our accolades and award designations from these publications.

As we look to build out these media partnerships, we will work closely with the Town of Bluffton to determine which publications are the best fit for the overall strategy and goal of our marketing plan efforts.



Destination Public Relations

Earned media secured through public relations initiatives remains a critical driver for destination awareness. As we move into the new fiscal year, the media landscape continues to evolve, with more consumers turning to mobile and digital platforms for news and entertainment. Influencers also maintain their role as trusted sources, driving purchase intent through engaged followings and curated content.

As travelers seek more personalized and experience-driven vacations, destinations that offer authenticity, sustainability, and unique cultural experiences are gaining traction. Consumers are prioritizing meaningful getaways that allow them to connect with local communities and create lasting memories.

While leveraging core public relations strategies, we will remain closely connected with our media contacts and adapt to emerging trends. With this approach, we will build upon the momentum Bluffton has gained, ensuring it remains a top-choice destination for travelers seeking “escapism” experiences and unforgettable getaways.

Through strategic public relations efforts, we will generate a consistent stream of media coverage, as well as social and digital buzz, allowing us to maintain a competitive edge over similar destinations. Our goal is to inspire travelers to discover Bluffton and experience firsthand why it is the Heart of the Lowcountry™.





A scenic view of a golf course. In the background, a large, multi-story clubhouse with a blue roof and white trim is nestled among tall, dense pine trees. The middle ground features a well-maintained green golf course with a sand trap. In the foreground, there is a body of water, likely a pond or a lake, with reeds and grasses along the shore. The sky is clear and blue.

Photography/Videography

Asset collection will be done strategically to align with planned campaigns, including identifying gaps and analyzing performance to see what assets perform best for our target demographic. We will also leverage and repurpose existing high-performing assets captured by Harden Creative throughout 2024 to maximize their value and reach. Working with our partners to capture event content will ensure we have up to date assets to promote our destination to our audiences across social media, the website, and digital media.

Meetings & Group Sales

Bluffton continues to grow and position itself as a group destination. The variety and quality of experiences for group visitors has never been more diverse, offering a robust arts, historical and cultural scene, with growing culinary experiences. We will continue to promote Bluffton while attending travel tradeshow throughout the country.

Group Tour

Group Tour remains an important market to maintain current and new relationships. Bluffton continues to be an attractive destination for a hub and spoke opportunity. With Savannah 40 miles away, Beaufort 30 miles and Charleston just under 2 hours, the Bluffton region is ideal for groups to stay in one location for up to a week and focus on day trips from one central area.

Industry Partnerships and Tradeshow

In order to achieve our goal of increasing qualified leads, we will continue to foster our industry partnerships with conference or meeting attendance/activations and promotion on their platforms.

Our presence at industry tradeshow continues to reinforce our willingness to partner with meeting planners and increase visibility to decision-makers. This opportunity represents a large portion of our efforts and how we can grow our qualified leads throughout the year; ultimately turning into booked business for the destination partners, heads in beds in key timeframes and accommodations taxes to continue to fill the pipeline year after year.

Collateral and Fulfillment

The Official Bluffton Vacation Planner, our comprehensive guide to what to see and do, is our primary print fulfillment piece for the destination. We receive many online, as well as media and phone inquiries, and distribute the planner to state and local welcome centers, airports, along with tradeshow and promotional events with media.

In today's more visual world, telling a story through pictures and graphics appeals more to our target demographic. To further entice these target markets, we have designed the Vacation Planner for visitors to better visualize their vacations and discover what the Town of Bluffton has to offer. This is an important element to the "Travel Planning Journey."

Bluffton's natural beauty is what sets the destination apart from other communities. By tapping into our portfolio of stunning photography and combining it with updated content, we have transformed the Vacation Planner into a "lookbook" destination discovery piece so visitors can imagine themselves experiencing all things Lowcountry.

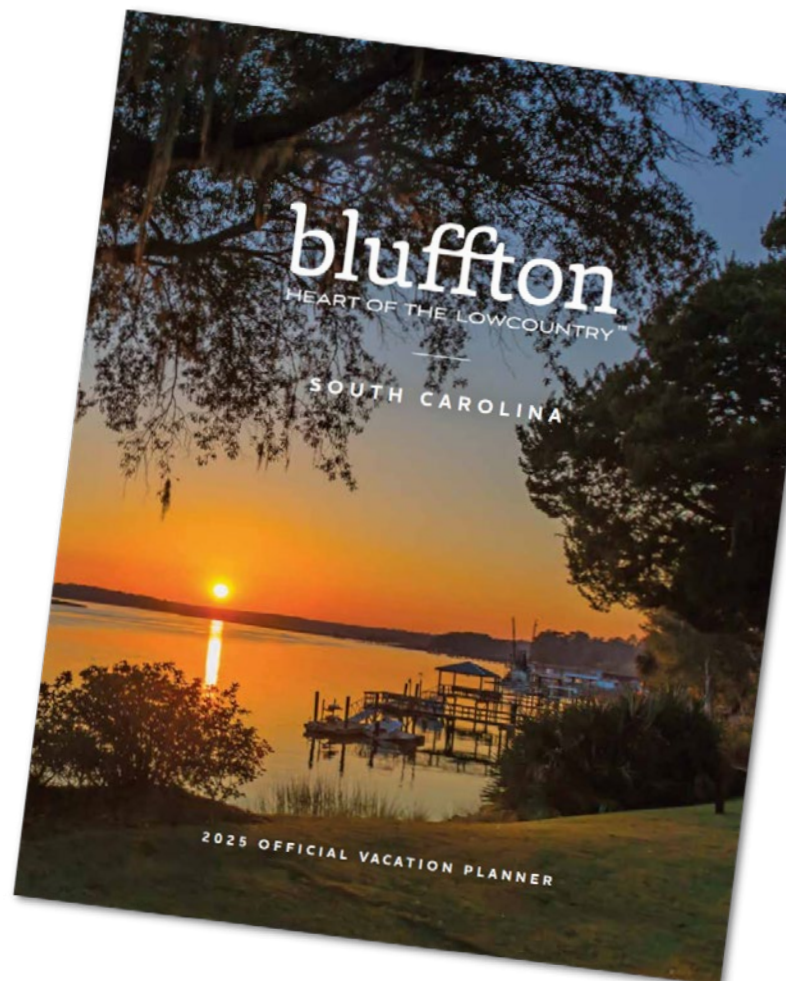
In addition to working with a digital and print publisher, our in-house marketing staff provides the business directory, local photography and editorial content management, editorial review and proofreading for this asset.

Promotions and Brochure Distribution

Included in our budget is a dedicated campaign for the promotion of the Vacation Planner for visitors to request a guide as well as for fulfillment and distribution costs. The books are distributed through:

- Online requests
- Phone inquiries
- Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport
- Hilton Head Island Airport
- South Carolina Welcome Centers
- AAA offices nationwide
- Hotel partners
- Tradeshow
- Events
- Media

Quantity: 30,000 fulfillment



Research & Analytics

Research provides powerful information to evolve and perfect the Visitor & Convention Bureau's marketing strategy. Throughout the year we will continue to extract detailed reports and information that guides us in understanding our visitors. These research programs will lead to marketing and advertising initiatives aimed at growing the tourism industry for Bluffton. The following programs will be ongoing:

- Maintenance of ThinkBluffton.org, the Chamber's online economic metrics portal.
- Keydata weekly and monthly reports which assure lodging occupancy, average room rates, room demand and RevPAR. Includes monthly comparative report with competitive destinations.
- Collaborate with College of Charleston Office of Tourism Analysis.
- Subscription to the U.S. Travel Association's (USTA) Travel Monitor Program and related reports.

These consistent research details will provide insights to produce quarterly and annual reports that provide a health check into tourism for the Town of Bluffton*.

Based on the contract with the Town of Bluffton and the Chamber, on a quarterly basis the DMO will provide the Town with:

- Number of website visits
- Number of clicks throughs made to area businesses (conversions)
- Occupancy rate
- Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR)
- Number related to mail fulfillment
- Industry awards received for marketing and public relations
- Events held and participation in events by Chamber members
- Update on public relations efforts to include; the number of media impressions/ dollar equivalent
- Social Media Reports

On an annual basis, statistics, and insights related to tourism are provided through the following reports:

- Visitor Profile Study
- Economic Impact Study

*All metrics and reports mentioned above are based upon information available. Reporting will flex and grow as more information is gathered and/ or becomes available.



Appendix

- *Personas*
- *2024 Social Recap*
- *2024 Website and Digital Marketing Recap*
- *2024 Public Relations Recap*
- *2024 Economic Impact Report*
- *2024 Visitor Profile Study*

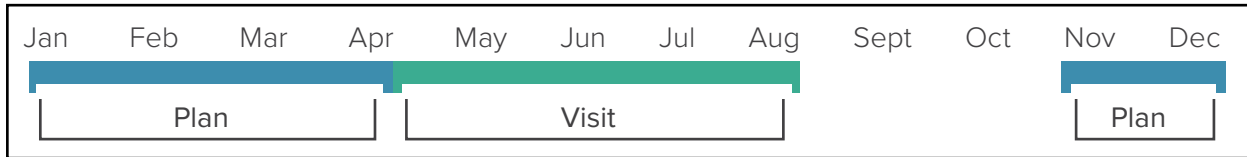


Family

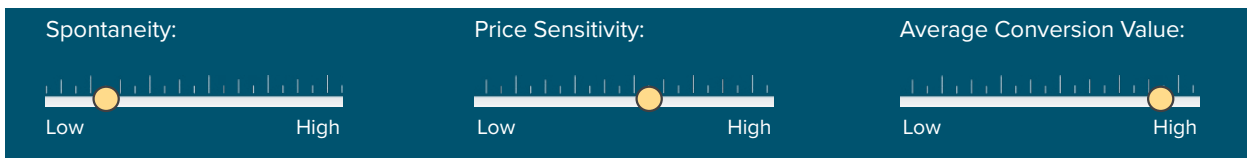


Family Travel Objective

Find a vacation spot that will please everyone during the school holidays.



Travel Habits



Who They Are



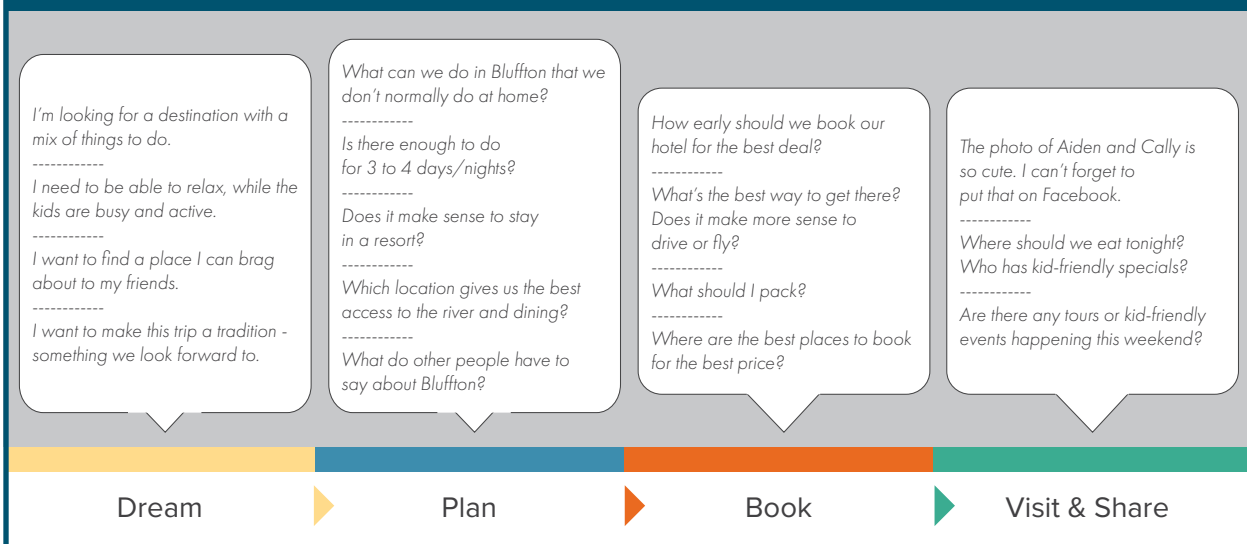
Preferred Activities & Attractions

Resorts/Hotels
Water Activities
Walking Parks
Festivals & Events
Kid-friendly Dining
Museums & Tours

Marketing Channels & Formats

Facebook Videos
Instagram
TripAdvisor
TV
Online Video
Forums & Blogs
Pinterest

"Let's Make Memories." Their Path to Purchase

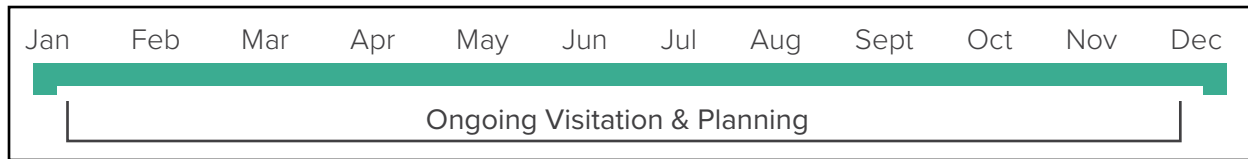


The Weekender

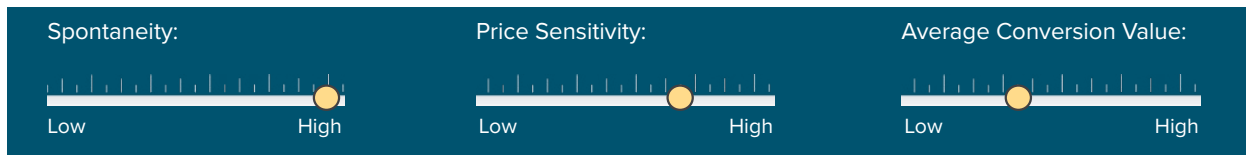


The Weekender Travel Objective

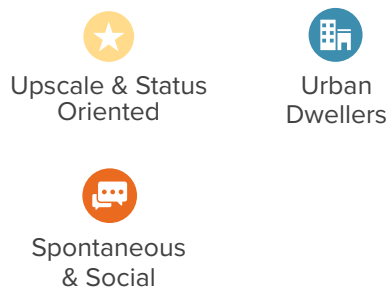
Find a fairweather weekend escape from work and city life.



Travel Habits



Who They Are



Preferred Activities & Attractions

Vacation Rentals & Resorts
Water Activities
Dining & Shopping
Romantic Things to Do
Festivals & Events
Weddings

Marketing Channels & Formats

Facebook Videos
Instagram
TripAdvisor
TV
Online Video
Forums & Blogs
Pinterest

"Let's Get Away." Their Path to Purchase

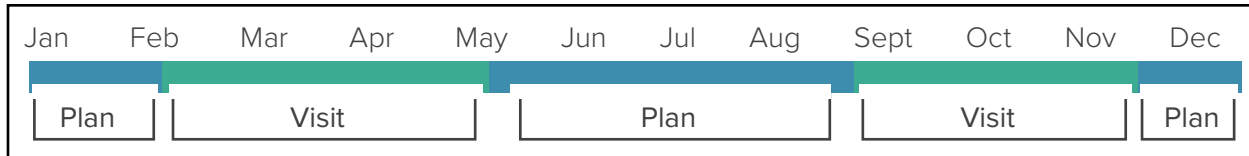


Arts, Culture & History



Arts, Culture & History Travel Objective

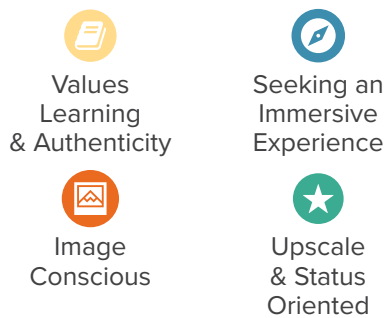
To explore cultural attractions, historical sites and the local arts scene.



Travel Habits



Who They Are



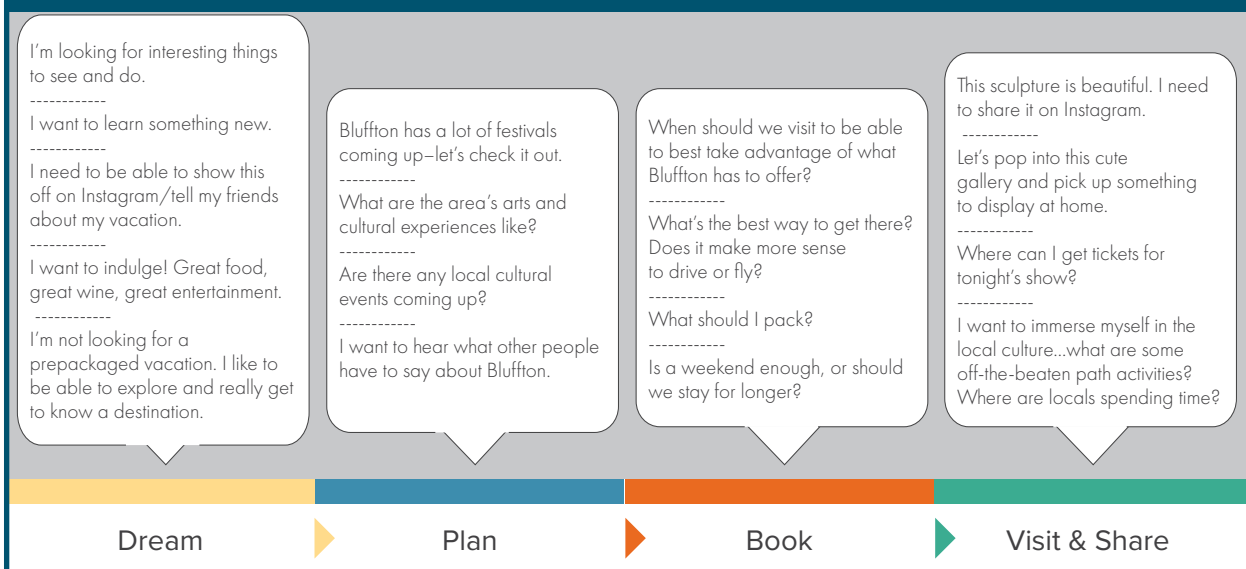
Preferred Activities & Attractions

Historical District & Attractions
 Art District & Galleries
 Cultural District
 Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage
 Festivals & Events
 Downtown

Marketing Channels & Formats

Facebook Videos
 Instagram
 TripAdvisor
 Online Video
 Forums & Blogs
 Pinterest
 Earned Media
 (Print/Digital)

“Experiences are Greater than Things.” Their Path to Purchase

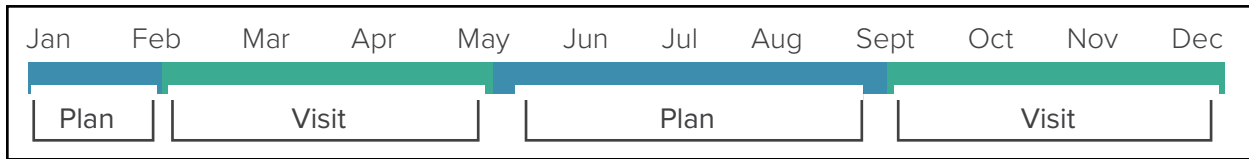


A close-up photograph of several oysters on ice with lemon wedges. The oysters are arranged on a bed of crushed ice, and several lemon wedges are scattered around them. The oysters are fresh, with their shells slightly open, revealing the glistening meat inside. The lemon wedges are bright yellow and add a pop of color to the scene. The overall composition is appetizing and suggests a fresh seafood dish.

Culinary

Culinary Travel Objective:

Be immersed in a new destination (or an old favorite) by exploring the pursuit of unique and memorable culinary experiences.



Travel Habits



Who They Are



Preferred Activities & Attractions

Food Events
Food Tours
Wine, Beer and Food Festivals
Specialty Dining Experiences
Oyster Roasts

Marketing Channels & Formats

Facebook Videos
Instagram
TripAdvisor
Forums & Blogs
Pinterest



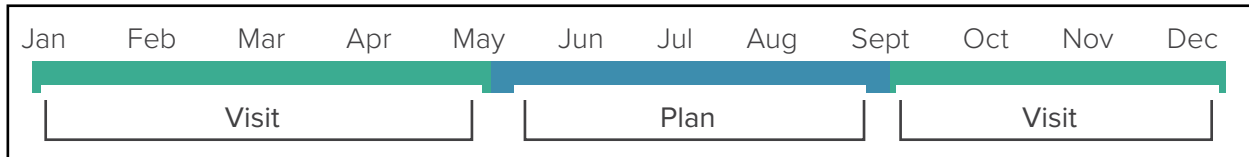
Activities & Recreation Enthusiasts



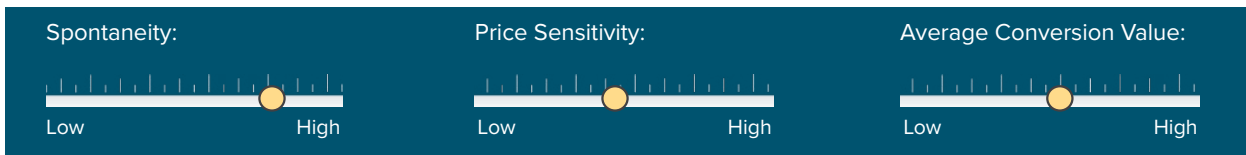
Activities / Recreation Enthusiast

Travel Objective

Find a destination where they can pursue their interests on their downtime.



Travel Habits



Who They Are



Preferred Activities & Attractions

Boating & Water Activities
Hiking & Biking
Live Music & Shows
Golf

Marketing Channels & Formats

Facebook Videos
Instagram
Twitter
TripAdvisor
TV
Online Video
Forums & Blogs

"Let's Explore." Their Path to Purchase



Snowbirds



Snowbirds Travel Objective

Find a warm destination that feels like home for the winter, where they can welcome family and friends for visits.



Travel Habits



Who They Are



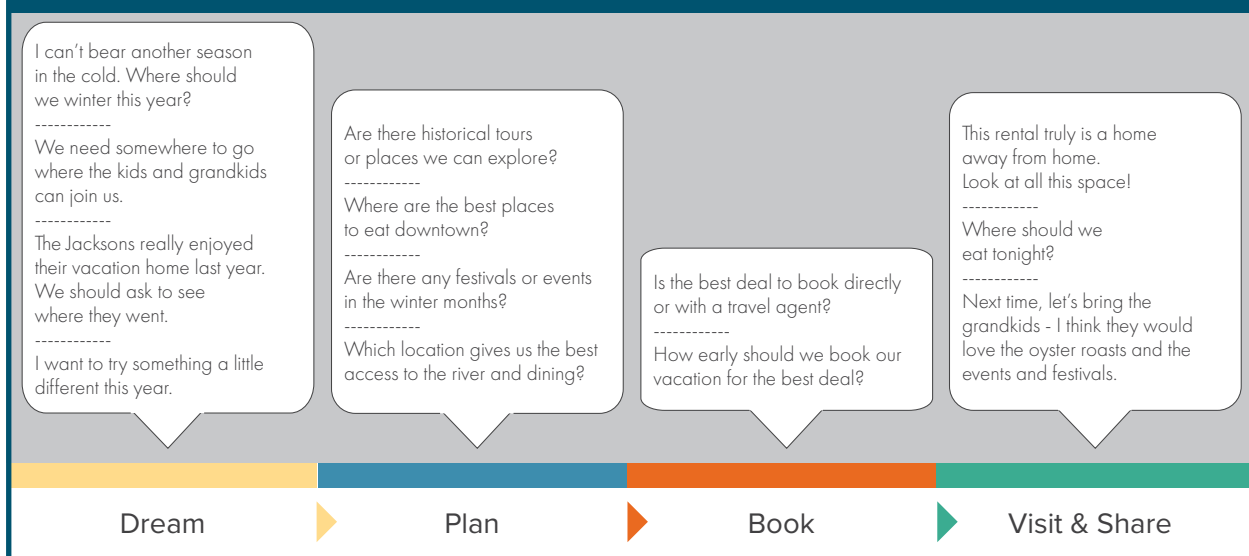
Preferred Activities & Attractions

Vacation Rentals
Dining
Golfing
History / Culture
Excursion / Tour
Walking

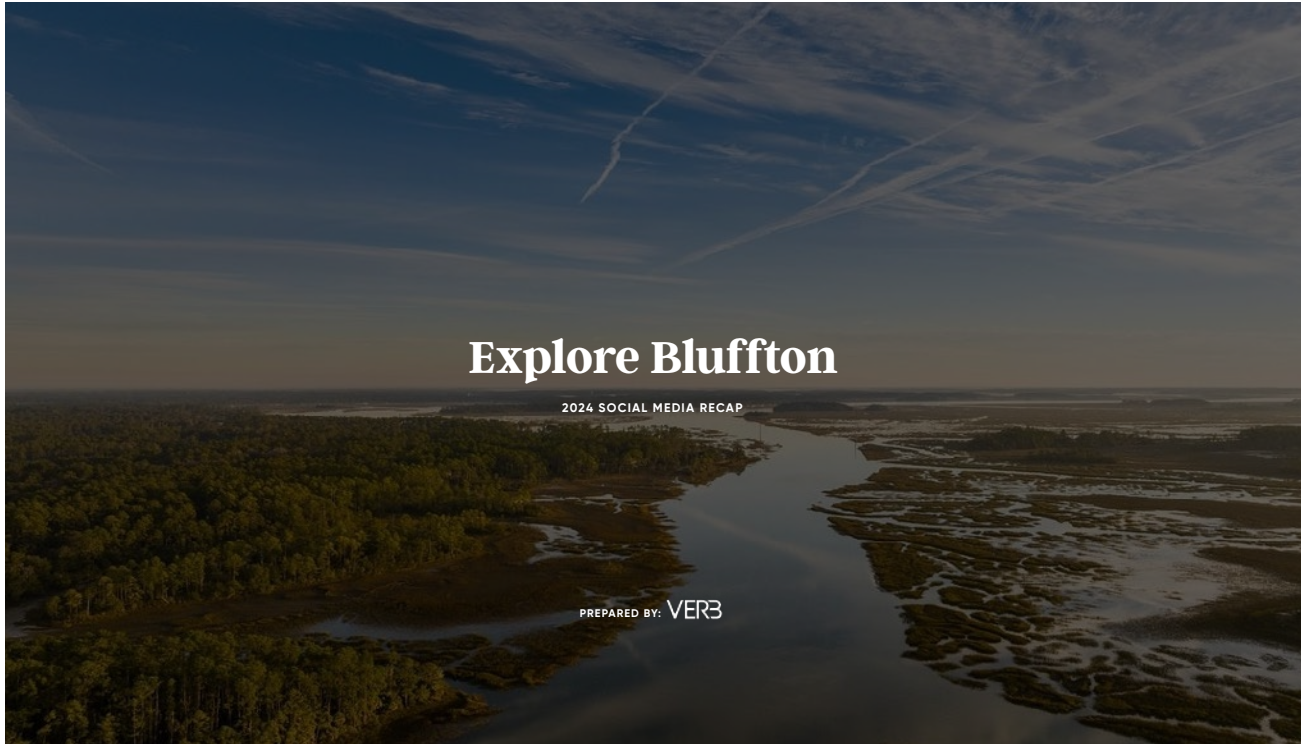
Marketing Channels & Formats

Facebook
Print
TripAdvisor
Radio
TV
Online Video

"Let's Make this Feel like Home." Their Path to Purchase



2024 Social Recap



Bluffton 2024 Highlights

LET'S CELEBRATE THE WINS:

- Net follower growth of 7K, which was an increase of 41.2% YoY
- Video views increased 35.2%, totalling 2,214,916 views
- 65.5% increase in videos on Facebook, totalling 48 published
- Organic shares on Instagram increased 62.9%, totalling 3,402
- Likes on X increased 51%, totalling to 209
- Total TikTok impressions up by 60.5%, totalling 52,043
- Engagements on TikTok up by 126.2%, totalling 1,500

VERB

Top Performing Posts by Engagements

JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 1, 2024



SPANISH MOSS
May 23
11,691 Engagements



CHARMING STREETS
July 24
10,073 Engagements



FAMILY VACATION
May 8
6,955 Engagements

VERB

Channel Overview

Instagram Overview

Total Followers: 12,275

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

59.7% women, 19.6% men, 20.7% non-binary or unlisted

Our top age demographic are users between the ages 35-44 (26.3%), followed by 45-54 (21.2%) and 55-64 (20.6%).

11,698 of our followers are based in the United States. Among the U.S.-based followers, 2,010 are from Bluffton, 859 are from Hilton Head Island, and 512 are from Okatie.

KEY INSIGHTS

Short-form video content continues to outshine other styles when it comes to engaging our audience. Showcasing the serene beauty, charm, and offerings of Bluffton through video not only captures attention but resonates deeply with our audience. By pairing aesthetic Lowcountry clips with trending audio, we're able to go beyond our followers feed and land on Explore pages and recommended posts, which has likely been a key driver of our Instagram growth this year.

**YTD as of December 1, 2024*



VERB

Instagram Top Performing Posts

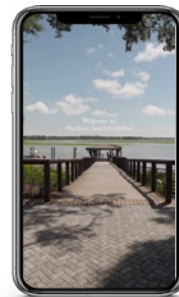
RANKED BY OVERALL ENGAGEMENTS



HGTV ANNOUNCEMENT
October 29
1,343 Engagements



HGTV SECOND ANNOUNCEMENT
November 25
1,054 Engagements



WELCOME TO BLUFFTON
September 13
784 Engagements

VERB

Facebook Overview

Total Followers: 40,405

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS
79.6% women, 20.4% men.

Our top age demographic are users between the ages 45-54 (28%), followed by 55-64 (23%) and 65+ (23%).

39,428 of followers are based in the United States, with 1,196 followers being from Charlotte, 1,056 from Jacksonville, and 906 from New York City.

KEY INSIGHTS

On Facebook, static images and carousels are currently resonating best with our audience. Photos that capture the beauty and charm of Bluffton, as well as family and community-focused content that showcases life in the town, have generated significant positive engagement. Moving forward, we'll continue prioritizing static images while gradually integrating videos into our audience's feed. These videos will reflect the same themes of nature, family, and community, aiming to expand our reach on the platform and attract new followers.

**YTD as of December 1, 2024*



VERB

Facebook Top Performing Posts

JANUARY 1 - DECEMBER 1, 2024



SPANISH MOSS
May 23
11,691 Engagements



CHARMING STREETS
July 24
10,073 Engagements



FAMILY VACATION
May 8
6,955 Engagements

VERB

X (Formerly Twitter)

Total Followers: 694

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

*X removed its insights in 2020, so audience data cannot be gathered.

KEY INSIGHTS

As X continues to evolve, it presents both challenges and opportunities for engagement. Despite the changes, we're still seeing meaningful interactions with our audience. Community updates, events, and aesthetic photos tend to perform best, as users often turn to X for news and updates. This makes it an ideal platform for sharing important announcements or link-based content, as users here are more likely to take the extra step to learn more.



*YTD as of December 1, 2024

VERB

X Top Performing Posts

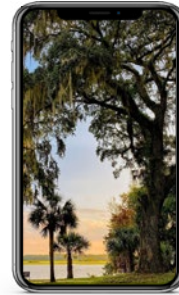
RANKED BY OVERALL ENGAGEMENTS



OYSTER FACTORY PARK UPDATE
January 24
17 Engagements



VISITOR SURVEY
January 14
13 Engagements



VISITOR SURVEY
November 15
11 Engagements

VER3

Pinterest Overview

Total Followers: 18

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS

81.7% women, 10.8% men, 7.5% unspecified

Our top age demographic are users between the ages 18–24 (39.5%), followed by 25–34 (31.1%) and 35–44 (10.1%).

20% of our audience have an unlisted location, and 64.3% are based in the United States. 83.4% of this audience is interested in travel, 76.8% are interested in weddings, 78.4% are interested in food and drinks, and 82.3% are interested in event planning.

KEY INSIGHTS

While we're still growing our presence on Pinterest, we've developed a content plan tailored to our audience's interests. By focusing on weddings, things to do, food and beverage, and aesthetic Lowcountry photos, we've seen impressive engagement and impressions. As the platform evolves with new trends, we'll continue to monitor changes to stay ahead and align with what our audience is searching for.

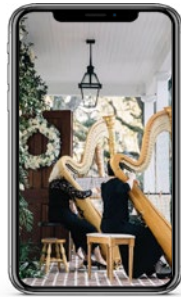
**Followers are YTD, audience demographics are within the last 30 days, and audience insights are reported on for the last 6 months due to Pinterest API limitations*



VER3

Pinterest Performing Posts

RANKED BY OVERALL IMPRESSIONS



UNIQUE LOWCOUNTRY WEDDING IDEAS

January 13
145 Impressions



A WEEKEND IN BLUFFTON

October 30
59 Impressions



LOWCOUNTRY SUNSETS

November 6
42 Impressions

VERB

TikTok Overview

Total Followers: 2,321

AUDIENCE DEMOGRAPHICS
38.1% men, 61.9% women

Our top age demographic are users 25-34 (32.0%), followed by 35-44 (21.7%), and 45-54 (20.5%)

Of our 2,321 followers, 2,293 are based in the United States.

KEY INSIGHTS

With the rise of video content and an increase in owned assets, we've been able to share more TikTok content that resonates with our audience. TikTok offers a space to have fun, get creative, and highlight the unique aspects of Bluffton. As users increasingly turn to TikTok as a search tool, we're focusing on using SEO keywords, trending topics, and eye-catching videos to ensure Bluffton stands out in those search results.

*YTD as of December 1, 2024



VERB

TikTok Top Performing Posts

RANKED BY OVERALL VIEWS



MONTAGE PALMETTO BLUFF

January 5
8,103 Views



CHURCH OF THE CROSS

January 31
1,457 Views



BLUFFTON WEDDING

May 7
1,275 Views

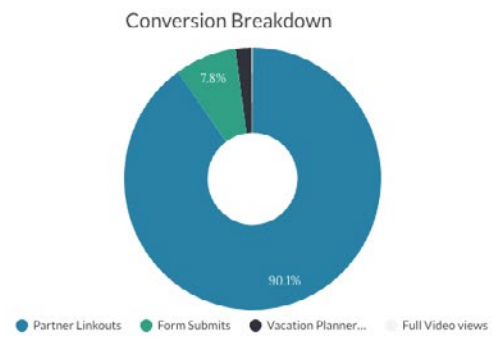
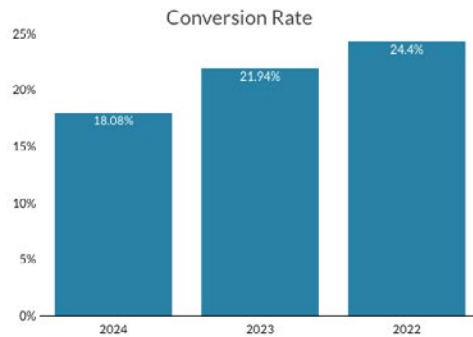
VER3

2024 Website & Digital Marketing Recap

BLUFFTON

CONVERSION RATE OVERVIEW

- In 2024, our conversion rate dropped slightly to 18.08% in line with drops we see in Organic traffic overall.

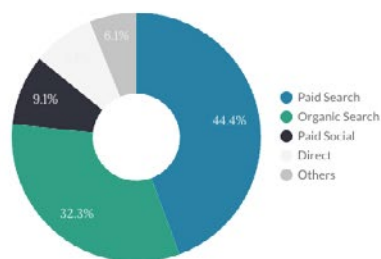


VISIT BLUFFTON

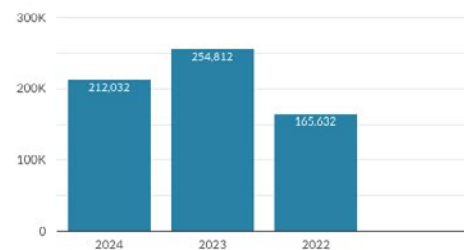
TOTAL WEBSITE VISITATION

- Overall website visitation decreased to 212K visits in 2024, a -16.8% decrease YOY.
- Paid social campaigns drove about 54% of total site sessions with about 6% of total partner referrals. Paid search was very efficient, driving 45% of total referrals on 15% of site sessions. Overall in 2024, the site struggled from an organic search perspective, seeing about -32% less traffic than the prior year.

Visitors by Channel



Website Visits

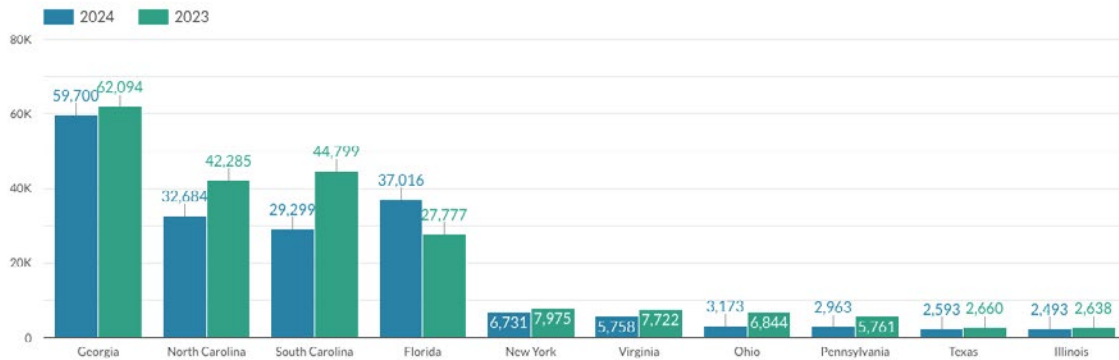


BLUFFTON

DMAs

- In 2024, the top regions stayed in line with what we saw in 2023. However, 2024 saw a large increase in Florida traffic. Our South Carolina and North Carolina markets struggled noticeably compared to other regions.

Top 10 Markets



WEBSITE PERFORMANCE OVERVIEW

Jan 1, 2024 - Dec 31, 2024

VERB

Sessions

212,032

 ↑ 6.4% YoY
 ↑ 6.4% PoP

Partner Referrals

38,329

 ↓ -8.8% YoY
 ↓ -8.8% PoP

Partner Referral Rate

18.08%

 ↓ -14.3% YoY
 ↓ -14.3% PoP

Average session length (sec)

28.02

 ↓ -15.6% YoY
 ↓ -15.6% PoP

Engagement rate

53.74%

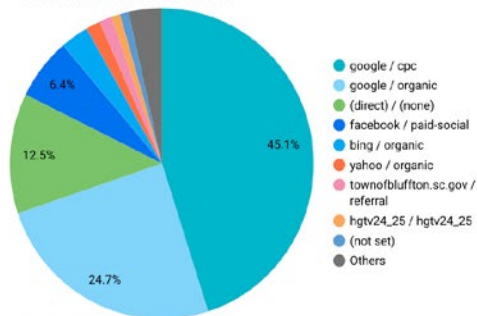
 ↓ -6.0% YoY
 ↓ -6.0% PoP

Page Views

332,116

 ↑ 7.4% YoY
 ↑ 7.4% PoP

Source/Medium Breakdown



	Source / Medium	Sessions	Sessions % of Total	Partner Referrals	Partner Referrals % of Total
1.	facebook / paid-social	115,386	54.42%	2,464	6.43%
2.	google / cpc	33,153	15.64%	17,278	45.08%
3.	google / organic	28,667	13.52%	9,474	24.72%
4.	(direct) / (none)	15,678	7.39%	4,795	12.51%
5.	hgtv24_25 / hgtv24_25	2,400	1.13%	363	0.95%
6.	bing / organic	2,320	1.09%	1,154	3.01%
7.	news.grets.store / referral	2,273	1.07%	0	0%
8.	(not set)	1,466	0.69%	351	0.92%
	Grand total	212,032	100%	38,329	100%

1 - 100 / 219 < >

2024 Public Relations Recap



COVERAGE HIGHLIGHTS

2024 BLUFFTON RESULTS

**Results represent 2024 calendar year mentions*

192
MENTIONS
4,450,719,059
IMPRESSIONS
\$2,293,983.58
AD VALUE

VOGUE

An Endless Summer in South Carolina's Lowcountry—With a Guest Appearance by Stan Smith (the Man, Not the Shoe)



Forbes

The 12 Best Resorts On Hilton Head Island For Spa Trips, Romance And More



Best Hotel For Romance On Hilton Head Island: Old Town Bluffton Inn

COVERAGE HIGHLIGHTS

WELLNESS/RECREATION



Lowcountry Christmas: Style, Design and Traditions That Make This Region Special



Montage Palmetto Bluff, Bluffton, South Carolina

Lowcountry Christmas is a holiday tradition that has been celebrated in the Lowcountry for generations. It's a time of year when the region's unique culture and traditions come to the fore. HGTV's Lowcountry Christmas: Style, Design and Traditions That Make This Region Special is a new series that explores the region's holiday traditions and the beautiful scenery that makes the Lowcountry a special place to visit.



The 10 Best Day Trips From Charleston



3 OF 10
Bluffton



8 Fun Ideas for Vacations With Young Grandkids



Bluffton, South Carolina

Bluffton is a beautiful coastal town in South Carolina that offers a wide range of activities for visitors. From its historic downtown to its beautiful beaches, Bluffton has something for everyone. AARP's 8 Fun Ideas for Vacations With Young Grandkids is a new series that explores the many ways to enjoy Bluffton with your family.

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Spring travel: 8 quick getaways by car or plane



Bluffton, South Carolina

55-minute flight and 40-minute drive



From Charleston to Savannah: the ultimate Lowcountry road trip

Take a well-deserved breather in Bluffton

ECOTOURISM

INSIDEHOOK

9 Luxury Hotels With Epic Animal Encounters

Montage Palmetto Bluff (Bluffton, South Carolina)

Prove that not all properties with excellent wildlife viewing are in the middle of nowhere. Montage Palmetto Bluff is spread across 20,000 acres of marshlands, pristine coastline and maritime forests in Bluffton, South Carolina (an easy 40-minute drive from Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport). Alligators, turtles and white-tailed deer are some of the many critters that live on site. Guests of all ages can look forward to a range of nature experiences, from naturalist-led dawn chorus walks filled with the melody of chirping birds to lagoon boat tours.

VERANDA

These Are the Chicest Hotels in Every State

South Carolina: Montage Palmetto Bluff

The Montage Palmetto Bluff stands as South Carolina's premiere property and it was also where Haley and Justin Bieber exchanged their vows. With meticulously designed accommodations, a Jack Nicklaus signature golf course, and a serene spa, the resort offers a sophisticated retreat, which is harmonized by high-end comfort and the appeal of the coastal landscape.

the knot

How to Get Married in SC—Experts Share Where You Should Start

Bluffton

Although Bluffton may be a fan-favorite coastal town in South Carolina for its seaside charm and proximity to Hilton Head Island, Bonazzi notes that it's also a "haven for couples seeking a relaxed yet elegant wedding vibe." Furthermore, the region houses many wedding venues including The Sea Pines Resort, Sonesta Resort Hilton Head Island and Howitt Oaks.



2024 Economic Impact Report

ESTIMATED TOTAL IMPACT OF TOURISM IN

Bluffton

ON BEAUFORT COUNTY, SOUTH CAROLINA 2024



MARCH 2025

CONDUCTED BY:

MELINDA PATIENCE
DANIEL GUTTENTAG, PH.D.



COLLEGE OF
CHARLESTON
OFFICE OF TOURISM ANALYSIS

66 GEORGE STREET | CHARLESTON, SC 29424
OTA.COFC.EDU

Impact of Tourism in Bluffton on Beaufort County, 2023

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INTRODUCTION1

METHODOLOGY.....1

RESULTS2

APPENDIX.....4

Impact of Tourism in Bluffton on Beaufort County, 2024

Introduction

This study estimates the economic impact generated by tourism to the Town of Bluffton in the year 2024. It examines the impact of such tourism on the broader economy of Beaufort County, South Carolina, and takes into account the direct spending of the visitors along with the positive secondary effects of such expenditures. The analysis entailed individually estimating the economic impacts associated with overnight visitors and day trip visitors, and then summing them together for an overall total.

This analysis was conducted by Dr. Daniel Guttentag and Melinda Patience of the Office of Tourism Analysis, which is part of the School of Business at the College of Charleston.

Methodology

The economic impact estimations undertaken for this analysis involved various steps and diverse data. Initially, visitor volume estimates were produced using data on lodging demand provided by Key Data, combined with visitor behavior data that is collected via a Visitor Profile Survey. The total number of visitors in each segment for 2024 can be observed in Table 1. These figures then were used to estimate the total direct visitor spending associated with each segment. Such spending estimates also relied upon visitor expenditure data collected as part of the previously mentioned Visitor Profile Survey, which asks respondents about their spending in over a dozen categories (e.g., lodging, food,

transportation, and activities). The list of expenditure categories, and the total estimated direct expenditure in each category for 2024, can be observed in Table 2.

The previously described data subsequently were used to determine average per-person expenditures. These figures were combined with the estimated visitor counts and used as inputs for a regional economic impact modelling tool, IMPLAN. IMPLAN is an input-output (I-O) model that uses regionalized economic data and other information to determine economic output that accounts for direct expenditure and the secondary benefits of such expenditure (i.e., indirect and induced impacts). The model further estimates labor impacts and tax revenues.

Table 1. Number of Bluffton Visitors

Segment	Visitors
Overnight	173,167
Day Trip	310,606
Total Visitors	483,773

The following metrics, as estimated by the economic impact model, are covered within this report:

- **Employment:** The number of jobs in the region supported by the economic activity, which involves an industry-specific mix of full-time, part-time, and seasonal employment. Seasonal jobs are adjusted to annual equivalents.

Impact of Tourism in Bluffton on Beaufort County, 2024

Table 2. 2023 Estimated Total Expenditure by Spending Category

Category	Totals
Transportation (around the destination)	\$13,466,660
Lodging	\$20,538,088
Food – Dining Out	\$33,240,724
Food – Groceries	\$8,140,014
Shopping	\$35,187,147
Spas	\$5,491,259
Golf	\$3,233,902
Biking	\$2,166,248
Performance/Visual Arts	\$6,852,619
Festivals	\$3,336,652
Museums/Historical Tours	\$7,520,392
Boating/Sailing/Fishing	\$6,986,322
Nature-based Activities	\$1,767,994
Dolphin Tours	\$3,054,782
Tennis	\$1,325,637
Other Expenses	\$8,800,901
Total Expenditure	\$161,109,342

- **Labor income:** All forms of employment income, including employee compensation (wages and benefits) and proprietor income.
- **Output:** The total value of industry production, which for the service sector represents total sales, for the retail sector represents gross margins, and for the manufacturing sector represents sales minus inventory change.
- **Direct:** The initial effects to local industries that are directly receiving the expenditures of interest.
- **Indirect:** The secondary effects resulting from business-to-business purchases in the supply chain occurring throughout the region, as triggered by or in support of the direct expenditure activity.
- **Induced:** The ripple effects in the region resulting from household spending of

income, after the removal of taxes, savings, and commuters.

- **Taxes:** These revenues take into account a variety of taxes, including sales tax, property tax, and income tax. These figures do not account for tourism taxes, such as accommodation taxes.

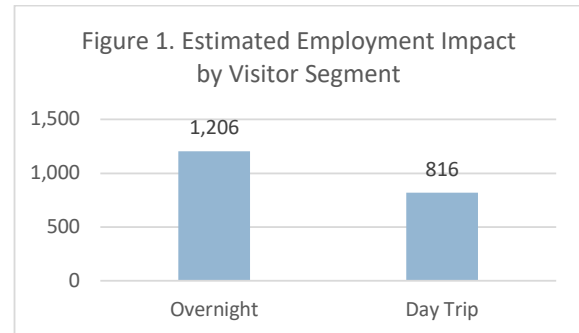
Results

Visitation numbers to Bluffton remained quite stable in 2024, declining by less than 1% versus the prior year. An estimated total of **484 thousand visitors** came to Bluffton in 2024, down 0.6% compared to 2023. The overall economic impact of this tourism on Beaufort County was **\$205.78 million**, down 1.1% compared to 2023. This economic impact represents not just the direct expenditure by visitors, but also the secondary ripple effects of such economic activity that occur as tourism

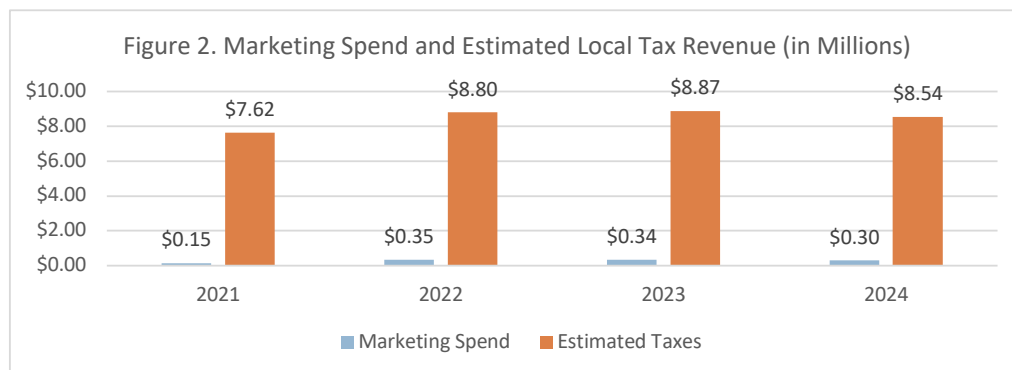
Impact of Tourism in Bluffton on Beaufort County, 2024

businesses spend operating funds and as tourism dollars are re-spent within the region. Bluffton tourism also (directly and indirectly) supported an estimated **2,022 jobs**, which represent 2.2% of all jobs in Beaufort County, as per employment data provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Similar to the economic impact figure, this employment figure does not refer solely to jobs within the tourism sector, but rather to a combination of full-time, part-time, and seasonal jobs that are both directly and indirectly supported by the broader tourism economy and its secondary effects on non-tourism industries and enterprises. Impact estimates for each of the visitor segments are presented in the Appendix (Tables A1 - A3), and the employment impacts are presented in Figure 1.

The total output multiplier for tourist spending was calculated using the model estimates. This multiplier represents the ratio of total economic impact to direct spending. The estimated output multiplier for Bluffton tourism on Beaufort County was **1.34**. This signifies that every dollar spent by tourists in Bluffton increased output in the overall Beaufort County economy by a total of \$1.34.



The tourist expenditures generated an estimated **\$2.24 million** in tax revenues for local Beaufort County governments. The Town of Bluffton earned an additional **\$6.31 million** in accommodations tax and hospitality tax, as reported by the Town of Bluffton Revenue Services. Together, this **\$8.52 million** in tax revenue represents a decrease of just under \$331,000 (3.7%) compared to 2023 and a decrease of 3.0% compared to 2022. This tax revenue also corresponds with a Return on Tax Investment (ROTI) of 28.91, based on the \$295.5 thousand that was spent on destination marketing in 2024. In other words, each dollar spent by the Visitor & Convention Bureau yielded an estimated return of **\$28.91** in local tax revenue. The comparative relationship over the past four years between destination marketing expenditure and the estimated local tax revenues generated from tourism can be seen in Figure 2.



Impact of Tourism in Bluffton on Beaufort County, 2024

Appendix

Table A1. Overnight – Estimated Economic Impact on Beaufort County

	Employment	Labor Income	Output
Direct	931	\$28,507,558	\$83,713,785
Indirect	176	\$8,458,190	\$29,085,221
Induced	99	\$4,772,369	\$16,640,691
Total	1,206	\$41,738,117	\$129,439,697

Table A2. Day Trip – Estimated Economic Impact on Beaufort County

	Employment	Labor Income	Output
Direct	638	\$17,959,299	\$46,507,317
Indirect	115	\$5,347,430	\$19,205,835
Induced	63	\$3,047,733	\$10,628,027
Total	816	\$26,354,462	\$76,341,179

Table A3. Total, All Segments – Estimated Economic Impact on Beaufort County

	Employment	Labor Income	Output
Direct	1,569	\$46,466,857	\$130,221,102
Indirect	291	\$13,805,620	\$48,291,056
Induced	162	\$7,820,102	\$27,268,718
Total	2,022	\$68,092,579	\$205,780,876
Estimated Local Tax Revenue			\$2,235,114
Local Tourism Tax Revenue (ATax and HTax)			\$6,307,369
Total Estimated Local Tax Revenue			\$8,542,482

*Impact of Tourism in Bluffton on Beaufort County, 2024***Table A4. Top 50 Industries Impacted by Bluffton Tourism**

	Industry	Output
1	Full-service restaurants	\$34,892,581
2	Hotels and motels, including casino hotels	\$20,541,164
3	Retail - Miscellaneous store retailers	\$19,174,392
4	Transit and ground passenger transportation	\$13,570,629
5	Other real estate	\$12,266,735
6	Museums, historical sites, zoos, and parks	\$9,304,052
7	Performing arts companies	\$7,031,049
8	Water transportation	\$6,993,959
9	Fitness and recreational sports centers	\$6,805,437
10	Personal care services	\$5,623,253
11	Owner-occupied housing	\$5,395,212
12	Insurance agencies, brokerages, and related activities	\$4,907,925
13	Scenic and sightseeing transportation and support activities for transportation	\$3,509,875
14	Other amusement and recreation industries	\$3,499,894
15	Retail - Food and beverage stores	\$3,100,851
16	Management of companies and enterprises	\$2,207,666
17	Monetary authorities and depository credit intermediation	\$1,973,301
18	Other local government enterprises	\$1,656,488
19	Legal services	\$1,516,162
20	Employment services	\$1,469,642
21	Advertising, public relations, and related services	\$1,408,910
22	Services to buildings	\$1,258,099
23	Limited-service restaurants	\$1,242,835
24	All other food and drinking places	\$1,207,381
25	Travel arrangement and reservation services	\$1,206,373
26	Management consulting services	\$1,157,611
27	Securities and commodity contracts intermediation and brokerage	\$1,118,845
28	Offices of physicians	\$1,068,592
29	Other financial investment activities	\$1,060,614
30	Maintenance and repair construction of nonresidential structures	\$1,042,998
31	Nondepository credit intermediation and related activities	\$1,030,577
32	Independent artists, writers, and performers	\$985,009
33	Accounting, tax preparation, bookkeeping, and payroll services	\$895,965
34	Data processing, hosting, and related services	\$873,382
35	Landscape and horticultural services	\$871,539
36	Postal service	\$871,028
37	Lessors of nonfinancial intangible assets	\$690,122
38	Commercial and industrial machinery and equipment rental and leasing	\$682,337
39	Internet publishing and broadcasting and web search portals	\$677,420
40	Retail - Motor vehicle and parts dealers	\$662,576

Impact of Tourism in Bluffton on Beaufort County, 2024

	Industry	Output
41	Couriers and messengers	\$654,721.44
42	Automotive repair and maintenance, except car washes	\$636,899.41
43	Insurance carriers, except direct life	\$621,773.26
44	Wholesale - Other nondurable goods merchant wholesalers	\$602,170.64
45	Retail - General merchandise stores	\$592,378.81
46	Promoters of performing arts and sports and agents for public figures	\$588,072.84
47	Truck transportation	\$572,007.50
48	Retail - Building material and garden equipment and supplies stores	\$520,631.66
49	Tenant-occupied housing	\$491,188.90
50	Personal and household goods repair and maintenance	\$480,322.46

2024 Visitor Profile Survey

Bluffton Visitor Profile Survey

2024

Melinda Patience
Daniel Guttentag, Ph.D.



HILTON HEAD ISLAND-BLUFFTON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE



COLLEGE OF
CHARLESTON
OFFICE OF TOURISM ANALYSIS

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

PREPARED FOR:

HILTON HEAD ISLAND-BLUFFTON
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

BY:

OFFICE OF TOURISM ANALYSIS
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BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS**

Millennials (29-44 years old) represented 39.8% of the respondents, followed by older Gen Z (19-28 years old) (33.6%), Baby Boomers (61+ years old) (14.6%), and then Gen X (45-60 years old) (11.5%). Over 54% of those surveyed had a Bachelor's degree or higher, and more than 62% had an annual household income of \$75,000 or more. Also, nearly 73% of the respondents were married.

POINT OF ORIGIN

The respondents resided in 268 geographical areas / MSAs (Metropolitan Statistical Areas) throughout the U.S., stretching from the east coast to the west coast. More respondents resided in California than any other state (8.6%). Second was New York (8.0%), followed then by Pennsylvania (5.4%), Kentucky (4.7%), Ohio (4.6%), and Washington (4.3%). In-state visitors did not comprise a significant portion of the respondents (8.1%).

According to a market penetration analysis, the following MSAs were major markets amongst respondents: New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ; Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA; Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA; Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD; Lexington-Fayette, KY; Rochester, NY; Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA; Charleston-North Charleston, SC; Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN; and Pittsburgh, PA.

Canada was the top international origin market amongst respondents (73.7%), followed by Europe (10.5%) and the British Virgin Islands (10.5%).

THOSE WHO TRAVELED TO BLUFFTON

The top reasons for choosing Bluffton as a destination included visiting beaches, spending time with family, relaxation, nature-based activities, visiting heritage attractions/museums/historic tours, shopping, and business. Other popular motivations included festivals, boating/sailing/kayaking, biking, and golf. The activities in which visitors actually participated are similar to the previously mentioned activities, and also include culinary, music or theatrical performances, and water excursions. Amongst Bluffton's overnight visitors, 72.2% were first-time visitors, suggesting that the destination continues to appeal to new visitors.

Trip Characteristics

The average group size of those surveyed was 3.1 for overnight visitors and 2.8 for day trip visitors. The main mode of transportation to town was personal/family car for both overnight and day trip visitors (43.5% overnight, 40.0% day trip). About 51% of overnight visitors flew to Bluffton via commercial flights, with just over half of them (50.5%) landing at the Savannah/Hilton Head Island International Airport.

The average length of stay for those overnight visitors surveyed was approximately 4.6 nights. Hotels were the most popular choice of accommodation for overnight visitors (48.5%), followed by home/villa rentals (19.5%), resorts (15.5%), and staying with friends/relatives (14.5%).

TRAVEL PLANNING

VRBO was the most popular online booking platform for villas/homes (28.9%), followed by local vacation rental companies (26.3%) and Airbnb (18.4%). The top five other destinations visitors considered before choosing Bluffton were the Hawaiian Islands; Gulf Shores, AL; Ponte Verde, FL; Isle of Palms, SC; Alabama Golf Trail; and the Caribbean.

Top reasons for choosing to visit Bluffton were word-of-mouth recommendation (41.3%), wanting to visit a beach destination (33.5%), wanting to visit nature-based attractions (32.2%), and wanting to visit someplace new (23.9%).

Of those surveyed, 82.1% indicated an intention to return to visit Bluffton, which signals a high degree of trip satisfaction.

NON-VISITORS

Of those who indicated not to have traveled at all or not to have traveled to the Hilton Head Island / Bluffton area in the past 12 months (N=246), 29.7% had never visited the Hilton Head Island / Bluffton area before, and 61.8% had visited one to five times before.

Of those non-visitors, 38.6% traveled elsewhere, 34.2% plan to visit in the future, 11.4% mentioned health reasons, 5.1% were hesitant because of unpredictable weather events, 3.2% did not find what they were looking for, and 0.6% did not travel at all. Of those who did not visit the Hilton Head Island / Bluffton area, alternative destinations in the Southeast (34.4%) and Northeast (33.1%) were the most popular. Nonetheless, 36.7% of the non-visitors indicated they had plans to visit the Hilton Head Island / Bluffton area within one year.

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

TRAVEL BEHAVIOR

Looking at the travel behavior of both visitors and non-visitors together, the majority (57.8%) take two to four leisure/vacation trips per year, and they are most likely to travel between May and October.

The top five most appealing experiences for leisure trips/vacations were: beaches (87.1%), relaxation & rejuvenation (85.3%), passive outdoor adventures (76.1%), romantic couple getaways (74.7%), and historic attractions (73.6%).

The following attributes were most important in choosing a leisure vacation: natural beauty of the destination (92.8%), quality of dining options (85.8%), ease of access (85.5%), quality of lodging options (84.9%), diversity of dining options (83.2%), and affordability (80.6%).



METHODOLOGY

SURVEY IMPLEMENTATION

The 2024 Visitor Profile Study (VPS) for the Hilton Head Island and Bluffton Area was conducted electronically. Between mid-January 2024 and January 2025, emails were sent on a rolling basis to invite individuals to participate in the VPS. These individuals had previously visited www.hiltonheadisland.org or www.visitbluffton.org and submitted their email addresses, and they were contacted following their anticipated dates of visitation. In addition, invitations to complete the survey were posted multiple times during the same time period on the social media channels of the Hilton Head Island Visitor & Convention Bureau and Explore Bluffton.

A total of 1,040 completed surveys were collected. This report is based largely on the 230 respondents who visited Bluffton as an overnight or day trip, along with 246 individuals who did not travel at all or did not travel to Hilton Head Island / Bluffton. The remaining 574 responses were individuals who only visited Hilton Head Island and are covered in a separate report.

This report presents the results of the present study, together with comparative results from the last time this study was completed, examining visitation in 2021, 2022, and 2023.

The table below shows the visitor estimates for Bluffton by segment for 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024.

Visitor Segment	2021	2022	2023	2024
Non-paying Guests	172,349	154,478	174,291	173,167
Daytrippers	309,137	277,083	312,621	310,606
Total Visitors	481,486	431,561	486,912	483,773

Table 1: Visitor Estimates 2021-2024

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

SURVEY FINDINGS**SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHICS**

Gender	2022	2023	2024
Female	38.1%	52.0%	44.0%
Male	61.9%	47.5%	56.0%
Self-identify	-	0.5%	-
Marital Status			
Married	69.1%	76.8%	76.3%
Single	14.4%	12.4%	12.3%
Divorced	7.7%	4.5%	6.6%
Widowed	7.2%	4.8%	3.3%
Separated	1.6%	1.5%	1.4%
Education (highest level completed)			
Grade School	0.8%	0.5%	-
High School	3.6%	8.4%	4.8%
Some College	26.7%	23.8%	22.1%
Associates Degree (2 years)	15.8%	16.2%	13.0%
Bachelor's Degree (4 years)	33.9%	32.5%	36.5%
Graduate Degree (Post degree/MA)	19.1%	18.6%	23.6%
Age			
19 years or younger	0.6%	0.3%	1.0%
20 to 29 years	38.3%	23.8%	5.8%
30 to 39 years	44.4%	36.8%	30.3%
40 to 49 years	10.7%	12.2%	19.2%
50 to 59 years	1.8%	10.9%	19.7%
60 to 69 years	2.9%	9.8%	4.3%
70 years and over	1.1%	6.0%	1.9%
Prefer not to say	0.2%	0.3%	-
Household Income			
Under \$24,999	0.8%	1.4%	3.6%
\$25,000-\$34,999	5.6%	5.4%	8.7%
\$35,000-\$49,999	10.3%	11.0%	6.2%
\$50,000-\$74,999	12.6%	14.7%	11.8%
\$75,000-\$99,999	18.8%	20.1%	25.1%
\$100,000-\$149,999	18.4%	18.1%	25.1%
\$150,000-\$199,999	19.1%	14.7%	10.8%
\$200,000-\$249,999	7.6%	10.8%	3.1%
\$250,000 or more	6.8%	3.7%	5.6%
N	1,005	422	243

Table 2: Demographics

SAMPLE POINT OF ORIGIN**ZIP Code Analysis – Top 30 MSAs**

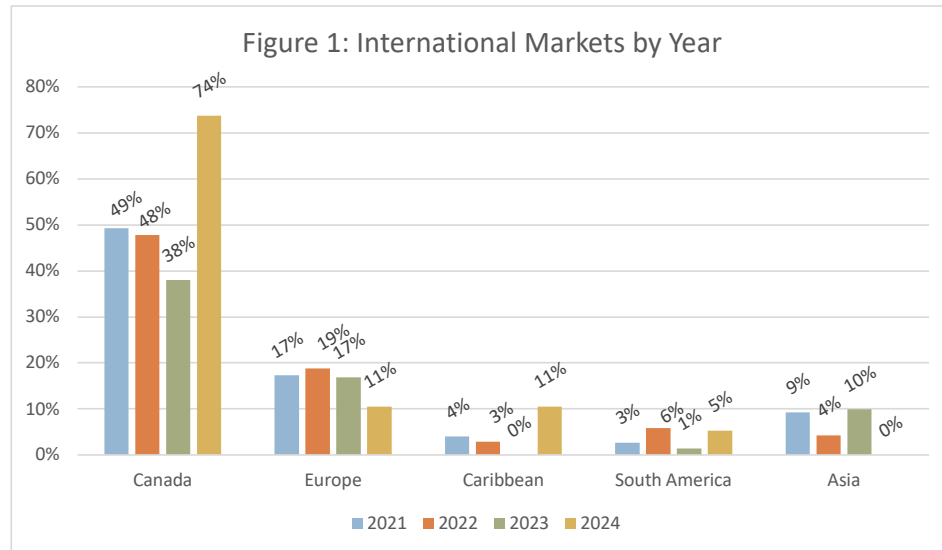
	Metropolitan Area	Sum MSA	Percent MSA Share
1	New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ	73	7.1%
2	Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	42	4.1%
3	Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	38	3.7%
4	Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	33	3.2%
5	Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	28	2.7%
6	Lexington-Fayette, KY	27	2.6%
7	Rochester, NY	25	2.4%
8	Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	22	2.2%
9	Charleston-North Charleston, SC	20	2.0%
10	Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN	19	1.9%
11	Pittsburgh, PA	19	1.9%
12	Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC	17	1.7%
13	Dallas-Fort Worth-Arlington, TX	16	1.6%
14	Hilton Head Island-Bluffton-Port Royal, SC	14	1.4%
15	Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD	13	1.3%
16	Las Vegas-Henderson-North Las Vegas, NV	13	1.3%
17	Myrtle Beach-Conway-North Myrtle Beach, SC	13	1.3%
18	Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN	12	1.2%
19	Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	11	1.1%
20	Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ	11	1.1%
21	Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	10	1.0%
22	Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	10	1.0%
23	Rural OH	10	1.0%
24	Columbia, SC	9	0.9%
25	Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI	9	0.9%
26	Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	9	0.9%
27	Columbus, OH	8	0.8%
28	Birmingham, AL	7	0.7%
29	Fresno, CA	7	0.7%
30	Greenville-Anderson-Greer, SC	7	0.7%
	Other	469	45.9%
	Total	1,040	

Table 3: ZIP Code Analysis – Top 30 MSAs

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

International Markets

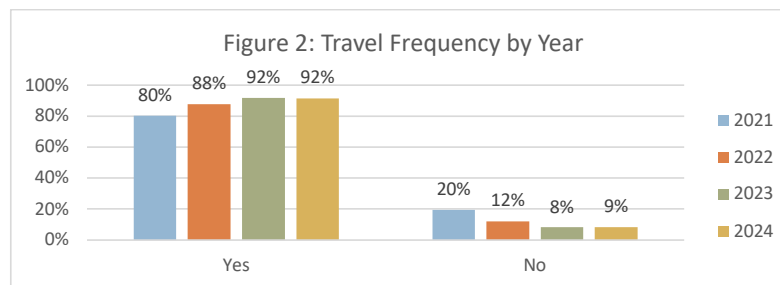


	2021	2022	2023	2024
Canada	49.3%	47.8%	38.0%	73.7%
Europe	17.3%	18.8%	16.9%	10.5%
Caribbean	4.0%	2.9%	-	10.5%
South America	2.7%	5.8%	1.4%	5.3%
Asia	9.3%	4.3%	9.9%	-
Australia/Oceania	1.3%	5.8%	5.6%	-
Africa	6.7%	7.2%	1.4%	-
Antarctica	2.7%	-	-	-
Central America	1.3%	-	-	-
Middle East	5.3%	7.2%	26.8%	
N	75	69	71	19

Table 4: International Markets

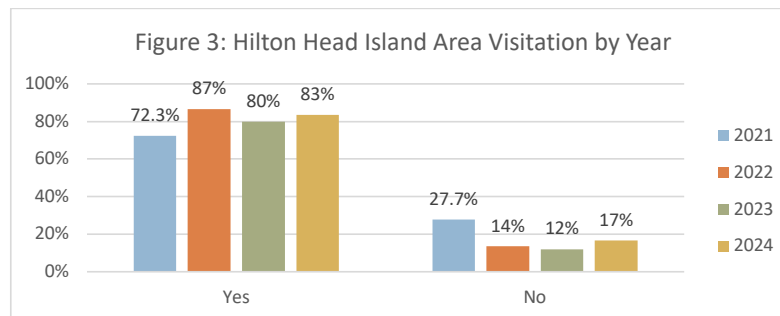
BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

TRAVEL TO THE HILTON HEAD ISLAND / BLUFFTON AREA**Within the last 12 months have you traveled or taken a vacation?**

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Yes	80.4%	87.8%	91.8%	91.5%
No	19.6%	12.2%	8.2%	8.5%
N	2,084	2,918	1,710	1,040

TABLE 5: Travel Frequency by Year

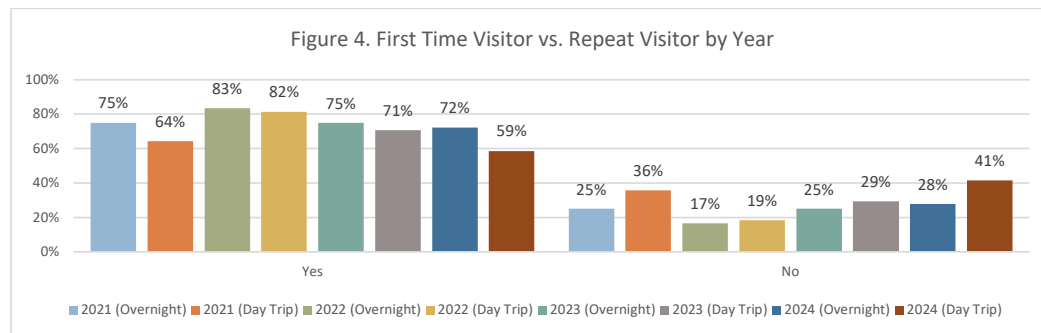
Did you visit Bluffton, SC or Hilton Head Island, SC in the last 12 months?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Yes	72.3%	86.5%	79.8%	83.4%
No	27.7%	13.5%	12.0%	16.6%
N	1,675	2,547	1,570	952

TABLE 6: Bluffton / Hilton Head Island Visitation by Year

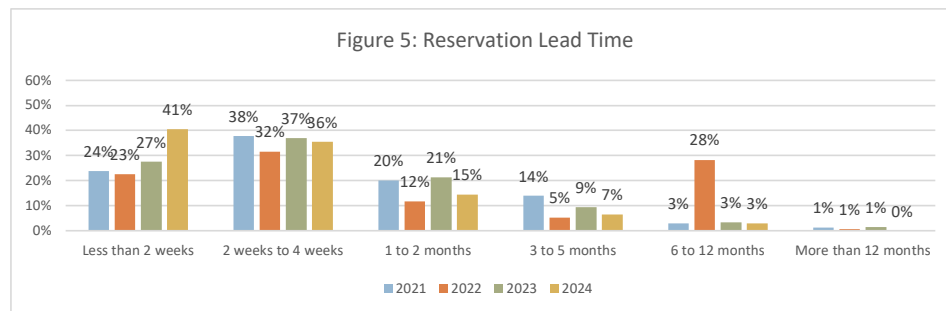
BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

BLUFFTON VISITORS**Was that your first time visiting in Bluffton?**

	2021 (Overnight)	2021 (Day Trip)	2022 (Overnight)	2022 (Day Trip)	2023 (Overnight)	2023 (Day Trip)	2024 (Overnight)	2024 (Day Trip)
Yes	75.0%	64.3%	83.4%	81.5%	74.9%	70.6%	72.2%	58.6%
No	25.0%	35.7%	16.6%	18.5%	25.1%	29.4%	27.8%	41.4%
N	164	28	603	54	211	34	198	29

TABLE 7: First Time Visitor vs. Repeat Visitor

Approximately how long before your trip to Bluffton did you make your first reservation (e.g., accommodation, transportation, etc.)?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Less than 2 weeks	23.8%	22.5%	27.5%	40.5%
2 weeks to 4 weeks	37.8%	31.6%	37.0%	35.5%
1 to 2 months	20.1%	11.6%	21.3%	14.5%
3 to 5 months	14.0%	5.3%	9.5%	6.5%
6 to 12 months	3.0%	28.3%	3.3%	3.0%
More than 12 months	1.2%	0.7%	1.4%	-
N	164	604	211	200

TABLE 8: Reservation Lead Time

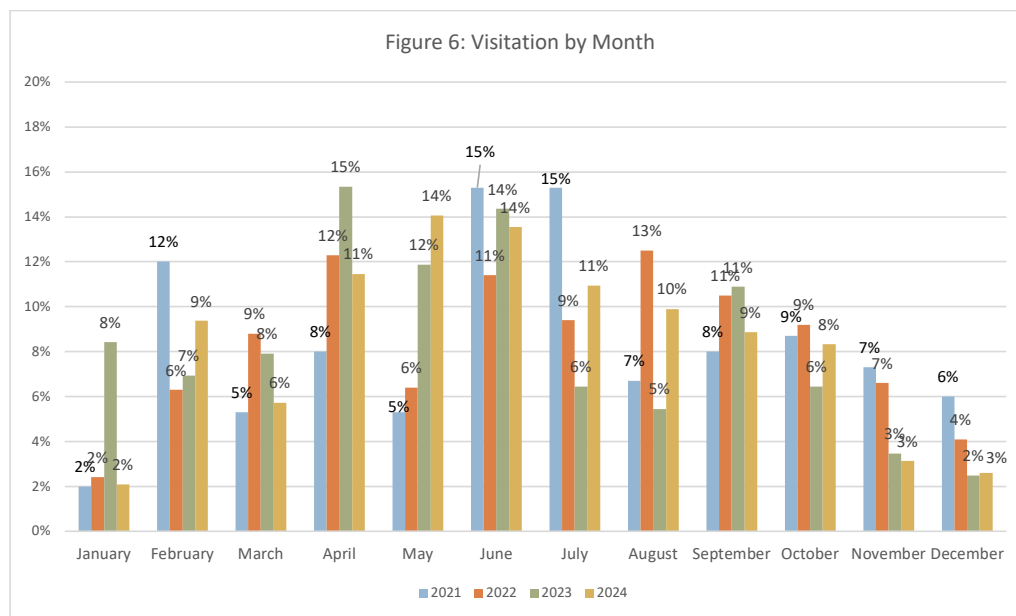
BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

When did you make your most recent trip to Bluffton?

	2021 (Overnight)	2021 (Day Trip)	2022 (Overnight)	2022 (Day Trip)	2023 (Overnight)	2023 (Day Trip)	2024 (Overnight)	2024 (Day Trip)
January	2.0%	-	2.4%	2.1%	8.4%	3.0%	2.1%	-
February	12.0%	10.0%	6.3%	6.4%	6.9%	-	9.4%	10.0%
March	5.3%	15.0%	8.8%	8.5%	7.9%	3.0%	5.7%	6.7%
April	8.0%	-	12.3%	19.1%	15.3%	15.2%	11.5%	13.3%
May	5.3%	5.0%	6.4%	14.9%	11.9%	12.1%	14.1%	20.0%
June	15.3%	30.0%	11.4%	12.8%	14.4%	18.2%	13.5%	10.0%
July	15.3%	30.0%	9.4%	12.8%	6.4%	12.1%	10.9%	10.0%
August	6.7%	-	12.5%	17.0%	5.4%	12.1%	9.9%	6.7%
September	8.0%	5.0%	10.5%	4.3%	10.9%	6.1%	8.9%	6.7%
October	8.7%	5.0%	9.2%	-	6.4%	9.1%	8.3%	13.3%
November	7.3%	-	6.6%	2.1%	3.5%	-	3.1%	3.3%
December	6.0%	-	4.1%	-	2.5%	9.1%	2.6%	-
N	150	20	543	47	202	33	192	30

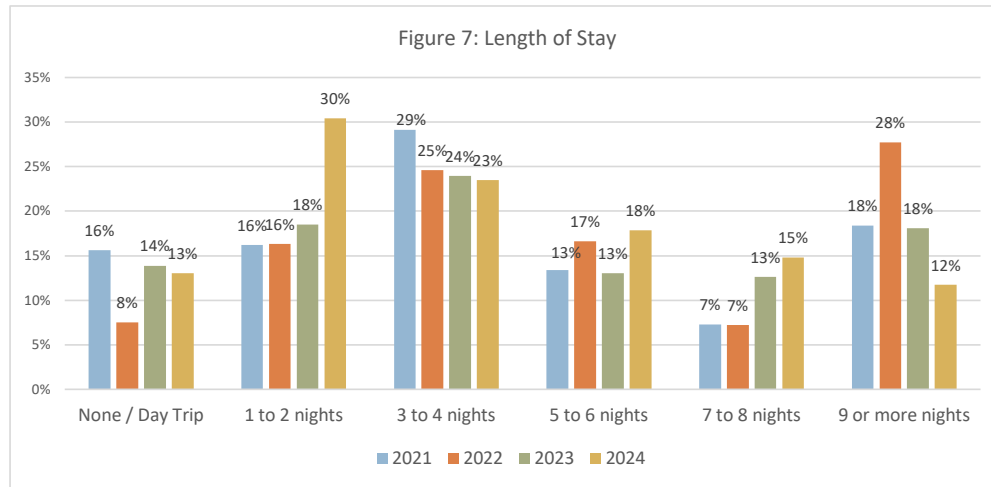
TABLE 9: Visitation by Month



BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Approximately how many nights was your trip to Bluffton?



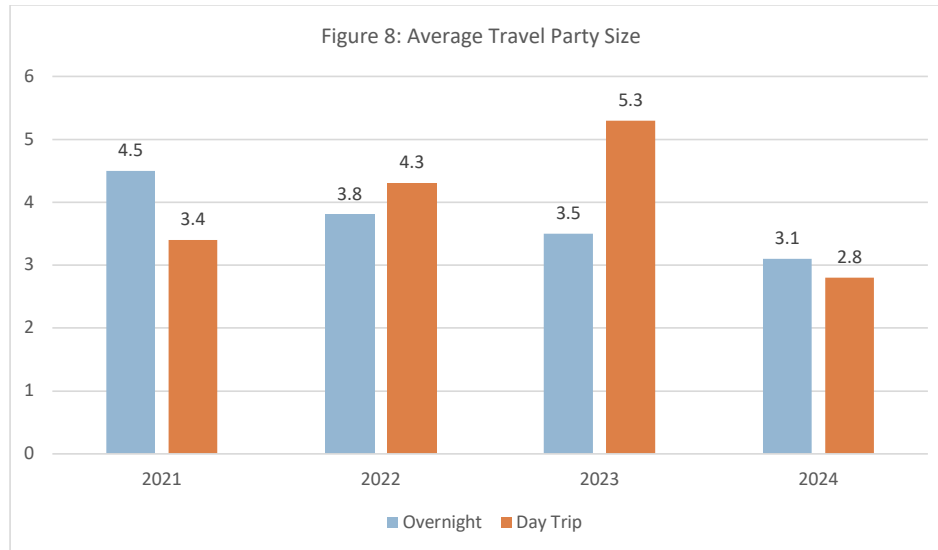
	2021	2022	2023	2024
None/day trip only	15.6%	7.5%	13.9%	13.0%
1 night	3.4%	3.4%	3.4%	3.5%
2 nights	12.8%	12.9%	15.1%	15.7%
3 nights	18.4%	14.2%	15.5%	14.8%
4 nights	10.6%	10.4%	8.4%	8.7%
5 nights	13.4%	9.9%	10.1%	11.7%
6 nights	-	6.7%	2.9%	6.1%
7 nights	4.5%	4.6%	6.3%	10.0%
8 nights	2.8%	2.6%	6.3%	4.8%
9 nights	2.2%	2.1%	1.3%	1.7%
10 nights	5.6%	4.2%	4.2%	3.5%
11 nights	1.7%	2.2%	-	3.0%
12 nights	1.7%	1.6%	2.5%	2.6%
13 nights	1.7%	1.1%	1.3%	-
14 nights	1.7%	3.8%	1.7%	-
15 nights	1.1%	2.2%	1.7%	-
More than 15 nights	2.8%	10.5%	5.5%	0.9%
N	179	626	238	230

TABLE 10: Length of Stay

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Please indicate how many people (including yourself) were in your travel party.



	2021 (Overnight)	2021 (Day Trip)	2022 (Overnight)	2022 (Day Trip)	2023 (Overnight)	2023 (Day Trip)	2024 (Overnight)	2024 (Day Trip)
Average	4.5	3.4	3.8	4.3	3.5	5.3	3.1	2.8
N	151	21	543	47	205	33	200	30

TABLE 11: Travel Party Size

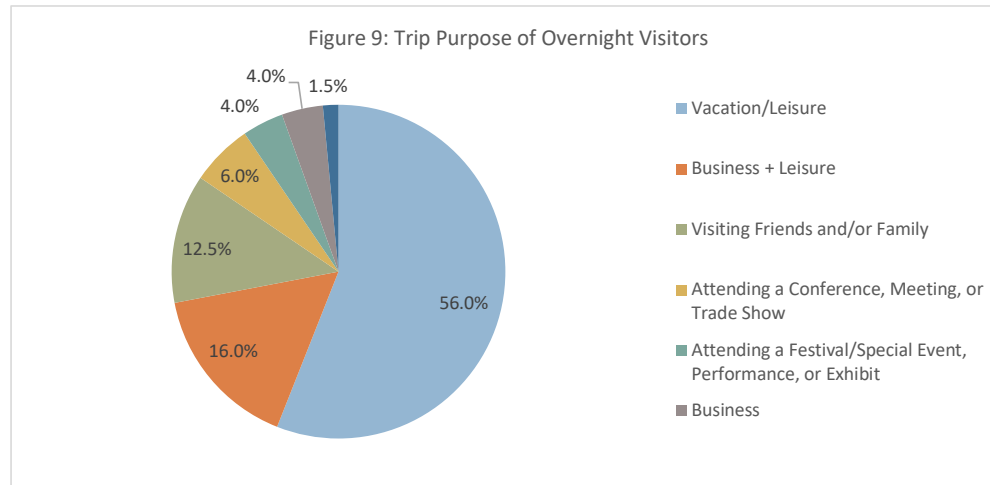
Please indicate by age category how many people were in your travel party.

	Age	0	1	2	3	4	5	6 or more
Overnight	Under 18	31.8%	2.0%	1.3%	0.7%	0.2%	-	0.4%
	18-24	18.1%	9.4%	6.4%	0.5%	0.5%	0.4%	0.9%
	25-34	25.2%	4.7%	4.9%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%
	35-44	33.0%	1.3%	1.6%	-	-	0.2%	0.2%
	45-54	32.5%	1.1%	2.4%	0.2%	-	0.2%	-
	55-64	33.0%	1.8%	1.5%	-	-	-	-
	65+	29.9%	3.1%	2.5%	0.2%	-	-	0.5%
Day Trip	Under 18	113.0%	8.7%	-	4.3%	4.3%	-	-
	18-24	78.3%	13.0%	30.4%	-	4.3%	4.3%	-
	25-34	108.7%	8.7%	8.7%	4.3%	-	-	-
	35-44	117.4%	8.7%	4.3%	-	-	-	-
	45-54	117.4%	-	8.7%	4.3%	-	-	-
	55-64	104.3%	8.7%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	4.3%	-
	65+	95.7%	17.4%	17.4%	-	-	-	-

TABLE 12: Travel Party Age Mix

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

What was the main purpose of your overnight visit to Bluffton?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Vacation/Leisure	46.3%	42.1%	38.6%	56.0%
Business + Leisure	22.1%	20.4%	24.7%	16.0%
Visiting Friends and/or Family	16.8%	9.7%	10.7%	12.5%
Attending a Conference, Meeting, or Trade Show	9.4%	10.2%	8.8%	6.0%
Attending a Festival/Special Event, Performance, or Exhibit	3.4%	6.6%	7.4%	4.0%
Business	-	10.2%	8.4%	4.0%
Relocating to Hilton Head/Bluffton area	2.0%	0.8%	1.4%	1.5%
N	149	608	215	200

TABLE 13: Trip Purpose of Overnight Visitors

Day Trip Visitors:**Was this visit part of an overnight vacation or a day trip from home?**

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Part of a vacation	50.0%	85.2%	76.5%	80.0%
Day trip from home	50.0%	14.8%	23.5%	20.0%
N	28	54	34	30

TABLE 14: Day Trip as Part of a Vacation or Day Trip from Home

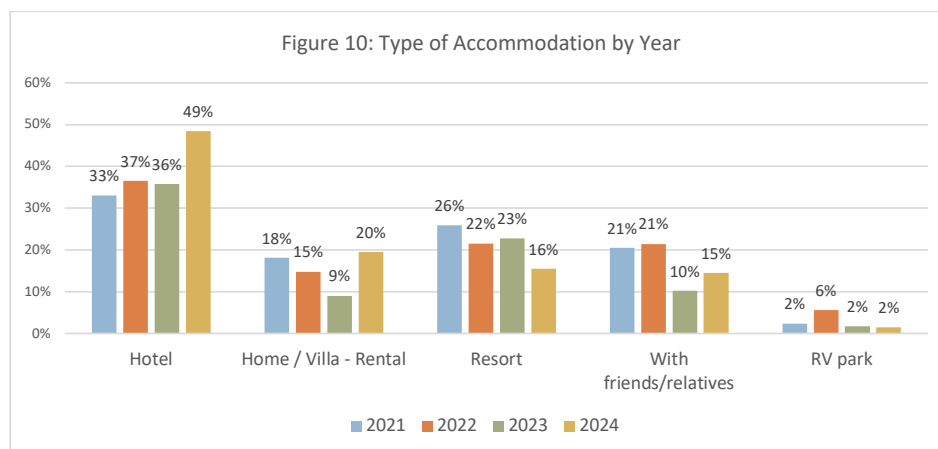
Where did you stay overnight?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Jacksonville	9.1%	2.2%	11.5%	26.1%
Savannah	45.5%	8.7%	23.1%	26.1%
Beaufort	18.2%	17.4%	15.4%	21.7%
Charleston	18.2%	39.1%	26.9%	13.0%
Other	9.1%	4.3%	3.8%	13.0%
Tybee Island	-	28.3%	19.2%	-
N	11	46	26	23

TABLE 15: Vacation Day Trip Visitors Overnight Location

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Overnight Visitors:**What was your primary form of accommodation while visiting Bluffton?**

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Hotel	33.1%	36.5%	35.8%	48.5%
Home / Villa - Rental	18.1%	14.8%	9.0%	19.5%
Resort	25.9%	21.5%	22.8%	15.5%
With friends/relatives	20.5%	21.4%	10.2%	14.5%
RV park	2.4%	5.6%	1.7%	1.5%
Home / Villa - Owned	-	-	-	0.5%
Other	-	0.2%	0.2%	48.5%
N	166	608	215	200

TABLE 16: Types of Accommodation

What was the name of the Hotel/Resort where you stayed?

Holiday Inn Express	19.5%
Comfort Suites	16.1%
Montage Palmetto Bluff	16.1%
Old Town Bluffton Inn	10.3%
Hampton Inn	8.0%
Comfort Inn Bluffton	3.4%
Hilton Garden Inn	3.4%
Mainstay Suites	3.4%
Fairfield Inn	2.3%
Holiday Inn	2.3%
N	87

TABLE 17: Top 10 Hotels or Resorts

Which of the following online platforms did you use to make your home/villa reservation?

VRBO	28.9%
A local vacation rental company	26.3%
Directly with the resort	21.1%
Airbnb	18.4%
HomeAway	2.6%
I don't remember	2.6%
N	38

TABLE 18: Booking Platforms for Home/Villa Rental

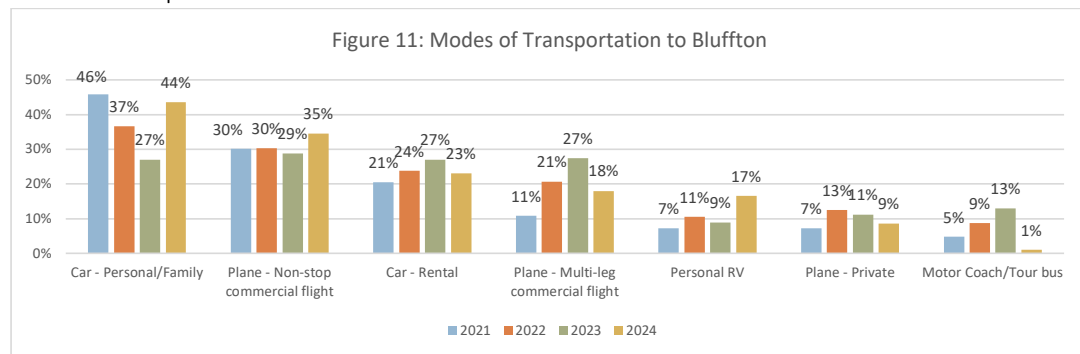
BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

What type of transportation did you use to travel to Bluffton?

	2021 (Overnight)	2021 (Day Trip)	2022 (Overnight)	2022 (Day Trip)	2023 (Overnight)	2023 (Day Trip)	2024 (Overnight)	2024 (Day Trip)
Car - Personal/Family	45.8%	67.9%	36.7%	27.8%	27.0%	47.1%	43.5%	40.0%
Plane - Non-stop commercial flight	30.1%	-	30.3%	-	28.8%	-	34.5%	-
Car - Rental	20.5%	14.3%	23.8%	35.2%	27.0%	29.4%	23.0%	23.3%
Plane - Multi-leg commercial flight	10.8%	-	20.7%	-	27.4%	-	18.0%	20.0%
Personal RV	7.2%	-	10.5%	3.7%	8.8%	17.6%	16.5%	-
Plane - Private	7.2%	17.9%	12.5%	18.5%	11.2%	17.6%	8.5%	30.0%
Train	-	-	-	-	-	-	2.0%	20.0%
Motor Coach/Tour bus	4.8%	7.1%	8.7%	18.5%	13.0%	11.8%	1.0%	-
N	166	28	608	54	215	34	200	30

TABLE 19: Modes of Transportation to Bluffton

**Visitors Arriving by Plane:****At which airport did you land?**

Savannah/Hilton Head International	50.5%
Hilton Head Island	24.7%
Charleston	13.4%
Atlanta	7.2%
Charlotte	2.1%
N	97

TABLE 20: Arrival Airport

Which commercial airline did you use?

American Airlines	61.4%
Alaska	6.8%
Delta	6.8%
Southwest	5.7%
Frontier	3.4%
JetBlue	3.4%
Air Canada	2.3%
Allegiant	2.3%
Breeze	2.3%
Silver Airways	2.3%
United	2.3%
N	88

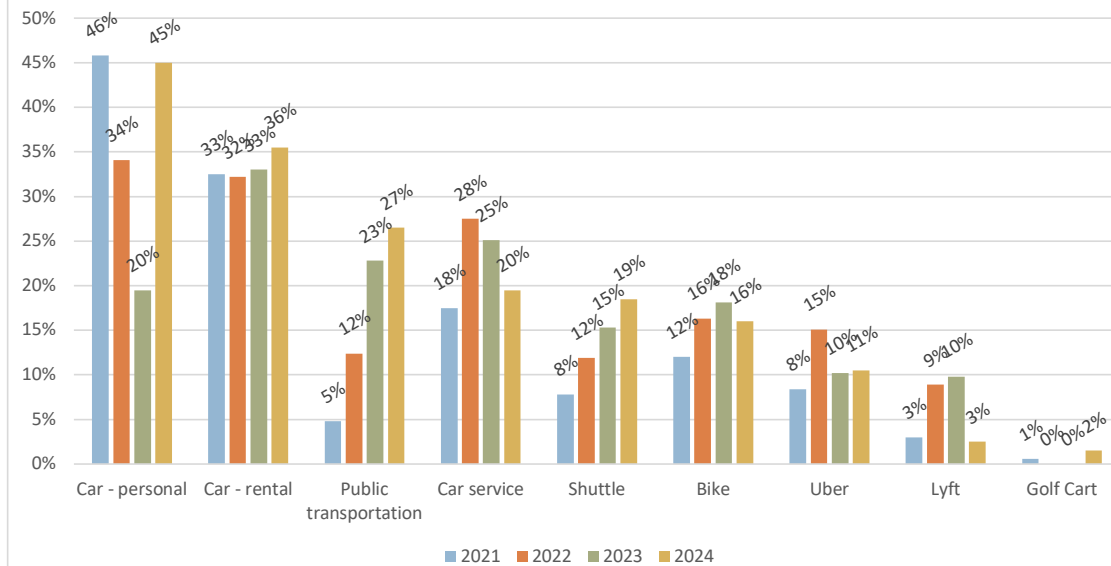
TABLE 21: Commercial Airlines Used

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Once in Bluffton, what mode(s) of transportation did you use?

Figure 12: Transportation while in Bluffton



	2021	2022	2023	2024
Car - personal	45.8%	34.1%	19.5%	45.0%
Car - rental	32.5%	32.2%	33.0%	35.5%
Public transportation (HHI Trolley, etc.)	4.8%	12.4%	22.8%	26.5%
Car service	17.5%	27.5%	25.1%	19.5%
Bike	12.0%	16.3%	18.1%	18.5%
Shuttle offered by the hotel/resort	7.8%	11.9%	15.3%	16.0%
Uber	8.4%	15.1%	10.2%	10.5%
Lyft	3.0%	8.9%	9.8%	2.5%
Golf Cart	0.6%	-	-	1.5%
N	166	608	215	200

TABLE 22: Transportation Used While In Bluffton

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Please indicate the approximate total amount of money that was spent by your party/group for each category while in the Bluffton area.

	Overnight	Day Trip	Overall
Transportation	\$179.53	\$102.40	\$155.43
Lodging	\$457.36	\$0.00	\$316.20
Food - Dining	\$483.34	\$218.56	\$401.62
Food - Grocery	\$124.29	\$48.48	\$100.89
Shopping	\$484.46	\$254.48	\$413.48
Spas	\$36.36	\$73.10	\$39.29
Golf	\$25.00	\$40.00	\$29.63
Biking	\$24.73	\$20.00	\$18.65
Performance/Visual Arts	\$69.11	\$71.03	\$57.04
Festivals	\$21.61	\$44.83	\$17.63
Museums/Historical Tours	\$80.18	\$74.27	\$61.50
Boating/Sailing/Fishing	\$113.36	\$35.92	\$89.46
Nature-based Activities	\$18.21	\$18.00	\$18.15
Dolphin Tours	\$48.75	\$16.40	\$38.77
Tennis	\$10.71	\$16.00	\$12.35
Other Expenses	\$95.09	\$85.84	\$92.20
Total Expenditure	\$2,266.54	\$904.32	\$1,846.10

Table 23: Average Per Travel Party Trip Expenditures by Category and Visitor Type

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

What are the three primary reasons why you visited Bluffton?

	2021 (Overnight)	2021 (Day Trip)	2022 (Overnight)	2022 (Day Trip)	2023 (Overnight)	2023 (Day Trip)	2024 (Overnight)	2024 (Day Trip)
Beaches	33.1%	53.6%	30.3%	27.8%	29.8%	44.1%	36.0%	36.7%
Time with family/friends	22.3%	21.4%	23.5%	5.6%	27.4%	26.5%	31.5%	23.3%
Relaxation	21.7%	-	11.0%	9.3%	12.1%	20.6%	25.0%	16.7%
Nature-based activities	16.9%	3.6%	16.1%	3.7%	15.8%	23.5%	21.5%	-
Heritage attractions / Museum / Historical tours	22.3%	25.0%	17.6%	13.0%	17.7%	32.4%	20.0%	43.3%
Shopping	14.5%	28.6%	16.4%	11.1%	19.5%	20.6%	18.5%	16.7%
Business trip (convention, meeting, etc.)	15.1%	10.7%	22.7%	37.0%	26.5%	2.9%	17.0%	10.0%
Festivals	7.8%	3.6%	12.8%	1.9%	7.9%	8.8%	17.0%	-
Boating / Sailing / Kayaking	21.1%	7.1%	22.7%	20.4%	14.4%	-	16.0%	13.3%
Biking	15.7%	14.3%	23.2%	37.0%	13.5%	11.8%	13.5%	20.0%
Golf	11.4%	3.6%	7.9%	13.0%	6.5%	2.9%	7.5%	6.7%
Parks	5.4%	7.1%	8.6%	7.4%	7.0%	2.9%	6.5%	3.3%
Attend sporting event	10.2%	25.0%	12.2%	11.1%	11.2%	2.9%	6.0%	6.7%
Culinary	12.0%	32.1%	10.2%	37.0%	8.8%	20.6%	5.0%	13.3%
Health/wellness/fitness	10.2%	7.1%	11.7%	5.6%	8.4%	8.8%	4.5%	-
Tennis	2.4%	3.6%	4.9%	1.9%	4.2%	26.5%	3.0%	3.3%
Wedding	2.4%	-	3.5%	-	3.3%	2.9%	2.0%	-
Other	-	-	-	-	-	-	6.0%	3.3%
Performance/visual arts	-	3.6%	-	-	1.4%	8.8%	36.0%	36.7%
N	166	28	608	54	215	34	200	30

TABLE 24: Three Primary Reasons for Visitation

Which of the following activities did you actively participate in?

	2021 (Overnight)	2021 (Day Trip)	2022 (Overnight)	2022 (Day Trip)	2023 (Overnight)	2023 (Day Trip)	2024 (Overnight)	2024 (Day Trip)
Beaches	40.4%	42.9%	40.6%	37.0%	31.2%	44.1%	48.0%	36.7%
Shopping	22.3%	50.0%	22.0%	18.5%	21.4%	29.4%	41.0%	43.3%
Nature-based activities (dolphin/turtle tours, fishing, etc.)	24.1%	-	20.4%	9.3%	24.7%	23.5%	36.0%	23.3%
Time with family/friends	24.1%	35.7%	20.4%	14.8%	18.6%	20.6%	33.5%	43.3%
Biking	16.9%	7.1%	33.9%	27.8%	27.0%	17.6%	30.5%	23.3%
Relaxation	25.9%	35.7%	15.3%	13.0%	14.9%	8.8%	30.5%	26.7%
Museum / Historical tours	19.3%	10.7%	21.5%	5.6%	20.9%	14.7%	24.5%	33.3%
Culinary	17.5%	42.9%	21.2%	20.4%	20.5%	20.6%	19.0%	10.0%
Festivals	12.7%	7.1%	19.1%	11.1%	14.4%	17.6%	18.5%	10.0%
Music or theatrical performance / Visual arts exhibit	10.2%	7.1%	15.6%	3.7%	19.5%	8.8%	18.5%	16.7%
Business/work	17.5%	14.3%	24.8%	9.3%	22.8%	2.9%	18.0%	13.3%
Water excursions	11.4%	10.7%	9.5%	22.2%	7.9%	17.6%	15.5%	26.7%
Spas	5.4%	3.6%	13.2%	3.7%	10.2%	5.9%	13.5%	3.3%
Health / Wellness / Fitness	16.3%	3.6%	19.6%	18.5%	14.4%	14.7%	12.0%	10.0%
Golf	12.7%	7.1%	16.1%	7.4%	9.3%	5.9%	10.5%	3.3%
Attend sporting event	13.3%	14.3%	17.1%	16.7%	14.0%	11.8%	6.5%	13.3%
Sports activities	5.4%	-	9.2%	3.7%	9.3%	58.8%	5.5%	3.3%
Tennis	5.4%	-	6.9%	1.9%	6.0%	2.9%	5.5%	6.7%
University visit / Education / Intellectual programs	4.2%	10.7%	8.2%	5.6%	5.1%	2.9%	3.5%	3.3%
Other	1.8%	-	-	-	1.4%	5.9%	1.0%	3.3%
Relocation	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.5%	3.3%
N	166	28	608	54	215	34	200	30

TABLE 25: Activities Visitors Participated In

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Which shopping locations did you visit?

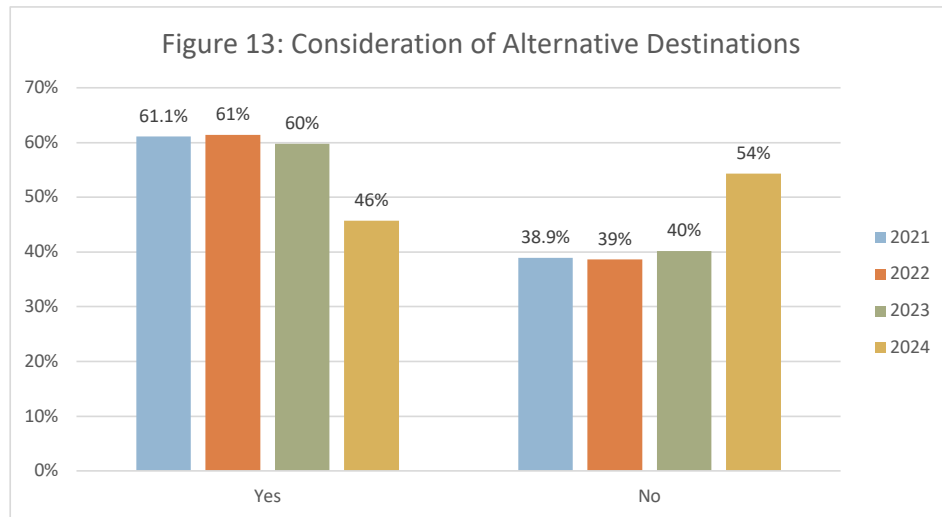
	2021 (Overnight)	2021 (Day Trip)	2022 (Overnight)	2022 (Day Trip)	2023 (Overnight)	2023 (Day Trip)	2024 (Overnight)	2024 (Day Trip)
Downtown Bluffton	48.2%	39.3%	48.8%	50.0%	50.2%	38.2%	58.5%	46.7%
Harbour Town	26.5%	17.9%	25.8%	33.3%	27.9%	23.5%	32.5%	20.0%
Coligny Plaza	29.5%	25.0%	25.8%	37.0%	24.2%	23.5%	30.5%	3.3%
Tanger Outlets	31.3%	53.6%	21.5%	9.3%	15.3%	5.9%	26.0%	13.3%
Main Street Village	19.3%	17.9%	27.1%	18.5%	24.7%	20.6%	24.5%	13.3%
Buckwalter shopping areas	15.7%	14.3%	19.9%	11.1%	22.3%	8.8%	24.5%	16.7%
The Shops at Sea Pines Center	20.5%	7.1%	17.9%	16.7%	14.9%	35.3%	23.5%	30.0%
Shopping areas off 278 (Target, Kroger, Best Buy, etc.)	17.5%	28.6%	11.2%	18.5%	22.3%	20.6%	18.0%	30.0%
South Beach Marina	10.2%	3.6%	18.3%	9.3%	17.2%	23.5%	17.0%	13.3%
Shelter Cove Towne Centre	18.1%	17.9%	20.2%	22.2%	25.1%	29.4%	13.5%	13.3%
Shelter Cove Harbour	21.7%	10.7%	20.9%	29.6%	16.7%	20.6%	11.0%	10.0%
Village at Wexford	12.7%	-	14.8%	11.1%	9.8%	11.8%	9.5%	16.7%
None	1.2%	3.6%			0.9%	5.9%	0.5%	3.3%
Other	1.2%	-			-	-	-	-
N	166	28	608	54	215	34	200	30

TABLE 26: Shopping Locations Visited

Did you visit any of the following cities while staying in Bluffton?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Hilton Head Island	50.6%	37.7%	43.7%	20.5%
Beaufort	25.9%	27.5%	20.0%	9.4%
Charleston	26.5%	33.7%	32.6%	8.9%
Savannah	27.7%	25.2%	19.5%	7.8%
Daufuskie Island	15.1%	28.5%	20.9%	6.7%
Tybee Island	14.5%	15.3%	14.0%	4.9%
Jacksonville	21.7%	27.3%	24.2%	3.1%
Port Royal	0.6%	0.3%	-	-
Other				0.4%
I did not visit any other cities.	4.2%	4.1%	5.1%	3.4%
N	166	608	215	200

TABLE 27: Other Cities Visited While Staying in Bluffton

TRAVEL PLANNING**Before deciding to visit Bluffton, did you consider any other destinations?**

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Yes	61.1%	61.4%	59.8%	45.7%
No	38.9%	38.6%	40.2%	54.3%
N	193	658	249	230

TABLE 28: Consideration of alternative destinations

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Which of the following destinations did you consider visiting?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Hawaiian Islands	22.0%	37.4%	32.9%	37.1%
Gulf Shores, AL	22.0%	29.5%	34.9%	22.9%
Ponte Vedre, FL	9.3%	17.3%	13.4%	22.9%
Isle of Palms, SC	22.0%	26.2%	24.2%	22.9%
Alabama Golf Trail	36.4%	38.1%	36.9%	21.9%
Caribbean	22.0%	26.5%	28.2%	21.9%
Savannah, GA	9.3%	23.8%	14.1%	21.0%
Sea Island, GA	9.3%	21.0%	19.5%	20.0%
Outer Banks, NC	9.3%	20.3%	30.9%	20.0%
Orlando, FL	15.3%	28.7%	16.8%	19.0%
Aspen, CO	36.4%	22.3%	20.1%	18.1%
Marco Island/Naples	15.3%	24.3%	26.8%	15.2%
St. Simons Island, GA	9.3%	10.6%	16.1%	14.3%
Kiawah Island, SC	22.0%	17.1%	18.1%	14.3%
Telluride, CO	7.6%	23.5%	19.5%	14.3%
Sandestin, FL	9.3%	18.3%	15.4%	13.3%
Napa/Sonoma, CA	15.3%	11.4%	14.1%	13.3%
Hilton Head, SC	22.0%	13.9%	10.7%	12.4%
Sarasota, FL	9.3%	12.1%	10.7%	11.4%
Sanibel Island, FL	9.3%	11.9%	20.8%	10.5%
Reynolds Plantation, GA	9.3%	21.3%	20.1%	10.5%
Pinehurst, NC	9.3%	16.3%	16.1%	10.5%
Charleston, SC	22.0%	10.6%	17.4%	10.5%
Myrtle Beach, SC	15.3%	6.9%	6.0%	8.6%
Jekyll Island, GA	22.0%	8.4%	8.7%	7.6%
Tybee Island, GA	7.6%	8.7%	6.0%	6.7%
Santa Fe, NM	9.3%	7.4%	8.7%	6.7%
Tampa/St. Petersburg, FL	7.6%	10.1%	9.4%	5.7%
The Florida Keys	7.6%	5.7%	6.0%	4.8%
Other	15.3%	17.3%	12.1%	5.7%
Total	118	404	149	105

TABLE 29: Alternative Destinations by Year

HILTON HEAD ISLAND VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

How did Bluffton make it to your list of places to consider for your vacation?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
It was recommended by friends/family	29.0%	35.5%	34.7%	41.3%
Wanted to visit a beach destination	32.6%	34.9%	32.7%	33.5%
Wanted to visit because of the nature-based attractions	23.3%	41.9%	36.7%	32.2%
Wanted to visit someplace new	16.6%	24.0%	21.6%	23.9%
Wanted to visit heritage attractions	19.2%	35.7%	25.7%	22.2%
Saw an advertisement in a magazine/website/social media	17.1%	18.8%	21.2%	21.3%
Had visited in the past and wanted to return	28.0%	22.7%	22.0%	20.9%
Discovered/learned about it on the internet/display ads/search engines	20.2%	19.7%	13.9%	17.4%
Wanted to visit some place within driving distance	19.7%	18.4%	18.8%	16.1%
Wanted to attend a cultural/performing arts event	9.3%	15.8%	13.1%	12.2%
Wanted to attend a sporting event	5.7%	13.7%	7.3%	8.7%
Safe place to visit during or after COVID-19	9.8%	11.7%	10.2%	5.7%
Other	4.7%	1.3%	2.4%	4.3%
Total	193	618	249	230

TABLE 30: Reasons for Visiting Hilton Head Island

How likely are you to return to Bluffton?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Very likely	59.4%	34.8%	30.8%	46.2%
Likely	26.4%	33.0%	32.1%	35.8%
Neutral	12.3%	24.3%	23.7%	15.1%
Unlikely	0.9%	6.1%	10.7%	2.8%
Very Unlikely	0.9%	1.8%	2.7%	-
Total	106	618	224	212

TABLE 31: Likelihood of Visiting Bluffton Again

How likely are you to recommend visiting Bluffton to a friend or family member?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Definitely Recommend	70.8%	39.4%	34.5%	54.9%
Probably Recommend	20.8%	40.0%	34.1%	35.3%
May or May Not Recommend	7.5%	17.2%	21.8%	8.9%
Probably Not Recommend	0.9%	3.1%	9.2%	0.9%
Definitely Not Recommend	0.0%	0.3%	0.4%	-
Total	106	635	229	224

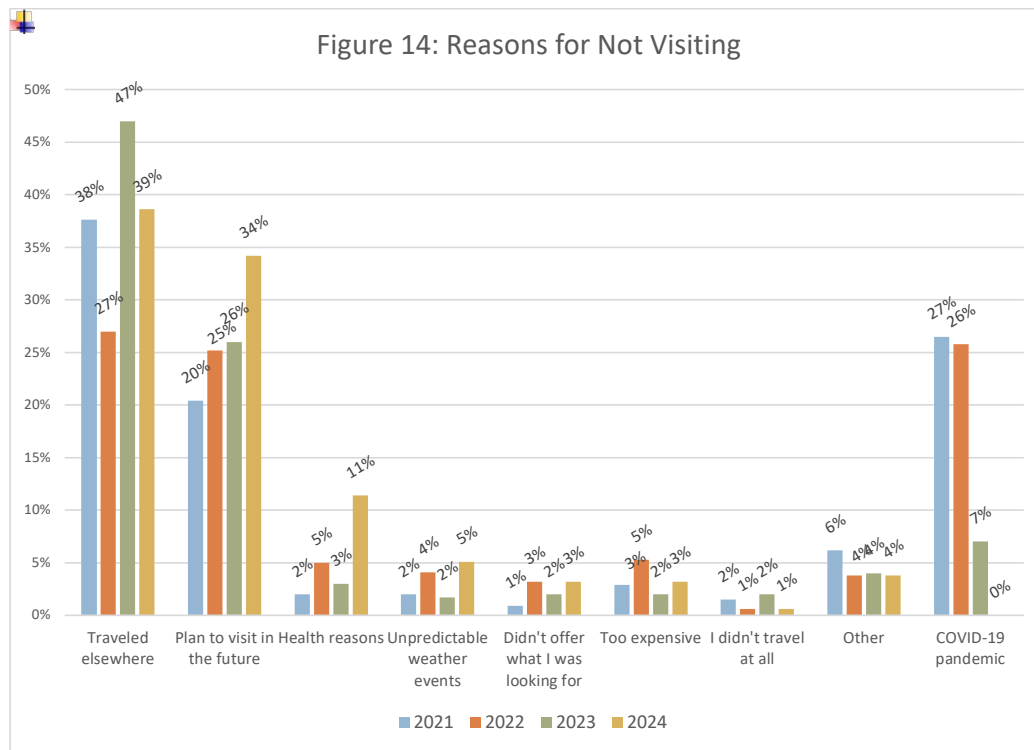
TABLE 32: Likelihood of Recommending a Visit to Bluffton

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

NON-VISITORS

Which of the following most accurately reflects why you did not visit Hilton Head Island-Bluffton during the last 12 months?



	2021	2022	2023	2024
Traveled elsewhere	37.6%	27.0%	47.0%	38.6%
Plan to visit in the future	20.4%	25.2%	26.0%	34.2%
Health reasons	2.0%	5.0%	3.0%	11.4%
Unpredictable weather events	2.0%	4.1%	1.7%	5.1%
Didn't offer what I was looking for	0.9%	3.2%	2.0%	3.2%
Too expensive	2.9%	5.3%	2.0%	3.2%
I didn't travel at all	1.5%	0.6%	2.0%	0.6%
Other	6.2%	3.8%	4.0%	3.8%
COVID-19 pandemic	26.5%	25.8%	7.0%	-
Total	860	341	100	158

TABLE 33: Reasons for not visiting

HILTON HEAD ISLAND VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Please indicate the region(s) that you traveled to in the past 12 months.

	2021	2022	2023	2024
USA - Southeast (GA, FL, NC, SC)	26.9%	33.7%	42.0%	34.4%
USA - Northeast (CT, MA, MA, NJ, NH, NY, PA, RI, VT)	9.1%	18.5%	24.0%	33.1%
USA - West (AK, AZ, CA, CO, HI, ID, MT, NM, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY)	9.8%	19.6%	22.0%	25.5%
USA - South (AL, AR, KY, LA, MS, OK, TN, TX)	9.0%	22.3%	27.0%	23.6%
Canada	1.4%	10.9%	16.0%	16.6%
USA - South Atlantic (DE, DC, MD, VA, WV)	8.0%	17.0%	16.0%	14.6%
Europe	1.2%	7.3%	10.0%	14.6%
USA - Midwest (IA, IN, IL, KS, MI, MN, MO, ND, NE, OH, SD, WI)	10.5%	20.8%	17.0%	14.0%
Latin America and Caribbean	2.1%	6.5%	6.0%	12.1%
Asia	0.5%	4.4%	8.0%	12.1%
Australia/New Zealand	0.2%	3.2%	6.0%	5.1%
Africa	0.3%	1.2%	1.0%	2.5%
Total	860	341	100	157

TABLE 34: Regions Visited by Non-Visitors in the Past 12 Months

How many times have you visited Hilton Head Island-Bluffton in the past 10 years?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Never visited	38.9%	42.9%	33.7%	29.7%
1	18.6%	14.0%	9.5%	16.3%
2 to 5	30.2%	36.4%	40.8%	45.5%
6 to 10	9.8%	5.0%	13.6%	6.5%
11 to 20	1.9%	0.9%	1.2%	1.6%
21 or more	0.9%	0.5%	1.2%	0.4%
Total	860	341	169	246

TABLE 35: Visitation Frequency in the Past 10 Years by Non-Visitors

Do you have plans to visit Hilton Head Island-Bluffton in the near future?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
Yes, within one year	49.2%	50.1%	48.8%	36.7%
Yes, but not sure when	42.5%	49.0%	47.0%	55.9%
No	8.3%	0.9%	4.2%	36.7%
Total	859	341	168	245

TABLE 36: Plans of visiting Hilton Head Island in the Future by Non-Visitors

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

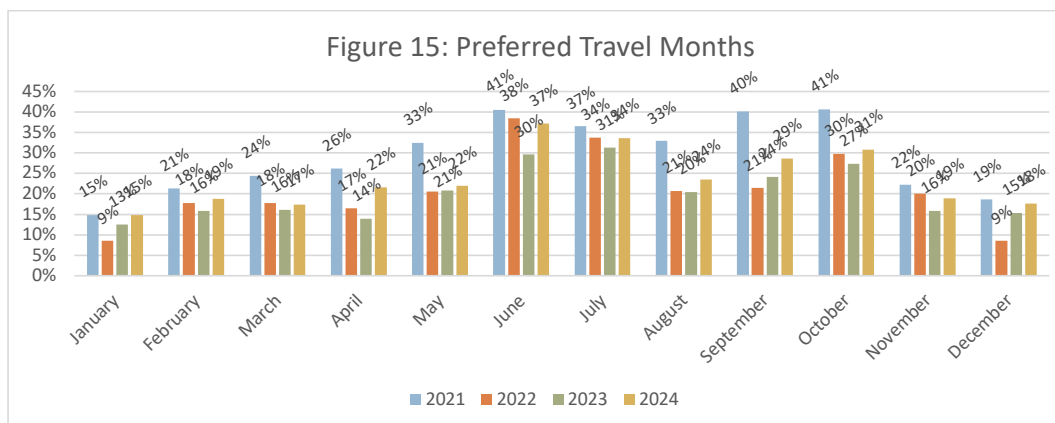
TRAVEL BEHAVIOR – ALL RESPONDENTS

On average, approximately how many leisure/vacation trips do you take each year?

	2021	2022	2023	2024
0 to 1	15.3%	10.0%	7.3%	11.7%
2 to 4	55.1%	47.3%	50.6%	57.8%
5 to 7	19.2%	29.9%	23.4%	18.8%
8 to 10	6.3%	8.2%	15.8%	8.7%
More than 10	4.1%	4.7%	2.9%	3.0%
Total	1,042	984	1,625	1,025

TABLE 37: Frequency of Leisure/Vacation Trips

Which month(s) are you most likely to travel for vacation purposes?



	2021	2022	2023	2024
January	14.8%	8.5%	12.6%	14.8%
February	21.3%	17.8%	15.9%	18.8%
March	24.4%	17.7%	16.1%	17.4%
April	26.2%	16.5%	13.9%	21.6%
May	32.5%	20.5%	20.8%	21.9%
June	40.5%	38.4%	29.6%	37.1%
July	36.5%	33.7%	31.3%	33.7%
August	32.9%	20.7%	20.4%	23.6%
September	40.1%	21.4%	24.1%	28.7%
October	40.6%	29.8%	27.3%	30.8%
November	22.2%	20.0%	15.8%	18.8%
December	18.7%	8.5%	15.3%	17.6%
Total	1,042	984	1,625	1,040

TABLE 38: Preferred Travel Months

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

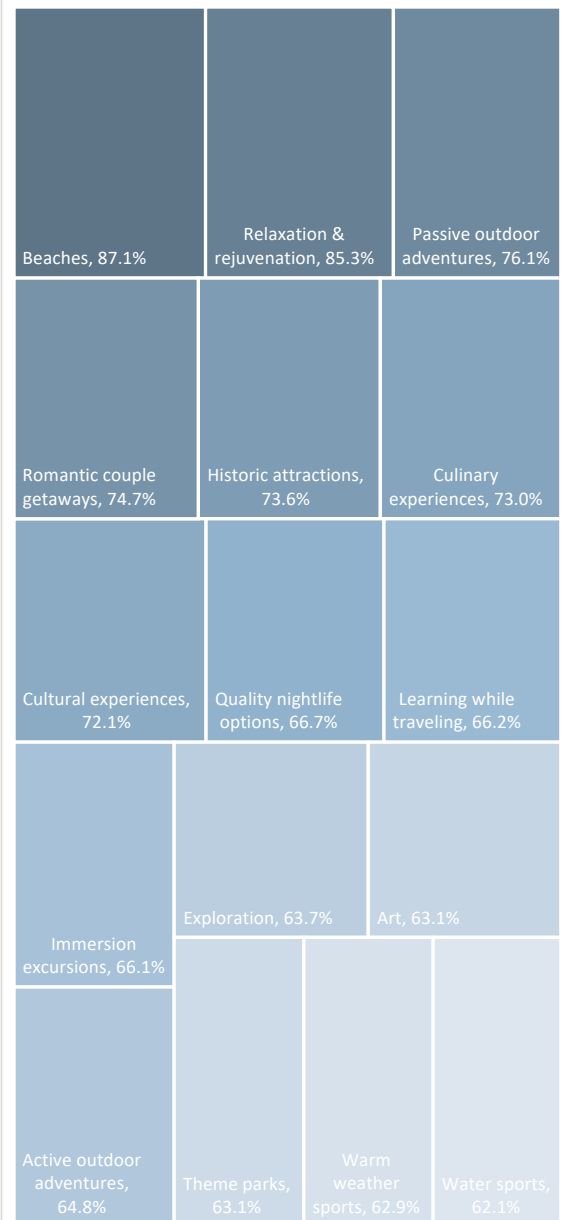
2024

To what extent do the following types of vacations/leisure trips and/or travel experiences appeal to you?

"Appealing" + "Very Appealing"	2021	2022	2023	2024
Beaches	88.4%	65.1%	71.2%	87.1%
Relaxation & rejuvenation	85.4%	66.9%	72.2%	85.3%
Passive outdoor adventures	72.6%	64.4%	63.7%	76.1%
Romantic couple getaways	70.0%	65.0%	60.8%	74.7%
Historic attractions	75.5%	64.4%	60.9%	73.6%
Culinary experiences	70.1%	63.7%	60.3%	73.0%
Cultural experiences	70.7%	62.9%	57.5%	72.1%
Quality nightlife options	52.6%	60.3%	52.2%	66.7%
Learning while traveling	60.9%	56.3%	54.1%	66.2%
Immersion excursions	49.6%	57.4%	51.1%	66.1%
Active outdoor adventures	46.8%	59.6%	51.9%	64.8%
Exploration	57.5%	59.8%	54.1%	63.7%
Art	49.8%	57.1%	49.2%	63.1%
Theme parks	44.7%	58.7%	51.7%	63.1%
Warm weather sports	52.7%	61.2%	53.5%	62.9%
Water sports	48.8%	60.4%	51.1%	62.1%
Performing/cultural arts getaways	51.2%	58.6%	50.5%	61.0%
Luxury camping	39.9%	55.0%	50.7%	60.6%
Urban getaway	48.4%	58.5%	48.0%	60.2%
Spectator sporting events	49.2%	57.0%	51.5%	59.7%
Waterparks	40.3%	54.4%	47.9%	58.4%
Medical/wellness	40.8%	55.5%	47.9%	56.1%
Golf getaways	37.4%	50.6%	41.9%	52.3%
Winter sports	30.2%	53.9%	42.5%	51.7%
Voluntourism	29.5%	49.9%	40.8%	47.6%
Tennis getaways	25.8%	48.5%	36.2%	47.0%
Total	949	1,005	1,625	967

TABLE 39: Preferred Vacation/Leisure Travel Experiences

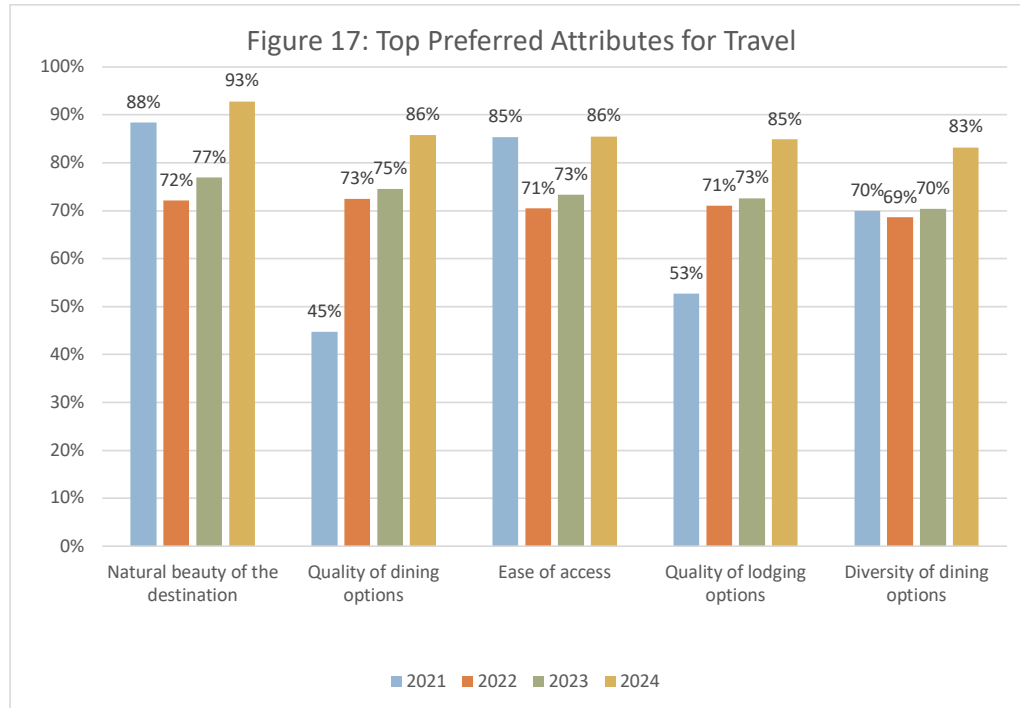
Figure 16: Preferred Travel Experiences



BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

How important are the following attributes to you in choosing a leisure vacation?



"Important" + "Very Important"	2021	2022	2023	2024
Natural beauty of the destination	88.4%	72.1%	76.9%	92.8%
Quality of dining options	44.7%	72.5%	74.6%	85.8%
Ease of access	85.4%	70.5%	73.3%	85.5%
Quality of lodging options	52.7%	71.0%	72.6%	84.9%
Diversity of dining options	70.0%	68.6%	70.4%	83.2%
Affordability	75.5%	67.2%	73.0%	80.6%
Diversity of lodging options	25.8%	67.3%	65.9%	77.8%
Low traffic congestion	60.9%	64.8%	63.6%	74.7%
Travel distance	70.7%	63.1%	63.3%	71.1%
Environmental/ecological sensitivity	72.6%	67.6%	59.2%	69.9%
Access to other cities in the surrounding area	46.8%	58.8%	57.8%	66.9%
Activities like events/festivals	49.6%	64.2%	55.4%	66.0%
Nightlife activity options	48.4%	61.4%	53.2%	65.7%
Medical/wellness	37.4%	60.4%	52.6%	60.1%
Public transportation	57.5%	57.0%	49.2%	57.9%
Total	949	1,005	1,625	967

TABLE 40: Preferred Attributes for Vacation/Leisure Travel

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I would rather rely on a travel agent or tour operator than make my own travel arrangements.	8.8%	19.8%	25.2%	31.2%	15.0%
I try to support the local economy of places that I visit.	28.0%	47.8%	17.3%	3.3%	3.5%
N 989					

TABLE 41: Travel Preferences

APPENDIX

ALL ZIP CODES COLLECTED BY MSA

MSA	Count	Percent
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	106	9.3%
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ	79	6.9%
Atlanta-Sandy Springs-Roswell, GA	44	3.9%
Philadelphia-Camden-Wilmington, PA-NJ-DE-MD	41	3.6%
San Francisco-Oakland-Fremont, CA	39	3.4%
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MD-WV	38	3.3%
Chicago-Naperville-Elgin, IL-IN	34	3.0%
Pittsburgh, PA	33	2.9%
Charlotte-Concord-Gastonia, NC-SC	23	2.0%
Columbus, OH	23	2.0%
Detroit-Warren-Dearborn, MI	20	1.8%
Charleston-North Charleston, SC	17	1.5%
Louisville/Jefferson County, KY-IN	17	1.5%
Rural OH	16	1.4%
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA-NH	15	1.3%
Cincinnati, OH-KY-IN	15	1.3%
Houston-Pasadena-The Woodlands, TX	15	1.3%
Kansas City, MO-KS	15	1.3%
Albany-Schenectady-Troy, NY	14	1.2%
Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD	14	1.2%
Austin-Round Rock-San Marcos, TX	13	1.1%
Riverside-San Bernardino-Ontario, CA	13	1.1%
San Diego-Chula Vista-Carlsbad, CA	13	1.1%
Jacksonville, FL	12	1.1%
Wisconsin Rapids-Marshfield, WI	12	1.1%
Greenville-Anderson-Greer, SC	11	1.0%
St. Louis, MO-IL	11	1.0%
Akron, OH	10	0.9%
Columbia, SC	10	0.9%
Rural TX	10	0.9%
Indianapolis-Carmel-Greenwood, IN	9	0.8%
La Crosse-Onalaska, WI-MN	9	0.8%
Rural KY	9	0.8%
San Jose-Sunnyvale-Santa Clara, CA	9	0.8%
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	8	0.7%
Minneapolis-St. Paul-Bloomington, MN-WI	8	0.7%
Allentown-Bethlehem-Easton, PA-NJ	7	0.6%
Buffalo-Cheektowaga, NY	7	0.6%
Cape Coral-Fort Myers, FL	7	0.6%
Clarksburg, WV	7	0.6%
Denver-Aurora-Centennial, CO	7	0.6%
Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, AR	7	0.6%
Milwaukee-Waukesha, WI	7	0.6%
Orlando-Kissimmee-Sanford, FL	7	0.6%
Rochester, NY	7	0.6%

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

MSA	Count	Percent
San Antonio-New Braunfels, TX	7	0.6%
Dayton-Kettering-Beavercreek, OH	6	0.5%
Fresno, CA	6	0.5%
Jackson, MS	6	0.5%
Johnstown, PA	6	0.5%
Lancaster, PA	6	0.5%
Las Vegas-Henderson-North Las Vegas, NV	6	0.5%
Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway, AR	6	0.5%
Sacramento-Roseville-Folsom, CA	6	0.5%
Beaumont-Port Arthur, TX	5	0.4%
Birmingham, AL	5	0.4%
Fayetteville, NC	5	0.4%
Killeen-Temple, TX	5	0.4%
Lansing-East Lansing, MI	5	0.4%
Memphis, TN-MS-AR	5	0.4%
Phoenix-Mesa-Chandler, AZ	5	0.4%
Rural IA	5	0.4%
Rural ME	5	0.4%
Rural NY	5	0.4%
Savannah, GA	5	0.4%
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	5	0.4%
Toledo, OH	5	0.4%
Anchorage, AK	4	0.4%
Boise City, ID	4	0.4%
Brainerd, MN	4	0.4%
Calhoun, GA	4	0.4%
Findlay, OH	4	0.4%
Lafayette-West Lafayette, IN	4	0.4%
Ocala, FL	4	0.4%
Providence-Warwick, RI-MA	4	0.4%
Richmond, VA	4	0.4%
Rural CO	4	0.4%
Rural ND	4	0.4%
Asheville, NC	3	0.3%
Athens-Clarke County, GA	3	0.3%
Atlantic City-Hammonton, NJ	3	0.3%
Deltona-Daytona Beach-Ormond Beach, FL	3	0.3%
Erie, PA	3	0.3%
Greensboro-High Point, NC	3	0.3%
Gulfport-Biloxi, MS	3	0.3%
Omaha, NE-IA	3	0.3%
Panama City-Panama City Beach, FL	3	0.3%
Roanoke, VA	3	0.3%
Rockingham, NC	3	0.3%
Rural AK	3	0.3%
Rural FL	3	0.3%
Rural KS	3	0.3%
Salinas, CA	3	0.3%
Stevens Point-Plover, WI	3	0.3%

BLUFFTON VISITOR PROFILE SURVEY

2024

MSA	Count	Percent
Sumter, SC	3	0.3%
Tucson, AZ	3	0.3%
Virginia Beach-Chesapeake-Norfolk, VA-NC	3	0.3%
Warner Robins, GA	3	0.3%
Albany, GA	2	0.2%
Augusta-Waterville, ME	2	0.2%
Chambersburg, PA	2	0.2%
Ellensburg, WA	2	0.2%
Fergus Falls, MN	2	0.2%
Keene, NH	2	0.2%
Kendallville, IN	2	0.2%
Maryville, MO	2	0.2%
Merced, CA	2	0.2%
Mobile, AL	2	0.2%
Modesto, CA	2	0.2%
Natchitoches, LA	2	0.2%
Pensacola-Ferry Pass-Brent, FL	2	0.2%
Port St. Lucie, FL	2	0.2%
Raleigh-Cary, NC	2	0.2%
Redding, CA	2	0.2%
Reno, NV	2	0.2%
Rural LA	2	0.2%
Rural MI	2	0.2%
Seneca, SC	2	0.2%
South Bend-Mishawaka, IN-MI	2	0.2%
Tallahassee, FL	2	0.2%
Terre Haute, IN	2	0.2%
Texarkana, TX-AR	2	0.2%
Torrington, CT	2	0.2%
Tulahoma-Manchester, TN	2	0.2%
Victoria, TX	2	0.2%
Cambridge, OH	1	0.1%
Decatur, IN	1	0.1%
El Paso, TX	1	0.1%
Jamestown-Dunkirk, NY	1	0.1%
Lake Havasu City-Kingman, AZ	1	0.1%
Las Vegas, NM	1	0.1%
Liberal, KS	1	0.1%
Manhattan, KS	1	0.1%
New Orleans-Metairie, LA	1	0.1%
Pullman, WA	1	0.1%
Russellville, AR	1	0.1%
Rutland, VT	1	0.1%
Sebastian-Vero Beach-West Vero Corridor, FL	1	0.1%
St. Cloud, MN	1	0.1%
Thomasville, GA	1	0.1%



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