



@VisitVisalia



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## **TOURISM CONTINUED TO SUPPORT VISALIA'S ECONOMY IN 2018**

Travel industry thrives in Visalia and across California

**Visalia, Calif. (May 6, 2019)** – Visalia continued to thrive from visitor spending in 2018. Visit California's latest economic impact report demonstrates local visitor spending reached \$430.4 million last year, a 6.38 percent boost in spending over the previous year, and supported 5,450 jobs in Tulare County. This growth highlights the ongoing importance of tourism to the region and California's economy.

Tax revenues generated by visitor spending are a vital source of income for Tulare County and the City of Visalia, funding local services such as police, firefighters, roadways, libraries and more. "These services improve quality of life for residents here in Visalia as well as enable us to continue to attract tourists and conventioners to our geographically appealing city where state conventions can 'Meet in the Middle,'" said Samantha Rummage-Mathias, Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau (CVB) Board Chair.

Visitor spending generated \$15.9 million in local tax revenue last year, providing a stream of revenue in Tulare County to fund local services. Essential programs, such as public safety, infrastructure and parks, are supported by the tourism industry. Without tourism, each Californian household would have to pay an additional \$890 in taxes each year to make up the difference.

2018 was the first year of operation for Visit Visalia, a collaboration of the Visalia Tourism and Marketing District and the Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau to increase the marketing budget to promote the city. "We are now better positioned to attract tourists to our city with the increased funding," said Anil Chagan, Visalia Tourism and Marketing District Board Chair.

Visit Visalia continues to promote Visalia as an ideal home base for families looking to visit Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks and who want to extend their stay to explore the region. Visit Visalia highlights the many things to see and do in Visalia, as well as the city's outstanding restaurants.

“With nine consecutive years of record visitation spending, tourism is a foundational part of this state’s economy benefitting all Californians,” said Visit California President & CEO Caroline Beteta. “In cities and counties across the state, tourism employs thousands of Californians and pumps millions of tax dollars into local government coffers to pay police officers and firefighters, fix roads and operate other important community programs.”

To ensure the tourism industry remains positioned for success, Visit California actively collaborates with local partners to inspire travelers to visit the Golden State. As international competition continues to grow, Visit California’s innovative marketing efforts fortify California’s charm to domestic and international travelers. The industry continues to invest in 13 international markets to attract travelers, who typically spend more and stay longer than their domestic counterparts. Once visitors decide to travel to California, Visit Visalia’s marketing efforts entice them to enjoy the region’s National Parks and our city’s food and entertainment.

The release of the 2018 economic impact report coincides with California Travel and Tourism Month, which occurs every May following a resolution enacted by the Legislature in 2016. This week, California also celebrates National Travel and Tourism Week, when destinations in the Golden State will join communities across the nation to host events that highlight and celebrate the importance of sustaining the travel industry. The full report can be viewed at <https://industry.visitcalifornia.com/Research/Economic-Impact>.

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#### **ABOUT VISIT VISALIA:**

Visit Visalia is a collaboration of the Visalia Tourism and Marketing District and the Visalia Convention and Visitors Bureau (VCVB) dedicated to marketing, advertising, public relations and other promotional efforts that inspire travel to the City of Visalia. Visit Visalia works closely with local lodging properties, restaurants and attractions to foster interest in Visalia as a year-round destination for leisure, family, and meeting and convention travelers. For more information about Visit Visalia go to [www.VisitVisalia.com](http://www.VisitVisalia.com) and follow VisitVisalia on Instagram, Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest.

#### **ABOUT VISIT CALIFORNIA:**

Visit California is a nonprofit organization with a mission to develop and maintain marketing programs – in partnership with the state’s travel industry – that keep California top-of-mind as a premier travel destination. According to Visit California, spending by travelers totaled \$140.6



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billion in 2018 in California, generating nearly 1.2 million jobs in the state and \$11.8 billion in state and local tax revenues. For more information about Visit California and for a free California Official State Visitor's Guide, go to [www.visitcalifornia.com](http://www.visitcalifornia.com). For story ideas, media information, downloadable images, video and more, go to [media.visitcalifornia.com](http://media.visitcalifornia.com).