




NORTHEAST GEORGIA MOUNTAINS TRAVEL REGION

October 2011 Report

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GEORGIA TOURISM DIVISION NEWS & UPDATE

- 🍌 **Twitter & Facebook** - Be sure to check www.facebook.com/exploregeorgia and www.twitter.com/georgiatourism to see all of the activity. We have 43,116 fans on Facebook and 14,200 followers on twitter. Send new items and requested posting to Stefanie at spaupeck@georgia.org.
- 🍌 We officially switched our Twitter feed over to www.twitter.com/exploregeorgia. We are excited to have the same name associated with our Facebook and Twitter pages. Everything is staying the same! www.twitter.com/georgiatourism no longer exists.
- 🍌 Travel Media Marketplace 2012 is scheduled to take place in May. Bid forms have been sent out and all bids are due back to GDEcD by December 16th.
- 🍌 GDEcD will be participating in the **Rejuvenate Marketplace** Nov. 7- 9, 2011 in San Jose, CA. Rejuvenate Marketplace is an educational conference designed specifically for meeting planners who organize meetings and conferences for faith-based organizations. The three-day event includes a reverse trade show with one-on-one appointments between planners and suppliers; an all-day planner boot camp for novices and professional planners; several general sessions and two days of sessions covering basic planning topics, business skills and strategy, technology tools and social media, and program innovations. Pam Kruseck will be attending and Co-op info tba.
- 🍌 Pam Kruseck will be **attending AAA Carolinas Superbowl of Knowledge** November 18 - 19, 2011 in Greensboro, NC. 'Superbowl of Knowledge' is an annual gathering of AAA Carolinas Travel Counselors and staff to learn about new offers and tourism products for their members. AAA Carolinas is expecting 300 employees including Travel Counselors and Drive Vacation Specialists. A lunchtime tradeshow allows Travel Counselors an opportunity to meet with us and gather information.
- 🍌 GDEcD will once again be participating as sponsors for the **National Tour Association (NTA) Annual Convention** from December 5 - 9, 2011 and the American Bus Association (ABA) Annual Marketplace from January 6 - 10, 2012. As part of our sponsorships we will have a booth on the marketplace floor which allows maximum exposure to all attendees and provides a better opportunity to sell Georgia. We are changing our level of participation this year for ABA and will be the show bag sponsor - we will offer co-sponsorship to our partners. Co-op information will be available soon.
- 🍌 **"2011 Georgia for the Holidays"** promotion at the Georgia Visitor Information Center – Lavonia/I-85 South This is a great time to showcase attractions, holiday events, hotels, restaurants and discounts for shopping in your area! PICK YOUR DAY! During November and December. Contact Pat Pierson at (706)356-4019 or email ppierson@georgia.org
- 🍌 **Do you have questions regarding the Hotel/ Motel Tax** - Jonathan Sharpe (DCA) oversees Hotel Motel Tax collections. He is assisted by James Stevens, DCA's Hotel Motel Tax expert. For questions about Hotel/Motel tax contact: Jonathan Sharpe- 404-679-4996- email jonathan.sharpe@dca.ga.gov or James Stevens- 404-679-0591 email: james.stevens@dca.ga.gov

 **ExploreGeorgia updates:** Please remember to add New Hotels, New Attractions and Special Offers to the website as well as all your 2012 special events. A logo or photo must be included with all listings. The more information you provide in your listing, the more likely you will be featured in one of our many newsletters.

 **Smith Travel data**

AUGUST

Hotel/motel **occupancy** increased 2.4% statewide in August 2011 from August 2010

August 2011 **room rates (ADR)** in Georgia were up 1.5% from last August
Statewide, **RevPAR** was 4%.

Georgia **room revenues** increased 3.4% in August 2011.

Room Demand increased 1.9% in the state from August 2011

Room Supply down -0.5%

YTD

Hotel/motel **occupancy** is up 4.7% statewide YTD (through August) 2011

YTD **room rates (ADR)** in Georgia are up 0.7%

Statewide, **RevPAR** is up 5.4% year-to-date.

Georgia **room revenues** are up 5.4% year-to date.

Room Demand is up 4.7% in the state year-to-date.

Room Supply is flat in the state year-to-date.

SEPTEMBER

Hotel/motel **occupancy** increased 2.8% statewide in September 2011

September 2011 **room rates (ADR)** in Georgia were up 2% from last September
Statewide, **RevPAR** was 4.9%.

Georgia **room revenues** increased 4.6% in September 2011.

Room Demand increased 2.6% in the state from September 2011

Room Supply down -0.2%

YTD

Hotel/motel **occupancy** is up 4.5% statewide YTD (through September) 2011


YTD **room rates (ADR)** in Georgia are up 0.8%


Statewide, **RevPAR** is up 5.3% year-to-date.


Georgia **room revenues** are up 5.3% year-to date.


Room Demand is up 4.4% in the state year-to-date.

Room Supply is flat in the state year-to-date.

 Online Brochure Room - The new online Brochure Room is a feature of ExploreGeorgia.org that enables consumers to order brochures online. To learn how to have your brochure included in our Online Visitor Information Center, go to www.georgia.org/georgiaindustries/tourism/exploregeorgiainstructions/pages/brochureprogram.aspx

 Georgia Event Calculator updated version: Tourism Economics developed two models- the one for DMAI and our custom model. We went with the more in-depth version that measures not just conventions and conferences but sporting events and fairs and festivals. We also went with the custom regional approach.

 We are always looking for info on anniversaries, milestones, etc. They are very popular requests from the media and travel writers. We are working on building a list of these special events/milestones over the next year to easily share with travel writers, travel/trade media, national media outlets and others.

 Georgia On My Mind (GOMM) merchandise is now available to both tourism partners and consumers for the first time via our new online store on ExploreGeorgia.org. Go to ExploreGeorgia.org and click 'Shop for Georgia Items!' on the right rail of the homepage to check out our wearable merchandise including beach towels, bags,

blankets, etc. All merchandise is available with an embroidered GOMM logo (black, white, full color and tone-on-tone). No minimum quantities when ordering and a discount is available when ordering quantities of 24 or more. Another option is for Georgia tourism-entities to order co-branded merchandise with their logo featured as well. Click on the "Contact Us" link for more information, or to submit a special request.

- 🍌 The 80 Days of GA Giveaways was a huge success – THANKS to all the partners who participated! Our goals were exceeded with an increase of Facebook fans by 106% and our twitter followers by 21% resulting in 31,019 contest entries, not to mention all the exposure the partners received in the promotion. Thanks again!
- 🍌 The Tourism Product Development Grant Awards will be announced on October 31st - There were a total of 82 applicants this year!

REGIONAL NEWS

- 🍌 **Tourism Job Openings:** www.southeasttourism.org/IndustryJobs.cfm
- 🍌 The **Econo Lodge in Dahlonega** has completed extensive renovations to move from the economy segment to the midscale segment as a **Quality Inn**. We at Choice Hotels are very excited about the transition. A great hotel with outstanding ownership was just made better. Bob & Kelly are very proud of the final results and we would encourage anyone to come by and take a look.

PUBLIC RELATIONS AND MARKETING

- 🍌 Blue Ridge Country Facebook Page: If you have a fall event, share it on Blue Ridge Country's Facebook page to let our fans know: www.facebook.com/blueridgecountry?ref=ts&sk=wall

CONFERENCES, SEMINARS AND OTHER INFO

- 🍌 **Travel & Tourism Day (2012)** - Preparations for the 2012 Travel & Tourism Day at the Capitol are in full swing, so please plan to join us by marking your calendars for Monday, January 23 and Tuesday, January 24, 2012. We all know what a difference an investment in tourism can do to improve the quality of life for all Georgia residents. It is more important than ever that we build strong advocacy programs in order to showcase the important role of tourism across the state.
This annual event will begin with an "Advocacy 101 Session" on the afternoon of Monday, Jan 23rd to educate participants on "how to work with your Legislator". The "Travel and Tourism Day" industry event will be Tuesday, Jan 24th. There are some exciting changes in the event format so stay tuned for more information.

Also, this year we will be working with Georgia Hospitality & Lodging Assoc (GHLA), Georgia Restaurant Assoc (GRA) and Georgia Chamber of Commerce (GCC) to increase the impact and attendance at "travel/tourism" events hosted yearly at the Capital. This will allow for more time to educate the legislators on the importance of the industry. It also makes sense for our organizations to work closer together on events that allow us to educate our constituents and legislators on the impact and issues in our industry. We will "jointly" host/ sponsor several events at the Capital; starting with "Travel and Tourism Day" on January 24th. GACVB and GDEcD will be the lead organizations on this date. The lead organization(s) for each event will determine the events, timeline and focus "talking points" for that day. The organizations that are not serving as the lead for the event will support the efforts of the lead organizations but on a smaller scale. All events will be co-branded with the logos from all of the partnership organizations.

If you have any questions or need more information, please feel free to contact me at tonya@visitkingsland.com. Looking forward to seeing everyone there in January :-)

GRANTS & FUNDING SOURCES

- 🍌 **In search of funding for cultural heritage tourism?** Click [here](#) for a blog that includes targeted list of federal grant opportunities for preservation and cultural heritage tourism projects culled from the comprehensive database of [federal grants](#). The National Trust for Historic Preservation's federal grants office maintains this blog

which also includes a calendar of upcoming deadlines and useful tips to help you navigate through the federal grant application process. For more ideas check out the [funding section](#) of this website.

- 🍌 Administered by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, **Preservation Services Fund Grants** are awarded to nonprofit organizations and public agencies for preservation planning and education efforts. Grant awards range from \$500 to \$5,000. For more information, contact the Southern Office at 843-722-8552 or soro@nthp.org or visit the [National Trust website](#). Application deadlines are **February 1, June 1** and **October 1** each year.
- 🍌 **List of Grants & Other Funding Sources** - Information on grant programs and other funding sources - www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Programs/Pages/Grants.aspx
- 🍌 **Funding initiatives through Georgia State Parks** - The following is a URL for two programs (the "Land and Water Conservation Fund" and the "Recreational Trails Program"). The Coastal region has utilized these grants for tourism related projects: www.gastateparks.org/net/content/page.aspx?s=8084.0.1.5&siteid=5&wrapid=1
- 🍌 **List of Funding Sources for Historic Preservation Projects (Georgia Historic Preservation Division)**
This is a long and extensive list...be sure to check it out periodically for new funding opportunities.
[www.gashpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=213&utm_source=Georgia+Historic+Preservation+Division+e-newsletters&utm_campaign=505ab88541-Preservation Georgia Online June 26-July+2 2010&utm_medium=email](http://www.gashpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=213&utm_source=Georgia+Historic+Preservation+Division+e-newsletters&utm_campaign=505ab88541-Preservation+Georgia+Online+June+26-July+2+2010&utm_medium=email)

SAVE THE DATE!

- 🍌 January 6 ,2012 - **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in July, August, September 2012
- 🍌 January 24, 2012 – Tourism Day at the Capitol – Atlanta, GA
- 🍌 April 6, 2012 – **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in October/November/December
- 🍌 July 6, 2012 – **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in January/February/March
- 🍌 October 5, 2012 – **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in April/May/June
- 🍌 January 4, 2013 – **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in July/August/September
- 🍌 April 5, 2013 - **STS Top 20** Events deadline for events in October/November/December

Tourism Industry Calendar – For a listing of tourism industry events such as conferences, trade shows, etc., go to www.georgia.org/GeorgiaIndustries/Tourism/Pages/IndustryCalendar.aspx. Contact me at csmith@georgia.org if you would like an industry event posted.