

An aerial photograph of Philadelphia, showing the city skyline with prominent skyscrapers like the Comcast Center and the University of Pennsylvania campus with its green lawns and trees. The Schuylkill River flows through the city, and the University of Pennsylvania's main building is visible in the foreground.

**VISIT
PHILADELPHIA®**



PHILADELPHIA
Visitor Center
CORPORATION

ANNUAL REPORT

20
23

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Visit Philadelphia Basics

WHAT WE DO

Every single day, we're dedicated to:



→ **BUILDING GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S IMAGE**



→ **DRIVING LEISURE VISITATION**



→ **BOOSTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

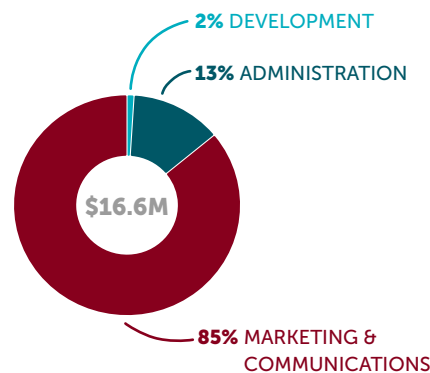
HOW WE DO IT

From the very beginning, Visit Philadelphia has taken an integrated approach to marketing. We deploy all our resources in service of promoting the Philadelphia region as a must-visit leisure travel destination.

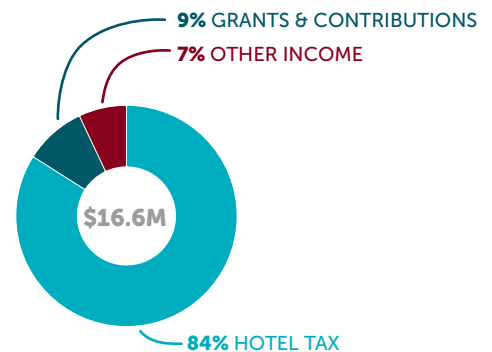
We focus on showcasing the city and region's vibrancy and driving local support of the businesses and attractions that make Philadelphia and the countryside a compelling destination. We've been able to take that to new heights in 2023 as travel demand picked up, expanding opportunities to connect with visitors to our region in a meaningful way.

Our work is always rooted in research. Using it as a starting point ensures we deliver the ideal message to the appropriate audience at the right time through the most effective marketing mediums.

EXPENSES FISCAL YEAR 2023



FUNDING SOURCES FISCAL YEAR 2023



Note: Fiscal year 2023 ran from October 2022 through September 2023

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE



While reflecting on 2023, I'm filled with optimism for Philadelphia's very bright future. I take great pride in our industry, our organizational accomplishments and our unwavering pursuit of complete post-pandemic recovery. And while a few key performance indicators have

yet to reach 2019 levels (our last best year), some have already exceeded it, and many are on the verge of doing so.


Philadelphia has proven its mettle over the past year by securing impressive recognitions. Our culinary scene led the charge, securing more **James Beard Foundation awards** than any other city. Both **AFAR** and **Lonely Planet** acknowledged Philadelphia as a top destination to visit in 2024.

That's also been reflected in our new campaign, ***Come for Philadelphia. Stay for Philly.***

Within its first year, the campaign has generated over **374 million ad impressions** and has been showcased in prime spots, such as Times Square, the brand-new Moynihan Train Station in New York City and on the exterior of buses in Washington, D.C.

We increased our overall marketing spend for diverse audiences and also launched a new series, ***In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union***, aligning Philadelphia's cultural ethos with the diverse audiences we target.

Our deep partnerships with the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB), the Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority (PCCA), Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation (PVCC) and the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association (GPHA) are the cornerstones of our success. As we did last year, **we've included the PVCC's annual report in ours** to give a comprehensive view of the overall leisure visitor experience.

Along the way, Visit Philadelphia has received numerous awards recognizing the exceptional work of our team. Our award-winning results are marked by trophy icons throughout this publication and listed in full on the back cover. 

I look forward to continued partnership across our industry as we work to ensure that Philadelphia and the entire region are at the top of every traveler's list for 2024.

Sincerely,

Angela Val | President and CEO, Visit Philadelphia

VISIT PHILADELPHIA believes in this city, and we have a set of values that match it.

We lead with these values, which means that we are:

Passionate about our city, our region and our mission. We believe passion drives success. Period.

Trustworthy, meaning we do what we say we're going to do, and we do it to the very best of our abilities. Being true to our word tells the people around us that they can count on us.

Inclusive of the people we invite to visit and the people we employ (including the diverse perspectives they bring along with them).

Respectful of one another and of the diverse opinions we hold and share daily.

Collaborative both internally and externally. That is, after all, when our work shines brightest and our results soar.

Innovative because that's the only way we'll continue to blaze trails. Plus, status quo just isn't how we roll around here.

Hospitable to our coworkers, our stakeholders, our visitors. Always. (We ARE in the tourism and hospitality business, after all.)

2023 RESULTS AT A GLANCE

★ **42.9M** HAPPY VISITORS TO THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGION

★ **2,600+** STORIES TRACKED AND/OR PLACED ABOUT PHILADELPHIA

★ **14.2M** VISITPHILLY.COM PAGEVIEWS

★ **187,600** HOSPITALITY-RELATED JOBS IN THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGION

★ **374M** AD IMPRESSIONS

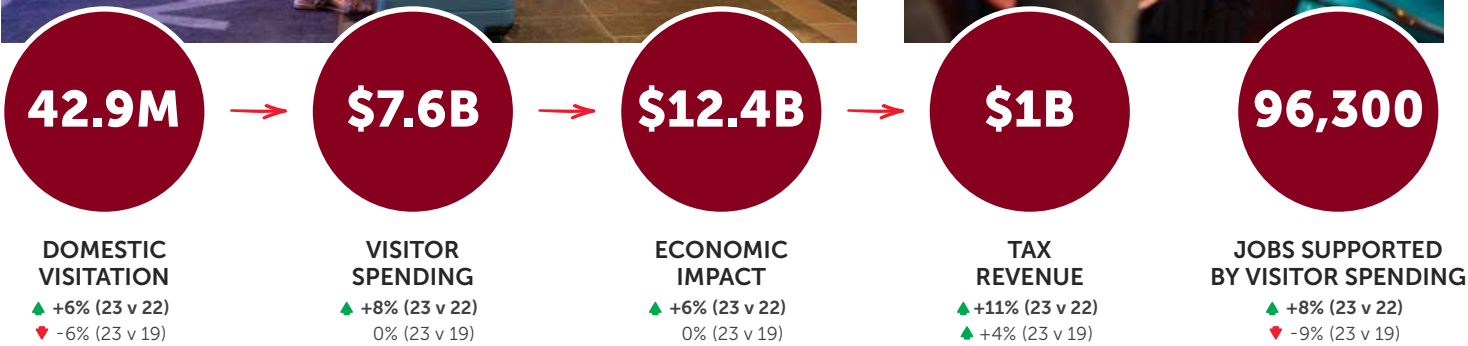
★ **35M** SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

2023 Tourism Industry Results

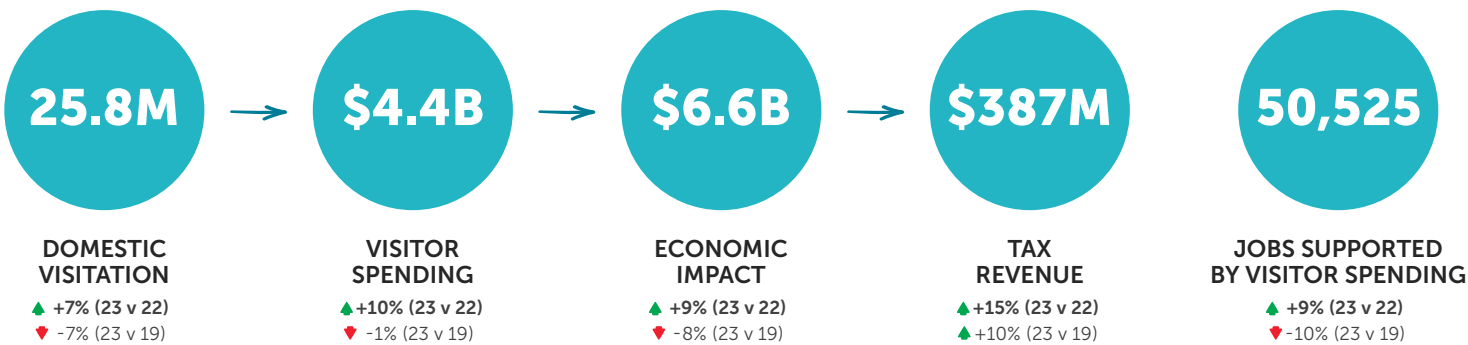
As travel continued to pick up in 2023, we have come ever closer to returning to pre-pandemic levels. Solid consumer confidence, pent-up demand and strong household savings helped propel travel despite a weakened economic outlook. The leisure travel segment continued to lead the industry rebound, and we’ve continued our forward progress toward reaching — and in some cases already surpassing — our 2019 benchmarks.



5-COUNTY REGIONAL RESULTS



PHILADELPHIA COUNTY RESULTS



Sources: STR (as of 1/1/24), Tourism Economics. Data provided in this report is based on the best available information at the time of publication. Some facts and figures may adjust as additional information is available.

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY HOTEL PERFORMANCE

62.3%

HOTEL OCCUPANCY

▲ +7% (23 v 22)
▼ -19% (23 v 19)

4.3M

ROOM NIGHT DEMAND

▲ +9% (23 v 22)
▼ -11% (23 v 19)

6.8M

ROOM NIGHT SUPPLY

▲ +2% (23 v 22)
▲ +9% (23 v 19)

\$202

AVERAGE DAILY RATE

▲ +2% (23 v 22)
▲ +9% (23 v 19)

\$126

REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM

▲ +9% (23 v 22)
▼ -11% (23 v 19)

\$859M

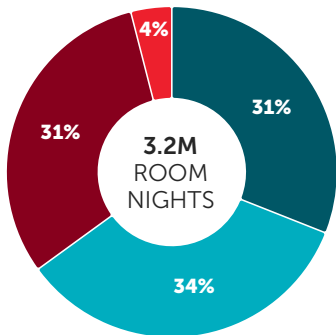
HOTEL ROOM REVENUE

▲ +11% (23 v 22)
▼ -3% (23 v 19)

Source: STR (as of 1/1/24)

CENTER CITY MARKET MIX

Of the 3.2 million room nights consumed, demand among leisure visitors continued to lead Center City's recovery. However, both the group and business segments picked up pace in 2023 versus 2022.



Sources: STR (as of 1/1/24), Tourism Economics. Data provided in this report is based on the best available information at the time of publication. Some facts and figures may adjust as additional information is available

★ **3.2M** ROOM NIGHTS ★ **2.7** AVERAGE NUMBER OF NIGHTS STAYED ★ **77%** REPEAT VISITORS

HOTEL PACKAGES

We've focused on promoting our new 3-Day Stay hotel package, which allows visitors to book two nights and get a third free, alongside our Visit Philly Overnight Package (VPOP), which offers exclusive experiential perks.

NEW

★ **687** 3-DAY STAY PACKAGES SOLD

NEW

★ **2.6K** PARTNER TICKETS/ PERKS REDEEMED

★ **7,249** VPOP SOLD ▲ +24% (23 v 22)

★ **\$3M** REVENUE GENERATED FROM HOTEL PACKAGES



2023 Visit Philadelphia Marketing Programs

Integrated marketing has always been at the core of what Visit Philadelphia does. Through our advertising, website, social media and communications efforts, we invite people to visit our historic, artsy, quirky, delicious and surprising destination.

There's so much to promote about Greater Philadelphia, but each year, we focus our efforts on the things that really make our region stand apart. For 2023, we homed in on arts and culture, culinary, history, hotels, neighborhoods and towns, sports and diversity.

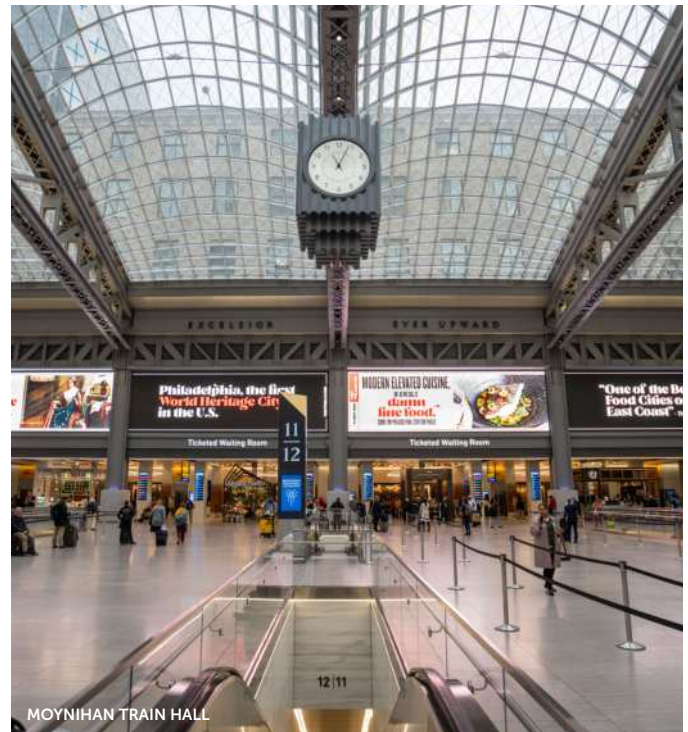
ADVERTISING BY THE NUMBERS

★ **374M** AD IMPRESSIONS ★ **114** VIDEOS PRODUCED
★ **123** SETS OF ADS TRAFFICKED ★ **77** PHOTO SHOTS

COME FOR PHILADELPHIA.
STAY FOR **Philly.**

To stand out in a crowded and competitive field, we launched our first-ever joint campaign with the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau. ***Come For Philadelphia. Stay For Philly.*** promotes the city's icons alongside its lesser-known attractions. The ads pair funny, witty, sassy lines with bold, vibrant, compelling photography that shows off the spirit of the place and its people.

We ran the campaign locally, regionally and nationally in tried-and-true print, radio, broadcast and digital outlets and tested new advertising waters (Moynihan Train Hall, Hopper, TikTok and mobile truck advertising) — all in an effort to reach people when they're most open to our invitations.





FRONT & CENTER IN NEW YORK CITY

Our first-ever campaign in New York City's shiny new Moynihan Train Hall garnered 17.6 million impressions, sharing content for Women's History Month and more. It ran jointly with a mobile retargeting campaign that identified users who had seen our ads in the station and served them similar messaging on their mobile devices.

PUTTING HEADS IN BEDS

Expedia, the workhorse of our media buy, continued to produce big results.



In nine months, Philly's presence on Expedia delivered 19,200 room nights and \$10.7 million in bookings.

We rebranded our popular Visit Philly Overnight Package (VPOP), which offers exclusive experiential perks, and launched the brand-new 3-Day Stay package, which allows visitors to book two nights and get a third free at participating hotels. Touting our best hotel offer in TV, radio and social advertising led to even better sales results. *See page 5 for program details.*



SERVING UP PHILLY'S FOOD SCENE TO FOODIES

Philadelphia's restaurant industry had some major moments in 2023, and we amplified the culinary industry's wins in A-list national outlets, like *Food & Wine*, *Bon Appétit* and *Travel + Leisure*, to further establish the city as a must-visit foodie destination.



CIVIC PRIDE BOOSTER

To boost civic pride and help counteract negative perceptions about the city, we worked with NBC10 to launch *On a Positive Note*, a segment promoting fun and feel-good happenings in the 5-County Region. The weekly 60-second segment put the spotlight on small businesses, events and more.



In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union

Our newest integrated effort celebrates various heritage months by showing off the birthplace of the nation as an open and welcoming destination for all. The series honors the country's history while acknowledging that its past values don't necessarily align with values held today. The result? Marketing that highlights a city that's always ***In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union***.

DRAG QUEEN STORYTIME

More than 12 states introduced anti-LGBTQ+ legislation by Pride Month (June 2023), when Visit Philadelphia debuted a 30-second TV spot showing two drag performers reading a story to families in front of Independence Hall. It ran on CBS in nearly 20 markets nationwide and included a supporting social media series featuring the performers enjoying popular Philadelphia attractions.

A focused press strategy yielded national attention for the initiative, which won a **PRSA Philadelphia Pepperpot** and three **HSMAI** awards: **Silver (DEI Marketing)**, **Bronze (PR and Communications)** and **Bronze President's (DEI Marketing and Social)**.



HISPANIC VOICES

This TV spot and social video series highlighted the diversity of Philadelphia's Latino and Hispanic communities and celebrated their unique heritages while acknowledging their pride in being American.

The effort included a 30-second TV spot featuring 35 Philadelphians representing 10 cultures. It ran in nearly 30 markets nationwide. Additional videos on web and social showed participants addressing misperceptions about their communities.





More Diverse Marketing

Every year, we amp up our efforts to connect with Black, Hispanic and Latino, AAPI, LGBTQ+ and other diverse visitors to ensure they feel welcome and a sense of belonging while exploring our great region.

LOVE + GRIT

In honor of the 50th anniversary of hip-hop, music was the unofficial theme of the fourth season of our **Love + Grit** podcast, which saw a 14% year-over-year increase in downloads in 2023. Food, fashion and the arts also continued to be a focus. Among the creative masterminds appearing on the show: DJ Jazzy Jeff, Adam Blackstone, Freeway, Khemist, Ellen Yin and Chad Williams.

We even recorded two live episodes: one during the BlackStar Film Festival and another during the Roots Picnic, where we also hosted a Love + Grit Marketplace to drive patronage to Black- and Brown-owned businesses.



ASIAN MARKET

We collaborated with Asian Media Group to run web banners and non-skippable videos on several websites frequented by Asian American Pacific Islander audiences locally, regionally and in our key drive markets. With 8.3 million impressions, this buy yielded results that consistently ranked above industry benchmarks.

BLACK MARKET

Some 120,000 co-branded supplements, produced in conjunction with *The Philadelphia Tribune*, highlighted the many attractions eager to welcome Black visitors.

Plus, for the third straight year, we promoted Shop Black Business Friday, an initiative supported by Councilmember Katherine Gilmore Richardson to encourage patronage of diverse local businesses during the holiday season.

LGBTQ+ MARKET

We partnered with Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Pop Up Garden on South Street for *Out in the Garden*, an LGBTQ+ community event series featuring concerts, meet-ups and special installations.



Visitphilly.com

2023 was a banner year for visitphilly.com. In fact, it was the best year for web performance since 2019. The site saw increases in all major metrics — users, sessions and pageviews — over 2022.

Consistently great content, a new date-filtering tool for events, a redesigned email, paid social distribution and more fueled a successful year in an increasingly competitive digital environment.

VISITPHILLY.COM BY THE NUMBERS

★ **7.5M** USERS
▲ +8% (23 v 22)

★ **9.8M** SESSIONS
▲ +6% (23 v 22)

★ **14.2M** PAGEVIEWS
▲ +3% (23 v 22)

1 ARTICLE = 1 MILLION+ VIEWS

Things to Do in Philadelphia This Week & Weekend, our premier piece of content, racked up a record 1 million-plus pageviews in 2023 — a 6% year-over-year increase — and helped us fulfill our mission in a major way, giving readers **more than 2,000 reasons** to spend a day, night or weekend in Greater Philadelphia.

FILTER BY DATE

We added a date-filtering tool to our *Things to Do* article to make it easier for potential visitors to find things to do on the days they would be in town. It was also a great way to help visitphilly.com's content stand out in a competitive content market. Visitors to the site used the **HSMIA Adrian Award-winning tool** more than half a million times.

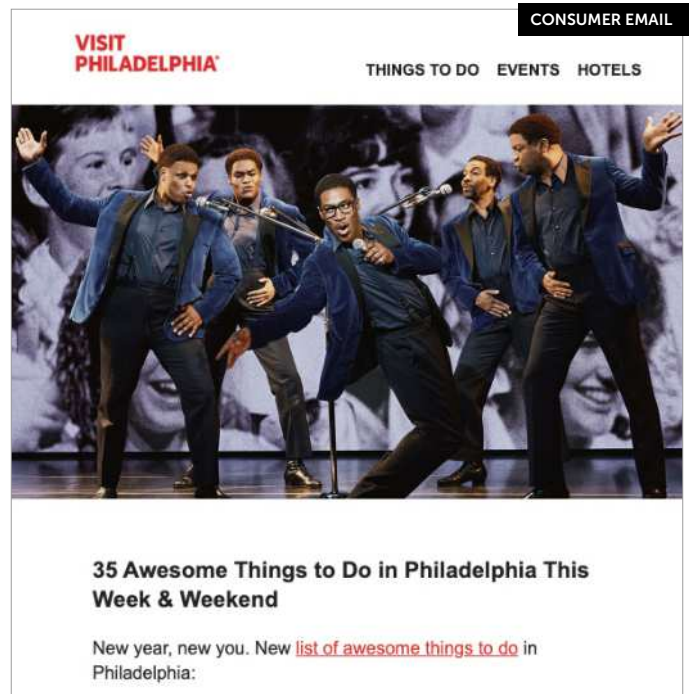


REFRESHED EMAIL, INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

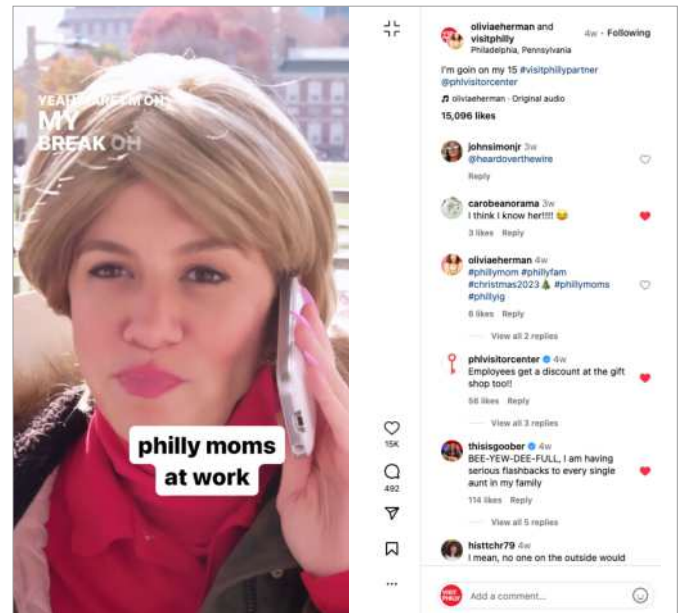
We revamped the look of our semi-monthly email. In July 2023, we added a new weekly email focused on our popular *Things to Do* feature article. In total, we sent 61 emails and saw increased engagement over 2022.

MORE DIVERSE CONTENT

Our commitment to diverse content remains strong. Compared to 2022, we created 25% more dedicated pieces centered around Philly's Black, Latino, AAPI and LGBTQ+ communities.



Visitphilly.com drove 2.4 million outgoing clicks to stakeholder websites, creating impactful traffic for our partners' websites.



Social Media

Social media is constantly changing. The best way to do something yesterday might not be the best way to do it today. That was the mindset for our social media pros throughout 2023, a year that Visit Philly's social accounts saw four local and national awards plus an increase in posts, fans and followers and an engagement rate that was often higher than industry standards.

The key to our success: agility.

CAPITALIZING ON POP CULTURE MOMENTS

In order to connect Philadelphia to key cultural moments, we successfully inserted Philly into the Barbie conversation, many sports conversations and, of course, the Taylor Swift conversation. Ahead of Swift's Philadelphia concerts, we launched a social media challenge that tapped into the singer's philanthropic tendencies. As a result, we made a \$26,000 donation to local music education nonprofit Rock to the Future and nabbed more than 570,000 social media impressions along the way in a **Social Media Masters**



Award-winning campaign.

A NEW INFLUENCER APPROACH

We took a different approach to influencers this year, working with content creators to educate, inform and entertain (aka, edu-tain) our online audiences. For example, we worked with Philly Mom (@oliviaherman) on a three-part series that documented her "new job" at the Independence Visitor Center. The series has garnered **1.6 million combined views** on Instagram.

THREADS: WE'RE ON IT!

We got in on the Threads action from the get-go. But instead of making direct sales pitches (come see this, go do that) as we normally do, we used the new platform to insert Philly's fun, confident, sassy voice into all sorts of conversations — establishing us as one of the first destinations to be active on the platform. That strategy worked, and by the end of July, we had already amassed **26,000 followers**.

COMPILATION IS KEY

We were able to show off more things to do in Philly and drive visits to our website by tapping into our vast video library to create themed compilation reels such as "Instagrammable Spots in Philadelphia," "Things to do in Bucks County" and "New Restaurants to Try in Philly." These videos resonated with our audience (760,000 views and 7,000 shares) and are now a regular part of our content mix.



Compilation reels on Instagram averaged 400 saves per reel — more than double the average for all other Visit Philly reels in 2023.

Communications

Visit Philadelphia forges meaningful relationships with influential media across the country, helping shape stories that inspire future travelers to book trips and visit our region.

CONNECTING WITH JOURNALISTS

★ **75** MEDIA EVENTS & PREVIEWS ATTENDED TO NETWORK WITH PRESS & PARTNERS

★ **55** PRESS RELEASES WRITTEN & SHARED

★ **86** REPORTERS PITCHED IN PERSON AT ANNUAL MEDIA EVENTS

★ **2,646** STORIES TRACKED AND PLACED

THE PHILLY CHEF CONFERENCE MEDIA LUNCH | APRIL 2023

To showcase Philadelphia's standout new culinary offerings during The Philly Chef Conference, we hosted 16 journalists from outlets, including *Esquire*, *Eater* and *Food & Wine* for a lunch at Mawn, with cocktails provided by Post Haste.

MEDIA EVENTS

We connected with journalists at three major annual media meetings and conventions:

- **TravMedia's International Media Marketplace** | New York City: 41 journalists from outlets, including *AFAR* and *The Washington Post*.
- **U.S. Travel Association's IPW** | San Antonio, TX: 35 journalists from *Forbes*, *Toronto Star* and more.
- **Society of American Travel Writers** | Puerto Rico: 10 journalists from *National Geographic*, *Travel + Leisure* and other publications.

VISITING MEDIA PROGRAM

Visit Philadelphia ramped up its Visiting Media Program this year, hosting 27 journalists from major publications to experience Philadelphia's food, arts and culture, history, LGBTQ community, health and wellness offerings, and beyond.

LGBTQ+ PRESS TRIP | SEPTEMBER 2023

The National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA) held its 2023 National Convention in Philly, and Visit Philadelphia hosted eight reporters representing community-focused LGBTQ+ outlets in key markets, like Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and Florida. Participants attended the conference pro-bono with support from NLGJA.



STANDOUT MEDIA MOMENTS

We love it when people write nice things about Philadelphia (whether they've participated in our Visiting Media Program or not), especially when they are writing for influential media outlets. Potential visitors gather inspiration from a variety of sources on how and where to spend their discretionary travel dollars each year. In 2023, we tracked and placed 2,646 stories about our destination.

Here are some of the media moments we loved most:

BEST IN TRAVEL 2024

"At the confluence of the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers sits the nation's first World Heritage City, the birthplace of the United States and the 'City of Brotherly Love'. But in all that historic high-mindedness what can get lost is modern Philly's kinetic energy – and tectonically shifting cultural core."

LONELY PLANET

THIS IS THE FUTURE OF BLACK TRAVEL, ACCORDING TO INDUSTRY LEADERS

"Visit Philadelphia is prioritizing events and marketing efforts aimed at attracting Black travelers ..."

TRAVEL + LEISURE

36 HOURS IN PHILADELPHIA

"Whatever you wake up craving, South Philly's got it."

THE NEW YORK TIMES

HOW ANGELA VAL PLANS TO BRING TOURISTS BACK TO PHILADELPHIA

"Fortunately for us — and for the city's all-important tourism economy — this is the moment she's spent her whole career preparing for."

PHILADELPHIA MAGAZINE

6 HOTELS IN THE US THAT INFLUENCED WOMEN'S HISTORY

"Personal, private, and posh." — A description of the Guild House Hotel

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER

HOW PHILADELPHIA IS BECOMING THE NEW QUEER VACATION DESTINATION

"... inclusion has become a key part of Philadelphia's modern queer culture."

TAGG MAGAZINE

WHERE TO GO IN 2024

"Travelers who love food and art should make a beeline to Philly this year."

AFAR

INSIDE AMERICA'S ICONIC MAIN STREETS: CHESTNUT HILL, PENNSYLVANIA

"What better place to celebrate July Fourth than in Philadelphia?"

GOOD MORNING AMERICA

THE SECRET IS OUT, THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN MARKET IN SOUTH PHILLY IS ONE OF THE BEST IN AMERICA

"It transcends the boundaries of a traditional food market."

FOOD & WINE

ALL-STAR ACCOLADES FOR PHILADELPHIA

**WHERE TO
GO IN 2024**
AFAR

**BEST IN TRAVEL
2024**
Lonely Planet

**MOST WALKABLE
CITY IN THE U.S.**
USA Today

**BEST CITY FOR
STREET ART**
USA Today

External Affairs

At Visit Philadelphia, strong partnerships are critical to our success. Our External Affairs team tirelessly builds and maintains key relationships at the local, state and federal level so that we understand the needs of our community and leverage the strengths and assets of Visit Philadelphia to support the development of our tourism product.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BY THE NUMBERS

★ **13** **ATTRACTION, NEIGHBORHOOD
AND COUNTY STAFF TOURS**

★ **182** **PARTNER EVENTS ATTENDED
BY STAFF THROUGHOUT 2023**

Government Relations

Throughout 2023, the Visit Philadelphia team met with city and state officials to underscore the positive impact that the tourism industry has on our local and state economies and overall quality of life.

MAYORAL FORUM ON HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM | MARCH 2023

Visit Philadelphia, along with our partners, hosted a candidate forum that was also live streamed by 6abc. Each candidate completed a Hospitality and Tourism Questionnaire that was posted online for voters to review.

DESTINATION CAPITOL HILL | APRIL 2023

Visit Philadelphia participated in U.S. Travel Association's annual advocacy day in Washington, D.C., which brought 240 industry professionals from across the country together to speak with legislators on key policies to grow travel, support our industry's workforce and bolster the U.S. economy.

LEGISLATIVE DAY IN HARRISBURG | MAY 2023

Visit Philadelphia participated in the Pennsylvania Restaurant and Lodging Association's (PRLA) Legislative Day at the Capitol Complex in Harrisburg to advocate for the tourism industry within the Commonwealth.

2026 TOURISM PLANNING TESTIMONY | OCTOBER 2023

As part of Visit Philadelphia's work leading to 2026, we provided testimony on the importance of tourism readiness at a hearing of the Pennsylvania House Tourism, Economic & Recreational Development Committee and worked closely with partners to organize the committee's visit to Philadelphia.

Partner Relations

Collaborating with key industry partners makes our work stronger and more compelling.

HOTEL INDUSTRY WORKFORCE VIDEO | APRIL 2023

We partnered with the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association (GPHA) to create a video that shares real stories of Philadelphia hotel employees, highlighting the variety of roles and opportunities in the hotel sector, addressing misperceptions about the industry and encouraging people to consider a hotel career.

INDUSTRY CONNECTIONS | JUNE 2023

For the first time, Visit Philadelphia orchestrated a "speed networking" event with Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association (GPHA) and Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB). **Representatives of 20 attractions, businesses and other partners had three-minute conversations with leaders of 34 hotels,** presenting chances to meet new faces and spur conversations about packages and partnerships.

FALL FÊTE | SEPTEMBER 2023

Industry partners from hotels, attractions, restaurants, retail businesses and more joined us at Fringe Bar to celebrate the collective wins achieved in 2023.





STAFF AT VALLEY FORGE TOURISM AND CONVENTION BOARD LUNCHEON

Destination Readiness

Visit Philadelphia aims to strengthen the resident and visitor experience in the city — preparing the destination to reliably offer travelers an experience they want to repeat again and again.

NEIGHBORHOOD TOURISM ASSESSMENT

To extend the benefits of visitor spending into more sections of the city, Visit Philadelphia is collaborating with community stakeholders to better understand the unique offerings for travelers in seven target Philly neighborhoods. From this assessment, we will work with communities to welcome visitors and realize the economic and community benefits of tourism.

DESTINATION OPTIMIZATION PROGRAM

Prospective visitors need accurate, quality information about Philadelphia when planning their trips, leading Visit Philadelphia and Miles Partnership to create a program to improve online information about the destination. **We audited Google listings for 2,391 hospitality-related businesses** to improve their digital profiles. We also held four educational workshops and launched online services for businesses to receive one-on-one expert assistance.



STAFF VOLUNTEERING

In the Community

Visit Philadelphia is committed to showing support for our partners and all their efforts.

GIVING BACK

Our team cares deeply about the place we call home. Visit Philly's *Days of Service* benefit gives employees two PTO days annually for volunteering. Between those and organic inspiration to give back, our staff volunteered with multiple organizations this year:

- Broad Street Ministry
- Urban Affairs Coalition
- Honey's Angels
- Walk to End Alzheimer's
- THE HOMELESS ASSISTANCE FUND, INC.
- Center for Hope
- The Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization



HISTORIC GERMANTOWN STAFF TOUR



BUCKS COUNTY STAFF TOUR



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



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Philadelphia Zoo

ANGELA VAL

Visit Philadelphia

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE



The birthplace of America. The city of underdogs. Home to the most passionate fans in professional sports. Whatever a visitor's first impression of Philadelphia may be, it is the personality and passion of Philadelphians that make a visit here so unforgettable.

In 2023, the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation took big steps to offer that personal touch to more visitors. We expanded operations to greet travelers where they are, and in new ways, with recommendations and travel tips as diverse as our city. Some highlights include:

Celebrating history at City Hall

In May 2023, the City Hall Visitor Center reopened its doors for the first time in three years, welcoming visitors to experience the panoramic views from atop the tower's 548-foot observation deck. Led by a knowledgeable team of history buffs and volunteers, the City Hall Visitor Center offers a dazzling look at some of the city's oldest and most intricate public art.

Greeting visitors on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway

The Parkway Visitor Center opened in June 2023 to greet the millions of visitors who run up and down the Art Museum steps before taking a photo with the iconic Rocky statue — a replica from the "Rocky III" film, donated to the city in 1983 by Sylvester Stallone. In October, through a partnership with Stallone, we unveiled The Rocky Shop at the Parkway Visitor Center, the first exclusive retail location of the Sly Stallone Shop.

A Philly ambassador on every corner

At the visitor center, we know the greatest asset to Philadelphia tourism is Philadelphians themselves. Looking ahead, the visitor center will continue to expand our touchpoint with visitors, on the Philly PHLASH® bus, at special events and by finding new ways to encourage Philadelphians to show their civic pride and become ambassadors for our city.

The visitor experience in Philadelphia has never been more dynamic. With custom itinerary planning and more than 100 ticket partners, our team can guarantee a memorable experience for each guest, because the best trips start here.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Ott Lovell | President and CEO, Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation

WHO WE ARE

The Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation works alongside Visit Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Philadelphia, the National Park Service and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to deliver world-class visitor experiences. We provide:

Welcoming public spaces: Our four visitor centers offer a safe, comfortable place to welcome travelers and provide information, recommendations and itinerary planning. Our iconic event space, The Liberty View, overlooks Independence Mall and regularly hosts celebrations and high-profile events.

Premiere concierge services: While Visit Philadelphia inspires visitors to travel to Philadelphia, our visitor services team informs them about all the great things to do in Philly once they arrive. Our concierge staff pride themselves on being in the know about the latest attractions, institutions and events that enhance the visitor experience in the Philadelphia region.

Safe, accessible transportation to key local attractions: The Philly PHLASH® Downtown Loop is a fast, convenient and reliable way for visitors and residents to travel from river to river. At \$2 a ride and \$5 for a day pass, PHLASH® buses are the most affordable and convenient way for visitors to explore our city's key attractions and vibrant downtown. Funded by SEPTA, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and 20-plus local partners, the Phlash drives tourism in our city by connecting visitors to key destinations.



MUGS AT THE INDEPENDENCE GIFT SHOP



Visitation to all four visitor center outposts **increased by 16%** in 2023 over the previous year and reached **54%** of pre-pandemic levels.



1.5 MILLION ANNUAL VISITORS*

▲ +16% (23 v 22) ▼ -46% (23 v 19)

**Includes visitors to Independence Visitor Center, LOVE Park Visitor Center and riders on the Philly PHLASH® Downtown Loop*



BUSIEST DAYS: FRIDAY & SATURDAY

(Source: Placer.ai)



BUSIEST TIME OF DAY: 10AM - 3PM

(Source: Placer.ai)



AVERAGE TIME SPENT BY VISITORS - 36 MINUTES

(Independence Visitor Center)



PHLASH RIDERSHIP - 12,400 AVERAGE RIDERS PER MONTH

▲ +13% (23 v 22)

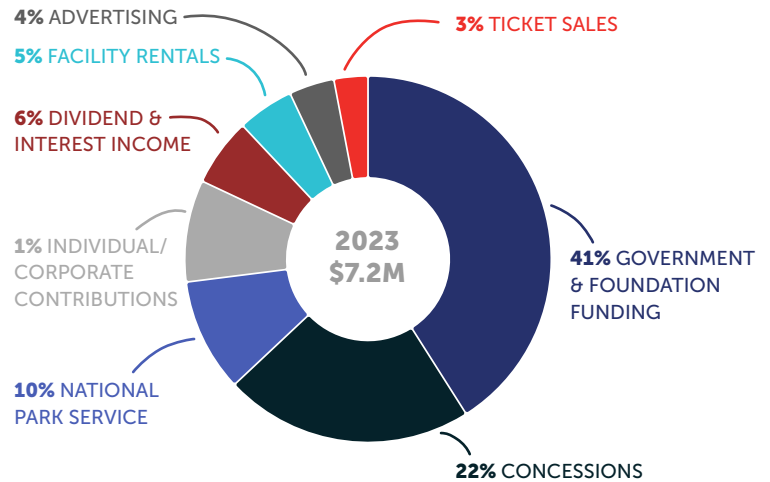


TOTAL PAGEVIEWS: 717,000

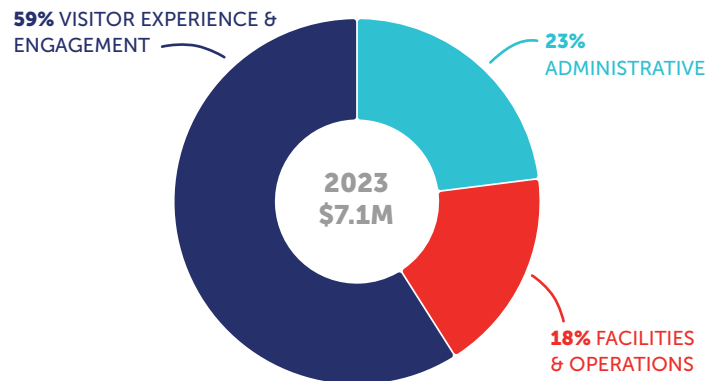
▲ +15% (23 v 22) ▲ +10% (23 v 19)



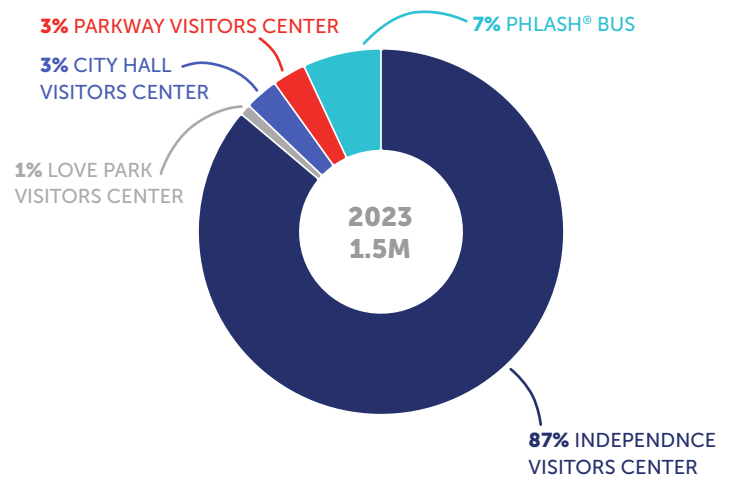
REVENUES



EXPENSES



TOTAL VISITATION





DOLLS AT INDEPENDENCE GIFT SHOP

SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS ACROSS PLATFORMS

★ **84.9K** AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENTS

★ **1.5M** AUDIENCE IMPRESSIONS

★ **1.6K** UNIQUE POSTS



SYLVESTER STALLONE AT ROCKY DAY

ROCKY DAY 2023

Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation and the City of Philadelphia marked an important milestone on Sunday, December 3, 2023: the inaugural "Rocky Day" and the grand opening of the Rocky Shop at the Parkway Visitor Center — all featuring a special appearance from Sylvester Stallone himself.

Thousands of fans gathered at the famous "Rocky Steps" outside the Philadelphia Museum of Art to hear from Stallone, City officials and tourism industry leaders as part of the public celebration, hosted by Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation in partnership with Visit Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The celebration cemented the important role of the "Rocky" films and the mythology that surrounds them in Philadelphia's global tourism appeal.

ROCKY DAY 2023 IMPACT:

★ **3,000+** ESTIMATED ATTENDEES

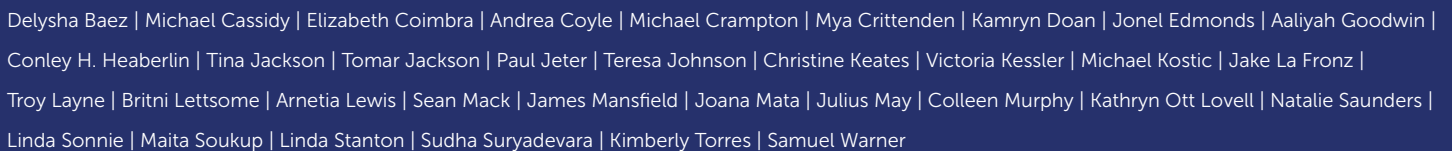
★ **450+** MEDIA PLACEMENTS

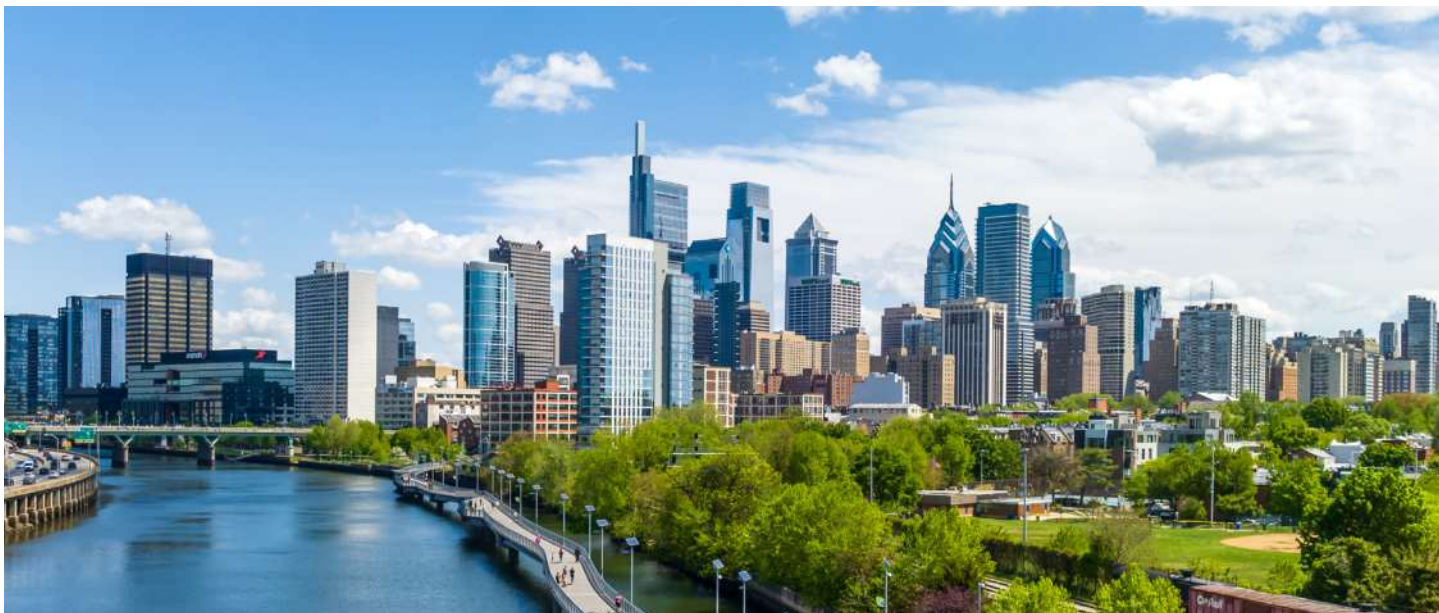
including widespread international coverage and lead stories in *USA Today*, *The Daily Mail*, *People*, *ABC News*, *NBC News*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Fox News* and more

★ **\$8.5M+** IN AD VALUE



RIBBON CUTTING OF THE ROCKY SHOP AT THE PARKWAY VISITOR CENTER





Looking Ahead

In 2024, we're excited for a banner year in Philadelphia's tourism industry, amplified by new restaurant and hotel openings, major events, a fantastic arts and culture lineup, and continued development throughout the city. The Visit Philadelphia team looks forward to collaborating with all our partners to continue making Philadelphia the No. 1 can't-miss destination in the country.



★ **1.1M** 2024 LEISURE
ROOM NIGHT GOAL

VISIT PHILADELPHIA 2024 ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

Looking ahead, we are focused on building Greater Philadelphia's image and driving day and overnight visitation with the following key areas of emphasis:

- **Promote and position Philadelphia as a top U.S. leisure destination** to inspire overnight visitation, leading to 1.1 million leisure room nights in 2024
- **Continue establishing Philadelphia as the ultimate inclusive destination for diverse travelers** from all cultures, backgrounds and walks of life
- **Elevate the tourism industry's role as a key driver of economic growth** in the Philadelphia region
- **Deepen civic pride among Greater Philadelphia residents** to help showcase the true welcoming spirit of our destination

Highlights From the Marketing Plan

COME FOR PHILADELPHIA. STAY FOR PHILLY.

We will continue to focus on driving weekend visitation and hotel bookings through the ***Come For Philadelphia. Stay For Philly.*** campaign, leaning on data surrounding the barriers and motivations to visitation to inform messaging. Key highlights will include amplifying Philadelphia's walkability, history and culinary scenes.

The campaign will be supported by our ever-expanding work centering diverse markets, including ***In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union***, which continues to position Philadelphia as the most welcoming city in the U.S.

THE CHEF CONFERENCE | APRIL 2024

The Chef Conference, which will be revamped in 2024, will further establish Philadelphia as a premier dining destination and hospitality hub by utilizing collaboration dinners, celebrity chef book events and more to facilitate connections between hospitality professionals and the public. As co-presenting sponsor alongside Resy, an AMEX company, Visit Philadelphia will work closely with event organizers to ensure our destination and our outstanding culinary scene shines in front of the national media expected to attend.

PREPARING FOR 2026

Between the nation's 250th anniversary, FIFA World Cup 26™ matches and the Major League Baseball 2026 All-Star Game, we're looking at a jam-packed lineup of incredible opportunities in 2026 to showcase Philadelphia as the must-visit U.S. destination of this monumental year.

Throughout 2024, we'll work closely with all our partners to bolster civic pride and optimize the visitor experience in each of Philadelphia's neighborhoods in preparation for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.



Visit Philadelphia Awards



HSMIA ADRIAN AWARDS:



SILVER AWARD

DEI Marketing



SILVER PRESIDENT'S AWARD, DIGITAL

Technology



BRONZE PRESIDENT'S AWARD

DEI Marketing and Social



BRONZE AWARD

PR and Communications



PRSA PHILADELPHIA PEPPERPOT

DEI Program



SOCIAL MEDIA MASTERS PHL AWARDS

Best Social Media

Enabled PR Campaign



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AWARDS PRESENTED BY THE SOCIAL SHAKE-UP

Best Year-Round Instagram

Presence and Best Mid-Tier

Influencer Campaign

VISIT PHILADELPHIA®

visitphilly.com



2005 Market St., Suite 3700
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Visit Philadelphia would not have had the year it did without the people who worked here.
Thank you to our 2023 team for all you did to support Philadelphia's tourism industry.

Won Jin An | Jasmine Armstrong | Ajene Atkins | Eli Bank | Ethan Blades | Trino Boix | Daecia Borgia | Sheryl Brown | Alethia Calbeck | Jessica Calter | Jabari Cherry | Eric Cortes | Hope Daluisio | Gianna DiAddezio | Liana Dunnell | Jovan Ellis | Farah Farag | Rachel Ferguson | Connor Fogel | Neil Frauenglass | Kaitlyn Grose | Michael Harisco | Colsen Liney | Tameka Love | Keith McMenamin | Cathy McVey-Palmer | Sydney Milkman | Michael Newmuis | Binh Nguyen | Scarlett Pennington | Rob Rabena | Cindy Ray | Jake Rhue | Joel Rivadeneira | Andora Robinson | Jenea Robinson | Sindoor Shah | Laura Smythe | Kyle Stein | Cassie Tomkins | Angela Val | Jazmund Walker | Dan Wisniewski | Andrew Zwarych

An aerial photograph of Philadelphia, showing the city skyline with prominent skyscrapers like the Comcast Center and the University of Pennsylvania's main building. The Schuylkill River flows through the city, and the University of Pennsylvania's campus is visible in the foreground with its green lawns and trees.

**VISIT
PHILADELPHIA®**



PHILADELPHIA
Visitor Center
CORPORATION

ANNUAL REPORT

20
23

2023 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Transportation Authority

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TONY SORRENTINO
University of Pennsylvania

Visit Philadelphia Basics

WHAT WE DO

Every single day, we're dedicated to:



BUILDING GREATER PHILADELPHIA'S IMAGE



DRIVING LEISURE VISITATION



BOOSTING THE LOCAL ECONOMY

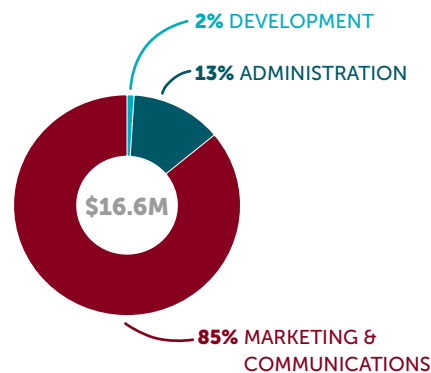
HOW WE DO IT

From the very beginning, Visit Philadelphia has taken an integrated approach to marketing. We deploy all our resources in service of promoting the Philadelphia region as a must-visit leisure travel destination.

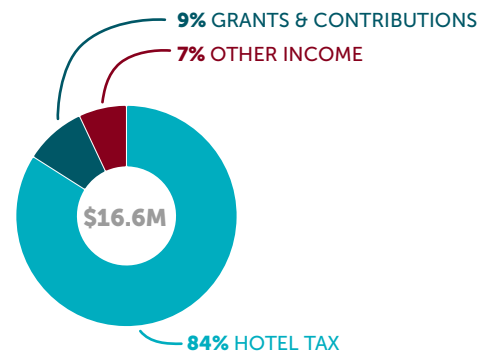
We focus on showcasing the city and region's vibrancy and driving local support of the businesses and attractions that make Philadelphia and the countryside a compelling destination. We've been able to take that to new heights in 2023 as travel demand picked up, expanding opportunities to connect with visitors to our region in a meaningful way.

Our work is always rooted in research. Using it as a starting point ensures we deliver the ideal message to the appropriate audience at the right time through the most effective marketing mediums.

EXPENSES FISCAL YEAR 2023



FUNDING SOURCES FISCAL YEAR 2023



Note: Fiscal year 2023 ran from October 2022 through September 2023

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE



While reflecting on 2023, I'm filled with optimism for Philadelphia's very bright future. I take great pride in our industry, our organizational accomplishments and our unwavering pursuit of complete post-pandemic recovery. And while a few key performance indicators have

yet to reach 2019 levels (our last best year), some have already exceeded it, and many are on the verge of doing so.


Philadelphia has proven its mettle over the past year by securing impressive recognitions. Our culinary scene led the charge, securing more **James Beard Foundation awards** than any other city. Both **AFAR** and **Lonely Planet** acknowledged Philadelphia as a top destination to visit in 2024.

That's also been reflected in our new campaign, **Come for Philadelphia. Stay for Philly.**

Within its first year, the campaign has generated over **374 million ad impressions** and has been showcased in prime spots, such as Times Square, the brand-new Moynihan Train Station in New York City and on the exterior of buses in Washington, D.C.

We increased our overall marketing spend for diverse audiences and also launched a new series, **In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union**, aligning Philadelphia's cultural ethos with the diverse audiences we target.

Our deep partnerships with the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB), the Pennsylvania Convention Center Authority (PCCA), Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation (PVCC) and the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association (GPHA) are the cornerstones of our success. As we did last year, **we've included the PVCC's annual report in ours** to give a comprehensive view of the overall leisure visitor experience.

Along the way, Visit Philadelphia has received numerous awards recognizing the exceptional work of our team. Our award-winning results are marked by trophy icons throughout this publication and listed in full on the back cover. 

I look forward to continued partnership across our industry as we work to ensure that Philadelphia and the entire region are at the top of every traveler's list for 2024.

Sincerely,

Angela Val | President and CEO, Visit Philadelphia

VISIT PHILADELPHIA believes in this city, and we have a set of values that match it.

We lead with these values, which means that we are:

Passionate about our city, our region and our mission. We believe passion drives success. Period.

Trustworthy, meaning we do what we say we're going to do, and we do it to the very best of our abilities. Being true to our word tells the people around us that they can count on us.

Inclusive of the people we invite to visit and the people we employ (including the diverse perspectives they bring along with them).

Respectful of one another and of the diverse opinions we hold and share daily.

Collaborative both internally and externally. That is, after all, when our work shines brightest and our results soar.

Innovative because that's the only way we'll continue to blaze trails. Plus, status quo just isn't how we roll around here.

Hospitable to our coworkers, our stakeholders, our visitors. Always. (We ARE in the tourism and hospitality business, after all.)

2023 RESULTS AT A GLANCE

★ **42.9M** HAPPY VISITORS TO THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGION

★ **187,600** HOSPITALITY-RELATED JOBS IN THE GREATER PHILADELPHIA REGION

★ **2,600+** STORIES TRACKED AND/OR PLACED ABOUT PHILADELPHIA

★ **374M** AD IMPRESSIONS

★ **14.2M** VISITPHILLY.COM PAGEVIEWS

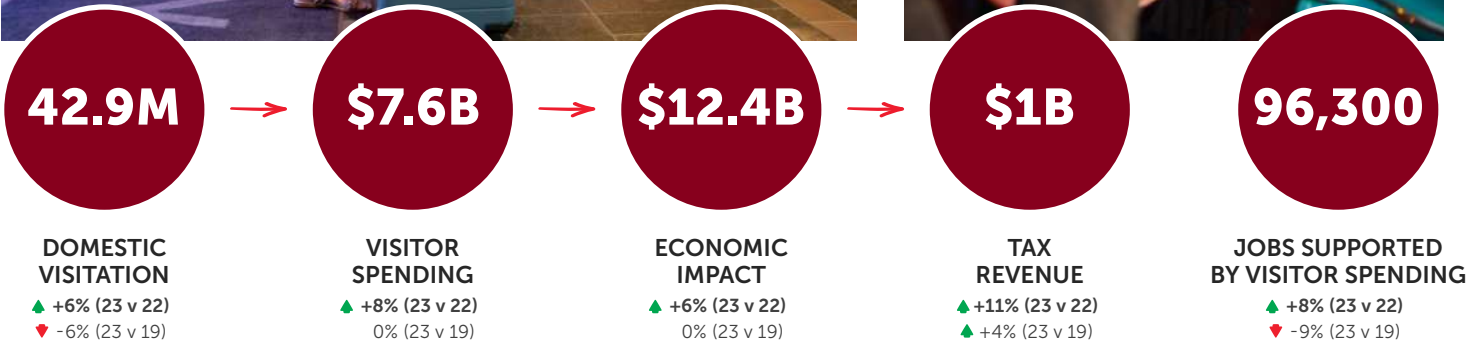
★ **35M** SOCIAL MEDIA IMPRESSIONS

2023 Tourism Industry Results

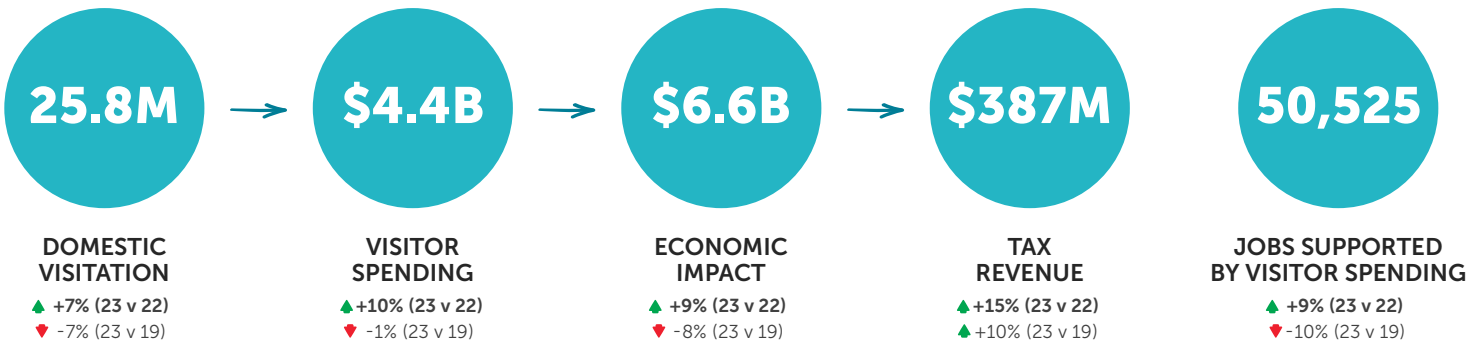
As travel continued to pick up in 2023, we have come ever closer to returning to pre-pandemic levels. Solid consumer confidence, pent-up demand and strong household savings helped propel travel despite a weakened economic outlook. The leisure travel segment continued to lead the industry rebound, and we’ve continued our forward progress toward reaching — and in some cases already surpassing — our 2019 benchmarks.



5-COUNTY REGIONAL RESULTS



PHILADELPHIA COUNTY RESULTS



Sources: STR (as of 1/1/24), Tourism Economics. Data provided in this report is based on the best available information at the time of publication. Some facts and figures may adjust as additional information is available.

PHILADELPHIA COUNTY HOTEL PERFORMANCE

62.3%

HOTEL OCCUPANCY

▲ +7% (23 v 22)
▼ -19% (23 v 19)

4.3M

ROOM NIGHT DEMAND

▲ +9% (23 v 22)
▼ -11% (23 v 19)

6.8M

ROOM NIGHT SUPPLY

▲ +2% (23 v 22)
▲ +9% (23 v 19)

\$202

AVERAGE DAILY RATE

▲ +2% (23 v 22)
▲ +9% (23 v 19)

\$126

REVENUE PER AVAILABLE ROOM

▲ +9% (23 v 22)
▼ -11% (23 v 19)

\$859M

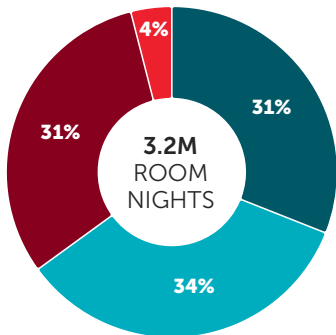
HOTEL ROOM REVENUE

▲ +11% (23 v 22)
▼ -3% (23 v 19)

Source: STR (as of 1/1/24)

CENTER CITY MARKET MIX

Of the 3.2 million room nights consumed, demand among leisure visitors continued to lead Center City's recovery. However, both the group and business segments picked up pace in 2023 versus 2022.



Sources: STR (as of 1/1/24), Tourism Economics. Data provided in this report is based on the best available information at the time of publication. Some facts and figures may adjust as additional information is available

★ **3.2M** ROOM NIGHTS ★ **2.7** AVERAGE NUMBER OF NIGHTS STAYED ★ **77%** REPEAT VISITORS

HOTEL PACKAGES

We've focused on promoting our new 3-Day Stay hotel package, which allows visitors to book two nights and get a third free, alongside our Visit Philly Overnight Package (VPOP), which offers exclusive experiential perks.

NEW

★ **687** 3-DAY STAY PACKAGES SOLD

NEW

★ **2.6K** PARTNER TICKETS/ PERKS REDEEMED

★ **7,249** VPOP SOLD ▲ +24% (23 v 22)

★ **\$3M** REVENUE GENERATED FROM HOTEL PACKAGES



THE STUDY AT UNIVERSITY CITY



GUILD HOUSE HOTEL

2023 Visit Philadelphia Marketing Programs

Integrated marketing has always been at the core of what Visit Philadelphia does. Through our advertising, website, social media and communications efforts, we invite people to visit our historic, artsy, quirky, delicious and surprising destination.

There's so much to promote about Greater Philadelphia, but each year, we focus our efforts on the things that really make our region stand apart. For 2023, we homed in on arts and culture, culinary, history, hotels, neighborhoods and towns, sports and diversity.

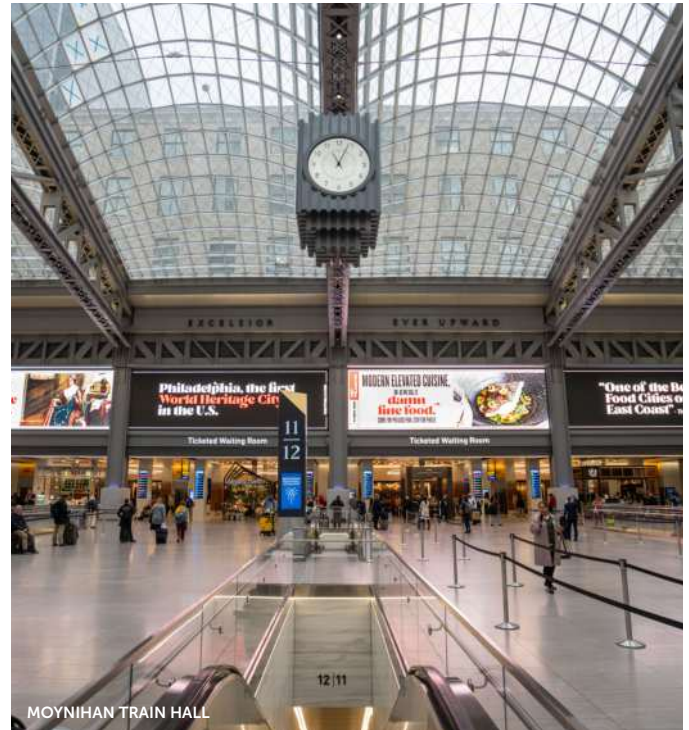
ADVERTISING BY THE NUMBERS

★ **374M** AD IMPRESSIONS ★ **114** VIDEOS PRODUCED
★ **123** SETS OF ADS TRAFFICKED ★ **77** PHOTO SHOTS

COME FOR PHILADELPHIA.
STAY FOR **Philly.**

To stand out in a crowded and competitive field, we launched our first-ever joint campaign with the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau. ***Come For Philadelphia. Stay For Philly.*** promotes the city's icons alongside its lesser-known attractions. The ads pair funny, witty, sassy lines with bold, vibrant, compelling photography that shows off the spirit of the place and its people.

We ran the campaign locally, regionally and nationally in tried-and-true print, radio, broadcast and digital outlets and tested new advertising waters (Moynihan Train Hall, Hopper, TikTok and mobile truck advertising) — all in an effort to reach people when they're most open to our invitations.



VEN POR
LOS PADRES FUNDADORES.
QUÉDATE POR
TATTOOED MOM.



COME FOR PHILADELPHIA. STAY FOR PHILLY.

Gritty but glorious South Street bar	DON'T MISS THE PIEROGIES & PICKLETINIS.	VISITPHILLY.COM	VISIT PHILADELPHIA
--------------------------------------	---	-----------------	--------------------

FRONT & CENTER IN NEW YORK CITY

Our first-ever campaign in New York City's shiny new Moynihan Train Hall garnered 17.6 million impressions, sharing content for Women's History Month and more. It ran jointly with a mobile retargeting campaign that identified users who had seen our ads in the station and served them similar messaging on their mobile devices.

PUTTING HEADS IN BEDS

Expedia, the workhorse of our media buy, continued to produce big results.



In nine months, Philly's presence on Expedia delivered 19,200 room nights and \$10.7 million in bookings.

We rebranded our popular Visit Philly Overnight Package (VPOP), which offers exclusive experiential perks, and launched the brand-new 3-Day Stay package, which allows visitors to book two nights and get a third free at participating hotels. Touting our best hotel offer in TV, radio and social advertising led to even better sales results. *See page 5 for program details.*

SERVING UP PHILLY'S FOOD SCENE TO FOODIES

Philadelphia's restaurant industry had some major moments in 2023, and we amplified the culinary industry's wins in A-list national outlets, like *Food & Wine*, *Bon Appétit* and *Travel + Leisure*, to further establish the city as a must-visit foodie destination.

CIVIC PRIDE BOOSTER

To boost civic pride and help counteract negative perceptions about the city, we worked with NBC10 to launch *On a Positive Note*, a segment promoting fun and feel-good happenings in the 5-County Region. The weekly 60-second segment put the spotlight on small businesses, events and more.



VISIT PHILADELPHIA
VISITPHILLY.COM

COME FOR
ROCKY.
STAY FOR
Renoir.

COME FOR PHILADELPHIA. STAY FOR PHILLY.





DRAG QUEEN STORYTIME TV SPOT WITH BRITTANY LYNN AND MORGAN WELLS

In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union

Our newest integrated effort celebrates various heritage months by showing off the birthplace of the nation as an open and welcoming destination for all. The series honors the country's history while acknowledging that its past values don't necessarily align with values held today. The result? Marketing that highlights a city that's always ***In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union***.

DRAG QUEEN STORYTIME

More than 12 states introduced anti-LGBTQ+ legislation by Pride Month (June 2023), when Visit Philadelphia debuted a 30-second TV spot showing two drag performers reading a story to families in front of Independence Hall. It ran on CBS in nearly 20 markets nationwide and included a supporting social media series featuring the performers enjoying popular Philadelphia attractions.

A focused press strategy yielded national attention for the initiative, which won a **PRSA Philadelphia Pepperpot** and three **HSMAI** awards: **Silver (DEI Marketing)**, **Bronze (PR and Communications)** and **Bronze President's (DEI Marketing and Social)**.



HISPANIC VOICES

This TV spot and social video series highlighted the diversity of Philadelphia's Latino and Hispanic communities and celebrated their unique heritages while acknowledging their pride in being American.

The effort included a 30-second TV spot featuring 35 Philadelphians representing 10 cultures. It ran in nearly 30 markets nationwide. Additional videos on web and social showed participants addressing misperceptions about their communities.





More Diverse Marketing

Every year, we amp up our efforts to connect with Black, Hispanic and Latino, AAPI, LGBTQ+ and other diverse visitors to ensure they feel welcome and a sense of belonging while exploring our great region.

LOVE + GRIT

In honor of the 50th anniversary of hip-hop, music was the unofficial theme of the fourth season of our **Love + Grit** podcast, which saw a 14% year-over-year increase in downloads in 2023. Food, fashion and the arts also continued to be a focus. Among the creative masterminds appearing on the show: DJ Jazzy Jeff, Adam Blackstone, Freeway, Khemist, Ellen Yin and Chad Williams.

We even recorded two live episodes: one during the BlackStar Film Festival and another during the Roots Picnic, where we also hosted a Love + Grit Marketplace to drive patronage to Black- and Brown-owned businesses.



ASIAN MARKET

We collaborated with Asian Media Group to run web banners and non-skippable videos on several websites frequented by Asian American Pacific Islander audiences locally, regionally and in our key drive markets. With 8.3 million impressions, this buy yielded results that consistently ranked above industry benchmarks.

BLACK MARKET

Some 120,000 co-branded supplements, produced in conjunction with *The Philadelphia Tribune*, highlighted the many attractions eager to welcome Black visitors.

Plus, for the third straight year, we promoted Shop Black Business Friday, an initiative supported by Councilmember Katherine Gilmore Richardson to encourage patronage of diverse local businesses during the holiday season.

LGBTQ+ MARKET

We partnered with Pennsylvania Horticultural Society's Pop Up Garden on South Street for *Out in the Garden*, an LGBTQ+ community event series featuring concerts, meet-ups and special installations.



Visitphilly.com

2023 was a banner year for visitphilly.com. In fact, it was the best year for web performance since 2019. The site saw increases in all major metrics — users, sessions and pageviews — over 2022.

Consistently great content, a new date-filtering tool for events, a redesigned email, paid social distribution and more fueled a successful year in an increasingly competitive digital environment.

VISITPHILLY.COM BY THE NUMBERS

★ **7.5M** USERS
▲ +8% (23 v 22)

★ **9.8M** SESSIONS
▲ +6% (23 v 22)

★ **14.2M** PAGEVIEWS
▲ +3% (23 v 22)

1 ARTICLE = 1 MILLION+ VIEWS

Things to Do in Philadelphia This Week & Weekend, our premier piece of content, racked up a record 1 million-plus pageviews in 2023 — a 6% year-over-year increase — and helped us fulfill our mission in a major way, giving readers **more than 2,000 reasons** to spend a day, night or weekend in Greater Philadelphia.

FILTER BY DATE

We added a date-filtering tool to our *Things to Do* article to make it easier for potential visitors to find things to do on the days they would be in town. It was also a great way to help visitphilly.com's content stand out in a competitive content market. Visitors to the site used the **HSMAI Adrian Award-winning tool** more than half a million times.

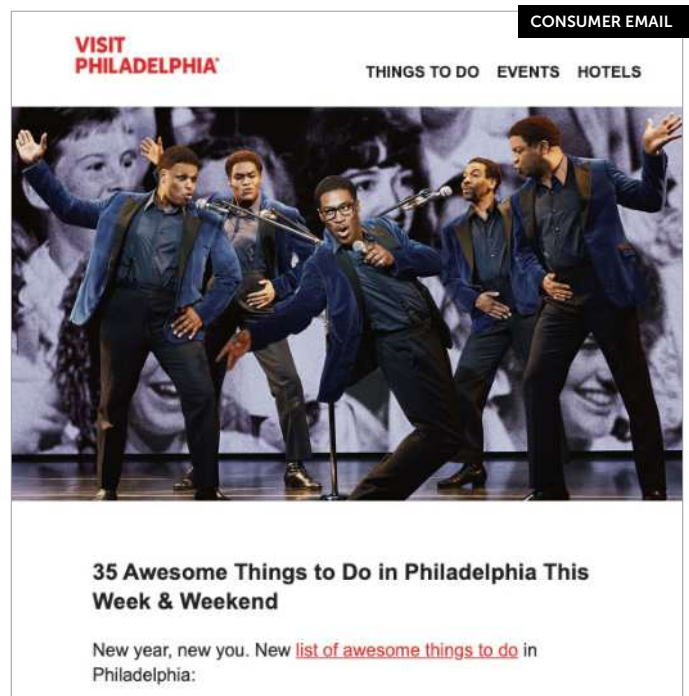


REFRESHED EMAIL, INCREASED ENGAGEMENT

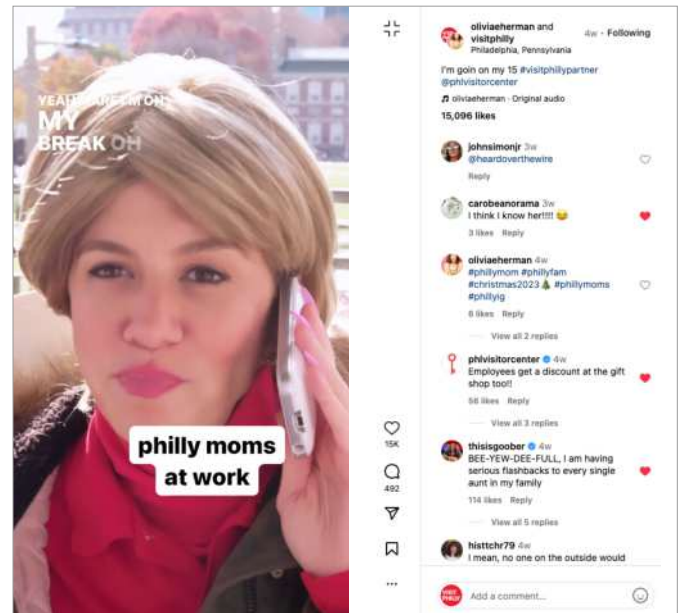
We revamped the look of our semi-monthly email. In July 2023, we added a new weekly email focused on our popular *Things to Do* feature article. In total, we sent 61 emails and saw increased engagement over 2022.

MORE DIVERSE CONTENT

Our commitment to diverse content remains strong. Compared to 2022, we created 25% more dedicated pieces centered around Philly's Black, Latino, AAPI and LGBTQ+ communities.



Visitphilly.com drove 2.4 million outgoing clicks to stakeholder websites, creating impactful traffic for our partners' websites.



Social Media

Social media is constantly changing. The best way to do something yesterday might not be the best way to do it today. That was the mindset for our social media pros throughout 2023, a year that Visit Philly's social accounts saw four local and national awards plus an increase in posts, fans and followers and an engagement rate that was often higher than industry standards.

The key to our success: agility.

CAPITALIZING ON POP CULTURE MOMENTS

In order to connect Philadelphia to key cultural moments, we successfully inserted Philly into the Barbie conversation, many sports conversations and, of course, the Taylor Swift conversation. Ahead of Swift's Philadelphia concerts, we launched a social media challenge that tapped into the singer's philanthropic tendencies. As a result, we made a \$26,000 donation to local music education nonprofit Rock to the Future and nabbed more than 570,000 social media impressions along the way in a **Social Media Masters**



Award-winning campaign.

A NEW INFLUENCER APPROACH

We took a different approach to influencers this year, working with content creators to educate, inform and entertain (aka, edu-tain) our online audiences. For example, we worked with Philly Mom (@oliviaherman) on a three-part series that documented her "new job" at the Independence Visitor Center. The series has garnered **1.6 million combined views** on Instagram.

THREADS: WE'RE ON IT!

We got in on the Threads action from the get-go. But instead of making direct sales pitches (come see this, go do that) as we normally do, we used the new platform to insert Philly's fun, confident, sassy voice into all sorts of conversations — establishing us as one of the first destinations to be active on the platform. That strategy worked, and by the end of July, we had already amassed **26,000 followers**.

COMPILATION IS KEY

We were able to show off more things to do in Philly and drive visits to our website by tapping into our vast video library to create themed compilation reels such as "Instagrammable Spots in Philadelphia," "Things to do in Bucks County" and "New Restaurants to Try in Philly." These videos resonated with our audience (760,000 views and 7,000 shares) and are now a regular part of our content mix.



Compilation reels on Instagram averaged 400 saves per reel — more than double the average for all other Visit Philly reels in 2023.

Communications

Visit Philadelphia forges meaningful relationships with influential media across the country, helping shape stories that inspire future travelers to book trips and visit our region.

CONNECTING WITH JOURNALISTS

★ **75** MEDIA EVENTS & PREVIEWS ATTENDED TO NETWORK WITH PRESS & PARTNERS

★ **55** PRESS RELEASES WRITTEN & SHARED

★ **86** REPORTERS PITCHED IN PERSON AT ANNUAL MEDIA EVENTS

★ **2,646** STORIES TRACKED AND PLACED

THE PHILLY CHEF CONFERENCE MEDIA LUNCH | APRIL 2023

To showcase Philadelphia's standout new culinary offerings during The Philly Chef Conference, we hosted 16 journalists from outlets, including *Esquire*, *Eater* and *Food & Wine* for a lunch at Mawn, with cocktails provided by Post Haste.

MEDIA EVENTS

We connected with journalists at three major annual media meetings and conventions:

- **TravMedia's International Media Marketplace** | New York City: 41 journalists from outlets, including *AFAR* and *The Washington Post*.
- **U.S. Travel Association's IPW** | San Antonio, TX: 35 journalists from *Forbes*, *Toronto Star* and more.
- **Society of American Travel Writers** | Puerto Rico: 10 journalists from *National Geographic*, *Travel + Leisure* and other publications.

VISITING MEDIA PROGRAM

Visit Philadelphia ramped up its Visiting Media Program this year, hosting 27 journalists from major publications to experience Philadelphia's food, arts and culture, history, LGBTQ community, health and wellness offerings, and beyond.

LGBTQ+ PRESS TRIP | SEPTEMBER 2023

The National Lesbian and Gay Journalists Association (NLGJA) held its 2023 National Convention in Philly, and Visit Philadelphia hosted eight reporters representing community-focused LGBTQ+ outlets in key markets, like Atlanta, Washington, D.C., and Florida. Participants attended the conference pro-bono with support from NLGJA.



STANDOUT MEDIA MOMENTS

We love it when people write nice things about Philadelphia (whether they've participated in our Visiting Media Program or not), especially when they are writing for influential media outlets. Potential visitors gather inspiration from a variety of sources on how and where to spend their discretionary travel dollars each year. In 2023, we tracked and placed 2,646 stories about our destination.

Here are some of the media moments we loved most:

BEST IN TRAVEL 2024

"At the confluence of the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers sits the nation's first World Heritage City, the birthplace of the United States and the 'City of Brotherly Love'. But in all that historic high-mindedness what can get lost is modern Philly's kinetic energy – and tectonically shifting cultural core."

LONELY PLANET

THIS IS THE FUTURE OF BLACK TRAVEL, ACCORDING TO INDUSTRY LEADERS

"Visit Philadelphia is prioritizing events and marketing efforts aimed at attracting Black travelers ..."

TRAVEL + LEISURE

36 HOURS IN PHILADELPHIA

"Whatever you wake up craving, South Philly's got it."

THE NEW YORK TIMES

HOW ANGELA VAL PLANS TO BRING TOURISTS BACK TO PHILADELPHIA

"Fortunately for us — and for the city's all-important tourism economy — this is the moment she's spent her whole career preparing for."

PHILADELPHIA MAGAZINE

6 HOTELS IN THE US THAT INFLUENCED WOMEN'S HISTORY

"Personal, private, and posh." — A description of the Guild House Hotel

CONDÉ NAST TRAVELER

HOW PHILADELPHIA IS BECOMING THE NEW QUEER VACATION DESTINATION

"... inclusion has become a key part of Philadelphia's modern queer culture."

TAGG MAGAZINE

WHERE TO GO IN 2024

"Travelers who love food and art should make a beeline to Philly this year."

AFAR

INSIDE AMERICA'S ICONIC MAIN STREETS: CHESTNUT HILL, PENNSYLVANIA

"What better place to celebrate July Fourth than in Philadelphia?"

GOOD MORNING AMERICA

THE SECRET IS OUT, THE SOUTHEAST ASIAN MARKET IN SOUTH PHILLY IS ONE OF THE BEST IN AMERICA

"It transcends the boundaries of a traditional food market."

FOOD & WINE

ALL-STAR ACCOLADES FOR PHILADELPHIA

**WHERE TO
GO IN 2024**
AFAR

**BEST IN TRAVEL
2024**
Lonely Planet

**MOST WALKABLE
CITY IN THE U.S.**
USA Today

**BEST CITY FOR
STREET ART**
USA Today

External Affairs

At Visit Philadelphia, strong partnerships are critical to our success. Our External Affairs team tirelessly builds and maintains key relationships at the local, state and federal level so that we understand the needs of our community and leverage the strengths and assets of Visit Philadelphia to support the development of our tourism product.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS BY THE NUMBERS

★ **13** **ATTRACTION, NEIGHBORHOOD
AND COUNTY STAFF TOURS**

★ **182** **PARTNER EVENTS ATTENDED
BY STAFF THROUGHOUT 2023**

Government Relations

Throughout 2023, the Visit Philadelphia team met with city and state officials to underscore the positive impact that the tourism industry has on our local and state economies and overall quality of life.

MAYORAL FORUM ON HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM | MARCH 2023

Visit Philadelphia, along with our partners, hosted a candidate forum that was also live streamed by 6abc. Each candidate completed a Hospitality and Tourism Questionnaire that was posted online for voters to review.

DESTINATION CAPITOL HILL | APRIL 2023

Visit Philadelphia participated in U.S. Travel Association's annual advocacy day in Washington, D.C., which brought 240 industry professionals from across the country together to speak with legislators on key policies to grow travel, support our industry's workforce and bolster the U.S. economy.

LEGISLATIVE DAY IN HARRISBURG | MAY 2023

Visit Philadelphia participated in the Pennsylvania Restaurant and Lodging Association's (PRLA) Legislative Day at the Capitol Complex in Harrisburg to advocate for the tourism industry within the Commonwealth.

2026 TOURISM PLANNING TESTIMONY | OCTOBER 2023

As part of Visit Philadelphia's work leading to 2026, we provided testimony on the importance of tourism readiness at a hearing of the Pennsylvania House Tourism, Economic & Recreational Development Committee and worked closely with partners to organize the committee's visit to Philadelphia.

Partner Relations

Collaborating with key industry partners makes our work stronger and more compelling.

HOTEL INDUSTRY WORKFORCE VIDEO | APRIL 2023

We partnered with the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association (GPHA) to create a video that shares real stories of Philadelphia hotel employees, highlighting the variety of roles and opportunities in the hotel sector, addressing misperceptions about the industry and encouraging people to consider a hotel career.

INDUSTRY CONNECTIONS | JUNE 2023

For the first time, Visit Philadelphia orchestrated a "speed networking" event with Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association (GPHA) and Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB). **Representatives of 20 attractions, businesses and other partners had three-minute conversations with leaders of 34 hotels,** presenting chances to meet new faces and spur conversations about packages and partnerships.

FALL FÊTE | SEPTEMBER 2023

Industry partners from hotels, attractions, restaurants, retail businesses and more joined us at Fringe Bar to celebrate the collective wins achieved in 2023.





STAFF AT VALLEY FORGE TOURISM AND CONVENTION BOARD LUNCHEON

Destination Readiness

Visit Philadelphia aims to strengthen the resident and visitor experience in the city — preparing the destination to reliably offer travelers an experience they want to repeat again and again.

NEIGHBORHOOD TOURISM ASSESSMENT

To extend the benefits of visitor spending into more sections of the city, Visit Philadelphia is collaborating with community stakeholders to better understand the unique offerings for travelers in seven target Philly neighborhoods. From this assessment, we will work with communities to welcome visitors and realize the economic and community benefits of tourism.

DESTINATION OPTIMIZATION PROGRAM

Prospective visitors need accurate, quality information about Philadelphia when planning their trips, leading Visit Philadelphia and Miles Partnership to create a program to improve online information about the destination. **We audited Google listings for 2,391 hospitality-related businesses** to improve their digital profiles. We also held four educational workshops and launched online services for businesses to receive one-on-one expert assistance.



STAFF VOLUNTEERING

In the Community

Visit Philadelphia is committed to showing support for our partners and all their efforts.

GIVING BACK

Our team cares deeply about the place we call home. Visit Philly's *Days of Service* benefit gives employees two PTO days annually for volunteering. Between those and organic inspiration to give back, our staff volunteered with multiple organizations this year:

- Broad Street Ministry
- Urban Affairs Coalition
- Honey's Angels
- Walk to End Alzheimer's
- THE HOMELESS ASSISTANCE FUND, INC.
- Center for Hope
- The Plast Ukrainian Scouting Organization



HISTORIC GERMANTOWN STAFF TOUR



BUCKS COUNTY STAFF TOUR



2023 ANNUAL REPORT



PHILADELPHIA VISITOR CENTER CORPORATION BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DEBORAH O'BRIEN

Board Chair
Bank of America

TIFFANY NEWMUIS

Board Vice Chair
Comcast

W. BRADLEY BATURKA, CPA

Board Treasurer
Wipfli LLP

SHAWN ANDRE MURRAY, MA, PHR

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JOSEPH T. ASHDALE

International Union of Painters
and Allied Trades

THOMAS A. CARAMANICO

McCormick Taylor, Inc.

GREGG CAREN

Philadelphia Convention
and Visitors Bureau

J.J. (JONATHAN J.) CUTLER

Heidrick & Struggles

PAUL R. DECKER

Valley Forge Convention
and Visitors Bureau

JOHN H. ESTEY

Forthcoming

JOHN FRICKE

Canopy by Hilton Philadelphia
Center City

ROB GHORMOZ

GSL Public Affairs,
A Stevens & Lee Company

JAZELLE JONES

City of Philadelphia

LAURI KAVULICH, ESQUIRE

Clark Hill, PLC

AMY SHEARER

Philadelphia Zoo

ANGELA VAL

Visit Philadelphia

LEADERSHIP MESSAGE



The birthplace of America. The city of underdogs. Home to the most passionate fans in professional sports. Whatever a visitor's first impression of Philadelphia may be, it is the personality and passion of Philadelphians that make a visit here so unforgettable.

In 2023, the Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation took big steps to offer that personal touch to more visitors. We expanded operations to greet travelers where they are, and in new ways, with recommendations and travel tips as diverse as our city. Some highlights include:

Celebrating history at City Hall

In May 2023, the City Hall Visitor Center reopened its doors for the first time in three years, welcoming visitors to experience the panoramic views from atop the tower's 548-foot observation deck. Led by a knowledgeable team of history buffs and volunteers, the City Hall Visitor Center offers a dazzling look at some of the city's oldest and most intricate public art.

Greeting visitors on the Benjamin Franklin Parkway

The Parkway Visitor Center opened in June 2023 to greet the millions of visitors who run up and down the Art Museum steps before taking a photo with the iconic Rocky statue — a replica from the "Rocky III" film, donated to the city in 1983 by Sylvester Stallone. In October, through a partnership with Stallone, we unveiled The Rocky Shop at the Parkway Visitor Center, the first exclusive retail location of the Sly Stallone Shop.

A Philly ambassador on every corner

At the visitor center, we know the greatest asset to Philadelphia tourism is Philadelphians themselves. Looking ahead, the visitor center will continue to expand our touchpoint with visitors, on the Philly PHLASH® bus, at special events and by finding new ways to encourage Philadelphians to show their civic pride and become ambassadors for our city.

The visitor experience in Philadelphia has never been more dynamic. With custom itinerary planning and more than 100 ticket partners, our team can guarantee a memorable experience for each guest, because the best trips start here.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Ott Lovell | President and CEO, Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation

WHO WE ARE

The Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation works alongside Visit Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau, the City of Philadelphia, the National Park Service and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to deliver world-class visitor experiences. We provide:

Welcoming public spaces: Our four visitor centers offer a safe, comfortable place to welcome travelers and provide information, recommendations and itinerary planning. Our iconic event space, The Liberty View, overlooks Independence Mall and regularly hosts celebrations and high-profile events.

Premiere concierge services: While Visit Philadelphia inspires visitors to travel to Philadelphia, our visitor services team informs them about all the great things to do in Philly once they arrive. Our concierge staff pride themselves on being in the know about the latest attractions, institutions and events that enhance the visitor experience in the Philadelphia region.

Safe, accessible transportation to key local attractions: The Philly PHLASH® Downtown Loop is a fast, convenient and reliable way for visitors and residents to travel from river to river. At \$2 a ride and \$5 for a day pass, PHLASH® buses are the most affordable and convenient way for visitors to explore our city's key attractions and vibrant downtown. Funded by SEPTA, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation and 20-plus local partners, the Phlash drives tourism in our city by connecting visitors to key destinations.



MUGS AT THE INDEPENDENCE GIFT SHOP



Visitation to all four visitor center outposts **increased by 16%** in 2023 over the previous year and reached **54%** of pre-pandemic levels.



1.5 MILLION ANNUAL VISITORS*

▲ +16% (23 v 22) ▼ -46% (23 v 19)

**Includes visitors to Independence Visitor Center, LOVE Park Visitor Center and riders on the Philly PHLASH® Downtown Loop*



BUSIEST DAYS: FRIDAY & SATURDAY

(Source: Placer.ai)



BUSIEST TIME OF DAY: 10AM - 3PM

(Source: Placer.ai)



AVERAGE TIME SPENT BY VISITORS - 36 MINUTES

(Independence Visitor Center)



PHLASH RIDERSHIP - 12,400 AVERAGE RIDERS PER MONTH

▲ +13% (23 v 22)

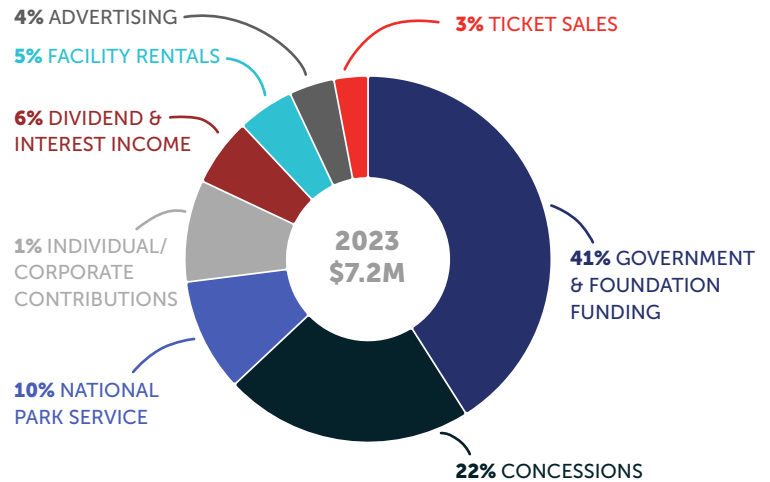


TOTAL PAGEVIEWS: 717,000

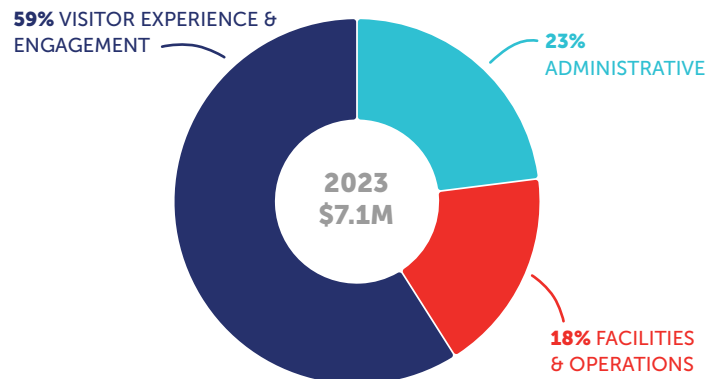
▲ +15% (23 v 22) ▲ +10% (23 v 19)



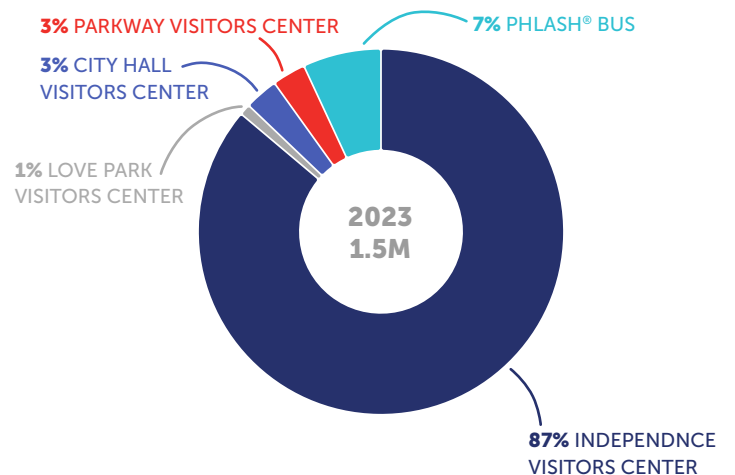
REVENUES



EXPENSES



TOTAL VISITATION





DOLLS AT INDEPENDENCE GIFT SHOP

SOCIAL MEDIA HIGHLIGHTS ACROSS PLATFORMS

★ **84.9K** AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENTS

★ **1.5M** AUDIENCE IMPRESSIONS

★ **1.6K** UNIQUE POSTS



SYLVESTER STALLONE AT ROCKY DAY

ROCKY DAY 2023

Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation and the City of Philadelphia marked an important milestone on Sunday, December 3, 2023: the inaugural "Rocky Day" and the grand opening of the Rocky Shop at the Parkway Visitor Center — all featuring a special appearance from Sylvester Stallone himself.

Thousands of fans gathered at the famous "Rocky Steps" outside the Philadelphia Museum of Art to hear from Stallone, City officials and tourism industry leaders as part of the public celebration, hosted by Philadelphia Visitor Center Corporation in partnership with Visit Philadelphia, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau.

The celebration cemented the important role of the "Rocky" films and the mythology that surrounds them in Philadelphia's global tourism appeal.

ROCKY DAY 2023 IMPACT:

★ **3,000+** ESTIMATED ATTENDEES

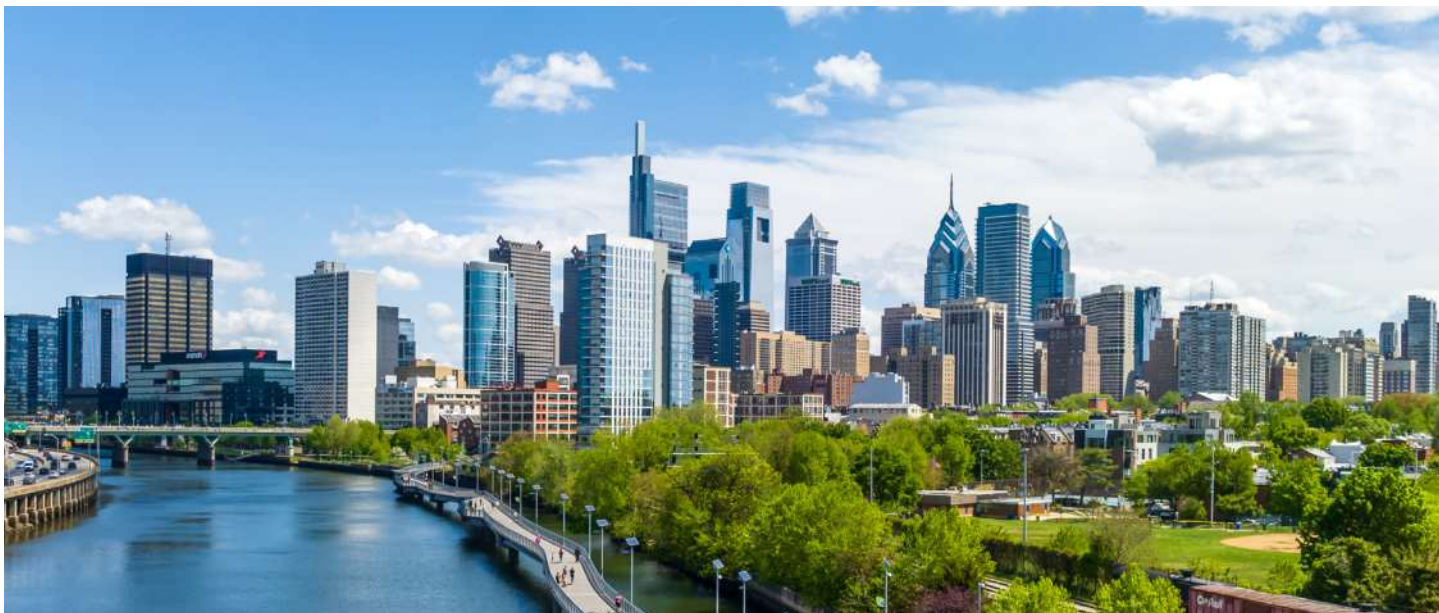
★ **450+** MEDIA PLACEMENTS
including widespread international coverage and lead stories in *USA Today*, *The Daily Mail*, *People*, *ABC News*, *NBC News*, *Entertainment Weekly*, *Fox News* and more

★ **\$8.5M+** IN AD VALUE



RIBBON CUTTING OF THE ROCKY SHOP AT THE PARKWAY VISITOR CENTER





Looking Ahead

In 2024, we're excited for a banner year in Philadelphia's tourism industry, amplified by new restaurant and hotel openings, major events, a fantastic arts and culture lineup, and continued development throughout the city. The Visit Philadelphia team looks forward to collaborating with all our partners to continue making Philadelphia the No. 1 can't-miss destination in the country.



★ **1.1M** 2024 LEISURE
ROOM NIGHT GOAL

VISIT PHILADELPHIA 2024 ORGANIZATIONAL PRIORITIES

Looking ahead, we are focused on building Greater Philadelphia's image and driving day and overnight visitation with the following key areas of emphasis:

- **Promote and position Philadelphia as a top U.S. leisure destination** to inspire overnight visitation, leading to 1.1 million leisure room nights in 2024
- **Continue establishing Philadelphia as the ultimate inclusive destination for diverse travelers** from all cultures, backgrounds and walks of life
- **Elevate the tourism industry's role as a key driver of economic growth** in the Philadelphia region
- **Deepen civic pride among Greater Philadelphia residents** to help showcase the true welcoming spirit of our destination

Highlights From the Marketing Plan

COME FOR PHILADELPHIA. STAY FOR PHILLY.

We will continue to focus on driving weekend visitation and hotel bookings through the ***Come For Philadelphia. Stay For Philly.*** campaign, leaning on data surrounding the barriers and motivations to visitation to inform messaging. Key highlights will include amplifying Philadelphia's walkability, history and culinary scenes.

The campaign will be supported by our ever-expanding work centering diverse markets, including ***In Pursuit of a More Perfect Union***, which continues to position Philadelphia as the most welcoming city in the U.S.

THE CHEF CONFERENCE | APRIL 2024

The Chef Conference, which will be revamped in 2024, will further establish Philadelphia as a premier dining destination and hospitality hub by utilizing collaboration dinners, celebrity chef book events and more to facilitate connections between hospitality professionals and the public. As co-presenting sponsor alongside Resy, an AMEX company, Visit Philadelphia will work closely with event organizers to ensure our destination and our outstanding culinary scene shines in front of the national media expected to attend.

PREPARING FOR 2026

Between the nation's 250th anniversary, FIFA World Cup 26™ matches and the Major League Baseball 2026 All-Star Game, we're looking at a jam-packed lineup of incredible opportunities in 2026 to showcase Philadelphia as the must-visit U.S. destination of this monumental year.

Throughout 2024, we'll work closely with all our partners to bolster civic pride and optimize the visitor experience in each of Philadelphia's neighborhoods in preparation for this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.



Visit Philadelphia Awards



HSMIA ADRIAN AWARDS:



SILVER AWARD

DEI Marketing



SILVER PRESIDENT'S AWARD, DIGITAL

Technology



BRONZE PRESIDENT'S AWARD

DEI Marketing and Social



BRONZE AWARD

PR and Communications



PRSA PHILADELPHIA PEPPERPOT

DEI Program



SOCIAL MEDIA MASTERS PHL AWARDS

Best Social Media

Enabled PR Campaign



SOCIAL MEDIA MARKETING AWARDS PRESENTED BY THE SOCIAL SHAKE-UP

Best Year-Round Instagram

Presence and Best Mid-Tier

Influencer Campaign

VISIT PHILADELPHIA®

visitphilly.com



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Philadelphia, PA 19103

Visit Philadelphia would not have had the year it did without the people who worked here.
Thank you to our 2023 team for all you did to support Philadelphia's tourism industry.

Won Jin An | Jasmine Armstrong | Ajene Atkins | Eli Bank | Ethan Blades | Trino Boix | Daecia Borgia | Sheryl Brown | Alethia Calbeck | Jessica Calter | Jabari Cherry | Eric Cortes | Hope Daluisio | Gianna DiAddezio | Liana Dunnell | Jovan Ellis | Farah Farag | Rachel Ferguson | Connor Fogel | Neil Frauenglass | Kaitlyn Grose | Michael Harisco | Colsen Liney | Tameka Love | Keith McMenamin | Cathy McVey-Palmer | Sydney Milkman | Michael Newmuis | Binh Nguyen | Scarlett Pennington | Rob Rabena | Cindy Ray | Jake Rhue | Joel Rivadeneira | Andora Robinson | Jenea Robinson | Sindoor Shah | Laura Smythe | Kyle Stein | Cassie Tomkins | Angela Val | Jazmund Walker | Dan Wisniewski | Andrew Zwarych