

VISITNC

newslink

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1. DIVISION WELCOMES INDUSTRY INPUT THROUGH PARTNER FORUM AT MID-YEAR MARKETING UPDATE

The 2009 Mid-Year Marketing Update will again provide the opportunity for industry partners to help shape the Division's future planning. A fresh approach to this year's partner forum will highlight a variety of successes and opportunities including media missions, co-op advertising, VisitNC.com and consumer sweepstakes, while also welcoming input to help fuel development of the Division's 2010-2011 strategic plan.

The partner forum will conclude the day's program which also features the Division Update along with remarks from N.C. Secretary of Commerce Keith Crisco, N.C. Secretary of Cultural Resources Linda Carlisle and Dr. Mike Walden, economist from N.C. State University.

For the complete agenda and registration information for the Mid-Year Marketing Update, Sept. 22 at the N.C. Museum of History in Raleigh, [click here](#).

2. VISITNC.COM SPECIAL OFFERS FREE THROUGH DECEMBER

The Division has extended its new Special Offers program, offering free submittal of special travel packages, offers or deals to industry partners through December 2009. With overwhelming response for visitors and partners, the Web-based system is easy to use. Located on the VisitNC.com home page, Special Offers can be sorted by region, will stay live for 60 days and are communicated monthly to the VisitNC.com subscriber list. Go to [VisitNC.com](#) and enter your special Labor Day package or get ready to showcase your Fabulous Fun Fall Getaway. For more information, e-mail partners@visitnc.com.

3. JULY LODGING INDICATOR TREND REPORT

Recent lodging data reveals that, while major indicators in North Carolina are still below 2008 levels, July's numbers were a slight improvement. According to Smith Travel Research, hotel/motel occupancy in the state is down 11.7 percent year-to-date when compared to 2008. July occupancy had the smallest percent decline of the year (down 7.0 percent). Occupancy in the South Atlantic region of the U.S. has decreased of 8.8 percent year-to-date, while the U.S. hotel occupancy as a whole is down 10.3 percent.

Average daily rates (ADR) in North Carolina are down 5.3 percent year-to-date, but they are trending slightly better than the region or the country: year-to-date ADR is down 7.2 percent in the South Atlantic region and down 8.8 percent nationally.

Revenue per available room (RevPAR) in North Carolina has dropped 16.3 percent from \$49.54 to \$41.46 year-to-date. This decrease however, is in line with the South Atlantic regional decrease of 15.3 percent (from \$68.93 to \$58.37) and the national decrease of 18.2 percent (from \$67.40 to \$55.12). The complete report is available at www.nccommerce.com/tourism/research. For more information contact Marlise Taylor at mtaylor@nccommerce.com.

4. MINGES ON TOURISM PANEL DURING N.C. ASSN. OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS CONFERENCE, AUG. 28-30 IN HICKORY

Assistant Secretary Lynn Minges, Asheville CVB's Kelly Miller, N.C. Travel & Tourism Coalition's Dana Simpson and N.C. Rep. Edgar Stames are panelists during the "Tourism as Sustainable Economic Development" workshop, part of the N.C. Association of County Commissioners Annual Conference, being held Aug. 28-30 in Hickory. Moderated by Brunswick County TDA's Mitzi York, the panel will cover best practices for utilizing occupancy tax revenues to increase tourism/economic development and local tax revenues. Governor Beverly Perdue will address the conference Friday morning. To find out more, visit <http://www.ncacc.org/annualconf.htm>.

5. GOV. PERDUE PROCLAIMS SEPTEMBER WINE & GRAPE APPRECIATION MONTH

Gov. Bev Perdue has proclaimed September Wine & Grape Appreciation Month. A copy of the proclamation, along with copies of the letters the governor prepared for restaurants and retailers to encourage them to promote and feature North Carolina wines, may be found at

<http://www.nccommerce.com/en/TourismServices/NurtureWineAndGrapeIndustry/>.

6. MEDIA STORIES ON TOURISM'S ECONOMIC IMPACT ON COUNTIES

Since the release by the Division of the "2008 Economic Impact of Travel on North Carolina Counties," news outlets continue to spotlight their local areas. Some of the counties who received media attention were

Carteret/Camden/Chowan/Currituck/Pasquotank/Perquimans:

<http://www.dailyadvance.com/business/visitor-spending-up-in-three-area-counties-777647.html>

McDowell: <http://www2.mcdowellnews.com/content/2009/aug/19/roads-lead-mcdowell-county-sees-increase-visitors-/>

Moore: <http://www.thepilot.com/stories/20090814/news/local/20090814Tourism.html>

Polk:

http://tryondailybulletin.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2880&Itemid=251

7. GASOLINE PRICES SLIP IN MOST OF THE U.S.

Motorists are paying a little less for gasoline in most parts of the country despite the recent increase in oil prices. The national average declined by 0.9 of a cent to \$2.628 a gallon, according to the Energy Department's weekly survey of filling stations, released Monday. Some analysts were sticking to predictions of a slide in prices by sometime in September. To find out more, visit <http://www.latimes.com/business/la-fi-gas25-2009aug25,0,5953183.story>.

8. NBTA PROJECTS U.S. TRAVEL COSTS TO BE HIGHER AFTER RECESSION

Even as new travel taxes are introduced and discriminatory travel tax rates continue to rise across the country, there has been a slight decrease in actual dollars travelers pay in taxes for lodging, rental cars and meals, according to a comprehensive study by the education and research foundation of the National Business Travel Association (NBTA), and Concur. "While the report shows that the travel taxes paid have slightly declined, we know that the fall is due to the weak economy and not tax cuts," said Fay Beauchine, NBTA Foundation chair. "In fact, tax rates increased and more were implemented across the United States to make up for government revenue shortfalls during the recession. So when the economy recovers, travelers will take a double hit of rising prices and exploding taxes due to tax rate increases enacted during this downturn." To find out more, visit

<http://www.travelpulse.com/Resources/Editorial.aspx?n=59903>.

9. STS ANNOUNCES TOP 20 EVENTS FOR JANUARY-FEBRUARY-MARCH 2010

The Southeast Tourism Society (STS) has announced its Top 20 Events for January-February-March 2010. The Cape Fear Model Railroad Society's 13th Annual Model

Railroad Show and Sale in Wilmington was included in January events. The N.C. Jazz Festival, also in Wilmington, was among the February events. To find out more, visit http://southeasttourism.org/top20/top20_janmar10.html.

10. GREENING N.C. TRAVEL: INCREASING VALUE BY PROVIDING ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

According to a recent study by ClimatePath.org on eco-tourism, the number one travel motivator for green conscious travelers is learning about different cultures and ecologies (<http://www.climatepath.org/forbusinesses/ecotourism>). North Carolina provides travelers a wealth of opportunities to experience nature in ways that few destinations can offer. The N.C. Office of Environmental Education (www.ee.enr.state.nc.us) has a number of resources and support to supplement visitor experiences with nature based learning. The N.C. Office of Environmental Education has a calendar of local environmental education (EE) events, certified EE centers in your area, and an online searchable database of EE resources to help your tourism accommodation or attraction enhance the experience for travelers. For more information on how your tourism business or organization can become more involved with EE, contact Marty Wiggins at (919) 733-1362 or via marty.wiggins@ncdenr.gov. For more information on sustainability in the tourism industry, contact Alex Naar at (252) 737-1346 or via anaar@nccommerce.com.

11. AP STROLLS AMONG DINOSAURS AT MUSEUM OF LIFE + SCIENCE

In an Associated Press article, picked up by USA Today, CNN and others, the recently completed dinosaur trail at the N.C. Museum of Life + Science in Durham is spotlighted. The trail includes nine types of dinosaurs from the Late Cretaceous period, the last period before dinosaurs became extinct, 100 million to 65 million years ago. It's also a period when dinosaurs roamed North Carolina. To find out more, visit http://www.usatoday.com/travel/destinations/2009-08-19-north-carolina-dinosaurs_N.htm.

12. WASHINGTON POST VISITS BEAUFORT

In its Sunday Travel section, the Washington Post visited Beaufort, including the Old Burying Ground cemetery, the N.C. Maritime Museum and Shackelford Banks. To find out more, visit <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2009/08/17/AR2009081701855.html>.

13. OUR STATE COVER STORY FEATURES YADKIN VALLEY WINE

The September issue of Our State magazine includes a cover story on "The Making of a North Carolina Vineyard." The photo essay features the eight members of the Yadkin Valley Winegrowers Association – Surry Community College, Hanover Park Vineyard, Round Peak Vineyards, RayLen Vineyards, RagApple Lassie Vineyards, Shelton Vineyards, Stony Knoll Vineyards, and Westbend Vineyards – and their embodiment of perseverance, originality and class.

14. SURVEYS, MARKETING, TRAVEL & INDUSTRY TRENDS

Hotels Giving Children the VIP Treatment -- Occupancy is down at hotels across the country, and business travel in particular has taken a beating, but hotels are finding a new group of customers to cater to: children. According to D.K. Shifflet & Associates, a

travel and tourism research company, the percentage of hotel rooms with children has been slowly but steadily increasing nationwide, from 25 percent in 2006 to 27 percent in 2008. And some local hotels have been rolling out the red carpet to attract these young guests, putting magicians in the lobby on Saturday mornings and stocking child-size bathrobes and slippers. Gone are the days when hotel extras were limited to adult-oriented features such as whirlpool bathtubs and froufrou cocktail lounges. To find out more, visit

http://www.boston.com/business/articles/2009/08/24/hotels_roll_out_red_carpet_for_new_clientele_children/.

Companies Using Social Media to Screen Potential Employees -- The number of companies using social networking Web sites to screen potential employees has doubled in the last year, and what they have found has killed the hire for more than a third of candidates, according to a CareerBuilder report. Its survey of more than 2,600 hiring managers found that 45 percent are searching sites to research job candidates, up from 22 percent a year ago. Another 11 percent say they plan to start using social networking sites for screening. The report says 35 percent of employers decided not to hire someone because of what they found out about them on these sites. Use of social networking sites can also increase odds of getting hired, with employers citing a good feel for the candidate's personality, a profile that supports their qualifications and a candidate who showed creativity as reasons for deciding to hire someone based on their online postings. To find out more, visit

http://triad.bizjournals.com/triad/stories/2009/08/17/daily34.html?ed=2009-08-19&ana=e_du_pub.

15. MEDIA LEADS

Heritage and Cultural Travel Web site -- Gozaic.com is an online community that provides a travel planning resource for heritage and cultural travelers and features heritage destinations, sites and events. Gozaic – done by Heritage Travel, Inc., a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation – is seeking heritage and cultural destinations and sites who are interested in being listed on the Web site, which also offers a chance for people to find and share heritage- and culture-rich experiences. Destination partners benefit from extensive consumer marketing as well as a professional forum for networking and sharing best practices about heritage tourism development. The Blue Ridge National Heritage Area, Chowan County TDA and Old Salem are just a few examples of participating partners. To view Gozaic, visit <http://www.gozaic.com/tom/>. To find out more about participating, contact Heritage Travel at (202) 588-6200 or visit www.HeritageTravelinc.com.

Blue Ridge Country Seeking Civil War-Related Events – Blue Ridge Country magazine is seeking all types of events through 2009 and into 2010. They're also specifically seeking Civil War-related events throughout this timeframe. Event information may be sent – and Civil War events sent separately -- to Editor Cara Ellen Modisett at cmodisett@leisurepublishing.com.

16. BARRINEAU LEAVES STATESVILLE CVB FOR NASCAR HALL OF FAME

Libba Barrineau has left as director of the Statesville CVB, which was effective Aug. 21, to become the group sales manager for the NASCAR Hall of Fame in Charlotte. To find

out more, visit <http://www2.statesville.com/content/2009/aug/22/city-tourism-chief-leaving-post-nascar-hall-fame/>.

17. “NORTH CAROLINA WEEKEND”

For the week of Aug. 27 on UNC-TV's “North Carolina Weekend,” take in the “Picasso and the Allure of Language” exhibition at the Nasher Museum of Art in Durham. Enjoy a day at the beach at Carolina Beach. Try your luck at Grandfather Trout Farm in Banner Elk. Lift a glass at Benjamin Vineyards & Winery in Saxapahaw. And “After Dark” checks out the Deadwood Theatre in Williamston. (*Please note: listings are subject to change.*) Exclusively underwritten by the N.C. Division of Tourism, “North Carolina Weekend” airs Thursdays at 9:00 p.m. with repeats on Fridays and Saturdays (*please check local listings*) on UNC-TV. In addition, UNC-TV has made recent editions of “North Carolina Weekend” available online. For more information or to download a podcast, visit <http://www.unctv.org/ncweekend>.

18. UPCOMING INDUSTRY MEETINGS & EVENTS

Aug. 30-Sept. 1 – ESTO, Lake Tahoe, Nev.

Sept. 9-10 -- Blue Ridge Parkway Association Regional Membership Meeting, Natural Bridge, Va.

Sept. 10 – N.C. Business Travel Association Education Day Meeting, Charlotte

Sept. 16-17 – Travel Leadership Summit, Washington, D.C.

Sept. 22 – Mid-Year Marketing Update, Raleigh

Oct. 26-28 – Marketing Outlook Forum, Little Rock, Ark.

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FEEDBACK WELCOME

The N.C. Division of Tourism, Film & Sports Development is committed to serving North Carolina's tourism industry. If you have feedback regarding any of the Division's programs, let your voice be heard at visitnc@nccommerce.com.