

MICHIGAN TOURISM NUMBERS GROWING AGAIN



Despite not reaching the dizzy heights of the period before the crisis, Michigan is on the road to recovery in its tourism sector, mostly thanks to a larger influx and spending power of outsiders.

Travelers boosted tourism in the U.S. state of Michigan by 13.7% last year. After three successive years of decline, reported by most destinations in the USA, the growing tourist numbers mark a positive change for the industry.

Nevertheless, the statistics also revealed that the revenue is still way below the record of 2006 when tourists brought \$18.7 billion to Michigan's budget. Last year saw \$17.1 billion in comparison.

The challenge for Michigan's tourism industry to overcome is the fact that the locals are spending less than visitors from elsewhere. This may be caused by the fact that locals know where to go in order to not spend a lot and do not have the need for accommodation, which tourists do.

Growth is expected again in 2011, by around 4%, which is positive especially for destinations like Leelanau Peninsula and Grand Traverse Bay that are popular tourist spots.

The current recovery in tourism has created a number of jobs, with 7.2% more Michigan residents entering the travel trade. Again, this number is expected to increase slightly during 2011.

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