

St. Marys Convention and Visitors Bureau Authority

Annual Report FY2023

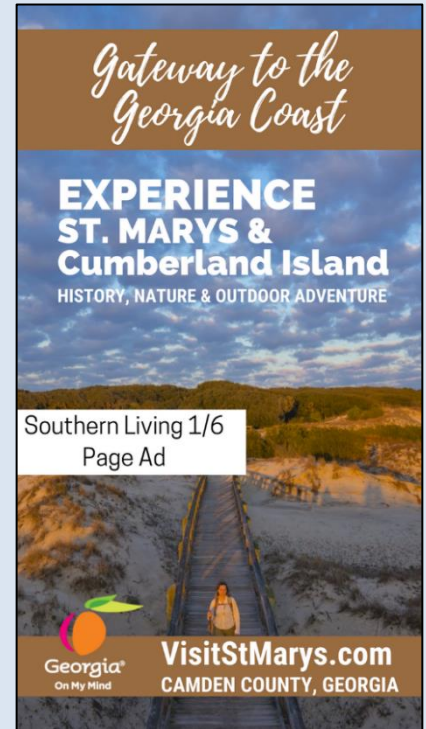
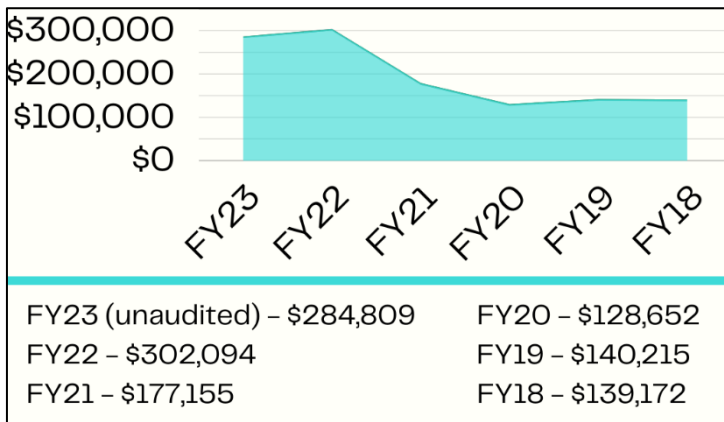
Prepared by: Angela Wigger, Executive Director & Darlene Landreth, Chairperson

CVB Mission: To promote St. Marys, Cumberland Island, and the Camden County area as a desirable tourist destination, increase the overall economic impact and overnight stays of visitors to the area, and foster a quality visitor experience to benefit the city.

CVB Board: Darlene Landreth, Chairperson; Tyler Carpenter, Vice Chairperson; Judy Thurner, Secretary; Mardja Gray, Sugar Yadav, Melissa Braun, Valerie Fautz, Jane Alexander, and Councilmember Allen Rassi

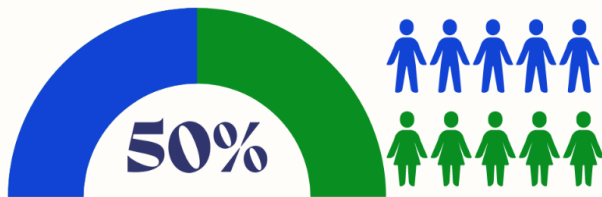
What is our Primary funding source?

6% local and 33.9% of the 5% county hotel/motel occupancy tax



DEMOGRAPHICS

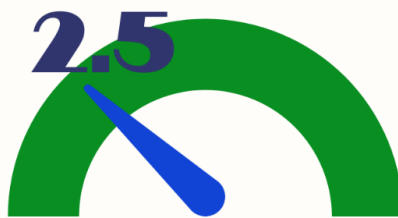
- ~ Outdoor and history enthusiasts.
- ~ Leisure travelers and social groups.



~ Estimated even mix of men & women travelers.

**45-64
YEARS
OLD**

Majority of travelers.



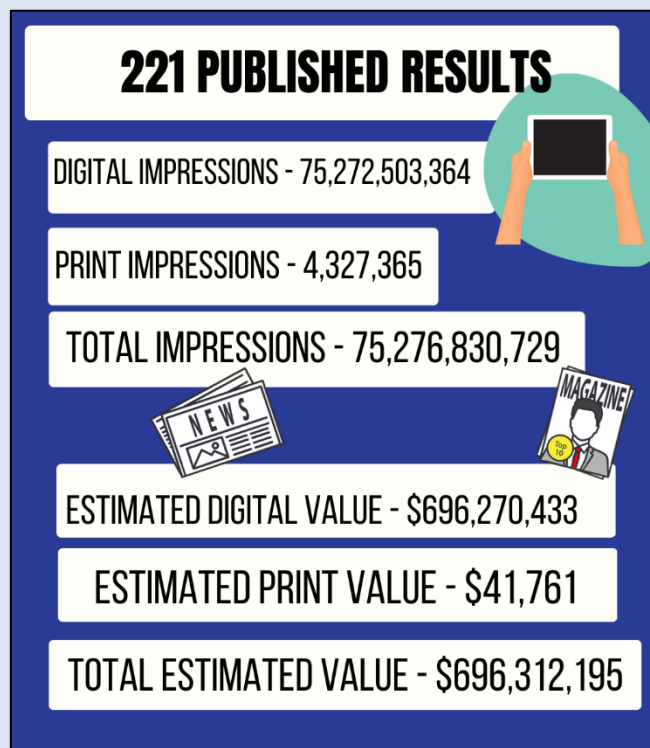
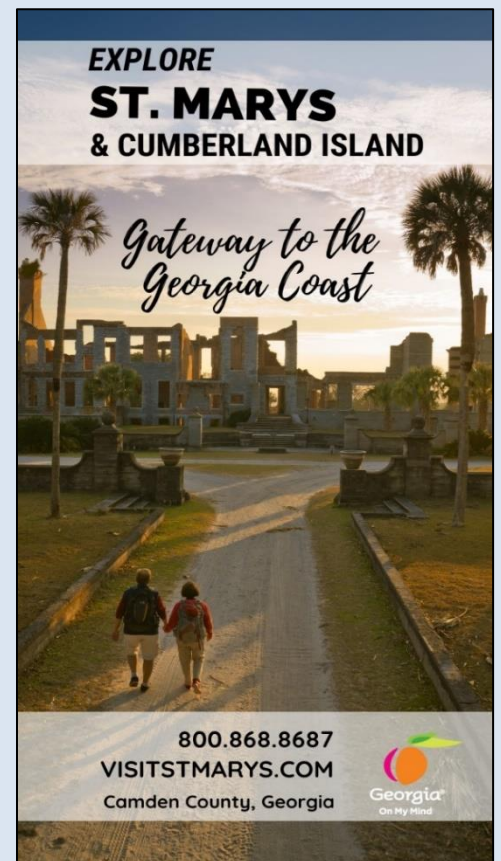
~ Estimated average length stay is 2.5 Nights.

Key Markets

The drive markets of Georgia, Middle & Northwest Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina. (Atlanta, Savannah, Augusta, Orlando, Daytona, Tampa, Charlotte, Charleston, and Greenville)

Initiatives/ Accomplishments/ Responsibilities

- Planned events: (7) Seven Music in the Park events, National Trails Day, Build-A-Scarecrow Workshop, Tour of Homes, NPS Speaker Series with history, nature, and Gullah Geechee speakers, Small Business Saturday.
- Marketing at the Georgia Visitor Center at Exit 1 to capitalize on the strength of the I-95 corridor. Coverage includes: a billboard, window perfs covering the front entrance that feature photos of St. Marys, a poly/fiberglass sailboat sculpture photo op, provided by the NPS, with "Visit St. Marys Waterfront" prominently displayed, plus a Visit St. Marys photo frame photo op, and a "Welcome to St. Marys" sign upon entering the building, all provide a much remarked upon first impression of St. Marys.
- Director and three Board members attended the Governor's Tourism Conference (GTC) to keep abreast of latest trends & networking
- Director serves on the St. Marys Submarine Museum Board of Directors
- Support /assistance with accommodations, information, dining arrangements, tours, and/or hosted events for groups such as, BRAG, Three Rivers Ride, signature festival vendors, Boater's Thanksgiving, White Lighting, Christmas in the Park, Live Nativity, etc.
- Media buys and placement of editorial/ad features and advertising
- Marketing/promotions via social media, newsletters, web updates, etc.
- Promotion/PR of local and regional events; Assists event planners; Management, updating, and/or creation of media, brochures, video, handouts, advertising placement, and web content
- Management of St. Marys Welcome Center and Community Market
- Required reports and financial responsibilities to appropriate officials



DIGITAL- Website with Search Engine Optimization (SEO) and a mobile responsive program, Facebook Advertising of website and boosts of various events and posts; Constant Contact newsletter, Social Media; AAA Living South digital banner and newsletter, Atlanta Magazine newsletter, Sojern Travel digital campaign, TripAdvisor matching grant program

PRINT- Highlights: AAA Living, Atlanta Magazine, Crooked River State Park map, Georgia Trend, Good Housekeeping, Guide to Camden County, Map Tech Boaters Guide, Southern Living, Travel & Leisure Magazine, T&G, USA Today, Woman's Day, etc.

TELEVISION/RADIO/OTHER – Georgia Public Broadcasting (GPB) delivers quality television and radio with robust content and images. Jacksonville Int'l Airport kiosks, I-95 Exit 26 Billboard, Georgia Visitor Center Billboard. Blogs, newsletter inserts, and media pitches through LRC Media to over 2,400 writers.



ACCOLADES/AWARDS

- Tourism Director holds the Travel Marketing Professional designation and is certified in Crisis Management, Communications, and Recovery Strategy for Destinations from Southeast Tourism Society and the Georgia Certified Professional Travel Counselor designation from the U.S. Travel Association National Council of State Tourism Directors (NCSTD)
- "Best Weekend Getaways in Georgia" - *Southern Living*, September 2023
- "The Best Fall Festivals is Georgia" - *Only in Your State*, September 2023
- "12 Off the Beaten Path Georgia Towns " - *World Atlas*, September 2023
- "The Best Budget Getaways in the South for 2023" - *Southern Living*, November 2022
- "Top 10 Best All-Inclusive Girlfriend Getaways in the South" - *Southern Living*, August 2022



Economic Impact of Tourism to Camden County – The Coast Region

(Tourism figures from Tourism Economics, The Georgia Visitor Industry, Prepared for Explore Georgia, GDEcD Tourism Division – Data released August 2023)

- 8% is the share of jobs directly sustained by visitor spending in Camden County
- Visitors generated \$165.2 million in direct tourist spending
- **On an average day \$452,602 is spent on tourism related expenses in Camden County**
- Visitors generated \$15.3 million in state and local tax revenues
- **Each Camden County household would need to be taxed an additional \$762 per year to replace taxes generated by tourism economic activity.**

Attraction Updates (Provided by Each Venue):

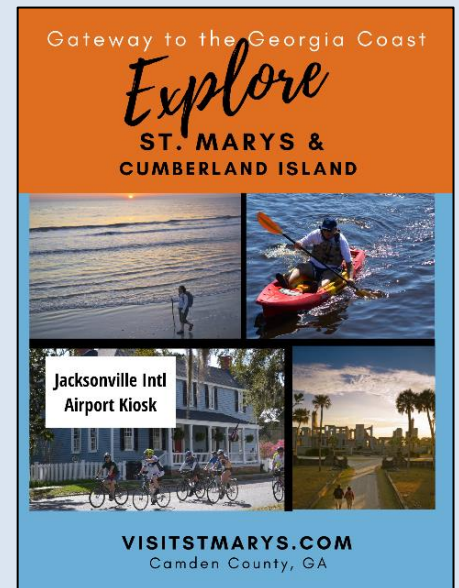
Welcome Center Statistics – MANAGED BY THE ST. MARYS CVB

FY2017	9,548		FY2021	5,611
FY2018	7,744		FY2022	12,086
FY2019	7,631		FY2023	8,746
FY2020 (Closed 3/18 – 5/20)	10,071			

Cumberland Island National Seashore (Island & Museum)

2017	51,900		2020 (Closed 3/18-6/26)	37,300
2018	55,600		2021	72,240
2019	53,900		2022	64,400

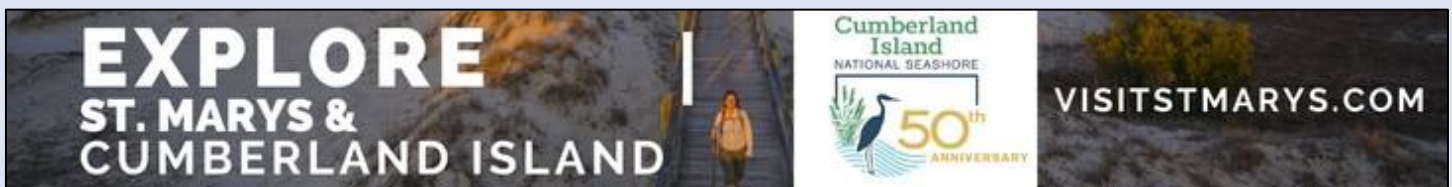
*Figures from NPS, National Park Visitor Spending Effects. In 2022, Cumberland visitors spent an estimated \$3.1 million in local regions while visiting. These expenditures supported a total of 41 jobs, \$1.4 million in labor income, and \$4.1 million in economic output in Camden and surrounding counties (Charlton, Glynn, and Nassau).



Crooked River State Park Visitation:

FY2018	197,534		FY2021	275,328
FY2019	201,534		FY2022	242,394
FY2020	261,592			

*Figures provided by CRSP Staff – “CRSP Transition and Trend Report”



One of several Digital Ads used in FY2023 in a \$15,000 media campaign that had a ROI of \$352,843 with 529 confirmed daytrip and overnight travelers and 74 hotel night stays confirmed as booked.

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www.VisitStMarys.com