

Report: Central Valley tourism a \$2.23B industry in '14

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Written by Business Journal staff

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Fresno County's Blossom Trail is one local tourist destination that helped generate \$1.37 billion in direct travel spending in the county last year. Photo via visitcalifornia.com Travel and tourism was a \$2.23 billion industry supporting nearly 24,000 jobs in the four-county Central Valley region last year, according to new data from Dean Runyan Associates.

[The report](#), conducted on behalf of nonprofit tourism promoter Visit California, reveals that 53 of the state's 58 counties saw an increase in direct travel spending in 2014 compared to the year prior.

Fresno, Kings, Madera and Tulare counties all saw bumps. Tulare's was the largest with a 1.8-percent jump in direct travel spending, followed by Madera with 1.3 percent, Fresno with 0.9 percent and Kings with 0.4 percent

In Fresno County, total direct travel spending totaled \$1.37 billion last year, up from \$1.36 billion in 2013.

Those travel dollars helped generate 13,830 jobs in Fresno County last year, compared to 13,120 the year prior.

Fresno County travel spending generated \$108 million in tax receipts in 2014, up from \$107 million in 2013.

Fresno County hotels and restaurants accounted for \$163 million in travel spending last year, compared to \$153 million in 2013. The arts, entertainment and recreation sector was second with \$67 million generated last year, compared to \$62 million in 2013.

In Kings County in 2014, direct travel spending totaled \$154.8 million, up from \$154.3 million the year prior. Total

direct travel employment was 1,810 jobs in Kings County, up from 1,750 in 2013.

Total local and state tax receipts generated from Kings County travel spending was \$11.9 million last year, unchanged from 2013.

Madera County direct travel spending totaled \$264.2 million last year, up from \$260.9 million in 2013. Travel directly created 3,270 jobs in the county, up from 3,090 in 2013.

Madera County travel dollars generated \$21.7 million in state and local tax receipts, up from \$21.4 million in 2013.

Direct travel spending in Tulare County last year totaled \$445.4 million, up from \$437.4 million in 2013. That spending directly generated 4,770 jobs, up from 4,540 in 2013.

Tulare County travel dollars generated \$37.8 million in local and state tax receipts, up from \$36.9 million in 2013.

Total direct travel spending in California was \$117.5 billion in 2014, a 3.6-percent increase in current dollars from 2013 and a 2.7-percent increase in inflation-adjusted dollars.

Last year, travel-generated employment was 1.02 million, up 4.2 percent from the year prior.

“California’s powerful tourism economy is great news for all Californians,” said Visit California President and CEO Caroline Beteta in a statement. “This report shows that visitors who inject billions of dollars into our economy – in all corners of the state – lift businesses from every sector, create jobs and support local economies.”

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