



# Arkansas Tourism Ticker



January-October 2022



sponsored by the Arkansas Hospitality Association



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**Following are recent reports  
from Arkansas' tourism industry.**

## **Marshals Museum moves**

With a summer opening still on the horizon and an estimated \$3 million needed for construction and operational needs, the Fort Smith-based U.S. Marshals Museum is starting the drive to hire employees who will be needed once the doors open to the public. Museum President and CEO Ben Johnson said more job announcements will be posted in the coming weeks as museum administration seeks to fill positions before the museum opens in the summer. (Jan. 26)

## **Hall of Fame names**

Benjamin Franklin Fruehauf III and Paula Miles will be inducted into the Arkansas Tourism Hall of Fame on Feb. 27, during the 49<sup>th</sup> annual Arkansas Governor's Conference on Tourism to be held Feb. 26-28 in El Dorado. The Hall of Fame honor is presented annually to an individual or individuals who have been actively involved in Arkansas' tourism industry for many years and who have made substantial contributions to the betterment of the industry as a whole. (Jan. 25)

## **Outdoor recreation push**

Gov. Sarah Sanders signed an executive order Jan. 24 establishing the Natural State Initiative and the Natural State Initiative Advisory Council and said her husband, Bryan, will lead the effort in a volunteer capacity. The order says the council will advise the governor about promoting outdoor recreation and the outdoor economy. (Jan. 24)

## **Inn at the Mill sale**

The Inn at the Mill in Johnson (Washington County), which includes a replica of the historic Johnson Mill, has a new owner. Washington County property records show that IATM LLC bought the 3.45-acre hotel property at 3906 Johnson Mill Blvd. for \$5.22 million. The transaction was an all-cash deal. (Jan. 17) **TBP**



# Tourism Ticker shows record gains in state's hospitality sector

Job and hospitality tax revenue records continue to be set in Arkansas' tourism industry, with the state's 2% tourism tax in the first 10 months of 2022 up more than 18% and already ahead of record revenue in all of 2021.

Arkansas' 2% tourism tax revenue between January and October was \$20.8 million, up 18.35% compared with the \$17.58 million in the same period of 2021. The 2021 collections of the tax (\$20.54 million) set an annual record for the tax, and revenue set a new monthly record in June of \$2.52 million.

The state's 2% tourism tax revenue fell almost 23% in 2020, and fell to levels not seen since 2014. 2019 set several records for the sector in terms of hospitality tax revenue and job gains, and marked the fifth consecutive year of growth as measured by the Arkansas Tourism Ticker.

January-October hospitality tax collections among 17 cities surveyed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker were up 16% compared with the same period in 2021, and up 22% compared with the same period in pre-pandemic 2019.

The Arkansas Tourism Ticker is managed by Talk Business & Politics, and sponsored by the Arkansas Hospitality Association. The ticker uses the following three measurements to review the health of the state's tourism industry.

- Hospitality tax collections — prepared food tax and lodging tax — of 17 Arkansas cities (cities listed below along with collections for each city);
- Tourism sector employment numbers as reported by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; and
- Collections of Arkansas' 2% statewide tourism tax. **TBP**

## Results for the January-October 2022 Tourism Ticker report



**16% increase**

Hospitality tax revenue in January-October 2022 among 17 Arkansas cities reviewed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker compared with the same period in 2021.



**18.35% increase**

Collections of Arkansas' 2% statewide tourism tax in January-October 2022 compared with the same period in 2021.



**9.5% increase**

Gain in monthly average of Arkansas' tourism industry jobs in January-October 2022 compared with the same period in 2021.



# Hospitality tax revenue in 17 cities up 16%

The combined hospitality tax collections in the 17 cities totaled \$55.27 million in January-October 2022, up 16% compared with the \$47.66 million in the same period of 2021. Collections were also up 22% above the \$45.3 million in the same pre-pandemic period of 2019.

Restaurant (prepared food tax) tax collections among the 17 cities totaled \$40.99 million in January-October 2022, ahead of the \$36.47 million in the same period of 2021. Hotel tax collections among the 17 cities totaled \$14.28 million in January-October 2022, up 27.6% compared with the \$11.19 million in the same period of 2021. Hotel tax collections in the first 10 months are also above the \$12.21 million in the first 10 months of 2019, which indicates the hotel industry has recovered from pandemic shutdowns.

Of the 17 cities surveyed for the Arkansas Tourism Ticker, 15 posted hospitality tax collection increases in January-October 2022, with Russellville (down 4.4%) and Texarkana (down 4.9%) posting declines. **TBP**











## Following are the past 12 years of 2% tax collections

<b>2021:</b> \$20.54 million	<b>2015:</b> \$14.81 million
<b>2020:</b> \$13.61 million	<b>2014:</b> \$13.67 million
<b>2019:</b> \$17.6 million	<b>2013:</b> \$12.71 million
<b>2018:</b> \$16.42 million	<b>2012:</b> \$12.4 million
<b>2017:</b> \$15.89 million	<b>2011:</b> \$12.02 million
<b>2016:</b> \$15.46 million	<b>2010:</b> \$11.49 million

## Tourism tax collections by county



Following are the top 10 counties in terms of 2% tourism tax collections in January-October 2022, and the percentage increase/decrease compared with the same period in 2021.

<b>Pulaski</b>		\$3.99 million up 21%
<b>Benton</b>		\$2.6 million up 56.3%
<b>Garland</b>		\$2.24 million up 13.8%
<b>Washington</b>		\$1.76 million up 37.6%
<b>Carroll</b>		\$1.02 million down 2.5%
<b>Sebastian</b>		\$842,335 up 22%
<b>Crittenden</b>		\$723,585 up 15.9%
<b>Craighead</b>		\$574,314 up 25.1%
<b>Baxter</b>		\$569,848 up 13.8%
<b>Faulkner</b>		\$493,887 up 10.3%



# Job numbers up more than 9% in Arkansas' travel and tourism sector

Monthly average tourism sector jobs in January-October 2022 was 122,080, up 9.5% compared with 111,500 in the same period of 2021. The sector reached record monthly employment of 124,800 in November. The sector had 124,400 jobs in February 2020, then fell precipitously to an estimated 74,100 in April 2020.

Of the eight metro areas in or connected to Arkansas, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics provides tourism employment data on five. All five posted employment gains compared with the same period in 2021, with the central Arkansas area posting the largest percentage increase at 15.5%. Following is the average monthly employment during the first 10 months of 2022 for the metro regions. **TBP**

## Monthly employment averages

### Northwest Arkansas

January-October 2022: **27,280**  
(up 2.9% compared with the same 2021 period)

January-October 2021: **26,500**

January-October 2020: **24,500**

January-October 2010: **18,070**

### Fort Smith

January-October 2022: **9,750**  
(up 8.6% compared with the same 2021 period)

January-October 2021: **8,980**

January-October 2020: **8,670**

January-October 2010: **8,450**

### Central Arkansas

(Little Rock-North Little Rock-Conway)

January-October 2022: **34,940**  
(up 15.5% compared with the same 2021 period)

January-October 2021: **30,250**

January-October 2020: **29,700**

January-October 2010: **29,670**



### Memphis-West Memphis

(Arkansas-Tennessee-Mississippi)

January-October 2022: **65,700**  
(up 7.9% compared with the same 2021 period)

January-October 2021: **60,900**

January-October 2020: **60,400**

January-October 2010: **64,950**

### Texarkana

(Arkansas-Texas)

January-October 2022: **7,580**  
(up 14.8% compared with the same 2021 period)

January-October 2021: **6,600**

January-October 2020: **6,300**

January-October 2010: **5,720**



# Tourism Tax Collections (among 17 cities)

CITY	January-October 2022	January-October 2021	% CHANGE
<b>Bentonville</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$2.88 million	\$2.24 million	<b>up 28.6%</b>
<b>Conway</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$4.62 million	\$4.28 million	<b>up 7.9%</b>
<b>El Dorado</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$343,065	\$262,252	<b>up 30.8%</b>
<b>Eureka Springs</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$1.64 million	\$1.5 million	<b>up 9.7%</b>
<b>Fayetteville</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$7.83 million	\$6.71 million	<b>up 16.6%</b>
<b>Fort Smith</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$959,127	\$807,296	<b>up 18.8%</b>
<b>Harrison</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$768,059	\$722,812	<b>up 6.3%</b>
<b>Hot Springs</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$7.7 million	\$6.91 million	<b>up 11.4%</b>
<b>Jonesboro</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax; 2% restaurant tax implemented Jan. 1, 2022)</small>	\$5.4 million	\$641,326	<b>up 742.7%</b>
<b>Little Rock</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$14.07 million	\$12.12 million	<b>up 16.1%</b>
<b>North Little Rock</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$7.68 million	\$6.83 million	<b>up 12.4%</b>
<b>Pine Bluff</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$2.1 million	\$1.59 million	<b>up 31.5%</b>
<b>Rogers</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$1.15 million	\$696,436	<b>up 66.3%</b>
<b>Russellville</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$386,688	\$404,369	<b>down 4.4%</b>
<b>Springdale</b> <small>(hotel tax)</small>	\$472,330	\$341,077	<b>up 38.5%</b>
<b>Texarkana</b> <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$1.23 million	\$1.3 million	<b>down 4.9%</b>
<b>Van Buren</b> (hotel and restaurant tax) <small>(hotel and restaurant tax)</small>	\$681,382	\$619,451	<b>up 10%</b>





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