



**THE BEACHES OF
FORT MYERS
AND SANIBEL**

TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL

Report to the Industry

Sept. 11, 2014

July Smith Travel Research Summary

Average Occupancy Rate			Average Daily Rate			RevPAR		
2013	2014	% Change	2013	2014	% Change	2013	2014	% Change
58.6%	65.9%	+12.5	\$121.23	\$126.23	+4.1	\$71.00	\$83.16	+17.1

Tourism bed tax collections continue to break records

The preliminary resort tax collections continue at record levels. For the month of July 2014, a preliminary total of \$2,213,680 was collected, a record-breaking 16.2 percent increase over the preliminary collections in July 2013. Fiscal year-over-year collections increased 16.4 percent with \$30,279,668 collected.

The Beaches of Fort Myers & Sanibel win U.S. Travel Association’s top tourism marketing award

The Lee County Visitor & Convention Bureau (VCB) earned U.S. Travel Association’s Destinations Council Destiny Award in the special project category for “Awaken,” a technologically sophisticated video that showcases the Fort Myers/Sanibel Island area’s natural beauty. The award was announced during the U.S. Travel Association's annual Educational Seminar for Tourism Organizations (ESTO) conference in Louisville, KY on Aug.27. It is the seventh time the VCB was recognized in the prestigious awards competition – with previous honors in 1994, 1996, 2002, 2007, 2009 and 2011.

Airport News

During July, 496,472 passengers traveled through Southwest Florida International Airport, an increase of 6.1 percent compared to July 2013. Year-to-date, passenger traffic is up 3.7 percent from the same period last year. The traffic leader in July was Delta with 119,281 passengers traveling to and from Fort Myers. Rounding out the top five airlines were Southwest (78,070), JetBlue (55,576), American (47,292) and AirTran (46,879).

VCB presents Songwriter Fest to increase fall visitation

In an effort to boost fall visitation, the VCB is organizing the inaugural Island Hopper Songwriter Fest, which will take place over two consecutive weekends, on Sept. 26-28 on Captiva Island, and Oct. 3-5 on Fort Myers Beach. Presented by Broadcast Music, Inc. ® (BMI ®), the largest music rights organization in the U.S., along with partners Clear Channel Media & Entertainment and iHeartRadio, the destination’s first-ever songwriter festival features free performances by nationally-acclaimed singer-songwriters at popular island venues. One of the most special performance locations will be the private home of renowned American painter and graphic artist Robert Rauschenberg on Captiva Island, which will open its doors to the public for the first time exclusively for the festival. For more information, log onto www.islandhopperfest.com.

Next TDC meeting

There is no regular meeting in September or October.

The next regular meeting of the TDC is scheduled for **Nov. 13, 2014**, 9 a.m. at the VCB’s office, 2201 Second Street, First Floor, Fort Myers, 33901. To view a complete tax collections report, go to www.LeeVCB.com. Contact: Tamara Pigott, TPigott@leegov.com, Lee County VCB, 239-338-3500.