

NEW MEXICO TOURISM BAROMETER REPORT

Year-End and Fall 2005

- The tourism barometer is based on a sampling of data from representative tourism businesses in twelve regions throughout the state.
- During December 2005 and January 2006, over 150 tourism-related businesses provided information on their tourism activity.
- An index was developed for each business, with 2002 set at 100. The indices were then averaged to provide a regional index. The regional indices were, in turn, weighted by lodging revenues for the region and aggregated into a statewide index.
- New Mexico tourism for the full year of 2005 had a barometer reading of 104.3 representing a 4.3% increase over 2002 and a 1.7% increase from 2004.
- For the fall, the barometer was 105.8, with visitation up 5.8% over 2004 and 3.2% over 2004.
- Thus, on a statewide basis, tourism continues its recovery from the recession and the events of 9/11.
- New Mexico state parks are seeing increases in visitation compared to recent years.
- However, visitation at national parks and monuments is still well below that of historic levels.
- Attendance at museums was generally stronger than in recent years.
- For the year, most areas showed increases compared to the base year of 2002 and compared to 2004.
- The major exceptions were Las Cruces, Southeast, Ruidoso/Alamogordo, and Taos, where activity was down from 2002 (which was a strong year in southern New Mexico) and the Farmington and Gallup regions, which experienced declines from strong showings in 2004.
- For the fall, most regions of the state were above the base year levels of 2002 and also above 2004.
- The primary exceptions were Gallup and Ruidoso/Alamogordo, where visitation was off compared to both years.
- Also, there were declines in the fall in the Southwest, Northeast, and Tucumcari regions compared to a strong showing in 2004.
- Record high gas prices are partly to blame for the declines in these areas.
- Business travel related to local economic activity benefited several regions of the state.
- Markets that are relatively more dependent on foreign visitors (e.g. Santa Fe and Taos) have begun to experience a recovery in this market segment.
- Visitors continue to take shorter vacations, spend less money, and do last minute bookings.
- Factors that have inhibited tourism include an uncertain economy and record high gas prices.