ST. JOHNS COUNTY TDC VISITOR TRACKING REPORT

APRIL – JUNE 2019

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VISITOR JOURNEY

Pre-Visit

- Transportation methods
- Trip planning cycle
- Planning sources
- Reason for visiting
- Primary Destination

Travel Party Profile

- Visitor origin
- Travel party size
- Travel party composition
- Areas stayed
- Demographics

Trip Experience

- Number of times visited
- Length of stay
- Visitor activities
- Accommodations
- Travel party expenditures
- Sharing on social media

Post-Trip Evaluation

- Destination ratings
- Visitor satisfaction
- Visitor concerns
- Rating destination attributes
- Painting a picture for others

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

VISITOR JOURNEY

Pre-Visit → Travel Party Profile → Trip Experience → Post-Trip Evaluation
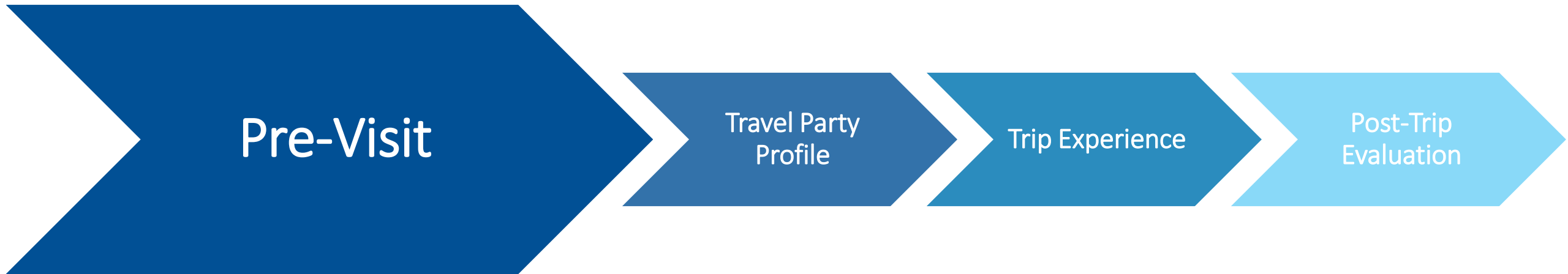
TRANSPORTATION

74% of visitors drove to
St. Johns County

25% of visitors flew to St.
Johns County

1% of visitors came by boat

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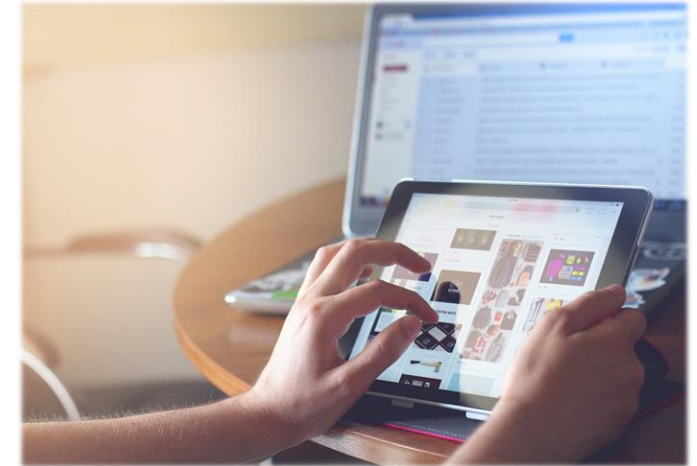downs & st. germain
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TRIP PLANNING

→ **33%** of visitors planned their trip less than a month in advance

→ **36%** of visitors planned their trip 1-3 months in advance

→ Top trip planning sources:

Talk to friends (35%)

Search on Google (29%)

Go to a hotel/resort website (17%)

Beach (34%)

Attractions and historical sites (26%)

Visit friends/relatives (14%)

Family friendly (10%)

Shopping, antiquing (10%)

Special occasion (10%)

[1]Up to 2 responses permitted

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PRIMARY DESTINATION

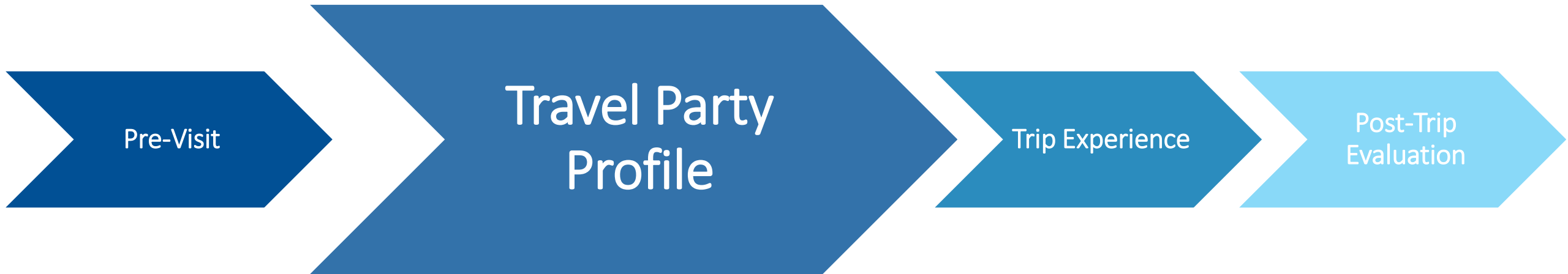81% of visitors said that St. Johns County was their primary destination on their trip

6% of visitors said their primary destination was Orlando/Disney

4% of visitors said their primary destination was Miami/South Florida

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VISITOR JOURNEY

Pre-Visit → Travel Party Profile → Trip Experience → Post-Trip Evaluation

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ORIGIN OF VISITORS

→ **32%** of visitors lived in Florida.

→ **4%** of visitors to St. Johns County were from Canada.

4%

18%

13%

23%

32%

10% International

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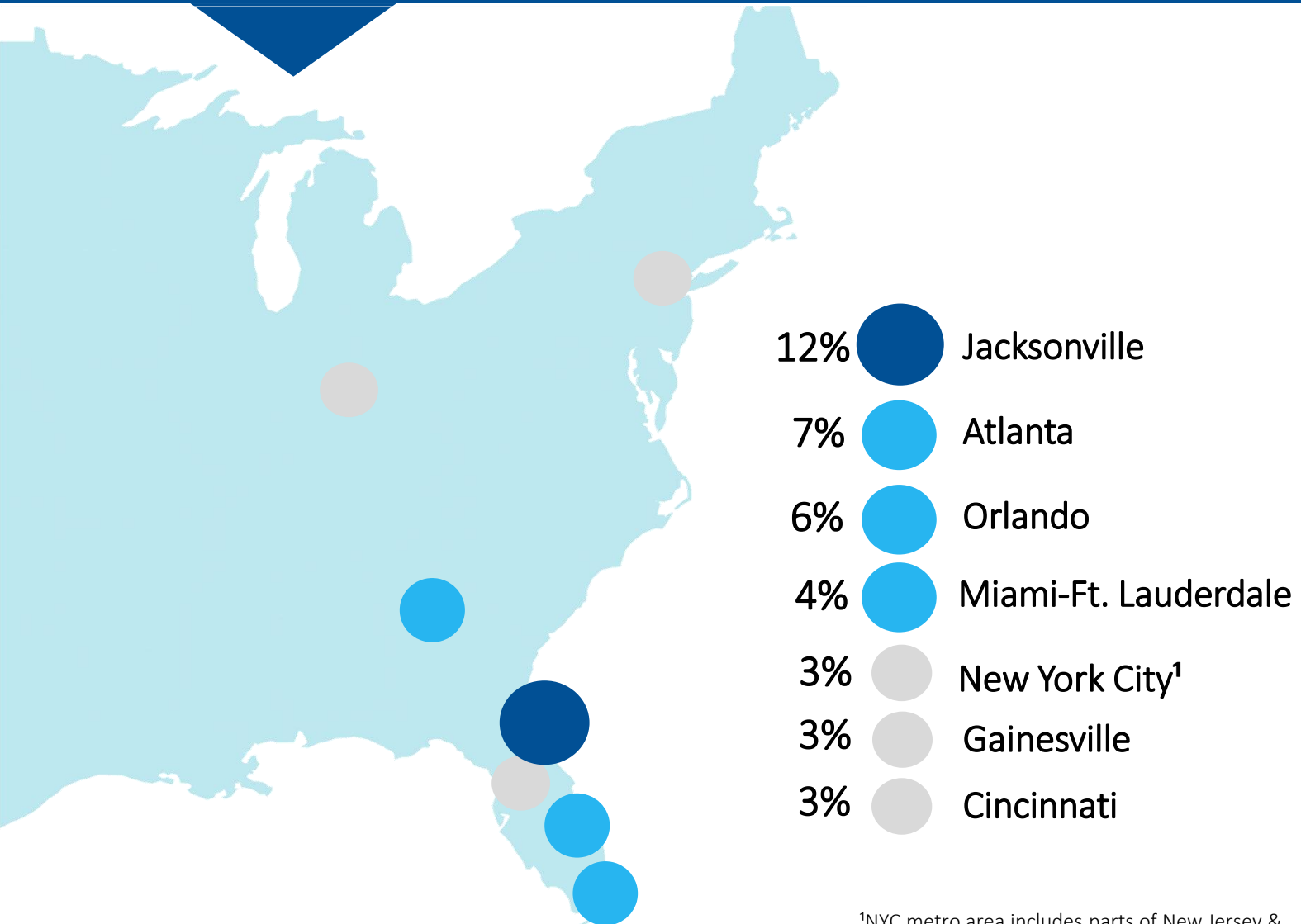# ORIGIN OF VISITORS

4%
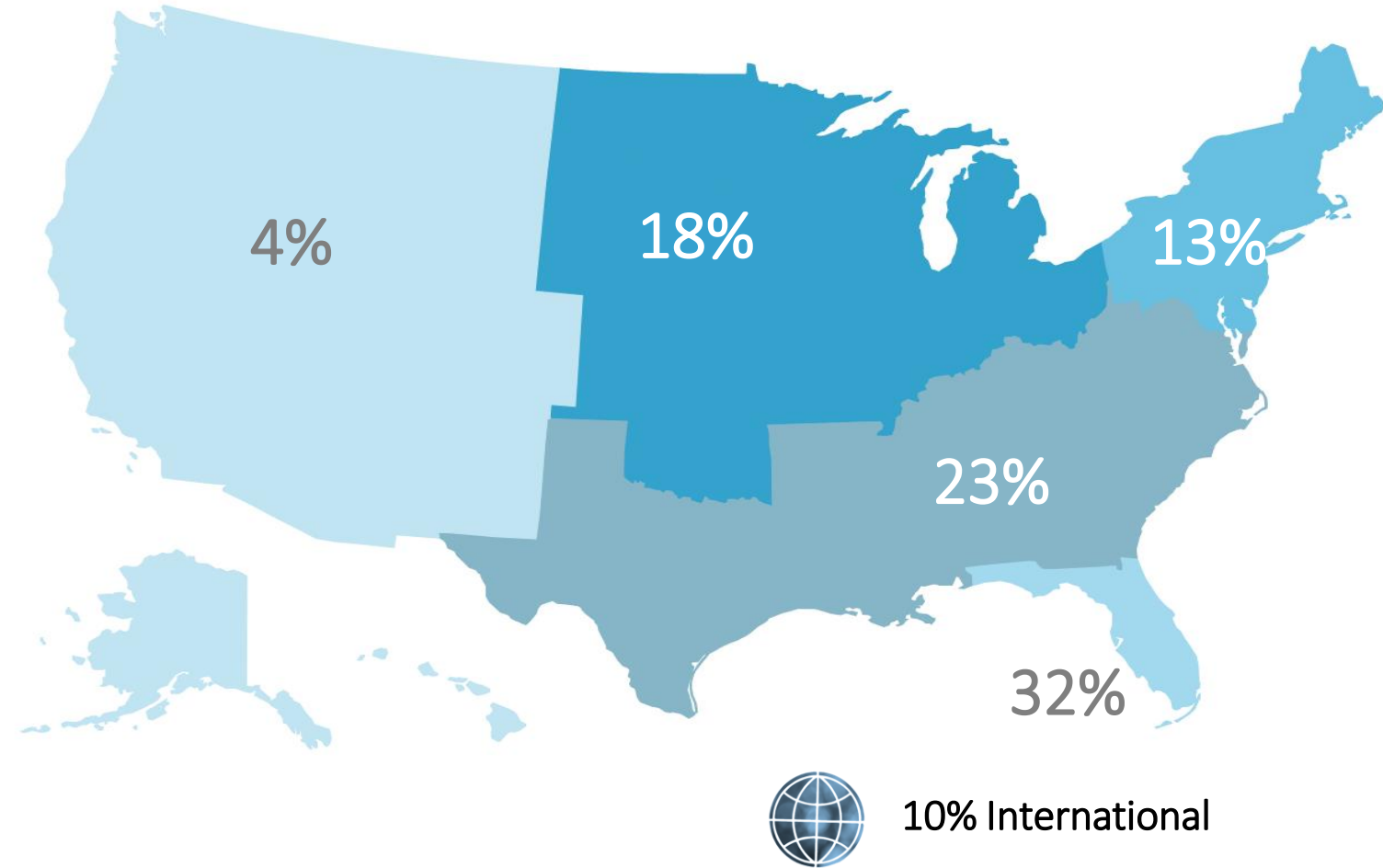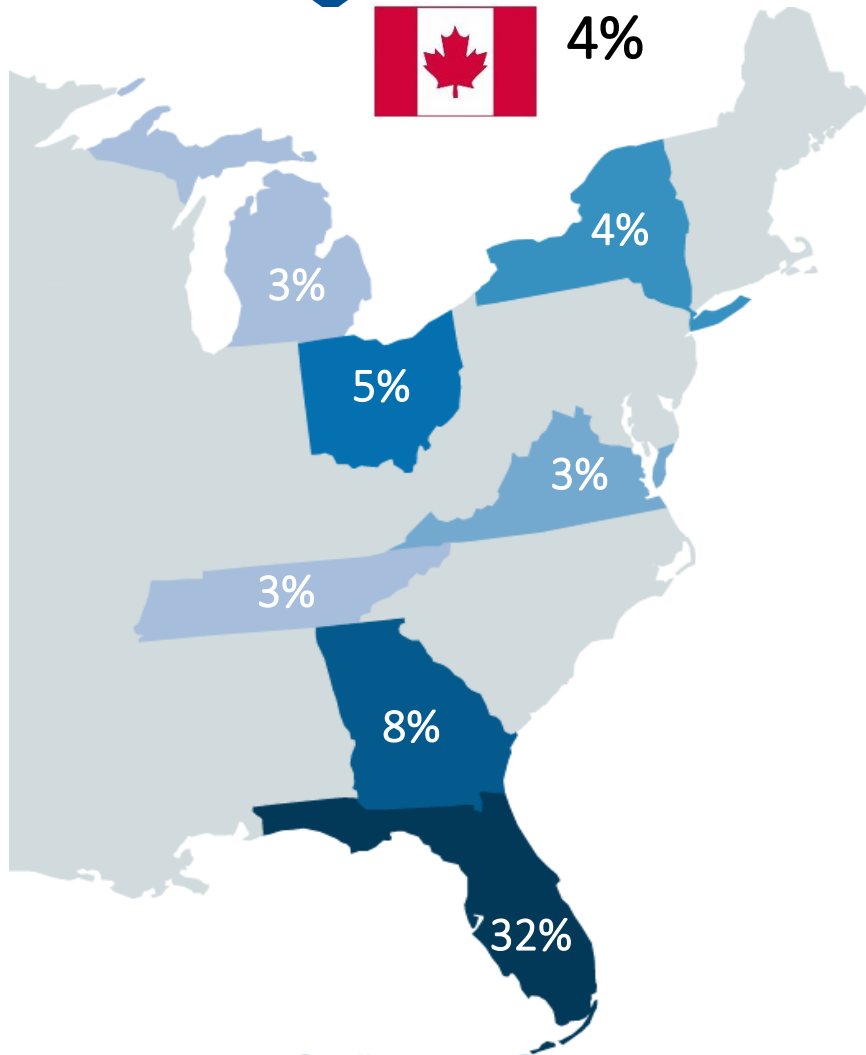
Florida

Georgia

Ohio

New York

Canada

Virginia

Tennessee

Michigan

→62% of visitors came from 7 states and Canada

4%

3%

5%

3%

3%

8%

32%

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ORIGIN OF VISITORS

12% Jacksonville

7% Atlanta

6% Orlando

4% Miami-Ft. Lauderdale

3% New York City[1]

3% Gainesville

3% Cincinnati

→38% of visitors came from 7 U.S. markets

[1]NYC metro area includes parts of New Jersey & Connecticut.

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TRAVEL PARTY SIZE AND COMPOSITION

→ The average visitor traveled in a party composed of 3.4 people.

→ 18% traveled with at least one person under the age of 20.

TYPICAL ST. JOHNS COUNTY VISITOR

→The typical Visitor:

→Was 51 years old

→Had a median household income of $88,000

→18% traveled with children

→Was from:

→Florida (32%)

→The Southeast (23%)

TYPICAL DAY TRIP VISITOR

→The typical Day Trip Visitor:

  →Was 52 years old

  →Had a median household income of $78,300

  →9% traveled with children

  →Was from:

    →Jacksonville (28%)

    →Orlando (9%)

    →Atlanta (8%)

    →Gainesville (8%)

TYPICAL VACATIONER[1] VISITOR

→The typical Vacationer[1] Visitor:

    →Was 49 years old

    →Had a median household income of
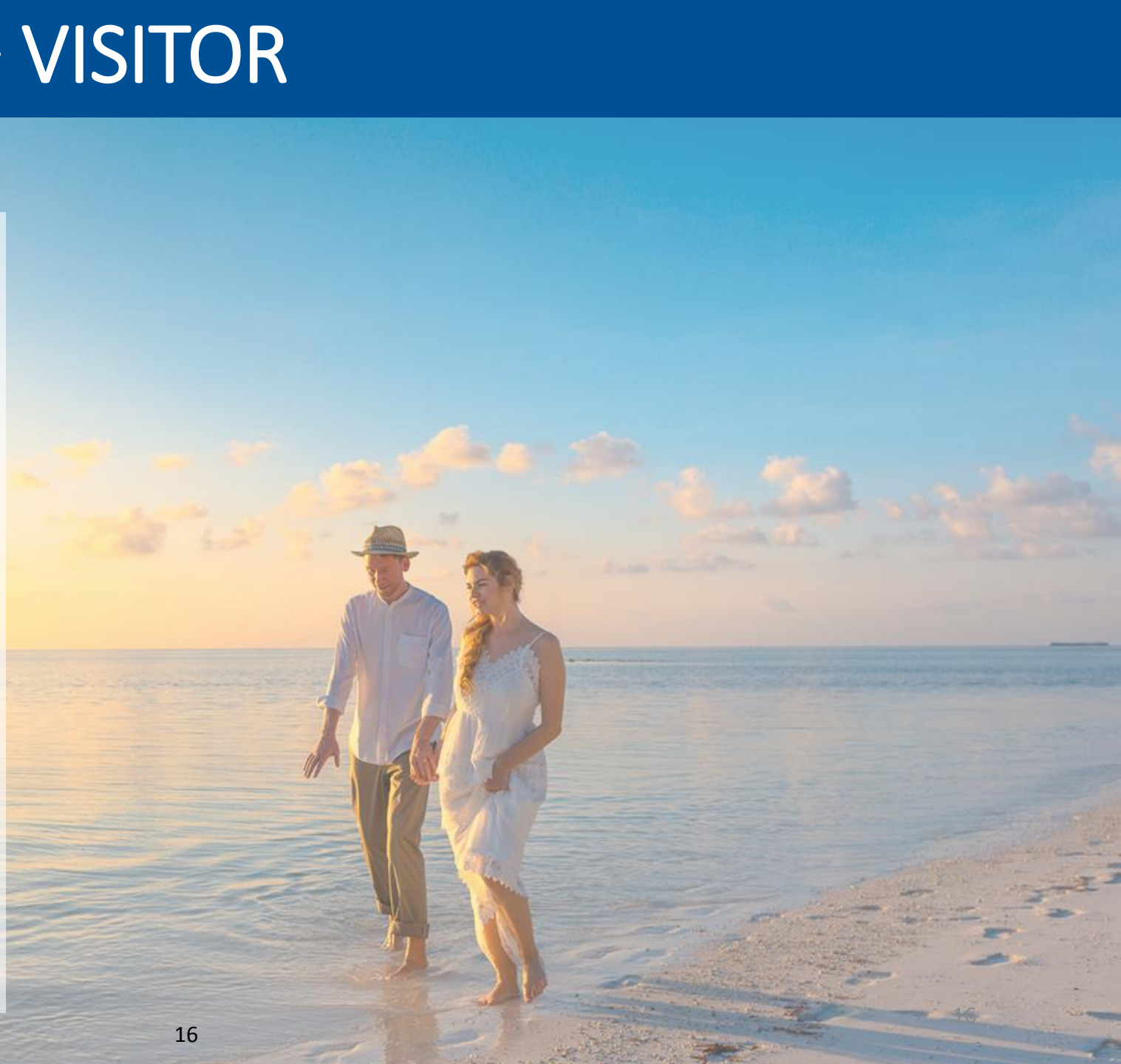 $87,900

    →20% traveled with children

    →Was from:

      →Florida (27%)

      →Southeast (26%)

[1]Travel parties who stayed 1-14 nights.

TYPICAL LONG-TERM[1] VISITOR

→The typical Long-Term[1] Visitor:

  →Was 61 years old

  →Had a median household income of
    $136,400

  →9% traveled with children

  →Was from

    →Midwest (32%)

    →Northeast (24%)

    →International (20%)

[1]Travel parties who stayed more than 14 nights.

VISITOR JOURNEY

Pre-Visit → Travel Party Profile → Trip Experience → Post-Trip Evaluation

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FIRST TIME AND EXPERIENCED VISITORS

→ **31%** were first time visitors

→ **15%** had visited more than 10 times

LENGTH OF STAY

→ **20%** of visitors to St. Johns County were day trippers, while **80%** stayed overnight

→ Visitors who stayed overnight spent about **5.5** nights in St. Johns County

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TOP ACTIVITIES DURING VISIT[1]

Beach (63%)	Restaurants (48%)	Attractions, historical sites (45%)	Shopping, antiquing (39%)	Trolley/walking/ghost tour (32%)

[1]Multiple responses permitted

VISITORS' ACCOMMODATIONS

42% Hotel/motel/resort

20% Day trippers

18% Friends/relatives

9% Rental house/condominium/Airbnb

TRAVEL PARTY SPENDING

→ Visiting travel parties spent $460 a day and $2,530 on their trip

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SOCIAL MEDIA

→62% of visitors planned to share their trip experiences on social media

Facebook (55%)

Instagram (12%)

Snapchat (7%)

Twitter (6%)

AREA STAYED

→7 in 10 visitors stayed in St. Augustine

St. Augustine (69%)

Ponte Vedra (14%)

Other (14%)

VISITOR JOURNEY

Pre-Visit → Travel Party Profile → Trip Experience → Post-Trip Evaluation

ST. JOHNS COUNTY RATINGS[1]

	Average Visitor Rating
A safe destination	4.7
A "family" atmosphere	4.7
Peaceful/relaxing	4.7
Plenty to see and do	4.6
Convenient location	4.6
Food/restaurants	4.5
Open space, green space, natural areas	4.5
White sandy beaches	4.3
Value for your travel dollar	4.1
Access to amenities	4.1

[1]Visitors rated their experience in St. Johns county on a 5 point scale, where 5 is excellent and 1 is poor.

VISITOR SATISFACTION

→ **96%** of visitors would recommend St. Johns County

→ **92%** will come back

→ Visitors gave St. Johns County **9.0**[1] rating as an overall place to visit

[1]10=Excellent; 1=Poor.

MAKING ST. JOHNS COUNTY A BETTER PLACE TO VISIT

→4 in 10 visitors said that additional public parking
would make St. Johns County a better place to visit

More public parking (43%)   Less expensive (25%)   More public restrooms (22%)

Beaches (47%)

"We love the opportunity to visit the beach; you can't be in Florida and not be at the beach."

History/culture (36%)

"Historical buildings in a tropical surrounding. Laid back attitudes, great food, and friendly people."

Attractions (16%)

"We love just walking around downtown and seeing what there is to explore."

Weather (15%)

"The warm weather and open areas with lots of beaches is something we don't have back home."

IF YOU WERE TALKING TO A FRIEND WHO HAD NEVER VISITED, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE ST. JOHNS COUNTY AS A PLACE TO VISIT OR VACATION?

Historical (37%)

"It's the oldest and sweetest town in America. I love it here."

Beautiful (23%)

"It's a beautiful and laid back historic town, with nice beaches and friendly people."

Great place to vacation (22%)

"A great location that is different from rest of Florida."
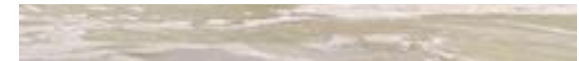
Best beaches (18%)

"You have to plan on staying a couple nights because there is so much to see and do. The beaches are wonderful."

DETAILED FINDINGS

VISITOR JOURNEY

Pre-Visit → Travel Party Profile → Trip Experience → Post-Trip Evaluation
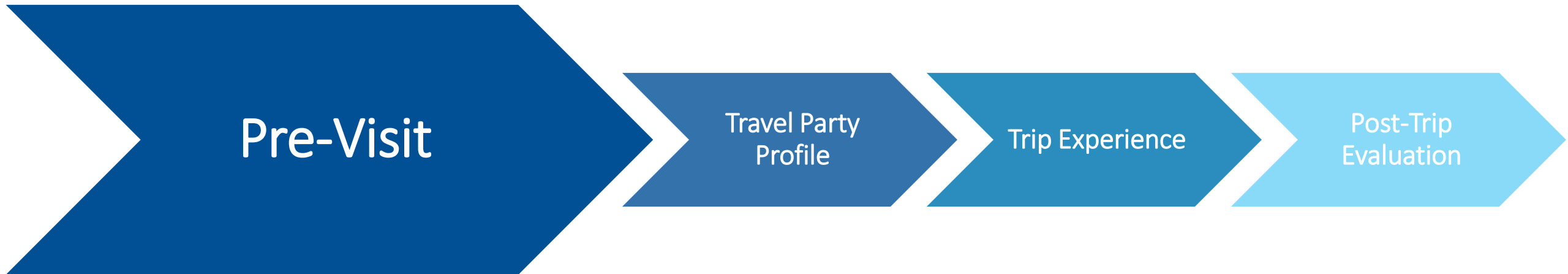
VISITOR TRANSPORTATION

→**3 in 4** visitors drove to St. Johns County

1%

25%

74%

■ Drive □ Fly ■ Boat
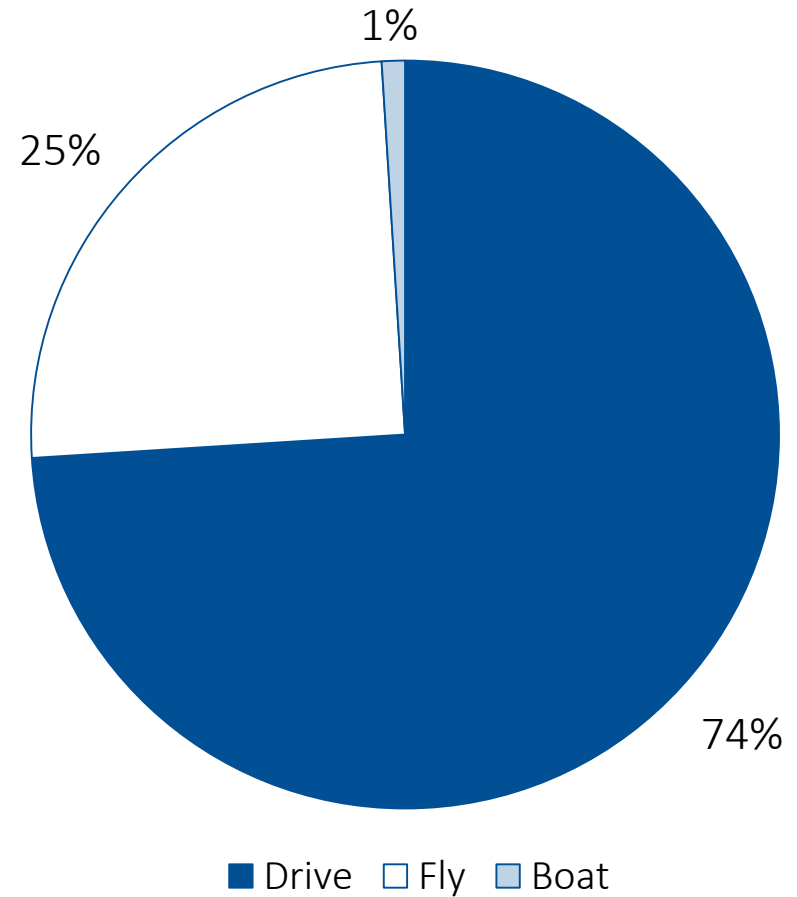
TRIP PLANNING CYCLE

→7 in 10 visitors planned their trip 3 months or less in advance

Category	Percentage
Less than a month	33%
1 to 3 months	36%
4 to 6 months	21%
7 months or more	9%
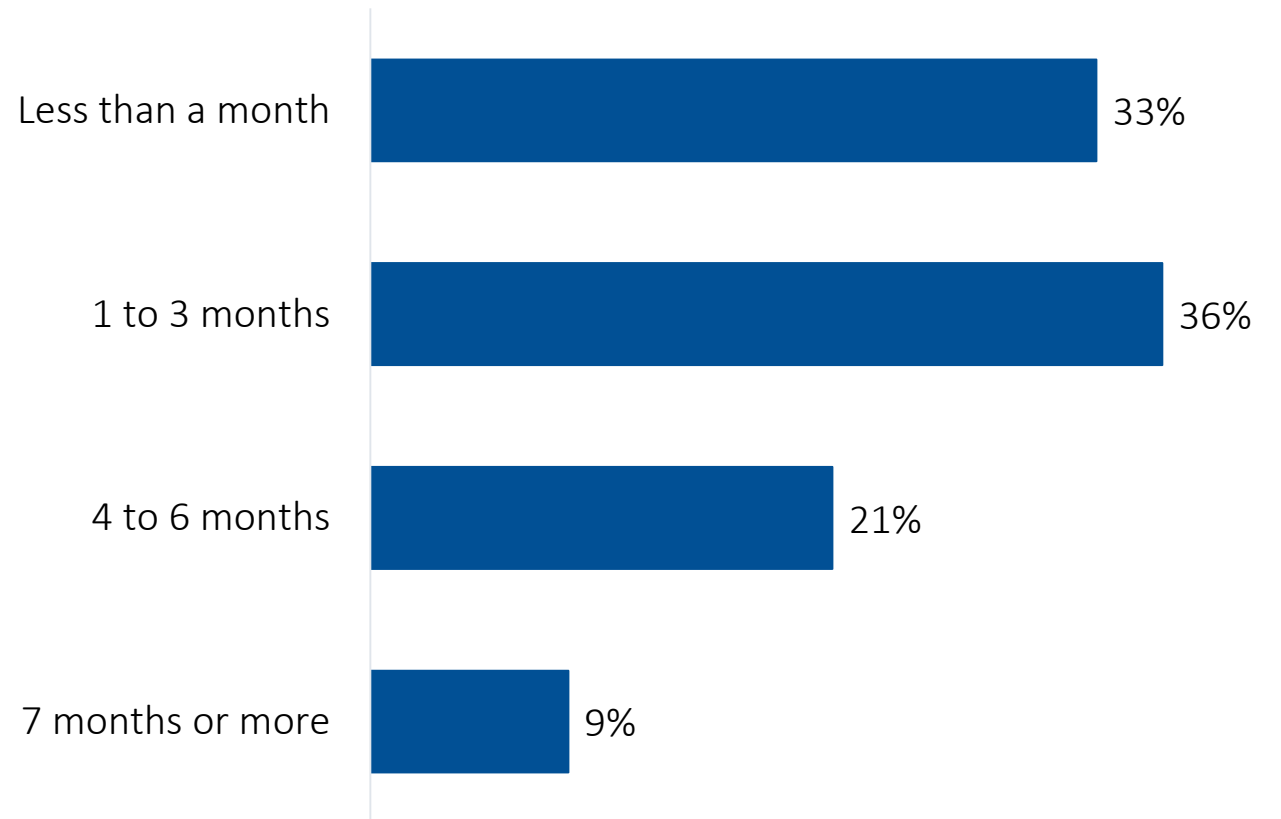
TRIP PLANNING SOURCES[1]

Trip Planning Source	
Talk to friends	35%
Search on Google, Yahoo, etc.	29%
Go to a hotel/resort website	17%
Use a trip planning app	13%
Go to VisitStAugustine.com	10%
Personal social media	8%
Go to an airline website	6%
Use an online travel agency	6%
Contact a travel agent	4%
Destination social media	4%
Look at travel magazines	4%
Go to FloridaHistoricCoast.com or HistoricCoastCulture.com	3%
Look in travel sections of newspapers	3%
Read travel guides	2%
Deal-based promotion	2%
Airbnb/HomeAway	1%
Other	6%
None	10%

[1]Multiple responses permitted.

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REASONS FOR VISITING[1]

Reason	Percentage
Beach	34%
Attractions and historical sites	26%
Visit friends and family	14%
Shopping, antiquing	10%
Family friendly	10%
Special occasion	10%
Food, wine, spirits	8%
Golf	5%
Water recreation	5%
Flagler College	4%
Convenient stop on the way	4%
Outdoor recreation	4%
Cultural events, art galleries	3%
Business, conference, meeting, etc.	2%
Special event	2%
Personal business including medical/healthcare	2%
Attend or participate in a sporting event	1%
Agritourism	1%
Spas	1%
Other	12%

[1]Up to 2 responses permitted

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PRIMARY DESTINATION

→8 in 10 visitors said that St. Johns County was the primary destination on their trip

Destination	Percentage
St. Johns County	81%
Orlando/Disney	6%
Miami/South Florida	4%
Outside of Florida	3%
Tampa	2%
Daytona Beach	2%
Other	2%

VISITOR JOURNEY

Pre-Visit

Travel Party Profile

Trip Experience

Post-Trip Evaluation
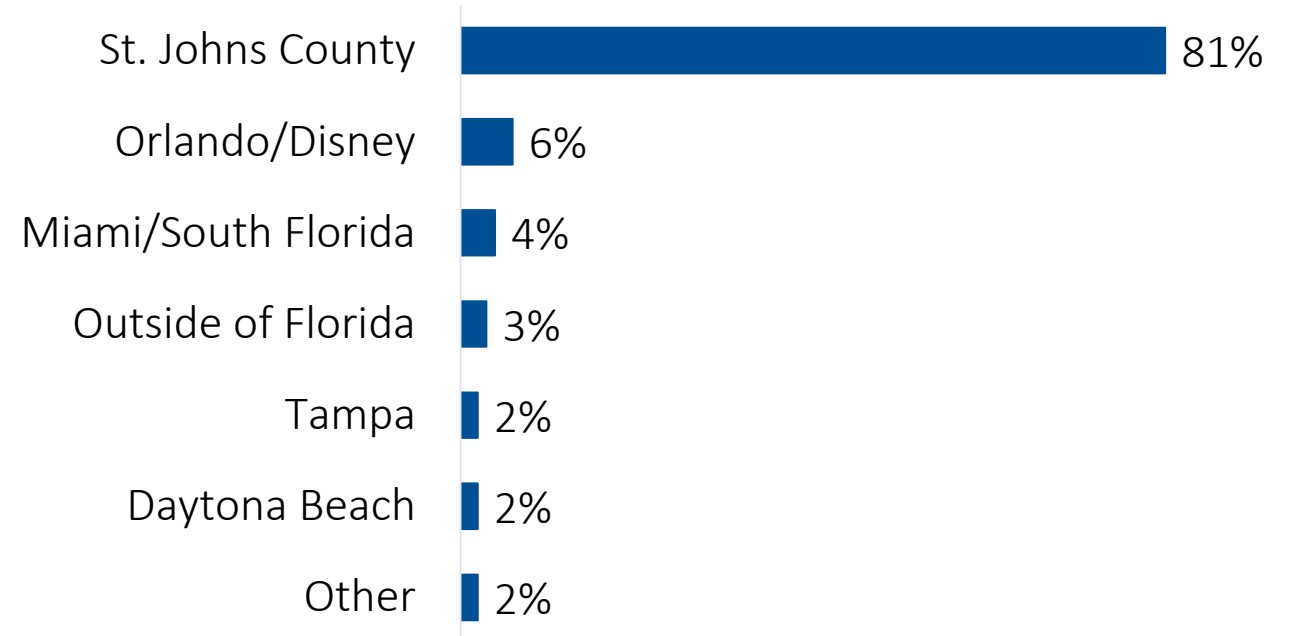
ORIGIN OF VISITORS: REGIONS

Region	Percent
Florida	32%
Southeast	23%
Northeast	13%
Midwest	18%
West	4%
Canada	4%
Other International	6%

90% of visitors came from **the US**

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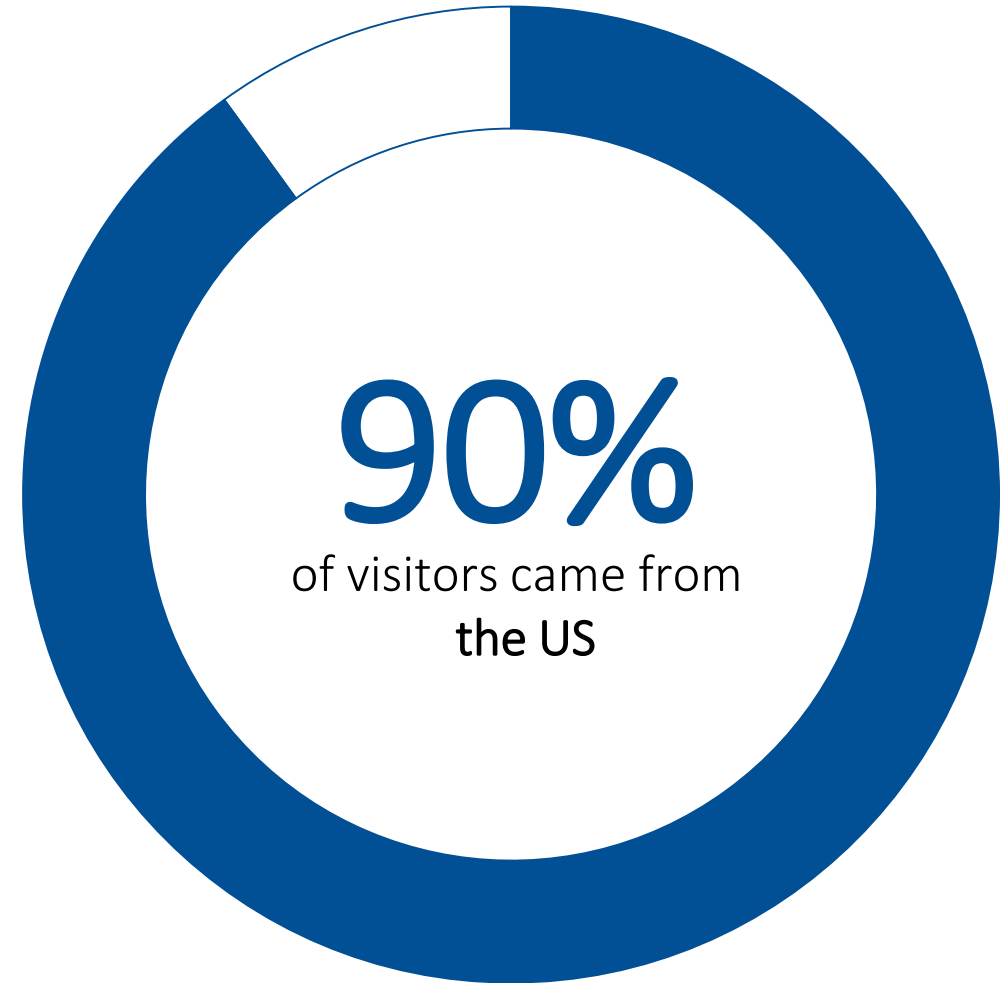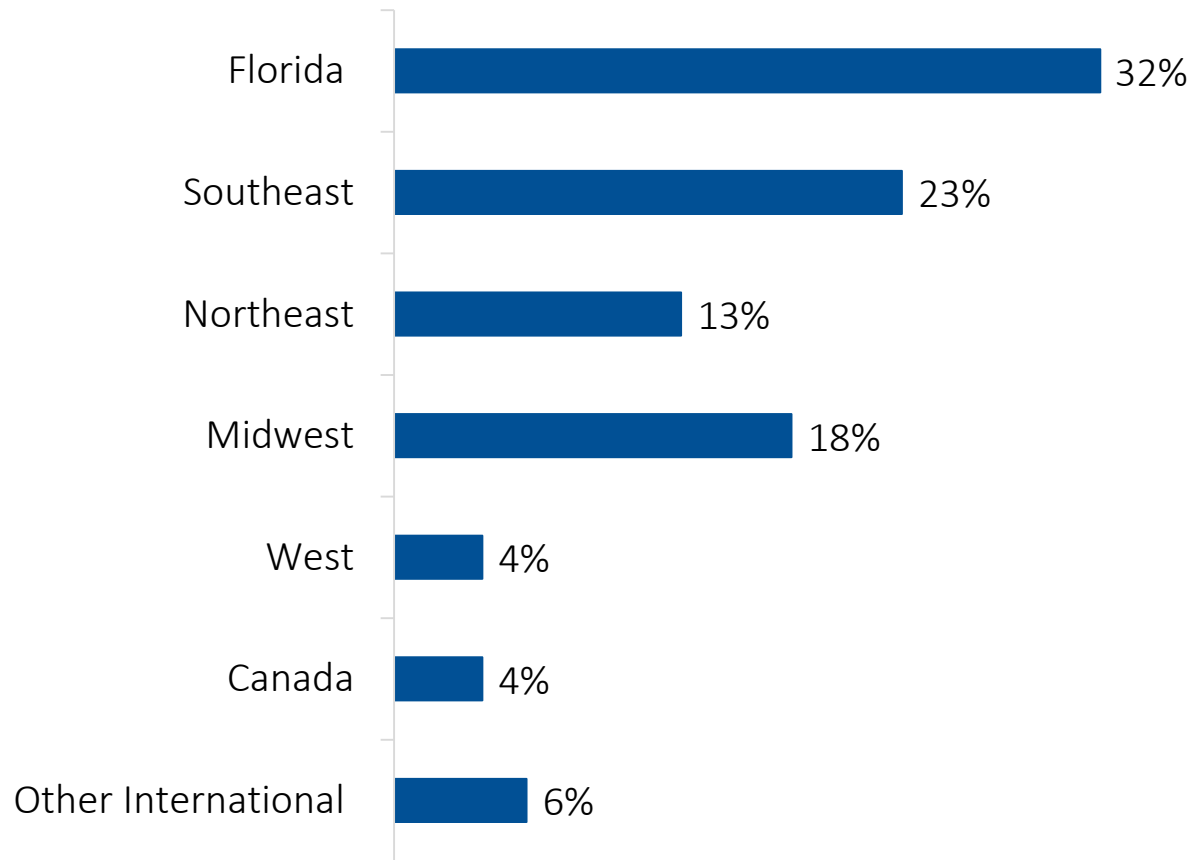
ORIGIN OF VISITORS: STATES

Origin	Percentage of Visitors
Florida	32%
Georgia	8%
Ohio	5%
New York	4%
Canada	4%
Virginia	3%
Tennessee	3%
Michigan	3%
Massachusetts	2%
South Carolina	2%
Illinois	2%

68%
of visitors came from
10 states and Canada

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ORIGIN OF VISITORS: MARKETS

Market	% of Visitors
Jacksonville	12%
Atlanta	7%
Orlando	6%
Miami-Ft. Lauderdale	4%
New York City	3%
Gainesville	3%
Cincinnati	3%
Tampa-Clearwater-St. Petersburg	2%
Washington D.C.-Baltimore	2%
Boston	2%
St. Louis	2%
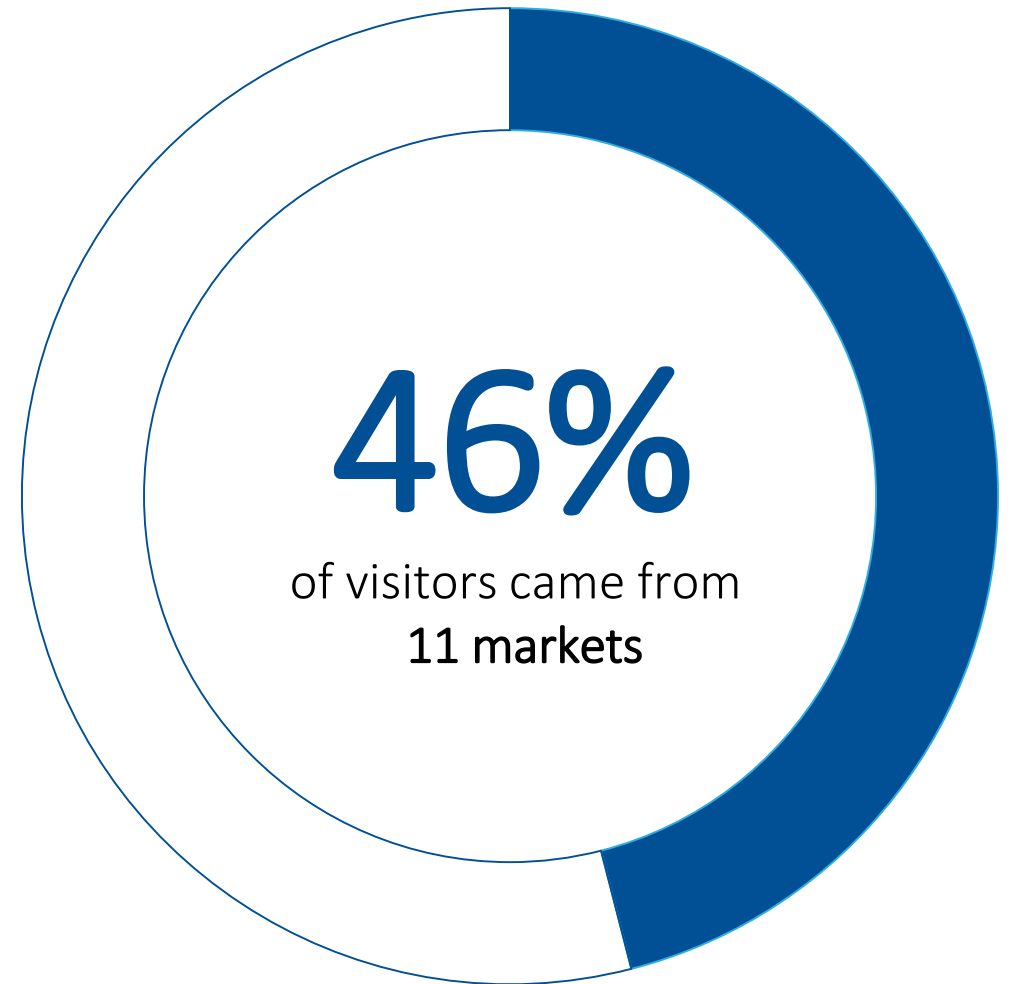
46%
of visitors came from
11 markets

TRAVEL PARTY SIZE AND COMPOSITION

→The average visitor traveled in a party composed of **3.4** people

→**18%** traveled with children under 20

→ **93%** traveled with at least 1 other person

By yourself 7%

2 people 45%

3 people 13%

4 people 18%

5 or more people 17%
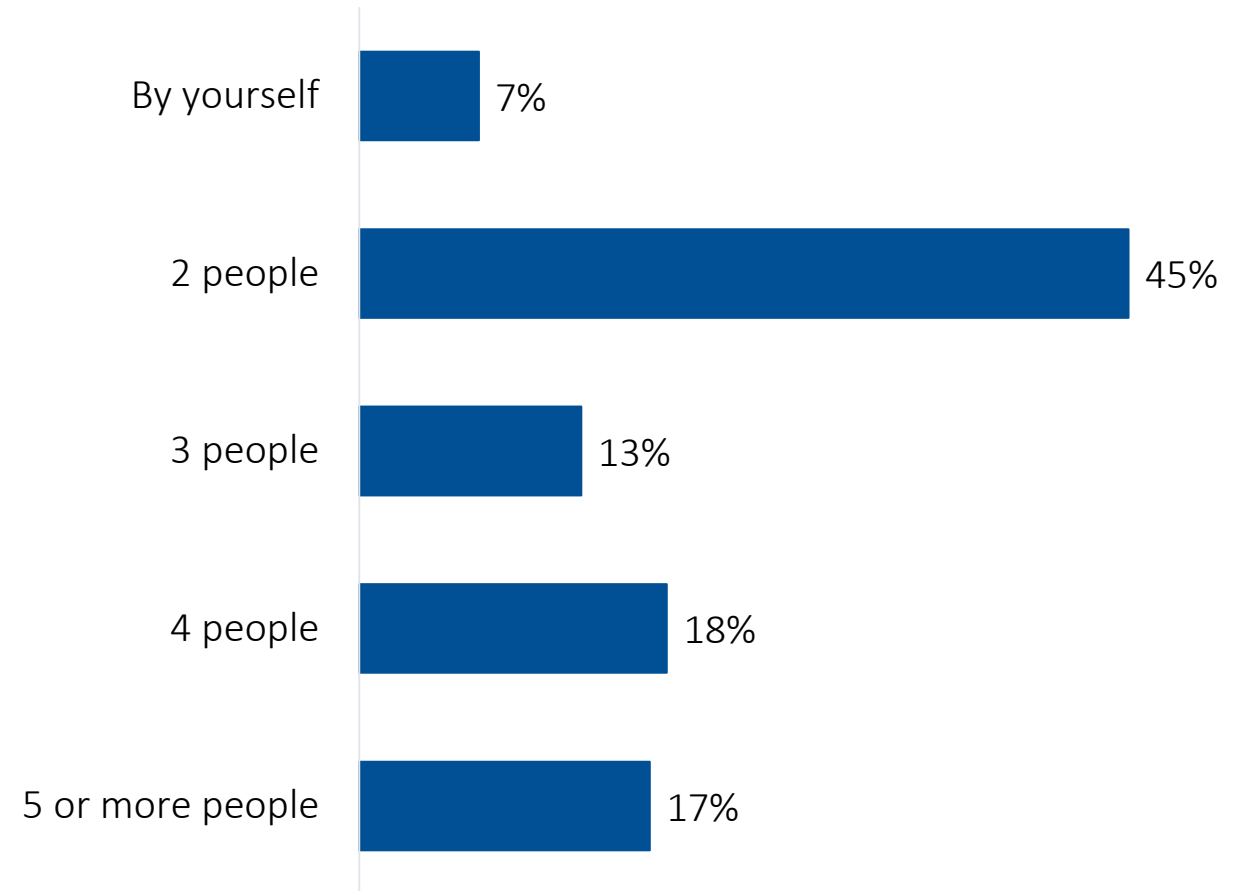
AGE

Median Age
→ The median age of April-June visitors was **51 years old.**

Age	%
18 to 24	3%
25 to 34	13%
35 to 49	31%
50 to 65	35%
65+	18%

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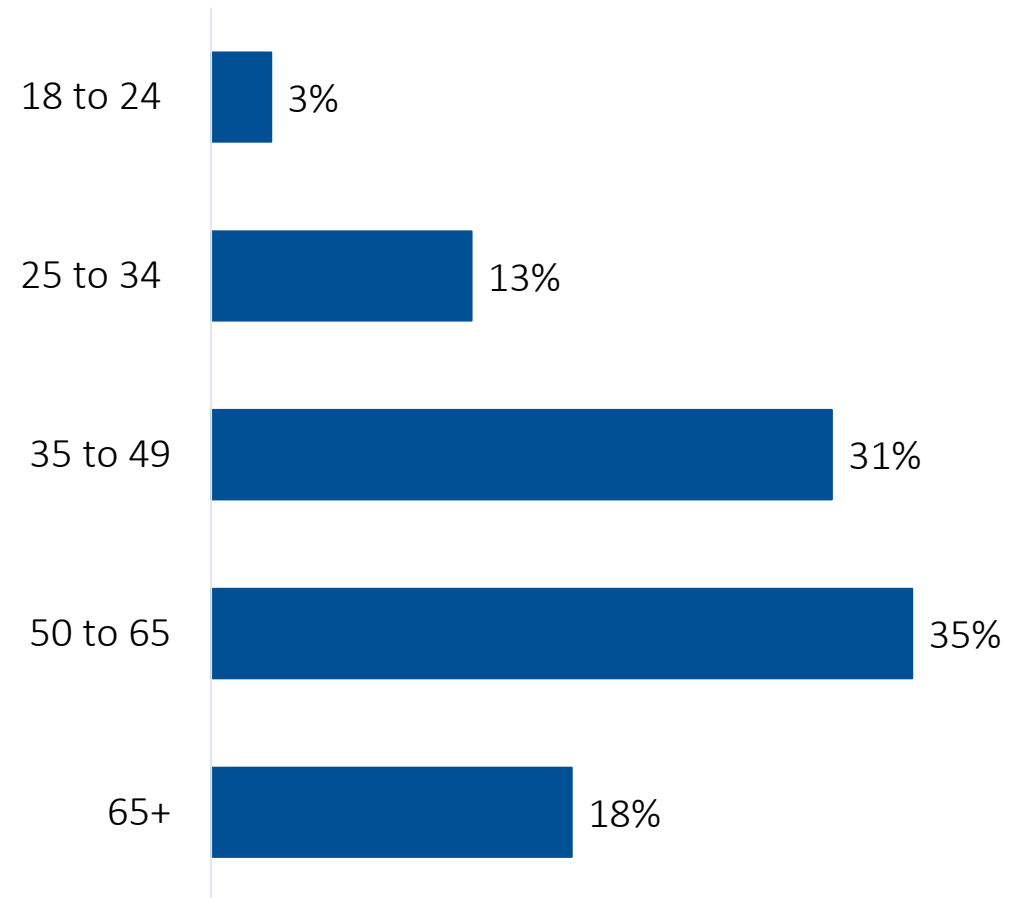
HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 2018

Median Household Income
→ April-June visitors had a median household income of $88,000

Income	Percent
<$30,000	5%
$30,000 - $49,999	10%
$50,000 - $74,999	21%
$75,000 - $99,999	27%
$100,000 - $149,999	19%
$150,000 - $200,000	10%
$200,000 or more	8%

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VISITOR JOURNEY

Pre-Visit → Travel Party Profile → **Trip Experience** → Post-Trip Evaluation

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NUMBER OF TIMES IN DESTINATION

→**31%** were first time visitors
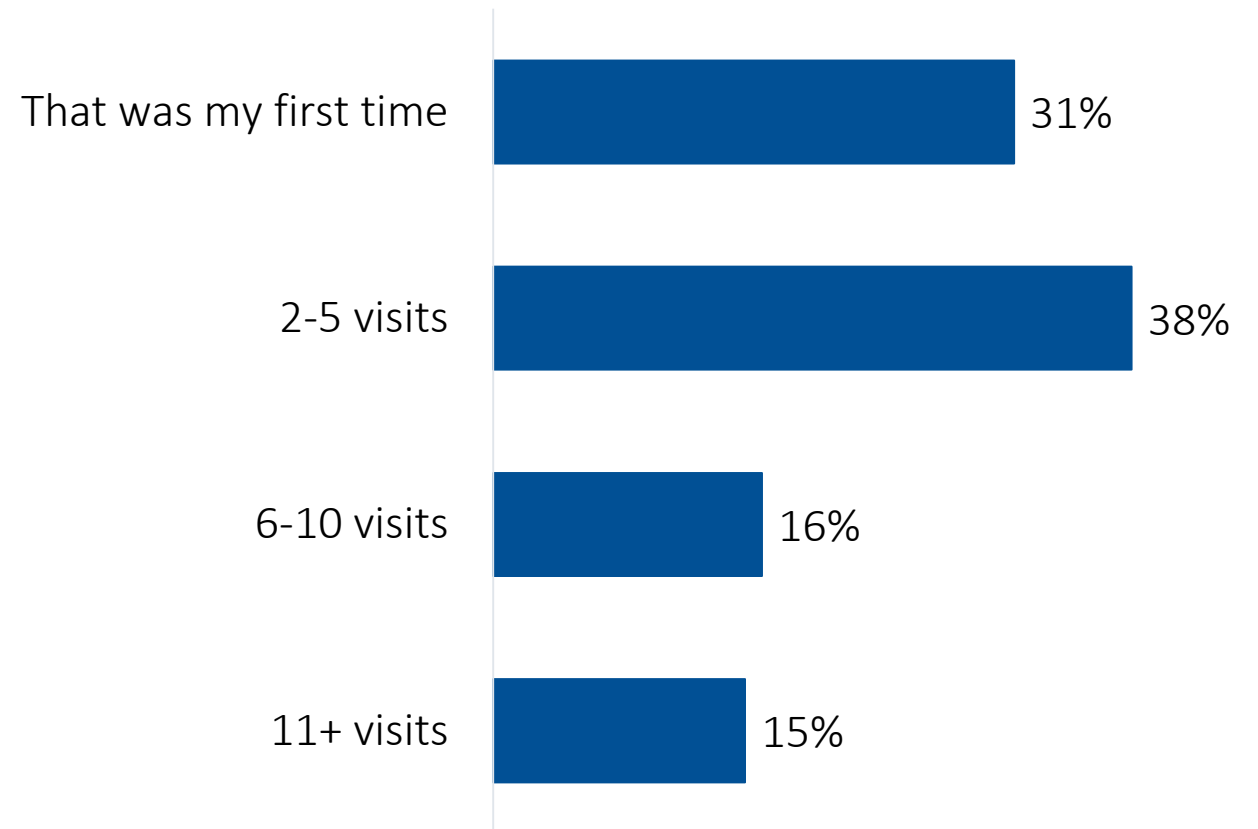
→**15%** had visited more than 10 times
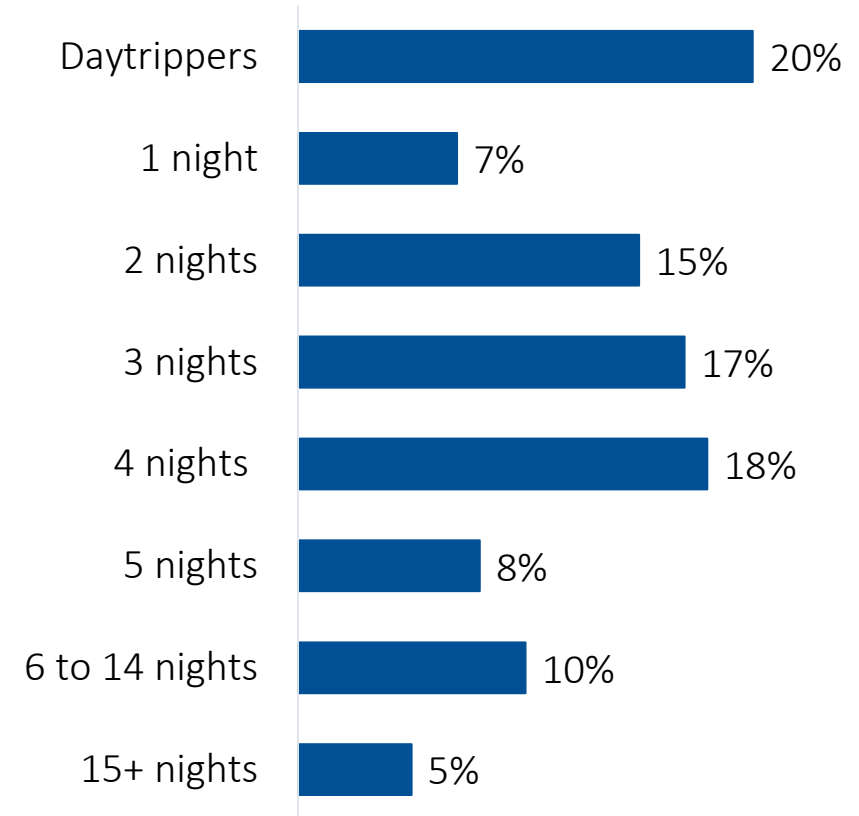
That was my first time — 31%

2-5 visits — 38%

6-10 visits — 16%

11+ visits — 15%

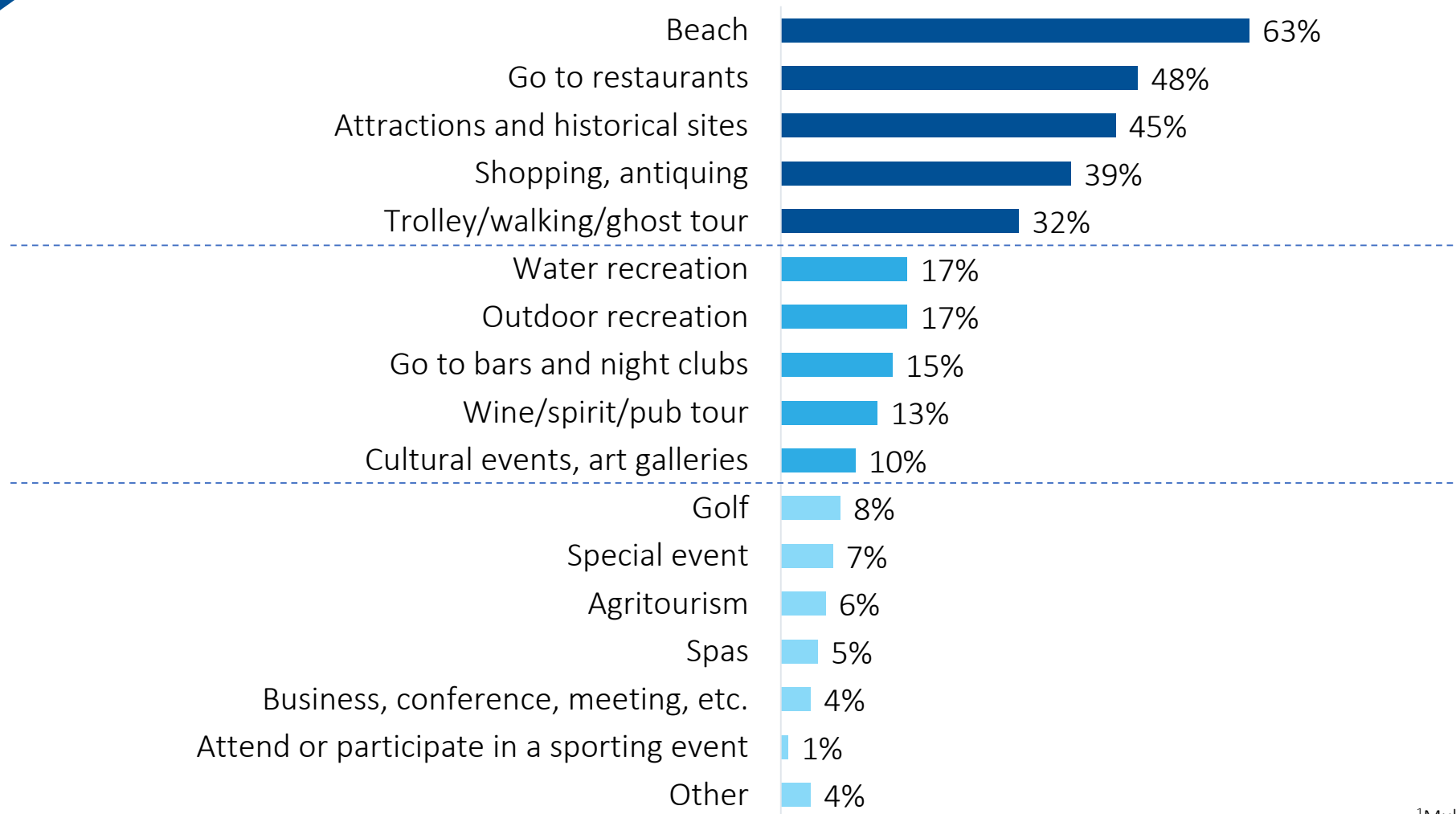# LENGTH OF STAY

→**20%** of visitors to St. Johns County were day trippers, while **80%** stayed overnight

→Overnight visitors spent an average of **5.5** nights in St. Johns County

Category	Percentage
Daytrippers	20%
1 night	7%
2 nights	15%
3 nights	17%
4 nights	18%
5 nights	8%
6 to 14 nights	10%
15+ nights	5%

VISITOR ACTIVITIES[1]

Activity	Percentage
Beach	63%
Go to restaurants	48%
Attractions and historical sites	45%
Shopping, antiquing	39%
Trolley/walking/ghost tour	32%
Water recreation	17%
Outdoor recreation	17%
Go to bars and night clubs	15%
Wine/spirit/pub tour	13%
Cultural events, art galleries	10%
Golf	8%
Special event	7%
Agritourism	6%
Spas	5%
Business, conference, meeting, etc.	4%
Attend or participate in a sporting event	1%
Other	4%

[1]Multiple responses permitted.

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REASON FOR VISIT VS. VISITOR ACTIVITIES

Reason for visit[1]

Visitor Activities[1]

Key Reasons for Visiting

	Reason for visit	Visitor Activities
Beach	34%	63%
Attractions and historical sites	26%	45%

Trip Enhancements

	Reason for visit	Visitor Activities
Shopping, antiquing	10%	39%
Food, wine, spirits	8%	13%
Golf	5%	8%
Water recreation	5%	17%
Outdoor recreation	4%	17%
Cultural events, art galleries	3%	10%
Business, conference, meeting, etc.	2%	4%
Special event	2%	7%
Attend or participate in a sporting event	1%	1%
Agritourism	1%	6%
Spas	1%	5%

[1]Multiple responses permitted.

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VISITORS' ACCOMMODATIONS

→**42%** of visitors to St. Johns County stayed in a hotel/motel or resort

→**7 in 10** visitors stayed in St. Johns County during the week (Monday-Thursday)

Accommodation	Percentage
Hotel/motel/resort	42%
Staying at a friends/relatives residence	18%
Vacation rental home, condominium, Airbnb, etc.	9%
Bed and breakfast/Inn	4%
Campground/RV park	3%
Personal condo/timeshare	3%
Other	1%
Not staying overnight	20%
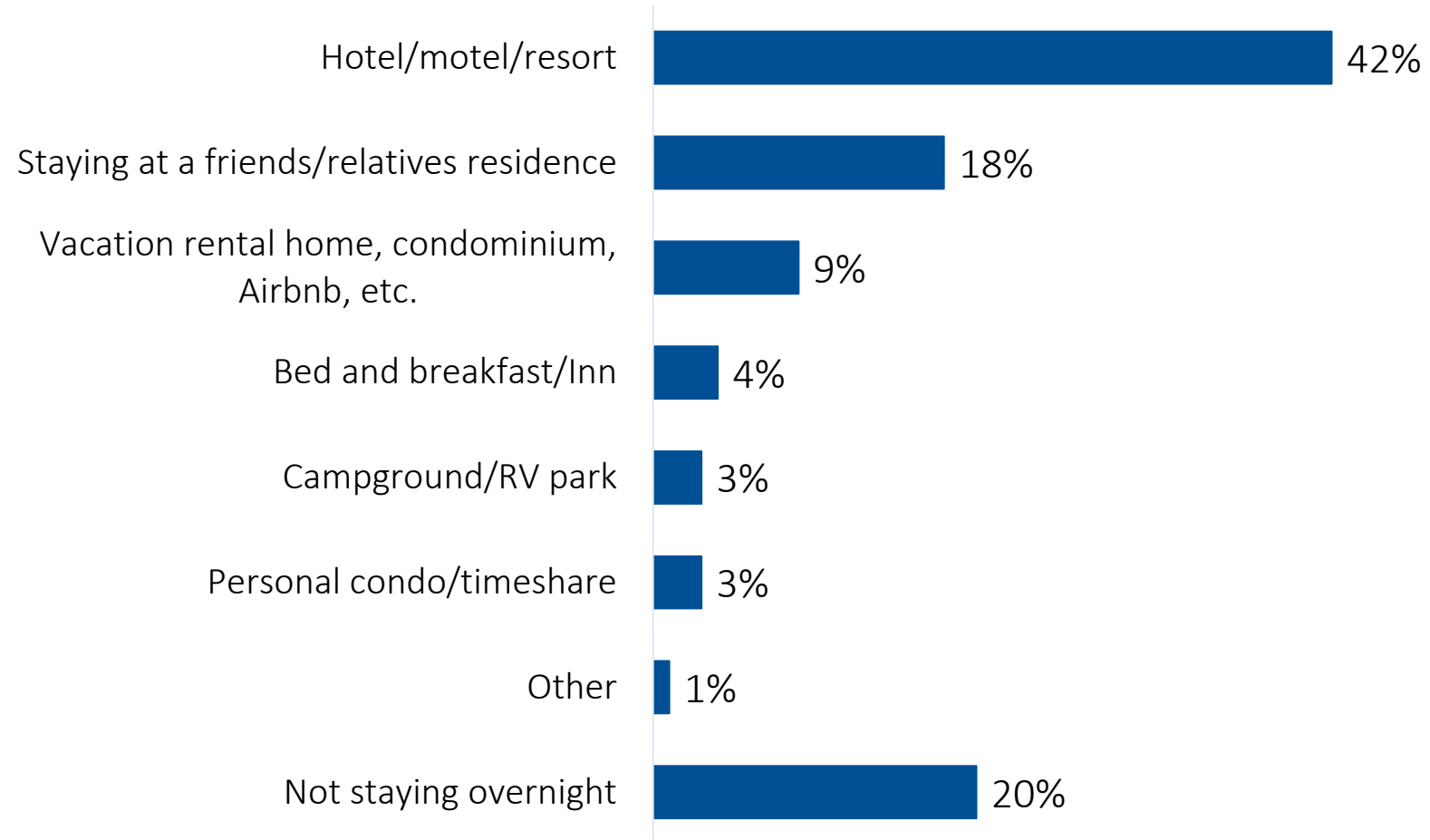
DAILY TRAVEL PARTY SPENDING

	Average Travel Party Spend per Day	Total Travel Party Spend per trip[1]
Lodging	$119	$655
Restaurants	$82	$451
Groceries	$30	$165
Shopping	$79	$434
Admissions	$64	$352
Entertainment	$36	$198
Transportation	$34	$187
Other	$16	$88
Total	$460	$2,530

[1]Calculated based on average nights stayed.

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SOCIAL MEDIA: PLANNING VS. SHARING

How visitors planned their trips[1]   How visitors shared their trips[1]

	How visitors planned their trips		How visitors shared their trips
7%	▮	Facebook	▮▮▮▮▮▮▮ 55%
1%	▮	Instagram	▮ 12%
1%	▮	Pinterest	▮ 3%
1%	▮	Twitter	▮ 6%
<1%	▮	Snapchat	▮ 7%
<1%	▮	Other	▮ 3%

→**8%** of visitors used social media to plan their trips

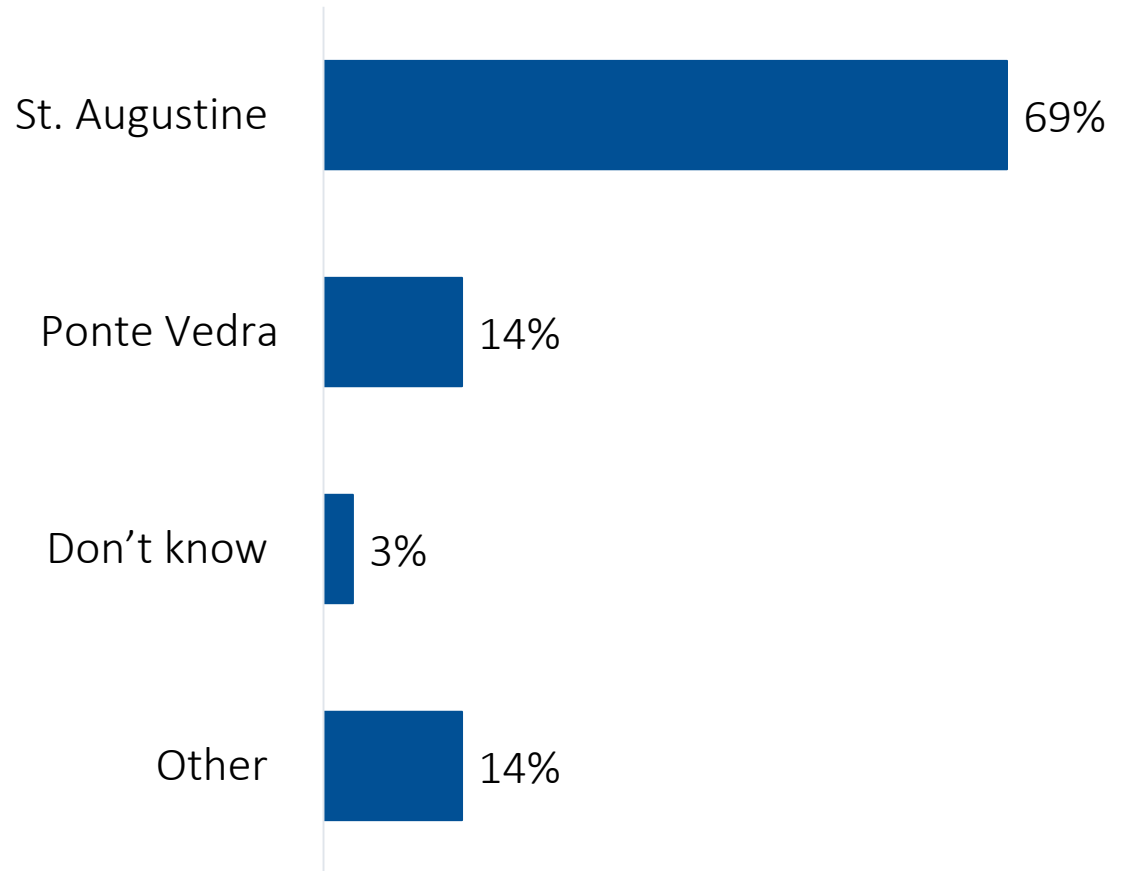→**62%** of visitors shared their trip experiences on social media during their trip or shortly after
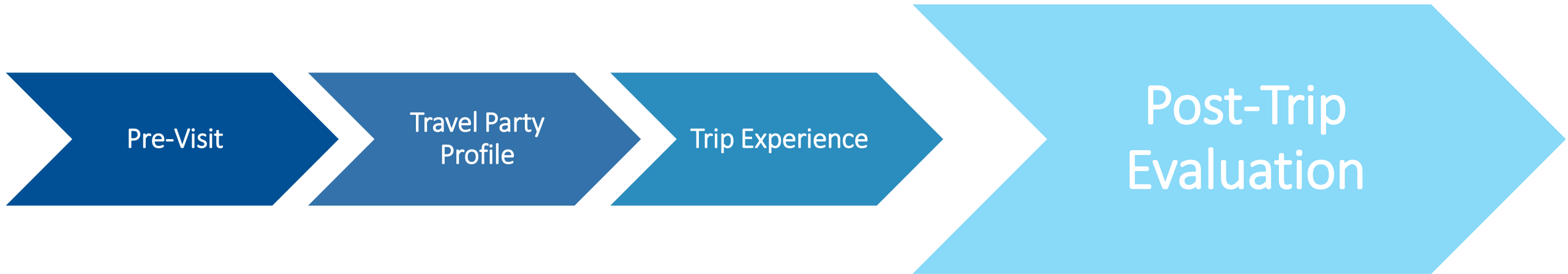
[1]Multiple responses permitted.

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AREA STAYED

→7 in 10 visitors stayed in St. Augustine

St. Augustine — 69%

Ponte Vedra — 14%

Don't know — 3%

Other — 14%

ST. JOHNS COUNTY RATINGS[1]

	Average Visitor Rating
A safe destination	4.7
A "family" atmosphere	4.7
Peaceful/relaxing	4.7
Plenty to see and do	4.6
Convenient location	4.6
Food/restaurants	4.5
Open space, green space, natural areas	4.5
White sandy beaches	4.3
Value for your travel dollar	4.1
Access to amenities	4.1

[1]Visitors rated their experience in St. Johns county on a 5 point scale, where 5 is excellent and 1 is poor.

VISITOR SATISFACTION

→Visitors gave St. Johns County an overall rating of **9.0[1] out of 10** as a place to visit

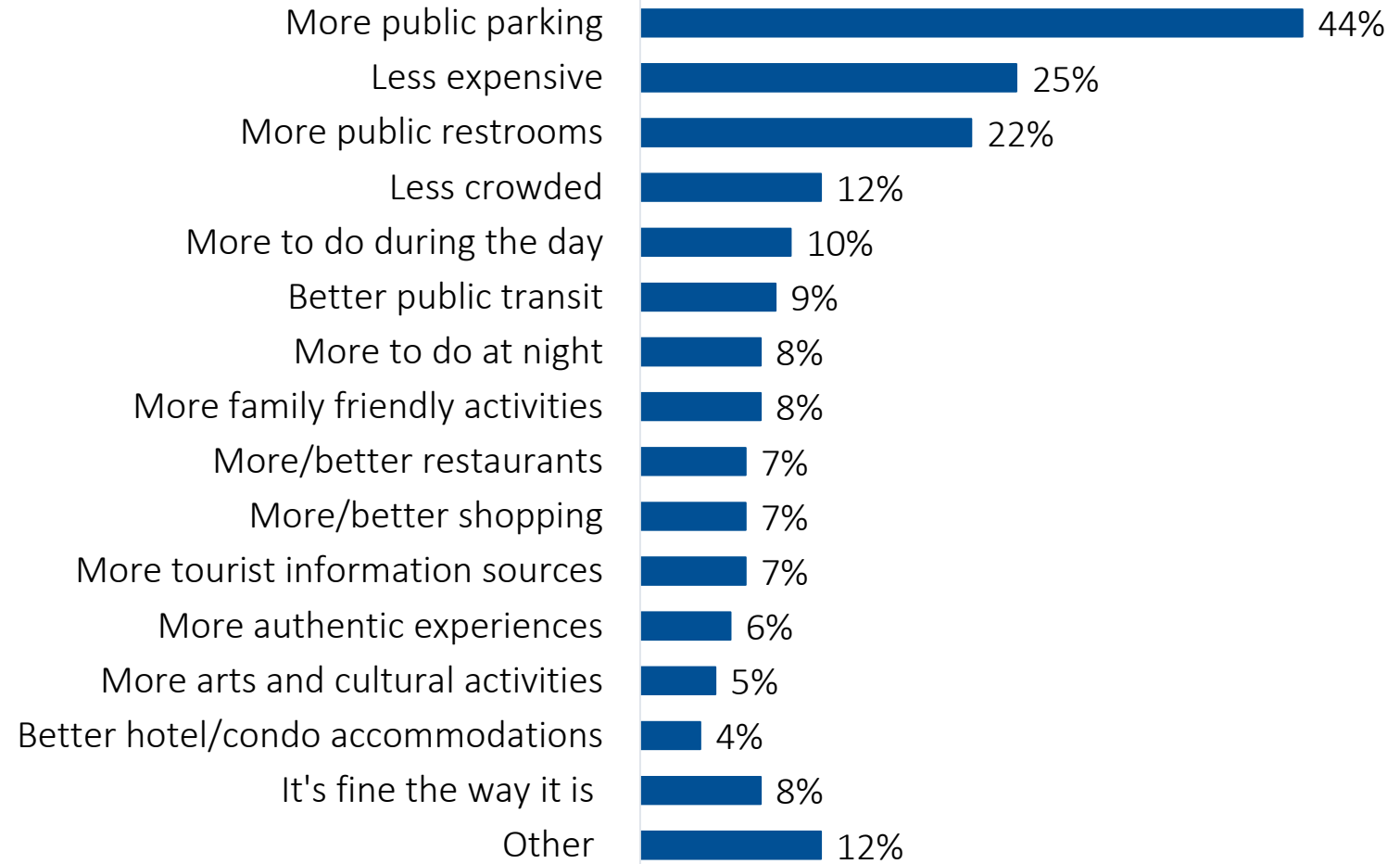→**96%** of visitors would recommend St. Johns County to a friend or relative

→**92%** of visitors will come back to St. Johns County

[1]Based on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 means poor and 10 means excellent.
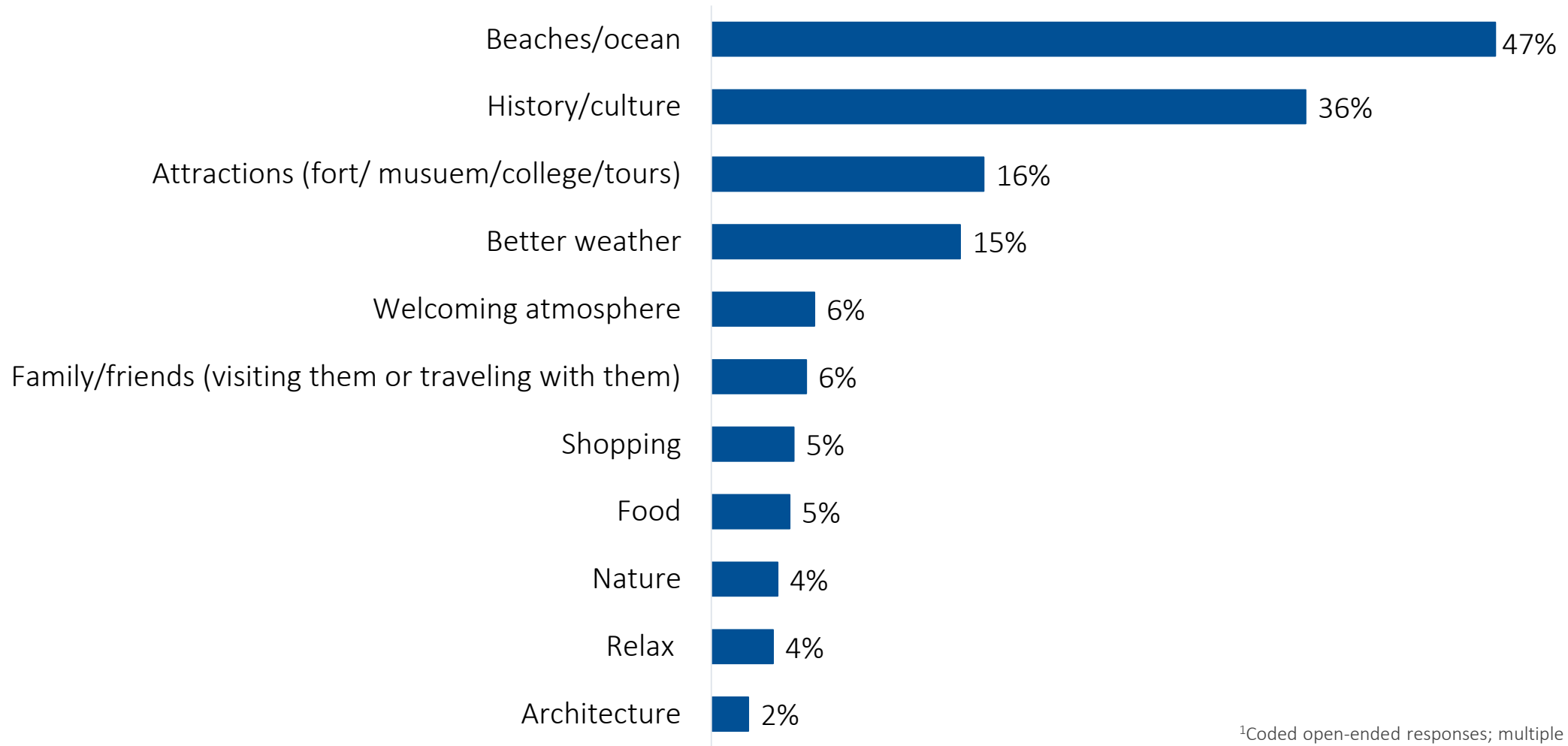
MAKING ST. JOHNS COUNTY A BETTER PLACE TO VISIT[1]

→ **4 in 10** visitors said that additional public parking would make St. Johns County a better place to visit

More public parking	44%
Less expensive	25%
More public restrooms	22%
Less crowded	12%
More to do during the day	10%
Better public transit	9%
More to do at night	8%
More family friendly activities	8%
More/better restaurants	7%
More/better shopping	7%
More tourist information sources	7%
More authentic experiences	6%
More arts and cultural activities	5%
Better hotel/condo accommodations	4%
It's fine the way it is	8%
Other	12%

[1]Multiple responses permitted.

WHAT DO YOU DO AND SEE IN ST. JOHNS COUNTY THAT YOU CAN'T DO OR SEE AT HOME?[1]

Category	Percentage
Beaches/ocean	47%
History/culture	36%
Attractions (fort/ musuem/college/tours)	16%
Better weather	15%
Welcoming atmosphere	6%
Family/friends (visiting them or traveling with them)	6%
Shopping	5%
Food	5%
Nature	4%
Relax	4%
Architecture	2%

[1]Coded open-ended responses; multiple responses permitted.

→ "There's plenty to learn about, the beaches are a fun experience, and the food is always good."

→ "Beaches, historical sites, museums, the weather!"

→ "I can walk on the beach from my hotel and see the historical places from my hotel. I sure cannot do that from home!"

→ "The beauty of the beaches and the old time feel."

→ "I love the beaches and the atmosphere."

→ "White beaches the weather allow you to be able to get out and do more than back home in Germany."

→ "I'm here on business, but in my downtime I love that I can spend quality time at the beach with my family."

→ "We love the opportunity to visit the beach. You can't be in Florida and not be at the beach!"

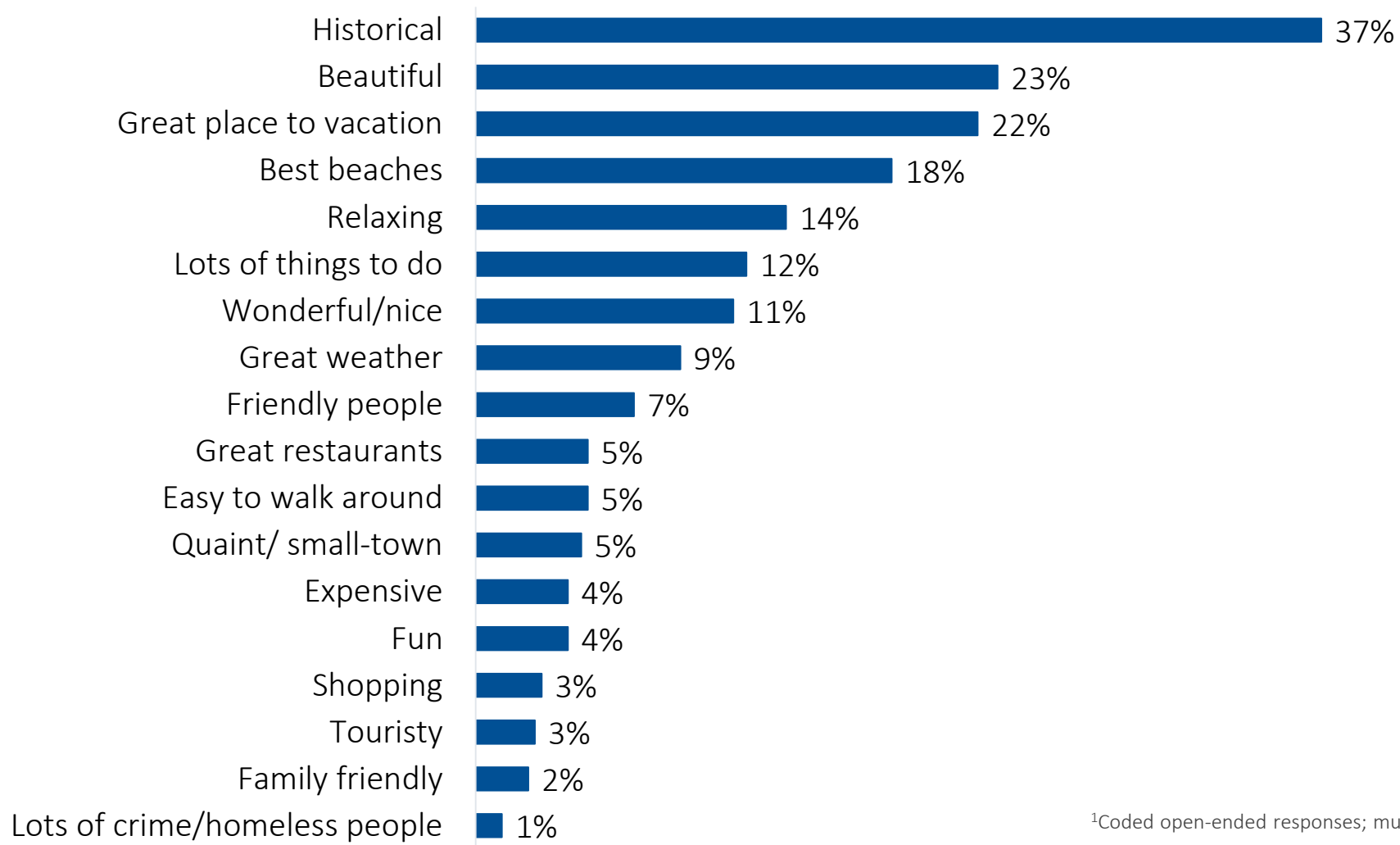→ "The clear sun shining on the ocean as the waves hit the beach."

ST. JOHNS COUNTY TOURIST DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL
Florida's Historic Coast | St. Augustine & Ponte Vedra

downs & st. germain
R E S E A R C H

→ "The area is nice. There's a lot of history in this city, and we love the beach."

→ "Historical buildings in a tropical surrounding. Laid back attitudes, great food, and friendly people."

→ "Great scenery a lot of old structures."

→ "Tour historical sites. Eat great seafood."

→ "St. Augustine has a lot more historical things, and we don't have that much at home."

→ "The area is rich with history. There is so much to see and learn if you are into the history the city has to offer."

→ "Historical sites that are convenient."

→ "All of the historical sites and old buildings."

→ "Historic aspects are very unique."

→ "Old buildings, streets, the history."

IF YOU WERE TALKING TO A FRIEND WHO HAD NEVER VISITED, HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE ST. JOHNS COUNTY AS A PLACE TO VISIT OR VACATION?[1]

Historical	37%
Beautiful	23%
Great place to vacation	22%
Best beaches	18%
Relaxing	14%
Lots of things to do	12%
Wonderful/nice	11%
Great weather	9%
Friendly people	7%
Great restaurants	5%
Easy to walk around	5%
Quaint/ small-town	5%
Expensive	4%
Fun	4%
Shopping	3%
Touristy	3%
Family friendly	2%
Lots of crime/homeless people	1%

[1]Coded open-ended responses; multiple responses permitted.

ST. JOHNS COUNTY
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R E S E A R C H

→ "Great place with a lot of history, beautiful beaches, great golf courses, and good food."

→ "History would be the draw, the beaches, shoppers would like the outlet mall at 16 and 95."

→ "Must see history and attractions. Easy to get around."

→ "Interesting and historical, beautiful and friendly."

→ "Rich in history and easily accessible by walking."

→ "Family friendly, historic, fun."

→ "Good place to learn about our American heritage."

→ "Historic, peaceful, friendly, great weather."

→ "History, downtown forts and shopping, restaurants, a beautiful not so crowded beach, and warm weather. It's really not like other Florida cities."

→ "Old Spanish town. Pedestrian friendly."

ST. JOHNS COUNTY
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RESEARCH

→ "St. Augustine is a beautiful place to visit, beaches are amazing. The pace of everyday life is slower so you can relax and enjoy it. Take a ghost tour!"

→ "The area is beautiful, and the beaches are wonderful."

→ "It's a beautiful city. The beaches here are really nice."

→ "Beautiful waterfront town."

→ "Absolutely breathtaking views on the beach."

→ "Beautiful scenery. Almost anywhere you go, you get a nice view of the beautiful water."

→ "Beautiful, laid-back historic town, nice beach, and friendly people."

→ "Absolutely gorgeous and historical."

→ "A beautiful place to view history."

→ "You have to visit at least once; it's a beautiful place."

→ "It's the perfect vacation spot for a mixed group. Those who want to lie on the beach can do so, those who want to go shopping at vacation-style shops in a friendly pedestrian shopping zone can do so, those who want to see nature/visit historical sites can do so."

→ "Good place to go. Do as much or as little as you want."

→ "Even if you have no desire to travel, St. Augustine should be the one place you go. It's so beautiful, and there's so much to do with the kids."

→ "Even if you have never been or don't take many vacations, you should visit St. Augustine. The beaches are nice."

→ "I would say St. Augustine is a very nice place to visit because of the history and beaches and the shopping areas."

→ "We have told several people how much we love to visit your city."

→ "One of the best places to visit in the Southeast area of the country."

METHODOLOGY

METHODOLOGY[1]

Visitor Tracking Study

Visitor tracking is completed through the use of internet surveys and in-person interviewing in areas throughout St. Johns County, including public areas, hotels, and events.

Tracking data is derived from the analysis of 512 completed interviews of visitors to St. Johns County.

Data Collection

Quarterly visitor tracking is performed in St. Johns County to render visitor profiles. This report is based on visitors who came to St. Johns County between April 1st, 2019 and June 30th, 2019.

[1]All photos within this report are credited to FloridasHistoricCoast.com, Pixels, and Unsplash. All other Photos are royalty free and labeled for reuse.

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R E S E A R C H

ST. JOHNS COUNTY TDC VISITOR TRACKING REPORT

APRIL – JUNE 2019

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