

20  24

Atlantic City Restaurant Week

Executive Report - November 2024



LLOYD D. LEVENSON INSTITUTE
OF GAMING, HOSPITALITY & TOURISM

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Supported By: Jane Bokunewicz, Ph. D. | Faculty

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SCHOOL OF BUSINESS, STOCKTON UNIGAMINGVERSTY

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Atlantic City Restaurant Week 2024

November 2024

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Assistant Director**

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**Commissioned by: Casino Reinvestment Development
Authority and Atlantic City Restaurant Week Committee**



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Overview

Atlantic City Restaurant Week, historically held in March, was postponed to October in 2021. The fall date was a response to the continuing COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the Atlantic City community. Following the success of the event in the new time window, Restaurant Week organizers decided to keep the event in the fall moving forward. The 2024 event was officially held October 6 – 11, 2024 and extended an additional week to October 20, 2024.

As in previous years, patrons of Atlantic City Restaurant Week were surveyed regarding their personal characteristics and experience of the event. A total of 267 survey responses (219 complete) were collected during the run of the event, October 6 through October 20, utilizing an exclusively online survey.





Key Findings

- More than **two-thirds** of respondents were returning Restaurant Week patrons.
- **Social media** was the most common way both first-time and returning patrons heard about the event.
- **8 in 10** respondents indicated that Restaurant Week factored into their decision to visit the resort.
- **34.7%** of respondents indicated they were of the Baby Boomer generation (age 60-78).
- **32%** of respondents traveled more than 50 miles to attend Restaurant Week.
- Half of respondents were from Atlantic County, **81%** from New Jersey.
- Among Restaurant Week patrons who were not residents of Atlantic City, **49%** said they were staying in the Atlantic City area overnight.
- **66%** of respondents rated Restaurant Week 5 out of 5 for value.
- **88%** of 2024 respondents said they would return in 2025, among first-time patrons nearly 8 in 10 said they would return in 2025.

Methodology

Restaurant Week patrons were asked to answer a series of questions regarding their experience of the event. A 12-question online survey was administered via Qualtrics. A link to the survey was provided on the Atlantic City Restaurant Week website and distributed to restaurant patrons via business cards printed with a QR code.

A total of 267 respondents participated in the 2024 online survey between October 6 and October 20, however only 219 finished the survey and not all answered every question.

As established in prior Restaurant Week Surveys, notably 2019, there has been little difference between patron samples collected online or via survey card except in the oldest age bracket. The choice to administer the survey entirely online should have little to no effect on the overall sample moving forward.

A note on year-to-year comparisons: Restaurant Week 2020 (March 8 through March 13) was cut short by the statewide declaration of a Public Health Emergency on March 9 (Executive Order 103) and the closure of indoor dining on March 16 (Executive Order 104). Data for that year is only reported for the period March 8 through March 15 (the date of the last patron survey). Data for all subsequent and prior years represents a full two-week period starting October 6, 2024, October 1, 2023, October 2, 2022, October 3, 2021, March 3, 2019 and March 4, 2018, respectively. Only complete responses were considered in cross-tabbed data, with incomplete responses included in single metric tables and the calculation of restaurant visits and group size for purposes of estimating average number of restaurants visited, and average spend per respondent.



12 online
question survey

267 respondents
participated



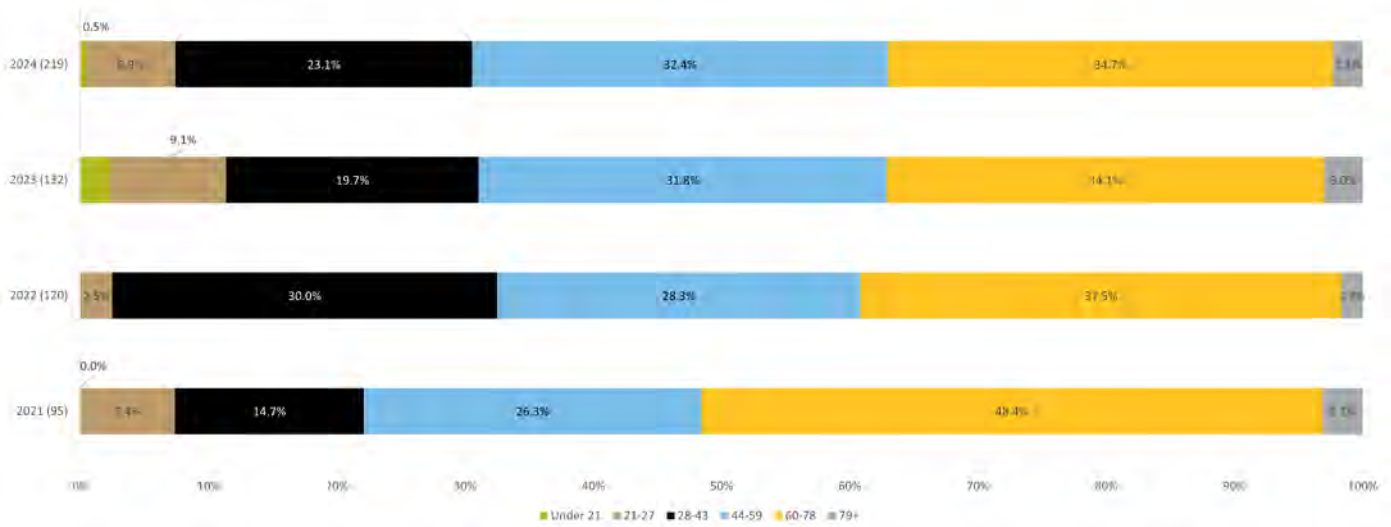
DEMOGRAPHICS CHARACTERISTICS: WHO IS THE ATLANTIC CITY RESTAURANT WEEK VISITOR?

Age

Consistent with previous years, the largest age group of 2024 Restaurant Week patrons were in the 60-78 (Baby Boomer) age range (34.7%) compared to 2023 (34.1%), 2022 (37.5%), 2021 (48.4%), and 2020 (35.4%). Millennials (age 28-43) represented 32.4% of patrons, an increase over 2023 (31.8%), which itself was a notable increase over 2022 (28.3%) and more than double the representation of respondents from this age range in 2021(14.7%). Representation among the oldest (79+) and youngest visitors (under 21 and “Gen Z” 21-27) decreased over 2023, 2.3% and 7.4% respectively compared to 3.0% and 11.4% in 2023.

As in the past, first-time patrons trended slightly younger than return patrons. However, the Gen X and Baby Boomer age ranges represented the largest share of first-time patrons (34% and 27% respectively). Gen Z and Millennial respondents represented 11% and 26% respectively of first-time patrons in 2024. In comparison, Gen Z and Millennial respondents represented 15% and 17% respectively of first-time patrons in 2023.

Please select your age group. All Patrons





Party Size

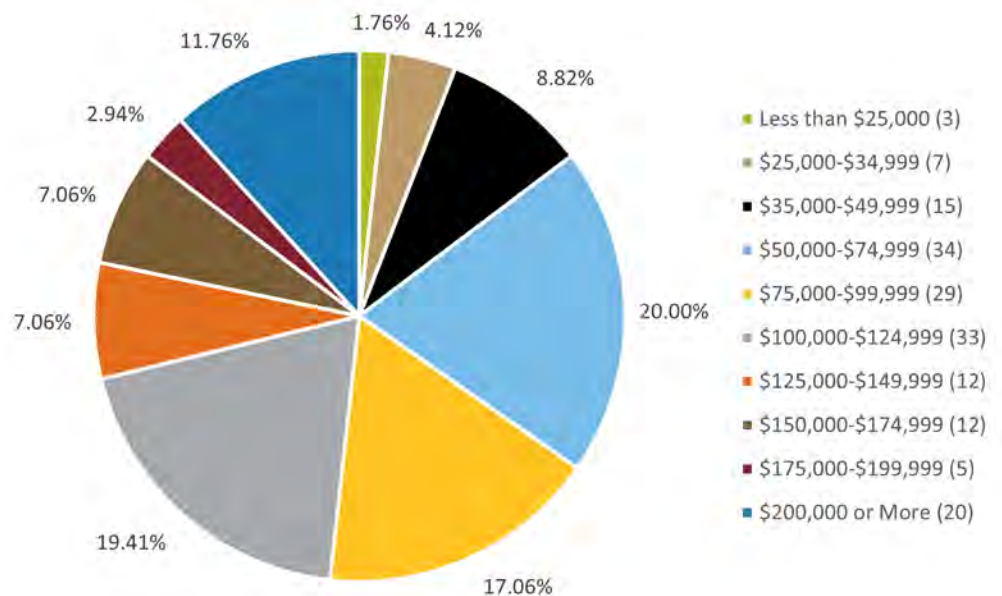
Restaurant Week continues to be an event particularly attractive to couples – nearly two thirds (63.4%) of respondents indicated they were traveling in a party of two and 21.3% indicated they were traveling in a party of four.

Restaurant Week was attractive to couples across the age spectrum — 61% of Millennial, 53% of Gen X and 73% of Baby Boomer respondents were traveling in parties of two. Gen Z patrons were more likely to travel in larger groups than their older counterparts. Thirteen percent of Gen Z patrons reported traveling in groups of five or more.

Income

As in previous years, patrons indicated a wide range of household incomes with most patrons falling within the \$50,000 to \$124,999 range. This is consistent with median incomes for the state of New Jersey (\$97,126) and Atlantic County (\$73,113) and higher than the median income for Atlantic City (\$35,188) (Bureau, United States Census, 2022).

Which of the following best represents your household income last year before taxes? (215 responses, 45 preferred not to disclose their income)





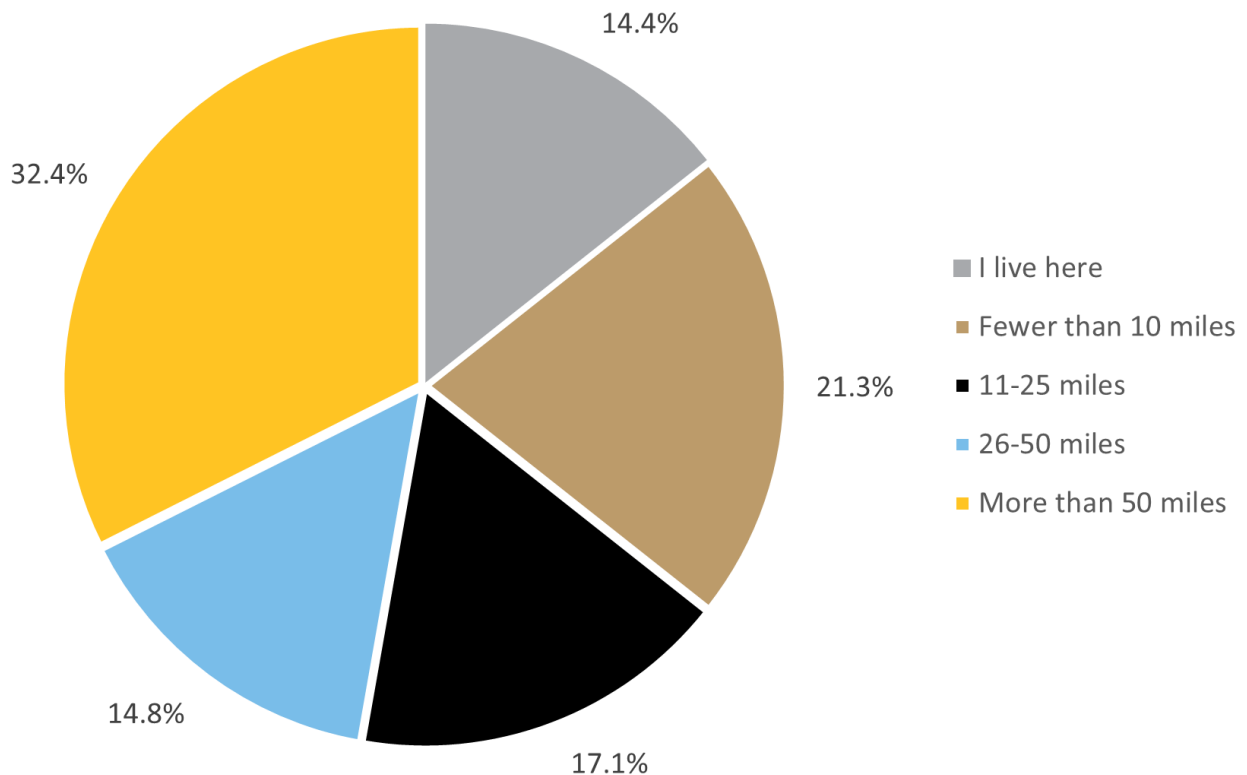
GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS: WHERE DID RESTAURANT WEEK PATRONS COME FROM?

Distance

Restaurant Week succeeded in attracting a mix of local and more distant visitors, with a notable increase in visitors traveling more than 50 miles (32.4%) compared to 2023 (21.9%). Over half of first-time Restaurant

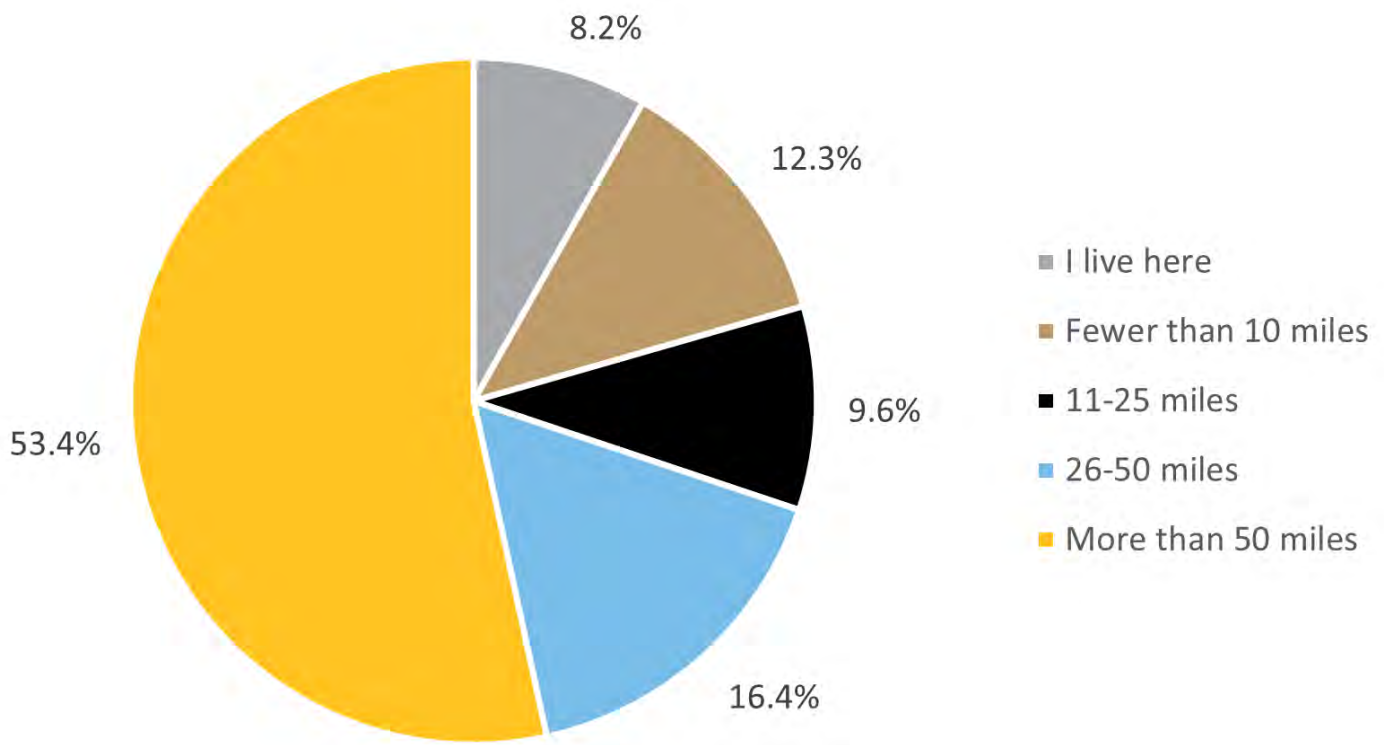
Week patrons (53.4%) traveled further than 50 miles to participate, while returning guests were more likely to be locals living in Atlantic City or traveling less than 10 miles (43.9%).

How far did you travel to participate in Restaurant Week? (all respondents)
(216 responses)





How far did you travel to participate in Restaurant Week? (First-time patrons)
(73 responses)



Zip Code

Reported zip codes for 2024 Restaurant Week patrons were consistent with previous years in that they clustered in southern New Jersey and were largely restricted to the Mid-Atlantic Region. The majority of respondents, 81%, said they were from New Jersey zip codes. Patrons from Pennsylvania accounted for nearly 10% of respondents while New York accounted for 4.5% of respondents. Notably 2024 also included responses from Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Massachusetts, Maryland, Ohio and Virginia.



Where are you from? (201 responses, Map focused on Southern New Jersey)

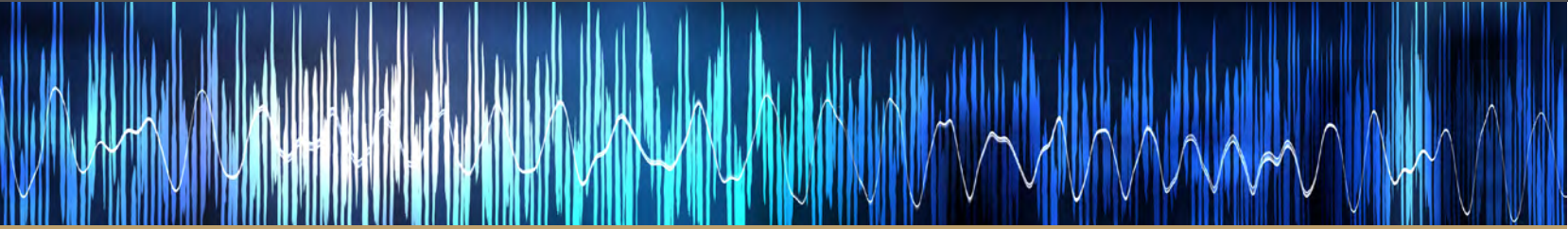
Zip Codes	Count	Percentage of Total
<input type="checkbox"/> NJ	163	81.09%
<input type="checkbox"/> Atlantic	101	50.25%
<input type="checkbox"/> Bergen	2	1.00%
<input type="checkbox"/> Burlington	5	2.49%
<input type="checkbox"/> Camden	5	2.49%
<input type="checkbox"/> Cape May	4	1.99%
<input type="checkbox"/> Gloucester	2	1.00%
<input type="checkbox"/> Mercer	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Monmouth	9	4.48%
<input type="checkbox"/> Morris	4	1.99%
<input type="checkbox"/> Ocean	16	7.96%
<input type="checkbox"/> Salem	3	1.49%
<input type="checkbox"/> Union	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Essex	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Cumberland	2	1.00%
<input type="checkbox"/> Middlesex	6	2.99%
<input type="checkbox"/> Somerset	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> NY	9	4.48%
<input type="checkbox"/> Richmond	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> New York	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Bronx	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Kings	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Nassau	3	1.49%
<input type="checkbox"/> Suffolk	2	1.00%
<input type="checkbox"/> PA	20	9.95%
<input type="checkbox"/> Bucks	4	1.99%
<input type="checkbox"/> Delaware	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Lancaster	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Lehigh	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Luzerne	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Philadelphia	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Carbon	2	1.00%
<input type="checkbox"/> Lackawanna	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Chester	4	1.99%
<input type="checkbox"/> Montgomery	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> Berks	3	1.49%
<input type="checkbox"/> CT	2	1.00%
<input type="checkbox"/> DE	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> FL	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> MA	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> MD	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> OH	1	0.50%
<input type="checkbox"/> VA	2	1.00%
Grand Total	201	100.00%



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Respondents





ADVERTISING & AWARENESS: HOW DID PATRONS HEAR ABOUT RESTAURANT WEEK?

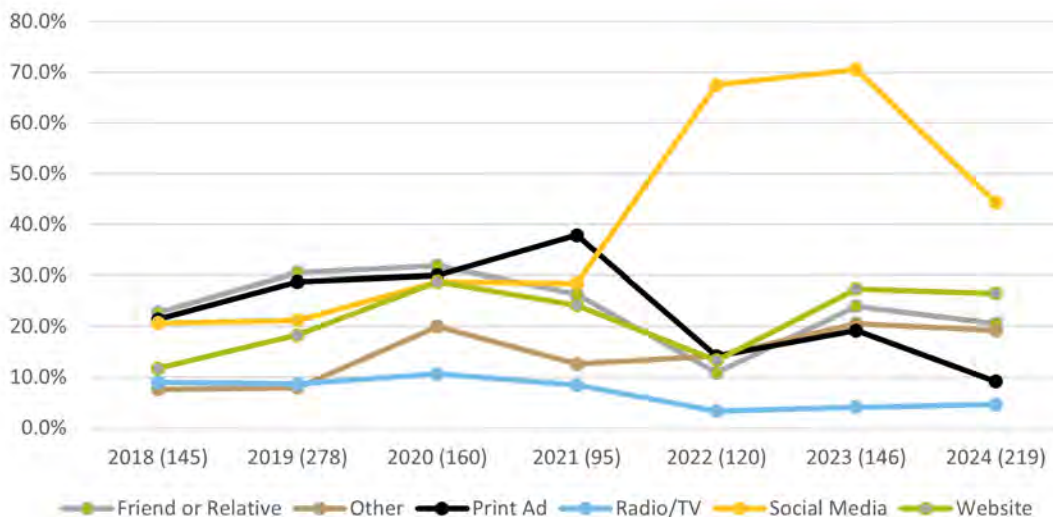
A history of delivering quality experiences for patrons continues to be the best endorsement for Restaurant Week and a significant factor in the event's popularity. Over half of respondents (64.4%) in 2024 were return guests compared to 62.8% in 2023, 65.8% in 2022, 61.5% in 2021, 74.4% in 2020, and 68.4% in 2019.

Is (was) this the first time you attended Restaurant Week? (216 responses)



Among all 2024 patrons, social media was the most common way of hearing about Restaurant Week. 44.3% of patrons said they heard about Restaurant Week through social media compared to 26.5% who heard about the event from the website and 13.7% who heard about the event through traditional media ads (print, TV and radio). 19.2% of patrons said they'd heard about Restaurant Week through other sources, with write-in responses including regular attendance of the event each year and having seen advertising on billboards and signs during their visit to the city. Some respondents indicated they had heard about the event via an emailed newsletter, while others heard about it in their workplace or from a hotel concierge.

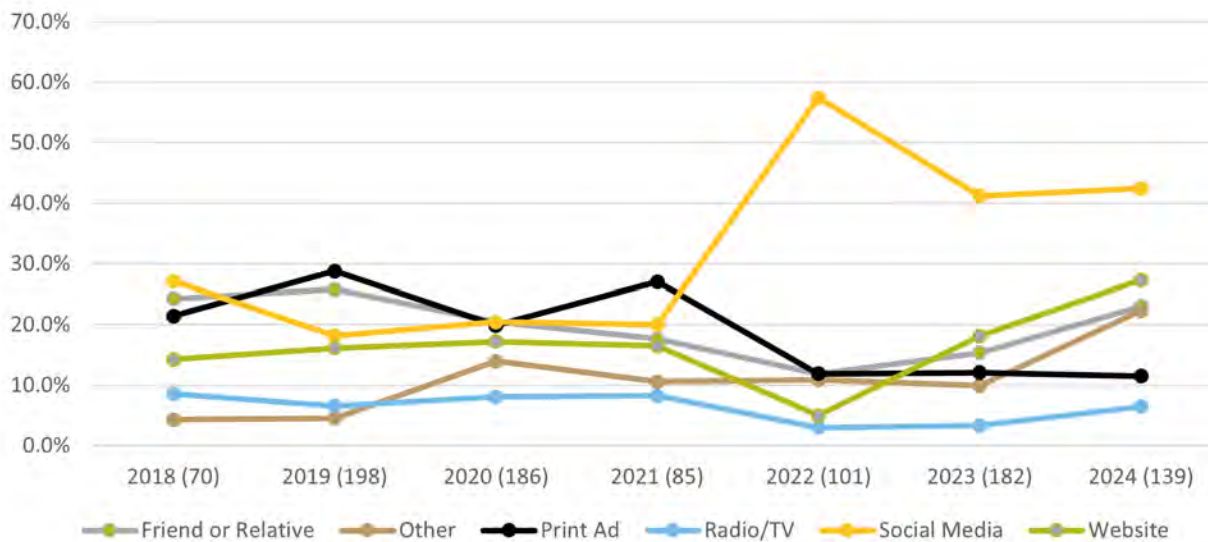
How did you hear about Restaurant Week? (# total respondents per year, respondents were instructed to choose all that apply)



Nearly half of first-time attendees learned about Restaurant Week through social media (49.3%), While a quarter found out about the event from the website (24.7%). Traditional media was less impactful with this group with just 6.8% saying they'd heard about Restaurant Week from print ads or radio/TV.

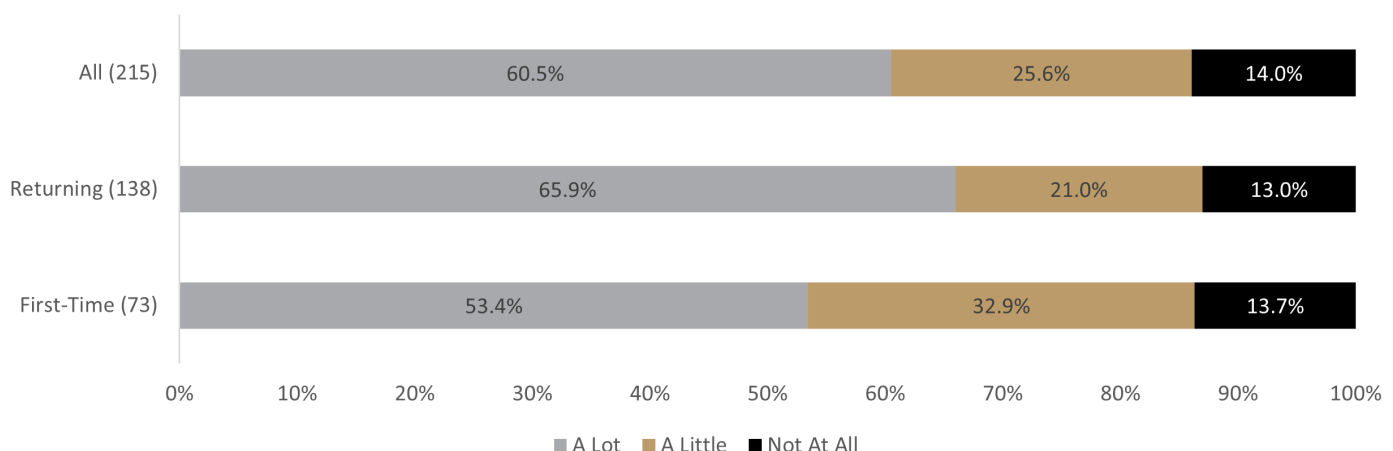
How did you hear about Restaurant Week?

(# first-time respondents per year, respondents were instructed to choose all that apply)



Patrons were also asked whether Restaurant Week was a factor in their decision to visit Atlantic City. Six in 10 respondents (60.5%) said that Restaurant Week factored 'A Lot' in their decision to visit the city, more than a quarter (25.6%) said that Restaurant Week had 'A Little' effect on their decision, only 14.0% said that Restaurant Week did not factor into their decision. Among first-time patrons, three quarters of respondents, more than 8 in 10, (86.3%) said Restaurant Week at least factored 'A Little' if not 'A Lot' in their decision to come to Atlantic City. This compares favorably to 2023 when 75.4% of first-time patrons said the event factored into their decision to visit the resort.

Did Restaurant Week factor in your decision to visit Atlantic City this week?

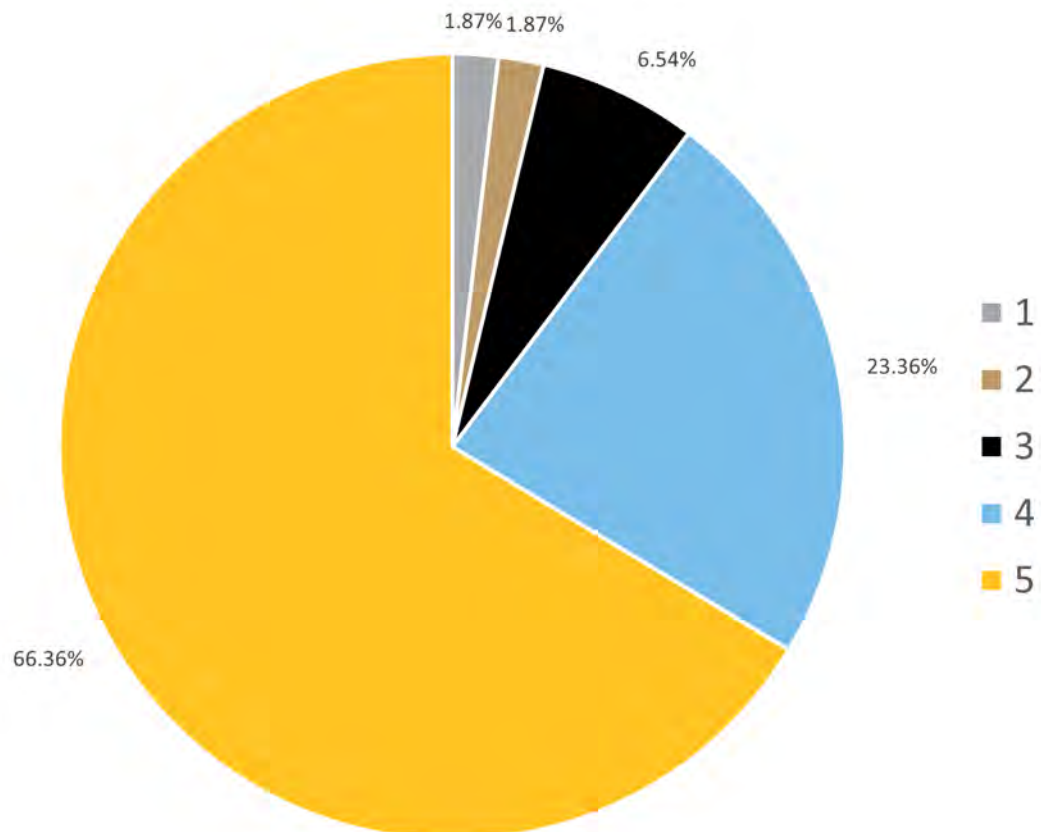




CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE: DOES RESTAURANT WEEK PROVIDE VALUE FOR PATRONS?

Atlantic City Restaurant Week continues to provide value for patrons with two thirds of respondents (66.36%) rating the event 5 out of 5 for value.

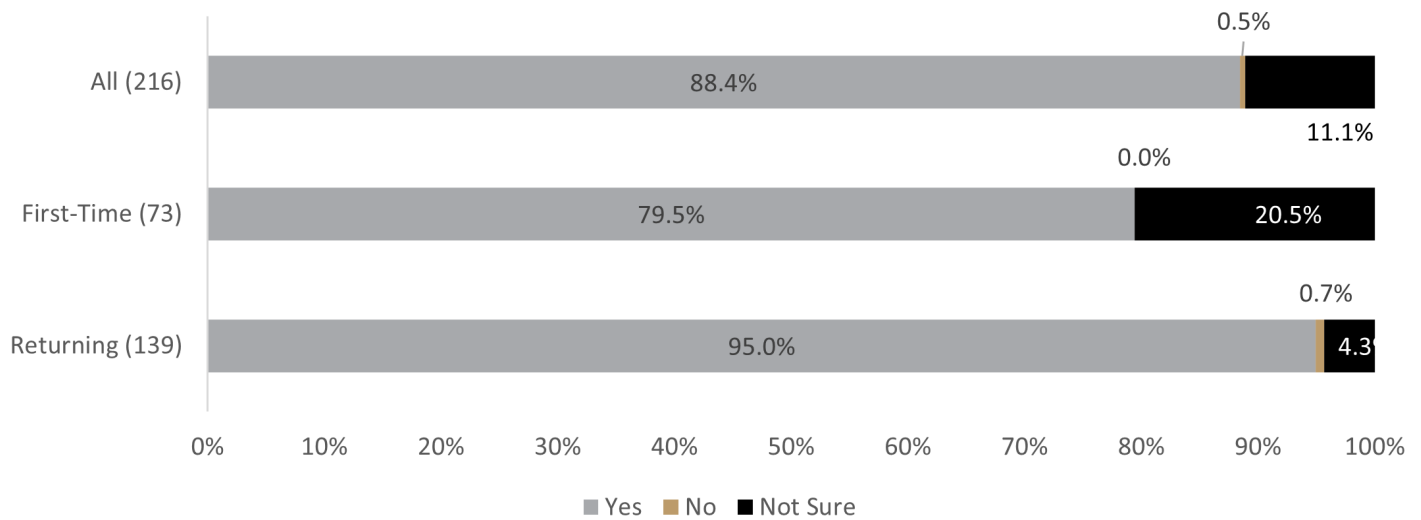
On a scale of 1-5 (5 being the highest) please tell us if Atlantic City Restaurant Week provided a value for your group.





It is this value that keeps bringing patrons back each year. Both first-time and return patrons said they plan to return next year. After just one experience with Restaurant Week, 79.5% of first-time patrons said that they plan to return next year, an increase over 2023 when 73.6% of first-time attendees said that they would return.

Do you plan to return for Restaurant Week next year?
 (# responses)

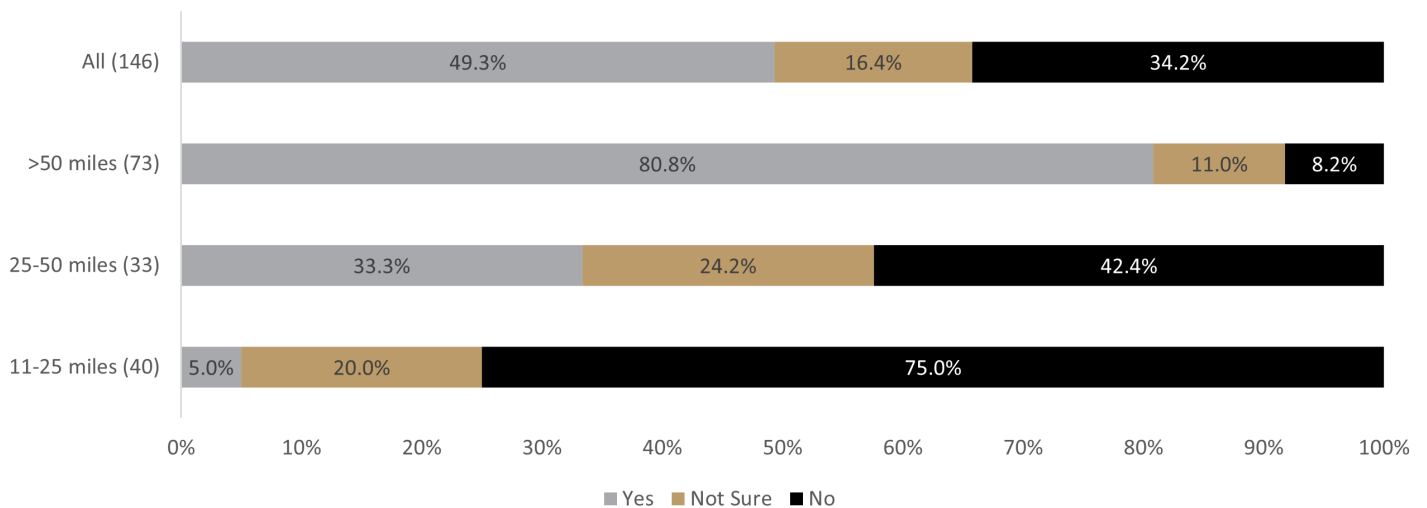




**ECONOMIC IMPACT:
WHAT OTHER ACTIVITIES DID RESTAURANT WEEK
PATRONS PARTICIPATE IN?**

Restaurant Week patrons included both visitors and Atlantic City residents with 49.3% of all nonresidents saying that they would be staying in the Atlantic City area overnight in 2024, a slight increase over 2023 (42.7%). The greater distance traveled to the resort, the more likely the respondent would be staying overnight in the city. More than 80% of respondents who traveled more than 50 miles to take part in Restaurant Week indicated that they would be staying locally overnight. This continued a positive trend from 2023 (80%) and 2022 (82%) as these years improved over 2021 when 76.5% and 2020 when 73% of this group indicated that they would be staying overnight.

Will you be staying in the Atlantic City area overnight?
(# responses)



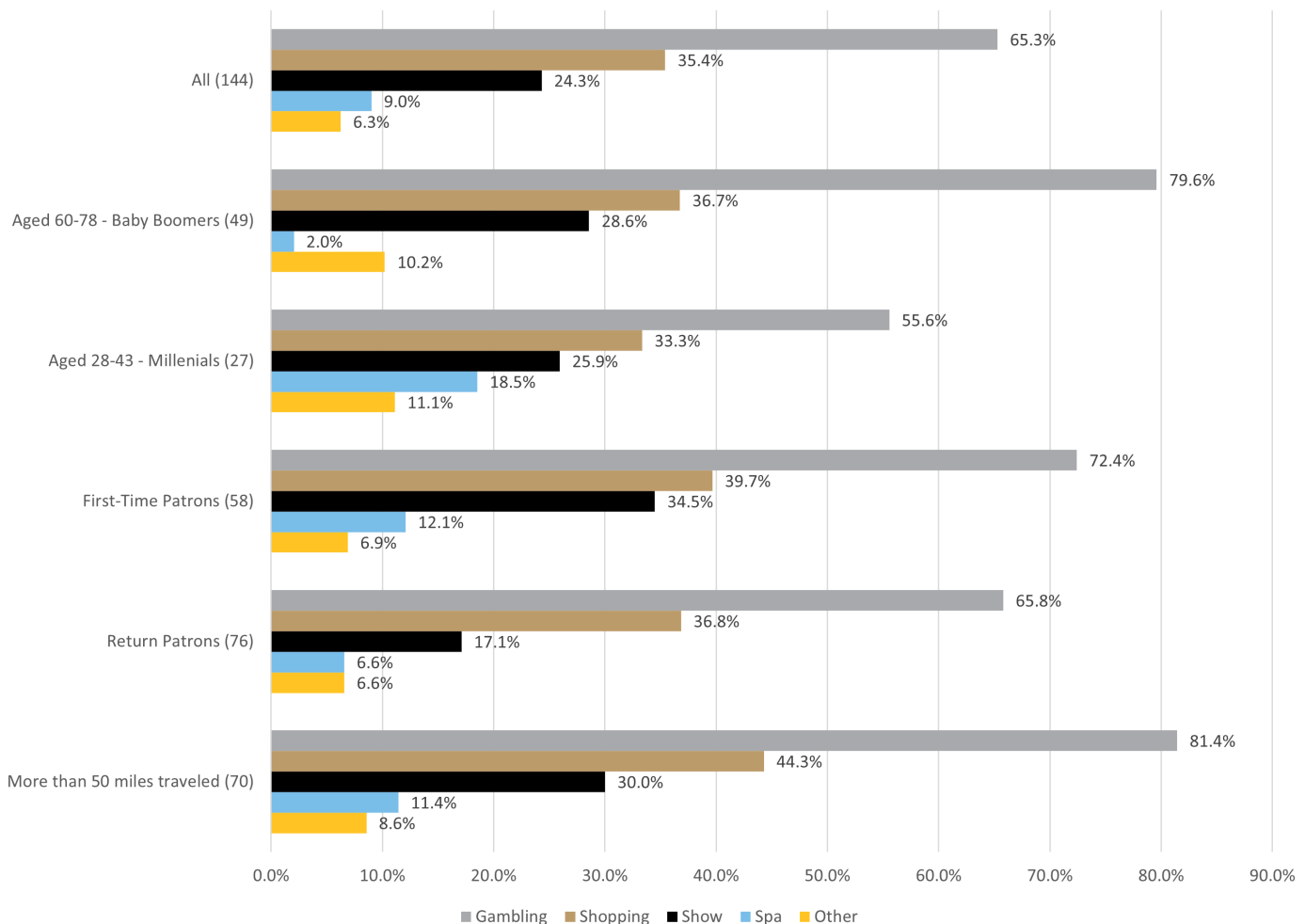
Restaurant Week patrons not only dined at area restaurants and stayed at local hotels but also participated in other activities throughout the city. Gambling was the most popular activity for Restaurant Week patrons followed by shopping and shows.

Millennials (age 28-43), were less likely to gamble than their Baby Boomer counterparts with 55.6% gambling during their visit compared to 79.6% of Baby Boomers. While similarly likely to shop (33.3% compared to 36.7%) and see a show (25.9% compared to 28.6%) as their older counterparts, Millennials were more likely to visit a spa (18.5% compared to 2.0%).

First-time Restaurant Week patrons took advantage of Atlantic City’s other amenities including gambling (72.4%), shopping (39.7%) and attending a show (34.5%).

Patrons that traveled more than 50 miles likely stayed in Atlantic City longer than other patrons and had the opportunity to take advantage of more of the resort’s amenities. In addition to attending shows and visiting a spa at a similar rate as all patrons, respondents who traveled more than 50 miles were more likely to include shopping and gambling in their visit.

What other activities you be participating in while here for Restaurant Week?
 (# of respondents, respondentwills were instructed to choose all that apply)





DISCUSSION & Recommendations

In 2024, the Restaurant Week Committee and the Lloyd D. Levenson Institute of Gaming, Hospitality and Tourism (LIGHT), Stockton University School of Business collected data from Restaurant Week patrons using an online survey. The survey was administered online for a period of two weeks and 267 patrons responded resulting in 219 complete responses.

2024 continues a positive trend in participation growth compared to prior years. 224 respondents provided information on the number of restaurants they visited. On average, each of these 224 respondents visited 3.1 of the 60 participating restaurants and planned to visit an additional 4.8 during Restaurant Week. This compares favorably to 2023 when respondents visited 2.7 restaurants on average and planned to visit an additional 3.6 and 2022 when respondents visited 1.9 and planned to visit 2.9.

At 2.73 the average group size in 2024 was slightly smaller than 2023 (2.96), but still higher than 2022 (2.53) and 2021 (2.65). As in 2023 and 2022, in 2024 very few respondents (3 total) stated they were traveling in a group of eight or more. Most (63% of respondents to the question) reported that they traveled in a group of two. Groups of four (21.3%) and three (8.8%) were the next most common group sizes.

Using the average group size and the fixed meal price for each respective year, an average spend per restaurant visited, per respondent can be calculated. In 2024, respondents spent on average \$109.91 per restaurant visited, not including additional purchases such as wine and/or cocktails to accompany the meal. This is less than the \$119.08 spent per restaurant in 2023 but still more than the average spent in 2022 (\$101.70), despite

the fixed price of \$40.24 only increasing \$0.01 each year.

By multiplying this per-visit spend with the average number of visits per respondent; a picture of Restaurant Week's economic impact on local restaurants begins to emerge. With an average group size of 2.73, and an estimated 3.1 restaurants visited, each of the 224 respondents spent approximately \$340.05 total at participating restaurants during Restaurant Week. This is notably more than was spent in 2023 (\$324.38), 2022 (\$193.23), 2021 (\$223.27), 2020 (\$265.68) and 2019 (\$205.89). Even when using the 2019 fixed price of \$35.19 per patron, spend on Restaurant Week in 2024 (\$297.37) exceeds pre-pandemic 2019 spend.

This estimate does not account for any additional purchases (i.e. wine and cocktails), which patrons may have made at the restaurants during their visit nor their additional planned restaurant visits (4.8 per patron in 2024).

Despite a number of variables that continue to impact the Atlantic City market and patrons of Atlantic City Restaurant Week, participation (the volume of restaurants visited) and spending in 2024 compare favorably to previous years.

Without knowing the total number of Restaurant Week attendees, or how closely their behaviors align with those who participated in the study, it is impossible to accurately gauge the total economic impact of the event on Atlantic City restaurants and the resort community. With an average total spend of \$340.05, the 224 attendees alone contributed \$76,170.97 to the local economy. Their additional purchases and participation in



other activities while visiting for Restaurant Week, such as gambling, shopping, and shows, also represent contributions to economic activity locally.

The economic impact is only part of Restaurant Week's contribution to Atlantic City and the region. The committee's efforts to promote the event have the added effect of positioning Atlantic City as a year-round destination for fine dining, reminding

potential visitors that there is more to experience in Atlantic City than casino gaming. Restaurant Week patrons, who enjoyed their experience at local restaurants, are likely to become return customers not only for Restaurant Week, but also for these businesses year-round. Even those who are unable to visit Atlantic City during Restaurant Week itself may be encouraged to visit at another time based on the positive exposure and visitor testimonials generated by the event.



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<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/atlanticcitycitynewjersey,atlanticcountynewjersey,NJ,US/INC110222>



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School of Business

Atlantic City **Restaurant Week**

EXECUTIVE REPORT

is an in-house publication of
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Supported By: **Jane Bokunewicz, Ph. D. | Faculty Director**

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