



TOURISM AWARENESS CAMPAIGN 2023

As part of the 2023 goals and initiatives for the Sitka Chamber and Visit Sitka, a Tourism Awareness Campaign was at the top of our priorities. The objective was to be a champion for a thriving community by communicating the value of the visitor industry and lessening its impact on the community.

As part of the Tourism Awareness Campaign, Visit Sitka published an ad in the local newspaper, the Daily Sitka Sentinel, every Friday for twenty weeks. Each ad brought different insight, facts, and busted-myths about the industry to the community. The ads contained consistent branding and messaging, later known as our Tourism Tidbits. Following this page is all twenty Tourism Tidbits for the community to view the campaign in its entirety.

Tourism Tidbits

Did you know 15% of jobs in Southeast Alaska are in the visitor industry?*

Sitka is an amazing place to work, live, and visit! Visit Sitka is excited to share some interesting things about this thriving part of Sitka's economy.

Watch for Tourism Tidbits in the Sitka Sentinel every Friday to expand your tourism knowledge.



#SitkaTourismAwareness

*Southeast Alaska By the Numbers 2022

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Tourism Tidbits

True or false: The tours that cruise passengers take are owned by the cruise lines.

FALSE!

- Tour companies are largely owned by Alaskan businesses that have wholesale agreements with cruise lines for shore excursions.
- In Sitka, all of the tour operators & bus companies are owned & operated by Alaskans.



#SitkaTourismAwareness

Sitka VISIT

Tourism Tidbits

Want to share your thoughts, comments, or considerations on the 2023 summer season?

 sitkatourism@gmail.com

 (907) 747-4088

 [Facebook.com/sitkatourism](https://www.facebook.com/sitkatourism)

Comments are shared with the CBS Assembly



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Sitka VISIT

Tourism Tidbits

Did you know?

In 2022, local Sitka seafood processors sold over 20 tons (\$400,000 worth!) of seafood to cruise ships when they were in port. *



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* Source: Daily Sitka Sentinel, September 19th, 2022

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Tourism Tidbits

Lincoln Street is closed from 10:00 am to 4:00 pm with no parking beginning at 9:00 am on days where the berth capacity (bed count) exceeds 5,000 passengers.

No parking signs are posted along Lincoln Street for closures and taken down before the street reopens.

Street closure updates can be found at facebook.com/sitkatourism.



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Tourism Tidbits

True or false: Some jewelry stores in Southeast Alaska are owned by the cruise lines.

FALSE!

- Privately owned, seasonal store owners in the Caribbean opened locations in Alaska when cruise ships moved to the Alaska market.
- Sitka does not have any Caribbean-based jewelry stores.



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Tourism Tidbits

In FY22, the City & Borough of Sitka saw \$16.4M in sales tax revenue- that's over \$3M more than in 2019! The surge in revenue was thanks to a strong independent visitor season and the return of cruise ship tourism.*



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* CBS Municipal Administrator John Leach, Annual State of the City Report, Jan. 2023

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Tourism Tidbits

Alaska's First Tourist

Explorer and scientist John Muir is considered Alaska's first tourist. In 1879, when Muir was 41 years old, he traveled to southeast Alaska to study glaciers, making a stop in Sitka. Muir explored by canoe in October through December and hired several local natives as guides. *



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* Source: John Muir, Travels in Alaska: John Sisk, The Southeast Alaska Tourism Industry: Historical Overview and Current Status

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Tourism Tidbits

In FY22, the City and Borough of Sitka collected \$665,880 from the Transient Lodging Tax. Visitors pay this 6% tax when they rent a hotel room or a short-term rental.*



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*Source: CBS FY22 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report

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Tourism Tidbits

In 2022, Sitka had 379,278
cruise ship passengers visit
the community.*



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*Source: Cruise Line Agencies of Alaska

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Tourism Tidbits

Visit Sitka provides
support services to over
200 businesses in
our community!



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Tourism Tidbits


**93,550 passengers passed
through the Sitka Rocky
Gutierrez Airport in 2022.***



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* <https://www.transtats.bts.gov>

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Tourism Tidbits

Sitka's *Tourism Task Force* is researching five key tourism topics. The task force will share its suggestions in April 2024.

For more information, visit cityofsitka.com/tourismtaskforce



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Tourism Tidbits

What is the Commercial Passenger Vessel (CPV) Tax?

For each commercial voyage, the first seven ports receive \$5 per passenger. These funds may only be used for port facilities, harbor infrastructure, providing services to the vessels & their passengers, and to improve the safety of the activities in which the vessels & the passengers onboard are engaged. *



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* Source: Alaska Dept. of Revenue DOR 06-Shared Taxes, Commercial Passenger Vessel Excise Taxes

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Tourism Tidbits

Who pays the Commercial Passenger Vessel (CPV) Tax?

Passengers pay the Commercial Passenger Vessel Excise (CPV) Tax if the following three criteria apply: *

1. They are traveling on cruise ships that have 250 or more berths
2. The cruise ship provides overnight accommodations in Alaska's marine waters
3. The voyage lasts more than 72 hours



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* Source: Alaska DCCED Commercial Passenger Vessel Excise Tax; Community Needs, Priorities, Shared Revenue and Expenditures February 2017

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Tourism Tidbits

Why can't we use cruise passenger taxes (CPV) to fund local government?

The U.S. Constitution, through the Commerce and Tonnage clauses, restricts the use of passenger taxes to services that are directly connected to the passenger and vessel. Taxing passengers to pay for services available to all citizens is considered restrictive of interstate commerce. In a recent court decision, a federal judge ruled that the per-passenger cruise ship fees levied can only be spent on projects that directly benefit the ships. *



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* Source: Cruise Lines International Association Alaska Economic Q&A

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Tourism Tidbits

What's happening with the airport project?



The SIT Terminal Improvements Project includes expanding and remodeling the existing terminal building. The first phase will begin this Fall, and the entire project is anticipated to be completed in Summer 2025.

To learn more, visit cityofsitka.com/SITAirportTerminalImprovementProject



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Tourism Tidbits

Since January 1st, 2023,
visitsitka.org saw over 150,000
visits to the website from over
150 different countries.*

That's over double the website visits from the
same time period in 2019!



#SitkaTourismAwareness

Source: visitsitka.org Google Analytics, 1/1/2023-8/30/2023

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Tourism Tidbits

Visit Sitka has partnered with Driftscape, an interactive app that offers a digital way to discover Sitka. Using the app, visitors can explore attractions, trails, and much more. Once downloaded, the app features are still available even without internet connection.

Download for iOS and Android at visitsitka.org/app



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Tourism Tidbits

Over this summer, Visit Sitka has published 20 Tourism Tidbits as part of our 2023 Tourism Awareness Campaign.

View the entire campaign at
visitsitka.org/partner-services



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