

The Sierra Nevada Heritage Tourist Resource List

Visitors to the Sierra Nevada are as complex and diverse as the destinations they are likely to visit. What binds them together is the rich natural, cultural and historical heritage that defines the Sierra Nevada as a region and destination. These “heritage” tourists visit museums, raft the whitewaters, savor locally grown foods, and hike amid the granite spires, in addition to participating in hundreds of other activities designed to immerse them in the Sierra Nevada experience.

This resource list will provide a good starting point for regional and community-based tourism planning as well as for individuals and businesses interested in tapping into this growing group of travelers.

Defining Heritage Tourism

Heritage Tourism is an activity where visitors participate in first hand experiences to explore, understand and enjoy the natural, cultural and historical attributes of a place or community.

In its broadest context, the term “heritage” defines what makes a place unique – the landscape or topography, geology, plants and animals, as well as the individual and collective human experiences that together create stories of a time and a sense of place.

CA Heritage Tourist Snapshot

- 42.7 years young
- \$61K household income
- White collar professional
- College educated
- Urban Californian
- Environmentally and socially conscious



WOW Facts!

- 62.8 million trips taken in California by heritage travelers in 1999
- 153 million person-days of travel
- \$17.7 billion in direct spending
- \$115.50 average daily spending



Why They Travel

- For a Purpose
- For Intellectual Rewards
- For Spiritual Enhancement
- For Cultural Immersion
- For an Authentic Experience
- To Experience Natural Environments



Primary Survey Sources

Two national surveys and three statewide surveys provide the majority of the trends and profile data for the heritage traveler. In most cases they will use a different terminology than “heritage” tourist, but these statistics show that they are the same audience. Statistically valid tourist profiles are expensive to produce so most are national in scope with funding support coming from a number of governmental agencies and trade associations.

National Survey on Recreation and the Environment

This survey is conducted every five years by the USDA Forest Service and tracks outdoor recreational trends and opinions. The survey has been conducted since 1960. It covers activities ranging from recreational walking to visiting historic sites and arranges the data by state, region, metropolitan areas, recreational land types and outdoor recreation personalities. The most recent survey was conducted in 2000. Link: <http://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/trends/Nsre/nsresum.html>

National Survey on Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation

This survey is conducted every five years by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. While limited to these specific wildlife-oriented recreational activities, the survey provides an excellent national, regional and state analysis of participation numbers and expenditures by both local recreationists and those that travel. The visitor profile and expenditure information is particularly helpful. The most recent survey was conducted in 2001. Link: <http://federalaid.fws.gov/surveys/surveys.html>

Public Opinions and Attitudes on Outdoor Recreation in California

This survey is conducted every five years by California State Parks. The study compares use patterns and trends involving 55 outdoor recreational activities within California. It looks at latent demand and public support for these activities, addresses motivations for participation and lack of participation, and provides an analysis on Hispanic and youth participation trends. The most recent survey was conducted in 2002. Link: <http://www.parks.ca.gov/pages/22545/files/2002corp.pdf>

1999 California Heritage Tourism Report

This report was prepared by D.K. Shifflet and Associates Ltd. for the California Travel and Tourism Commission and The Division of Tourism. The report utilizes existing statewide tourism statistics collected in 1998 and 1999 to define and characterize Heritage Travelers as those visitors that visited a national park, state park, museum or historic site, and/or attended a festival, crafts fair, concert or play. The report compares visitor volume, spending, and satisfaction between 1998 and 1999, and offers an overview of travel behavior, origin and demographics of the Heritage Traveler for 1999. Link: www.naturetourismplanning.com (**Who’s Watching Wildlife Page**)

California Tourism Research and Statistics

Not one report but a website with trends data and actual expenditures and visitation number by selected cities, counties and statewide. Link: http://www.gocalif.ca.gov/state/tourism/tour_homepage.jsp within the **Travel Industry section of the website.**

Development and Marketing Strategies for Birding and Wildlife Tourism in the Greater Reno Nevada Region

This report serves as an example of how statistics found in the above reports can be incorporated into a community or regional tourism marketing strategy. Link: www.naturetourismplanning.com (**Nevada Projects Page**)

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