



# Louisiana Travel Pulse

## Introduction

The Louisiana Travel Pulse is a seasonal industry travel barometer designed to present recent trends in travel industry performance. This issue's emphasis is on the Spring 2002 season (March-May). Performance measures are primarily presented to show differences in levels from one year ago. However, much of the following data also illustrates the most recent twelve to eighteen-month trend as well. Some indicators also show comparison national and/or regional trends when data is available. The following Pulse has two primary parts. The first part shows statewide indicators for hotels, airports, visitor centers, riverboat gaming, parks, and attractions. The second part of the Pulse contains a regional analysis of the Spring season using some of these same indicators.

The Louisiana Travel Pulse is published quarterly by the Office of Tourism within the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism. Any questions or issues concerning this Pulse should be directed to the Research Section, Louisiana Office of Tourism, Post Office Box 94291, Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804-9291 or by calling 225-342-8100.

## Spring 2002 Performance At-A-Glance

- Hotel Occupancy Rate: -3.1%
- Hotel ADR: -5.6%
- Hotel Room Supply: +5.0%
- Hotel Room Demand: +1.7%
- State Visitor Center Visitors: +1.3%
- Riverboat Gross Revenue: +0.3%
- Airport Enplanements: -7.8%
- State Parks Visitors: +11.9%
- Local Information Center Visitors: +14.0%
- Attractions Visitors: no change

*Note: These Louisiana indicators show the percentage difference from Spring 2001 to Spring 2002.*

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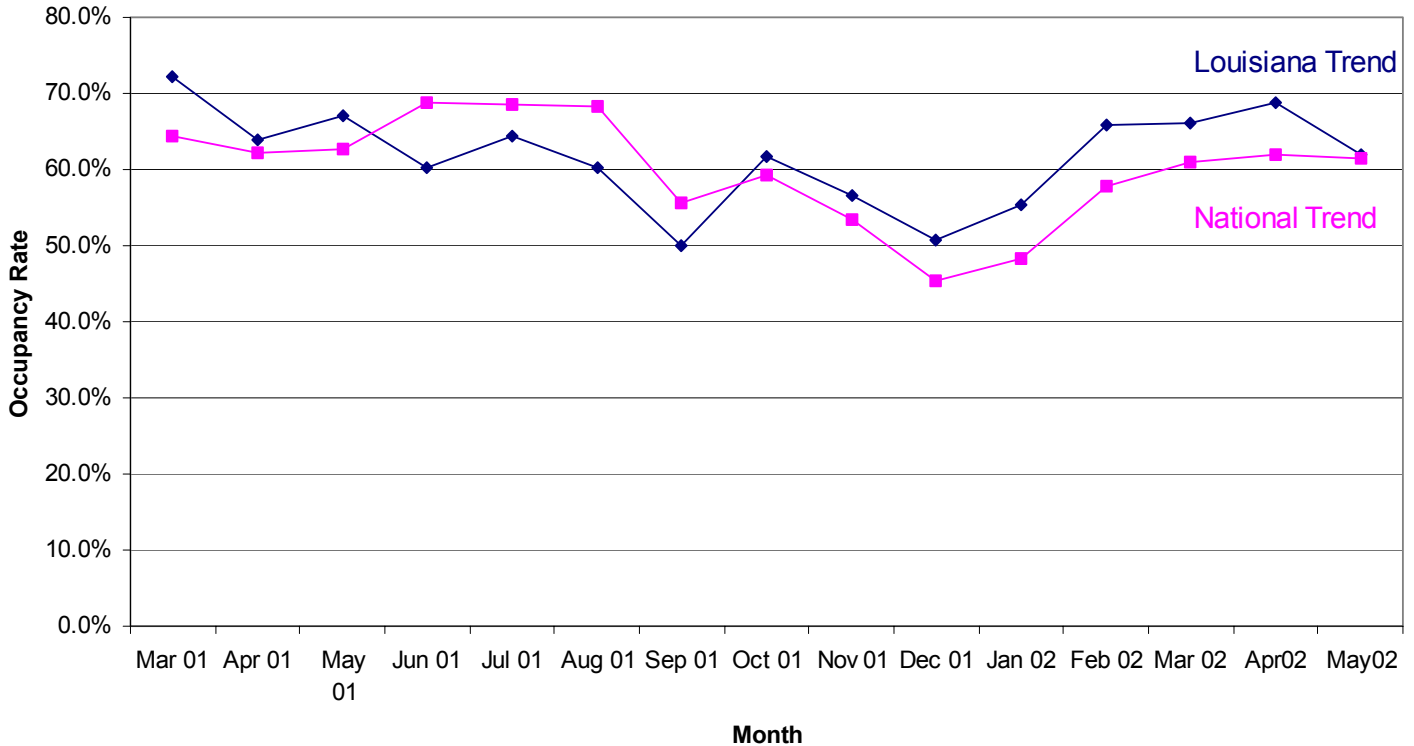
## Factors Influencing Spring 2002 Travel To Louisiana

Most surveys showing the closer-to-home/drive trips outpacing those taken by air...Consumer spending for in-home goods and services has taken priority over away-from-home outlays according to real spending for autos, home furnishings, and other consumer durables versus non-durables and services... Consumer confidence in the economy is still below previous year's levels... International arrivals are still down from last year... Cruises are the only sector of the leisure market really showing increases in passenger counts mainly because of the impetus of drive-to cruise ports like New Orleans... 2002 Jazzfest attendance was down by 100,000 compared to the previous year, mainly due to last year's near perfect weather and more heavily featured entertainers... Regional drive gaming destinations like Shreveport and Lake Charles are outperforming destination sites like Las Vegas which was down 2.3% thru April.

Previous copies of the Louisiana Travel Pulse are available on the web at: [www.latour.lsu.edu](http://www.latour.lsu.edu)

# 1. Hotel Trends – Occupancy Rate

## Spring 2002 – Occupancy Rate Trend



### Spring 2002 Season

**Louisiana hotel/motel occupancy: 65.6%**  
 % difference from prior year: -3.1%  
 % difference from 5 years ago: -9.2%

**U.S. hotel/motel occupancy: 61.4%**  
 % difference from prior year: -2.5%  
 % difference from 5 years ago: -5.4%

Louisiana’s monthly occupancy rate trend continues to be affected by the addition of rooms to the existing supply. Even though Louisiana’s occupancy rate for the Spring 2002 was its lowest in five years, the supply of rooms available has increased by 24.6% since 1998.

### 2002 Performance (January-May)

**Louisiana hotel/motel occupancy: 63.6%**  
 % difference from prior year: -3.0%  
 % difference from 5 years ago: -8.1%

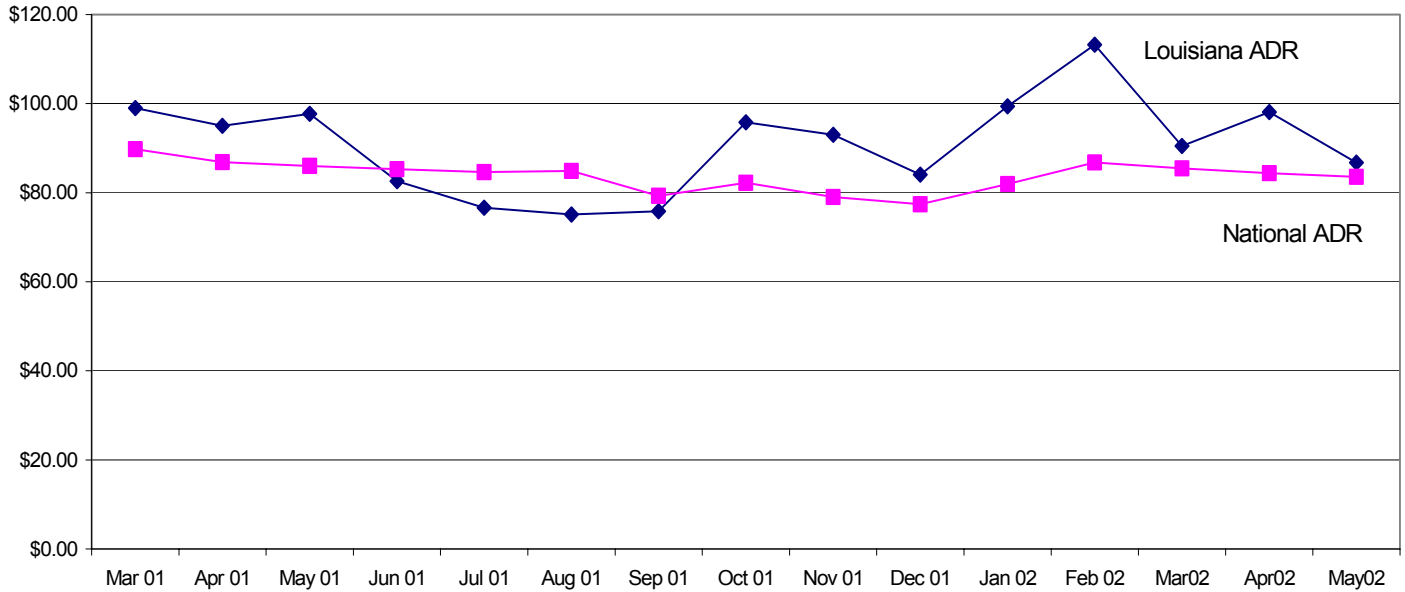
**U.S. hotel/motel occupancy: 58.0%**  
 % difference from prior year: -3.8%  
 % difference from 5 years ago: -6.7%

The only states with a higher occupancy rate than Louisiana so far this year are Arizona, Florida, Hawaii, and Nevada. While Louisiana currently outpaces the national average by over 5 percentage points, this is a seasonal trend which will likely narrow by the end of 2002.

Source: Smith Travel Research

## 2. Hotel Trends – Average Daily Rate

### Spring 2002 – Average Daily Rate Trend



#### Spring 2002 Season

**Louisiana hotel/motel average daily rate: \$91.79**

% difference from prior year: -5.6%

% difference from 5 years ago: +10.0%

**U.S. hotel/motel average daily rate: \$84.49**

% difference from prior year: -3.5%

% difference from 5 years ago: +7.4%

Louisiana's ADR in the spring was 8.6% higher than the U.S. average. However, Louisiana's rates have declined during the spring for the last two years.

#### 2002 Performance (January-May)

**Louisiana hotel/motel average daily rate: \$97.24**

% difference from prior year: -1.2%

% difference from 5 years ago: +7.4%

**U.S. hotel/motel average daily rate: \$84.51**

% difference from prior year: -4.3%

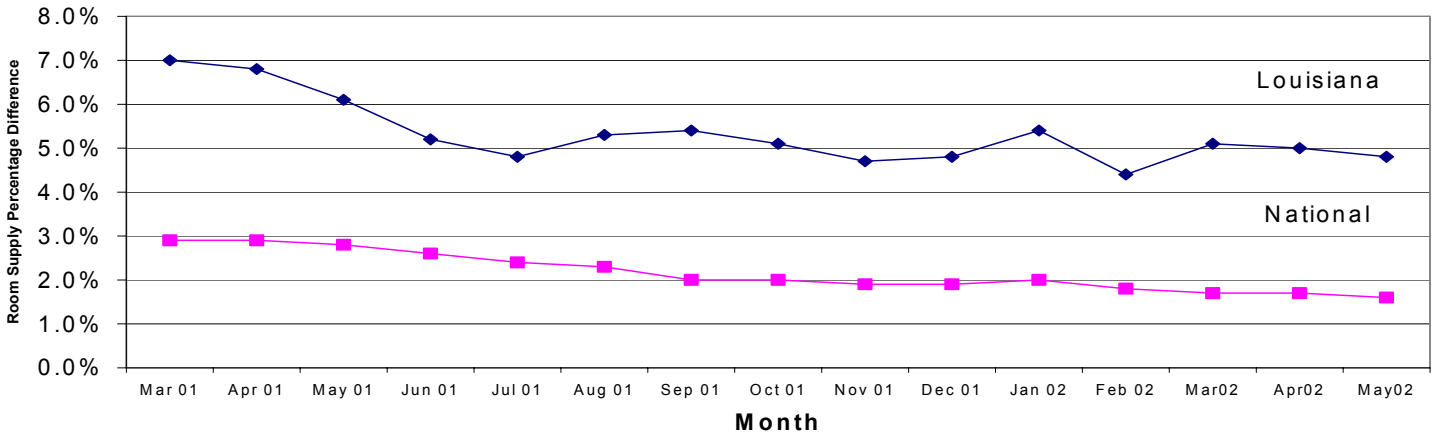
% difference from 5 years ago: +7.5%

The growth in hotel rates in Louisiana has been very consistent with those in the U.S. Louisiana's current average daily rate in 2002 is the 7<sup>th</sup> highest among all states in the U.S. This ranking will likely drop throughout the year due to seasonal rate variations in different parts of the country. For example, Louisiana's rates will be lower than the national average during the summer months thus allowing those states with high summer rates to catch up to Louisiana. Louisiana's rates in the spring and fall months are higher because of the higher proportion of business and convention travel at that time.

Source: Smith Travel Research

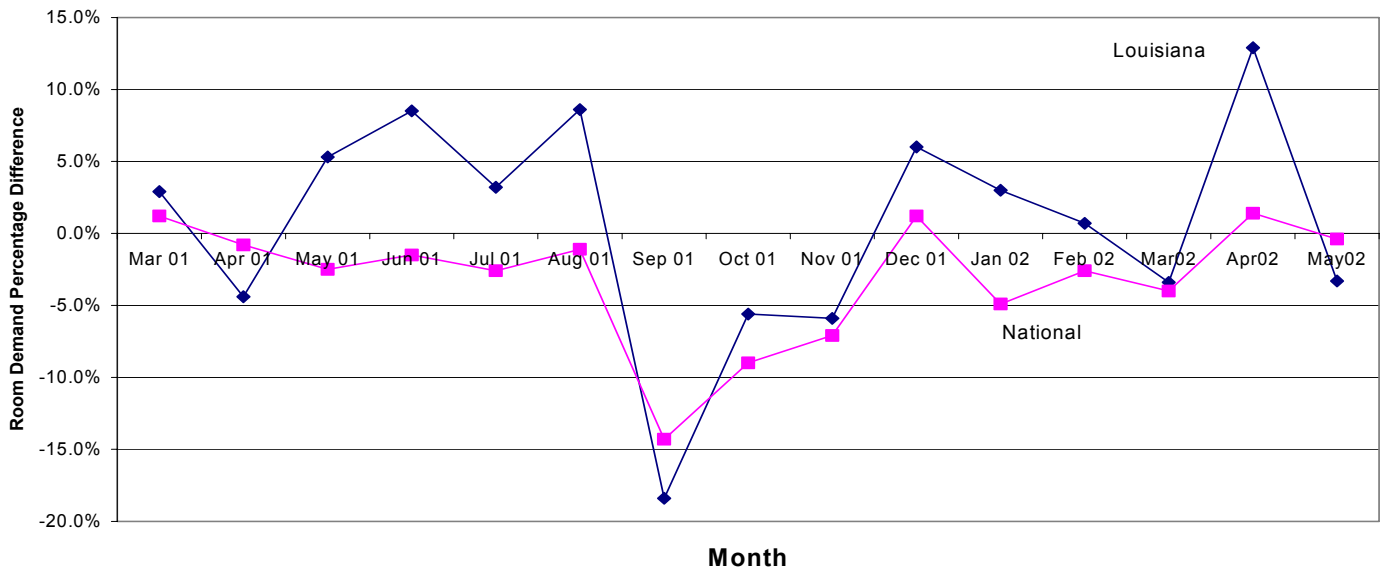
### 3. Hotel Trends – Room Supply

Spring 2002 – Room Supply Trend



### 4. Hotel Trends – Room Demand

Spring 2002 – Room Nights Sold Trend



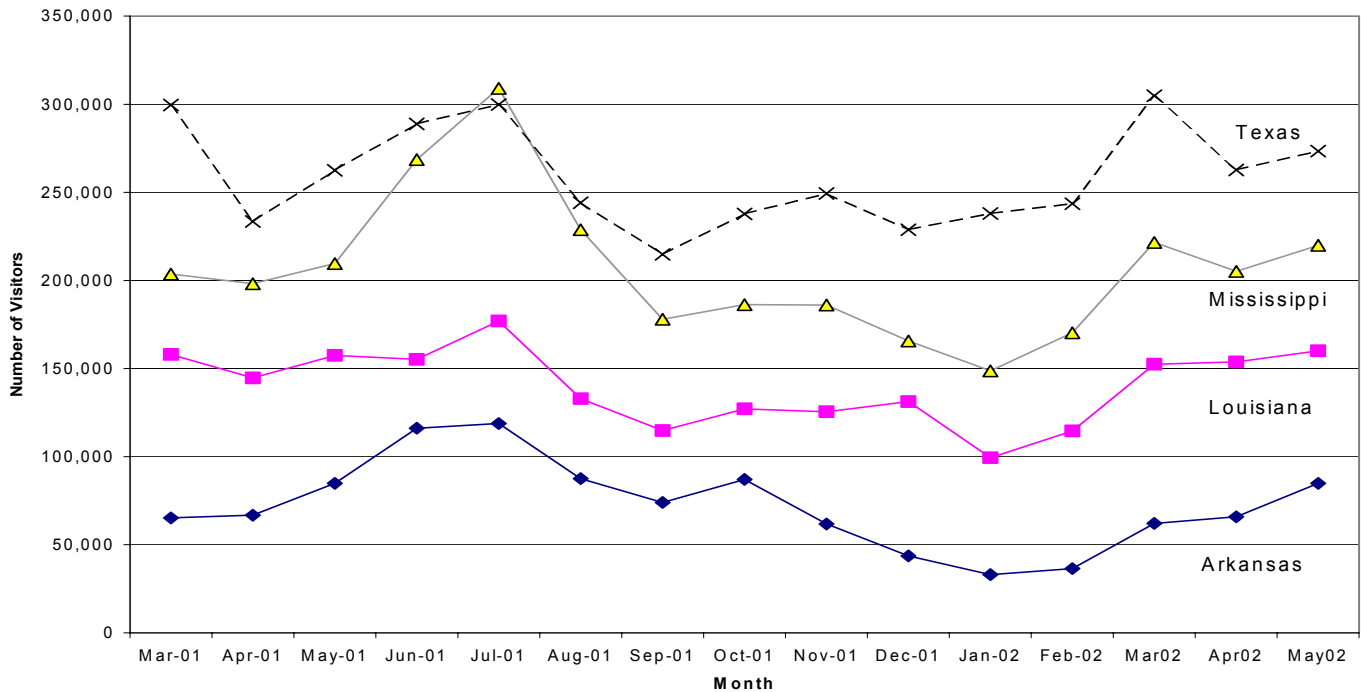
#### 2001 Louisiana Hotel-Motel Facts

Number of hotel/motel properties – 543  
 Number of hotel/motel rooms – 67,433  
 Room nights available statewide – 24,067,431  
 Room nights sold – 14,739,527

Source: Smith Travel Research

## 5. State Information Center Visitors

### Spring 2002 State Welcome Center Visitor Trend

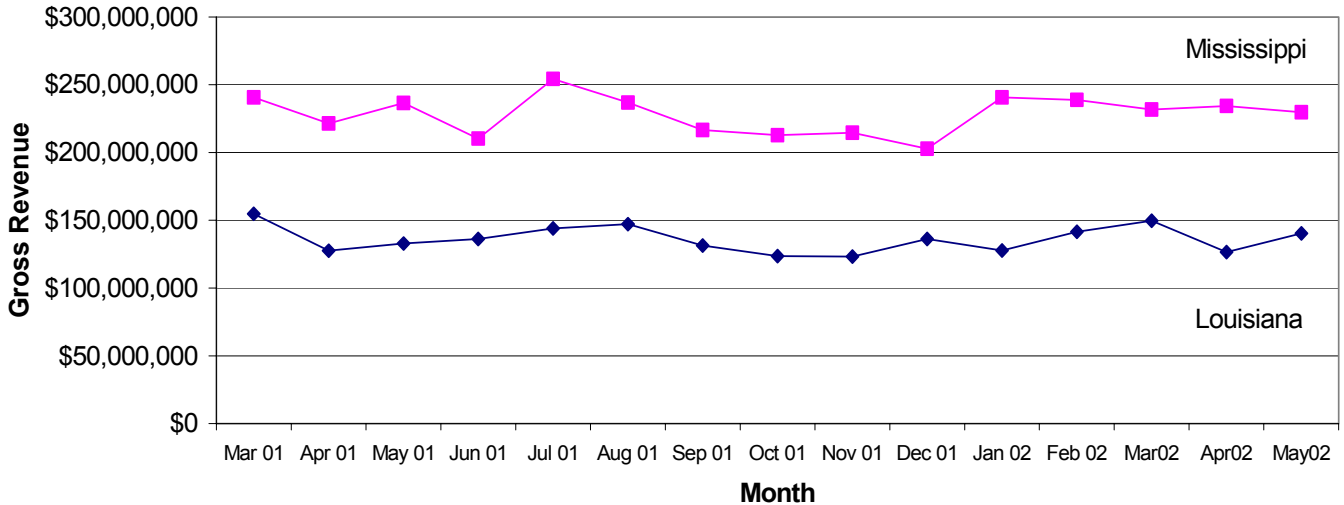


	Arkansas	Louisiana	Mississippi	Texas
<b>Spring 2002 Trend*</b>				
Number of Visitors	212,931	466,325	646,811	841,074
% difference from prior year	-1.8%	+1.3%	+5.7%	+5.7%
<b>2002 Year-to-Date Trend (January thru May)</b>				
Number of Visitors	282,471	680,367	965,877	1,049,253
% difference from prior year	+1.7	+2.7	+9.0	+6.8
* While each state uses a different method to calculate welcome center visitors, there have been no changes to the methods used over the last 15 months.				
Source: Louisiana Office of Tourism				

Weekly U.S. Gas Prices – Spring 2002										
Month	Week	Price	Week	Price	Week	Price	Week	Price	Week	Price
March	3/14	\$1.33	3/11	\$1.40	3/18	\$1.47	3/25	\$1.52		
April	4/1	\$1.55	4/8	\$1.60	4/15	\$1.59	4/22	\$1.58	4/29	\$1.58
May	5/6	\$1.58	5/13	\$1.58	5/20	\$1.58	5/27	\$1.58		
Source: U.S. Department of Energy ( <a href="http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/international/gas1.html">http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/international/gas1.html</a> )										

## 6. Riverboat Gaming

### Spring 2002 – Gross Revenue Trend



	Louisiana	Mississippi
<b>Spring 2002 Season</b>		
Total Gross Revenue	\$416,562,559	\$695,913,095
% difference from prior year	+0.3%	-0.3%
% difference from 5 years ago	+25.6%	+27.0%
<b>2002 Year-to-Date (January thru May)</b>		
Total Gross Revenue	\$685,825,219	\$1,176,417,299
% difference from prior year	+0.6%	+2.1%
% difference from 5 years ago	+25.0%	+29.5%
Sources: Louisiana State Police, and Mississippi State Tax Commission ( <a href="http://www.mstc.state.ms.us/index.html">http://www.mstc.state.ms.us/index.html</a> )		

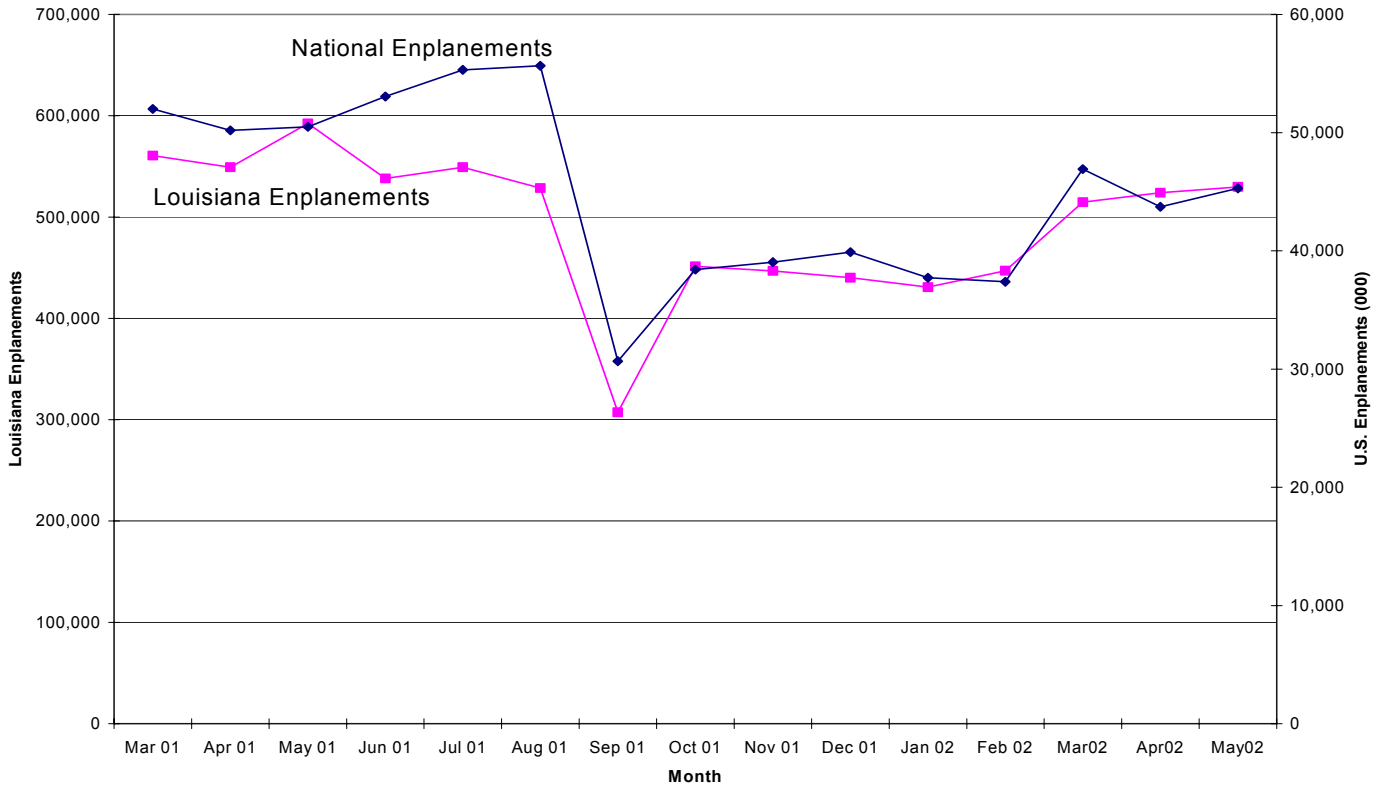
### FY00-01 Louisiana Riverboat Gaming Facts

Number of Riverboat Casinos: 14  
 Number of people directly employed full time: 15,450  
 Number of admissions: 28,901,779  
 Number of visitors\*: 14,549,164  
 Approximation of visitors to non-visitors: 52.4% visitors; 47.6% non-visitors  
 States with dockside or riverboat gaming other than Louisiana: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri, Mississippi

\* patrons who originate from more than 150 miles or from another state.  
 Source: Report to the Louisiana State Legislature 2001-2002, Louisiana Gaming Control Board

## 7. Airport Passenger Enplanements

### Spring 2002 Enplanements Trend



#### Spring 2002 Season

**Louisiana Airport Enplanements: 1,568,576**

% difference from prior year: -7.8%

% difference from five years ago: +0.3%

**U.S. Airport Enplanements: 135.9 million**

% difference from prior year: -10.9%

% difference from five years ago: -5.4%

The devastating effects of September 11<sup>th</sup> on air travel is still being felt by the commercial airlines.

#### 2002 Performance (January-May)

**Louisiana Airport Enplanements: 2,446,542**

% difference from prior year: -8.5%

% difference from five years ago: +1.6%

**U.S. Airport Enplanements: 211.0 million**

% difference from prior year: -11.6%

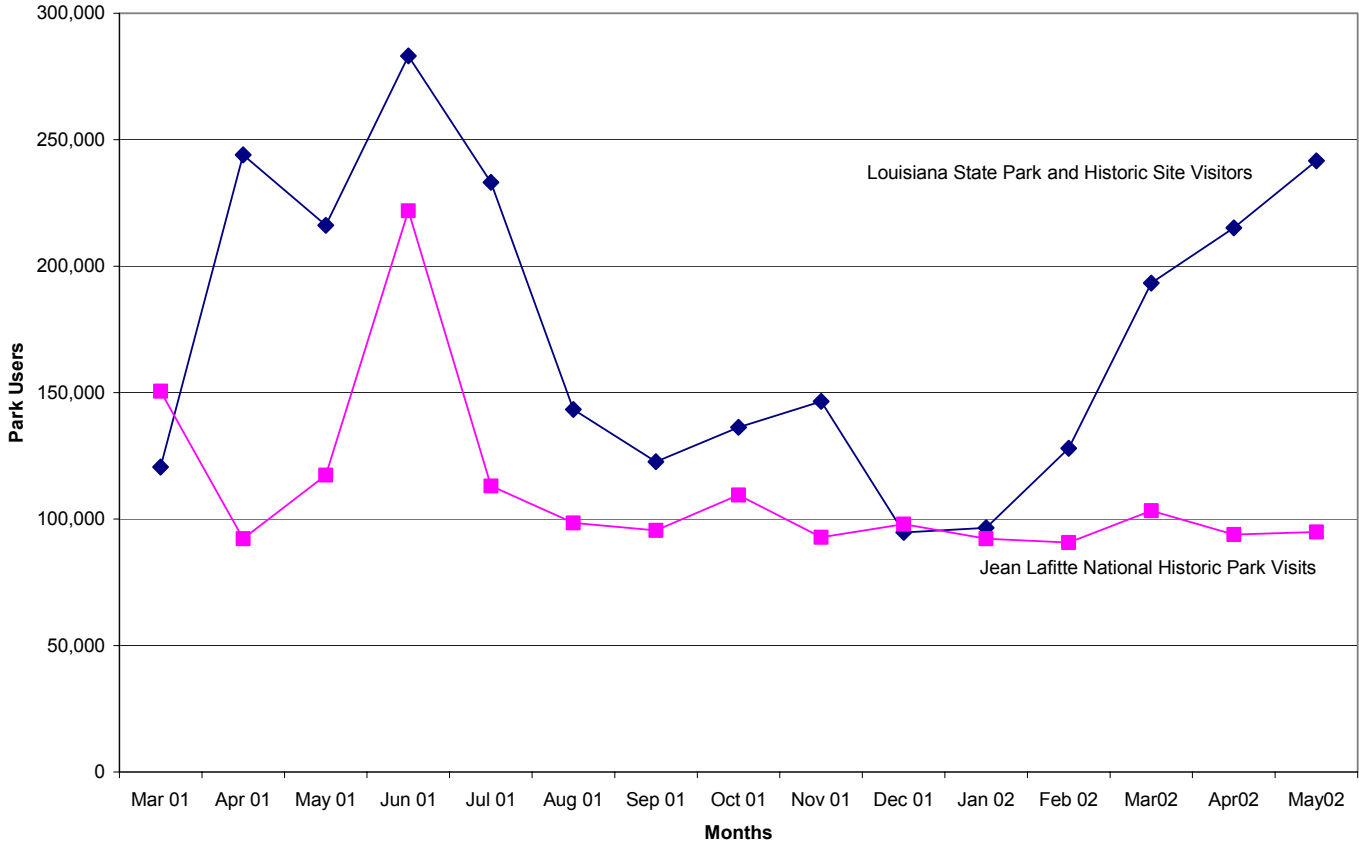
% difference from five years ago: -5.7%

U.S. passenger traffic is below the same level as it was five years ago. However, Louisiana is just above the level of air travel experienced five years ago. Louisiana is recovering at a slightly faster rate than the U.S.

Source: Louisiana Office of Tourism, and the Air Transport Association (<http://www.airlines.org/>)

## 8. State and National Park Visitors

### Spring 2002 Park Visitors Trend



#### Spring 2002 Season

Louisiana State Parks and Historic Site Visitors: 650,043  
 % difference from prior year: +11.9%

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park Visits: 292,143  
 % difference from prior year: -18.9%

#### 2002 Year-To-Date Performance (January-May)

Louisiana State Parks and Historic Site Visitors: 874,619  
 % difference from prior year: +18.0%

Jean Lafitte National Historical Park Visits: 475,066  
 % difference from prior year: -15.7%

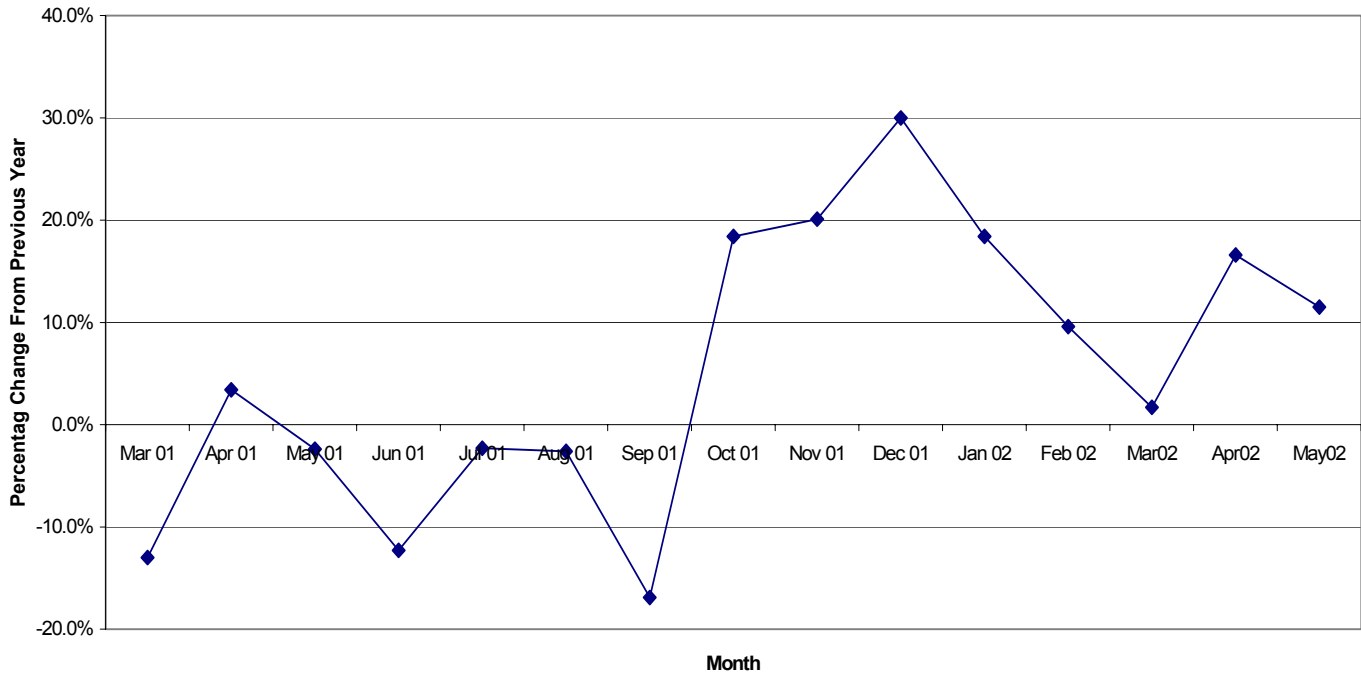
Almost one million people visited Louisiana's state parks and historic sites and the Jean Lafitte National Historical Park this Spring.

Source: Louisiana Office of State Parks, and the U.S. National Park Service (<http://www2.nature.nps.gov/stats/>)



## 9. Local Tourist Information Centers

### Spring 2002 – Tourist Center Visitor Trend



#### Spring 2002 Season

Louisiana local tourist information center visitors: 193,075

% difference from prior year: +14.0%

During the spring season, twenty-three reported increased visitor volume and only nine recorded a decrease in visitors compared to the previous spring season.

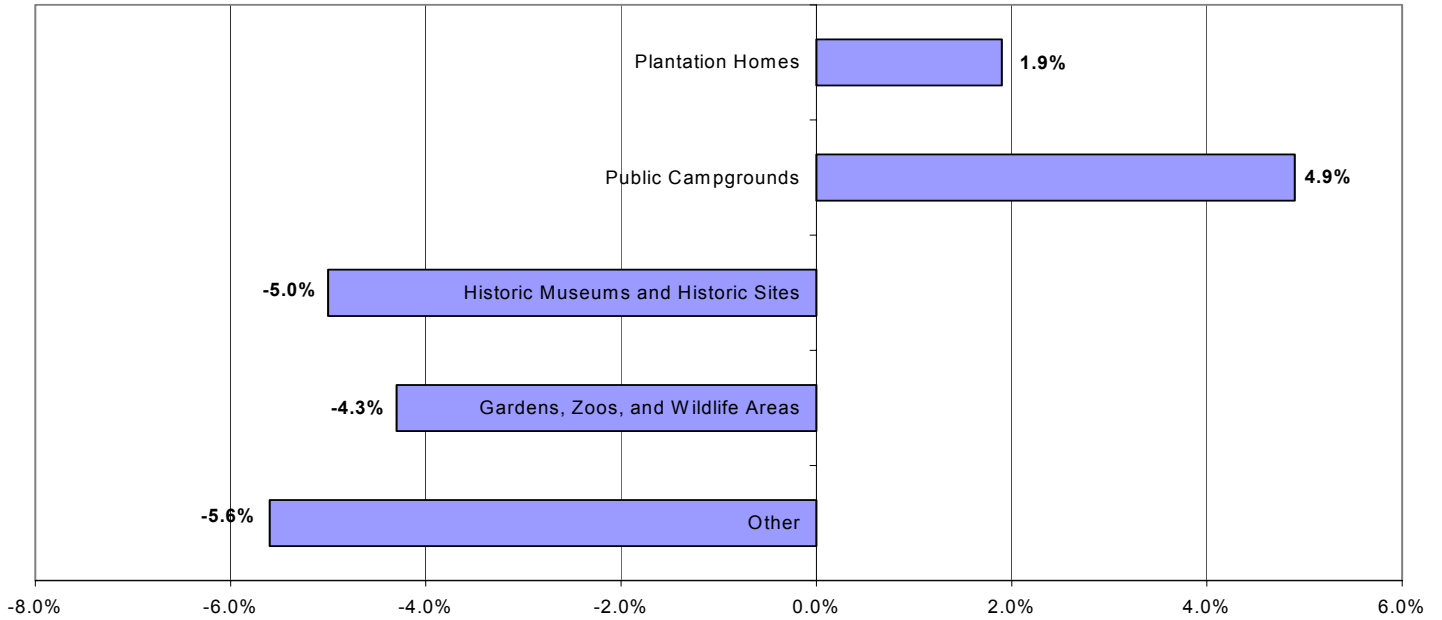
Source: Louisiana Office of Tourism. Local information center visitors are operated by municipal and parish tourist bureaus throughout Louisiana. Most use registration sheets to record the volume of visitors who enter the centers for travel information.

“The travel industry has always been supportive of transportation enhancement projects that improve local communities by preserving historic buildings, landmarks and neighborhoods and make roads and highways more attractive. These projects have a tangible impact on the quality of visitors’ experiences, and they help mitigate the negative aesthetics that sometimes accompany necessary road improvement projects. **In particular, our industry has been particularly supportive of building and maintaining highway information centers. Information centers provide a means for destinations and attractions to reach potential visitors, and they provide a valuable service to travelers. These centers have become a “known quantity” to visitors as they travel. From state to state, travelers can expect a high-quality experience as they obtain information about their destinations and about other travel opportunities on the way.**”

Source: John Shaffer, Director, Marketing and Sales, Luray Caverns, July 25, 2002, Testimony before the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure of the U.S. House of Representatives

## 10. Attractions Visitors

### Spring 2002 - Visitor Trend By Category Percentage Change From Previous Year In The Number Of Visitors



#### Spring 2002 Season

The Louisiana Office of Tourism received visitor counts from 80 attractions across the state. Numbers were received from 6 plantation homes, 16 public campgrounds, 33 historical museums and historic sites, 7 gardens, zoos and wildlife areas, and 18 other attractions. Overall, the number of visitors to Louisiana's attractions did not change during the Spring 2002 Season (March-May) compared to the previous spring season. The number of sites experiencing increased visitors was 41 while the number of sites with decreased visitors was 39.

Season	Spring 2002	Winter 2002	Fall 2001	Summer 2001	Spring 2001	Winter 2001
Number of Sites w/increased attendance	41	52	42	44	40	19
Number of Sites w/decreased attendance	39	28	35	44	39	58
Percentage difference from previous year*	0.0%	+4.8%	-2.9%	-5.7%	-4.0%	-8.2%

\* Percentage difference in actual visitors recorded at all parks, museums, and attractions submitted to LOT.

## 10. Regional Trends - Spring

<b>Greater New Orleans</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>% +/-</b>
New Orleans International Airport			
Passenger Enplanements .....	1,277,821	1,379,315	-7.4%
New Orleans Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate			
March .....	70.4%	79.3%	-11.2%
April .....	74.8%	69.5%	+7.6%
May .....	61.6%	73.1%	-15.7%
New Orleans Visitor Center .....	39,295	43,765	-10.2%
Slidell Visitor Center .....	103,022	103,131	-0.1%
Kentwood Visitor Center .....	36,663	35,569	+3.1%
Pearl River Center .....	48,194	38,336	+25.7%
Parks, Attractions, Museums .....	703,391	699,955	+0.5%

<b>Plantation Country</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>% +/-</b>
Baton Rouge Metro Airport Airport			
Passenger Enplanements .....	108,934	105,836	+2.9%
Baton Rouge Hotel/Motel Occupancy Rate			
March .....	57.5%	63.7%	-9.7%
April .....	61.2%	55.5%	+10.3%
May .....	62.3%	60.0%	+3.8%
State Capitol Visitor Center .....	58,620	54,611	+7.3%
St. Francisville Visitor Center .....	13,426	14,144	-5.1%
Parks, Attractions, & Museums .....	115,768	113,968	+1.6%

<b>Cajun Country</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>% +/-</b>
Lafayette Regional Airport			
Passenger Enplanements .....	41,908	50,984	-17.8%
Lake Charles Regional Airport			
Passenger Enplanements .....	11,918	11,938	-0.2%
Lafayette Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate			
March .....	57.5%	63.7%	-9.7%
April .....	73.1%	69.8%	+4.7%
May .....	68.1%	70.5%	-3.4%

Lake Charles Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate

March .....	69.1%	78.1%	-11.5%
April .....	67.5%	63.0%	+7.1%
May .....	63.4%	62.5%	+1.4%

Vinton Visitor Center.....	53,095	51,663	+2.8%
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Parks, Attractions, & Museums .....	271,585	267,590	+1.5%
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<b>Crossroads</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>%+/-</b>
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England International Airport Passenger Enplanements.....	27,906	36,551	-23.7%
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Alexandria Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate

March .....	65.2%	59.2%	+10.1%
April .....	58.6%	54.4%	+7.7%
May .....	62.8%	61.5%	+2.1%

Vidalia Visitor Center.....	6,847	7,840	-12.7%
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Parks, Attractions, & Museums .....	159,934	150,451	+6.3%
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<b>Sportsman's Paradise</b>	<b>2002</b>	<b>2001</b>	<b>%+/-</b>
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Shreveport Regional Airport Passenger Enplanements.....	77,056	90,448	-14.8%
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Monroe Regional Airport Passenger Enplanements.....	23,033	27,116	-15.1%
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Shreveport Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate

March .....	63.4%	66.0%	-3.9%
April .....	59.7%	59.1%	+1.0%
May .....	61.8%	60.4%	+2.3%

Monroe Hotel-Motel Occupancy Rate

March .....	70.9%	68.8%	+3.1%
April .....	72.3%	69.7%	+3.7%
May .....	67.5%	71.4%	-5.5%

Greenwood Visitor Center .....	58,872	58,847	0.0%
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Mound Visitor Center .....	48,291	52,209	-7.5%
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Parks, Attractions, and Museums.....	158,795	176,777	-10.2%
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*Notes on Regional Trends: Hotel/Motel statistics are from Smith Travel Research, Inc.; all other figures are from the Office of Tourism. Park figures include both day-use and overnight visitors. Attendance at parks, attraction and museums are self-reported to the Office of Tourism and include many different methods of recording visitors/customers.*