

VISIT SOUTH WALTON

Winter 2021 Visitor Tracking Study
December 2020 – February 2021

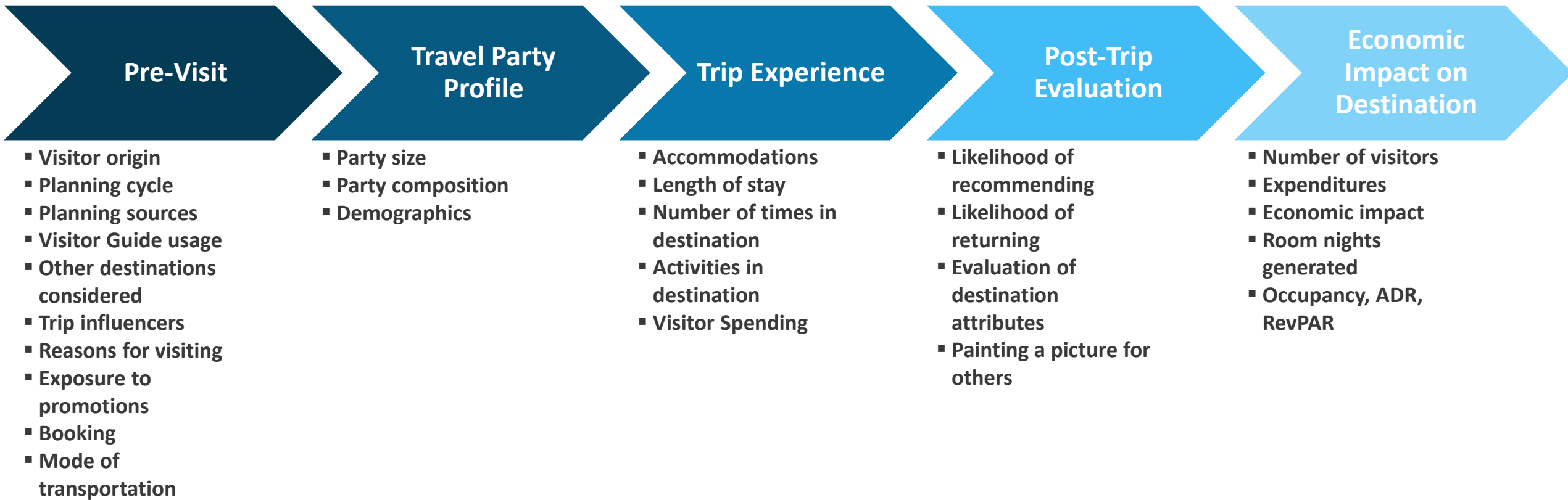


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STUDY OBJECTIVES: MAP THE VISITOR JOURNEY



Visitor Tracking Study

This report is based on 501 internet and in-person surveys* with Winter visitors who traveled to South Walton between December 2020 and February 2021.

South Walton's visitor tracking and economic impact metrics were impacted by several factors in Winter 2021 including:

- Changes in visitor behavior
- Inventory increase

Visitor behavior

More visitors stayed in their second home, with friend or relatives, or visited just for the day in Winter 2021

Visitors traveled in larger parties and stayed longer

Inventory increase

In addition, available units for visitors in Winter 2021 increased 7% units from 2020

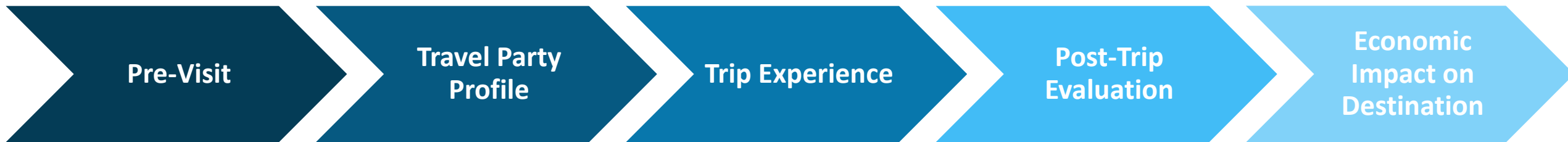
*Interviews are with out-of-county guests who stay at properties/vacation rentals at beach communities across South Walton, and at various locations along the beaches. 106 interviews were conducted via face-to-face interviews along the beach and in public areas.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



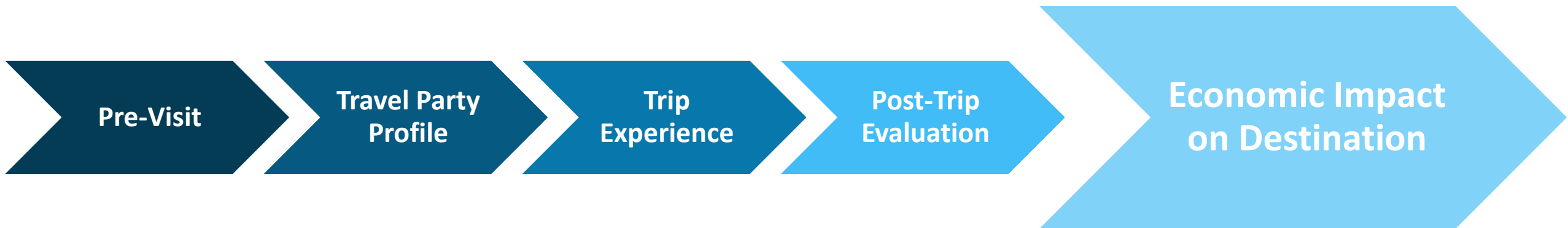
VISITOR JOURNEY: ECONOMIC IMPACT

This report is organized along the visitor's journey as shown below.



VISITOR JOURNEY: ECONOMIC IMPACT

We start at the end, that is, the economic impact of the visitor's journey.



ECONOMIC IMPACT – WINTER 2020 VS. 2021

An increase of active units by nearly 7% and more visitors staying in their second homes and with friends and relatives contributed to a slight decrease in occupancy, and a modest increase in room nights.

ADR jumped 37.6% in Winter 2021. The increased TDT rate from 4% to 5% led to an increase in Winter TDT by over 55%.¹

South Walton visitors traveled in larger party sizes and stayed longer in Winter 2021, contributing to a 25.9% increase in direct spending.

With nearly 500,000 visitors this Winter, total economic impact was over \$1 billion.

Property Statistics	Winter 2020	Winter 2021	% Change
Room nights	514,710	543,800	+5.7%
Total visitors	388,630	494,500	+27.2%
Direct spending	\$580,464,500	\$730,690,000	+25.9%
Economic impact	\$859,087,500	\$1,081,421,200	+25.9%
Occupancy	40.2%	38.5%	-4.2%
Room rates	\$120.43 ²	\$165.75	+37.6%
RevPAR	\$48.41	\$63.81	+31.8%

Data sources: Walton County government, properties in South Walton that rent to visitors, Key Data, and visitor and property surveys by Downs & St. Germain Research.

¹ 2020 tax rate is 4% in December 2019, compared to 5% in 2020.

At the 5% level, Winter 2021 TDT collections exceeded 2020 collections by **43.9%**.

² ADR for 2020 was revised based on additional input from KeyData and STR.

ECONOMIC IMPACT - LODGING STATISTICS

38.5%

Occupancy

↓ 4.2%

\$165.75

ADR

↑ 37.6%

\$63.81

RevPAR

↑ 31.8%

VISITOR JOURNEY: PRE-VISIT



PLANNING CYCLE

- » **56%** of visitors plan a Winter South Walton vacation at least 3 months in advance
- » **13%** of South Walton vacations are impulse decisions (plan a week or less in advance)
- » **11%** considered vacationing at a beach outside of South Walton - most of those beaches are in Florida



TOP TRIP PLANNING SOURCES*

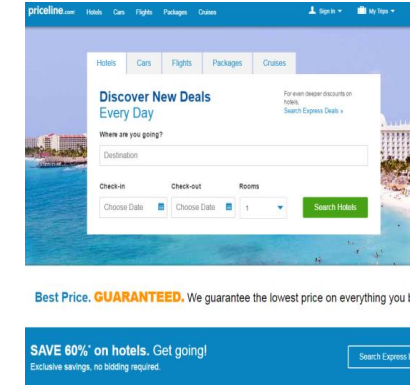


Friends, family **46%**

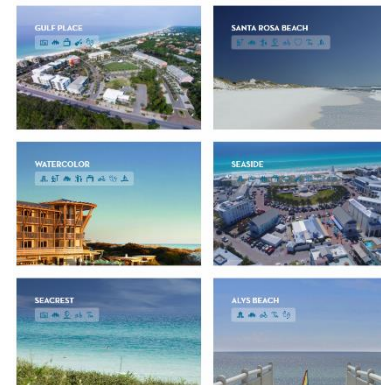
Search engines **35%**



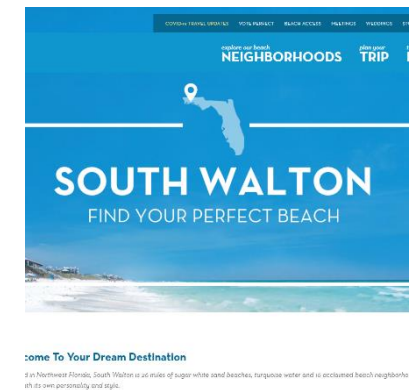
Online Travel Agency **26%**



Website for 1 of the 16 beach neighborhoods **21%**



VisitSouthWalton.com **19%**



*Multiple responses permitted.

SOUTH WALTON VISITOR GUIDE

- » **29%** of visitors viewed the South Walton Visitors Guide (mostly online) before going to South Walton



¹10 = Extremely useful; 1 = Not at all useful

TOP REASONS FOR VISIT*

Relax and unwind **60%**



Family vacation **46%**



Annual routine **25%**



Special occasion **14%**



*Multiple responses permitted

TOP SOUTH WALTON PROMOTIONS

- » **26%** of visitors have recently noticed promotions about South Walton

Top Sources of Promotions

Television



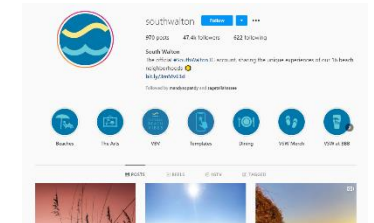
Other social media accounts



Online article



South Walton Social Media



TOP BOOKING SOURCES

Vacation Rental Company
50%

NEWMAN-DAILEY
RESORT PROPERTIES, INC.


Southern
RENTALS & REAL ESTATE


DUNE ALLEN REALTY
Vacation Rentals

Hotel/condo
29%

Residence
Inn®
Marriott




hotel • dining • spa

VRBO, Homeaway
8%

 **HomeAway**®

 **VRBO**®
from HomeAway®

VacationRentals.com™
Part of the HomeAway Family

VISITOR TRANSPORTATION

- » **82%** of visitors drove to South Walton
- » **18%** who flew used the following airports:

54%

Northwest Florida Beaches
International Airport



33%

Destin-Ft. Walton Beach
Airport



8%

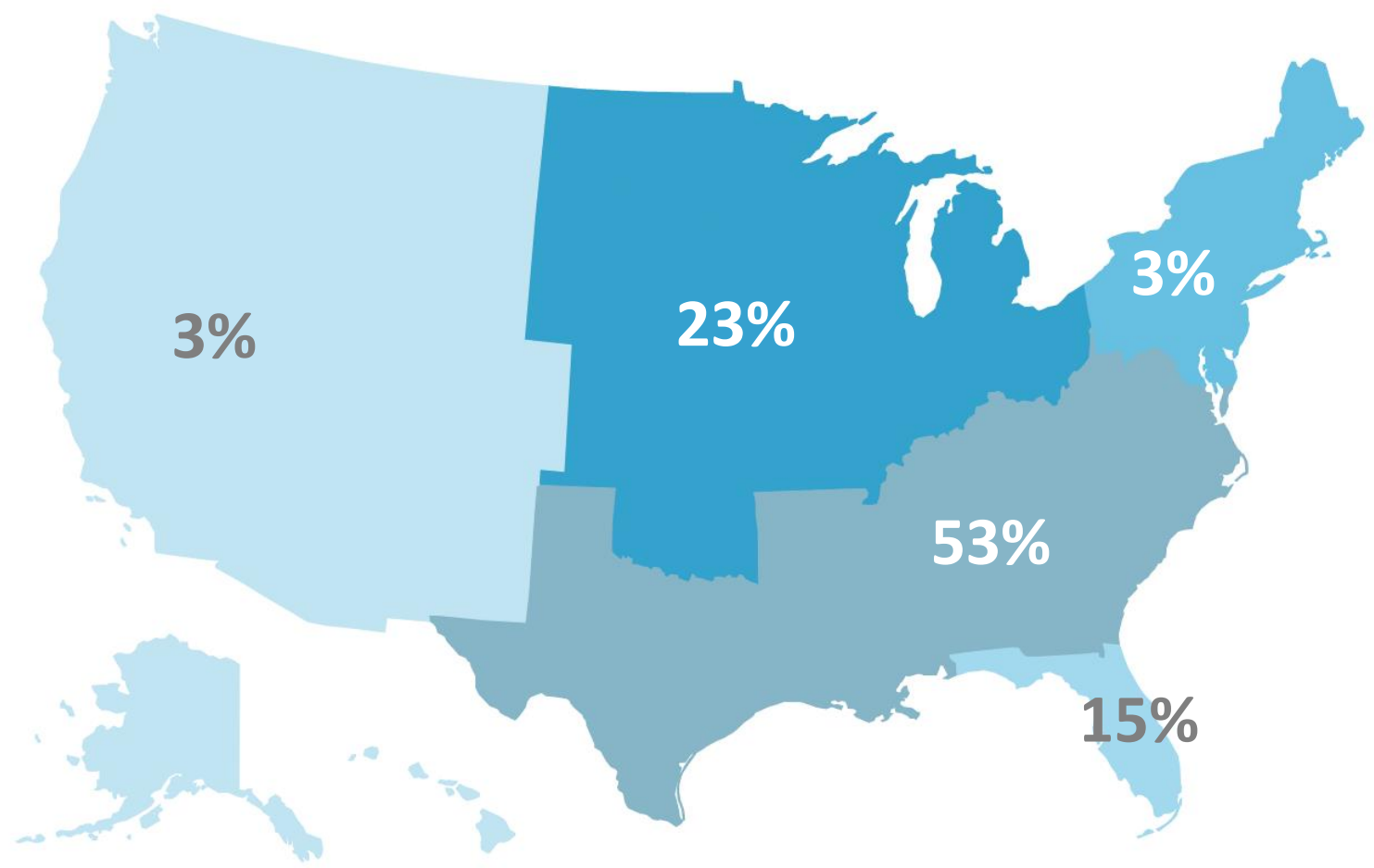
Pensacola International
Airport



VISITOR JOURNEY: TRAVEL PARTY PROFILE



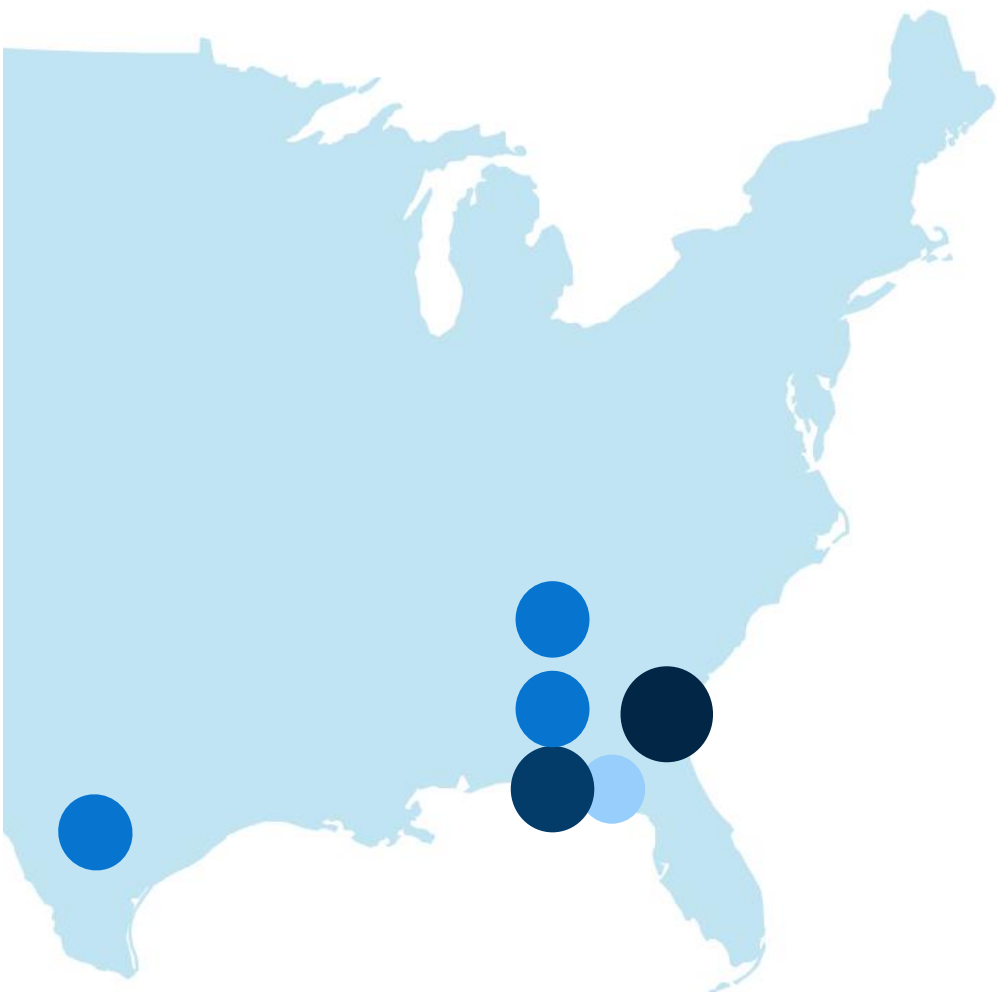
ORIGIN OF WINTER VISITORS



3% of visitors were from outside of the U.S.

ORIGIN OF WINTER VISITORS

39% of visitors are from 6 markets.



- 15% ● Atlanta
- 8% ● Pensacola-Mobile
- 5% ● Birmingham
- 4% ● Dallas – Ft. Worth
- 4% ● Nashville
- 3% ● Panama City

TRAVEL PARTY SIZE AND COMPOSITION

The typical visitor traveled in a party composed of **4.0** people



39% traveled with at least one person under the age of 20 in their travel party



WINTER VISITOR PROFILE



- » The typical South Walton Winter visitor:
 - » **55** years old
 - » Female (**59%**)
 - » Median household income of **\$154,300**
 - » From the Southeast (**68%**)

VISITOR PROFILE: TYPICAL VACATIONER¹



→The typical Vacationer¹ Visitor:

- Is **52** years old
- Has a median household income of **\$157,100**
- Is female (**61%**)²
- 48%** travel with children
- 80%** drive to the area
- Is from the Southeast (**79%**)

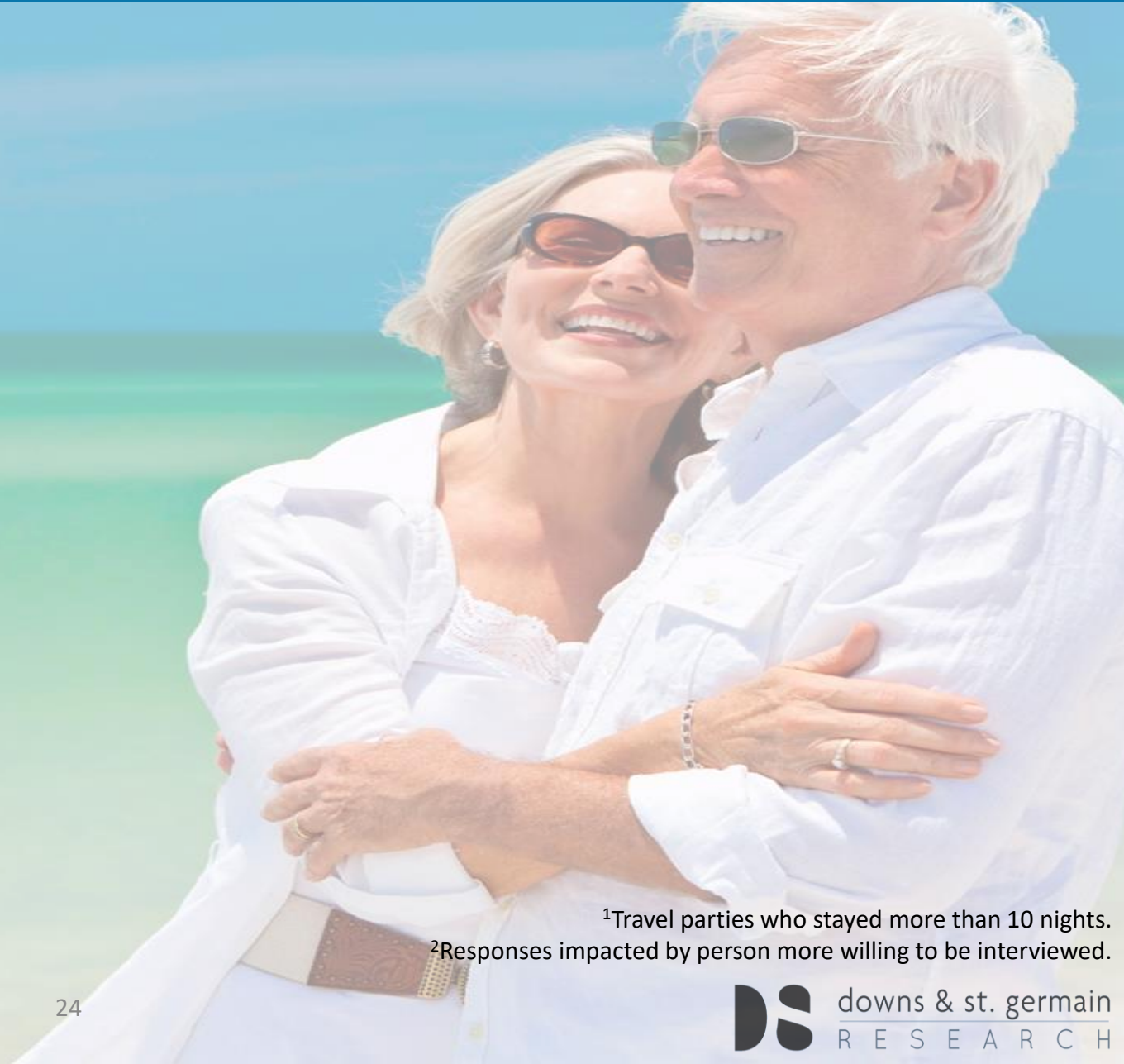
¹Travel parties who stayed 1-10 nights.

²Responses impacted by person more willing to be interviewed.

VISITOR PROFILE: TYPICAL LONG-TERM¹ VISITOR

→The typical Long-Term¹ Visitor:

- Is **72** years old
- Has a median household income of **\$121,000**
- Is female (**54%**)²
- 18%** travel with children
- 91%** drive to the area
- Is from the Midwest (**64%**)



¹Travel parties who stayed more than 10 nights.

²Responses impacted by person more willing to be interviewed.

VISITOR PROFILE: TYPICAL DAY TRIPPER

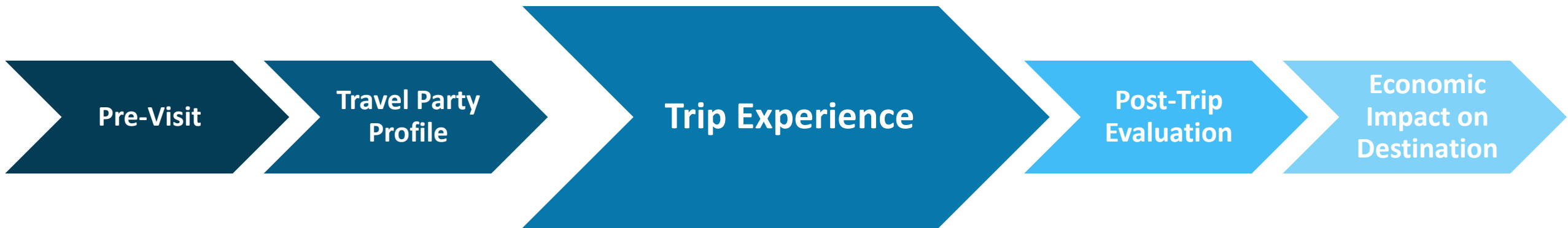
» The typical Day Trip Visitor:

- » Is **50** years old
- » Has a median household income of **\$98,600**
- » Is female (**71%**)¹
- » **37%** travel with children
- » **88%** drive to the area
- » Is from Florida (**50%**)



¹Responses impacted by person more willing to be interviewed.

VISITOR JOURNEY: TRIP EXPERIENCE



TOP ACCOMMODATIONS

62% Condos, rental houses, etc.



17% Hotels



9% Personal home/condo



TOP VISITOR ACTIVITIES*

Restaurants **85%**



Beach **82%**



Relax and unwind **75%**



Shopping, antiques **60%**



Family time, reading,
cooking **59%**



*Multiple responses permitted.

LENGTH OF STAY

- » Visitors spent **8.1*** nights in South Walton



*Visitors who stayed 30 or fewer nights.

FIRST-TIME AND EXPERIENCED VISITORS

- » **14%** were first-time visitors
- » **2 in 5** had visited more than 10 times



VISITOR EXPENDITURES*

- » Visitors spent **\$829** a day
- » Visitors spent **\$5,803** on their trip



*Visitors staying in paid accommodations.

VISITOR JOURNEY: POST TRIP EVALUATION



VISITOR SATISFACTION

- » Visitors gave South Walton a rating of **8.9¹** as a place to vacation
- » **95%** will return to South Walton²

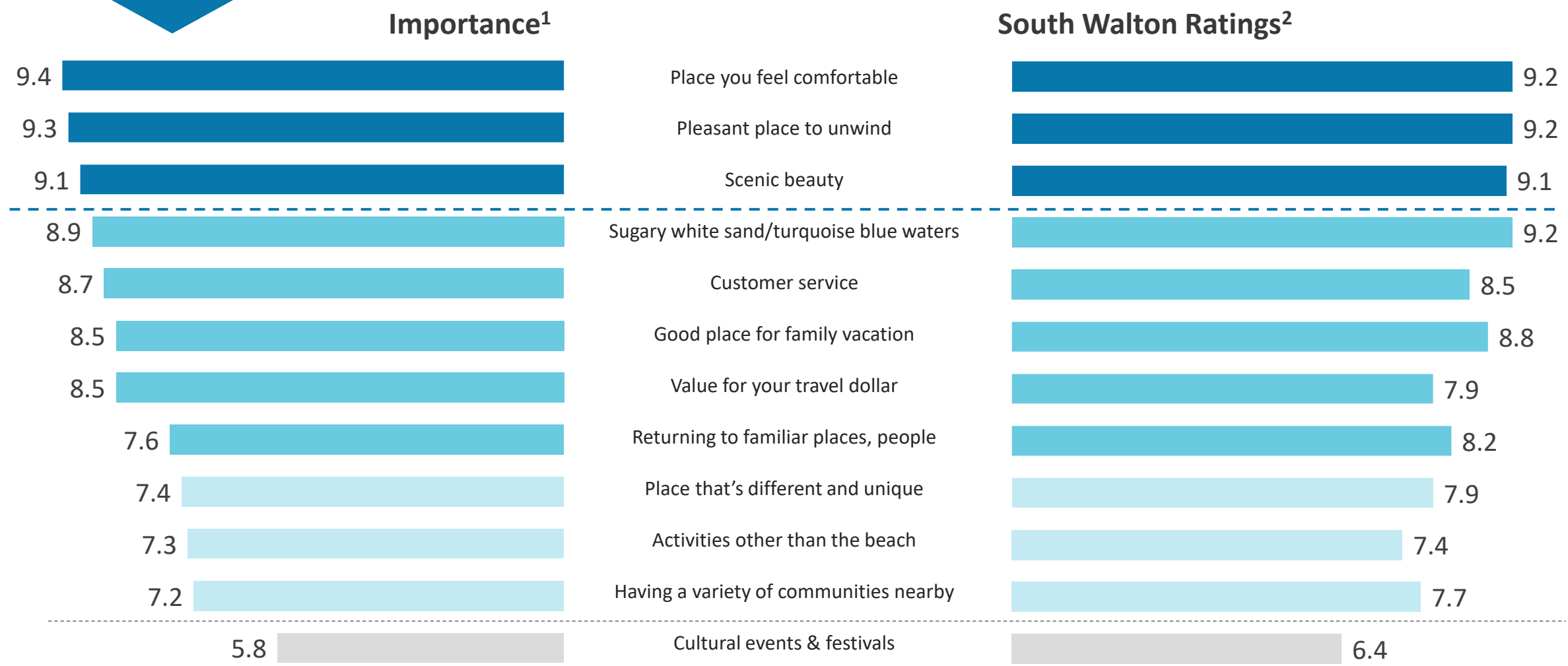


¹ 10 = Excellent; 1 = Poor

² 3% of all visitors will not return to South Walton for the following reasons:

1. Too expensive. 2. Too crowded. 3. Parking was a problem. 4. Traffic was a problem.

VACATION ATTRIBUTE IMPORTANCE VS. RATINGS



¹Rated on a scale from 1 to 10 where 10 is very important and 1 is not at all important.

²Rated on a scale from 1 to 10 where 10 is excellent and 1 is poor.

VISITOR DESCRIPTIONS OF SOUTH WALTON

Beautiful white sand, clear water (47%)

“The most beautiful beaches in the US. Clean, white sand and gorgeous teal water. Fabulous restaurants and friendly people.”

Great place to visit (33%)

“It is a great place for a special family vacation. The beach is very beautiful and there are many places that you can visit and enjoy.”

Relaxing & stress free (22%)

“South Walton is a place you must visit if you're looking for a relaxing and enjoyable vacation. You can experience a better life there than your usual hectic life. You must visit to South Walton!”

EMOTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH SOUTH WALTON*



*Word cloud generated from verbatim responses

YEARLY COMPARISONS

VISITOR PROFILE – WINTER 2020 VS. 2021

Visitor Metrics	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
Travel party	3.4	4.0
Kids <20	25%	39%
Median age	58	55
Estimated median household income	\$152,600	\$154,300
Stayed in condo/rental house	69%	62%
Drove	85%	82%
Nights spent	7.6	8.1
Direct expenditures (travel party for entire trip)	\$5,219	\$5,803
1 st time visitor	16%	14%
10+ visits to South Walton	39%	40%

VISITOR PROFILE – WINTER 2020 VS. 2021

Top Origin States	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
Georgia	14%	16%
Florida	15%	15%
Alabama	11%	12%
Texas	3%	8%
Tennessee	7%	7%
Origins - Regions	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
Southeast	60%	68%
Midwest	24%	23%
Northeast	5%	3%
West	3%	3%
International	8%	3%

VISITOR PROFILE – WINTER 2020 VS. 2021

Top Visitor Activities	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
Restaurants	88%	85%
Beach	80%	82%
Relax and unwind	79%	75%
Shopping, antiquing	70%	60%
Family time, reading, cooking	60%	59%
Biking, running	36%	36%
Bars, nightclubs	35%	32%
Hiking, nature walks, eco tours	30%	30%
State parks	25%	29%
Golf or tennis	23%	25%
Special events	32%	20%
Dune lakes	12%	19%
Attractions	22%	15%
Water sports	12%	14%
Art galleries, museums, cultural events	21%	12%
Spas	10%	7%
Business meetings, conferences	5%	5%

VISITOR PROFILE – WINTER 2020 VS. 2021

Visitor Metrics	Winter 2020	Winter 2021
Will return to South Walton	94%	95%
Rating for overall experience ¹	9.0	8.9
Viewed Visitors Guide	18%	29% ¹
Planned trip 6+ months out	38%	32%
Used VisitSouthWalton.com	14%	19%
Used 1 of 16 beaches' websites	19%	21%

¹ 10-point scale with 10=Excellent & 1=Poor.

² 22% used the online version & 7% used the print version.

DETAILED FINDINGS



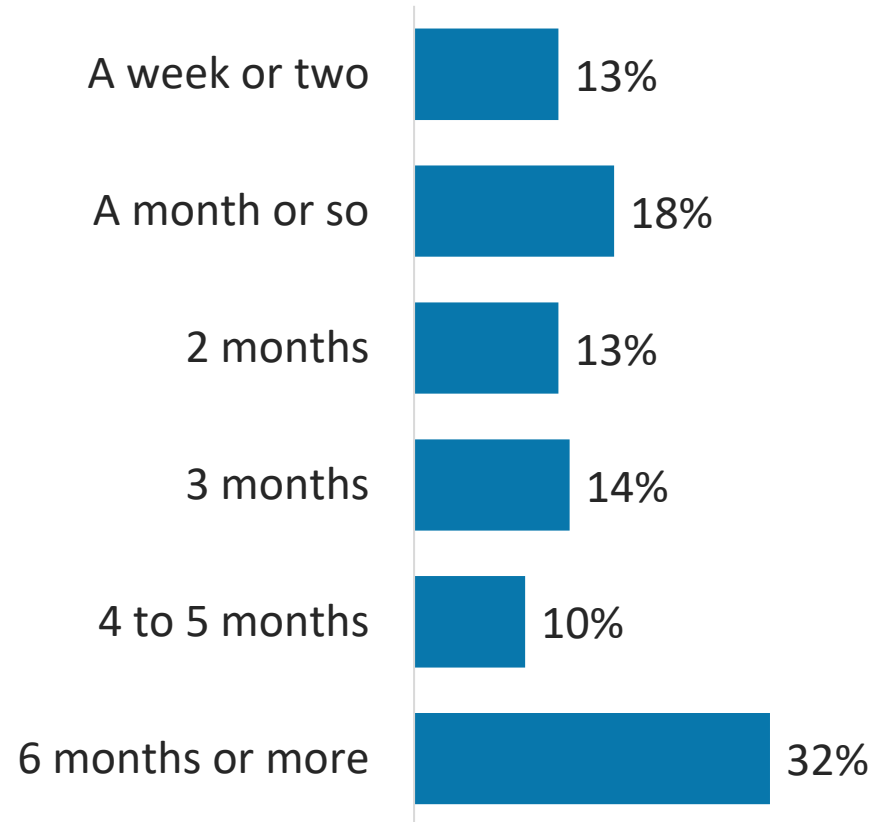
VISITOR JOURNEY: PRE-VISIT




PLANNING CYCLE

56% of visitors plan a Winter South Walton vacation at least **3 months out**.

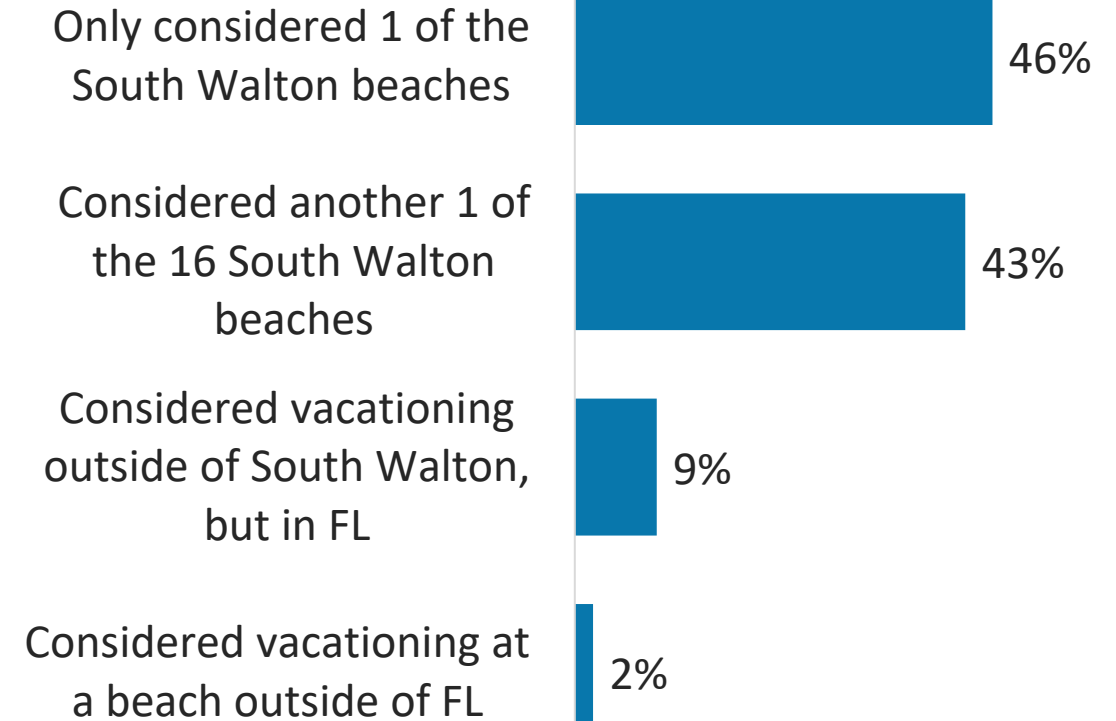
3 in 10 visitors to South Walton have **a short (a month or less) planning cycle**.



OTHER DESTINATIONS CONSIDERED

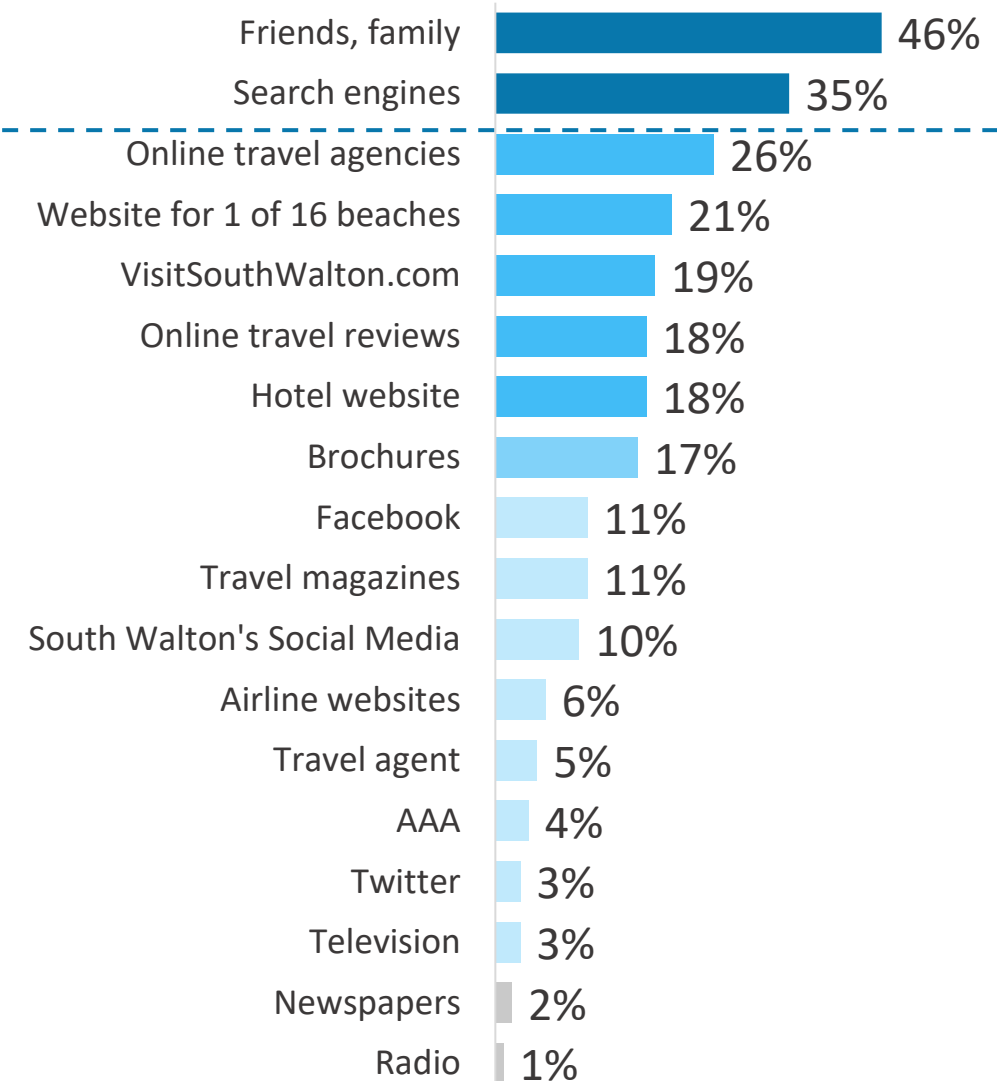


Only **1 in 10** visitors considered vacationing at a beach outside of South Walton.



TRIP PLANNING SOURCES¹

46% of visitors used friends and family to help plan their trip to South Walton.

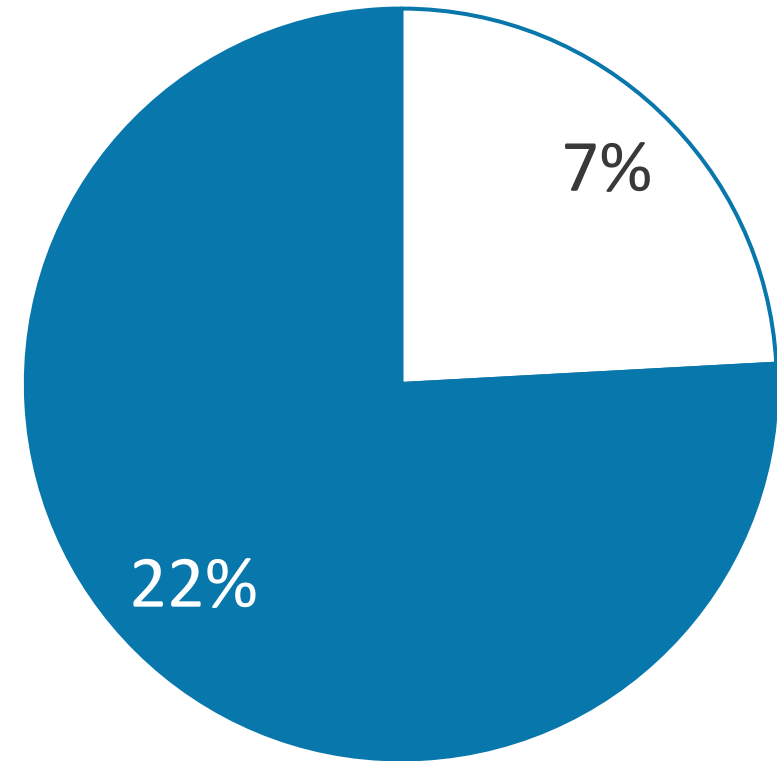


¹Multiple responses permitted.

SOUTH WALTON VISITOR GUIDE



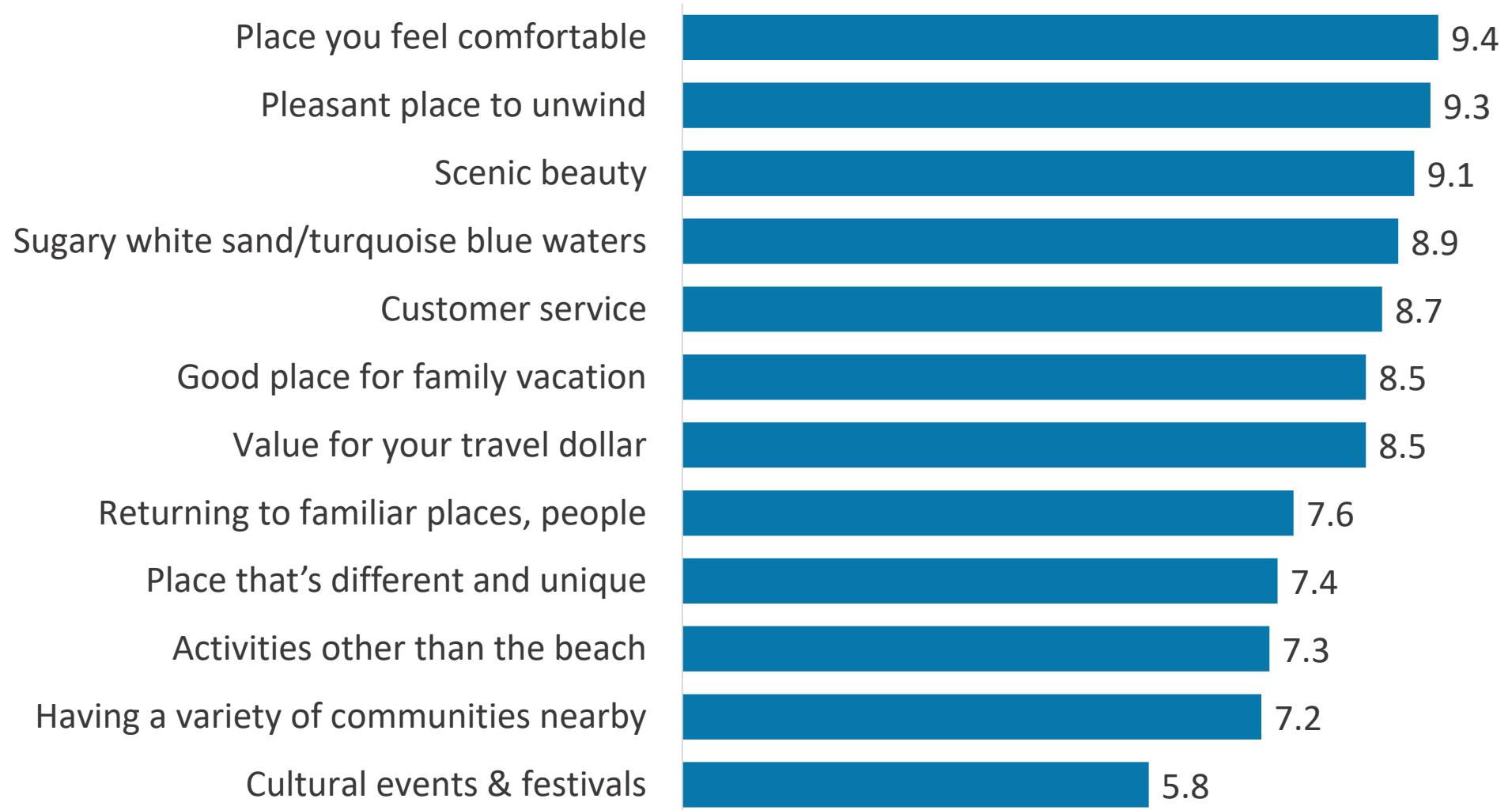
29% of visitors viewed a South Walton Visitors Guide before going to South Walton.



☐ Print version ☒ Online version

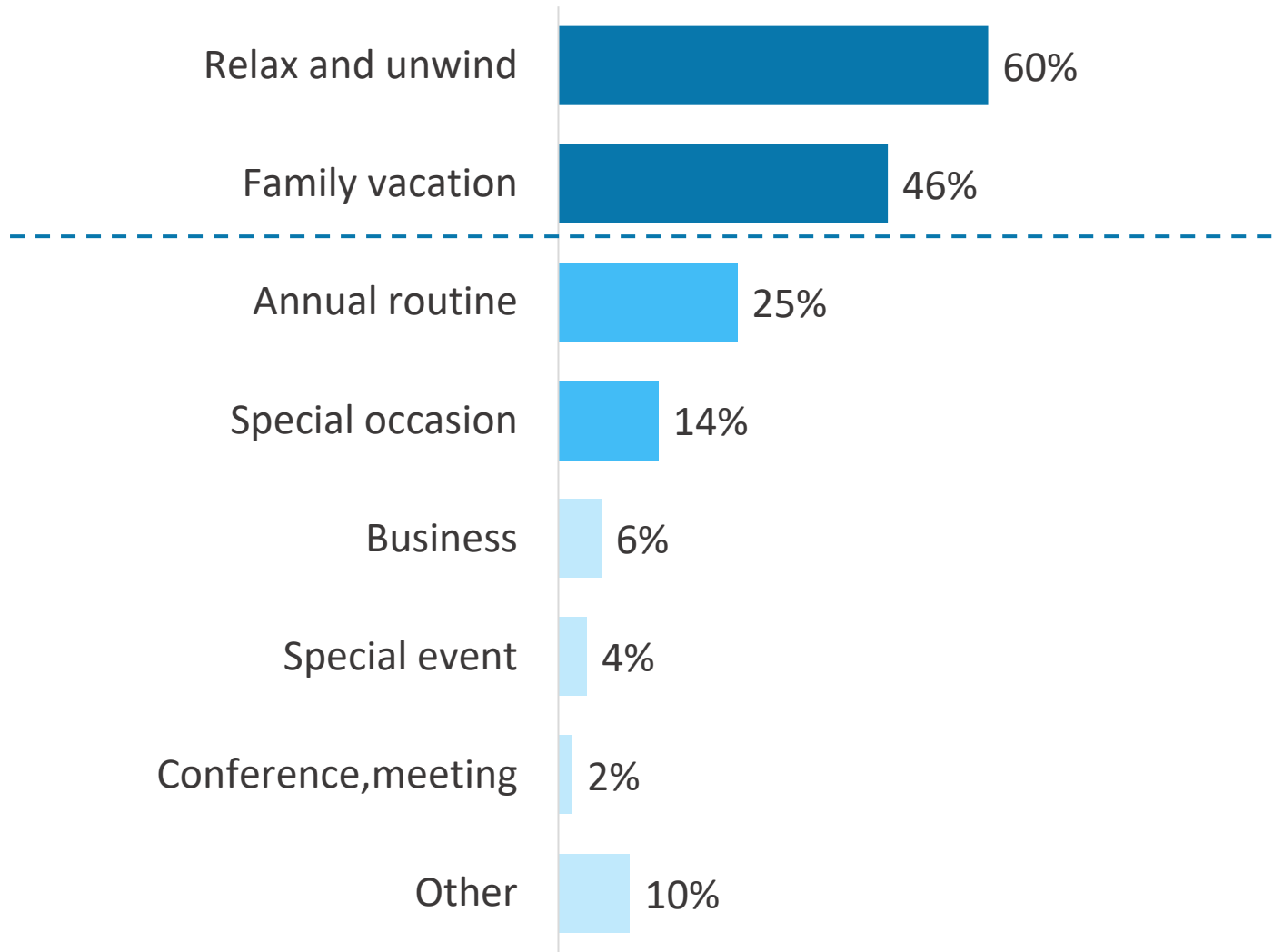
¹Rated on a 10 point scale where 10 is extremely useful and 1 is not at all useful.

IMPORTANT VACATION DESTINATION ATTRIBUTES¹



¹Rated on a scale from 1 to 10 where 10 is very important and 1 is not at all important.

REASONS FOR VISITING¹



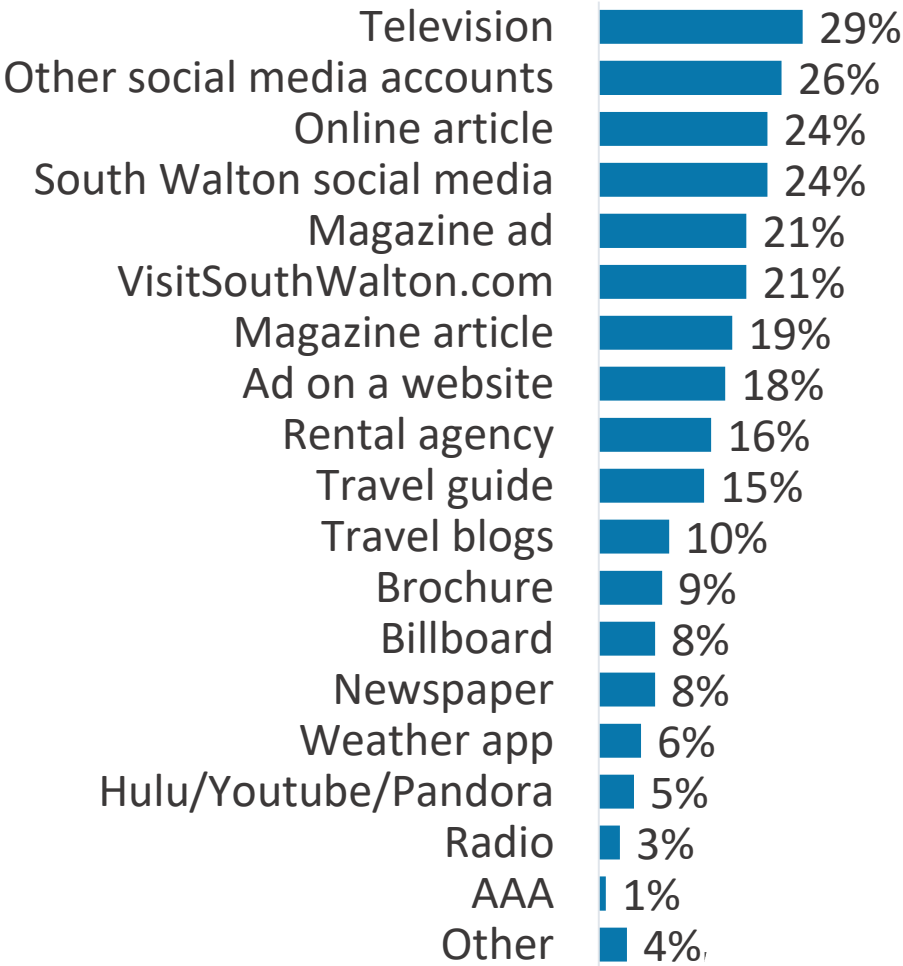
¹Multiple responses permitted.

SOUTH WALTON PROMOTIONS¹



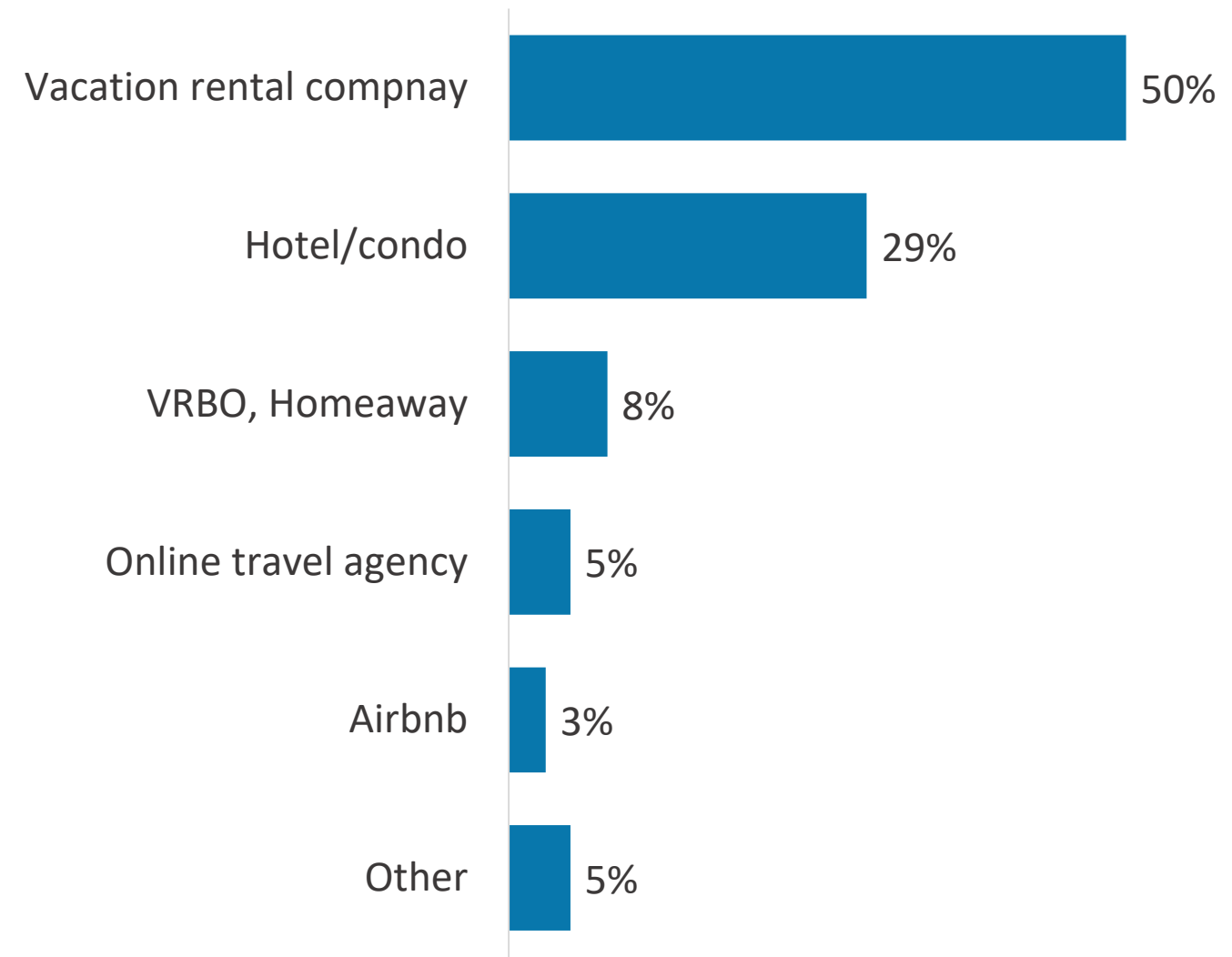
26% of Winter visitors have recently seen, read or heard advertising, promotions or travel stories about South Walton.

Base: 26% of visitors who noticed advertising




¹Multiple responses permitted.


BOOKING ACCOMMODATIONS



VISITOR TRANSPORTATION

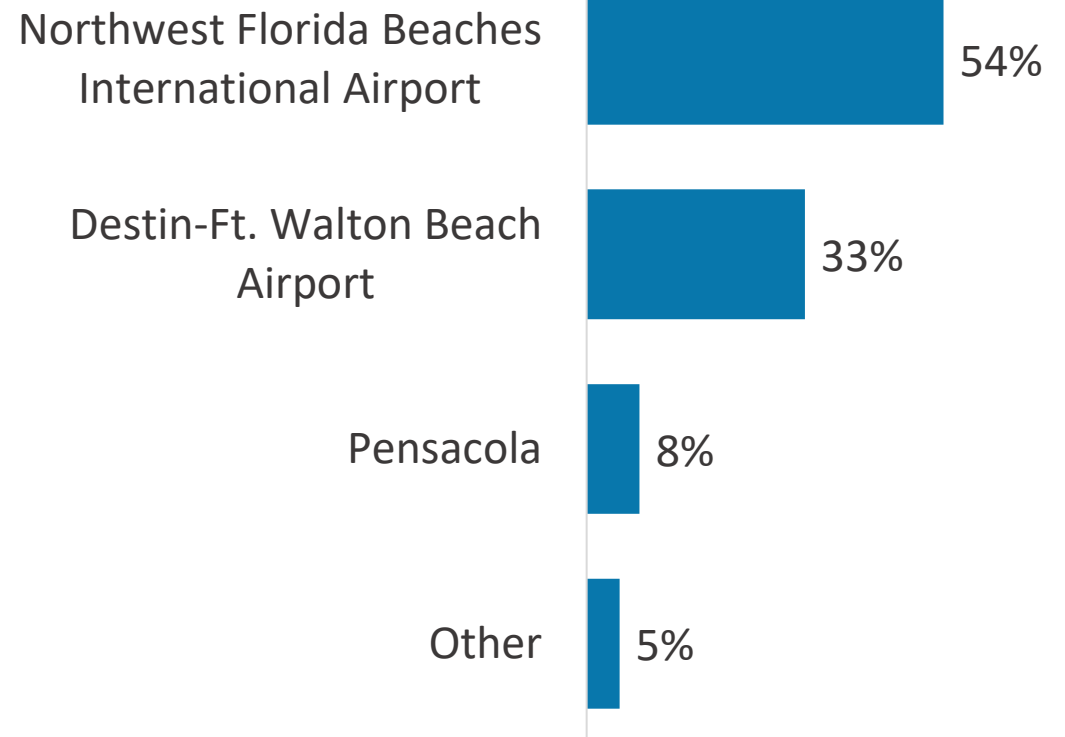


82% of Winter visitors drove to South Walton.



28% of those who drove were aware that there were direct flights from their city to the South Walton area.

18% who **flew** used the following airports:

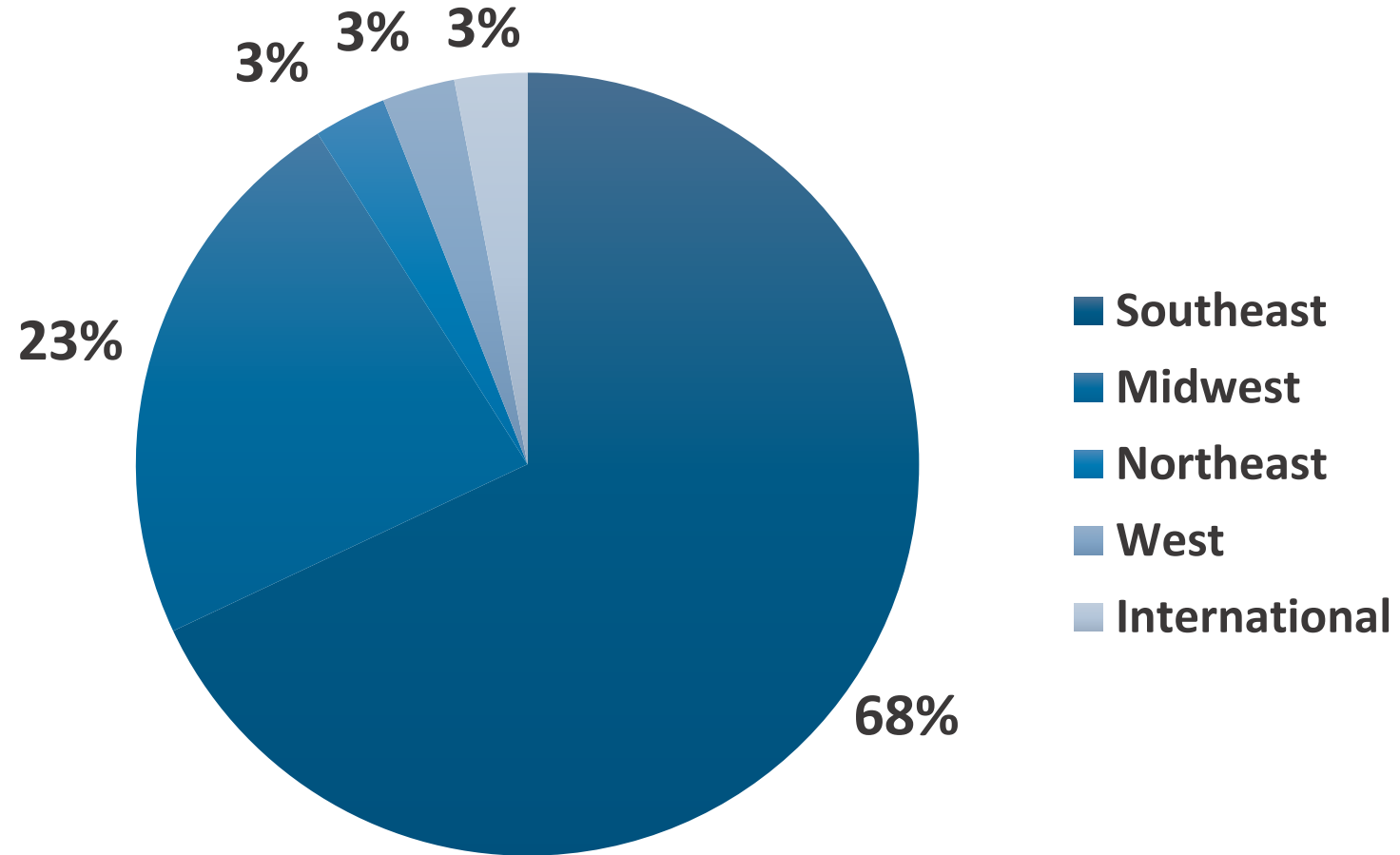


VISITOR JOURNEY: TRAVEL PARTY PROFILE



ORIGIN OF WINTER VISITORS

Top Origin Markets	% of Visitors
Atlanta	15%
Pensacola-Mobile	8%
Birmingham	5%
Dallas-Ft. Worth	4%
Nashville	4%
Panama City	3%
Chicago	2%
Houston	2%
Minneapolis-St. Paul	2%
Montgomery	2%
New Orleans	2%
Orlando-Daytona Beach-Melbourne	2%
Tallahassee-Thomasville	2%



ORIGIN OF WINTER VISITORS

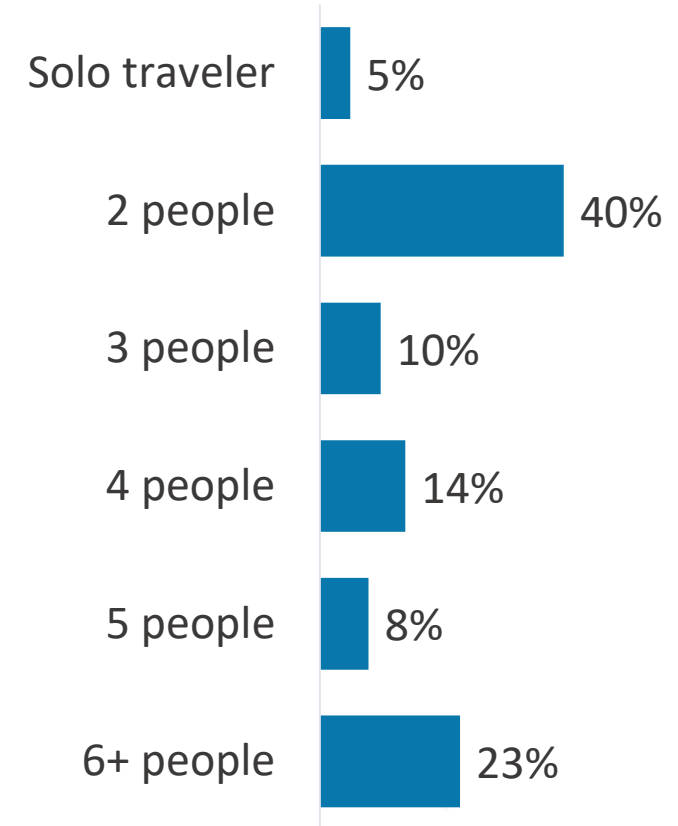
State	% of Visitors
Georgia	16%
Florida	15%
Alabama	12%
Texas	8%
Tennessee	7%
Kentucky	4%
Louisiana	4%
Michigan	4%
Illinois	3%
Indiana	3%
Ohio	3%



TRAVEL PARTY SIZE AND COMPOSITION

Visitors traveled in a party composed of **4.0** people.

39% of visitors traveled with children under the age of 20.

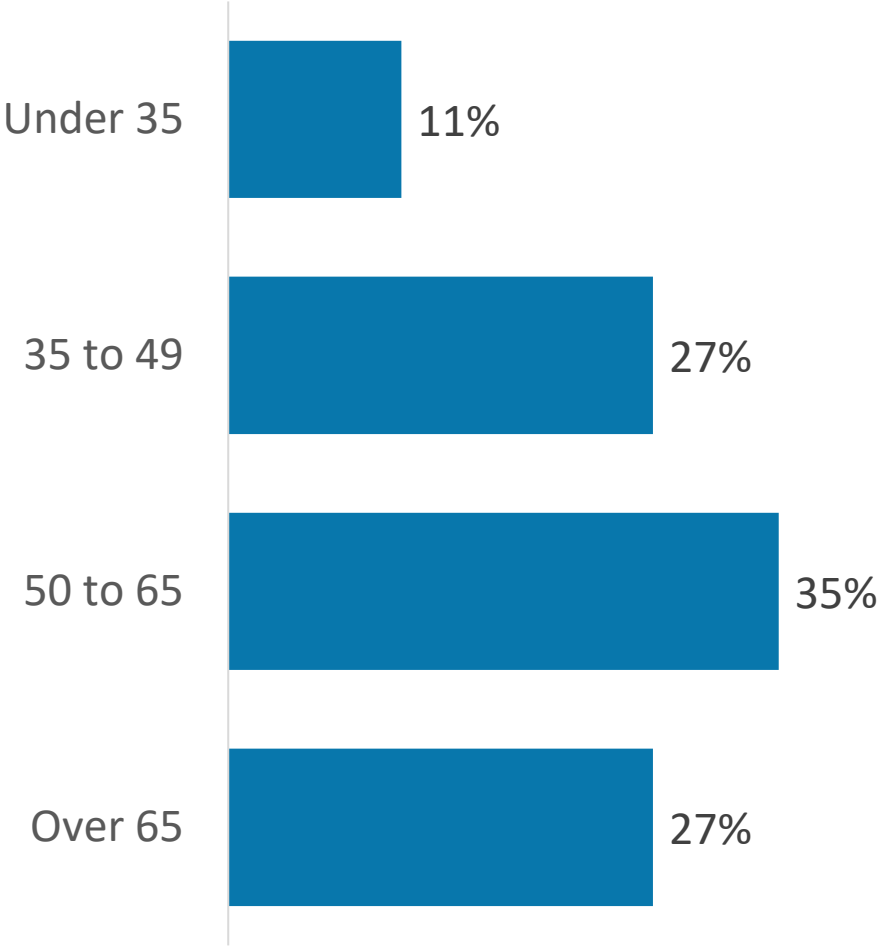


¹Multiple responses permitted.

AGE OF WINTER VISITORS

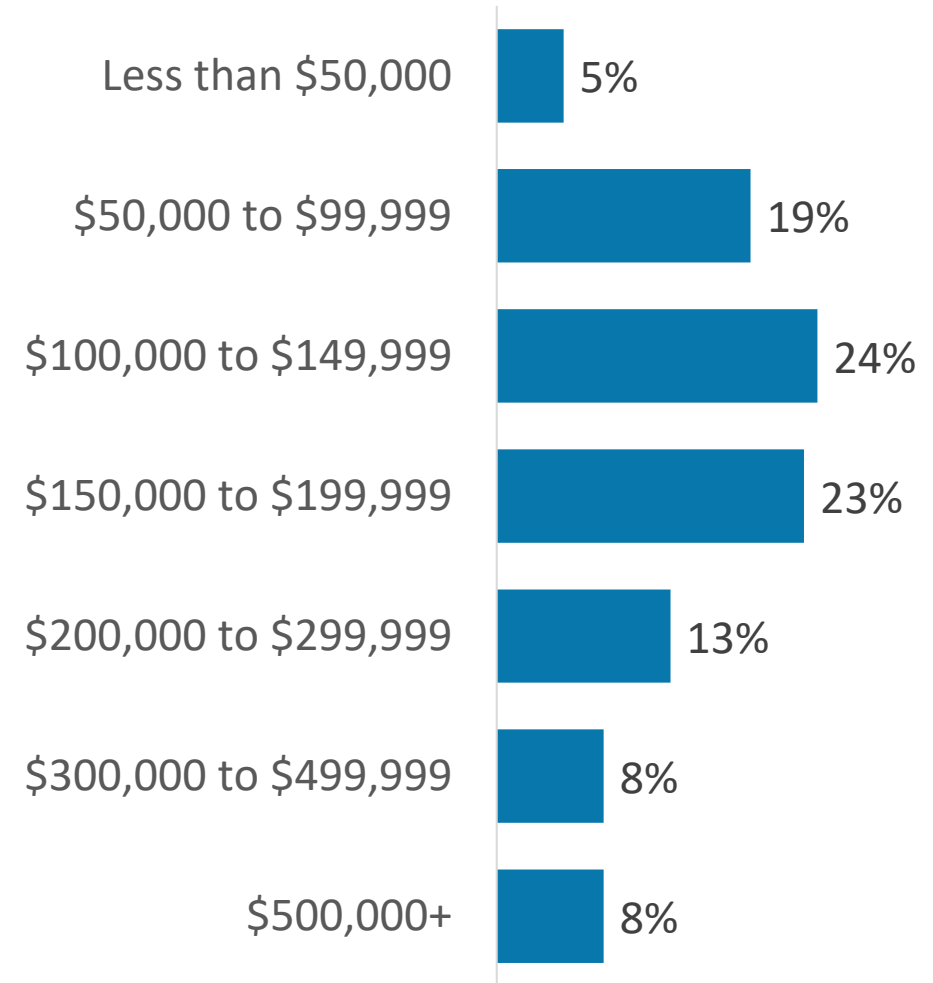


Median age of Winter visitors was **55 years old.**

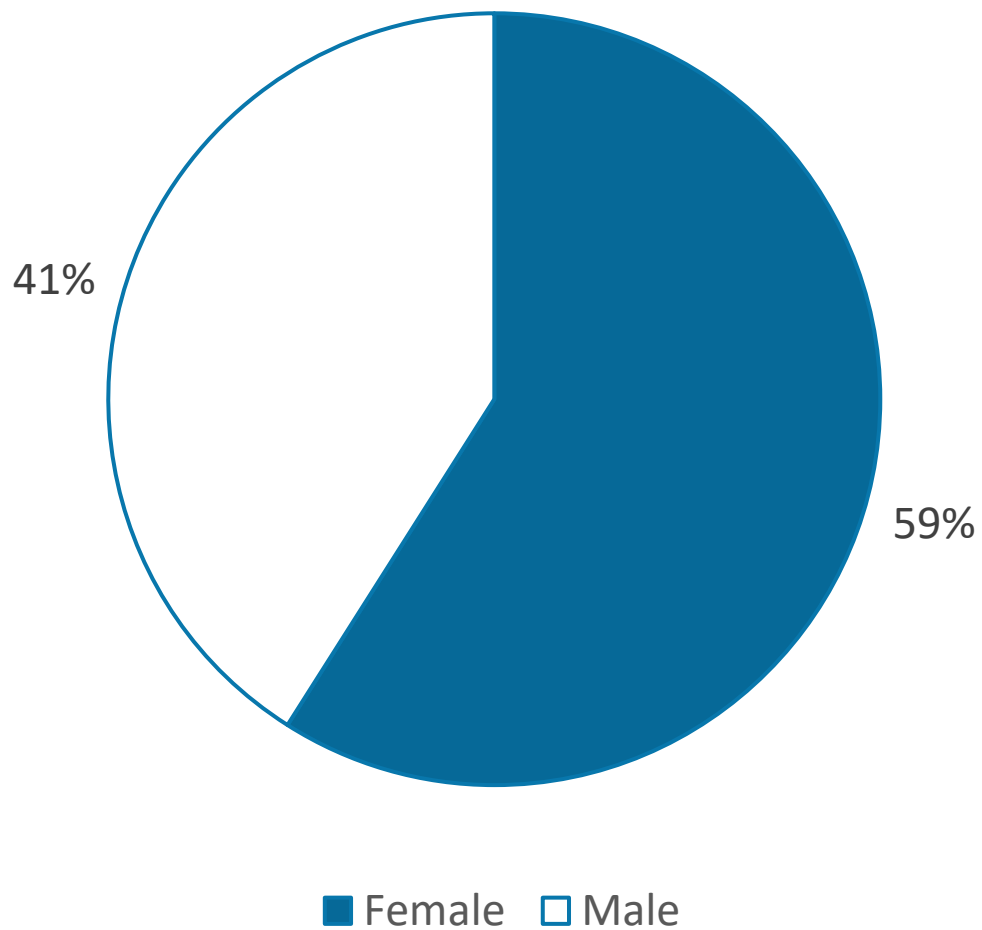


TOTAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 2020

Winter visitors had a median household income of **\$154,300**.



GENDER

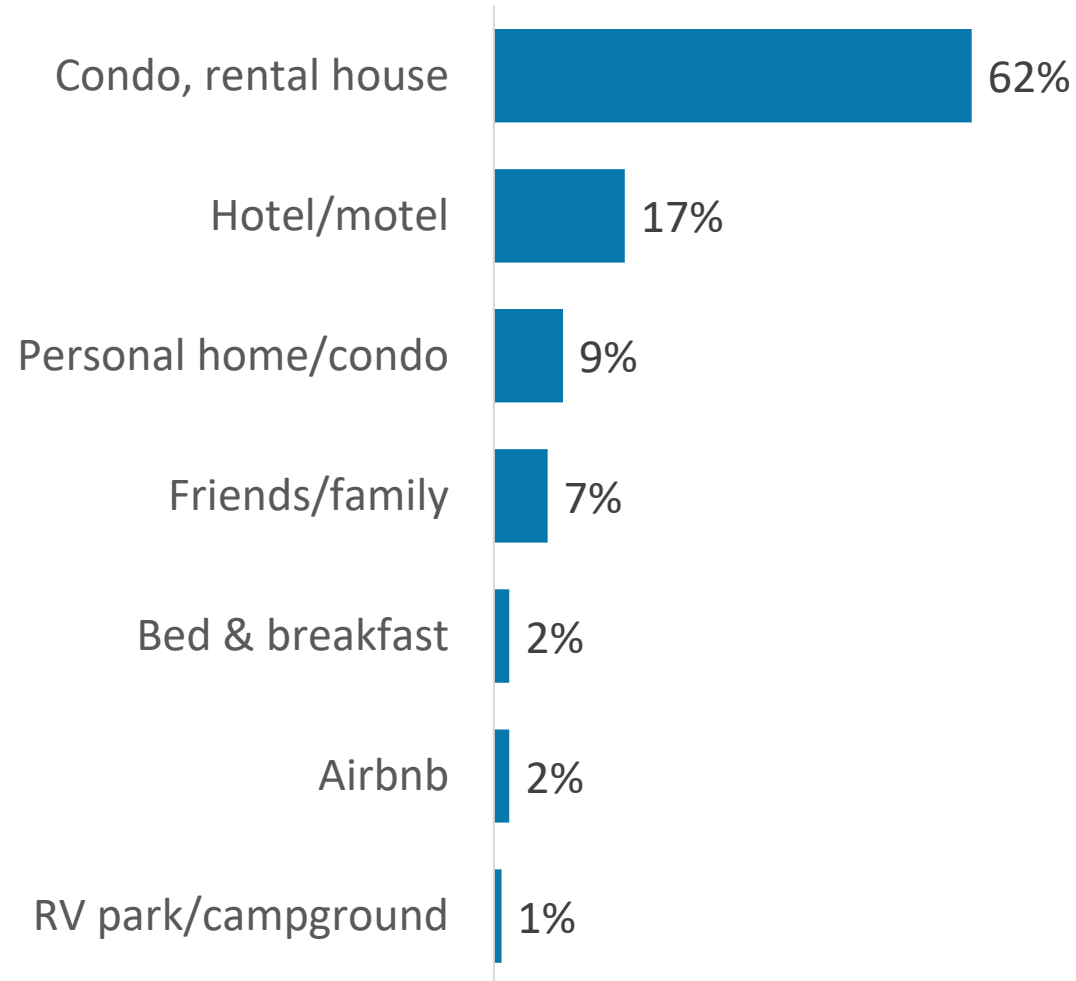


Responses impacted by person more willing to be interviewed

VISITOR JOURNEY: TRIP EXPERIENCE



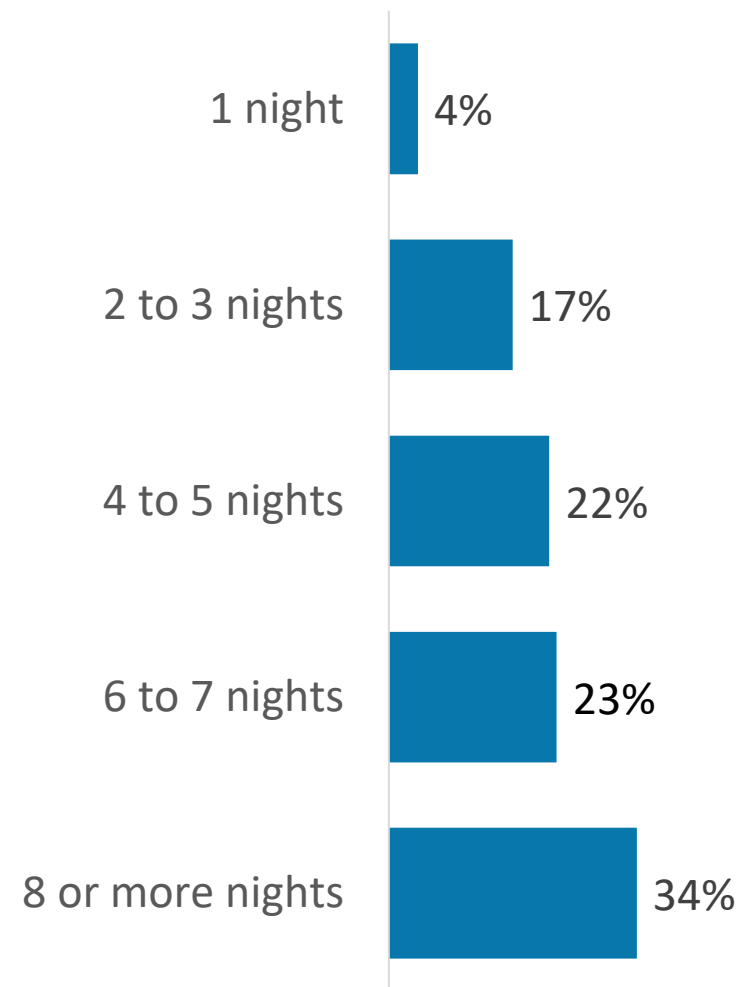
VISITOR'S PAID ACCOMMODATIONS



LENGTH OF STAY

Winter visitors¹ spent an average of **8.1** nights in South Walton.

When including long-term winter visitors², average length of stay was **13.5** nights.



¹Visitors who stayed in South Walton up to 30 nights.

²Includes visitors who stayed in South Walton for 30 nights or more.

NUMBER OF VISITS TO SOUTH WALTON



14% of Winter visitors were visiting for the first time.



2 in 5 Winter visitors have visited South Walton more than 10 times.

That was my first time



14%

2 – 3



17%

4 – 5



11%

6 – 10



18%

11 – 20



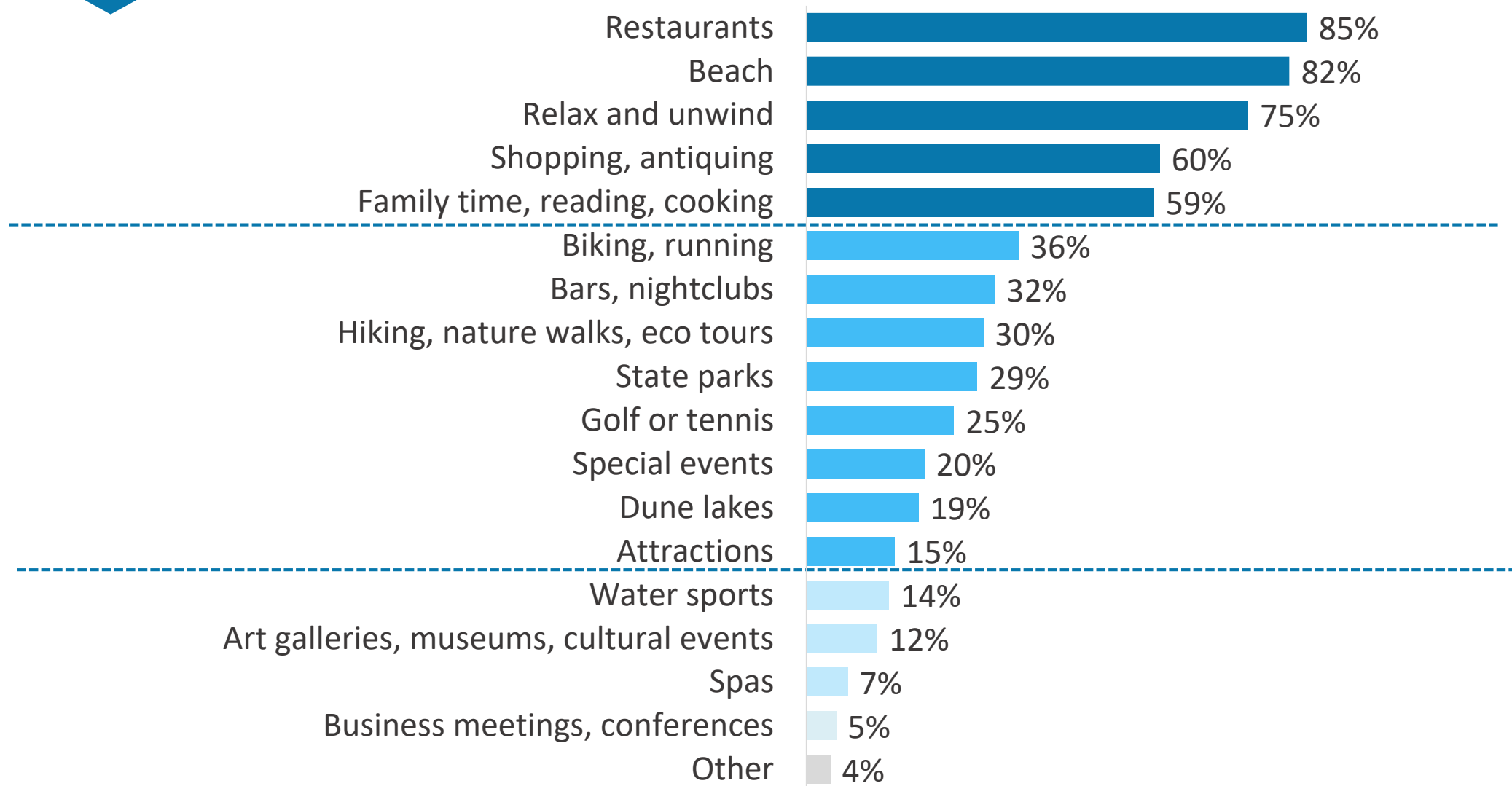
18%

21+



22%

VISITOR ACTIVITIES¹



¹Multiple responses permitted.

TYPICAL SOUTH WALTON TRAVEL PARTY EXPENSES¹

Visitor Metrics ¹	Average Daily Expenditure	Total Trip Expenditure
Accommodations	\$252	\$1,764
Restaurants	\$135	\$945
Groceries	\$56	\$392
Shopping	\$207	\$1,449
Entertainment	\$105	\$735
Transportation	\$45	\$315
Other	\$29	\$203
Total	\$829	\$5,803

¹For visitors staying 30 days or fewer

²This figure differs from the ADR reported by properties because of various fees added to the price visitors pay such as swim & tennis fees, amenity fees, housekeeping fees, reservation fees, arts & entertainment fees, linen charges, damage fees, etc.

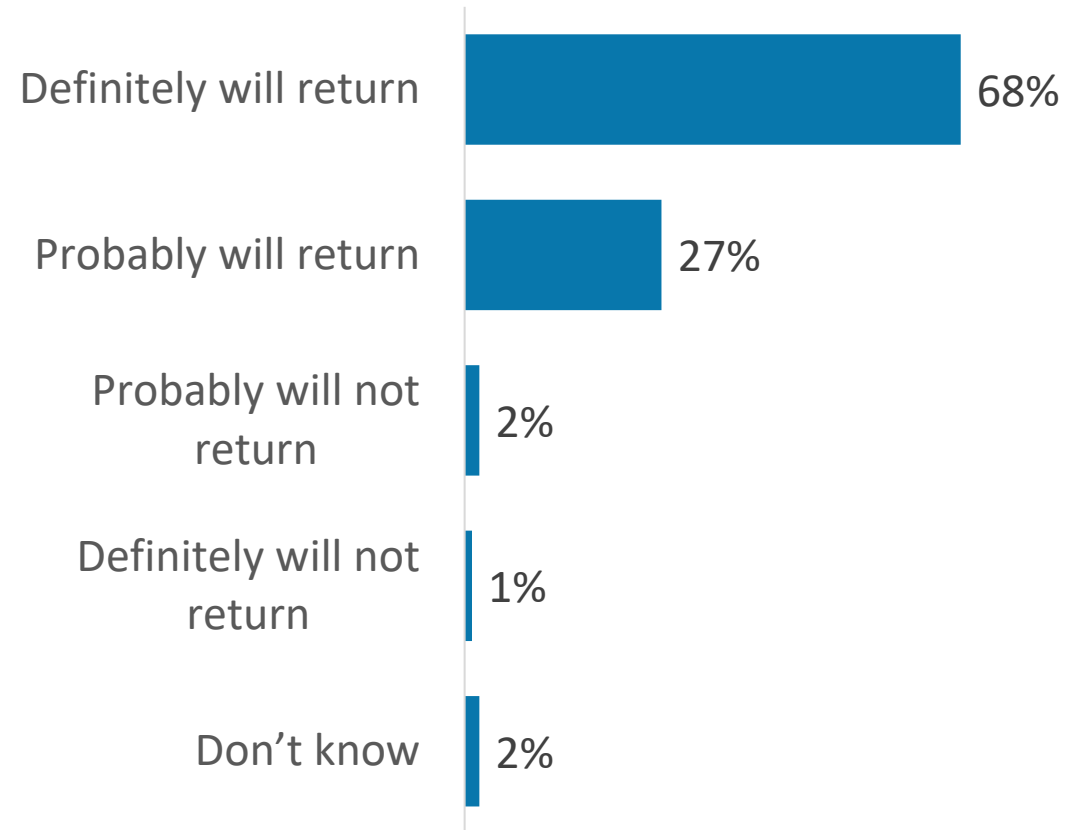
VISITOR JOURNEY: POST-TRIP EVALUATION



SATISFACTION WITH SOUTH WALTON

Visitors gave South Walton a rating of **8.9¹** as a place to vacation.

95% will return to South Walton.²

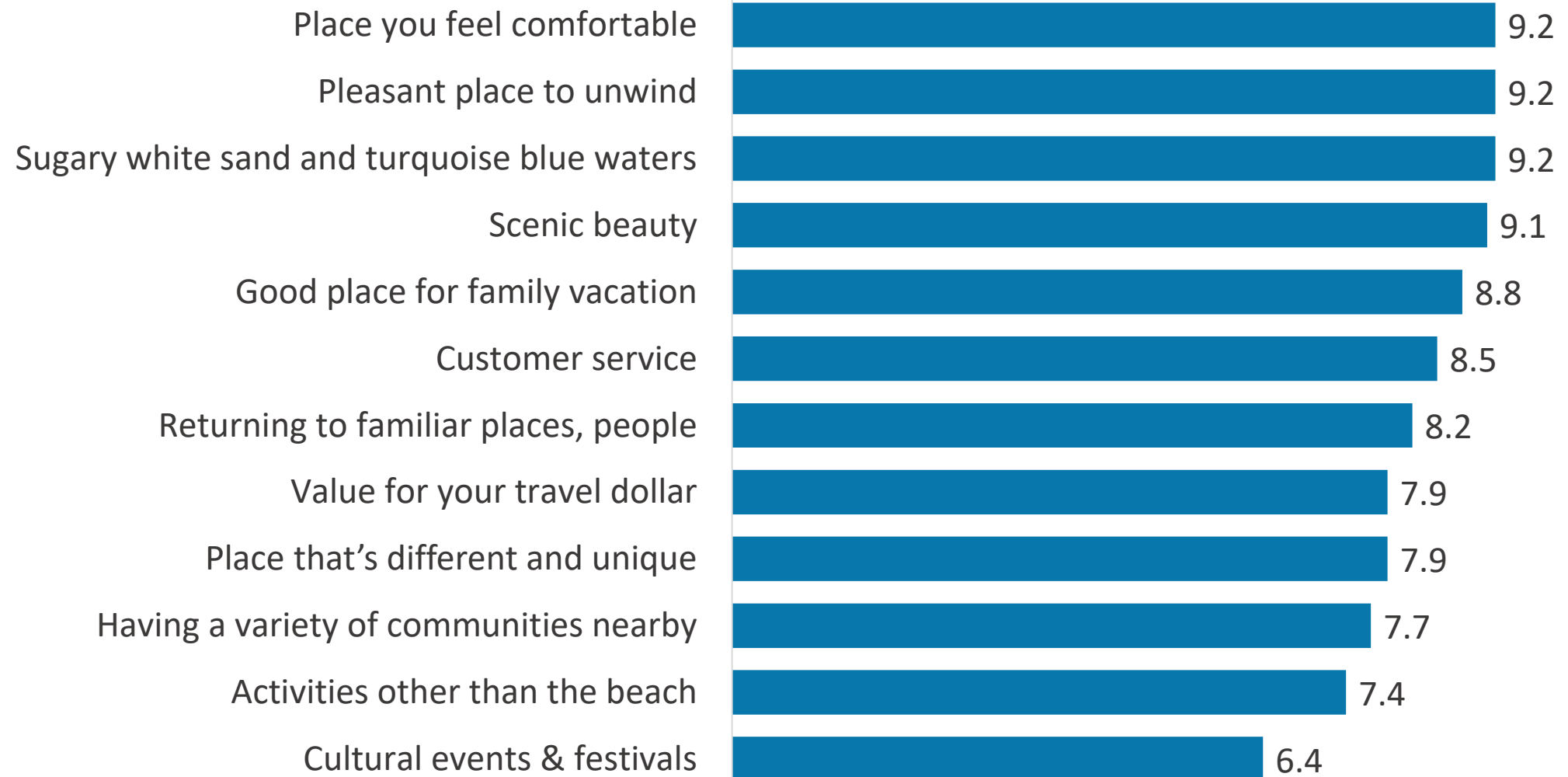


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¹ 10 = Excellent; 1 = Poor

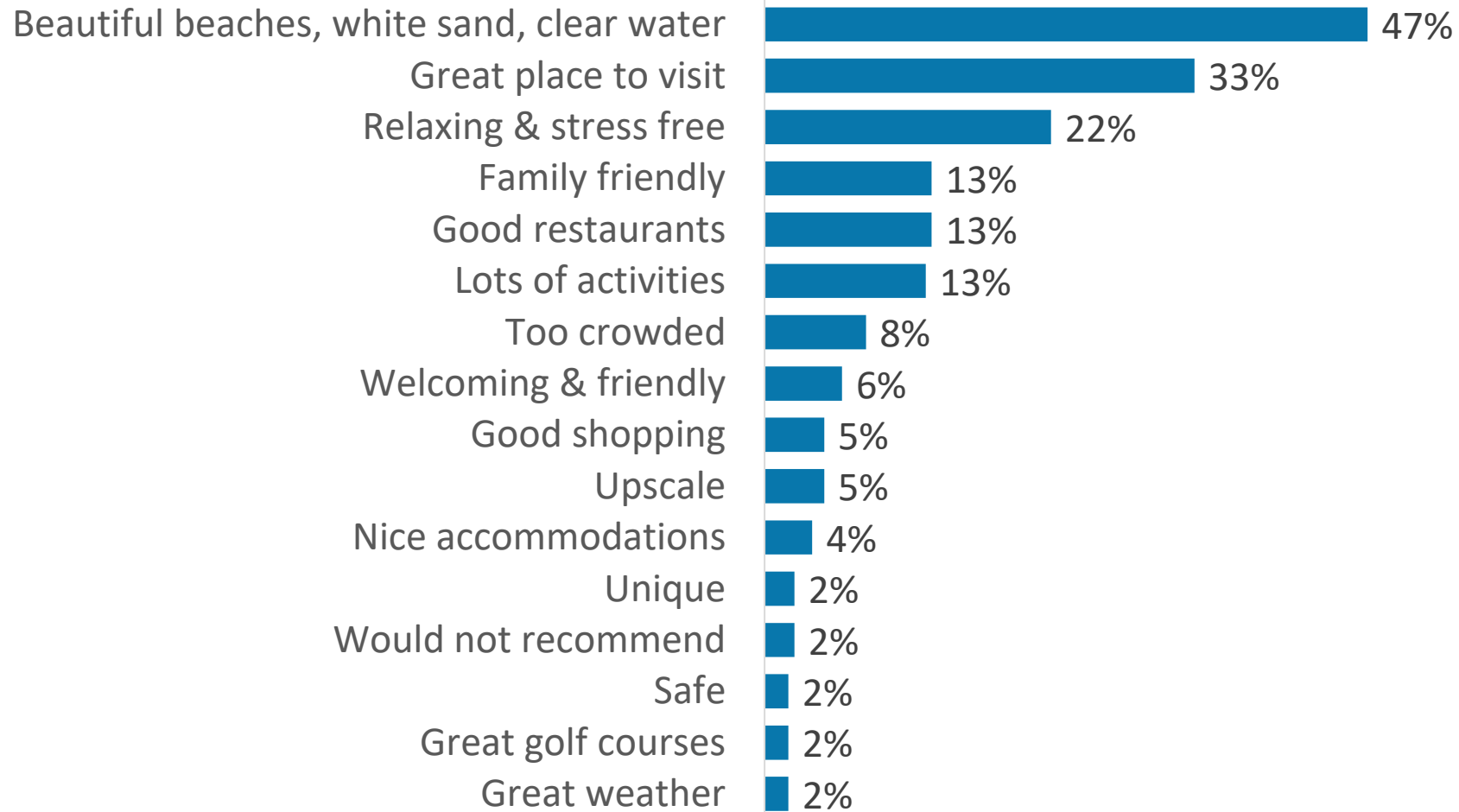
² 3% of all visitors will not return to South Walton for the following reasons:
1. Too expensive. 2. Too crowded. 3. Parking was a problem. 4. Traffic was a problem.

RATING SOUTH WALTON¹



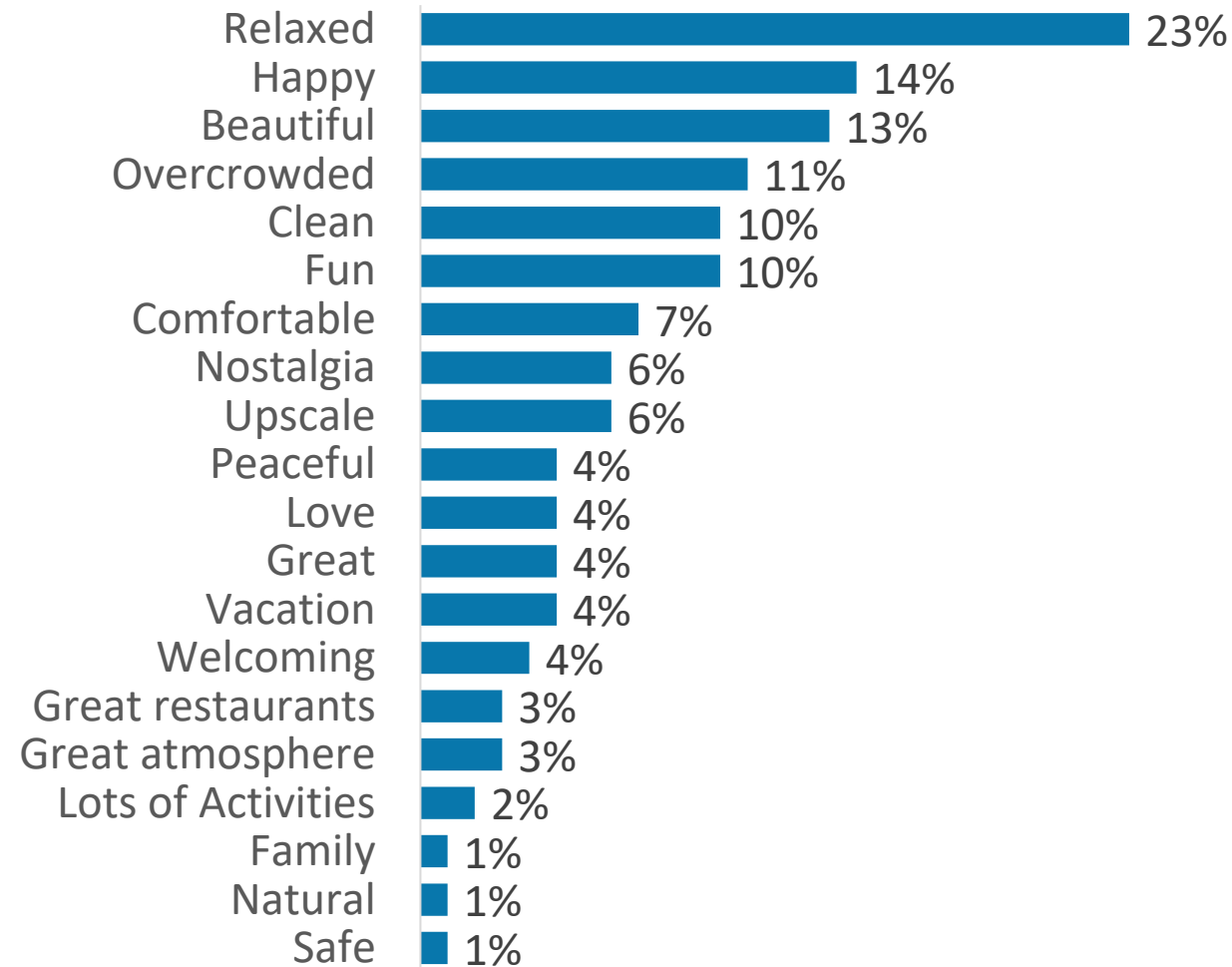
¹ Rated on a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 is poor and 10 is excellent.

VISITOR DESCRIPTIONS OF SOUTH WALTON¹



¹Coded verbatim response; multiple responses permitted.

EMOTIONS ASSOCIATED WITH SOUTH WALTON¹



¹Coded verbatim response; multiple responses permitted.

VISIT SOUTH WALTON

Winter 2021 Visitor Tracking Study December 2020 – February 2021

Joseph St. Germain, Ph.D., President
Phillip Downs, Ph.D., Senior Partner
Rachael Anglin, Director of Research
Erin Dinkel, Senior Project Director
Glencora Haskins, Project Director
Isiah Lewis, Project Director
Downs & St. Germain Research
850-906-3111 | www.dsg-research.com

