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From: Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism

Alabama beaches recover from Gulf oil spill to post third consecutive record tourism year

Gulf Shores and Orange Beach continue upward trend for the third year as this beach community rebounded from a double-digit decrease in 2010

GULF SHORES AND ORANGE BEACH, ALA. – Visitors to Alabama’s beaches in 2013 arrived in record numbers and left behind more money as they returned to their Southeast and Midwest homes refreshed and rejuvenated. Economically, the Gulf Shores and Orange Beach area closed 2013 at \$343 million in lodging revenue and at \$683 million in retail sales. The 5.9 percent and 6.5 percent increases, respectively, officially establish the area’s third consecutive record year for tourism, further proving the industry’s recovery.

“These numbers show that more and more guests are choosing our beach destination and are spending more money as they enjoy all of the area’s amenities,” said Herb Malone, president and CEO of Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism (GSOBT), the area’s official destination marketing organization. “To see back-to-back-to-back record years is unprecedented, especially when you consider that the first record came immediately after the 2010 Gulf oil spill. We continued the upward trend with 2012 and now 2013 thanks to the synergistic effort of our local and state governments and tourism businesses, who all partnered diligently to welcome these guests with Southern hospitality.”

2013 was also a milestone at GSOBT as the convention and visitors bureau celebrated its 20th anniversary.

“Since 1993, we’ve grown a lot as we’ve seen nearly 9,000 lodging rooms added on the island, a \$281 million increase in lodging rentals and \$520 million jump in retail sales,” Malone said. “We’ve enhanced our product through the development of several trails ([birding](#), [Civil War](#) and [scenic byway](#)), promoted the sinking of [The LuLu](#) and added a sports commission to serve this emerging market. But most importantly, we are still our true selves. Guests experience an authentic Southern beach destination that has grown tremendously over the years, but we still feel like a small town, and our best asset continues to be our people.”

For more information on this family beach destination, visit www.gulfshores.com or www.orangebeach.com.

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Infographic:

High resolution: <http://bit.ly/1dSl1jt>

Low resolution: <http://bit.ly/1aMydfb>

Additional Information:

Tourism numbers chart: <http://bit.ly/LLVanI>

Tourism presentation including numbers: <http://bit.ly/1kk3Ugg>

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About Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism:

Gulf Shores & Orange Beach Tourism serves as the official destination marketing organization for the Cities of Gulf Shores and Orange Beach in addition to the unincorporated area of Fort Morgan. To learn more about **the whole different state of discovery** on Alabama's 32 miles of white-sand, visit either www.gulfshores.com or www.orangebeach.com. This convention and visitors bureau is an accredited Destination Marketing Organization (2012-2016) and is an official corporate sponsor of the Southeastern Conference (SEC).