The Tourism Economy Study: CCU Lodging Update, Dec. 18, 2014

Current Performance Estimates

Hotel, Condo-Hotel and Campsite Properties

Preliminary results from Coastal Carolina University’s voluntary sample of hotel, condo-hotel and campsite (HC-HC) properties along the Grand Strand during the week of Dec. 7-13, 2014, indicate that the midweek occupancy rate averaged 21.5 percent, up 2.4 occupancy points or 12.6 compared to the equivalent week of 2013. During the Friday-Saturday night period, the occupancy rate averaged 38.1 percent, up 13 occupancy points or 51.7 percent compared to the equivalent weekend last year. The average daily rate (ADR) was up 3.3 percent during the midweek period and up 15.9 percent during the weekend period compared with last year. Consequently, HC-HC occupancy for the week overall was up 5.6 occupancy points or 27 percent, and revenue per available room (RevPAR) was up 38.4 percent compared with the equivalent week of 2013.

VRPs

Based on the Brittain Center’s observations of random samples of Internet websites of vacation rental properties (VRPs) in the coastal sections of Horry and Georgetown counties (338 of the 3,135 units) for which complete data are publicly available, 34.4 percent were reserved or blocked from nightly rentals during the nights of Dec. 6-12. The percentage of VRPs reserved in Horry and Georgetown counties combined was up 4.3 occupancy points or 14.2 percent compared with the equivalent period last year. For the nights of Dec. 13-19, 30.6 percent of the VRPs were reserved or blocked from reservation. The level of reservations was up 3.5 occupancy points or 12.8 percent compared with the equivalent week of 2013.

Six-Week Average Performance

During the nights of Nov. 2-Dec. 13, 31.8 percent of the lodging properties in the Brittain Center’s voluntary sample of HC-HC properties located along the Grand Strand were occupied, which was up by 2.4 occupancy points or 8.3 percent compared with the equivalent weeks last year. The average daily rate for these properties was up 0.3 percent compared with the equivalent weeks of 2013, leading to an 8.6 percent increase in average RevPAR compared with the equivalent period of 2013. During the same period this year, 41.9 percent of the VRP bedrooms in the Center’s random sample of Horry County VRPs were reserved or blocked from nightly rentals, up 1 occupancy point or 2.6 percent compared with the equivalent weeks last year. Advertised prices for this segment were up 4.8 percent compared with last year, which would lead to an increase in revenue per available bedroom of 7.5 percent.

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Forecast and Analysis

According to weather.com at the time of this writing, the forecast for the weekend of Dec. 20-21 calls for a 90 and 40 percent chance of precipitation, with highs of 51 and 60 degrees, respectively. The Brittain Center predicts that average occupancy for its sample of HC-HC properties may be near or above 22 percent for the weekend nights of Dec. 19-20, near the occupancy level of the equivalent weekend of 2013. Based on this week’s observations by Center researchers of 338 websites of VRPs available to rent in Horry and Georgetown counties, 38.3 percent are reserved for the week of Dec 20-26. VRP reservations in Horry and Georgetown counties for that week are up 2.3 occupancy points or 6.4 percent compared with the same week of 2013.

Additional Research Notes

The Brittain Center’s preliminary sample of 28 HC-HC properties reporting for the week of Dec. 7-13 consisted of 12 hotels (all but five are oceanfront/view, and five are brand affiliated), 15 condo-hotels (all are oceanfront/view, and one is brand affiliated), and one campground resort property. The results for the current moving six-week period are based on an average sample size of 8,852 units per week average.

Data collected and analysis created by:

The Clay Brittain Jr. Center for Resort Tourism

Taylor Damonte, Ph.D., Professor/Director

Pierre Valdema, Candelyn Bond and Staci Willette, Research Assistants

In cooperation with:

The Center for Economic and Community Development

Gary Loftus, Director

Note: The above analysis is based on sample estimates. Actual business performance results may vary greatly. Therefore, neither the above Centers nor Coastal Carolina University warrant the use of the above data or analysis for specific business application.