

The impact of the recent recession upon Tourism behavior

H. Leslie Furr
Department of Management
Georgia Southern University

Mark A. Bonn
Dedman School of Hospitality
Florida State University

ABSTRACT

The Labor Department's 2012 report on consumer spending confirmed the recent recession forced consumers to alter the typical lifestyle spending habits. It's apparent from the available consumer expenditure data that changes in the spending behavior for travelers dining choices continued beyond several years into the recovery period. In fact, the recorded decrease in food expenditures, from December 2007 to June 2009, was the largest inflation-adjusted amount ever recorded by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) since 1984.

The increase in unemployment to 9.3% in 2009 was another important attribute of the consumers' reduced spending levels during this recessionary period. According to the Food Expenditure Tables and the consumer Expenditure Survey U.S. household spending on food declined 5% between 2006 and 2009.

The expanded purpose of this study illustrated that travelers' food consumption, tourism expenditures and shopping behavior were affected by the recent recession.

	Table 1		
	Pre 2.5 yrs.	Recession yrs.	Post 2.5 yrs.
	Mean	Mean	Mean
total\$	258.67 _a	247.89 _b	267.55 _c
Shopping	29 _a	32 _b	16 _c
Lodging	39 _a	57 _b	59 _b
Groceries	11 _a	11 _a	24 _b
Restaurants	59 _a	65 _b	68 _c

The findings from 32,000 random day and site interviews in Tampa indicated that a reduction in unemployment affected more aspects of the travel economy than the average spending per party per day.

NO13060

Keywords: Travel expenditures, Travel spending behavior, Economic growth, recession and recovery