

Columbus Day Weekend and Fall Wrap-Up

Once again, thanks to our “reporters” from around the state who shared the following information with the Travel Council.

From **Jim Narkiewicz**, Keene Super 8 Motel/ Monadnock Region, Monadnock Travel Council: “A very busy Columbus Day weekend with 100% occupancy and great weather. Many travelers came from as far as California, Texas, Ohio and Illinois. Visitors from the New England States came primarily from CT, VT, MA and NH. The largest numbers came from NY. International Travel has increased due to the value of the dollar, especially from Canada (Nova Scotia and Ontario). Other International travelers have been from Australia, England and Scotland.”

From **Denise Meadows** with the EF Lane Hotel in Keene, “The Monadnock Region was sold out for the weekend and as far as I am aware through phone calls so was the rest of the state and most of Vermont! The leaves are just beginning to turn in the Monadnock Region. This weekend was a good kick off for the foliage season with awesome weather. The EF Lane Hotel is sold out every night this week (except Columbus Day @ 75%) through the 13th. Everyone is gearing up for the Pumpkin Festival, and I put a request out state wide via the Monadnock Travel Council for availability state wide for the weekend on the 20th & we now have a well composed list to pass out to members to keep folks in NH that are coming for the festival.”

B.J. "Doc" Noel of the Hampton Area Chamber of Commerce wrote, “Although the weather was nice during Columbus Day weekend there is still not a ton of activity at the beach as most people do go to the mountains for the foliage. However, because the weather was so beautiful, many of the hotels stated that they were busier than usual, due to people staying over.”

Marti Mayne with the Mt. Washington Valley Chamber of Commerce reports, “It certainly looks like Mt. Washington Valley saw record numbers of visitors Columbus Day weekend. I heard from Krissy Fraser at Attitash that they welcomed the highest number of attendees to their annual Oktoberfest they've ever had. Also heard from Cranmore that they launched its Ghoullog Halloween attraction and surpassed expectations for first weekend attendance. Over 1,000 visitors attended the event which features a haunted chairlift ride and a tour of a haunted house at the Summit of Cranmore Mountain. I heard from Wills Inn and Royalty Inn that they were sold out for the three day weekend. Don King at Royalty Inn says he's seeing at least 15% more Canadians this year. We saw Canadians from New Brunswick, Montreal, and Ontario. They came, they shopped and they ate. The Valley's restaurants were filled throughout the weekend. With Columbus Day falling a little earlier on the calendar, we have additional weeks of foliage to look forward to. I expect by the end of October, we'll hear that it's been a very strong foliage season for all business sectors in Mt. Washington Valley (and we did!).”

Jayne O'Connor with White Mountains Attractions reports, “I would call the Columbus Day weekend a ‘perfect storm for tourism, with excellent weather, perfect peak foliage and a long weekend to enjoy it all! It was tough to beat last year’s numbers, since last year was also an ideal weekend, but I would say most venues met or exceeded them. The number of international tourists was very high, and we also saw the return of our visitors from the distant domestic

markets such as Texas and California and Florida. As expected, we saw a healthy increase in the number of Canadian visitors over last year, as well.

The week after Columbus Day has remained above average, and we are expecting to get one more solid foliage weekend. The motorcoach tours have learned to capitalize on the lower cost and less crowded week after Columbus Day. This year, they should also have enough remaining foliage to keep their visitors happy.

Our expectations for the remainder of 2007 look good, as businesses continue to grow their packages for pre-holiday shopping, Christmas Tree outings, Santa's Village Christmastime trips and the popular Polar Express excursions. These pre-holiday activities have turned the shoulder season into an active time in the White Mountains as we wait for the start of ski season.”