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CITY OF CHICAGO

CHOOSE
CHICAGO

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**MAYOR EMANUEL AND CHOOSE CHICAGO ANNOUNCE NEAR RECORD TOURISM NUMBERS IN
MAY**

Hotel Occupancy sets near record May, Driven by Record Growth in Leisure Tourism

Mayor Emanuel and Choose Chicago today announced near record hotel occupancy rates for the month of May in Chicago at 81.2 percent. Overnight leisure visitation to Chicago was a record May occupancy of 48%, an increase of 8.5 percent over the May 2012 level of 44.2% and spurred much of the overall growth. The news comes just a month after Mayor Emanuel and Choose Chicago announced near-record tourism rates for Chicago in 2012, with over 46.2 million visitors to the city.

"Choose Chicago continues to build on its success and fill our city's hotels," Mayor Rahm Emanuel said. "These records show that our strategic, targeted approach is working and creating strong economic benefits for the whole city, such as new jobs and tax revenue. I look forward to many more visitors coming to enjoy our outstanding city. It's going to be a wonderful summer."

Average daily rates and revenue per available room also grew dramatically, at 5.4 and 9.6 percent respectively. These May rates surpassed pre-recession rates in 2006-2007, even as Chicago adds hotel rooms to keep up with the growing demand.

"The success of our hotels reflects our commitment to a proactive and aggressive marketing approach," said Don Welsh, Choose Chicago President and CEO. "We've added 4,500 rooms and average daily rates have increased by more than \$20 since 2006, and yet more Chicago hotel rooms are filled than ever before. We have seen rapid growth in our tourism industry lately, and we expect that success to continue moving forward."

When Mayor Emanuel took office, he worked with Chicago tourism leaders to create one streamlined tourism organization, which became Choose Chicago. Mayor Emanuel set a lofty goal of 50 million visitors per year by 2020, which would be an increase of nearly 11 million from 2010's

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total. With 46.2 million visitors in 2012, the city has already reached 65 percent of the mayor's goal in just two years.

In April 2014, Chicago will host the U.S. Travel Association's International Pow Wow, the world's largest travel trade show. Chicago last hosted the premier event in 1998, and has grown its tourism industry considerably since then.

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