

What does The Telluride Tourism Board do, is a question that Realtors often hear from locals and clients. The Telluride Association of Realtors would like to offer a brief answer to this question and summarize the benefits offered by our local tourism board and shed some light on recent local occupancy rates as reported by their organization.

The mission of the Telluride Tourism Board, is to market and maintain the quality of the Telluride region experience for the benefit of both the visitor and the economic sustainability of the community. This nonprofit community organization promotes the Telluride region through general marketing and public relations efforts, group and conference bookings, a central reservations system for the general public and operating the Visitors Information Center, now located at 700 West Colorado Avenue. They also operate VisitTelluride.com, the official website of the Telluride Tourism Board and the region. Here, one can learn about lodging choices, summer or winter activities, summer festivals, winter events and even book travel online through Telluride Central Reservations. A wealth of additional information on the Telluride region can also be found here from the event calendar, to health and wellness to a community business directory. The "In the Box" E-mail Newsletter also keeps locals and tourists informed. The Tourism Board is primarily funded by a 2% lodging tax provided by the towns of Mountain Village and Telluride and San Miguel County, and commissions off of internal sales. One of the major benefits to the local business community is the lodging occupancy reports that they provide. These analyses can provide insight for local businesses to prepare for the upcoming seasons and compare our resort and economic health to other destination resorts.

Over the last 6 months the Board reports that Telluride is up in lodging bookings (as reported by 14 local properties) by over 19% as compared to the same period April-September 2009. Also the average daily rate for lodging increased with demand this summer and showed gains of almost 6%. Great news! In fact August 2010 has outpaced August 2009 by almost 25% and all other summer months have seen significant gains as well. That kind of upswing is just not happening at other destination resorts such as Crested Butte and Sun Valley ID or around the country. In fact, according to a recent poll of tax collections by the Colorado Association of Ski Towns, the Telluride region was the destination showing the quickest tourist related economic recovery in the entire state.

In addition, the Tourism Board measures ourselves against 12 other resort destinations in lodging performance and the Telluride region sat on top of the destination comparison report for most of the summer in both occupancy and rate gains. The upcoming reservations for the next six months show a slight decrease of 3% but optimism remains as marketing and PR engines kick into gear this week. Considering the recent trends of the traveler, we know people are waiting to the last second to book their vacations. Overall the Telluride Tourism Board does a wonderful job at promoting Telluride and drawing tourists to our region and is a huge benefit to us all. The guests they recruit buy our lift tickets, eat in our restaurants, stay in our accommodations and buy Real Estate. The trickledown economics of their efforts helps us all in numerous ways. If you want to learn more about the Tourism Board's efforts, their public annual meeting will be held December 9th from 9-11am at the Sheridan Opera House.

Teddy Errico, Past President for the Telluride Association of Realtors®