

Tourism News



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DUTCHESS IS 1ST TOURISM AGENCY IN HUDSON VALLEY TO RELEASE VIRTUAL REALITY VIDEO

POUGHKEEPSIE, NY– If you’ve ever wanted to view the Hudson River and surrounding mountains from the open air cockpit of a bi-plane without leaving the comfort of your couch, look no further than Dutchess Tourism’s first virtual reality (VR) video.

Dutchess Tourism, Inc. (DTI) announced that residents and visitors alike can now experience some of the “Distinctly Dutchess” activities and attractions the county has to offer through the magic of virtual reality by going to <http://dutchesstourism.com/360>. The 360° version can be viewed on desktop computers and the virtual reality version on mobile devices or smart phones with a special VR viewer and the Vimeo app.

“VR video is an important cutting-edge tool that allows Dutchess Tourism to engage audiences in a new, high-tech way that particularly appeals to millennial travelers,” said DTI President & CEO Mary Kay Vrba.

According to Cisco’s *2016 Visual Networking Index*, “82% of consumer interest traffic will be video by the end of the decade.” Additionally, the *2016 YouGov Travel Booking Trends Study* found that “71% of prospective travelers will download travel-specific VR content to their devices, and 33% confirmed they would book their next vacation following a positive VR experience.”

According to DTI Director of Tour & Travel Dawn Hopper, “Our virtual reality videos are an incredibly valuable tool for use at domestic and international travel trade shows in a way that printed materials are not.”

First-hand knowledge, gained through attendance at I Love NY coordinated sales missions to Europe, showed that many international tour operators are installing VR decks so prospective travelers can get a hint of what they’ll experience when they visit a destination. Production of VR videos allows Dutchess Tourism and the Hudson Valley to sell a new experience to visitors traveling from around the world -- especially through new connections created by Norwegian Airlines’ flights into Stewart International Airport that bring visitors from Ireland, Scotland, England and beyond to the Hudson Valley.

Tourism continues to be a major economic driver for Dutchess County. More than 4.75 million people visit the county annually, and in addition to spending over half a billion dollars on lodging, dining, shopping, area attractions and transportation, generated \$40.9 million in local taxes and \$31.7 million for New York State. According to the report, were it not for tourism-generated state and local taxes, the average household in Dutchess County would have to pay an additional \$678 to maintain the same level of government revenue.

2016 tourism spending in Dutchess County increased 7.6% over 2015 to more than \$568 million. This is the seventh consecutive year spending has increased and the one with the largest annual jump. Tourism is New York's fourth largest industry and employs 10,484 people within Dutchess County.

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ABOUT DUTCHESS TOURISM, INC.

The DTI office is located at 3 Neptune Road in the Town of Poughkeepsie with 19 Tourism Information Centers located around Dutchess County. Their website is www.DutchessTourism.com and they can be reached at 845-463-4000. Follow Dutchess Tourism on Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest and YouTube. Dutchess County Tourism was founded in 1984 under the umbrella of the Dutchess County Economic Development Corporation, became incorporated as Dutchess Tourism, Inc. in 2014 and is partially funded by monies received from the County of Dutchess.