

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Palm Beach County reassures \$7B tourism market post-Hurricane Irma

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The Breakers in Palm Beach, FL. Image credit: Discover the Palm Beaches

By STAFF REPORTS

Palm Beach County was among the fastest regions in Florida to recover from the effects of Hurricane Irma.

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According to the county's tourism marketing cooperation Discover The Palm Beaches, 98 percent of the area's hotels and 90 percent of its cultural attractions have reopened after the hurricane devastated parts of the Caribbean and much of Florida ([see story](#)). When natural disaster strikes popular tourist destinations, such as Florida's coastal communities, emphasizing the area's recovery can inspire travelers to keep these places top of mind for their next vacation.

Back to the beaches

Within 48 hours after Hurricane Irma passed over Florida, the Palm Beach International Airport reopened. The airport was the first in South Florida to return to service.

Also, Palm Beach County's 54 public parks reopened on Sept. 15. The county's public golf courses also have resumed tee times. Palm Beach County counts 160 golf courses in total.

The Palm Beaches are also home to nearly 17,000 hotel rooms, ranging from historic resorts to boutique inns. In addition to its hospitality offerings, the destination includes more than 200 art and culture organizations, world-class luxury retail and 125 miles of beaches.

Although Hurricane Irma was gentler to South Florida counties than originally forecasted, the region was still impacted by the storm due to wind damage, downed trees and minor flooding due to storm surges and rains.



The Boca Raton Resort & Club, a Waldorf Astoria Resort. Image credit: Discover The Palm Beaches

The 39 cities and towns and 15 tourism districts, from Boca Raton to Jupiter and Tequesta, generate \$4.6 billion in direct visitor spend and support more than 66,000 jobs for an economic impact of about \$7 billion.

"We are fortunate that The Palm Beaches experiences comparatively little damage from Irma, and our hearts go out to those who sustained the full impact," said Jorge Pesquera, president/CEO of Discover The Palm Beaches, in a statement. "Palm Beach County only experienced power outages and uprooted trees, and recovered in 72 hours.

"All area tourist attractions are open, vibrant and bustling, and the ocean is as inviting as ever," he said.

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