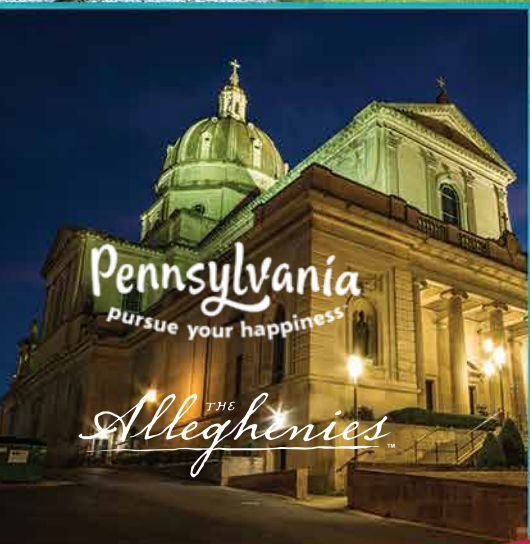


# SMALL DESTINATION BIG ADVENTURES

explore  
**Altoona**  
Pennsylvania

## 2023 YEAR IN REVIEW



explorealtoona.com  
**explorealtoona.com**





Explore Altoona is a partnership-based 501-c(6) non-profit organization designated by the Blair County Board of Commissioners to serve as the county's official Destination Marketing Organization, or Visitors Bureau. Our organization's **seasonal strategies** involve a **fully-integrated marketing program** consisting of various digital, online, print, and broadcast communications with the consistent plan of sharing with potential visitors the unique, authentic **vast variety** of experiences you will find on our website and other forms of media.

The **MISSION of Explore Altoona** is to market Greater Blair County as a premier visitor destination, offering a positive experience and fostering economic development.



## PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

To paraphrase the Greek philosopher, Aristotle, the sum of the parts is greater than any one individual. Combine this thought with a **vast variety** of individual parts and an effective **collaboration** begins to portray an entire product. Thus the concept of **partnership**!



Explore Altoona introduced a **newly created staff position** to this end in June of 2023, the **Director of Partnership Development**, and was extremely pleased to have appointed Patrick Schurr within this responsibility. Patrick's level of exhibited collaboration and extensive unique skill set have provided the impetus to establish partnership development as one of three pillars for **Explore Altoona's current strategic plan**.

Working together in unison as a **vast variety of experiences**, and welcoming visitors to the destination, holds great potential within Explore Altoona's **ongoing initiatives** in placing **Blair County** on the map for **travel purposes** and in continuing to drive **increasing visitor spending** into the **community's economy**.

# ECONOMIC HIGHLIGHTS

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TRAVEL AND TOURISM IN PA REPORT:

Blair County TOTAL generated in direct visitor spending

# \$371 MILLION

### 2022 BLAIR COUNTY SPENDING IN MILLIONS



2022 Total amount of 371 million represents a nearly 14% increase from 2021 and less than 1% below 2019's pre-pandemic, all-time high of \$374.4 million.

-PA DCED - Tourism Economics, an Oxford Economics Company, March 2024

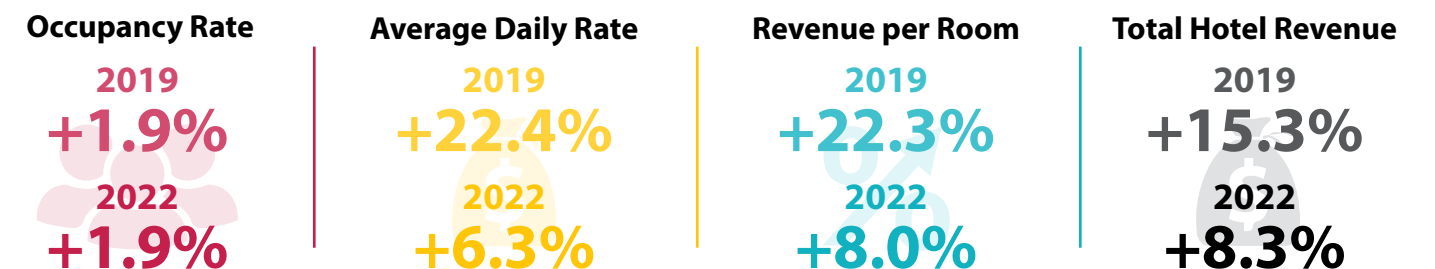
## HOTEL ANALYTICS

### SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH

Explore Altoona subscribes to Smith Travel Research, the leading global provider of hotel analytics, for three individual reports: one for the aggregate hotel data for Blair County, one for seven comparative markets across the state, and one for the aggregate hotel data for PA. This invaluable information provides the organization with useful insights on the county's overnight lodging performance as well as a gauge into comparisons across several levels. The reporting includes data on room occupancy percentage, average daily rate (ADR), revenue per available room (RevPAR), demand, and total hotel revenue which allows for benchmarking, analysis of the current market, competitor analysis, and subsequently, some strategic seasonal marketing analysis.

#### 2023 YEAR OVER YEAR INCREASES

Significant increases when compared to 2022 and 2019, reflective strong post-pandemic recovery!



-Smith Travel Research, a division of CoStar Group

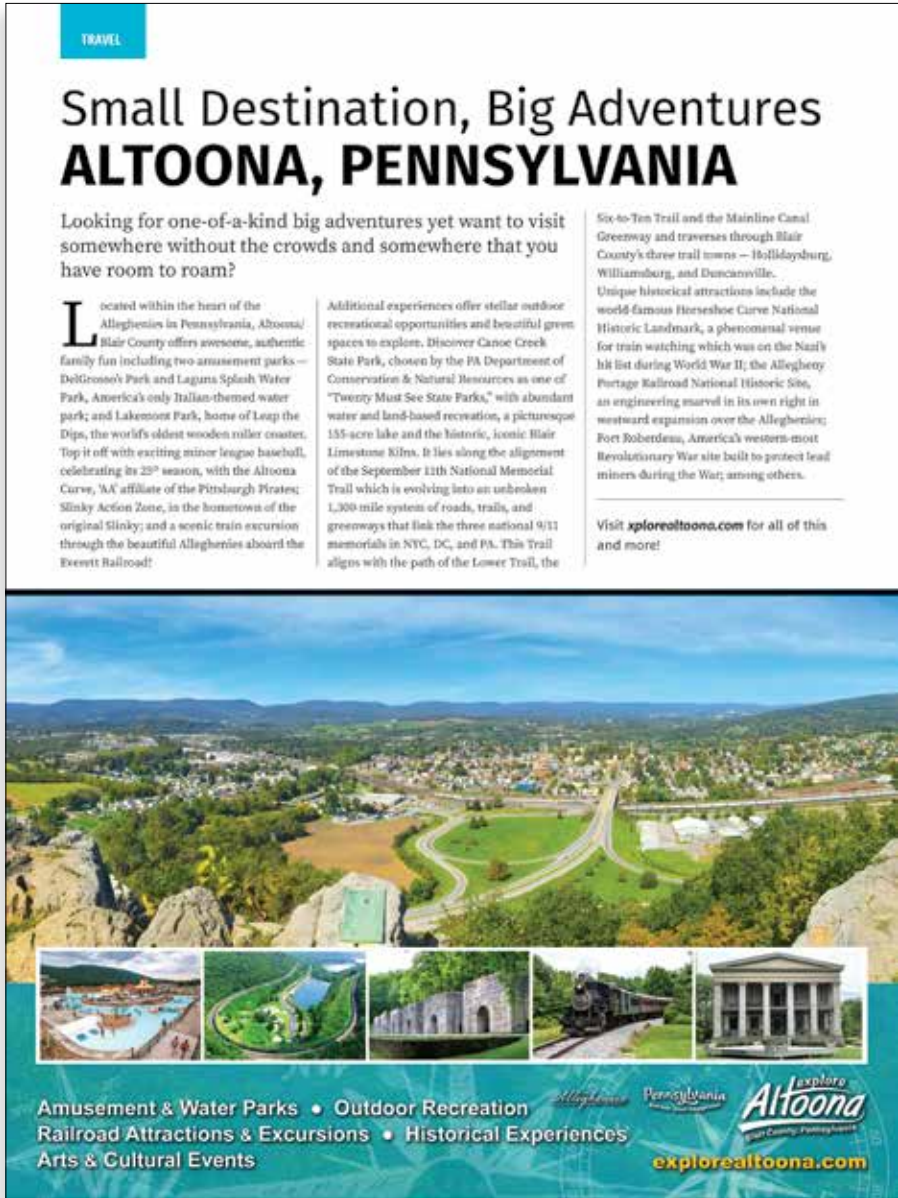


# 2023 MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS

As an **emerging travel destination**, **additional investments** provided the opportunity to enhance marketing assets and initiatives, reaching **new audiences** and **expanding brand awareness** of the **vast variety** of Blair County's visitor experiences.

Featured efforts included:

- Robust, integrated digital campaign with USA Today reaching millions of potential visitors
- TV Commercials in Major Target Markets - Pittsburgh, Harrisburg, and MD/VA
- Enhanced marketing partnership with VisitPA, showcasing Explore Altoona in print, online, and digital



Where and When Pennsylvania



Recreation News

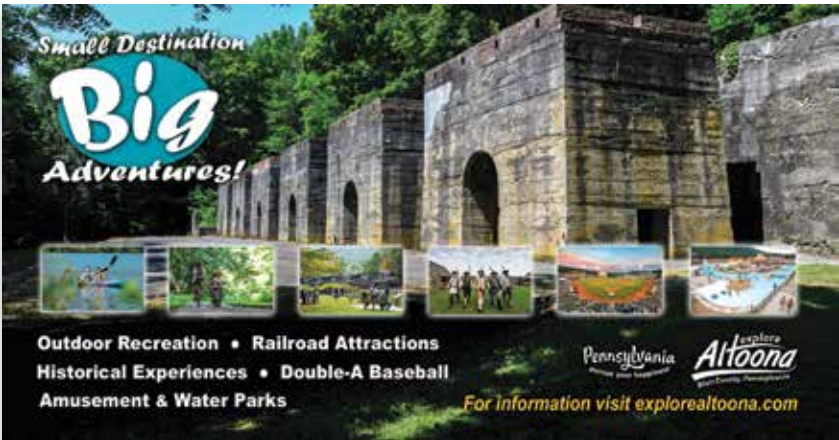
# 2023 MARKETING HIGHLIGHTS



Travel Taste and Tour



Happy Traveler - PA Travel Guide



Adventure Outdoors



USA Today GO Escape - National Park Service Edition



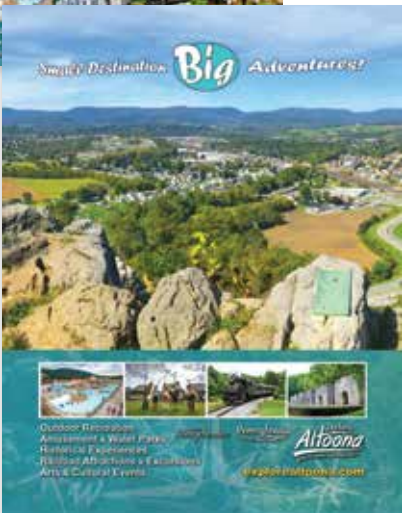
Mid-Atlantic Events



Guest Quest



2023 MLB Pittsburgh Pirates Yearbook



Guest Quest



# 2023 MARKETING INVESTMENTS

**Gannett Media/USA Today** – variety of digital niche campaigns – outdoor recreation, history and heritage, arts and culture, festivals, family fun – amusement and water parks, minor league baseball, seasonal and special interest escapes within targeted markets and audiences

- Search engine marketing and social mirroring impressions
- Retargeting and geofencing
- OTT and CTV streaming
- Digital display ad placements and targeted email blasts
  - *Irish Heritage Festival*
  - *Altoona Curve Home Opener – 25th Season*
  - *Southern Alleghenies Museum of Art – Photo Symposium*
  - *Hoops Fest*
  - *African American Heritage Festival*
  - *Summer Fest at Lakemont Park*
  - *September 11th National Memorial Trail*
  - *Baker Mansion – Wedding Dress Exhibit*
  - *Holiday Lights on the Lake*

## H2R Market Research

- Lodging Multiplier Impact Study, Traveler Sentiment & Visitor Profile

**Smith Travel Research** – leading global provider of hotel stats and analytics

- Aggregate data for Blair County hotel properties
- Aggregate data for seven comparative markets in PA
- Aggregate data for the state of PA

**Belgian Film Crew** – hosted this group to an Altoona Curve game and a visit to the Horseshoe Curve National Historic Landmark in partnership with the PA Tourism Office through participation at US Travel Association's international inbound travel trade show

**TV Broadcast Campaign** – targeted markets and demographics

- Pittsburgh
- Harrisburg/Lancaster/York
- Hagerstown/Cumberland, MD
- Northwestern DC suburban market

**USA Today GO Escape** – Summer edition and Winter edition

- Half page print and digital ad placements
- Online lead generations requesting 2023 Visitors Guide to Blair County
- Special National Park Service edition featuring Allegheny Portage Railroad National Historic Site

**DelGrosso's Park and Laguna Splash Summer Co-op**

- TV and Radio – Pittsburgh, Harrisburg/Lancaster/York, Wilkes Barre/Scranton, and Hagerstown/Cumberland, MD
- Coupon/magazine publications and digital – Harrisburg, Williamsport, York, and WV

**Canada Travel and Lifestyle** – Summer edition

- Full page print and digital ad placements
- Digital billboard – Gardiner Expressway, downtown Toronto, ON

**Guest Quest Travel Media** – Spring edition and Summer edition

- VA/DC publication, PA publication
- Print ad placements – targeted full page back cover and half page placements

- Landing page article, photo, web site link and video link
- Online lead generations requesting 2023 Visitors Guide to Blair County

**Miles Media Partnership** – the official marketing partner of the PA Tourism Office

- Happy Traveler – 2023 Pennsylvania Travel Guide – half page print ad placement
- [www.visitpa.com](http://www.visitpa.com)
- Online lead generations requesting 2023 Visitors Guide to Blair County
- Native ads, E-blasts, and custom content articles

**PA on Display and Getaways on Display** – mass distribution of the 2023 Visitors Guide to Blair County

- 14 PA Welcome Centers and Sideling Hill Turnpike Plaza
- AAA Offices – PA and NJ travel consumer areas – eastern, western, northern, and south central PA; northern VA; and MD

**Travel Taste & Tour** – Summer edition, Fall edition, and Winter edition

- Full page print and digital ad placements; two pages of editorial and photos
- Social media campaign and homepage spotlight

**Adventure Outdoors** – Summer edition

- Full page print and digital ad placements plus full page of editorial and photos

**TV Broadcast Series** – WPSU/PBS

- Local awareness campaign – family fun and history/railroad heritage

**Mid Atlantic Events Magazine** (solely digital) January/February, May/June, September/October themed editions

- Full page print ad placements – co-op with Blair County
- Convention Center
- Half page – Small Destination Big Adventures and half page – Blair County Convention Center plus editorial features

**Forever Media** – radio campaigns across four stations

- Winter Play in Central PA and Comfort Cravings
- Stay and Play (summer)

**Official 2023 NFL Pittsburgh Steelers Yearbook**

**Official 2023 MLB Pittsburgh Pirates Yearbook**

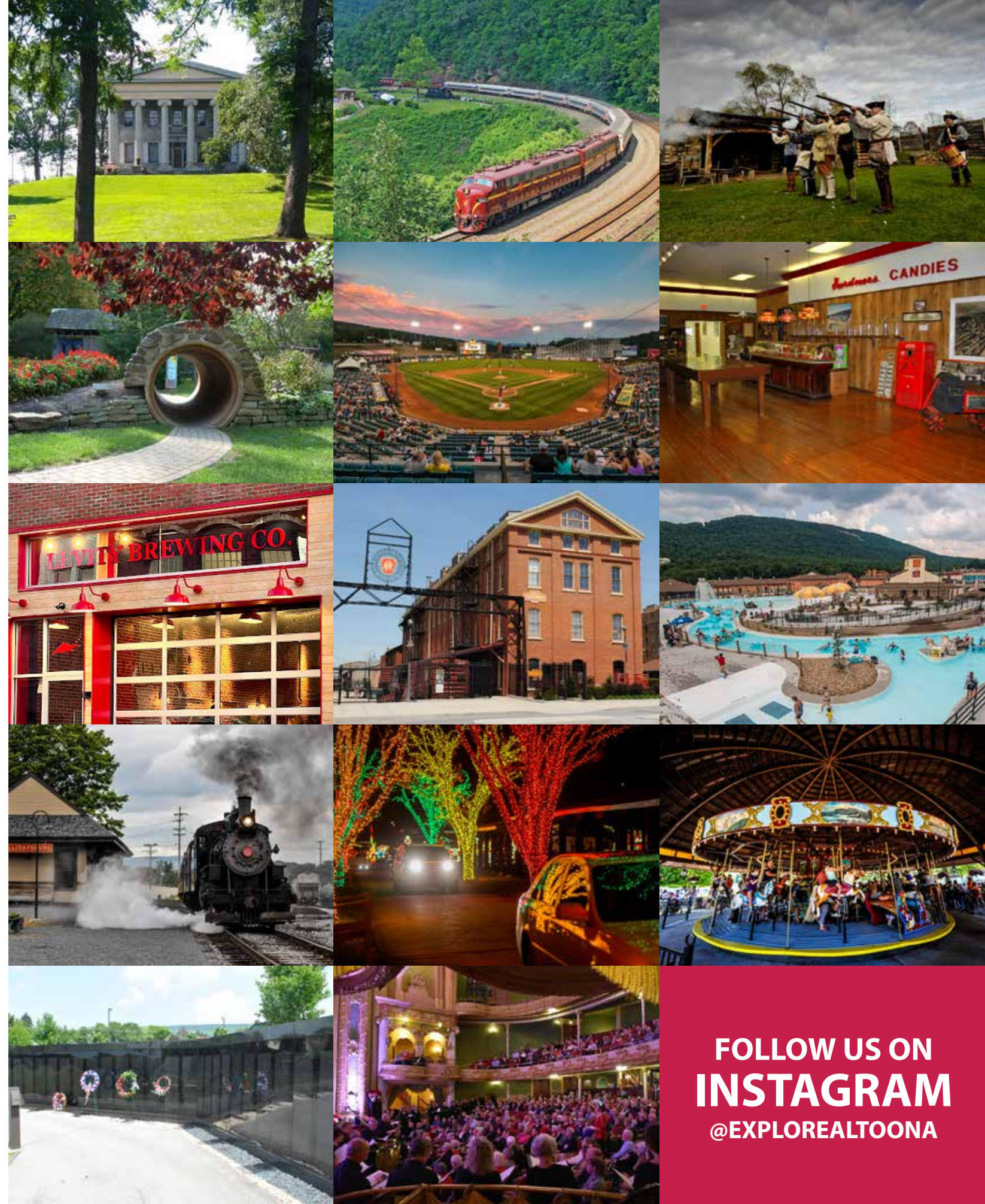
- Small Destination Big Adventures and Altoona Curve 25th Season
- Penn State Sports Annual – Fall edition and Winter edition

**Where and When Pennsylvania** – Spring, Summer, and Fall editions

- Back cover full page ad placement plus digital ad placement
- PA Family Travel Fair – consumer show, Lancaster, PA

**Kids Linked.com**

- Summer Fun Guide – print and digital ad placements
- Video spotlight



**FOLLOW US ON  
INSTAGRAM**  
@EXPLOREALTOONA



# PARTNERSHIP BENEFITS



## MARKETING

Unique page on [www.explorealtoona.com](http://www.explorealtoona.com) with photo, Google Maps, and links to your social media platforms and website

Listing in Explore Altoona's Blair County Visitors Guide

Promotion of your events through Calendar of Events on [www.explorealtoona.com](http://www.explorealtoona.com)

Co-op marketing opportunities

Opportunities for representation in seasonal and niche marketing campaigns

## PUBLIC RELATIONS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

Promotion on Explore Altoona's social media platforms

Representation at selected consumer shows and expos

Representation to travel writers

Promotion to group and meeting planners

Opportunities for networking

Educational seminars related to tourism and travel marketing

## REFERRALS TO VISITORS VIA VISITOR REQUESTS

Mailing fulfillment of your brochures and rack cards and Explore Altoona's Blair County Visitors Guide in response to visitor inquiries

Distribution of your brochures and rack cards at Explore Altoona's brochure rack locations throughout Blair County

**To begin, or to enhance, your partnership with Explore Altoona, please contact Patrick Schurr, Director of Partnership, at [pschurr@explorealtoona.com](mailto:pschurr@explorealtoona.com).**