U.S. Census Bureau News

U.S. Department of Commerce • Washington, D.C. 20233

Profile America Facts for Features

CB14-FF.27
Dec. 3, 2014

The 2014 Holiday Season

This festive season, or simply the holidays, is a time for gathering and celebrating with family and friends, gift giving, reflection and thanks. To commemorate this time of year, the U.S. Census Bureau presents the following holiday-related facts and figures from its collection of statistics.

Rush to the Stores

$24.4 billion

Estimated retail sales by the nation's department stores (including leased departments) in December 2013. This represents an estimated 40.9 percent jump from the previous month when retail sales were estimated at 17.3 billion. No other month-to-month increase in department store sales last year was as large.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Retail Trade Survey
http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=2013&endYear=2013&categories=4521I&dataType=SM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA

Note: Leased departments are separately owned businesses operated as departments or concessions of other service establishments or of retail businesses, such as a separately owned shoeshine parlor in a barber shop, or a beauty shop in a department store. Also, retail sales and inventory estimates have not been adjusted to account for seasonal or pricing variations.

13.9%

The estimated percentage of total 2013 sales for department stores (including leased departments) in December. For jewelry stores, the estimated percentage was 19.1 percent.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Retail Trade Survey
http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=1992&endYear=2013&categories=4521I&dataType=SM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA

http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=1992&endYear=2013&categories=44831&dataType=SM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA

22.8%

The estimated growth in inventories by our nation's department stores (excluding leased departments) from Aug. 31 to Nov. 30, 2013.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Retail Trade Survey
http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=1992&endYear=2013&categories=4521E&dataType=IM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA

$44.5 billion

Estimated value of retail sales by electronic shopping and mail-order houses in December 2013 — the highest total for any month last year.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Monthly Retail Trade Survey
http://www.census.gov/econ/currentdata/dbsearch?program=MRTS&startYear=1992&endYear=2013&categories=4541&dataType=SM&geoLevel=US&notAdjusted=1&submit=GET+DATA

30,185

The number of electronic shopping and mail-order houses in business in 2012. These businesses, which employed 365,508 workers in the pay period including March 12, are a popular source of holiday gifts.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 County Business Patterns
http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/BP/2012/00A1//naics~45411

Christmas Trees and Decorations

$1.0 billion

The value of U.S. imports of Christmas tree ornaments from China between January and September 2014. China was the leading country of origin for such items. Similarly, China was the leading foreign source of artificial Christmas trees shipped to the United States ($137.5 million worth) during the same period.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade Statistics
http://www.census.gov/foreign-trade

Where the Toys are ... Made

563

The number of locations that primarily produced dolls, toys, and games in 2012; they employed 7,481 workers in the pay period including March 12. California led the nation with 95 establishments.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 County Business Patterns
http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/BP/2012/00A1//naics~33993

Holiday Names

Place names associated with the holiday season consist of a dozen places named Holly including Mount Holly, N.C. (population 13,904) and Holly Springs, Miss. (7,558). There is Snowflake, Ariz. (5,576), Santa Claus, Ind. (2,501), North Pole, Alaska (2,214), Noel, Mo. (1,809) and — if you know about reindeer — Dasher, Ga. (944) and the village of Rudolph, Wis. (436). There is also Santa Claus, Ga. (167).
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates
http://www.census.gov/popest/data/cities/totals/2013/SUB-EST2013-3.html

Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa

52.3%

Estimated proportion of the nation's potatoes produced in Idaho and Washington during the fall of 2013. Potatoes are a popular dish served during the holidays.
Source: National Agriculture Statistics Service, Page 2
http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Washington/Publications/Current_News_Release/PT09_1.pdf

$1.6 billion

The estimated value of product shipments of candles in 2012 by U.S. manufacturers. Many of these candles are lit during Diwali (Oct. 23), Hanukkah (Dec. 16-24) and Kwanzaa (Dec. 26-Jan. 1) celebrations.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2012 Economic Census, Industry Series
http://factfinder2.census.gov/bkmk/table/1.0/en/ECN/2012_US/31I2//prodsvc~3399995

Nearly 450 million to 470 million

Packages of mail the U.S. Postal Service expects to deliver between Nov. 17 and Christmas Day. This is a 12 percent increase from last year.
Source: U.S. Postal Service
http://about.usps.com/news/national-releases/2014/pr14_057.htm

Following is a list of observances typically covered by the Census Bureau's *Facts for Features* series:

African-American History Month (February)
Super Bowl
Valentine's Day (Feb. 14)
Women's History Month (March)
Irish-American Heritage Month (March)/
St. Patrick's Day (March 17)
Earth Day (April 22)
Asian/Pacific American Heritage Month (May)
Older Americans Month (May)
Mother's Day
Hurricane Season Begins (June 1)
Father's Day
The Fourth of July (July 4)
Anniversary of Americans with Disabilities Act (July 26)
Back to School (August)
Labor Day
Grandparents Day
Hispanic Heritage Month (Sept. 15-Oct. 15)
Unmarried and Single Americans Week
Halloween (Oct. 31)
American Indian/Alaska Native Heritage Month (November)
Veterans Day (Nov. 11)
Thanksgiving Day
The Holiday Season (December)

Editor's note: The preceding data were collected from a variety of sources and may be subject to sampling variability and other sources of error. Facts for Features are customarily released about two months before an observance in order to accommodate magazine production timelines. Questions or comments should be directed to the Census Bureau's Public Information Office: telephone: 301-763-3030; or e-mail: <PIO@census.gov>.