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Hospitality rise the outlier as general spending is flat in April, AIB Spend Trend reveals

Spending in Hotels, Pubs and Restaurants increased as people enjoyed Easter holidays

Laois and Leitrim hotels saw spending increases

Silver spending surge as over 65s show increases in Clothing, Hotels, Restaurant, Pubs and Off Licence sectors

April was a positive month for the hospitality sector, as spending increased in Hotels, Restaurants, Pubs and Off Licences, likely due to the Easter holidays.

Average daily spend increased by 7% in Hotels; 6% in Pubs and Off Licences; and 4% in Restaurants. The hospitality sector performance is in contrast to overall spending, which was flat compared with March. Average daily spending in Hotels increased most in Laois and Leitrim at c. 14%, average daily spending in Restaurants increased most in Waterford at c. 8% and average daily spending in Pubs and Off Licences increased most in Donegal at c. 15%.

The data was compiled from c. 60m debit and credit card transactions in store and online during April 2023 and has been anonymised and aggregated. Data provided by AIB features one of the most comprehensive and accurate data sets on consumer spending in Ireland.

Spend Trend April 2023 (all data points compared to the previous month, unless otherwise stated).

- Average daily spend in April was c. €97m, in line with March's figures.
- There continues to be a steady increase in the use of Digital Wallets, with a 4% increase in average daily spend in April, building on a 7% increase in March and a 12% increase in February.
- The average daily spend for Online shopping declined slightly, by 1%, however it remains the most popular method of spending at 36% of total spend, followed by Chip and Pin at 33%, Digital Wallet at 19% and Contactless at 12%.
- The highest average daily spend was on Friday 28 April, after pay day for most people, while the lowest average daily spend was on Easter Sunday, 9 April, when many shops were closed.

- When looking at the Easter weekend, spending peaked on Holy Thursday, which was the second highest spending day of the month.
- Of the ten sectors analysed, Groceries continues to account for most spending at 18% of total spend, followed by Hardware, Health and Beauty, Clothing and Restaurants at 5%, Hotels and Airline Travel at 3%, and Pubs and Off Licences, Homewares and Electronics at 2%.
- Average daily spending on Electronics decreased overall by 3%. However, it increased by c. 8% in Longford and decreased by c. 9% in the neighbouring county of Cavan.
- While people aged 65 and over spend 24% of their overall spend on Groceries, they also seem to be having the most fun with their highest increase in average daily spend per sector being on Clothing (13%), Hotels (c. 12%), Pubs and Off Licences (c. 11%), and Restaurants (c. 10%) with these four sectors contributing to 13% of their overall spend.

Speaking about the data, John Brennan, Head of SME Banking at AIB said “it’s a positive sign to see increases across the hospitality sector in April, as people enjoyed the Easter break and ahead of the summer months which are an important time for Hotels, Pubs and Restaurants. However, we saw overall spending was flat when compared with March, which could be further evidence of the impact of cost-of-living increases. It’s interesting to note the continued increase in spend using Digital Wallets, reflecting overall customer behaviour, as more and more customers choose digital banking methods every day. This data is important for businesses as it allows them to support customer choices and ensure customers have the best experience when engaging with them.”

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