
Visitor Services Project
Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site
Report Summary

- This report describes the results of a visitor study at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site during April 13-19, 1997. A total of 473 questionnaires were distributed to visitors. Visitors returned 286 questionnaires for a 61% response rate.
- This report profiles Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site visitors. A separate appendix contains visitors' comments about their visit. This report and the appendix include summaries of those comments.
- Forty-three percent of the visitor groups were family groups. Thirty-seven percent of visitor groups were groups of two. Forty-one percent of visitors were aged 26-45.
- Eighty-two percent of visitors were making their first visits to Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site. Forty-four percent of the visitor groups spent two hours at the park, while 25% spent one hour and 20% spent three hours.
- United States visitors were from Georgia (24%), New York (8%), California (7%), Florida (6%), 40 other states and the District of Columbia. International visitors (13% of total visitation) were from France (28%), Germany (28%), England (13%) and twelve other countries.
- On this visit, the most common activities were viewing visitor center exhibits (97%), visiting Martin Luther King, Jr.'s tomb (89%) and watching the visitor center video (73%).
- Travel guides and tour books (31%) and friends or relatives (28%) were the most used sources of information by visitor groups; 20% of the groups received no information prior to their visits.
- Eighty-six percent of visitor groups indicated that learning more about Martin Luther King, Jr. was a primary reason for visiting the park. Another 70% reported that seeing the area where Dr. King grew up was a primary reason for visiting the park. Thirty-six percent of visitor groups indicated that the park was the primary destination on this visit. Other Atlanta area attractions visited by groups included Underground Atlanta (65%), Stone Mountain (41%) and CNN Center (35%).
- Sixty-one percent of visitor groups had members with a special interest in African-American history. Other civil rights sites visited in the past by groups included the Civil Rights Monument in Montgomery, AL (35%) and the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, TN (35%).
- Twenty percent of visitor groups reported that there were things they had hoped to do or see at the park but which they were unable to do. Included in this category were visiting Ebenezer Baptist Church and touring Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birth home.
- In regard to the use, importance and quality of services, it is important to note the number of visitor groups that responded to each question. The services that were most used by 247 respondents were visitor center exhibits (78%), the park brochure/map (66%) and the visitor center video program (65%). According to visitors, the most important services were visitor center exhibits (91% of 184 respondents), the visitor center video (85% of 157 respondents) and restrooms (85% of 130 respondents). The highest quality services were visitor center exhibits (93% of 177 respondents) and the visitor center video (93% of 154 respondents).
- Sixty-seven percent of visitor groups want to learn more about the life and teachings of Dr. King on a future visit and 61% want to learn more about the Civil Rights Movement.
- Ninety-one percent of visitor groups rated the overall quality of visitor services at Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site as "very good" or "good." None of the groups rated services as "very poor." Visitors made many additional comments.

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the
University of Idaho Cooperative Park Studies Unit; phone (208) 885-7129 or 885-7863.
