

DELIVERING BUSINESS ESSENTIALS TO NTA MEMBERS

OCTOBER 2018

# Courier

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The Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee, site of NTA's convention







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##### The Rockies

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Music Destinations and Attractions

Guide: Hotels and Lodging

#### DEADLINES

Space: Oct. 5 | Material: Oct. 15

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Preview to Tucson (Contact '18)

Casinos and Gaming

Guide: Casinos and Gaming

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Space: Nov. 2 | Material: Nov. 12



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**Bob Rouse**

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AT EVERY TRAVEL EXCHANGE, the NTA president or board chair calls the staff on stage to thank us for doing our jobs during the week of convention. I will tell you: The applause we get is meaningful to us—and, I believe, meaningful from you.

You make us feel like stars.

It's a crazy week, of course, because we start early and go late every night, zipping from one major event (or conventional task) to another. It's exhausting and exhilarating. It's what we work toward all year.

The *Courier* staff been working about that long on a new star in NTA's constellation of websites. **NTAcourier.com** launched in September, a couple of months after **NTAtravelexchange.com** and a few weeks before we reveal a website for Contact. And we've got another new website coming in late October; it'll illuminate a new China Preferred Partners Program you'll be hearing about.

The *Courier* site is all-content, all the time. When we write about you on the pages of this magazine, it'll be transformed into a stand-alone article online—searchable and shareable. Brilliant.

The stars were bright when I was walking early this morning (press day, you know). I thought about the stars in the context of this issue of *Courier* (again, press day). And I wondered about the same stars I saw in Kentucky shining down on other parts of the world where my NTA staff buddies and I have been traveling.

Pat Henderson was a little closer to the stars when he visited Colorado; His City Spotlight on Durango starts on page 18. I

know he still has stars in his eyes regarding his trip to Africa (pages 48–50). And while we were prepping Patti Nickell's Compass stories on New England states (pages 41–44), Kami Risk, NTA Services president, was in Massachusetts on an FTA Fam trip with Plymouth 400. (You'll read about that in the next issue.)

Is NTA President Pam Inman seeing stars in the night skies of China, where she's traveling at press time? Because Kendall Fletcher covers that country and India on pages 45 and 46.

I couldn't see stars in the nighttime Ottawa sky because of the fireworks (pages 16 and 17), but I definitely saw stars on the Chicago stage. See the intro to the guide of NTA-member theaters and performance venues, page 51.

The real star of this issue is the Travel Exchange section, gobbling up pages 20 through 40. It's massive and marvelous. It's Milwaukee and it's our convention. I like knowing we'll spend time together that first week in November. I'm confident you'll enjoy the events and being with your fellow delegates.

And we'll be snapping your photo in Milwaukee—for the magazine, for the website ... for your fans. After all, you're the real star of the show.

Read on,

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**On the cover:**  
The Wisconsin Center  
in Milwaukee, site of  
Travel Exchange '18  
Photo: VISIT Milwaukee



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John Folks of Minding Your Business, standing at left, facilitated a board discussion about Travel Exchange at the Lord Elgin Hotel in Ottawa.

## Minding our business

BY CHRIS BABB, CHAIR, NTA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

*"If you always do what you've always done, you'll always get what you've always got."*  
—Henry Ford

THE RESULTS ARE IN. Minding Your Business, the consulting firm the NTA Board of Directors retained to help us redesign Travel Exchange, conducted a thorough survey after the San Antonio convention, and you spoke clearly: You want more networking opportunities, more access to education sessions and more year-round engagement. (An executive summary of the Minding Your Business survey results is posted on NTA Online.)

At the August board meeting in Ottawa, your board did a deep dive into the survey recommendations and brainstormed about the future of Travel Exchange. Our talks centered on how we could give you more opportunities to do business together while, at the same time, give you more access to education.



Chris Babb, NTA chair, and Pam Inman, NTA president

With tour operators being required to take as many as 150 appointments, they aren't able to attend the majority of the education sessions. But if we were to cut back on appointments, under our current format, suppliers and DMOs would get fewer opportunities to do business with buyers.

I hope you can appreciate our dilemma! We spent extensive time discussing ways to provide more opportunities for attendees to meet outside of one-to-one appointments. We believe that if we provide structured, meaningful networking sessions that bring sellers together with buyers—in a variety of configurations—we can increase the number of significant opportunities for us to collaborate and form partnerships.

And by providing more—and new—opportunities for doing business face-to-face, we can reduce the appointment requirements and spend even more productive time together making business connections.

What are our next steps? We're working with Minding Your Business on recommendations and actionable items for changes to our convention. The board will discuss these at our next meeting, in Milwaukee just prior to Travel Exchange, and then we will take these recommendations to our member networks—owner, supplier and DMO—for feedback.

I am excited about the new look and changes for Travel Exchange in Milwaukee, and I welcome your feedback. See you in Milwaukee!

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COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

## Courier: The next page

Last month NTA launched a dedicated website, NTAcourier.com, that expands the reach of *Courier* to a broader global audience.

Articles from the association's award-winning magazine form the bulk of the content for the new site, which also includes web-only pieces and photo galleries featuring images not found in the print edition. The stories are grouped by three categories—Places to Go, Things to Do and Insights + Experts—and keywords allow readers to search for articles on specific destinations or tour themes.

With this enhanced online presence, *Courier* content is completely accessible (and shareable), and the larger reach means that more people can find out about NTA members and the many ways they provide meaningful and memorable travel experiences.

The website is supplemented by additional *Courier*-specific content (@NTAcourier) on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter



that is pushed to followers, who in turn share those stories with *their* audience.

So join the *Courier* caravan at NTAcourier.com. Find out what's down the road ... and on the next page.

## UNWTO: 2017 was a banner year for travel

According to the World Tourism Organization's latest data, released in late August, international tourist arrivals grew by 7 percent in 2017, to 1.32 billion. The figure, which was up 84 million from 2016, marked the highest year-over-year increase since 2010.

The tourism sector has now seen uninterrupted growth in arrivals for eight straight years, with 2017's growth being led by the regions of Europe and Africa, which received increases in arrivals of 8 and 9 percent, respectively.

International tourism receipts were up 5 percent from 2016 and resulted in \$1.3 trillion in receipts. When combined with the \$240 billion from international passenger transport taken by nonresidents, total tourism exports reached nearly \$1.6

trillion for the year, or \$4 billion a day.

These strong 2017 results were driven by sustained interest for destinations across all world regions, including a firm recovery by ones that have suffered from security challenges in recent years. Strong outbound demand from virtually all source markets, including rebounds from major emerging economies such as Brazil and the Russian Federation, helped both advanced and emerging destinations alike.

The new report also illustrates that Chinese travelers continue to lead global spending, having spent US\$258 billion on international tourism in 2017. That figure represents just under one-fifth of the amount of overall global tourism spending.

### World's top countries (based on 2017 international arrivals)

France	87 million (+5.7% year-over-year increase)
Spain	82 million (+9%)
United States	77 million (+0.2%)
China	61 million (+2.5%)
Italy	58 million (+11%)

Sources: UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2018 and the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration's National Travel and Tourism Office

### World's top spenders (based on a country's outbound travelers)

China	\$258 billion (+5% year-over-year increase)
United States	\$135 billion (+9%)
Germany	\$89 billion (+9%)
The United Kingdom	\$71 billion (+2%)
France	\$41 billion (+1%)

Source: UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2018 (figures shown in U.S. dollars)

### World's top earners (based on a country's tourism receipts)

United States	\$251 billion (+2% year-over-year increase)
Spain	\$68 billion (+10%)
France	\$61 billion (+9%)
Thailand	\$57 billion (+13%)
The United Kingdom	\$51 billion (+12%)

Sources: UNWTO Tourism Highlights 2018 and the U.S. Department of Commerce International Trade Administration's National Travel and Tourism Office (figures shown in U.S. dollars)

# RELATING TO GOVERNMENT

INSIGHTS ON U.S. LEGISLATIVE ISSUES AND INDUSTRY TOPICS



## Summer developments mean U.S.-Cuba travel is warming

IN AUGUST, the United States Department of State lowered its travel advisory on Cuba from Level 3 (“reconsider travel”) to Level 2 (“exercise increased caution”). The island now shares this status with multiple tourism-heavy countries such as the Bahamas, the United Kingdom, Germany, France, Spain, Italy and China.

The State Department says this shift is a product of a recently concluded review of potential risks to private U.S. citizens traveling to the island. The thorough review was undertaken in response to suspected attacks that began in 2016 and caused auditory and sensory symptoms for multiple Canadian and U.S. embassy employees.

According to the report, attacks targeted residences of U.S. embassy staff and government personnel only, and those affected did not include private travelers. While the State Department has indicated that it does not yet know the exact methods or source of the attacks on U.S. personnel, investigators do not believe there is any immediate danger to American citizens traveling to Cuba, so the country was switched to Level 2.

The travel industry initially expressed hope that this announcement would

increase the number of American visitors to Cuba. The country has seen a steep decline in tourism following tightened restrictions and elevated concern about travel to the island last year. According to Michel Bernal, commercial director for the Cuban Tourism Ministry, in April the number of U.S. visitors was only 56.6 percent of what it was in April 2017. While the State Department’s announcement does not impact any restrictions on travel to Cuba, pro-Cuba travel advocates are lauding it as a great first step toward restoring the island’s economically essential tourism sector.

In addition to the State Department’s reduced warning, there have been two other positive, tourism-related steps for the island within the last two months. The U.S. embassy in Havana issued a press release in late August informing the public that the embassy has “resumed offering a full range of American Citizen Services, including passport renewals, first-time passport applications, notary services, authentication services, Consular Reports of Birth Abroad (CRBA) and emergency assistance to U.S. citizens in Cuba.” These services are significant to Americans

residing in Cuba and for U.S. travelers and tourists visiting the island.

On Aug. 14, the Cuban government ran a free Wi-Fi trial, which included hundreds of hot spots around the country, in advance of plans to sell the service through a state-owned monopoly. This marked the first time that internet sales were available nationwide.

***The U.S. embassy in Havana has resumed offering a full range of American Citizen Services, including ... emergency assistance to U.S. citizens in Cuba.***

While internet access has been available at hotels on the island for quite some time, this island-wide rollout will help build and maintain a robust tourism infrastructure; keep U.S. travelers connected while they explore, dine and travel around the island; and give them access to important safety resources.

Any American considering travel to Cuba should still exercise caution and use good judgment. The State Department implores U.S. travelers to still avoid two specific hotels in Havana—the Hotel Nacional de Cuba and the Hotel Capri—and to relocate immediately if they experience any auditory or sensory phenomena. For more important information on precautions to take and helpful resources when traveling to Cuba, please visit the travel advisory page for the island on the U.S. State Department’s website: [bit.ly/2tTNVoq](https://bit.ly/2tTNVoq).

Signal Group is a Washington, D.C., lobbying firm retained by NTA to advise members about travel-related issues and legislation.



DEPOSITPHOTOS/RUTHBLACK



# ALASKA. WHERE JOY MEETS BLISS.



*The best way to cruise Alaska just got better as  
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Now your clients can experience Alaska on two of our newest ships, Norwegian Joy or Norwegian Bliss, both designed to give guests deeper connections to the world around them. Experience Norwegian Joy when she cruises year-round from the west coast to Alaska, the Mexican Riviera and Panama Canal starting April 2019. Enjoy a rush like no other racing on a thrilling two-level race track in the middle of the ocean. Be immersed in all the wonder of a virtual world in the Galaxy Pavilion. Or be pampered in luxury in our new, spacious and beautifully appointed Concierge accommodations. Explore the wilds of Alaska including pods of whales up close in untouched Icy Strait Point. Whether your clients are cruising Norwegian Joy or Norwegian Bliss, they'll enjoy vacation experiences that will delight the senses and calm the soul aboard the youngest fleet cruising Alaska.

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For more group rates and  
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# From pixel to people: Use social to turn lookers into bookers

BY CATHERINE HEEG



YOU'D LOVE to fill your next group tour more easily.

You probably know social marketing can help you reach the fans who have clicked your Facebook posts and landed on your website. But maybe you've wondered how to reconnect with those visitors and show them ads that match their activity on your website.

That used to be magic performed by web wizards. Now it's a reality for everyone!

Installing **Facebook Pixel** on your company's website gives you access to information that will help you understand what resonates with your Facebook and Instagram fans. Getting started is easy: You or your web team can copy and paste a provided snippet of code (called a pixel) into your website.

Once you have the pixel installed, it will track user interactions with your Facebook ads and website. The insider information you glean can help tailor your tour, experience and destination offerings.

Don't have a pixel yet? Here's an easy how-to guide with all the details:

[bit.ly/2wsxpK6](http://bit.ly/2wsxpK6)

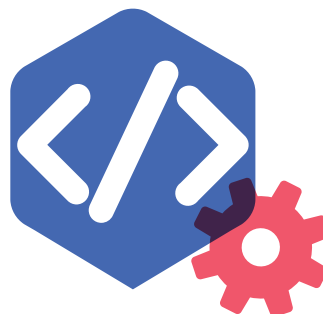
## Pixel to people

Here's how it works: Let's say a Facebook user—whether they're a fan of yours or not—sees an ad that you've created, clicks it and is directed to your website.

With your pixel in your website's code, you'll be able to show future ads to those who have clicked your ad and followed the link. You can continue to market to these interested users and possibly turn lookers into bookers.

## Group tour impact

Maybe you've designed a series of Facebook ads to showcase upcoming events or group tours. You can target viewers who have looked at different ads over specific dates. One month, you might run an ad for an upcoming cruise,



followed by a month-long campaign for a coach tour of the Wild West.

Each month you can create a new audience of viewers for each of these tours. When viewing your new pixel audience's activity, select a date range so you can further remarket specific tour information. See timing criteria here:

[bit.ly/2nxjeyN](http://bit.ly/2nxjeyN)

Simply by creating a new Facebook pixel audience, remarketing becomes a breeze. Don't worry, you won't have access to specific people's names and contact info, only the data to remarket to them socially. Find more ad targeting hacks here: [bit.ly/2MBVEwg](http://bit.ly/2MBVEwg)

*Installing Facebook Pixel on your company's website gives you access to information that will help you understand what resonates with your Facebook and Instagram fans.*

## Great fit

Now imagine that you'd like to reach out to more people with the same interests as your active social media following.

You can create a **Lookalike Audience** in Facebook, which consists of people with similar traits to your pixel audience.

Facebook helps you expand your potential client base by matching demographics and interests of your pixel audience and creating a new, comparable audience for you. Sweet!

## Consider this

You can finesse these audiences even more by targeting people who are considering going on a trip. With the new **Trip Consideration** ad option, you can refine your pixel audiences to tease out and target people who are in the early stages of trip planning.

## Not advertising yet?

Even if you haven't created your first Facebook or Instagram ad, now is a great time to set up your Facebook pixel. You can begin building awesome audiences to make your first ad successful.

High-tech is now giving us more efficient ways to be high-touch while we put more "heads in beds" and, as many in our industry say, "butts in seats." 🍷

Catherine Heeg, an international speaker and trainer, focuses on social media marketing strategies for the tourism and hospitality industry. Connect with her socially and at [cmsspeaking.com](http://cmsspeaking.com).



# TAKE PEOPLE BEYOND WHAT THEY KNOW

Some states aren't as lucky to even have one. Colorado has four national parks, each renowned for their beauty and recognized for their attractions. Stumble upon ancient cliff dwellings or the tallest sand dunes in the country. Tour through unmistakable black canyons and the unforgettable Rocky Mountains in all their glory.

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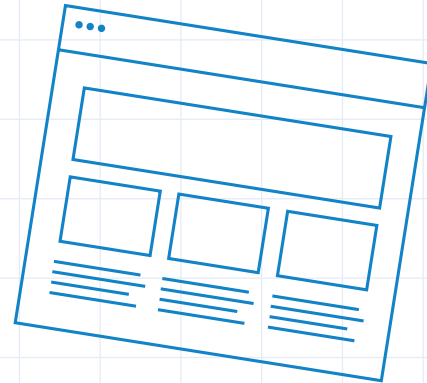


# Courier



What began as a four-page newsletter in 1974 evolved into a four-color **magazine** loaded with original articles that explain new and upcoming tour product, focus on destinations, provide insight into industry trends, and inform National Tour Association members about the events and benefits.

With the launch of **NTAcourier.com**, articles are now more easily accessed, read and shared, not only by members, but also by the larger travel community—and by anyone with an internet connection and a yearning to explore.



Also providing a digital multiplier, *Courier* uses social media **@ntacourier** to cultivate and push content to followers, who in turn share those stories that are meaningful to *their* followers.

*Courier's* engaging articles and insightful information is now disseminated in print, online and via social media. Now with a wider audience, we can better promote NTA members and the many ways they enable people to experience the depth and breadth of meaningful and memorable travel.







JODYO PHOTOS

The northern lights

## An Anchorage trifecta: glaciers, animals, the aurora

From the serene waters of Cook Inlet to the natural beauty of the Chugach Mountains, Anchorage blends a metropolitan vibe and an outdoorsy feel.

"Groups can pursue adventures under the midnight sun all summer long, or chase the northern lights starting in late August," says Visit Anchorage's David Kasser. "Or they can soar over glaciers and the tallest peaks in North America on a flightseeing tour. No matter the season, Anchorage has the best of Alaska, all in one place."

A number of national and state parks are within easy reach, and when you throw in the area's 60 glaciers and roughly 1,500 moose, Alaska's largest city delivers when it comes to nature-themed adventures. In addition to moose

viewing, the parks offer chances for visitors to get up close with other animals, such as eagles, musk oxen and bears.

Kasser says some of the most popular options for groups include Salmon Berry Tours' drive-your-own dog sled or cart experiences, Alaska Photo Treks' Aurora Borealis Tours in the Chugach Mountains, and the Anchorage Eco Tour, which includes visits to a salmon hatchery and the Alaska Botanical Gardens. The area's waterways and train tracks provide additional adventures. Options include going rafting or kayaking near Spencer Glacier and taking the Hops on Rails Beer Train to Talkeetna.

To learn more, contact Kasser of Visit Anchorage at [dkasser@anchorage.net](mailto:dkasser@anchorage.net) or go to [anchorage.net](http://anchorage.net). —P.H.

Paddling trip near Spencer Glacier



CC FLICKR/PAXSON WOELBER: bit.ly/208Yv

## Edinburgh's got a story to tell

Scotland is known for its spectacular coastline, historical attractions, colorful gardens and vibrant culture, and at the heart of it all is Edinburgh, a city that seamlessly blends the ancient and the modern.

The Old and New Towns of Edinburgh were added to UNESCO's list of World Heritage sites in 1995. As part of a

variety of tours, visitors can learn more about the Scottish capital's medieval Old Town and its Georgian New Town.

The area's crown jewel is the Edinburgh Castle, which includes St. Margaret's Chapel, a shrine that dates back to the 12th century. The impressive fortress houses the Honours (Crown Jewels) of Scotland, the Stone of Destiny and the One O'Clock Gun. The castle also is the backdrop for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, which takes place each August in front of thousands of onlookers.

Another popular Edinburgh attraction is the Scottish Storytelling Centre and the John Knox House. The center is a vibrant arts venue on Edinburgh's Royal Mile that incorporates contemporary design and entertainment with medieval architecture. It offers programming ranging from live storytelling and theater/music performances to exhibitions, workshops and annual events.

At the John Knox House, groups can learn about one of the country's most dramatic and turbulent times, the Scottish Reformation. Knox, a 16th-century Protestant reformer, was a part of the movement, which resulted in the outbreak of civil war and the abdication of Mary, Queen of Scots.

To learn more, contact Nicole Graham of VisitScotland at [nicole.graham@visitscotland.com](mailto:nicole.graham@visitscotland.com) or go to [visitscotland.com/trade](http://visitscotland.com/trade). —P.H.

Edinburgh Castle



VISITSCOTLAND/KENNY LAM

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## A Savannah sampler

History oozes from nearly every corner of Georgia's oldest city, Savannah. According to Mindy Shea, the director of tour, travel and international sales with Visit Savannah, there are a number of diverse tour options—including the following five—that await both students and adults who head to her destination.



### **Walking the squares**

Home to one of the nation's largest historical districts, Savannah was designed in a grid pattern with 24 park-like plazas. Groups can walk these squares and learn about the architecture of the buildings.

### **Checking out a historical home**

History is alive in many of the city's house museums and cultural centers. Groups can visit the Owens-Thomas House, see writer Flannery O'Connor's childhood home and tour the birthplace of Girl Scouts founder Juliette Gordon Low.

### **Taking a city tour**

Beyond the squares and mansions, visitors can absorb history via a guided tour on foot or aboard a trolley. The Massie Heritage Center offers special, grade-level-specific programs for students detailing the lives of children in the early 19th century.

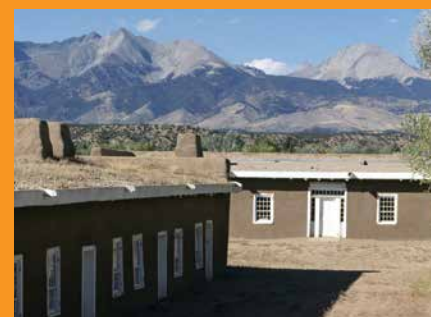
### **Exploring aviation heritage**

Featuring more than 90,000-square-feet of exhibits and interactive displays, as well as an impressive collection of aviation art, the Museum of the Mighty Eighth Air Force teaches visitors about the science of flight behind World War II B-17s.

### **Visiting an Underground Railroad site**

The First African Baptist Church sheltered runaway slaves on their journey to freedom before the Civil War. It also was the site of weekly meetings held by early leaders of the Civil Rights movement in Savannah.

For more information, contact Shea at [mshea@visitsavannah.com](mailto:mshea@visitsavannah.com) or go to [visitsavannah.com](http://visitsavannah.com). —K.F. ☎



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Fireworks over the Ottawa River  
and Parliament

# Board—but never bored—in OTTAWA

BY BOB ROUSE

NTA members are listed in bold type.

## SPOILER ALERT:

*"Ottawa has a lot to offer for group travel."* —Cory Mace

*"A really livable city with a cool vibe."* —John McGlade

*"I'm already working on a program for 2019."* —Debra Asberry

*"The truth is: Ottawa left me speechless!"* —Paul Larsen

I don't know if it's wrong to tell you upfront how this story ends, but I don't want to build phony suspension. And unlike Paul, I am certainly not speechless.

I was in Ottawa in August for the NTA Board of Directors meeting, and I was only too happy to get to know the destination after each day's meeting—and happier still to stay an extra couple of days.

From the comments of board members above, you'll note I'm not the only one impressed with the Canadian capital.

My *Courier* colleague Gabe Webb wrote about Ottawa last year, covering the city during Canada's 150th anniversary celebration. (You can view it, along with loads of other *Courier* content, on NTAcourier.com. Just search "Ottawa.")

Gabe gave readers a good look at some of the museums in Ottawa, which make the place an ideal destination for students, but also for adults wanting a deep dive into the country's history, art and culture.

So I asked Kelly Dean of **Ottawa Tourism**, who hosted the board meeting (and me), to connect me with other experiences. And she did. During my four-day visit, I went on a city tour, a foodie tour, a drinky tour, a bike tour, a ghost tour and a boat tour.

I also cruised around the splendidly located **Lord Elgin Hotel**, which served as headquarters for the board meeting. The hotel gave me a front-row seat to a daily parade of soldiers, pipers and a regimental band marching down the street en route to Parliament Hill for the 10 a.m. changing of the guard. The sprightly procession is held from late June through late August.

Parliament Hill is an easy walk from the Lord Elgin, as are many museums, stores and a wide variety of restaurants and bars. Amber Van Der Hoeven, CTP, the hotel's tour and travel sales manager, has used her vantage point to witness the city's shift.

"I've been in Ottawa for six years and have seen so many changes," she said. "We have young entrepreneurs who have created fun and funky restaurants, bars and coffee shops."

Because I sampled so much of Ottawa's culinary and beverage selections, I also consumed a good bit of coffee.

During my first meal in the city, at Riviera on the lively Sparks Street, I watched all the dishes being prepared mere yards away from my seat at the bar. The diner was delicious, and the experience was captivating.

I had more firsthand food encounters when I nibbled my way through the ByWard Market District on a gourmet food tour with C'est Bon Cooking. The cooking school and sightseeing company offers seven tours—six by foot and one by bike.

During nine stops through the eclectic neighborhood, I sampled everything from standout grilled chicken and pork barbecue to sweet gelato and sour beer. And talking with the artisan/entrepreneurs who create the tastes was, well, icing on the cake.

NEL ROBERTSON



I also tipped a glass or two during a tour with Brew Donkey, which offers custom and scheduled tours, plus pick-ups. On the Y-East End Tour (get it?), we sampled the products of two craft brewers and one distiller. My companions on the tour were all locals, and by the end of the day, I felt like a local, too. I would provide more tasting details here, but my notes got a bit, uh, wet.

I followed the straight and narrow path better during my bike tour, which I enjoyed along with several NTA board members. Ottawa is as bikeable as it is walkable, and we wheeled around town getting good looks—from new vantage points—of the city’s cool buildings, inviting neighborhoods and the popular Rideau Canal.

The canal connects Ottawa to Lake Ontario and the Saint Lawrence River, 125 miles away, but for folks in Ottawa, it’s a recreational waterway lined with downtown parks and bike paths. And during the winter—from January to late February or early March—nearly five miles of the canal turn into the largest naturally frozen skating rink in the world.

Ottawans and visitors alike lace up their skates, said Jantine Van Kregten of Ottawa Tourism.

“It becomes part of the transportation system,” Jantine told me. “They include skating conditions on the daily traffic reports.”

The weather during my late-summer stay was steamy, but it was much cooler the evening that our NTA group strolled up to Parliament Hill and sat on the lawn to watch Northern Lights: Sound & Light Show, an informative and stirring pictorial presentation of Canadian history, artistically projected onto the main building of the parliamentary complex.

I got an additional dose of history—and spooky lore—during a Saturday night walking tour with **Haunted Walks Inc.** Our black-cloaked guide, Natasha, led us along the canal and through streets and alleys, detailing accounts of apparitions seen in old churches, schools and other buildings.

My most unexpected moment in Ottawa was when Jantine took me to a spot on the Ottawa River—Remic Rapids Park—where a man has been balancing rocks for more than 30 years. Each spring, John Felicè Ceprano creates a series of sculptures by stacking fossilized rocks he collects on-site.

Throughout the summer, people sit on park benches and watch him from a short distance. They breathe while he heaves. Some of the rocks are quite large, but so are John’s biceps. On the day we were there, he had a helper who assisted with lifting extra-large rocks. That’s understandable, as John is 70-plus years old.

Read more about the artist here: [bit.ly/2wZB4Ae](https://bit.ly/2wZB4Ae).

I said I won’t cover the many museums in Ottawa, and I won’t. But I will say that when I return to Canada’s capital, I will spend more time in those attractions. And when I spend more time in the **Canadian Museum of History**—which we toured for about an hour—I hope I’ll be led by Shalina Gouin, a 10-year veteran interpreter at the museum.

Her enthusiasm for Canadian culture is infectious, and after hearing her tell the story of her country’s people, I was rendered, I admit, speechless.

For more information about Ottawa, contact Kelly at [kdean@ottawatourism.ca](mailto:kdean@ottawatourism.ca) or go to [ottawatourism.ca](https://ottawatourism.ca). 📍



NTA board members Dave Nitkiewicz, Dan Flores and John McGlade enjoy a view of Parliament Hill across the Ottawa River.



Jason Gullo Mullins, an interpreter at Aboriginal Experiences, shows beaver pelts, snowshoes, wigwams and other key elements of First Nation peoples who lived on Victoria Island, located in the middle of the Ottawa River.



John Felicè Ceprano creates rock sculptures at Remic Rapids Park.





To learn more about Durango, contact Marcia Wilson, sales manager for Visit Durango at [marsha@durango.org](mailto:marsha@durango.org) or go to [durango.org](http://durango.org).

Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad

## CITY SPOTLIGHT

# Durango

STORY AND PHOTOS BY PAT HENDERSON

THERE ARE FEW THINGS I enjoy more than checking out a new destination. Getting to put my feet on the ground and roam around an uncharted-by-me place gives me a sense of adventure and fulfillment as I discover its highlights and sidelights, nook and crannies, and defining characteristics.

Because I love the mountain towns of the North American West, my expectations were high as I headed to this southwestern Colorado outpost for the first time, and Durango really delivered. Packed within this small city is a treasure trove of big (and bold, and nature-y, and wonderful, and authentic) options.

I can totally understand why my travel-writing compadres at *Budget Travel* included Durango on their 2018 list of the “Coolest Small Towns in America,” as I discovered a whole lotta cool as part of my touring this August.

My host was Marsha Wilson of Visit Durango, and the two of us spent three days exploring the area together. While Marsha is an industry veteran—having worked for multiple DMOs across the U.S. during her career—she’d just relocated to the city two weeks before I arrived to begin her job as Visit Durango’s sales manager. Marsha is a good traveling companion, and I really appreciated getting to know her and to see her begin to settle in to her new role.

Hers should be an easy settling process, though, as Durango seems like a very connected community. Not only were the tourism folks in tune with each other, they also are very connected to, and passionate about, their city.

While I had written about two of the area’s calling cards—Mesa Verde National Park and the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad—it was a real treat to get

to enjoy both in person.

Leading our Mesa Verde excursion was Denise Galley of Rivertrippers. Denise has lived in Durango for decades now, and she possesses a deep enthusiasm and passion for U.S. national parks. She also has an incredible knowledge of geology, which was an absolute asset as we explored Mesa Verde’s millennia-old rock formations and cave dwellings.

Seeing some of the park’s thousands of well-preserved structures built by the ancient Puebloans was a staggering experience. It was hard to comprehend how they navigated the steep cliffs and sheer rocks on a daily basis, let alone how they managed to tuck their homes in the seemingly-too-narrow spaces in the canyon walls.

The following day we took a ride with Durango & Silverton along the route that connects its two namesake cities.



I'd heard longtime NTA member Carrie Whitley sing the praises of this legendary rail journey before, but getting to experience it live was fantastic.

Nearly every article you read on train travel touts how a ride "takes you back to a simpler time" and "allows you to hit pause on your daily life." That had always seemed a bit contrived to me, but I can guarantee you when the whistle blew and the coal-fired locomotive sprang to life, the nostalgia was very real.

The route goes through the forests and mountains along the Animas River. While I had made the drive between Durango and Silverton—and enjoyed the gorgeous views from the highway—seeing the sights from the open-air rail car was an experience I won't soon forget.

We were fortunate that the attendant in our car was another knowledgeable local, who was as quick to offer up facts about the railroad and the area's flora and fauna as she was to share a story from a lifetime spent in Durango. Groups also should make time to visit the rail company's museum at the downtown depot.

My final day of touring included a jeep ride through La Plata Canyon, a lunch stop at James Ranch, a tour across the road at Honeyville and a visit to Purgatory Resort, a four-season attraction that blends a range of outdoor activities—skiing chief among them—with a variety of room choices.

It is hard for me to imagine you could get more local or more authentic than Marsha and I did during our visit to James Ranch. Getting to hear the story of the family and their farm from Jennifer Wheeling—one of the James' grown children—was very inspiring and would be a



Mesa Verde National Park

total home run for groups that are craving an only-in-Durango experience.

Jennifer detailed how their focus is on raising and offering only organic products, be they meats, cheeses or veggies. These and other farm-fresh foods are available at the on-site market and café, and they can be enjoyed at one of the picnic tables overlooking the river and the ranch. Live music and other special events are held throughout the year, and tours of the farm also can be arranged.

I got to stay at two NTA-member properties, the Hampton Inn Durango and the Strater. Both are located along Main Street, close to where the action is, and have plenty of amenities for groups. They offer two contrasting styles, though, as the Hampton Inn is an ultra-modern hotel, while the Strater, which dates back to 1881 and is a National Historic Landmark, is a throwback that oozes Old West charm.

Another serendipitous bonus was getting to attend a Tour Colorado meeting at the Bar D Ranch. Carrie heads up the organization, which focuses on promoting the

state to the North American market, and it was cool to reconnect with some people I've met at Travel Exchange. The evening also was a great reminder of how supportive Durango and the state of Colorado have been to NTA over the years.

Following the meeting, we got to stay for the chuckwagon dinner and a show featuring music and storytelling by the amazing Riders in the Sky and the Bar D Wranglers. 🌟

### More passionate locals being passionate about local things

During my time in Durango, I got to share a meal with the owners of two of the area's historical properties, and got to hear a pair of incredible tales of dedication and preservation.

Our lunch stop on the day we rode the train included a visit with Jim Harper, president of the Grand Imperial Hotel in Silverton. As we sat in the airy, Western-themed dining room, he weaved a tale of a multi-year, multi-million-dollar renovation that completely transformed the 135-year-old property. As he shared, it was clear he and his family had pored over every detail as they updated the historical hotel.

We heard a similar story the following morning from Kirk Komick, owner of the Rochester Hotel on Second Avenue in downtown Durango. Komick shared how he and his mom decided to redo the circa 1890s hotel that was a former flop house. Following its meticulous restoration, the property has been one of the main drivers that has led to Second Avenue becoming a bustling corridor for locals and visitors.

Any destination would be lucky to have people like Jim and Kirk (and their families) so passionately investing in their community.

Riders in the Sky at the Bar D Ranch



# travel exchange Mil





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Think about it ...

It's a lakefront city with a river running through it. It's a city of festivals and fine art. Brewers and Bucks. Legendary beer and crazy cocktails.

NTA has never before held a convention in Milwaukee, but this city was built for our crowd. It has the buildings and the bars, event floors and great outdoors, atmosphere and lots of beer.

And cheese curds.

Travel Exchange '18 will hit town just as the air turns crisp. NTA delegates will be eager to shake hands. Ready to get down to business. Keen to learn. Inclined to have fun.

And there's plenty that awaits us in Milwaukee. Turn the page to learn more. To get started.

We're going to gather soon in Milwaukee ... because Milwaukee was made for Travel Exchange.

# Tips for gaining more appointments

For most sellers, requesting appointments is the linchpin of your Travel Exchange planning. Starting Oct. 19, you'll have more opportunities to add appointments through NTA's Direct Request scheduling system. And NTA's open-floor format allows you to make even more connections on-site. (For an idea of how this can work in real life, see "Notes from a first-timer" on page 64.)



NAM HASSAN

**Be direct:** After you receive your appointment schedule, you can add more meetings—by direct request—before leaving for Milwaukee. Here are the steps:

- 1 Research (again): Because more attendees registered after the appointment system made its matches, look again to see if there are members with whom you want to meet.
- 2 Using the online request system, reach out to colleagues who have the same open time slots as you do, and see if you can schedule a meeting.
- 3 Keep in mind that operators who do not package your destination are removed from your list, which saves you time in research and outreach.
- 4 Each request that's accepted will be automatically added to your schedule—and to theirs.
- 5 Direct request scheduling closes Oct. 29.

**Work it:** You might have missed getting an appointment with a company, but you can still seek out the representative on the business floor in Milwaukee. The best time to arrange an unscheduled appointment is while operators are seated during the Supplier Exchange (Wednesday and Thursday). If you see that an operator you'd like to meet with is not engaged in an appointment, ask if you can find a time that works for both of you. If one's not available, you can leave your profile form and business card—and chat later with that operator at a meal, an evening event or over coffee.

**Profile yourself:** Your online profile helps potential partners understand you and your organization better, and you can add photos—including a headshot—to truly personalize your page. And speaking of pages, the profile sheet that sellers hand over to buyers should give enough information to help tour planners understand the most important details ... without overwhelming them.



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**Visit Tucson**  
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# Schedule

Sunday Nov. 4	Monday Nov. 5	Tuesday Nov. 6	Wednesday Nov. 7	Thursday Nov. 8
Tour Operator Day	DESTINATION PAVILION DMO Appointments		SUPPLIER EXCHANGE Tour Supplier Appointments	
	Opening Ceremony and Breakfast	Breakfast on your own	Government Relations Breakfast Bistro	Breakfast on your own
Sightseeing Tours <i>Sponsored by VISIT Milwaukee and Milwaukee Food &amp; City Tours</i>	BIZnet: The Opening Connection  Education Sessions	DMO Appointments  Education Sessions	Tour Supplier Appointments  Education Sessions	Tour Supplier Appointments  Education Sessions
Lunch on your own	NYC Center Stage Luncheon <i>Sponsored by Broadway Inbound and NYC &amp; Company</i>	Luncheon <i>Sponsored by Visit Tucson</i>  Distinguished Dozen Awards <i>Presented by Courier magazine</i>	Luncheon <i>Sponsored by Norwegian Cruise Line</i>	Luncheon <i>Sponsored by Visit Fort Worth</i>
Education Sessions	DMO Appointments  Education Sessions	DMO Appointments  Education Sessions	Tour Supplier Appointments  Education Sessions	Tour Supplier Appointments  Education Sessions
Icebreaker at Harley-Davidson Museum <i>Sponsored by VISIT Milwaukee</i>	NTA Evening Party at Discovery World <i>Sponsored by The Bartolotta Restaurants and Discovery World</i>	Happy Hour  Dine-around	Dine-around  Tourism Rocks	Closing Night Party at Milwaukee Public Museum <i>Sponsored by Milwaukee Public Museum</i>

# Info, details, advice ... for you

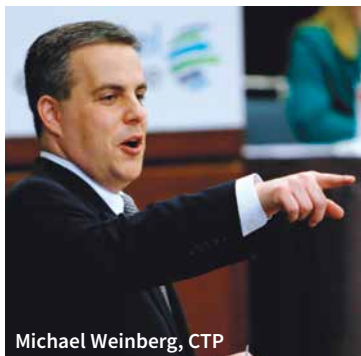
**Before:** Replay the “TREX 101” webinar, hosted by TREX veterans Michael Weinberg, CTP, of Hiltons of Chicago and Lindsey Seybert of Visit Albuquerque. And catch “Know Before You Go,” a webinar on Oct. 17 at 2 p.m. ET, hosted by convention sage Clayton Whitehead, CTP, of Spots Leisure Vacations. Both presentations (when completed) can be found on [NTAtravelexchange.com](http://NTAtravelexchange.com): Pull down the About menu and click First Timers.



**On-site:** On Sunday in Milwaukee, Clayton delivers Travel Exchange 101 live and in-person, from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. (repeated on the Presentation stage Tuesday afternoon at 2:45). It'll help you maximize your convention experience during appointments, free time, social events and seminars. Plus you'll make new friends at the start of the show.

**24/7:** And emailable day or night are NTA ambassadors—members who know what to expect, what to pack and how to get the most out of Travel Exchange. (Note: They might not be awake 24/7, but you can send your email anytime.) These 10 veterans are waiting to help you:

- **Jim Coggin**, Virginia Beach CVB  
[jcoggin@visitvirginiabeach.com](mailto:jcoggin@visitvirginiabeach.com)
- **Scott Hartcorn**, Shilo Inns Suites Hotels  
[scott.hartcorn@shiloinns.com](mailto:scott.hartcorn@shiloinns.com)
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# Step right up!

Whether you're a convention veteran or a first-timer, volunteering at Travel Exchange provides a great opportunity for you to meet and network with other attendees. Volunteer positions and duties include:

- **Convention greeter:** Welcome your peers and hand out *Travel Exchange Daily* newsletters.
- **Registration:** Give out registration bags and badges as delegates check in.
- **Seminar monitor:** Serve as the contact person for a featured speaker, count the number of seminar attendees and introduce speakers (that's negotiable).
- **Tourism Cares student mentor:** Share your NTA and industry experience with a 2018 Tourism Cares scholarship recipient by having a student shadow you during your appointments.



Ready to step up and volunteer? Send an email to NTA at [headquarters@ntastaff.com](mailto:headquarters@ntastaff.com).

## Tap the app

The Travel Exchange '18 mobile app will launch in October, and as a registered delegate, you will receive an email before the show with steps for downloading and logging on to the app. And you should. It contains tons of useful functions and information, such as:



- Full event schedule
- Your personalized appointment schedule
- List of event registrants with a messaging function
- Push notifications for announcements and schedule changes
- Social chatter from your friends and colleagues who use #Trex18 on social media

The app is compatible with iOS and Android devices, and it's accessible from a web browser, too. Once you're on-site in Milwaukee, if you lose login details or need a little help making things app-en, you can get help at NTA Central.

### SILVER continued

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FOOD & CITY TOURS

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Sightseeing Tours

**OUE SKYSPACE**  
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**Sweet Home Alabama**  
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## **BONUS \$30 CASINO INCENTIVE PACKAGE\***

**Monday – Friday Package consists of: One \$15 Meal/Retail Credit and One \$15 Free Bet Coupon**  
Meal/Retail credit can be used in any restaurant, a full buffet or shop at Mohegan Sun.

## **BONUS \$25 CASINO INCENTIVE PACKAGE\***

**Saturday – Sunday Package consists of: One \$15 Meal/Retail Credit and One \$10 Free Bet Coupon**  
Meal/Retail credit can be used in any restaurant, a full buffet or shop at Mohegan Sun.

**Group Leaders receive an additional \$30 PACKAGE**

Contact Stephen Olender at 860.862.8988  
or [solender@mohegansun.com](mailto:solender@mohegansun.com) or visit  
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\*In order to receive package, bus group must stay for a minimum of 5 hours. Packages and offer subject to change without notice. [mohegansun.com](http://mohegansun.com)



# Fabulous fams

Tour operators can get a head start on building relationships and Wisconsin itineraries by going on a familiarization tour hosted by the folks who know the state best. Our friends at Circle Wisconsin are sponsoring two pre-event Fam tours Nov. 1-3, and information on both is listed below. To view the full itineraries and sign up, go to [ntatravelexchange.com](http://ntatravelexchange.com), pull down the Schedule menu and select Fam Tours. But do it fast; we need to firm up our numbers.

## Green Bay and Beyond

Join us as we head north along Lake Michigan to the home of the Oneida Nation and the Green Bay Packers. On the way, we'll stop at the Wisconsin Museum of Quilt & Fiber Arts, located in historical and charming Cedarburg. Enjoy the intricate and beautiful exhibits dedicated to educating the public about the artistic, cultural, historical and social importance of quilts and fiber arts.

In Green Bay, we'll experience the National Railroad Museum (home to General Eisenhower's World War II train), learn about the history of the Oneida Nation and, of course, tour Lambeau Field and the Packers Hall of Fame. Enjoy the history of the only NFL team owned by its fans and city, the Green Bay Packers.

As we head back to Milwaukee, we'll overnight in Fond du Lac and enjoy the Lake Winnebago area, including a stop at a family-run, award-winning cheese farm. (Overnight in Green Bay and Fond du Lac)



CC FLOKRYKEN LUND, bit.ly/2NlgRtC

## Only in Wisconsin

We'll head west from Milwaukee and travel to Madison, the state capital, which is located between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona. The city will delight visitors with its Frank Lloyd Wright architecture, great food and beautiful sights. During a stop in nearby Middleton, we will tour the National Mustard Museum and its more than 5,000 mustards, collected from all over the world.

One of the most unique destinations you'll ever visit is Spring Green. The small town is not only home to Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin, but also to The House on the Rock. We'll tour the House and the Infinity Room built by Alex Jordan and see his collection of "stuff," including the world's largest carousel, the Sea Serpent, dollhouses, cars, life-size music boxes and so much more.



CC FLOKRY/JORDAN RICHMOND, bit.ly/2NlgRtC

We'll make our way back east to the shores of Lake Michigan to tour Kenosha's Jelly Belly Outlet & Distribution Center and Civil War Museum. Before heading back to Milwaukee, we'll stop in Racine, which is Wright's hometown. We'll visit the SC Johnson Administration Building and Research Tower that he designed and built. And no trip to Racine is complete without enjoying a delicious Danish kringle.

(Overnight in Middleton and Racine)

## SILVER continued



Visit Fort Worth  
Thursday Luncheon

## BRONZE



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Alaska Coach Tours  
Profile Form Notebook



Campbell County  
Convention &  
Visitors Bureau  
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CayTours  
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Visitors Bureau  
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Coral Castle  
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Reception



Maryland Office  
of Tourism  
Profile Form Notebook



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Space Camp at U.S.  
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# See the sights

VISIT Milwaukee and Milwaukee Food & City Tours have put together a series of Sunday sightseeing tours for Travel Exchange delegates. Read about the tour options below, then visit [ntatravelexchange.com/schedule/sightseeing-tours](http://ntatravelexchange.com/schedule/sightseeing-tours) for further info and to sign up.



## Milwaukee City Tour | 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Explore Milwaukee on a fully narrated sightseeing tour that visits Milwaukee's key neighborhoods: Brady Street, Old World 3rd Street, Walker's Point and the Historic Third Ward. The tour will stop at popular Milwaukee attractions including the Milwaukee Art Museum (to visit the Santiago Calatrava-designed entrance), North Point Light House and the Milwaukee Public Market, where guests can stroll the market and buy lunch on their own, if desired.

*Transportation is provided, food is not.*



## Beer Barons of Milwaukee | 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Get an authentic taste of Milwaukee's history and culture. Traveling via bus, you'll hear narration on points of interest such as the Miller Brewing Company, the family mansions of Milwaukee beer barons, the Pabst Brewery complex and Schlitz Park. The tour includes three memorable stops, including at the historical Pabst Mansion and at the Brew City MKE exhibit at the Milwaukee County Historical Society. We'll finish at Lakefront Brewery for a lively, guided visit that includes two samplings of beer and a souvenir glass.

*Transportation, beer samples and snacks provided.*

## Christmas Around Milwaukee Bakery Bus

9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Get in the holiday spirit on this bakery bus tour! This excursion offers an excellent opportunity to start celebrating the season by sampling delicious treats from a collection of favorite Milwaukee bakeries. And we'll enjoy stories of ethnic holiday traditions en route. Participants are encouraged to dress for the occasion; Santa hats, elf stockings and ugly (or pretty) Christmas sweaters are all welcome on tour.

*Transportation, bakery treats and light lunch provided.*



## Burger & Custard Capital of the World

10 a.m.-1 p.m.

We'll start with a two-thumbs-up visit and photo opportunity to see Fonzie along the Milwaukee Riverwalk followed by lunch at a classic Milwaukee diner. Next we'll delve into a "custard crawl," with stops at two historical custard stands to learn why Milwaukee is the Frozen Custard Capital of the World!

*Transportation, light lunch and custard samples provided.*

## Sold out! Bloody Mary Brunch | 9 a.m.-1 p.m.

Who invented the bloody mary and why are there so many variations of the popular drink? These and other questions will be answered on this unique Sunday brunch tour, which also offers a glimpse into Milwaukee's past. The excursion includes traditional brunch items, plus stops for three 6-ounce bloody marys. (Or you can have a Milwaukee-brewed beer or orange juice.)

*Transportation, three half-sized bloody marys and light brunch items provided.*

## Milwaukee Photo Walk | 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

Whether you're a novice or professional photographer or just interested in history, you'll enjoy the stunning beauty of downtown Milwaukee and the Third Ward, the scenic Riverwalk, Wisconsin Avenue, the Milwaukee Art Museum and the lakefront. This 1.5-mile guided walking tour is focused on teaching guests to take more creative photos while learning about Milwaukee's history.

*Transportation is provided; food is not. Please dress for the weather as this is a walking tour.*



# Your on-site resources

NTA's Corporate Partners and associate members bring a wealth of knowledge to the Travel Exchange table. You'll find these valuable colleagues in the Associates Pavilion, at sponsor booths, on the Presentation Stage or at the head of the class in seminar rooms.

**B** Exhibit booth   **A** Associates Pavilion   **P** Presentation Stage   **S** Seminar

## Corporate Partners

AFEX | Ned Donkle, Andrew Saa **B**

Aon Affinity Berkely Travel | Peter Maidhof, Geni Priolo **B S**

Centaur Systems | Rafeek Kottai

Rezgo | Jim Bjorkes **P**

UMS Banking | Chris Lake **B**

## Associates

Dragon Trail Interactive | Matt Grayson **A P**

FareHarbor Holdings | Samantha deGroff **A**

Group Tour Media | Elly DeVries, Jim Holthaus **B**

Outdooractive | Yan Baczowski **A P**

Red Hot Celebrations | Suzanne Slavitter **A**

Rezdy | Bob Gilbert **A P**

Serendipity Media | Monica Schafer **B**

Travefy | Scott Rutz **A P**

Travel Insured International | Sue Barbanel, Bud Geissler **A P**

Trip Mate Inc./Trip Assure | Greg Takehara **A P**

U.S. Bank | Chad Fitterer **A P**

Whisper Trading & Services | Annette Morejon, Leah Wilson **A P**

# BOD election

Ballots for the 2019 NTA Board of Directors were emailed to members in October, but final votes will be cast at the Meet the Candidates session on Sunday. Each candidate will speak, and you'll be able to ask questions. After voting closes, the new board will be announced at the Opening Ceremony & Breakfast on Monday morning.

The slate of candidates presented by the NTA Nominating Committee is as follows:

- **Vice Chair:** Jim Warren, CTP, Anderson Vacations
- **Secretary:** Jorge Cazenave, CTP, Cazenave Argentina
- **Tour Supplier Director:** Angela Harness, CTP, Tanger Outlets
- **DMO Director:** Ashley Kingman, Travel Portland
- **Tour Operator Director:** Fraser Neave, CTP, Wells Gray Tours
- **Tour Operator Director:** Christina Werner, CTP, Custom Holidays
- **Tour Operator Director:** Monique van Dijk-Seppola, Scandinavia Tours

Tour operators vote for operator candidates and officers, tour suppliers for supplier candidates, and DMOs for DMO candidates. Paul Larsen, Ed-Ventures, will rise to the office of chair after serving as vice chair during 2018.



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## The sun sets ... and the fun rises



VISIT MILWAUKEE

### Sunday | Icebreaker at Harley-Davidson Museum

*Sponsored by the Harley-Davidson Museum*

Kick-start the week at the Harley-Davidson Museum, whether you were born to be wild or mild! More than a nostalgia trip for motorcycle enthusiasts, the museum offers a glimpse of American history and culture. Get your (temporary) ink before gearing up for motorcycle photo ops, and don't forget to grab your T-shirt, a beverage and a bite to eat at one of the food stations. And let the live entertainment keep your engine revving on the dance floor all night long!

### Monday Night Party | Discovery World

*Sponsored by The Bartolotta Restaurants and Discovery World*

This lakefront learning center holds more than a dozen interactive science, technology and freshwater exhibits in its 120,000-foot facility. And on Monday night, it will hold NTA delegates' attention with creative menu items from the Bartolotta Restaurants, refreshing libations and a chance to dance.



## Wednesday | Tourism Rocks

*Sponsored by Best Western Hotels & Resorts, Delta Air Lines, Hard Rock Cafe International and the Las Vegas CVA*

This annual event allows you to laugh, dance and stay out late for a good cause. Proceeds benefit Tourism Cares, which advances the travel industry's social impact and provides scholarships for rising travel and hospitality professionals. Tour operators attend as guests of the sponsors, and DMOs and suppliers may purchase tickets by emailing [headquarters@ntastaff.com](mailto:headquarters@ntastaff.com). If the event is not sold out, tickets will be available at the Tourism Cares booth on the convention floor in Milwaukee.



MILWAUKEE PUBLIC MUSEUM

## Final Night Party | Milwaukee Public Museum

*Sponsored by the Milwaukee Public Museum*

Close out Travel Exchange '18 with a party at one of the city's most unique venues: the Milwaukee Public Museum. The attraction boasts more than 150,000 square feet filled with one-of-a-kind exhibits where you can visit the world and even travel through time. Enjoy cocktails in the Costa Rican Rainforest, jump into a 15-minute flash tour of one of the most popular exhibits with a docent or dance by the butterflies during an unforgettable night.



## TIRED OF THE ORDINARY - We Make It Extraordinary

The Lake Winnebago Region is home to more than 70 attractions. From the endearing charm of the classic supper club, to the field to table experience or trying yoga with a goat - your escape from the ordinary starts here.



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NTA and FTA

# We'll see you at the ...

## All-delegate Networking Floor Reception

Sunday, 1-5 p.m.

Following Sunday morning's sightseeing tours, you can get a first peek at the convention floor during this reception. Drinks will be served, and delegates will be able to visit sponsor booths and see product demonstrations in the Associates Pavilion.

## Opening Ceremony, Breakfast & Annual Business Meeting

Monday, 8-9:15 a.m.

Details for this event were unavailable at press time, but they'll be coming soon to a website near you: [NTAtravelexchange.com](http://NTAtravelexchange.com).



## NYC Center Stage Lunch

Monday, 12:15-1:45 p.m.

*Sponsored by Broadway Inbound and NYC & Company*

Singers and dancers from many of Broadway's hit shows will perform selections at what's always the most popular lunch at Travel Exchange.

## FTA Member Breakfast & Networking (FTA members only)

Tuesday, 7:30-8:30 a.m.

*Sponsored by Ed-Ventures*



Sharing a meal and hearing an inspirational speaker is a great way to start your day. This year's presenter is Rev. Robert Flohrs, the executive director of Wittenberg English Ministry in Wittenberg, Germany, who has

delivered English-language church services to hundreds of thousands of tourists and locals the past 21 years. He will also share his unique perspective on faith travel and provide ideas and tips for travel professionals. FTA members who wish to register for the breakfast should contact Kay Saffari at [kay.saffari@faithtravelassociation.com](mailto:kay.saffari@faithtravelassociation.com). Non-FTA members who wish to *become* FTA members and attend the breakfast should also email her.

## Happy Hour

Tuesday, 4-4:45 p.m.

*Sponsored by Aon Affinity Insurance Services and Hilmar Cheese Company Visitor Center*

New this year on the convention floor, wine and cheese will be served at 4 p.m., providing a short break between appointments to fuel up. Appointments will resume at 4:45 and conclude at 6:15 p.m.

Three groups will gather during this event:

**China Inbound Operator Meet-up**—Meet at the Visit Milwaukee booth

**FTA Meet-up** (Sponsored by Ed-Ventures)—Meet at the FTA booth

**YP Meet-up**—Young Professionals will meet at a location TBD



## Government Relations Breakfast Bistro (ticketed event)

Wednesday, 8-9 a.m.

*Sponsored by The Group Tour Company*

Participants will enjoy a hot breakfast and have rich conversation as they kick off their day. Leaders will share information about key industry legislative issues, and NTA will announce the winner of the James D. Santini Award. Visit the registration desk to purchase your ticket; all proceeds go to NTA's Government Issues Fund.

## Toast to Travel Exchange

Thursday, 4-5:30 p.m.

Close out the last day of appointments and seminars on the convention floor by toasting a successful week with a glass of wine or a beer.



# Business by day

## Booth décor

Sellers, you can promote your area in your Destination Pavilion workstation or your tour product in your Supplier Exchange appointment booth. There are no restrictions to your booth's décor, so have fun with it. But remember that the only material you can distribute during appointments are your profile form and business card.

## Destination Pavilion

DMO delegates have 10-minute appointments with buyers in the Destination Pavilion, which is arranged by region and country. DMOs are seated in booths with operators visiting them for their appointments during three sessions:

**Monday** 2–5:30 p.m. | **Tuesday** 8:45 a.m.–Noon and 1:30–6:15 p.m. (with a break for happy hour at 4 p.m.)

## Supplier Exchange

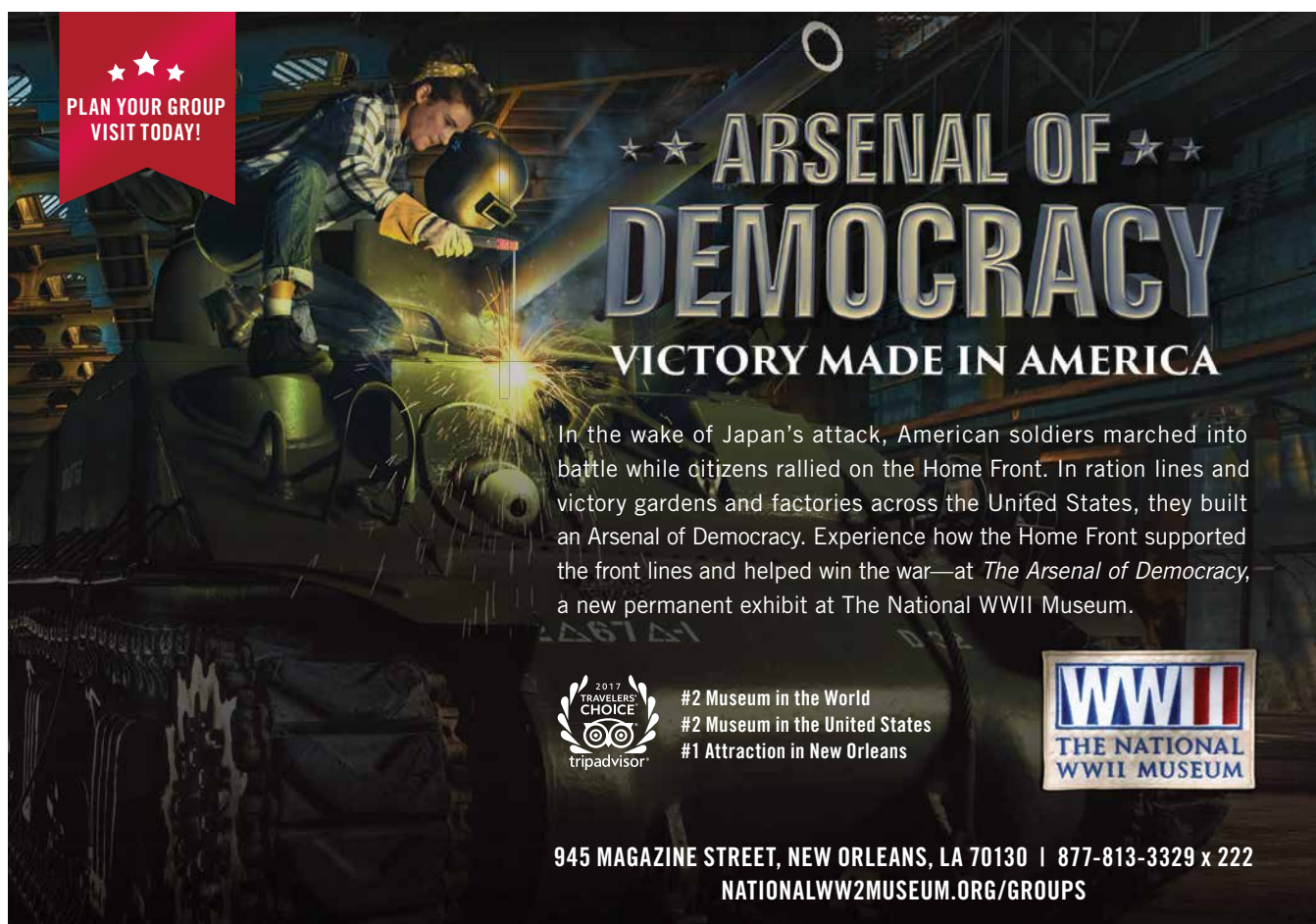
Suppliers have seven-minute appointments with buyers. In this one-on-one business format, the tour operators are seated in booths, and tour suppliers go to them. Appointments were scheduled on the following days based on supplier membership categories:

**Wednesday** 9:15 a.m.–noon and 1:30–5:30 p.m.

- Sightseeing Companies
- Tour Operators (those registered as sellers)
- Attractions
- Airlines
- Corporate Partners
- DMCs

**Thursday** 8–11:45 a.m. and 1:30–5 p.m.

- Railroads
- Casinos
- Multiple Services
- Passenger Vessels
- Restaurants
- Hotels
- Motorcoach Operators



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# Get educated ... get connected

## SUNDAY

NTA DMO Network | 2–4:15 p.m.

Tour Operator Forum | 2–3 p.m.

Brace Yourself: How New Technologies Are Changing Travel Marketing | 2–3 p.m.

What People Say About Your Brand Matters | 3:15–4:15 p.m.

Ask the Operator for DMOs  
4:30–5:30 p.m.

Travel Exchange 101 | 4:30–5:30 p.m.

What Tour Operators Need to Know about the Solo Travel Market  
4:30–5:30 p.m.



NAIM HASSAN

## MONDAY

### SPOTLIGHT SESSION

**BIZnet: The Opening Connection**  
9:30–11:45 a.m.

This orchestrated networking session, facilitated by Thom Singer, The Conference Catalyst, follows the Opening Ceremony & Breakfast on Monday. Come to greet old friends and meet new ones—and swap info about tour product, itinerary ideas and business challenges and successes.

*“We’re going to be networking among ourselves, and I can guarantee everyone that you don’t want to miss BIZnet and Thom’s engaging energy,” says Michael Weinberg, CTP, (Hiltons of Chicago), an*



Thom Singer

*NTA Ambassador. “He is the link to get people talking, and he’s going to give everyone actionable takeaways during this session.”*

**RSVP now:** Email NTA Headquarters to save your seat (headquarters@ntastaff.com)

### SPOTLIGHT SESSION

**Trend Watch 2019: Consumer Behavior Insights** | 2–3 p.m.

Whether you’re a large or small company, customer acquisition and retention are key. There’s no doubt that major and minor shifts in B2B and B2C consumer behavior will impact your business in the year ahead. Through revealing research and case studies, presenter Shawna Suckow will unveil insights that will help you empower your team to have their best year ever.

*“There’s one constant in in consumer behavior: Change!” Shawna says. “We’ve never experienced more change in how people buy than in the last five years. Keeping on top of what consumers want is more of a challenge than ever. Technology constantly evolves, buying habits continuously confound, and frustration is commonplace with sales and marketing teams trying to stay relevant.”*

**The Paradox of Potential**  
3:30–4:30 p.m.

**Don’t Become Extinct! Join the Sales Evolution** | 3:30–4:30 p.m.

## TUESDAY

**Solo Travelers and Marketing**  
9–10 a.m.

**Ask the Operator for Suppliers**  
9–10 a.m.

**Women in Travel: Succeed with the 80/20 Rule and Take Back Your Life**  
10:30–11:30 a.m.

**Tour Operator Risk Management, Conducted by Aon Affinity Berkely Travel** | 10:30–11:30 a.m.

**What’s So Great About Having the Last Word? How to Listen Well and Respond with Clarity** | 2–3 p.m.

**NTA Supplier Network** | 2–4 p.m.

**Transition Prescription: Dealing with the Headache of Change**  
3:30–4:30 p.m.

**The Changing Face of Family Travel: Trends, Challenges & Opportunities** | 3:30–4:30 p.m.

## WEDNESDAY

### SPOTLIGHT SESSION

**The 5.6 Billion-dollar Advantage**  
9:30–10:30 a.m.

*“Two demographic transformations are in play in the United States right now,” says presenter Terry Soto. “A record share of the population is going gray and the population is rapidly becoming majority*



*multicultural. The fact that both are unfolding simultaneously has enormous social, political, economic and business implications for the tour industry."*

In this session you will learn essential information about multicultural consumers, their travel behaviors including destination preferences, how they travel, where they stay, how they book travel, how much they spend and why they travel. And Terry will bust the myths that may hinder your ability to benefit from this growing consumer segment.

**Faith-travel Session** | 10:45–11:45 a.m.

**Creating Revenue Growth Solutions in New Markets** | 10:45–11:45 a.m.

**Influencer Marketing Overview**  
2–3 p.m.

**How to Profit from Gastronomy Tourism** | 2–3 p.m.

**Influencer Marketing In-depth**  
3:30–4:30 p.m.

**China Outbound Travel Market: Recent Research and Trends**  
3:30–4:30 p.m.

## THURSDAY

**Rubber Band Resilient: How to Snap Back after Being Stretched**  
9–10 a.m.

**Adventure Travel Market Session**  
10:30–11:30 a.m.

**The Road Warriors Guide**  
10:30–11:30 a.m.

## SPOTLIGHT SESSION

**Power Hour** | 2–3:15 p.m.

After a full week of networking, education and entertainment, what can you take away from Travel Exchange that will help you overcome obstacles facing your business and the industry, and capitalize on the positives? Join this session to compare notes, discuss ideas and insights, and share key takeaways from your experiences with your NTA colleagues in Milwaukee.

## New presenters



### Kathy Parry | Wellness Roundtrip

Kathy works with service organizations that energize employees in order to boost performance, increase retention and improve staff utilization. A recognized authority in personal energy and productivity, Kathy uses her passion to ignite positive changes for professionals. She holds degrees in business and food management from Miami University and has authored three books: "The Ultimate Recipe for an Energetic Life"; "Hung Over, Sleep-Deprived, Over-Caffeinated and Living on Pizza"; and "Eating for Energy: Four Seasons of Real Food."

**Rubber Band Resilient: How to Snap Back after Being Stretched** | Thursday 9–10 a.m.

**The Road Warriors Guide** | Thursday 10:30–11:30 a.m.



### Terry Soto | About Marketing Solutions

Terry is the CEO of About Marketing Solutions Inc. and is one of the country's top experts and advisers on topline revenue growth in multicultural markets. She is the author of "Marketing to Hispanics – A Strategic Approach to Assessing and Planning Your Initiative" and the upcoming book, "The \$3.5 Trillion Advantage – A C-Suite Guide on Growing Revenue in Today's America." Originally from Ecuador, Terry is passionate about traveling and learning about global cultures.

**The 5.6 Billion-dollar Advantage** | Wednesday 9:30–10:30 a.m.

**Creating Revenue Growth Solutions in New Markets** | Wednesday 10:45–11:45 a.m.



### Shawna Suckow | Shawna Suckow International

Shawna was a million-dollar B2B buyer in the hospitality industry for over 20 years. In 2008 she founded an association of B2B buyers, which now has over 2,500 members across North America. Shawna began studying B2B and B2C behaviors in 2009 and speaking to audiences of salespeople, marketers and retailers who were frustrated with the shifting marketplace and influences of technology. She has written three books, two of which became best-sellers.

**Trend Watch 2019: Consumer Behavior Insights** | Monday 2–3 p.m.

**Don't Become Extinct! Join the Sales Evolution** | Monday 3:30–4:30 p.m.



### Julie Ann Sullivan | Learning Never Ends

Julie Ann works with organizations that want to create a workplace where people are productive, engaged and appreciated. She is a communication specialist, collaboration strategist and change steward. Julie Ann is the Founder of Learning Never Ends, a company whose purpose is to create a more positive culture, one person at a time. She is a member of the National Speakers Association, an accomplished author and hosts the Mere Mortals Unite & Businesses that Care podcasts.

**What's So Great About Having the Last Word? How to Listen Well and Respond with Clarity** | Tuesday 2–3 p.m.

**Transition Prescription: Dealing with the Headache of Change**  
Tuesday 3:30–4:30 p.m.



### Janice Waugh | The Solo Traveler

Janice is the founder, publisher and a contributor to Solo Traveler, a website she developed based on her own need for finding better information about traveling alone. Since launching the site in 2009, Janice has seen readership grow to 160,000 monthly, with a subscriber base of more than 45,000 each month.

**What Tour Operators Need to Know about the Solo Travel Market** | Sunday 4:30–5:30 p.m.

**Solo Travelers and Marketing** | Tuesday 9–10 a.m.

# A culinary and cultural compass

The Travel Exchange host city is a jumping-off point for Wisconsin's desirable (and delectable) destinations

BY LUCY SAUNDERS

Center your compass over Milwaukee and use the city as a starting point to explore all the culinary corners of Wisconsin. As a food writer, I invited several travel authors to recommend the most delicious destinations in the state.

To the south, Racine beckons with its downtown marina, funky boutiques and house-brewed root beer at the Kewpie Café, and you can get lunch with a view at the Reefpoint Brewpub by the pier. Racine is also home to one of Wisconsin's architectural treasures—the S.C. Johnson Research Tower, designed and built by Frank Lloyd Wright—as well as a lake-front zoo and the Racine Art Museum, specializing in American arts and crafts.

Next is the historical coastline city of Kenosha, home to the confectionery giant Jelly Belly and Scandinavian bakeries that offer the famous Danish kringle (a flaky pastry oval stuffed with fruit and nut fillings). Kenosha's Big Star is a classic drive-in, famous for hand-cut fries, shakes and burgers. Mary Bergin, author of "Wisconsin Supper Club Cookbook," suggests the HobNob, on the north end of Kenosha, for enjoying lake-front views and grasshopper cocktails amidst a lifetime of travel memorabilia. South of Kenosha, the Pleasant Prairie Premium Outlets features shopping and the Chancery Pub for burgers and pastas.

Less than 100 miles west of Milwaukee is Madison, the state capital, located on



Charmant Hotel in La Crosse

CHARMANT HOTEL

an isthmus between Lake Mendota and Lake Monona. The city's capital square is flanked by food stores, such as Candinas Chocolates and the Old Fashioned Supper Club with its shareable lazy Susan trays, plus many shops and boutiques on State Street. Neighboring Middleton is home to Capital Brewery and the National Mustard Museum, with more than 5,000 mustards from all over the world and a kitschy gift shop with lots of mustard-themed merchandise.

Due west of Madison is historical Spring Green, the site of Frank Lloyd Wright's summer home, Taliesin, where the gardens were recently restored to

mid-century splendor. Nearby, The House on the Rock features founder Alex Jordan's bizarre architectural treasures, such as the Infinity Room, the world's largest carousel, the Sea Serpent, giant music boxes and more stuff crammed into overflowing rooms and hallways. Stretch your legs on the trails along the Wisconsin River and, in season, stretch your taste buds outdoors on the deck at the Riverview Terrace Café.

Southwest of Spring Green are Indian mounds, remnants of Native American memorials built as animal-shaped or "effigy" mounds; giant birds, bears and panthers are common forms. After hiking the mounds, follow the Sugar River Trail to New Glarus, which offers a taste of little Switzerland with an award-winning brewery and tours, along with small bakeries and restaurants. The Chalet Landhaus features some of the finest European cuisine at affordable prices.

Venture northwest of Madison and explore the Wisconsin Dells, a scenic area of lakes, bluffs and rock formations that's dotted with family resorts and modern water parks. Visit the local historical supper clubs, such as the Ishnala on Lake Delton or the Del Bar, known for its brandy Old-Fashioneds. In Baraboo,



## Discover The Huntington

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the Driftless Glen Distillery serves up house-made spirits, tastings and tours.

Nearby, Roots Chocolates creates farm-crafted chocolates and confections using fruits, herbs and honey from the owners' fourth-generation gardens, open for group tours from May through October. Other seasonal agri-based tours include a visit at the Rowley Creek Lavender Farm.

About 90 minutes northwest of the Wisconsin Dells runs the Great River Road, which winds through La Crosse, up to Minnesota. La Crosse is one of the little-known urban treasures of Wisconsin, according to Martin Hintz, author of "Wisconsin: Off the Beaten Path." The riverfront city is home to the Heileman Brewery and one of the state's biggest Oktoberfest celebrations, along with the Charmant Hotel, a former candy factory turned into a luxury hotel with a rooftop bar and plush fixtures. La Crosse also hosts several winter festivals, including a masquerade ball during its Mardi Gras.

Travel northeast of Milwaukee to explore the coast of Lake Michigan. The Kohler American Club and Whistling Straits golf courses offer many options for fine dining, as well as the chance to tour the tower of spa porcelain at the Kohler Design Center. Manitowoc is home to the SS *Badger*, a vintage vessel that ferries tourists across Lake Michigan.



Green Bay delights visitors with restaurants and brewpubs, including Titledown Brewery and Hinterland Brewing Co. According to Kathy Flanigan, author of "Beer Lover's Wisconsin," "Hinterland is across from

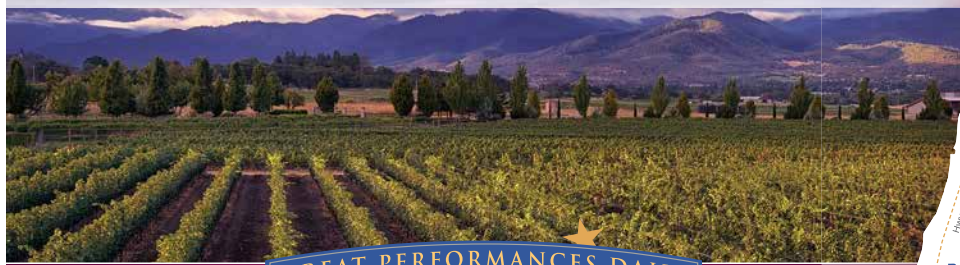
Lambeau Field in the Titledown District. Seating is available in the Beer Hall, or, if the weather agrees, the Beer Garden. Upstairs, the High Gravity dining area is quieter and comes with a view."

Drive east of Green Bay to discover Door County and its many parks, forests and beaches. In the winter, Door County offers lots of scenic trails for cross-country skiing, as well as country inns with fireside dining. The Door County Brewing Co., Hacienda Brewing, Magnolia Cheese and the Door County Music Hall also offer tours, tastings and cultural events.

Many of these destinations are featured by Circle Wisconsin in its Fam tours that will take place prior to Travel Exchange. You can visit [circlewisconsin.com](http://circlewisconsin.com) for photos and itineraries or email Wendy Dobrzynski at [wendy@circlewisconsin.com](mailto:wendy@circlewisconsin.com).

Lucy Saunders is the author of five cookbooks and loves living in Milwaukee near Lake Michigan.

Named a Top 12 Global Wine Region to Visit, *Forbes*, 2017



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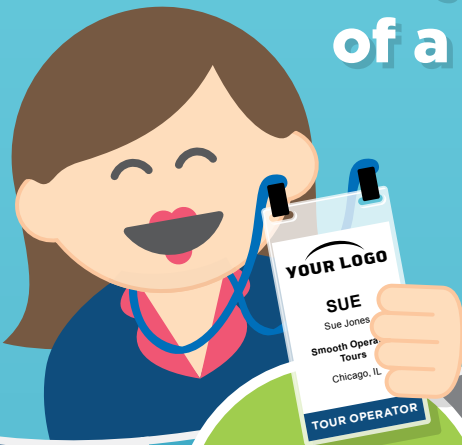


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## New England

COMPILED BY PATTI NICKELL

New England may be a tiny slice of America, but it's had a mega influence on the shaping of the nation. The region's historical significance speaks for itself, but these six states offer other incentives for visitors: quaint villages, pristine seacoasts, green farmland, heritage attractions and a cuisine—from clam chowder and baked beans to lobster, pot roast and johnnycakes—that is uniquely Yankee.

Follow in the footsteps of the Founding Fathers and explore this region that is rich in Americana.

### Massachusetts: A big time in Boston

Boston is among the country's most cutting-edge cities, always looking ahead. However, over the next eight years it will be looking back—to the moment 250 years ago when tea tossed into the city's harbor served as the catalyst for a revolution and the beginning of a nation.

Revolution 250 will be a series of events over eight years, allowing Baby Boomers to brush elbows with British aristocracy, Gen Xers and generals to get to know each other, and millennials to meet up with Minutemen.

That's right: The British are coming again, and Boston is ready for them (and for you). Large scale re-enactments of the Boston Tea Party, the battles of Lexington and Concord, and the Battle of Bunker Hill will culminate in 2026 with a celebration of the first reading of the Declaration of Independence. Go to [revolution250.org](http://revolution250.org) for more information.

No need to wait for one of Boston's most innovative events, though. Tavern Nights is the only nighttime Colonial tavern experience in the city. Held the second and fourth Friday of every month at the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum, it's an entertaining and memorable night. The museum is part of NTA-member Boston Attractions Group.

Samuel Adams and John Hancock are among the historical figures waiting to welcome you with a mug of ale, roasted sweet



meat of swine and tales of their exploits. Political discourse plays second fiddle to, well, an actual fiddle for boisterous songs and rollicking dances as well as Colonial fun and games.

However, if your group wants to get in a few jabs at King George, we're sure the costumed Colonists won't object. So give a big huzzah and "hie" yourself to Tavern Nights.

For a double dose of patriotism, book the museum's pre-dinner group tour. Follow the Sons of Liberty as they take your group to a re-enactment of the Town Hall meeting that led to the famous event at Boston Harbor—you can even toss some tea yourself.

According to Paul Lurie, group sales manager for the attraction, Tavern Nights has proven so popular that many tour groups are using it as a closing event for their Boston experience.

"It offers the perfect mix of Boston's rich history with a great dining experience and an interactive performance where guests are encouraged to participate," he says.

For more information about Boston attractions, contact Stacy Thornton of the Boston CVB ([bostonusa.com](http://bostonusa.com)) at [sthornton@bostonusa.com](mailto:sthornton@bostonusa.com) or Suzanne Taylor of the Boston Attractions Group ([bostonattractionsgroup.com](http://bostonattractionsgroup.com)) at [staylor@thefreedomtrail.org](mailto:staylor@thefreedomtrail.org).



Tavern Nights at the Boston Tea Party Ships & Museum is an immersive Colonial dinner theater experience in the heart of Boston.



*Charles W. Morgan* in the harbor at Mystic Seaport

## It doesn't take a mystic to know why groups love Mystic Seaport

When most of us think about quintessential New England, we think of a charming hamlet, complete with a village green, rainbow-hued cottages and boats moored in the harbor—all caressed by the salty spray of the sea. In other words, Connecticut's Mystic Seaport.

Just five minutes off Interstate 95, between New York and Boston, Mystic could be a throwback to another century—a time when whaling ships plied the Atlantic and sailors set off for exotic ports of call. Groups can explore this maritime heritage at a re-created New England seafaring village and

view the *Charles W. Morgan*, the last wooden whaling ship in the world, or they can watch shipwrights hard at work restoring the *Mayflower II*.

Visitors can tour specialty shops, sample free fudge at a local bakery or sit down for a meal at any number of group-friendly restaurants. If a group is interested in a nautical experience for themselves, they can go on a river cruise aboard a 1908 steamboat or on a navy launch.

For more on Mystic Seaport, reach out to Margaret Milnes at [margaret.milnes@mysticseaport.org](mailto:margaret.milnes@mysticseaport.org) or go to [mysticseaport.org](http://mysticseaport.org).

## Vermont: A holiday lover's paradise

If you're having winter visions of mountains draped in snow, sleigh rides with bells tinkling in the frosty air, and hot cider before a crackling fire, where better than Vermont to spend the holidays?

According to Karen Ballard, program manager for the Vermont Tourism Network, the season brings a series of events across the state.



VERMONT TOURISM NETWORK

The town of Woodstock's Wassail Weekend has been a mainstay for the past 27 years, earning a coveted Top Ten Winter Event in Vermont designation. The Wassail Horse Parade showcases 50 horses and riders dressed in holiday attire, and even Santa has been known to make an appearance. The 2019 event takes place Dec. 6–8.

Another top-10 event, Christmas in Weston (Dec. 7, 2019) is a day-long kickoff to the season. There are horse-drawn wagon rides, gallery exhibitions, crafts and food tastings. Daytime activities conclude with a concert and a reading of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol," followed by the lighting of the Christmas tree on the village green.

More carolers and seasonal shoppers will be in Burlington for its Church Street Marketplace Santa Parade and Holiday Tree lighting (Nov. 22, 2019).

If your clients want to see Christmas, New England-style, they will definitely want to be on hand for the illumination of 250,000 lights on Church Street, followed by the lighting of the official tree in shades of red, gold, tangerine, blue and green.

Contact Ballard about Vermont's group tour offerings at [kballard@vtchamber.com](mailto:kballard@vtchamber.com) or visit [vermonttourismnetwork.com](http://vermonttourismnetwork.com).

TOP: MYSTIC SEAPORT



## Maine's welcome mat

Some say that Maine, the northernmost portion of New England, is as much a state of mind as an actual state. Cabot Cove of "Murder, She Wrote" might actually have been Mendocino, California, and Stephen King's Maine townships are a composite of several villages.

But that doesn't alter the fact that the real thing offers plenty for groups.

"From the mountains to the sea, Maine rolls out the welcome mat for groups," says Hannah Collins of the Maine Office of Tourism.

With 3,500 miles of coastline, Maine is steeped in a maritime history that lives on today in working waterfronts, fishing villages and historical downtowns, boatyards harkening back to the era of tall ships, and award-winning locally sourced seafood.

This most nautical of states has other group-friendly attractions as well, including the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens. Tour operators can customize their group's experience with an expert-led tour or one of several new dining options.

The Maine Mineral & Gem Museum (scheduled to open this fall) in Bethel is sure to be a crowd-pleaser. In addition to housing the finest collection of Maine's marvels from underground, it will also contain one of the world's foremost collections of extraterrestrial rocks—meteorites from Mars, the moon and an asteroid belt. We're betting that Stephen King can make something from this.

Groups looking for specialty tours ranging from moose safaris to gem sluicing can find them at the Sunday River Resort. You might find those activities calm compared to other annual events such as the New England Cornhole Championship and the North American Wife Carrying Championship, both held in conjunction with Sunday River Resort's Fall Festival.

Contact Collins at [hannah.collins@maine.gov](mailto:hannah.collins@maine.gov) to learn more about Maine tour stops, or go to [visitmaine.com/maine-motorcoach-network](http://visitmaine.com/maine-motorcoach-network).



Alfond Children's Garden in the Coastal Maine Botanical Gardens

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Federal Hill Pizza in Little Italy

PROVIDENCE CVB

## Big-city cool in Little Rhody

Providence, Rhode Island, has small-town New England charm with its cobblestoned streets, Colonial architecture and waterfront vistas, but it also has big-city cool with colorful pops of public art, sophisticated restaurants and a vibrant downtown.

“Groups love Providence because you can really feel the history and culture,” says Elise Swearingen, leisure sales manager for the city’s CVB.

That history and culture include the first Baptist church in the United States and the largest collection of intact Colonial homes, on Benefit Street.

Providence provides more than just food for the soul; it offers food for the stomach with one of the nation’s largest Little Italy neighborhoods. And a pasta-making class makes a great group activity.

Another don’t-miss experience is WaterFire, a public art installation of nearly 100 bonfires that appear to float on the downtown rivers. The free event is held on scheduled days from May through November.

Swearingen says that with a compact downtown and three rivers winding through the heart of the city, Providence can be explored by bus, boat or on foot. The CVB has developed walking tours of some of the city’s most historically significant neighborhoods, and routes are available in print or online.

To find out more about WaterFire and other Providence attractions, contact Swearingen at [eswearingen@goprovidence.com](mailto:eswearingen@goprovidence.com) or go to [goprovidence.com](http://goprovidence.com).


## Scenery and serenity in New Hampshire

If you think New England is all about history, think again. New Hampshire’s White Mountains offer groups nature on a lavish scale—from iconic Mt. Washington (at 6,288 feet, the Northeast’s highest peak) to the White Mountain National Forest (800,000 acres offering activities ranging from hiking and golfing to cross-country skiing and snowshoeing).

The White Mountains are also home to two “firsts”: the Mt. Washington Auto Road, the nation’s first man-made attraction, and NTA-member Mount Washington Cog Railway,

the world’s first mountain-climbing cog railway train.

All this and one of the region’s most dazzling displays of seasonal colors make New Hampshire both a scenic and serene choice for tour operators.

To learn more reach out to Michele Cota ([michele.cota@dred.nh.gov](mailto:michele.cota@dred.nh.gov)) at the New Hampshire Division of Travel & Tourism Development ([visitnh.gov](http://visitnh.gov)). Or connect with Susan Presby ([sue@thecog.com](mailto:sue@thecog.com)) of the Mount Washington Cog Railway ([thecog.com](http://thecog.com)). 



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## You say Potala, I say Potala

Ping and Chris Lee, owners of ChinaPlus Tours, specialize in creating packaged tours to China and providing unique experiences with their shared knowledge of both Chinese and American cultures.

They were born in China and moved to the United States in 1988, gaining U.S. citizenship in 1998. For them, not only is China a one-of-a-kind destination for groups, but it's also home.

Ping says North American groups look for a more exotic destination with a rich culture and fascinating people for their vacations. With that in mind, ChinaPlus' tours are designed to include the best sightseeing spots and opportunities for visitors to dive into Chinese heritage and daily life.

In addition to traditional China tours with Beijing, Xian, a cruise on the Yangtze River and Shanghai on the itineraries, their two most popular tours are:

**China in-depth with unique Tibet** This 12-day tour includes a journey to remote and spiritual Tibet, where groups will visit Lhasa's 1,000-room Potala Palace, one of the grandest monuments in Asia, and meet with a local family to learn about Tibetan culture. In the city of Chengdu, participants mingle with locals at a tea house and see the Panda Research Center with an up-close encounter with giant pandas. There'll be a few stops in Hong Kong, too, including Victoria Peak.

**China Silk Road & Shangri-la** This 16-day tour combines the ancient Silk Road and beautiful Shangri-la with cultural experiences, scenic views and charming villages. Highlights include seeing the ruins of ancient Jiaohe City in Turpan, a UNESCO World Heritage site built more than 2,000 years ago; the Shigu Village and Tiger Leaping Gorge in Lijiang; the Ganden Songzanlin Monastery in Shangri-la; and the Museum of Ancient Mummies in Urumqi.

For more information, contact Ping and Chris at [travel@chinaplustour.com](mailto:travel@chinaplustour.com) or visit [chinaplustour.com](http://chinaplustour.com). ☎



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Panda Research Center in Chengdu



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Ruins of Jiaohe City



# India

COMPILED BY KENDALL FLETCHER

## India: The sites. The sounds. The six-day tours.

Since its founding in 2006, Unisafe Tours in Agra, India, has taken pride in creating flexible itineraries and going beyond the usual tourist activities by letting their clients learn and have fun simultaneously.

“We have history and lots of old arts we are still keeping alive, and we have museums, palaces, Havelis, and lake adventure tourism. There are lots of reasons to come and visit India,” says Vishal Gupta, the company’s managing director. “North American groups love local culture, Indian tradition, Indian history and North Indian food the best.”

One of the company’s most popular tours is the six-day Golden Triangle Tour, covering Delhi, Agra and Jaipur. The tour includes a garlanding on arrival in New Delhi, meals and drinks, and English-speaking guides.

Participants will ride an elephant at Amber Fort in Jaipur, see the sights in New Delhi, tour the India Gate, check out Humayun’s Tomb and go to the National Museum. There’s a sunrise visit to the Taj Mahal, stops at Fatehpur Sikri and Birla Temple, the Hawa Mahal or Palace of the Winds, the City Palace and the Solar Observatory. Jaipur offers colorful markets with unique places to explore the culture and shop for antiques, jewelry and pottery.

“In our itineraries, we tend not to recommend one prestigious hotel after another in the predictable carousel of tourist sights,



Elephant ride at Amber Fort in Jaipur

but have used our skill and judgment to introduce fascinating variations where appropriate,” says Gupta. “Nor do we invariably recommend flying between cities; that is no way to measure the rhythm of a country, so road and rail play their part, too.”

One of those rail options is a one-day tour of Agra, departing from Delhi with breakfast on the train and stops at the Taj Mahal, Agra Fort, a UNESCO World Heritage site, and Fatehpur Sikri.

For more information, contact Gupta at [unisafetours@gmail.com](mailto:unisafetours@gmail.com) or go to [unisafetours.com](http://unisafetours.com). ☎

Humayun’s Tomb in New Delhi





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# Africa

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

## The time I walked a cheetah

OK, full disclosure, I am not the world's biggest fan of wine or animals: However, during a recent stay in South Africa's Cape Town region, I had fantastic encounters with both Cabernet and big cats.

My itinerary was coordinated by Deon Kitching of new NTA- and Faith Travel Association-member Embrace South Africa Tours. Deon is one of the most thoughtful people I've met, and he is a pro at keeping the focus on highly localized experiences.

During my stay, he took me out to his hometown, Paarl, for a couple of nights. This quaint city, located 30 miles east of Cape Town, is a hot spot for wine enthusiasts. While there are dozens of great places to sample the fruits of the vine, I did tastings at Mellasat Vineyards and Laborie Estate.

Small batch is the name of the game at Mellasat, a boutique winery on a beautiful farm. Owner Stephen Richardson said the vineyard's claim to fame is an award-winning white Pinotage, which has been very well received by the local and international wine community since it was introduced in 1997.

Laborie celebrates its link to the French Huguenots, who annexed the estate property in the late 17th century, by serving Tallefert Wines, with tastings being offered Wednesday to Sunday in the stately manor house. (Bonus tip: If you can secure one of the eight rooms at Laborie Estate, do it. I loved my night in luxurious Suite 5.)

Deon also set me up for the Volunteer for a Day program at Ashia Cheetah Experience, one of his area's newer attractions. The sanctuary is home to more than 10 retired or rehabilitating cheetahs, and my duties (ahem) included helping with poop scooping, preparing food bowls and assisting with a tour group.



Courier's Pat Henderson with Ellie

While it was a bit daunting at first, I got used to spending time within 15–20 feet of the majestic creatures. I also got to take Ellie for a walk (see photo), which was an amazing and thankfully peaceful experience.

Contact Kitching at [deonkit@mweb.co.za](mailto:deonkit@mweb.co.za) or go to **embrace southafricatours.com** to learn more.

## A Zambian sampler

Located in southern-central Africa, Zambia combines a diverse culture with unspoiled beauty and nature-based adventure. Zamag Tours & Safaris, an NTA member since 2015, covers many of the country's highlights as part of its itineraries.



Zambian farmers

"It's a great destination for both safaris and agriculture tours," says company owner Daphne Lindsay. "From an agricultural point of view, Zambia has 40 percent of Africa's water and is a very fertile country that could be the future breadbasket of Africa."

Daphne and her husband, Ian, have been running agricultural tours for more than two decades, first in Zimbabwe and then in Zambia. Itineraries include visits to a number of traditional Zambian farms—both small-scale and commercial operations—for everything from in-depth study programs covering specific technical interests to more social visits.

In addition to the farm-focused tours, the company offers safaris in Zambia. Game drives typically showcase some of the nation's signature outdoor attractions—Kafue, South Luangwa and Lower Zambezi national parks—as well as animals such as leopards, zebras, elephants, hippos and many species of birds. Neighboring Botswana and Zimbabwe also are included on some packages.

Contact Lindsay at [reservations@zamagsafaris.com](mailto:reservations@zamagsafaris.com) or go to **zamagsafaris.com** to learn more.





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Kaole Ruins in Bagamoyo

## A tale of two Tanzanian cities

As part of my trip to Tanzania in June for the NTA Product Development Trip, I got to spend two days before the safari started exploring the nation's capital, Dar es Salaam, and the historical town of Bagamoyo. Scholastica Ponera of Pongo Safaris organized my touring, and I was in the capable hands of guide Tetula Okama and driver Hans Warburg.

We spent a full day of touring Bagamoyo, a fascinating rural outpost founded in the 700s that has strong ties to early European contact. During our stop at the Kaole Ruins, I learned how the region became a major trade center for merchants from the Far East, Africa and Europe in the 13th century.

The area also was a hub for Protestant and Catholic missionaries, primarily from Germany and England, who used the port city as a starting point for evangelistic outreach across Tanzania. In the late 1860s, land was given to one group of Catholics, and the first mission in East Africa was established.

Of the many cool places we saw and things we did, my favorite stop was the fish market in Dar es Salaam. The seaside market, which seemed like organized chaos, has two components—your typical vendor area with stalls and an auction area. We got to watch three rounds of live bidding, and while the man running the show didn't talk a mile a minute (à la U.S. auctioneers) it was a fascinating scene.

The market also includes a section where you can have your fish cleaned and packaged, and an area where locals cook the fresh fish (either yours or what they've bought to sell). The last merchant booth we visited offered samples of what is easily the best calamari I've ever tasted.

Tetula and Hans, both Tanzania natives, were very much in the know about the history of the places we toured. In addition to their extensive "professional" knowledge, they also offered interesting perspectives on everyday life. Their insights, and the laughter we shared, made my two days in the Tanzanian capital very enjoyable.

For more information, contact Ponera at [info@pongosafaris.com](mailto:info@pongosafaris.com) or go to [pongosafaris.com](http://pongosafaris.com).



Dar es Salaam fish market

PAT HENDERSON


## A suite of safari options

Africa Safari Classics is a Kenya-based tour company that specializes in wildlife safaris and/or beach holidays in Kenya, Tanzania, Zambia, Rwanda, Botswana and Seychelles. Here is a look at three of ASC's featured tours:

**Taste of Kenya Experience** This eight-day safari puts adventurers in touch with big game at Tsavo West National Park, Chyulu Hills National Park, Masai Mara Game Reserve and the Lewa Wildlife Conservancy, which is where Prince William proposed to Kate Middleton in 2010.

**Wildlife in Style** The tour covers many of Kenya's top nature areas—Amboseli National Reserve, Aberdares National Park, Samburu Game Reserve, Lake Nakuru National Park and Masai Mara Game Reserve—and showcases a range of animals over nine days.

**East Africa Wildlife Safari** Travelers get to enjoy game drives in Kenya and Tanzania on this two-country itinerary. After spending five days in southern Kenya, the group heads to Tanzania's Kilimanjaro region for four days of exploration at Serengeti National Park and Ngorongoro Crater.

To learn more, contact Maurice Nzwii at [sales@africasafariclassics.com](mailto:sales@africasafariclassics.com) or go to [africasafariclassics.com](http://africasafariclassics.com). 



# Courier's Guide to NTA-member Theaters

Chicago's CIBC Theatre

## Think ... theatrical

BY BOB ROUSE

I WAS QUITE THEATRICAL when I visited Chicago in July. I don't mean I was dramatic; I only mean I visited two NTA-member theaters.

We saw "Hamilton" at CIBC Theatre, one of four managed by longtime NTA-member Broadway in Chicago. You may recall that I gushed about that show after seeing it in New York (and it was every *beat* as good in Chicago) so now let me gush a bit about the CIBC Theatre: It's the venue version of a four-layer red velvet cake—scrumptious. We luxuriated in the theater's grand style and comfy seats. "I've even got legroom!" one tall son of mine said.

Others are impressed, too. When I told the hotel clerk where we were going, she said, "You'll love it. It's, like, every seat is close, and it's really intimate."

Our seats were pretty darn close, so I wanted to size up the rest of the house. I stood with my back against the stage, looked up to the third balcony and focused on a lady on the back row. "That looks like Laura McFadden (an NTA HQ colleague)," I thought. That's how intimate the seating is.

Broadway in Chicago Group Sales connects tour operators with seats at shows that either arrive direct from Broadway or are world premieres destined for the Great White Way.

With four theaters in her portfolio, Gemma Mulvihill, executive director of sales, can come up with the right show at the right rate for any group of 15 or more.

"The best prices are commonly found on weeknights," she says, "but each show is different, so it's always good to check with me for help in booking tickets."

I also checked in on The Second City, not for one of the theater's famed sketch comedy shows, but for a walking tour of the surrounding Old Town neighborhood, which included a history lesson (and inside scoop) about the company's pipeline to fame. The Second City stage has produced a remarkable number of "Saturday Night Live" cast members, from John Belushi and Bill Murray to Tina Fey and Cecily Strong.

But the show's the thing, and Second City offers several types. "When talking to an operator about shows, I like to learn some basic demographics of the

group: age range, where they're from, the kind of group and the occasion for the trip," says Heather Scholl, group sales and events manager.

Scholl adds that most shows are considered to be R-rated, but the theater does offer a PG-13 set on Saturday afternoons and can cook up a special performance for extra-large groups desiring a "clean" show.

For more details, you can check with my Chicago theater friends (I like saying that). Find their contact information with that of other NTA-member theaters on the pages that follow.

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The guide listings are based on a company's membership category and profile selections, and the information was provided by the member contact and current as of Aug. 16. Please check NTAonline.com for updated information on association members offering theater product. With this and all other guides that appear in *Courier*, members can enhance their listing. Contact sales@ntaservicesinc.com for details.

## THEATERS, PERFORMANCE VENUES AND PRODUCTION COMPANIES

### CANADA

#### ONTARIO

##### Greg Frewin Theatre

Serena Waldeck  
5781 Ellen Ave.  
Niagara Falls, ON L2G 3P8  
+1.905.356.0777 (240)  
serena@gregfrewintheatre.com  
gregfrewintheatre.com

##### Mirvish Productions

Natasha Springett  
284 King St. West, Suite 310  
Toronto, ON M5V 1J2  
+1.416.593.4142 (202)  
nspringett@mirvish.com  
mirvish.com

### UNITED STATES

#### ARIZONA

##### Blazin' M Ranch

Lori Mabery  
1875 Mabery Ranch Road  
Cottonwood, AZ 86326  
+1.928.634.0334  
lori@blazinm.com  
blazinm.com

#### ARKANSAS

##### Ozark Folk Center State Park

Michalle Stevens  
1032 Park Ave.  
Mountain View, AR 72560  
+1.870.269.3851  
michalle.stevens@arkansas.gov  
ozarkfolkcenter.com

#### CALIFORNIA

##### PIER 39

Jodi Cumming  
Beach Street and The Embarcadero  
Stairway 2, Level 3  
San Francisco, CA 94133  
+1.415.705.5500  
jodi@pier39.com  
pier39.com

##### Pirate's Dinner Adventure--California

Anna Castillo  
7600 Beach Blvd.  
Buena Park, CA 90620-1838  
+1.714.690.1497 (212)  
annac@pirates-ca.com  
piratesdinneradventure.com

#### FLORIDA

##### Maltz Jupiter Theatre

Dana Munson  
1001 E. Indiantown Road  
Jupiter, FL 33477  
+1.561.743.2666 (110)  
dmunson@jupitertheatre.org  
jupitertheatre.org

##### Sleuths Mystery Dinner Shows

Jim Lyons  
8267 International Drive  
Orlando, FL 32819-9326  
+1.407.363.1985  
jiml@sleuths.com  
sleuths.com

#### ILLINOIS

##### Broadway in Chicago Group Sales

Gemma Mulvihill  
17 N. State St., Suite 810  
Chicago, IL 60602-3047  
+1.312.977.1710  
groupsales@broadwayinchicago.com  
broadwayinchicago.com

##### Lyric Opera of Chicago

Brittany Gonzalez  
20 N. Wacker Drive  
Chicago, IL 60606  
+1.312.827.5927  
bgonzalez@lyricopera.org  
lyricopera.org

##### The Second City

Heather Scholl  
1616 N. Wells  
Chicago, IL 60614  
+1.312.337.3992  
hscholl@secondcity.com  
secondcity.com

#### INDIANA

##### Amish Acres--Red Barn Theatre

Becky Cappert  
1600 W. Market St.  
Nappanee, IN 46550-1731  
+1.574.773.4188  
beckymaust@amishacres.com  
amishacres.com

##### Derby Dinner Playhouse

Cindy Nevitt  
525 Marriott Drive  
Clarksville, IN 47129-3053  
+1.812.288.2632  
groups@derbydinner.com  
derbydinner.com

#### MASSACHUSETTS

##### Boston Ballet

John Fernandes  
19 Clarendon St.  
Boston, MA 02116  
+1.617.456.6343  
jfernandes@bostonballet.org  
bostonballet.org

##### Boston Pops Orchestra/ Boston Symphony Orchestra/ Tanglewood

Megan Cokely  
301 Massachusetts Ave.  
Boston, MA 02115-4557  
+1.617.638.9345  
mcokely@bso.org  
bso.org

##### Shear Madness

Lisa Field  
20 Park Plaza, Suite 1012  
Boston, MA 02116-4315  
+1.617.451.0195  
lisaf@shearmadness.com  
shearmadness.com

#### MISSOURI

##### Dutton Family Theater Complex

Debbie LeTourneau  
3454 W. 76 Country Blvd.  
Branson, MO 65616-3546  
+1.417.332.2772  
debbie.letourneau@gmail.com  
theduttons.com

##### National Blues Museum

Casey Jolley  
615 Washington Ave.  
St. Louis, MO 63101  
+1.314.925.0016 (439)  
cjolley@nationalbluesmuseum.org  
nationalbluesmuseum.org

##### Presleys' Country Jubilee

Raeanne Presley  
2920 W. 76 Country Blvd.  
Branson, MO 65616-2172  
+1.417.334.4874  
raeanne@presleys.com  
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### Cirque du Soleil USA Inc.

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Las Vegas, NV 89119  
+1.702.352.0036  
jacinta.jose@cirquedusoleil.com  
cirquedusoleil.com

## NEW MEXICO

### The Santa Fe Opera

Kathy Murphy  
301 Opera Drive  
Santa Fe, NM 87506  
+1.505.986.5911  
kmurphy@santafeopera.org  
santafeopera.org

## NEW YORK

### Broadway Inbound

Peter Waugh  
520 8th Ave., 11th Floor  
New York, NY 10018  
+1.212.302.0995  
peterw@broadwayinbound.com  
broadwayinbound.com

### Carnegie Hall

Rayna Bourke  
881 7th Ave.  
New York, NY 10019-8075  
+1.212.903.9705  
rbourke@carnegiehall.org  
carnegiehall.org/groupsales

### Chicago The Musical-National Artists Management Company

Ken Sperr  
165 W. 46th St., Suite 1202  
New York, NY 10036-2508  
+1.212.575.1044  
kens@namcousa.com  
chicagothemusical.com

### Disney Theatrical Group

Nicholas Faranda  
214 W. 42nd St.  
New York, NY 10036-7202  
+1.212.827.5412  
nicholas.faranda@disney.com  
disneyonbroadway.com

### GreatWhiteWay.com Group Sales

Scott Mallalieu  
1776 Broadway, Suite 2020  
New York, NY 10019  
+1.212.757.9117  
scottm@greatwhiteway.com  
greatwhiteway.com

### Group Sales Box Office at Broadway.com

Kendra Dolton  
729 7th Ave., Floor 6  
New York, NY 10019-6831  
800.BROADWAY (ext. 2)  
kdolton@broadway.com  
broadway.com/groups

### Madison Square Garden Group Sales

Benjamin Maddy  
2 Penn Plaza, 14th Floor  
New York, NY 10121-0101  
+1.212.631.4354  
ben.maddy@msg.com  
msggroupsales.com

### Roundabout Theatre Company

Madeline Hurley  
231 W. 39th St., #1200  
New York, NY 10018  
+1.212.719.9393  
madelineh@roundabouttheatre.org  
roundabouttheatre.org

### WICKED the Musical/ 321 Group Sales

Ellise Lesser  
420 West 45th St., 2nd Floor  
New York, NY 10036  
+1.646.289.6885  
elesser@321mgt.com  
wickedthemusical.com

### Your Broadway Genius

Chris Hillner  
1501 Broadway, Suite 1304  
New York, NY 10036  
877.943.2929  
chris@yourbroadwaygenius.com  
broadwaygeniusgroups.com

## PENNSYLVANIA

### American Music Theatre

Alyssa Keshel  
2425 Lincoln Highway E  
Lancaster, PA 17602-1423  
+1.717.397.7700  
sales@amtshows.com  
amtshows.com

### Dutch Apple Dinner Theatre/ Prather Productions

Myra Gromen  
510 Centerville Road  
Lancaster, PA 17601-1306  
800.933.3759  
mgromen@dutchapple.com  
dutchapple.com

### Fulton Theatre

Lisa Hall  
12 North Prince St.  
Lancaster, PA 17603  
+1.717.397.7425 (103)  
lhall@thefulton.org  
thefulton.org

### Sight & Sound Theatres (Lancaster and Branson)

Simi Telesco  
300 Hartman Bridge Rd.  
P.O. Box 310  
Strasburg, PA 17579-0310  
+1.717.687.4220 (2400)  
simi.telesco@sight-sound.com  
sight-sound.com

## SOUTH CAROLINA

### Alabama Theatre

Ellen Calhoun  
4750 Highway 17S  
North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582-5355  
+1.843.272.5758  
ecalhoun@alabama-theatre.com  
alabama-theatre.com

### The Carolina Opry

Jordan Watkins  
8901 A Highway 17  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577  
+1.843.913.1450  
gsales@cgp.net  
carolinaopry.com

### The Logos Theatre

Jennifer Swain  
80 School St.  
Taylors, SC 29687  
+1.864.268.9342 (011)  
jswain@thelogostheatre.com  
thelogostheatre.com

## TENNESSEE

### Grand Ole Opry Entertainment Group

Wayne Chandler  
2804 Opryland Drive  
Nashville, TN 37214-1209  
+1.615.882.5435  
wchandler@gaylordentertainment.com  
opry.com/groups

### Hatfield & McCoy Dinner Show

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smokymtnopry.com

## UTAH

### Tuacahn Amphitheatre

Melanie Camire  
1100 Tuacahn Drive  
Ivins, UT 84738-6088  
+1.435.652.3204  
mcamire@tuacahn.org  
tuacahn.org

## VIRGINIA

### Riverside Center for the Performing Arts

Nancy Huffine  
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groupsales@riversidedt.com  
riversidedt.com

## WASHINGTON

### Teatro ZinZanni

Virginia Tabbutt  
222 Mercer St.  
Seattle, WA 98109  
+1.206.802.0013  
vtabbutt@zinzanni.com  
zinzanni.com

## WISCONSIN

### The Fireside Dinner Theatre

Jean Flynn  
1131 Janesville Ave.  
Fort Atkinson, WI 53538-2406  
800.477.9505  
jean@firesidetheatre.com  
firesidetheatre.com

## The Palace Theater

Steve Calzaretta  
564 Wisconsin Dells Parkway S.  
Wisconsin Dells, WI 53965  
+1.608.253.9000  
groupsdept@dellspalace.com  
dellspalace.com

## OTHER THEATER- OR PERFORMANCE-RELATED PRODUCT

## CANADA

## ALBERTA

### Heritage Park Historical Village

Sandy Wilde  
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Calgary, AB T2V 2X3  
+1.403.268.8612  
swilde@heritagepark.ca  
heritagepark.ca

## ONTARIO

### CN Tower

Cathy Sullivan  
301 Front St. W.  
Toronto, ON M5V 2T6  
+1.416.601.4719  
csullivan@cntower.com  
cntower.ca

### Destination Cinema

Kimberly Allan-Sampson  
6170 Fallsview Blvd.  
Niagara Falls, ON L2G 2A3  
+1.905.358.3611  
kallan-sampson@imaxniagara.com  
destinationcinema.com

### Skylon Tower

Anita Pang Hrepic  
5200 Robinson St.  
Niagara Falls, ON L2G 2A3  
+1.905.356.2651  
apang-hrepic@skylon.com  
skylon.com

## UNITED STATES

## ALASKA

### Alaska Native Heritage Center

Lauren Hughes  
8800 Heritage Drive  
Anchorage, AK 99506  
+1.907.330.8013  
lhughes@alaskanative.net  
alaskanative.net

## ARIZONA

### Sound Education Programs

Teina Woodburn  
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soundep.com

## CONNECTICUT

### Mystic Seaport

Margaret Milnes  
75 Greenmanville Ave.  
Mystic, CT 06355-1946  
+1.860.572.5309  
margaret.milnes@mysticseaport.org  
mysticseaport.org

## DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

### Museum of the Bible

Kelly Martin  
400 4th St. SW  
Washington, DC 20024  
+1.202.848.1553  
kelly.martin@mbible.org  
museumofthebible.org

## LOUISIANA

### The National World War II Museum

Ruth Katz  
945 Magazine St.  
New Orleans, LA 70130-3813  
+1.504.528.1944 (222)  
group.sales@nationalww2museum.org  
nationalww2museum.org

## MASSACHUSETTS

### New England Aquarium/ Simons IMAX Theatre

Della Grallert  
Central Wharf  
Boston, MA 02110  
+1.617.973.6508  
dgrallert@neaq.org  
neaq.org

### Plimoth Plantation, Inc.

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products@thetourexchange.com  
thetourexchange.com

## NEW YORK

### American Museum of Natural History

James Cuebas  
Central Park W at 79th St.  
New York, NY 10024  
+1.212.496.3676  
jcuebas@amnh.org  
amnh.org

### Corning Museum of Glass

Sally Berry  
1 Museum Way  
Corning, NY 14830-2253  
+1.607.438.5400  
berryask@cmog.org  
cmog.org/groups

## The RIDE

Renee Wilson  
545 8th Ave., Suite 14S  
New York, NY 10018  
+1.646.661.7699 (168)  
rwilson@experiencetheride.com  
experiencetheride.com

### Turning Stone Resort Casino

Jeremy Cadrette  
Tour & Travel Sales Department  
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Verona, NY 13478  
+1.315.361.7958  
jeremy.cadrette@turningstone.com  
turningstone.com

## OREGON

### Evergreen Aviation and Space Museum & Theater

Rob Zeh  
500 NE Capt. Michael King Smith Way  
McMinnville, OR 97128  
+1.503.434.4185  
rob.zeh@evergreenmuseum.org  
sprucegoose.org

## TENNESSEE

### Fontanel Attractions

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4125 Whites Creek Pike  
Nashville, TN 37189-9124  
+1.615.876.4618  
vance.nichols@fontanel.com  
fontanel.com

## TEXAS

### Houston Museum of Natural Science

Chris Arreaga  
5555 Hermann Park Drive  
Houston, TX 77030  
+1.713.639.4724  
carreaga@hmns.org  
hmns.org

## VIRGINIA

### Colonial Williamsburg Foundation

Winette Jeffery  
P.O. Box 627  
Williamsburg, VA 23187-0627  
+1.757.220.7769  
wjjeffery@cwfb.org  
colonialwilliamsburg.com/groupstours

## WASHINGTON

### Ride the Ducks of Seattle

Tammy Guill  
516 Broad St.  
Seattle, WA 98109-4700  
+1.206.812.0495  
tammy@ridetheducksofseattle.com  
ridetheducksofseattle.com

## WEST VIRGINIA

### Oglebay Resort & Conference Center

Deb Jones  
465 Lodge Drive  
Wheeling, WV 26003-1600  
+1.304.243.4000  
djones@oglebay.com  
oglebay-resort.com

## WYOMING

### Buffalo Bill Center of the West

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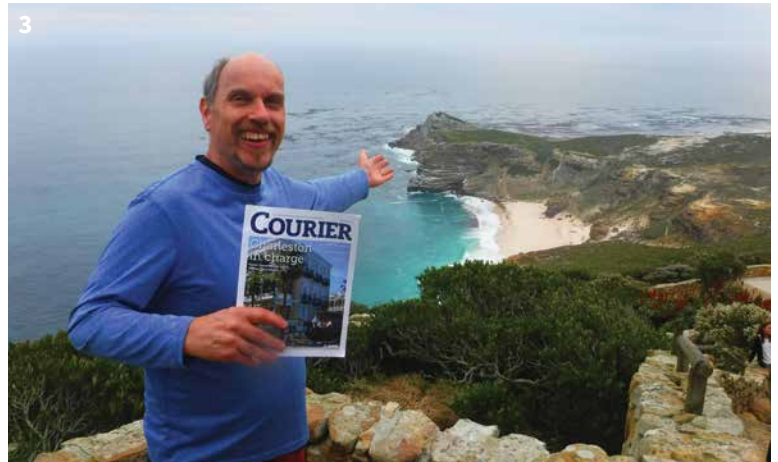
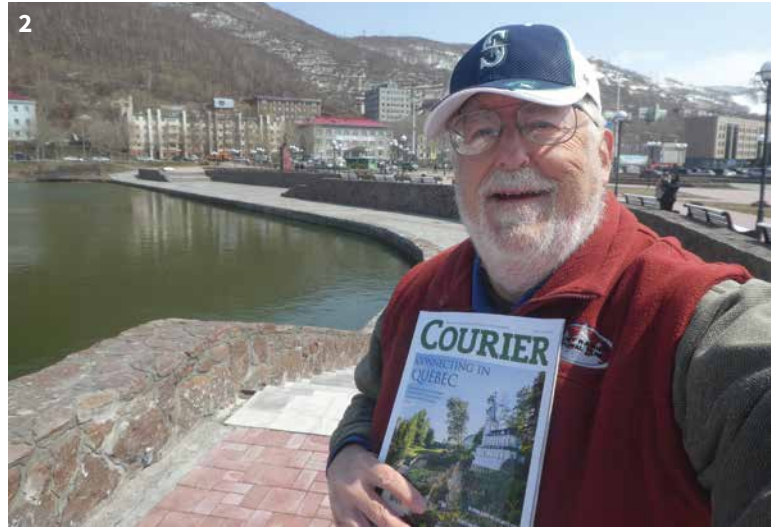
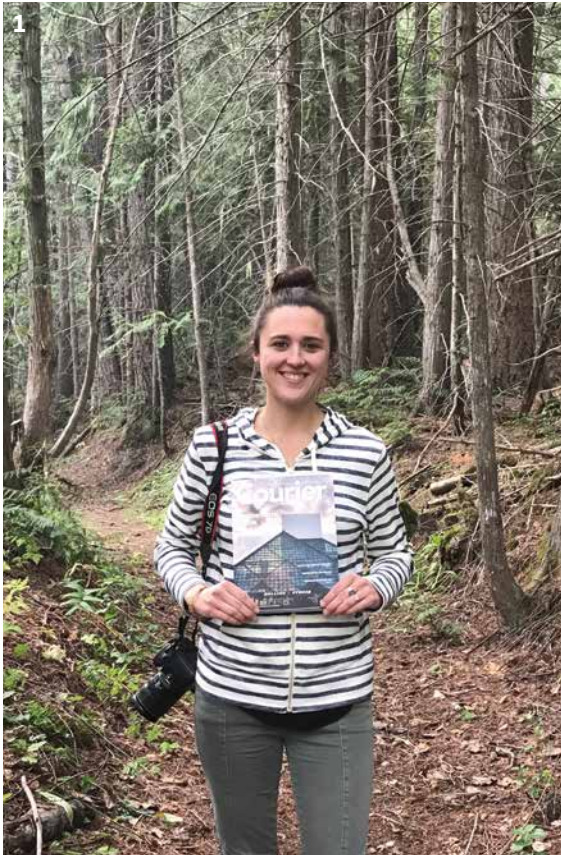
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Where in the World is *Courier*? All over North America—and from the top of the world to the bottom.

- 1 *Courier* writer Kendall Fletcher on the Bullion Ditch Trail in Likely, British Columbia, in the Cariboo Chilcotin Coast Region
- 2 Bob Hoelscher in Petropavlovsk, Russia, a port call for the *Norwegian Jewel*
- 3 *Courier* Managing Editor Pat Henderson at South Africa's Cape of Good Hope
- 4 Participants in the FTA product development trip with Plymouth 400, from left: Lynn Li (Gary Express), Jerry Varner (Making Memories Tours), Gail Arndt (Tour Trends Ltd.), Rowena Drinkhouse (Reformation Tours), Emily Martel (Milne Travel) and Erika Lee (Joshua Expeditions)
- 5 Agustin Caparros (A Closer Look Tours) and Daniel Chavez (Sports Empire & Authentic California Vacations) at Spotlight on the Southwest

# Meet the Members

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## Appina Travel GmbH

GAUTING-MUNICH, GERMANY

**NTA contact:** Denise Buchanan,  
Canadian/U.S. sales representative

**Office phone:** +1.647.391.8225

**Website:** appina-travel.com

**NTA member since:** 2010

### Tell me a little about Appina Travel GmbH.

Appina Travel is a full service destination management company specializing in group travel to Germany and Central Europe. We design custom itineraries to suit your group's needs.

### What tours have gained the most following?

Lately, some of our most popular tours are performance and music ones, as well as history tours.

### How did you get started in the travel business?

I started in the travel business after taking my first international trip after high school.

I realized that travel was my passion and knew I wanted to make a career out of it. I went to college and studied hospitality and tourism and have been working in the industry ever since. I am happy to report that 20 years later, I made the right choice and travel is still very much my passion!

### What are your favorite destinations?

Europe was so fascinating to me that I moved to London in 2006. I remember the first time I went just being totally in love with all the old architecture, food, languages and culture. I have travelled through so many European countries and am always amazed how the cultures and landscapes change so much in such a small space.



### What's the strangest thing you've ever eaten during your travels?

Eel in China and pork knuckle in Poland.

### What's on your current music playlist?

The Lumineers, Foster the People and the "Moana" soundtrack. (Thanks, kids!)

For more information, contact Buchanan at [denise.buchanan@appina-travel.com](mailto:denise.buchanan@appina-travel.com).

## Milwaukee Public Museum

MILWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

**NTA contact:** Tim Malenock, director of  
visitor services and group sales

**Office phone:** +1.414.278.6174

**Website:** mpm.edu

**NTA member since:** 2018

### What are you promoting to tour operators these days?

We have upcoming traveling exhibits over the next couple years, including "Frogs!" in the fall of 2018, "Power of Poison" in the spring of 2019 and "Spiders!" in the fall of 2019. We have our most popular Streets of Old Milwaukee tour as a mainstay but have new tours always being developed, like MPM Hidden and MPM Exposed tours.

### What could a visit to the museum entail for a group?

Group visits are all up to you! An average visit is 2.5 to 3 hours, or all day with special

exhibits, tours or the theater. Twenty-five-minute planetarium programs are included with admission, and traveling exhibits are seasonal, so it all depends on how you want us to curate your experience. We also have an on-site coffee shop and café, but you can also have private catering for groups that want a boxed lunch or a plated cuisine experience.

### Do you have a favorite exhibit or collection?

It's hard to narrow down three floors of 150,000-plus-square-feet of fabulous exhibits and experiences into one answer, but my favorite spaces on each floor consist of the rainforest exhibit on the first floor, the Snake Button (which has its own Twitter handle, @MPMSnake) on the second floor and Crossroads of Civilizations on the third floor.



### What's your favorite vacation spot?

Las Vegas

### Have you binged on any television series lately?

"Homeland" (on Showtime)

For more information, contact Malenock at [tim.malenock@mpm.edu](mailto:tim.malenock@mpm.edu).

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Contact is where you make the relationships."**

Agustin Caparros, A Closer Look Tours

**"You never know what topic might come up for discussion or collaboration."**

Suzanne Slavitter, CTP

**"I come back to the office refreshed and flowing with new ideas."**

Stephanie Dilling, Wells Gray Tours

Visit [NTAonline.com/contact](http://NTAonline.com/contact) to register today!



Save  
the date:  
Contact '19  
reg opens  
Nov. 5.

## NEW MEMBERS

The following list shows organizations that joined NTA recently. Companies that also joined the Faith Travel Association have an FTA logo by their name. To access complete information on each of these new members, log on to NTAonline.com and go to the member searches.

### DMOs

#### Abilene Convention & Visitors Bureau

Tiffany Nichols  
Abilene, TX 79601-5810 USA  
abilenevisitors.com

#### Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce/CVB

Patti Lloyd  
Centerville, MA 02632-1428 USA  
capecodchamber.org

#### Cedarburg Visitor Center

Elizabeth Albers  
Cedarburg, WI 53012 USA  
cedarburg.org

#### Cincinnati USA

##### Convention & Visitors Bureau

Ronnie Jefferson  
Cincinnati, OH 45202-3174 USA  
cincyusa.com

#### Discover Salt River

Blessing McAnlis-Vasquez  
Scottsdale, AZ 85250 USA  
discoversalttriver.com

#### Effingham Convention & Visitors Bureau

Jodi Thoele  
Effingham, IL 62401-0648 USA  
visiteffinghamil.com

#### Great Rivers & Routes Tourism Bureau

Katie Bennett  
Alton, IL 62002-6271 USA  
riversandroutes.com

#### MeetNKY

Erin Hoeibel  
Covington, KY 41011 USA  
meetnky.com

#### North of Boston

##### Convention & Visitors Bureau

Ann Marie Casey  
Salisbury, MA 01952 USA  
northofboston.org

#### Pontiac IL Tourism

Ellie Alexander  
Pontiac, IL 61764 USA  
visitpontiac.org

#### Switzerland Tourism

Martin Oester  
New York, NY 10020 USA  
corner.stnet.ch/trade-us

#### Tanzania Tourist Board

Devota Mdachi  
Dar es Salaam, Tanzania  
tanzaniatouristboard.com

#### Tourisme Outaouais

Emerson Velasco  
Gatineau, QC J8X 3V8 Canada  
outaouaisgroup.com

#### Visit McHenry County

Kristine Austin  
Huntley, IL 60142 USA  
visitmchenrycounty.com

#### Visit Newport Beach

Colleen Costello  
Newport Beach, CA 92660 USA  
visitnewportbeach.com

### TOUR OPERATORS

#### Across Spain, DMC & Leisure Travel

Ignacio Grijalvo  
Madrid, 28014 Spain  
across-spain.es



#### Champion Holiday International Inc.

Wenjia Liu  
Fullerton, CA 92835 USA  
919trip.com

#### Dark Blue International Trade

Peng Du  
Fresh Meadows, NY 11365 USA  
darkblueint.com

#### Engaging Cultures Travel LLC

Daniel Robards  
Springdale, AR 72762 USA  
engagingcultures.com



#### John Hall's Alaska

Elizabeth Hall  
Anchorage, AK 99518 USA  
kissalaska.com

#### Terrapin Tours

Kelly Cooke  
North Woodstock, NH 03262 USA  
terrapintours.com

#### Weiyou Travel Inc.

Yitong Wu  
New York, NY 11355 USA  
we-trav.com

### TOUR SUPPLIERS

#### Boyd Gaming Corporation

Jasmin Shaw  
Las Vegas, NV 89103 USA  
boydgaming.com

#### Grande Denali Lodge/Denali Bluffs Hotel

Joe Merrill  
Anchorage, AK 99503 USA  
denalialaska.com

#### Green Bay Packers

Krissy Zegers  
Green Bay, WI 54304 USA  
packers.com

#### Hilton Bellevue

Justin Anderson  
Bellevue, WA 98004 USA  
bellevue.hilton.com

#### Hilton Garden Inn Anaheim/ Garden Grove

Mitchell Hirschman  
Garden Grove, CA 92840 USA  
hgianaheim.com

#### Lake Louise Summer Gondola

Jason Connell  
Lake Louise, AB T0L 1E0 Canada  
skilouise.com

#### Le Nouvel Hotel

Sistina Damasio  
Montréal, QC H3H 1R3 Canada  
lenouvelhotel.com

#### Main Street Management

Cindy Goodrich  
Grand Junction, CO 81501 USA  
grandjunctionhamptoninn.com

#### Maltz Jupiter Theatre

Cheryl McDermott  
Jupiter, FL 33477-5110 USA  
jupitertheatre.org

#### Milwaukee Public Museum

Tim Malenock  
Milwaukee, WI 53233-1478 USA  
mpm.edu

#### Mystic Lake Casino Hotel

Heidi Keyho  
Prior Lake, MN 55372-9004 USA  
mysticlake.com

#### National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

Jessica Roncker  
Cincinnati, OH 45202-3414 USA  
freedomcenter.org

#### Palm Garden Hotel

Michael Reardon  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91320 USA  
palmgardenhotel.com

#### Retsel Corporation (dba Grand Gateway Hotel)

Anna Vandegrift  
Rapid City, SD 57709-2047 USA  
grandgatewayhotel.com

#### Royal Sonesta Boston

Cherie Allen  
Cambridge, MA 02142 USA  
sonesta.com

#### Surfside on the Lake

Kris Dawson  
Lake George, NY 12845-1100 USA  
surfsideonthelake.com

#### Sun Diego Charter Co.

Daisy Padaon  
National City, CA 91950 USA  
sundiegocharter.com



## USA Hotel Management Services

Hemendra Patel  
La Verkin, UT 84745 USA

## WildPlay Zipline to the Falls

Lee Carr  
Niagara Falls, ON L3C 4R5 Canada  
wildplay.com

## Wisconsin Museum of Quilts & Fiber Arts

Melissa Wraalstad  
Cedarburg, WI 53012 USA  
wiquiltmuseum.com

## ASSOCIATES

### Hospitality Softnet

Lisa Richards  
Boston, MA 02109 USA  
hospitalitysoftnet.com



### Travefy

David Chait  
Lincoln, NE 68508 USA  
travefy.com

## New FTA Members

The following is a list of NTA members that also have joined the Faith Travel Association since May 1.

### DMOs

Fresno/Clovis Convention & Visitors Bureau  
North Dakota Tourism Division  
Solvang Visitors Bureau Inc.  
VisitBritain  
Visit Hershey & Harrisburg Inc.

### TOUR OPERATORS

Destinations Unlimited  
Egyptian Educational Travel  
Gary Express Inc.  
Milne Travel  
Ohio Travel Treasures LLC  
Pathfinders  
Safir Tours  
TripOTour LLC  
US Connections-Mayflower 400  
Vacations for Less Inc. (dba Israel  
Tourism Consultants)  
Witte Travel & Tours

### TOUR SUPPLIERS

Airtel Plaza Hotel & Conference Center  
Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad  
Glenn H. Curtiss Museum  
Embassy Suites by Hilton South Jordan UT  
Hyatt Palm Springs  
Wyndham Hotel Group USA

## NTA EVENTS

Save these dates in 2018 and beyond to connect with new partners and destinations. For more information on these events, click the EVENTS tab on NTAonline.com.



Milwaukee | Nov. 4-8, 2018



Fort Worth | Dec. 8-12, 2019



**CONTACT**  
Tucson, AZ • March 27-30, 2019  
Tucson, Arizona  
March 27-30, 2019



**CONTACT**  
Anchorage | March 18-21, 2020  
Anchorage, Alaska  
March 18-21, 2020



Washington, D.C. | April 10-11, 2019



ntacourier  
Durango, Colorado



Liked by pettusanna, kendallfletch and 82 others

ntacourier Writer, Pat Henderson's action-packed adventure includes a visit to Mesa Verde National Park, a ride in the Durango & Silverton Narrow Gauge Railroad, dinner and a show at Bar D Ranch, and a jeep Adventure in La Plata Canyon @visitdurango

## INSTAGRAM



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and join the  
conversation!

# Notes from a first-timer

BY RICH FIGUEROA

2017 was unusual. So that NTA could place Travel Exchange back in the fourth quarter, the association held two conventions in one year. That gave Courier the chance to collect feedback from a first-time attendee, who, within 10 months, experienced his inaugural Travel Exchange and also prepared for his second.

Rich Figueroa, special events coordinator for the Oneida Nation of Wisconsin, shares his experiences and reactions from 2017. And whether you're a first-timer or a 50-year convention veteran, you can retrace Figueroa's steps and likely gain insights for Travel Exchange '18.

## Notes following Travel Exchange in St. Louis (February 2017):

By the time I received approval to attend Travel Exchange in St. Louis, it was too late to request appointments, so I sat in the Circle Wisconsin booth and shared appointments with Wendy Dobrzynski. Events like this weren't foreign to me, and it was pretty much what I expected.

I liked the way it was laid out, format-wise: DMOs have the first two days, and suppliers have the next two. I took appointments as a DMO for Oneida and set up additional appointments for the supplier exchange days. I went on the NTA website and researched some operators and walked the floor to make appointments with them. In all, I took about 30 appointments.

Considering I walked through the doors with zero appointments, I felt good about that.

## On representing a Native American destination:

It was a positive experience, and people were very receptive to me as a Native American. I always find it fascinating when people react towards me like we're a lost culture. It's uplifting to hear them get excited about Native America and that there's tourism product out there.

At the same time, I sink a bit. This is such a gold mine for tribal people



Rich Figueroa (Oneida Nation of Wisconsin) with Amanda LaFave (Green Bay Radisson Hotel & Conference Center)

*Some of the things I'll need: a sales "one-sheeter," visual advertising (pop-up displays) and a lead-capturing plan to enhance what I share with potential clients.*

nationwide, but many tribes want to protect their lands and way of life. I completely understand that. Non-tribal people try to mimic our culture and mass produce it for profit, and while Oneida Wisconsin doesn't have too much of a problem with that, other tribes are hesitant to share the heritage. So, given that, tourism product is difficult to find for non-tribal people.

## Preparing for Travel Exchange in San Antonio (December 2017):

Sitting in with Circle Wisconsin in St. Louis enabled me to get a feel for the flow of the event and see how things run. Based on that experience, I know what I need to bring and prepare ahead of time so that my solo experience as a DMO is a fulfilling one that Oneida Nation can profit from.

Some of the things I'll need: a sales "one-sheeter," visual advertising (pop-up displays) and a lead-capturing plan to enhance what I share with potential clients. Follow-up materials and data-capturing systems can help organize hard leads from the soft ones.

I'm heading to San Antonio with one of our hotel representatives, whose focus is motorcoach and group sales, and a representative from our local CVB. Together we can share leads and combine appointments to bring people to our area.

It'll work this way: The CVB and I are DMOs, and the rep from our hotel is a supplier. I have about 18 appointments, and the CVB has 29 appointments. Of those 29, she has 25 that I can attend, which brings me to 43. And I'll be able to go with my hotel rep on her 15 appointments. This will bring my overall appointments to 58 out of a maximum of 60—not to mention the additional appointments I make at the networking functions.

Travel Exchange should be a good show for me, my organization and the greater Green Bay area. ☺

The next time we see Figueroa, we'll be in Milwaukee, two hours from the Oneida Reservation. To learn more, go to [exploreoneida.com](http://exploreoneida.com) or email Figueroa at [rfigueroa@oneidanation.org](mailto:rfigueroa@oneidanation.org).



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