

Courier

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PLANNING AHEAD

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Courier aims to facilitate member-to-member partnering by spotlighting member product and destinations worldwide, to provide information on current industry trends and issues, and to inform members about NTA initiatives, events and benefits.



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MY JOB ISN'T HARD.

I am surrounded by enormously talented people: my colleagues who write, design and generate ad support for these pages. They're experts, and they make it easy to be the editor of *Courier*.

And, like my fellow writers, when I pen a page or two, I seek out other experts: NTA members who represent a destination or attraction or company or experience. Those experts know what they're talking about, and they make *Courier* articles shine.

You know experts in NTA—and I'm 99 percent certain you're one of them.

I've always been impressed with the detailed knowledge that every member carries around in his or her brain, but these days, I'm beyond impressed.

In June I posted on Engage (engage.ntaonline.com) that a writer for AARP needed ideas for saving money in summer travel, and the responses were tremendous: from operators, DMOs and suppliers. And in July I turned to the NTA Owners Network to help President Pam Inman prepare for an interview about travel trends, and the response was immediate ... the insights ample.

Also in July I joined conference-call meetings of the association's DMO and tour supplier networks, and each of them included fine-tuning a member-written document of industry best practices. Phonefuls of experts.

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I mention all this expertise to lead you into this month's feature story on NTA-member museums. Kendall Fletcher takes us behind the scenes with curators to appreciate the thought and diligence that go into creating an exhibit. These professionals—experts all—are amazing. The full tour runs from page 17 to 23.

Kendall also shares the comments and updates she collected while attending Rendez-vous Canada in late May. That's on page 13. And on the next page, Pat Henderson gives readers reasons to be cheerful, detailing his time in Puerto Rico as part of a Tourism Cares project.

We also proudly share updates (page 56) about Tourism Cares, NTA's official philanthropy, provided by Greg Takehara, the organization's new CEO (and an old NTA member).

And we've got destinations, from Coastal California (corralled by Kendall on pages 24–28) and the Southwest U.S. (pages 34–37, provided by Pat) to a dive into the Great Lakes region, pages 29–33, conducted by Kay Saffari. This issue also explores Central Europe (pages 38–41), led by Pat.

I think you'll also enjoy a business story, expertly written by Katie Thompson (page 10), about old castles and homes that have become new tour product for The Group Company. And you can meet more members/experts, profiled on pages 52–54.

I look forward to interacting with more members in the months ahead, when I write about destinations and detail preparations for Travel Exchange. I'm counting on your expertise. You make my job easy, you know.

Read on,

On the cover:
Visitors catch up with
“Women in Baseball” at
the National Baseball Hall
of Fame & Museum
*Photo: National Baseball
Hall of Fame & Museum*



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WHERE DO YOU GET YOUR ENERGY?
I know where mine comes from.

As you may know, I commute between D.C. (actually northern Virginia) and NTA headquarters in Lexington, Kentucky. They say the Beltway is where the energy is, but for me, it's when I am in Lexington surrounded by our amazing team—or when I am with our incredibly motivated remote staff. I try not to get in the way of their momentum!

And we continue to exert NTA energy in Washington. Recent meetings with Amtrak officials revealed their desire to segment NTA tour operators from other groups and eventually relieve the burdensome deposits they now require. It will take time for Amtrak to develop necessary software platforms, finalize its automated group tour desk and implement Congress-driven discounts for veterans. Kerry McKelvey, Amtrak's vice president of marketing, will speak at our Government Relations Breakfast Bistro at Travel Exchange.

Our Travel Coalition of associations continues to meet monthly with representatives of the National Park Service. NPS recently agreed to form a committee of tour operator members to advise them. Representing NTA are Nish Patel, Mayflower Tours; Michele Michalewicz, Western Leisure; and Fraser Neave, Wells Gray Tours. We have invited someone from NPS to speak at the GR breakfast as well. I hope you'll sign up to attend; the proceeds help fund our efforts on Capitol Hill.

I have just returned from Philadelphia, where I participated in the China Tourism Forum, led by Dr. Robert Li, director of the U.S.-Asia Center for Tourism & Hospitality Research at Temple University. The forum combines cutting-edge research with innovative practices and thinking to better understand China's tourism and hospitality market.

NTA has been working with Temple University to provide data for the China-U.S. Travel Monitor Program, which generates innovative business practices in China market. Also speaking at the forum were Roger Dow, U.S. Travel Association; Fred Dixon, NYC & Company; and Ernest Wooden Jr., Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board.

And, back at NTA headquarters, your staff is in high gear with Travel Exchange preparations. I hope you'll take note of all the changes we're making to the event—all based on your input. (See NTAtravelexchange.com/about/whats-new.)

Tour operators asked for a break from the long days of appointments, so we've made Tuesday appointment-free and created more time for education. We've also added Sales Missions for North American DMOs and suppliers, and Fast Pitch to give our international members a bigger showcase.

Chair Paul Larsen leads the NTA board with his heart and soul, and the board members follow his lead. Everyone wants to do what they can to make a difference. NTA wouldn't be who we are without this legacy of leadership and the strength of our members. I am grateful to be part of this amazing journey.

Stay cool!

Pam

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Green means ...

NTA members will step into a sea of green tables at Travel Exchange in Fort Worth, Dec. 8-12. When you come to TREX'19 ... there's meaning behind that greening.

Green means ... Fresh

"I like the new open concept and the energy in the room. Milwaukee was my third Travel Exchange, and it's a welcoming event that feels like family."

—Charlotte Finnegan, Visit Spokane
(pictured, center)



Green means ... Money

"Experience Grand Rapids books more business at Travel Exchange than at any other show."

—Dave Nitkiewicz, Experience Grand Rapids

"As a supplier, I truly enjoy the opportunity to connect with some of the top tour operators. This is a one-stop shop for us and offers a great return on our investment."

—Gina DuQuenne, Ashland Hills Hotel and Suites (Oregon)



Green means ... New

"Appointments were high-quality and meaningful, and I walked away with new ideas for tours to new destinations as well as new partners to include in our portfolio."

—Tracie Wingo, Globus Family of Brands
(pictured, center)

To get details—and to get signed up—visit NTAtravelexchange.com

COMPILED BY PAT HENDERSON

The profile of a successful profile

Your organization's profile on NTA Online is one of your most important marketing tools within the association. It allows other buyers and sellers to learn more about you, and it can lead to better opportunities for connections and future business.

For your profile to have maximum impact, make sure it's accurate and thorough so your colleagues will know exactly who you are and what you do best. Updating it is simple: Just sign into ntaonline.com and click the person icon in the top right of the page next to the search function.

Reminder: Only an organization's NTA primary contact can update the profile, which includes your company info, description, logo, photos and social media links. Plus, once you've updated your profile, you earn points toward your organization's total in the NTA Loyalty Program (ntaonline.com/mynta/nta-loyalty-program).

If you need assistance updating your profile, just email headquarters@ntastaff.com or call +1.859.264.6540.



International arrivals to the U.S. rose in 2018

The U.S. National Travel and Tourism Office released data on inbound travel to the United States in 2018, and the information shows that arrivals increased at a higher rate than in 2017 (3.5% vs. 0.7%). Spending also increased in 2018, but at a slightly slower rate than the year before (1.7% vs. 2.1%).

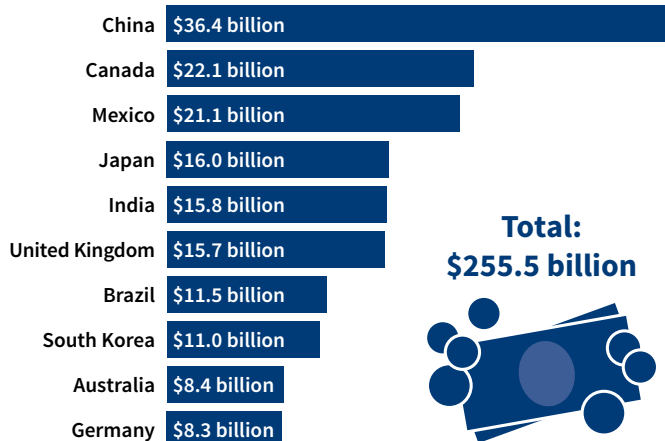
The top six countries that U.S. visitors came from remained the same in 2018 as in 2017: Canada, Mexico, the U.K., Japan, China and South Korea. Brazil moved into the No. 7 spot, switching places with Germany; France remained at No. 9 and India replaced Australia as the No. 10 country of origin in 2018.

Overall international spending in the U.S. (termed an export by the federal government) increased a bit: from \$251.4 billion in 2017 to \$255.5 billion in 2018. In both years, those numbers represented 10% of all U.S. exports.

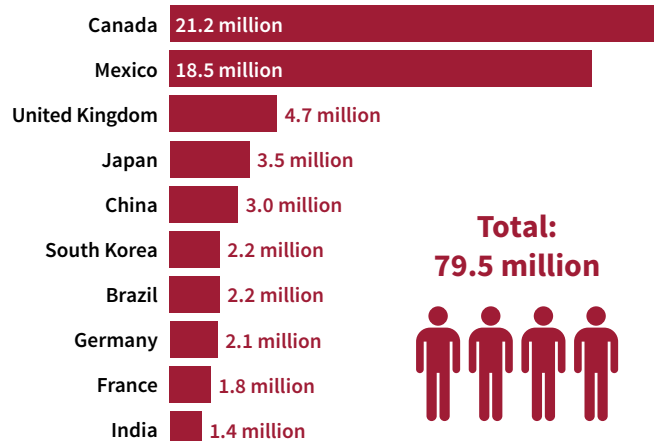
China remained the leading country in terms of visitor spending for 2018, with Canada moving into second place by switching places with Mexico. Japan remained the No. 4 country; India and the U.K. changed spots in 2018, with the former assuming the No. 5 position. Countries seven through 10 remained the same: Brazil, South Korea, Australia and Germany.

For more details visit the NTTO site: bit.ly/2GSJDkc.

Top countries for international visitor spending in the U.S.



Top international origin countries for visitors to the U.S.





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The future is in the past: Why heritage tours are key for groups

BY KATIE THOMPSON



Blenheim Palace



THEY SAY you don't know what you've got till it's gone. But curiously, it is sometimes only when you are committed to destroying something that you realize its true value. Take this tale from the U.S.-based National Trust for Historic Preservation, for example.

In 2005, a developer snapped up the opportunity to demolish the Daylight Building in Knoxville, Tennessee. After the demolition plans fell through, Dewhurst Properties bought the building in 2009 and started renovations. What they discovered was a wealth of opulent features, from heart pine drop ceilings to a vast glass clerestory, which allows sunlight to pour into the building's core.

On a grander scale, in 2018, construction workers at England's Blenheim Palace uncovered a series of mysterious, "lost" rooms while they were draining lakes on the estate. The UNESCO World Heritage site, birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill and filming location for the iconic period drama "Downton Abbey," contains more than 30 rooms and passageways that were said to have been flooded by the creation of the lakes in the 18th century.

What else might we discover?

The lake drainage operation was part of a \$15 million project for Blenheim Palace, and it's not the only restoration effort in

the U.K. In fact, in 2019 alone, we've seen many ancient properties being brought back to life, providing a much-needed boost for the local economy, as well as offering an enriching experience for groups.

In Kent, home to a number of royal residences, as well as landmarks such as Canterbury Cathedral, the team at the newly renovated Leeds Castle are keen to show off their \$2.5 million stonework project. This comes in addition to the restoration of Lady Baillie's drawing room and the castle library. Lord Conway famously called the 12th-century property the "loveliest castle in the world."



Leeds Castle

CC FLICKR/KAREN ROE: btljy2JfR3H

TOP: CC FLICKR/KATHERINE: btljy2JfR3H



A labor of love

While these properties may have benefited from accolades, such as being designated as UNESCO World Heritage sites, or from receiving enormous amounts of state funds, this is not always the case for castle restoration projects. For some, reviving ancient properties is a labor of love, a means of preserving hundreds of years of family traditions.

Take, for example, the Campbell family, owners of the Old Castle of Rowallan near Glasgow. In a bid to reconnect with their family and revive the 900-year-old property, the Campbells funded a restoration project. Family members say they have received inquiries from relatives living all over the world, and the castle is now open to the public for the first time in 70 years.

Opening the doors

Head almost 200 miles north to Inverness and you'll find the Lacey-Solymar family, proud owners of the resplendent Achnagairn Castle. The 30-acre estate dates to 1663 and has undergone many transformations, from housing Charles "Bonnie Prince Charlie" Edward Stuart to serving as a hospital during World War II. An ornate ballroom was added in 1912, with the entire estate decked out in classic Scottish architecture.

When it fell into disrepair in the early 21st century, there was a danger of the castle becoming an apartment block. Thankfully, owners Gillian and Michael Lacey-Solymar snapped it up and spent two years restoring the castle with a modern twist.

Today, the property proudly displays its 5-star rating from VisitScotland, and it is open for exclusive rental to groups. With 24 rooms, each featuring its own individual decor, Achnagairn Castle is far from being a typical hotel experience. At The Group Company, we have been fortunate enough to secure exclusive group rates for those who want to learn a little more about Scottish customs.

Why heritage tours are so important (and unique)

In January 2019, a British financial firm used computer imaging technology to digitally restore six castle ruins across the United Kingdom, from the 16th-century Dunluce Castle in Northern Ireland to Goodrich Castle in Herefordshire.

These artists' impressions served to highlight the enduring appeal of these captivating structures. However, nothing can compare to the immersive experience of setting foot on these ancient lands. Heritage tours go beyond simply walking

around the grounds; they invite you into the estate's culture. At Achnagairn, for example, travellers can enjoy Highland dancing or learn about the clans behind the traditional Scottish kilts.

At other sites, guests can meet with any lord or lady, and he or she will be happy to personally escort them around the land, giving an intimate overview of the property's best-kept secrets. For teams working at heritage sites, this is not simply a day job. It could be the regeneration of a local area or the chance for a budding chef to win a coveted award. These people are all fiercely protective of their history, and they welcome the chance to share their story with others.

In an ever-developing world, cultural sustainability is becoming more and more important. These properties are not simply costly renovation projects; they are a part of a nation's history and give younger generations an insight into the events that shaped the modern world.

What's more, the culture and heritage tourism sector is also a hugely lucrative business. It is currently valued at more than \$1 billion globally, with heritage and culture tourists spending as much as 38% more during their visits.

New chapters for old tales

Such is Britain's passion for restoring its history, there are a multitude of organizations dedicated to keeping the memory alive. Scotland's Castle Conservation Register, for example, supports ambitious projects, such as installing solar panels at Crichton Castle. That's quite a leap from 14th-century roofing!

Meanwhile, the U.K.'s National Trust for Places of Historic Interest or Natural Beauty currently protects 500 heritage properties and also invests heavily in wildlife preservation. With ample evidence indicating that sustainability is a key motivator for Generation Z, this suggests a positive trend for restoration and heritage tours.

Globally renowned television shows may help to put these properties on the map, but it is our own commitment to development that will see this kind of tourism thrive. When we step back in time, we grow, we develop and we learn—and ultimately, we enjoy a better future. 🌱

Katie Thompson represents The Group Company, based in York, England; Boston; and Maastricht, Netherlands. Reach her by email at katie@thegroupcompany.com.



How do you know if your social is working?

BY CATHERINE HEEG



WE ALL KNOW if the electricity is working; either the lights go on or they don't. But what about your social marketing? This is where it gets a bit murky. Maybe

you find yourself asking:

- How can I "light up" my social posts?
- Are likes a true measure of success?
- Are social ads worth my money?

You might find yourself on autopilot, simply doing what you've always done with your social marketing. Sort of like flipping on the light switch and automatically expecting it to be bright.

Let's explore how you can better evaluate whether what you're doing on Facebook is really working to meet your goals and electrify your business.

Is posting socially worth the time?

The general consensus is that you have to be using social marketing to survive. If you're getting a fair number of likes, that's great. But what else needs to be happening?

For many in the travel industry, a like is simply the starting point. Savvy marketers are looking at the comments and shares of their posts. As long as you're spending the time and effort, better to get plugged in to what works for your unique audience.

Comments tell all

When someone takes the time to stop scrolling on Facebook and actually type a comment, dig deep to understand what inspired them to write. Your next step is to create similar content in order to encourage more comments and, eventually, click-throughs. Studying the written comments and questions can be inspiration for a blog post, video or even a group tour.

On your Facebook page under the Insights tab, click Posts in the left column to find data showing what content and style of posts are attracting attention with your audience—see what's lighting up their world. Click on People and you'll learn about the demographics of your fans.

Insider tip: Inspiring comments is easier with video! (OK, the cat's out of the bag.) Right now, video is the quickest and easiest way to get fans to stop scrolling and start engaging. When thinking about your video strategy (bit.ly/2OTnENn), consider video slideshows, video you shoot in your office or on the road, and livestream video (bit.ly/2yQGUod). Fans love to see videos of people, to learn and to be entertained.

Bonus insider tip: Set up a new ad audience of people who have viewed your videos or engaged with your page: bit.ly/2B3552Z.

When a reader shares your post, that's gold. And studying what's been shared gives you a roadmap to your next new content.

Guess what gets more shares than anything now? Video (again). If you're ready

to jump onboard but fear you lack the gear, find what you need here: bit.ly/2wqSBak.

Is advertising worth the money?

Many people in our industry have told me that ads just aren't bringing in business and lighting up their bottom line. Do you find that your ads are reaching a high number of people, but that no one is taking any action? Use your **Relevance Score** to take your ads from mediocre to marvelous.

When an ad finishes you'll find a Relevance Score on your Ads Manager dashboard. You can use three rankings—quality, engagement rate and conversion rate—to understand how relevant your ads were to the audiences they reached.

If you find that your ad relevance is low, here are some tweaks you can put into play:

1. Adjust your **audience** to better fit your ad. Simple changes to the demographics, interests and even the timing of your ad placement can make a big difference. (bit.ly/2nxjeyN)
2. Add relevant **emoji** to make your ad more eye-catching.
3. Video **captions** have been found to attract scrollers who have their the audio off.
4. A **call-to-action button** helps viewers take the desired action. (bit.ly/30h7CBO)
5. Split-test your ads and use **dynamic ads** to learn what appeals to your audience. (bit.ly/2xn71AW)

While we don't all know the inner secrets of social algorithms or the finer points of electricity, all of us can inspire the right people and build stronger relationships with social media. Using a brighter light to focus on the relevance of our posts and ads, we're better able to navigate the world of social marketing and reach the people who matter. ☺

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.



Lots of {glowing} heart-to-hearts at Rendez-vous Canada

BY KENDALL FLETCHER

OVER THE LAST year and a half, Destination Canada has been thinking about moving—moving away from being a destination brand and becoming a passion brand.

At the 2019 Rendez-vous Canada's energetic Inside Track session in Toronto, CEO David Goldstein replayed for the audience several steps in the organization's rebranding process, but it came down to this: They want to resonate. They want to speak of inclusion and promote the people, not just the places. They want to capture hearts.

Thus, For Glowing Hearts was born.



Destination Canada CEO
David Goldstein

"The belief is that travel should change you," Goldstein said.

And as I spoke with Goldstein at my first-ever RVC, I found out just how the components of this new branding will come together. It lies within the provinces, the cities and the people who make promoting those places and product their life's work.

Goldstein has had the opportunity to visit some incredible places during his career in travel, and although he doesn't have a favorite (he says he loves all his children), Torngat Mountains

National Park, in the northern tip of Labrador, left "an important impression on his heart."

"It's the only ecosystem on the planet where black bears and polar bears coexist. It's got these unbelievable fjords," he said. "There are so many of these distinct regions of Canada that have their own cultures and languages."

I also spoke with several NTA members at Rendez-vous Canada.

Newfoundland and Labrador Tourism's Charlotte Jewczyk talked about the "Come From Away" experience. Travelers can fly into Gander, the Newfoundland town that inspired the hit Broadway musical, and learn about the kindness of its residents, who received nearly 6,700 unexpected guests when flights were rerouted there following the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

My literature-loving heart soared when Grant McRae with Tourism Prince Edward Island handed me a copy of "Anne of Green Gables." The beautiful island is the setting for the classic book, and his organization offers several packages with this at the focus.

Travel Manitoba's Michel LaRiviere said there's much planned for the province's 150th anniversary celebration next year. The DMO is shedding new light on its Northern Lights product (no



pun intended, really). Churchill is one of the top three spots for viewing, and the city received lots of attention at the Travel Manitoba-sponsored luncheon. Videos of beluga whale communications and colorful stories about vacationing in Churchill had many delegates aspiring to go there before dessert.

I found a common thread in many conversations, presentations and interviews at RVC: the push for getting travelers from around the world to Canada's bustling cities and lovely remote territories—all during the off-seasons.

"There's so much undiscovered Canada," Goldstein said. "We have fantastic urban centers with nature on the cusps, which is one of Canada's best-kept secrets. We're working on building itineraries with urban (components) and extraordinary outdoor adventures. That's our jam. We just have to jam it a little louder."

Visitors can find year-round foodie tours in Jasper, Travel Alberta's Desiree Gibson said. The new Peak Nik Tour combines a guided hike with cooking on the mountain, and NTA-member Heritage Park Historical Village also has three new experiences to discover.

Nova Scotia Tourism's Meghan Lloyd expressed excitement about the four newest direct international flights into Halifax, including ones from Chicago, Philadelphia and New York City.

While Toronto welcomed hundreds of people from all over the world for RVC, the city is celebrating a record year with 44 million travelers having visited in 2018. And even more people poured in since the NBA Finals were going on during the event.

According to Tourism Toronto's Maxine Morrell-West, the DMO is launching a new marketing campaign called "Let Yourself In," designed to promote Toronto's diversity and inclusivity. She also said they're busy endorsing the city's summer and fall festivals, Mirvish Productions shows, and new exhibits at the Art Gallery of Ontario.

And as Canada's new For Glowing Hearts initiative rolls out this year, Goldstein said the brand is an embodiment of what Canada is: one of the world's most welcoming and open countries.

"At the end of the day it's about people engaging with people doing cool stuff," he said. "Our promise is that Canada will leave a lasting mark on your heart (and encourage you) to put your camera down." 📷

Tourism Cares for Puerto Rico project offers reasons to be cheerful

BY PAT HENDERSON

NTA's Catherine Prather
and Pat Henderson



PAT HENDERSON

ONE OF MY FAVORITE MUSICIANS is David Byrne. The former frontman of the Talking Heads has always struck me as one of the most creative people on the planet, and in 2018 he began posting a group of articles on his website as part of a new initiative he called Reasons to Be Cheerful. The aim was to offer “good news as a remedy and kind of therapy to the state of the world,” and the stories told of people around the globe doing things big and small that were impacting their communities in positive ways.

During the recent Tourism Cares for Puerto Rico event, attended by more than 150 travel professionals, that phrase kept coming back to me. Even though there was a lot of talk about Hurricane Maria, a 2017 storm that left nearly all residents without power for at least three months, I heard plenty of tales of innovation and collaboration that fit Mr. Byrne's theme.

Over the past couple of years, Tourism Cares has shifted the focus of its popular giveback projects at travel-related sites in different North American cities. The new-look events, branded as Meaningful Travel Summits (see page

56) still contain a work day, but have been expanded to three days and include intentional cultural engagement and learning opportunities to better connect volunteers with the local communities.

While I've helped out with several single-day work projects in the past, this was my first experience with the amped-up version, which takes things up a few notches, totally in a good way.

The opening day featured two hour-long educational sessions that offered a detailed look into ways that local entrepreneurs are making a difference. As part of the first session, small groups of attendees met with representatives of eight local start-ups, whose businesses range from a teenager whose fascination with bees led her to start the Be a Bee program in her school to a couple that leads tours focusing on San Juan architecture.

After that busy and buzzy hour—sorry, I couldn't resist—we switched places with the other group, who had just heard a panel discussion on food sovereignty in Puerto Rico. Increasing collaboration between small farmers, agricultural organizations and

microbusinesses in the food economy—and helping them find additional markets—was a main point of discussion.

With all the talk of grassroots organizations doing big things, I'll admit that I was taken aback to see Jose Gonzalez of Marriott Hotels as one of the panelists. But, as Gonzalez shared how the island's three Marriott properties had shifted from importing 90 percent of the food they served to now working with area growers and vendors who provide more than 60 percent of what is served, it was evident that the movement wasn't just for the little guys.

The work day took us to the south side of the island and the towns of Ponce and Yauco. All of the projects were based around Centro de Microempresas y Tecnologías Agrícolas de Yauco, a sustainable farm that became a community gathering place and beacon of hope to residents in the weeks and months after Maria.

Since this was my first time visiting Puerto Rico, I flew in three days before the Tourism Cares event kicked off so I could do more exploring. My activities were set up by longtime NTA member Vámonos Tours, and everything I did with them—from visiting different areas of the island and joining one of their student tour groups for a couple of activities to sampling a lot of tasty cuisine at local restaurants—just furthered the week's theme of authenticity and local. (To read more about these adventures, go to ntacourier.com/index.php/taxonomy/term/305.)

Since I returned, one of the most common questions I get is, “How is the recovery going in Puerto Rico?” While I had no base for comparison with what the island was like before Maria, that was a tough question to answer.

But, based on what I saw and experienced, I can say there are many reasons to be cheerful about what lies ahead for the diverse, friendly and beautiful destination. ☺

Chris Babb and Kami Risk planted trees at a sustainable farm in Yauco as part of the Tourism Cares for Puerto Rico event in May.



JIM MARTIN

Galway, Rijeka are 2020 European Capitals of Culture

The cities of Galway, Ireland, and Rijeka, Croatia, will serve as the European Capitals of Culture in 2020. The cultural riches of the two cities will be promoted extensively by the European Union, which organizes the program as a way to highlight unique cities and promote unity within its member countries.

Both Galway and Rijeka have a rich maritime history and are located along the western coast of their respective countries. That aspect of local life also plays a role in the cities' themes for the Capital of Culture year—Galway's is Making Waves and Rijeka's is Port of Diversity.

As the capital of Ireland's Gaelic West, Galway blends medieval architecture and traditions with a vibrant social scene. Two major universities in the coastal city attract thousands of students, who lend to the fun-loving atmosphere. Quay Street is home to a number of lively galleries, cafés and pubs, as well as many historical buildings.

Those features and other aspects of the city's culture will be highlighted as part of Galway 2020. The Making Waves theme is about creating new ways of thinking, new ways of working, new conversations and new partnerships—all aimed at ensuring a more creative Galway.

That theme will be developed through a series of programs and exhibits, one of which is called Small Towns Big Ideas. Following an open call in 2018, more than 50 cultural projects were approved that will highlight the rich culture and diversity of Galway and the surrounding communities.

Rijeka is playing up its strategic location in the northwestern corner of Croatia on the Adriatic Sea as it prepares to be a European Capital of Culture. The Port of Diversity theme reflects the city being a welcoming harbor for visitors from across the globe and a center for sustainable development.

The cultural and artistic programming for Rijeka 2020 will be focused on three topics: water, work, and migrations. More than 1,000 events, exhibitions, performances, special tours and learning sessions are in the works for next year, and they will showcase the range of experiences the city has to offer.

While no new buildings are being constructed as part of the project, existing facilities will be renovated. The industrial complex, Benčić, is being reconfigured to house the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art, the City Library, the Children's House and the City Museum.

To learn more, go to galway2020.ie and rijeka2020.eu.



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A serene setting for sculpture

Earlier this year, the New Orleans Museum of Art debuted an expansion to its sculpture garden. Following a yearlong renovation, which more than doubled the size of the Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden, the space now houses more than 90 sculptures.

The original 5-acre garden connects to the new 6.5-acre space surrounding a lagoon in New Orleans' historical City Park. As visitors stroll under pine and magnolia trees, and around cypress-laden islands, they can see the diverse collection of sculptures that have been donated by the Besthoff Foundation.

Many of the works located in the new section are by artists working primarily in the 21st century. Some of the featured pieces include Frank Geary's "Bear With Us," Coosje van Bruggen and Claes Oldenburg's "Corridor Pin, Blue" and Jeppe Hein's "Mirror Labyrinth." Later this year, a work by Ugo Rondinone will be added, and two other large-scale installations—a glass bridge and a 60-foot mosaic wall—have been commissioned.

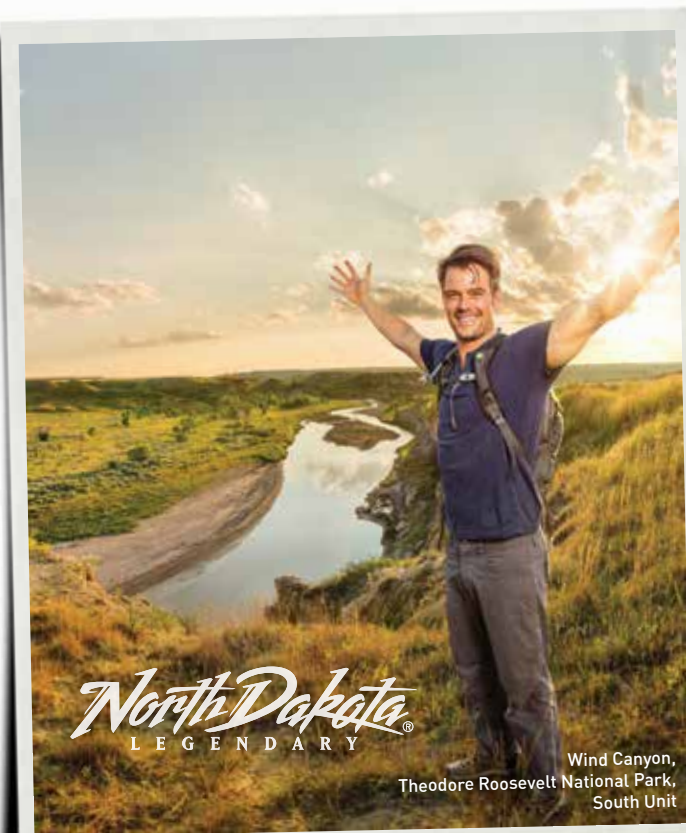
In addition to offering more display space, the expansion provides new areas for musical and theatrical productions, movie screenings under the stars, special tours, festivals and private events. The northern part of the gardens features an outdoor classroom, where groups can enjoy classes, workshops and special programs.



"Bear With Us" by Frank Geary

The sculpture garden is open seven days a week, and public guided tours are available Fridays, Saturdays and Mondays at noon. Travel planners can book group tours for other days and times by contacting museum staff in advance.

For more information, go to noma.org/sculpture-garden.



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South Unit

Josh Duhamel FROM THE TOP

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‘We want our visitors to see themselves in the narrative’

COMPILED BY KENDALL FLETCHER

NTA-MEMBER MUSEUMS are talking history—and not just the high points. The industry is moving in a direction of inclusivity, directing displays towards telling the whole story. These museums are places where visitors not only learn something new, but also can have reflective moments and connect with an exhibit on a more personal level. That’s the idea.

“We’re committed to sharing history in new and dynamic ways, and over the past several years, the museum industry as a whole has increased efforts to share history from a variety of diverse perspectives, including groups who may have been originally left out of the history books,” says Tami Goldman of the Missouri History Museum in St. Louis.

As museums move in this direction, visitors are immersed in exhibitions—from

rotating displays highlighting recent events to long-established collections of fascinating relics. Their curators are putting together stories through many mediums: fiber arts, baseball cards, paintings, textiles and virtual-reality experiences. It’s quite a collection.

Here, we explore museum attractions whose teams are paying attention; they’re always changing and looking to resonate with all generations.

National Geographic Museum

Washington, D.C.

It’s a full-circle kind of place. National Geographic, a household name, is a non-profit institution, providing grants to scientists, explorers and educators. And in turn, its museum’s installations are always

displaying the work of those people.

The team changes exhibits every five months or so, depending on where in the world that exhibition is traveling to next (much like the artists and storytellers).

“With our museum being located at National Geographic headquarters, we have the unique opportunity to showcase the work of our explorers and photographers,” says Group Sales Specialist Brianna DeOrsey. “Our exhibitions range from photography exhibitions and large artifact displays to multimedia immersive exhibitions like ‘Tomb of Christ,’ which uses virtual reality to tell the story behind the historical renovation of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Our explorers are using new technology in the field, such as augmented reality, and we get to integrate that technology into our exhibitions.”

One of these rotating exhibitions is “Queens of Egypt,” a collection from the Museo Egizio in Italy highlighting women’s role in Egyptian society. “Exploration Starts Here,” a permanent collection, is a celebration of National Geographic Society’s 131-year history.

And that varied history is one of the most special things about the museum’s exhibitions, DeOrsey says, which means they’re always putting together displays with different content and themes.

“When we develop exhibitions, we take a concept, build a narrative using the storytelling that National Geographic is known for, supplement with content from our history, and weave in elements that make exhibitions accessible to anyone who comes through the door,” she says.

The museum’s upcoming exhibit, “Becoming Jane,” will be dedicated to the life, work and legacy of primatologist and anthropologist Jane Goodall. The exhibition, to open in November, will feature personal artifacts, interactive installations and video testimonials.

For more information, contact DeOrsey at bdeorsey@ngs.org or go to natgeomuseum.org.



Kentucky Derby Museum Louisville, Kentucky

With two floors of exhibitions, the Kentucky Derby Museum underwent an 11,000-square-foot renovation project last fall, the largest expansion since its 1985 opening. The attraction is designed to celebrate the history and tradition of the two most anticipated minutes in sports: the world-renowned Kentucky Derby.

The museum’s featured exhibit, “The Greatest Race,” is a 4K high-resolution experience capturing the unique sporting and cultural event of the Derby on a 360-degree screen in the Great Hall.

Permanent exhibits in the new wing focus on the personal collections of innovative Thoroughbred trainer D. Wayne Lukas and jockey Bill Shoemaker, who won the Derby four times over four decades.

Chris Goodlett, director of curatorial and educational affairs, says visitors experience exhibits in their own, unique way—whether it’s through permanent installations telling stories crucial to the understanding of the Derby or temporary exhibits often featuring something of immediate importance or artifacts on loan.

“Some people really want to see historic and unique objects, art or images, while others engage through interactives. For the curatorial team, a relevant and engaging story is one of the key elements in an exhibition. It provides the meaning for the artifacts and images,” he says.

And while there are many more



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interactive components in the museum's exhibits now than there were several years ago, Goodlett says interactive doesn't always mean technology.

"For example, we recently showcased a temporary exhibition on 2015 Triple Crown winner American Pharoah that included a puzzle that guests could complete. The pieces together showed an x-ray of American Pharoah's hoof," he says. "A second, but possibly less obvious, change is the amount of text in an exhibit. We try to strike a balance between informing and potentially having too much text. Recently, the curatorial team removed some text from exhibit panels and elected to use it on social media and blog posts. That way, we not only cut back on the amount of copy, but there was additional information we could use for promoting the exhibit after the opening."

For more information on the Kentucky Derby Museum, contact Group Tour Manager Jennifer Riddell at jriddell@derbymuseum.org or go to derbymuseum.org.

Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum Canyon, Texas

Texas' largest history museum is a sprawling assemblage of artifacts and exhibits that explore the region's exciting tales of weaponry, transportation and paleontology. Through permanent exhibits, visitors can learn about the petroleum industry in the Panhandle region, see an extensive Southwest art collection and check out the new, built-from-the-ground-up Pioneer Town, representing 1890 to 1910.

In October the museum's "Undressing Suffrage" exhibit will launch in concurrence with the upcoming 19th amendment ratification anniversary. It will tell of the historical development of women's rights in the U.S. through garments of the time period.

"I am really excited about our Women's Suffrage exhibit in our textile gallery because it is so unique and a different take from your usual historical exhibition," says Stephanie Price, the



PANHANDLE-PLAINS HISTORICAL MUSEUM

Pioneer Town

museum's communications and marketing director. "In my opinion, and from almost seven years in the industry, the most appealing exhibits are those that form a connection with the audience and are timely to what is being discussed in our communities and cultures."

One of the exhibit's co-curators, Darby Reiners, says they work to recognize diversity in their communities and add those stories to their historical narratives to better connect and represent them.

"Our suffrage exhibit is intended to discuss ... the growth in diversity of the

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women's rights movement as a whole over just these last few decades," she says. "We currently have a museum app that provides additional information throughout our permanent exhibits, and we are evaluating digital interactives for the suffrage exhibit. We want our visitors to see themselves in the narrative."

Price says the museum's exhibits typically stay six months to a year after they're curated in-house. They also must consider the artifacts on display.

"For instance, textiles, even in our permanent exhibitions, must be changed out every nine months to a year, as textiles are heavily affected by light," Reiners says.

The team lays out the museum's exhibit calendar at least two years in advance. With the 2018 Pop Culture exhibit, which focused on popular culture influences from the 1950s through the 2000s, curators began work in 2015 to develop content, interactives, loans from other museums and layouts.

"In some ways it is a daunting task to think about what will be exciting or

interesting to visitors three years into the future, and I think that's where the creativity in our exhibition team is really exciting," Reiners says.

For more information, contact Price at sprice@pphm.wtamu.edu or go to panhandleplains.org.



MISSOURI HISTORY MUSEUM

Missouri History Museum St. Louis, Missouri

At the Missouri History Museum, display ideas can be found in unlikely places—and result in unlikely exhibits.

"It can be something as simple as a little black dress or the complex history of how one city's sound helped create the soundtrack for a nation," says Tourism and Group Sales Manager Tami Goldman. "The public is often surprised at how collaborative developing an exhibit is. It's never one curator walking down rows of artifacts, cherry-picking things to be on display. It's always a true team effort between curators and historians, librarians and archivists, graphic designers and local contractors."

In 2014 the museum shifted its focus to local history rather than embracing large traveling shows to attract its visitors. This move has allowed the staff to tell the stories of St. Louis and highlight the city's role in the larger narrative of the history of the region, state and country, Goldman says.

Its newest exhibit, "Mighty Mississippi," allowed Goldman to collaborate with several CVBs along the Mississippi River, a process which she says has been fun and exciting. The 6,000-square-foot exhibit exploring the history of the largest waterway in North America, including its impact on commerce, culture, the environment and westward expansion, is set to open in November.

"Hundreds of artifacts spanning thousands of years will be on display, including the original pilothouse from the *Golden Eagle* steamboat," Goldman says. "I'm excited to see the years of hard work and passion our team has put into this exhibit come to life for visitors."

The museum is anchored by its permanent collections of 1904 World's Fair artifacts and exhibits featuring Lewis and Clark. Goldman says temporary exhibits rotate based on things like the fragility of its artifacts as well as the level to which the museum's visitors can personally connect to the content—which alludes to its recent rebranding.

"Our slogan is 'Find Yourself Here.'"

The Missouri History Museum strives to serve as the confluence of historical perspectives and contemporary issues. No matter where a visitor is from, we hope they can relate to the human experiences of the everyday people featured in our exhibits," Goldman says.

The museum's team is currently developing new permanent exhibits to open



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WISCONSIN MUSEUM OF QUILTS & FIBER ARTS

Wisconsin Museum of Quilts & Fiber Arts

Cedarburg, Wisconsin

This attraction's team is always looking to educate the public about the history and cultural importance of quilts and fiber arts—from the unique exhibits down to quilt-patterned doors on the repurposed 1850s-era farmhouse.

The museum aims to produce four original exhibitions a year, and from August through November, "Water" will be a unified display of contemporary artists' work inspired by the expressive possibilities of water—and a nod to the region's plentiful freshwater.

"Water" aims to draw attention to this valuable, yet vulnerable, resource through the lens of fiber and video works, sculptures and installations. The exhibition includes top nationally recognized fiber artists—three of whom have works in the Smithsonian's collection—and many have made new works for the show," says exhibit curator Emily Schlemowitz.

As the team curates exhibits, Schlemowitz says they're always cognizant of design, how the viewer will experience the works and how the information is being communicated.

"We start from the place that exhibitions should spark curiosity and dialogue," she says. "Sometimes we achieve that by curating a solo exhibition of a particularly phenomenal artist, as we

will be doing with Doreen Speckmann, who has never had a retrospective despite being nationally recognized for her quilting innovations. Sometimes we achieve that by curating by theme, as we are doing for 'Water.'"

The museum recently received a grant to renovate the atrium, and it will become part of the permanent exhibitions.

"During 'Water,' we will have several carp—made specifically for the exhibition by Akiko Ike, a fiber artist from Japan—hanging from the atrium's ceiling. We will also be installing our first permanent outdoor sculpture by Susan Falkman, a sculptor who made a marble quilt inspired by the flow of water and the softness of fabric," Schlemowitz says.

For more information, contact Executive Director Melissa Wraalstad at director@wiqiltmuseum.com or go to wiqiltmuseum.com.

"Off We Go into the Wild Blue Yonder" by Susanna Lewis, 1977



PHILADELPHIA MUSEUM OF ART

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Tell a story that speaks to the viewer. That's one of the most important components of putting together an exhibit at the Philadelphia Museum of Art, according to Shari Feldman, manager of group sales.

"It has to bring in a human element and make it relatable," she says. "Encouraging interactions between our visitors and the pieces in the exhibition is much more prevalent than it has been in the last several years. In the past, exhibitions have relied heavily on wall text but now an exhibition might include a video that

BRING YOUR MOB TO THE MUSEUM

The Mob Museum in downtown Las Vegas offers a provocative, contemporary journey through the fascinating topic of the battle between organized crime and the law with high-tech theater presentations, hundreds of one-of-a-kind artifacts and interactive exhibits. The Museum provides an array of special offerings designed to enhance the guest experience, including private guided tours, Distillery tours & tastings, engaging teambuilding activities, an interactive Crime Lab and a working Speakeasy.



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"Shoebox Treasures" at the National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum

NATIONAL BASEBALL HALL OF FAME & MUSEUM

shows the process of how an artist creates the object, or it has an iPad that allows the guest to expand an image to see something very small. It (has) to be filled with fascinating facts about the subject and the time period, and a nice open floor plan and great lighting help, too."

The exhibits, as ever-changing as the museum industry itself, remain on view for about three to six months. That's what makes seeing these exhibits so important, whether the collections are on loan from other museums or private lenders.

In the fall, the museum will open "Designs for Different Futures."

"We typically think about design with regards to clothing, buildings or furniture, but this exhibition explores how design is influential in the trajectory of our everyday life," Feldman says. "It will explore visionary and sometimes controversial designs that promise to transform how we live, eat, heal, travel and even love."

"Off the Wall: American Art to Wear," also opening in the fall, will highlight the inventive work of mixed-media artists who use the body as a frame for one-of-a-kind art.

For more information, contact Feldman at shari.feldman@philamuseum.org or go to philamuseum.org.

National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum Cooperstown, New York

As museum-goers soak up wall-to-wall classic Americana, there's a certain sentiment to be felt.

The National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum's latest addition knocks hard on

the door to the past, evoking nostalgia through the story of baseball cards.

The lead curator for "Shoebox Treasures," John Odell, said they answered a calling for a sole exhibit on baseball cards. He said it couldn't just be rows of cards in a case, but needs to be a full show—from 19th-century tobacco cards and gum company sets to today's pricey keepsakes. The exhibit, housed across 700 square feet on the third floor, shines a light on the history, design and production of the cards. It explores the craze of the 1980s that transformed the hobby into a multi-million dollar industry—through the climbing value of old cards and the demand for new ones.

The museum's total collection holds about 200,000 cards, and the immense support for the exhibit allows ongoing cataloging and conservation of the cards that are loved by people of all ages. "Shoebox Treasures" features about 2,000 of those on display in vertical drawers. The exhibit is divided into four primary themes: the history of baseball cards, the evolution of card design, how and why fans of all ages collect baseball cards, and cards considered "holy grails."

For the ultra-sentimental experience, visitors can spin a bicycle wheel with a baseball card placed in the spokes and remember back to that click-clack of bike-riding on summer nights, the pavement lit only by street lamps.

"Shoebox Treasures" will be an ongoing exhibit and is included with regular admission. For more information, email Sales Manager June Dolhun at jdolhun@baseballhall.org go to baseballhall.org. ☎

Museums making connections

While many museums educate visitors about the past, they're all telling us something about the future: The people, places and events on exhibit play a vital role in how museums are evolving. The history is important. The future of museums, how their collections tell those stories and now connect with viewers, is even more so.

Here are four sponsoring NTA-member museums with unique, historical-based experiences and exhibits:

NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE US ARMY



The Army Historical Foundation, National Museum of the United States Army Arlington, Virginia

Jamie Hubans
Chief of museum operations
+1.703.562.416 | jamie.hubans@armyhistory.org
armyhistory.org

The National Museum of the United States Army, opening near Washington, D.C., in 2020, will immerse visitors in the experience of American soldiers since 1775. The museum will include a 300-degree 4-D theater, café, shopping and interactive learning spaces. It's located at Fort Belvoir, Virginia—less than 30 minutes from the National Mall and Arlington National Cemetery, and 10 minutes from Mount Vernon and I-95. It offers free performance areas as well as free admission, and inspiring spaces are available for rent.

HAGLEY MUSEUM AND LIBRARY



Hagley Museum and Library Wilmington, Delaware

Bonnie Wirth
Group tour manager
+1.302.658.2400 (259) | bwirth@hagley.org
hagley.org/tours

Take a journey through the historical DuPont Company's black powder yards and the garden and grounds of the first du Pont family home in America. Experience what makes Hagley unique with demonstrations of 19th-century water-powered machinery and a gunpowder explosion. Tour through the family home, chat with the horticulturalist in the French garden, discover archival treasures with a Hagley Historian and enjoy the most beautiful mile of the Brandywine in Wilmington, Delaware!

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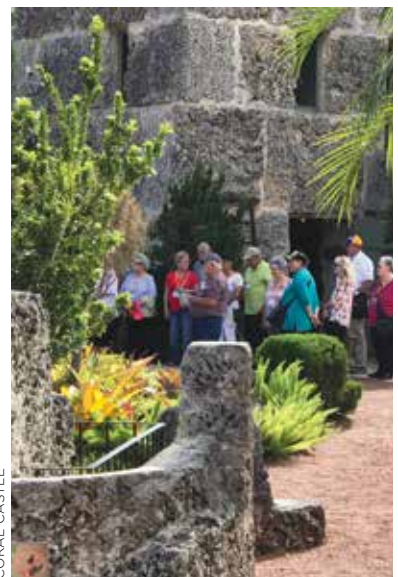
Patriots Point Naval & Maritime Museum on Charleston Harbor in South Carolina is home to a unique Vietnam experience—the only exhibit of its kind in the United States. Bringing to life the history of the Vietnam War with advanced technology, the attraction invites guests to explore a "Brown Water Navy" support base and feel the intensity of a U.S. Marine Corps artillery fire base during the Tet Offensive and the Battle of Khe Sanh.

Coral Castle Miami, Florida

Laura Maye
General manager/curator, director of marketing and sales
+1.305.248.6345 | lauramay9@gmail.com
coralcastle.com

A modern megalith, Coral Castle has over 30 architectural structures. Visitors learn the science, hear the infamous love story and see Edward Leedskalnin's sundial, the only one in the world to show the calendar month, time and seasons. They can enjoy the Coral Castle Café, the unique gift shop, free parking and continuous tours. Open year-round, the attraction received TripAdvisor's "Top 35 out of 35,000 museums across the U.S." rating and *New Times Magazine's* Reader Choice Awards' "Best of Miami."

CORAL CASTLE





The Balboa Pavilion at Newport Beach

Coastal California COMPILED BY KENDALL FLETCHER

Newport Beach boasts rich (and famous) history

Strolling the sands of Newport Beach offers a walk in the path of Hollywood stars including many places where the cameras were rolling.

Charming cottages dot the beautiful shoreline of Crystal Cove State Park's Historic District. The 24 dwellings from the 1930s have been restored and are available for rent. The 1988 movie "Beaches," starring Bette Midler and Barbara Hershey, was filmed here.

Groups can hop aboard the Duffy boat tour and get a peek at John Wayne's estate and yacht "The Wild Goose," and the former homes of Shirley Temple, James Cagney and George Burns. They can take in the views of other stately beach mansions, clubs and yachts while cruising the Lido Peninsula and Newport Beach Harbor Islands—waters once frequented by Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall.

The beachside shopping scene is anchored by Fashion Island, an open-air center with luxury stores, specialty boutiques and acclaimed restaurants. The nearby Lido Marina Village houses

a variety of shops, like Stone Cold Fox, a vintage-inspired store with Los Angeles-made clothing; Clare V., offering French-inspired accessories; and Charlie & Me, a boutique for dogs. Shoppers also can find chic beauty salons, health clubs and eateries like Malibu Farm, which serves up farm-to-table dishes, and Zinqué, the perfect spot for waterfront dining with a wine bar. The stylish village setting is a favorite of the stars of "The Real Housewives of Orange County."

The Ferris wheel at the Fun Zone at Balboa Village offers some incredible views of the Newport Harbor (and a famous scene from "The OC" was shot here). Its boardwalk has no admission cost, and groups can do bayside bungee jumping, ride on the giant Happy Swing or put their inner kid to the test in the arcade room. They can also find whale-watching options here and see the harbor's abundant sea lions.

For more information, contact Visit Newport Beach's Colleen Costello at colleen@newportbeachandco.com or go to visitnewportbeach.com.

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The Oakland Zoo's gondola ride offers visitors a view from above.

What's new at the zoo (and other Oakland to-dos)

The California Trail expansion is a transformational project that opened last year at the Oakland Zoo. Its design gives viewers an interpretation of one of the stories of change in California with an emphasis on human influence on the San Francisco Bay area ecology.

"Through live native animal and plant exhibits, the zoo highlights the delicate balance between plants, animals and humans—and the impact of change on all three," says Visit Oakland's Allie Neal.

Zoo-goers can also hop into the gondola and see camels, elephants and bison from above—along with a view of six counties in the Bay Area. The gondola is the first of its kind in California and can fit up to eight people at a time for a four-minute ride up.

Another option is Local Food Adventures' all-new Jack London Food Tour, which starts in San Francisco with a taste of one of the Ferry Building's many culinary offerings. Participants then will board the ferry and head over to Oakland, taking in views of Alcatraz Island and the Bay Bridge. The next stops are the historical warehouse district and the newly founded Jack London Brewing District, where guests will experience the local food and spirits scene and the artist community against the East Bay backdrop.

And Visit Oakland's latest launch is the "Oakland Style" shopping campaign, which aims to showcase the city's fashion

diversity through a digital guide. It promotes local designers and boutiques, and the guide is organized into five styles: Town Pride, Vintage and Consignment, A Night on The Town, Elevated Style and Lakeside Lounging.

For more information, contact Neal at allie@visitoakland.com or go to visitoakland.org.



A boutique featured in the "Oakland Style" shopping campaign



Going green at Blue Lake Casino & Hotel

Located just east of Arcata and minutes from the Pacific Ocean in northern California, the Blue Lake Casino & Hotel offers exciting entertainment, gaming and unique restaurant options, all while remaining environmentally friendly.

The property is also situated near the mountains, so it's an ideal spot to stay and play before diving into a coastal adventure or a scenic mountain journey. The spacious rooms open up to views of the Mad River Valley and its infinite forest of beautiful redwoods. Hotel amenities include an outdoor heated pool and hot tub, luxurious pillowtop mattresses, roomy bathrooms with shower and tub, free Wi-Fi, and HDTV services with more than 60 channels.

It's designed for a boutique hotel experience, with four eateries, including Alice's, a fine-dining establishment serving classic Americana; Sushi Blue, a fusion sushi spot; Wave, offering pub fare and 24 beers on tap; and Lily Pad, a casual Tex-Mex restaurant.

Blue Lake Casino & Hotel is home to lively entertainment and a variety of ever-changing expos. It hosts free live music every Friday and Saturday; everything from bluegrass to rock in its Sapphire Palace; and many outdoor festivals.

And in an effort to reduce the business's carbon footprint, the Blue Lake Rancheria Tribe is embracing green innovation within the restaurants, the hotel, the casino, the fuel station, mini-mart and its other facilities. They've switched from plastic to paper, changed from fossil fuels and conventional energy to biodiesel and renewables, made energy-efficient upgrades and enhanced recycling efforts.

For more information, contact Lisa Corral at lcoral@bluelakecasino.com or go to bluelakecasino.com.

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An immersive experience for the senses

With 58,800 lights spread over 15 acres, Bruce Munro's world famous art installation, "Field of Light," is an illuminating first phase of new NTA-member Sensorio's entertainment destination concept.

CEO Ken Hunter has plans to add several attractions to 40 of the 380 acres of beautiful land in Paso Robles that make up Sensorio. He was inspired many years ago by The Butchart Gardens, located near Victoria, British Columbia, and hoped to one day create something with the same feeling.

"You'll leave being happy. It's just a very sort of calming, beautiful piece of art, kinetic if you will, that I think is unique, particularly with regard to the topography in which this art is set. It has kind of a (soothing), intellectual effect that is just good for the soul," Hunter says.


"Field of Light" features stemmed, fiber-optic spheres that cover the rolling hills in stunning color. Sensorio's Executive Director Tracy Strann says the attraction integrates art, technology and nature in a way that's never been done before.

"It's the largest outdoor light exhibit Bruce Munro has ever done," she says. "After your day of wine tasting and horseback riding in the Paso Robles region, you can come here in the evening and have a gourmet picnic dinner and spend the evening walking (among) the lights. We have an event lawn where people can sit and watch live music, and we have food trucks that come in nightly that vary. It's a very fun, exciting, interactive experience."

Strann helps coordinate group sales, as well as special dinners on the VIP terrace.

"Everything is customizable. If groups have something they'd like to do specifically, we'd be happy to accommodate," she says.

Sensorio is situated three miles off Highway 101, the main artery between San Francisco and Los Angeles.

For more information, contact Sensorio's Rae Myers at rmyers@sensoriopaso.com or go to sensoriopaso.com. 

Great Lakes

COMPILED BY KAY SAFFARI

The many sides of Fond du Lac

Fond du Lac and Wisconsin's Lake Winnebago Region are nestled between Milwaukee and Green Bay. The area, which includes more than 70 attractions, is a true hub-and-spoke destination for tour groups.

The local DMO, Destination Lake Winnebago Region, offers 13 themed tours all designed for a unique experience: Bountiful Harvest, Fun on the Farm, Farm to Table, Back to Nature, Escape the Ordinary, Decadent Delights, Artisans and Arts, Girlfriends Getaway, Land-Air-Sea, Wrap it Up for the Holidays, Beer-Bourbon-Wine and More, Mystery Tour, and the Pilgrimage & Fellowship Tour that takes groups to Wisconsin's Holy Land and the only Marian apparition site in the U.S.

On those tours, visitors can meet genuine people, taste farm-fresh flavors at Wisconsin supper clubs or waterfront restaurants, pick their own fruits, pet an array of animals and much more.

For more information, email Liz Engh at lengh@fdl.com or visit fdl.com.

A sightseeing tour of Horicon Marsh



The malls of Minnesota

Want to visit the largest mall in America? Join the 40 million annual visitors who head to Mall of America in Bloomington, Minnesota, to visit more than 500 stores and unique attractions, such as an aquarium, the world's largest indoor park (Nickelodeon Universe) and FlyOver America, a flight simulation ride that takes you over many iconic U.S. landscapes and sites. Other entertainment options include miniature golf, a movie theater, an escape game and a roller-coaster/video game combination. A new indoor waterpark will be added in 2022, promising even more fun for the whole family.

Groups receive complimentary Mall of America VIP benefits, including souvenir shopping bags and special coupon books with discounts available only for groups. Tour leaders and bus drivers enjoy complimentary refreshments upon arrival.

A different shopping experience awaits travelers at Miller Hill Mall in Duluth, where out-of-state residents enjoy tax-free clothing shopping. The mall includes 100 stores, with a great mix of national, regional and local shops that provides interesting retail options. Special events are held regularly at the mall and include arts and crafts shows, Disney playdate events, sports and collectors shows, and Ladies' Night Out events.

Located at the tip of Lake Superior, Duluth is a waterfront city and must-see destination. Driving along the Lake Superior shore during the summer and fall provides spectacular lake views, and the many area attractions and restaurants offer options for all ages.

For more information on Mall of America, email Samantha Sommers at samantha.sommers@moa.net or go to mallofamerica.com. For more information on Miller Hill Mall, reach out to Simon Shopping Destinations' Nora Barboe at nbarboe@simon.com or go to traveltrade.simon.com.



Explore the Chicagoland area

With more than 55 million people visiting Chicago each year, it makes sense for groups to explore options just outside of the city. Two nearby areas represented by NTA DMO members are Lake County and Chicago Southland.



Lipizzan stallion

JOHN BORO'S PHOTOGRAPHY



Shrine of Christ's Passion

CHICAGO SOUTHLAND CVB

Lake County

Just north of Chicago on Lake Michigan, Lake County offers year-round activities and attractions for a range of groups. Summer fun includes visits to Six Flags Great America & Hurricane Harbor amusement and water park, as well as water sports and relaxation on Lake Michigan.

Lake County is also home to plenty of indoor options. Groups enjoy Tempel Lipizzans performances by the famous Lipizzan stallions; visits to the Sanfilippo Estate, a privately owned home that houses a collection of antique musical instruments; and tours of area museums including the Volo Auto Museum and the National Museum of the American Sailor.

For more information, email Jayne Nordstrom of the Lake County, IL CVB at jayne@lakecounty.org or go to visitlakecounty.org.

Chicago Southland

Located just south-southwest of the city limits, Chicago Southland offers easy accessibility, affordability and appealing activities for groups.

Popular options are the religious tour that pairs a trip to the Shrine of Christ's Passion (a prayer trail of the Passion of Christ) with a visit to Bible League International, and a historical tour that includes visits to the Method Soap Factory and the Pullman Historic District. Outdoor options include Lake Katherine Nature Center & Botanic Gardens, Pullman National Monument and Park Forest Rail Fan Park. The area also has eight breweries, which form the local Brewery Trail.

To learn more, email Tobie Fitzpatrick of the Chicago Southland CVB at tobie@visitchicagosouthland.com or go to visitchicagosouthland.com.



Sign, sign, everywhere a sign

Groups visiting the Cincinnati, Ohio, area have plenty of sights to see in this vibrant city on the banks of the Ohio River, including several area museums. One interesting choice is the American Sign Museum, the largest public museum in the U.S. dedicated to signs.

The attraction offers a unique look at the art and history of commercial signs and sign-making. Groups can view American signage from early, pre-electric signs adorned in gold leaf, to the earliest electric signs, and from beautiful art-deco neon to modern plastic-faced signs.

Be sure to check out the Signs on Main Street display, which re-creates a typical U.S. Main Street, complete with shop windows full of sign-related objects, curiosities and samples. Another must-see is Neonworks of Cincinnati, the neon workshop where you can watch tube benders making modern-day signs.

Groups can explore the museum on their own, listen to an audio tour on their phones, or have a more in-depth experience by taking a 60-minute guided tour that covers a century of sign history, starting in the late 1800s.

For more information, email the attraction's Brad Huberman at info@americansignmuseum.org or go to americansignmuseum.org.

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Eagan is the perfect destination for your next group tour. Proud to be the new home of the Minnesota Vikings, groups can experience the state-of-the-art Vikings Museum, which features interactive displays and a complete history of the Minnesota Vikings. As one of only four NFL team museums in the country, this is a must-see! Eagan is also located less than five miles to amazing attractions like the Minnesota Zoo and Fort Snelling, both of which offer behind-the-scenes programs just for groups. Additionally, Eagan features a fantastic array of tax-free shopping at Twin Cities Premium Outlets – the largest outlet mall in the Upper Midwest. With 18 amazing hotels most offering complimentary breakfast and free on-site motor coach parking, Eagan is THE place to book your next group tour.



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Michigan attractions you can't a-Ford to miss

From the urban offerings in Motown to the “Coolest Museum in the World” to the beauty of the Upper Peninsula, Michigan has a lot of intriguing options for travelers.



Detroit skyline

ROB KOHN

Detroit

Detroit is offering a lot of “new” these days—new restaurants, entertainment districts, retailers and businesses—making it a great time to head to the Motor City.

Detroit is the hometown of automotive pioneer Henry Ford, and it's the only destination where you can visit the plant where Ford assembled his first Model T and then watch an iconic Ford truck being built today. Beginning in 2020, the North American International Auto Show will take place in June instead of January, allowing attendees to enjoy the event and soak up all the city has to offer during ideal summer weather.

While in Detroit, groups can take advantage of the city's fine museums, including the Motown Museum, The Charles H. Wright Museum and the Detroit Institute of Arts. The latter houses Mexican muralist Diego Rivera's famous Detroit Industry Murals, 27 large and looming panels that depict workers on the assembly lines at Ford Motor Company.

For more information, email Kalyne DeFeaver of the Detroit Metro CVB at kdefeaver@visitdetroit.com or go to visitdetroit.com.

The Henry Ford

Just 10 miles southwest of Detroit, travelers can visit The Henry Ford, named the “Coolest Museum in the World” by The New York Times. Located in Dearborn, this living history museum offers the opportunity to see a village from the 1800s and Ford's earliest factory. Guests can see and learn about the inventions and innovations that were so important to the development of the automobile industry in the U.S.

The Henry Ford comprises the Museum of American Innovation, where groups can learn



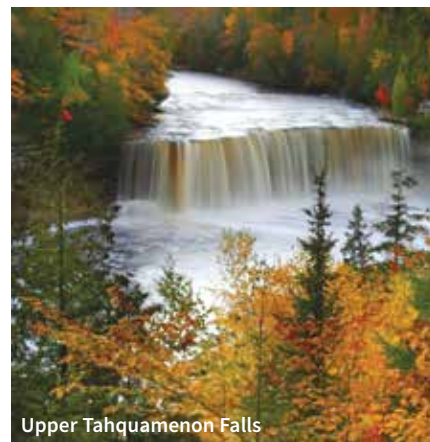
Greenfield Village

THE HENRY FORD

about many “firsts” in cars, airplanes, tractors and trains; Greenfield Village, a collection of 80 authentic historical homes and workplaces (including those of the Wright Brothers and Thomas Edison) that allow visitors to experience life over a 300-year span; and the Ford Rouge Factory, where groups can watch live production of the Ford F-150 truck in a “green” factory.

Group amenities include special tour operator rates, a group check-in desk, free on-site motorcoach parking, and restaurants and shops that can accommodate groups.

For more information, contact Vickie Evans of The Henry Ford at vickiee@thehenryford.org or visit thehenryford.org.



Upper Tahquamenon Falls

UPTRA

The Upper Peninsula

Michigan's Upper Peninsula, known for its unrivaled scenic beauty, rich history and friendly people, is one of the most popular destinations in the Midwest for group travel. The area features an abundance of natural attractions, including over 300 waterfalls, 4,300 inland lakes, 12,000 miles of rivers and over 1,700 miles of shoreline on three of the Great Lakes.

The area also features some of the greatest man-made attractions in the world, including the Mackinac Bridge, the Grand Hotel and the world-famous Soo Locks.

“Many of the biggest group tour attractions in the Upper Peninsula can be found in our state parks,” says Fred Huffman, the longtime group tour coordinator for Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The list includes Lake of the Clouds in the Porcupine Mountains, the Big Springs of Michigan on Indian Lake near Manistique, and Tahquamenon Falls just east of Paradise. This year marks the 100th anniversary of the Michigan state parks system, considered one of the finest in the United States.

For more information, email Huffman at groups@uptravel.com.



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Diverse experiences await in Indiana

Two NTA members showcase different options for groups in Indiana. Established in 1845, French Lick Resort offers luxury accommodations and a variety of activities to create the perfect vacation, while the Amish Country area of northern Indiana provides cultural and religious tour options.

French Lick Resort

Groups can enjoy a world-class experience at French Lick Resort in the town of French Lick. Recently named the Best Historic Resort in America by Historic Hotels of America, the resort has two historical hotels, two world-class spas, three championship-level golf courses, a casino, stables with horseback riding and carriage rides, complimentary trolley service, and numerous restaurants and shops. French Lick Scenic Railroad offers themed train excursions including Wild West Hold-ups, Polar Express and a newly launched dinner train service that includes a fine-dining experience aboard the train.

Wilsterm Wildlife Park at the resort offers animal encounters that include bathing an elephant, feeding giraffes or getting up close and personal with grizzly bears and their handler Jeff Watson, formerly of Animal Planet's Project Grizzly. Other options include step-on guided tours of the property, walking tours of the historical hotels, scenic nature cruises of Patoka Lake and culinary delights at the eateries.

For more information, email Kristal Painter at kristal@visitfrenchlickwestbaden.com or go to visitfrenchlickwestbaden.com.

Amish Country

Northern Indiana has the third-largest Amish population in the U.S., and the area offers a variety of great options for groups. Groups can fly into Chicago, only 120 miles away, and arrange pick-up services by a local coach company.

One of the most popular tours is the Quilt Gardens tour. Located in six towns along the Heritage Trail, the gardens feature more than one million blooms planted to resemble typical quilt patterns. Groups can visit the Quilt Gardens during the summer months up until mid-September.

Faith groups can explore the Amish religion and culture as part of the Amish Country Backroads tour or by experiencing hands-on cooking and tasting in Amish homes. In addition, the University of Notre Dame is just 20 minutes away, where groups can visit the basilica with its spectacular stained glass and gold embellishments.

For more information, reach out to Sonya Nash of the Amish Country of Northern Indiana CVB at sonya@amishcountry.org or go to amishcountry.org.



A garden along the Quilt Gardens tour

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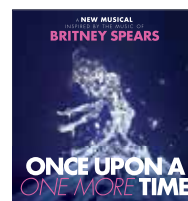
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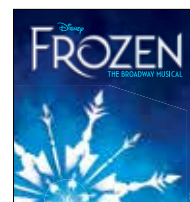
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New Mexican culture on display at local festivals

Each October, around 900,000 people head to New Mexico to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta. Visitors from around the world converge on the city for nine days of activities, and this year will mark 48th installment of this iconic event.

The state also plays host to a number of other popular annual festivals, including the following six that are held in Albuquerque, Gallup and Las Cruces:



Monuments to Main Street (September 2019)

This monthlong celebration is full of special events and activities that showcase the region's vibrant culture. Attendees can enjoy nature and history tours highlighting Las Cruces heritage, concerts and film festivals, the local culinary and agricultural scenes, and the great southern New Mexico outdoors.



The Las Cruces Country Music Festival (Oct. 11–13, 2019)

Celebrating its seventh year this October, this country music showcase has established itself as one of Las Cruces and New Mexico's premier events. This year's line-up includes Big & Rich with Cowboy Troy, Gretchen Wilson, Ronnie Milsap and many others, who will perform over three days.



Red Rock Balloon Festival (Dec. 6–8, 2019)

While smaller than the Albuquerque version, Gallup's Red Rock Balloon Festival provides a perfect way for people to usher in the holiday season. More than 150 balloons float through and above the area's red rock canyons. In addition to the balloon flights, there are parades and live entertainment.



The Southwest Chocolate & Coffee Fest (March 21–22, 2020)

As the largest chocolate and coffee consumer festival in the country, this Albuquerque event brings together 140 purveyors of chocolates, coffees, gourmet foods, wines and beer. Beyond sampling and shopping, attendees can enjoy cooking demonstrations, baking contests, coffee seminars and more.



Festival Flamenco Albuquerque* (June 2020)

For eight days, the city is abuzz with the pulse of flamenco—on display as part of performances, workshops, classes and seminars. Next year will mark the 33rd installment of the event, which is organized by the National Institute of Flamenco and the University of New Mexico.



Gallup Inter-tribal Indian Ceremonial (Aug. 1–9, 2020)

The festival, which is the oldest commemoration of Native American culture in the U.S., will celebrate 100 years in 2021. Attendees can see a powwow, two parades, a juried Native American art show, a rodeo, a queen pageant and nightly performances by Native American dance groups.

To learn more, contact Maureen Chavez of Visit Albuquerque at mchavez@visitabq.org or go to visitabq.org; Jennifer Lazarz of the City of Gallup at jlazarz@gallupnm.gov or go to galluprealtrue.com; and Rochelle Miller-Hernandez of Visit Las Cruces at rhernandez@las-cruces.org or go to visitlascruces.com.

* The spelling of *Albuquerque* includes the additional *R* to recognize the original spelling of the city's name.



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Ready for a musical road trip, Oklahoma style?

From powerhouse vocalists Carrie Underwood and Kristin Chenoweth to indie rock stars The Flaming Lips and St. Vincent to country legends Blake Shelton and Vince Gill, Oklahoma has produced a lengthy and diverse list of famous musicians. The Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department honors these and other notable performers through the Oklahoma Music Trail itineraries it has put together.

More than 50 road trips are on the department's list (travelok.com/music-trail/itineraries). As part of these multi-stop tours, travelers can visit places that were influential to the development of the featured Sooner State's stars. Each listing includes details on why the chosen sites are significant to the artists and lists the mileage to the next stop.

For instance, the Carrie Underwood tour covers five cities: Tahlequah, Muskogee, Checotah, Eufaula and Tulsa. The two Tahlequah stops are at Northeastern State University, Carrie's alma mater, and Sam & Ella's Chicken Palace, where she worked during her college days. In her hometown of Checotah, fans check out where she attended high school and see an animal shelter the singer opened in 2011.

In addition to the artist-specific tours, the webpage includes trails that showcase musical genres, such as country, blues, folk, opera, jazz, and Christian and gospel.

To learn more, contact the Oklahoma Tourism & Recreation Department's Todd Stallbaumer at todd@travelok.com or go to travelok.com.

Oklahoma native
Carrie Underwood



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Arizona's fav caves

Thanks to A-list destinations such as Grand Canyon National Park, Arizona is known for its abundant natural beauty and plethora of outdoor recreational options. Additionally, travelers can head below ground to check out some of the state's diverse caves and caverns.

"There are several caves in Arizona that boast rare formations, and each of these diverse natural wonders has a story of its own. Some are developed, and others are untouched," says Olivia Hall, travel industry marketing manager for the Arizona Office of Tourism. "Visiting them is a great summer activity for groups since the caves stay around 70 degrees, no matter what the temperature is outside."

Here are details she shared on four of the top spots:



Kartchner Caverns State Park

Kartchner Caverns State Park

During 90-minute guided tours, guests learn about this "living" limestone cave in southeastern Arizona, which boasts stalactites that drip down like icicles and stalagmites that reach up from the ground.

Grand Canyon Caverns

This natural limestone cave is the largest dry cavern in the United States. Tours range from 25 minutes to 2.5 hours, and the Cavern Grotto, with seating for 16 people, offers a unique underground dining experience.

Colossal Cave Mountain Park

On the National Historic Register, the 2,400-acre park is home to the crystal-filled Colossal Cave. During the hour-long tour, guests see boxwork, flowstone and helictites, and learn about Colossal's history and geology.

Bisbee Queen Mine

Visitors ride a train into this former copper mine in southeast Arizona on tours that are led by former miners. When the mine closed in 1975 after a century of operations, it had produced metals valued at \$6.1 billion.

To learn more, email Hall at ohall@tourism.az.gov or go to visitarizona.com.

AN PHAM

An odyssey in Odessa

Located on the West Texas plains, Odessa offers a good mix of activities and attractions.

"Odessa is a wonderful place for groups to come and enjoy their time away, whether it's for business or leisure," says Discover Odessa's Mary Rains. "There is a Smithsonian-affiliated art museum, a state-of-the-art archives and many other unique attractions. We take pride in these places and look forward to sharing them with our visitors."

The Presidential Archives and Leadership Library is home to exhibits featuring campaign memorabilia, books, photos and other items that document the history of the U.S. presidency. Guests can see the Hall of Presidents and four unique collections that showcase additional presidential artifacts. Another local historical attraction is the Chris Kyle Memorial Statue, which honors the Odessa native and Navy SEAL whose life was the basis for "American Sniper."

For arts devotees, the Ellen Noel Art Museum of the Permian Basin contains a vast collection of works by international and regional artists that can be discovered on tours, during education sessions and at special events. A good evening activity is catching a show at the Permian Playhouse, a theater



that stages local productions of familiar plays and musicals throughout the year.

One of the area's more interesting attractions is a Stonehenge replica, which is located on the University of Texas of the Permian Basin campus. The 20-plus stones, while slightly smaller than the English ones, are arranged in a similar circular pattern, and each one weighs around 20 tons.

For more information, email Discover Odessa's Monica Tschauner at monicat@odessacvb.com or go to odessacvb.com.



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Visovac Monastery

A cornucopia of Croatian faith sites

From UNESCO World Heritage sites such as the Cathedral of St. James in Sibenik and the Episcopal Basilica in Poreč to centuries-old Marian sites near Zagreb and Rijeka, Croatia is a country that boasts a number of intriguing places to faith-based travelers.

Ina Rodin, director North America for the Croatian National Tourist Office says these important religious sites are spread across the country, but still easy to reach. “Croatia is great group destination because everything is nearby. Most destinations are only a few hours apart.”

The Catholic faith has a long history in Croatia, and one of the most picturesque Franciscan monasteries is on the island of Visovac, just north of Split. The grounds include a chapel, a museum and a flowering garden that is attended to by the small group of resident monks.

Croatia’s largest Marian site—in Marija Bistrica—is known for its statue of the Black Madonna and the Stations of the Cross path, which includes works by famous Croatian sculptors. Pope John Paul II visited the peaceful village, located just north of Zagreb, in 1998 and conducted a mass.

Back in the country’s capital city, the Zagreb Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary is the tallest building in Croatia. In addition to twin spires that stretch to 354 feet (108 meters), the basilica features outstanding examples of Neo-Gothic architecture.

Two popular pilgrimage sites are the Sanctuary of Our Lady of Trsat in coastal Rijeka (turn to page 15 to read more about the city) and a Marian shrine dating from 1704 in the eastern Croatian town of Aljimas.

For more information, email Rodin at cntony@earthlink.net or go to croatia.hr.



Statue of the Black Madonna, Marija Bistrica

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Zagreb Cathedral of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

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Hands-on cooking class in Poland



Traditional Polish dishes and spirits



Taking a bite out of Poland

When Sarna Rose started Poland Culinary Vacations a decade ago, her goal was simple: to showcase the flavors and culture of Poland to travelers. While her food and drink packages do that, she says she's gained a better appreciation over the years of how they also have a larger purpose.

"I strongly believe that travel helps us better understand and appreciate other people, ultimately leading to a more peaceful world," Rose says. "Nothing is more intimate, or more effective at breaking down cultural barriers, than cooking and sharing meals together. Even though most of the housewives we cook and bake with don't speak English well, we still have fun and enjoy each other's company while learning from each other as we create delicious recipes."

This year the company will offer 11 food and wine adventures that are designed to highlight local and regional culinary specialties in many areas across the country. Rose says her itineraries

often incorporate festivals, which provide another way for her guests to get a feel for local culture.

"There are wonderful food, wine and cheese festivals that are organized only during June, July and August," she says. "Our Five Days with Polish Wine in Subcarpathia wine tour is offered in August during the region's International Wine Days Festival. We also offer trips which we schedule around the annual Pierogi Festival in Krakow and around the Polish Pottery Festival in Boleslawiec in the Lower Silesia regions of southwest Poland."

The company will be adding tours in the coming years that highlight more of the country's wine regions. "Our 'enotourism' is very popular," says Rose. "Plus, we have such a nice, organic quality of wines to pair with local foods and experiences."

Reach out to Rose at info@polandculinary.com or go to polandculinaryvacations.com to learn more.

Setting the stage for performance group tours

“Classical music is simply a Central European tradition,” says Marcela Lauková, CTP, owner and managing director of Discover Slovakia Tours. “Some of the world’s greatest composers were born in the region—including Mozart, Chopin, Liszt and Dvořák—and their musical masterpieces formed a legacy that’s treasured by locals and visitors. Thanks to that, we have a lot of famous venues where many groups want to perform.”

The company has developed a range of tours for choirs, bands and orchestras that can include multiple nations or focus on a single country. Lauková says a recent tour for a U.S. choir is typical of what a performance group’s itinerary would look like.

“This one was nine days long and included concerts in fantastic places, such as the Church of the Infant Jesus in Prague, the Basilica of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in Krakow, King’s Hall in Slovakia’s Zvolen Castle and the famous Stephansdom in Vienna,” she says. “We also featured the tourism highlights of those countries.”

In addition to providing regular DMC services—lodging, dining, transportation and guide arrangements—Discover Slovakia Tours takes care of all the concert management details, ranging from finding rehearsal space and other venue-related needs to promoting concerts via social media and in local newspapers.

“We also work with choirs here in order to prepare a joint performance between the touring group and a local choir, and, if possible, we try to set up lunch or dinner to give them more time together,” she adds. “Plus, performance groups are often received in the city hall by a town mayor who thanks them for



Concert at Bratislava main square

the piece of culture they brought to Central Europe from their home. Our clients just love that!”

For more information, reach out to Lauková at mlaukova@discoverslovakiatours.com or go to discoverslovakiatours.com.



ESA Baltic's Agne Samkuviene and Edvinas Samkus

The lowdown on Lithuania

Earlier this year, ESA Baltic became NTA's first Lithuania-based member. The tour company, which is owned by Agne Samkuviene and her husband Edvinas Samkus, takes its customers to the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. *Courier* checked in with Samkuviene to find out more.

Courier: Why is Lithuania such a great place for groups?

Samkuviene: Lithuania is a new travel destination to most, so that means no mass tourism. It is a very clean and safe small country where in a short period you can see a lot, enjoy quality food and meet friendly people.

Courier: What are some of your favorite places in Lithuania?

Samkuviene: The Curonian Spit! The fresh air, the smell of pines and the sand are really amazing. Every single year we go there for a holiday, and it is our corner of paradise. The second place for me would be Vilnius old town. It is very beautiful and green, and even though I've lived in Vilnius 15 years, I cannot stop admiring this city.

Courier: How do your tours connect travelers with local culture?

Samkuviene: Our tours include not only the cities, but also go to countryside. There our guests meet local people and have a look at—and often try—local activities such as collecting amber near the Baltic Sea, weather vane painting, a bread-making workshop with locals and more.

For more information, email Samkuviene at info@esabaltic.lt or go to esabaltic.lt.



Vilnius old town

Green means ...

NTA members will step into a sea of green tables at Travel Exchange in Fort Worth, Dec. 8-12. When you come to TREX'19 ... there's meaning behind that greening.



Green means ... Growth

"TREX18 opened my eyes to better networking skills that I've brought back home to grow business."

—Courtney Hawkins, Hotel Preston (Nashville)
(pictured, far left)

"As a small DMO from Alaska, attending Travel Exchange is a great opportunity to meet with key tour operators in one place."

—Casey Ressler, Mat-Su CVB

Green means ... Go!

"We move people, not iron or gasoline, so networking and personal relationships have to come first! And NTA works exactly in this way."

—Michele Marinaro, Michelangelo International Travel

Green means ... Inexperienced

"I always tell first-timers it's not about the sales you are going to go home with ... it's the relationships you build."

—Colin Caparros, A Closer Look Tours

"Travel Exchange is wonderful for a first-timer—everyone is so friendly and helpful. The whole experience exceeded my expectations."

—Kalynne Defever, Visit Detroit
(pictured, far right)



Grab the green.

To get details—and to get signed up—visit
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FORT WORTH

— DECEMBER 8-12, 2019 —

Courier's Guide to NTA-member Museums

The San Francisco Museum
of Modern Art



There is no shortage of state-of-the-art museums among the NTA membership that welcome travelers. As they roam around North America, groups can check out art and science museums, history-themed attractions, and presidential libraries and homes. As they explore the special places listed on the following pages, visitors can see unique exhibits, take part in hands-on activities, enjoy a variety of events and go on guided VIP tours.

Listings in this guide are based on a company's primary membership category or profile selections. The information was provided by the member contact and was current as of July 5. Please check NTAonline.com for updated details on the association's museum members.

CANADA

ALBERTA

Heritage Park Historical Village

Sandy Wilde
1900 Heritage Drive SW
Calgary, AB T2V 2X3
+1.403.268.8612
swilde@heritagepark.ca
heritagepark.ca

Manitoba

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights
Carrie Goulet
85 Israel Asper Way, Victoria Building – 4th Floor
Winnipeg, MB R3C 0L5
+1.204.289.2000
tours@humanrights.ca
humanrightsmuseum.ca

Parks Canada

Jennifer Burnell
145 McDermot Ave.
Winnipeg, MB R3B 0R9
888.773.8888
jennifer.burnell@pc.gc.ca
parksCanada.gc.ca

ONTARIO

Canadian Museum of Nature

Lorna Sierolawski
240 McLeod St.
Ottawa, ON K2P 2R1
+1.613.566.4235
lsierolawski@nature.ca
nature.ca

National Gallery of Canada

Hélène Donaldson
380 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1N 9N4
+1.613.990.1938
hdonaldson@gallery.ca
gallery.ca

Royal Canadian Mint

Adrianne Wilson
320 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, ON K1N 0G8
+1.204.984.3214
wilsonad@mint.ca
mint.ca

QUÉBEC

Canadian Museum of History

Stephanie Fortin
100 Laurier St.
Gatineau, QC K1A 0M8
+1.819.776.7086
information@historymuseum.ca
historymuseum.ca

Québec Copper Art Studio & Museum Albert Gilles

Palmyre Gilles
7450 Boulevard Ste-Anne
Chateau-Richer, QC G0A 1N0
+1.418.824.4224
palmyre@cuivres-albertgilles.com
albertgilles.com

ENGLAND

National Churches Trust Heritage Services

Emma Clarke
7 Tufton St.
London, England SW1P 3QW
+44.20.7222.0605
emma.clarke@nationalchurchestrust.org
explorechurches.org

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA

U S S Alabama Battleship Memorial Park

Rhonda Davis
2703 Battleship Parkway
Mobile, AL 36602
+1.251.433.2703
rdavis@ussalabama.com
ussalabama.com

U.S. Space & Rocket Center

Tom White
1 Tranquility Base
Huntsville, AL 35805
+1.256.721.7124
tom.white@spacecamp.com
spacecamp.com

ALASKA

Alaska Native Heritage Center

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

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

Academy Museum of Motion Pictures

Rowena Adalid
6067 Wilshire Blvd.
Los Angeles, CA 90036
+1.310.247.3000
radalid@oscars.org
academymuseum.org

California Academy of Sciences

Cyd Antang
55 Music Concourse Drive
San Francisco, CA 94118
+1.415.379.5205
cantang@calacademy.org
calacademy.org

Hearst Castle

Jim Allen
750 Hearst Castle Road
San Simeon, CA 93452-9740
+1.805.927.2093
jim.allen@parks.ca.gov
hearstcastle.org

The Huntington Library, Art Collections & Botanical Gardens

Jane Sandmeier
1151 Oxford Road
San Marino, CA 91108-1218
+1.626.405.2240
jsandmeier@huntington.org
huntington.org

Intel Museum

Kelli Ambrosi
2200 Mission College Blvd.
Santa Clara, CA 95054
+1.408.765.5050
museum@intel.com
intel.com/museum

The Living Desert

Roshan Patel
47900 Portola Ave.
Palm Desert, CA 92260-6156
+1.760.346.9810
rpatel@livingdesert.org
livingdesert.org

Maritime Museum of San Diego

Theresa Smullen
1492 N. Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92101
+1.619.234.9153 (123)
tsmullen@sdmaritime.org
sdmaritime.org

Pacific Battleship Center

Jonathan Williams
250 South Harbor Blvd.
San Pedro, CA 90731
877.446.9261
jwilliams@labattleship.com
pacificbattleship.com

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library and Museum

Melanie Salvesen
40 Presidential Drive
Simi Valley, CA 93065-0600
+1.805.522.2977
mgiller@reaganfoundation.org
reaganlibrary.com

San Francisco Museum of Modern Art

Teresa Ou-young
151 3rd St.
San Francisco, CA 94103
+1.415.915.1449
touyoung@sfmoma.org
sfmoma.org

USS Midway Museum

Joe Wagstaff
910 N. Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92101-5811
+1.619.398.8249
jwagstaff@midway.org
midway.org

Winchester Mystery House

Nathan Emmett
525 S. Winchester Blvd.
San Jose, CA 95128-2537
+1.408.247.2000
nathan@winchestermysteryhouse.com
winchestermysteryhouse.com

COLORADO

Garden of the Gods Visitor & Nature Center

Linda Carter
1805 N. 30th St.
Colorado Springs, CO 80904-1247
+1.719.219.0105
tours@gardenofgods.com
gardenofgods.com

History Colorado

Zach Werkowitch
301 N. Union
Pueblo, CO 81003
+1.719.583.0453
zach.werkowitch@state.co.us
historycolorado.org

CONNECTICUT

Mystic Seaport Museum

Rebecca Shea
50 Greenmanville Ave.
Mystic, CT 06355-1946
+1.860.572.5309
rebecca.shea@mysticseaport.org
mysticseaport.org

DELAWARE

Hagley Museum and Library

Bonnie Wirth
200 Hagley Creek Road
Wilmington, DE 19807-0630
+1.302.658.2400 (259)
bwirth@hagley.org
hagley.org

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Hillwood Estate Museum & Gardens

Meredith DeSantis
4155 Linnean Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20008-3806
+1.202.243.3914
grouptours@hillwoodmuseum.org
hillwoodmuseum.org

International Spy Museum

Lori Scott
700 L'Enfant Plaza SW
Washington, DC 20024
+1.202.654.2844
lscott@spymuseum.org
spymuseum.org

National Geographic Museum

Brianna DeOrsey
1145 17th St. NW
Washington, DC 20036
+1.202.807.3232
bdeorsey@ngs.org
natgeomuseum.org

National Law Enforcement Museum

Ali Brewer
444 E St. NW
Washington, DC 20001
+1.202.737.7498
abrewer@nleomf.org
lawenforcementmuseum.org

Newseum

Roxana Rivera
555 Pennsylvania Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20001-2114
+1.202.292.6322
rrivera@newseum.org
newseum.org

FLORIDA

Coral Castle

Laura Maye
28655 S. Dixie Highway
Miami, FL 33033
+1.305.248.6345
lauramay9@gmail.com
coralcastle.com

Kennedy Space Center Visitor Complex

Gabriele Bauer Cornish
Mail Code: DNPS
Kennedy Space Center, FL 32899
+1.321.449.4400
gbauercornish@delawarenorth.com
kennedyspacecenter.com

Merlin Entertainments

Greg Dotson
8387 International Drive
Orlando, FL 32819
+1.407.270.8634
greg.dotson@merlinentertainments.biz
merlinentertainments.biz

ILLINOIS

Chicago Architecture Center

Deb Rodak
111 E. Wacker Drive
Chicago, IL 60601
+1.312.922.3432
grouptours@architecture.org
architecture.org

Museum of Science and Industry

Amy Tometich
5700 South Lake Shore Drive
Chicago, IL 60637
+1.773.684.1414
amy.tometich@msichicago.org
msichicago.org

KENTUCKY

Ark Encounter

Eddie Lutz
1 Ark Encounter Drive
Williamstown, KY 41097
888.582.4253 (377)
elutz@arkencounter.com
arkencounter.com

Kentucky Derby Museum

Jennifer Riddell
704 Central Ave.
Louisville, KY 40208-1212
+1.502.637.1111 (2225)
jriddell@derbymuseum.org
derbymuseum.org

National Corvette Museum

Debbie Eaton
350 Corvette Drive
Bowling Green, KY 42101
+1.270.781.7973
debbie@corvettemuseum.org
corvettemuseum.org

LOUISIANA

Mardi Gras World

Brooke Pickett
1380 Port of New Orleans Place
New Orleans, LA 70130
+1.504.527.0389
brookep@mardigrasworld.com
mardigrasworld.com

The National World War II Museum

Ruth Katz
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oakalleyplantation.org

MASSACHUSETTS

Boston Attractions Group

Suzanne Taylor
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staylor@thefreedomtrail.org
bostonattractionsgroup.com

Edward M. Kennedy Institute for the United States Senate

Jean MacCormack
210 Morrissey Blvd.
Columbia Point
Boston, MA 02125-3314
+1.857.271.3371
marketing@emkinstitute.org
emkinstitute.org

John F. Kennedy Presidential Library & Museum

Ian Shepherd
Columbia Point
Boston, MA 02125
+1.617.514.1589
kennedy.groupvisits@nara.gov
jfklibrary.org

Plimoth Plantation, Mayflower II & Plimoth Grist Mill

Janet Young
137 Warren Ave.
Plymouth, MA 02360
+1.508.503.2653
groupsales@plimoth.org
plimoth.org

Salem Witch Museum

Merry Ward
19 1/2 Washington Square North
Salem, MA 01970-4056
+1.978.744.1692
merryw@salemwitchmuseum.com
salemwitchmuseum.com

MICHIGAN

The Henry Ford

Vickie Evans
20900 Oakwood Blvd.
Dearborn, MI 48124-5029
+1.313.982.6008
vickiee@thehenryford.org
thehenryford.org

MISSOURI

Gateway Arch Riverfront

Amber Barbeau
211 North Broadway, Suite 700
St. Louis, MO 63102-2759
+1.314.982.1400 (1735)
anbarbeau@gatewayarch.com
gatewayarch.com

Missouri History Museum

Tami Goldman
5700 Lindell Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63112-0040
+1.314.454.3137
tgold@mohistory.org
mohistory.org

Saint Louis Science Center

Michael Wense
5050 Oakland Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63110
+1.314.289.1419
michael.wense@slsc.org
slsc.org

NEVADA

The Mob Museum

Sabine Von Henning
300 Stewart Ave.
Las Vegas, NV 89101
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svonhenning@themobmuseum.org
themobmuseum.org

Springs Preserve

Pietra Sardelli
P.O. Box 98947
Las Vegas, NV 89193-8947
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springspreserve.org

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

Melissa Rose
1 Museum Way
Corning, NY 14830-2253
+1.607.438.5400
rosemm@cmog.org
cmog.org/groups

National Baseball Hall of Fame & Museum

June Dolhun
25 Main St.
Cooperstown, NY 13326-1330
+1.607.547.0312
jdolhun@baseballhall.org
baseballhall.org

Ripley's Believe It or Not! Times Square

Tatiana Smith
234 W. 42nd St.
New York, NY 10036-7215
+1.212.398.3133
tsmith@ripleysny.com
ripleysnewyork.com

The Strong National Museum of Play

Karen Dodson
1 Manhattan Square
Rochester, NY 14607
+1.585.410.6359
kdodson@museumofplay.org
museumofplay.org

NORTH CAROLINA

Billy Graham Library

Melanie McIntyre
4330 Westmont Drive
Charlotte, NC 28217
+1.704.401.3251
mmcintyre@bgea.org
billygrahamlibrary.org

Biltmore Estate

Leslie Brewer
1 Approach Road
Asheville, NC 28803-8900
+1.828.225.1413
lbrewer@biltmore.com
biltmore.com

OHIO

American Sign Museum

Brad Huberman
1330 Monmouth Ave.
Cincinnati, OH 45225
+1.513.541.6366
info@americansignmuseum.org
americansignmuseum.org

Cincinnati Museum Center

Kathleen Bodenlos
1301 Western Ave., Suite 4270
Cincinnati, OH 45203-1138
+1.513.287.7099
kbodenlos@cincymuseum.org
cincymuseum.org

National Underground Railroad Freedom Center

Jessica Roncker
50 E. Freedom Way
Cincinnati, OH 45202
+1.513.333.7536
jroncker@nurfrc.org
freedomcenter.org

Rock and Roll Hall of Fame & Museum

Sharrona Burns
1100 Rock & Roll Blvd.
Cleveland, OH 44114
+1.216.515.1228
sburns@rockhall.org
rockhall.com

OKLAHOMA

Cherokee Nation Cultural Tourism

Cheryl Trask
777 W. Cherokee St.
Catoosa, OK 74015-3235
+1.918.384.6623
cheryl.trask@cnent.com
visitcherokeeneration.com



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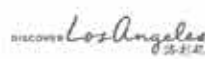
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OREGON

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

PENNSYLVANIA

The National Civil War Museum

Trini Nye
1 Lincoln Circle at Reservoir Park
Harrisburg, PA 17103
+1.717.260.1861
tnye@nationalcivilwarmuseum.org
nationalcivilwarmuseum.org

National Constitution Center

Gina Romanelli
525 Arch St.
Independence Mall
Philadelphia, PA 19106-1514
+1.215.409.6800
gromanelli@constitutioncenter.org
constitutioncenter.org

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Philadelphia Museum of Art

Shari Feldman
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+1.215.684.7863
shari.feldman@philamuseum.org
philamuseum.org

Visit the Philadelphia Museum of Art and discover the cultural heart of Philadelphia. The museum's landmark building houses one of the most comprehensive art collections in the country, featuring works from America, Asia and Europe. You'll also find van Gogh's "Sunflowers," the world's largest Marcel Duchamp collection and a Japanese teahouse all under one roof, as well as the only dedicated Rodin Museum outside France. The museum is a place that welcomes everyone and makes the experience surprising, lively and always memorable.

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Newport Mansions - The Preservation Society

Daniel Fryer
424 Bellevue Ave.
Newport, RI 02840-6924
+1.401.847.2251
groups@newportmansions.org
newportmansions.org

SOUTH CAROLINA

Magnolia Plantation

Christine Potter
3550 Ashley River Road
Charleston, SC 29414-7109
+1.843.571.1266
tours@magnoliaplantation.com
magnoliaplantation.com

Patriots Point "Home of the USS Yorktown"

Kayla Halchak
40 Patriots Point Road
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464-4377
+1.843.881.5924
khalchak@patriotspoint.org
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Dixie Thompson
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+1.605.234.3452
dthompson@stjo.org
aktalakota.org

Crazy Horse Memorial

Amanda Allcock
12151 Avenue of the Chiefs
Custer, SD 57730-8900
+1.605.673.4681
amanda.allcock@crazyhorse.org
crazyhorsememorial.org

TENNESSEE

Cheekwood Estate & Gardens

Amanda Bjorklund
1200 Forrest Park Drive
Nashville, TN 37205
+1.615.353.6971
grouptours@cheekwood.org
cheekwood.org

Country Music Hall of Fame & Museum

Dana Romanello
222 5th Ave. South
Nashville, TN 37203
+1.615.499.8264
dromanello@countrymusichalloffame.org
countrymusichalloffame.org

Fontanel Attractions

Carol Ziegler
4125 Whites Creek Pike
Nashville, TN 37189-9124
+1.615.876.4618
carol.ziegler@fontanel.com
fontanel.com

Graceland & Guest House at Graceland

Shirley Conner
P.O. Box 16508
3734 Elvis Presley Blvd.
Memphis, TN 38186-0508
+1.901.332.3322
sdconner@graceland.com
graceland.com

The Hermitage: Home of President Andrew Jackson

Ann Jones
4580 Rachels Lane
Hermitage, TN 37076-1331
+1.615.889.2941 (212)
ajones@thehermitage.com
thehermitage.com

TEXAS

Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum

Stephanie Price
2503 Fourth Ave.
Canyon, TX 79016-0001
+1.806.651.2244
sprice@pphm.wtamu.edu
panhandleplains.org

UTAH

Temple Square Hospitality

Neil Wilkinson
15 E. South Temple, 9th Floor
Salt Lake City, UT 84150-9002
+1.801.539.3103
nwilkinson@templesquarehospitality.com
visitemplesquare.com

VIRGINIA

The Army Historical Foundation, National Museum of the United States Army

Kerri Kline
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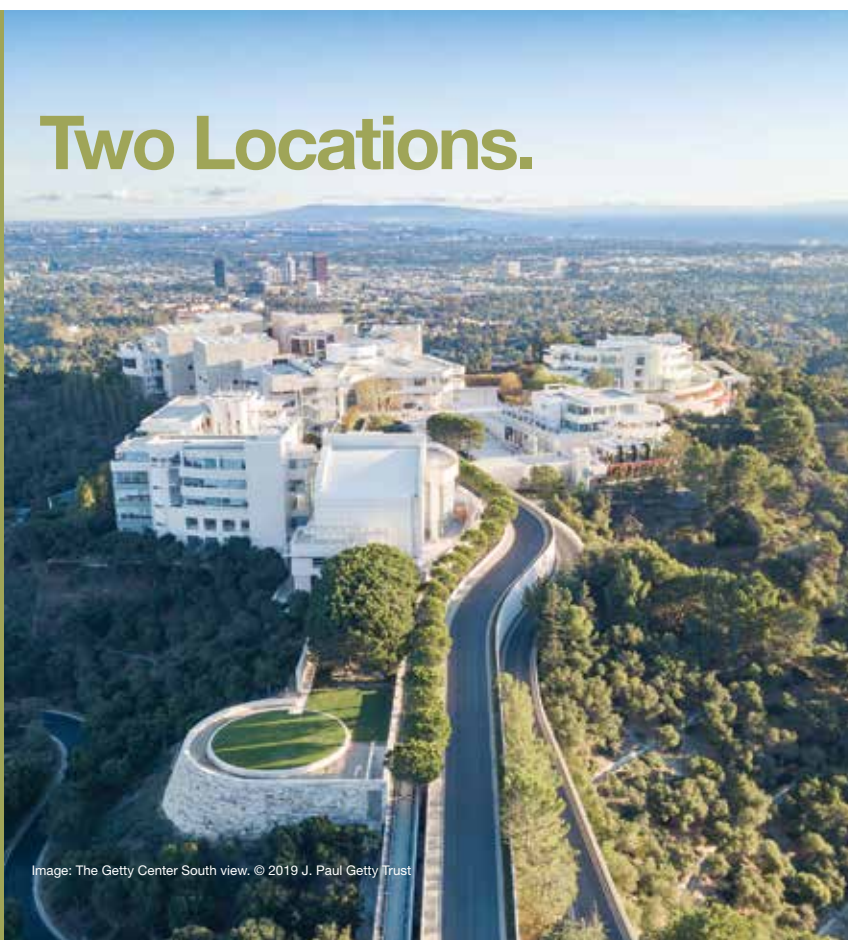


Image: The Getty Center South view. © 2019 J. Paul Getty Trust

George Washington's Mount Vernon

Rebecca Aloisi
3200 Mount Vernon Memorial Highway
Mount Vernon, VA 22121-0110
+1.703.799.8688
raloisi@mountvernon.org
mountvernon.org

Jamestown-Yorktown Foundation

Joan Heikens
Route 31 South
Williamsburg, VA 23185
+1.757.253.4838
joan.heikens@jyf.virginia.gov
historyisfun.org

National Museum of the Marine Corps

Pauline Bonilla
18900 Jefferson Davis Highway
Triangle, VA 22172
+1.703.649.2775
bonilla@marineheritage.org
usmcmuseum.com

Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum

Holly Williamson
14390 Air and Space Museum Parkway
Chantilly, VA 20151
+1.202.633.2373
hwilliamson@si.edu

Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

Kathy Parrish
200 North Blvd.
Richmond, VA 23220
+1.804.340.1575
kathy.parrish@vmfa.museum
vmfa.museum

WASHINGTON

Boeing Future of Flight

Jody Hawkins
8415 Paine Field Blvd.
Mukilteo, WA 98275-3239
+1.425.438.8100 (241)
jody.l.hawkins@boeing.com
futureofflight.org

The Museum of Flight

Bethany Carrillo
9404 E. Marginal Way S
Seattle, WA 98108-4046
+1.206.768.7104
bcarrillo@museumofflight.org
museumofflight.org

Pacific Science Center

Lindsae Long
200 2nd Ave. N
Seattle, WA 98109-4816
+1.206.443.3611
llong@pacsci.org
pacificsciencecenter.org

Seattle Art Museum

Lawrence Cenotto
1300 1st Ave.
Seattle, WA 98101
+1.206.654.3112
lawrencec@seattleartmuseum.org
seattleartmuseum.org

Space Needle and Chihuly Garden & Glass

Nicole Smoucha
400 Broad St.
Seattle, WA 98109-4607
+1.206.905.2186
nicoles@spaceneedle.com
spaceneedle.com

WISCONSIN

Harley-Davidson Museum

Barbara Smyrl
500 W. Canal St.
Milwaukee, WI 53203-3208
+1.414.287.2799
groups@h-dmuseum.com
h-dmuseum.com

House on the Rock

Susan Donaldson
5754 Highway 23
Spring Green, WI 53588
+1.608.935.3639
groupsales@thehouseontherock.com
thehouseontherock.com

Wisconsin Museum of Quilts & Fiber Arts

Melissa Wraalstad
N50 W5050 Portland Road
Cedarburg, WI 58012
+1.262.546.0300
director@wiqiltmuseum.com
wiqiltmuseum.com

WYOMING

Buffalo Bill Center of the West

Debra Elwood
720 Sheridan Ave.
Cody, WY 82414-3428
+1.307.578.4114
debrae@centerofthewest.org
centerofthewest.org

National Museum of Wildlife Art of the United States

Jennifer Tremblay
2820 Rungius Road
Jackson, WY 83001
+1.307.732.5426
jtremblay@wildlifeart.org
wildlifeart.org

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NTA staff and board members have been busy the past few months representing the association at various industry events (clockwise from top left):

IPW in Anaheim: NTA staffers were joined by a number of member companies' representatives, who took appointments in the association's booth.

Faith Travel Association Product Development Trip to Portugal: Michelle Wiegand (Ed-Ventures), Rebecca Stoker (Select International Tours), Kay Saffari (FTA), Jerry Varner (Making Memories Tours), Mete Gurel (TripOtour) and Jean Faust (Jean Faust Tours) pose with a figure of Pope Francis at the Wax Museum of Fátima during the FTA trip hosted by ACISO: Associação Empresarial Ourém Fátima.

Rendez-vous Canada: NTA's Gina Martin, Morgan Maravich, Kendall Fletcher and Pam Inman were in Toronto for the 2019 event.

Tourism Cares for Puerto Rico: Dan Flores (Maverick Aviation Group), Kami Risk (NTA), Chris Babb (The Group Tour Company), Pat Henderson (NTA), Chase Poffenberger (Academic Travel Abroad) and Catherine Prather (NTA) are shown at the final night event in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

Meet the Members

City Creek Center

SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH

NTA contact: Bianca Lyon, marketing and tourism specialist

Office phone: +1.801.212.6338

Website: shopcitycreekcenter.com

NTA member since: 2011

Tell us about your attraction.

City Creek Center is the dominant shopping destination in Salt Lake City. In addition to the center's more than 100 stores and restaurants, its architecture, retractable roof and fire fountain are pretty spectacular and create a special environment for customers all year round.

What's new at City Creek Center?

In our industry, we continue to see digitally native brands open brick and mortar stores. A great example of this is Bonobos, which recently opened with us. We also added popular jewelry designer, Kendra Scott. Any time we can support a local or regional business, it makes us feel great. Böhme, a brand founded

in Utah, just opened a beautiful new store in our center, which overlooks Main Street.

What's on your travel bucket list?

I want to do a whitewater rafting trip through the Grand Canyon and hike to Havasupai, as well as see Glacier National Park. Internationally, I want to visit Iceland and Machu Picchu. Also high on my list is introducing my children to their relatives in Spain!

What do you like to do on weekends?

Salt Lake City is truly the best place to live if you enjoy the outdoors. My family and I enjoy skiing in the winter and hiking in the summer. We also are huge fans of Real Salt Lake soccer and go to all home games.

Have you binged on any good TV shows lately?

I love a good comedy and right now "Brooklyn 99" and "The Good Place" are my favorite shows.



For more information, email Lyon at blyon@taubman.com.

International Tour Management Institute

SAUSALITO, CALIFORNIA

NTA contact: Ted Bravos, founder and CEO

Office phone: +1.415.957.9489

Website: itmitourtraining.com

NTA member since: 1977

Why should potential students seek out your institute?

Since 1976, ITMI has been training professional tour directors and guides to help them turn their travel dreams into a fulfilling career. Our two-week training course is held in locations across North America, led by a team of exceptional instructors. Students select ITMI because of our reputation and our commitment to their success; we give them lifetime career assistance and access to our 8,000 alumni worldwide. We are pleased to say that we have an average 92% placement rate.

What's new at the International Tour Management Institute?

The ITMI Signature Master Classes and the opening of ITMI Online. Master Classes are intensive destination and experiential

training in locations like the Southwest U.S. national parks, Cuba, Washington, D.C., and Italy. ITMI Online also offers both personal and professional eCourses, like "Human Trafficking—How to Spot & Stop," "Social Media & Marketing," "Destination Guides" and more.

What's your favorite vacation memory?

A float trip down the Snake River in Jackson Hole, Wyoming, late in the season. The leaves are beginning to turn, the tourists are few and the Grand Teton mountains pop up and disappear at every bend in the river.

You get to pick dinner tonight. Where are you going?

There is a local, off-the-beaten-path restaurant and bar in Sausalito with exceptional food and entertainment called the Seahorse. Try Sunday evenings, when they teach dancing lessons before the seven-piece salsa band arrives. You must order the garlic mussels, calamari, the creatively designed butter lettuce salad and their tender filet mignon with mushroom and red wine sauce.



For more information, email Bravos at travel@itmisf.com.

CTN Travels

MIDLAND, NORTH CAROLINA

NTA contact: Rick Pharr

Office phone: +1.704.888.0698

Website: ctntravels.com

NTA member since: 1998

Tell us a little about CTN Travels.

The company is celebrating its 30th anniversary this year. We specialize in custom-designed travel programs. Our main focus is on bank travel clubs and senior groups traveling both domestically and internationally.

What's one of your most popular packages for group travel?

Travel to the antebellum South has been a very good product for us. We also have a great Tanzania program that several of our bank client clients have done with great results.

I love my job because ...

Over more than 40 years in the business,

I still keep finding travelers that say, "I have waited all my life to experience this place." Always makes me smile.

What's your favorite destination?

Domestically I enjoy the American West and Louisiana. I love the stunning scenery in the Rockies and great food in Cajun country. Two international favorites are Newfoundland and Tanzania.

What do you like to do when you're not hard at work?

I enjoy a bit of yard work and some me time in the gym.

What are your favorite tunes at the moment?

Anything Jimmy Buffet.

For more information, email Pharr at rick@ctntravels.com. ☎



travel  exchange

FORT WORTH

— DECEMBER 8-12, 2019 —

Introducing ... NTA's newest members

Listen Technologies

BLUFFDALE, UTAH

Associate

Listen Technologies believes everyone deserves to hear the world around them. The company provides audio solutions for environments where it is difficult to hear, like within attractions and during group tours. It offers one-way and two-way portable tour equipment as well as Wi-Fi solutions that deliver audio directly to personal smartphones.



Mikey Shaffer

Account manager
888.296.1623
mikey.shaffer@
listentech.com
listentalk.com

"As an avid explorer with a curious nature, I believe travel to be the ultimate educator. Helping others create inclusive experiences through sound is my passion."

City of Henderson Texas

HENDERSON, TEXAS

DMO

Henderson, full of charm and Southern hospitality in the heart of East Texas, is a perfect hub-and-spoke destination. Its downtown National Register Historic District is one of the most picturesque areas in the region, and it features the Henderson Civic Theatre and the Depot Museum, and is home to the famous Heritage Syrup Festival.



Suzanne Cross

Tourism coordinator
866.650.5529
tourism@hendersontx.us
visithendersontx.com

"I've been the City of Henderson's tourism coordinator for the past 24 years. My motto is 'Choose a job you truly love and you will never have to work another day in your life.' I am a very happy person and love to be with people. Tourism is my life!"

ESA Baltic

RIESE VILLAGE, VILNIUS DISTRICT,
LITHUANIA

Tour operator

ESA Baltic is a family-owned DMC based in Lithuania that has operated tours in all three Baltic States (Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia) since 2009. Services include buses, guides, hotels, catering, meetings, incentive tours, tailor-made tours and special interest tours (commercial, culinary, agricultural, work and educational tours).



Agne Samkuviene

General manager
+370.670.09123
info@esabaltic.lt
esabaltic.lt

"Greetings from the Baltic States! I'm Agne from one of the Baltic countries—Lithuania. I have spent 10 years in the tourism business, so it's no surprise that I love to travel very much, as well as meeting people all over the world and sharing knowledge."

Palestine Visitor Center

PALESTINE, TEXAS

DMO

Palestine is a charming East Texas town that boasts more than 1,800 historical sites, including an award-winning Main Street District. Home to the Texas State Railroad and Dogwood Trails, Palestine is graced with stately homes and gorgeous scenic drives, and offers a Texas-friendly welcome for a true Southern experience.



Mary Raum

Tourism marketing manager
+1.903.723.3053
mraum@palestine-tx.org
visitpalestine.com

"I have been in tourism for a little over 3.5 years, but I have traveled all my life. One of my favorite sounds is the carabiner hitting against the flagpole with each gust of wind on Nantucket Island as a child. Making memories like that for my guests is what makes me love my job." ☺

PROFILES ENCOURAGED

Think of your member profile on NTA Online as a digital elevator pitch that other members rely on when making business appointments or conducting online searches. Is your profile up to date? To find out, log in and click the "welcome" words in the upper right corner.



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

City of Henderson Texas
Suzanne Cross
Henderson, TX 75652 USA
visithendersontx.com

Denton Convention & Visitors Bureau
Dana Lodge
Denton, TX 76201-9046 USA
discoverdenton.com

Discover Crystal River
Terry Natwick
Crystal River, FL 34429 USA
discovercrystalriverfl.com

Discover Dunwoody
Race Roberts
Dunwoody, GA 30346 USA
discoverdunwoody.com


Greater Ontario Convention & Visitors Bureau
Lorraine Chapman
Ontario, CA 91764 USA
gocvb.org

MetroWest Visitors Bureau
Katrina White
Framingham, MA 01702 USA
metrowestvisitors.org

Palestine Visitor Center
Mary Raum
Palestine, TX 75801 USA
visitpalestine.com

Peachtree City CVB
David Green
Peachtree City, GA 30269 USA
visitpeachtreecity.com

TOUR OPERATORS

ALLKNOWNTOURS 
Murphy Andoh
Rome, 00193 Italy
allknowntours.com

Charter Coach Inc./Gray Line Puerto Rico
Sasha Trilla
San Juan, Puerto Rico 00919-2312

Direct Travel
Tammy Rohde
Bismarck, ND 58504 USA
directtravelnd.com

Ghion Travel and Tours PLC
Yoseph Getnet Teshale
Addis Ababa, 1000 Ethiopia
toughion.com

Grand Arctic Travel Inc.
Sara Zhang
Ontario, CA 91761 USA

Greenlife Tours Ltd. (t/a Caminoways) 
Tony Flynn
Dublin, D08 P3K4 Ireland
greenlifetours.com

Pan American Int'l Travel Inc.
Zoe Zhou
Monterey Park, CA 91754-3227 USA

Quality Travel Solutions
Donald Capparella
Mesa, AZ 85205 USA
qualitytravelsolutions.com

Sens Asia Travel JSC 
Bui Ngoc Linh
Hanoi, 10000 Vietnam
sensasia.com

Travalco USA Inc.
Siggi Sperber
Hallandale Beach, FL 33009 USA
travalco.com

TOUR SUPPLIERS

Boone Hall Plantation
Adam Morrical
Mount Pleasant, SC 29464-9020 USA
boonehallplantation.com

Bus.com 
Francois Deslandres
Montréal, QC H2W 2R2 Canada
bus.com

Denihan Hospitality Group
Kerry Kelly
New York, NY 10176 USA
denihan.com

Domaine Château Bromont
Joel Caron
Bromont, QC J2L 1K6 Canada
chateaubromont.com

Gouverneur Hotels
Nathalie Revah
Montréal, QC H3A 3R3 Canada
gouverneur.com

Hampton Inn and Suites Dallas-Farmers Branch
Ruth Gallenberg
Farmers Branch, TX 75234 USA

Holiday Inn Express Deer Lake
Laura Barry-Walbourne
Deer Lake, NL A8A 1A9 Canada
hiedeerlakehotel.com

Hotel Roma (Lisboa) 
Sara Baptista
1749-074 Lisbon, Portugal
hotelroma.pt

Hotel Tucson City Center
Maria Chun
Tucson, AZ 85701 USA
hoteltucsoncitycenter.com

Miami Culinary Tours
Grace Della
Miami Beach, FL 33139 USA
miamiculinarytours.com

MSC Cruises
Wayne Peyreau
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309-2180 USA
msccruisesusa.com

Roadrunner Charters
Donna Maynes
Hurst, TX 76053 USA
roadrunnercharters.com

Shallow Bay Motel & Cabins Conference Centre
Steven House
Cow Head, NL A0K 2A0 Canada
shallowbaymotel.com

Turkey Hill Experience
Kim Mable-Dolly
Columbia, PA 17512 USA
turkeyhillexperience.com


TRAVEL AGENT

PG Consulting & Services LLC
Patty Gierau
Jackson, WY 83001 USA
instagram.com/jacksonholebypatty

ASSOCIATES

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Hunt Valley, MD 21031 USA
roamright.com

Gala Prompter
Yonat Burlin
New York, NY 10007 USA
galapro.com

HotelPlanner.com 
Scott Beane
West Palm Beach, FL 33401 USA
hotelplanner.com

NTA EVENTS

Save these dates in 2019 and beyond to connect with new partners and destinations. For more information on these events, click the EVENTS tab on NTAonline.com

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Fort Worth
Dec. 8-12, 2019

VISITRENO-TAHOE.COM



travel exchange '20
RENO-TAHOE
NOVEMBER 15-19
Reno Tahoe
Nov. 15-19, 2020

VISIT ANCHORAGE/ASHLEY HEIMBIGNER



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

MEMPHIS CIVIL ANDREA ZUCKER



CONTACT 
Memphis | March 17-20, 2021
Memphis, Tennessee
March 17-20, 2021

Tourism Cares: Now more than ever

BY GREG TAKEHARA



NO ONE WANTS to think about a time when travel and tourism as we know it does not exist. For me, they are what I do as a career and part of the fabric of my life.

Let's recall, however, the lessons of 9/11 and the recession of 2008, when our industry was in clear jeopardy. We demonstrated resilience in meeting those challenges, but now we find ourselves at a place where the specter of a reduced existence is being raised again.

Sustainability is a big word these days. It's defined as "the ability to be maintained at a certain rate or level" or "the avoidance of the depletion of natural resources in order to maintain an ecological balance."

So, can we maintain travel and tourism at the current level and not deplete our natural and cultural resources? If not, what happens to our product?

The proliferation of the term overtourism indicates that we are not maintaining an ecological balance. So how can we combat overtourism? Let's start with respect.

When you are invited to someone's home, you often bring a gift. Yet when we travel to destinations and they open their arms to us, how is it that we sometimes lose our consciousness? We must also make sure our actions and carbon footprint are positive. (See sidebar)

Until recently, travel and tourism relied on marketing. But with information and social media now at consumers' fingertips—and with issues like overtourism and environmental neglect at the forefront—travel companies are changing their words. Marketing companies are becoming management or stewardship companies, because it's not just about numbers; it's also about responsible planning to ensure sustainability.

Tourism Cares promotes these principles—and takes on that management role—by helping to educate and inform, as well as to connect the dots within the industry.

We, too, have changed with the times.

Tourism Cares embraces its 15-plus-year history as a networking and volunteer organization that brought friends and colleagues together to give back to our industry, but now, the *how* is supplanted by the *why*. We continue to unite the industry, but we now work to leverage the power of tourism to create positive change.

Tourism Cares strives to achieve the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. In 2018 we worked with local nonprofits and social enterprises in the Florida Keys to promote healthy oceans and restore the mangroves and coral reef, which are instrumental in protecting the Keys from hurricanes. We went to Jordan and put a spotlight on social enterprises that promote gender equality and foster entrepreneurial culture in an effort to expand tourism as part of the country's Meaningful Travel Map.

Tourism Cares embraces its 15-plus-year history as a networking and volunteer organization, but now, the how is supplanted by the why.

Earlier this year we went to Puerto Rico, where we highlighted the city of Ponce as an emerging destination, introduced our contingent to agritourism in nearby Yauco, and again connected social enterprises and local nonprofits to the wider tourism economy (see a full recap on page 14). Preceding the 2019 IPW conference in Anaheim, we organized a volunteer event that brought together local and national nonprofits focused on urban agriculture and the homeless—issues affecting tourism nationwide—and raised awareness of tourism's role in advancing the U.N.'s goals.

Seeing all of these efforts—and having NTA and its members with us every step of the way—you understand the

developing body of Tourism Cares' work. I am excited to have joined the Tourism Cares staff to help the industry become knowledgeable about the evolving language of sustainability, overtourism, social enterprises, community engagement, and social and environmental impact.

Tourism and travel will continue to exist, but don't consider it a given. We must be conscious of the fragility that exists. As an industry community, Tourism Cares matters—now more than ever. ☘

Greg Takehara became CEO of Tourism Cares on May 1 after serving as the organization's chairman since December 2018. Reach him at greg.takehara@tourismcares.org.

Be the best guest

We may think it's enough that we are leaving our dollars in a destination, but we can do more:

- When visiting areas associated with overtourism, spend a few days there, but also explore outlying communities, where similar gems await.
- Be mindful of the locals' voice, adopt local customs and choose to explore as they do.
- Engage with social enterprises and hometown businesses to ensure your dollars stay in the community.
- Pledge to engage in positive behavior, as if it were your own hometown.
- Be mindful of your trash by packing a reusable water bottle, a shopping bag, a straw and a pair of utensils.
- Consider traveling in shoulder- or off-season, when your economic impact is most needed.



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