

## **Travel South USA Global Ambassador Awards**

*Travel industry awards presented to nearly 40 organizations worldwide for their impressive contributions in "Selling the South"*

**ATLANTA, GA – Dec. 3, 2019** / Shining a spotlight on several organizations and individuals for their efforts to stimulate travel to the Southern United States, Travel South USA (TSUSA) announced the 2019 Ambassador Awards recipients.

Nine international operators from key markets in Australia, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom, along with 25 U.S.-based receptive operators and five special individuals and organizations were honored with an Ambassador Award at TSUSA's 2019 International Showcase, Dec. 2 – 4 in St. Louis, Missouri. These awards are given annually to organizations and select individuals that make prominent contributions to the tourism economy of the South. In addition, these recipients exemplify the Travel South USA brand by influencing and promoting the region, supporting state tourism organizations and engaging with the Southern travel industry.

"Travel South USA is excited to honor tour operators, airlines and partners around the globe that love the Southern United States. We are grateful for the time and effort these Travel South USA Ambassadors put into developing new tours, promotional campaigns and training seminars year-round," said Duane Parrish, director of South Carolina Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Tourism and Chair of the TSUSA Board of Directors. "We depend on this volunteer group of tourism professionals to share our destinations globally. To the 2019 Travel South USA Ambassadors, we say 'thank you!'"

Criteria for selection for the Ambassador Awards included overall production and promotional efforts for the Travel South USA region; an array of leisure holiday offerings (such as group tours, city stays, road trips and foreign independent travel); beyond the airport gateway promotions and efforts; annual attendance at International Showcase; and enthusiasm and partnership in promoting the South.

"The Ambassador Awards provides a unique opportunity to recognize the national and international organizations that assist in driving visitation to the South. International Showcase, the event during where so much international travel business is conducted, is the ideal setting to thank and pay tribute to them," continued Parrish.

In 2018, the Travel South USA region received approximately 7.2 million international visitors who spent \$9.8 billion in hotels, restaurants, attractions, tours and other travel related businesses in the southern U.S., according to Tourism Economics.

This year over 400 tourism professionals gathered for three-days of intensive meetings with the aim of delivering more international visitors, spending more time and more money in the Southern U.S.

2019 Travel South USA Ambassador Award recipients include:

International Operator Recipients:

- Intrepid Travel – Australia
- Flytour Viagens – Brazil
- Zhejiang CTS – China
- FDM Travel – Denmark
- Visiteurs – France
- America Unlimited – Germany
- NAAR World Wide Tours – Italy
- Tenzing Travel – The Netherlands
- America As You Like It – United Kingdom

North American Operator Recipients:

- ATP – AlliedTPro
- America & Beyond
- America 4 You
- American Tour Guide Association
- American Tours International LLC. South
- Apple Leisure Group
- Bonotel Exclusive Travel
- Destination America
- FM Tours
- G2 Travel
- Gastaldi USA, Inc
- Getaroom.com
- HOG, LLC
- Hotelbeds USA INC
- Meeting Point North America
- I Tour Service of America
- Miki Travel Ltd.
- Teamamerica
- TourMappers North America LLC
- Trans Orbit USA / Trans M.A.P.P.
- Travalco USA
- TripAdvisor Experiences
- Universal Vision
- U.S. China Connection Inc.
- World 2 Meet

#### Special Individuals & Organization Recipients:

- Mary Moore Mason – Essentially America United Kingdom
- Jaap van Splunter – America Magazine, The Netherlands
- Global Partner of the Year – East West Marketing – China
- Airline Ambassador of the Year – Delta Air Lines
- Tourism Ambassador of the Year – Grey Brennan, Alabama Tourism

#### **About Travel South USA**

Travel South USA is America's oldest and largest regional travel promotion organization, formed in 1965. The long-standing regional collaboration of the state tourism offices of [Alabama](#), [Arkansas](#), [Georgia](#), [Kentucky](#), [Louisiana](#), [Mississippi](#), [Missouri](#), [North Carolina](#), [South Carolina](#), [Tennessee](#), [Virginia](#) and [West Virginia](#) provides a foundation to positively position tourism as a vital and dynamic element in the region's economic development. Tourism ranks throughout the region as one of the top three industries, behind manufacturing and agriculture, and is responsible for \$133 billion in spending by visitors, generating 1.4 million direct jobs, \$30 billion in worker paychecks, and almost \$16 billion in state and local taxes. Visit [TravelSouthUSA.com](http://TravelSouthUSA.com) for consumer information and travel industry information, [TravelSouthUSA.org](http://TravelSouthUSA.org).

#### Contact:

Angelica De Stefano

Program Manager, Marketing Communication & Events

[Angelica@TravelSouthUSA.com](mailto:Angelica@TravelSouthUSA.com)

404-231-1790