

AUNZ REPORT

DECEMBER 2024



Prepared By:

GATE 7

Suite 102, 13-15 Wentworth Ave Sydney 2000

P +61 2 9356 2945

W GATE7.COM.AU

Jo Palmer, *Managing Director*

Jo@gate7.com.au

Jacob Annesley, *Head of PR & Content*

Jacob@gate7.com.au

Penny Brand, *Head of Tourism Development*

Penny@gate7.com.au

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ABOUT TSUSA

Global Partner Programming

The latest arrival figures released report 65,866 Australian visitors to the USA in November, up 2% on 2023, and reaching 78% of 2019 levels. YTD visitation is up 7.4% YOY. Australia was the 12th largest long-haul market into the USA for the month of November and YTD is sitting at number 9th (Source i94 arrivals).

In terms of visitation from New Zealand to the USA, in November there were 15,331 visitors, up 2% on last year.

3,001 Australians listed a Travel South state as their first intended address in November, equaling 5% of total USA visitation, and up 15% on last year. (Source i94 arrivals – first intended address).

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- ThinkNewsBrands' 2024 Readership Report, based on Roy Morgan data, highlights the continued dominance of news publishing in Australia's media landscape.
 - Reaching 21.8 million Australians monthly and 18.4 million weekly, the report underscores how deeply embedded news consumption is in daily life. The findings reveal that 93% of Australians engage with up to five news brands each month, with over half exploring four or more content categories. General news leads readership at 21.1 million, followed by property (14.8 million), sport (12.2 million), and lifestyle & health (11.6 million).
 - Notably, travel content reaches 6.7 million Australians monthly, reinforcing news media as a key touchpoint for tourism marketers. News readers are 1.4 times more likely to be early adopters in sectors like travel and accommodation, positioning news platforms as essential for targeting high-value, purchase-ready consumers. [Read it here](#)
- Digital News Media Australia has released its predictions for 2025, highlighting key trends that will shape the future of the industry. Their report points to AI-driven personalization and automated reporting as major drivers of audience engagement and newsroom efficiency. The rise of short-form video and interactive content is expected to dominate, with platforms like YouTube and TikTok continuing to influence news consumption. In response to growing concerns about misinformation, the report emphasizes a shift towards greater transparency and ethical journalism to build and maintain public trust. [Read it here](#)
- A social media ban for under-16s was approved before Senate closed for the year, with trials starting in January 2025 and full implementation planned within a year. This increased scrutiny could prompt marketers to shift budgets toward alternative platforms.
- Nine Entertainment faces potential restructuring following a damning internal review of its TV operations. The report flagged declining profitability and the growing influence of streaming platforms as major challenges. Discussions around splitting the business to enhance shareholder value are ongoing.

- News Corp will sell its Australian cable TV provider, Foxtel, to British-based sports network DAZN for A\$3.4 billion. This deal signals News Corp's pivot towards digital platforms as sports streaming demand grows in Australia. DAZN plans to expand its reach in the region following the acquisition.
- Seven Network led free-to-air ratings in 2024, with 42% market share driven by AFL broadcasts, despite Nine dominating key metropolitan demographics crucial for advertising. The AFL Grand Final was the most-watched program, drawing 4.06 million viewers.
- Media and Entertainment Market Growth: The Australian media and entertainment market size reached USD 37.9 billion in 2024 and is expected to grow at a CAGR of 4.6% between 2025 and 2034, reaching USD 56.8 billion by 2034. [Read it here](#)

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Travel South International Showcase
- North Carolina – Post Showcase Fam
- Pitching media attendance Global Week 2025.
- Where Music Was Born campaign next steps.
- Concrete Playground ‘See the South’ Campaign
- Held a Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer.

Australia		Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec		FY 25 Total
10 Partners AL KY LA NC SC TN WV MO MS ROTS	Travel Trade								
	Trade Meetings	30	21	9	66	19	27		172
	Number of Agents Trained	133	87	4	202	6	0		432
	Media Meetings	12	5	14	10	10	21		72
	Total number of articles published	12	26	14	2	22	3		79
	Impressions	14,804,911	5,535,000	3,923,219	4,730,000	6,199,607	4,924,199		40,116,936

II. COMMUNICATIONS & PR

- Pitching media attendance Global Week 2025.
- Where Music Was Born campaign next steps.
- Concrete Playground 'See the South' Campaign
- Held a Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer as a way to lightly engage with media on 2025 plans and thank them for supporting us in 2024.
- Earned media Coverage Book
- GMM24 media Coverage Book

COVERAGE:



MEMPHIS 2025: NEW HOTELS, RESTAURANTS & MUST-SEE EVENTS

Hotel updates

- Aloft Downtown Memphis opened its doors in October and is the ultimate new spot for those wanting direct access to all that Downtown has to offer. This ultra-modern property uses tech-savvy amenities, including robotic bellhops and mobile room keys, to provide guests with a seamless stay. The hotel also features an on-site golf course and a rooftop bar.
- Memphis is ready to welcome the chic Dream Hotels brand to Main St., with plans to open in 2025. The hotel property will include a swimming pool, apartments and a restaurant, all located a stone's throw from Beale Street, Orpheum Theatre, and the Memphis Music Hall of Fame.
- Steeped in history and rumoured to be haunted, the iconic Hotel Pontotoc, a downtown Memphis landmark built in 1906, is set to undergo a transformative revival and reopen in spring 2025. The hotel will be redesigned to feature a ground-floor restaurant, 10 boutique hotel rooms, and 3 cosy Airbnb rooms.
- Arrive Memphis, located in the trendy South Main neighbourhood, has been awarded a Michelin Key (similar to Michelin Stars for restaurants). A former warehouse and art school, Arrive was designed with the artsy vibe that South Main is so well-known for. Travellers will have close access to a range of hot restaurants such as Central BBQ, the haunted Earnestine & Hazel's and Elvis' favourite, The Arcade Restaurant.
- Central Station Memphis, named one of the top two hotels in the South by Condé Nast Traveler's Readers' Choice Awards, is due to welcome a new restaurant on the ground floor later this year.

New Restaurants and Bars

As the BBQ capital of the world, Memphis knows how to do food – but beyond finger-licking BBQ, Memphis dining is also becoming known for fine dining, street food, and a growing vegan scene. Travellers are spoilt for choice, and there are new restaurants and bars popping up every month. Some of the latest openings include:

- Mary's Bar of Tropical Escapism, or Mary's B.O.T.E. for short, is a tiki-inspired cocktail bar in Midtown, decked out in tropical vibes, festive glassware, cocktails and small bites.
- Located in the Edge District, JEM Dining aims to take elevated fine dining and make it approachable with a menu of comfort food made with local and seasonal ingredients.
- The local favourite establishment Mahogany Memphis has opened a second venue on Mud Island, with an elegant upstairs bar and patio dining facing the river serving up its upscale Southern Cuisine with a dash of Creole.

Events in 2025

- **Elvis Presley's 90th Birthday (January):** The former home turned museum, Graceland puts on a series of events to celebrate the late King's birthday, including a Candlelit Concert, live music in the Jungle Room Bar, plus a new exhibit with 90 curated artifacts launches and will be available for the duration of 2025.
- **Memphis in May:** Returning for another year, the 2025 lineup boasts the World Championship Barbecue Cooking Contest, River Beat Music Festival, and the Great American River Run.
- **Summer Festivals and Events:** With its long musical history, it's no surprise that Memphis comes alive in summer with a long list of vibrant city festivals, concerts and other events to keep both locals and visitors entertained. From rooftop parties on top of the historic Peabody Hotel, to the packed schedule of free concerts in the Overton Park Shell or the Live at the Garden in the Radians Amphitheater, there's something for everyone to enjoy.
- **Elvis Week (August):** It's one of the biggest events in Memphis and results in tens of thousands of Elvis fans converging in the city to commemorate the late King of Rock'n'Roll. Details TBC.
- **B. King's 100th Birthday (September):** Nicknamed the King of the Blues, B.B. King was one of the most important names in R&B music in the 1950s. BB King's Blues Club on Beale Street will celebrate BB King's 100th birthday with live music and family-friendly activities on Sept. 14, then a hologram concert on Sept. 18. To commemorate the singer, there will be a range of events happening in Memphis (more details TBC), and The B.B. King Blues Band has announced a tour around the country to share his music.
- **Food festivals:** With its diverse culinary scene, it's no surprise that a wide range of food festivals and events take place across the year. Memphis Chicken and Beer Festival, World Barbecue Championship, Summer Cocktail Festival, Craft Food & Wine Festival, and the Memphis Vegan Festival are just a few of the events taking place in Memphis, giving visitors the opportunity to discover why Memphis is so well-known for its food.

Explore more of Memphis here: <https://www.memphistravel.com/>



The 25 trending locations on Airbnb in 2025



1 of 26 Attribution: Nine



By 9News Staff

December 16, 2024 - 3:44PM

Ever heard of Florianópolis?

How about Combloux?

These must-visit destinations are on the up, according to Airbnb's data on the trending locations for 2025. Read on to see the 25 trending travel destinations for next year.

The 25 trending locations on Airbnb in 2025



10 of 26 Attribution: Getty

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Down on the banks of the Mississippi lies Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

The town has a rich example of pre-Civil War history.

The 25 trending locations on Airbnb in 2025



20 of 26 Attribution: Getty Images/iStockphoto

Charleston, USA

South Carolina's Charleston made the list, partly for its superb French Quarter.

NOMADE

LUX

MAGAZINE

[HOTELS](#) [NORTH AMERICA](#) [TRAVEL](#)

HOTEL OPENING: NOBU HOTEL NEW ORLEANS

LUX NOMADE. — DECEMBER 30, 2024 • 2 MINS READ



DISCOVER THE NEW NOBU HOTEL IN THE HEART OF NEW ORLEANS

The wait is over: the legendary Nobu brand has officially arrived in the vibrant city of New Orleans with the grand opening of Nobu Hotel Caesars New Orleans. Situated in the newly reimagined Caesars Tower on Canal Street, this chic urban retreat marks the brand's first foray into Louisiana, and it promises to deliver a luxurious blend of contemporary design, Japanese elegance, and Crescent City charm.

A Perfect Fusion of Cultures

Nobu Hotel Caesars New Orleans is more than just a place to stay; it's an experience that perfectly mirrors the city itself—energetic, eclectic, and endlessly inviting. With 54 beautifully appointed guest rooms and suites spread across two floors, the hotel offers a peaceful haven amidst the buzz of the Big Easy. Designed by the renowned Rockwell Group, the interiors combine sleek, modern luxury with subtle nods to Japanese minimalism, creating an atmosphere of serene sophistication that offers an oasis right in the heart of the city.

A Prime Location for the Ultimate New Orleans Experience

Location, as they say, is everything—and Nobu has certainly chosen wisely. The hotel is ideally positioned to immerse guests in the rich culture and iconic landmarks of New Orleans. Just steps away from the lively French Quarter and offering sweeping views of the Mississippi River, the hotel places you in the center of it all. Whether you're in town to explore the history of Bourbon Street, indulge in the city's renowned music scene, or simply enjoy the unique energy that New Orleans is famous for, you'll find yourself right at the heart of the action.



Savor the Flavors of Nobu New Orleans

As if staying in one of the city's most stylish hotels wasn't enough, guests can also indulge in the culinary delights of Nobu New Orleans, the restaurant that opened earlier this year. Known worldwide for its fusion of Japanese techniques with local ingredients, Nobu's New Orleans outpost brings a tantalizing twist to the city's rich food culture. Expect fresh sushi, inventive cocktails, and dishes that marry traditional Japanese flavors with the bold spices and soulful influence of the South.

A Prime Destination for Celebrations

Timing couldn't be more perfect for the debut of Nobu Hotel Caesars New Orleans, just in time for the city's legendary New Year's Eve festivities and the Allstate Sugar Bowl. Whether you're here for the grand celebrations or looking for a luxurious base to explore the city's music, food, and culture, this new addition to the Nobu portfolio offers the ultimate place to stay.

Whether you're a first-time visitor or a frequent traveler to New Orleans, Nobu Hotel Caesars New Orleans is set to become a new benchmark for luxury, blending the charm of the Crescent City with the world-class standards of the Nobu brand. So, pack your bags (and your appetite) and get ready for an unforgettable experience in one of the world's most unique cities.

For more details, check out [Nobu Hotels New Orleans](#).

Communications & PR

Media Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings)

Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up/Next step
Julia Aebi, We Are Explorers	Met to discuss offering and opportunity.	Will reconnect if there is opportunity.
Wendy Rend, Australian Geographic	Met to discuss offering and opportunity.	Will reconnect if there is opportunity
Alison Izzo Head of Digital, Fashion / Beauty at ELLE Australia	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Penny Hunter, The Australian	Pitched Global Week 2025.	Approved and confirmed attendance.
Amy Cooper Freelance Writer and Editor Frequently contributes to Good Food (The Age)	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	N/A
Carla Grossetti Freelance Food and Travel Writer Writer for delicious, Australian Traveller and International Traveller	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Chantelle Schmidt Freelance Writer for Pedestrian.TV	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Christopher Singh (Chris) Deputy Editor for the AU Review Freelance Journalist (mainly travel) Editor of Sydney Travel Guide	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Claire Isaac Freelance Writer (lifestyle, celebrities)	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Demeter Stamell Lifestyle Editor across the weekly magazine titles (New Idea, Take 5, that's life!, TV WEEK, Woman's Day (Australia), Who (Australia)) for Are Media (Australia)	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.

Edwina Hart Freelance Travel Writer	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Julie Miller Travel Writer at Traveller Sub-Editor for Signature Luxury Travel & Style / Vacations & Travel at Signature Media Contributor to The Concierge	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Kate Allman Kate is a Freelance Journalist / Editor / Presenter. She is a Travel Writer for both ESCAPE (Australia) and Chillfactor.	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Kartya Vucetic Editor at So Sydney!	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Katrina Holden Editorial Director at KarryOn (Luxury)	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Maddison Hockey Digital Editor at Marie Claire Australia	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Natasha Dragan Freelance Writer / Editor / Sub- Editor (Australia) who contributes to Vacations & Travel. She is also a Travel Writer for both ESCAPE (Australia) and The Australian	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Rob McFarland Freelance Travel Writer Writes for The Sydney Morning Herald	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Rowena Ryan Digital Editor of ESCAPE	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.
Simone Mitchell Associate Digital Editor of ESCAPE	Connected with at Gate 7 EOY Media Mixer	Briefed on TSUA 2025.

III. TRAVEL TRADE

Trade Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings).

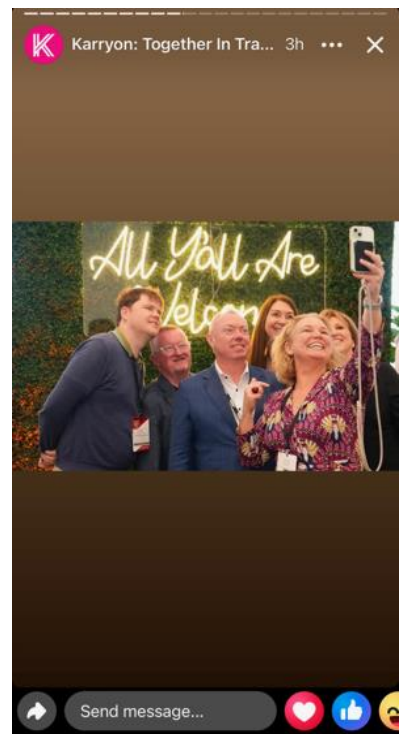
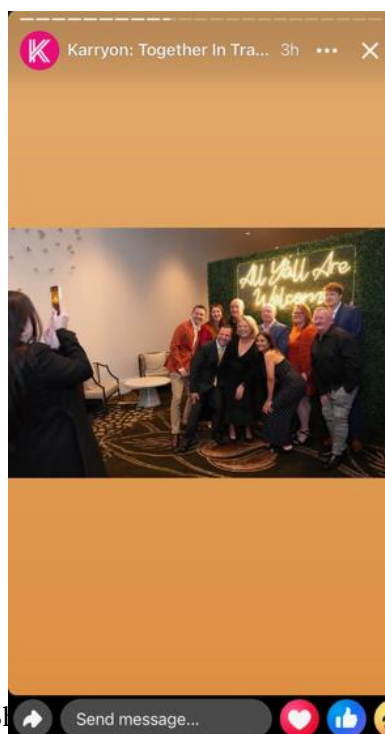
Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up /Next step
Jeffrey Harlan Explore Louisiana	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing
Dalaney Thomas Leah Dipietro Arkansas, The Natural State	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market.	Ongoing
Mark Jaronski Explore Georgia	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market.	Ongoing
Mike Mangeot Kentucky Department of Tourism	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing
Rochelle Hicks Visit Mississippi	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing
Stephen Foutes Missouri Division of Tourism	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing
Wit Tuttell Visit North Carolina	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing
Duane Parrish Visit South Carolina	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing
Debra Smith Tennessee Tourism	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing
Lauren Bodnar West Virginia	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing

Grey Brennan Sweet Home Alabama	Update on Travel South activity in AU/NZ market plus product audit of state distribution.	Ongoing
Isabelle Caffery Director of International Sales Hotel Monteleone	Product/Destination update	N/A
Dana Maugans Director of Dale Visit Springfield	Product/Destination update	N/A
Dustin Holcumbrink Hotel Manager Kansas City Marriott Downtown	Product/Destination update	N/A
Jenny Wilson VP of Tourism Development Visit KC	Product/Destination update	N/A
Jennie Bradford Curlee Deputy Director Topelo	Product/Destination update	N/A
Abria Butler Earned Income Manager BB King Museum	Product/Destination update	N/A
Ashley Farmer Executive Director Experience Greenwood	Product/Destination update	N/A
Lorrie Love Manager Tourism Sales & Events The Outer Banks North Carolina	Product/Destination update	N/A
Hannah Curtis Hermitage Farm -Kentucky	Product/Destination update	N/A
Julie Cavignac Destinations Kitchen	Product/Destination update	N/A
Devan Corbello Executive Director St Francisville	Product/Destination update	N/A

Chasta Feller Fun Enthusiast Mint Julep	Product/Destination update	N/A
Ariana Pernice Vice President Hilton Head Island	Product/Destination update	N/A
Lisa Simon CEO Executive Director International Inbound Travel Association	Product/Destination update	N/A
Jay Markwalter TMP Statewide Tourism Director Explore Georgia	Product/Destination update	N/A
Lori Huffstutler Director of Sales The Guesthouse - Graceland	Product/Destination update	N/A

CAMPAIGNS & ACTIVITY

■ Atlanta International Showcase 2024





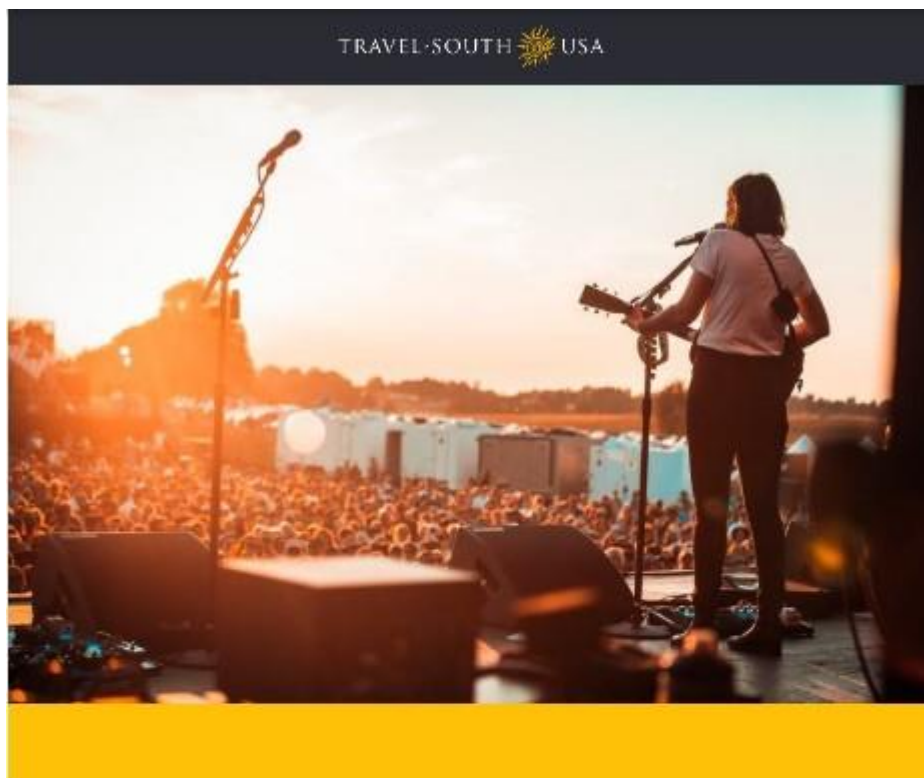
Newsletters

TRADE Newsletter –

Recipients: **3995** Open Rate: **933 (23.35%)**

PR Newsletter –

Recipients: **379** Open Rate: **188 (49.60%)**



The Southern USA offers a diverse mix of music festivals, concerts and cultural experiences. From blues and bluegrass to soulful jazz and country, the region showcases a variety of genres and local traditions. Whether you're a fan of live performances, food, or art, the South promises unforgettable experiences for every music enthusiast.

Discover the birthplaces of iconic music genres where legendary artists and unforgettable sounds first came to life!

Music Concerts & Festivals



KENTUCKY

Bluegrass & Barbecue Bliss

Kentucky comes alive in the summer with a vibrant festival scene! Immerse yourself in the lively sounds of bluegrass at the Poppy Mountain Bluegrass Festival in Morehead or ROMP Music Festival. Blues lovers and foodies alike will find their bliss at the WC Handy Blues & Barbecue Festival, Bourbon & Beyond and the Great American Brass Band Festivals that each pair delicious eats with entertainment.

Foodie Bluegrass



LOUISIANA

The Birthplace of Jazz

Music is engrained into the soul of Louisiana. Not only is Louisiana the birthplace of jazz, zydeco, Cajun and swam pop, but the state also has inspired genres ranging from blues and country to hip-hop, gospel, rap and rock 'n' roll. The Baton Rouge Blues Festival is one of the oldest festivals in the nation, honouring Louisiana's own blues artists, particularly the sound of swamp blues.

Swamp Blues



SOUTH CAROLINA

Holiday Festival of Lights

Charleston's Holiday Festival of Lights is one of South Carolina's oldest and most cherished holiday festivals. First held in 1990 at James Island County Park, this festival has grown into a beloved annual tradition, featuring a stunning display of over 2 million lights, themed light displays and various holiday activities. Its longstanding presence and popularity make it a significant part of South Carolina's holiday celebrations.

Holiday Harmonies



RHYTHMS OF THE SOUTH

Atlanta, Nashville, New Orleans

A road trip through Atlanta, Nashville and New Orleans is sure to satisfy your soul with a sweet array of music. For those seeking a blend of hip-hop, R&B and soul, Atlanta's ONE Musicfest stands out as a diverse celebration of Black music and culture. Nashville's CMA Music Festival draws country music fans from all over the world each June. The Jazz & Heritage Festival in New Orleans brings together the finest in jazz, blues, gospel and local cuisine.

Rhythms and Grooves



WEST VIRGINIA

FestivALL

FestivALL is a city-wide, multi-arts celebration in Charleston, West Virginia. Each year, FestivALL includes over 100 events, featuring 300 performances and exhibitions across music, theatre, dance, visual art and humanities. These events showcase local talent alongside national artists. With many events being free or low-cost, the festival creates an atmosphere that celebrates the inclusivity of art and music.

Artistic Festivities



NORTH CAROLINA

MerleFest

From mountains to coast, celebrate North Carolina's music and culinary scenes with the iconic MerleFest. The four-day annual festival that attracts fans from around the globe to pay tribute to traditional Appalachian music, featuring bluegrass, folk, and Americana. With 75,000+ attendees annually, it's one of the country's largest music festivals. Next year's event is April 24-27.

Appalachian Music



ALABAMA

Electrifying Atmosphere

Alabama's many music festivals each offer a unique glimpse into the heart of southern culture and hospitality. From the electrifying atmosphere of Rock the South Music Festival in Cullman, where all proceeds go to local charities, to the iconic Alabama Shakes' hometown performances in Muscle Shoals, the state pulses with the energy of world-class talent and vibrant local scenes.

Rock the South



MISSISSIPPI

Art, Music & Cuisine

Mississippi's impressive festival repertoire includes the Double Decker Arts Festival in Oxford that combines art, music, and cuisine in a celebration connecting the charming town to its British roots. The streets of Oxford fill with art booths showcasing paintings, sculptures, and crafts by local and national artists. The festival features live music performances and a range of food vendors serving up Southern delicacies.

Oxford Vibes

FIND OUT MORE



CONTACT INFO

Phone: 02 9158 9314 | Email: jacob@gate7.com.au

Market Update

Economic & Market Update

The following Economic announcements were made in December

- Australia's unemployment rate fell by 0.2 to 3.9% in November, which is the lowest level since March, according to the latest figures from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). [Source.](#)
- The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) has announced that the cash rate will remain unchanged at 4.35%. It's the ninth decision in a row where the RBA has maintained the same rate. In a statement, the RBA Board said that while "inflationary pressures are declining," it still believes that "risks remain". The RBA partly bases its decisions on underlying inflation, which measures the rate of price growth once you remove extremes on either side (such as a sudden fall in energy prices). The latest data showed underlying inflation, also known as the 'trimmed mean', was at 3.5%. The RBA said this "remains too high". The RBA's target range for underlying inflation is 2-3%. [Source.](#)
- \$1,396 (\$886 USD) is the median weekly salary in Australia in August 2024, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics. That's about \$72,500 a year (\$46k USD). [Source.](#)
- The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) estimates that 4.5% of Australia's population over the age of 16 are LGBTQIA+. This estimate is based on data from around 45,000 responses to a series of health surveys. [Source.](#)
- The latest arrival figures released report 65,866 Australian visitors to the USA in November, up 2% on 2023, and reaching 78% of 2019 levels. YTD visitation is up 7.4% YOY. Australia was the 12th largest long-haul market into the USA for the month of November and YTD is sitting at number 9th (Source i94 arrivals).
- In terms of visitation from New Zealand to the USA, in November there were 15,331 visitors, up 2% on last year.
- 3,001 Australians listed a Travel South state as their first intended address in November, equaling 5% of total USA visitation, and up 15% on last year. (Source i94 arrivals – first intended address).
- The exchange fell below 63c this month hitting a low of 62.51 US cents.

Tour Operators & Travel Agencies

- Rod Carrington has been promoted to Chief Commercial Officer at Ignite Travel Group after 11 years of impactful leadership. Known for driving the success of Ignite's My Holiday brand and partnerships like ALDI Holidays, Carrington aims to lead the company into a dynamic growth phase, focusing on innovation and delivering exceptional travel experiences. [Source](#)
- Helloworld Travel's 2024 Frontliners Forum in Singapore revealed exciting updates, including new destinations for Viva Holidays as well as introducing the luxury brand VIVA Gold, new cruise partnerships, and tech advancements in ReadyRooms. [Source](#)
- Envoyage, part of Flight Centre Travel Group, has launched its first branded shopfronts in Rockingham and Mandurah, Western Australia. The independently owned stores offer travel entrepreneurs flexibility, supported by Envoyage's resources, training, and supplier connections. Owners Clive and Sam Fillingham praised the model's balance of independence and brand support. [Source](#)
- eRoam's travel tech platform revolutionizes booking with time-saving features like quick cost checks, instant

itineraries, and efficient booking completion. Designed for travel agents, it streamlines processes, boosts efficiency, and offers 24/7 sales through an e-commerce plug-in. [Source](#)

- Flight Centre's Travel Academy had a record year in 2024, helping over 800 students secure tourism jobs. The academy connected students with opportunities in aviation, hospitality, and tourism, including placements with partners like Hamilton Island and Cruise Whitsundays. With new programs in sustainability and school partnerships, the academy expects even greater success in 2025. [Source](#)
- Registration is now open for the Visit USA Expo 2025, taking place from February 17–20 in Sydney, Brisbane, and Melbourne. With over 60 exhibitors, exciting activations, and fantastic prizes, the event offers travel agents the latest tools and insights to boost USA bookings. [Source](#)

Traveler Insights

- In 2025, relaxation is top of mind for Aussie travellers, with 1 in 3 prioritizing beach holidays. A survey reveals that 46% of Australians plan to unwind on "do-nothing" getaways, making beach and resort vacations the dominant choice. Cultural trips are also in demand, offering agents opportunities for curated sightseeing itineraries. Additionally, younger travellers are extending event-based trips, presenting a chance to upsell add-ons like local tours or beach escapes. [Source](#)
- Australian travellers are heading overseas in record numbers, with 1.66 million travelling abroad in October 2024, a 12.1% increase from last year. Japan saw the biggest surge, with a 73.8% year-on-year rise, followed by Vietnam (up 35.4%) and Indonesia (up 26%). New Zealand and the USA also experienced growth. Holidays remain the primary reason for travel, with leisure travel driving much of the increase. Inbound travel to Australia is also booming, particularly from China, South Korea, and Japan. [Source](#)

Air Lift

- The ACCC has approved an interim five-year alliance between Virgin Australia and Qatar Airways, enabling Virgin to launch flights to Doha from Sydney, Melbourne, and Brisbane in June 2025, and Perth in November. Operated via wet-lease, the partnership aims to boost capacity, reduce airfares, and enhance trade and tourism links. [Source](#)
- Delta Air Lines has launched its inaugural Brisbane-Los Angeles flights, marking a historic milestone for Queensland's air capacity. Operating three seasonal flights per week, this new route increases capacity by 56%, boosting tourism and trade. The A350-900 aircraft also supports freight, strengthening U.S.-Queensland connections. [Source](#)
- Brisbane Airport has emerged as Australia's fastest-growing hub to the U.S., highlighted by Delta Air Lines' new direct Brisbane-Los Angeles service. With a 125% increase in U.S. flight capacity by January 2025, surpassing pre-pandemic levels, Brisbane is leading growth in U.S.-Australia connectivity. The new routes reflect increased demand and trade significance, with rising corporate travel and stronger economic ties between both nations. [Source](#)
- Fiji Airways has launched its inaugural direct service from Nadi to Dallas-Fort Worth, expanding its North American network. The airline's A350-900 XWB will operate three times weekly. The route provides Australian travelers with new U.S. access, enhancing connectivity with over 250 destinations from DFW, and special fares are available. [Source](#)

- American Airlines has launched a direct Brisbane-Dallas-Fort Worth flight, operating daily from December 2024 to March 2025. The 13-hour 43-minute flight on a Boeing 787-9 Dreamliner offers Main Cabin amenities, including inflight entertainment and meals. This route provides Queenslanders with direct access to Texas and beyond. [Source](#)
- Air Canada will reduce its Brisbane-Vancouver flights from daily to five weekly services between February and October 2025, citing operational constraints. Despite strong demand and a 30% increase in seat capacity for 2024, the airline faces aircraft availability issues due to global network expansion. Air Canada plans to add over 70 new planes to its fleet in the coming years. [Source](#)

Actions

- **International Showcase Report**
- **‘Where Music Was Born’ Parkes & Tamworth Festival**
- **Trade & PR Newsletter**
- **Concrete Playground Campaign Kick Off**
 - Brief partners, kick off call with Concrete Playground
- **Pitching for Global Week**
 - The Australian Confirmed