



AUNZ REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2025

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ABOUT TSUSA

Global Partner Programming

- 87, 264 Australians visited the USA in August, down -8% monthly year-on-year. This brings the year-to-date total to over 630,614 visitors, a decline of -3.5% YoY.
- Australia was the 12th largest long-haul market in August, and year to date is ranked 11th (Source: I-94 arrivals).

Shifts in Market Share

Value, airlift, and alternative experiences are redistributing Australian arrivals across U.S. gateways:

Port of Entry	August 2025 Arrivals	% Change YoY	Insight
California	33,412	-14.6%	Gateways losing market share to Texas/NY
Hawaii	8,920	-20.7%	Too expensive relative to Asia, Fiji, Bali
New York	9,008	20.4%	Direct airlift growing demand
Texas	7,592	21.7%	Growth a result of direct airlift, value, cultural immersion (cowboy culture trending)
Florida	1,674	-2.6%	
All other ports	17,658	-8.3%	

Travel South Visitation

3,107 Australians listed Travel South as their first intended address in August, down -4% YOY.

New Zealand Market

- In August, 20,592 New Zealanders travelled to the USA, a -20% YoY fall.
- Year-to-date, 156,733 Kiwis have visited, down -7% YoY.
- Despite this pullback, visitation remains relatively strong compared to New Zealand's population size, and dips are the result of price barriers and local economic headwinds.





Market Context

- Outbound travel from Australia remains robust: Over 7.44 million Australians travelled overseas Jan–Jul 2025, up +11% YoY (ABS).
- However, the USA has lost ground in market share: it is now the 5th most visited destination, behind Indonesia, New Zealand, Japan, China. At the same time last year, the USA ranked 4th.
- Demand is strongest for high-value destinations like Asia
 - Japan +25% YoY
 - Thailand +17% YoY
 - Vietnam +23% YoY





EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Auckland Sales Calls and Meetings
- Travel South Mission Planning
- Good Food and Wine Show Planning
- International Showcase Attendees Confirmed
- Media Meetings
- Asheville (NC) Media Famil (Explore)
- Blues Highway (LN, MS, TN) Media Famil (Explore)
- Tennessee Dollywood Media Famil (Women's Weekly)
- Securing October QLD freelancer and editor connect meetings
- AU Facebook and Instagram Content





		July	Aug	Sep	Q1 TOTAL
9 partners AL/KY/LA /MS/MO/ NC/SC/TN /ROTS	Australia				
	Trade				
	Trade Meetings/Trainings	15	26	28	69
	Number of Agents Trained	6	60	48	114
	Travel Trade Newsletter Recipient	-	-	4068	4068
	Trade Newsletter Open Rate	-	-	28.02%	28.02%
	Managed Media				
	Media Meetings	4	5	6	15
	Total number of articles published	10	14	14	38
	Impressions	14,403,597	13,909,685	13406124	41,719,406
	PR Newsletter Recipient	-	-	364	174
	PR Newsletter Open Rate	-	-	47.80%	47.80%
	Social Posts				
	Facebook Page				
	Followers	-	9,198	9,200	9,200
	Likes	-	9,198	9,200	9,200
	Facebook Posts				
	Reach	-	194	321	515
	Views	-	404	669	1,073
	Likes	-	3	5	8
	Comments	-	0	0	0
	Shares	-	0	0	0
	Instagram				
	Reach	-	9	12	21





	Views	-	173	354	527
	Followers	-	9	9	9
	Likes	-	6	19	25
	Comments	-	0	0	0
	Shares	-	0	0	0





II. COMMUNICATIONS & PR

- Media Meetings
- Asheville (NC) Media Famil (Explore)
- Blues Highway (LN, MS, TN) Media Famil (Explore)
- Tennessee Dollywood Media Famil (Women's Weekly)
- Securing October QLD freelancer and editor connect meetings
- AU Facebook and Instagram Content
- Earned media [Coverage Book](#)
- Global Market Media Place 25 media [Coverage Book](#)





COVERAGE:

[Read Today's Paper](#) | [Tributes](#)

5:45pm Wednesday, October 8th, 2025

Adelaide Today ☀️ 11 °/ 20 ° >

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Lifestyle

Best theme parks in the USA

No country is more inextricably linked with amusement parks like the good ol' USA. They just do the combo of rides, kitsch, merch, characters, shows and onsite accomm so well. The choice, however, can be overwhelming when you get beyond Disney. Strap in and prepare to fly because we've got you covered.

 **David Smiedt** [Follow](#)

 6 min read [September 29, 2025 - 12:22PM](#) **ESCAPE**

Dollywood, Pigeon Forge, Tennessee



Ride the FireChaser Express at Dollywood. Picture: Steven Bridges/www.stevenbridges.com

You either get the kitschy, campy, down home wonder that is Dolly Parton. Or you don't. Those in the former camp are so devoted - as you should be - that her theme park is now in its fourth decade. And just getting better. It is a world unto itself with rodeo dinner shows, a gigantic water park, stage extravaganzas, a pair of hotels and rides like the Lightning Rod - one of the world's fastest wooden coasters. It consistently rates high for customer service and at last count there were over 40 separate rides and attractions. People bang on about the likes of [Knobels Amusement Resort](#) for the quintessential country theme park experience, but Dolly wins out for us every time. They'll even pour you a cup of ambition.





Silver Dollar City, Branson, Missouri



Silver Dollar City is a family friendly and affordable theme park option.

Come for the 1880s mining town theme, 40 rides like the Fire In The Hole indoor family coaster, the same number of daily shows, craftspeople demos (see kids things were once made to last), five hectares of waterpark and a tour of one of the state's deepest caves Marvel Cave. Stay for what else is on offer in this [most amazing of towns](#) in the Ozark Mountains. It is a legit showbiz capital where tribute shows reign supreme. Everyone from Elvis and Willie Nelson to the Bee Gees and Abba perform nightly. There's also mini golf courses galore, the Hollywood Wax Museum and the world's largest toy museum, The Breck.

Traveller DESTINATION GUIDES INSPIRATION REVIEWS & ADVICE TRAVEL NEWS

SEARCH

Think river cruises are too generic? Try a themed cruise

 **Brian Johnston**
September 26, 2025 – 3:07pm

Save Share

 Listen to this article
3 min

If you've done river cruising before, or even been to its chief destinations on land, you might not be tempted to return for another go.

True, most river itineraries are similar but, if you want all the convenience and ease of cruising yet hanker after something different and more insightful, a themed cruise might be for you.

Save this article for later

Add articles to your saved list and come back to them anytime.

GOT IT





Inspiration Foodie travel

In a city of many great restaurants, I had the most memorable meal of my life

Carrie Hutchinson
September 11, 2025 – 5:00am

[Save](#) [Share](#)



Executive chef EJ Lagasse (left) and his father, Emeril.

“We had two weeks of R&D [research and development] to come up with the menu before we reopened with this new concept,” he says as we eat a cucumber cup filled with some of those seasonal ingredients. That new concept is a tasting menu, featuring reconfigured Emeril’s classics.





Communications & PR

Media Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings)

Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up/Next step
Michael Turtle, The Canberra Times & Freelance	Michael is a freelance travel writer and also contributes a weekly column to The Canberra Times which is great for possible coverage. He is open to a wide range of travel stories, particularly those with unique or unexpected angles.	TCT is highly syndicated and potential target for GMM 26
Ellie Cobb, Travel Editor for BBC Travel	BBC Travel focuses exclusively on editorial content, not paid partnerships, and typically avoids hosted famils unless the story demands an on-the-ground perspective. They also feature a section exploring destinations through the lens of locals. Still has strong readership in Australia.	N/A
Cleo Glyde, Freelancer	Based in Los Angeles, Cleo regularly contributes to Travel + Luxury. Opportunity for better less flight investment due to proximity – but would need to be the right opportunity in the 'Luxury' space.	Follow up with further destination information.
Shaney Hudson, Freelance, Explore & Escape,	Met to share updates on TSUSA, including GMM campaign, but also focus on non-famil stories	Follow up with further destination information.
Michael McHugh Editor, MiNDFOOD	Educated on the region, and potential storytelling opportunities. Was more interested in famil but did frame press office opportunities.	Follow up with further destination information.
Nicholas Eager Freelance, News corp	Educated on the region and potential storytelling opportunities.	Follow up with further destination information.





III. TRAVEL TRADE

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

Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up /Next step
Jason Cuschiere Partnership Manager Webjet	Webjet are embarking on new branding campaign and open to partnerships for OOH & radio advertising. Will match \$ for \$ for any campaigns with a min \$20-25K buy in. USA is currently up 8-10% YoY. They are still using Expedia affiliation program for hotels, but have just bought Locomates for Biz Travel and Hotels. Use Klook for experiences and attractions. 2.2 Mil database in Australia & 400k in NZ.	Ongoing
Kerry-Anne Walker Global Events Leader Flight Centre	Discussion on Flight Centres Annual Global Conference. It is already locked in until FY 2028, but open to researching and support with site visits and hotel recommendations. Expressed interest in New Orleans and Nashville as growing global destinations.	Ongoing
Hayley Dawson General Managers ATPI	Meeting and training with Virtuoso Agency APTI Hayley Dawson and her team. They are reporting a slow down in business travel, but leisure inquiries to the USA are good. Training on Travel South with 5 agents.	N/A
Deanna Nock Manager You Travel Newmarket	Meeting and training with Deanna Nock from You Travel and her team of 4.	N/A
Lucas Team Leader Flight Centre Newmarket	Meeting and training with Lucas Flight Centre Newmarket and his team of 7.	N/A
Auckland Agent Training Lunch	Lunch and training with 12 senior advisors on Travel South.	N/A
Andrew Gay Founder Travel USA	Meeting with Andrew to discuss current USA booking. He has also been awarded for AmCham Success & Innovation Awards this year, in the 'Contribution to Tourism with the USA' category. Booking are turning over with a slight increase within his wholesale network.	N/A





Mel Newton Global Publications & Merchandising Leader Flight Centre	Update & brief on International Showcase meetings and appointment scheduling.	Ongoing
Anna Mc Creadie Event Manager Good Food and Wine Festival	Ongoing meeting and discussion for Good Food & Wine Show, June 2026.	Ongoing
Jess Ogg Manager CTM	CTM is situated in Newmarket and a large agency that specializes in MICE and high end travel. Training on Travel South states and bleisure market.	N/A
Kirsty Jackson Assistant Team Leader Flight Centre	Assistant Team Leader Flight Centre Botany, Kirsty is one of the Brand USA Ambassadors. Training with her & 2 members of her team.	N/A
Joanne Saunderson Broker NZTB	New Zealand Travel Brokers group, Jo is one of the Brand USA Ambassadors and does escorted tours to the USA for Megan Singleton aka 'Blogger at large'. Training on TS USA.	N/A
Hemal Jani Director Beyond Holidays	Travel Beyond operates under the GTN network of agents that are part of HOT, Hamal is a top seller to the USA. Training with him and 3 of his team.	N/A
Helen Moffit Agent House of Travel Mt Eden	Helen is a top selling consultant at House of Travel St Helliers, and focusses on high end customers. Training with her and 2 other House of Travel Mt Eden staff.	N/A
Helloworld Parnell	Training with Helloworld Parnell x 3, a busy high-end agency, but tariffs have impacted their business travel but they do have a mix of Business, leisure and incentive travel.	N/A
Phillip Webb Broker NZTB	Training with Phillip from New Zealand Travel Brokers group. He is often in the top sales for the brand and is a very experienced and successful agent.	N/A





Louise Sutton North American Product Manager Flight Centre – Infinity Holidays New Zealand	Meeting with Louise on growth of Infinity Holidays in NZ market. They have replicated 6-8 of the USA road trips to release to the market including Rhythms of the River, Musical Roots of the South, At the movies Southern Sights & Route 66 (MO).	N/A
Jessica Oswald Shona Bray House of Travel	Training with Jessica, Shona and 3 other HOT Product team members on Travel South.	N/A
Rhea Altoft Team Leader Flight Centre St Lukes Mega Store	Training with Rhea at Flight Centre St Lukes Mega store with 6 agents.	N/A
House of Travel Ponsonby	Training with 2 agents at House of Travel Ponsonby.	N/A
Venue Scouting – Travel South Mission Jun 26	Venue scouting in Auckland – Fish Markets, NZME, Empire Bar, The Lulu Inn, The Cellar bar at Danny Doolands, Customs Lane and Mr Morris. Some good options depending on finalized event brief.	Ongoing
Dee Jaswal Head of Product and Marketing itravel	Update on itravel's Headquarters Wholesale system with both DMC recommendations and a aggregator abilities. Accommodation is currently pulling from all major bed banks. US going well, but they are seeing the cruise market a little flat. See is off on maternity leave and Christine McCullagh has recently been appointed as Product Manager – looking it whilst she is on leave.	N/A
Chris Ellis County Director AU/NZ Expedia TAAP	Update on Expedia TAAP promotions and marketing campaigns – run through their representative partner Discover the World Marketing. They love working with agent incentive and group webinars, but fam positions get the best response with agents in their network.	N/A
Alison Hopkirk NZ National Account Manager Delta Airlines	Update, support and instructions for Delta incentive fam to the South.	Ongoing





Travel South Mission & GFWS Webinar with GPP States & Partners	Travel South Mission and GFWF proposal deck and presentation for state and city partners on Australian visit for June 2026.	Ongoing
IPW Committee Meeting	IPW Tour operators and journalist approval meeting with US Commercial.	Ongoing
Thanksgiving Save the Date	Invite, Invitee list and save the date for Thanksgiving Event.	Ongoing





CAMPAIGNS & ACTIVITY

New Zealand Sales Calls & Meetings





RESOURCE CENTRE UPDATES

What's On:



October 10, 2025

Louisiana Gumbo Festival

Think you know gumbo? Put your taste buds to the test at the Louisiana Gumbo Festival in the heart of the "Gumbo Capital of Louisiana." Across the weekend, volunteers cook nearly 500 gallons of authentic Cajun gumbo, from seafood to chicken and sausage. Enjoy lively local music, carnival rides, a Sunday parade at 10:30 AM and a live auction at 1:00 PM, celebrating Louisiana's culture, flavour and community spirit. (more...)



October 10, 2025

Richmond Folk Festival

From 10-12 October 2025, the Richmond Folk Festival returns to downtown Richmond's historic riverfront, celebrating music, dance and culture from around the world. One of Virginia's largest and most beloved events, the free three-day festival features performances across six stages, showcasing a vibrant mix of folk traditions and genres. (more...)

What's New:

September 2025



Two New Orleans Restaurants Named Among America's Best

Two New Orleans restaurants have earned spots on The New York Times list of the 50 Best Restaurants in America for 2025. Emeril's, led by E.J. Lagasse, continues to shine with its refined, seasonal Creole-inspired tasting menu on Tchoupitoulas Street. Meanwhile, Saint Claire, opened in June 2025 on Richland Road, offers relaxed dining under oak trees with a rotating seasonal menu that celebrates Louisiana's flavours in an elegant, welcoming setting.

[LEARN MORE](#)



Hotel Indigo Gatlinburg Downtown TN

The Hotel Indigo Gatlinburg Downtown brings a stylish boutique stay to the heart of Tennessee's Smoky Mountains. The 136-room property features a rooftop restaurant with panoramic mountain views, dog-friendly amenities, and 9,300 square feet of versatile indoor and outdoor event space. Blending contemporary design with the natural beauty of its surroundings, the hotel offers a fresh, elevated experience for leisure and business travellers alike.

[LEARN MORE](#)

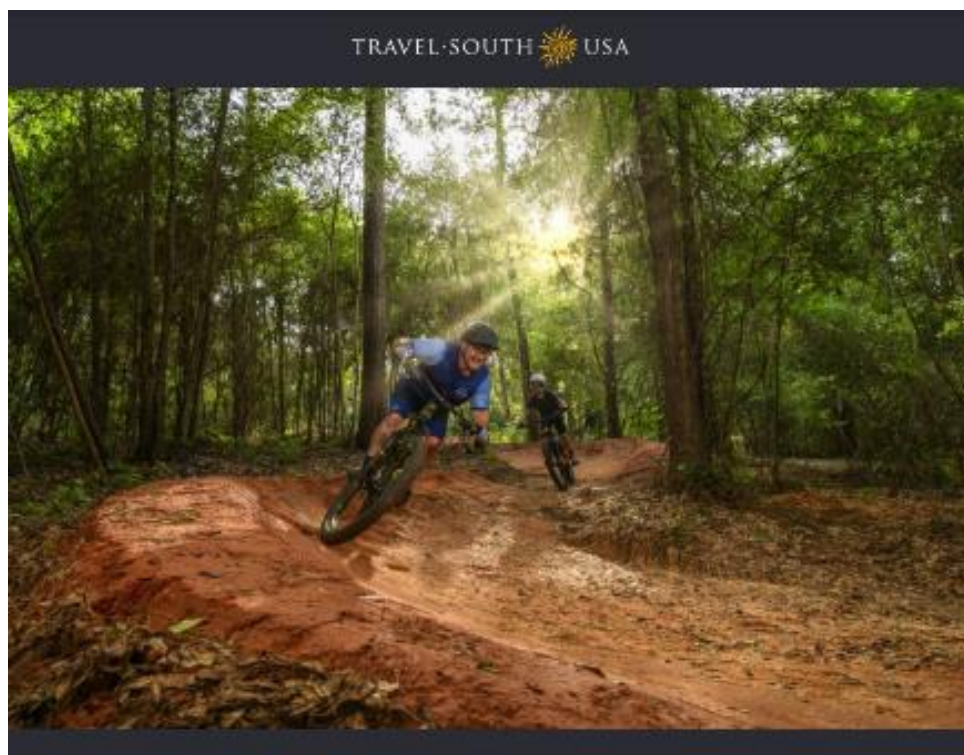




Newsletters – Biking & Hiking in the Outdoors: What's in Your Picnic Basket?

TRADE Newsletter – Recipients: 4068 Open Rate: 1140 (28.02%)

PR Newsletter – Recipients: 364 Open Rate: 174 (47.80%)



Two wheels, two feet, or a mix of both - the South is built for adventure. Meandering trails, scenic byways, and hidden paths lead to stunning views, charming towns, and perfect picnic spots. Along the way, you'll discover flavours as memorable as the landscapes, from fresh local bites to classic comfort foods.

Whether you're chasing a new challenge or a leisurely day outdoors, every route offers the chance to slow down, explore, and savour the journey.

**Biking & Hiking in the Outdoors:
What's in Your Picnic Basket?**





RHYTHMS OF THE SOUTH

Atlanta, Nashville, New Orleans

From vibrant cities to leafy trails, the South serves up unforgettable biking, hiking and picnic spots. In Atlanta, cycle the BeltLine or hike Stone Mountain, then picnic in Piedmont Park or by the Chattahoochee River. Nashville's 90-mile Greenway connects rivers, forests and neighbourhoods - ideal for biking to picnic-perfect spots like Radnor Lake. In New Orleans, ride the Lafitte Greenway or the Mississippi River Levee Trail, then relax in City Park with po'boys, pralines and Southern charm under the oaks.

[Southern Trails](#)



MISSISSIPPI

Mississippi Miles

Central Mississippi's Natchez Trace Parkway offers a 444-mile scenic byway ideal for both cycling and hiking. Winding through Jackson, Ridgeland and Clinton, it blends natural beauty with rich history. Riders and hikers will find shaded trails, scenic overlooks, and historic landmarks perfect for picnic breaks under towering trees. Whether you're out for a short stroll or a longer ride, the Parkway provides a peaceful, picturesque route through one of the South's most storied landscapes.

[Plan Your Journey](#)



TENNESSEE

Tennessee on Two Wheels

Explore Tennessee's backroads with Bike Tennessee: Cycle the Storytelling State, a curated collection of 52 handpicked cycling routes designed to showcase the state's natural beauty and rich heritage. Using the Ride with GPS app, cyclists can navigate scenic trails through small towns and stunning landscapes. Picnic basket pick: Ride the Sequatchie Valley Loop in East Tennessee and swing by The Cookie Jar Café for fresh sandwiches and sweet treats to enjoy mid-ride or trailside.

[Bike Tennessee](#)





ALABAMA

Alabama Outdoors

Alabama's trails take you from mountain climbs to coastal calm, offering something for every adventurer. In the north, hike Monte Sano or the Walls of Jericho for sweeping views, or cycle the 33-mile Chief Ladiga Trail into Georgia. Down south, the Hugh S. Branyon Backcountry Trail in Gulf State Park spans 28 miles through marshes, swamps and pine forests. Pack a picnic with pimento cheese sandwiches, boiled peanuts and peach hand pies, flavours as rich as the scenery.

[Explore Trails](#)

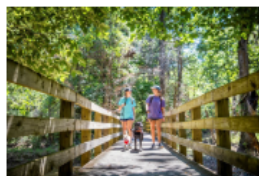


KENTUCKY

Trail Towns

Kentucky's Trail Towns are made for outdoor explorers - and well-packed picnic baskets. With 30 certified towns near rivers, lakes and trails, these hubs offer easy access to hiking, paddling and local eats. In Leitchfield, nestled between Nolin Lake and Rough River Dam parks, enjoy a scenic hike, then grab a to-go meal from Farmer's Feedmill or Hometown Hangout. Fill your basket with fried chicken, cornbread, and a slice of Derby pie - trail treats with true Bluegrass flavour.

[Discover Kentucky](#)



LOUISIANA

Bayou Trails

Louisiana's outdoors offer more than bayous and beignets. On the Northshore, the 31-mile Tammany Trace winds through charming towns, breweries and state parks - ideal for a relaxed bike ride or walk with picnic stops along the way. Pack a basket with boudin, crusty French bread, local cheeses and a sweet praline. For a wilder escape, hike Kisatchie National Forest's 640,000 acres of piney woods and sandstone bluffs. From trails to treats, Louisiana blends nature with flavour.

[Explore Louisiana](#)





MISSOURI

Trail Tastes

Missouri's Katy Trail offers a scenic 381 km journey along the Missouri River, passing through charming towns with plenty of delicious stops. Start in St. Charles at The Bike Stop Café for breakfast and bike rentals, then head west to Defiance for wood-fired pizza and craft beer at Good News Brewing. Enjoy coffee and pastries in historic Augusta, then refuel in Rocheport at Meriwether Café. Whether hiking or biking, you'll find flavours to match the views.

Katy Trail

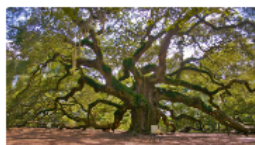


NORTH CAROLINA

North Carolina Cruising

North Carolina delivers outdoor adventure across mountains, Piedmont and coast. Ride rugged trails in Pisgah National Forest, hike the Blue Ridge Parkway or bike Beech Mountain's summer slopes - then picnic with Ashe County cheese, crisp apples and sourdough. In the Piedmont, cycle the American Tobacco Trail or hike Umstead Park before a beer garden break. Coastal rides include Ocracoke Island and the Wilmington Riverwalk. Join Cycle North Carolina's scenic rides across the state for a multi-day biking experience.

Explore the Trails



SOUTH CAROLINA

Cycle & Savour

Pedal through South Carolina's scenic landscapes on the newly extended Swamp Rabbit Trail in Greenville County. This nearly 20-mile path winds through Unity Park and beyond, offering a smooth, bike-friendly journey with perfect picnic stops along the way. Break for lunch under the ancient canopy of Angel Oak Park on Johns Island. What's in your basket? Think crispy fried chicken, pimento cheese sandwiches, pulled pork sliders, tangy devilled eggs and salty, slow-simmered boiled peanuts - Southern comfort at its best.

Swamp Rabbit Trail





FIND OUT MORE



CONTACT INFO

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SOCIAL CONTENT UPDATE

Instagram:



travelsouthusa.au Explore Tennessee's backroads with Bike Tennessee.

Cycle a curated collection of 52 handpicked cycling routes designed to showcase the state's natural beauty and rich heritage.

Use the Ride with GPS app to explore, then stop for a trailside picnic in Sequatchie Valley - don't miss The Cookie Jar Café's sandwiches and sweet treats 🍪

📍 @tnvacation

#MadeInTennessee #BikeTennessee #TravelSouth



travelsouthusa.au Savor Kentucky's spooky-season spirit with bourbon & chocolate pairings. Sip and savour smooth wheated bourbons with creamy milk chocolate or bold high-ryes with dark chocolate & sea salt. 🍷🍫

You'll find unique pairings all along the Kentucky Bourbon Trail - from Evan Williams' Choc-ology tour in Louisville to Woodford Reserve and Lux Row in Bardstown. Add in haunted stops like Waverly Hills Sanatorium for the ultimate sweet + spooky escape.

📍 @kytourism

#TravelSouth #KentuckyTourism



travelsouthusa.au Alabama serves up plenty of spooky-season delights, where sweets and spirits collide in hauntingly fun ways.

At Bark & Barrel, you'll find smoky pulled pork, brisket, and hearty chili alongside seasonal favorites that taste like fall in the South. Pair your plate with a pumpkin ale, dark chocolate stout, or a bourbon maple old-fashioned for the ultimate autumn feast. 🍷🍂

📍 @alabamatravel

#SweetHomeAlabama #TravelSouth



travelsouthusa.au Louisiana knows how to do spooky season! 🎃

Celebrate Cajun folklore at Rougarou Fest in Houma with costumes, contests, and howlin' fun. Explore DeRidder's Gothic "Hanging Jail" with ghost tours and a haunted house, or head to Shreveport's Dixie Maze Farm for pumpkin patches by day and haunted mazes by night.

📍 @explore.louisiana

#Louisiana #OnlyLouisiana #TravelSouth

7 hours ago



travelsouthusa.au Kentucky's Trail Towns are ideal for outdoor explorers (and well packed picnic baskets)

With 30 certified towns near rivers, lakes and trails, these hubs offer easy access to hiking, paddling and local eats.

Fill your picnic basket with fried chicken, cornbread, and a slice of Derby pie... Treats with true Bluegrass flavour.

📍 @kytourism

#HikingandBiking #TrailTowns #TravelSouth

23 September



travelsouthusa.au Louisiana's outdoors offers much more than bayous and beignets.

On the Northshore, the 31-mile Tammany Trace winds through charming towns, breweries and state parks - ideal for a relaxed bike ride or walk with picnic stops along the way.

Pack a basket with boudin, crusty French bread, local cheeses and a sweet praline. 🍪

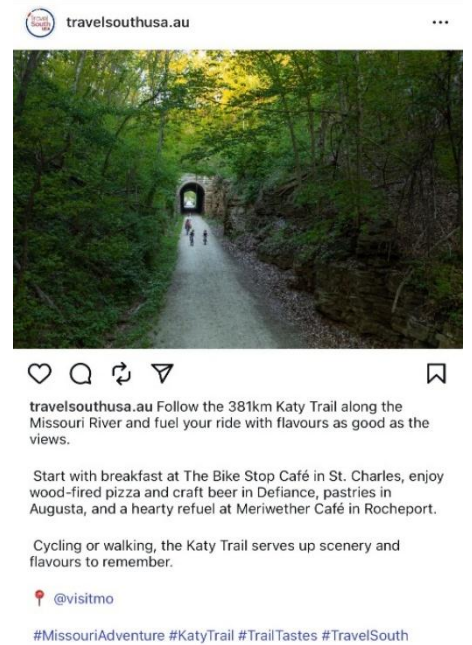
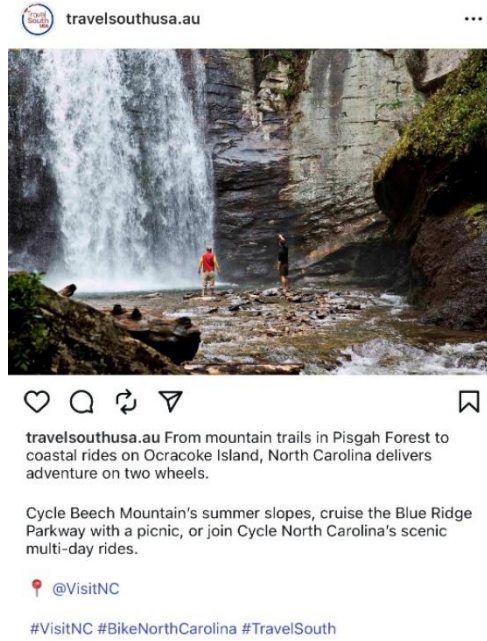
📍 @explore.louisiana

#Louisiana #OnlyLouisiana #TravelSouth

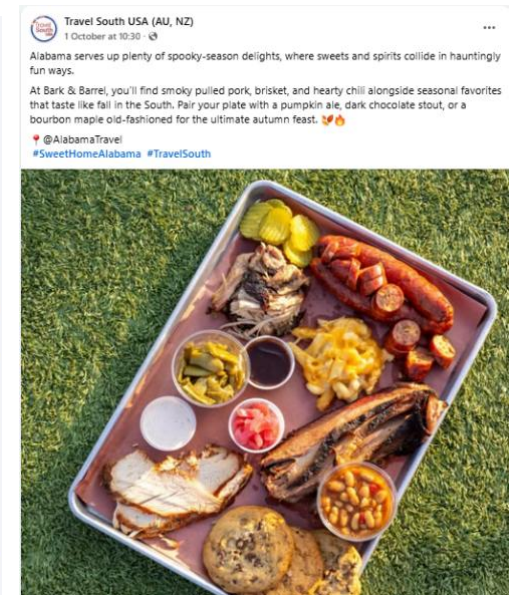
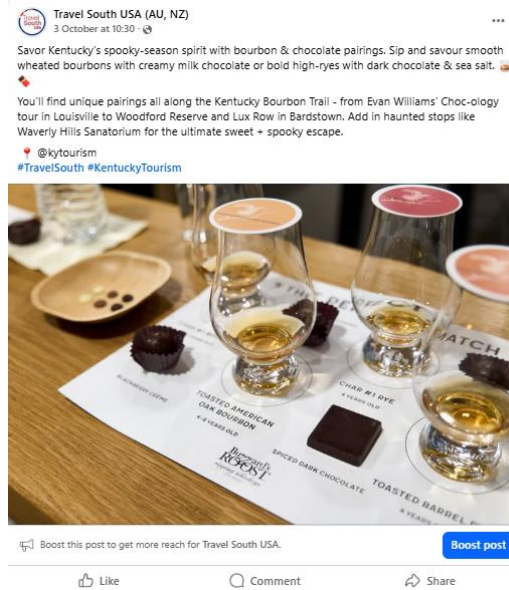
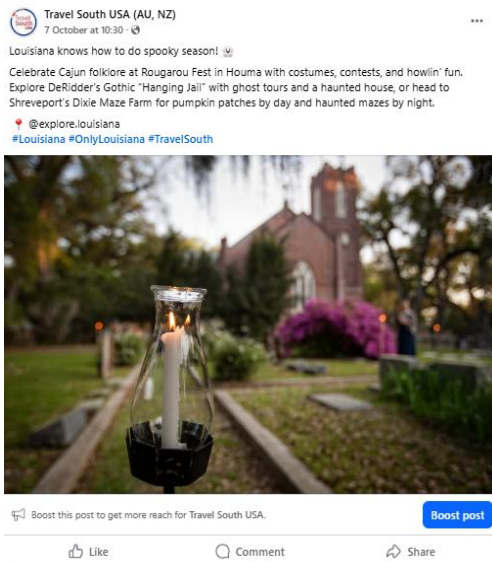
18 September



Travel South USA | AUNZ GPP MONTHLY Report



Facebook:



TravelSouth
All Y'all Are Welcome **USA**





Travel South USA (AU, NZ)

25 September at 10:00 · 🌐

Explore Tennessee's backroads with Bike Tennessee.

Cycle a curated collection of 52 handpicked cycling routes designed to showcase the state's natural beauty and rich heritage.

Use the Ride with GPS app to explore, then stop for a trailside picnic in Sequatchie Valley - don't miss The Cookie Jar Café's sandwiches and sweet treats 🍪

📍 Tennessee Vacation

#MadeInTennessee #BikeTennessee #TravelSouth



Boost this post to get more reach for Travel South USA.

Boost post

Like

Comment

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Travel South USA (AU, NZ)

23 September at 10:01 · 🌐

Kentucky's Trail Towns are ideal for outdoor explorers (and well packed picnic baskets)

With 30 certified towns near rivers, lakes and trails, these hubs offer easy access to hiking, paddling and local eats.

Fill your picnic basket with fried chicken, cornbread, and a slice of Derby pie... Treats with true Bluegrass flavour.

📍 Kentucky Tourism

#HikingandBiking #TrailTowns #TravelSouth



Boost this post to get more reach for Travel South USA.

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Travel South USA (AU, NZ)

18 September at 10:00 · 🌐

Louisiana's outdoors offers much more than bayous and beignets.

On the Northshore, the 311-mile Tammany Trace winds through charming towns, breweries and state parks - ideal for a relaxed bike ride or walk with picnic stops along the way.

Pack a basket with boudin, crusty French bread, local cheeses and a sweet praline. 🍯

📍 Explore Louisiana

#Louisiana #OnlyLouisiana #TravelSouth



Boost this post to get more reach for Travel South USA.

Boost post

Like

Comment

Share



Travel South USA (AU, NZ)

16 September at 10:00 · 🌐

South Carolina was made for cruising 🚲🌿

Pedal the newly extended Swamp Rabbit Trail in Greenville County, weaving through Unity Park and beyond.

Stop for a picnic under the ancient Angel Oak on Johns Island with Southern favourites like fried chicken, pimento cheese sandwiches, and boiled peanuts.

📍 @discover_sc

#DiscoverSC #BikeSouthCarolina #TravelSouth



Boost this post to get more reach for Travel South USA.

Boost post

Like

Comment

Share



Travel South USA (AU, NZ)

11 September at 10:01 · 🌐

From mountain trails in Pisgah Forest to coastal rides on Ocracoke Island, North Carolina delivers adventure on two wheels.

Cycle Beech Mountain's summer slopes, cruise the Blue Ridge Parkway with a picnic, or join Cycle North Carolina's scenic multi-day rides.

📍 @VisitNC

#VisitNC #BikeNorthCarolina #TravelSouth



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Travel South USA (AU, NZ)

9 September at 10:00 · 🌐

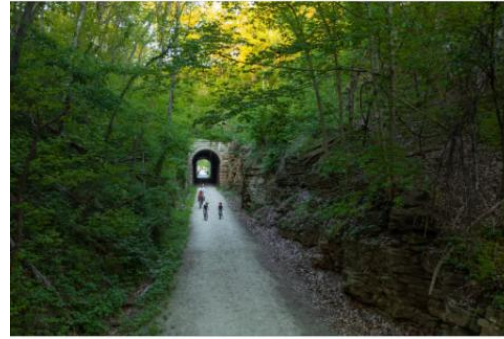
Follow the 381km Katy Trail along the Missouri River and fuel your ride with flavours as good as the views.

Start with breakfast at The Bike Stop Café in St. Charles, enjoy wood-fired pizza and craft beer in Defiance, pastries in Augusta, and a hearty refuel at Meriwether Café in Rocheport.

Cycling or walking, the Katy Trail serves up scenery and flavours to remember.

📍 @visitmio

#MissouriAdventure #KatyTrail #TrailTastes #TravelSouth



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Market Update

Economic & Market Update

The following economic announcements were made in September:

- Australia's economy moved sideways in Q3: growth signals were modest, but households continued to spend on services and travel.
- The Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA) first held the cash rate at 3.85% in July (a split vote), cut to 3.60% in August, then held again in September, signaling a cautious "wait-and-see" stance as inflation momentum ticked up late in the quarter.
- Inflation firmed as the quarter progressed. After sitting at 2.1% YoY in June, the monthly CPI rose to 2.8% in July and 3.0% in August, with electricity a key driver. That lift is important for travel affordability and sentiment, particularly for price-sensitive families heading into the southern spring.
- The labor market stayed resilient but cooled at the margin. Unemployment held at 4.2% in August with a small fall in total employment and softer full-time roles, consistent with an economy easing but not stalling.
- Demand for travel-adjacent spending remained healthy. The Australian Bureau of Statistics reports spending rose in July, supported by hotel stays and air travel; and Australia saw a higher number of residents returning from holiday in July vs. a year earlier, consistent with robust international travel demand during winter school holidays.
- The Australian dollar (AUD) was range-bound through most of September in the mid-\$0.65s and finished the month near \$0.66 per USD, aided by a softer U.S. dollar and the RBA holding rates. For Aussies, that level remains weak by historical standards, keeping U.S. trips relatively expensive even as demand persists. Marketing that foregrounds value, bundles, and transparent pricing in AUD will resonate.

What this means for international travel: Australian households are still booking trips, but the late-quarter inflation pop and a cautious central bank will keep buyers value-oriented.

Tour Operators & Travel Agencies

- Visit USA Australia has announced two new appointments, including GTI Tourism's Trade Marketing Director Anne Lee in the executive role of Secretary. Eight Communication's Account Director Christina Atherton has also joined as PR & Media Manager with Aida Osta now serving as General Manager. [Source](#)





- Travel Associates has opened a flagship Adelaide store at Burnside Village, saying it's a "significant step in the brand's future direction as a luxury travel retailer". [Source](#)
- Travel Managers is still tracking ahead of its competitors in sales year-to-date, despite a slowing in overall growth, according to the company's Chief Executive Officer Joe Araullo. [Source](#)
- Envoyage double digit growth for group as "Independent Revolution" accelerates as FCTG independent network's progress from 2018 to the present day, a journey that has seen Envoyage grow from "about \$30 million" to a multi-billion dollar operation. [Source](#)
- Travelles Choice have announced a healthy \$2.01 million pre-tax profit for 2024/25. [Source](#)

Traveler Insights

- One in five US work trips are being cancelled due to increasing costs, with North America having the top five most expensive hotel room rates in the world. [Source](#)
- Tourism Research Australia released the latest International Visitor Survey showing a 7 per cent year-over-year increase in holiday trips, 10 per cent below June 2019. [Source](#)
- America's travel economy would lose US\$1 billion (A\$1.5b) every week in the event of a full government shutdown, the US Travel Association has warned. [Source](#)
- David Jones Rewards has launched a new loyalty program alongside Qantas Frequent Flyer that allows Aussies to unlock more value when shopping their favourite fashion, beauty, homewares, and more. [Source](#)
- More Australian corporates are paying to move their people out of economy, with FCM Travel and Corporate Traveller reporting premium economy and business class demand surging as the biggest driver of recent growth, says FCTG [Source](#)
- A new report highlights that [solo female travellers](#) want physically active, culturally rich and historic exploration trips in 2026 – and they're willing to spend USD\$5,000 to \$12,000 (around AUD\$7,500 – \$18,000) on their ideal holiday. [Source](#)
- Americans are arriving Down Under in record numbers while Australians are choosing Asia over the USA, according to new data from the [Australian Travel Industry Association](#) (ATIA). [Source](#)
- International tourism was up five per cent year-on-year and four per cent above pre-COVID levels for the first half of 2025, however, the latest [UN Tourism World Tourism Barometer](#) report showed mixed results for different regions. [Source](#)
- 81% of older Australians are willing to cut back on disposable spending to travel and almost two in five (39%) Aussie seniors taking a big trip in the past year. The [2025 Grey Gap Year Report](#) found the number of Aussie seniors taking a big holiday in the past year has doubled since 2022 (39% vs 18%), signalling a strong resurgence in travel among this demographic. [Source](#).





- The number of trips taken by Aussies in Jul grew by more than 290,000 when compared to Jun, new ABS figures have showed. [Source](#)

Air Lift

- Fiji Airways' outgoing CEO Andre Viljoen is bullish on further US growth, but has conceded there may not be much room to grow in Australia. Australia and New Zealand currently account for around 70% of Fiji Airways' traffic, with 20% attributed to US travel. [Source](#)
- Cathay Pacific announces return of non-stop flights from Hong Kong to Seattle from March 26 as it continues to strengthen its presence in North America. [Source](#)
- Qantas has announced a seven-day sale on flights to North America with return economy fares starting from \$949. [Source](#)
- United Airlines is giving serious main character energy with the launch of its first-ever direct flight between San Francisco and Adelaide. From December, the days of Australian layovers are over – United will be the only airline offering nonstop services to four Australian cities. [Source](#)
- Virgin Australia has posted a strong bottom line for FY25, reporting pro forma underlying Net Profit After Tax (NPAT) of \$331 million, a jump of 27.8 per cent on last year. [Source](#)
- After its debut last year, [Delta Air Lines](#) will resume its nonstop seasonal Los Angeles–Brisbane route from 31 October 2025 to 27 March 2026, linking Southern California and South-East Queensland directly with the first LAX-bound flight departing on 2 November [Source](#)





Media

- **ABC and News.com.au Pull Further Ahead as The Australian Surges 45%:** ABC News and news.com.au remain well ahead of their rivals in Australia's online news race, with more than 3.5 million monthly readers separating the top two from Nine's flagship site. According to Ipsos iris August 2025 data, ABC News led with over 13 million monthly readers, while news.com.au grew to reach 12.7 million. Nine.com.au dropped slightly below the 10-million mark to 9.1 million readers, as 7news.com.au (8.39 million) and The Guardian (8.08 million, up 8.6 percent) closed the gap.

Other notable shifts included Yahoo News climbing modestly to 5.5 million readers, while The Australian surged into the Top 10 with 5.19 million monthly readers - a dramatic 45 percent jump credited largely to increased exposure through Apple News and Google News, despite its paywall. The Sydney Morning Herald remained the country's most-read paywalled title with 6.7 million readers, followed by The Age on 5.2 million, and the Daily Mail Australia at 6.5 million. [Source](#)

- **Seven West Media and Southern Cross Merge to Form National Multimedia Giant:** In a landmark \$400 million deal, Seven West Media and Southern Cross Media announced plans to merge, creating a new national network spanning free-to-air television, radio, print, digital, and streaming platforms. The move will unite the Seven Network, The West Australian, and a portfolio of regional newspapers with Southern Cross's Triple M and Hit radio brands, aiming to deliver a more integrated multimedia offering to metropolitan and regional audiences.

Long-time media leader Kerry Stokes will step down as chair of Seven West Media but remain chair of the combined entity until February 2026 before handing over to Southern Cross's Heith Mackay-Cruise, marking the end of an era in Australian broadcasting. The merger, still subject to ACCC and ACMA approval as well as shareholder votes, has raised questions about media diversity but is widely seen as a strategic bid to consolidate resources as and viewing trends shift further toward streaming and digital news. [Source](#).

- **Government Holds Firm on Teen Social Media Ban Amid Google Pushback:** With Australia's new minimum-age rules for social media set to take effect in December, tensions have escalated between the government and major tech platforms. The legislation will block under-16s from holding accounts on age-restricted platforms including Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Snapchat and, after a late inclusion, YouTube - though children will still be able to view YouTube content in logged-out mode or via YouTube Kids.

Google has launched an ad campaign positioning YouTube as "where teens come to learn" and warned of possible legal action, arguing the service is misclassified as social media. Communications Minister Anika Wells has rejected that claim, saying the policy prioritises "parents ahead of platforms" and pledging not to be intimidated by tech companies, with fines of up to \$49.5 million for non-compliance. The eSafety Commissioner has stood firm that no platform should receive exemptions and is expected to prioritise enforcement against the largest services. Meanwhile, Wikimedia Australia has expressed concern that the law's broad definition could inadvertently capture Wikipedia and similar sites, potentially forcing them to introduce costly age-verification systems. [Source](#)

- **Australia leads the world in Reddit usage:** Australia now has the highest global penetration of Reddit, with 33% of internet users over 16 accessing the platform monthly - almost triple the





global average of 11.9%. Reddit's ad reach in Australia extends to 94% of the population aged 13+, and the country ranks as a top-five market for the platform. Despite a slight quarterly dip in ad reach, Reddit's mainstream adoption and advertising potential continue to grow.

This surge could suggest more than just changing platform preferences: as AI-generated content becomes increasingly embedded in news feeds and search results, Australians appear to be gravitating toward forums where discussion is driven by real people, signalling a demand for authentic, peer-driven perspectives that can counterbalance algorithmic or machine-produced information. [Source](#)

- **The Nightly launches digital travel magazine ROAM:** Seven West Media's The Nightly has launched ROAM, a premium digital travel magazine debuting 20 September. Targeting "curious wanderers," the first issue highlights Indigenous tourism, Japan's tropical islands, global wellness, and hospitality profiles. Led by Richard Clune, the title aims to deliver authentic, in-depth travel storytelling as part of The Nightly's product expansion. [Source](#)
- **Youtube rockets as a podcast listening platform, Apple falls behind:** Podcast listening in Australia continues to be one of the healthiest markets in the world with 9.6 million people, with Millennials and Gen Z driving growth. Comedy, news and crime remain top genres. Platforms for engagement are shifting: Spotify dominates at 58%, while YouTube has jumped from 30% to 44% in a year, overtaking Apple Podcasts' shrinking 20% share. [Source](#)
- **Mamamia shifts brand strategy as new content launched:** At Mamamia's upfront event in Sydney Tuesday, the company launched new content aimed at Gen X women (45 to 60-year-olds), parents and travellers among other audiences. It also announced a "strategic shift" that it says will de-emphasise the Mamamia brand in favour of the individual content verticals. [Source](#).
- **Kayo Sports and Foxtel extend Disney-led ESPN partnership in multi-year deal:** Kayo Sports and Foxtel have renewed their multi-year ESPN deal, securing NBA, NFL, MLB, UFC and more for Australian audiences, plus exclusive commercial distribution rights. [Source](#).





Actions

- Good Food & Wine Festival Planning
- Mission Planning
- Beyond Borders & NTIA
- International Showcase
- Melbourne Meetings
- New Orleans Pelicans NBA Melbourne Games
- Trade & PR Newsletter
- Queensland Freelancer, Editor and Creator Media Meets
- Media Pitching

