



# AUNZ REPORT

## OCTOBER 2025

Prepared By:

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# ABOUT TSUSA

## Global Partner Programming

### Visitation to the USA.

Due to the U.S. government shutdown, the latest I-94 arrival data for September has not been released.

### Market Context.

Australian Bureau of Statistics international arrivals data was released for August this month. [Source.](#)

### Top 10 countries Australians returned from in August:

1. Indonesia/Bali (161,600, ↑2%)
2. New Zealand (113,390, ↑7%)
3. United Kingdom (67,640, ↑7%)
4. United States (50,700, ↓10%)
5. Thailand (49,120, ↑4%)
6. Fiji (36,890, ↑3%)
7. Vietnam (35,020, ↑8%)
8. Italy (32,940, ↑5%)
9. China (32,940, ↑12%)
10. India (28,690, ↑8%)

The list reflects the same ranking as last year. **Year-to-date (Jan–Aug 2025)** shows that value and cultural richness continue to drive demand:

1. Indonesia / Bali up 7% on last year
2. NZ up 7%
3. Japan up 22%
4. USA up 1%
5. China up 22%
6. Thailand up 16%
7. India up 11%
8. UK up 6%
9. Vietnam up 22%
10. Fiji flat YOY

When looking specifically at North America, year-to-date figures show the **USA up 1%** (ABS) and **Canada (ranked 16th) up 3%**, suggesting that some Australian travellers may be holding off until 2026 in favour of visiting during the World Cup.





## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- ATIA Beyond Boarder Conference, Fun Run Networking Event and NTIA Awards
- Travel South Mission Planning
- Good Food and Wine Show Planning
- International Showcase Planning
- Asheville (NC) Media Famil (Explore)
- QLD (Gold Coast/Brisbane) media meetings
- AU Facebook and Instagram Content
- GMM 26 Kick Off – identify journalists





		Q1 TOTAL	Oct	TOTAL
9 partners AL/KY/LA /MS/MO/ NC/SC/TN /ROTS	<b>Australia</b>			
	<b>Trade</b>			
	Trade Meetings/Trainings	69	47	116
	Number of Agents Trained	114	70	184
	Travel Trade Newsletter Recipient	4068	3992	8060
	Trade Newsletter Open Rate	28.37%	24.17%	26.27%
	<b>Managed Media</b>			
	Media Meetings	15	10	25
	Total number of articles published	38	21	59
	Impressions	41,719,406	324,593	42,043,999
	PR Newsletter Recipient	364	356	720
	PR Newsletter Open Rate	47.80%	42.13%	44.97%
	<b>Social Posts</b>			
	<b>Facebook Page</b>			
	Followers	9,200	9,200	9,200
	Likes	9,200	9,200	9,200
	<b>Facebook Posts</b>			
	Reach	515	454	454
	Views	1,073	780	780
	Likes	8	0	0
	Comments	0	0	0
	Shares	0	0	0
	<b>Instagram</b>			
	Reach	21	7	7
	Views	527	320	320
	Followers	18	9	9





	Likes	25	11	11
	Comments	0	0	0
	Shares	0	0	0





## II. COMMUNICATIONS & PR

- Blues Highway (LN, MS, TN) Media Famil (Explore)
- Tennessee Dollywood Media Famil (Women's Weekly)
- QLD (Gold Coast/Brisbane) media meetings
- Further coverage from Viking Cruises Southern Famil
- Media Pitching
- Media Meetings
- GMM 26 Kick Off - identify journalists
- Earned media Coverage Book
- Global Market Media Place 25 media Coverage Book





## COVERAGE:



The Rhine Getaway cruise begins at Basel, located where Switzerland, Germany and France meet, and reflects a fascinating blend of traditions.



Enjoy an excursion to the Cairo Citadel and Egyptian Museum with 107 exhibit halls which hold over 120,000 items with its most celebrated collection, the Tutankhamen Gallery which contains the famous gold mask and other artifacts.



Often referred to as "The Big Easy," the city of New Orleans radiates charm and is renowned for its Southern hospitality.

# Spring is in the air

By Lee Mccarthy

Spring is the season of renewal and the perfect time to plan an unforgettable journey across the waters to new lands and experiences.

As nature reawakens, so too does the desire to explore, reconnect and take time out to try something new and exciting.

With exclusive airfare offers across Viking's river, ocean and expedition voyages, keen travellers can experience the world in comfort and with more inclusions included and fewer costs.

Designed for curious travellers, Viking's thoughtfully crafted itineraries created from firsthand personal experiences aboard award-winning ships offer opportunities to become immersed in the world's culture.

No matter what trip guests are searching for Paris, Giza, Istanbul, Lisbon or Antarctica there are endless opportunities on the state-of-the-art ships.

With no kids, no casinos, and a focus on cultural enrichment, the trips all promise a refined destination focused experience.

The company's smaller ships are designed to bring guests closer to their destination aboard Scandinavian inspired elegance that never upstages the destination but does provide an unforgettable experience while onboard.

More is included in Viking fares including a complimentary excursion in every board, all onboard meals with beer, wine and soft drinks at lunch and dinner, unlimited wi-fi, gratuities, port charges and access to the truly breathtaking and relaxing Nordic Spa.

Guests who book a river voyage before 1 December 2025 receive free flights or for bookings on an ocean or expedition voyage your companion flies free!



See the magnificent architectural highlights of one of Europe's most elegant and romantic cultural capitals, Vienna, Austria. (Supplied)

This offer is for travels booked for the 2026 to 2028 holidays using the offer code on the Viking website.

River cruises include the Rhine Getaway sailing from Basel to Amsterdam for eight days, visiting four countries and includes four tours from only \$5,395.

The Grand European Tour takes travellers from Budapest to Amsterdam for fifteen days, across four countries and includes twelve tours from \$10,395.

Perhaps a Romantic Danube is more appealing taking guests from Budapest to Regensburg over eight days, three countries and five tours from \$5,595.

The very popular and much-loved Pharaohs and Pyramids roundtrip Cairo, Egypt is on many travellers' bucket list and includes twelve days and eleven tours from \$11,295.

The beauty of taking a journey on Viking is the extensions available on many of their trips allowing passengers to have a few days either side of the cruise start and

finish to chill, relax, explore and take in the essence of the host country.

Another special trip is the Holland and Belgium river cruise from Amsterdam to Antwerp for ten days which includes eight tours over three countries from just \$7,695.

Many tourists love the United States and have a deep desire to fully explore the south and the Mississippi Delta Explorer ticks all the boxes visiting New Orleans, Louisiana to Memphis, Tennessee.

The eight days, six tour trip allows guests to explore the fascinating towns along the banks of the Mississippi that preserve the memory of the American South's early history.

Savour delicious Cajun and Creole cuisine along with the famous Memphis barbecue while celebrating musical legends in the birthplace of rock and roll.

Honour the memory of a pivotal Civil War battle at the Vicksburg National Park or become immersed in the blues with Viking's Privileged Access Mississippi



Learn the secrets of making your own Weiss Wurst at a Regensburg institution during the Grand European Tour.

Delta experience.

Enjoy pre and post cruise extensions here with more days to explore the embarkation or disembarkation city or see a new destination altogether.

Travellers can add a two night 'The Best of New Orleans' extension to appreciate the inimitable character and charm of the historic French Quarter and enjoy free time to discover the foodie and music scene of 'The Big Easy'.

The helpful Viking host is available to help plan so guests can make the most of the visit.

The extensions include two nights at the Hotel Monteleone in the centre of New Orleans French Quarter and combines timeless charm with Southern elegance close to Bourbon Street and historical sites and is priced from \$1499.

A selection of additional excursions may be available to enhance the extension experience and are able to be booked when the cruise shore excursions open for sale.

For more information on these cruises or the many and varied options Viking delivers, please visit [www.viking.com](http://www.viking.com) or phone 138 747.





## Communications & PR

Media Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings)

Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up/Next step
Freelancer / Narelle Bouveng (Escape, Australian Geographic)	Gold Coast-based travel writer contributing regularly to Escape and Australian Geographic.  Attending IPW and developing a potential feature concept tracing the full length of the Mississippi River—from Minnesota to the Gulf of Mexico—highlighting key stops such as St. Louis, Memphis, and New Orleans. Is keen on support and in doing in tandem with fellow journalist Craig Tansley.	They will circle back in Jan 26.
Broadsheet/Freelance, Elliot Baker	Brisbane-based journalist specialising in culinary and travel writing. Long-time contributor to Broadsheet (300+ articles since 2016) and Queensland State Editor for Gourmet Traveller. His work also appears in The Guardian (Australia), The Weekend Australian, FoodService Magazine, The Upsider, and Boss Hunting.  Very food and drink focused, with growing interest in expanding into travel and sports content.	Shared details on the MICHELIN Guide to the American South.
The Great Outdoors / Samantha Cheney	Follow-up to prior meeting to get more detail about costs and ways of working across multiple states. American Airlines has come on as flight sponsor. Crew and talent fly economy and receive a per diem, which helps reduce hosting costs. The team manages most permits in advance, and all members hold iVisas. Segments can be grouped or portioned into multiple destination features. Samantha felt a road trip piece may work best.  Filming runs through May and each episode airs in primetime and on demand, complemented by one Instagram and Facebook post promoting each segment pre-broadcast and post-shoot (tagging client handles).	Relook for planning for FY26-27.
Kellie Carty, Global PR & Communications Manager, Flight Centre.	Flight Centre HQ catch-up. They are keen to be more collaborative – keen to share more data with each other so we can leverage off of each others news or moments and press office.	Shared key messaging points for a press release on Aust visitation of the South through Dallas for them.
Jeremy Pierce, The Courier Mail	Jeremy loves the US but shared some hesitation on going currently.	Find a thematic throughline for QLD to use in press office.





	Still an advocate though and he loves sports focused stories. His stories must always have a QLD angle or it's not of interest.	
Kirk Owers, Freelancer/Escape The Herald Sun, The Daily Telegraph, and The Courier-Mail/Travel Photographer	<p>Kirk is an award-winning travel writer and photographer who regularly contributes to Escape. Last year he was recognised by the Australian Society of Travel Writers (ASTW) with an award for Best Travel Photo for "Riel Dancers, Under African Skies." There is usually a great visual to accompany his work his portfolio also spans long-form stories that celebrate adventure and authenticity.</p> <p>Kirk was going to be in Louisiana and had been commissioned also to do a story on the Blues Highway.</p>	Facilitated additional support from Memphis and Clarksdale/Mississippi for Route 61 famil.
Rachael Martin, Body + Soul, Deputy Content Editor	<p>Body+Soul is one of Australia's leading lifestyle and wellbeing platforms, part of the News Corp network and featured across The Sunday Telegraph, Herald Sun and Courier-Mail. It reaches a broad, health-conscious audience through expert-driven content on fitness, nutrition, mental wellness and modern living.</p> <p>Rachael mentioned that they are interested in unique, lesser-known experiences that would surprise and engage audiences.</p>	Jake to highlight unique wellness experiences with the South in a press office story.
Stu Freeman, Editor & Owner, Pro Mag / Travel Inc Memo	Stu was in Australia for the NTIA Awards. Updated him on Travel South and priorities for the coming year. He has maintained the sentiment that he is willing to support us editorially for all trade activity that he deems relevant for his NZ trade audience.	N/A
Dani Tuffield, KarryOn	<p>Met with Dani to discuss upcoming opportunities with KarryOn. Dani mentioned two podcast options currently available, a short episode format featuring a spokesperson guest, and a sponsored deep-dive podcast focused on a specific destination (paid).</p> <p>She also mentioned that KarryOn is going to host some social events later in the year aimed at connecting members of the travel industry.</p>	Jake to stay connected re: podcast options for Mission.
Eruna Jun, ARE Media	Caught up with Erna – she is part of the partnerships team so was quite sales focused but was able to get an introduction to the new Editor of Gourmet Traveller – who is very focused on destination specific issues.	Liase with editor of GT on food focused stories. Shared details on the MICHELIN Guide to the American South.





## III. TRAVEL TRADE

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

Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up /Next step
Alexis Cunningham Partnerships and Contracting Manager  <b>Luxury Escapes</b>	Met with Alexis for an update on the US product, which continues to perform strongly. A new Sydney Bondi Junction Westfield signature store is set to open in November/December. The current booking window sits between 85-120 days, with self-funded retirees making up most of the market.	N/A
Kristy Prince Product Manager North America  <b>Adventure World</b>	Received an update from Adventure World - bookings to the US are currently slow, but a new reservations system is in development and expected to launch within the next six months.	N/A
Nicholas Hawksley & Ash O'Reilly Product Manager and Marketing Manager  <b>Infinity Holidays</b>	USA products continue to sell as the best destination with an increase in booking YTD. Developing more city stay packages to secondary and developing cities.	N/A
Allie Sparr Global Head of Brand & Marketing  <b>Envoyage</b>	Met with Envoyage for an update on their network, which continues to see strong growth across the US and Canada - now a key focus for the brand. Following a successful global conference, Envoyage plans to shift to regional conferences next year, alternating them annually moving forward. The network now spans five markets (Australia, New Zealand, the US, Canada and South Africa) and reports a global turnover of \$2.4 billion TTV, with \$900 million generated from Australia.	N/A
Leeanne Grove & Sandra Reucker Marketing Executive and Product Executive  <b>Travel Managers</b>	We discussed that the US market has softened slightly and Europe is currently driving strong demand.	N/A
Dee Jaswal Head of Product & Marketing  <b>iTravel</b>	Update on the US market, which remains strong for hotels, though the cruise sector is flat or slightly down across regions. The network continues to grow, with significant focus on strengthening their Headquarters wholesale operations. Christine McCullagh (itravel-au.com) has recently been appointed Product Manager, based in Melbourne.	N/A





David Reece Founder <b>Ride the World Motorcycle Tours</b>	Met with David to discuss the upcoming launch of the Route 66 "Mother Road 66th Birthday" ride - a key promotional opportunity celebrating one of America's most iconic road trips.	Ongoing
Janis McDonald Sales Account Manager <b>Air Canada</b>	Discussion on joint promotions to promote AC's connections into the USA via fams, trainings and event.	Ongoing
Sue, Senior Consultant <b>Time 2 Travel</b>	Agency training for 3 agents with varying experience levels; spent extra time with the junior agent reviewing the Travel South map, key attractions, and client-focused tips to boost confidence and product knowledge.	N/A
Sharon, Manager <b>St George Travel</b>	Presented to 2 Senior Consultants, showcasing the latest itineraries. Focused on new and upcoming highlights across the state.	N/A
Lisa, Travel Advisor <b>Flight Centre Southgate</b>	Agency presentation to 4 consultants on What's New and Travel South itineraries; strong interest in learning about new destinations for their clients. Hotels & activities highlighted for family-friendly shopping-centre locations.	N/A
<b>Beyond Borders Conference</b>	Met with key trade partners across major networks including Helloworld, itravel, Envoyage, Travel Associates, and Frontier Travel, with overall feedback indicating continued growth and strong performance for US land product.	N/A
<b>ATIA Fun Run</b>	Participation in ATIA (Australia Travel Industry Association) fun run for networking and Flight Centre Head office breakfast	N/A
<b>NTIA Awards</b>	Attended and networked at the NTIA Awards and the Karryon x Qantas Glam Club, engaging with NTIA Travel Agent Finalists and key industry partners.	N/A
<b>WebBeds Event</b>	Discussed Webjet's recent demerger and upcoming relaunch supported by significant media investment. The new launch will introduce static packages, tours, and business travel offerings (following the acquisition and rebrand of Locomode to Webber Business Travel). Webjet is expanding its product range and increasing market and media spend by 82% over the next six months, supported by enhanced CRM capabilities through Braze for advanced customer insights.	N/A





<b>Trip Advisor Event</b>	Attended the Tripadvisor relaunch event, connecting with Lauren Wicker (Principal Client Partner) and industry peers. The event provided insights into Tripadvisor's refreshed positioning and upcoming initiatives within the travel and tourism sector.	N/A
<b>Thanksgiving Save the Date</b>	Invite sent out for Thanksgiving event to influential trade, airline, wholesale and agency consortia's with 62 RSVPS to date.	Ongoing
<b>Travel Managers Webinar</b>	Travel South Webinar with 32 Travel Managers. Webinar also loaded on their intranet for access when required.	N/A
Lynett Day Owner  <b>Maria &amp; Turner Travel Associates</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Krystal Brazel Senior Consultant  <b>Everything Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Jo Gonzales Travel Advisor  <b>MTA Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Aaron Spriggs Leisure Consultant  <b>Orbit World Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Suzie Taouk Owner/Director  <b>The Ultimate Traveller</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Deborah Bartolo Owner  <b>MTA Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Trish Park Travel Advisor  <b>Savenio Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Bradley Chew Travel Consultant  <b>Flight Centre</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A





Melanie Evans Senior Travel Advisor <b>Travel Associates Mosman</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Michelle Massey Director <b>Amplify Accessible Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Luke Watts Home Based Independent <b>Travel Managers</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Sharon Hington Travel Advisor <b>Helloworld Taree</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Shana Frazin Travel Agent <b>Travelglobe</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Natasha Spencer Travel Advisor <b>MTA Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Jenny Thomas Travel Advisor <b>Maria &amp; Turner Travel Associates</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Dianne Cox Travel Advisor <b>MTA Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Lyndall Collins Travel Advisor <b>itravel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Simon Wakeford Owner <b>Roam Wisely</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Sarah Day Travel Advisor <b>MTA Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A





Maria Esteves Travel Advisor <b>Itravel Carlingford</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Michelle Pellie Personal Travel Manager <b>Travel Managers</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Andre Parchimowicz Travel Consultant <b>Planet Dwellers</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Zane Batson Travel Consultant <b>Planet Dwellers</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Michelle Barker Founder <b>Embark Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Benjamin Lord Agency Manager <b>Expert Class Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Leah Temple Owner <b>Helloworld</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Maria Lamotto Travel Advisor <b>Itravel Sutherland</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Donna Jones Travel Advisor <b>MTA Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A
Clare Dos Santos Director <b>Clare Dos Santos Travel</b>	Meeting and training on Travel South.	N/A





## CAMPAIGNS & ACTIVITY

### NTIA Awards





ATIA Beyond Borders Conference



ATIA Fun Run & Flight Centre Breakfast





TADA 2025:





Travel Manager Webinar – 37 Agents Trained





Media Meetings



## RESOURCE CENTRE UPDATES

What's On:



November 27, 2025  
**101st Turkey Day Classic**

Celebrate a century-old tradition at the 101st Turkey Day Classic, featuring exciting homecoming festivities, lively entertainment, and family-friendly fun throughout the day. Join locals and visitors alike for one of Montgomery's most anticipated annual events.

(more...)



November 20, 2025  
**Graceland Holiday Lighting Ceremony**

Kick off the festive season at the annual Graceland Holiday Lighting Ceremony, where Elvis' iconic home transforms into a winter wonderland. Enjoy the magic as hundreds of blue Christmas lights, a life-size nativity scene, and Santa's sleigh sparkle to life. This free event is open to the public and will also be streamed live on Graceland's Livestream Channel.

(more...)





What's New:

⊕ **October 2025**

🏠 **The Tess, Autograph Collection - Atlanta, Georgia**

Opened October 2025 in the Buckhead neighbourhood of Atlanta, The Tess (part of the Marriott Autograph Collection) features 201 rooms, a rooftop pool & bar, a restaurant, skyline views and even a podcast-studio space.

[LEARN MORE](#)

🔔 **The Sicilian Butcher / The Sicilian Baker - Nashville, Tennessee**

Beloved Arizona-born brands The Sicilian Butcher and The Sicilian Baker have officially opened their first Tennessee location in Nashville's vibrant Midtown district. The dual restaurant-bakery concept brings authentic Italian comfort food, signature build-your-own meatballs, and indulgent cannoli flights to Music City. With its lively atmosphere and handcrafted menu, it's a delicious new addition to Nashville's dining scene.

[LEARN MORE](#)





# Newsletters – Trick or Treats: Spooky, Sweet, and Savory October Eats & Drinks

TRADE Newsletter – Recipients: 3992 Open Rate: 963 (24.12%)

PR Newsletter – Recipients: 356 Open Rate: 150 (42.13%)

## TravelSouth USA



### Trick or Treats: Spooky, Sweet, and Savory October Eats & Drinks

October in the South is a feast for the senses, blending the warmth of Southern hospitality with the playful spirit of Halloween. From comforting seasonal flavors to hauntingly creative cocktails and fall-inspired treats, every bite and sip captures the essence of the season. Whether you crave something spooky, sweet, or savory, this month's culinary adventures promise to delight taste buds and celebrate autumn in true Southern style.

[Learn More](#)

### LOUISIANA

#### Frightful Festivities

Louisiana in October bursts with spooky charm and Southern flair. In Houma, celebrate Cajun folklore at Rougarou Fest with costume contests, ghouls runs, music, and food. Explore eerie legends at DeRidder's Gothic "Hanging Jail", featuring history tours and a haunted house. In Shreveport, Dixie Maze Farm delights families by day with pumpkins and corn mazes, then thrills guests at night with haunted adventures. Round out your trip at New Orleans' Historic Voodoo Museum for mystical tales and traditions.



[Read More](#)





## SOUTH CAROLINA

### Cozy Conway

Conway, South Carolina comes alive each October with small-town charm and festive spirit. Downtown streets glow with pumpkins, spooky décor, and photo-worthy Halloween displays-perfect for a fall stroll. Local cafés and restaurants join in the fun with pumpkin-spiced treats, themed cocktails, and ghost-shaped pastries. Whether you're after cozy autumn vibes or a family-friendly Halloween adventure, Conway offers the perfect seasonal escape.

[Read More](#)



## ALABAMA

### Seasonal Sips

From pumpkin ales to dark chocolate stouts, Alabama's breweries embrace spooky season with delicious flair. In cities like Birmingham and Huntsville, local brewers pour autumnal creations that taste like fall in a glass, perfect for cozy nights and Halloween gatherings. Pair your pint with seasonal bites from nearby food trucks or pubs, where smoky barbecue, roasted corn, and hearty chili make the perfect match. Alabama proves that when sweets meet spirits, magic follows.

[Read More](#)



## RHYTHMS OF THE SOUTH

### Atlanta, Nashville, New Orleans

In Atlanta, Georgia, fall brings cozy cafés, pumpkin-spiced treats, and spooky adventures-from ghost tours through historic neighborhoods to the cinematic thrills of Netherworld Haunted House in Stone Mountain. In Nashville, Tennessee, the season means rooftop dining, live music, and crisp-air festivals filled with food, crafts, and laughter. And in New Orleans, Louisiana, autumn is a feast of flavor and fun, with gumbo, ghost tours, and the vibrant Krewe of Boo Halloween parade lighting up the streets.

[Read More](#)



## MISSISSIPPI

### Haunted Mississippi

October in Mississippi brings a haunting blend of flavor and folklore. In Vicksburg, the historic McRaven House-known as the state's most haunted home - beckons visitors to explore its Civil War past and ghostly legends. After your chills, warm up with pumpkin-spiced treats, caramel-drizzled desserts, and autumn-inspired brews at local cafés and breweries. With its mix of Southern comfort food, eerie sites, and small-town charm, Mississippi serves up a Halloween experience like no other.

[Read More](#)





## TENNESSEE

### Fright Flight

In Johnson City, Tiebreakers raises spirits this Halloween with its Fright Flight, a four-cocktail tasting experience that's equal parts spooky and sophisticated. Guests can sample the Certified Freak, a tequila blend with pineapple and a black salt rim, or the Spooky Action, topped with cotton candy for a sweet surprise. Alongside creative mixes like Green Witch and Dangerous Delight, this Halloween flight delivers a playful taste of Tennessee's seasonal spirit.

[Read More](#)



## NORTH CAROLINA

### Mountain Magic

October transforms North Carolina into a masterpiece of color, where mountain trails and coastal towns come alive with fall flavor. Sip pumpkin-spiced lattes, sample harvest ales, and savor hearty seasonal dishes after scenic drives along the Blue Ridge Parkway. From cozy cafés in the mountains to seafood feasts by the coast, North Carolina's fall season blends vibrant scenery, crisp air, and Southern warmth into the perfect autumn escape.

[Read More](#)



## KENTUCKY

### Bourbon & Chocolate

Savor the spirit of Kentucky with a bourbon and chocolate pairing experience along the Kentucky Bourbon Trail. Enjoy Evan Williams' "Choc-ology" tour in Louisville, tastings at Woodford Reserve, or sweet pairings at Lux Row Distillers in Bardstown. As Halloween approaches, explore the state's haunted landmarks like Waverly Hills Sanatorium and the Old Talbott Tavern, where rich bourbon, sweet chocolate, and eerie history create the perfect seasonal escape.

[Read More](#)



## MISSOURI

### Pumpkin Patches

Fall in Missouri means cozy sweaters, crisp air, and pumpkin patches bursting with seasonal charm. Across the state, farms transform into autumn wonderlands with wagon rides, corn mazes, and fields filled with pumpkins of every shape and size. Visitors can pick the perfect pumpkin, sip cider, and enjoy family-friendly fun surrounded by golden leaves, creating the ultimate fall experience in the heart of the Show-Me State.

[Read More](#)





FIND OUT MORE:



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# SOCIAL CONTENT UPDATE

## Instagram:



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 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 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





travelsouthusa.au  
travelsouthusa.au October in Mississippi is all treats and tricks! 🎃👻🍷 From pumpkin-spiced sweets and glowing cocktails to cozy chilli and festive fall brews, the culinary scene comes alive with spooky flavors. 🍂  
Pair it with haunted adventures - explore the eerie McRaven House in Vicksburg, candlelit tours in Natchez, or ghostly encounters at Jackson's Fairview Inn. Whether it's ghoulish desserts or haunted history, Mississippi serves up the ultimate spooky-season escape.  
📍 @visitms  
#TravelSouth #Mississippi



travelsouthusa.au  
travelsouthusa.au Autumn in North Carolina means cozy bites, festive sips, and breathtaking views. From the mountains to the coast, cafés, breweries & restaurants bring the season to life with festive menus that pair perfectly with crisp air & colorful scenery.  
Sip pumpkin spice lattes, taste harvest ales, or enjoy butternut squash soup after a Blue Ridge hike. Every stop is a chance to savor autumn's best while soaking up breathtaking fall views. 🍂  
📍 @VisitNC  
#VisitNC #TravelSouth



travelsouthusa.au  
travelsouthusa.au Fall flavors, festivals & frights across the South! 🎃  
📍 Atlanta: Sip pumpkin ales at local breweries, indulge in seasonal café treats, and brace yourself for Netherworld, one of America's top haunted houses. Add in ghost tours and outdoor movie nights under crisp fall skies.  
📍 Nashville: Enjoy rooftop dining, cozy lattes, and harvest menus. Explore fall festivals, farmer's markets, and don't miss Oktoberfest with world-class beer tastings and German eats.  
📍 New Orleans: Bite into po'boys and gumbo, sway to blues at the Crescent City BBQ Festival, and feel Mardi Gras magic at the Krewe of BOO! Parade, complete with Zombie Run & Monster Mash afterparty.  
📍 @discoveratlanta @visitmusiccity @neworleans  
#TravelSouth #RhythmsOfTheSouth



travelsouthusa.au  
travelsouthusa.au Spooky Season in Conway, South Carolina 🎃  
This charming small town comes alive each October with glowing pumpkins, festive décor, and Halloween photo ops that make downtown perfect for a fall stroll. 🍂  
Local restaurants and cafés serve pumpkin-spiced treats, ghost-shaped pastries, caramel apple desserts, and Halloween cocktails that capture the season's flavor. 🍷  
Conway is the perfect blend of cozy charm and spooky fun - a Halloween experience for all ages.  
📍 @Discover\_SC  
#DiscoverSC #TravelSouth



travelsouthusa.au  
travelsouthusa.au In Sevierville, Tennessee (Dolly Parton's hometown!), the Apple Barn Cider Mill & General Store is a must-stop during harvest season. 🍏🍷  
Explore two restaurants, a winery, cider house, creamery, bakery, candy factory, candle shop, and a charming general store - all rooted in apple tradition. Apples are milled in-house and transformed into craft cider at the Apple Barn Hard Cider Company... the perfect fall sip! 🍷  
📍 @tnvacation  
#MadeInTennessee #TravelSouth

Facebook:



# Travel South USA | AUNZ GPP MONTHLY Report



**Travel South USA**  
Just now · 🌐

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



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**Travel South USA**  
Just now · 🌐

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



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**Travel South USA**  
Just now · 🌐

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



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**Travel South USA**  
Just now · 🌐

October in Mississippi is all treats and tricks! 🍷👻🍷 From pumpkin-spiced sweets and glowing cocktails to cozy chili and festive fall brews, the culinary scene comes alive with spooky flavors. 🍂🍷

Pair it with haunted adventures - explore the eerie McRaven House in Vicksburg, candlelit tours in Natchez, or ghostly encounters at Jackson's Fairview Inn. Whether it's ghoulish desserts or haunted history, Mississippi serves up the ultimate spooky-season escape.

📍 @visitms  
#TravelSouth #Mississippi



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Just now · 🌐

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📍 @VisitNC  
#VisitNC #TravelSouth



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Just now · 🌐

Fall flavors, festivals & frights across the South! 🍷👻  
Atlanta: Sip pumpkin ales at local breweries, indulge in seasonal café treats, and brace yourself for Netherworld, one of America's top haunted houses. Add in ghost tours and outdoor movie nights under crisp fall skies.

Nashville: Enjoy rooftop dining, cozy lattes, and harvest menus. Explore fall festivals, farmer's markets, and don't miss Oktoberfest with world-class beer tastings and German eats.

📍 New Orleans: Bi... See more



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📍 @tnvacation

#MadeInTennessee #TravelSouth



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# Market Update

## Economic & Market Update

The following economic announcements were made in October:

- **RBA holds interest rates at 3.60% (1 Oct):** The Reserve Bank kept the cash rate steady, saying it wants clearer signs that inflation is easing before making any move. In short, they're staying cautious. [Source](#)
- **Inflation (29 Oct):** Prices rose 3.2% over the year to September (1.3% quarter-on-quarter), up from 3.0% in August. The lift was mainly driven by housing, electricity, and insurance costs. Inflation remains above the RBA's 2-3% target, but signs of easing in goods prices suggest pressure may be slowly moderating. [Source](#)
- **Labour (24 Oct):** Unemployment edged up to 4.5% in September (from 4.3%), showing the job market is softening slightly. This cooling suggests the economy is slowing, which could help ease inflation in coming months. [Source](#)
- **AUD vs USD (October):** The Australian dollar softened slightly over the month, ending October at around USD 0.65 (down from USD 0.66 in September). While still stronger than its early-year lows, the softer dollar still makes price the biggest barrier for travel to the USA. [Source](#)

## Tour Operators & Travel Agencies

- ATIA launches new committee to elevate independent travel agents. At the recent Australian Travel Industry Association (ATIA)'s annual summit, the new Committee of Independent Travel Agents and Advisors (CTA) was unveiled, giving independent advisors a formal voice in policy, data sharing and industry advocacy from late 2025. [Source](#)
- Helloworld takes full ownership of MTA – Mobile Travel Agents! Helloworld Travel has acquired the remaining 50 % stake in MTA – Mobile Travel Agents (MTA), lifting its total investment to around AU\$50 million and adding an estimated AU\$440 million annualised TTV to its books. [Source](#)
- Entire Travel Group accepts 40 % investment from Consolidated Travel to power growth. Consolidated Travel (CTG) acquires a 40 per cent stake in Entire Travel Group, bringing CTG executive Ari Magoutis onto the board and enabling investment in tech, destinations and agent support. [Source](#)
- Webjet unveils bold rebrand as it pivots beyond flights after 27 years. Under Katrina Barry, Webjet launches its biggest refresh, new visual identity, "Go-Somewhere" platform, expanded hotels/packages/tours and AI-driven site, aiming to double transaction value by 2030. [Source](#)
- Flight Centre sells Cross Hotels to refocus on growth ventures. The divestment to South Korea's Sono International will enable FCTG to reinvest in its Horizon Three portfolio, including Topdeck's small-group relaunch, Back-Roads Touring, Discova and Grasshopper Adventures, signalling a sharper focus on niche, experience driven travel brands. [Source](#)





## Traveler Insights

- Cruise tourism industry contributes A\$7 billion to Australia's economy. Research indicates the cruise sector's economic footprint in Australia has hit approximately A\$7 billion, underlining its significance for tourism, regional ports, hospitality and shore based experience suppliers, a strong reminder of cruising's role in the broader travel ecosystem. [Source](#)
- Expedia research finds video drives travel decisions as AI divides audiences. The global study shows travellers are nearly three times more influenced by video than static imagery when booking holidays. While authenticity remains key, many remain cautious about AI generated content, with most preferring a mix of human creativity and machine assistance. [Source](#)
- Luxury Escapes 2026 Travel Trends. The report reveals Australians will travel more and spend more in 2026, favouring premium yet purposeful escapes centred on wellness, cultural immersion and bucket list experiences. Japan, Italy and Bali top wish lists, while sports events, concerts and culinary travel drive new motivations. Value-add inclusions and flexible packages remain the strongest conversion triggers. [Source](#)
- Travellers seek quieter, slower escapes for 2026; avoid the crowds, embrace nature. According to the "Unpack '26" trend report by Expedia and partners, 59% of travellers will attend local sporting events and 50% will stay in smaller towns/holiday parks to escape tourism hotspots. [Source](#)
- Australian travellers pull back from the U.S. as short-haul destinations surge. Trips by Australians to the U.S. have dropped by double digits, while Indonesia, New Zealand and the UK record strong growth according to ABS data. [Source](#)
- Grand-generation holidays surge: grandparents and grandkids travel together, parents stay home. Hilton's 2026 Trends Report finds "skip-gen" trips are booming with grandparents taking grandchildren on memory rich, wellbeing focused holidays that demand interconnect rooms, senior friendly amenities, and culture-led experiences. [Source](#)
- Guided tours surge with next-gen travellers. A 5,000 participant study by Globus and MMGY Travel Intelligence finds 74% of Gen X and 71% of younger Boomers now favour guided travel for cultural connection, ease and hidden gems, with small group tours especially popular. [Source](#)
- Australia poised to capitalise as sports tourism becomes a major travel driver. Sports tourism is booming: fans spending over US \$3,000 per trip, global market projected to hit US \$1.3 trillion by 2032, presenting opportunities for Aussie hotels and operators. [Source](#)
- Luxury travel in Australia & NZ shifts from opulence to meaning, according to Luxe Report 2026. In the Virtuoso Luxe Report 2026, luxury travellers prioritise restorative, authentic experiences, expedition cruises, slow travel and ultraluxe packages, as Japan becomes top destination and emerging hotspots gain traction. [Source](#)
- Majority of APAC travellers now book trips around sports and entertainment events. A Hilton survey across China, India, Australia, Singapore and Japan reveals 40% of respondents plan international trips for events, with F1 leading the charge, and loyalty program perks shaping hotel choices. [Source](#)





## Air Lift

- American Airlines tours its new B787-9P premium Dreamliner in Brisbane. The redesigned B787-9P touched down in Brisbane, showcasing a full interior overhaul; 51 Flagship Suites, advanced Premium Economy and Main cabins, USB-C/AC power throughout and free WiFi for loyalty members from 2026. The aircraft will operate the seasonal Brisbane-Dallas service this summer. [Source](#)
- Operational readiness steps begin at Western Sydney International Airport. The new Western Sydney terminal has stepped into its test phase, with staff training underway and safety systems undergoing live drills ahead of its late-2026 opening. The phase includes emergency simulations and flight path checks in partnership with Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA). [Source](#)
- Qatar Airways revives Canberra-global link and launches bargain Europe fares. From 2 December 2025, Qatar Airways will resume daily Boeing 777 flights to Canberra via Melbourne, and is offering return Europe fares from A\$1,809 under an Early Bird sale running 7-31 October. [Source](#)
- Malaysia Airlines returns to Brisbane with direct route and upgraded aircraft. The carrier and Brisbane Airport Corporation celebrated the relaunch of Brisbane-Kuala Lumpur service from 30 November 2025, featuring the new A330neo and expanded Firefly connections. [Source](#)
- US carrier Air T inks deal to acquire Regional Express (Rex). After entering voluntary administration in July 2024, Rex has signed a Sale & Implementation Deed with Air T. The deal remains subject to creditor and regulatory approvals and aims to secure regional route continuity and workforce retention. [Source](#)





## Media

- ARN's iHeart is has partnered with sports media organisation Making The Call to launch Australia's first-ever audio network dedicated entirely to women's sports. [SOURCE](#)
- Are Media, one of Australia's largest women's lifestyle networks, has launched a new luxury division uniting Gourmet Traveller, Marie Claire and Australian Women's Weekly under one cross-brand ecosystem. This consolidation points to a renewed focus on affluent, experience-led storytelling that intersects travel, design, gastronomy and wellness. [Source.](#)
- New research from Bench Media shows Australians are growing weary of AI-generated advertising, with most seeking greater transparency and human input. While many recognise AI's creative potential, 60% of consumers want AI-made content clearly labelled. For tourism brands, this signals that authenticity and emotional storytelling remain key. As AI adoption rises, travellers will respond to campaigns that focus on genuine human experiences and local connection. [Source.](#)
- Val Morgan Digital has appointed Amanda Bardas as its new Head of Digital, following the recent closure of lifestyle site The Latch, which will see the company focus on driving growth through its stable of global publishing brands; LADbible, BuzzFeed, Tasty, Fandom, and POPSUGAR. Bardas, who joined the company in 2019 and has a strong pedigree in youth publishing and has overseen significant audience growth across the network's digital portfolio. [Source.](#)
- News Corp Australia has maintained its position as the country's leading news and information publisher, reaching four in five online Australians in September, according to the latest Ipsos iris digital audience rankings. In the news category, they achieved 14.72 million users and 575 million browser page views, with an average of 44 minutes spent per visitor. [Source.](#)
- Australian media network Vinyl Group has revealed plans to increase its content output by ten times using AI, targeting break-even by the end of the financial year. The strategy will look to automate repetitive tasks like sourcing, drafting and tagging stories, allowing editors and writers to focus on higher value creative work. [Source.](#)
- News Corp Australasia boss Michael Miller says the country is at risk of losing its voice and identity to artificial intelligence unless the government implements safeguards. Miller told the Melbourne Press Club that proposed copyright changes giving tech companies unfettered use of journalistic content for AI training would threaten Australian culture and media, calling for stronger protections of creators. By emphasising that media organisations must not be undermined in the rush for AI-driven scale, this has highlighted the growing tension between large legacy publishers and the tech & AI sector. [Source.](#)
- Signature Media has announced key structural changes, with Tina-Louise Jackson appointed Publisher & General Manager and Christian Barker stepping into the role of Editorial Director across all titles. Vacations & Travel will now publish three times per year, while Ski & Snowboard will discontinue its standalone print edition but maintain coverage across the portfolio. Source: Social Diary.





## Actions

- Good Food & Wine Festival Planning
- Mission Planning
- Travel Managers Webinar
- International Showcase
- Thanksgiving
- Trade & PR Newsletter
- Melbourne Media Meetings
- GMM 26 Pitching
- Social Campaign

