

# CANADA REPORT

February 2026

Travel  
South  
USA

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# ABOUT TSUSA

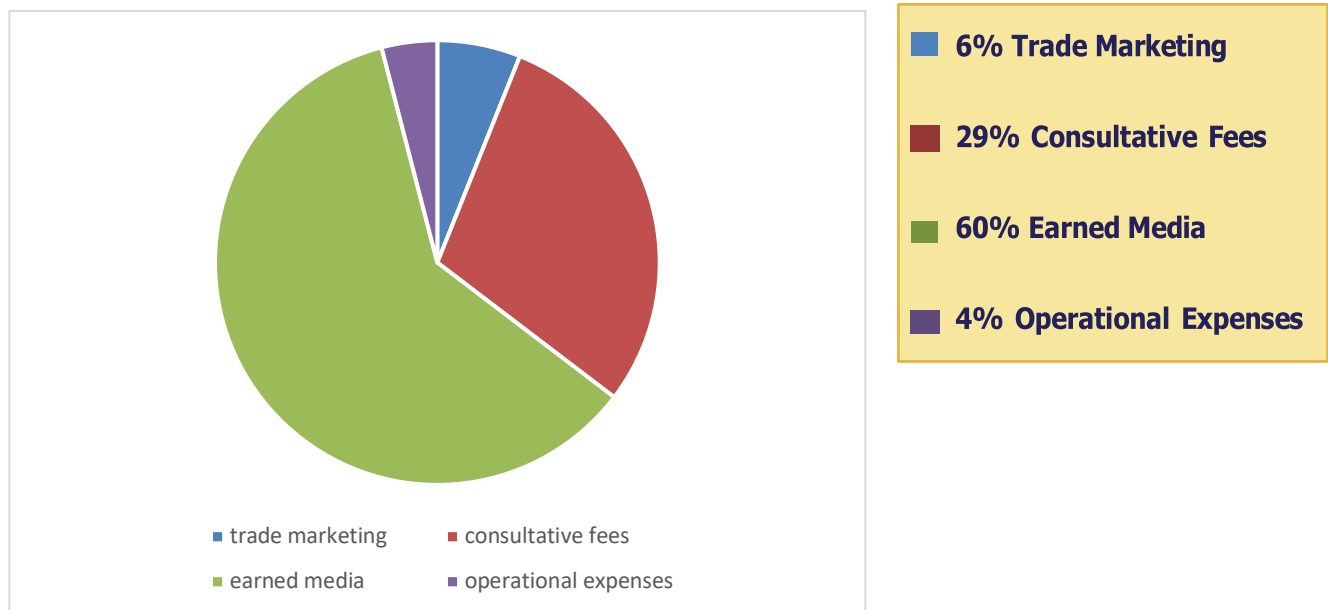
## Global Partner Programming

Canada represents one of the most important international source markets for the United States, underpinned by deep socio-cultural ties, aligned values, and one of the most integrated economic relationships in the world. The efficient movement of people across the border is essential to prosperity and competitiveness, and travel remains a natural extension of those connections.

Canada maintains a stable economy, strong household purchasing power, and a mature outbound travel culture. Cross border journeys consistently rank among the most popular international trips for Canadians, supported by expanding air connectivity between major Canadian gateways and U.S. destinations. While current volumes sit below earlier forecasts as households navigate broader socio-economic pressures, the market continues to deliver a meaningful share of travelers who remain active and willing to visit the United States. Air travel remains a primary growth driver, particularly during peak leisure periods such as summer and holiday windows.

Canadian travelers are experienced, informed, and comfortable navigating the U.S. They are receptive to regional diversity, open to local cuisine, and typically build itineraries that blend marquee experiences with opportunities for discovery.

### FY 26 Canada GPP Resource Allocations



# I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Meetings with key trade partners to identify new co-marketing opportunities and educational opportunities to continue to build drive market product ahead of market rebound, expected shift due to global geopolitical issues overseas and in the Caribbean.
- Communication and PR results are mixed: the Canadian media landscape remains highly competitive, with ongoing global news developments dominating editorial agendas and leaving limited space for destination driven travel coverage.
- Social media engagement has risen significantly, with Facebook and Instagram hitting their annual targets so far; this growth is driven by the strategic use of videos and more engaging captions, boosting visibility and supporting trade outreach

		Q1 Total	Q2 Total	January	February	March	Q3 Total	FY 25/26 Total
<b>9 Partners AL/AR/KY/ MS/MO/NC SC/TN ROTS</b>	<b>Canada</b>							
	<b>Travel Trade</b>							
	Trade Meetings/Trainings	22	14	4	7		12	40
	Number of Agents Trained	0	29	4	0		4	33
	<b>Communication &amp; PR</b>							
	Media Meetings	39	23	7	6		13	75
	Total number of articles published	15	6	0	1		1	22
	Impressions	10,109,399	170,775	0	685,000		685,000	10,965,174
	Global Media Marketplace & FAMS	0	4	0	1		2	5
	TSUSA PR Newsletters	1	3	1	1		2	5
	Facebook	4	12	4	5		9	21
	Instagram	4	12	4	5		9	21

# II. Comms & PR

Meetings with media, coverage opportunities, media releases, contacts, earned media evaluation, clippings, and others.

## News Releases & Pitching

- Monthly newsletter highlighted Soulfood: BBQ to Meat & Threes Honouring Civil Rights Legacies
- February featured two-page spread on Kansas City in Canadian World Traveler's Spring print edition
- CoverageBook Link - <https://travelsouthusa.coveragebook.com/b/cc3dd1a010f4af6e>

**Discovering Kansas City, Kansas**  
by Randy Mink

**BBQ places are mission-critical for me to visit KCK, but during my stay based at the new Morgantown Hotel Kansas City, I found it has much more to offer. The ethnically diverse city of 157,000 is the No. 1 tourist destination in the state of Kansas.**

**Village West: Food Point for Fun**  
Located in the fast-developing Village West area, my hotel was a good jumping-off point for attractions like the new Afton, a high-tech waterfront just a block away. At this combination fun house, escape room, art museum and entertainment venue, you might catch performances by musicians, dancers, acrobats and contortionists, and even get into the act yourself.

**Village West also is home to Kansas Speedway, which hosts NASCAR races twice a year and offers ride experiences—with or without a driver—in certain areas. Coming off-season, Back to the Backdoor Casino at Kansas Speedway, a short drive from the historic Kawartha Kansas City Monarchs, and Sporting Park, home to Major League Soccer's Sporting Kansas City.**

**An attractive open-air shopping mall, recently renamed Ingers Kansas City at Legends, has long anchored the city's west-side shops, vintage and sidewalk playgrounds recognize former Kansas like U.S. President Dwight D. Eisenhower, pioneer aviator Amelia Earhart and Western heroism Wyatt Earp. Mega stores Helix, Nike, Furniture Mart and Best Pro Shops are major draws, along with familiar names like Pub, Ralph Lauren, Nike, Under Armour and Old Navy.**

**The 238-room Morgantown hotel offers free shuttle bus service to the mall and other attractions in Village West. But I wouldn't**

**Mane explore for staying put at this laid-back, beach-themed chill place that embodies the spirit of singer-songwriter Jimmy Buffet, a who relocated in 10 years like "Margaritaville" and "I'm on a Boat Somewhere." Guests can frolic in an indoor pool, enjoy a hip-hop-like outdoor pool ringed with cabanas and fake palm, and choose from the extensive margarita menu at Laidback & Chill.**

**KCK's Cultural Tapestry**  
In downtown Kansas City, Kansas, the eclectic Strawberry Hill neighborhood is best known for its Eastern European roots, a heritage that dates to the late 1800s, when immigrants—many of them from Croatia—came to work in the smelting plants. Strawberry Hill Museum & Cultural Center, housed in a Victorian mansion and former orphanage, preserves the area's Slavic culture.

**For treats and treats on one block of Sixth Street, stop by Hay Sugar Ice Cream and Kramer's House of Sausage. The latter shop, a third-generation family business founded by a Croatian immigrant, makes 24 varieties of sausage—from bratwurst to cheese popovers—and supplies some of the area's top barbecue restaurants.**

**The KCK Legacy Trail, a series of self-guided audio programs along a rail path, spotlights the city's diverse culture. On "Eastern European Journey," centered in the Strawberry Hill and Russian Hill neighborhoods, one of eight stops is the former Holy Trinity Russian Orthodox Church, now a gem for drinks and cocktails. The Legacy Trail's 10-stop "Kansas Journey" also has been launched, and is the works in "Indigenous People Journey."**

**For views of long traffic and the Kansas City, Missouri skyline, head to KCK's Kawartha Park. This site at the confluence of the Missouri and Kansas rivers is where explorer Lewis & Clark camped in June of 1804. Educational pavilions and scenic walkways commemorate the famed expedition into the wilds of western America.**

**An exciting new crowd-pleaser in KCK is an aquatic bridge that's being redeveloped as America's first entertainment district over a river. Rooted in the history of the Rock Island Railroad, the Rock Island Bridge will include a water, a beer garden-type area, a stage for live music, event spaces and kayak and paddle boarding docks. Spanning the Kansas River, the renovated bridge, built in 1903, crosses the Kansas-Missouri state line and has a landing in each state.**

**Marble Magic in Bonner Springs**  
For an easy side trip from Kansas City, go west to Bonner Springs, home of the Moon Marble Company museum and retail store. At this hidden Kansas gem, you can shop for marbles, make your own marble necklace and see marbles made in a glasswork demonstration. The store offers a variety of retro toys and games, including Chrome checkers and other games that use marbles.

**Best Barbecue in the Midwest**  
Preserving the smoky, saucy, slow-cooked legacy of Kansas City barbecue, the KCK BBQ Trail connects food businesses in neighborhoods throughout town. Visitors and locals can sign up online to receive a mobile app that lists them some points of the stops and releases them for prizes.

**Kansas City's tomato-based BBQ sauces are thick, tangy and layered with sweet and spicy notes. The sauce is so good that I don't care if I am having it with beef brisket, pulled pork, chicken, tri-tip sausage, burnt ends or pork spare ribs.**

**At places like Slig's BBQ in Strawberry Hill, the sides are just as tempting as the meat. You can't go wrong with the cheesy corn, baked beans or baked potato casseroles. Other delectable choices include mac and cheese, coleslaw, French fries, hot pates and fried chicken curls.**

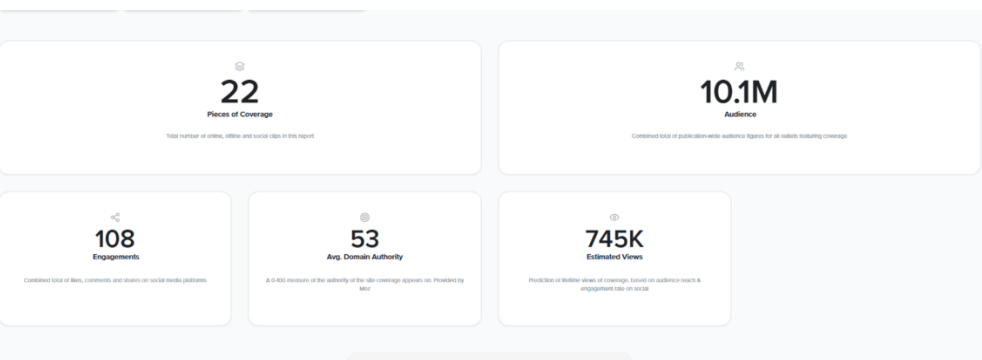
**My other major experience was at Joe's Kansas City Bar-B-Que, located at a two-purty gas station/convenience store. Joe's signature Z-Man sandwich, an 8-ounce Kansas ham, combines smoked beef brisket with smoked provolone cheese and crispy onion rings. Some in my group raved about the Rocket Pig, a sandwich of pulled pork tossed in a sweet-hot BBQ glaze, with bacon, pepper jack cheese, BBQ mayo and fried jalapeños. I had the Big Cheese sandwich—a bun stuffed with pulled pork and sliced sausage—and the best baked beans ever. For dessert, there's the BBQ joint staple—creamy banana pudding with vanilla wafers.**

**Best Trail Adventure: Fossilic Fossils**  
Hesperia make up about 40 percent of the city's population, and there are more than 60 Mexican restaurants. As on the KCK BBQ Trail, individuals who sign up for the KCK BBQ Trail's digital passport can tally up points to earn prizes.

**World's best BBQ side and toppings, each with their own vibe and menu items. The jelly taco museum allows you to pose for pictures at one of the stops. On my group's tour, I found the best at El Camino Real, where the marinated pork (el pastor) is infused with bits of pineapple on the meat and fruit revolves on a vertical spit.**



































**The next time you're in the area, follow in the footsteps of Lewis & Clark and take some of the trails that explore this Kansas city's cultural and culinary scenes.**

[www.kansascity.com](http://www.kansascity.com)



# II. Comms & PR

## February Social Media Posts

<input type="checkbox"/>	 From winding Route 66 roads to hidden ... Reel · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Thu Feb 26, 2:01pm		63	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	 From winding Route 66 roads to hidden ... Reel · <a href="#">Travel South USA - Canada</a>	Boost	...	Thu Feb 26, 2:00pm		22	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 You have 5 days. One car. Endless Southern ... Carousel · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Wed Feb 25, 1:00pm		4	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	 You have 5 days. One car. Endless Southern ... Multi media · <a href="#">Travel South USA - Canada</a>	Boost	...	Wed Feb 25, 1:00pm		2	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 BBQ isn't just food—it's a way of life acro... Carousel · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Tue Feb 24, 1:00pm		7	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	 BBQ isn't just food—it's a way of life acro... Multi media · <a href="#">Travel South USA - Canada</a>	Boost	...	Tue Feb 24, 1:00pm		2	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 The countdown to Mardi Gras is on! 🎉🎊 W... Carousel · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Mon Feb 23, 1:00pm		7	1
<input type="checkbox"/>	 The countdown to Mardi Gras is on! 🎉🎊 W... Multi media · <a href="#">Travel South USA - Canada</a>	Boost	...	Mon Feb 23, 1:00pm		0	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 From the South to Team Canada... we see y...	Boost	...	Fri Feb 20, 11:22am		1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Where faith met freedom, gospel became t... Carousel · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Thu Feb 19, 1:00pm		15	4
<input type="checkbox"/>	 🎷Where music meets history 🎷 The Jeffer... Multi media · <a href="#">Travel South USA - Canada</a>	Boost	...	Wed Feb 18, 3:00pm		2	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 🎷Where music meets history 🎷 The Jeffer... Carousel · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Wed Feb 18, 2:15pm		17	2
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Did you know the blues started right here, c... Reel · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Wed Feb 18, 1:48pm		130	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Did you know the blues started right here, c... Reel · <a href="#">Travel South USA - Canada</a>	Boost	...	Wed Feb 18, 1:47pm		29	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 The Texas & Pacific Railway Depot in Natchi... Photo · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Tue Feb 17, 1:00pm		15	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 The Texas & Pacific Railway Depot in Natchi... Photo · <a href="#">Travel South USA - Canada</a>	Boost	...	Tue Feb 17, 1:00pm		1	0
<input type="checkbox"/>	 Attention food and travel lovers! 🍴🍷 1856 i... Photo · <a href="#">travelsouthusa.ca</a>	Boost	...	Mon Feb 16, 1:00pm		9	0

### Destinations mentioned:

- Missouri, Nashville Kentucky, North Carolina, Alabama, New Orleans, Tennessee, Louisiana
- Featured post celebrating two Canadian hockey players who are Southern US team during the NHL season.
- Featured content for black history month
- **Increased engagement by 40%**

# II. Comms & PR

PR Newsletter to consumer media professionals

Status	Topic	Numbers delivered	Open rate
<p>Travel South USA Newsletter Series #6</p>	<p>Soulfood: BBQ to Meat &amp; Threes Honouring Civil Rights Legacies</p> <div data-bbox="573 625 878 1709">  <p>The preview shows the newsletter's layout, starting with a header for 'Travel South USA' dated February 2016. The main headline is 'SOUL FOOD: BBQ TO MEAT &amp; THREES HONOURING CIVIL RIGHTS LEGACIES'. Below this are several article teasers for Atlanta, Nashville, New Orleans, Arkansas, and Kentucky, each with a small image and a 'Read More' button. At the bottom, there is a section titled 'YOUR NEXT SOUTHERN ADVENTURE STARTS HERE' with a 'FIREFACED' logo and a 'FOR MORE INFORMATION, VISIT OUR WEBSITE OR FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA' call to action.</p> </div>	<p>697</p>	<p>42.60%</p>

Featured Atlanta, Nashville, New Orleans, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Missouri

## II. Comms & PR

### Global Media Marketplace & Summit 2026

Name	Publication	Status	Expected Coverage	Fam Choice
Craig Silva	BigDaddyKreativ, The Travel Pub, Living Local Magazine (digital and print), Toronto Times, Ottawa Times, Montreal Times, Mapsgirl	Confirmed & Registered	Social media posts 2x stories in multiple outlets	Kentucky
Randy Sharman	Informed Traveller	Confirmed & Registered	Multiple podcast interviews	Georgia
Dan Donovan	Ottawa Life	Confirmed & Registered	2x Stories	Virginia
Bryen Dunn	Inspired Media Inc. (PinkPlayMags, theBUZZ)	Confirmed & Registered	2x Stories	Missouri
TBC	Canadian World Traveller	Confirmed, not registered	2x Stories	West Virginia
Pat Lee	Go World Travel (with MSN Canada/U.S. syndication)	Cancelled		

## II. Comms & PR

Media Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings) cont.

Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up/Next Step
Karen Kwan, Freelance	Discussed culinary storytelling opportunities across Southern destinations, highlighting chef-driven dining, neighbourhood restaurants, and regional food culture. Not available to attend GMM 2026.	Awaiting update following her outlet pitches; revisit potential press visit or curated culinary itinerary featuring emerging chefs and notable restaurants.
Jennifer Merrick, Freelance	Explored story angles focused on women-focused or multigenerational travel experiences centred on walkable historic districts, arts and culture, and boutique accommodations.	She will follow up with editorial pitches; hosting not recommended at this time.
Andrea Yu, Freelance	Discussed broader editorial opportunities positioning Southern cities as vibrant cultural hubs combining design-forward hotels, nightlife, and culinary experiences.	Followed up with destination notes highlighting walkable neighbourhoods, rooftop dining, live music culture, and boutique hotel options. Editorial opportunities are still limited but she will pitch and report back on where she can land coverage.
Andrew Penner, Golf.com	Connected on golf storytelling opportunities across the Southern U.S., highlighting renowned courses and golf itineraries in Pinehurst, Hilton Head Island, and Birmingham.	Shared destination insights and developed course-led story angles tied to broader Southern golf travel itineraries. Follow up on editorial opportunities.
Vernon Chang, Content Creator	Discussed potential experiential content partnership highlighting culture, food, and neighbourhood exploration.	Reviewing and vetting proposal to assess alignment with potential campaign objectives and measurable deliverables.
RoseAnna Schick, RAS Creative	Introductory discussion on lifestyle-driven storytelling opportunities aligning Southern design, art, fashion, and culinary culture with her visually driven audience, particularly in Charleston and Savannah.	Maintain contact and develop visually driven pitch angles highlighting design hotels, art spaces, and locally inspired experiences.

## III. Trade


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

Contacts	Activity/Activation	Follow-up/Next Step
Doug Paterson, CAA South Central Ontario	Met with Doug to align strategies for supporting their Southern promotions. He mentioned that CAA clubs are currently not focusing on U.S. business due to the current sentiment. Doug recommended reconnecting in 6-8 months to re-evaluate the market situation.	Action Item: Share newsletters and updates with Doug on upcoming missions and marketing opportunities. While marketing is currently paused, suggest alternative trade engagement opportunities such as webinars, virtual trainings, and partner promotions that do not require travel. Currently in discussion on potential dates for agent training.
Ahmed Hassan, Edu Travel	Met with Ahmed to evaluate the current state of the student motorcoach market. Ahmed reported that the focus is on private school tours which includes NYC, Chicago and DC.	Action Item: Provide information and sample itineraries on Southern destinations that align with private school educational travel highlighting strong history, art, architecture, and cultural heritage experiences that fit well within curriculum-based student tour itineraries.
Sheryl Dawksins, Dawkhouse Travel	Indicated that clients are cautiously returning to U.S. travel, with strong interest in destinations perceived as safe and uncomplicated. While some clients are ready to book, others are postponing decisions due to economic uncertainty and currency considerations. Shorter stays are more common than extended trips.	Action Item: To align with this trend, TSUSA should actively highlight short-stay trip options across webinars and trainings. This could include curated 2-4 night itineraries in high-demand, easily accessible U.S. destinations, emphasizing convenience, safety, and memorable experiences. Promoting weekend getaways, city escapes, and regional adventures can help capture bookings from clients seeking low-commitment trips while maintaining engagement with those still monitoring economic conditions.

<p>Yannik Julliene, Voyages Lennoxville</p>	<p>Noted that clients are asking more questions about close-to-border U.S. destinations; however, price sensitivity remains high, and many clients are waiting for promotions or added value. Agents see potential for FIT travelers seeking nature, local culture, and flexible travel pacing.</p>	<p>Action Item: Will follow up to share road trip itineraries and opportunities, including examples geared toward fitness and active travel.</p>
<p>Simon Duval, Exoentik Voyages</p>	<p>Indicated that while some clients remain cautious about U.S. travel, there is optimism for increased bookings this summer and fall despite currently limited volume.</p>	<p>Action Item: Follow up to provide updates and guidance on U.S. travel opportunities for cautious clients. While current booking volumes are limited, highlight strategies and destinations that could drive increased interest for summer and fall, such as short-stay trips, flexible itineraries, and value-added packages.</p>
<p>Chantal Ouyang, Vacances Dragon</p>	<p>Shared that while long-haul and some Caribbean destinations remain popular, there is renewed interest in regional U.S. destinations. They expect motorcoach travel volumes to increase this spring and summer. Additionally, with the recent announcement of visa-free travel between Canada and China, many Chinese visitors are interested in exploring beyond Canada and incorporating the U.S. into combined Canada–U.S. itineraries.</p>	<p>Action Item: Share the top TSUSA destinations for spring and summer bookings, highlighting beach, mountain, and city escapes, along with suggested short-stay itineraries. While the current portfolio includes New York, Chicago, Boston, and Washington, DC, they are open to exploring additional Southern destinations that offer strong educational, historical, and cultural experiences.</p>
<p>Christine Moore, Voyages Mascouche</p>	<p>Shared that client interest in U.S. travel is slowly returning, but decisions are being made much closer to departure. Travelers are prioritizing flexibility and clear entry requirements, and many are still comparing U.S. options with domestic and Caribbean alternatives.</p>	<p>Action Item: Follow up to provide destinations for clients seeking flexible, short-notice travel, highlighting beach locations that can be positioned alongside domestic and Caribbean options.</p>

# III. Newsletters

Trade Newsletter to tour operators and travel agent professionals

Status	Topic	Numbers delivered	Open rate	Click-thru rate
<p>Travel South USA Newsletter Series #6</p>	<p>Soulfood: BBQ to Meat &amp; Threes Honouring Civil Rights Legacies</p>  <p>Featured Atlanta, Nashville, New Orleans, Arkansas, Kentucky, and Missouri</p>	<p>5,039</p>	<p>28.62%</p>	<p>100%</p>

# IV. Market Update

## Tour Operators & Travel Agencies

- [Canadian can now travel to China visa-free. Here's what people are saying about the change](#) (CBC News)
- [Brand USA is "absolutely committed" to Canada, says Heywood - and travel advisors are vital](#) (Travelweek)
- [New Wave of Independence as Canadian Advisors Take on Agency Ownership](#) (OpenJaw)
- [Vegas casinos see surge in Canadian visitors dollar at par offering working](#) (Travel Press)

## Airlift

- [Severe winter storms across much of Canada disrupted flights and forced school closures, significantly affecting air travel operations.](#) (CTV News)
- [Air Canada says it saw strong profits despite drop in U.S. travel demand](#) (Global News)
- [New flights to PHX from YVR, YOW with Porter, plus YOW-MIA too](#) (Travelweek)
- [A new era in long-haul: Air Canada to acquire Airbus A350-1000 widebody aircraft](#) (PAX News)

## Industry News

### Conference Board of Canada Data

- Jan-Dec 2025 saw 30.1 million Canadians return home from an overnight outbound trip - a 9.0 per cent decline compared to 2024.
- The volume of transborder trips fell 20.9 per cent, while activity to non-U.S. (overseas) destinations grew 9.6 per cent.
- Activity to non-U.S. destinations accounted for 47 per cent of all overnight trips in 2025, compared to 39 per cent in both 2024 and 2019.
- The first two months of the 2025-26 winter travel season (Nov-Dec) saw 2.4 million Canadians return home from an overnight trip to the U.S., an 18.3 per cent drop compared to last winter.
- The period also saw nearly 2.3 million trips to non-U.S. destinations, a 13.5 per cent increase compared to 2024-25.

### Economic Landscape

- [Canada and US resume trade talks after months-long pause](#) (BBC)
- [Canada's annual inflation rate edged down to 2.3% in January with decline in gas prices](#) (CBC News)
- ['A foreign policy based on short memory': Carney continues push to diversify from the U.S.](#) (Global News)
- [Poll finds Carney has broad coalition of support among Canadians for his economic plan](#) (CityNews)

# V. Actions

## 1. Global Media Marketplace & Summit 2026

Arranging logistics and airfare

Confirming fifth journalist's information, loading bio & other info.

## 2. Ongoing media meetings and pitching to obtain coverage

## 3. Draft and send March PR & Trade Newsletter

Click here for [Editorial Calendar](#)

Next issue is 'Sports Scores Big with Foodies: Tailgating to Stadiums' - due by March 15

## 4. Plan and Prepare Spring Agent Training

Sourcing and securing agency for March - April agent training

## 5. Planning & Preparing Spring Media Gift Drop

Sharing planned gifting options for approval