

NORDICS REPORT

April 2026

Travel
South
USA

Prepared By:

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ABOUT TSUSA

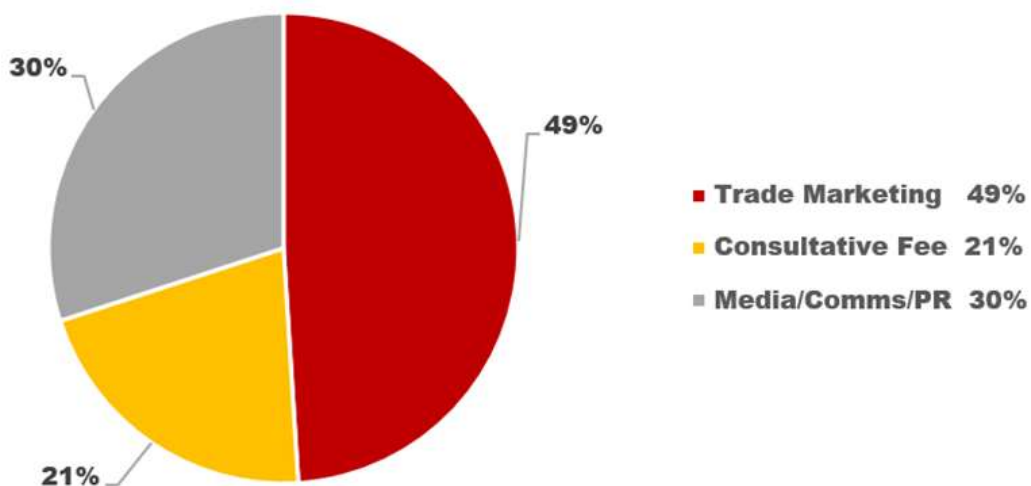
Global Partner Programming

The TSUSA GPP provides a foundational base from which state tourism offices have shared in country representation with international export marketing and sales activities. Managed by Travel South USA, the official regional destination marketing organization for the 12 state tourism offices, these collaborative efforts create leveraged actions, increase reach of travel trade and journalists, and coordinated consumer campaigns which deliver visitors to the South. In 2019, the Travel South USA region welcomed 10.2 million visitors, who spent \$10.3 billion, with 90% of these visitors arriving from 15 markets from around the globe.

The Nordic Region – Denmark, Sweden and Norway have a combined population of approximately 27 million citizens, with have historical high levels of disposable income and extensive vacation days. They rank 10th in visitor volume and often seek off-the-beaten path destinations. They are polite, approachable, and speak English well. They traditionally are willing to adapt to local culture, willing to try local cuisine, tip generously and have prior to the pandemic planned holiday with longer itineraries with more stops than other European visitors. Scandinavians enjoy five to six weeks vacation. There were an impressive range of types of southern tours being sold in the Nordic market prior to the pandemic and booking travel with professional operators for long-haul travel is very common. Therefore, we plan to prioritize travel trade marketing efforts and partnering with operators in consumer efforts for FY22 .

FY 26 Nordic GPP

Resource Allocations



I. Executive Summary

FDM Travel Campaign Update — Frederik Øhrgaard has returned from Australia and re-established contact to discuss the current state of the Danish market and provide a campaign status update, as required under the terms of the paused contract.

Progress with Key Trade Partners — Swanson's Travel has finalised its 2026/27 catalogue with Travel South featured centrally within the Southern pages, and a co-op proposal is under discussion for the coming fiscal year. The HABLO platform programme has been agreed for a June 2026 launch in Sweden, coordinated alongside Discover America for maximum trade sign-up and impact.

Editorial and FAM Trip Activity — Travel South, in conjunction with Tennessee Tourism, hosted American Trails' Jonas Larson on an extended trip taking in Franklin, Leiper's Fork, Sevierville and the Great Smoky Mountains, with two substantial articles — each around 15 pages — agreed for publication.

Active Media Pipeline — Eight media meetings were conducted in April, with journalists across Denmark, Sweden, Norway and Finland discussing press trip opportunities and story angles covering destinations including Nashville, Huntsville, and the Great Smoky Mountains, generating strong potential coverage across tier-one outlets.

Positive Newsletter Performance — The April Nordic newsletter, themed around gardens and green experiences in the Southern States, was delivered to 413 recipients and achieved an open rate of 35.84%, reflecting continued strong engagement across the region.

	APR	MAY	JUN	Q1 TTL	Q2 TTL	Q3 TTL	FY 25/26 Total	
AL/KY /LA/M O/NC/ SC/TN /ROTS	Nordics							
	Travel Trade							
	Meetings/Trainings	8			20	25	30	83
	# Agents Trained	10			8	256	151	425
	Media							
	Media Meetings	5			7	9	12	33
	Total articles published	1			16	24	12	52
	Impressions	6,500			4m	6.9m	635k	11,557,780

II. Travel Trade

Contact	Activity/Activation	Follow-up/Next Steps
FDM Travel – Frederik Øhrgaard	Frederik has arrived back from Australia and has reached out to set up a call to discuss the state of the Danish market to the US and update on the campaign status (the paused contract has a clause that calls for regular updates).	
Swanson's Travel – Magnus Hermansson/ Johan Rudolf	We have finalise the Travel South advert in the new Swanson's catalogue. This sit central to the Southern pages in the publication. Johan has also sent a co-op proposal through and we are setting up a meeting to discuss, adjust and agree. This will be campaign that will run across the fiscal 26/27 with preparatory work happening in the current year.	Call to discuss next steps
Russell Meara - Hablo	We have agreed a Travel South/ Hablo program that we are looking to launch in Sweden in June 2026. We will co-ordinate with Discover America and likely launch alongside them to gain the maximum impact and sign-up. We have agreed an extended number newsletters that will allow for all GPP partners to have their dedicated newsletter	
Discover America Sweden – Johnny Gardsater	Following their quarterly meeting Johnny advised that Nancy Björshammar from the US Embassy will handle the administration of the Discover America account. We have agreed a introductory/training/setup call with Hablo to ensure we are ready for the launch date. Johnny fed back the Malmo and Gothenburg agents dinners went well and he may look at these for Spring 2027 but cannot confirm at this point. DA Sweden is also handling the Nordic reception at IPW in Fort Lauderdale. Due to the delegation size, no sponsorship request has been made this year.	
American Trails – Jonas Larson	Jonas visited Nashville between the 14-19 April with hotels and flights sponsored. Travel South in conjunction with Tennessee Tourism hosted	

	<p>an extended trip that took in Franklin and East Tennessee. The outline was as follows: April 21 – Franklin/Leiper’s Fork April 22/23 – Sevierville/ Gt Smoky Mtn Nat Park April 24 – Sevierville and Flight home. Jonas has agreed two articles for both Franklin & East Tennessee, with each comprising around 15 pages. We are awaiting feedback and publication timelines.</p>	
Sembo Tours – Marie Javerud	<p>Marie is the product manager for Sembo tours, based out of Helsingborg in Southern Sweden. Sembo has started to feature Southern USA product and wants to expand. We have set up a meeting at IPW and Marie is interested in attend showcase in Nahville.</p>	
USA Rejser – Christian Walker Willumsen	<p>Met with Christian to discuss Danish market conditions and the trading situation for USA Rejser. Being a USA specialist is impacting business severely but there are still some enquiries coming in. They have sold a lot of Norwegian business through their sister site and have created a Caribbean website which is performing well, including the US Virgin Islands (which used to be Danish). USA Rejser (Christian) is the only Danish delegate at IPW this year. We have set up a meeting for a further catch up.</p>	
Icelandair – Rebecca Taernstroem	<p>Rebecca is starting to take more of a leading role within Discover America in Norway. She is keen to join the Hablo project as soon as possible and is keen to create a joint Nordic account/page. We are bringing them into discussion and may be included in the June 1 Launch. Rebecca and Marina (Sweden) are also visiting Nashville in June to attend CMA Fest.</p>	
Plus Reiser - Aud Kindervåg Halsne	<p>Met with Aud to discuss a possible trip to Tennessee. She is looking at a team fam trip to Nashville in October which will also include East Tennessee (Pigeon Forge & Gatlinburg). I have discussed showcase and she is going to look at this also. There has been a lot of interest in the Southern states, largely driven by increased airlift into Nashville.</p>	

Swanson's 2026/7 Catalogue



SÖDERN

Det finns en speciell känsla i söder som ofta har någon relation till. De stora floderna som strömmar söder, som Mississippi och Ohio, har varit de stora vattendragen. Men som mest är det en känsla av historia som finns i söder. Det är en känsla som ofta har sin rötter i den gamla södern. Det är en känsla som ofta har sin rötter i den gamla södern. Det är en känsla som ofta har sin rötter i den gamla södern.

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Swanson's

- Pin
- Chard
- Cabernet
- Shiraz
- Merlot
- Sauvignon
- Riesling
- Pinot
- Chard
- Cabernet
- Shiraz
- Merlot
- Sauvignon
- Riesling

Upplev musikens rötter

För de som är musikaliskt intresserade är södern ett paradis. Här finns alla musikgenrer som södern har skapat. Här finns alla musikgenrer som södern har skapat. Här finns alla musikgenrer som södern har skapat.

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Southern

Southern är ett ord som ofta används för att beskriva södern. Det är ett ord som ofta används för att beskriva södern. Det är ett ord som ofta används för att beskriva södern.



STORA MUSIKGENRER

Stora musikgenrer som södern har skapat. Här finns alla musikgenrer som södern har skapat. Här finns alla musikgenrer som södern har skapat.

MANNSKAP OCH PLANTAGS

Manuskript och plantage. Här finns alla manuskript och plantage som södern har skapat. Här finns alla manuskript och plantage som södern har skapat.

Southern är ett ord som ofta används för att beskriva södern. Det är ett ord som ofta används för att beskriva södern. Det är ett ord som ofta används för att beskriva södern.



Adventure doesn't ask permission. It dares you.



In the American South, the journey and the destination cast their own spells. Winding highways fit you into mist-draped mountains, backroads echo with the sustain of a blues guitar, and small towns appear like lanterns in the night, each one a world of warmth, history and hospitality.

One Region, Infinite Escapes.

Travel South
All You Are Welcome **USA**

TravelSouthUSA.com

III. Communications & PR

Contact	Activity/Activation	Follow-up/Next Steps
Monthly Travel South Newsletter	<p>Find attached the coverage chart and the PDF's for the April newsletter – Gardens and green experiences in the Southern States</p> <p>Newsletter links: DK: https://presscloud.com/csp/vocast/message.csp?KEY=102005927557604&format=web NO: https://presscloud.com/csp/vocast/message.csp?KEY=562299710471823&format=web SE: https://presscloud.com/csp/vocast/message.csp?KEY=704200583279300&format=web FI: https://presscloud.com/csp/vocast/message.csp?KEY=408447058426299&format=web</p> <p>Newsletter stats Delivered: 413 Open rate: 148 (35.84%) Click rate: 2 (1.35%)</p>	
Media Meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jens Henrik Nybo, Freelance for several tier 1 media (DK) – Discussing press trip opportunities. Jens Henrik will be visiting Nashville in September/October and do a press trip to Great Smoky Mountains after. Nicklas Flenø Mikaelson and Emil Fammé Hansen (DK) – Known as “Cykeldrengene” (the bicycle boys) Nicklas and Emil are cycling around different countries in the world to either produce travel content to their own social media channels or TV series. They announced they were going to US, so we reached out to see if there could be some synergies now or in the future. They mentioned they were going to Kodiak Island, Alaska. Sara Grant, Freelance for Aller media (SE) – Sara resigned from her former position as editor at Aller media in Sweden. She will continue to work as a freelance journalist providing them with articles. We discussed press trip opportunities and story angles. Kirsten Vestergaard, Freelance for REJSER (DK) – Discussing press trip opportunities and story angles. Kirsten is interested in writing a story about space centers in US, including the 	

US space and rocket center in Huntsville, Alabama.

- Ella Bontenbal, Freelance for several tier 1 media (NO) – Discussing press trip opportunities and story angles. She is very interested in taking part in future press trips and events.
- Simon Skovborg, Writer at Rejsespejder (DK) – Rejsespejder is a well-established travel platform that searches for the best flight deals, suggests inspiring itineraries, and publishes destination-focused articles. Simon told me that they recently introduced exclusive promotional campaigns on their site, where destinations can get a top banner for a week, and they create two travel articles and two travel great travel offers incl. itinerary to convert inspiration into actual bookings. This costs 2,400 EUR.
- Marja-Liisa Kinturi, Freelance (FI) – Marja-Liisa loves the Southern states and is very enthusiastic about joining a press trip.
- Anders Hartzberg, Editor for TravelMore (DK, NO, SE) – Discussing press trip opportunities and story angles. We pitched our food related newsletter stories which have been published.

Newsletters

Travel South All Y'all Are Welcome USA

Press release

Gardens and green experiences in the Southern States

The South offers a wide variety of botanical gardens and green experiences. In the spring, you can set out on one of Louisiana's many azalea trails, either by bike or on foot, while in Kentucky you can take a curated garden journey via Kentucky's Garden Trail and collect stamps.



Collect stamps at the Kentucky Botanical Gardens

Kentucky's Garden Trail takes you on a curated journey through 12 botanical gardens in the state. Among the 12 gardens is the Waterfront Botanical Gardens in Louisville, where you can experience a collection of bonsai and a garden with edible plants. Another garden on the route is Liberty Hall, in the city of Frankfort, which is a historic garden in an 18th-century setting. At the 12 gardens, it is possible to get a Garden Trail Passport, which can be stamped at each garden visit on the route. If you visit at least six gardens, you will receive a gift to take home.

[Read more](#)



Azalea Trails in Louisiana

In the spring, Louisiana's colorful azaleas are in full bloom. The best way to experience the flowers is along the state's many azalea trails, including the 30-mile (48-kilometer) Wild Azalea Trail in Kisatchie National Forest. There's also the option to experience the flowers in a more urban setting along the Lafayette Azalea Trail, which takes you through the city and into rural areas.

[Read more](#)



Iris Flower Celebration in South Carolina

South Carolina hosts a number of food festivals in beautiful botanical gardens and parks. These include the annual Iris Festival in Swan Lake Iris Street, which runs from May 15-17 and features food stalls, tastings such as "Taste at the Gardens" featuring edible plants, and outdoor dining among blooming irises.

[Read more](#)



Recognized garden in Alabama created by Coca-Cola businessman

South of Mobile, Alabama, you can experience Bellingrath Gardens and Home, adorned with large areas of colorful azaleas and views of the Fowl River. The garden was originally planted as a private garden by businessman Walter Bellingrath, known for bottling and selling Coca-Cola locally, and his wife Bessie Bellingrath. Due to the great enthusiasm for the garden among the couple's friends, they decided to open it to the public in 1932, making the garden one of the most recognized garden attractions in the South.

[Read more](#)



Rose beds and forest trails in North Carolina

In the city of Winston-Salem, North Carolina, you can experience Reynolda Gardens, which offers a combination of classic landscaped gardens, rose beds, and wooded walking paths. The garden features a variety of ongoing floral displays that reflect the changing seasons, from the colorful blooms of spring to the warmer hues of fall.

[Read more](#)



Rhythms of the South: A Road Trip for Garden Enthusiasts

The cities of Atlanta, Nashville, and New Orleans, a popular combination on many road trips, also offer several botanical experiences.

The Atlanta Botanical Garden is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year with the "Atlanta SUPER Blooms!" exhibit, which brings more than 140,000 tulips and daffodils to the garden. The exhibit will be on display until April 30.

At Cheekwood Estate & Gardens in Nashville, you can stroll along colorful flower beds and a sculpture trail where works of art are integrated into nature.

Also in New Orleans, you can experience more than 90 garden sculptures in the more than four-hectare Sydney and Walda Besthoff Sculpture Garden.

[Read more](#)

About Travel South USA

Travel South USA is the tourism board for 12 states in the southern United States. Here you will find a wonderful mix of beaches, mountains, music, culture and culinary experiences. With short distances between cities and experiences, the area is perfect for a USA road trip.

Here you can drive along green fields or along winding roads in the Great Smoky Mountains - or enjoy the lush landscape along the 1,200-mile Coast Highway, which runs from the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains to the ocean and beaches. Along the way, you can enjoy the hospitality of small towns, delve into the region's unique musical history, visit local bourbon distilleries or explore the diverse food culture.

www.travelsouth.visittheusa.com

Sample Media Coverage



Les mer om Azaleablonstringen i Louisiana [HER](#)



Iris i Swan Lake Iris Street i byen Sumter, Sør-Carolina (Foto: [discoversouthcarolina.com](#))

Feiring av sverdtiljer i Sør-Carolina

I Sør-Carolina arrangeres en rekke matfestivaler i vakre botaniske hager og parker. En av disse er den årlige [Iris Festival](#) i Swan Lake Iris Street, hvor det blir satt opp matboder fra 15-17. mai. Her kan du få smakeprøver som «Taste at the Gardens» med spisselige planter og utendørs servering blant blomstrende iris. Iris-festivalen arrangeres i byen [Sumter](#) – 70 km øst for delstatshovedstaden [Columbia](#).

Les mer om Sør-Carolina [HER](#)

Anerkjent hage i Alabama anlagt av Coca-Cola-ferhandler

Sør for [Mobile](#) i Alabama kan du oppleve [Bellingrath Gardens and Home](#), som er utstykket med store områder med fargerike esdaleer og utsikt over [Fowl River](#).



[Bellingrath Gardens and Home](#) i [Mobile](#), Alabama (Foto: [Alabama Tourism Department](#))

Hagen ble opprinnelig anlagt som en privat hage av foretaksgrüneren [Walter Bellingrath](#), som var kjent for å tappe og selge Coca-Cola lokalt, og hans kone [Florence Bellingrath](#). På grunn av den store entusiasmen for hagen blant parets venner bestemte de seg for å åpne den for publikum i 1932, noe som har gjort hagen til en av sørstatenes mest anerkjente hageattraksjoner.

Les mer om [Bellingrath Gardens and Home](#) [HER](#)

Rosebed og skjegestier i Nord-Carolina

I byen [Winston-Salem](#) i Nord-Carolina kan du oppleve [Reynolds Gardens](#), som tilbyr en kombinasjon av [Kataiske](#) anlagte hager, rosebed og skogklødd turlier.



Fontene foran [Reynolds House Museum of American Art](#) i [Winston-Salem](#), Nord-Carolina. Museet er et av landets fremste og viser kunstsamlinger som strekker seg over tre århundrer



Blomstring i [Cheekwood Estate & Gardens](#) i [Atlanta](#), Georgia (Foto: [Cheekwood Estate & Gardens](#))

[Atlanta Botanical Garden](#): Teier sitt 50-årsjubileum i år med utstillingen «Atlanta SUPER Blooms!», der hagen byr på over 140 000 tulipaner og påsketuljer. Utstillingen kan oppleves til 30. april.

På [Cheekwood Estate & Gardens](#) i [Nashville](#) kan du spase langs fargerike blomsterbed og en skulpturall hvor kunstverk er integrert i naturen.

I [New Orleans](#) kan du også oppleve over 90 hageskulpturer i den over fire hektar store [Sydney and Walter Buxhoff Sculpture Garden](#).

Les mer om [Rhythms of the South](#) [HER](#)

Les mer om det søvestige USA [HER](#)

For flere relaterte artikler og reisefølge – klikk på linkene: [AKTIV FERIE](#) – [AMERIKAFERIE](#) – [AMERIKATIPS](#) – [FESTIVALER](#) – [HISTORIE](#) – [HISTORISKE BYGNINGER](#) – [KUNSTUTSTILLINGER](#) – [MAT & DRINK](#) – [MUSEER](#) – [NASJONALPARKER](#) – [NATUROPPLEVELSER](#) – [PARKER](#) – [ROADTRIPS](#) – [SØRSTLIGE USA](#) – [TRAVEL SOUTH USA](#)

IV. Market Updates

Air lift Developments for Summer 2026

Delta Air Lines has resumed two seasonal US routes to Copenhagen in spring 2025, reflecting surging demand for Nordic travel. Seasonal flights from New York JFK to Copenhagen resumed on April 14, followed by a brand-new nonstop service from Minneapolis–St. Paul operating three times weekly from May 22 — giving MSP nonstop access to seven European destinations. The Minneapolis route is operated on Airbus A330-300 aircraft and Delta is the only carrier on that city pair.

A key driver behind both routes is Delta's codeshare with Scandinavian Airlines: following SAS's move from Star Alliance to SkyTeam in September 2024, the agreement gives SAS passengers access from 35 Scandinavian destinations with one connection or less.

Delta is preparing its largest transatlantic schedule since 2015, with more than 650 weekly flights to nearly 30 European destinations for summer 2026, positioning the Copenhagen routes as a strategically important piece of that record-setting network.

The overall network development from the Nordics:

Key US–Nordic Developments, 2026

Airline	Route	Launch
Delta	JFK–Copenhagen (daily, seasonal)	April 14, 2025 (resumed)
Delta	Minneapolis–Copenhagen (3x weekly)	May 22, 2025 (new)
United	Washington Dulles–Reykjavík (year-round)	May 21, 2026
Alaska Airlines	Seattle–Reykjavík (daily, seasonal)	May 28, 2026
United	Newark–Nuuk, Greenland (nonstop)	2026
SAS	Copenhagen hub expansion (+20% capacity)	Summer 2026

Ticket — The Nordics' Largest Travel Agency: USA Bookings Plunge 21%

Ticket is the largest private travel agency in the Nordic region (operating in Norway and Sweden). According to Ticket, the US dropped from third to sixth place on its list of most popular travel destinations for 2026. The US is the only country on Ticket's top list where travel bookings are declining — a fall of just over 21% compared to 2025. Meanwhile, Japan entered Ticket's top 10 list of most booked countries for the first time, beating out Cyprus, with bookings to Alicante in Spain up 43% and bookings to Rome up 73%.

Ticket's own communications manager offered a note of qualified optimism: "It puts the country in focus in a completely different way, and even if not everyone travels for the matches, it can help more people start looking at the USA as a travel destination again," said Tiyoneh Jah, PR & Communications Manager at Ticket, referring to the FIFA World Cup. The caveat being that the data was measured before any potential World Cup uplift had materialised.