

CANADA REPORT

July 2026

Travel
South
USA

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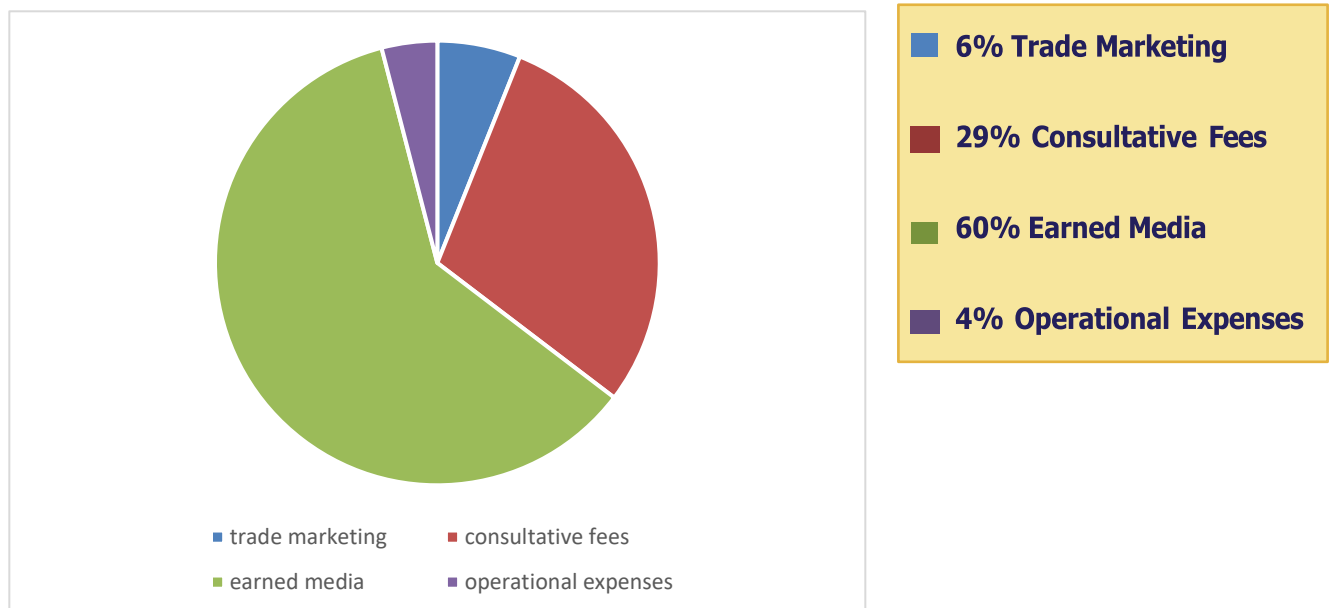
Canada represents one of the most important international source markets for the United States, underpinned by deep socio-cultural ties, aligned values, geographic proximity, and one of the most integrated economic relationships in the world. The efficient movement of people across the border remains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

Canada has experienced economic headwinds, with affordability concerns and cautious consumer spending influencing travel decisions. However, recent data indicates positive signs of market recovery as travel demand begins to rebound from spring into summer, with Canadians demonstrating renewed confidence and continued interest in U.S. destinations. While consumers remain value-conscious, travel continues to be a priority—particularly among higher-value and experience-driven travelers seeking meaningful leisure experiences.

Strong air connectivity and proximity continue to position Canada as a resilient and strategically important market. As recovery progresses, success will depend on a more targeted approach to marketing, recognizing the distinct behaviors, motivations, and opportunities across Canadian provinces and consumer demographics. Tailored strategies that align messaging with regional travel patterns, household priorities, and audience interests will be essential to maximizing engagement and conversion.

While overall volumes remain below earlier forecasts as households continue to navigate broader socio-economic pressures, Canada continues to deliver a meaningful share of travelers who are active, informed, and willing to visit the United States. Canadian travelers are experienced exploring the U.S., with strong interest in regional diversity, local cuisine, authentic experiences, and itineraries that blend iconic attractions with opportunities for discovery. By delivering relevant, timely, and value-driven messaging, destinations can continue to strengthen their connection with Canadian audiences and capture renewed demand.

FY 27 Canada GPP Resource Allocations



I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Social content strategy will be strengthened in FY27, with greater emphasis on Instagram video and engaging, personality-driven storytelling. Building on strong performance from visual destination content, the strategy will introduce bi-weekly Local Talent Spotlights, featuring local experts who can authentically showcase the destination and inspire Canadian travellers. The series will launch in August with Nicole Will of Asheville Wellness Tours.
- Year-round FY27 activation strategy anchored by major events throughout the year including Brand USA Travel Week (media day only) and International Showcase in Q2, media mission + consumer show in Q3 and IPW in Q4.
- Newsletters will resume in September.

		July	August	September	Q1 Total	Q2 Total	Q3 Total	FY 26/27 Total
9 Partners AL/AR/KY/ MS/MO/NC SC/TN ROTS	Canada							
	Travel Trade							
	Trade Meetings/Trainings	3			3			
	Number of Agents Trained	0			0			
	Communication & PR							
	Media Meetings	11			11			
	Total number of articles published	3			3			
	Impressions	504,648			504,648			
	Global Media Marketplace & FAMS	0			0			
	TSUSA PR Newsletters	0			0			
	Facebook	4			4			
	Instagram	4			4			

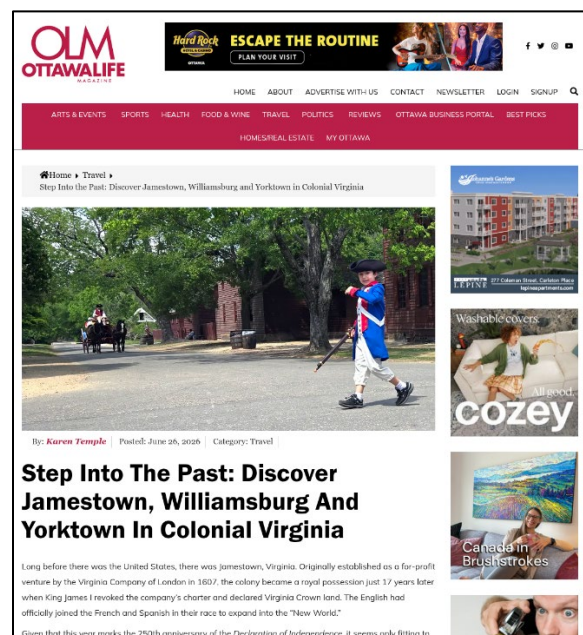
II. Comms & PR

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

News Releases & Pitching

- Newsletter will resume in September.
- July included stories on West Virginia by Randy Mink and Virginia stories by Karen Temple who attended GMM.
- CoverageBook Link - <https://travelsouthusa.coveragebook.com/b/5ffa7b1ee0b64d97>

Clipping Highlights:



Social Media

Title	Date published	Status	Reach	Views	Viewers	Follows	Interactions	Likes and reactions	Comments	Shares
 Adventure awaits in North Carolina ... Reel • Travel South USA - Canada	Mon Jun 22, 1:02pm	Boost	5	6	--	0	1	1	0	0
 Adventure awaits in North Carolina ... Reel • Travel South USA - Canada	Mon Jun 22, 1:00pm	Boost	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
 From bold barbecue and fresh seafo... Reel • Crossposted • Travel South USA - Canada	Fri Jun 19, 2:24pm	Boost	29	143	27	0	1	1	0	0
 This post has no text Photo • Travel South USA - Canada	Mon Jun 15, 4:48pm	Boost	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
 Summer in South Carolina is calling... Reel • Travel South USA - Canada	Tue Jun 9, 1:01pm	Boost	127	142	--	0	4	3	0	0
 Summer in South Carolina is calling... Reel • Travel South USA - Canada	Tue Jun 9, 1:00pm	Boost	87	93	88	0	0	0	0	0

July Insights:

- Posting the "Rooftop views" Reel to Facebook generated nearly double the audience reach (208 vs. 111) and video views (205 vs. 115) compared to Instagram, demonstrating Facebook's stronger organic distribution
- The 15-second Reel ("From the soulful sounds...") recorded 246 views against a reach of 113, achieving a 218% view-to-reach ratio that indicates strong viewer retention and multiple rewatches per user.
- The 29-second Reels saw total views roughly match total reach across platforms, indicating that while longer clips deliver full messages, viewers generally watch them once without replaying.
- Content published during the mid-day window (12:25 PM – 1:31 PM) consistently secured immediate traction and view conversion on both Friday and Monday release dates.

Brand USA Travel Week x Discover America Canada Media Day

- Submitted formal request for participation at the media day event on October 28 in Toronto.
- Expecting attendance approval/confirmation from DAC in early August.

Global Media Marketplace & Summit 2026

- monitoring pending coverage

Name	Publication	Status	Expected Coverage	Fam Choice
Craig Silva	BigDaddyKreativ, The Travel Pub, Living Local Magazine (digital and print)	Completed	Social media posts Social media posts 1. Lexington's Colorful Retreat: Inside Elwood Hotel & Suites 2. Three Kentucky Pours Made for Slow Evenings by the Lake 3. Three Kentucky Pours Made for Slow Evenings by the Lake (PAGE 46) 4. Hidden Luxury and Southern Charm at The Kentucky Castle 5. Kentucky Bourbon Culture Comes to Life at	Kentucky

			The Trail Hotel 6. Bluegrass Tradition and Timeless Days at Keeneland 7. Kentucky History Still Sings at My Old Kentucky Home State Park 8. Hotel Genevieve Brings Louisville's Creative Energy to Life in NuLu 9. Where Greatness Still Echoes: Inside Louisville's Muhammad Ali Center 10. Steel, Salt Air, and Stories of Service at USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park 11. Southern Grandeur Still Glows at The Battle House Renaissance Mobile Hotel & Spa	
Randy Sharman	Informed Traveller	Completed	Multiple podcast interviews	Georgia
Karen Temple	Ottawa Life	Completed	1. Why Alabama Deserves a Spot on Your Travel Map 2. Virginia VA250 Guide: Mount Vernon, Museums, and the Best Ways to Celebrate the 250th 3. Step Into the Past: Discover Jamestown, Williamsburg and Yorktown in Colonial Virginia	Virginia
Bryen Dunn	Inspired Media Inc. (PinkPlayMags, theBUZZ)	Completed	2x Stories - <i>pending</i>	Missouri
Randy Mink	Leisure Group Travel & Canadian World Traveler	Completed	1. Let the Good Times Roll in Mobile, Alabama 2. West Virginia's Rugged Appalachian Empire 3. West Virginia's Rugged Appalachian Empire (CWT/pg 86) 4. Let The Good Times Roll In Mobile, Alabama (CWT/pg 42)	West Virginia

Media Mission & Consumer Show

- Media-only Toronto event will take place March 31-April 1, 2027

Consumer Show: T.O. Food & Drink Fest

- Now in its 5th year, the T.O. Food & Drink Festival attracts 16,200 attendees (professionals aged 19–49 from Toronto/GTA).
- Culinary tourism is a core festival theme, making it a natural fit for Travel South USA's food identity.
- Dates: April 2–4, 2027
- Goal is to buy-in with a 'Taste the South' Pavillion (minimum 8 partner booths)
- Option includes culinary demos and mixology program.

Media Meetings (phone calls, emails, personal meetings)

Contacts	Interest/Status	Follow-up/Next Step
Vivan Vassos, Editor BOLD	Continues to cover U.S. travel content but is not traveling during the Toronto summer season. Open to considering future opportunities once travel resumes.	Continue monitoring availability for future media opportunities and maintain engagement through targeted U.S. travel story pitches. Once travel resumes, prioritize opportunities that showcase Southern destinations, seasonal experiences, and immersive itineraries that align with her audience interests.
Christine Roberti, Freelance, Toronto Star Network	Currently focused on local Toronto assignments following maternity leave and is not traveling outside the region for the time being. Continues to cover U.S. travel content and requested to remain on pitch lists. Will advise when she is available to travel again.	Keep her on the media distribution list and continue sharing relevant U.S. travel story ideas, as she remains interested in coverage but is currently focused on local Toronto assignments following maternity leave. Revisit potential travel opportunities once she confirms she is available for out-of-region assignments.
Dan Clapson, Freelance, Eat North/CTV	Interested in U.S. culinary, restaurant, and food travel stories. Currently busy with paid partnership commitments but remains open to receiving relevant pitches and invitations for future opportunities.	Continue pitching culinary-focused story angles, including Southern cuisine, chef-driven experiences, barbecue trails, food festivals, and destination dining experiences. Hold off on immediate travel invitations due to existing paid commitments but maintain regular communication for future editorial opportunities.
Randi Mann, Freelance, Narcity	Currently on maternity leave and interested in family-friendly travel opportunities she can experience with her baby. Shared that she is freelancing for Narcity and is open to relevant travel pitches that align with this focus.	Prioritize family-friendly opportunities that align with her current focus as a new parent, including baby-friendly itineraries, multigenerational travel, outdoor experiences, and accessible Southern getaways. Continue sharing relevant story ideas as she freelances for Narcity and identify opportunities that can work for her audience.
Alexandra Emanuelli, Freelance, Southern Living/Travel + Leisure	Currently writing primarily for U.S. publications. Introduced Alexandra to Ottawa Life Magazine, which has agreed to begin publishing her travel stories, creating a new opportunity for Canadian travel coverage. Open to future story ideas for both U.S. and	Continue building the relationship and share story opportunities suitable for both Canadian and U.S. publications. Explore opportunities to provide Alexandra with Southern travel content that can be adapted for Ottawa Life Magazine and other

	Canadian outlets.	outlets, creating additional Canadian editorial exposure.
Cynthia McLeod, Editor, Toronto Sun	Advised there may be upcoming changes to how travel stories are assigned and published across the Toronto Sun and Postmedia. We will continue to monitor developments and advise when there is more clarity on whether local Postmedia outlets will once again be able to assign travel stories internally.	Continue monitoring Postmedia's travel editorial structure and wait for clarity on future assignment processes. Once opportunities become available, prioritize pitches that align with Toronto Sun/Postmedia readership, including road trips, seasonal travel, and accessible U.S. vacation ideas for Canadian travelers.
Karen Doradea, Editor, Curiocity	Open and enthusiastic about U.S. travel content. Continue to send story ideas, media invitations, and FAM opportunities, as she is able to amplify editorial opportunities across the broader Zoomer media platforms.	Maintain regular communication and continue providing media invitations, story ideas, and FAM opportunities. Prioritize high-impact Southern travel experiences that can be amplified across Zoomer Media platforms, including destination spotlights, cultural experiences, food-focused itineraries, and unique regional stories.
Amy Bielby, Deputy Editor, HELLO! Canada	No longer traveling for editorial assignments but is happy to commission stories where appropriate apart from sports-related FAM opportunities. Editorial focus remains on major trends, celebrity news, and personality-driven stories. Travel angles featuring celebrity chefs, athletes, entertainers, or other personalities with a Canadian connection are particularly strong fits.	Prioritize sports-related experiences and personality-driven travel angles, including destinations connected to athletes, musicians, chefs, entertainers, and other recognizable figures with Canadian relevance.
Patricia Karounos, Freelance	Primarily writes talent profiles and lifestyle features for ELLE Canada. Open to destination coverage when there is a strong local talent or personality angle that ties into the destination experience.	Pitch Canadian talent, personalities, or cultural connections to strengthen relevance for ELLE Canada's lifestyle audience. Focus on premium experiences, design, food, fashion, and celebrity-driven angles that connect Southern destinations with recognizable Canadian voices or pop-culture moments.
Jim Byers, Freelance, Open Jaw + NUVO	Jim mentioned he's open to US content/travel; however, he cannot commit to trips until Q4, as advised by his doctor. Requested to approach with requests in Q4 '26 for Q1'27 opportunities	Reconnect with Jim in Q4 2026 regarding potential Q1 2027 opportunities, as he is interested in U.S. travel coverage but is currently unable to commit to travel due to medical scheduling restrictions. Prepare future opportunities that align with his focus on strong editorial storytelling and timely travel trends.

Mike Baginski, Travel Industry Today	Discussed current travel trends and Canadian advisor priorities. Highlighted increased interest in experiential travel, destination education, and content that provides advisors with the tools needed to sell destinations effectively. Conversation also covered the importance of keeping the trade informed on new products, experiences, and updates within the U.S. market.	Provide relevant story opportunities that highlight Southern U.S. travel experiences, new tourism developments, and resources available to Canadian travel advisors. Continue building awareness of the region among the Canadian travel trade through targeted industry coverage.
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III. Trade

International Showcase 2026

NAME	COMPANY	STATUS
Laurence Despiegel	Toundra Voyages	Confirmed & Registered
Caroline Poulin	Voyages Gendron	Confirmed & Registered
Ali Rizvi	Goway Travel	Confirmed & Registered
Terry Kaszas	CAA Saskatchewan	Confirmed & Registered
Stacey Ludlow	Kensington Tours	Confirmed & Registered
Dan Sombach	Alberta Motorcoach Association	Confirmed & Registered

Trade Meetings (phone calls, emails, personal meetings)

Contacts	Activity/Activation	Follow-up/Next Step
Lorna Lane, Memory Lane Travels	Memory Lane Travels is seeing continued consumer interest in experience-led travel, indicating that travellers remain motivated by meaningful, differentiated experiences even amid softer sentiment toward U.S. travel. The company is currently limiting U.S. promotion, with Miami primarily serving as a cruise embarkation point, reflecting the impact of current market sentiment on broader U.S. leisure demand.	Maintain an active relationship with them while monitoring shifts in consumer sentiment and U.S. demand. When conditions improve, position the region around high-value, experience-driven itineraries that offer compelling reasons to travel beyond traditional gateway destinations. Opportunities could include culinary, music, outdoor adventure, cultural heritage and multi-state road-trip experiences that can be packaged into distinctive FIT and small-group offerings.
Prasad Gopinath, DMCI	DMCI has significant reach through its network of approximately 24,000 travel advisors across Canada and the U.S. and specializes in customized FIT and small-group travel. Within the South, Nashville is currently the strongest-performing destination, including demand for women-only groups, while Louisiana, Mississippi/Natchez, Memphis and New Orleans are also selling. However, DMCI reported that overall bookings have softened, reinforcing the need for targeted, advisor-led demand generation.	There is an opportunity to build on existing demand for Nashville and New Orleans while introducing advisors to complementary destinations and multi-state itineraries that can extend length of stay and broaden the economic benefit across multiple states. Women-only and small-group travel could also represent a valuable niche for product development.

Tim Macdonell, Elite Sports Tours	Elite Sports Tours is seeing continued opportunity in sports tourism and group travel from Canada to the U.S., including youth tournaments, fan travel and event-driven itineraries. Interest in American football is expected to increase heading into the fall season.	Provide Elite Sports Tours with destination-specific sports and group travel resources, including venues, hotels, attractions and complementary experiences that can be incorporated into tournament and fan itineraries. Prioritize Southern destinations with strong sports infrastructure and major football, college sports and professional sporting events. Explore opportunities to develop pre- and post-event itineraries that encourage visitors to extend their stay and experience additional Southern destinations.
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III. Market Update

Economic Landscape

[Canadians' pessimism about economy is fading despite trade war, poll says](#) (Financial Post)
[Carney Gets High Marks on Economy Despite Recession Talk, Poll Says](#) (BNN Bloomberg)
[Six takeaways for Canada from latest U.S. tariff threats; GDP likely rose again in May](#) (RBC)
[Canada added 18,000 jobs in June as unemployment rate edged down](#) (CBC)
[Bank of Canada holds key rate steady at 2.25%, predicts economic rebound](#) (BNN Bloomberg)

Airlift

[Air Canada names Scandinavian Airlines head Anko Van der Werff as next CEO](#) (BNN Bloomberg)
[Porter Airlines resumes \\$40 fuel surcharge as oil prices spike again](#) (Financial Post)
[Airlines blame demand for decision not to drop plane ticket prices as fuel costs fall](#) (CTV News)
[Montreal, Vancouver and Ottawa airports back Toronto Pearson's concerns over fake bot-driven travel sites](#) (CTV News)
[Air Canada plane veers off runway at Montreal airport after landing, no injuries](#) (CBC)
[Air Canada cutting some routes to U.S. Midwest and Florida in the winter](#) (Global News)

Market Insights and data

- The first four months of 2026 saw 11.0 million Canadians return home from an overnight outbound trip - a 3.3 per cent decline compared to 2025.
- The volume of overnight transborder trips fell 12.0 per cent compared to 2025, while activity to non-U.S. (overseas) destinations grew 5.9 per cent.
- Activity to non-U.S. destinations accounted for 53 per cent of all overnight trips during the period, compared to 48 per cent in 2025.
- The 2025-26 winter travel season (Nov-Apr) saw almost 7.6 million Canadians return home from an overnight trip to the U.S., a 14.1 per cent drop compared to last winter.
- The period also saw more than 8.1 million overseas trips, a 7.9 per cent increase compared to 2025-26.

Overnight Transborder Travel by Mode, All Trip Purposes (monthly)

	U.S. Auto			U.S. Non-Auto			TOTAL U.S.		
	2025	2026	% change	2025	2026	% change	2025	2026	% change
Jan	562,863	427,949	-24.0%	866,678	759,337	-12.4%	1,429,541	1,187,286	-16.9%
Feb	419,188	348,759	-16.8%	852,431	754,400	-11.5%	1,271,619	1,103,159	-13.2%
Mar	677,524	584,944	-13.7%	1,061,088	948,059	-10.7%	1,738,612	1,533,003	-11.8%
Apr	566,602	540,764	-4.6%	885,804	822,926	-7.1%	1,452,406	1,363,690	-6.1%
YTD	2,226,177	1,902,416	-14.5%	3,666,001	3,284,722	-10.4%	5,892,178	5,187,138	-12.0%

Source: CBSA Frontier Counts

IV. Actions

1. International Showcase

- Secured buyers for the 2026 show in Nashville. Next steps: book airfare.

2. Social Media

- Request state partners share information on local talent (chefs, musicians, tour guides, etc.) for bi-weekly “local talent” spotlight

3. Ongoing media meetings and pitching to obtain coverage

- Newsletters will resume in September

4. Brand USA Travel Week

- Requested attendance for the media day on Oct 28. Following confirmation, next steps will be identified.

5. Media Mission & Consumer Show

- Vetting partner interest to confirm buy-in for the T.O. Food & Drink Fest
- Sourcing venue options

6. Global Media Marketplace & Summit

- Monitoring and reporting pending 2026 coverage
- Identified target media for 2027