

INDIA REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2026



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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.

India, the world's fifth-largest economy, is projected to grow between 6% and 7% in FY26, reinforcing its status as one of the fastest-growing major economies. In 2025, the USA received 2.06 million visitors from India, ranking India as the #2 overseas source market (excluding Canada and Mexico) and #4 overall for international arrivals. In 2025, Indian visitors spent \$24.8 billion, ranking number 3 amongst international markets. The country is now the world's third-largest aviation market, with significant airport expansions underway.

With Indian travelers typically holding a 10-year U.S. visa and a significant proportion comprising repeat visitors, the Southern states present considerable potential as destinations to explore. Through the GPP program, our focus will be on promoting the diversity and distinct character of the Southern states in the Indian market, thereby generating stronger interest and engagement among Indian travelers. The rich combination of culture, cuisine, music, and outdoor experiences offered by the region is particularly appealing to the Indian audience, making it a compelling proposition for both first-time and repeat visitors.

Indian travelers increasingly seek diverse experiences spanning sports, entertainment, cruises, wellness, and adventure tourism. Travel is now seen as a contributor to personal well-being and a way to collect unique experiences from shopping and cultural activities to culinary explorations. This shift is fueled by a young, affluent, and digitally savvy population, with millennials and Gen Z leading the way. Rising incomes and a "You Only Live Once" mindset are encouraging higher spending on premium services and exclusive travel opportunities. India's digital adoption is robust, with 1066 million internet users (66% penetration) and mobile connectivity at 1.35 billion connections.

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

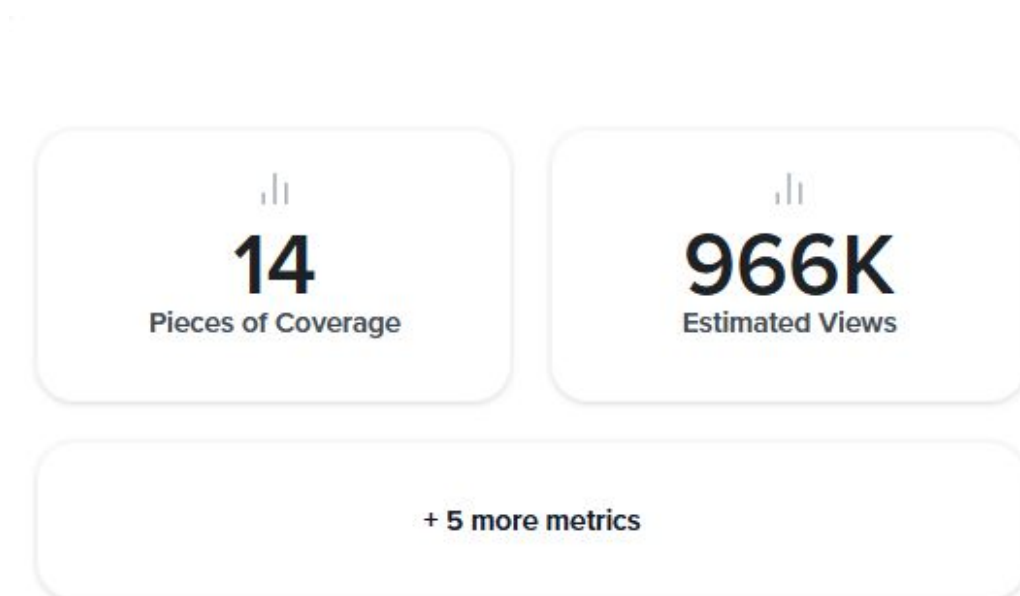
- TSUSA participated in the Brand USA Educational Seminar in Ahmedabad on 10 Sep, attended by 81 travel agents.
- Trade and media discussions for TSUSA continued with outreach to 16 trade companies and 6 media meetings in September 2026
- TSUSA India provided destination trainings to 2 companies engaging 7 participants.
- **New Product Development -**
 - Tratoli has listed products for Charleston, New Orleans, Atlanta & Nashville. [LINK](#)
 - Grand Travel Planners has promoted Kentucky and Mississippi as road trip destinations.
- Bespoke Serenity included TSUSA States in its September Newsletter featuring -
 - Rhythms of the South – Nashville, New Orleans & Atlanta
 - Road trips covering the Blue Ridge Parkway and Route 66
 - Mississippi and bourbon tasting in Kentucky

The newsletter was circulated to approximately 13,500 recipients, providing strong visibility for TSUSA and its participating destinations.
- 6 media meetings were completed in September, resulting in 4 earned media coverages.
- Executed the monthly content calendar and maintained consistent social media hygiene across Facebook and Instagram.
- Started with implementation for the shared recommendations to strengthen social performance, with future efforts focused on Stories, profile optimization, content discoverability, and more saveable, India-relevant content.

II. Comms & PR

News Releases

- 4 earned media coverage secured on consumer media platforms
- Topics covered in September- Saddling Up in Southern USA: The best places for horse riding and equestrian culture & MICHELIN-guided restaurants in Nashville
- One special feature appeared in Manifest magazine (digital), highlighting 'Honeymoon destinations in Southern USA'
- CoverageBook Link - <https://app.coveragebook.com/29490/books/baac13aea7790ec7>



II. Comms & PR

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

Contacts	Discussion points	Website
BW Travel	Horseback adventures across southern united states	https://www.bwtravel.com/
Manifest	Four Southern US Honeymoon Destinations For Couples Who Want More Than Pool Days	https://www.manifestmagazine.in
Travel & Food Network	Where to Eat in Nashville, Tennessee: The Best MICHELIN-Recognised Restaurants	www.tfninternational.com
Express News Asia	Saddling Up in Southern USA: The Best Places for HorseRiding and Equestrian Culture	https://expressnews.asia/
Additional Coverage		
BW (Newsletter)	Horseback adventures across southern united states	Link

III. Trade

Trade Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings)

Contacts	Activity/Activation	Follow-up / Next step
All4Season (FIT)	In-person meeting & team training focused on product development for 2027 FIT product listings.	Follow-up email with itineraries & assets was sent
Kulin Kumar (FIT)	FIT product development for 2027 FIT product listings. States like Louisiana, North & South Carolina promoted based on their clientele.	Follow-up email with itineraries & assets was sent
Grand Travel Planners	Product development discussion on 2027 products. They have created promotional flyers around TSUSA States to be promoted via their Whatsapp broadcasts & social media channels	Maintain regular outreach
Ottila International	B2B Wholesaler. Product development and team training discussed.	Follow-up email with itineraries & assets was sent
Bespoke Serenity	They have featured TSUSA States in their September Newsletter along with further inclusions in their upcoming editions. Their database is 13,500 recipients.	Maintain regular outreach
Arizona Holidays	Interested to do product development & organic social media promotion for all 8 States and ROTS.	FIT Product development push. We have shared itineraries & short videos
Kesari Select (FIT)	Discussion on additional product development and focus on states like Kentucky, North & South Carolina and ROTS. They are open to promoting off-beat US destinations.	Follow-up email with itineraries & assets was sent
Dream Trip 4U	Edits suggested for their company product brochure on TSUSA. Final brochure to be ready by Oct Wk1	Maintain regular outreach
Dishaan Holidays	In-person meeting & team training focused on product development for 2027 FIT product listings.	Follow-up email with important links was sent Product development to follow
Voyageur Hub	Product development and team training discussed.	Product development push

III. Trade

Trade Contacts (phone calls, emails, personal meetings)

Contacts	Activity/Activation	Follow-up / Next step
Fora Holidays	In-person meeting & team training focused on product development for 2027 FIT product listings.	Follow-up email with important links was sent.
Thrillophilia	Product development push for experiences around TSUSA States. Update to follow in Oct	Maintain regular follow-up
Panache World	Luxury FIT company with repeat travellers & VFR clients to the US. TSUSA States promoted. Social media promotion discussed	Maintain regular follow-up
Tibro	Discussion on new product development and focus on states like Kentucky, North & South Carolina and ROTS. They are open to promoting off-beat US destinations.	Follow-up email with important links was sent.
MyLastminutetrip	Product development and team training discussed.	Maintain regular follow-up
Red Carpet (DMC)	Discussion on featuring TSUSA states as a part of their brochure for their messaging channels.	Follow-up email with important links was sent.

IV. E-newsletter

- We sent out the monthly e-newsletter to 6000+ travel trade/tour operators and 300+ media professionals.
- The opening rate for trade was 11.70% and media was 11.80% for September 2026.
- The focus states were Alabama, Louisiana, Kentucky, Missouri and Mississippi.

TravelSouth All Y'all Are Welcome USA

SEPTEMBER 2026



SUNRISE TO SUNDOWN: PHOTO READY ROAD TRIPS IN THE SOUTH

Welcome to the American South — a region where rich traditions, vibrant culture, and unforgettable experiences come together. From Kentucky's scenic horse country and Louisiana's soulful road trips to Missouri's natural wonders, Mississippi's camera-ready landscapes, and Alabama's mountain-to-coast adventures, the South invites travelers to discover legendary music, Southern flavors, outdoor escapes, colorful art, and warm hospitality at every turn.

IV. E-newsletter



ALABAMA

Travelers today are seeking destinations that are as visually compelling as they are memorable, planning itineraries around breathtaking scenery, hotels, restaurants, and local experiences. Alabama delivers it all on a road trip from northern mountain vistas to Gulf Coast beaches, with boutique stays, rooftop cocktails, vibrant public art, live music, scenic drives, and iconic Southern cuisine along the way.

[EXPLORE MORE](#)

KENTUCKY

Explore Western Kentucky, where vibrant street art, rich culture, scenic riverside drives, and Southern flavors come together. Discover music history in Central City, colorful floodwall murals and the National Quilt Museum in Paducah, plus wineries, barbecue, charming stays, and lush parks for an unforgettable getaway.

[DISCOVER MORE](#)

LOUISIANA

Louisiana offers a diverse road trip experience, from exploring Antique Alley in West Monroe's Cotton Port Historic District to enjoying Creole cuisine at Lasyone's in Natchitoches and contemporary art at Alexandria's River Oaks Art Center. In the south, discover the historic Old State Capitol and the wildlife and folklore of Honey Island Swamp in Slidell.

[READ FURTHER](#)

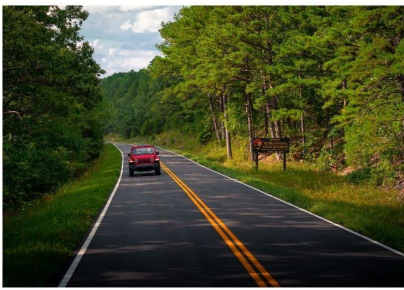
IV. E-newsletter



MISSISSIPPI

From Delta highways and colorful murals to historic towns, blues clubs, rooftop bars, and Gulf Coast sunsets, Mississippi is made for a camera-ready road trip. Explore Clarksdale, Cleveland, Greenwood, Vicksburg, Jackson, Natchez, Oxford, Tupelo, and Hattiesburg before ending in Coastal Mississippi, where vibrant public art, harbor views, and Gulf light provide the perfect final frame.

[KNOW MORE ABOUT IT](#)



MISSOURI

Immerse yourself in the tranquility of the Ozarks, from billion-year-old boulders at Elephant Rocks State Park to sweeping vistas at Taum Sauk Mountain, Missouri's highest point. Cool off at Johnson's Shut-Ins, float the Ozark National Scenic Riverways, and watch for Shannon County's wild horses before retreating to cozy lodges, rustic cabins, or treehouses.

[EXPLORE MORE](#)

YOUR NEXT SOUTHERN ADVENTURE STARTS HERE!

FUN FACT: Natchitoches is the oldest settlement in the Louisiana Purchase, the French colony was established in 1714.

FOR MORE UPDATES, LOCAL SECRETS, AND TRAVEL INSPIRATION, FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!



VIEW THE INTERNATIONAL PLANNER



Travel South USA

All Y'all Are Welcome

ABOUT TRAVEL SOUTH USA

Travel South USA is America's oldest and largest regional travel promotion organization, formed in 1965 by a resolution presented at the Southern Governors' Conference. The long-standing regional collaboration of the state tourism offices of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia provides a foundation to positively position tourism as a vital and dynamic element in the region's economic development.

V. Brand USA Educational Seminar 2026

- Brand USA conducted a series of educational seminars 'Discover USA' and TSUSA India participated in **Pune and Ahmedabad**, held on August 4 & September 10. We engaged with the attending senior trade participants and networked with **129 total agents** across both seminars.

Program details:

- Seminar 1
- City: Pune
- Venue: Westin Hotel, Pune
- Date: Tuesday, August 04, 2026
- Time: 10 AM- 2 PM
- Attendees: **48 agents** (Product Managers, luxury travel agencies, and regional heads)
- Seminar 2
- City: Ahmedabad
- Venue: Hyatt Ahmedabad, Ahmedabad
- Date: Thursday, September 10, 2026
- Time: 10 AM- 2 PM
- Attendees: **81 agents** (Product Managers, luxury travel agencies, and regional heads)

TSUSA Content:

- Destination presentation and destination video.

Program Activity:

- The educational seminars started with table-top networking.
- TSUSA was allocated 10 minutes for the presentation in both Pune & Ahmedabad, which included an interactive Q&A at the end.

Key Takeaways:

- TSUSA was of interest to agents as a new destination proposition within the US, particularly for repeat travellers.
- Agents requested assets - videos/ images & itineraries.

V. Brand USA Educational Seminar 2026

Pune Images:



Ahmedabad Images:



VI. New Product Development



- New product development for TSUSA by Grand Travel Planners, an FIT focus company based out of Chandigarh, India.
- The promotional material created will be promoted across all their messaging channels like WhatsApp Broadcast groups which have over 450 of their regular clients.
- It was also promoted via their social media channels.

VII. Newsletter Feature - Bespoke Serenity

- Bespoke Serenity (TSUSA International Showcase 2026 participant) featured the below TSUSA destinations in their September Newsletter -
 - Rhythms of the South – Nashville, New Orleans & Atlanta
 - Road trips covering the Blue Ridge Parkway and Route 66
 - Mississippi and bourbon tasting in Kentucky
- The newsletter was circulated to approximately 13,500 recipients, providing strong visibility for TSUSA and its participating destinations.



LET THE ROAD DECIDE WHERE YOU STOP
The Great American Road Trip

There may be no more American way to travel.

A beautiful car.

A great playlist.

And several hundred miles ahead.

Perhaps follow part of legendary Route 66 through desert towns and neon-lit Americana.

Or drive through the Rocky Mountains, stopping in small towns where nobody seems particularly concerned about your itinerary.

Take the Blue Ridge Parkway through the Appalachian landscape.

Or follow the Pacific Northwest through forests, mountains and wild coastline.

Pull over for a diner simply because it looks interesting.

Stay longer somewhere because you like it.

Change tomorrow's plan over dinner.

*The great American road trip isn't really about getting somewhere.
It's about everything that happens along the way !*



FOLLOW THE MUSIC SOUTH
New Orleans • Mississippi • Memphis • Nashville

Some journeys have a soundtrack.

This one has several.

Begin in **New Orleans**, where jazz slips out through open doorways and dinner has a habit of turning into an evening.

Then follow the Mississippi north.

Into the Delta, where the blues grew from cotton fields, churches, juke joints and stories passed between generations.

Continue to **Memphis** for soul, barbecue and the legacy of some of America's greatest musicians.

Then Nashville.

Perhaps go backstage.

Sit in on a songwriter session.

Hear tomorrow's star in a room holding fewer people than your favourite restaurant.

Stay out later than intended.

*Because in the American South, the evening often begins when the
itinerary says the day is over !*



COME HUNGRY
America, One Table at a Time

Forget what you think American food means.

Meet an oyster farmer along the New England coast.

Pull lobster traps from cold Maine waters before lunch.

Walk through a farmers' market in California with a chef who already knows what dinner will become.

Sit at an intimate counter while one of America's most exciting chefs cooks directly in front of you.

Taste bourbon in Kentucky with the people who make it.

Eat barbecue somewhere in Texas where the queue begins before breakfast.

And in New Orleans, don't even attempt to count the courses.

America's food story isn't one cuisine.

It is immigration, geography, history and obsession served on a plate.

Come hungry. You'll understand the country better !

VIII. Social Media

- Paid amplification significantly expanded TSUSA's visibility across Meta driving a strong uplift in video consumption and engagement this month.
- Facebook led performance, generating 489.4K video views, 1.2K+ engagements and 454 shares extending content beyond the existing organic audience.
- Instagram generated 18.0K+ views and 254 interactions alongside 125 profile visits and 15 new followers.
- The paid push helped TSUSA reach a much larger pool of prospective travellers, creating greater opportunities for destination content discovery.
- Going forward, amplification can be used selectively to scale high-performing content while organic activity continues to build the India community.

IX. Market Update

Market & Economy Updates

- Credit rating agency Moody's raised India's real GDP growth forecast to 7% from 6% for the current fiscal year, citing its resilience amid the West Asia conflict.
- TravClan, a B2B travel platform offering agents access to flights, hotels, holiday packages, and other services, has reported over 10% year-on-year growth in early festive demand.
 - International flight bookings have grown by almost one-third, and hotels are being reserved a week earlier compared to last year.
- According to Thomas Cook and its group company SOTC, India's peak travel season, traditionally April–July, is now spreading more evenly, with September–December emerging as an extended travel window alongside Diwali and Christmas–New Year.

NTO Updates

- Destination DC launched Phase II of its Washington, DC Special Agent Academy for Indian travel professionals on August 31, combining destination training with tiered incentives.

Airline Updates

- Starting 1 October 2026, Scandinavian Airlines will be operating five weekly flights to BOM from Copenhagen, connecting India to 10 U.S. hubs, including Boston.
 - Other hubs: New York, Newark, Washington DC, Atlanta, Chicago, Seattle, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Miami.
- British Airways has launched a third daily Delhi–London Heathrow flight, taking its India–London schedule to up to 70 weekly flights during the winter season—a 25% increase year-on-year
 - Importantly for the US market, the new service has been timed to offer seamless onward connections via Heathrow to destinations across the USA and beyond.
- Air India has launched Easy Connect from Ahmedabad, linking Gujarat to 26 international destinations via Delhi.
 - The service provides onward connectivity to key long-haul markets including the US, Canada, UK, Europe and Australia, with thorough check-in, immigration clearance at Ahmedabad and no baggage re-check or terminal change in Delhi.

IX. Market Update

Media Updates

- According to the Media Partners Asia Video Content Dynamics 2026 report, streaming has overtaken television in India's content investment for the first time, with online video accounting for 46% of the country's spend in 2025 compared with 42% for TV. [More](#)
 - Also, according to the report, Indian users streamed an estimated 420 billion hours of online video in 2025, with sports as one of the strongest differentiators between streaming platforms.
- According to the latest Ormax OTT Audience Report: 2026, released by media consulting firm Ormax Media, India's OTT audience universe has grown to 664.9 million, representing 45% of the country's population, while active paid OTT subscriptions have reached 172.6 million. [More](#)
 - One of the strongest growth areas is Connected TV (CTV), with India's active CTV user base reaching 206.9 million, registering a 60% increase over 2025.
- According to PwC's Global Entertainment & Media Outlook 2026–30 report, India's entertainment and media (E&M) market is projected to grow from USD 25.7 billion in 2025 to USD 36.7 billion by 2030 at a compound annual growth rate of 7.4%. [More](#)
 - India's market is expected to expand at nearly twice the global E&M industry's projected 4% growth rate over the same period.
 - Also, India's OTT market generated US\$2.2 billion in revenue in 2025 and is projected to reach US\$3.6 billion by 2030, growing at a compound annual growth rate of 10.2%. [More](#)
- According to TAM AdEx's Advertising Report, digital advertising continued to gain momentum in India during January–July 2026, with ad impressions up 44% year over year, with more than 110,000 exclusive advertisers. This highlights the growing base of advertisers using digital as a standalone medium. [More](#)
- Crisil Ratings conducted a study of newspaper groups running five of India's most widely circulated dailies. Circulation of large newspapers fell to around 10 million in 2025 from 15 million in 2019, a decline of nearly 33%. However, during the same period their digital editions increased their contribution to revenue from around 13% to 25%. [More](#)
 - Crisil expects revenue from non-print businesses to grow 10-12% annually between fiscal 2025 and 2027, while traditional print revenue is expected to grow only 2-3% over the same period.

X. Actions

1. Travel South USA International Showcase 2026

- Continued follow up for flight tickets and insurance details of all delegates

2. Trade

- DreamTrip4U's TSUSA focused Brochure to be ready - Wk2 Oct
- In-person trainings with Tibro, Kesari Select and Ottila International with a focus on product development planned for October.

3. PR

- October Theme – 7 Festive Experiences to Add to Your US Holiday Itinerary

4. Social Media

- Introduce Stories and Highlights to improve content discovery and keep the profile active between feed posts.
- Build more saveable, planning-led content around itineraries, seasonal travel and destination tips.
- Strengthen Reel hooks and India-relevant messaging to improve reach and video consumption.
- Use destination/trade handle tagging where relevant to improve discoverability and potential amplification.
- Identify strong organic posts for selective boosting, based on engagement and content performance.