

2007 International Visitation and Spending Set New Records For The U.S.

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The U.S. Department of Commerce announced that a record 56.7 million international visitors traveled to the United States in 2007, an increase of 11 percent over 2006. This level also surpassed the 2000 record year of 51.2 million visitors. Ten of the top 25 arrival markets broke records set in previous years.

International visitors also spent a record-breaking \$122.7 billion on travel to, and tourism-related activities within, the United States in 2007 - an increase of nearly 14 percent over the previous record set in 2006. The largest travel and tourism trade surplus was realized in nearly a decade, with international travelers outspending U.S. travelers abroad by \$17.8 billion in 2007, 113 percent over 2006.

Highlights of 2007 International Arrivals to the United States

-Canadian visitation totaled 17.7 million, up 11 percent for the year. Air arrivals increased six percent from 2006.

-Arrivals from Mexico totaled a record 15.1 million, up 13 percent in 2007. Air arrivals were up 10 percent for the year.

-Overseas arrivals (excluding Canada and Mexico) totaled 23.9 million, up 10 percent for the year. Although arrivals are down eight percent from 2000, the last record year, they have increased 32 percent from 2003, the post 9/11 low in arrivals to the U.S. It is expected that overseas arrivals will exceed the 2000 record in 2009.

-Visitation from Western Europe, accounted for almost 46 percent of overseas arrivals, and was up 13 percent in 2007 with 10.9 million visitors. Travelers from the United Kingdom were up eight percent in 2007, to 4.5 million, representing 41 percent of all Western European visitors in 2007.

-The other top Western European countries grew by double digits in 2007, Germany, France and Italy, up 10 percent, 26 percent and 19 percent (a record for Italy), respectively, for the year. Arrivals from Spain, the Netherlands, Ireland and Sweden grew 22 percent, 13 percent, 19 percent and 18 percent, respectively, in 2007. These were records for Spain, Ireland and Sweden.

-Eastern European arrivals were up 12 percent in 2007. Visitation from Russia accounted for 22 percent of arrivals from Eastern Europe and registered a 21 percent growth rate for 2007.

-Visitation from Asia increased four percent in 2007 and accounted for 27 percent of overseas arrivals. Growth was driven by record visitation from both India and the People's Republic of China, which increased 39 percent and 24 percent, respectively for the year. Japanese arrivals were down four percent in 2007. Japan accounted for 55 percent of all Asian visitors in 2007 and is the only major market with a decline in visitation. South Korean and Taiwanese visitation grew by six percent and four percent, respectively, for 2007. This was a new record for South Korea.

-Arrivals from South America, accounting for almost 10 percent of overseas arrivals, were up 18 percent in 2007. Double-digit growth in visitation from Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia and Argentina were experienced for the year. Brazil was the top traveler market for South America, accounting for 28 percent of arrivals from the region in 2007. Central American arrivals were up 13 percent for the year. Guatemalan visitation was up 16 percent for the month.

-Travel from Oceania increased 10 percent for the year. Australia increased 11 percent for the year, setting another new record, and accounting for 80 percent of all arrivals from Oceania in 2007.

-Visitation from the Caribbean was up 10 percent for the year. Air arrivals accounted for 92 percent of the visitation. Visitation from the Dominican Republic set a new record with 11 percent growth, while visitors from the Bahamas were up five percent.

-Middle Eastern arrivals were up 12 percent in 2007. Israel accounted for 51 percent of arrivals from the Middle East and was up 10 percent for the year.

-African visitation increased by 10 percent for the year.

-The total arrivals from countries that require a visa again posted growth rates that exceed the 27 countries that have a visa waiver status. In 2007, Non-Visa Waiver countries posted a 14 percent increase over 2006, compared to the 8 percent growth rate for the 27 visa waiver arrival markets. Since the 2003, non-visa waiver countries have seen arrivals increase by 43 percent compared to the 27 percent increase in arrivals for the 27 visa waiver arrival markets between 2003 and 2007.

TOP PORTS Calendar Year 2007

A brief analysis is presented on the top 15 ports for overseas arrivals during 2007.

Overseas arrivals (which exclude Canada and Mexico) were up 10 percent through December 2007. Arrivals through the top 15 ports-of-entry accounted for 83 percent of all overseas arrivals, about the same as the total arriving through these ports for calendar year 2006.

Twelve of the top fifteen ports posted increases in arrivals in 2007. Nine of the top airports posted double-digit increases. New York JFK maintained its lead in non-resident arrivals with a 16 percent increase, followed by Miami which also posted a 13 percent increase in arrivals. Newark's overseas arrivals were up 16 percent, moving it into 4th position, ahead of Honolulu, which declined two percent compared to 2006. San Francisco moved into 6th position, ahead of Chicago ORD. Detroit, Houston's IAH, and Orlando's Sanford International airport all saw changes in their rankings as a top port between 2007 and 2006.

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