

## U.S. International Visitation Up 14 Percent in May 2008

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The U.S. Department of Commerce announced that 4.3 million international visitors traveled to the United States in May 2008, an increase of 14 percent over May 2007. International visitors spent a record \$11.8 billion during the month, an increase of 21 percent from May 2007, and \$57.4 billion for the year, up 22 percent.

Total visitation year-to-date May 2008 was up 12 percent compared to the same period 2007.

### **HIGHLIGHTS: May 2008 International Arrivals<sup>1</sup> to the United States**

Canadian visitation grew 16 percent over May 2007 driven by land arrivals, up 18 percent. At the same time, air arrivals increased 12 percent. Year-to-date arrivals were up 17 percent.

Arrivals from Mexico (traveling to interior 2 U.S. points) increased eight percent in May 2008. Land arrivals increased 12 percent while air arrivals for the month were down one percent. Overall traffic year-to-date was up four percent through May 2008.

Overseas arrivals increased 14 percent in May and over 10 percent year-to-date. Visitation from overseas markets has grown for 13 consecutive months.

Visitation from Western Europe was up 21 percent in May 2008 and 16 percent year-to-date, accounting for 47 percent of all overseas arrivals.

Eastern European arrivals continued double-digit growth for the past 8 months, up over 14 percent for May 2008 and over 15 percent year-to-date. Russian visitation increased 29 percent for the month.

Arrivals from the United Kingdom were up 11 percent in May and eight percent year-to-date. Visitors from the United Kingdom accounted for 39 percent of all Western European arrivals.

Year-to-date, French and Italian arrivals were up 25 percent each, and German arrivals increased 20 percent, continuing growth trends from 2007. Visitors from Spain and Ireland were up 48 percent and 31 percent, respectively, for the month, and 29 percent and 20 percent for the year. Arrivals from Sweden and Switzerland were up 18 percent and 20 percent, respectively, for the month and 18 percent and 16 percent for the year. For May, visitation from the Netherlands grew 21 percent.

Visitation from Asia increased seven percent in May, and three percent year-to-date. Japanese arrivals increased two percent in May, but were down three percent year-to-date. Japan accounts for 52 percent of all Asian visitors for the year. Year-to-date, arrivals from PR China, India and South Korea grew 34 percent, 10 percent and three percent, respectively. Taiwanese visitation was flat in May 2008.

Arrivals from South America were up 18 percent in May and 17 percent year-to-date. Year-to-date, double-digit growth in visitation was observed from Brazil, Venezuela, Colombia, and Argentina. From South America, top arrivals were from Brazil, accounting for 31 percent of arrivals from the region.

Central American arrivals increased three percent in May, and increased seven percent year-to-date. Visitation from the Caribbean area declined three percent in May and decreased six percent year-to-date. In May, there was a 30 percent decrease in arrivals from the Bahamas and a five percent drop from the Dominican Republic. Air arrivals from the Caribbean were down six percent for the year.

Travel from Oceania is increasing, four percent in May and four percent year-to-date. Australia registered a six percent increase for the month and a five percent expansion year-to-date. Year-to-date, Australia accounted for 83 percent of all arrivals from Oceania.

Arrivals from the Middle East increased 12 percent in May and nine percent year-to-date. For May, Israel's visitation increased 11 percent. African visitation was up 20 percent for the month and 13 percent year-to-date.

To access the 2008 monthly arrivals data for world regions and top markets, visit

<http://www.tinet.ita.doc.gov/view/m-2008-I-001/index.html>

### **TOP PORTS: Year-to-Date May 2008**

Arrivals to the United States by port-of-entry are tracked on a monthly basis. The U.S. Department of Commerce has arrival data on more than 40 U.S. ports-of-entry from all world regions and 30 countries, with a brief analysis presented on the top 15 ports for overseas arrivals during 2008.

Year-to-date, overseas arrivals (excluding Canada and Mexico) were up 10 percent through May 2008. Arrivals through the top 15 ports-of-entry accounted for 85 percent of all overseas arrivals, slightly higher than in 2007.

Thirteen of the top fifteen ports posted increases in arrivals for the first five months of 2008. Arrivals increased by double digits through nine of the ports. Arrivals through San Francisco were up 11 percent, moving it into 5th position ahead of Honolulu, which experienced a five percent decline in arrivals. At the same time, arrivals through Philadelphia increased 38 percent, moving it into the 15th spot.

To access top port activity, go to OTTI monthly arrival page above and scroll down the page until you see the yellow title bar entitled: 2008 Monthly Top Airports for Overseas Non-Resident Arrivals. Click on the Excel file to view the monthly port figures.

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