BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Hosts the 11th Annual U.S. - China Tourism Leadership Summit in Atlanta

Atlanta, Georgia - September 21, 2017

More than 200 High-Ranking U.S. and Chinese Tourism-Industry Leaders and Government Officials Attend Marquee Annual Event

Brand USA, the destination marketing organization for the United States, along with the China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau and Georgia Tourism, is hosting the 11th annual U.S.-China Tourism Leadership Summit in Atlanta, Georgia, September 20-22.

More than 200 high-ranking industry leaders and government officials gathered to address issues impacting tourism, share best practices in marketing, and receive industry updates. The summit is also an opportunity to build and strengthen the relationship between the U.S. and China travel industries, conduct exchanges, explore cooperation, and reaffirm the importance of travel and tourism to the two largest economies in the world.

“This year’s U.S.-China Tourism Leadership Summit builds off of the success of last year’s U.S. – China Tourism Year, which was designed to effectively position the United States and China for increased trade in travel services,” said Christopher L. Thompson, president and CEO of Brand USA. “The summit’s business sessions and networking opportunities are mutually beneficial to improve strategies for tourism marketing in the United States and China and increase travel between our respective countries.”

The summit also provides a platform to showcase great destinations and experiences in the United States and China to an influential audience. This year, in addition to evening events at the Porsche Experience Center, the Georgia Aquarium, and the World of Coca-Cola, the Chinese guests are being treated to familiarization tours of major Atlanta attractions and landmarks.

“China represents an incredibly strong growth opportunity for tourism to Atlanta,” said William Pate, President and CEO, Atlanta Convention & Visitors Bureau. “The summit provides a platform to showcase the growth of our destination and educate Chinese tourism officials about Atlanta’s world-class cultural, educational and retail offerings.”

According to most recent statistics from the National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO) at the U.S. Department of Commerce, China was the single-largest source of international tourism spending in the United States in 2016, totaling $33.0 billion dollars in travel exports for 2016. Travel and tourism exports account for 61 percent of all U.S. services exports to China – injecting more than $90 million a day into the U.S. economy. NTTO additionally reported that the United States welcomed nearly 2.97 million visitors in 2016 from China – a 15 percent increase over 2015—and that China is the fifth-largest source market for international travelers to the United States.

“Holding the Summit here in Georgia’s capital city of Atlanta points to the importance of the Chinese market,” said Kevin Langston, Deputy Commission for Tourism, Georgia Department of Economic Development. “It provides an opportunity to highlight the South’s unique, authentic experiences to the world’s fastest-growing, highest-spending market, and positions our region to capture more of that growing business.”

Brand USA is highly active in China with consumer marketing, robust travel trade outreach and cooperative marketing platforms. The consumer marketing is tailored entirely to the China market and features heavy digital and social presence across established and emerging Chinese channels. To reach the travel trade and travel media and collaborate with the U.S. embassy and consulates, Brand USA has established representation offices in Beijing, Chengdu, Guangzhou, and Shanghai. Many of the cooperative marketing programs that Brand USA offers to its partners in China make use of this impressive media and trade footprint.

“Tourism is playing an increasingly important role in the big picture of the China-U.S. cooperation. It enriches the cooperative contents of bilateral trade and people-to-people exchanges, as well as deepens the understanding and friendship of the two peoples,” said CNTA Chairman Li Jinzao. “Over the last ten years, more than 30 million tourist visits were made between the two countries, and in the last three years, the annual tourist visits were respectively 4.28 million,4.68 million and 5.22 million, growing by over 400,000 per year. The expansion in tourist exchange has laid a firm foundation for the building of a mutually beneficial tourist source-destination relationship.

Our bilateral tourism dialogue has yielded fruitful results, making wonderful stories for tourism cooperation between countries with different social systems, development stages and models."

In addition to the Atlanta Convention and Visitors Bureau and Georgia Tourism, the 2017 U.S.-China Tourism Leadership Summit is supported by the American Hotel and Lodging Association, CNN International, Delta Air Lines, Destinations International, Travel South USA, and the U.S. Travel Association.

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About Brand USA
Brand USA is the nation's destination marketing organization, dedicated to attracting legitimate international inbound travel to strengthen the U.S. economy, increase exports, create quality jobs, and promote community prosperity. By running data-driven campaigns and unifying messaging across industry and government, Brand USA positions the United States as a top global destination while providing current visa and entry information.

Over the past 13 years Brand USA has driven 11.3 million additional international visitors who spent $38.1 billion in the United States, leading to $82.9 billion in total economic impact and sustaining an average of more than 40,000 jobs each year. These efforts have generated nearly $11 billion in attributable tax receipts at the federal, state, and local levels.