

## LEISURE TRAVEL

January 2023

Prepared by:

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Director Leisure Travel

### Trade Shows/Missions

January 2023

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1/18-23	ASTA 3-Rivers Chapter Trade Show & Pittsburgh AAA Travel Showcase
1/23-25	AAA Auto Club Group Sales Calls – North Florida
1/27-28	ASTA (American Society of Travel Advisors) Central Florida Chapter Meeting/Trade Show – Melbourne/Cocoa Beach, FL

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### January 2023

#### ASTA 3-Rivers Chapter Trade Show & Pittsburgh AAA Travel Showcase      January 18 – 23, 2023

ATTENDANCE:            56 Travel Advisors ASTA 3-Rivers – 15,237 AAA Members & Staff Pittsburgh Travel Showcase

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION:        N/A

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED:           500 Destination Magazines, Logo Items

#### RESULTS:

- AAA Travel Showcase Presented by AAA Pittsburgh had record breaking attendance this year. In February the final attendance numbers were sent to vendors. Member inquiries ranged from monthly condominium rentals, spa resorts, beach weddings, and public golf course access. Details for Spring Training (both the Philadelphia Phillies and Pittsburgh Pirates in Bradenton) are always of interest to members. Most customers want details on AAA packages for March & April.
- Prior to the show setup, VSPC was given the opportunity to conduct a destination overview to the AAA Member Representatives that were assigned to sell Florida during the show. Information presented to the advisors gives them valuable tools to increase sales to our area. Confirmed bookings for SPC during the show included:
  - March 10-13 Wyndham Grand – clients booked through Southwest Vacations
  - March 13-19 Innisbrook Golf Resort - group to attend Valspar Championship
  - May 24-27 The Don CeSar - wedding anniversary - booked directly with the hotel @ AAA rate
- Other Florida destinations represented during this trade show were Visit Tampa Bay, Port Canaveral, Miami, Visit Central Florida, and Key West.
- To maximize our efforts while in Pittsburgh, VSPC participated in the ASTA Pittsburgh 3-Rivers Chapter Trade Show. There were 56 travel advisors in attendance. Being a part of this trade show allowed VSPC to educate and update these top producing travel advisors on the destination, keeping St. Pete/Clearwater top-of-mind when selling Florida.

- One ASTA member reported a direct booking for July 1 - 5 for the Sandpearl Resort. Honeymoon booked directly with the property. Will send welcome bag from VSPC and travel advisor.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will continue to support ASTA and AAA events in Pennsylvania to grow direct bookings. Good market and contacts for attraction partners as well.

STAFFED BY: Gail Yeager – Sr. Sales Manager, Leisure Travel

**AAA Auto Club Group Sales Calls – North Florida January 23 – 25, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: 20 Member Representatives AAA Offices, Visit Florida Staff, Welcome Center Staff

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: Clearwater Marine Aquarium

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 60 Bags with Destination Magazines, Logo Items, Partner Collateral

RESULTS:

- VSPC and Clearwater Marine Aquarium visited AAA Auto Club Group offices in central and north Florida, along with Visit Florida Welcome Centers along I-95 & I-10 and the new Visit Florida office in Tallahassee.
- AAA offices were very pleased to see us and many order our Destination Magazines for their members. AAA has designated Member Representatives for each office that specialize in domestic travel. VSPC was able to speak with them about new happenings in St. Pete/Clearwater and told them we would send more detailed information on our new Travel Advisor Training Program with Visit Florida.
- Many offices said they have clients coming to our area and we offered to provide welcome bags for those arrivals. Each of the AAA locations sells admission tickets to most of our museums and attractions and these offices have not been visited since 2019, the start of the pandemic.
- Welcome Center staff knows our destination well and needs more of our DM's. We will advise VSPCs advertising department. Would suggest updating images in the centers to reflect our new "Let's Shine" campaign. The I-10 team said the west coast of Florida, especially St. Pete/Clearwater, has significantly grown in popularity post pandemic. Even more so after Hurricane Ian damaged the Fort Myers area.
- Visit Florida will host their annual Welcome Center Festival in June 2023.
- Spending time in Tallahassee with the Visit Florida team is key to continuing our strong partnership with the state. VSPC is participating in domestic, Canadian, Mexican, and European Sales Missions with VF in FY23. Met with Lauren Pace and toured Visit Florida's new offices.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will continue to travel with partners to call on these AAA Offices and Welcome Centers.

STAFFED BY: Rosemarie Payne – Director Leisure Travel

**ASTA Central Florida Chapter Meeting - Melbourne/Cocoa Beach      January 27 - 28, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: 45 Travel Advisors

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: N/A

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 50 Destination Magazines, Logo Items

RESULTS:

- The ASTA Central Florida Supplier Roadshow was a 1<sup>st</sup> time event for Melbourne/Cocoa Beach. 45 Travel Advisors from the Cocoa Beach/Melbourne and Daytona Beach attended. This Chapter has over 400 Travel Advisors and includes agents from across Central Florida.
- VSPC was able to give a presentation to the entire group, participate in the trade show and speak again at the end of the show. Destination Magazines were distributed to all agents along with 4 swag-bag prizes including Clearwater Marine Aquarium tickets.
- Opportunities from the show included GoTravel out of Melbourne Beach, FL wants VSPC to host destination training for their agency before the summer in-state travel kicks off. Dream Vacations is looking for a location for a lady's group in April for 4 days, she is going to reach out when she has finalized the date. Expedia Cruises asked about pre and post cruise options in SPC for Tampa cruises and asked VSPC to reach out to the NEW Expedia Cruise Center that just opened on Central Avenue in Downtown St Petersburg.
- VSPC was also able to work with the president of the chapter to secure the Dolphin Beach Resort as the St Pete location for the 1<sup>st</sup> stop of a 4-city event. After the event, this advisor reported that the resort did a fantastic job with the dinner and event space. He was very thankful that VSPC assisted in securing the location because he was having challenges finding availability in their price range.
- The registration fee for this Chapter Meeting is only \$250.00. A great value for VSPC to get in front of agents with bookings for in-state travelers. Orlando members have a similar meeting around the same time, but it sells out fast. VSPC will use contacts with ASTA to get dates for 2024 well in advance.

RECOMMENDATION: Great value for the investment and an opportunity to influence the drive market. Recommend working with this Chapter on the Atlantic Coast and Orlando.

STAFFED BY: Darryl Boggess – Leisure Travel Sales Manager

## **International Update**

- VPSC met with Brand USA's newest Manager, Partner Marketing Programs - Carolyn Kirby. Carolyn just moved to Clearwater. Invited her to visit the VSPC offices to meet the team. Having a BUSA market manager living in our destination could prove valuable in creating future marketing initiatives. Carolyn took lots of notes on our key international markets and she hopes to attend IPW.

## **Domestic Update**

- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will participate, with a handful of other DMO partners, in a first-ever domestic AAA National Media Campaign with Visit Florida. During the 3-month campaign (April – June 2023) St. Pete/Clearwater will receive incredible visibility from AAA members around the United States. Digital marketing across AAA's content management platforms will showcase what our destination has to offer and share inspiring content with millions of AAA members who are ready to learn more (and most importantly book!). Back in 2021, AAA was working on their first national campaign with Switzerland. At a meeting that year at RTO (Receptive Tour Operator) Summit, VSPC proposed AAA consider a national campaign for Florida Beaches. This marketing opportunity is a direct result of that meeting and VSPC's growing partnerships with 42 AAA Regional Clubs including Auto Club South, Northeast, Southern California, Mid-Atlantic, and Ohio.

## **UPCOMING TRADE SHOWS/MISSIONS/EVENTS**

2/2-5	Florida Huddle – West Palm Beach, FL
2/12-14	IITA (International Inbound Travel Association) – San Diego, CA
2/28 – 3/1	Peninsula Shows – Orlando, Melbourne, Jacksonville, FL

## **UPCOMING FAMS – EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

6/14-18	UK FAM
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