

LEISURE TRAVEL

March 2023

Prepared by:

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Director Leisure Travel

Trade Shows/Missions

March 2023

3/13-17	Peninsula Travel Shows – Atlanta, GA, Greenville, SC, Charlotte, NC
3/27-30	Peninsula Travel Shows – Dallas, Austin, San Antonio, Houston, TX
3/29-4/3	Visit Florida Canadian Sales Mission and Ottawa Travel & Vacation Show

March 2023

Peninsula Travel Shows – GA, SC, NC

March 13 - 17, 2023

ATTENDANCE:	238 Travel Advisors
INDUSTRY	
PARTICIPATION:	N/A
COLLATERAL	
DISTRIBUTED:	238 Destination Magazines, Logo Items

RESULTS:

- Participating in these shows afforded VSPC the opportunity to educate and update travel advisors that have the potential to bring in hundreds of new and continuing room nights to Pinellas County hotel properties. Most of these travel advisors are home based. In Atlanta there were 88 agents, Greenville, SC 78, and in Charlotte, NC 72 agents attended.
- The Atlanta market continues to remain in one of our top markets with a combination of fly/drive. The advisors book with Delta Vacations and/or directly with our hotel properties.
- Charlotte was well attended and most of the travel advisors book with AA Vacations. Allegiant airline packages are popular with the airlift from the Concord Airport to St. Pete - Clearwater International Airport.
- Other Florida destinations represented at this show were Port Canaveral, Miami, Visit Central Florida, and Ft Lauderdale.
- Travel Advisors we met during the show discussed the following bookings for 2023:
 - June 1-5 - Sheraton Sand Key Resort, Clearwater Beach (Family) - Vacations in Paradise
 - August 27-31 - Sandpearl Resort, Clearwater Beach (Honeymoon) - With the Ring Destination Weddings/Honeymoons
 - Sept 1-4 - The Don CeSar, St Pete Beach (girlfriend spa weekend) - Bonita's Travel

RECOMMENDATION: VSPC should attend this show series in 2024. Cost effective way to meet home-based agents in these markets.

STAFFED BY: Gail Yeager – Sr. Manager Leisure Travel

Peninsula Travel Shows - Texas**March 27 – 30, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: 332 Travel Advisors
INDUSTRY
PARTICIPATION: N/A
COLLATERAL
DISTRIBUTED: 332 Destination Magazines, Logo Items

RESULTS:

- The Peninsula Travel Shows in Texas consisted of trade show, face to face round table discussions, and dinner with vetted travel advisors. The show started in Dallas with 98 advisors, Austin with 60 advisors, San Antonio with 70 advisors, and Houston with 104 advisors. Currently, St. Pete/Clearwater has non-stop flights to all 4 cities and my flight into Dallas and back to Tampa from Houston was completely full.
- We were able to distribute over 300 Destination Magazines and these advisors asked great questions about the destination and arts scene.
- Direct bookings discussed at the shows included:
 - Postcard Inn for June, Don CeSar Resort and Spa for May, Hyatt Regency Clearwater for a week in September. We also got a booking request for July 2024, 5 nights, for 20-25 rooms from Accent Travel Agency in San Antonio. The Leisure Travel Department sent this business opportunity to our hotel partners.
- Overall, these shows presented an excellent opportunity to get face to face with booking travel advisors in one of our largest feeder markets and hopefully, shift market share from the panhandle of Florida.

RECOMMENDATION: VSPC should participate in this show series in 2024.

STAFFED BY: Darryl Boggess – Sales Manager Leisure Travel

Canadian Sales Mission/Ottawa Travel & Vacation Show**March 29 – April 3, 2023**

ATTENDANCE: 156 Travel Advisors – 600 Consumers
INDUSTRY
PARTICIPATION: N/A
COLLATERAL
DISTRIBUTED: 750 Destination Magazines, Logo Items, Partner Hotel Stays

RESULTS:

- VOX International, representation company for Visit Florida in Canada, sent out a post-mission update. Please see notes below.
- Attending the mission were Visit Florida staff from Canada and Tallahassee, Disney, Daytona, Kissimmee, Fort Myers, Miami, Naples Grand Resort, Central Florida, and VSPC.
- All three events were very well attended. Benefit to Pinellas County will be increased direct bookings from these travel advisors. Important that VSPC was part of the mission, as competition from other Florida DMO's continues to be strong.

- Canadians want to travel, lockdown was very strict in Canada, and Florida is still a priority for both air & drive customers. Canadians, on average, want longer stays and condo products are of particular interest. Canadians that are not fully vaccinated cannot travel to the US. Waiting to see if this ban is lifted in May 2023.
- While in Calgary we had a very productive meeting with the Florida Product Manager and Marketing Manager for WestJet Vacations. They are based in Calgary, and they recently acquired Sunwing. Details on how that partnership will work and how it will impact Florida is still TBD. WestJet's new strategy is to "Win the West with Eastern Destinations". They see tremendous growth potential for Florida from provinces like Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Alberta and want to grow their product across the state. WestJet is also closely tied to the Toronto Blue Jays. Another meeting with WestJet at IPW to discuss marketing opportunities.
- Ottawa consumer show was also well attended, and this market knows St. Pete/Clearwater. Business discussed included lots of planning for Blue Jays Spring Training in 2024, couple looking for a golf property for a 6-week stay – very interested in Innisbrook. Couple looking for a summer anniversary trip wanted details on the Don CeSar and new JW Marriott. Multi-generational family wanted info. on properties with kid's programs. Repeat customers commented on how much they love our Destination Magazine. Questions on Red Tide, Sargassum, shootings in the US, political concerns, and RV locations beyond Fort De Soto. Overall, a good show. Distributed over 600 bags with DM's, "New & Now", logo items, and partner collateral. Benefit to Pinellas County will be the potential for increased visitation from Ottawa. Competition at the show included Kissimmee, Miami, and Visit Central Florida. US markets that also attended were NY, Massachusetts, Detroit, Maine, and Myrtle Beach.

Calgary Travel Agent Event – March 27

57 Travel Advisors & WestJet Call Center Staff

Visit St. Pete/Clearwater Prize Winner: Jennifer Hawkings, WestJet,
jennifer.hawkings@westjet.com

4-day / 3-night stay for two at Postcard Inn on the Beach, St. Pete Beach + VSPC Let's Shine T-shirt

Toronto Travel Agent Event – March 29

46 Travel Advisors and 1 Trade Media Guest

Visit St. Pete/Clearwater Prize Winner: Sabrina Mantel, Centre Holidays,
sabrina@centreholidays.com

4-day / 3-night stay for two at TradeWinds Island Resorts, St. Pete Beach + VSPC Let's Shine T-shirt

Montreal Travel Agent Event – March 30

53 Travel Advisors and 1 Trade Media Guest

Visit St. Pete/Clearwater Prize Winner: Maria Ortiz, Transat Distribution Canada,
maria.ortiz@transat.com

4-day / 3-night stay for two at Bilmar Beach Resort, Treasure Island + VSPC Let's Shine T-shirt

RECOMMENDATION: VSPC will continue to partner with Visit Florida on missions to Canada.

STAFFED BY: Rosemarie Payne – Director Leisure Travel

Domestic Update

- Visit St. Pete/Clearwater will participate, with Travel Weekly on their Summer Escapes Co-op Roundtable Webinar April 24th. Travel Weekly guarantees 600 registrants for the webinar and the series is hosted on TravelWeekly.com for a year. Advisors are already receiving requests for summer travel and expect this to peak after the Easter holiday. Many advisors have expressed increased booking activity from their customers for summer getaways and see a strong demand for Florida. This webinar is limited to 6 Florida DMO partners.

UPCOMING TRADE SHOWS/MISSIONS/EVENTS

4/1-4	Travel Agent Forum – Las Vegas, NV
4/3-5	ASTA – South Florida Chapter Event
4/10-13	Peninsula Travel Shows – Cherry Hill, NJ – Harrisburg/Pittsburgh, PA
4/19-21	Travursity Trade Shows – Atlanta & Nashville
4/23-28	Visit Florida Domestic Sales Mission – NY & TX

UPCOMING FAMS – EDUCATIONAL VISITS

6/14-18	UK Trade FAM
6/14-16	FTI Switzerland FAM