

## LEISURE TRAVEL

**April 2024**

**Prepared by:**

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### **Trade Shows/Missions**

**April 2024**

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4/1-4	Visit Florida – NY & Chicago Sales Mission
4/5-11	Ottawa Travel & Vacation Show – TravelBrands Product Launch – Toronto & Montreal
4/17-19	Peninsula Travel Show – Cherry Hill, NJ – ASTA Philadelphia

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### **April 2024**

#### **Visit Florida – NY & Chicago Sales Mission**

**April 1 - 4, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: 92 Travel Advisors New York, 78 Travel Advisors Chicago, 45 Travel Advisors expected at the Long Island Rescheduled Event

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: N/A

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 215 Destination Magazines, Assorted Logo Items, Partner Collateral

#### **RESULTS:**

- VISIT FLORIDA and Development Counsellors International (DCI) hosted a Domestic Trade Mission to New York and Chicago. The Delta Vacations reception scheduled for Long Island was cancelled due to weather. New date is 6/12/24. VisitSPC collateral will be distributed.
- Staff members from DCI gave us an overview on how DCI prides itself on its deep expertise in the destination marketing space and its ever-evolving relationship with the North American travel industry. DCI understands that VISIT FLORIDA and partners need to raise destination awareness with the travel trade and position the region as a sought-after domestic destination. DCI works closely together with companies that include JetBlue and Hopper.
- The focus of these initiatives in NY & Chicago was to educate the travel trade on Florida's tourism offerings through immersive and interactive activities in a Florida setting. The goal was for the travel advisors and tour operators to gain useful tools and destination awareness to better sell our regions of the state. The events were designed to facilitate relationship building between the participating partners and trade professionals.
- Travel advisor attendance – 92 New York, 78 Chicago. The travel advisors were very interested in VisitSPC's destination training program on the VISIT FLORIDA industry site.
- Other Florida destinations represented were Miami, Naples, Tampa, Orlando, Central Florida, St Augustine, and Crystal River.

RECOMMENDATION: VisitSPC will continue to participate with VISIT FLORIDA in future domestic sales missions that influence new bookings to the destination.

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

**Ottawa Travel & Vacation Show – TravelBrands Product Launch**

**April 5 - 11, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: 500 Consumers Ottawa – 200 Travel Advisors Toronto, 125 Travel Advisors Montreal

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: N/A

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 450 Destination Magazines, Assorted Logo Items, Partner Collateral

**RESULTS:**

- This was a 3-day Canadian sales initiative starting with the Ottawa Travel and Vacation Show over the weekend and the TravelBrands, Toronto and Montreal product launches the following Tuesday and Wednesday.
- VisitSPC participated alongside Miami, Kissimmee, and Fort Myers DMO leisure travel teams at the Ottawa Travel and Vacation show. Over 300 destination magazines were distributed to consumers looking for vacation ideas in St Pete - Clearwater. The attendance was exceptional on Saturday 4/6 and heavy on Sunday 4/7, except for the last hour of the show due to a local hockey game. VisitSPC helped several travelers with vacation ideas and discussed at least 7 definite vacations coming to the destination with potential room revenue over \$10,000. One challenge for the Ottawa vacationers coming to Tampa International Airport is the lack of nonstop flights. Currently Air Canada is the only carrier to offer a direct flight but while at the show, we were told that Porter Airlines is potentially looking at a flight into TPA from Ottawa.
- TravelBrands Product Launch in Toronto had a great turnout. VisitSPC was one of the few Florida destinations that did not have a designated Canadian Travel Representative attending the show. VISIT FLORIDA was in attendance plus Miami, Orlando, Fort Myers, Kissimmee, Tampa, and Fort Lauderdale. Over 100 destination magazines were distributed and direct contact information from more than 40 Toronto travel advisors for future communication and engagements. There were great conversations about new Clearwater resort properties and changes coming to St Pete Beach properties. During the show VisitSPC talked with advisors about 10 vacation packages being consider for summer and fall 2024. Tradewinds Island Grand was also booked during the show for a family of four for a week in August.
- TravelBrands Montreal was not as busy as Toronto, but the destination still had a lot of interest and several discussions about moving clients from the east side of the state to the Gulf Coast. For the future, a French-Canadian specific destination magazine may be useful as a selling tool to help the travel advisors with their non-English speaking clients. Montreal

currently has a seasonal flight on Air Canada but not having a year-round direct flight did not seem to deter the advisors from booking the destination.

RECOMMENDATION: Attending the three shows in a week, was an incredible opportunity to connect and education advisors and consumers in three Canadian markets. VisitSPC should look at this opportunity again in FY25.

STAFFED BY: Darryl Boggess – Sales Manager Leisure Travel

**Peninsula Travel Show – Cherry Hill, NJ – ASTA Philadelphia April 17 - 19, 2024**

ATTENDANCE: 103 Travel Advisors Cherry Hill, 13 Travel Advisors Philadelphia

INDUSTRY

PARTICIPATION: N/A

COLLATERAL

DISTRIBUTED: 120 Destination Magazines, Assorted Logo Items, Partner Collateral

**RESULTS:**

- Peninsula Travel Shows are the leading roundtable trade shows that reach retail travel advisors and home-based agents. Attendance for this event was 103 travel advisors from New Jersey and surrounding cities. Participating in these events gave St Pete - Clearwater the opportunity to keep these travel professionals updated and informed and St Pete - Clearwater “top of mind” when selling Florida. These advisors sell St Pete - Clearwater packages through American Airlines Vacations, Southwest Airlines Vacations and Delta Vacations.
- Other Florida destinations exhibiting at this trade show were Miami, Visit Central Florida, Beaches of Ft Myers/Sanibel, St Augustine, and Port Canaveral.
- Advisors were interested about summer festivals happening in our destination and several mentioned planning vacation getaways for clients with children.
- Nina Sherman of Lada Travel and the ASTA Philadelphia Chapter organized a VisitSPC and Visit Central Florida “Lunch & Learn” training session or 13 travel advisors. Met with Connie Rush CCRA Chapter Director, Lehigh Valley, and she has requested a few Florida destinations co-host events in the Lehigh Valley area in early December. Both Nina and Connie will send out an e-mail blast to their membership base to become a Destination Specialist for Visit St Pete – Clearwater through the VISIT FLORIDA training portal.
- Reported bookings discussed during the shows include a Dec 16 – 19 - Wyndham Grand Clearwater Beach (honeymoon) - Deanna’s Travel Service, May 24 - 27- Doubletree Reddington Shores (family) - Hooked on Travel, and July 1 - 5- Sandpearl Resort (couple getaway) - Lada Travel.

RECOMMENDATION: Visit St. Pete – Clearwater should continue to look for opportunities to educate and train agents in both the PA & NJ markets.

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

## **CANADIAN UPDATE**

- Porter Airlines Canada announced the suspension of their package vacation program called Porter Escapes. The team will continue to service customers that have packages booked through 2024. Status of the airline's service and potential growth into Florida is currently uncertain.

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

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5/1-8	Visit Florida West Coast Sales Mission – IPW - Los Angeles
5/13-17	Illinois Sales Mission
5/21-22	ASTA Southern New England

## **UPCOMING FAMS – EDUCATIONAL VISITS**

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6/19-23	UK Trade FAM
8/25-27	Knecht Reisen Switzerland FAM
9/15-16	USA Rejser Denmark FAM
11/21-22	Lufthansa eXperts Network Agents German FAM