



## Tourism Tuesday

Welcome to Tourism Tuesday, your weekly e-newsletter from the Arizona Office of Tourism (AOT).

### A Message from Director:

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Good afternoon,

Arizona's unforgettable signature scenery, wide selection of statewide visitor activities and thriving culinary scene make our state one of the best travel destinations to sell. Nonetheless, global competition for valuable visitor dollars increases daily. It is imperative that we continue to expand our network of domestic and international tour operators, receptive tour operators and travel agents who can effectively "sell" Arizona travel experiences and encourage the visitation spending that is vital to our state's economic success.

To help us get there, one of AOT's goals this year is to grow our travel trade industry efforts by participating in even more activities and opportunities that will educate the travel trade on the Arizona experience, enabling them to become the sales force we need to promote our state's great travel assets.

In FY 2017 AOT will be participating in trade activities in Mexico, Canada and China. We will be offering familiarization tours during the year for travel trade representatives so they can experience first-hand all there is to see and do in Arizona. We will also participate in World Travel Market (WTM), International Tourism Exchange Berlin (ITB), and the U.S. Travel Association's IPW event. We are excited to take part in all these opportunities as this activity certainly help expand the awareness of Arizona's travel brand in the global marketplace. For a complete look at our upcoming efforts and how you can join us, view our [FY17 Trade and Media Calendar](#).

However, we will be moving forward with our trade efforts without one of our essential team members. After 16 years of helping AOT establish solid travel trade relationships throughout the world, Jennifer Sutcliffe, AOT's Travel Industry Marketing Manager, has resigned from the Office of Tourism to begin a new adventure. We are all so appreciative of what Jennifer has accomplished for the agency and I hope you all join us in wishing her the best of luck for her future success.

And finally, with respect, adoration and admittedly some envy, I want to congratulate *Arizona Highways* magazine for its [recent industry awards](#). The magazine won 20 industry related awards for outstanding images and content. This recognition is well deserved for a magazine that has truly established itself as an Arizona treasure.

Have a great week,

Debbie Johnson  
Director, Arizona Office of Tourism  
#AZTourismTuesday

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## AOT in Action

### Join AOT for the China Trade and Media Mission

AOT is pleased to invite Arizona DMOs and tourism suppliers to participate in a Travel Trade and Media Mission to China. The five-day mission will take place October 24-28 in Shanghai and Beijing, two of the largest cities for doing travel trade business in China. China is the fastest growing outbound travel market with an estimated 250 million Chinese tourists anticipated to travel overseas by 2020. In addition, Chinese visitors are big spenders, spending more than \$6,000 per person per trip. In 2015, Chinese visitation to Arizona alone increased 18.5% (over 2014 visitation). And, in 2015, Visa card spending from China was up 34.8% year-over-year (source: VisaVue).

AOT plans to meet one-on-one with tour operators and media professionals as well as host meal events and destination workshops for optimal networking and educational opportunities with the Chinese travel trade. This is a great opportunity for you to meet with approximately 125 key travel agents, tour operators, media professionals and other related travel trade professionals in this important market. There are several ways to participate in this mission, so please contact us for more information. Contact Kimberly Todd (media) at 602-364-3305 or via email at [ktodd@tourism.az.gov](mailto:ktodd@tourism.az.gov).

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## Upcoming AOT Events & Activities

### [Canada Media Influencer Tour - Get Your Kicks on Route 66](#)

Date: October 16-21

Locations: Phoenix, Winslow, Flagstaff and Kingman

AOT's media rep with ConnectWorldWide in Canada will escort this tour which will provide the opportunity to explore the people and places along Historic Route 66.

### [China Trade and Media Mission](#)

Date: October 24-28

Locations: Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai

AOT's trade and media representative in China, AVIA Reps, will coordinate a delegation-led mission to Beijing and Shanghai. The events in each city will typically include a destination presentation followed by a luncheon as well as trade specific meetings and one-on-one media appointments. This is available to co-op partners.

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## Upcoming Industry Events & Activities

### [Arizona Restaurant Week](#)

Date: September 16-25

Location: Arizona

This statewide affair offers foodies a wealth of dining opportunities and the chance to get outside their own neighborhood and try something new. From sizzling Southwestern and soothing comfort foods to five-star dining and international fare – it's all on the table during Arizona Restaurant Week.

### **Lighting Arizona Purple - Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

Date: October 3

Location: Arizona State Capitol, House Lawn, Phoenix

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. October 3rd Governor Ducey will light the State Capitol purple as a symbol of Arizona's dedication to ending domestic violence. Stand with the Governor as we say, "It Can Stop".

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## **Arizona News**

### **Scottsdale Convention and Visitors Bureau Rebrands as Experience Scottsdale**

Last week, the Scottsdale Convention and Visitors Bureau launched its new brand, advertising campaign and corporate identity as Experience Scottsdale. With the Effortless Revitalization brand, Experience Scottsdale aims to tell a story of both adventure and relaxation, highlighting the moments and emotions awaiting Scottsdale visitors of all ages.

Scottsdale's desert setting and stirring beauty offer travelers an indulgent getaway that promises relaxation, excitement and discovery. Escaping to Scottsdale leaves visitors feeling effortlessly revitalized. Experience Scottsdale kick-started its new brand with the Absolutely Scottsdale advertising campaign. Through print and digital advertisements and a television commercial, the campaign redefines perceptions of the Sonoran Desert.

For more information about Scottsdale's new brand, visit [www.ExperienceScottsdale.com/Brand](http://www.ExperienceScottsdale.com/Brand). And visit the newly designed website, [www.ExperienceScottsdale.com](http://www.ExperienceScottsdale.com).

### **Kai Named Top 100 Best Restaurants for Foodies**

Kai Restaurant is proud to announce that they have been named one of the 100 Best Restaurants for Foodies in America by OpenTable. The list of winners is derived from more than 5 million reviews submitted by OpenTable diners for approximately 20,000 restaurants across the nation.

"Kai is delighted to receive this prestigious recognition from OpenTable diners," said Vipin Menon, Director of Food and Beverage at Sheraton Grand at Wild Horse Pass. "This honor is evidence of a team that consistently looks to innovate in the ever-evolving culinary world. We are pleased to know that these diners thoroughly enjoyed their experience at Kai and enjoy the daring cuisine our restaurant offers."

"These are our most delicious awards of the year, and we are so thrilled to highlight the restaurants that are delighting even the most discerning of foodies at every meal," said Caroline Potter, OpenTable Chief Dining Officer.

For more information about all of the restaurants on this list or the selection process, please visit <http://www.opentable.com/m/best-foodie-restaurants-in-america-2016>.

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## Industry News

### **Travel Agents Are Back, Says A New MMGY Report**

“Our research over the past three or four years, and this year in particular, shows a huge jump—a 50% increase—in the number of travelers who plan to use a travel agent,” says Steve Cohen, VP of insights at MMGY. “And it seems to me that agencies could be even more successful if they had a stronger voice in the marketplace, if they could demonstrate to consumers what an agency can do for them.”

“The travel agency space is there for the owning. I believe there’s an opportunity for whatever brand to become THE brand in travel. No one has done it yet. It’s an expensive proposition, but there’s a chance for a really big payoff.”

TMR’s conversation with Cohen this week came as the result of a new white paper released by MMGY, the travel-industry marketing and research firm that produces the voluminous Portrait of American Travelers survey. It then releases the data in five parts; the latest release, part two, came out yesterday.

It found that more than 9 million U.S. travelers will be calling a travel professional to help them book a trip this year, and will push a whopping \$83.7 billion through the travel agency distribution channel.

#### *By the numbers*

The use of travel agents is at a six-year high—and the increase is being driven not by Baby Boomers, but by Millennial travelers, 34% of whom reported using a travel agent, the survey found. And the higher the ticket price of the travel being purchased, the more likely they were to turn to a professional travel advisor.

“As these travelers are vacationing more and spending more on leisure travel than those booking on their own, travel agent users are becoming a more desirable segment for both destinations and travel service providers,” the white paper said.

The paper notes that 16% percent of American travelers used a traditional travel agent during the past 12 months and intend to do so during the next two years (what MMGY Global refers to as travel agent users). That’s up five percentage points, fully 45%, from 2011, “and significantly higher than each of the previous five years.”

There’s lots more good news where that came from. Travelers who use travel agents do so frequently, calling a professional for 50% of their travel.

The typical travel agency customer is 39 years old, married with children, with an annual household income of \$145,875. The top reasons they cite are expertise, trust and ease, but 86% also say that using an agent gives them more control over their trip, and 79% believe a travel agent will find the best price.

### *The road not yet traveled*

Good as the data is, though, a 16% market share still leaves plenty of room for growth.

“Most of what we hear when we ask travelers how they heard about their travel agency, they say it was word of mouth,” Cohen said. “Back in the mid-90s, when airlines were paying commission, you had Liberty Travel, AAA; people were aware of those travel agency brands. But I don’t think any agency owns the travel-agency space in the consumer’s mind today.”

In the survey as well as in focus groups that it holds regularly (the latest was on July 27), MMGY has found that even though Millennials in general, and Millennials in their 30s in particular, are accustomed to reaching for their phones to research and make purchases, “they still want to get the best deals and they want to have someone who really gets it help them. There are so many different travel sites out there, but Millennials are saying they want someone they can talk to. They are going away from the OTA model back to someone who has been there. All of a sudden they are showing up at travel agencies again. They are telling us that in the largest percentage of their vacations they use traditional travel agents.

“It all adds up to a great opportunity for travel professionals.” (*Travel Market Report, August 30*)

[http://www.travelmarketreport.com/articles/Travel-Agents-Are-Back-Says-A-New-MMGY-Report?articleid=25245?utm\\_source=Travel+Industry+Wire](http://www.travelmarketreport.com/articles/Travel-Agents-Are-Back-Says-A-New-MMGY-Report?articleid=25245?utm_source=Travel+Industry+Wire)

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### **Did You Know**

Arizona has seven Sky Island ranges, which include the Baboquivari Mountains, Whetstone Mountains, Chiricahua Mountains, Huachuca Mountains, Pinaleno Mountains, Santa Catalina Mountains, and Santa Rita Mountains. A sky island is a mountain that is separated from other mountains by distance and by surrounding lowlands of a dramatically different environment. The result is a habitat island, such as a forest surrounded by desert.

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### **Statewide Calendar of Events**

Visit [www.VisitArizona.com](http://www.VisitArizona.com) to find information on all the exciting [events, festivals and activities](#) held throughout the Grand Canyon State!

### **Connect with the Arizona Office of Tourism!**

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