BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

U.S. Tourism Organizations Travel to Japan for 2025 MLB Tokyo Series

March 20, 2025

TOKYO (March 20, 2025) — Over the last week, multiple United States destination marketing organizations collaborated to leverage the 2025 MLB World Tour: Tokyo Series to promote the American markets featured in the Cubs vs. Dodgers series. Brand USA, Choose Chicago, the Illinois Office of Tourism, Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board, and Visit California, in partnership with the Chicago Cubs, Los Angeles Dodgers, and MLB Tourism, traveled to Tokyo to drive future visitation from Japan to the United States by collectively engaging with travel agents and operators as well as travel and lifestyle media and influencers.

“The MLB Tokyo Series is a showcase of the connection between Japan and the United States, uniting sports and travel in a powerful way,” said Fred Dixon, President and CEO of Brand USA. “As we celebrate U.S.-Japan Tourism Year and Japan’s recent inclusion in the Global Entry program, this collaboration highlights the incredible opportunities for Japanese visitors to experience America’s vibrant sports culture with greater ease. The U.S. offers endless possibilities for fans looking to combine their love of the game with unforgettable road trips, legendary stadiums and ballparks, renowned theme parks, and so much more.”

“We were thrilled to collaborate with our partners to bring our Chicago Style to Tokyo, in partnership with our counterparts across the country” said Rich Gamble, Interim President and CEO of Choose Chicago. “This was a strategic opportunity to work together to uplift all our destinations and take advantage of this chance to attract visitors from a key market. Choose Chicago leveraged this sales mission to share all that Japanese travel trade professionals, media and influencers can expect when they visit Chicago throughout the year as well as for IPW 2025 this June.”

“The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity’s Office of Tourism was excited to join our colleagues from across the country in showcasing Illinois as a top destination for Japanese travelers,” said Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity Director Kristin Richards.

“The MLB Tokyo Series provided a unique platform to engage with international visitors and highlight what makes our state so special, from world-class attractions to the vibrant culture of our cities and welcoming communities. By working together with our partners, we aim to strengthen the Illinois brand in this key market and drive future tourism to our state.”

“We’ve hit a home run with this partnership and can’t wait to welcome Japanese travelers to California’s all-star lineup of attractions,” said Caroline Beteta, president and CEO of Visit California. “Whether visiting our iconic stadiums, scenic highways or theme parks, California offers a winning experience for every fan."

“We are delighted to be part of the MLB Tokyo Series and bring two of the world’s most vibrant baseball cultures together and celebrate our partnership with our vital destination counterparts,” said Adam Burke, CEO, Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board. “Los Angeles is proud to have 10 Japanese professional athletes across LA sports teams, and we are eager to continue fostering this strong connection with the Japanese market in this iconic series and welcoming travelers in 2025 and beyond.”

As a key inbound market for the United States, Japan saw a 21% increase in arrivals in 2024, reaching 1.8 million and climbing to the seventh-largest inbound market from No. 9 in 2023. The growth continues in 2025, with January arrivals rising 5% year-over-year to 134,000.

The 2025 MLB World Tour: Tokyo Series featuring the Chicago Cubs and the Los Angeles Dodgers represented a significant opportunity to collectively drive travel to Chicago, Illinois, Los Angeles, California and the rest of the United States. The destination marketing organizations hosted tailored hospitality events, media and influencer activations, informational sessions, and welcomed key travel trade and media clients to the MLB Tokyo Series games at the Tokyo Dome.

This visit to Tokyo came as Chicago prepares to host the US Travel Association’s IPW 2025 in June, the largest inbound international trade show in the United States. This event, which was hosted by Los Angeles in 2024, will bring thousands of global delegates from over 60 countries around the world to Chicago, including ov

hotels, and attractions.

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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.

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