BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Invites Travelers to Experience the Soul of the Nation Through Arts and Culture

July 30, 2025

Featured Image: *Miami, Florida | Wynwood Walls, an outdoor street art museum in the Wynwood neighborhood*

WASHINGTON, D.C. (July 30, 2025) — ??The United States offers one of the most vibrant and expansive arts and culture scenes in the world. According to a recent Brand USA research study, over 70% of international respondents across 15 global markets agree that the U.S. is a destination rich in culture, offering rich history, world-class museums, and distinctive neighborhoods. As the nation's official destination marketing organization, Brand USA invites global travelers to experience the richness of American arts and culture—from the iconic to the unexpected, in every corner of the country.

"From world?class museums to lively festivals and colorful street art, the cultural richness of the USA is unmatched. Every experience tells a story of creativity, community, and history," said Fred Dixon, president and CEO of Brand USA. "And with new museums, exhibitions, and cultural celebrations opening across the country, there's always something fresh to discover, inviting travelers to connect more deeply with the spirit of America."

Arts
Blockbuster exhibitions, major museums and new openings, public art and installations, architecture highlights

Happening Soon

Untitled Art will make its Houston, Texas debut in September 2025, bringing its signature mix of contemporary works, experimental galleries, and immersive installations to a new audience in the burgeoning Texas art scene.

This fall, the Chicago Architecture Biennial (Sept 2025–Feb 2026), the largest exhibition of its kind in North America, returns to the Windy City. Expect exhibitions, talks, performances, and films at the Biennial, which is free and open to the public. While in town, explore Frank Lloyd Wright's Prairie-style homes or take a river cruise through the city's famed skyline.

Twelve whimsical troll sculptures crafted from reclaimed materials will make their U.S. debut at the North Carolina Arboretum in Asheville, North Carolina from November 15, 2025 to February 17, 2026. Created by Danish artist Thomas Dambo, Trolls: A Field Study invites visitors to explore the Arboretum's gardens and trails, where each troll (standing up to nine feet tall) embarks on a playful "study" of human life.

Art Basel Miami Beach, one of the most influential contemporary art fairs in the world, transforms Miami each December into a global art hub. And this year it returns with its most ambitious edition yet, welcoming over 250 premier galleries from nearly 50 countries and territories to the Miami Beach Convention Center from December 5–7, 2025.

In wine country (Santa Rosa, California), the Charles M. Schulz Museum celebrates 75 years of humor in Peanuts with a new exhibit honoring the beloved characters and their timeless charm.

In Portland, the Portland Art Museum is nearing completion of a $111 million transformation, reopening in late 2025 with over 95,000 square feet of new space, a pavilion connecting historic buildings, and a new gallery dedicated to Black art.

Coming in 2026

The Whitney Biennial returns to New York City in March 2026 for its 82nd installment, promising a diverse snapshot of contemporary American art, in all mediums.

At the Smithsonian Institution in Washington D.C., photography lovers won't want to miss "Photographic Memory: Fifty Years of Photography at the National Portrait Gallery." The exhibit, opening in May 2026, will include more than 100 works that highlight the evolution of portrait photography from the daguerreian era to now.

The Lucas Museum of Narrative Art in Los Angeles is set to open in 2026 on an 11-acre Exposition Park campus. In addition, the Los Angeles County Museum of Art is completing a transformational redevelopment of its main campus, with the David Geffen Galleries, spanning Wilshire Boulevard, set to open in April 2026. Also returning in 2026, Frieze Los Angeles, a leading international art fair, celebrating Los Angeles' dynamic cultural scene and global contributions to contemporary art, will take place at Santa Monica Airport from February 26 to March 1, 2026.

In Boca Raton, Florida, the Center for Arts & Innovation, slated to open in 2026, will serve as a dynamic new cultural hub—featuring state-of-the-art performance spaces, galleries, and studios designed to inspire creativity and community engagement.

The Hip Hop Museum at Bronx Point in New York is set to open in 2026 as a 55,000-square-foot tribute to the genre's roots and cultural impact.

Always Worth a Visit

In Los Angeles, California, the Getty Center and Getty Villa continue to inspire with its breathtaking hilltop setting, European and American art, and tranquil gardens.

New York remains a global arts capital with long-standing icons like The Metropolitan Museum of Art, the recently reopened Frick Collection, and The Museum of Modern Art, New York City presenting travelers with world-class collections year-round.

The largest contiguous urban arts district in the country, the Dallas Arts District is home to the Dallas Museum of Art, the Nasher Sculpture Center, and performance spaces galore. The River North Art District (RiNo) in Denver is all things industrial grit, street art, craft breweries, and avant-garde installations.

The Arts District in downtown Los Angeles pulses with cutting-edge galleries like Hauser & Wirth, while Northeast Minneapolis's Arts District celebrates its creative community through regular open-studio events. Other must-visit neighborhoods include Station North Arts District in Baltimore, a pioneer in arts-driven urban revitalization; East Market District (also known as NuLu) in Louisville, Kentucky, for its indie boutiques and public art; and Knoxville's Old City, where artist markets, murals, and music animate historic streets.

Across the country, long-standing architectural icons aren't going anywhere. In St. Louis, Missouri, the Gateway Arch—the tallest monument in the U.S.—offers sweeping views of the Mississippi River and stands as a symbol of modernist design. The Golden Gate Bridge in San Francisco, California remains one of the world's most recognizable landmarks, where visitors can walk, bike, or take in panoramic views from guided tours. And in Washington, D.C., the National Mall is home to some of the nation's most iconic memorials, where architectural brilliance meets historical significance, from the Lincoln Memorial to the Washington Monument and Jefferson Memorial.

Santa Barbara offers a different kind of architectural experience. A self-guided walking tour reveals the whimsical world of Jeff Shelton, whose imaginative take on Spanish Colonial Revival style pushes the boundaries of tradition with bold colors, sculptural forms, and playful details — redefining a classic central coastal California look.

Cultural Traditions & Local Heritage
Regional and local culture, folk art, heritage, and immersive experiences

Happening Soon

In Atlanta, Georgia the National Center for Civil & Human Rights is adding two new wings (complete with immersive exhibits, classrooms, and event space), reopening in the fall of 2025.

Head to North Carolina in the fall for festivals like October's Cherokee Indian Fair, celebrating Indigenous storytelling and crafts.

Day of the Dead (Día de los Muertos) is widely observed in late October and early November across the U.S., with one of the largest celebrations happening yearly at Hollywood Forever Cemetery in Los Angeles on the last Saturday before November 2nd.

In Corpus Christi, Texas, the Día de los Muertos Festival (now in its 18th year) lights up downtown on November 1, 2025 with live Latin music, folklórico dancers, traditional ofrendas (altars built to honor deceased loved ones), and an 85+ vendor art expo. The beloved celebration honors South Texas's rich Mexican heritage and is one of the best in the country.

Coming in 2026

In New Orleans, Louisiana, Mardi Gras 2026 festivities peak on Fat Tuesday, but stretch January 6 through February 17 with parades, parties, and balls. Meanwhile, Mobile, Alabama is home to America's oldest organized Mardi Gras with celebrations in February, as well.

In Indianapolis, Indiana visitors can experience Cowboy Couture at the Eiteljorg Museum from March 26 to August 2, 2026, which will spotlight Indiana-born designer Jerry Lee Atwood. Known for his rhinestone-studded "nudie suits," Atwood has designed for rappers, music producers and DJs, athletes, and other stars. Outside of this exhibit, the Eiteljorg holds one of the nation's largest Native American and Western art collections.

Santa Fe has earned recognition as the "Indigenous Fashion Capital of the World" with two major events spotlighting Native designers. Native Fashion Week Santa Fe returns in 2026, while the long-standing SWAIA Native Fashion Week includes four days of runway shows, pop-ups, and panel discussions hosted by the Southwestern Association for Indian Arts. These platforms champion Indigenous creativity, solidifying Santa Fe as both a cultural and style destination.

Always Worth a Visit

In Denver, Colorado, the Denver Art Museum (DAM) celebrates a century of spotlighting Indigenous arts. The centerpiece exhibition, Sustained! The Persistent Genius of Indigenous Art, co-curated with Indigenous community members, explores cultural resilience through themes like family, fashion, and ceremony. DAM is also showcasing solo exhibitions by contemporary Indigenous artists Kent Monkman and Andrea Carlson as part of its year-long programming.

In the heart of El Paso, Texas's Downtown Arts District, Chalk the Block highlights borderland culture with a sidewalk chalk arts contest that's one of the biggest events of its kind in the region. A short road trip away, Marfa, TX, remains a hub for contemporary art installations and creative events year-round. In San Antonio, TX, Fiesta San Antonio champions the city's diverse heritage with parades and cultural events for 10 whole days in April.

In San Diego, Balboa Park (America's largest urban cultural park) is home to more than 17 museums and lush gardens, offering visitors a blend of art, history, and nature, all set against stunning Spanish Colonial Revival architecture.

Theater & Performing Arts
Big-name productions and regional performing arts scenes

Happening Soon

In New York City, Broadway remains the heart of American theater, with a highly anticipated 2025–2026 season featuring big-name revivals like the Rocky Horror Show and Ragtime, buzzy premieres like the Pulitzer Prize finalist Becky Shaw, and Off-Broadway gems that continue pushing creative boundaries. Inspired by the Grammy-winning album and acclaimed documentary of the same name, the Broadway musical Buena Vista Social Club, set in 1950's Cuba and featuring an incredible Afro-Cuban band, runs through January 4, 2026 and will have viewers dancing in their seats.

Chicago's storied theater scene is also thriving with acclaimed institutions like Chicago Shakespeare Theater, a leading venue for both classic and contemporary works. And in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the Guthrie Theater anchors the city's vibrant arts landscape with eight compelling productions, including Macbeth, Little Women, Private Lives, and Come From Away during the 2025-2026 season. Highly recommended for serious theater buffs.

Coming in 2026

Set to make its Broadway debut in 2026, Hello, I'm Dolly, a brand-new musical featuring original songs alongside her beloved hits, will tell the story of Parton's extraordinary journey from the Smoky Mountains to international stardom.

Always Worth a Visit

Los Angeles brings the drama outdoors at the Hollywood Bowl, where the LA Philharmonic's summer series encompasses music, film, and theater (along with almost always perfect weather) under the stars. Meanwhile, Center Theatre Group continues to be at the forefront of LA's theatrical scene with three iconic venues and a dynamic subscription season of new works and crowd-pleasers.

The Oregon Shakespeare Festival in Ashland, Oregon brings high caliber stagings of Shakespeare and modern plays to a devoted national audience each year, with fairytale mountain scenery as a bonus. For more Shakespeare, head to Cedar City, Utah, where the Utah Shakespeare Festival draws fans from all over to its award-winning productions in an intimate, small-town setting that feels tailor-made for storytelling.

Festivals, Annual Events & Music
From coast to coast, annual festivals light up the calendar. Get on your feet!

Happening Soon

Held in Birmingham, Alabama in September, Southbound is a 10-day Southern food festival that celebrates the region's culinary traditions and the way Southern food has evolved over the years. Featuring tastings, chef demos, and late-night bites with live music, the event spotlights both well-known and rising Southern chefs. It emphasizes storytelling, community, and hospitality—making it a distinct celebration of the past, present, and future of Southern food.

In Palm Springs, California, Modernism Week celebrates mid-century design, architecture, and culture with a packed schedule of home tours, exhibitions, and expert-led talks.

In Albuquerque, New Mexico, skies fill with color at the International Balloon Fiesta from October 4- 12, 2025. Minneapolis celebrates butterflies and culture at the Monarch Festival (one of the largest and most well-established festivals of its kind) in September, while Atlanta, Georgia plans to rock out at Shaky Knees Music Festival (September 19-21, 2025), headlined this year by punk rock artists like Blink-182, Deftones, and My Chemical Romance.

Coming in 2026

There's something magical about hearing American music genres in the cities where they were born. New Orleans throws its legendary Jazz & Heritage Festival (April 23 to May 3, 2026), for sweet sounds from musical greats and a taste of Cajun cuisine, but on any given day jazz, brass bands and second-line parades fill the streets and local bars with soul.

Austin, Texas pulses in March with the energy of South by Southwest (SXSW), a festival that merges music, film, tech, and innovation. Over in Charleston, South Carolina, Spoleto Festival USA (May to June) offers opera, dance, theater, and Southern charm.

The largest Latin music fest in the country, Calle Ocho Music Festival will welcome visitors to Miami in March 2026 for a variety of musical stages, international food, folkloric dances, and entertainment for all ages.

The U.S. offers an exciting lineup of annual music festivals that celebrate the power of music - ranging from the iconic Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival in Indio, California to the vibrant Lollapalooza in Chicago, each offering unforgettable performances and cultural experiences that draw fans from around the world.

Always Worth a Visit

In Nashville, Tennessee, country music comes alive nightly — from the Grand Ole Opry to Broadway's rambunctious honky-tonk bars. And in Memphis, visitors can walk in the footsteps of musical legends: see live blues on Beale Street and pay tribute to Elvis Presley at Graceland. For the birthplace of Motown, visit Detroit, Michigan also known as the Motor City. Take a journey through the Motown Museum to learn about the place that gave us legends like Stevie Wonder, Diana Ross, and Marvin Gaye.

Across the country, new exhibitions, landmark openings, and time-honored cultural traditions are giving travelers fresh reasons to explore the United States. Every destination tells a story — and visitors from around the world are invited to explore the creative soul of the U.S. For inspiration and trip planning tools, visit AmericaTheBeautiful.com.

Note to the Editor
Accompanying high-resolution images can be found here.

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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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