NEWS RELEASE

Brand USA Hosts Inaugural Travel Week South America, Highlighting the Region's Rising Importance for U.S. Inbound Travel

March 18, 2026

RIO DE JANEIRO, BRAZIL (March 18, 2026) — A Brand USA delegation led by President and CEO Fred Dixon traveled to Rio de Janeiro this week as the organization hosts the inaugural **Brand USA Travel Week South America**, bringing together U.S. destinations with leading travel trade professionals and media from across Brazil, Colombia, Argentina, Chile, and Perú. The four-day program taking place this week (March 15–19, 2026) is designed to strengthen connections with one of the fastest-growing regions for outbound travel to the United States.

"South America is a strategically important region for inbound leisure and business travel to the United States," said Fred Dixon, president and CEO of Brand USA. "According to the latest data, travelers from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, and Peru generated $20 billion in visitor spending across the United States, underscoring the tremendous economic value of this market. With travel demand continuing to grow across the region, we expect that impact to increase even further in the years ahead, making collaboration with our partners here more important than ever."

The region accounts for 16 percent of total overseas visitors to the U.S., making it the third-largest global region for inbound travel, and delivers 9.8 million nonstop airline seats annually to the United States, not including additional airlift through connecting itineraries. Further strengthening capacity, Brazilian airline GOL recently announced its first nonstop route connecting Rio de Janeiro (GIG) and New York (JFK), scheduled to launch in July 2026.

Across the region, demand remains strong and opportunity-rich. Brazil is the region's largest source market with 1.9 million arrivals in 2025, and Brazilian leisure travelers spend an average of $3,442 per trip. Colombia delivered 1.1 million arrivals, with average leisure visitor spending of $2,400, and the United States ranks as the top outbound destination for Colombian travelers. Argentina recorded 789,942 arrivals, up 14.9 percent year over year, with visitors spending an average of $3,321 per trip. Peru contributed 372,986 arrivals, with average leisure traveler spending of $2,516, while Chile saw 318,819 arrivals, with average visitor spending of $2,969 per trip.

AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

Timed to coincide with the event, the organization is amplifying its America the Beautiful global tourism campaign across Brazil. Out-of-home placements across Rio de Janeiro's Santos Dumont Airport airport and high-traffic roadside locations feature the campaign across large and small digital boards as well as branded vehicle wraps, bringing Brand USA's storytelling directly to travelers across the city. Campaign messaging appears in Portuguese, featuring the message "Os Estados Unidos esperam por você" ("The United States is waiting for you"). In addition, the campaign is running across connected TV, digital, and social channels, inviting South American travelers to discover the people, places, and stories that define the United States, with a strong emphasis on emotional connection and authentic experiences.

BRAND USA TRAVEL WEEK SOUTH AMERICA

Brand USA Travel Week South America brings together over 50 U.S. trade and media exhibitors and nearly 80 South American travel buyers and media representatives. Travel trade participation includes 22 organizations from Brazil, 20 from Colombia, 10 from Argentina, and four each from Chile and Peru, along with two regional online travel agencies. The media program includes nine outlets from Brazil, three from Argentina, two from Colombia, and one each from Chile and Peru.

Throughout the week, participants are taking part in pre-scheduled business meetings, enrichment sessions, and networking opportunities designed to deepen market understanding, strengthen partnerships, and support the development of travel experiences that inspire future visitation to the United States.

“South America represents a highly engaged and evolving travel audience for the United States,” said Malcolm Smith, senior vice president, global markets and chief trade and product development officer at Brand USA. “Events like Travel Week South America help ensure our partners are well positioned to connect with these travelers and showcase the incredible experiences available across the United States.”

The program also includes a C-suite market immersion designed to provide senior executives with deeper insight into the South American travel landscape and facilitate strategic dialogue with senior leadership across the travel trade and media landscape. Participating destinations include Visit Fairfax, Virginia; Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau; Visit Orlando; and the Colorado Tourism Office.

Enrichment sessions throughout the week feature real-time insights and intelligence from Mariana Aldrigui, full professor of tourism at the University of São Paulo; Simon Mayle, event director of ILTM Latin America and North America PROUD; Angeles Yugdar, LAC general manager at Virtuoso; and Andrés Camacho Murillo, director of the Master’s Program in Tourism Economics at Colombia University. Sessions will also include representatives from major OTAs such as Despegar, CVC, RappiTravel, and PriceTravel, airline partners Delta Air Lines, American Airlines, and United Airlines, ProColombia, and regional travel associations including Braztoa and Faevyt.

Following the inaugural Travel Week South America in Rio de Janeiro, the next edition of the program will take place in Amsterdam for the U.K. and Europe markets September 28 to October 1, 2026. Additional information about Brand USA Travel Week events can be found at thebrandusa.com/brand-usa-travel-weeks.

WHAT’S NEW IN AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

The event takes place at a pivotal moment for international travel to the United States. This year, major milestones including the 2026 FIFA World Cup, America’s 250th anniversary, and the Route 66 Centennial are expected to generate increased global interest in visiting the country, creating new opportunities to welcome travelers from around the world. Additionally, the United States will host the Summer Olympic and Paralympic Games in Los Angeles in 2028 and the Winter Olympic and Paralympic Games in Salt Lake City in 2034, further strengthening the country’s global tourism appeal in the years ahead.

During the week, Brand USA will also highlight new consumer storytelling designed to inspire travel to the United States. Recent releases include:

- What’s New in the USA: New Experiences and Reasons to Visit HERE
- The USA on Screen: Oscar-Nominated and Award-Winning Filming Locations HERE
- America the Beautiful Game: 50 Experiences in USA World Cup Host Cities HERE
- America the Bespoke: 50 Luxury Experiences Around the Nation HERE
- 50 Family-Friendly Travel Experiences HERE

To learn more about Brand USA, visit TheBrandUSA.com. To start planning a trip to the USA, visit AmericaTheBeautiful.com.

Note to the Editor
Accompanying high resolution photos can be found here. Brand USA’s press kit can be found here.

Featured Photo: *Panrotas*

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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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