

Brand USA Concludes 11th U.K. & Ireland Destination Immersion, Highlighting the Vibrancy of U.S. Communities and Travel Experiences

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(Image: U.K. & Ireland 2026 Finale in Seattle, Washington State. Credit: Visit Seattle)

LONDON (May 6, 2026) — [Brand USA](#), the destination marketing organization for the United States, in partnership with Aer Lingus, American Airlines and British Airways, proudly concluded its 11th U.K. and Ireland Destination Immersion Program on May 1 with a finale event in Seattle, Washington State.

The 2026 U.K. & Ireland Destination Immersion brought together 51 travel agents and nine product managers for six thoughtfully designed itineraries across the United States. The itineraries spanned 11 states and 24 cities, including Raleigh, NC; Las Vegas, NV; Santa Monica, CA; Chicago, IL; New Orleans, LA; and Portland, OR. The experience offered hands-on, interactive learning opportunities, equipping travel advisers with the knowledge and tools to create new and more engaging itineraries — supporting longer, more immersive trips and boosting value for both travellers and destinations.

The immersion concluded with a finale event in Seattle, Washington, where British and Irish agents came together to reflect on their journey, share insights, and explore one of the United States' most dynamic and scenic cities. For 2026, the programme included an expanded and dedicated B2B marketplace in Seattle for product managers and agents. Through direct engagement with 19 regional tourism offices, local suppliers, and nine Receptive Tour Operators, it helped strengthen product development across the U.K. and Irish travel trade.

Malcolm Smith, senior vice president, global markets & chief trade and product development officer at Brand USA, said, "As key inbound markets, the U.K. and Ireland play a vital role in driving international visitation to the United States, and the success of our annual Destination Immersion programme demonstrates how meaningful trade engagement can foster stronger connections and deliver lasting economic impact for local communities across the United States. The 2026 programme comes at a particularly exciting time for U.S. tourism, with the industry spotlighting major milestones including America250, the 2026 FIFA World Cup, and the centennial of Route 66 — along with the wealth of uniquely American experiences that surround them. Together, these moments provide a powerful platform that reinforces the United States' position within the global travel trade and supports future demand."

The U.K. remains the United States' largest overseas source market, with a total of 4,058,124 arrivals in 2025, representing a 0.52% increase compared to 2024 and approaching pre-pandemic levels from 2019 ([The National Travel and Tourism Office](#)). In 2026, over 1,000 weekly flights will connect London Heathrow, London Gatwick, Manchester, Edinburgh and Glasgow with more than 30 U.S. destinations, including the launch of the first-ever direct service from London to St. Louis and additional new or expanded routes such as London Heathrow to Seattle, making it easier for travellers to access a diverse range of experiences across the United States. Flights from Dublin and Shannon will offer 39 nonstop routes to 34 U.S. destinations, including new services from Dublin to Raleigh-Durham and Pittsburgh, with Aer Lingus launching its first-ever nonstop service between Dublin and Pittsburgh on May 25, 2026.

The 2026 U.K. & Ireland Destination Immersion underscores Brand USA's ongoing commitment to authentic, community-driven travel, presenting the United States as a welcoming, dynamic, and unmissable destination for British and Irish travelers.

A Snapshot of This Year's Itineraries:

Carolina Charm: From Capital Culture to Coastal Escapes

- Raleigh, North Carolina
- Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
- Charlotte, North Carolina

Southwest Splendour: Vegas Lights and Canyon Heights

- Las Vegas, Nevada
- Williams, Arizona
- Flagstaff, Arizona
- Sedona, Arizona
- Phoenix, Arizona

Golden State Gems: Iconic Beaches and Seaside Cities

- Santa Monica, California
- San Diego, California
- Huntington Beach, California

Route 66 Roots: Great Rivers & Epic Road Trips

- Chicago, Illinois
- Springfield, Illinois
- St. Louis, Missouri
- Joliet, Illinois

Southern Sounds: Louisiana Great to the Lone Star State

- New Orleans, Louisiana
- Baton Rouge, Louisiana
- Shreveport, Louisiana
- Fort Worth, Texas

Pacific Adventure: City Charm and Alpine Awe

- Portland, Oregon
- Astoria, Oregon
- Evergreen Coast, Washington State
- Olympic Peninsula, Washington State

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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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