BRAND USA

NEWS RELEASE

United States and India tourism sectors open U.S. – India travel and tourism partnership year

NEW DELHI, India - February 17, 2017

Brand USA, the destination marketing organization for the United States, hosted the opening celebration for the U.S. – India Travel and Tourism Partnership Year in Delhi, India yesterday. The "Partnership Year" effort is led by the Department of Commerce's National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO) and the Government of India's Ministry of Tourism through the U.S. – India Strategic and Commercial Dialogue's Travel and Tourism Working Group. India is one of the fastest growing markets for inbound international travel to the United States, with NTTO forecasting a 72 percent increase in arrivals from 2015 through 2021...

The U.S. – India Travel and Tourism Partnership Year is *designed to effectively position the United States and India for increased trade in travel services by bringing* the governments and the private sectors in both countries together to *focus on mutually beneficial opportunities* within the travel sector. It also creates an opportunity for Brand USA to bring new programming opportunities in the Indian market to its U.S. domestic partners. The initiative will also create inroads for the U.S. travel industry with the India travel trade to facilitate better connections and opportunities to promote travel from India to the United States. Brand USA leads the promotion of the U.S. – India Travel and Tourism Partnership Year among the U.S. travel industry.

"India is one of the fastest growing markets for inbound tourism to the USA, and we seek to capture an increasing share of this new business, which will be an important contributor to fueling the economy and creating jobs," said Christopher L. Thompson, president and CEO of Brand USA. "The USA offers Indian travelers a range of experiences and destinations that provide the authenticity and value Indian travelers seek, and we intend to leverage the partnership year to inspire even more travelers from India to visit the USA. Key to our efforts are expanded cooperative marketing programs and B2B marketing initiatives, product development, and our ongoing consumer marketing."

In 2015, the United States welcomed 1.1 million visitors from India who spent $11.8 billion, positioning India as the eleventh largest inbound visitation market and the seventh largest market for U.S. travel and tourism exports, according to statistics from NTTO. Over the last decade, travel and tourism exports to India have more than doubled, now accounting for 65 percent of all U.S. services exports to India.

The opening celebration was attended by more than 200 leading tourism and media executives and government officials from India and the United States. The entities representing the U.S. travel and tourism industry at the event included: American Tours International, Caesar's Entertainment, Enterprise Holdings, Experience Kissimmee, Grand Canyon Helicopters, Grand Canyon West, The Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau (TX), the Las Vegas Convention and Visitors Authority, Maxim Tours, the National Tour Association, NYC & Company, SeaWorld Parks & Entertainment, Travel Oregon, Ujala Vacations, United Airlines, and Visit Orlando, among others. Speakers at the event included Brand USA President and CEO Christopher Thompson, U.S. Chargé d'Affaires MaryKay Loss Carlson, NTTO Director Isabel Hill, and Joint Secretary, Indian Ministry of Tourism Suman Billa. The emcee for the event was India's leading international live host Rini Simon Khanna.

The opening celebration occurred during the same week as the annual South Asia Travel and Tourism Exchange (SATTE) travel trade show in Delhi from February 15-17, 2017. SATTE, now in its twenty-fourth year, is one of South Asia's leading B2B travel and tourism trade exhibitions, where Brand USA is again leading the USA Pavilion featuring nearly a dozen U.S. partner exhibitors. On Feb. 15, Brand USA President and CEO Christopher Thompson inaugurated the USA Pavilion alongside Patrick Santillo, the Minister-Counselor for Commercial Affairs at U.S. Embassy Delhi.

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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.