

KEY FACTS ABOUT INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM TO THE UNITED STATES

The Economic Engine

International travel is one of the largest exports for the United States, ranking ahead of agricultural goods and motor vehicles. It is the single largest services sector export, accounting for 26 percent of all services exports in 2008.

In 2008 total U.S. international travel receipts was a record \$142 billion. This spending includes international passenger airfare payments made by non-resident visitors to U.S. carriers.

The U.S. generated a record travel trade surplus of \$29 billion in 2008. A surplus has been produced continuously since 1989. A surplus occurs when foreign visitors spend more in the United States than U.S. residents spend traveling abroad.

Spending by visitors to the United States in 2008 directly supported 824,000 American jobs, \$30 billion in payroll, and \$17 billion in U.S. tax revenues.

International visitors spend more per traveler than U.S. domestic travelers. Although they account for only four percent of total travelers, they represent 14 percent of travel-related spending, employment, payroll, and taxes in the U.S. International visitors purchase 21 percent of all traveler accommodations output, 19% of all gambling output, 15 percent of all food and beverage output, 10 percent of all highway tolls, and seven percent of all gasoline output.

2008 Visitation Levels

International visitors to the United States reached a record 58 million in 2008, up four percent from 2007. The increase in 2008 builds on the strong performances in each of the previous four years. The previous record visitation had been 56 million in 2007.

The largest visitor markets for the United States in 2008 were Canada (33%), Mexico (24%), U.K. (8%), Japan (6%), Germany (3%), France (2%), and Korea (1%). Combined, these seven markets accounted for 76 percent of all 2008 international visitors.

The United States ranks second behind France for world international visitors.

2008 U.S. Visitors

Total		57.9 million			
1	Canada	18.9 million	6	France	1.2 million
2	Mexico	13.8 million	7	Italy	0.8 million
3	U.K.	4.6 million	8	Brazil	0.8 million
4	Japan	3.2 million	9	S. Korea	0.8 million
5	Germany	1.8 million	10	Australia	0.7 million

2008 Visitor Spending Levels

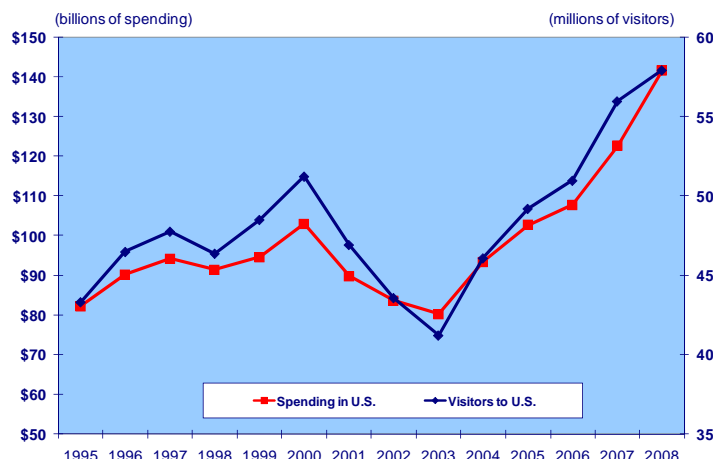
Spending by international travelers to the United States in 2008 was \$142 billion. Of this total, \$110 billion was spent in the United States and \$32 billion on passenger fares on U.S. carriers. Visitor spending for other countries excludes passenger fares and is not available until later in 2009. In 2008 the U.S. ranked first among worldwide destinations in travel spending excluding passenger fares, garnering 12.4 percent market share; this share is nearly double that of second-ranked Spain.

In 2008 Canada remained the top-ranked spending country among U.S. origin countries, accounting for 13 percent of total spending. U.K. ranked 2nd (12%), followed by Japan (11%), which slipped from 1st to 3rd in 2007, Mexico (7%), and Germany (5%).

2008 U.S. Visitor Spending

Total		\$141.7 billion			
1	Canada	\$18.7 billion	6	France	\$4.8 billion
2	U.K.	\$16.7 billion	7	India	\$4.3 billion
3	Japan	\$14.6 billion	8	Brazil	\$4.2 billion
4	Mexico	\$9.7 billion	9	Australia	\$3.7 billion
5	Germany	\$6.7 billion	10	China	\$3.6 billion

U.S. Visitors and Spending 1995-2008



Note: International travelers include all non-U.S. residents who visit the country and stay one or more nights.

Sources: U.S. Department of Commerce, International Trade Administration, Manufacturing and Services, Office of Travel and Tourism Industries; U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis; U.S. Travel Association; United Nations World Tourism Organization.

For more information on the international travel market to the United States, please visit the Office of Travel and Tourism Industries' web site at: <http://tinet.ita.doc.gov>.

November 2009

