



U.S. CULTURAL & HERITAGE TOURISM SUMMIT HIGHLIGHTS

PURPOSE

The U.S. Cultural & Heritage Tourism Summit celebrated the 10th anniversary of the landmark 1995 White House Conference on Travel and Tourism by convening more than 400 representatives from state, local and federal arts, tourism, historic preservation, humanities, transportation and natural resource agencies, as well as tourism leaders, elected officials and nonprofit, tribal, public and private sector leaders to create a national strategy for the cultural and heritage tourism industry.

OUTCOMES

- **A Position Paper on Cultural and Heritage Tourism in the United States:** The position paper and the declaration endorsed by the delegates are the framework for the national strategy, which by design, is to be fulfilled by the actions, vision and leadership of state, local and federal arts, tourism, historic preservation, humanities, transportation and natural resource agencies, as well as tourism leaders, elected officials and nonprofit, tribal, public and private sector leaders.
- **Declaration of Opportunities and Actions:** Endorsed by the delegates, this document complements the position paper as a tool to ground a national strategy in local, regional and state action.
- **Resolution:** This declaration of support by the delegates backs a collaboration between the Southeast Tourism Policy Council and the Southern Arts Federation in assisting in the revitalization of the Gulf Region's heritage, cultural and tourism resources. The purpose is to create a bridge and a focus for coordination between the various sectors in response to the disasters.
- **Priorities and action steps:** Delegates appointed by the governor with their at-large colleagues met by state to hammer out potential actions in addressing the goals of the position paper and the unique needs of their state's cultural and heritage tourism industry.

WHO WAS THERE AND WHAT THEY SAID

Keynote speakers included the following:

- Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez: "Travel and tourism is an essential element of our strong growing economy. We want visitors to hear about the men and women whose leadership, service and creativity make this nation a beacon of hope throughout the world."
- Lynn Biggar, Senior Vice President, American Express Consumer Travel Network: "The private sector has an important role in supporting a responsible and sustainable policy in protecting, promoting and preserving cultural and heritage resources."
- Adair Margo, Chairman, President's Committee on the Arts and the Humanities, on the meaning of cultural and heritage tourism: "Opening our hearts and minds to our community. So we can know it and share it—creating ambassadors for our community."
- Nick Jordan, Kansas State Senator: "We need a strategy for the industry that is sustainable. In an environment where different groups [in our



industry] are competing for [public] dollars and we need a strategy that benefits us all.”

- John Nau, Chairman, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation: “Preserve America provides us with ways to recognize the tremendous efforts to preserve and share the past already taking place throughout the country, as well as to enhance opportunities to broadly promote and market products that already exist — great products you drive by every day.”
- Roger Dow, President and CEO, Travel Industry Association of America: “We define America by our art, by our history and by our music. We have to talk about how we’re going to thrive, how we’re going to grow, how we’re going to exceed expectations, how this industry is going to be the fabric this country is about, and the defining part of what Brand USA is.”
- Mayor John Hickenlooper, Denver, CO: “The rural and urban divide is broken down through this context of cultural and heritage tourism.”
- Mayor Bill Purcell, Nashville, TN: “[Cultural and heritage tourism] offers a vision of the past that is the roadway to our future.” He added, “more people participate in culture and heritage than in sports events in my city.”
- Louisiana Lt Gov Mitch Landrieu: On Katrina/Rita the “cultural economy is the engine of change. This is a real human tragedy that has the power to transform a people. This time of sorrow must be transformed into a time of hope.”

CULTURAL & HERITAGE TOURISM CONSUMER

A study was conducted as part of the Summit to provide information on the cultural and heritage tourism consumer and market. Presenters and researchers included: Dawn Drew, Vice President and Publisher, *National Geographic Traveler*; Lalia Rach, Ed.D, Dean & HVS International Chair, New York University, Preston Robert Tisch Center, Suzanne Cook, PhD, Senior Vice President, Research, Travel Industry Association of America; Adam Sacks, Managing Partner, Global Insight

- Travel is an extension of what they do at home
- Upcoming younger generations of consumers cannot be reached by magazines or brochures. They are plugged in—get their information from the Web and non-traditional channels
- Cultural and Heritage tourism employment doubled in the last five years
- Cultural and heritage tourism sales were \$41 billion in 2004

IMPLEMENTING A NATIONAL STRATEGY

Delegations representing 50 states, District of Columbia and the Virgin Islands met in a town hall setting to identify three potential actions they would take in meeting the goals of the position paper and addressing the strengths and weaknesses in their states. Some highlights:

- “Revolutionize” the Governor’s Conference to include arts, cultural and heritage organizations in both programming and attendance
- Design, develop and implement an African American Heritage Summit
- Survey all cultural and heritage tourism assets to create an inventory resource

- Challenge the private sector to help develop cultural and heritage tourism programming
- Form statewide cultural and heritage tourism alliance or task force to improve communication and propel growth of industry
- Develop an integrated statewide cultural and heritage tourism plan
- Develop more accurate return on investment (ROI) assessments of cultural and heritage tourism organizations
- Get architecture and other “specialty” schools involved in cultural and heritage tourism planning and development
- Provide money and technical support for local cultural and heritage tourism sites
- Develop public/private leadership team to help move cultural and heritage tourism initiatives forward
- Add “culture host” component to hospitality training program
- Create more formal cultural and heritage tourism network/communications
- Dedicate funding year ‘round for cultural and heritage tourism events
- Build on state cultural and heritage tourism summit by convening regional meetings
- Educate the state’s decision makers about cultural and heritage tourism and its importance in the economic development of the state
- Host a familiarization tour for legislators to introduce them to the cultural and heritage tourism resources in the area
- Adopt a legislator and educate them about all things related to cultural and heritage tourism

WHAT IS NEXT

- Partners in Tourism, a contributor to the Summit, will serve as the steward for implementing the national strategy and a forum for communication and information on developments in the field in advancing the goals of the Summit. Partners is a coalition of national associations and federal agencies, representing a broad spectrum of arts, humanities, tourism and heritage organizations, as well as federal agencies. Summit materials, follow-up and news can be found at <http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org/>
- The Cultural & Heritage Tourism Alliance will convene its national conference in Atlanta in the Fall 2006. It will focus in part on the key areas addressed in the Summit.

RESOURCES

- **A Position Paper on Cultural and Heritage Tourism in the United States**—part of the framework for the national strategy for cultural and heritage tourism
- **Declaration of Actions & Opportunities**—a summary case statement and suggested actions to address cultural and heritage tourism by key stakeholders. Part two of the national strategy.

- **Cultural & Heritage Tourism Quiz**—designed to address overall strengths and weaknesses in five key areas.
- **Cultural and Heritage Tourism Web site**—information and updates on the Summit and the cultural and heritage tourism field managed by the National Trust for Historic Preservation and Partners in Tourism..