



AIANTA
American Indian Alaska Native
Tourism Association

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Renowned International Tourism Experts to be Featured at 17th Annual American Indian Tourism Conference

AIANTA expands international education at annual conference as international tourism market grows exponentially in United States

Albuquerque, New Mexico (September 1, 2015) – As international travel to the U.S. continues to grow, along with international visitation to Indian Country, the American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) has extended its international training and education tract to include three separate session topics during the annual American Indian Tourism Conference (AITC), September 13-17, 2015 at the Sky Ute Casino Resort in Ignacio, Colorado.

Travel and tourism is one of America's largest industries, with \$927.9 billion spent directly by domestic and international travelers last year. International travel grew 3.7 percent last year, with 6.7 percent growth in spending, according to Brand USA.

International travelers visiting Native American sites have also increased over the past five years, setting records in the past three. These overseas visitors to Native American communities are also making a stronger impact on the economy, U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) research shows. According to the DOC, visitors to Native American communities typically spend twelve more days in the United States than those not visiting Indian Country, and 67% of those visitors are leisure travelers, spending more money than other travelers.

The international topics at AITC this year will include a session detailing tourism and itinerary development for the international market, with expert speakers on the topic from experienced and successful Indian Country tour programs, as well as the world famous Tauck World Discovery Tours.

Founder and President of his own successful tour company in Monument Valley, Harold Simpson, who has been marketing to the international market for nearly 40 years, will share his expert knowledge in this itinerary-building session.

Joining Simpson on this panel is Paige Williams, Director of Tourism for the Chickasaw Nation, one of Indian Country's top destinations, as well as Roger Saterstrom, Product



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Manager for Tauck World Discovery, known world-wide for their unique tours and experiences.

Also important to tribes or businesses interested in entering into the international market, this year's AITC will include a session devoted to planning and preparing tourism businesses for the international tradeshow, ITB Berlin and IPW. Offering his expertise on this international development panel, is Neville Bhada, Founder and CEO of Tourism Skills Group, a company devoted to the research and strategic planning needs of the travel and tourism industry. Speaking with Bhada on this expert panel is Mary Motsenbocker, President of International Tourism Marketing, Inc., with more than 30 years' experience in tourism marketing, representation and education.

And finally, back at AITC by popular demand is a session presented by a panel of representatives from the U.S. Department of Commerce, discussing the impact of the international traveler on the economy, both on a national scale and in Indian Country. AIANTA is excited to welcome to this panel Paul Bergman, Director of Denver U.S. Export Assistance Center (serving the states of Colorado and Wyoming) for the U.S. Department of Commerce; and Ron Erdman, Deputy Director of Research for the Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, U.S. Department of Commerce. Also joining this panel is Donatello Osti, Commercial Specialist at the U.S. Department of Commerce, Italy, to share his expert knowledge on the Italian market and their potential impact on the U.S. economy.

About AIANTA

The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) is a 501(c)(3) national nonprofit association of Native American tribes and tribal businesses that was incorporated in 2002 to advance Indian Country tourism. The association is made up of member tribes from six regions: Alaska, Eastern, Midwest, Pacific, Plains and the Southwest. AIANTA's mission is to define, introduce, grow and sustain American Indian and Alaska Native tourism that honors traditions and values.

The purpose of AIANTA is to provide our constituents with the voice and tools needed to advance tourism while helping tribes, tribal organizations and tribal members create infrastructure and capacity through technical assistance, training and educational resources. AIANTA serves as the liaison between Indian Country, governmental and private entities for the development, growth, and sustenance of Indian Country tourism. By developing and implementing programs and providing economic development opportunities, AIANTA helps tribes build for their future while sustaining and strengthening their cultural legacy.

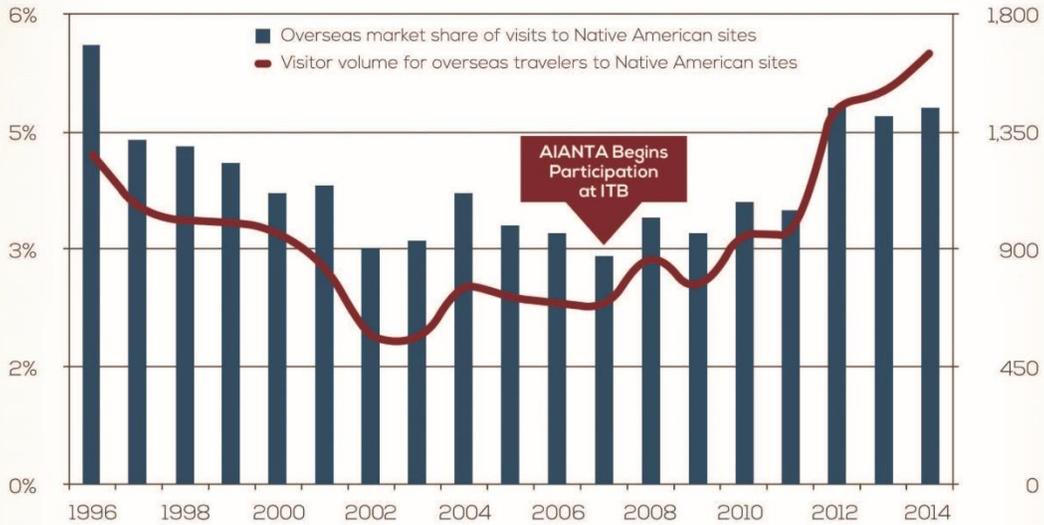
To learn more, please visit www.aianta.org. For current updates, like us on [Facebook](#) and follow us on Twitter ([@OfficialAIANTA](#)).

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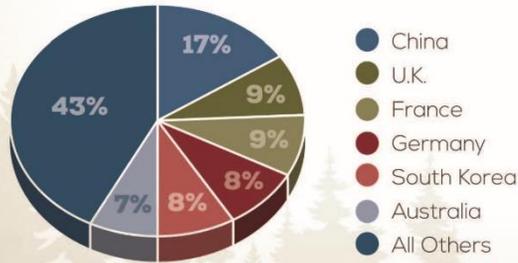
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Travelers visiting Native American sites have increased over the past five years, setting records in the last three years. The American Indian Alaska Native Tourism Association (AIANTA) began international outreach in 2007 at ITB, the world's largest travel marketplace.

2014 INTERNATIONAL VISITORS TO NATIVE AMERICAN SITES



VISITORS TO NATIVE AMERICAN COMMUNITIES:

- Typically spend 12 additional days in the USA
- 67% are leisure travelers, spending more than business travelers
- Visit three destinations while in USA
- Are frequently returning visitors looking for new experiences
- More than half come from Asia and Europe; AIANTA marketed in China, Germany and Italy in 2014-2015

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