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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Overseas Travel to Texas Jumps 14% in 2010 According to Newly Released Report**

**Austin, TX, May 25, 2011** – According to a report released this week by the U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) International Trade Administration (ITA), Texas saw a double-digit increase of 14% in 2010 - with 1.028 million visitors - over the number of overseas\* visitors who came to Texas in 2009. This increase solidifies Texas' place in the Top 10 states in the United States for overseas visitors. The report is attached.

In 2010, Houston and the Dallas-Plano-Irving area, both with international gateway airports into the state, also saw increases in overseas visitors. Houston's visitation increased in volume 5%, with an additional 20,000 overseas visitors, and the Dallas-Plano-Irving area increased 20%, seeing an additional 58,000 overseas visitors.

"The international market is critically important to Texas, with nearly 10 percent of all visitor spending at destinations, or **\$4.3 billion**, credited to the international markets," said Julie Chase, Director of Tourism for the Office of the Texas Governor, Economic Development & Tourism Division, in a recent interview.

"Spending by international visitors provides significant economic stimulus for Texas, supporting almost **43,000 jobs** and generating much needed state and local tax revenues. These numbers clearly demonstrate the benefit of promoting Texas internationally, particularly in countries such as the UK, Germany, Japan, China and Brazil," said David Teel, Texas Travel Industry Association President and CEO.

The DOC report also noted: in 2010 overseas arrivals to the United States posted an 11 percent increase compared to 2009. The DOC projects overall international travel to the United States will continue experiencing strong growth through 2016. Visitor volume is expected to increase 7 percent in 2011 and reach 64 million visitors who stay one or more nights in the United States.

"These numbers demonstrate that aggressively promoting Texas as a top-of-mind destination for overseas visitors is crucial to the Texas economy, the state's travel and tourism industry, and communities throughout the state," said Teel. "International travelers matter to Texas."

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\*Overseas visitors include all countries except Canada and Mexico.

*TTIA is a non-profit organization made up of businesses, organizations, associations and individuals dedicated to developing Texas tourism to its fullest potential. TTIA's mission is to unify and develop industry leadership that will support and influence the growth of Texas travel and tourism. For more information about the Texas Travel Industry Association, visit [www.ttia.org](http://www.ttia.org) or contact the office in Austin at (512) 328-8842.*

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## 2010 Overseas Visitation to U.S. States, Cities Estimates Released Plus 10 Regional and over 20 Country Market Profiles Released

Today the U.S. Department of Commerce announced the states, cities, and territories that most benefitted from overseas travelers to the United States. In 2010 overseas arrivals to the United States posted an 11 percent increase compared to 2009. 2010 reflected a dramatic reversal of the visitation decline experienced in 2009 with most states and cities posting significant increases in 2010. *The 2010 overseas visitation estimates to U.S. destinations (states, cities and regions) and origin region/country market profiles provide information on contributing factors behind the growth.*

New York State was the most visited state by overseas travelers in 2010 for the ninth consecutive year. Although visitation to New York increased eight percent, its market share slipped slightly since its growth was less than the national average. Florida maintained its second position, with a 10 percent increase in visitation. California remained at third position, however increased its market share by experiencing a 21 percent increase in visitation. Nevada, Hawaii, Guam, Massachusetts, Illinois, **Texas** and New Jersey rounded out the top 10 states in visitation estimates. Of the 20 states/territories for which estimates are available, double-digit increases were experienced by 10 states. This was a reversal from 2009 results in which 10 states posted double-digit declines. Nevada and Washington States posted stunning 32 percent increases, respectively, in their visitation estimates, the highest growth among all states.

The cities most visited by overseas travelers in 2010 were New York City, Los Angeles, Miami, Orlando, San Francisco, Las Vegas, Washington DC, Honolulu, Boston and Chicago. Of the 20 city visitation estimates issued, all but one posted an increase. Thirteen states posted double-digit increases in 2010 compared to 10 cities that registered double-digit declines in 2009. The largest visitation increases were experienced by Los Angeles, Seattle and Las Vegas, all over 30 percent. Los Angeles regained its spot as the second most visited city in the U.S.

To view the top states and cities visited by overseas travelers, go to:

[http://tinet.ita.doc.gov/outreachpages/download\\_data\\_table/2010\\_States\\_and\\_Cities.pdf](http://tinet.ita.doc.gov/outreachpages/download_data_table/2010_States_and_Cities.pdf)

Changes in a state or city's visitation estimate vary from year-to-year due to changes in origin market 'demand side factors' and shifts in traveler characteristics. For example:

- New York State was up eight percent overall, however travel to the state from Asia, Oceania, South America were up 35 percent, 18 percent, and 17 percent respectively. In contrast, New York State experienced a one percent decline in visitation from W. Europe which accounted for 50 percent of its overseas visitation.
- Florida state visitation was up 10 percent. W. Europe, which generates 46 percent of Florida's overseas visitors, was only up five percent, however, South America, accounting for 30 percent of visitation, was up 20 percent. The Asia and Pacific regions also posted strong growth, but contributed five percent or less of the visitors to the state.
- California state visitation was up 21 percent due to 28 percent increase from Asia (35 percent share), and a 40 percent increase from Oceania (11 percent share). W. Europe (40 percent share) registered a 14 percent increase in visits to the state.

Changes in key traveler characteristics may also influence visitation, such as, business versus leisure travel, the number of destinations visited, and/or the traveler's use of transportation within the country. Some of the key shifts in traveler characteristics that occurred in 2009 compared to 2010, and over the past several years, that can impact the destinations visited include:

- Increases in leisure travel as a purpose of trip, up two percentage points to 67.9; the highest share since OTTI started the survey in 1983.
- Business travel's share dropped slightly in 2010, to 20.2 percent. The share of business travel has declined for three straight years and was down from a high of 30.2 percent in 2000.
- After five straight years of declines in tour package travel, the share increased to 16.9 percent, the highest figure since 2006.
- This year, the percent of travelers who only visit one state dropped to 67.1. This is only the fifth drop in this metric in the last 15 years. In 1995, only 61.7 percent of overseas travelers visited only one state. So, we are seeing a long term trend of staying put once they arrive in the country. The high was just over 70 percent and this was reached in 2003, 2004 and 2006.
- Likewise, there has been a trend in the declining use of automobiles (rental cars, company/private autos) as a mode of transport within the United States. Rental car use was up in 2010 (30.2%), but it has been down seven of the last nine years. Access to private autos has declined seven years in a row, which also impacts secondary destinations. However, there has been a slight shift in inter-city transportation (airlines, rail and buses).
- Increases in the share of first time travelers to the United States increased in five of the last eight years; it dipped slightly in 2010.
- Women travelers as a percent of the total have increased to over 44 percent in 2010. Their share has increased nine of the last eleven years.

OTTI has also released 11 world regional profiles and 21 countries. These profiles provide the traveler characteristics for each market between 2009 and 2010 along with the destinations visited each year. To see the market profiles, go to:

[http://tinet.ita.doc.gov/outreachpages/inbound.general\\_information.inbound\\_overview.html](http://tinet.ita.doc.gov/outreachpages/inbound.general_information.inbound_overview.html)

In 2010, OTTI was able to collect almost the same number of surveys as they did in 2009. Over the last four years, OTTI has surveyed between 34,500 to almost 36,600 overseas travelers. Additionally, OTTI expanded it's worked to conducting supplemental surveys at eight local airport to dramatically improve the coverage at these airports. Collections obtained by surveys within departure airport now accounts for 73 percent of the collections, an all time high. The database that provides a count of all overseas travelers was also enhanced as records from the 36 visa waiver countries is now all captured electronically which also improves the quality of the data. The surveys collected are weighted by the country or origin and port-of-entry to improve the representativeness of the program in matching the arrival counts. The sample increases and other improvements enable better tracking of the shifts occurring in the U.S. international marketplace. These changes, in turn, impact the destinations visited. To view the market share, volume estimates and percentage change for overseas travelers to the U.S. for 2009 and 2010.

Destination visitation estimates are publicly released for 20 states and 20 cities. The limited number of estimates for destinations visited is due to limitations in sample size and OTTI's statistical policy which requires a minimum of 400 survey respondents for a public estimate. The policy is intended to help ensure the quality of the estimates.

In addition to the aggregate level data available on the web site, OTTI also offers detailed and custom reports or data on a subscription basis using the 35 tables shown in the overseas profile. For information on the research programs that were used to generate the market intelligence issued, see the publications section and custom reports section in the Research Programs area of the *Survey of International Air Travelers*, at:

<http://tinet.ita.doc.gov/research/programs/ifs/index.html>. If you have any questions or need any additional information concerning the visitation estimates, please contact OTTI on 202-482-0140.