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Development

U.S. is losing share of international travel market

In 2018, “the U.S. continued to lose market share as global travel expanded,” according to a report by Oxford Economics.

While international travel overall was up about 6 percent, travel into the U.S. rose 2 percent.

This compares to Europe and Asia (6 percent) and the Middle East (10 percent).

Adam Sacks, president of the Oxford Economics subsidiary Tourism Economics, says, “There appears to be a triad of factors affecting the market. The global economy is slowing, most currencies have weakened against the dollar, and U.S. policy and rhetoric have damaged sentiment.”

It may not get any better this year. A trends report from the U.S. Travel Association is titled “International Inbound Travel Growth Projected to Fizzle in First Half of 2019.”

Source: forbes.com



Visit California

Bixby Bridge has become a must-see spot on the Big Sur coast.

Monterey encourages good behavior

Sustainable Moments initiative presents tips for responsible travel

Bixby Bridge has become a must-see spot on the Big Sur coast. Its concrete arches overlook the vast Pacific Ocean. Car commercials are filmed here and the bridge is featured in the opening credits of the popular HBO TV series “Big Little Lies.” Pictures of Bixby Bridge are all over social media apps like Instagram.

Even on a rainy weekday, dozens of tourists pull over to take selfies.

Sometimes visitors take risks to get the perfect picture, like getting too close to steep cliffs.

That behavior worries Butch Kronlund. He’s the Executive Director of the Community Association of Big Sur.

“Big Sur is a wild coast and folks get themselves in trouble all of the time.

In the process of trying to get to a secluded location, they end up damaging the very resource that they’re there to look at. So that’s also a problem,” says Kronlund.

Everyone needs to work together when it comes to balancing demands

of a growing tourism sector with environmental stewardship, the president of the Monterey County Convention and Visitors Bureau says.

“Unless visitor education is evangelized by local residents and business and government, it won’t get the traction it needs,” Tammy Blount-Canavan says.

She was speaking in January at the IMPACT Sustainability Travel and Tourism Conference in Victoria, BC.

Its goal is to bring together various segments of the tourist industry, such as governments, planners, operators, investors and academics to develop economic, social and environmental sustainability and follow restorative practices.

The Monterey County tourism body launched its Sustainable Moments initiative in 2015, focusing on encouraging visitors to enjoy themselves and at the same time, to behave in a responsible way.

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CVB, local government and residents all have part to play

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Its goal is to foster a culture both within the local community and with visitors that makes adherence to Monterey's values a priority.

The county focuses on sustainable practices such as water conservation, commercial composting, and wildlife and nature preservation.

Tourism is worth \$2.5 billion to Monterey County every year.

A survey found most residents understood its importance to the economy. A total of 78 per cent of respondents said they would feel better about tourism if they knew it was being promoted as responsible tourism.

Residents are doing their part, too.

To improve tourist behavior, a group of Big Sur residents created the "Big Sur Pledge." It's posted online at bigsurpledge.org. The goal is to remind people to respect this



www.seemonterey.com/sustainable

popular wilderness destination. It asks them to commit to sharing the road, leaving no trace, camping only where allowed. It is modeled after Hawaii's Pono Pledge.

"A bunch of us in the community got together and said, 'this is a really great idea, a good way to send a positive message to our visitors.' And it's a good reminder for us. Folks in Big Sur travel just like everyone else and I know when I go someplace, I want to be thoughtful," Kronlund says.

Sustainability is a concept the local

hospitality industry is embracing.

The Convention and Visitor's Bureau has its Sustainable Moments campaign. Online, it offers tips for responsible travel. For each community, there are specific do's and don'ts. In Big Sur, do stay on the path, don't start fires. There's also a video series about #travelfails.

Local educators are also working to shape a more sustainable tourism industry.

Last spring, the tourism organization announced the Sustainable Moments Collective, a partnership with the Monterey Bay Aquarium and other local organizations to foster a balance between a strong tourism economy and preserving the environment.

In January, the 2nd Annual Sustainable Hospitality Summit took place in Monterey.

Sources: kazu.org, timescolonist.com

An extreme example of bad behavior

A group of British travelers dubbed the "tourists from hell" were deported from New Zealand after wreaking havoc across the country in January.

The group were accused of theft, trashing hotels, refusing to pay for food, leaving rubbish on the beach, using foul language and littering during their stay in New Zealand.

One member of the group pleaded guilty to two counts of theft in the Hamilton District Court.

Group patriarch Larry Doran told the Daily Mail "we got blamed for things," and his family were getting human rights advice over the trip. "It's lies, they've condemned us," he said.

Source: nzherald.co.nz, Daily Mail via newshub.co.nz



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