

## NEW STUDY SHOWS HERITAGE TOURISM IMPACT

A recent research study reveals that 78 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers participate in cultural and/or heritage activities while traveling, translating to 118.3 million adults each year. With cultural and heritage travelers spending an average of \$994 per trip, they contribute more than \$192 billion annually to the U.S. economy.

"We discovered that an impressive number of U.S. travelers seek out cultural and heritage experiences," said Helen Marano, director, Office of Travel and Tourism Industries, U.S. Department of Commerce. "...Their expenditures confirm that this is a strong market, and they are contributing significantly to our communities during these challenging economic times."

The study is the first to segment cultural and/or heritage travelers, showing the diverse groups that exist within this broader category of traveler. The segmentation analysis uncovered five different types of cultural and heritage travelers: Passionate, Well-rounded, Aspirational, Self-Guided, and Keeping it Light. Three segments - Passionate, Well-rounded, and Self-guided - were more serious about their travels and said that cultural and heritage activities had a greater impact on their destination choice. Together, these three segments represent 40% of all leisure travelers and contribute nearly \$124 billion to the U.S. economy.

Cultural and heritage travelers as a whole are more frequent travelers, reporting an average of 5.01 leisure trips in the past 12 months. They are more frequent business travelers and more likely to have taken an international trip in the past 12 months than their non-cultural/heritage counterparts. They are also likely to travel farther to get the experiences they seek: about half of most recent overnight leisure trips were 500 miles or more from home. More than a third say they traveled between 100 and 300 miles for a day trip.

The study found that cultural and heritage travelers are more likely to participate in culinary activities, such as sampling artisan food and wines, attending food and wine festivals, visiting farmers' markets, shopping for gourmet foods, and enjoying unique dining experiences as well as fine dining.

Other cultural and heritage activities identified by travelers include visiting historic sites (66 percent); attending historical re-enactments (64 percent); visiting art museums/galleries (54 percent); attending an art/craft fair or festival (45 percent); attending a professional dance performance (44 percent); visiting state/national parks (41 percent); shopping in museum stores (32 percent); and exploring urban neighborhoods (30 percent). The vast majority of these travelers (65 percent) say that they seek travel experiences where the "destination, its buildings and surroundings have retained their historic character."

The study was conducted by Mandala Research for the U.S. Cultural & Heritage Tourism Marketing Council, in conjunction with the U.S. Department of Commerce. Heritage Travel, Inc., a subsidiary of The National Trust for Historic Preservation, and its website [www.gozaic.com](http://www.gozaic.com) was lead sponsor of the study.