

## Fact Sheet

# United States of America



Welcome



### Where is USA?

The USA, also referred to as the US or the United States, is located in North America, and shares its northern border with Canada and its southern border with Mexico. It has Atlantic, Pacific, Gulf and Arctic coastlines.



### Time difference

Between six and nine hours behind South African time.



### Population

316-million (2013).



### Economy

The US is the world's largest economy, with a GDP of US\$16.8-trillion, with its wealth generated primarily through service-based industries.



### Language

The main language in the US is English. Spanish is the second most common language and is spoken by around 35-million people.



### US manners

Americans are usually generous tippers, tipping up to 15-20%. In the US, the tip is sometimes included in the bill, so you may have to mention it if this is not the case in your establishment.

Often, Americans are accustomed to having a large amount of personal space when interacting with others.

In the USA it is usually considered proper not to phone someone after 9.30pm.

Many Americans consider it rude to ask questions about how much they earn and how much more expensive items cost.

It is also usually best to avoid topics such as politics, religion, homosexuality, racism, abortion, criticism of the government, and criticism of an individual's patriotism when speaking to Americans.

Always be aware that treating men and women differently is unacceptable when interacting with Americans.

Some things that Americans usually consider rude are spitting, chewing with one's mouth open, staring and picking one's nose.



## How to make an American's day

They like to try food from different cultures, but nothing too adventurous, and always err on the healthy side.

They are coffee fanatics, so good coffee in big cups is always a win. Iced coffee in summer is a good option.

Tour guides must be knowledgeable and friendly, as Americans like interaction.

They want to experience the local culture wherever they go, so make sure they have unique activities and places to enjoy.

They often enjoy grilled meat, so a braai would go down well (they're referred to as barbeques in the States).

They enjoy the service of a hotel to organise their day trips and excursions, but when it comes to dining make sure you suggest fun, trendy restaurants and bars.

### Geography

The US is comprised of 50 states (including the island of Hawaii, in the Pacific Ocean).

### Facts about US travellers to South Africa

Travellers from the USA are the second-highest contributors (after the UK) to the South African tourism economy, contributing over R16-billion to the industry between 2003 and 2008.

Eight in 10 travellers from the US visit South Africa for leisure, rather than business. The highest proportion of US visitors to South Africa come from New York and Washington, although there is an increase in the number of travellers from other cities.

Internet travel sales are booming in the US. They grew at an annual rate of 20% between 2003 and 2008, while the number of retail travel outlets decreased by 4% every year during the same period. Translation: make sure you have an online presence!

Visiting natural attractions and experiencing wildlife in South Africa are the most common activities for American travellers, who rate our country's scenic beauty and wildlife/game park experiences as the most common reasons for satisfaction after visiting.

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## How to make an American's day

In the US market, South Africa's biggest competitors are Australia and Kenya in the wildlife/adventure space. India, China, France and the UK, along with Egypt, compete with South Africa for historical and cultural experiences.

South Africa also faces competition from Brazil and Thailand for beach experiences.

However, prices for direct flights from the USA to South Africa are lower than to most African competitors on a \$/km basis, Special offers on flights, safaris and hotels have proven to be very effective encouragement to first-time American travellers to South Africa.

Most US holiday takers to South Africa are between the ages of 35 and 64, and many stay for six to seven days. On average, repeat visitors stay for a longer duration and visit fewer provinces compared to first-time travellers.

The Western Cape is a favoured destination for all American visitors. Repeat visitors, however, tend to take longer stays in Gauteng compared to first-timers.

### Traveller profiles

There are five segments of consumers from the USA who are positive about SA – a large proportion of them 'Wanderlusts' and 'Next Stop South Africas' (NSSAs).

### Key segments for South Africa in the US market:

- Wanderlusts
- CPAs
- Family Explorers
- Well-Travelled Seniors
- NSSAs