

# CULTURAL HERITAGE TOURISM

## 2008 FACT SHEET



### **What is cultural heritage tourism?**

Cultural heritage tourism means traveling to experience the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present. It includes irreplaceable historic, cultural and natural resources. To learn more about cultural heritage tourism, go to [www.culturalheritagetourism.org](http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org).

### **What benefits does cultural heritage tourism offer?**

Tourism is big business. In 2005, the travel and tourism industry contributed \$650 billion to the U.S. economy. Travel and tourism is the third largest retail industry in the U.S. behind automotive dealers and food stores. Travel and tourism directly employs more than 8 million people and creates a payroll income of \$171.4 billion and tax revenues of \$104.9 billion for federal, state and local governments. (Source: *Travel and Tourism Works for America*, September 2006).

In addition to creating new jobs, new business and higher property values, well-managed tourism improves the quality of life and builds community pride. According to the 2003 *The Historic/Cultural Traveler* study by the Travel Industry Association and *Smithsonian Magazine*, 81% (118 million) U.S. adults who traveled in 2002 were considered cultural heritage travelers. These travelers included historical or cultural activities on almost 217 million person-trips last year, up 13 percent from 192 million in 1996. Visitors to historic sites and cultural attractions stay longer and spend more money than other kinds of tourists. Cultural and heritage visitors spend, on average, \$623 per trip compared to \$457 for all U.S. travelers excluding the cost of transportation. (Source: 2003 *The Historic/Cultural Traveler*, TIA). Perhaps the biggest benefits of cultural heritage tourism, though, are diversification of local economies and preservation of a community's unique character.

### **What challenges can cultural heritage tourism bring?**

One challenge is ensuring that tourism does not destroy the very heritage that attracts visitors in the first place. Furthermore, tourism is a competitive, sophisticated, fast-changing industry that presents its own challenges. It is generally a clean industry: no smokestacks or dangerous chemicals. But it does put demands on the infrastructure - on roads, airport, water supplies and public services like police and fire protection.

### **What makes cultural heritage tourism work?**

By working in local communities across the country over the past decade, the National Trust has developed five guiding principles to create a sustainable cultural heritage tourism program.

- 1) Collaborate
- 2) Find the fit between a community and tourism
- 3) Make sites and programs come alive
- 4) Focus on quality and authenticity
- 5) Preserve and protect resources

### **What does the National Trust's Heritage Tourism Program do?**

The Heritage Tourism Program provides technical assistance in strategic planning, preservation, tourism development, interpretation and marketing on a fee-for-service basis. The Heritage Tourism Program has also developed a series of "how-to" publications and programs to help individuals and organizations developing cultural heritage tourism programs. For more information, check out <http://www.preservationnation.org/issues/heritage-tourism/> and <http://www.culturalheritagetourism.org>.

### **What publications does the National Trust offer about cultural heritage tourism?**

To help communities, regions, and states develop or enhance cultural heritage tourism activities, the National Trust has developed a series of publications and products, including:

#### **Touring Historic Places**

A 16-page guide for group tour operators and managers of historic sites to develop, market, and host group heritage tours. (\$10 plus \$4 S&H)

#### **Preserving Our Past: Building Our Future**

An 8-minute video describing the economic impact of heritage tourism and other benefits that heritage tourism can provide. (\$10 plus \$4 S&H)

#### **Share Your Heritage: Cultural Heritage Tourism Success Stories**

An 80-page four-color publication featuring cultural heritage tourism success stories from across the country. Stories were selected by a national committee including representatives from historic preservation, museums, the arts and the humanities, plus

***Stories Across America: Opportunities in Rural Tourism:*** a companion 44-page publication of rural tourism success stories. (\$25/pair plus \$5 S&H)

#### **Forum Journal – Summer 1999 New Directions in Heritage Tourism**

A 60-page publication focusing on issues of heritage tourism. It contains eight articles reflecting current trends and initiatives in heritage tourism. (\$6 plus \$3 S&H)

#### **To order:**

Send a check or money order to:  
National Trust for Historic Preservation, Mountains/Plains Office  
535 16th Street, Suite 750, Denver, CO 80202; (303) 623-1504

For credit card orders:  
*Preservation Books* at 202-588-6296 or [www.preservationbooks.org](http://www.preservationbooks.org)

### **Where can I find more information about the National Trust for Historic Preservation?**

For more information about the National Trust for Historic Preservation, or for historic preservation assistance, call (202) 588-6000 or [www.PreservationNation.org](http://www.PreservationNation.org).

The National Trust headquarters office is located in **Washington, DC** and has regional offices in:  
<http://www.preservationnation.org/about-us/contact-us/regional-offices/>

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