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VISIT PHILADELPHIA® ANNOUNCES MARKETING PLANS FOR 2019
*New President & CEO Jeff Guaracino Joins Other Hospitality Leaders
To Report On The Year's Tourism Industry Outlook*

PHILADELPHIA, January 29, 2019 – At VISIT PHILADELPHIA's 2019 Outlook event—the group's 10th annual—the destination marketing organization released details about its marketing initiatives for the year, including a winter advertising campaign, a brand new hotel package for Live Nation showgoers, a new campaign to spur Latino travel to Philadelphia and an increased marketing focus on Philadelphia's food and drink scene. In addition, the City of Philadelphia, VISIT PHILADELPHIA®, the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association reported on a record year for occupancy—79.6%—at Center City Philadelphia hotels.

Hospitality industry partners from the U.S. Travel Association, the state and city shared their news for 2019 as well. Highlights include the completion of the Visitor Experience Improvement Project at the Independence Visitor Center, 20 citywide conventions for the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau and nearly 20 new flights out of Philadelphia International Airport.

A Look Back:

2018: A Record Hotel Year: The City of Philadelphia, VISIT PHILADELPHIA, the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association announced record occupancy for Center City Philadelphia hotels in 2018 at 79.6%, according to STR data. The market welcomed 402 rooms from three new hotels in 2018, building big momentum over 2017.

- **Room Nights Sold:** 5.6% increase in hotel room nights sold over 2017—that's 186,000 additional room nights for a total of 3.5 million sold in 2018.
- **Average Daily Rate (ADR):** 3.4% increase in ADR to \$191, up from \$185 in 2017 and matching the record set in 2016, when Philadelphia hosted the Democratic National Convention.
- **Revenue:** 9.2% increase in hotel revenue, up from \$618 million in 2017 to \$675 million in 2018, thanks to higher rates and higher demand throughout the year.

2018: A Winning Year: VISIT PHILADELPHIA® recently won six Adrian Awards from Hospitality Sales & Marketing Association International (HSMIAI), including a Platinum Award for its retargeting marketing program executed in conjunction with the Pennsylvania Convention Center (PCC). The company also took home awards for its reimagined visitphilly.com and the [media center](#) that goes along with it, [Flavors of Philly](#) Facebook series, [We Got You](#) campaign to inspire African-American travel and [Behind the Eats: Philadelphia](#) series. Since 2004, VISIT PHILADELPHIA has won 43 HSMIAI Awards.

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Happening Now:

City of Brotherly Love Winter Advertising Campaign: VISIT PHILADELPHIA's winter City of Brotherly Love campaign launched on January 14, 2019 with a concentration in New York, Northern New Jersey and Philadelphia. Highlights of the \$1 million media buy include:

- New: Animated video advertisements at Brooklyn transit stations
- Traveling billboards on buses commuting through the Northern New Jersey suburbs
- Partnerships with three New York radio personalities who'll talk about what's happening in Philly throughout the campaign
- New: In-market TV commercials, thanks to partnerships with 6ABC, FOX29, NBC10 and Telemundo 62

Visit Philly Live Nation Hotel Package Debuts: VISIT PHILADELPHIA® has partnered with Live Nation Philadelphia and six hotels on the all-new **Visit Philly Live Nation Hotel Package**, bookable at visitphilly.com/livenationpackage (link live on February 1). People attending a Live Nation event at The Fillmore, The Met or Wells Fargo Center can enhance their experience by purchasing the hotel package, which includes an overnight hotel stay, hotel parking, venue parking, early venue access, food and beverage vouchers, commemorative VIP lanyards, custom show posters and a late hotel check-out. The package runs from February 1 through April 30, 2019. (Show tickets are not included in the package and must be purchased separately.)

Coming Soon:

- **Latino Marketing Initiative:** VISIT PHILADELPHIA is working on a three-year campaign to build the region's perception and drive visitation among Latino travelers. The initiative will debut in summer 2019.
- **Focus on Food & Drink:** The company's focus on food and drink continues this year with an increased focus on the region's beer, wine and whiskey offerings and an expansion of its partnership with the James Beard Foundation.

Partner News:

- **Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association:** 2018 was a record-breaking year for the hotel industry in Philadelphia, with occupancy just under 80% and an average daily rate of \$191. The new Philadelphia Hospitality Investment Levy has collected approximately \$5 million in funds to help attract even more events to the city for years to come. 2019 will be an even better year with six new hotels (Four Seasons Hotel Philadelphia, Lokal Hotel Fishtown, Pod Philly, Hyatt Place Hotel Airport, Mainstay Suites and Ascend Hotel Collection) made up of more than 700 new rooms. In addition, several existing hotels (Sofitel Philadelphia, Loews Philadelphia Hotel, AKA Rittenhouse, to name just a few) will complete multimillion-dollar renovations. Contact: Zoey Toy, (215) 557-1900, ztoy@gpha.us
- **Independence Visitor Center:** In summer 2019, the Visitor Center will complete its \$15 million Visitor Experience Improvement Project. Renovations and upgrades include: a 42-foot digital "Philly Welcome Wall" that displays interactive content for visitors to explore via touchscreen; an eight-and-a-half-minute film featuring the city's sites and attractions played daily in an open-orientation theater; a public wraparound outdoor terrace with panoramic views of Independence Mall; an expanded gift shop; an exhibit space and digital screens featuring Independence National

Historical Park; and additional environmentally friendly, accessible public restrooms, including a dedicated caregiver room. Contact: Nicole Woods, (215) 965-2310, nwoods@PHLvisitorcenter.com

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- **Pennsylvania Convention Center (PCC):** Over the next 12 months, the center will host one of its strongest convention calendars in two decades. And over the next three years, the center's board of directors is set to invest more than \$40 million in building enhancements: installation of new energy-efficient lighting, the modernization of escalators, vibrant restrooms, new room partitions and exterior sidewalk and landscape improvements. Additional fiber optic cable will be added to the already robust network to increase capacity and speed for PCC's customers who are using new technologies during their meetings and conventions. Contact: Deirdre Childress Hopkins, (215) 418-4754, dchildress@paconvention.com
- **Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau (PHLCVB):** Currently, the PHLCVB has secured 20 citywide conventions and events—a 10-year record—that will bring over 346,000 visitors to the city and generate more than 375,000 hotel room nights. Returning customers like LIGHTFAIR International and BIO will be joined by first-time conventions such as the American Heart Association and the American Academy of Neurology. On March 24 and 25, 2019, PHLCVB's PHL Diversity division, in partnership with Lodging Media and Temple University's School of Sport, Tourism and Hospitality Management, will present the 2019 Diversity and Inclusion Conference, an opportunity for business leaders to exchange ideas and best practices surrounding diversity and inclusion. Overseas leisure travel is also expected to grow in 2019, with increased visitation from the Asia Pacific region driving much of the growth. Contact: Alethia Calbeck, (215) 636-3340, alethia@discoverPHL.com
- **Philadelphia International Airport:** Philadelphia International Airport welcomes several new flights in 2019. American Airlines, the airport's hub carrier, will launch nonstop flights to eight new destinations: Key West and Melbourne, Florida (February 16); Edinburgh, Scotland (April 2); Asheville, North Carolina and Chattanooga, Tennessee (May 3); Bologna, Italy (June 6); Berlin, Germany and Dubrovnik, Croatia (June 7). American will resume service to Halifax, Nova Scotia (June 13) and upgrade capacity on its popular Prague, Czech Republic flight. The Bologna and Dubrovnik service will be the only direct flights to those cities from the U.S. In addition, Sun Country Airlines will begin commercial service at PHL on April 18 with flights to Minneapolis, Minnesota. Frontier Airlines is adding nonstop flights from Philadelphia to Montego Bay, Jamaica (February 10); Atlanta, Georgia, Las Vegas, Nevada, Myrtle Beach, South Carolina and Raleigh-Durham, North Carolina (April 30); and Pensacola, Florida (May 3). Spirit Airlines is starting service to New Orleans, Louisiana (May 2) and San Juan, Puerto Rico (May 23). Contact: Diane Gerace, (215) 937-5402, diane.gerace@phl.org

VISIT PHILADELPHIA® is our name and our mission. As the region's official tourism marketing agency, we build Greater Philadelphia's image, drive visitation and boost the economy.

On Greater Philadelphia's official visitor website and blog, visitphilly.com and uwishunu.com, visitors can explore things to do, upcoming events, themed itineraries and hotel packages. Compelling photography and videos, interactive maps and detailed visitor information make the sites effective trip-planning tools. Along with Visit Philly social media channels, the online platforms communicate directly with consumers. Travelers can also call and stop into the Independence Visitor Center for additional information and tickets.

Note to Editors: For high-resolution photos and high-definition B-roll of Greater Philadelphia, visit the Photos & Video section of visitphilly.com/mediacenter.