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Tweet It: Get a peek at 2020 (and beyond) marketing initiatives for @visitphilly: vstphl.ly/2GHqe6p

**HOSPITALITY LEADERS DECLARE THE 2020s
A DECADE OF OPPORTUNITY FOR GREATER PHILADELPHIA TOURISM
*VISIT PHILADELPHIA Announces New Initiatives & Collaborations For Year & Decade To Come***

PHILADELPHIA, January 28, 2020 – Today, on National Plan for Vacation Day, nearly 1,000 members of the tourism and hospitality community gathered to hear industry leaders and city officials, including Philadelphia Mayor Jim Kenney and City Councilmember Cherelle Parker, present their outlook for the industry over the decade of opportunity to come. Hosted by VISIT PHILADELPHIA®, the 11th annual Tourism & Hospitality Industry Outlook highlighted how Greater Philadelphia will maintain its competitive advantage as a tourism destination, meet the challenges of the decade ahead and grow its share of the visitor market collaboratively.

At The Met Philadelphia on North Broad Street, one of several city neighborhoods undergoing a renaissance, Jeff Guaracino, president and CEO of VISIT PHILADELPHIA, provided top-line details for several new marketing initiatives designed to drive leisure tourism. In 2018, 88% of Greater Philadelphia's 45 million visitors came to the region to have fun. Programs include a first-of-its-kind partnership with the James Beard Foundation, strategies to increase girlfriend and boomer travel, a new podcast with a twist, a partnership with Live Nation and CID Entertainment and increased marketing in Canada, the region's top international visitor market. VISIT PHILADELPHIA will announce additional details for each initiative throughout the year.

Earlier in the day, the City of Philadelphia, VISIT PHILADELPHIA, the Philadelphia Convention & Visitors Bureau and the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association reported that Center City hotels marked 10 straight years of growth in 2019 thanks to records in daily rate and revenue.

Leaders from the Philadelphia International Airport, Independence Visitor Center Corporation, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Visit Bucks County, Valley Forge Tourism & Convention Board, Visit Delco and Chester County Conference & Visitors Bureau also shared their outlooks at the event.

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The 2020 Tourism & Hospitality Industry Outlook event was made possible by The Met Philadelphia, Brulee Catering, Visual Infinity, IATSE Local 8, KYW Newsradio, NBC10/Telemundo62, Victory Brewing Company, Love City Brewing and Yards Brewing Company.

2020 Marketing Highlights:

James Beard Partnership

VISIT PHILADELPHIA® and the [James Beard Foundation](#) are embarking on an exciting new partnership that brings the culinary and tourism industries together to make it easy for travelers to support delicious, diverse and sustainable food. The year-round, region-wide collaboration will connect travelers to the award-winning chefs and culinary talent that make the Greater Philadelphia region a not-to-be-missed destination for people who love food and love to make an impact. Embracing The Foundation's Good Food for Good™ mission, the partnership aims to drive those passionate about food to choose Philadelphia for their next culinary adventure. Elements include:

- **James Beard House Chef Takeovers:** A four-night Philadelphia chef takeover at New York City's James Beard House on January 29, January 30, April 21 and June 11, 2020, bringing together Philadelphia's award-winning chefs and rising culinary talent, in-the-know mixologists and top media
- **2020 James Beard Foundation Awards Nominee Announcement:** Taking place in Philadelphia on March 25, 2020, at the Barnes Foundation in partnership with Constellation Culinary Group
- **The James Beard Foundation's Taste America:** Philadelphia Pop-Up Dinner on April 14, 2020, bringing the James Beard House experience to Philadelphia's Spice Finch with an intimate, seated dinner featuring Spice Finch chefs Jennifer Carroll and Billy Riddle, along with James Beard Award-winning chef Vishwesh Bhatt of Snackbar in Oxford, Mississippi
- **A Brand-New James Beard Restaurant Collective:** A series of events in the Philadelphia region with the city's top culinary talents in August 2020, curated in partnership with Center City District, the James Beard Foundation and local chefs and restaurateurs

City of Sisterly Love

In 2020, VISIT PHILADELPHIA will celebrate the power of sisterhood, inviting all women — particularly those in the 40-70 demographic — planning to travel with sisters, cousins, girlfriends or other groups of women to choose Philadelphia as their getaway destination. To compete as a top national leisure destination for women, VISIT PHILADELPHIA will promote a year of events and programming around art, food, fitness, wine, music and history, including the centennial of women's right to vote.

The year-long marketing strategy will include advertising, public relations, social media, web content and partnerships. First up, VISIT PHILADELPHIA is sending artist Amberella to New York City to create street art that will encourage visitation to the City of Sisterly Love.

New Podcast

Set to launch on Leap Day, February 29, 2020, VISIT PHILADELPHIA will debut a travel podcast that offers listeners insider perspectives on Greater Philadelphia and puts the region's culture and diversity on full display. The podcast will give a voice to the tourism marketing organization's popular [visitphilly.com](#) and enable VISIT PHILADELPHIA to use varied voices to tell an enhanced Philadelphia story. This additional content platform will reach diverse markets and generate revenue.

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The podcast covers the expected: best cheesesteaks, best Philly movies, best Philly singers. But it focuses even more heavily on the unexpected. For example, listeners will hear from *Shark Tank* winner Patrice Banks, founder of the Girls Auto Clinic; Adam Blackstone, music director for awards shows and top artists; Vashti DuBois of The Colored Girls Museum; and Shawn Gee, president of Live Nation Urban, founding member of management group Maverick and lead manager for The Roots and Jill Scott.

Three Philadelphia megafans host the podcast: radio personality Laiya St. Clair and VISIT PHILADELPHIA's Rachel Ferguson and Justin Pizzi. It features music by local producer, DJ and brand ambassador Dan "Dilemma" Thomas. In addition, special guests and celebrities will appear on the program to share their Philly views and opinions.

To help differentiate it from other podcasts, it will have a video component to help drive Visit Philly's social media fans and followers to download and subscribe.

Live Nation/CID Entertainment Partnership

Between Memorial Day and Labor Day, Live Nation will sell more than three million event tickets.

To position Philadelphia as the live entertainment destination of the summer, drive more hotel stays and measure the impact of live music on leisure tourism, VISIT PHILADELPHIA is partnering with Live Nation and CID Entertainment, a premier Philadelphia-based VIP ticket package and travel provider.

As the marketing partner, VISIT PHILADELPHIA will publicize ultimate VIP concierge experiences — including travel packages and other exclusive perks — for 265 events taking place at four Live Nation venues (The Met Philadelphia, The Fillmore Philadelphia, the Mann Center for the Performing Arts and BB&T Pavilion) in summer 2020.

Expanded Tourism Marketing In Canada

In order to grow the leisure tourism market, VISIT PHILADELPHIA is partnering with a coalition of industry stakeholders to better capture Philadelphia's share of Canadian visitors against direct competitors such as New York, Chicago, Boston, Florida, Houston and the Caribbean. Of the 1.22 million international visitors to Greater Philadelphia last year, nearly 500,000 of them came from Canada, Philadelphia's largest international market.

The marketing effort will extend beyond traditional public relations, which VISIT PHILADELPHIA has been doing in Canada for many years now, to include social media, web, advertising, events and partnerships. The city's expanded Canadian outreach will begin this year and grow throughout the decade.

REAL ID

VISIT PHILADELPHIA is partnering with Philadelphia International Airport to make sure people know that all Americans will require a REAL ID-compliant form of identification to fly domestically beginning on October 1, 2020. Currently, according to the U.S. Travel Association (USTA), more than 90 million Americans still do not have a REAL ID driver's license or an acceptable alternative, like a U.S. passport. VISIT PHILADELPHIA and the Airport will run REAL ID messaging on social media and radio throughout February and March to urge all those in the Greater Philadelphia region — particularly diverse populations — to get compliant. dmv.pa.gov/REALID

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Hotel News:

2019: A Record Hotel Year

2019 marked a decade of growth for Center City Philadelphia's hotels. Today, the City of Philadelphia, in conjunction with VISIT PHILADELPHIA®, the Philadelphia Convention and Visitors Bureau and the Greater Philadelphia Hotel Association, announced records, most notably, in average daily rate (up 5.8% year over year to \$202.41) and revenue (up 4.3% year over year to \$707 million). Occupancy remained solid at 76.3%, as did demand with 3.49 million room nights consumed. All of these results came during a year when four new Philadelphia hotels opened, adding 491 rooms to the city's supply. In addition, according to AIRDNA, Center City Philadelphia saw a significant increase in demand for limited-lodging options such as Airbnb, with 343,700 room nights consumed by guests renting a private room or an entire home, up 38.9% year over year.

New Hotels

On the heels of a year of prominent hotel openings in Philadelphia and The Countryside® — the **Four Seasons Hotel Philadelphia** in the Comcast Technology Center, Center City's art-filled **Fitler Club** and micro-hotel pioneer **Pod Philly**, and the riverside **Ghost Light Inn** in New Hope — the city and region are looking forward to more than 1,800 new hotel rooms in 2020.

This spring, the Market East corridor will welcome a **Canopy by Hilton**; Philly's first **W** and **Element** hotels — the first dual brand for the hotels, anywhere — will debut in the center of Center City; New Hope will receive a luxurious new **River House at Odette's**; and the Main Line will get a rustic-chic extended-stay property on the Schuylkill in the **Residence Inn by Marriott Philadelphia / Bala Cynwyd**. Also planning 2020 debuts: **Guild House Hotel**, a National Historic Landmark that's also a landmark in Philadelphia women's history, and **Live! Hotel & Casino**, featuring gaming and dining near the sports complexes of South Philadelphia.

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.