



Trade Show Report International Roundup – Spearfish, SD April 28 – May 1, 2019

Glacier Country Representation:

- Glacier Country Tourism – Debbie Picard
- Destination Missoula – Kara Bartlett
- Discover Kalispell – Dawn Jackson
- Travelers' Rest Preservation & Heritage Assoc. – Molly Stockdale

Overview:

As a Marketing Partner of RMI, Glacier Country attended the Summit Meeting on Sunday April 28th and listen to the proposals presented by each RMI overseas representative.

- 28 European tour operators, 3 US receptive tour operators, and 7 RMI reps from France, Italy, UK, Germany, Benelux region, Nordic region and Australia. These tour operators specialize in group travel, FIT, and fly/drive programs.
- Glacier Country Tourism met with all of the tour operators and reps for 10 minute appointments.
- Next IRU will take place in Casper, WY April 19 – 23, 2020

European Travel Updates

- Benelux Update (Marjolein Fraanje) – People of Benelux receive 30 days of vacation each year and usually take 14 days per vacation. The last year saw them staying closer to home, but with desire to visit the US. They utilize the internet for inspiration then call on either a tour operator or travel agent to book their travel. They are looking for unique experiences (something different than all their friends are doing, for bragging rights) They are going to smaller tour operators to get that unique experience instead of the larger cookie cutter vacations. Many Dutch tour operators are extending Canadian holidays to include the GAW region. Florida, NY and the west coast continue to be the most popular.
- France Update (Emmanuelle Blondin) – The economy is getting stronger in France. There are 65 million French. French people are booking more on their own to easy destinations like NY, Orlando but still utilize a tour operator for more unknown areas like our region. He said that most of the French tour operators are utilizing Rocky Mountain Holiday Tours as a receptive operator. The French people get 5 to 6 weeks of paid vacation and will use 2 weeks of it when traveling to the US. Travel to the US is up 8% with it being the #1 long haul destination. Travel remains strong for the higher end, and the GAW region is trendy. The French are looking for niche and tailor-made trips to our region.
- Italy Update (Olga Mazzoni) – The Italians love to travel and they love to eat! While they don't have as many travel days as other European countries their average spend on a holiday is the highest. The US is the #1 long haul destination for Italians. The Italians get about 12 to 15 days of vacation per year. A trip to the USA is preferred destination and a trip to the GAW region is a very sophisticated trip. It's the more "mature" Italian traveler who comes to our region, maybe their 3-4th visit to the US, and



they are looking for a more authentic and experiential experiences. Motorcycle tours and and honeymoon destinations are very popular. They recommend we promote the Amtrak service more due to the Italians love of train travel.

- UK Update (Jenni Bridgman) – The UK economy took a nose-dive after BREXIT and remains low with the exit strategy weighing heavily on the Brits. However, the outlook for travel to the US is positive, especially for the over 50 market. Canada remains strong, and cheaper than the US and we may see some drop-down into our region. They get 4 weeks of paid vacation per year. They are spending 36 million overseas on travel each year. Most use tour operators for booking their travel needs. Value is very important so including things like breakfast is nice. Luxury market is very strong, and they feel that a great Holiday is a RIGHT for them. They like to watch videos when researching on where to go for vacation.
- Germany/Austria/Switzerland Update (Susanne Schmidt) –There are 80 million people in Germany and the Germany forecast is for an increase in future travel. They have the strongest economy in Europe. Germans get 30 days of paid vacation a year and feel that travel is a RIGHT. There are far more FIT travelers and small escorted bus tours. Many Germans have been to the US and the RMI region is a 3rd or 4th trip to the US.
- Nordic Region Update Hanna Johansson is our rep. The region is very big into social media and will trust bloggers over other forms of media. They too want experiential travel and will look to the US for that. They are very socially conscious and want to see Americans recycle and reuse and not waste so much. Canada is a major competitor for the traveler.
- Australia Update (Caroline Davidson) – Australia's #1 long haul destination is the US. They are looking for active vacations with authentic experiences. Products that interest Australian tourists are National Parks, cowboy and Native Indian heritage and events, museums about history, ranch experiences, ski resorts and winter experiences, adventure activities, shopping and the RV and motorcycle rentals. High end corporate is also drawn to the GAW region. The most popular months are May-October and December. She thinks our niche should be winter activities.