

BLOG

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San Jose area shows fastest U.S. growth in international visitors

/ April 18, 2019 by Elisabeth Handler

As OED's International Programs Manager, Joe Hedges regularly analyzes a wide range of data sources for information and trends that are important to the economic health of the city. Looking at the latest annual federal report of overseas visitors to the United States, Joe noted that the San Jose metro area had the strongest growth among the top 40 U.S. cities in attracting overseas visitors (overseas visitors include all nations except Canada and Mexico).



According to the **U.S. Department of Commerce** (<http://www.trade.gov>) National Travel & Tourism Office, San Jose ranks 19th among the nation's Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSA), with 611,000 international visitors in 2017, an **increase of 25 percent from 2016**. Nationwide, international visitor arrivals increased just 0.7 percent in the past year.

While our neighbor, San Francisco, ranked an impressive fifth nationally with 3.4 million visitors, the San Francisco MSA saw a **decline** of 3.6 percent in their overseas visitors in 2017. New York, Miami, Los Angeles and Orlando are the top four U.S. destinations for overseas visitors, with Las Vegas, Honolulu, Washington, D.C., Boston and Chicago rounding out the top ten.

International visitors to the U.S. have a broad impact on the economy, accounting for more than \$251 billion in spending, or 32 percent of the nation's service exports – supporting 7.8 million jobs nationwide. In San Jose, overseas visitors, whether attending an industry trade show or conference, visiting family and friends or on holiday, stay at area hotels, patronize restaurants, shop at retail outlets and visit area attractions. Overseas visitors to San Jose and the region contribute to our vibrant economy in many ways.

San Jose's strong growth in overseas visitors occurred as several airlines began or accelerated international flights at **Mineta San Jose International Airport** (<https://www.flysanjose.com/>). The top five nations for international visitors to the U.S. are Canada, Mexico, the United Kingdom, Japan and China. San Jose is linked to each of these nations with non-stop air service – Vancouver (Air Canada), Cabo San Lucas (Alaska and Southwest), Guadalajara (Alaska and Volaris), Leon, Morelia, Zacatecas (Volaris), London, (British Airways), Tokyo (ANA), and Beijing (Hainan Airlines).

San Jose will continue to welcome overseas and international visitors seeking to enjoy the many amenities of the city and region. For more information on San Jose's international business activities, contact **Joe Hedges** (joe.hedges@sanjoseca.gov), 408 535-8186.

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