

Travelers from the United Kingdom to
CALIFORNIA
(2006)

Prepared for
California Tourism

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

UNITED KINGDOM TRAVELERS TO CALIFORNIA - 2006

Total Market. Of 4,176,000 United Kingdom visitors to the U.S., 18.0%, or 752,000 visited California in 2006¹. This represented a 3% decrease from 2005, and a drop of 11% from the peak year of 1998. United Kingdom arrival volumes at California ports-of-entry showed a decrease in 2006 after a small increase from 2004 to 2005.

	Visitors to CA from United Kingdom (est.)	CA Market Share of Total United Kingdom Travelers to the U.S.	Leisure Visitors to CA from United Kingdom (est.)	CA Market Share of British Leisure Travelers to U.S.
1994	654,000	23.6%	516,000	25.5%
1995	592,000	20.5%	425,000	20.9%
1996	688,000	21.2%	426,000	21.2%
1997	815,000	21.9%	525,000	22.3%
1998	843,000	21.2%	553,000	20.5%
1999	816,000	19.2%	606,000	18.9%
2000	767,000	16.3%	576,000	16.0%
2001	631,000	15.4%	465,000	14.6%
2002	660,000	17.3%	466,000	16.3%
2003	693,000	17.6%	528,000	16.6%
2004	693,000	16.1%	565,000	16.0%
2005	778,000	17.9%	630,000	17.5%
2006	752,000	18.0%	629,000	17.6%

Main Destination. More than two-thirds of all United Kingdom visitors to California in 2006 (68%) reported California was the main destination of their U.S. trip. Leisure visitors from the United Kingdom reported the same percentage (68%).

Purpose of Trip. Among all United Kingdom visitors to California in 2006, 77% reported vacation/holiday was one of their major reasons for traveling. Other reasons for traveling included visiting friends/relatives (42%), business (20%), and attending a convention (6%).

Visitors often report multiple purposes of trip. Most leisure visitors from the United Kingdom (85%) reported visiting California in 2006 on vacation/holiday. The proportion of leisure visitors who were visiting friends and relatives in 2006 was 43%.

¹The estimated volume of visitors to California was based upon the ITA/OTTI 2006 Survey of International Air Travelers. The sample size for United Kingdom visitors to California in 2006 was 650 respondents.

Port of Entry. A combined total of 58% of United Kingdom visitors to California entered the U.S. through west coast ports. Just under one-third (33%) entered through Los Angeles, followed by San Francisco (24%). The next highest ports were Chicago and Atlanta which each processed 4% of United Kingdom visitors to California.

Top Metropolitan Areas Visited in California. United Kingdom visitors to California in 2006 tended to center their trip itineraries on the major cities of San Francisco (58%), Los Angeles (49%), and San Diego (12%).

Leisure/Recreation Activities. The top leisure and recreation activities reported by visitors from the United Kingdom, whether traveling for business or leisure, were dining, shopping and sightseeing. United Kingdom travelers are more likely to visit cultural heritage sites, enjoy water sports or sunbathing, visit ethnic heritage sites, and go hunting or fishing than other overseas visitor groups.

Advance Trip Decision. United Kingdom travelers to California reported making their trip decision 127 days in advance of their trip. This is a much longer average trip decision time than the 85 days reported by all overseas visitors to California. United Kingdom leisure travelers made their trip decision 140 days in advance of their trip.

Means of Booking Air Trip. More than four in ten United Kingdom travelers to California (41%) booked their air trip via a travel agent, the same as in 2005. This was lower than the other major overseas markets to California (55%).

Means of Booking Lodging. About 27% of all United Kingdom visitors and 32% of United Kingdom leisure travelers pre-booked their lodging via a travel agent. In 2006 15% of United Kingdom travelers reported booking lodging through a hotel/motel directly. About 16% of leisure United Kingdom travelers booked their accommodations through the hotel/motel directly.

Trip Information Sources. Among United Kingdom visitors to California, the most frequently mentioned sources of information included: a personal computer (43%), followed by travel agency (39%), direct information from airlines (26%), friends/relatives (15%), and tour companies (12%).

Length of Stay. United Kingdom visitors stayed an average of 15.0 nights in the U.S. and 8.1 nights in California. In comparison the length of stay for all overseas visitors to California was 10.6 nights in the state.

Sex and Age. Men comprised 53% of United Kingdom travelers to California with a median age of 47 years. This is a somewhat older median age than reported by all overseas visitors to California (43 years). Women represented 47% of all United Kingdom travelers to California in 2006, with a median age of 45 years compared to 40 years reported by all overseas female visitors. Looking at leisure travel only, about 50% of United Kingdom leisure travelers to California are men and 50% are women.

Travel Party Size. Most (88%) United Kingdom travel groups consist of adults only. While 12% of United Kingdom travel groups to California include children, only 8% of all overseas visitors to California include children. The mean travel party size for all United Kingdom visitors to the state was 1.8 people compared with 1.5 people for all overseas visitors to California. The travel party size for United Kingdom leisure visitors to California was 2.0 people.

Annual Household Income. Visitors from the United Kingdom reported higher median household incomes (\$110,800) relative to all overseas visitors to California (\$80,900). The median household income of United Kingdom leisure visitors to California was (\$106,100).

Accommodations. Most of United Kingdom visitors to California (84%) chose a hotel or motel as their primary type of accommodation during their stay in 2006. This proportion is higher than the 78% reported by all overseas visitors to California. United Kingdom leisure visitors reported the same likelihood to stay in a hotel/motel (84%). A somewhat low 22% of all United Kingdom visitors and 22% of United Kingdom leisure visitors stayed in a private home in 2006.

Use of Prepaid Package. In 2006, 24% of United Kingdom visitors and 29% of United Kingdom leisure visitors used prepaid packages.

Expenditures. Visitors to California from the United Kingdom spent an estimated \$676 million in California in 2006. United Kingdom visitors were spending an average of \$111 per day during their visit. Leisure visitors from the United Kingdom spent an average of \$104 per day. Each visitor to California from the United Kingdom spent an average of \$899 in the state, and each leisure visitor spent an average of \$853 in California.

Average International Airfare. Average international airfare to the U.S. was \$1,708 for United Kingdom visitors and \$1,454 for leisure visitors.