



TI News: An information service from Office of Travel & Tourism Industries (OTTI)

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U.S. INTERNATIONAL AIR TRAVEL ABROAD DOWN THREE PERCENT IN 2009 ⁽¹⁾

December 2009 Outbound Air Market Up One Percent

The U.S. Department of Commerce announced that preliminary results for the U.S. outbound non-stop air market totaled 38.7 million in 2009, three percent below 2008. In 2009, the top outbound markets were Europe, the Caribbean, Asia and Mexico, all of which were down in departures along with Central America and Canada. The Middle East and Africa experienced the strongest growth in 2009. Air travel was also up to Oceania and South America.

In the month of December 2009, the outbound air market increased one percent when compared to December 2008, reaching 3.5 million. U.S. air travel abroad registered month-over-month increases in five out of the last six months of the year.

During the second-half of the year, air departures increased one percent as opposed to an eight percent decline in the first-half. Positive growth occurred in seven of the eight world regions, with Oceania, the Middle East and Africa posting double-digit increases. But outbound travel to Canada and Mexico were both down six percent.

U.S. spending in December 2009 by U.S. travelers on foreign carrier passenger fares totaled \$2.3 billion, down 17 percent compared to December 2008. In 2009, spending by U.S. travelers on air and vessel transportation decreased 20 percent to \$26.0 billion. Since passenger fare receipts (foreign travelers on U.S. carriers) declined by 15 percent for the year, the balance of trade for passenger fares increased to an \$881 million surplus.

Highlights: U.S. Citizen Air Traffic to Overseas Regions, Canada & Mexico

- **Overseas** markets remained down one percent for the year but grew two percent in December.
- **Europe** declined four percent for the year and decreased five percent for the month.
- **Asia** was down four percent for the year but grew three percent for the month.
- **Canada** decreased nine percent for the year and was down six percent for the month.
- The **Caribbean** decreased two percent for the year but increased seven percent in December.
- For the year, air traffic to **Mexico** decreased 11 percent. For the month, Mexico was down one percent compared to December 2008.
- **South America** was up one percent for the year and the month.
- **Central America** was down two percent for the year but was flat for the month.
- The **Middle East** was up 41 percent for the year and up 27 percent in December.
- **Oceania** increased three percent for the year and increased 27 percent for the month.
- **Africa** increased 25 percent for the year and jumped 18 percent for the month.

Background

Manufacturing and Services' Office of Travel and Tourism Industries (OTTI) collects, analyzes and disseminates international travel and tourism statistics for the U.S. Travel and Tourism Statistical System. To view the OTTI U.S. departure data tables that provide monthly estimates of U.S. air travel abroad by world region and the rate of change each month and year-to-date, please visit: <http://www.tinet.ita.doc.gov/view/m-2009-O-001/index.html>.

For more detail information on the U.S. international travel abroad research program, please visit <http://tinet.ita.doc.gov/research/programs/i92/index.html>

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⁽¹⁾ Throughout this report, percent changes posted for U.S. air travelers for December 2009 were calculated by comparing data in December 2009 to data in December 2008. Also, percent changes posted for year-to-date 2009 were calculated by comparing data January - December 2009 to data January - December 2008.

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