



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **ORANGE COUNTY'S DESTINATION MARKETING ORGANIZATIONS CELEBRATE THE 'FUTURE OF TRAVEL' THIS NATIONAL TRAVEL AND TOURISM WEEK**

*Region's Tourism Industry Projected to Fully Recover by 2024*

**ORANGE COUNTY, Calif. (May 1, 2022)** – The Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO) of Orange County, Calif. recognize the collective strength of the U.S. travel industry during National Travel and Tourism Week (NTTW) from May 1-7, 2022. Tourism is a vital part of Orange County's economy, providing jobs for hundreds of thousands of residents and making significant contributions to tax revenues that support city services and programs.

NTTW, the annual celebration of the contributions of the U.S. travel industry, spotlights the critical role that travel will play in driving economic growth and building the path forward.

Since 2020, Orange County tourism has increased 30 percent and in 2021, hotel occupancy throughout the county was 4% higher than predicted by CBRE. Even with strides toward the industry's recovery, Orange County's tourism is still 11 percent behind 2019 visitation numbers.

In 2019, Orange County welcomed 50.2 million visitors who spent \$9.2 billion throughout the region (Source: CIC Research, Inc.). Looking to the future, Orange County is on pace to return to these 2019 visitation numbers by 2024 (Source: CBRE), which will be a welcome milestone for the industry.

This encouraging outlook for the Orange County tourism industry makes this year's NTTW theme, Future of Travel, fitting for the region as it looks to restore the workforce, help communities recover, foster sustainability, usher in new innovations and reconnect with travelers.

From theme parks to shopping to beaches, there are plenty of developments throughout Orange County drawing travelers back:

- **Anaheim:** The destination now has three new AAA Four Diamond hotels, which are the first outside of Disneyland Resort, including: JW Marriott, Anaheim Resort, The Westin Anaheim Resort and Radisson Blu Anaheim. Anaheim is also home to the only Avengers Campus in the world, which is currently recruiting super heroes in Disney California Adventure Park!
- **Buena Park:** The Land of Yes is excited to announce the newest hot spot to open in Buena Park - the Beach Boulevard Club. Step through the entrance of this classy 1920s speakeasy lounge and get transported to the prohibition days as you laugh and sing along to the smooth soundtrack of the club's talented dueling pianists. The summer adventures in Buena Park continues long after the sun goes down with live music, food and games at Knott's Summer Nights.
- **Costa Mesa:** The City of the Arts® is home to Segerstrom Center for the Arts, the performing arts center hosting Broadway musicals and concerts. The Center welcomes



the Orange County Museum of Art (OCMA) to its campus in October of 2022. OCMA's stunning new 53,000-square-foot home will be able to simultaneously showcase its collection and major traveling exhibitions. Across the bridge, South Coast Plaza, housing the largest collection of luxury retailers west of the Mississippi, is celebrating its 55-year anniversary with a year-long series of events and exhibits. Visitors can enjoy an Eatcation® in Costa Mesa by choosing from a variety of unique, eclectic cuisines, including all of the 3 MICHELIN-starred restaurants in Orange County.

- **Dana Point:** Already trademarked the Dolphin & Whale Watching Capital of the World, Dana Point was recently named the first Whale Heritage Site in the Americas. In March 2022, The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel debuted a new, chef-driven culinary program dedicated to Indian weddings and in April 2022, Laguna Cliffs Marriott Resort & Spa opened long-awaited Outer Reef, a coastal seafood restaurant part of the resort's recent multi-million-dollar renovation.
- **Huntington Beach:** Over 100 unique special events happen year-round in Huntington Beach from a weekly farmers market, car shows, live music, sporting events, food pairing dinners, and more. Mark your calendars for the annual HB 4th of July Celebration and Fireworks (July 1-4), Vans U.S. Open of Surfing (July 30 - Aug. 7), Pacific Airshow (Sept. 30 - Oct. 2), and AVP Beach Volleyball Huntington Beach Open (Nov. 12-13). This year, the destination's signature events are back in full scale and free for guests to enjoy.
- **Irvine:** The Great Park has it all for your summer of fun! The brand-new Wild Rivers Water Park makes a big splash with its grand opening in June. At Marriott Irvine, you can play golf while enjoying amazing food and beverage at Topgolf Swing Suite - the only one in OC! If music under the stars moves you, this summer, the FivePoint Amphitheatre has a great concert series lineup. And, while you're here, plan to stay at one of our 22 beautiful hotels, including the brand-new Element Hotel or the fully renovated Sonesta Irvine.
- **Laguna Beach:** The summer art festivals (Laguna Art-A-Fair, Sawdust Art Festival, Festival of Arts Fine Art Show and Pageant of the Masters) will return this summer, starting late June through Labor Day. The Laguna Playhouse, celebrating 100 years, has some fun shows gracing the stage; and the Laguna Art Museum will display cutting-edge installations and innovative programming.
- **Newport Beach:** Newport Beach & Company is pleased to welcome a new era of luxury with the announcements of three major developments in the heart of Newport Beach within the next two years. Guests can look forward to two premium hotels, VEA Newport Beach, a Marriott Resort & Spa (opening this spring) and Pendry Newport Beach (opening 2023), which are both undergoing top-to-bottom reimaginings. Standing at four stories high with almost 80,000 square feet of indoor, outdoor and dining space, the all-new RH Newport Beach will be an alluring Orange County exclusive with the upscale home furnishings brand's only Design Gallery in the region.
- **Santa Ana:** Travel Santa Ana, the brand-new destination marketing organization (DMO), is in the final stages of a brand initiative, with an anticipated launch in June. In addition,



president/CEO Wendy Haase is expanding the current team of one to include a director of sales, who will leverage Santa Ana's unique venues and events to draw group business.

To learn more about National Travel and Tourism Week, please visit [ustravel.org/NTTW](http://ustravel.org/NTTW).

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