



Monthly Update –March-April 2009 The Georgia Coast Travel Region

Kudos

- **Darien's Blessing of the Fleet** was named one of the top 10 events in Georgia by Top Events USA - <http://www.topeventsusa.com/state-events-georgia.html>
- **The Cloister at Sea Island Makes Mobil Five-Star History**
Mobil Travel Guide honored the historic, family-owned Georgia resort with *four* Five-Star awards. The Cloister at Sea Island made Mobil Five-Star history when it garnered three of the awards for the hotel itself, its signature restaurant, the Georgian Room, and the world-class Cloister Spa. In addition, The Lodge at Sea Island Golf Club maintained its Five-Star distinction for the ninth consecutive year. The Cloister Spa is the only Mobil Five-Star spa in Georgia and one of only eight so recognized in the U.S. and Canada. The Georgian Room shares its status with only one other restaurant in the state and 19 other restaurants in the U.S. and Canada.
- **MSN Travel named Savannah as one of the 15 Coolest North American Cities!**
<http://travel.msn.com/Guides/MSNTravelSlideShow.aspx?cp-documentid=843006&imageindex=10>
- **CBS Atlanta picked up the Coastal Living story that names the Jekyll Island Club Hotel as one of the top 10 Romantic Island Inns.**
<http://www.cbsatlanta.com/travelgetaways/18926765/detail.html>
- **www.exploregeorgia.org won first place in the 2009 American Marketing Association's AMY awards!**
<http://www.amyawardsatl.com/winners.html#2009AMYWinners>
- **River Street Riverboat Company Executive Chef, Christopher Myhre won first place in the BBQ and Hot Sauce category in the 2009 Flavor of Georgia contest for his *Buzzy's Savannah Slather Barbeque Sauce!* Congratulations!!**
<http://www.caed.uga.edu/fog/pdf/2009Winners.pdf>

GDEcD Press Releases

- Check out <http://www.georgia.org/PressCenter/Press+Release+Archive.htm> for all of the **tourism related press releases** that have been sent out over the past months.

Coast Mentions in the Media

- **Sept - Outside magazine picks 50 places to get away from it all – Eagle Island -**
http://www.usatoday.com/travel/news/2008-09-25-outside-50-places_N.htm
- **Nov-Dec – Chef Scott Crawford for the Cloister was included in the Chef Profiles section of the holiday issue of *Atlanta's Finest Dining Magazine*.**
<http://www.atlantasfinestdiningmagazine.com/Issues/NovDec08/page36.htm>
- **Feb – Family Motorcoach Magazine – Jekyll Island a Georgia Jewel**
<http://www.fmca.com/index.php/magazine/features/592-jekyll-island-a-georgia-jewel>
- **Feb – CNN – CNN visited the Georgia Sea Turtle Center -**
<http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/tech/2009/02/21/wolf.sea.turtle.rescue.cnn?iref=videosearch>

- **Feb – USA Today - Free Streetcar Shuttles Tourists on Savannah Riverfront -**
http://www.usatoday.com/travel/destinations/2009-02-23-savannah-streetcar_N.htm
- **March – AJC - One-Tank Trip: Tybee Island, Ga.**
http://www.ajc.com/travel/content/travel/southeast/ga_stories/2009/03/08/Tybee_Island_o_netank.html
- **March - NY Times - The Calm of the Swamp in Georgia**
<http://travel.nytimes.com/2009/03/13/travel/escapes/13okie.html>
- **March - Group Travel Leader – Waycross, Okefenokee, Colonial Coast Birding Trail and the Woodpecker Trail** are mentioned in the intro. Herb Sparrow wrote the article about Georgia's driving trails based on GDEcD's January 22 driving trails press release.
http://grouptravelleader.epubxpress.com/wps/portal/gtl/c0/04_SB8K8xLLM9MSSzPy8xBz9CP0os3iLkCAPEzcPlwN_dxM3A6MAXwv3lBczl_dQl_1l_ShzhLyBe4gxWD7QK9TFyN3DTD8EZGKmfqSJgZkpiFmsH2kAogv0lw2N9QuyE5OqUiMVAbuD9Go!/
- **March - Times newspaper – UK – focused on a Gone With the Wind Tour.** This tour was put together by Maggi Smit MD of America As You Like It. The circulation is 620,416; The readership is 1,240,832 and the ad value is \$30,758. **Savannah and Jekyll Island are mentioned.** <http://www.timesonline.co.uk/tol/travel/article5927002.ece>
- **March/April - Bus Tours Magazine – The Crab Shack**
<http://www.bustourismagazine.com/back/Mar09BTM.pdf> Page 38
- **March – Gramophone – UK Publication – Savannah Music Festival Makes a Big Impression**
<http://www.gramophone.co.uk/newsMainTemplate.asp?storyID=3175&newssectionID=1>
- **March – Mother Nature Network – Cumberland Island**
<http://www.mnn.com/lifestyle/travel/stories/exhausted-your-vacation-options-take-a-trip-to-a-car-free-island>

Media Opportunities and Other Interesting Stuff

- **The AJC features their Weekend Away section on the homepage every Monday.** Lots of great shots from around Georgia! Take a look or submit some of your own.
http://lpe.ajc.com/gallery/view/travel/weekend_away/2007/weekendaway081907/#homepage_tab_newstab#homepage_tab_newstab
- **BLUE Ocean Film Festival Call For Entries!** It's All About the Oceans! BLUE, a global oceans film and conservation event, has opened its international call for submissions. The 4-day event to be held in historic Savannah, Georgia June 11-14, 2009 is dedicated to promoting, honoring, & sharing great films in an effort to help protect the oceans & the life within. For 2009 BLUE is being hosted by the Gray's Reef Ocean Film Festival, building on their festival experience and success over the past 5 years. Film submissions should be made through the Without A Box web site:
<http://www.withoutabox.com/login/7530>
- **Artists Are Part of the Workforce Too -** The nearly two million U. S. artists comprise "...one of the largest classes of workers in the nation... artists earn an aggregate income of approximately \$70 billion annually." "Artists now play a huge but mostly unrecognized role in the new American economy of the 21st century," said NEA Chairman Dana Gioia. The Artists In The Workforce Study "provides the first look at 21st century labor trends among working artists" and shows how important American artists are to both our nation's cultural vitality and economic prosperity of our communities." Access the report at <http://www.arts.endow.gov/news/news08/ArtistsinWorkforce.html>.
- **STS Marketing College - REGISTRATION IS OPEN -** Marketing College will take place **Sunday, July 26 through Friday, July 31, 2009** in **Dahlonega**. It will be another intensive, fact-filled week of learning, networking and socializing at North Georgia College and State University. For more information, visit www.southeasttourism.org.

- **Bed and Breakfasts around the country are beginning to offer frequent traveler programs** to try and generate business and repeat customers as the economy sours. These programs typically offer free nights or discounts after a certain number of nights, while hotel chains usually prefer a points program. B & B's are using these programs in an effort to lure more business travelers, as they are increasingly offering free Wi-Fi and other business friendly amenities. http://www.usatoday.com/travel/hotels/2008-11-03-bed-and-breakfast-frequent-stay_N.htm
- **TRAVEL TRENDS: BUSINESS TRAVELERS WILL PAY FOR QUALITY HIGH-SPEED INTERNET** A new market research study from Ypartnership, one of the nation's leading marketing agencies specializing in serving travel, leisure and entertainment clients, shows that more than half of business travelers are willing to pay for quality Internet service at the hotels in which they stay. The study is part of an in-depth look at travelers' interest in in-room technology sponsored by iBAHN. <http://www.tripinfo.com/ITM/Articles2009/ITM2736.html>
- **TRAVEL TRENDS: U.S. TRAVEL: AMERICANS' LEISURE TRAVEL INTENTIONS TREND SLIGHTLY UPWARD** According to the February travelhorizons™ survey, the U.S. Traveler Sentiment Index™ rose to 90.2 in February 2009 from 78.2 in October 2008 due to an increase in the perceived "affordability of travel." The spike in the perceived affordability of travel appears to be a direct result of many travel suppliers' recent efforts to stimulate short-term demand through the aggressive promotion of discounted fares and rates. Promotional pricing and related incentives are now offered by suppliers representing practically every segment of the travel industry from airlines to cruise lines, hotel companies, attractions and rental car companies, some of which are featuring rates and fares that are up to 50 percent off the prices being quoted just six months ago. <http://www.tripinfo.com/ITM/Articles2009/ITM2813.html>

FAMs and Press Trips

- **March 29 – April 1** – Midwest Travel Writers post conference press trip – 12 writers
- **March 30** – Sue Pollack – freelance journalist
- **March 30** - Donna Long - freelance journalist
- **April 3 – 6** – Tri-Ergon – German Film Crew
- **March 7 – 11** – Travel South post FAM – 15 Tour Operators
- **March 8 – 11** – Scott Sumner – Canadian Golf Writer
- **April 20-21** – Gone With the Wind press trip from the UK and Ireland.
- **May 5** - Knut Benzner - Germany's major radio networks NDR and Deutschland

Grants

- **GDEcD now has a website devoted to its grant programs.** Please visit the following link for all grant info: <http://web.georgia.org/net/content/page.aspx?s=115682.72586.26.3011>
- **Co-Op Marketing Grant** information and application are now on-line. The deadline for submission has been extended to July 31, 2009. I will be offering workshops on applying for this grant. If you are interested in attending a workshop, send me an e-mail to let me know. <http://web.georgia.org/net/content/page.aspx?s=115682.72586.26.3011>
- **The Southern Arts Federation** with support from the National Endowment for the Arts is pleased to offer a limited number of Economic Response Technical Assistance grants for non-profit presenting organizations in our nine-state region. In response to the current economic climate, this special initiative encourages visual, media, performing, and literary arts presenting organizations to contract with an outside consultant for intensive work to focus on organizational stabilization and to strengthen an organization's infrastructure. Examples of consultation activities funded by this Technical Assistance grant program include: updating a strategic plan, short and long term planning, fundraising, innovation or entrepreneurial efforts, building participation, and grantsmanship. Activities should focus on ways that the organization will respond to the current economic conditions for the long-term health and stability of the organization. For more information, please contact Nikki Estes, Program Director - Presenting & Touring, at 404-874-7244 ext. 16 or

- **The National Park Service's National Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act (NAGPRA) Program** is offering grants to Indian tribes, Alaska Native villages and corporations, Native Hawaiian organizations, and museums. Two types of grants are available: Consultation/Documentation Grants - Applications **Due: March 2, 2009; and Repatriation Grants - rolling application. Applications and more information online at <http://www.nps.gov/history/nagpra/grants>**
- **Cemetery Grant Program, Round 2**
Applications for Round 2 of the Historic Cemetery Heritage Tourism Grant Program, funded in cooperation with the Georgia Department of Economic Development, are available on HPD's Web site at <http://www.gashpo.org/content/displaycontent.asp?txtDocument=426>. If you submitted an application for Round 1 and your project was not funded, please contact Carole Moore (if you have not already done so) if you wish to be considered in Round 2. The purpose of the grant program is to assist local communities in promoting their historic cemeteries through heritage tourism. Eligible projects include research and documentation; interpretation and public information; advertising and marketing; or workshops and training. "Bricks and mortar" projects are not eligible for this program. The reimbursable grant funds are 50% state/50% local match and will be awarded on a competitive basis. The maximum grant award will be \$2,500; however, there is no minimum amount, and HPD encourages applications for small projects. We anticipate that the deadline to submit applications will be mid-March with grant awards being announced in late April/early May 2009. For more information, please call or e-mail Grants Coordinator Carole Moore at 404-463-8434 or carole.moore@dnr.state.ga.us.
- **Save Our History 2009/2010 grant cycle announced.** The Save Our History Grant Program provides funding to history organizations that partner with schools on a local community preservation project. Since launching the Save Our History Grant Program in 2004, History, formerly known as The History Channel, has awarded over \$1 Million Dollars in grants to organizations and schools large and small, urban, suburban and rural, in the northern, southern, eastern, western and central United States. During the 2009/2010 school year, History will again award grants of up to \$10,000 to historical organizations to fund hands-on, experiential educational projects that teach students about their local history and actively engage them in its preservation. For guidelines and criteria, important dates, and to apply, please visit <http://www.history.com/content/saveourhistory/grant-program>. Applications are due June 5, 2009. Any questions can be directed to info@saveourhistory.com.
- **Challenge grants** - NEH challenge grants are capacity-building grants, intended to help institutions and organizations secure long-term improvements in and support for their humanities programs and resources. Grants may be used to establish or enhance endowments or spend-down funds (that is, funds that are invested, with both the income and the principal being expended over a defined period of years) that generate expendable earnings to support ongoing program activities. Funds may also be used for one-time capital expenditures (such as construction and renovation, purchase of equipment, and acquisitions) that bring long-term benefits to the institution and to the humanities more broadly. For more information visit www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/challenge.html or email challenge@neh.gov. Applications are due by May 5.
- **Preservation assistance grants** - Preservation Assistance Grants for Smaller Institutions help small and mid-sized institutions, such as libraries, museums, historical societies, archival repositories, town and county records offices, and colleges, improve their ability to preserve and care for their humanities collections. Awards of up to \$6000 support preservation related collection assessments, consultations, training and workshops, and institutional and collaborative disaster and emergency planning. Grants cover consultant fees, workshop registration fees, related travel and per diem expenses, and the costs of purchasing and shipping preservation supplies and equipment. For more information visit www.neh.gov/grants/guidelines/pag.html or email preservation@neh.gov. Applications are due by May 14.

- **Preserve America grants** - Applications for Georgia's community landmarks now available. The purpose of the sub-grant program is to assist Georgia's cities and towns in promoting their community landmarks through heritage tourism. Community landmarks are the significant places that people associate with their town and its history. They could include historic courthouses, city halls, theatres, libraries, schools, cemeteries, hotels, churches, battlefields, parks and gardens, museums, commercial and residential historic districts, lighthouses, coastal fortifications, and archaeological sites. \$80,000 in matching (50%/50%) funds is available. For more information or to receive a sub-grant application in the mail, please contact Carole Moore, HPD Grants Coordinator, at 404-463-8434 or e-mail carole.moore@dnr.state.ga.us.

International Tourism News

- **Expansion of Visa Waiver Program to Strengthen Economy, Attract Up To One Million New Visitors** - The Travel Industry Association (TIA) announced that the following seven countries will be admitted to the U.S. Visa Waiver Program (VWP): the Republic of Korea (South Korea), the Czech Republic, Hungary, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Slovakia. Expanding and strengthening the VWP will help the United States to welcome hundreds of thousands of new visitors annually, thereby strengthening America's economy and global image.
<http://www.tripinfo.com/ITM/Articles2008/ITM2543.html>
- **GDEcD's INTERNATIONAL SALES MISSIONS: Kevin Langston**, Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Tourism, will lead three upcoming sales missions to the **UK** (June 1 - 5), **Germany** (July 13 - 17) and **China and Japan** (Fall 2009). Participation fee for each is \$500 + your own travel costs. In each market, the visit will entail calls on tour operators and travel media including one or two special events to give trade prospects an overview of the Georgia product. We welcome CVBs and/or attractions to join us in reaching these target markets. The mission is limited to eight people, so it is first-come, first-serve. Please contact Kevin Langston via email if you are interested in learning more. He is available at klangston@georgia.org.

From The State

- **Good News for Tourism!** The House and Senate did restore \$1.1 million in tourism funding. The Governor has line item veto power and depending on the economy, could take it out again. We will not know about the marketing budget until it is signed by the Governor, usually late June.
- **GDEcD has a new photo contest - January 1st launched this new program on www.ExploreGeorgia.org** The contest is open to U.S. citizens, 18 years or older. Once photos are submitted, GDEcD will have full usage rights of photographs. There will be one winner each month through October 2009 and winners will be chosen by an internal judging panel. Each winner will receive a new GPS system and will be featured in the 2010 Georgia Travel Guide.
- **National Trust launches African American Heritage in Preservation Web Site** In celebration of Black History Month, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has launched a "African-American Heritage in Preservation" Web site at <http://www.preservationnation.org/about-us/african-american-preservation.html> This new page highlights sites, programs, and resources pertaining to people of African heritage. Help the public learn about preserving African American historic places and revitalizing communities by sharing upcoming events. Forward stories or articles to Tanya Bowers, Director for Diversity, at tanya_bowers@nthp.org.
- **GA Tourism is on Facebook** - The latest trip ideas, special offers, events and travel news can be found on the **Explore Georgia** Facebook page (<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Explore-Georgia/36470358490>) – we encourage everyone to become a fan of the page and check it out, as it is updated regularly.
- **It's here -- Georgia's Creative Economies website** for marketing and promoting Georgia Made Georgia Grown Products. To register your Georgia Made or Georgia

Grown product, go to www.gamadegagrown.org and follow the instructions. Visit www.georgia.org/foundation to learn more about this economic development effort led by the Georgia Tourism Foundation.

Update:

A new search category "by travel region" has been added to gmggproducts website. It is really good for communities looking to locate registrants from their region.

- April 20 & 21 the **2009 Techno Tourism Conference** - Chattahoochee Technical College in Marietta. The dates remain April 20 and 21. "Social Media Marketing . . . Affordable, Effective & Essential" is the theme of the conference this year. Because the grant process is on hold, the requirement for attendance in order to receive funding is waived. Registration at: <http://www.caes.uga.edu/UNIT/ATHENS/events/events.html#TechnoT>
- **Group Tour Boot Camp will take place June 18-19, 2009** in Macon at the Georgia Music Hall of Fame. The boot camp will focus on itinerary building. Keep an eye out for registration information in April.
- **Georgia Economic Impact Model - GEMODE Calculator**
Research is the key to determining the current, past and potential impact of the tourism industry on the State's economy. In order to get a deeper understanding of the Economic Impact generated by fairs and festivals within the state of Georgia, the State contracted Dr. Bruce Seaman with Georgia State University to develop an Economic Impact model (GEMODE). This model is an easy to use excel based worksheet that can help communities analyze the actual impact of local fairs and festivals. One of the goals of this calculator is to track the success these events and start to build a database of results. The database can then be used to determine the feasibility of hosting events and help communities to forecast potential revenue streams. For more information about the GEMODE calculator, please contact Nerissa Serrano at nserrano@georgia.org.
- **Destinations2Discover.com numbers for 2008 – Georgia Guide**
 - Key statistics for the 2008 performance:
 - The number of unique visitors to the Georgia guide in the 4th Quarter 2008 **increased by 5.8%** from the 3rd Quarter 2008 to a total of **92,291 unique visitors**.
 - The number of yearly unique visitors to the Georgia guide from January through December 2008 was **326,804** which is an increase of **29.9%** over the same period in 2007.
 - Vacations2Discover.com system wide produced 1,134,160 unique visitors (+11.25% vs. 2007) with 16,581,335 page views (+4% vs. 2007).
 - Vacations2Discover.com system wide generated a 35% increase in unique visitors in the 4th Quarter of 2008 due to a highly successful Sweepstake campaign.
- **GDEcD's MONTHLY REPORTS**
You can now find monthly reports from GDEcD's international representatives in the UK and Germany on www.MarketGeorgia.org in the monthly regional reports section.
- **GDEcD's RESEARCH UPDATE**
GDEcD's Monthly Research Newsletter is available at www.marketgeorgia.org in the industry research section. The report features a variety of Georgia and national travel indicators.
- **DCA's March 2009 newsletter** published by DCA Communications. www.dca.ga.gov/dcanewsletter/200903.html.
- If you want to know what is happening in regards to **stimulus funds** that are coming to Georgia, please see the following website link www.stimulusaccountability.ga.gov or <http://www.dot.state.ga.us/gastimulus>

- **Peach Byte!** – GDEcD's official Georgia Tourism Monthly E-Newsletter available to everyone. If you have not yet signed up to receive Peach Byte, please send an email to peachbyte@georgia.org requesting that your e-mail address be added. If you would like to see past editions of Peach Byte, visit: <http://my.georgia.org/net/content/go.aspx?s=244185.72586.26.3011>
- **Market Georgia Tourism is an excellent resource for tourism professionals.** You will find industry research, industry presentations, grant information, excellent contact information and more...information is added weekly: <http://my.georgia.org/core/item/page.aspx?s=72456.72586.26.3011>
UPDATE: In April 09, www.marketgeorgia.org will be redirected to www.georgia.org/travel.

Exploregeorgia.org

- **www.ExploreGeorgia.org** – Make sure you are updating your free listing on the State tourism website. If you need assistance with how to register or navigate the partner admin pages, please contact me.
- **We have made the following changes** to exploregeoriga.org
 - Simple Reviews (located on all attractions and lodgings listings and also viewable on the search results page)
 - Kids Landing Page <http://www.exploregeorgia.org/Kids>
 - Music Landing Page <http://www.exploregeorgia.org/Music>

Georgia Visitor Information Center Marketing Opportunities & News

- **2009 Georgia On My Mind Day** dates for all of the state Visitor Information Centers
 - May 9th – Plains
 - May 15th – Kingsland
 - May 22nd – Lavonia
 - May 29th – Savannah
 - June 5th – Tallapoosa
 - June 19th – Ringgold
 - July 17th – Augusta
 - July 31st – West Point
 These events offer an opportunity to set up at the VIC with others in the Industry...a chance to show travelers how much we have to offer as a state. As always this is a FREE opportunity. For more information please contact the individual centers. Contact info can be found at [http://web.georgia.org/net/content/search.aspx?s=0.0.26.3011&load=1&keyword=Georgia a%20Visitor%20Information%20Center&maintitle=Georgia%20Visitor%20Information%20Centers&searchtype=Exact](http://web.georgia.org/net/content/search.aspx?s=0.0.26.3011&load=1&keyword=Georgia%20Visitor%20Information%20Center&maintitle=Georgia%20Visitor%20Information%20Centers&searchtype=Exact)

Jobs Available

- **Tourism Coordinator - Cumming-Forsyth County Chamber of Commerce.**
The Cumming-Forsyth County Chamber of Commerce has never had a dedicated, full-time tourism professional. They are looking for someone that can help build a modest program from the ground up. <http://my.toomah.com/listings/9+rypj>.

Dates to Remember

- **May 29, 2009** – Co-Op Marketing Grant final reports are due.

Regional Contact Information

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