

Omicron Wave Sets the Stage For Tourism in U.S. Northern States

Omicron Sweeps Through Like Groundhog Day.

RAPID CITY, SOUTH DAKOTA, U.S.A., January 12, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- For travel and tourism, Omicron seems like a repeat of COVID in 2020. While it might seem the same, there are some significant differences. January of 2020 shook travel to its core. Prior to the winter onset, southern states like Florida, Texas, Arizona and New Mexico greased the wheels and waited anxiously for the much needed influx of tourism dollars that support so many small businesses. Along came the COVID wave, crushing hopes for many.

“

Get out into nature—go walking, go hiking, experience how America is such a sacred place.

Everywhere you go in this land, our people have been there and they have said, “This place is sacred.”

Ohiyesa, (Charles Alexander Eastman) Santee Sioux

In the North, however, it was a different story. COVID delayed the start of the season, but not for long. Those whose vacation plans were ruined came out with a vengeance, with places like The Black Hills of South Dakota benefitting from the natural dip in infection rates.

This hasn't stopped people moving to the sunbelt, but the COVID cycle seems to favor the natural tourism season of summertime destinations. Rapid City and South Dakota in general made up for the late start in short order. Hotels filled to capacity. A huge number of visitors to Custer State Park, Mount Rushmore and the Badlands broke previous records, providing wide open spaces and a much needed respite for both adults and children.

While National Parks like Zion, Arches, Yellowstone and Glacier struggled to deal with the overwhelming amount of visitors, places like the [Black Hills and Badlands](#) have been planning for decades of such an influx. Rapid City and Southwestern South Dakota have been meticulously designed due to the foresight of extraordinary people such as the former State Senator, Governor and U.S. Senator Peter Norbeck. His wisdom, grit and planning firmly secured The Black Hills as an international destination.

Visitors enjoyed ample parking, wide streets, quaint towns, family friendly attractions and magnificent natural wonders. From June through October tourists drove from far and wide by car, RV's and 5th wheels to escape the city life and breathe in the fresh air filtered by soaring Ponderosa Pine.

Statistically, not many people are aware of the beauty of the Black Hills. The everyday tourist generally thinks of Mount Rushmore, an engineering marvel. All one has to do is look a little deeper to find an overwhelming amount of activities, out of this world landscapes and wildlife such as the American Bison that amazes visitors at every turn. Take a one of the private [tours of the Black Hills](#) and you'll understand. Both Iron Mountain Road and The Needles Highway are some of the most sought out drives designed thoughtfully and with surprises around every bend.

The Midwest may be some of the most beautiful, yet undiscovered parts of our country remaining today. This sacred land is home to the Lakota, and the 8th largest reservation in the country, Pine Ridge. South Dakota has one of the highest populations of Native Americans as a percentage of the state. This being true a rich and deep cultural history exists here. Native American art rivals that of the Southwest, and famous chiefs like Red Cloud, Bigfoot and Crazy Horse have lived, fought and died here.

For those interested in Native American Culture, you don't need to look far. The Lakota influence can be seen and felt everywhere. Traditions are being preserved and carried out at places like Crazy Horse Memorial and the annual Pow Wow each October.

Endless stories of Wild West figures such as Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickok abound in towns like Deadwood. Quite possibly the worst place to live in it's hay day of the Gold Rush, these mining towns are now places of interest tucked away in outstanding canyons and valleys of the Black Hills.

Dinosaurs exist in South Dakota, with the Badlands being one of the worlds greatest depositories of fossils, as well as the living lizards of Reptile Gardens. No matter where you look it seems there's something for everyone.

With the current wave of Omicron taking grip of the Nation, South Dakota takes safety seriously. Tour operators go to great pains making sure that while it experiences a great season, measures are taken to keep visitors safe. Take a moment to ask anyone how they work above and beyond to ensure you not only have fun, but enjoy peace of mind. Plenty of private tours of the Black Hills and Badlands are available, such as those offered by hospitality winner of the year, [My XO Adventures](#). They aren't alone. Hospitality exists in the DNA of South Dakotans, and when you visit you'll understand.

So while Omicron has put a damper on things, a good piece of advice would be to start making plans to head north this upcoming season and enjoy the best places throughout the United States. There's a good chance if you plan ahead now, your summer vacation will be as smooth as a scoop of huckleberry ice cream.

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