

The "Taste the South" campaign showcases the authentic food and spirits of the Southern USA

6-month culinary campaign whets the UK's appetite for travel to the South

ATLANTA, GA, UNITED STATES, June 12, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The South's culinary offerings play a major role in marketing travel to the Southern States. Travel South USA, in partnership with Brand USA, has signed a title sponsorship for the National Geographic Traveller (UK) Food Festival to be held in London, July 15-16, 2023. This culinary-centric UK marketing campaign targets consumers interested in traveling to the Southern USA.

A major focal point for the campaign will be the Taste the South Pavilion at the National Geographic Traveller (UK) Food Festival, expected to attract 6,000 - 8,000 visitors to the Business Design Centre in London. Highlights include demonstrations by nine renowned Southern chefs and drink aficionados serving as Travel South Ambassadors, preparing tasty samplings, sharing the stories behind the authentic spirits and cuisine culture, along with inspirational travel information. Representatives from the Southern states will be on hand for media interviews, mouthwatering samplings and travel recommendations.

Meet the extraordinary ambassadors: Chef Jim Smith, Executive Chef and Owner of The Hummingbird Way Oyster Bar, Mobile, Alabama, crowned the King of American Seafood by winning The Great American Seafood-Cook-Off and the national spokesperson for Alabama Seafood, American Sustainable Seafood, Gulf Seafood and the NOAA; Chef Scott Thomas McGehee, winner of over 400 "Best of" Arkansas Times awards including a multi-year winner of the prestigious "Best Chef" award and equally passionate in his pursuit to be strongly connected and supportive of local farmers and farm families; Herb Heneman, Chief Commercial Officer for Bardstown Bourbon Company from Kentucky, one of the nation's leading distillers of American Whiskey, Rye and Bourbon; Chefs Cody and Samantha Carroll, Louisiana's very own culinary couple rose to fame as Food Network stars, showcasing their farm-to-table cuisine and unique style in the kitchen as a true dynamic-duo on their own show: Cajun Aces; Chef Nick Wallace was named Best Chef of Mississippi in 2020 and has remained on the list of Best Chefs in America since; Chef Rob Connoley specializes in Ozark cuisine rooted in Missouri history, he garnered three James Beard Foundation semi-finalist awards, and two consecutive honors as one of the best restaurants in America by Wine Enthusiast magazine; Chef Ricky Moore of Durham, North Carolina, was named the James Beard Foundation "Best Chef Southeast" and is a self-professed North Carolina seafood evangelist; Chef Chris Williams of South Carolina was deemed the 2022

South Carolina Chef Ambassador to promote the states culinary heritage and local food culture through "gas station cuisine" that he has elevated to an art form; and last, but not least, Lexie Phillips is an assistant distiller at Jack Daniel's Distillery in Lynchburg, Tennessee, one of only a handful of women to have worked as a distillery operator, Lexie hopes to share her passion for whiskey making and inspire interest in future female distillers.

"Chefs were nominated from the Travel South region, chosen by a panel to serve as Culinary Ambassadors because they each represent an interesting and unique approach to Southern cooking," says Doug Bourgeois, Chairman of Travel South USA. "We want to show off chef-forward cuisine, authentic bourbon, whiskey, top-style cooking schools, and focus on sustainable culinary practices."

A private, invitation-only dinner trade and media event will be held at the famous Barbican Conservatory with interactive presentations. Each chef or spirit-expert storyteller will share their signature dishes, stories, talent, and humor, while showcasing the region's best tastes, produce and spirits.

"By marketing great Southern food, tempting UK food lovers to 'Taste the South,' we're inviting them to experience and enjoy distinct destinations while learning a true appreciation of Southern cuisine," remarked Bourgeois.

Other integrated initiatives surrounding the six-month campaign include content articles on the National Geographic Traveller website; a 10-page print version combining all web articles appearing in National Geographic Traveller; a 15-page cover story feature of the southern culinary scene in the National Geographic Traveller Food summer edition; social promotion for all states' participation in the festival; 3 double-page ads in National Geographic Traveller Magazine, The Guardian and The Evening Standard; press engagements with the nine culinary ambassadors; newsletter coverage to 40K+ subscribers; and a VIP event with tour operators and journalists.

About Travel South

Travel South USA is America's oldest and largest regional travel promotion organization, formed in 1965 by a resolution presented at the Southern Governor's Conference. The long-standing regional collaboration of the state tourism offices of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia provides a foundation to positively position tourism as a vital and dynamic element in the region's economic development. Tourism ranks throughout the region as one of the top three industries, behind manufacturing and agriculture, and is responsible for \$133 billion in spending by visitors, generating 1.4 million direct jobs, \$30 billion in worker paychecks and more than \$16 billion in state and local taxes.

The National Geographic Traveller (UK) Food Festival 2023 will be held on July 15-16, 2023, at the

Business Design Centre, London, and will offer a unique range of dining, drinking and learning experiences from all over the world. The 2022 event welcomed 6,000 visitors and featured 78 exhibitors and 82 talks, demonstrations, and masterclasses.

foodfestival.natgeotraveller.co.uk

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