



For Immediate Release  
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## **ITALY SCORES AS TOP DESTINATION FOR PACKAGED TRAVEL**

### **USTOA Poll Reveals California, National Parks Are First for Domestic Travel**

The United States Tour Operators Association – whose members account for the vacations of more than 11 million people annually – has revealed the top destinations for packaged travel in 2006. Once again Italy ranked number one as the year's top international destination for tours and packages. California and the National Parks won as the top domestic destination for the first time, according to an informal survey of the organization's member companies.

#### **Top Places**

For the fourth year in a row Italy placed first as the single most popular destination, cited by more than 50% of USTOA respondents, with 30% of respondents ranking Rome as the top city. On the domestic front both California and the National Parks were cited as the hottest destinations for packaged travel, while Alaska and Florida were also mentioned.

#### **Best Value for the Dollar**

China placed first for country or area representing the best value for the dollar, followed closely by South America and the Fiji Islands. Brazil, Egypt, Mexico, Hungary and Indonesia were also cited. Cities offering the best value for the dollar were Buenos Aires, Budapest and Bali.

#### **Hottest Up and Coming Destinations**

Southeast Asia, including Vietnam, was named the hottest up and coming area for packaged travel. China and India tied with last year's favorite, Croatia, for second place, and Eastern Europe came in third.

#### **Biggest Surprise Destinations of 2006**

As for the biggest surprise destinations of 2006, USTOA members cited China, Vietnam, Eastern Europe, and Greece.

Survey respondents represented 65 of the top brand names in packaged travel, or 72% of USTOA's Corporate members. USTOA member companies have met the travel industry's highest standards, including participation in the USTOA Travelers Assistance Program, which among other things requires each USTOA Active member company to set aside \$1 million to reimburse consumers in case the company goes out of business. For more information and a listing of USTOA Member companies, visit [www.ustoa.com](http://www.ustoa.com).

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