

Hit a home run

The US is hosting a wealth of sports events in 2025 and beyond.
Alice Barnes-Brown discovers how agents can score sales

hot dogs in the stands, unsuspecting viewers on the kiss cam and jubilation as the home team scores a winner – catching an all-American game will teach you more about this country's culture than any museum ever could.

The US has hosted a range of major events this year, from the annual Superbowl and US Open to the Copa America football and T20 ICC Men's Cricket World Cup – but there are plenty more on the horizon over the next few years.

The countdown is already on for the 2026 Fifa World Cup in North America and the 2028 Olympics in Los Angeles. The former is predicted to attract an estimated five million fans, generating

more than \$5 billion – proving there are big bucks in selling sports to travellers.

Keep your eyes peeled for news on the 2031 Rugby World Cup, 2033 Women's Rugby World Cup and 2034 Winter Olympics, all of which are taking place across the pond. Until then, explore our selection of the biggest events agents can use to sell a sports-focused holiday.

ON THE BALL

The revamped Fifa Club World Cup will make its way to US shores in June and July next year. Including defending champions Manchester City, 32 teams from across the globe will compete – though the ➤

PICTURE: Carol M. Highsmith

DESTINATIONS

THE US | SPORTY STAYS

ASK THE expert



Jackie Ennis,
vice-president
global trade
development,
Brand USA

“Sport is an increasingly big motivator for travel. Our USA Discovery Program includes modules on many of the cities that will host upcoming sporting events. The newly refreshed online training platform has been designed specifically to assist agents selling the US; it is the ultimate hub, featuring more than 60 training modules.”



Ben Mortimer,
managing
director,
MVP Travel

“The authenticity of live events – accompanied by value-adds such as a pre-game party with local fans or a stadium tour – is a unique selling point. Sports holidays also provide agents with a chance to differentiate their offerings. Many fantastic but lesser-visited destinations such as Pittsburgh and Nashville are home to amazing sporting events and have direct flights. Explore these options, as specialist operators are happy to help.”



Jimmy Rowan,
head of
Spectate

“Spectate has started to offer more US sports holidays, as we have seen growth in this area recently. We are selling the NFL in New York this winter and will monitor its success to see if there is an opportunity to grow [this area] in other cities.”

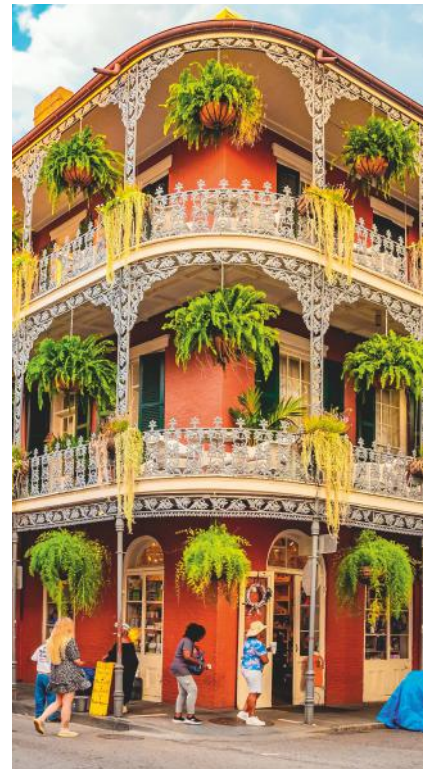


fast fact

Sports tourism generates a 10th of travel spending worldwide, and is set to grow 17.5% a year until 2030, says UN Tourism

CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: American football game at SoFi Stadium, Los Angeles; French Quarter, New Orleans, home of next year's Super Bowl; Masters golf tournament, Augusta, Georgia

PICTURES: Shutterstock/Kavram; Phil Anderson



host cities and ticket details have yet to be announced.

Turning to a different kind of football, expect pop culture moments aplenty at the 59th Super Bowl, which takes place on February 9, 2025, in the Creole culture-filled city of New Orleans – making it a superb sell even for non-sports fans. Direct flights to New Orleans mean it's easy for clients to watch their favourite NFL team (or pop superstar) play, enjoy the city's electric atmosphere in the run-up to Mardi Gras or simply eat and drink their way around town. Do Something Different offers a cocktail tour in the French Quarter from £56 per person.

And if clients want to extend their holiday into a multi-city trip, they can tag on the NBA All-Star game in San Francisco on February 16.

In other big-hitting sports, baseball's World Series begins in March, with teams from the US and

BOOK IT

Touchdown Trips offers a five-night Super Bowl tour to New Orleans from £13,595, departing February 9, 2025. The price includes flights, room-only accommodation, a welcome party, Super Bowl Experience ticket, entry to the Pre-Super Bowl all-inclusive VIP party, tickets to Super Bowl LIX and transfers.
touchdowntrips.com

USA Golfholidays sells a four-night US Masters trip from £5,300. The price includes B&B accommodation,

car rental, two 18-hole rounds of golf, tickets and transfers to one day of the Masters and flights departing April 10, 2025, plus luggage.
usagolfholiday.com

Spectate Travel sells a four-night Las Vegas Grand Prix package from £6,350 per person, including flights on November 20, a room-only stay at Caesar's Palace, three-day main grandstand tickets to the race plus luxury transfers.
spectatetravel.co.uk

Japan competing. The game is more than sitting in the bleachers: savour foot-long hotdogs and beer or sing along at pre-game ceremonies, and it won't matter if you don't understand the rules.

REVVING THE ENGINES

If motor sports are more your clients' speed, next year, Miami and Austin will each host one of the six new Sprint races in the Formula One calendar. Covering a third of the distance of a typical grand prix, the sprint race ➤

DESTINATIONS

THE US | SPORTY STAYS



ABOVE: Daytona International Speedway track

PICTURE: Shutterstock/Grindstone Media Group

is held a day before the main event and makes for an exciting 30-minute spectacle. Both cities will have hosted their inaugural sprint races by the end of this year, so tell clients to get their best cowboy hats and chequered flags ready for more excitement in 2025.

Also look to all-American Nascar, which hosts a 500-mile rough-and-ready race at Florida's fabulous Daytona International Speedway track each February. It's an optimal time to visit Florida, with sunny days

and temperatures a pleasant 21C, so clients can incorporate trips to the beach and Orlando's theme parks, which are just 90 minutes away.

COUNTRY CLUB

Golf holidays can be lucrative for agents to sell – and the US offers plenty of teeing-off points. Starting the season in April 2025 is the tournament, held on the greens of Augusta National Golf Course in Georgia. Highlight some of charming Augusta's other springtime pursuits, from kayaking to disc golf.

Golf fans have more to look forward to next year, with the US Open in Pennsylvania in June, followed by the Ryder Cup in September – which returns to New York for its 45th edition.

OLYMPIC FEVER

Los Angeles is busy getting ready for the Olympic Games in July 2028. In preparation for the arrival of millions of Olympic fans, LAX airport is undergoing a huge renovation, which includes new connections between terminals and extra bays for wide-bodied aircraft. Plus, British architect Foster + Partners is currently transforming seven hectares of Beverly Hills real estate into an urban oasis, with gardens, open spaces and a new Aman resort, which is set to welcome visitors in 2027. **TW**

BEST OF THE rest

Horse racing: For all the glam of Epsom, with a splash of southern flavour, pitch the Kentucky Derby. Mint juleps are the drink of choice, while the over-the-top fascinators and hats give Ascot a run for its money.

Rugby League: The Betfred Super League is taking a game to the US for the first time in March 2025, in Las Vegas, Nevada. Tickets cost from £39 for the match between Wigan Warriors and Warrington Wolves.

Wrestling: Three stadium shows are on their way to Indianapolis. The Royal Rumble on February 1, 2025, will be followed by SummerSlam and Wrestlemania in the coming years bringing about \$300 million to the city.

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