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GOVERNOR KATHY HOCHUL

GOVERNOR HOCHUL ANNOUNCES PLANS FOR I LOVE NY BLACK TRAVEL INITIATIVE

I LOVE NY Will Promote Black Travel Destinations, Events and Cultural Attractions to Encourage Black Travelers to Explore New York State

Builds on I LOVE NY LGBTQ and Accessible NY Programs to Boost New York Tourism Among Diverse Populations

Governor Kathy Hochul today announced plans for an I LOVE NY Black travel initiative, designed to grow New York State tourism and encourage Black traveler visitation. The Governor made the announcement at the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater as part of the state's commemoration of Black History Month. The program will build on the success of the state's tourism programs like [I LOVE NY LGBTQ](#) and [Accessible NY](#) which highlight destinations of interest to and supportive of specific travel communities.

"The new I LOVE NY Black travel initiative will be a celebration of New York's unparalleled Black history, culture, food, and arts," **Governor Hochul said.** "From sites and museums that bring Black history to life to world-class arts and cultural institutions like the Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater, New York has so much to offer. I look forward to working with our partners to welcome even more visitors to experience Black culture in our state."

Lieutenant Governor Antonio Delgado said, "I am proud our state will proactively highlight the incredible diversity we have to offer and encourage travelers from around the world to experience and appreciate New York's Black culture."

I LOVE NY's Black travel initiative will be a comprehensive program that promotes New York State as a great vacation destination for Black travelers. It will have a dedicated presence on the I LOVE NY website, and a promotional campaign based on market research and stakeholder outreach that highlights existing assets and supports new programming to provide a direct invitation welcoming Black visitors and their families to experience New York's unparalleled Black history, culture, food, arts and events.

The Division of Tourism will utilize existing relationships with international travel trade operators to encourage the creation of Black travel itineraries and engage travel journalists and content creators to share all that awaits Black travelers and their friends and families across New York State. I LOVE NY will also collaborate with other State agency partners and local tourism promotion agencies to amplify their Black travel messaging.

The annual economic impact of tourism and travel in New York State as of 2021 is \$85.5 billion, and it generates enough in state and local taxes to save every household in the state more than \$1,000 annually. The tourism and hospitality sector is the state's third largest industry, supporting one in 10 private sector jobs. Black travelers represent more than 13 percent of the domestic leisure travel market, spending over \$109 billion annually.

Empire State Development President, CEO and Commissioner Hope Knight said, "New York embraces its diversity, and we want to ensure that visitors from around the world recognize the opportunities to celebrate Black history and heritage throughout the state. Given the unparalleled depth and variety of attractions here that appeal to Black travelers, this program is a perfect fit to spotlight and showcase these places, stories and people."

Empire State Development Vice President and Executive Director of Tourism Ross D. Levi said, "I LOVE NY is excited to work with stakeholders throughout the state to build and launch this new program, which will complement other tourism programs like Path Through History, I LOVE NY LGBTQ and Accessible NY. This new initiative will help amplify and extend the efforts of our travel industry partners that are already highlighting Black travel attractions, and extend an invitation to Black travelers from around the world to come find what they love in New York State."

Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater Artistic Director Robert Battle said, "As an institution born out of the Black experience in New York more than 65 years ago, we are proud that Governor Hochul chose to announce this valuable program at Ailey's home - The Joan Weill Center for Dance - the largest building dedicated to dance here in the capital of dance. We look forward to welcoming the world to New York with others, thanks to the I LOVE NY Black travel initiative, and seeing more visitors inspired by Ailey's performances and classes."

New York is home to dozens of Underground Railroad sites and one of the largest Juneteenth festivals in the nation. The state has deep ties to leaders like Fredrick Douglass, Sojourner Truth and Harriet Tubman, and is where hip hop was born. Museums and venues celebrating Black culture, art and heritage can be found throughout the state - from the Jackie Robinson Museum in Lower Manhattan, to the Harriet Tubman National Historical Park in Auburn, to the Colored Musicians Club in Buffalo.

In a survey of Black travelers, 64 percent reported that the availability of Black culture and heritage attractions is important when making a destination choice. Another survey of Black travelers reported that diversity in marketing is a top factor when choosing a travel destination, with 54 percent of U.S. Black travelers more likely to visit a destination with Black representation in advertising. I LOVE NY already includes diverse imagery in its marketing and promotes themes, attractions and events of interest to a wide variety of communities. This new travel program is the next phase of the Division of Tourism's segment promotion work, joining specific invitations and overtures to LGBTQ travelers and guests with accessibility needs.

About New York State

New York State is a premier vacation destination with world-class attractions, picturesque natural beauty, locally sourced cuisine and a booming craft beverage scene, an array of accommodations, and iconic, year-round festivals and events. Its 11 diverse vacation regions feature some of the world's top ranked beaches; two out of America's top three favorite state parks; breathtaking Niagara Falls; more ski areas than any other state; one of the nation's longest foliage seasons; multiple Halls of Fame; North America's longest, fastest and highest zipline; the largest publicly protected area in the contiguous United States; and the country's longest multi-use trail. Add in the state's unique museums, historic landmarks, cultural sites, charming small towns and urban playgrounds, and it's no wonder New York has been consistently chosen as a top getaway by travel publications and experts. To help plan your next New York State vacation, visit www.iloveny.com.

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