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CCi

CONVENTION CITIES INDEX

OUR EXCLUSIVE RESEARCH ADDS NEW DATA POINTS FOR EVALUATING THE BEST PLACES TO HOLD LARGE EVENTS




















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NORTHSTAR'S SECOND ANNUAL CONVENTION CITIES INDEX SHOWCASES THE WORLD'S BEST DESTINATIONS FOR LARGE EVENTS

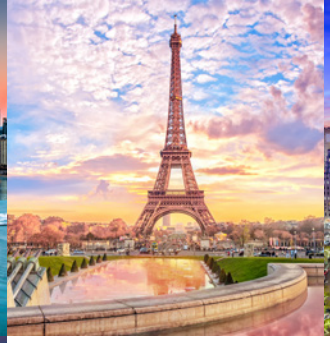
BY ELISE SCHOENING

Selecting a convention destination can be difficult in the best of times; in a pandemic, it's even trickier. Among key considerations beyond rates, dates and space are ample airlift as well as safety factors, including health concerns.

Northstar Meetings Group's second annual Convention Cities Index is an essential tool to help planners of large events narrow their choices. The first and only of its kind, the CCi uses extensive research and a weighted system to identify the top destinations for meetings in the United States and around the world.

New to this year's CCi is the addition of direct flights per month as one of the six evaluation categories of the index's in-depth methodology. The other factors are the amount of indoor exhibit space at each city's largest convention center, number of hotel rooms within 15 minutes' walking distance of the facility, average cost of a hotel room, travel time (without traffic) from the nearest major international airport to the convention center, and the city's safety level for travelers.

"It's great to see the second edition of the Convention Cities Index by Northstar," said David Peckinpaugh, president of Maritz Global Events. "The index is a simple, unbiased and easy-to-use guide for the world's top destinations, and the inclusion of the number of daily flights is a great addition."












CCi METHODOLOGY

CONVENTION CENTER SIZE is the initial benchmark for consideration in the index. U.S. venues with a minimum of 500,000 square feet of indoor exhibit space were evaluated. The minimum for the global ranking was 1 million square feet.

NEARBY HOTEL ROOMS AND TRAVEL TIME from the airport to the convention district were calculated using Google Maps. Airport transit time was recorded for 7 a.m. in each city's time zone.

AVERAGE HOTEL RATES are based on the *Business Travel News* 2021 Q1 Corporate Travel Index.

SAFETY SCORES are from GeoSure, an app that synthesizes data from sources including the CDC and the World Health Organization. Among factors considered: health and medical concerns (including Covid-19 data), nighttime safety, LGBTQ+ safety, women's safety, theft, and basic freedoms. On a scale of 1 to 100, the higher the number, the safer the destination.

FLIGHTS PER MONTH are from Cirium, an aviation analytics provider, which collects flight data from more than 2,000 sources, including airlines, airports and regulators. All direct flights into the area's airports were considered. CCi data is for May 2021; results might vary in other months.

In some destinations, more than one convention center met the size criteria; those city rankings were based on total exhibit space and nearby hotel rooms, and the average travel time from all facilities to the nearest international airport.

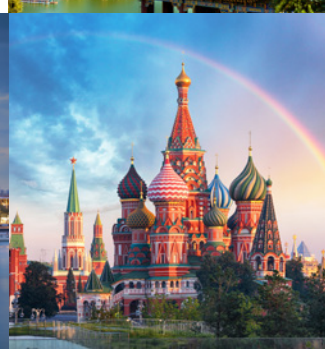
Final CCi rankings are on a weighted scale of 100 points. While 25 U.S. cities and 25 global destinations are listed in order of total points, planners are encouraged to consider the individual data points in the charts that follow to determine which locations are best suited to their specific needs for each event.

"The beauty of this index is its aggregation of data representing the fundamental elements of an event organizer's buying decision," said David Blansfield, executive vice president and group publisher of Northstar Meetings Group. "Based on the characteristics of the business event, the budget, and the priorities of the organizers and attendees, the CCi provides in one place a relative comparison of all the key variables in all the major convention cities to help planners short-list the best destinations to host their events."

For a year-over-year comparison, view the 2020 CCi at bit.ly/MCcci.







U.S. CONVENTION CITIES INDEX

CITY	EXHIBIT SPACE	HOTEL ROOMS	AVERAGE ROOM RATE	MINUTES TO AIRPORT	DIRECT FLIGHTS IN MAY 2021	SAFETY RATING	AGGREGATE INDEX
Atlanta*	2,002,000	11,077	$164.44	16	27,273	56	85.03
Anaheim, Calif.	1,150,000	7,414	$144.96	35	20,748	72	80.70
Houston*	1,951,563	8,069	$153.90	25	16,294	62	80.14
Las Vegas*	4,621,222	37,774	$170.34	6.33	12,122	65	78.95
Dallas	1,000,000	6,376	$150.34	20	29,703	55	77.05
Orlando	2,053,820	7,083	$175.74	14	12,876	59	72.79
Rosemont, Ill.	840,000	4,145	$153.58	4	22,924	68	71.89
Chicago	2,600,000	2,940	$179.27	14	28,330	57	71.55
Denver	584,000	9,322	$174.99	30	22,227	68	70.29
Indianapolis	749,000	7,725	$139.48	14	3,062	63	64.82
New Orleans	1,100,000	7,391	$157.45	16	3,337	56	63.07
San Diego	615,701	8,126	$175.17	7	5,256	67	62.47
San Antonio	514,000	10,884	$140.07	10	2,387	62	62.07
Philadelphia	679,000	9,504	$183.51	14	8,004	60	60.06
Salt Lake City	515,000	5,657	$143.84	10	10,304	51	56.69
New York	850,140	11,490	$256.64	22	12,514	69	56.55
Los Angeles	720,000	2,843	$192.00	16	20,748	64	56.28
San Francisco	599,100	15,076	$211.12	16	7,028	65	55.79
Miami Beach	500,000	6,656	$169.34	16	8,104	58	55.43
Phoenix	584,500	4,286	$188.18	5	14,639	59	54.31
Washington, D.C.	703,000	9,183	$214.10	35	6,405	63	52.52
Detroit	723,000	3,546	$150.23	18	10,973	51	52.41
Louisville, Ky.	680,000	1,512	$131.33	3	1,564	63	50.32
St. Louis	502,000	5,433	$168.04	14	4,436	49	46.91
Atlantic City	500,000	3,337	$153.50	60	16,759	54	46.86

* Cities with more than one facility that fit the criteria for indoor exhibit space

Exhibit space: Northstar Meetings Group research; **Hotel rooms:** Northstar Meetings Group research; **Average hotel cost:** *Business Travel News* 2021 Q1 Corporate Travel Index; **Minutes to airport:** Google Maps; **Direct flights in May 2021:** Cirium; **Safety score**: GeoSure (note: Safety scores are based on a scale of 1-100, with 100 being the safest); **Weighting methodology:** The CCi is based on a 100-point scale. Exhibit space, hotel rooms, hotel cost and monthly flights are weighted 20 points; travel time and safety level, 10 points. **CCi source:** Meetings & Conventions

GLOBAL CONVENTION CITIES INDEX

CITY	EXHIBIT SPACE	HOTEL ROOMS	AVERAGE ROOM RATE	MINUTES TO AIRPORT	DIRECT FLIGHTS IN MAY 2021	SAFETY RATING	AGGREGATE INDEX
Frankfurt, Germany	4,305,564	5,741	$134.11	10	6,935	68	73.45
Las Vegas *	4,621,222	37,774	$170.34	6.33	12,296	65	68.20
Shenzhen, China *	5,435,774	4,100	$106.77	30.5	15,038	53	63.45
Shanghai *	6,458,346	1,952	$102.30	23	27,800	58	60.11
Cologne, Germany	3,056,950	1,714	$120.21	12	682	68	57.16
Guangzhou, China	3,638,201	2,649	$92.56	50	19,702	56	56.35
Hanover, Germany	5,017,058	603	$133.82	24	495	71	54.69
Orlando	2,053,820	7,083	$175.74	14	13,427	59	54.13
Atlanta	1,500,000	7,589	$164.44	12	29,002	56	52.56
Birmingham, England	1,959,031	1,820	$117.62	4	619	63	52.31
Barcelona, Spain	2,583,338	1,610	$130.07	6	4,214	60	51.35
Dusseldorf, Germany	2,820,144	288	$133.82	6	1,917	71	51.19
Paris *	4,976,284	3,380	$210.80	17.5	10,856	66	51.16
Madrid	2,583,338	425	$126.02	3	5,763	67	50.96
New Orleans	1,100,000	7,391	$157.45	16	3,343	56	50.92
Dallas	1,000,000	6,376	$150.34	20	32,137	55	50.46
Kunming, China	3,229,173	598	$100.62	9	15,212	45	50.36
Valencia, Spain	2,475,699	225	$128.05	4	849	67	49.23
Moscow *	5,070,877	688	$96.87	25	21,660	34	48.39
Poznań, Poland	1,184,030	801	$101.34	9	81	68	48.36
Munich	2,152,782	1,450	$147.98	24	3,412	72	46.34
Chicago	2,600,000	2,940	$179.27	14	30,010	57	45.43
Chongqing, China	2,152,782	548	$100.62	26	14,620	56	45.22
Qingdao, China	1,614,586	935	$100.62	30	7,597	56	43.06
Dubai	1,051,085	2,950	$133.69	8	8,092	45	42.19

* Cities with more than one facility that fit the criteria for indoor exhibit space

Exhibit space: Northstar Meetings Group research; **Hotel rooms:** Northstar Meetings Group research; **Average hotel cost:** *Business Travel News* 2021 Q1 Corporate Travel Index; **Minutes to airport:** Google Maps; **Direct flights in May 2021:** Cirium; **Safety score**: GeoSure (note: Safety scores are based on a scale of 1-100, with 100 being the safest); **Weighting methodology:** The CCi is based on a 100-point scale. Exhibit space, hotel rooms, hotel cost and monthly flights are weighted 20 points; travel time and safety level, 10 points. **CCi source:** Meetings & Conventions

U.S. DOMESTIC CITIES AT A GLANCE



1 Atlanta

Coming out on top of this year's list is "the city in a forest," whose bustling convention district is surrounded by a canopy of trees. The Georgia World Congress Center, the first in the nation to be GBAC Star-certified in coronavirus cleaning and prevention, features 1.5 million square feet of exhibit space, and the nearby AmericasMart Atlanta has an additional 502,000 square feet of exhibit space. The two downtown venues are accompanied by more than 11,000 hotel rooms within walking distance and are just steps from major attractions, such as the Georgia Aquarium and the World of Coca-Cola. Getting to Atlanta is easy; Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport was the busiest in the United States last year in terms of passenger traffic and offers an impressive 27,000 direct flights per month into the city.

2 Anaheim, Calif.

There's lots to love about Anaheim. This meetings hub records 280 days of sunshine each year, the highest safety score of all destinations on the U.S. domestic list and the largest expo facility on the West Coast. The Anaheim Convention Center has 1.15 million square feet of exhibit space and more than 7,000 hotel rooms within walking distance — half of which are directly connected to the venue. Better yet, the average hotel cost is cheaper than most major cities, at about $144.96 per night. Groups can take advantage of the growing craft-brewery scene, beaches along the coastline and, of course, Disneyland.



3 Houston

Enjoy a top-notch culinary scene with a side of Southern hospitality in Houston. Two major convention facilities provide ample space for giant events. The George R. Brown Convention Center offers 770,000 square feet of exhibit space downtown, and an additional 1 million square feet of space is just south of the city center at NRG Park. Houston is one of the most diverse cities in the nation, with more than 145 languages spoken here. The city's colorful history and culture is evident in its 19 museums and more than 10,000 restaurants.



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4 Las Vegas

High-end casinos, luxurious spas and dazzling shows draw millions to the Strip each year. But Las Vegas is also a meetings mecca with three major facilities for large events. The Mandalay Bay Convention Center, and the Sands Expo and Convention Center each offer more than 1 million square feet of exhibit space. Earlier this year, the Las Vegas Convention Center opened its expansion, bringing the venue's total exhibit space to 2.5 million square feet. A new underground people-mover has been added to the facility, allowing attendees to get from one end of the 200-acre campus to the other in a few minutes. Las Vegas outranks every other destination for available hotel rooms; an impressive 37,000 rooms are within walking distance of the three expo centers.

5 Dallas

The Big D is home to the largest urban arts district in the United States, and leads the domestic list with the most monthly flights. Planners can rest easy knowing sustainability is a top priority at the Kay Bailey Hutchison Convention Center, which offers 1 million square feet of exhibit space. Not only is the facility LEED-certified, but its good-neighbor program assists groups in donating unused exhibit items and food to local nonprofits serving homeless families and children in Dallas.





6 Orlando

It's easy to see why this Florida city is a crowd favorite. The Orange County Convention Center is the second-largest in the nation, with more than 2 million square feet of exhibit space. Four hotels with more than 5,000 rooms in total are directly connected to the venue. Theme parks dot the city and new attractions are on the horizon. Dezerland Park debuted in December, an indoor amusement park with a bowling alley, go-karts and the Orlando Auto Museum. Two record-breaking rides will open at ICON Park this summer: the world's tallest slingshot ride and the world's tallest free-standing drop tower.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (DALLAS) F11PHOTO; (LAS VEGAS) DMITRY VINOGRADOV; (ORLANDO) SEAN PAVONE; ALL ADOBE STOCK



7 Rosemont, Ill.

Avoid the crowds by heading to this destination just outside of Chicago and a four-minute drive from O'Hare International Airport. Rosemont's Donald E. Stephens Convention Center has nearly 1 million square feet of exhibit space, and while downtown Chicago is only 20 minutes away, Rosemont has a few draws of its own for after-hours, including the Rivers Casino and indoor skydiving at iFly.

8 Chicago

The Windy City welcomes events of all sizes with 2.6 million square feet of exhibit space at McCormick Place — the largest convention center in the Western Hemisphere. An impressive 40 James Beard-award-winning restaurants and 160 breweries are scattered throughout the city. Chicago operates the second-largest transportation system in the nation, and getting here is easy with two major airports nearby and more than 28,000 nonstop flights per month.





9 Denver

The Mile High City is in the midst of a major revamp. Denver International Airport is investing $2.6 billion to enhance security, improve passenger flow, increase capacity with the addition of 39 new gates, and more. Phase one is set to debut at the end of the year, with phase two scheduled for completion in 2024. Also underway is an expansion of the Colorado Convention Center, which will bring technology improvements, more meetings space and a rooftop terrace to the downtown venue by 2023. Denver has nearly 10,000 hotels within walking distance of the facility — and the walk should be pleasant: The sun shines here about 300 days per year.

10 Indianapolis

Indianapolis prides itself on having the most connected convention campus in the country. Skywalks link a dozen hotels with a total of 4,700 rooms directly to the Indiana Convention Center and Lucas Oil Stadium, which offer 749,000 square feet of exhibit space. By 2025, the city plans to add another 143,500 square feet of meeting space, and hopes to build two more connected hotels with an extra 1,000 rooms. Farm-to-table restaurants and unmatched Hoosier hospitality give this Midwestern city added appeal.



PHOTOGRAPHS: (CHICAGO) DRONE DOOD; (DENVER) KEVIN RUCK; (INDIANAPOLIS) SEAN PAVONE; ALL ADOBE STOCK

11 New Orleans

The Big Easy lands on the U.S. domestic list with more than 1 million square feet of exhibit space at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center, set between the French Quarter and the Garden District. A five-year, $557 million capital-improvement project is underway to modernize the convention campus. A new transportation center already has been added, along with a 7.5-acre pedestrian park that runs alongside the facility. Next up are enhancements to the meeting rooms and the construction of a 1,200-room headquarters hotel, which will connect directly to the venue.





12 San Diego

This sun-soaked California city touts an average temperature of 72 degrees — perfect for meeting any time of year. More than 600,000 square feet of exhibit space is available at the San Diego Convention Center, which occupies a prime spot along the downtown waterfront and is across the bay from Coronado Island. San Diego International Airport is only seven minutes away, but attendees will be reluctant to head home with 70 miles of beaches and dozens of championship golf courses to explore after the gathering finishes up.

13 San Antonio

Downtown on the banks of the River Walk is the Henry B. Gonzalez Convention Center, with 514,000 square feet of exhibit space. Top attractions, including the Alamo and the 750-foot-tall Tower of the Americas observation deck, are just steps away. An impressive 11,000 hotel rooms surround the venue. Among the newest properties in town are the 162-room Thompson San Antonio and the 195-room Canopy by Hilton San Antonio River Walk.





14 Philadelphia

The City of Brotherly Love is home to the largest ballroom on the East Coast, a 55,408-square-foot space at the Pennsylvania Convention Center. The venue is LEED-certified and has been practicing sustainability since 1999. With 679,000 square feet of exhibit space, the facility is in the heart of the city, close to Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell. Philadelphia International Airport, less than 15 minutes away, has nonstop service to 36 international destinations and 108 cities in the United States.

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15 Salt Lake City

Utah's capital has made noteworthy investments for the meetings market. A $4.1 billion transformation of Salt Lake City International Airport closed down the old facility, which will be demolished; the new terminal with two new concourses and a streamlined security area were unveiled last fall. Phase two, which will add a tunnel to connect concourses A and B, should finish up in 2024. The Salt Palace Convention Center is getting a new headquarters hotel, the 700-room Hyatt Regency Salt Lake City, set to open in October 2022. Host of the 2002 Winter Olympics, this city is well equipped for large gatherings and offers a variety of outdoor activities for any season.

16 New York City

There's never been a better time to bring a large group to New York, as the Javits Center just finished a $1.5 billion expansion in May that brings the venue's total exhibit space to 850,000 square feet. The project also added new rooftop spaces and a four-level truck-marshalling facility to streamline event operations. The city has a high safety level for travelers and offers more than 11,000 hotel rooms within walking distance of the Javits Center. Beyond the convention space, there's something for everyone in the Big Apple. Attendees have five boroughs to explore, with 64 Michelin-star restaurants and more than 80 museums.





17 Los Angeles

Millions flock to the City of Angels each year for warm weather, a picture-perfect coastline and a dynamic dining scene. The Los Angeles Convention Center, which is celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, has 720,000 square feet of exhibit space and welcomes an average of 350 events each year. The city also scores high in airlift, with nearly 21,000 nonstop flights per month. Los Angeles International Airport, the second-busiest in the nation in 2020, is in the midst of a $14.3 billion project that will upgrade the terminals and add a new people mover to connect the airport to public transportation systems.



18 San Francisco

Moscone Center, just a few blocks from the waterfront of this favorite California city, finished a $551 million expansion in 2019, adding 21 percent more usable function space. The venue now features just under 600,000 square feet of exhibit space, a nearly 50,000-square-foot ballroom and 25,000 square feet of outdoor terraces. Popular attractions are right across the street, including the San Francisco Museum of Art and Yerba Buena Gardens. Accommodations are plentiful; 15,000 hotel rooms are within walking distance of Moscone.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (LOS ANGELES) LARRY; (NEW YORK CITY) F11PHOTO; (SALT LAKE CITY) F11PHOTO; (SAN FRANCISCO) MARCO PONCE; ALL ADOBE STOCK

19 Miami Beach

This Florida destination has earned its reputation for sun, fun — and business. The Miami Beach Convention Center, in the heart of the city, underwent a $620 million renovation and expansion in 2018, adding 60,000 square feet of ballroom space and a focus on sustainable operations. The hotel scene, too, is getting a refresh. Among the latest properties to open this year are the renovated 80-room Berkeley Park Hotel, and the new 202-room Moxy South Beach.





20 Phoenix

The logistics could not be easier in this Southwestern state. The Phoenix Convention Center, with 584,000 square feet of exhibit space, is only five minutes from the Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, which serves more than 120 U.S. and international locations with over 14,500 flights per month. More than 4,000 hotel rooms are conveniently nearby. The area around the Arizona capital is home to 170 golf courses, and nature provides the backdrop for hiking, biking and other outdoor adventures. Spas are popular and plentiful.

21 Washington, D.C.

The nation's capital leads the way in sustainability, as the first LEED platinum city in the world as designated by the U.S. Green Buildings Council. Accordingly, the Walter E. Washington Convention Center, which has 703,000 square feet of exhibit space, is outfitted with energy-efficient fixtures and employs a waste-minimization program. With nearly 6,500 flights per month and more than 9,000 walkable hotel rooms, the logistics are easy for attendees. American history buffs will be in their glory here. The Smithsonian, which oversees 17 museums in the city, is celebrating its 175th anniversary this year.





22 Detroit

More than 720,000 square feet of exhibit space can be found at the TCF Center, which is adjacent to the Riverwalk and not far from Corktown — the oldest neighborhood in Michigan's largest city. Nearby hotels include the Detroit Marriott at the Renaissance Center, the tallest hotel in the nation with 70 floors and 1,328 guest rooms. Hotel rates are comparatively low, averaging $150.23 per night. Detroit is home to one of the largest theater districts in the nation and the birthplace of Motown.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (DETROIT) F11PHOTO; (MIAMI BEACH) ESPIEGLE; (PHOENIX) SEAN PAVONE; (WASHINGTON) F11PHOTO; ALL ADOBE STOCK



23 Louisville, Ky.

It's easy to get to the heart of this city, thanks to the shortest travel time of all destinations on the U.S. list — the Kentucky Exposition Center, with 680,000 square feet of exhibit space, is a three-minute drive from the Louisville Muhammad Ali International Airport. Affordable hotels are another plus, as the destination has the lowest prices per night among on the domestic list ($131.33). Get a true taste of Louisville on the Urban Bourbon Trail, plotted with 46 restaurants and bars. Other must-see sites include the Muhammad Ali Center and Churchill Downs, home of the storied Kentucky Derby.

St. Louis

Missouri's second-largest city is in growth mode. An expansion of the America's Center Convention Complex is in the works. The $175 million project should be completed in 2023, adding 92,000 square feet to the venue's existing 502,000 square feet of exhibit space. The convention center is well positioned downtown, just a few blocks from the Mississippi River and the city's iconic Gateway Arch. Getting downtown is easy: St. Louis Lambert International Airport is only 14 minutes away.

24



Atlantic City

This Jersey Shore destination is preparing to emerge from the pandemic stronger than ever. Several of its nine casinos are in the midst of multimillion-dollar upgrades. Caesars Entertainment alone plans to spend $400 million on its three Atlantic City properties: Caesars, Harrah's Resort and the Tropicana. Renovations also are underway at Bally's, Ocean Casino Resort and the Hard Rock Hotel & Casino. More than 3,000 hotel rooms are within walking distance of the Atlantic City Convention Center, which has 500,000 square feet of exhibit space.

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PHOTOGRAPHS (ALL) SEAN PAVONE/ADOBE STOCK

GLOBAL CITIES AT A GLANCE



1 Frankfurt, Germany

Known as the financial capital of Germany, Frankfurt is home to one of Europe's busiest airports and a sprawling convention campus, Messe Frankfurt, which has two congress centers and eleven halls, with more than 4.3 million square feet of exhibit space. An award-winning redesign was completed in 2020, with modern appeal and the latest technology. Access could not be easier: an underground tram and train stop are directly outside, and Frankfurt Airport is just 10 minutes away. Nearly a dozen museums line the banks of the Main River, a tributary of the Rhine.

2 Las Vegas

Las Vegas made the U.S. CCi at No. 4 (see page 7). Note that the minimum convention space criteria for the Global CCi is 1 million square feet, thus some high-ranking cities on the U.S. list did not qualify.





3 Shenzhen, China

Just north of Hong Kong is Shenzhen, a major innovation hub often referred to as "China's Silicon Valley." The city has two major convention facilities. The Shenzhen Convention and Exhibition Center in the Futian Central Business District offers 1 million square feet of exhibit space. On the east side of the city along the Pearl River is the Shenzhen World Exhibition and Convention Center, which opened in 2019 with 4.3 million square feet of exhibit space. Phase two of construction will add another 1 million square feet, making it the largest convention center in the world.

PHOTOGERAPHS: (FRANKFURT) F11PHOTO; (LAS VEGAS) SOMCHAIJ; (SHENZHEN) WR.LIU; ALL ADOBE STOCK

4 Shanghai

The most populous city in China, Shanghai is served by two international airports offering a combined 27,000 direct flights per month. Two convention facilities sit on either side of the Huangpu River, which runs through the middle of the city. In the historic Puxi district on the west side is the National Convention and Exhibition Center, with more than 4.3 million square feet of exhibit space. Pudong, the more modern district to the east, features the Shanghai New International Expo Center, with another 2 million square feet.





5 Cologne, Germany

Cologne welcomes conference-goers with a centrally located convention center surrounded by historic charm. More than 3 million square feet of exhibit space is available at Koelnmesse, built along the Rhine River across from the storied Cologne Cathedral. Attendees can cross the Hohenzollern Bridge and step back in time with a stroll through Old Town, or visit one of the many museums. Hotel rates are relatively low here, averaging US$120.21 per night. Another plus: Cologne Bonn Airport is only a 12-minute drive from the convention center.

6 Guangzhou, China

This affordable destination features the lowest room rates on the global list — averaging US$92.56 per night. There's more than enough room for large conventions, with 3.6 million square feet of exhibit space at the Canton Fair Complex. The venue, along the Pearl River, is among the largest in Asia. The city also ranks highly on the global list for airlift, with nearly 20,000 direct flights per month.



PHOTOGRAPHS: (COLOGNE) RUDOLF BALASKO; (GUANGZHOU) 06PHOTO; (SHANGHAI) TTSTUDIO; ALL ADOBE STOCK



7 Hannover, Germany

Hannover is home to the largest exhibition center in the world, Hannover Fairgrounds, which extends across 24 halls, spanning more than 5 million square feet of exhibit space. A tram line connects the expansive convention complex to the city center and Hannover Airport, which offers non-stop service to more than 80 destinations. The city, which is the capital of Germany's Lower Saxony region, also scores high in safety — another plus for planners.

8 Orlando

The Florida city made the domestic list at #6 (see page 7).





9 Atlanta Georgia's capital city was #1 on the U.S. CCi (see page 6).



10 Birmingham, England

Once a manufacturing town, Birmingham has been transformed into a major meetings hub. The city, about 100 miles north of London, is home to the largest event space in the United Kingdom: the National Exhibition Centre, with nearly 2 million square feet of exhibit space. Four hotels surround the venue, including the 790-room Hilton Birmingham Metropole, 242-room Crowne Plaza Birmingham NEC, 224-room Moxy Birmingham NEC and the 182-room Genting Hotel. Access is easy, as Birmingham Airport is only four minutes away.

PHOTOGRAPHS: (ATLANTA) WASINPUMMARIN.COM; (BIRMINGHAM) 2015 CARSON LIU; (HANNOVER) MAPICS; (ORLANDO) ALEXEN_ZHUKOV@UKR.NET; ALL ADOBE STOCK



11 Barcelona, Spain

The country's second-largest city lands on the global list with 2.5 million square feet of exhibit space at the Fira de Barcelona Gran Via. The building, which was designed by Pritzker-prize-winning architect Toyo Ito, is known for its modern design and focus on sustainability. Nearly 26,000 solar panels line the roof of the exhibit halls. The venue offers green-meetings consulting services, carbon-footprint reporting and the opportunity to offset emissions. Barcelona is popular with attendees, with its world-class beaches, rich art history, unique architecture and delicious food.

Düsseldorf, Germany

This city in Western Germany scores high in safety and convenience. Düsseldorf International Airport, the third-largest in the country, serves 200 destinations in 55 countries. Travel time is just six minutes to Messe Düsseldorf, which spans 19 halls with a total of 2.8 million square feet of exhibit space. The facility recently refreshed two of its halls and the south entrance — all of which is part of a greater multimillion-dollar plan to modernize the venue by 2030.

12





Paris

The City of Lights is more than a world-favorite leisure destination. The French capital is home to two convention centers, offering nearly 5 million square feet of exhibit space combined. Paris Expo Porte de Versailles, not far from the Eiffel Tower, has 2.3 million square feet of exhibit space. At Paris Nord Villepinte, just outside Charles de Gaulle Airport, is another 2.6 million square feet. With about 11,000 direct flights per month, attendees won't have trouble getting here. Leaving behind Paris's 119 Michelin-star restaurants and 144 museums is much harder.

13

14 Madrid, Spain

Spain's capital leads all CCi destinations on the global list with the shortest travel time — just 3 minutes — from airport to convention facility, IFEMA Feria de Madrid. The center has 2.5 million square feet of exhibit space. Another draw for the destination is its well-priced room rates, averaging US$126.02 per night. With a dry climate and little rainfall, Madrid's weather is pleasant all year long. While in town, attendees can enjoy a soccer game at the Santiago Bernabéu Stadium or dine at Sobrino de Botín, the world's oldest restaurant.



PHOTOGRAPHS: (BARCELONA) MAPICS; (DÜSSELDORF) RUDOLF BALASKO; (MADRID) BASICZTO; (PARIS) MARI79; ALL ADOBE STOCK

15 New Orleans

made the domestic list at #11 (see page 9).





16

Dallas made the domestic list at #5 (see page 7).

17 Kunming, China

This scenic city in China's southern Yunnan province borders Dian Lake and is flanked by mountains. Kunming Changshui International Airport is the sixth-busiest in China, with more than 15,000 direct flights per month. The airport is only nine minutes from Kunming Dianchi International Convention and Exhibition Center, where planners have more than 3.2 million square feet of exhibit space at their disposal. A temperate climate and flowers that bloom all year long have earned Kunming its nickname as the "City of Eternal Spring."



18 Valencia, Spain

This destination on Spain's southeast coast is the third-largest in the country. Just under 2.5 million square feet of exhibit space is available at Feria Valencia, outside the city center and only four minutes from Valencia Airport. In off-hours, attendees can enjoy the city's 12 miles of beaches or wander through the historic center district, which is more than 2,000 years old. Valencia enjoys 300 days of sunshine a year and is the birthplace of paella — a must for your event's menu.



PHOTOGRAPHS: (DALLAS) KEVIN RUCK, (KUNMING) LEONID ANDRONOV; (NEW ORLEANS) KEVIN RUCK; (VALENCIA) JOYT; ALL ADOBE STOCK



19 Moscow

The colorful, dome-accented architecture that lines Moscow's streets make the city worth a visit in and of itself, but Russia's capital also offers two massive convention centers for large events. Expocentre, close to the heart of the city, has just over 1 million square feet of exhibit space. Further west, Crocus Expo has nearly 4 million square feet of additional exhibit space. The city's low hotel rates, averaging US$96.87 per night, and ample airlift, with more than 21,000 direct flights per month, add to its appeal. Moscow features an expansive metro system marked by ornately decorated stations — 44 of which have been listed as cultural heritage sites.

Poznań, Poland

This picturesque Polish city offers plenty of meetings space without the crowds found in sister cities Warsaw or Krakow. The Poznań International Fairgrounds is right in the center of town, with 1.18 million square feet of exhibit space. Nearby attractions include the Palmiarnia Poznańska botanical gardens and Old Market Square, which is lined with cobblestoned streets and numerous restaurants. With Poznań Airport less than 10 minutes away and a high safety level for travelers, this destination has a lot to offer for events.

20



Munich

This German city is used to handling large gatherings, as more than 6 million people flock to Munich each year for Oktoberfest. There's plenty of space for business events, too, and this destination ranks among the highest on the global list in terms of safety. Just 10 miles east of downtown is Messe München, a sprawling venue with 18 halls totaling more than 2 million square feet of exhibit space. Munich Airport is the second busiest in the nation, with nonstop service to 254 destinations in 75 countries. Among attractions are 40 art galleries and, of course, classic bar crawls.

21



(MOSCOW) TTSTUDIO; (MUNICH) RUDOLF BALASKO; (POZNAN) SERGEY DZYUBA; ALL ADOBE STOCK

22 Chicago

made the domestic list at #8 (see page 8).



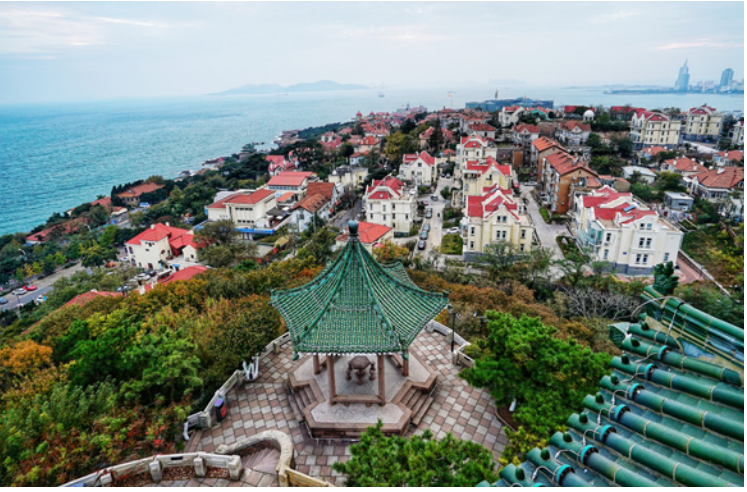


23 Chongqing, China

China's third-largest city draws conventions with 2.1 million square feet of exhibit space at Chongqing International Expo Center. The facility is on the banks of the Jialing River — one of two bodies of water that run through town. The other, the Yangtze River, is the longest in Asia and is best enjoyed via river cruise or cable car. To ease attendee arrivals, Chongqing Jiangbei International Airport provides nearly 15,000 direct flights per month. A fourth runway and an expansion of the third terminal are underway, scheduled to be completed by 2024.

24 Qingdao, China

This coastal city on the Yellow Sea has been nicknamed the "Switzerland of the Orient" for its red roofs, European-inspired architecture and lush greenery. Qingdao is a well-connected transit hub, with nearly 8,000 direct flights per month and a bustling port, allowing attendees to arrive by plane, train, bus or ship. Groups can gather on the waterfront at the China Hongdao International Convention Center, which offers 1.6 million square feet of exhibit space.





25 Dubai

Come for the conference and stay for the stunning desert landscape and towering skyscrapers — including the world's tallest building, the 2,716-foot-tall Burj Khalifa. The Dubai World Trade Center is close to downtown and features 1 million square of exhibit space; nearly 3,000 hotel rooms are within walking distance of the facility. Dubai International Airport is just eight minutes from downtown and welcomes more than 8,000 flights per month. During downtime, attendees can take advantage of the city's expansive beaches, or head into the desert for sandboarding and desert safari tours. ■

(CHICAGO) ABRICOTINE; (CHONGQING) ZHOU.YILU; (DUBAI) ASHRAF JANDALI; (QINGDAO) JONGCHEOL PARK/EYEEM; ALL ADOBE STOCK