NYC, Paris, London Reign Supreme: Travelers Finally Returning to Iconic Cities This Winter

November 3, 2021

Tripadvisor's 2021 Winter Travel Index reveals travel trends and destinations popping this season

NEEDHAM, Mass., Nov. 3, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- As the autumn season is sadly winding dawn, leaves are slowly beginning to fall, and all focus shifts to the holidays, Tripadvisor's new Winter Travel Index divulges where Americans are heading for the next season. The final installment of the Tripadvisor Travel Index for 2021, which is based on first party site data and consumer sentiment data, reveals that over half (55%) of Americans report that they are planning to travel this winter. This is up from 50% who traveled in this season in 2020, but still lags behind the 63% who hit the road in 2019.

Last-minute bookers: Notably, 24% of Americans are still undecided about winter travel. Only about a third (30%) have already booked their trip, but three-quarters (74%) of those who haven't yet are waiting until November or December to do so, so we may end up seeing significantly more travelers hit the road as the coldest season further approaches.

Although the vast majority (94%) of travelers will remain domestic, Americans are looking to broaden their horizons and experience new things this winter, as more than a third (37%) are planning to travel somewhere they haven't been before and over a third (42%) have booked a tour or activity.

Where to? New York City is back on top in the U.S. for the first time since the start of pandemic, as the #1 most popular destination and home to the #1 most-booked experience this winter. With the iconic Rockefeller Center and gorgeous holiday displays, it's no surprise this city is topping travelers' winter wish lists.

10 Most Popular Winter Destinations for Americans:

1. New York City, N.Y.
2. Orlando, Fla.
3. Las Vegas, Nev.
4. Key West, Fla.
5. Miami Beach, Fla.
6. Nashville, Tenn.
7. Chicago, Ill.
8. Anaheim, Calif.
9. Los Angeles, Calif.
10. Savannah, Ga.

Seaside destinations trending in Tripadvisor's Fall Travel Index (Myrtle Beach, Ocean City, Honolulu, Virginia Beach) are out, as more cities (Los Angeles, Savannah) popped back into the mix, as well as Anaheim, home to Disneyland, surging in popularity. Other changes from this fall include increased interest in traveling overseas, likely a response to the recent openings of many international borders to Americans. In fact, the majority of the fastest-growing destinations (greatest growth from fall to winter) are international, with the icons Paris, London, and Rome rounding out the top three.

Top 10 fastest growing destinations for Americans (from fall 2021 to winter 2021):

1. Paris, France
2. London, United Kingdom
3. Rome, Italy
4. Naples, Italy
5. Seven Mile Beach, Cayman Islands
6. Soufriere, St. Lucia
7. Freeport, Maine, United States
8. St. John's, Antigua
9. San Pedro, Belize
10. Tamarindo, Costa Rica

Holiday cheer: Half (49%) of Americans report feeling excited about holiday travel, more than any other country, 43% feel hopeful, and 42% feel optimistic. These trump negative emotions like stressed, nervous, cautious, which were the least common emotions reported.

After a year of missing loved ones, visiting them this season is a priority. The most common destination people want to visit is family and friends' houses (61%), followed by the city (39%) and the beach (37%). And, most are traveling with their immediate family (50%) or significant other (41%).

What else is trending this winter?

- The **most popular travel dates** for Americans heading off on winter trips are December 16, December 30, and November 24, respectively, just in time for Thanksgiving and Christmas.
- **Top hotel styles:** family and mid-range hotels.
- **Popular hotel amenities**: pool, free breakfast, all-inclusive, beach, and free cancellation.
- 67% of travelers booking a trip this winter have already started researching.
- **Money mindset:**
    - 77% of Americans say they are saving up for holiday travel.
    - The most important factor when choosing a destination this winter: travel cost (39%).
    - 32% will spend more than last year, 58% will spend the same amount.
    - Gift cards for retail or restaurants are the most popular gifts respondents want to give this year. But almost one-fifth (17%) want to give tickets for travel - the best gift there is!

Trending activities this season

Travelers are loving Cultural Tours, 4WD, ATV & Off-Road Tours, and Museum Tickets & Passes, as these are the top three types of experiences Americans are booking this winter. A mix of rich culture and active adventures, the most-booked experiences for the season range from an ATV waterfall tour in Hawaii to historical classics like the Grand Ole Opry and 9/11 Memorial.

Top 10 Most-Booked Experiences[1]:

1. New York in One Day Guided Sightseeing Tour - New York City, N.Y.
2. Night Manta Ray Adventure - Island of Hawaii, Hawaii
3. Kauai ATV Waterfall Tour - Kauai, Hawaii
4. Turtle Canyon Catamaran Snorkel Cruise - Oahu, Hawaii
5. Grand Canyon West Rim Bus Tour & Hoover Dam Photo Stop with optional Skywalk - Las Vegas, Nev.
6. 9/11 Memorial Museum Admission Ticket - New York City, N.Y.
7. Charleston's Old South Carriage Historic Horse & Carriage Tour - Charleston, S.C.
8. Key West Sunset Sail with Full Bar, Live Music & Hors D'oeuvres - Key West, Fla.
9. Full-Day Iconic Sights of LA, Hollywood, Beverly Hills, Beaches and More - Los Angeles, Calif.
10. Grand Ole Opry House Guided Backstage Tour in Nashville - Nashville, Tenn.

For those who prefer to take the road less traveled and avoid the most "popular" activities, Tripadvisor also rounded up the best activities to get in the winter spirit.

The Best Winter Activities

- Rocky Mountain National Park Tour - Winter In The Park - Estes Park Guided Tours - Estes Park, Colo.
- Dog Sledding and Mushing Experience - Fairbanks, Ala.
- Winter Yellowstone Tour (With Optional Hike or Snowshoe) - Gardiner, Mont.
- Guided Snowshoe Excursion - Park City, Utah
- Half Day Ice Climbing in Telluride - Telluride, Colo.

The Best Festive Experiences

- Dyker Heights Brooklyn Christmas Lights Tour - Brooklyn, N.Y
- Savannah Holiday Lights Trolley Tour - Savannah, Ga.
- 2-Hour Chicago Holiday Lights Segway Tour - Chicago, Ill.

- Holiday Lights Tour of San Francisco - San Francisco, Calif.
- New York City Cocoa and Carols Holiday Cruise - New York City, N.Y.

How do *frequent* travelers differ from *all* travelers?
Tripadvisor Plus is a new annual travel subscription for $99/year that helps members become better travelers by saving them money, so they can get more from their trips – more memories, more travel. Here's how Tripadvisor subscribers' - who typically travel more and longer - upcoming travel plans differ from all Tripadvisor users[2].

Rank	Most popular destinations	Most-booked hotels	Most-booked experiences
1.	New York City, N.Y.	Venetian Resort - Las Vegas, Nev.	Chicago Architecture River Cruise - Chicago, Ill.
2.	Las Vegas, Nev.	Barbary Beach House Key West - Key West, Fla.	Skip-the-Line Group Tour of the Vatican, Sistine Chapel & St. Peter's Basilica - Rome, Italy
3.	Cancun, Mexico	Freehand New York - New York City, N.Y.	Turtle Canyon Catamaran Snorkel Cruise - Oahu, Hawaii
4.	Honolulu, Hawaii	The Palazzo at the Venetian - Las Vegas, Nev.	Semi Private Standard | Santorini Catamaran Cruise with Greek buffet and Drinks - Santorini, Greece
5.	Chicago, Ill.	Hotel Xcaret Mexico - Riviera Maya, Mexico	Bateaux Parisiens Seine River Gourmet Dinner & Sightseeing Cruise - Paris, France
6.	Boston, Mass.	Outrigger Waikiki Beach Resort - Waikiki, Hawaii	Harvard University Campus Guided Walking Tour - Boston, Mass.
7.	Key West, Fla.	Havana Cabana at Key West - Key West, Fla.	Boston Duck Boat Sightseeing City Tour with Cruise Along Charles River - Boston, Mass.
8.	Cabo San Lucas, Mexico	Allegretto Vineyard Resort Paso Robles - Paso Robles, Calif.	Chief's Luau Admission - Oahu, Hawaii
9.	Paris, France	Akumal Bay Beach & Wellness Resort - Riviera Maya, Mexico	Eiffel Tower Skip the Line and Small Group Tour with Summit Access by elevator - Paris, France
10.	Miami Beach, Fla.	Sofitel Chicago Magnificent Mile - Chicago, Ill.	Colosseum Underground and Ancient Rome Semi-Private Tour - Rome, Italy

METHODOLOGY
The data cited in this release was gathered and analyzed from two key sources:

- A Tripadvisor Consumer Sentiment Survey, based on data drawn from an online survey of over 2,400 consumers, in partnership with Qualtrics, conducted between October 5, 2021 through October 14, 2021 across eight countries (United States, United Kingdom, Australia, Japan, Italy, Singapore, Germany, India).
- Site behavioral data sourced from first party traffic data on the Tripadvisor platform, gathered during the week commencing October 18, 2021, for searches made by U.S. travelers from September 1, 2021 through October 15, 2021 for travel between November, 2021 through January 31, 2022.

NOTES TO EDITOR

1. Most-booked experiences based on bookings on Tripadvisor made between September 1, 2021 - October 15, 2021 for travel between November 1, 2021 – January 31, 2022, limited to two per city, and three per state.
2. Most popular destinations, most booked hotels, and most booked experiences for Tripadvisor Plus subscribers based on bookings on Tripadvisor made between September 1, 2021 through October 15, 2021. Hotels and experiences limited to two per city.

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About Tripadvisor
Tripadvisor, the world's largest travel guidance platform*, helps hundreds of millions of people each month** become better travelers, from planning to booking to taking a trip. Travelers across the globe use the Tripadvisor site and app to discover where to stay, what to do and where to eat based on guidance from those who have been there before. With more than 934 million reviews and opinions of nearly 8 million businesses, travelers turn to Tripadvisor to find deals on accommodations, book experiences, reserve tables at delicious restaurants and discover great places nearby. As a travel guidance company available in 43 markets and 22 languages, Tripadvisor makes planning easy no matter the trip type.

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* Source: SimilarWeb, unique users de-duplicated monthly, June 2021
** Source: Tripadvisor internal log files

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