

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

One-of-a-kind experiences most attractive for affluent travelers: report

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TCS World Travel plane

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Affluent consumers have shown to be interested in the most convenient methods of travel so they can maximize the experiences had on their vacations, according to a new report from TCS World Travel.

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The private jet firm released the top travel trends that interest high-net-worth individuals, and ease of travel as well as one-of-a-kind experiences top the list. Consumers who are interested in luxury are looking for experiences to add to their repertoire and do not want to cut into this experience time with excessive travel pains; the easier the better.

"At its core, these findings reveal those with a high disposable income seek similar experiences as the average traveler, though have differentiating motivators and drivers such as travel efficiencies, exclusive access and one-of-a-kind, standout adventures that go beyond the destination that lead their decision making process when determining the way in which they travel and how they aim to experience their journeys," said Shelley Cline, president at [TCS World Travel](#).

Travel trends

High-net-worth individuals are interested in the comfort having all their travel paperwork and planning done as conveniently as possible. For instance, pre-arranged visas and planned out itineraries are tools that are very attractive to these travelers.



TCS World Travel Private Jet - Robb Report co-branded Boeing 757

Special amenities that continue easing mundane tasks throughout the trip are very impactful on high-net-worth travelers as well. Amenities such as private chefs and medical professionals, door-to-door luggage service and butler service can make a big difference for any type of trip.

These travelers are also interested in experiences and new destinations that not many others have experienced. South Africa, Southeast Asia, the Mediterranean, New Zealand and Australia are topping the list for destinations of interest in 2017, but the fastest growing are Cuba, Iran, Iceland, Antarctica and Mongolia.



Kempinski in Havana, Cuba

These "bucket-list" destinations are the most anticipated.

Destinations of high interest are also places that are likely to be on the verge of changing. For instance, Cuba is a top destination right now because since the U.S. travel ban has been lifted, it is likely growing tourism will change its atmosphere.

Other factors include climate change, endangered habitats and erosion.

Travel on the rise

Luxury travel bookings are seeing a hefty bounce back for 2017, with more than 81 percent of high-end travel agents claiming their bookings for this year were higher or on par with 2016, according to Travel Leaders Group.

The 2017 Luxury Travel Trends report showed that European river cruises are leading the way in terms of destinations from affluent consumers. Vacations to Italy and Cuba are also increasingly strong, which is mirrored by a common fear of the Trump presidency seeing to the embargo on Cuba being reinstated ([see more](#)).

Luxury hospitality brands are also likely to expand further into Asian markets now that the region's local consumer base has a stronger interest in Asia Pacific travel, according to Travelzoo.

About 70 percent of Chinese consumers for the study showed interest in traveling abroad at least two times a year. Hong Kong travelers that intend to take more than four trips within this year make up 30 percent of consumers ([see more](#)).

"In the past, we've seen high-net-worth travelers opting for a more traditional luxury, on-the-ground experience as opposed to an emerging destination or off-the-beaten-path experience," Ms. Cline said. "Yet, with our most recent findings, high-net-worth travelers are eager to explore places that are still relatively undiscovered and they want to do it before mass tourism arrives."

"This motivates them to choose itineraries or trips that feature emerging destinations like Mongolia or Cuba, and they're more likely to want to visit these places sooner rather than later, while they can still get an authentic experience," she said.

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