

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Where do travelers want to go next year? Australia, UK and Canada top wish list

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Caims Esplanade, Cairns City, Queensland. Image credit: Tourism Australia

By STAFF REPORTS

Australia, United Kingdom and Canada top travelers' global wish list for future travel, followed by Italy, Greece and Ireland, according to a new consumer travel trends survey commissioned by North American travel agency Travel Leaders Group.

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The top 10 list also included European and Caribbean cruising, with 95 percent of nearly 2,000 respondents surveyed in October and November planning to travel next year. More than half 52 percent plan on spending more money on travel in 2020 than they did this year.

"Australia is on everyone's bucket list, and a favorable exchange rate makes travel to the U.K. attractive, so we're not surprised to see these two destinations take the top spots on this year's consumer travel wish list," said Travel Leaders Group CEO Ninan Chacko in a statement.

"Canada is also becoming increasingly popular for adventure travel and its natural beauty," he said.

Based in New York, Travel Leaders Group has more than 6,000 company-owned, franchised and affiliated travel agencies throughout the United States, Canada, U.K., Mexico and other regions with 52,000 travel advisors worldwide.

All on the coast

The survey found that interest in cruising remains extremely strong. Cruising took three of the top 10 spots on the traveler wish list.

Top international destinations consumers are most interested in traveling to in 2020

1. Australia
2. United Kingdom (England, Scotland and Wales)
3. Canada

4. Italy
5. Greece
6. Ireland
7. European river cruises
8. Caribbean cruises
9. French Polynesia
10. Mediterranean cruises

Per the research, while consumers may dream of traveling to new places in the future, the actual top international destinations where they have already begun planning to travel to in 2020 are the Caribbean, Western Europe, Mexico, U.K. and/or Ireland, and tied at fifth place, Eastern Europe and Canada.

The top 10 traveler wish list for U.S. destinations has Hawaii, California and Alaska take the first, second and third spots, respectively, followed by Florida, Colorado, New York, Maine, Arizona, Montana and Washington D.C.

One by one

Solo trips too are growing in popularity.

"Travelers continue to express interest in solo trips," Mr. Chacko said in the statement.

"There are growing options offered by travel suppliers for individuals who enjoy traveling on their own," he said.

"We see more cruise companies offering single fares and more tour operators developing programs to entice solo travelers with special interests."

Per the study, the top five U.S. destinations that solo travelers are most interested in traveling to next year are Florida and California, both tied at No. 1, followed by Hawaii, New York, Alaska and Colorado.

Worldwide, the regions these solo travelers would like to travel next year are Canada, U.K., Australia, Italy and Greece.

In keeping with the preference toward experiential travel, these holidaymakers want authentic encounters in the destinations they visit. It boils down to food, culture, nature and active adventure.

Per the study, the top five most important elements when choosing a destination are cultural (65 percent), nature/outdoors (49 percent), beach/pool (40 percent), active adventure (38 percent) and culinary (34 percent).

Special sites/attractions (59 percent) are one of the most remembered elements of a vacation after spectacular scenery (80 percent), the survey found.

North Americans, in particular, are most likely to splurge on sightseeing/tours (74 percent), special meals at restaurants (51 percent) and luxury accommodations (35 percent).

"We see a strong correlation between a strong economy and low unemployment rates, with increased consumer interest in discovering a destination and a willingness to spend on immersive experiences and luxury accommodations," Mr. Chacko said.