

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Spring travel sees 29pc increase as consumers crave a break

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Destin, Florida is a top spring break destination among American travelers this month. Image credit: Vacasa

By NORA HOWE

With warmer weather and longer days on the horizon, many travelers are itching to break free of the winter slump and their day-to-day routines.

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According to vacation rental management company **Vacasa** 56 percent of U.S. consumers are planning a trip sometime this spring, with 37 percent planning travel during spring break. For those still working remotely, the likelihood of travel skyrockets to 86 percent as these individuals yearn for environments beyond the confines of their homes.

Spring break

This spring, 75 percent of American travelers are planning domestic trips and 23 percent are looking into staycations. With uncertainty still looming regarding the COVID-19 pandemic, only 18 percent are planning international trips.

Almost half of travelers, 43 percent, cite needing a change of scenery or company as the main reason for traveling, while 40 percent say they have been stuck at home for too long.

When it comes to what motivates people to travel, 32 percent say the destination, 28 percent say who they are traveling with and 45 percent say celebratory events, such as reunions or birthdays.

Thirty percent of travelers are booking vacation rentals for their upcoming spring trips, as opposed to hotels or resorts, due to financial savings, access to a kitchen and privacy. These are especially important for parents of small children, with 49 percent saying they are opting for vacation homes as their top lodging choice.



U.S. travelers are primarily staying domestic this spring but are headed to tropical locales such as Key West. Image credit: Vacasa

When it comes to trip duration, Vacasa found that travelers are opting for a greater number of small trips throughout the year, 34 percent, as opposed to one or two large vacations, 19 percent.

Of those planning to travel this spring, three-quarters say they plan to travel more frequently in 2022 than they did in 2021 likely a result of low COVID-19 case numbers and pent-up demand for experiences.

While safety concerns are still relevant, travelers are starting to gain confidence with their plans, as 50 percent said they would change their plans if there was a COVID-19 spike in the destination down from the 67 percent that said this last year.

This also varies demographically 68 percent of Gen Z travelers would change plans, while only 38 percent of baby boomers would if there was a spike.

One in five individuals is choosing not to travel this spring due to not wanting to risk being quarantined somewhere due to COVID-19 restrictions, while 35 percent stated they do not feel safe traveling due to the pandemic.

For those looking to break their winter doldrums, the beach seems to be most popular, with a few winter sports hubs in the mix.



For those still interested in wintersports, Park City, Utah is a popular spring break spot. Image credit: Vacasa

According to Vacasa's research, the most-searched destinations for March 2022 are Hilton Head, Destin, Gulf Shores, Key West, Park City and Breckenridge.

Elevating the luxury experience

As travelers look to book travel itineraries, they are also looking for more experiential activities and create valuable memories. Hospitality brands are pulling out all the stops.

Bespoke travel company Black Tomato fostered its love for literature through packages inspired by renowned mystery author Agatha Christie.

The company worked with Agatha Christie Limited and the author's great-grandson as the organization's official

travel partner in celebrating 100 years since the author's Grand Tour. To mark the anniversary, Black Tomato curated several journey packages to bring travelers along the beloved writer's footsteps through Africa, Australasia and more ([see story](#)).

Earlier this month, hospitality brand The Ritz-Carlton collaborated with television network Showtime to reimagine the concept of presidential suites.

To commemorate Showtime's new anthology series "The First Lady," select Ritz-Carlton properties will reconceptualize their presidential suites as "First Lady suites" this April. Overnight stays in the suites will be exclusively offered to Marriott Bonvoy members through the loyalty program's Moments platform.

Four Ritz-Carlton properties will feature First Lady suites inspired by the historic women, in addition to incorporating details such as actual set pieces and props, period costumes and specialty cocktails at its bars and restaurants ([see story](#)).

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