

Photos: U.S. Travelers Sunny on Summer Travel Prospects Nearly 90% Taking Summer Vacation, 27% Taking More Time than Last Year 36% Drink More Alcohol, 25% Eat More Junk Food on Summer Trips than at Home

TripAdvisor Lays Out America's Best Beaches

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TripAdvisor(R), the world's most popular and largest travel community, today announced the results of its annual summer travel survey of more than 1,800 U.S. respondents. Eighty-nine percent are planning a leisure trip this summer, nearly equal to one year ago. Among those taking summer getaways, 26 percent plan to take between seven to 10 days, 21 percent expect 11 to 14 days, and 18 percent are scheduling two to three weeks. Twenty-seven percent said they will take more vacation time this summer than last, while 56 percent intend to take the same amount.

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Serving it Up in the Summer

Thirty-six percent said they are more likely to drink more alcohol on summer vacation than while at home. Twenty-eight percent said they exercise less, while 25 percent said they eat more junk food. The top summer travel food indulgence for respondents was overwhelmingly ice cream, according to 44 percent and the favorite summer drink indulgence was margaritas at 18 percent.

Shutting Down and Tuning Out

When asked how their behavior changes while on summer vacation compared to at home, the large majority of U.S. respondents said they'll leave out their laptops and turn off their TVs.

Top 3 Behavioral Changes on Summer Vacation Compared to Home

1. Connect to internet less- 63%
2. Watch less television- 56%
3. Return fewer calls/emails- 52%

Top 3 Summer Travel Fashion Faux Pas

1. Wearing socks with sandals- 25%
2. Overly skimpy swimwear- 20%
3. Fanny pack- 14%

Summer Travel Gripes

The biggest summer travel gripe in general is overcrowded attractions, according to 24 percent of respondents. When asked about the most frustrating behavior by summer tourists, 57 percent identified out of control children. When asked specifically about the most annoying beach behavior, 27 percent said it's when people don't throw out their trash.

Beach Chair Hogs

Thirty-two percent of travelers said they often encounter travelers hogging beach chairs, and nine percent said they always encounter it. When asked how long they think it's fair for someone to reserve a beach chair if they are not around, 60 percent said no more than half an hour.

There's the Love

Twenty-five percent of respondents said they will be more romantic while on summer vacation than while at home. Twenty-six percent said they are friendlier to strangers when they are away on summer trips.

Summer Savings

While the great majority of respondents are planning trips this summer, they are finding ways to cut costs on vacation. When asked what they are likely to do to save money on their leisure summer travel this year, the top response, 36 percent, said they'll cut back on eating out and going out. Thirty-two percent said the top way they plan to save is visiting free attractions.

The Great Outdoors

Not surprisingly, the top attraction type U.S. respondents plan to visit this summer is the beach according to 58 percent, 41 percent will go to a museum, and 38 percent will head to a national park. The top outdoor activities for travelers are hiking (37 percent) biking/cycling (23 percent) and sailing/boating (20 percent.)

Memorial Day Travels

Eighteen percent of respondents said they plan to travel on Memorial Day weekend, down from 22 percent one year ago. Of those, 58 percent expect to drive and 36 percent to fly, nearly equal to last year.

Top 10 U.S. Beaches, According to Traveler Popularity on TripAdvisor.com

1. Fort De Soto Park, Tierra Verde, Florida - Beloved for its pure white sand and clear water, the park's North Beach is a wide, family-friendly stretch of beach that is both naturally beautiful and convenient, with picnic tables, grills, and bathrooms nearby.
2. Bahia Honda State Park and Beach, Big Pine Key, Florida - An exquisite spot for snorkeling, the park draws both those who want to experience gentle, lapping waves and soft sand, as well as those seeking the beauty of the park's flora and fauna.
3. St. Andrews State Park, Panama City, Florida - With abundant wildlife and more than a mile and a half of beach, the park invites visitors to enjoy the exquisite waters of the Gulf of Mexico in a variety of ways, from swimming to kayaking to snorkeling.
4. Hanauma Bay Nature Preserve, Oahu, Hawaii - With a focus on preserving the precious natural ecosystem of the area, the preserve is ideal for swimming and observing coral, fish, turtles, stingrays and other marine life.
5. Kailua Beach Park, Oahu, Hawaii - The beach's stunning scenery and turquoise water make it an unforgettable Hawaiian destination, and visitors can enjoy it while swimming, kayaking, or simply taking in the view from the soft sand.
6. La Jolla Cove, La Jolla, California - Known for its breathtaking beauty, the cove's small stretch of beach, and deep, clear water is perfect for swimming and sightseeing alike. Ideal picnicking nearby lets visitors continue to enjoy the views even after leaving the water.
7. Green Sand Beach, Hawi, Hawaii - Located on the southernmost point of the United States, the olive-colored sand alone is well worth the bumpy trek there, not to mention the extraordinary views and blue-green water of this legendary destination.
8. Tunnels Beach, Kauai, Hawaii - Travelers rave about the exquisite snorkeling, but even from ashore the beach is stunningly picturesque, with its aqua water meeting golden sands, surrounded by the lush, hilly greens of Kauai.
9. Honeymoon Island State Park, Dunedin, Florida - What sets this beach

apart is its undisturbed natural beauty. Not your typical "beachgoer's beach," it lets visitors interact with the scenic natural environment of the area, from swimming to seashells to sunsets.

10. Edisto Beach State Park, Edisto Island, South Carolina - This uncrowded beach draws visitors to its scenic shores, while the park itself is a perfect camping destination, with a bike trail that makes it easy to explore the quiet beauty of the area.

"Recession be damned, Americans are preparing to pack up the beach bags and boogie boards en masse this summer," said Michele Perry, vice president of global communications for TripAdvisor.

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