

TRAVEL FACTS AND STATISTICS

Travel Facts and Statistics

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NEW! The new **U.S. Travel Answer Sheet** is filled with facts and statistics about the travel industry and its impact on the U.S. economy. [Download](#) this one-page fact sheet about a leading American industry that's more than just fun.

Activities with the greatest level of interest among U.S. adults are, in order, visiting friends and relatives, sightseeing, beaches/waterfronts, visiting zoos/aquariums/science museums, national parks, visiting a state park, going on a cruise, theme parks, visiting a city and visiting a mountain area. Interest in the engaging in the activities varies by generation, household income, gender and most other demographic characteristics of leisure travelers. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Air is the secondary means of transportation used by leisure visitors who traveled for leisure purposes between August 2008 and July 2009. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Air travel: About 42 percent of U.S. adults reported traveling by air for leisure trips taken between August 2008 and July 2009. The percentage of air travelers increases to 48 percent among U.S. adults who traveled for business purposes in the past year. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Air travel hassles: A June 2008 study by the U.S. Travel Association revealed a deep frustration among air travelers that caused them to avoid an estimated 41 million trips over the past 12 months at a cost of more than \$26 billion to the U.S. economy. Air travelers expressed little optimism for positive change, with nearly 50 percent saying that the air travel system is not likely to improve in the near future. The effect of avoided trips cost airlines more than \$9 billion in revenue; hotels nearly \$6 billion and restaurants more than \$3 billion. Federal, state and local governments lost more than \$4 billion in tax revenue because of reduced spending by travelers. (Source: Air Travel Survey, 2008)

Auto is the primary means of transportation used by leisure visitors (76%) who traveled for leisure purposes between August 2008 and July 2009. The percentage of leisure visitors traveling by auto varies by income, generation and other demographic characteristics. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Business travel in the U.S. is responsible for \$246 billion in spending and 2.3 million American jobs; \$100 billion of this spending and 1 million American jobs are linked directly to meetings and events. For every dollar invested in business travel, businesses experience an average \$12.50 in increased

revenue and \$3.80 in new profits. A 10 percent increase in business travel spending would increase multi-factor productivity, leading to a U.S. GDP increase between 1.5 percent and 2.8 percent. (Source: [The Return on Investment of U.S. Business Travel](#))

Business travel in the U.S. remains flat compared to the same period last year with only one-in-five U.S. adults still expecting to take business trips in the next six months. However, the number of business trips expected to be taken in the next 6 months has increased slightly to 3.9. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Canada and Mexico travelers represented over 56% of all international visitors to the U.S. in 2008. In 2008, 18.9 million Canadians and 13.7 million Mexicans visited the U.S., and combined they spent more than \$22 billion on travel in the U.S. (Source: IVIS)

China has been a fast-growing market of international travelers to the U.S. since the United States and China signed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2007 that opened the doors for promotion of travel to the entire U.S. In 2008, almost 500,000 thousand Chinese traveled to the U.S., staying on average 23 nights and spending \$7,200 per visit. Total spending by Chinese travelers in the U.S. was \$3.5 billion in 2008. By 2013, visitation from China to the U.S. is expected to grow 61% over 2008 arrivals — rising from 493,000 in 2008 to a forecasted 795,000 in 2013. (Source: IVIS China Summary, Office of Travel and Tourism Industries)

Environmental issues impact travel decisions. With over 79% of U.S. adults considering themselves environmentally-conscious and increasingly aware of terms such as carbon footprint and global warming, travelers are beginning to make decisions based on sustainability criteria. However, while environmental responsibility is one of the prime factors influencing the selection of travel companies, American travelers continue to lack the willingness to pay extra to support environmentally-friendly travel providers. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Family travelers, those traveling with either children or grandchildren, make up 30% of U.S. adult leisure travelers. Grandparents traveling with grandchildren represent 7% of U.S. adult leisure travelers. Family travelers take an average of 4.5 trips each year. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Gen X (those born from 1965 through 1980) makes up 31 percent of all leisure travelers and 36 percent of all business travelers. Gen Xers take an average of 3.5 leisure trips and 6.9 business trips per year.

Gen Y (those born after 1980) makes up 12 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers and those traveling in this group take an average of 3.9 leisure trips per year. Gen Yers also represent 13 percent of all business travelers and take an average of 4.2 business trips per year.

The Hispanic/Latino population in the U.S. is expected to reach 47.8 million by 2010 or 16 percent of the total population. By 2050, the Hispanic/Latino population is projected to total 102.6 million, comprising 24 percent of the U.S. population. In 2007, there were an estimated 16.2 million Hispanic adult leisure travelers who took a combined 50.4 million domestic and outbound trips and spent \$58.7 billion on their travels. (Source: Profile of Hispanic/Latino Leisure Travelers, 2008 Edition)

International travel to the United States is one of the nation's leading exports. In 2008, 58 million international travelers visited the U.S., up 4% from 2007. Total spending (excluding passenger fares) from all international visitors in the U.S. was \$110.4 billion in 2008, an increase of 14% over 2007. In 2008, the top five overseas markets for travelers to the U.S. were the U.K. with 4.5 million arrivals, Japan with 3.2 million arrivals and Germany with 1.8 million arrivals, France with 1.2 million arrivals, and Italy with 780 thousand arrivals. Unfortunately, although international travel has boomed over the past several years, with 48 million more overseas trips taken in 2008 than in 2000, America actually lost visitors, welcoming 633,000 fewer overseas travelers in 2008. If the United States had simply kept pace with global travel trends, 58 million more overseas travelers would have visited the United States between 2000 and 2008 – and would have generated an estimated 245,000 new U.S. jobs in 2008 alone. (Source: IVIS, www.poweroftravel.org)

The Internet was used by approximately 90 million American adults to plan travel during the past year with 76 percent of online travelers planning leisure trips online. Most online travel planners are somewhat or extremely satisfied with their experiences in using the Internet to plan their trips. Importantly, most see the Internet as a very useful or essential tool for planning many/most aspects of a trip including where to stay overnight, planning travel routes, potential places to visit, attractions to visit, as well as learning about what to do. The primary tools for travel planning are online travel agency websites, search engines, company websites and destination websites. Airline tickets, overnight lodging accommodations and car rentals are the dominant travel products and services purchased online by travel planners. (Source: Travelers' Use of the Internet, 2009)

Mature travelers (those born before 1946) represent 21 percent of all leisure travelers and those who travel in this group take an average of 4.1 leisure trips each year. The Mature Group also comprises 14 percent of business travelers. Mature business travelers take an average of 6.7 business trips each year.

Older boomers (those born from 1946 through 1954) make up 15 percent of leisure travelers and take an average of 4.4 leisure trips each year. Older Boomers also represent 16 percent of all business travelers and these travelers take an average of 10.1 business trips each year.

Online travel planners have increased many facets of trip planning including the number of information sources used for planning, the number of places considered during the planning process and the number of places actually visited. The Internet has also led to decreases in the extent to which travelers make calls, especially to a travel agency or airline, state and local tourism office, car rental agency, or hotel. (Source: Travelers' Use of the Internet, 2009)

Pets make great travel companions. Over 49 percent of U.S. adult leisure travelers consider their pet to be part of the family and 18 percent of U.S. adult leisure travelers usually take their pets with them when they travel. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Solo travelers, those who travel alone with no companions, comprise 11% of all U.S. adult leisure travelers. Solo travelers take slightly fewer trips per year (4.3) than those who travel with other adults (4.8). (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Travel planning sources: The most widely-used information source to plan leisure trips is the Internet followed by online travel agencies, branded suppliers, and other websites. One-in four of adult leisure travelers also obtain information from friends, relatives, neighbors, and/or co-workers. Guide books were the fifth most popular source, being used by 15 percent of all leisure travelers. (Source: [travelhorizons™, July 2009](#))

Young boomers (those born from 1955 through 1964) represent 21 percent of all U.S. leisure travelers and 22 percent of business travelers. Young Boomers also take an average of 4.1 leisure trips and 5.6 business trips per year.

<http://www.ustravel.org/news/press-kit/travel-facts-and-statistics>