The GOAT mindset: Expedia reveals 2022's biggest travel trend

Travelers want their next vacation to be their Greatest of All Trips (GOAT), and are in pursuit of transformative and meaningful travel experiences

SEATTLE, Nov. 30, 2021 /PRNewswire/ -- Today, Expedia® releases its 2022 Travel Trends Report revealing that travelers are shaking up the status quo with new priorities next year. Top findings from the report, which leverages Expedia data and a global research study, revealed that more than two-thirds of Americans (68%) are planning to go big on their next trip and that many are eyeing international destinations like Rome, Bali, London and Paris in 2022. Expedia is calling this new "no-regrets" style of travel the "GOAT" (Greatest of All Trips) mindset.

Expedia's research, which polled 12,000 travelers across 12 countries, uncovered that U.S. travelers are embracing the GOAT mindset by seeking out excitement/exhilaration (41%) and the feeling that they have made the most out of their trip (40%). The study also found that travelers are more willing than ever before to splurge on their future travels (40%).

Christie Hudson, Senior PR Manager for brand Expedia, comments: "Travel is no longer just about 'going somewhere.' Coming out of such a long period of constraints and limitations, 2022 will be the year we wring every bit of richness and meaning out of our experiences. Whether it's going somewhere new, being more spontaneous or treating yourself, it's clear that a new wave of excitement is bubbling as travelers chase travel greatness to get their GOAT."

EXPEDIA'S 2022 GOAT TRAVEL TRENDS, UNPACKED:

Where U.S. Travelers Are Heading in 2022:
Domestic travel, particularly to warm-weather beach destinations, remains a top choice for Americans, with 59% of U.S. survey respondents planning domestic-only trips for 2022. However, a significant portion (37%) are planning both domestic and international vacations in the coming year. These are the top-searched spots on U.S. travelers' lists:

- **Domestic**: Orlando, Destin, Gatlinburg – Pigeon Forge, Panama City and Maui
- **International**: Riviera Maya/Playa del Carmen/Tulum, Rome, Bali, London and Paris

Scrapping the Schedule
The pandemic made it difficult to travel or do anything on a whim, with 37% of U.S. travelers admitting to being less spontaneous since the onset of COVID-19. While travel advisories and guidelines will persist for the foreseeable future, travelers nonetheless are planning to embrace the impromptu and let loose on their future trips. In fact, a quarter (25%) of respondents are willing to be more spontaneous and live in the moment and another 26% are aiming to be more flexible and go-with-the-flow this time around.

- **How to get your GOAT**: For travelers wanting to be more spontaneous, be on the lookout for [last-minute deals](#) and use the "free cancellation" filter on the Expedia app to find flexible rates.

The Splurge-cation
After cancelled trips and postponed celebrations, travelers are ready to make up for lost time and go big to put themselves first and get the GOAT they deserve. Over the next year, 40% of U.S. travelers are more
willing to treat themselves and spend money on their next trip. From indulging in luxurious experiences (15%), to upgrading on rooms or flights (16%) to visiting a bucket-list destination (32%), 2022 will be all about splurging on the things that make a trip go from good to great. The study also revealed that travelers between the ages of 18 and 34 are the most likely to go big (80% compared to 56% of travelers over the age of 50), while Gen-X travelers are the most likely to splurge on a high-end restaurant (18% compared to 16% overall).

- **How to get your GOAT:** Get treated like a VIP by staying at Expedia VIP Access properties, top-rated hotels that offer member perks like spa credits, late check-out and more. And for those looking to treat themselves to luxe flying, now is the best time to upgrade. According to data from Airlines Reporting Corporation (ARC), average premium economy ticket prices in 2021 were around 290% more expensive than economy tickets, whereas pre-pandemic, in 2019 they were a whopping 430% more expensive than economy.

**Immerse to Discover**

Going big doesn't just mean taking a bucket-list trip. In the coming year, American travelers are going after their GOAT by stepping outside their comfort zone (22%) and immersing themselves in a destination, culture, and experiences completely different to their own (19%).

From trying food they've never eaten before (40%) and experimenting with local delicacies (31%), to attending a local music event (14%) and seeking out off-the-beaten track experiences and destinations (23%), U.S. travelers have a renewed curiosity to learn and experience the world.

- **How to get your GOAT:** Expedia's handy "Interest" filters will help narrow activity and experiences searches. Try filtering by history and culture, or food and drink to indulge in a food tour to get the very best the destination has to offer.

**Sensation Seeking**

In 2022, travelers aren't just craving new tastes and places, they're also yearning for the feeling of being excited and exhilarated once again (41%); with 11% willing to try daring or high adrenaline activities and experiences and 24% looking to have an unforgettable night out.

Additionally, when it comes to their next trip, one-fifth (21%) of travelers are most excited about doing things they would usually never do, including sleeping under the stars (19%), travelling alone (17%) skinny-dipping (11%) or having a vacation romance (10%).

- **How to get your GOAT:** Whether it's sky diving in Dubai or deep-sea diving in Oahu, Americans are ready to feel wind in their hair again and the rush of exploring the unknown. Use Expedia's "Adventure & Outdoor" filter to narrow down experiences that will get the blood rushing and adrenaline pumping.

**Unfiltered Enjoyment**

A successful trip is no longer defined by likes on social media; rather devices are out, and traveler priorities are shifting to place a greater focus on staying present and mindful. More than a third (36%) of U.S. travelers are searching for a sense of contentment and mental wellbeing on their next trip, and nearly a quarter (24%) plan to spend less time on their devices to be more present.

In fact, the trip experience Americans are looking forward to most is the chance to relax and do nothing (38%). To reach this sense of contentment, more than a quarter of travelers (27%) also aim to spend more time in their destination to ensure they fully experience all it has to offer. Travel in 2022 will be about quality, not quantity, where travelers are embracing the simple pleasures to truly achieve their GOAT with more meaningful impact.
How to get your GOAT: Whether it's relaxing at a Mexico spa retreat, or staying at the Tierra Patagonia Hotel & Spa in Chile with zero reception or Wi-Fi, it's the perfect time to discover unplugged getaways that are sure to recharge the batteries.

It's important to stay up to date with the latest government and travel advisories. For the latest information visit Expedia's COVID-19 Travel Guide.

1 This study was conducted on behalf of Expedia by Northstar Research Partners, a global strategic research firm. The survey was conducted online from August 27th–September 6, 2021, across North and South America, Europe, and Asia-Pacific using an amalgamated group of best-in-class panels. The study was conducted among 12,000 respondents across 12 countries, amongst adults who are planning domestic or international travel in the next 18 months.


3 Information is based on average premium and economy round-trip ticket prices for January through August for 2021 & for January through December 2020 and 2019, sourced from ARC's global airline sales database for 2021.

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