

The year of price-driven decisions



Skyscanner's Travel Trends report is our annual take on where we see industry and consumer behaviours shaping the new trends. The study takes into account Skyscanner's proprietary search and booking data coupled with our annual consumer behaviour study to create this set of trends.

What we're seeing is that **price-driven travel will clearly be the main priority for 2023** and as a result a selection of Skyscanner's 2023 trends focus on finding ways to still get that all important break away from the rigours of day-to-day life – whether it's checking out an emerging destination that offers great value, making work work for you or trending activities that won't break the bank

As consumers today look to make better, informed decisions about their discretionary spend, our recent polling revealed: 41% of consumers are planning the same number of holidays in 2023 as 2022, **and 1 in 3 are thinking of even going on more trips next year.** Just 7% are planning to holiday less next year.

What's more, UK travellers are still planning to spend next year, with 70% sharing that they plan to spend the same if not more on travel abroad in 2023 – whilst only 8% are planning to spend less.

The conclusion? Post covid restrictions, holidaymakers continue to prioritise adventures abroad and embrace travel freedoms with relish.

Conversely, travellers are also looking to make their money go further in 2023 and rising prices of everyday items are impacting our buying decisions. 1 in 3 respondents shared that rising costs will also impact their travel booking decisions, citing spend on hotels and whilst in-destination as the top joint aspects where they'll look to save. For those who don't see it impacting their plans, the resounding reason cited is that they have decided to prioritise holidays next year over other big-ticket items (41%).

With consumers increasingly shopping around to get the best price, metasearch platforms like Skyscanner have never been more valuable. Making travellers' well-earned money work harder for them is top of our agenda so we advise taking onboard all our travel hacks to bag a bargain: being open-minded to the destination and dates will often reward travellers with the cheapest getaways.

Naomi Hahn
VP of Strategy



Skyscanner's 2023 hot list

The likes of Barcelona, New York and Paris will never fail to be incredibly popular travel destinations. But travellers are increasingly on the hunt for less popular places that offer undiscovered experiences. In fact, Skyscanner's Search Everywhere feature – that allows travellers to search by price rather than destination, regularly sees 'Everywhere' feature in the top searches post-pandemic, as more and more travellers are switched onto the idea that being flexible on where they go both unlocks better prices and great experiences. And the key is getting in early – an inside secret this year could be the talk of the town the next.

Our recent polling found that **1 in 2 travellers are planning short-haul flights next year**, and with trips to Asia back on the cards as the region welcomes back international travellers, 23% are planning far-flung adventures – we see this reflected in our data with 10 of the top 20 emerging destinations being long-haul.

As for trip types: Beach trips reign with UK travellers (38%) followed by city breaks (37%), and trips to visit/reunite with family and friends being planned by a third (33%).

Emerging destinations from the UK for families and couples include*:

Family hot list:

Jacksonville, USA
(570% increase in searches)

Izmir, Turkey
(168% increase in searches)

Madeira, Portugal
(123% increase in searches)

Couples hot list:

Minneapolis, USA
(409% increase in searches)

Preveza, Greece
(316% increase in searches)

Santiago de Compostela, Spain
(289% increase in searches)



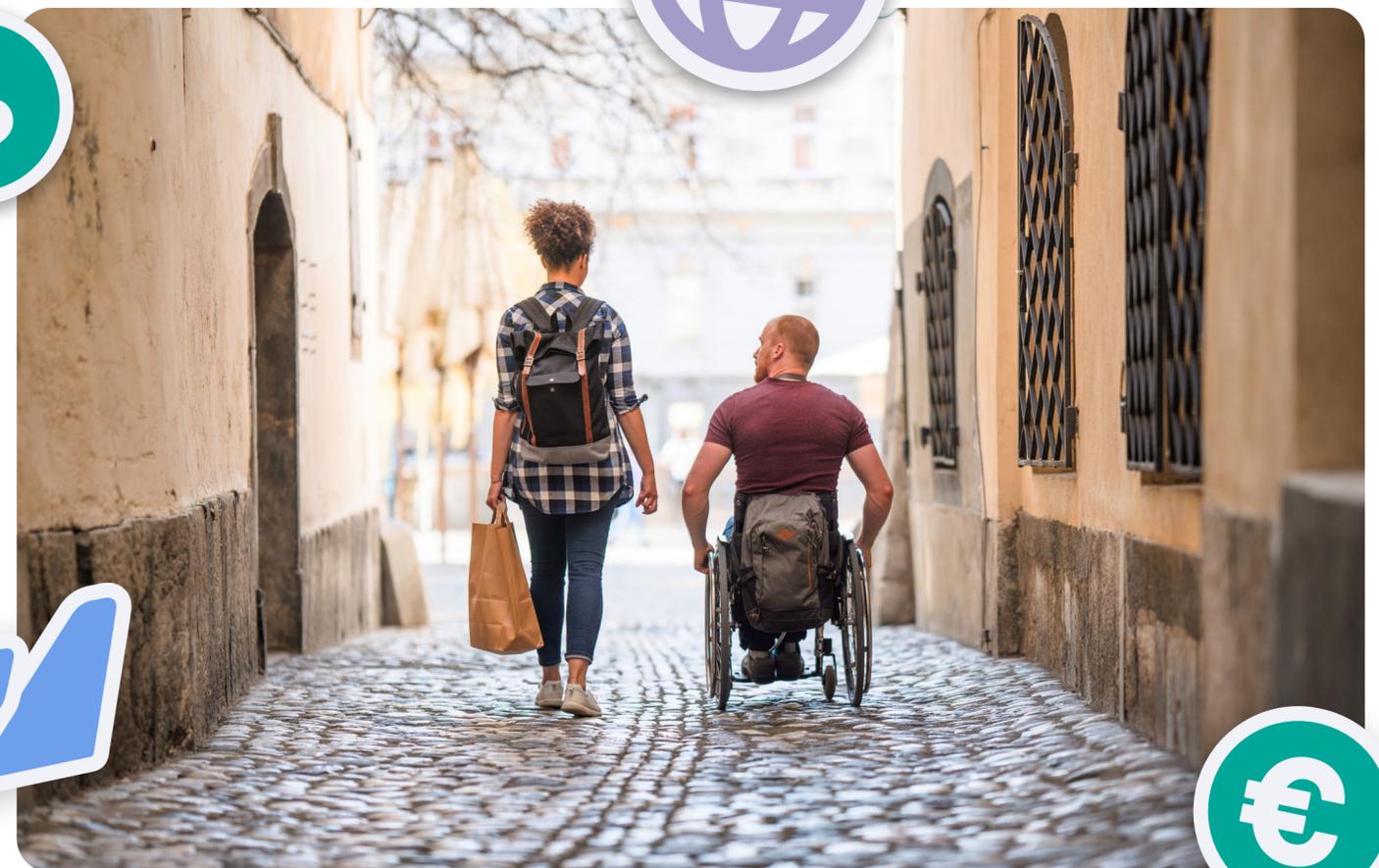
Make work work for you (and your wallet) in 2023

The working population are making the digital nomad trend we've seen emerge over the last few years permanent. In fact, **1 in 6 plan to work whilst on holiday next year**, a strategic move for which the top reasons are 'it means I get more time in destination' (55%) and 'it works out cheaper by flying at quieter times' (51%).

Expect travellers to take advantage of the long list of countries that launched digital nomad visas this year including Barbados, Croatia, Greece, Mexico and Spain to name a few. Earning while travelling creates opportunities for globe-trotting, multi-trips and extended breaks, more people are taking remote working to the next level.

Here's how some digital nomad visa cities fair against London's cost of living index**:

City with Digital Nomad visa	% cheaper than London's cost of living index	Cheapest month to visit
Mexico City, Mexico	41	May
Zagreb, Croatia	33	December
Madrid, Spain	27	November



Going away will stay, but what we spend on will shift

There is no question that price has always driven traveller decision making but 2023 will see a shift in the way that consumers think about value. Following the strain pandemic cancellations placed on traveller trust in airlines, we are seeing a new bar for expectations from travellers. Travellers are increasingly demanding greater ticket transparency, as well as taking control of the value in their airfares, unbundling of price to build packaged airfares that suit their needs. Enabling travellers' agency and greater control over value calculations is opening up new ways to think about value:

1. The importance (or lack thereof) of in-flight meals, entertainment
2. Seating value
3. Baggage – location, volume and speed

Skyscanner data from a sample of airlines shows that travellers are increasingly willing to pay to upgrade, evidenced by a 250% growth in seat selection (2022 vs 2019). Similarly, we have seen a doubling in the number of those paying for checked baggage***.

So, buying travel is no longer just about the cheapest fares. While most travellers will always want to keep the costs down, people are looking for value – based on their individual needs – and in some cases are happy to pay for additional extras. Access to individual price tailoring is becoming increasingly expected by travellers, so price transparency is imperative for the future of travel for all.

In addition, for those looking for the best value destinations, Skyscanner has run the numbers based on millions of bookings to reveal the destinations that have seen the biggest price drops this year vs 2019 from the UK:

1. Madeira, Portugal – **22% price drop**
2. Sofia, Bulgaria – **18% price drop**
3. Brussels, Belgium – **13% price drop**



Social media has already decided your next trip

3 out of 4 UK travellers now use a mobile device to plan or book their next trip, with the most popular locations for doing so on the go being:

1. At work
2. At a pub, bar or restaurant
3. Whilst on another holiday

When planning a break, our recent survey showed that 1 in 2 people said social media influences where they go next. Our results also showed a clear divide by age, with those aged 45 and over saying they are much less influenced by social media platforms, whereas those below this age are more inclined to seek inspiration from them. Instagram came top in the UK, followed by Facebook, for being the platform of choice, with 48% of us saying we're more likely to book a trip if we've seen it through the app.

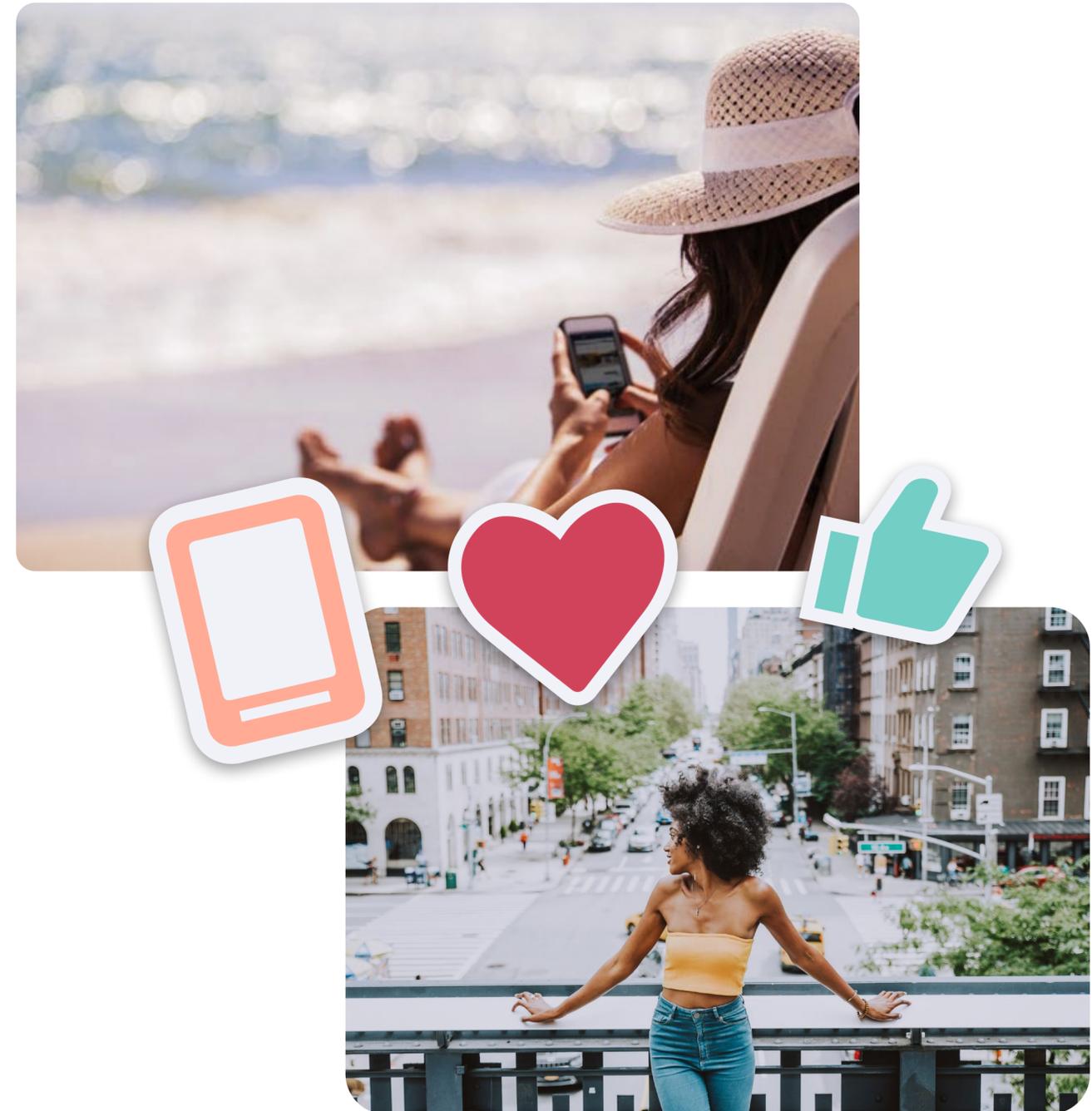
So, what guides us? In the UK, over half of us are inspired by celebrities, followed by social media influencers and then friends and family. But businesses rank much lower with only 23% of us saying they guide our thumbs.

Some of the most shared city destinations according to Instagram globally include:

1. Rio De Janeiro, Brazil
2. Paris, France
3. London, United Kingdom

And for those wanting to get ahead of the game, Skyscanner can reveal the top three emerging destinations that have started to see an increase in searches, but are not yet the darlings of Instagram****:

1. Mexico City, Mexico
(591% increase in searches)
2. Zagreb, Croatia
(344% increase in searches)
3. Amman, Jordan
(195% increase in searches)



Swap Sunbathing for Forest Bathing in 2023

As environmental concerns continue to grow in prominence, more than 1 in 4 (28%) global respondents said travel related sustainability is more important to them now compared to pre-pandemic with it holding the same level of importance for over half (53%)****.

Wildlife spotting and hiking are in the top three travel activities planned for holidays in 2023, suggesting the pandemic's emphasis on getting outside for walks and connecting with the local environment is now transferring as a key component of travel plans. All of which can be accessed from a low-cost price point, starting out at a pair of binoculars, trainers and visit to a city park or countryside whilst on holiday.

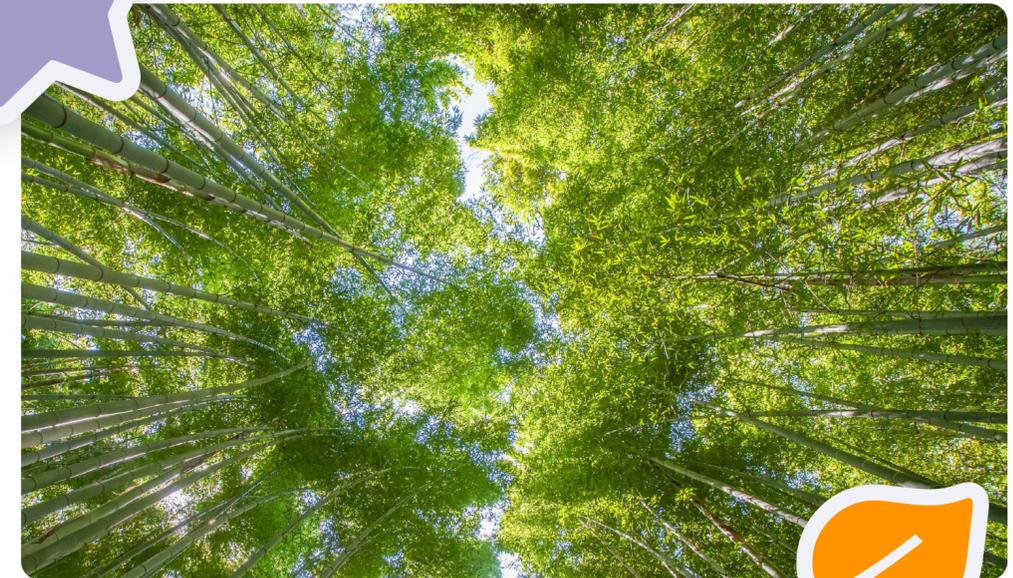
Interacting with the environment and watching animals has mood boosting properties. It is about switching off from technology and slowing down from the rigours of life. Getting amongst green nature and experiencing the meditative effects of Shinrin-yoku, a new wellness trend that literally means 'forest bathing'.

The data also reveals Millennials come top in wanting to embrace nature's wet & wild side for their 2023 travels. A series of 'aqua adventures' are the primary must haves for 25-44yr old respondents (of which Millennials are the predominant demographic), stating their top three activities to be wild swimming, stand up paddle-boarding or swimming with sharks.

Australia is rich in opportunities for aqua adventures, we recommend Lake Barrine (Queensland) formed over 17,000 years ago in the crater of an erupted volcano or Wineglass Bay, Tasmania, with pink ink granite peaks and lapping turquoise waters surrounding its clam shaped shoreline. Port Lincoln in South Australia is the place to book Great White shark cage diving.

Pacific Beach in San Diego, USA is a hot spot for many breeds of shark or head in-land to Lake Tahoe, the second deepest lake within the US. Further north British Columbia in Canada has a plethora of watery options, one outstanding spot being Seton Lake.

European and Middle East aqua adventurers can look to Egypt's Red Sea resorts for their shark encounters. Slovenia's alpine Lake Bohinj region provides stunning vistas and refreshing dips, whilst the turquoise green waters of Lake Walchen, Germany are not to be missed.



Relationship status? In love with travel

Solo travelling is no longer a niche sector, one in four travellers (29%) are considering escaping solo next year, with 52% choosing to go their own way as family and friends don't share their travel interests.

Taking time for themselves is top of mind, with 51% of travellers from the UK citing a solo travel trip being important for their mental health wellness, with one week deemed the perfect duration to help the mind unwind.

Singles (57%) and Divorcees (59%) ranked amongst the highest in their readiness to embark on a solo holiday in 2023 and look set to form a new trend of travellers who are 'solo and self-focused'.

This cohort has holiday fun firmly top of mind and appear to get work priorities wrapped up before departure, with only 5% of divorces or singletons planning to do any work on holiday. This is in stark contrast to the 40% of travellers married or in a relationship, who are intending to break away from their partners whilst on holiday for work-related matters.

Divorcees are beach-bound (39%) for their solo 'me time', with singletons placing city breaks (25%) their top target. Trips don't have to remain solo for long however, as the past few years have seen an increasing number of friendship apps launched and platonic versions of dating apps growing in users. For example, the women-first dating and social networking app, Bumble has more than 42 million global users. Since 2021, almost 15% of total Bumble users use BFF, its friendship-only offering.

Using this and other apps such as Meetup and Friender, solo travelers can plan ahead to hook up with new travel friends and companions. More romantic travelers could also look to dating apps, which include specific holiday features like [Bumble's Travel Mode](#), allowing individuals to change their location before or during a trip to help switch holiday 'me time' into 'back to mine'.



Beyond 2023...

Whilst price is top of the agenda in the immediacy, the research also looked at what people feel the distant future of travel will look like. How will we look at flying in five years' time? In fifty years? One thing is certain: our travel experiences are set to be out of this world.

Supersonic set to re-define short haul

Supersonic flights are set for a comeback. American Airlines has placed an order for 20 new supersonic airliners plus new airlines like Boom Supersonic, with its focus on sustainable manufacturing and fuel strategies, are expected to reintroduce a new form of supersonic flight by the end of the decade.

The emergence of sustainable fuel for the aviation sector will be a priority. Flying must become more environmentally friendly, faster. That's one of the reasons Skyscanner was the co-founder partner of the Board Now programme with SkyNRG, to make sustainable air fuel options viable and accessible for a greater proportion of travellers.

Supersonic flight has the potential to become a big travel disrupter, halving flight times and opening up new destinations. It is tipped

to become a travel experience for the masses, with 28% of travellers believing it will be a mainstream flight option in the future.

Looking five years ahead to Concorde's 25th Anniversary in 2028, imagine if supersonic flights re-define short-haul travel, making far flung destinations a weekend experience. If this were to become reality, the research reveals travellers are most excited about supersonic trips to New York City (23%) or witnessing the awesome natural power of Niagara Falls in NY State (21%), all accessible with anticipated London to NYC flight times of 3 hours.

What's more, supersonic flights will enable popular long-haul destinations like Australasia to become visited more regularly, as vastly reduced travel times make the routes more attractive, especially to families.



1 in 4 plan to travel amongst the stars in their lifetime

2053 will mark 150 years since the Wright Brothers' first airplane flight. A lot has changed since then, and travellers are expecting significant developments to be mainstream when hitting that milestone in 30 years' time.

1 in 4 people (25%) expect to regularly holiday amongst the stars, climbing aboard space craft for Earth sight-seeing day trips to the edge of space and longer trips beyond, with 21% of Millennials additionally expecting holidays to other planets such as Mars.

Conversely there is a strong belief that we will be able to holiday without any actual travel, as 26% believe virtual reality holidays are set to become mainstream travel options, with experiences so rich in content they are indistinguishable from real life.

Although VR is not expected to replace real holidays, 'travel trip and chill' could become the future's ultimate night in at home.





It is clear that we're hungrier than ever to discover something new – even though we might have less in our pockets next year. The aftermath of a pandemic has made travellers look for ways to make up for lost time and create new experiences and memories.

We want the holiday not to stop on a Monday morning, but to work where we could holiday. We're craving experiences grounded in nature and well-being.

A way to reset and feel normal again.

For travel in 2023, there's a lot we want to do differently, so, what will you do?

First stop, visit Skyscanner for the best deal in 2023

* Cities that have seen an increase in searches on Skyscanner.net from the UK between 2019 and 2022

** numbeo.com

***Skyscanner Horizons report

****Skyscanner searches data cross referenced with the lowest user generated hash-tags from Instagram

***** Sustainable travel research commissioned by Skyscanner and independently conducted by YouGov. Sample of over 7484 global respondents (national representative aged +18) across 5 countries; UK, USA, Australia, Germany, UAE. The survey was run online via YouGov platform in October 2022

OnePoll survey, UK 2,000 respondents in November 2022

