



Top Topics 2026

TRAVEL INSIGHTS



Top Topics 2026: Travel

As travelers balance practical responsibilities with a longing for escape, they are seeking trips designed to restore. Kid-inspired planning is rising while adults are seeking book-immersed getaways. People are using travel as a matchmaker for meaningful connections, and as a gateway to looking and feeling like their best selves — whether through beauty travel or grounded pastoral getaways. Travel brands that rise to the moment by speaking to these travel desires will help visitors return refreshed and dreaming of their next trip.





Top Topics 2026: Travel

1. Childlike Trips
2. Storybook Vacations
3. Connecting Flights
4. Grounding Getaways
5. Beauty Pursuits



Childlike Trips

As the craving for play rises across all ages, people are acknowledging travel as the perfect playground. Kids' influence on travel decisions is growing, and adults' openness to child-like activities is following suit.

84%

of travelers plan to seek out opportunities for the entire family to play together in 2026.

- Hilton

84%

of parents try to take inspiration from their kids' imagination when setting up a vacation.

- Talker Research with Visit Anaheim in The New York Post



73%

In 2026, nearly three-quarters (73%) of those who travel with children or grandchildren expect to actively encourage them to play a role in vacation planning.

- Hilton

90%

of respondents say their children currently participate in planning family vacations, from at least choosing one activity to providing major input on the destination and activities.

- NYU and Family Travel Association



Peoria, IL is hosting 'Future Play in Peoria' in 2026 - a citywide festival with an esports competition, retro arcade lounge, creator studio and live music.

- Sports Travel Magazine

The most important kid-centered trip features are unique once-in-a-lifetime experiences (77%) and opportunities for physical activities and adventure (73%).

- NYU and Family Travel Association



Storybook Vacations

Like a novel that refuses to be set down, travelers can't get enough of book-centric vacations. Whether taking a retreat specifically to read or selecting a destination inspired by a favorite piece of literature, travelers are looking for travel brands that can help give them their storybook experience.

Literary tourism is predicted to grow to \$3.3 billion by 2034.
- Future Market Insights



53%

of U.S. travelers expressed interest in a reading retreat, up to **67%** among Millennials.
- Morning Consult data via Hilton

↑ 285%

Mentions of reading-related terms in Vrbo guest reviews has surged **285%** year-over-year, and searches for "book retreats" and "book club retreat ideas" are up **100%** and **275%**, respectively, on Pinterest.
- Vrbo



33% + 21% + 14%

The top literary travel experiences people would consider in the future are visiting a destination mentioned in a book (**33%**), staying in a book-themed accommodation (**21%**), and going on a writing or reading retreat (**14%**).
- Skyscanner

Groups and book clubs such as Book a Break host reading retreats and camps for 10-90 people in destinations like New York, New Mexico, Florida, Vermont, Maine, and Wisconsin.
- Vogue



Reading was included among the top three most anticipated leisure activities for American travelers.

- Morning Consult data via Hilton



Connecting Flights

Gone are the days of “catching flights, not feelings”; today’s travelers are catching flights for feelings. Travel brands have the opportunity to be the newest matchmakers, friendship-formers, and bond-builders, as people use trips to foster connections.

48%

Nearly half (**48%**) of Gen Z travelers are interested in trips taken specifically to meet face-to-face for the first time with a friend or romantic partner.

- Future Partners

53%

of travelers have gone or considered going overseas specifically to meet new people for friendship or dating, up to seven in ten among Gen Z and Millennials.

- Skyscanner

Conversation views about dating in travel subreddits have increased **492%** YoY.

- Reddit data via Skyscanner

3 in 10

Over **3 in 10** global travelers are actively seeking local groups or communities to join when they travel.

- Hilton



42% of people are more open to meeting others when they're traveling.

- Skyscanner



63%

of respondents say they've made new friends while traveling to events related to their interests, and a third plan to take group trips specifically to enjoy a shared passion, from music to fitness.

- Hilton





Grounding Getaways

Travelers are becoming down-to-earth as interest in agritourism continues to grow. Travel brands that offer immersive, hands-on, rustic experiences provide nourishment to visitors enchanted by the pastoral charm of a slower life.

6 in 10

Over **6 in 10** Millennials are interested in extended, slower-paced trips and immersive, hands-on experiences that connect travelers with a destination's culture, history, or environment.

- Future Partners

84%

of travelers are interested in staying on or near a farm as the slow travel movement gains momentum.

- Vrbo

↑ 12%

The modern agritourism market is in full bloom, growing 12% yearly and poised to reach \$14.5 billion by 2029.

- Vogue

On Airbnb, there were over 1 million searches for farm stays in the first quarter of 2025, a 20% increase from the same period the previous year.

- CNN

“Elevated farm stays now offer luxurious amenities, spa services and curated wellness programs, reflecting a new standard for restorative travel rooted in land stewardship and mindful living.”

- Vogue

73% + 62% + 42%

The most desired farm stay features include nature walks or hiking (**73%**), the chance to interact with farm animals (**62%**), and harvesting produce or picking fresh fruit (**42%**).

- Vrbo



Beauty Pursuits

Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder, and in the hands of the boarding pass holder. Whether pursuing greater longevity, skincare treatments, or even just beauty sleep, the travel industry has become a gateway for travelers to look and feel like their best selves.

“Longevity travel is one of the biggest trends of the year, as people worldwide become ever more fascinated with living a longer, fuller life.”

- National Geographic



Beauty brands are joining forces with travel brands, with Estée Lauder partnering with Hacienda AltaGracia in Costa Rica to open the Estée Lauder Skin Longevity Institute.
- Esquire



32%

of Gen Z are planning to seek out beauty treatments and skincare stores while traveling in 2026, compared to just **8%** of Baby Boomers.

- Skyscanner

38%

Travelers are seeking beauty sleep, with more than a third (**38%**) finding trips focused on getting sleep and rest appealing, up to **48%** of urban respondents.

- Future Partners

\$31.5B

The global Cosmetic Medical Tourism Market is projected to grow from USD 7.23 billion in 2025 to USD **31.53 billion** by 2032.

- Fortune Business Insights

Reddit conversation views are up YOY for r/koreanbeauty (96%) and r/EuroSkincare (64%).

- Reddit data via Skyscanner

If you found these insights valuable, or would like to discuss them further, we'd welcome the opportunity to speak with you. Feel free to reach out to victoria.simmons@bvk.com.



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