



Travel Insights

COMFORTING ESCAPES



Comforting Escapes

Trends of adult plush toys to freeze-dried candy are among the signals of American culture's comfort craving. Yet few comforts rival the restorative power of travel. Travelers are seeking soft resets from overscheduled lives, returning to familiar destinations, indulging in amenities, embracing small-town ease, and savoring the warmth of hometown holidays. For travel brands, this is an opportunity to metaphorically wrap your visitors in a cozy blanket and offer inviting, comforting escapes.





Comforting Escapes

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At Brush Creek Ranch in Wyoming, guests learn to grow, harvest, and cook with ingredients cultivated on the ranch's 100,000-pound annual yield.

- Vogue



Soft Resets

Countering hyperconnectivity and hustle, travelers are seeking "soft resets" that offer slow, immersive escapes. From secluded ranches to farm-to-table retreats, destinations that lean into this trend can highlight offerings that encourage a sense of presence and peace.

54%

of travelers are opting for more secluded and serene destinations, with 75% reporting that these types of trips help reduce anxiety.

- Vrbo

79%

of wellness travelers seek outdoor immersion, 75% prioritize healthy cuisine, and 60% demand tranquility.

- Spa Business

"In a fast-paced world, there is a desire for regional and slower travel, where immersive getaways close to home feel restorative and meaningful."

- Lodging



"We've always believed in the value of slowing down and being present"

Proprietor, Blackberry Farm Resort

- Vogue



Familiar Destinations

Travelers are packing their bags yet visiting places that feel like home. Many Americans are returning to the same destinations year after year, finding joy in the known rather than the novel. These repeat travelers prize familiarity, tradition, and local connection, and look for travel destinations that welcome them like locals.

77%

Over three-quarters of travelers (77%) revisit the same destinations for at least 20% of their vacations.

- Skyscanner

65%

of repeat visitors report feeling like “locals” in their favorite vacation spots.

- Apple Vacations survey via the New York Post

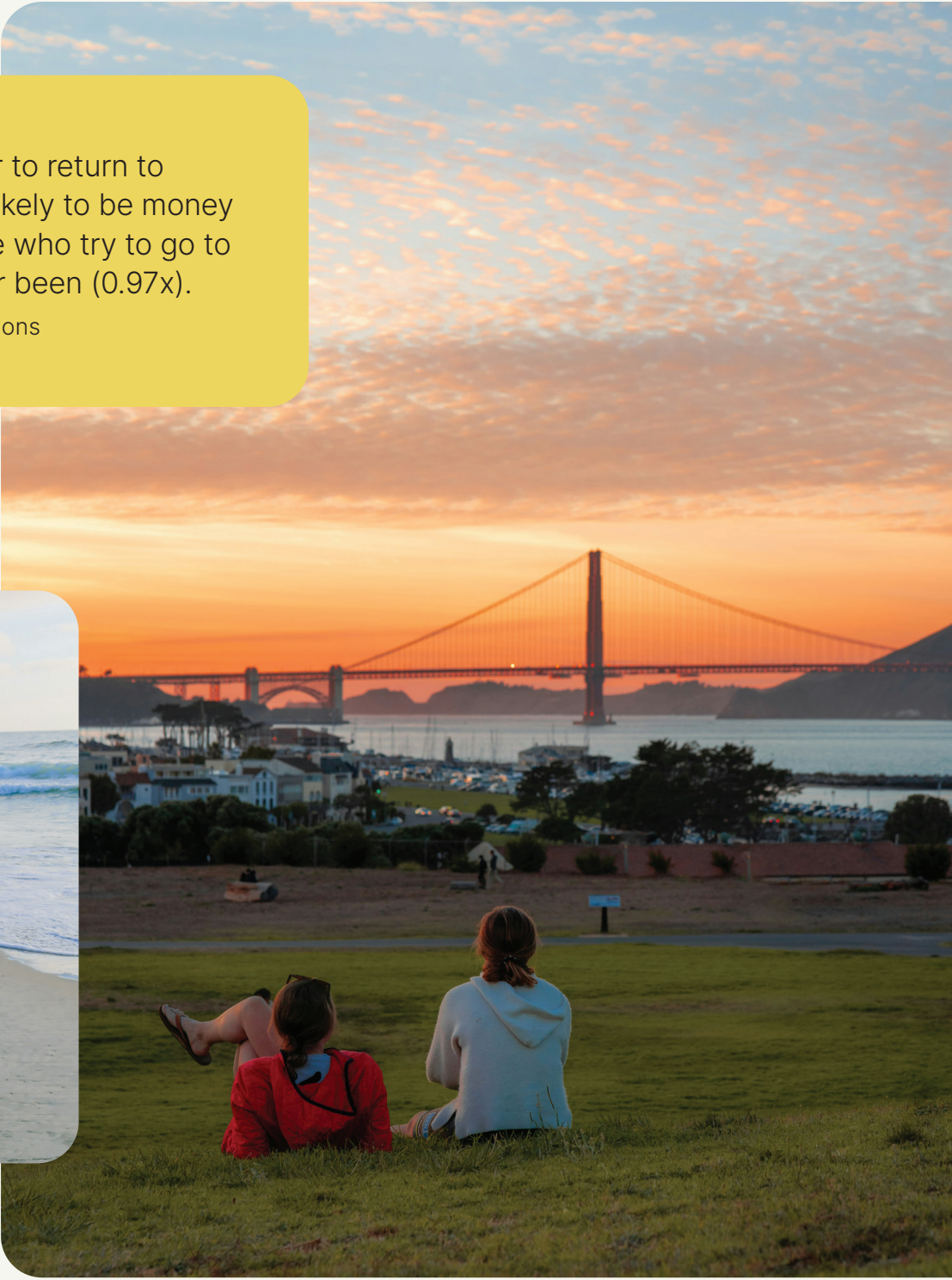
52% + 40%

Top reasons for repeat visitation include familiarity and comfort (52%), scenery (40%), traditions with friends or family (40%), and the food scene (40%).

- Apple Vacations survey via the New York Post

People who prefer to return to destinations are more likely to be money savers (1.08x) vs. those who try to go to places they’ve never been (0.97x).

- MRI Simmons



At U.S. attractions, visitors return an average of 1.4x per year.

- PGAV



Luxury Comforts

Luxurious amenities remain in demand as travelers seek ease. Indulgence is defined through the sensory comfort of intimate lodging and experiences rooted in authenticity. Whether through an airport lounge or a farm-stay spa, travel brands that demonstrate ease over opulence will please their discerning guests.

36%

Boutique hotels and private villas top the list of preferred lodging options among luxury travelers, with 36% favoring boutique stays for their charm and intimacy, and 37% preferring villas for privacy and exclusivity.

- NewBeauty

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

- Vogue



60% ↓

One travel company, Culture Discovery Vacations, has seen 60% fewer requests for Michelin-starred dining in the last five years, replaced by enthusiasm for meals with local “mamas” and “nonnas.”

- Investopedia

44%

of U.S. travelers agree that having luxury experiences is usually an important part of their leisure trips.

- Future Partners



Airports across the U.S. are experiencing a boom in luxury lounge construction, such as Capital One's 13,500-square-foot space at JFK International Airport in New York, offering amenities like specialty cocktails, gourmet meals and spa services.

- The Wall Street Journal



Small Town Approachability

Small towns and rural locales appeal as welcoming alternatives to mass-visited tourist spots. Regional destinations appear approachable by leveraging local creators, community storytelling, and authenticity over flash. For travelers looking for a down-to-earth getaway, destinations that offer genuine hospitality, agritourism, and relatable locals can draw visitors in.

70%

More than 70% of global travelers now prioritize authentic, local experiences—eschewing cookie-cutter accommodations for independently owned properties.

- Skift

\$14.5B

The agritourism sector is expanding at a rate of 12% annually and is projected to reach \$14.5 billion by 2029.

- Vogue



Luxury travel advisors share that while clients still expect high standards of service and design, many are now willing to trade a night in a plush resort for a rustic lodge or village stay that feels authentic.

- Investopedia

Saskatchewan, Canada brought its relatable “Saskatchewanwanderer” program to life, featuring culinary, accommodations, and experiences through a local content creator lens while featuring “Wanderers of the Week” throughout the year.

- PhocusWire

Small and regional DMOs are successfully applying influencer marketing with a grassroots twist leaning into local creators, authentic storytelling and community-focused campaigns.

- PhocusWire



Home for the Holidays

The holidays are synonymous with cozy smells, sights and sounds of nostalgia. Driven by these cravings, Americans are spending on overnight road trips to reunite with family and friends. Brands that facilitate holiday travel can gain the affinity of travelers chasing familiar roads, warm welcomes, and comforting rituals.



Family overnight trips are the most common holiday travel type, with nearly half of respondents citing them.
- American Hotel & Lodging Association

34%
of respondents plan overnight travel for Thanksgiving, and 37% for Christmas.
- American Hotel & Lodging Association

\$1127
is the average amount consumers plan to spend on holiday travel, up 10% YOY.
- KPMG data via The Wall Street Journal



Nearly 90% of U.S. holiday travelers are planning to hit the road rather than fly.
- Sojern via PR Newswire



83%
Among those traveling this holiday season, 83% plan to visit family and friends.
- The Points Guy

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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