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AARP Unveils the 2016 Top 7 Travel Trends for Baby Boomers

99% of Boomers are planning to travel, many are less concerned about cost, but free Wi-Fi will be popular

WASHINGTON, DC — As 2015 starts to wind down, Americans are already starting to make travel plans for 2016. But what are Americans—particularly Baby Boomers—looking for in their 2016 vacations?

A new survey released today from **AARP Travel**, a valuable resource for America’s 76 million Baby Boomers who spend over \$120 billion annually in leisure travel, provides some great insight into how Americans want to get away in 2016, from desired destinations to lodging options to favorite trip planning tools.

“The vast majority of Baby Boomers are planning to drive, fly or set sail on leisure trips in 2016, with an average of 4 or 5 trips already in the works,” said Stephanie Miles, VP, Products & Platforms, AARP. “Boomers make up a large segment of the traveling public, and so it’s particularly important for the travel industry to be aware of what Boomers are looking for in their vacations going into 2016. This new survey finds that their travel desires often differ greatly from younger travelers.”

Here are seven highlights from the new survey:

- **2016 will bring a travel boom for Boomers** . A whopping 99 percent of Baby Boomers are planning to travel next year, and more than three-quarters of them have already chosen their destination(s); 11 percent who are planning to take a domestic trip had booked their travel by September 2015.
- **Boomers may be deal seekers, but cost is not a deal breaker for their travel plans** . Getting a great deal may make a trip even better, but for many Boomers, it won’t make or break their travel plans. More than half of Millennials and Gen Xers say that cost is a barrier to leisure travel, but only 45 percent of Boomers agree. Additionally, more than 6 in 10 Boomers say that higher airfares have had no impact on their personal travel plans.
- **International “bucket list” trips will be especially hot in 2016** . It will be a year of once-in-a-lifetime trips for many Boomers: 32 percent will be embarking on an international bucket list trip. International trips will be especially popular in the spring, with 29 percent traveling to other countries then.
- **Summer and weekends will sizzle with domestic travel**. Nearly a third of Boomers will take advantage of hot summer weather to make domestic trips. Quick weekend getaways will be popular, with 23 percent of Boomers saying they will choose a weekend for domestic travel. Twenty-six percent of Boomers say they will take domestic multi-generational trips (with three or more generations traveling together) in 2016, but that’s down from 32 percent in 2015.
- **There will be a lot of travel to hotspots—literally**. Many Boomers will be packing their shorts and flip-flops in 2016, heading off to warm and wonderful destinations. Florida (19%) and Las Vegas (9%) will be the most popular domestic destinations for Boomers in 2016. Internationally, the Caribbean and Mexico (each 19%) will see the most Boomer travel.
- **Free Wi-Fi, please!** When it comes to lodging amenities, free Wi-Fi is king. Forty-three percent of Boomers say that when choosing a hotel, free Wi-Fi is a must-have, as do 86 percent of Boomers seeking rental homes. While roughly 4 in 10 Boomers stay at hotels or motels when they travel, Airbnb and VRBO are growing in popularity: 1 in 10 Boomers are planning to use those services to rent a private residence instead of using a hotel on a 2016 trip.
- **2016 travel is all about F-U-N**. Most Boomers spend their vacations surrounded by family—and with a smile on their face. Boomers say that when they’re on vacation, they do more smiling and laughing (68%) and that they spend more time with family (61%).

The online survey was conducted September 17-28, 2015 among males and females 18 and older who had taken at least one trip 50 miles or more away from home, with a two-night stay, in the past two years.

The survey can be found at aarp.org/2016TravelTrends. Here’s a tweet if you would like to share the new survey: New @AARP Travel survey reveals Boomers’ 2016 vacation plans: aarp.org/2016TravelTrends#travel#2016

About AARP

AARP is a nonprofit, nonpartisan organization, with a membership of nearly 38 million, that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities

and protection from financial abuse. We advocate for individuals in the marketplace by selecting products and services of high quality and value to carry the AARP name as well as help our members obtain discounts on a wide range of products, travel, and services. A trusted source for lifestyle tips, news and educational information, AARP produces AARP The Magazine, the world's largest circulation magazine; AARP Bulletin; www.aarp.org; AARP TV & Radio; AARP Books; and AARP en Español, a Spanish-language website addressing the interests and needs of Hispanics. AARP does not endorse candidates for public office or make contributions to political campaigns or candidates. The AARP Foundation is an affiliated charity that provides security, protection, and empowerment to older persons in need with support from thousands of volunteers, donors, and sponsors. AARP has staffed offices in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Learn more at www.aarp.org.

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