

CLASSIC VACATIONS® REVEALS 2026 LUXURY TRAVEL TRENDS REPORT



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Travel Advisors Predict Top Destinations, Booking Behaviors, and Emerging Motivations

SAN JOSE, Calif., Dec. 15, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Classic Vacations® — the #1 rated luxury travel advisor resource — today released its first luxury travel trends report, offering exclusive insights into booking behaviors, motivations, and emerging trends among discerning travelers. The findings are based on a survey completed by travel advisors booking Classic Vacations spanning major consortia networks, including Travel Leaders Network, Virtuoso, and Signature. These advisors serve U.S. luxury travelers.

"Classic's inaugural Luxury Travel Trends Report offers a peek into the emerging trends that our travel advisors predict will shape the industry in the year ahead," said Melissa Krueger, CEO of Classic Vacations. "Advisors are seeing a clear shift in how luxury travelers explore the world — intentionally moving beyond traditional destinations and standard itineraries to seek transformative experiences. Classic is proud to provide the tools and resources that enable advisors to make this impact, while continuing to strengthen our products and platform for advisors and suppliers."

Summary: The 2026 Travel Landscape

According to advisors, luxury travel is set for strong growth in 2026 as travelers prioritize meaningful, personalized experiences and show a willingness to spend more on trips that matter. Top motivations



include milestone celebrations, relaxation, quality family time, and bucket-list adventures. Advisors report high interest in destinations spanning beaches, cultural capitals, and lesser-known locales both in the U.S. and abroad. Key trends shaping next year include intentional travel, heritage exploration, wellness-focused escapes, bespoke and micro-luxury experiences, and socially connected journeys. Overall, 2026 is poised to be a year defined by intentionally slow, immersive, and elevated travel.

Top Destinations

Advisors predict that the following destinations will be the most popular in 2026:

- International Destinations: Italy, Greece, Japan, Portugal, Croatia, and France
- Domestic Destinations: Hawaii, Florida (Keys), California (Napa/Sonoma), New York (City), and Arizona (Scottsdale)

Luxury Travel Demand and Spend

- **77%** of advisors indicate that demand for luxury travel will increase among their clients in 2026.
- **71%** of advisors reported that the average amount that luxury travelers will invest per trip will increase significantly.

Travel Motivations

The top 3 motivations driving travelers to book trips will be celebrating milestones, rest and relaxation, and family time.

- **81%** of advisors responded that travelers are booking vacations to celebrate life's biggest moments, such as anniversaries, birthdays, graduations, pregnancies, weddings, and more.
- **67%** of advisors responded that travelers are booking vacations simply for rest and relaxation.
- **66%** of advisors reported that travelers are booking vacations with their families, to maximize time together.

Most In-Demand Destination Types

Travelers are most interested in visiting beaches, culturally significant sites, and off-the-beaten-path regions:



- **76%** of advisors responded that sun and beach destinations such as Hawaii, the Caribbean, and Mexico will remain in high demand for luxury travelers in the new year.
- **56%** of advisors believe that destinations where travelers can soak in rich history and local culture, such as Rome and Japan, will captivate travelers.
- **29%** of advisors expect "off-the-beaten-path" destinations to rise, including Puglia and the Dolomites in Italy and the Loire Valley and Bordeaux in France.

Most In-Demand Experiences

Along with relaxation, travelers are seeking thrills, many booking trips centered around unique and engaging experiences:

- **54%** of advisors believe that adventure or soft-adventure experiences – such as camping in the Grand Canyon, skiing in Big Sky, Montana, or exploring the sights of Sydney – will be in high demand.
- **23%** of advisors anticipate that unique culinary experiences, like cooking classes in Tuscany and wine tasting in Napa Valley, will attract travelers seeking authentic tastes and local flavors.
- **20%** of advisors predict that film- or book-inspired travel, known as "set jetting," will continue to captivate travelers, from visiting Game of Thrones filming locations in Croatia or Malta to charming European towns that remind them of their favorite romance novels.

Traveler Booking Behaviors

Advisors report that travelers are making bookings well ahead of time to secure their preferred experiences and accommodations:

- **75%** of travel agents said clients are booking travel between 5 to 11 months in advance, reflecting a longer lead time compared to last year.
- **74%** of advisors indicated that cost and budget are a key factor, **67%** noted personal motivations such as the desire for new experiences, and **60%** pointed to household and family schedules as shaping travelers' plans.

Emerging Travel Trends & Terms

Whycations: Purpose-Led Travel

Travelers increasingly want trips with intention — choosing immersive itineraries, longer stays, and quiet

luxurious retreats that foster connection and meaning. This purpose-first mindset is fueling the rise of "whycations," where travel is guided by personal significance rather than sightseeing checklists. A growing expression of this trend is "Heritage" or "Roots Tourism," as more travelers seek ancestral destinations to strengthen their sense of identity, often through multigenerational journeys focused on shared stories and history.

Hushpitality: Wellness Travel with Minimal Noise

Wellness travel continues to surge as travelers seek calm, rest, and digital detachment. Advisors report strong interest in low-stimulus escapes – coined "Hushpitality" – that emphasize peace, nature, and mental restoration. Related concepts include "Dead Zoning" (device-free breaks), "Blue-Mind" ocean escapes, and "Glow-Cations" centered on spa and beauty treatments. Whether for a few days or a full retreat, travelers are prioritizing restorative moments that help them return home reset and recharged.

Luxury, Elevated: Personalized Indulgence Takes Center Stage

Bespoke, quietly luxurious travel is increasingly the standard. Travelers want itineraries that feel custom-crafted, with micro-luxury touches that elevate the journey – such as a standout night in a premier suite, seamless private transfers, or tailored experiences. "Suite-cations" and short, high-impact "micro-cations" continue to rise, as travelers seek comfort, exclusivity, and meaningful upgrades.

Connectivity: Travel That Brings People Together

Group and relationship-driven travel is evolving as travelers prioritize shared experiences with the people who matter most. "Bestie-moons," "buddy-moons," and fan-fueled trips tied to concerts or sporting events are gaining traction. Families are embracing "kidfluence," letting children shape the itinerary, while skip-gen trips remain popular for grandparent-grandchild bonding. Across all segments, travel is becoming more social, more intentional, and more aligned with personal relationships.

The Resurgence of YOLO

A renewed YOLO mindset is inspiring travelers to finally take the bucket-list trips they've long imagined. Advisors report that clients are leaning into dream destinations and major experiences with a "why wait?" attitude – echoing the lingering effects of post-pandemic revenge travel and a desire to make up for lost time.



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About Classic Vacations

Classic Vacations began as Classic Hawaii in 1978 and has grown to serve hundreds of destinations globally. Today, Classic remains true to its advisor-first legacy beside its like-minded owner, TBO, and operates as a full-service B2B2C luxury travel company with a strong network of high-value travel advisors and deep ties with major consortia, including Virtuoso, Signature, and Travel Leaders Network. Professionally managed, the company leverages expert call centers to deliver premium white-glove service across hotels, air, experiences, car rentals, and travel protection, specializing in complex bespoke luxury itineraries and investing in its ongoing digital transformation to offer travel advisors the option and convenience of online booking as well. Visit classicvacations.com or call 1 (800) 221-3949 for more information about Classic Vacations.

About TBO

Founded in 2006, TBO is one of the leading global travel distribution platforms that aims to simplify the buying and selling travel needs of travel partners across the world. It leverages technology to simplify the demands of the complex world of global travel by connecting over 159,000 travel buyers and 1 million travel suppliers at a scale of more than 100 countries.

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