

CLASSIC VACATIONS® FORECASTS A MORE SELECTIVE APPROACH TO LUXURY TRAVEL FOR SUMMER 2026



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Classic Vacations

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Early booking data shows a sustained demand for Europe, increased interest in domestic luxury travel, and a rise in multi-destination itineraries

SAN JOSE, Calif., April 22, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- Classic Vacations®, the #1 rated luxury travel advisor resource, today released its Summer 2026 Luxury Travel Trends Forecast, highlighting the destinations, booking behaviors, and traveler motivations shaping the upcoming season.

Luxury travel demand remains strong, with a growing shift toward more intentional planning as travelers look for value, flexibility, and meaningful experiences.

"For summer 2026, travelers are prioritizing high-end vacations that feel effortless from start to finish," said Melissa Krueger, CEO of Classic Vacations. "Luxury hotels, resorts, and villas remain top choices, especially those offering immersive, on-site experiences that create a deeper connection to place."

A More Selective Luxury Mindset

Summer 2026 travel reflects a move toward purposeful itineraries that blend cultural immersion, relaxation, and time with family, with multigenerational travel, culinary immersion, and agritourism leading bookings. Travelers are increasingly selective, seeking clear value through elevated service and thoughtful customization. Planning windows are shortening as travelers wait longer to commit, while airfare sensitivity, particularly among families, is driving increased demand for domestic and closer-to-home destinations.

Trending Destinations

Europe continues to lead summer bookings, with strong demand across:

- Italy: Rome, Florence, Venice, Tuscany, Amalfi Coast
- Greece: Athens, Santorini, Mykonos
- France: Paris
- Spain: Madrid, Barcelona
- Portugal: Lisbon

Additional trending destinations include Japan (Tokyo, Osaka), Costa Rica, and Domestic destinations such as Hawaii (Maui, Big Island, Oahu), The Florida Keys, and Napa and Sonoma, California.

Evolving Booking Behaviors

Travel decisions are being influenced by rising costs, fluctuating flight availability, and evolving entry requirements, driving demand for predictability and ease. Key booking behaviors include:

- **Close-to-Home Luxury:** Domestic destinations that offer luxury without the complexity of international travel are gaining momentum, including Hawaii, the Florida Keys, Napa and Sonoma (CA), Scottsdale (AZ), Palm Springs (CA), Aspen (CO), and Big Sky (MT).
- **Passport-Free Escapes:** Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands continue to grow in popularity, offering seamless tropical travel.
- **Shorter Booking Windows:** Particularly for domestic and short-haul travel.

Emerging Travel Experiences

Travelers are placing greater emphasis on how they experience a destination:

- **Culinary & Countryside Immersion:** Travelers are seeking private tastings, hands-on cooking classes, and locally led food tours, alongside growing interest in agritourism-style luxury stays and countryside retreats, particularly in regions like Tuscany and California wine country where food, wine, and nature are deeply intertwined.
- **Hotel Hopping:** Multi-destination itineraries that pair time in cultural capitals with countryside or coastal stays reflect a desire for greater variety and a more layered sense of place.
- **Historic Stays:** Rising interest in historic properties that have been thoughtfully restored, as travelers seek a deeper connection to a destination's history.
- **Wellness Integration:** Travel centered on balance, nature, and unstructured time.
- **Personalized Touring:** Travelers are moving away from large group formats in favor of smaller, more tailored tours that allow for greater flexibility and deeper engagement.
- **Outdoor Experiences:** There is a growing interest in hiking, horseback riding, fishing, and similar activities that connect travelers to nature.

Technology & AI in Travel

Technology continues to enhance—not replace—the role of the travel advisor, elevating both efficiency and personalization across the planning process and in-destination experience. AI-powered tools are streamlining workflows and generating strong itinerary starting points, ultimately giving advisors more time to refine, tailor, and deliver deeply personalized journeys.

Classic's Advisor Guidance for Summer 2026

- Work with partners that offer flexibility, strong support, and added value.
- Introduce travel protection early to support confidence and continuity across itineraries.
- Position domestic travel as a standalone luxury experience, not a substitute, emphasizing ease of access and reduced complexity as core selling points.

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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 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 an expert call center to deliver premium white-glove service across hotels, air, experiences, car rentals, and travel protection, specializing in complex bespoke luxury itineraries and invests 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. SOURCE Classic Vacations