

Booking.com |
Affiliate Partner Programme

Your guide to 2018's top travel trends

Put together by the
Booking.com Affiliate
Partner Team.



A dark, atmospheric photograph of a person's hands pressed against a circular airplane window. The hands are silhouetted against the bright light coming from outside the plane. The image is partially obscured by a white, angular graphic element on the left side.

Contents

Intro	4
Research	6
Travel technology	8
Increased travel	10
Rental homes	12
Staycations	14
Weekend getaways	16
Health-conscious holidays	18
Pop culture trips	20
Food tourism	22
Groups of friends	24
Eco-friendly travel	26
10 trending destinations	28
Conclusion	30
About Us	32

2018 Travel Trends: An Introduction

Those of us who work in travel know that the industry is always changing. Every year, new trends influence the way guests plan their trips, from where they'll go to who they'll travel with.

That doesn't mean that you need to totally revamp your marketing strategy each year – but it's a good idea to know what to expect. That way you can make simple changes that have a big impact.

To make things easier, we've put together this guide on 2018's top travel trends. Using our data and your business savvy, we've recommended steps you can take to make the most of the rest of this year and beyond.



How did we find out these trends?

The experts at Booking.com, the global leader in connecting travellers with the widest choice of incredible places to stay, combined customer insights from over 129 million real guest reviews with research from nearly 19,000 travellers across 26 countries around the world to predict the biggest travel trends for 2018.

Research was commissioned by Booking.com and independently conducted among a sample of adults who have taken a trip in the last 12 months/plan to take a trip in the next 12 months. In total 18,509 respondents were surveyed (1,000+ from the UK, US, Brazil, China, Germany, Italy, Spain, France, India, Singapore and Russia and 500+ each from Australia, Argentina, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Hong Kong, Croatia, Indonesia, Japan, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Sweden, Thailand and Taiwan). Respondents completed an online survey in August 2017.



People are using technology more and more to plan their trips.

This means more and more travellers will be using the internet to research and book stays.

But it's not just about booking accommodation online. We found that nearly one third of travellers would let a computer plan their next trip using their travel history. And half don't mind if they deal with a real person or a computer – as long as their questions get answered.

What does this mean for you?

- First of all, make sure you have a professional, user-friendly website where you can showcase your expertise. Consider using a custom domain or web address to make your brand more memorable to visitors. Then, get your content looking as professional as possible – inviting photos, links and relevant content targeted to your audience.
- It's also crucial that your visitors can actually find your website. That's where SEO comes in – make sure you're using plenty of keywords so that your readers can easily land on your site.

People are travelling more often.

To be exact, 47% of travellers plan to take more trips in 2018 than in 2017.

This increase in travel is most likely due to worldwide economic growth, easier access to social media promoting travel, and a millennial generation passionate about seeing the world.

How to make the most of this good news?

Here are some ideas to attract more customers to your property:

- Use links in social media to create a base of followers that you can redirect to your website.
- Keep your audience engaged by regularly updating your content and sending newsletters.

Take advantage of Booking.com's products and services:

- The inspiring search box is the most successful product for getting bookings. [Find out more here.](#)
- Booking.com provides quarterly trending destinations, which you can [find in the knowledge base.](#)

2

Holiday homes are the new 'it' thing.

In 2018, more and more travellers will opt for an apartment or holiday home over a hotel – 1 in 3 to be exact.

You can make some small adjustments to your website to take advantage of this growing trend.

Share links to our landing pages for [apartments](#), [villas](#) and [holiday homes](#) on your blog. You can promote them to your readers as a way of living like a local and enjoying home comforts. If you need help creating links, take a look at our [Links tool article](#). For information on where travelers are booking right now, head to the landing pages we shared above. There, you'll find the top destinations for each property type.

Here are a few reasons to recommend apartments, villas and holiday homes:

- **Instant confirmation:** When your readers book with Booking.com, they won't need to wait for the owner to confirm their stay. Everything's confirmed immediately.
- **No booking fees:** We don't charge booking fees, so your readers won't be surprised by unexpected additional costs.
- **More affiliate commission:** When people book a home, apartment or villa, they tend to book a longer stay – meaning more affiliate commission for you.

3



Staycations are on the rise.

It's true that people will be travelling more in 2018 – but that doesn't necessarily mean further away.

In fact, 1 in 3 travellers plan to take a holiday closer to home this year.

The reasons why?

They want to save:

46% of travellers say domestic travel is cheaper.

And they ❤️ their home countries:

46% believe there are wonderful places they have yet to discover right on their doorstep.

So, how can you use this information?

- Check the trending domestic destinations for your market and feature these places in your website content.
- Promote deals for these domestic destinations via the [Booking.com deals page](#).
- Become an affiliate with [Rental Cars](#) so you can offer travellers the full experience.

4



5

People plan to take more weekend getaways.

With a focus on travelling more and closer to home, it makes sense that people will be booking more weekend trips this year.

Nearly half of all travellers are planning to take more weekend getaways in 2018 than they did in 2017.

So, how can you capitalise on the weekend rush?

- Add content about weekend getaways. Promote trending destinations that your target audience can easily get to for a weekend – anything from city breaks to nature stays.
- Offer weekend deals via the [Booking.com Deals page](#). Visitors can pick deals for the upcoming weekend and the weekend after.
- Preset the Booking.com search box only for weekends to really highlight weekend getaways to your audience.

People want their holidays to be more health-conscious.

We found that 55% of travellers want to take walking or hiking trips in 2018.

But it's not just about getting back to nature. Other wellness inspired activities are also popular:

Visiting a spa or receiving beauty treatments, 33%

Cycling, 24%

Water sports, 22%

Taking a full body detox holiday, 17%

Yoga retreat, 16%

Running, 16%

Meditation/mindfulness, 15%

What can you do?

- Add content on spa and wellness centres, hiking, cycling, yoga seminars and more. You can inspire your readers by creating links to articles on the Booking.com travel platform, **Unpacked**. Just filter with 'Nature' or 'Sports & Fitness' to find relevant content.
- The Booking.com index page also provides filters for nature getaways, spa, sports and other themes. You can easily add links for hotels that offer these amenities directly on your website.



7

Pop culture influences where people go.

In 2018, 36% of people plan to travel to the on-screen locations of their favourite film, music video or television show.

Some of the world's top television programmes will have the biggest influence:

- Game of Thrones inspires 29% of travellers to visit Croatia, Spain and Iceland
- Sherlock (21%) and The Crown (13%) make people want to visit London
- Billions attracts 13% of travellers to New York and Manhattan
- Entourage makes 10% want to plan a trip to Los Angeles

Lucky enough to be writing content about any of these destinations?

- Capitalise on it. Feature unique experiences related to the television programme and promote them on your website. For inspiration, check out the Booking.com travel platform, [Unpacked](#), as well as our [Landmarks page](#).
- On our [Affiliate Partner Centre](#) you can also select 'hyped' cities and add links to top properties on your site.

2018 is the year of the foodie.

Trying a new cuisine has always been a factor in travel, but local food is a major draw in 2018.

64% of travellers want to eat more local food when exploring a new destination.

And a good local food scene can be the deciding factor when it comes to people choosing where to go. In fact, 1 in 5 travellers plan a trip for the food alone, while 1 in 4 actively avoid destinations that don't have a strong food culture.

So how can you attract these food-lovers to your website?

- Build up blog content on your website promoting countries known for great food.
Feature restaurants, famous chefs, food festivals and pop-up restaurants.
- When you make offers or write travel experience reviews, make sure to include food experiences as well.
This could increase the probability of bookings.
- Check out Booking.com [Unpacked travel articles](#) and link to food-related articles.
Promote hotels in the foodie regions you feature.

8



9

People will travel more as a group of friends.

When asked whether they plan to travel solo, as a couple, with family or with a group of friends, the segment that increased the most from 2017 to 2018 was:

Travelling with a group of friends (from 27% to 31%)

How can you make the most of this trend?

- Offer special deals for group travellers on your website and feature bigger properties.
Holiday homes and villas are ideal for group stays.
- Add content on your page about different group activities nearby.
Spas, horseback riding, pub crawls? There's so much that can be more fun with a group of friends.
- Display a digital calendar that highlights upcoming events that would interest groups.
Include concerts, art and food festivals, or sports events.



10

Eco-friendly travel continues to grow.

This year, 33% of travellers say they plan to choose more eco-friendly options than in 2017.

That's great news for Planet Earth – but what does it mean for you?

- Add some content on your website about eco-friendly activities and destinations.
Include info on eco tours and organisations working in conservation. Add links to eco-themed articles on Unpacked, such as [8 hotels that keep it green](#).
- Promote eco-friendly hotels on your website.
On the Booking.com index page you can filter by eco-friendly hotels and create affiliate links to highly rated eco-friendly accommodations.

There are 10 trending destinations around the world.

Based on Booking.com reservations from last year, here's who made the cut for 2018:

Sapporo, Japan
Nashville, Tennessee, USA
Bucharest, Romania
Zakopane, Poland
Taitung City, Taiwan
Hannover, Germany
Brisbane, Australia
Bogotá, Colombia
Portland, Oregon, USA
Lima, Peru

** Destinations listed in no particular order.*

In addition to promoting these general trending destinations, you can check our Partner Centre to find out what your top trending destinations are, and feature these in your website as well.

Booking.com also provides quarterly trending destination insights on where travellers will be booking in the next quarter. These can be found on the Affiliates Knowledge Base.

11





**Thanks for reading
our 2018 guide!**

We hope you got some useful information out of it, and are already implementing some new strategies for 2018 and beyond.

And if there were a few parts that weren't a fit for you and your website – not to worry! There are improvements you can make that aren't solely based on trends, but on what your audience wants year after year.

Whether you need technical support, the Booking.com Affiliate Partner Team is always here to help. You can find out more tips for making 2018 a great year on our affiliates.booking.com resources page.



About us

The Booking.com Affiliate Partner Programme gives you the unique opportunity to connect your business to the world's most recognised online accommodation booking platform.

We have an extensive network of over 12,500 affiliates, who benefit from our customisable and easy-to-use products and dedicated support from our Booking.com team.

As a partner, you can integrate our customer-facing products into your website and in return, earn commission for each booking made through it.

We're constantly optimising and innovating our products to ensure they offer a seamless experience and do exactly what they need to do: maximise bookings.

Booking.com

Affiliate Partner Programme

A decorative blue line graphic that starts from the bottom left, curves upwards and to the right, then curves downwards and to the right, ending at the edge of the page.

Booking.com |
Affiliate Partner Programme