

Travelers Booking Summer Trips Earlier This Year Despite the Expectation of Larger Crowds and Higher Rates

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New Quarterly Research Report from Expedia.com and Travel Expert Chris McGinnis Provides Trends, Data and Tips to Inform and Empower Travelers

Expedia.com(R) (NASDAQ:EXPE) today introduced the first issue of its quarterly report, Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM), which focuses on the upcoming summer travel season. Chris McGinnis, a 20-year travel industry veteran most recently serving as a travel correspondent on CNN Headline News, is the editor of the Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM). Each report will provide travelers with a treasure trove of trends, data and advice designed to help people make better travel decisions. To view the complete report, please visit <http://www.expedia.com/trendwatch> .

"There's no doubt that after a decade of online trailblazing and 25 million travelers visiting the site each month, Expedia.com has considerable intelligence and information to offer to travelers," said McGinnis. "My insight and expertise in the travel industry is coupled with Expedia(R)'s unparalleled travel intelligence within the report to create an invaluable source of insider knowledge for travelers this summer."

Key summer travel trends and tips discussed in the debut issue of the Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM) include the following:

1) Travelers are planning and booking summer vacations early this year to save money and to get the vacation they want.

œ An April Expedia.com survey revealed that the vast majority (85 percent) of U.S. adults who are planning to travel this summer have already booked or will book their travel plans at least one month in advance.(1)

œ In addition, the Travel Industry Association of America (TIA) said one in every three U.S. travelers is planning travel earlier this year than they did in 2005, with many already committed to plans for their longest summer trip.

œ Trendwatch(TM) Tip: Book your trip either very early or very late. Early bookers are most likely to avoid sell-outs at popular destinations and can usually take advantage of advance purchase discounts. While last-minute deals are not as plentiful as in previous years, if you are flexible with dates and destinations, you can still save.

2) Despite generally higher airline ticket prices, demand for summer travel remains steady

œ According to an Expedia.com survey, 55 percent of U.S. adults plan to fly as much this summer as last summer and six percent say that they plan on flying more despite rising airline ticket prices in 2006.(2)

œ Additionally, the Air Transport Association recently reported that airfares in the U.S. rose 10.6 percent for January and February 2006, over the same period in 2005.

œ On the bright side, Expedia data show prices decreasing on several popular routes.

œ Trendwatch(TM) Tip: Lock it in! To avoid the dreaded middle-seat scenario or the possibility of another fare increase, travelers who find a great air deal should book it immediately before it's gone.

3) Despite higher prices, crowds and a relatively weak dollar, Europe remains a hit with Americans this summer.

œ According to British Airways, bookings for spring and summer trips to the U.K. in 2006 are stronger compared with the same period in 2005.

œ The most popular European package destinations booked on Expedia.com as of March 31, 2006 include (in descending order): London, Paris, Rome, Amsterdam, Barcelona, Venice, Dublin, Madrid, Prague and Florence.

œ Trendwatch(TM) Tip: Visit Eastern Europe. Countries such as Croatia, Poland and Hungary offer a unique European experience, without the extensive crowds or higher prices found in more frequented destinations.

4) Summer vacationers are better informed and more prepared than ever, thanks to the Internet.

œ Online user-generated reviews and ratings are in hot demand, with Expedia travelers posting over 100,000 traveler opinions since January 2005 -- offering more reviews than any other online travel agency.

œ In addition, a recent TIA survey indicated 78 percent of online travelers (79 million Americans) turned to the Internet for travel or destination information in 2005 -- a 15 percent jump over 2004.

œ Trendwatch(TM) Tip: Majority rules. When checking out online traveler reviews, focus on absorbing key themes of the reviews, not necessarily one-off feedback, before making a decision on a hotel stay. Also, rely on sites that verify that posted reviews are based on actual stays.

To view the full report or for additional information on these trends, please visit <http://www.expedia.com/trendwatch>.

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