

Expedia Travel Trendwatch Observes Consumer Appetite for Winter Travel, Delivers Outlook On Spring Break Hot Spots

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Spring Break Travel Outlook Strong; Warm Winter Weather, Passport Regulations and International Currency Exchange Rates Having Subtle Impact

Expedia.com(R), the world's leading online travel provider, today introduced the latest issue of its quarterly report, Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM). Twenty-year travel industry veteran and Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM) Editor Chris McGinnis reveals the findings of a recent Expedia.com consumer survey conducted by Harris Interactive(R) showing, among other things, that 82 percent of U.S. adults plan to travel by air as much or more this spring as last spring. The same survey reveals that new passport requirements won't likely slow travel to Canada, Mexico, Central and South America, or the Caribbean. In addition, the weakened U.S. dollar versus other currencies is a relatively small concern to those considering international travel. The report also provides further trend information, travel tips, and deals designed to help people make better travel decisions. To view the complete report, please visit <http://www.expedia.com/trendwatch> .

"Following the peak holiday travel season, many find that winter is a great time to beat the crowds and uncover off-peak travel deals," said McGinnis. "But travel during winter is nothing compared to the take-off we'll see when spring-breakers head for resorts and popular destinations in March and April."

Key travel trends and tips reported in the current issue of the Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM) include:

1) Spring break is a popular time to travel every year, and 2007 is no exception. All signs point to this spring break season being as busy as last year, continuing the pattern of the recent peak winter holiday season.

œ The Expedia consumer survey found that 16 percent of U.S. adults plan to travel by air more this spring than they did last spring, and 66 percent plan to travel by air as much as they did last spring.

œ Airlines continue to raise fares despite declining fuel prices. Fares to South Florida cities like Miami and Ft. Lauderdale are up five percent to 10 percent. Puerto Vallarta, Los Cabos and Cancun, Mexico are up seven percent to 13 percent. Hawaii has become a more affordable destination to visit, with average year-over-year fares having decreased approximately 10 percent to 15 percent, partially due to a recent up tick in capacity to the islands according to Expedia.com data.

2) Unseasonably warm temperatures in parts of the U.S. earlier this winter could mean deeper discounts in warm weather destinations like Florida and the Caribbean. Warmer than average weather could also bolster more interest in skiing and big-city trips.

œ With much of the country in a relatively balmy state early this winter, the urge to migrate south may not be as strong as normal. If winter weather remains mild, less demand for warm-weather getaways could translate into more aggressive late-winter discounting and an increase in last-minute deals in places like Florida, the Caribbean and Mexico.

œ The weather could have some impact on western ski resorts, as snow-seekers head to the Rockies, Sierras and elsewhere on news of multiple snowstorms. This season is on track to break the record of 59 million skier visits in a season, set just last year, according to the National Ski Areas Association.

3) Despite a weak U.S. dollar and concern over new passport requirements, Americans are still traveling internationally.

œ The Expedia.com consumer poll found that when it comes to international travel, 38 percent of U.S. adults are not at all influenced by the exchange rate when choosing a destination.

œ Likewise, recent changes in passport requirements do not appear to be dampening interest in overseas trips. The Expedia.com consumer survey also found that 74 percent of U.S. adults say that they are equally (68%) or more likely (6%) to travel to Canada, Mexico, Central and South America or the Caribbean, the areas recently affected by the new passport rules. Additionally, the U.S. State Department anticipates that the number of passports it issues in 2007 will increase to 16 million, compared to 12.1 million in 2006.

Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM) Travel Tips

Spring Break Deals

œ If you are seeking a great deal and have flexible travel dates, consider a spring trip sometime during the April 15 to May 30 "shoulder season." The crowds will dwindle, prices soften and the weather can't be beat.

Cruising Right

œ This might be the winter to take to the seas because you'll find lower prices and more availability. If you have been considering a Caribbean cruise but have yet to board a ship, seven new cruise ships were christened in 2006 and nine more will debut this year. Cruise pricing is softest this year in the Caribbean, while pricing for European or Alaskan itineraries remains firm.

Hit the Slopes

œ Look west for the best skiing conditions this winter. Washington, Oregon and British Columbia have received the most snow so far this year with nearly 100 percent of ski terrain open. Save on air and hotel at these resorts by booking a ski vacation package, Expedia customers save \$220 on average when doing so. Visit www.expedia.com/ski .

International Travel

œ Get a passport! Having a passport on hand ensures the freedom to take advantage of a last-minute flight to Canada or spur-of-the-moment vacation to the Bahamas. Soon, passports will be required for those entering the U.S. by land or sea so it's worth the investment for 10 years of care free travel.

About Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM)

Expedia Travel Trendwatch(TM) is a quarterly report on consumer travel trends, plus insight and tips from Expedia.com, the world's leading online travel service, and Chris McGinnis, a 20-year travel industry veteran who is the editor of the report. McGinnis' travel industry insight and expertise, coupled with unparalleled travel intelligence from Expedia.com(R), can be found throughout each report, providing a treasure trove of data, trends, and tips designed to help empower and inform travelers.

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