

New Survey Reveals Staycations Planned by Fewer than One in Ten Travelers

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A new survey of 2,231 U.S. adults reveals only 9 percent are planning a 'staycation,' or home-based vacation, as an alternative to a vacation they otherwise would have taken out of town during the next six months. This represents a significantly lower percentage than expected by industry analysts.

While one in seven (14 percent) American leisure travelers said they had taken a 'staycation' during the past six months, only one in 11 (9 percent) expects to do so during the next six months according to the July 2008 Travel Industry Association/Ypartnership travelhorizons(TM) survey. When asked about the reason(s) for their anticipated 'staycation' vacation, respondents stated 'gasoline prices are too high' (61 percent), 'travel in general is too expensive' (44 percent), and 'am cutting back on discretionary spending' (43 percent).

In a surprising revelation, among those adults planning to take a home-based vacation during the next six months fully one out of five (22 percent, or 5.1 million adults) expects to stay in a local hotel, motel or resort at least one night on their 'staycation.' This suggests that many Americans still plan to 'get away' even if their destination is local. Lodging establishments and other tourism-related businesses will clearly benefit from these unexpected and previously-unreported expenditures.

'People taking 'staycations' are not necessarily entertaining themselves at home,' said Roger Dow, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Travel Industry Association. 'On the contrary, many are participating in travel-related activities that generate significant revenues for restaurants, attractions, theme parks, as well as hotels and resorts.'

The results of this survey will come as welcomed news by many tourism-related businesses that have been concerned about the potential impact of Americans vacationing closer to home because of the escalating cost of transportation and travel-related services. According to Peter Yesawich, Chairman of Ypartnership, coauthor of the survey, 'Although 'staycations' appear to be a real phenomenon, the results of this survey suggest that their potential negative impact on the domestic travel industry will be far less than expected based on the extensive coverage this phenomenon has received in the press.' Other results from the travelhorizons(TM) survey corroborate this conclusion: more than five times as many U.S. adults (160 million) actually took a leisure trip during the past six months than took a 'staycation,' and nearly eight times as many (166 million) plan to take a leisure trip during the next six months than are planning a 'staycation.'

The travelhorizons(TM) survey also revealed that 83 percent of U.S. adults would travel more for leisure if they had more money, 63 percent believe that leisure travel brings family members together, and 58 percent feel that leisure travel is very important to their well-being.

The Travel Industry Association is the national, non-profit organization representing all components of the \$740 billion travel industry. TIA's mission is to promote and facilitate increased travel to and within the United States. TIA is proud to be a partner in travel with American Express. For more information, visit www.tia.org.

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