



U.S. Resident Travel to International Destinations Increased Nine Percent in 2015 *Strong Growth in U.S. Outbound Travel from the South Atlantic and West South Central States* *Subtle Changes in Traveler and Trip Characteristics*

The U.S. resident outbound market totaled 74.0 million in 2015, up nine percent from 2014. Travel to overseas countries (32.8 million) increased seven percent, to Canada (12.5 million) up eight percent and travel to Mexico (28.7 million), singly the largest outbound market, was up 11 percent.

The top five destination countries visited by U.S. residents in 2015 were: Mexico (28.7 million) and Canada (12.5 million), followed by the overseas countries of the United Kingdom (2.9 million), Dominican Republic (2.8 million) and France (2.4 million). Nine of the top 10 destinations visited by U.S. travelers posted increases in 2015.

The top origin regions/states from which U.S. residents traveled to overseas destinations:

- Middle Atlantic States (New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania), with a 20 percent share of all U.S. regions, was down eight percent from 2014.
- South Atlantic States (primarily Florida, Georgia, Virginia, Washington, D.C., Maryland and North Carolina) accounted for 23 percent and travel was up 25 percent.
- Pacific States (California and Washington) generated 15 percent of outbound travel was down four percent from 2014.
- West South Central States (mainly Texas) registered a 12 percent share and travel was up 18 percent.
- Travel from East North Central (primarily Illinois, Ohio and Michigan) accounted for 10 percent and was up seven percent.

U.S. Overseas Traveler and Trip Characteristics:

Select highlights from 2015:

- **Main trip purpose.** **Vacation/holiday** estimated at 53 percent of U.S. overseas travelers was up 11 percent in volume from 2014. **Visiting friends and relatives (VFR)** was the second-highest main trip purpose, at 27 percent, and was up six percent in volume from 2014. **Business** travel, as the main purpose of trip, composed 10 percent of outbound travel; but volume was down five percent from 2014. **Convention** travel was three percent of travel and the number of convention travelers decreased nine percent in 2015.
- The top ten **ports of departure** for U.S. citizens were New York (JFK), Miami (MIA), Atlanta (ATL), Los Angeles (LAX), Newark (EWR), Chicago (ORD), San Francisco (SFO), Washington (IAD), Houston (IAH) and Boston (BOS) which accounted for 76 percent of U.S. departures.
- **Advance trip decision** time and **airline reservation time** increased to an average of 102 days and 70 days prior to departure, respectively, in 2015 compared to 2014.

- As an **information source** for trip planning, airlines were most used (52 percent), along with online travel agencies (OTA) (32 percent) and conventional travel agencies (17 percent). More than a third of travelers **booked** directly through the airlines (39 percent), a majority booked indirectly via either an Internet booking service (31 percent) and/or a travel agency (18 percent).
- **Pre-paid package** usage decreased slightly to 13 percent of U.S. travelers.
- The average **length of stay** (number of nights) outside the United States was 17.2 nights in 2015, down ½ day from 2014.
- Seven percent of travelers were on their **first international trip**, down from 2014, meaning the number of repeat travelers increased more. The average **number of international trips** taken by U.S. travelers in the last 12 months was 2.6, about the same as in 2014.
- The number of **destinations visited** averaged 1.8 in 2015. The percentage visiting only one destination was again 57 percent. Those visiting three or more destinations were also 20 percent as in 2014.
- Travel **party size** held at 1.6.
- The **modes** of inter-city transportation used by U.S. travelers **between destinations** overseas were airline (65 percent, down from 66 percent in 2014), bus (20 percent), and railroad (14 percent). The top modes of intra-city transit were taxicab/limo (30 percent) and subway/tram/bus (20 percent). The use of private and/or rented autos was 39 percent and 12 percent, respectively. Five percent traveled on cruise/river boat for overnight trips. Seven percent took short scenic cruises or used a ferry/river taxi.
- Top **leisure activities** for U.S. travelers were sightseeing, shopping, visiting small town/countryside, experiencing ‘fine dining’ (gastronomy), visiting historical locations, taking guided tours, visiting art galleries/museums, experiencing cultural/ethnic heritage sites, visiting national parks/monuments and ‘nightclubbing’.
- Average international airfare per visitor, per trip, was \$1,237 USD, down eight percent from 2014, and average expenditures (travel payments) per visitor, per trip, while overseas were \$1,487, flat from 2014. The usage of credit cards increased slightly to 56 percent. Cash brought from home and cash withdrawn from an ATM using credit/debit cards and purchases using debit cards accounted for 44 percent.
- Airfare and convenient schedules were main factors in airline choice. Over 81 percent ‘paid’ for the ticket without the use of awards, upgrades or deeply discounted fares. Seventy eight percent flew in coach or economy class.
- Travel insurance was purchased for the trip by 30 percent of respondents, up from 28 percent in 2014.
- Twelve percent visited a health care provider in advance of their trip, the same as in 2014.

Demographic Data:

- Fifteen percent of respondents identified themselves as Hispanic. Sixteen percent identified as Asian, eight percent as Black, and two percent as American Indian/Alaskan Native or Hawaiian Islander. Fifty-nine percent of U.S. citizens who visited Asia in 2014 identified themselves as Asian. Fifty-two percent of those visiting South America had identified as Hispanic.
- Females composed slightly over half (50.3%) of U.S. travelers to overseas. The number of women travelers continues to increase. (In 2000 women were 39 percent of U.S. outbound.) The average age of male travelers was 45.0, slightly down from 2014; female travelers averaged 43.5 years, also slightly down from 2014.

- Average household income was \$125,000, up from 2014. First time traveler households reported \$83,000 and repeat traveler households reported \$129,000 annual income. Seven percent of traveler households earned \$300,000 or more. Business and convention travelers earned an average \$153,000.

Top Outbound Destination Markets

Mexico

Mexico was the top U.S. international destination again in 2015 with a record setting 28.7 million travelers, up 11 percent from 2014. According to Banco de Mexico 'Tourist' (non-border) travel increased 14 percent in 2015 compared to 2014. However, those who only traveled across the border for 1+ nights increased four percent. Longer-haul travel by air totaled 8.0 million, and was up 15 percent from 2014. Travel to Mexico has remained relatively stable over the last 10 years. The strongest growth periods were in 2008, 2010 and 2013 through 2015.

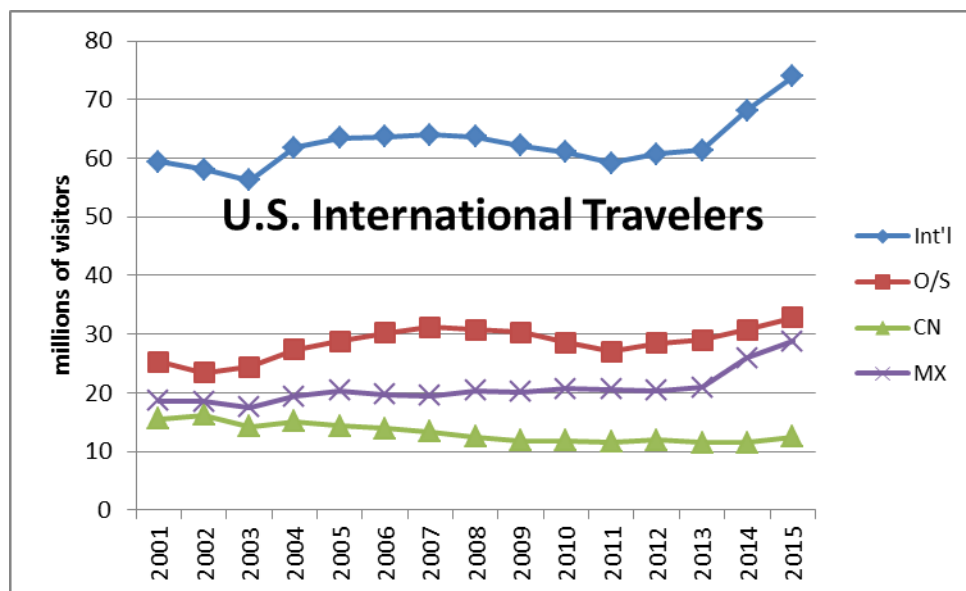
Canada

Canada continues to be the second-most visited country by U.S. travelers. In 2015, 12.5 million U.S. travelers visited Canada, up eight percent from 2014. Longer haul travel, by air (3.6 million), was up six percent. The peak year for U.S. travel to Canada was in 2002 with 16.2 million U.S. travelers. Since 2005, U.S. travel to Canada has declined in six of the last 10 years.

Overseas

In 2015, 32.8 million U.S. travelers visited overseas markets, an increase of seven percent from 2014.

Travel was up in nine of the top ten overseas markets: the United Kingdom, Dominican Republic, France, Italy, Jamaica, Spain, China, Bahamas and India. Visitation to Germany was down.



Source: National Travel and Tourism Office, U.S. Department of Commerce

For more detailed information, please go to the Outbound Overview page on NTTO's website, which contains links to in-depth information on the outbound market:

http://travel.trade.gov/outreachpages/outbound.general_information.outbound_overview.html

In the 2015 outbound section, interested parties will find:

- 2015 Profile of U.S. Resident Travelers Visiting Overseas Destinations. (The profile provides key information on travel patterns, traveler characteristics and spending by U.S. travelers going abroad. Several new tables have been included since the 2012 questionnaire change. In addition, a breakdown is provided on leisure/visiting friends and relatives (VFR) travelers and business/convention travelers.)
- 2015 U.S. to Europe Profile
- 2015 U.S. to Asia Profile
- 2015 U.S. to Overseas Destinations for Business/Conventions Profile
- 2015 U.S. to Overseas Destinations for Leisure/VFR Profile
- Top Destinations Visited by U.S. Resident Travelers 2014-2015
- Top 30 Ports of Departure (to overseas) in 2015 for U.S. Citizens
- Total International Travelers Volume to/from the United States 2006 – 2015
- U.S. Resident Travel to Canada, Mexico and Overseas (Historical 2000 – 2015)
- 10 Year Historical Travel Import Timelines
- Monthly U.S. international non-stop air traffic figures. (While air traffic is not the same as 'visitation,' it does provide a current indication of air traffic flows for U.S. citizen outbound travel.)

In addition to the data available on the web site, parties interested in subscribing to detailed standardized reports and/or customized data can do so by visiting the NTTO web site at:

<http://travel.trade.gov/research/programs/ifs/index.html>

If the information needed is not on the website or in the standard reports sold by NTTO, custom tables and reports are available from the database. Go to:

<http://travel.trade.gov/research/reports/ifs/customized.html>

The Survey data tables and standard national reports can assist the industry in understanding U.S. travelers going abroad. 48 subsets of the data are also available based on 40 questions asked of U.S. outbound travelers.

For additional information or questions, please contact:

U.S. Department of Commerce
International Trade Administration/Industry & Analysis
National Travel and Tourism Office (NTTO)
1401 Constitution Avenue NW, Mail Stop 10003
Washington, D.C. 20230
Phone:(202) 482-0140
Fax: (202) 482-2887
Website: //travel.trade.gov
Email: ntto@trade.gov