

The Boomer Project

10 Travel Trends for today's Boomer Consumer

Boomers are transforming the travel industry as they enter that stage of life where they can travel without the kids. Many of today's Boomers are new "empty nesters," which changes where they go, how long they stay, what they do there, how often they go, and how they travel. All 78 million Boomers are at their peak earning years and can spend more on travel than ever before. Here are ten travel trends Boomers will lead:

- 1 More "experiential" travel** - not just visit a place, but get immersed in the local culture by living with a family for part of the visit, or taking cooking classes from a local chef. As they grow older, Boomers realize life is now about "being someone" and not "becoming someone."
(look at cruise line ads showing all the different things one can do).
- 2 More "voluntourism" travel** - not just go on vacation to unwind but to give back - from Tsunami Relief packages to teaching English to working in a local clinic. The locations are unique or exotic and the work emotionally rewarding, just what older Boomers will want at this stage.
- 3 More "romance" travel** - after raising the kids it's time to rekindle the romance. Travel packages with ballroom dancing lessons, or co-ed massages, will be popular.
- 4 More "mastery" travel** - going to golf school, photography school, cooking, music, dancing, gardening, even exercise, as long as it is something they can begin to master in a week.
- 5 More "extended family" travel** - to places that accommodate large blended families so everyone - stepsiblings, mother-in-law, etc, can have their "space" and activities
- 6 More "adventure" travel** - to places that give you a rush - and enable you to prove to yourself that you're still vital and capable. Boomers aren't out to impress others any more, but want to impress themselves.
- 7 More "safety net" travel** - to places that have easily accessible medical services, contingency services, nursing services and easy access back home to handle "what if" scenarios and keep you connected.
- 8 More "tastings" travel** - two or three day mini-vacations to sample a place where they may return for a longer stay. These can happen mid-week, not just on long weekends, and can be fly or drive.
- 9 More "grandparent" travel** - places where they'll generate new experiences with the grandkids, trying to influence their lives, from educational to entertainment.
- 10 More "virtual" travel** - they'll visit you online before spending money to visit you in person. The better you make the online experience, the higher the conversion to real dollars on-site.

Learn more about Boomers over 50 in our new research report, "50 Things Every Travel Marketer Needs to Know about Boomers over 50." Available online at www.boomerproject.com.



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