

# BUZZ vs. REALITY

Edition #2

Global: Decoding the luxury travel consumer's mindset



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Looking back on the past three years, global travel has been challenged by a succession of exceptional circumstances. The luxury travel industry has had to show all its tenacity and resourcefulness to ride out this challenging and uncertain period. While many of these issues are likely to persist, there is now cause for real optimism as we move into a new era of luxury travel.

This year has seen travel continue to recover strongly, but with the impacts of the pandemic still being felt. Having been unable to enjoy their money over the past two years, the affluent are now looking to resume travelling in new and fulfilling ways, and in style. “No expense spared” and “Time is precious” are sentiments expressed by many.

So, what does luxury tourism now look like? There has been much discussion over the past three years about which traveller behaviours will now accelerate, which will stabilise, and which will recede. Increasingly, we are moving into a period of much more conscious and considerate tourism. Factors such as wellness, sustainability, philanthropy, and human connection will become more integral as people look to travel ‘better’. Extra bureaucracy will also ensure Travel Advisors remain essential in helping their clients have personal and stress-free trips.

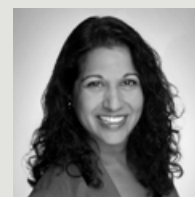
It is the changing travel landscape which is at the heart of this report. Now more than ever, this industry has to be finely tuned to what travellers desire most.

In this global edition of ‘Buzz vs Reality’, partnering with Altiant, together we bring a unique and comprehensive representation of what luxury global travel looks like today.

We hope that it will be a valuable resource for you and your teams for 2023 and beyond.



Alison Gilmore  
Portfolio Director - ILTM



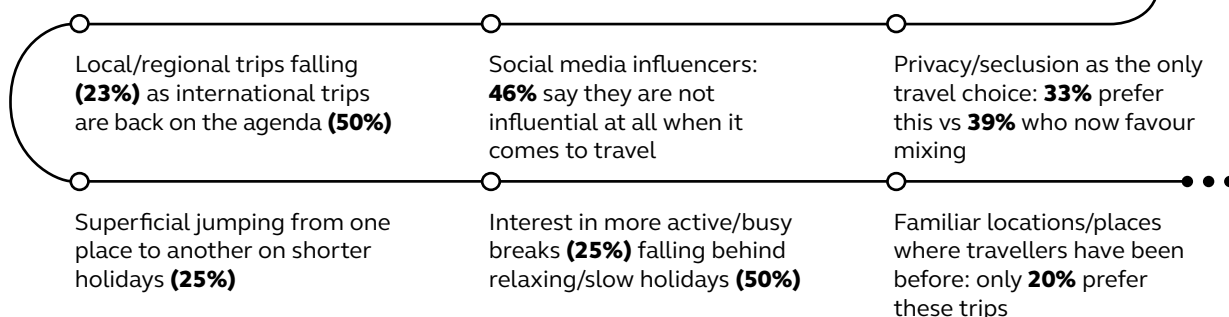
Sangeeta Naik  
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American Express Travel

The last three years have seen some fundamental changes in traveller behavior, with some trends accelerating, some slowing and others stabilising.

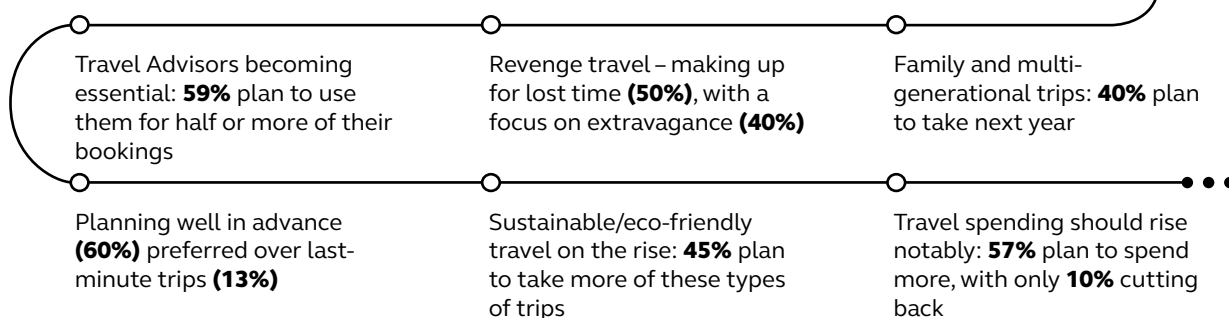
## What's Staying...



## What's Slowing...



## What's Growing...



## SECTION 1.

# Recent and Future Travel Trends

### KEY POINTS

**1/** Domestic holidays dominated over the past year: 91% of the affluent from Europe and the Americas took a trip within their country, while 82% of those from Asia Pacific did so.

**2/** City breaks, beach holidays and extended family breaks were the most popular holiday types last year overall, and are projected to remain so over the next 12 months. Boat cruises should see a notable upturn in interest, particularly among wealthy travellers from the Americas.

**3/** Overall, 57% of the global affluent expect to spend more on holidays than pre-Covid trips, peaking in the Americas at 73%. Only one in ten (10%) expect to cut back.

**4/** Around half are planning to travel more to make up for lost time, and to take celebration trips and more extravagant holidays than before.

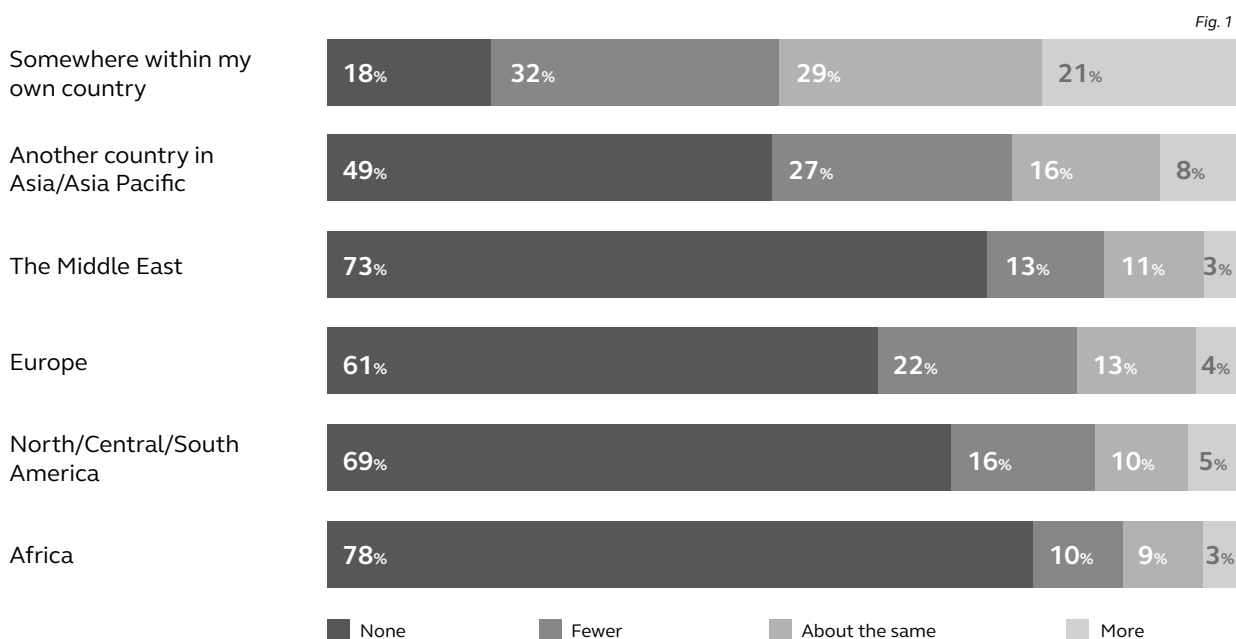
# Looking back: Domestic and regional travel comes to the fore

To start, let us look back at how travel has developed over the past year. Covid-19 continues to have a significant impact on travel plans, but most countries have now removed the majority, or all, of their restrictions.

As expected, there was a clear decrease in the overall number of holidays taken globally between summer 2021 and 2022 as trips were curtailed by the pandemic. International tourism in particular saw a downturn as domestic and regional travel became more popular vs pre-Covid years.

Caution was particularly high among Asian travellers where countries such as China and Japan have continued to see lockdowns reimposed and had sporadic Covid outbreaks. This impact on tourism meant that 82% of wealthy APAC individuals took a holiday within their own country, rising to 97% of Chinese. Meanwhile, 51% did so within Asia/Asia Pacific and only around a third ventured to the other continents.

## Over the past 12 months, did you take more, fewer or about the same number of holidays than pre-Covid to the following locations? [APAC]

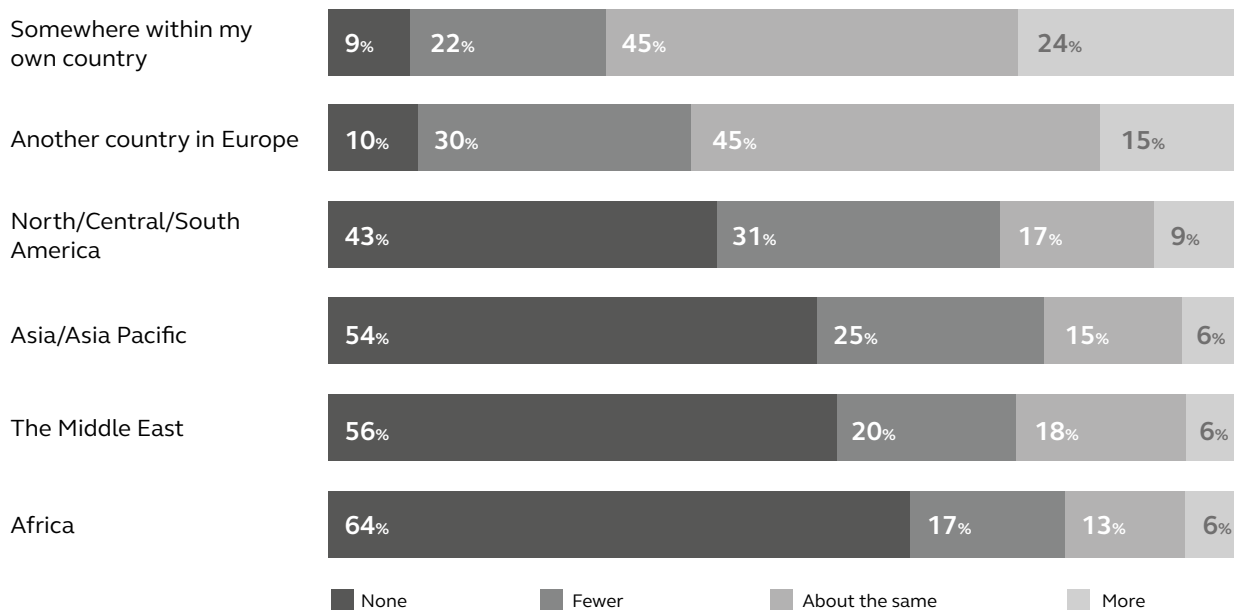


Europeans were also big domestic and regional travellers last year, with 91% doing so within their own country and 90% travelling to another country in Europe. There was a clear drop off in numbers for long-haul trips, albeit 57% still went to the Americas and just under half to Asia/Middle East.

Similarly, 91% of wealthy individuals from the Americas took a domestic trip last year, with 22% doing so more than before Covid. The sheer size of countries such as the US, Mexico and Brazil means that travellers are able to experience a wide variety of holiday types without ever needing their passport. Nevertheless, many did venture outside of their country, with 68% going elsewhere within the Americas, 58% going to Europe and 44% to Asia/Asia Pacific.

## Over the past 12 months, did you take more, fewer or about the same number of holidays than pre-Covid to the following locations? [Europe]

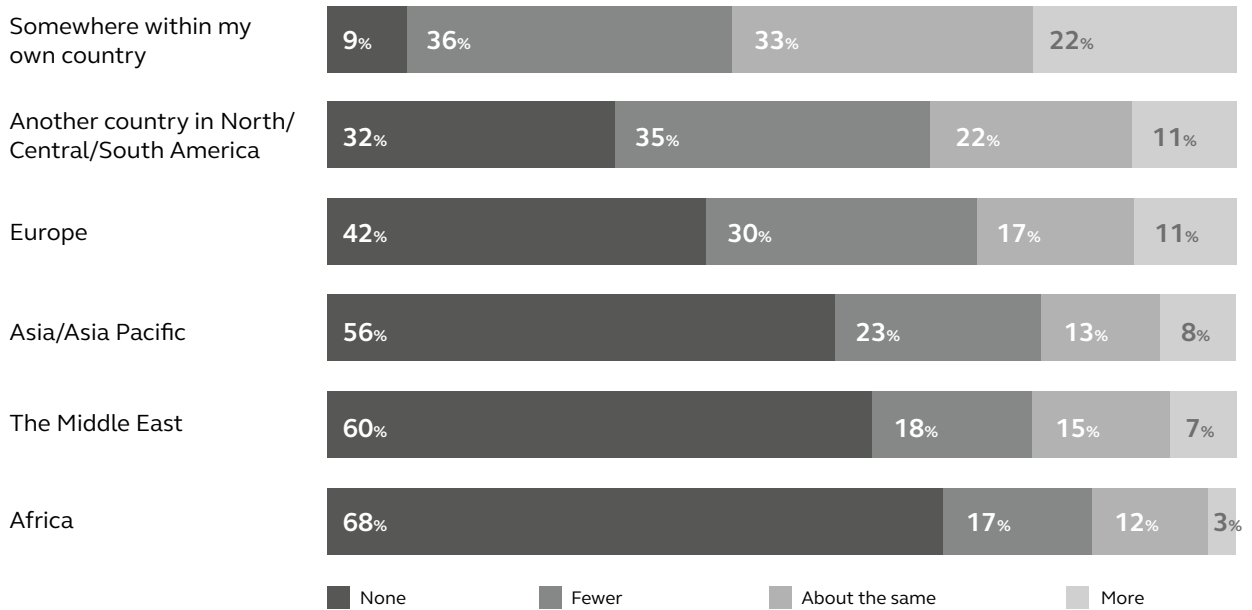
Fig. 2





# Over the past 12 months, did you take more, fewer or about the same number of holidays than pre-Covid to the following locations? [Americas]

Fig. 3



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# Beach holidays, city breaks and extended family trips top the list

While there are some similarities in the types of holidays taken across all three regions – such as the overall popularity of city breaks and beach holidays – we can also see some stark variance across the regions. For example, city breaks prove to be particularly popular among affluent Europeans while beach holidays hold a limited appeal among affluent Asians. That wealthy Asians were less likely to have travelled last year also means they were the least likely to take many of the different types of holidays.

**Multi-generational and extended family trips have been projected to be a key growth area in recent years and this is reflected in our data. While just over a third of wealthy Europeans and Asians took one of these trips last year, more than half of travellers from the Americas did so. Meanwhile, around a third of the total sample also said that they took a rural/countryside trip and a cultural trip last year, with Europeans the most likely to do so in both cases.**

Much has been written about the mental and physical toll of the pandemic, leading to many wanting to unwind, destress and improve their wellbeing. Wellness was already a market with strong growth prior to 2020 and this has accelerated since the Covid-19 outbreak, particularly in the Americas.

Around a quarter took a physical/mental wellness break last year and many luxury hotels are now catering to this growing industry in increasingly comprehensive and innovative ways. Under-45s are significantly more likely than over-45s to have taken most types of holidays last year, particularly so for wellness and nature-based holidays.
































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## Which of the following types of holidays do you expect to take within the next year?

Fig. 4

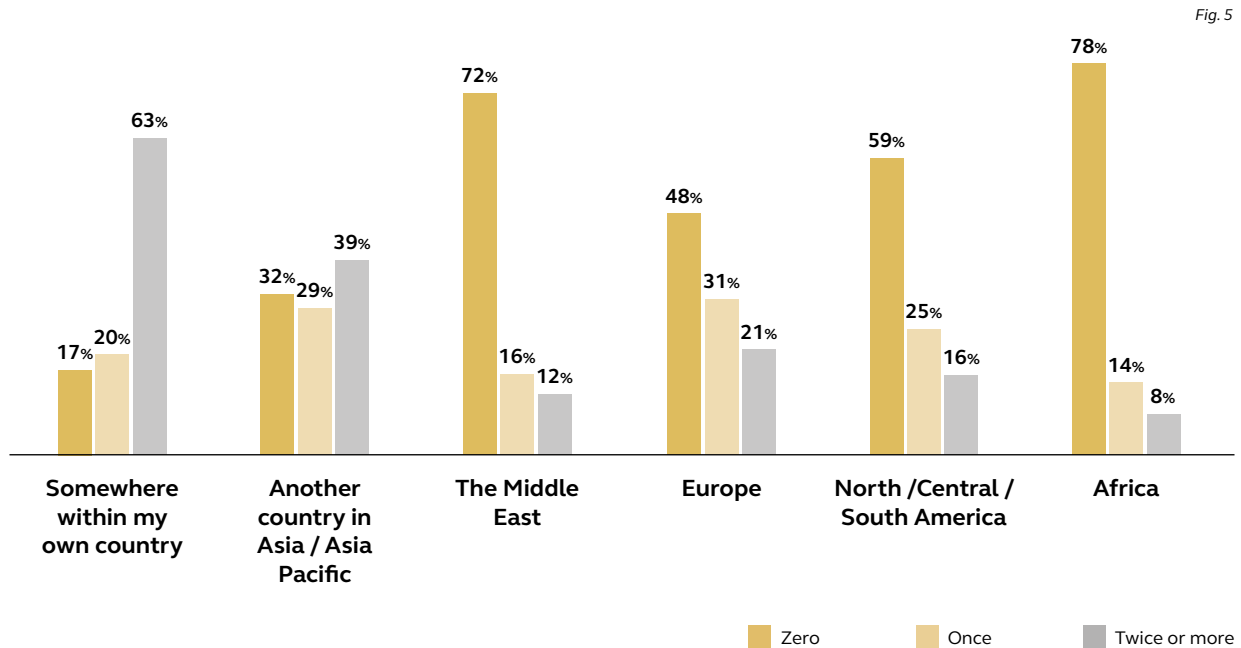
	APAC	Europe	Americas	Highest	
Any type	87%	97%	97%	France (100%)	
 Beach holiday	38%	66%	68%	Italy (80%)	
 City break	41%	67%	44%	UK (73%)	
 Extended family holiday (e.g. with parents/grandparents)	36%	34%	52%	France (59%)	
 Cultural trip	23%	42%	36%	France (59%)	
 Rural/countryside	30%	38%	29%	UK (52%)	
 Activity holiday (e.g. golf, cycling)	19%	34%	26%	France (41%)	
 Physical wellness	20%	31%	25%	France (50%)	
 Workations (e.g. extending a business trip)	19%	26%	33%	Brazil (41%)	
 Travelling holiday (e.g. river cruise, coach/train trip)	20%	25%	25%	Italy (39%)	
 Mental wellness	16%	19%	39%	Brazil (46%)	
 Solo travel	18%	19%	29%	China (35%)	
 Nature-based/low-carbon travel (e.g. conservation)	18%	16%	25%	China (44%)	
 Boat cruise	12%	17%	18%	China (28%)	
 Private transportation (e.g. private jets, yachts)	13%	14%	20%	S. Korea (22%)	
 Virtual tour (e.g. Egyptian pyramids, Louvre Museum)	11%	12%	16%	Brazil (25%)	
 Educational trips	6%	10%	15%	Mexico (19%)	

# Looking forward: Resuming travel in earnest

Switching to looking forward, we can see that domestic and regional travel will remain popular for wealthy global travellers despite the immediate threat of Covid receding. Factors such as health, convenience, climate concerns and supporting their own economy are reasons why some may continue to eschew longer-haul breaks, particularly in the older age groups.

In terms of domestic trips, 83% of Asians expect to take at least one domestic holiday within the next year. Regional trips will also remain popular and are expected to be taken by 68% of Asians, with 39% anticipating taking two or more. Nevertheless, there are also signs of the desire to travel further afield again. More than half (52%) expect to visit somewhere in Europe over the next year while 41% plan to visit the Americas and a quarter to the Middle East or Africa.

## How often do you plan to travel to the following regions over the next 12 months? [APAC]



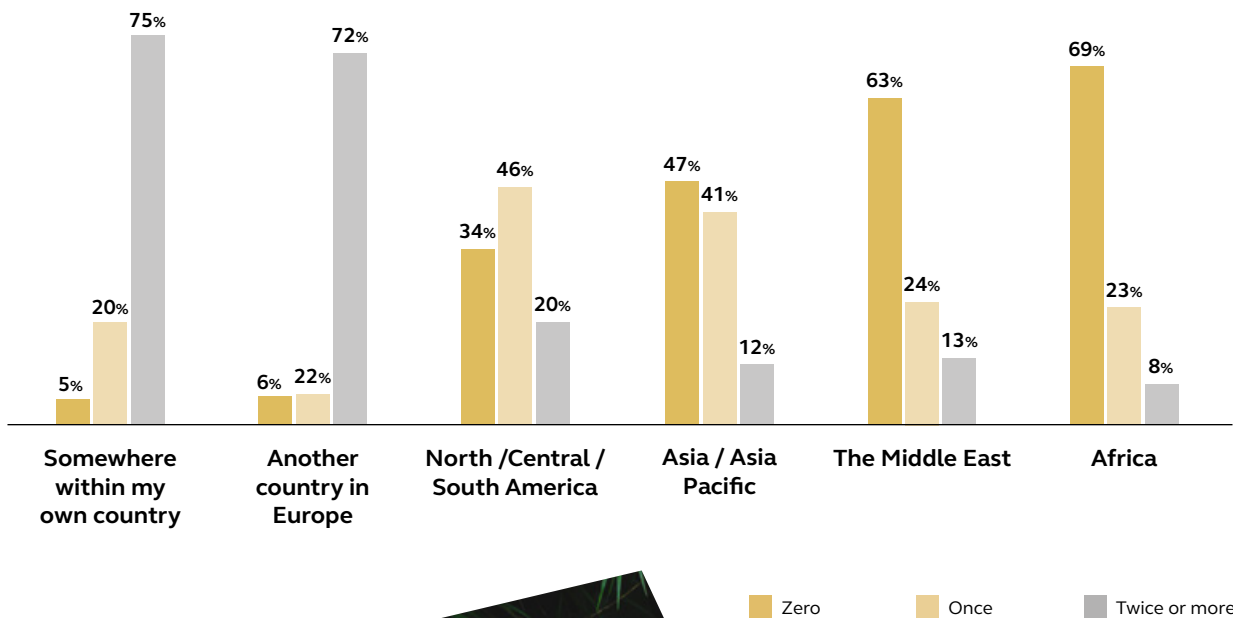


Domestic travel will also lead the way among wealthy Europeans: 95% plan to take at least one of these trips over the next year and three-quarters expect to take two or more. Strong travel connections and relatively short distances mean that nearly all Europeans also expect to holiday

regionally: 72% plan to take two or more of these trips. Europeans are also likely to be prolific travellers further afield, with 66% planning to visit the Americas, 53% to Asia/Asia Pacific and around a third to the Middle East and Africa.

## How often do you plan to travel to the following regions over the next 12 months? [Europe]

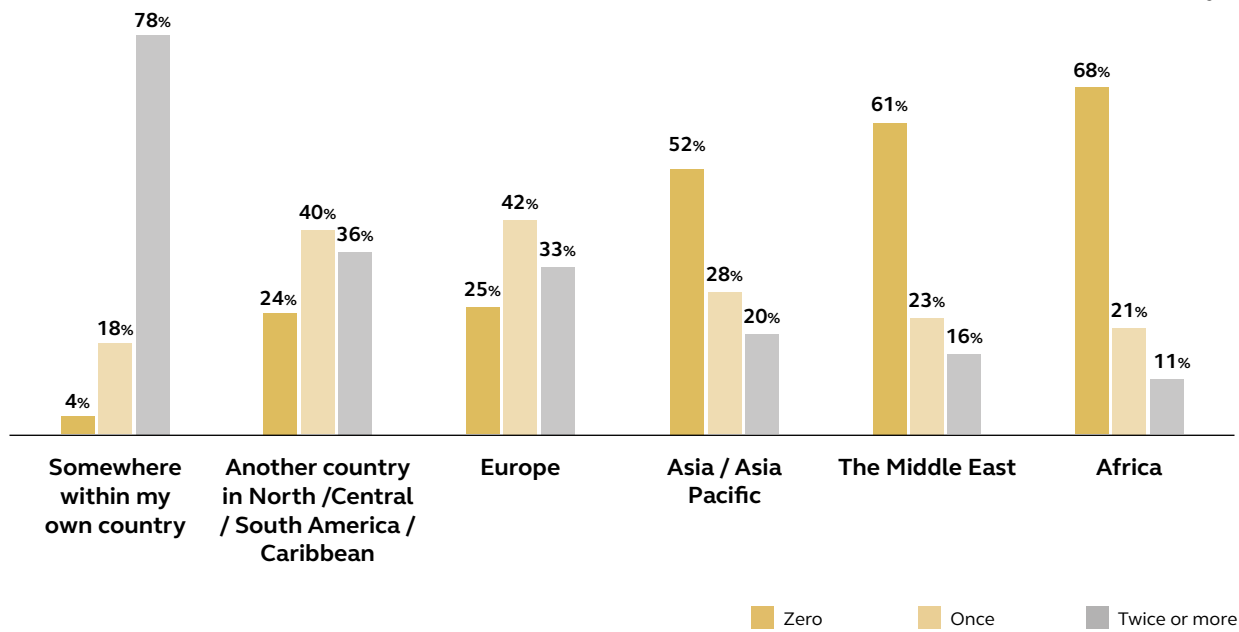
Fig. 6



Nearly all (96%) affluent individuals from the Americas plan to travel within their own country next year, with 78% planning to do so two or more times. Three-quarters expect to visit another country in the region (76%) and Europe (75%), falling to just under half for Asia/Asia Pacific, and around a third for trips to the Middle East and Africa.

## How often do you plan to travel to the following regions over the next 12 months? [Americas]

Fig. 7



# Visiting family and friends shapes global travellers' immediate plans

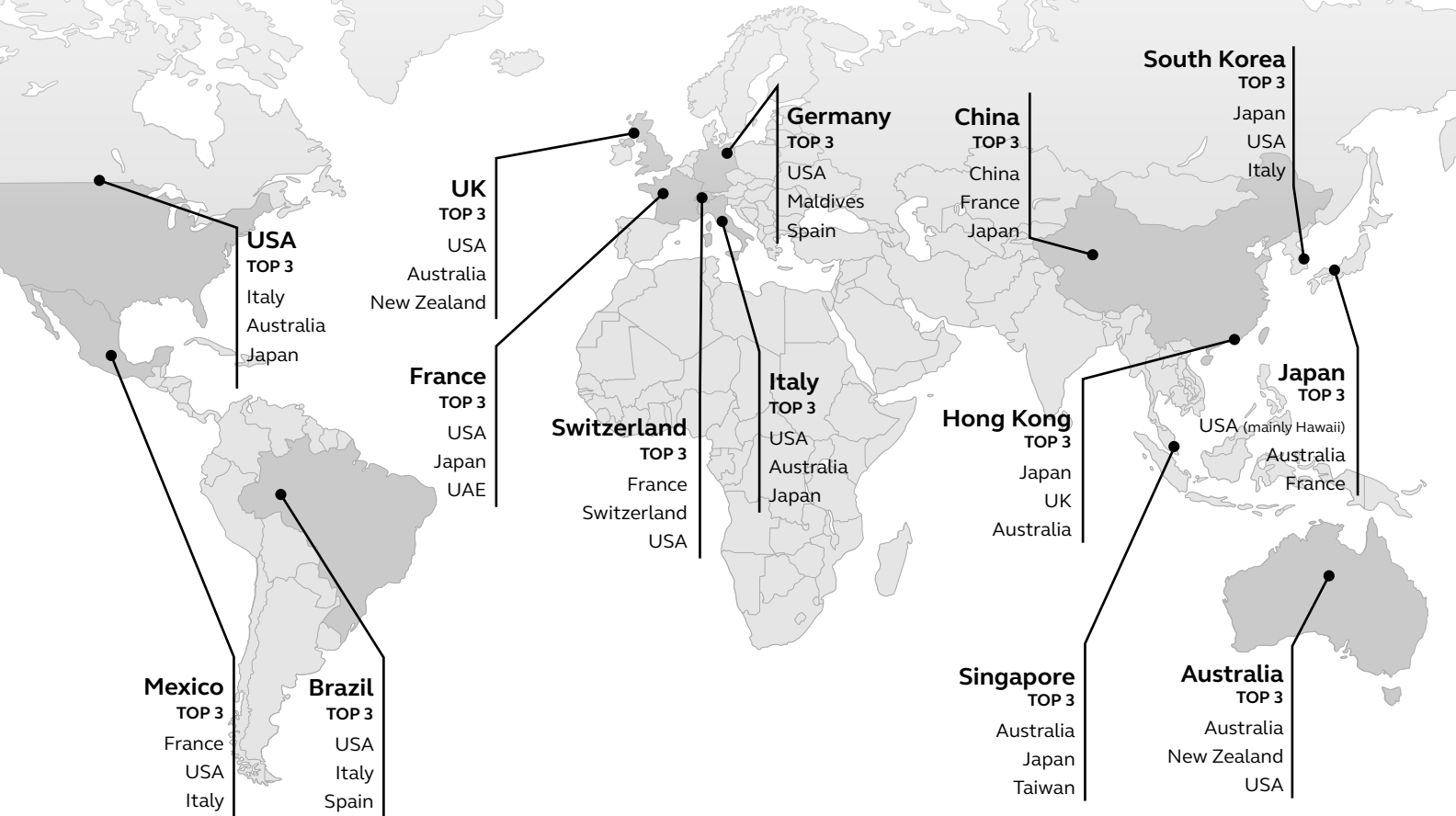


Fig. 8

Visiting family and friends or overseas property are two of the main holiday drivers for affluent travellers over the next year. **Enforced absences due to the pandemic mean that the wealthy are looking to reconnect with their loved ones, often leading to them staying close to home or visiting their homeland.** Reflecting their relatively strict travel protocols, Australians and the Chinese continue to be particularly likely to favour domestic trips or those which are reasonably close by.

**However, there is a clearly growing confidence to travel and see the world again. Very few affluent travellers from Europe and the Americas say that they would remain within their country if they only had one holiday next year.**

The US is one of the most popular locations for residents of many of the other countries and is the most popular among wealthy British, German, Italian, French and Brazilian travellers. Australia, Italy and Japan also emerge as popular locations for these travellers' potential trips over the next year. For Americans themselves, Australia, Japan, Israel and European countries such as Italy appeal most of all.



# Most holiday types look set to grow strongly in the year ahead

Which of the following types of holidays do you expect to take within the next year?

Fig. 9

	APAC	Europe	Americas	Highest	
Any type	94% (+7)	98% (+1)	99% (+2)	France, Mexico, Singapore (100%)	
Beach holiday	48% (+10)	62% (-4)	61% (-7)	UK (72%)	
City break	43% (+2)	61% (-6)	44% (=)	UK (73%)	
Extended family holiday (e.g. with parents/grandparents)	38% (+2)	33% (-1)	52% (=)	US (55%)	
Cultural trip	31% (+8)	45% (+3)	41% (+5)	France (57%)	
Rural/countryside	31% (+1)	36% (-2)	31% (+2)	UK (55%)	
Travelling holiday (e.g. river cruise, coach/train trip)	28% (+8)	31% (+6)	32% (+7)	Italy (47%)	
Activity holiday (e.g. golf, cycling)	26% (+7)	37% (+3)	23% (-3)	Switzerland (47%)	
Physical wellness	23% (+3)	33% (+2)	33% (+8)	France (46%)	
Mental wellness	25% (+9)	25% (+6)	41% (+2)	Brazil (43%)	
Workations (e.g. extending a business trip)	20% (+1)	29% (+3)	36% (+3)	Brazil (45%)	
Boat cruise	18% (+6)	25% (+8)	35% (+17)	Brazil (41%)	
Nature-based/low-carbon travel (e.g. conservation)	24% (+6)	18% (+2)	29% (+4)	China (53%)	
Solo travel	19% (+1)	22% (+3)	29% (=)	Brazil (32%)	
Private transportation (e.g. private jets, yachts)	13% (=)	18% (+4)	22% (+2)	France (31%)	
Virtual tour (e.g. Egyptian pyramids, Louvre Museum)	12% (+1)	13% (+1)	21% (+5)	Brazil (32%)	
Educational trips	10% (+4)	11% (+1)	21% (+6)	Brazil (24%)	

\* Note: Numbers in brackets represent the percentage point change vs holidays taken last year



**Most types of holidays should see an upturn in popularity among global travellers in the year ahead, again reflecting the growing confidence to travel. The significant majority of the wealthy expect to travel over the next year, taking various types of trips.**

Among those from APAC, beach holidays should see a clear uptick in popularity (up to 48%), albeit remaining some way behind the other regions. City breaks (43%) and extended family breaks (38%) remain the other most popular holiday types for planned trips. Mental and physical wellness should also see growth among affluent APAC travellers in the year ahead.

For Europeans, the two most popular types of holidays will remain beach holidays and city breaks, although these may both see a small fall in popularity. Instead, change appears to be preferred, with boat cruises (+8 percentage points), mental wellness breaks and travelling trips (both +6) set to grow in the year ahead.

A similar pattern emerges among wealthy travellers from the Americas, where beach holidays should remain the most popular type of holiday (61%), albeit a little less popular than last year. Instead, trips such as travelling holidays (+8), physical wellness (+7) and educational trips (+6) may see robust growth.

However, it is the +17 percentage point growth in boat cruises which is particularly eye-catching and points towards a growing willingness to be close to other travellers. While this is partly due to wealthy Americans, much of this increase is driven by affluent Brazilians (+17) and Mexicans (+29).



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# Travellers from the Americas are most likely to be bullish on spending

In all three regions, there is a clearly positive intention to spend more on travelling in the year ahead vs pre-Covid trips. This sentiment is highest in the Americas where almost three quarters plan to spend more, with 29% planning to spend much more. Wealthy Mexicans are particularly bullish about their spending intention, with four in five planning to increase holiday expenditure and only 7% cutting back. Similarly, under-45s are more likely than over-45s across the sample to expect to increase their spending over the next year (64% vs 50% respectively).

*"I want MORE luxury - more business/first class, 5-star hotels (instead of 4 stars) and probably longer stays and farther trips. One thing I did learn about Covid is take more time off!"*

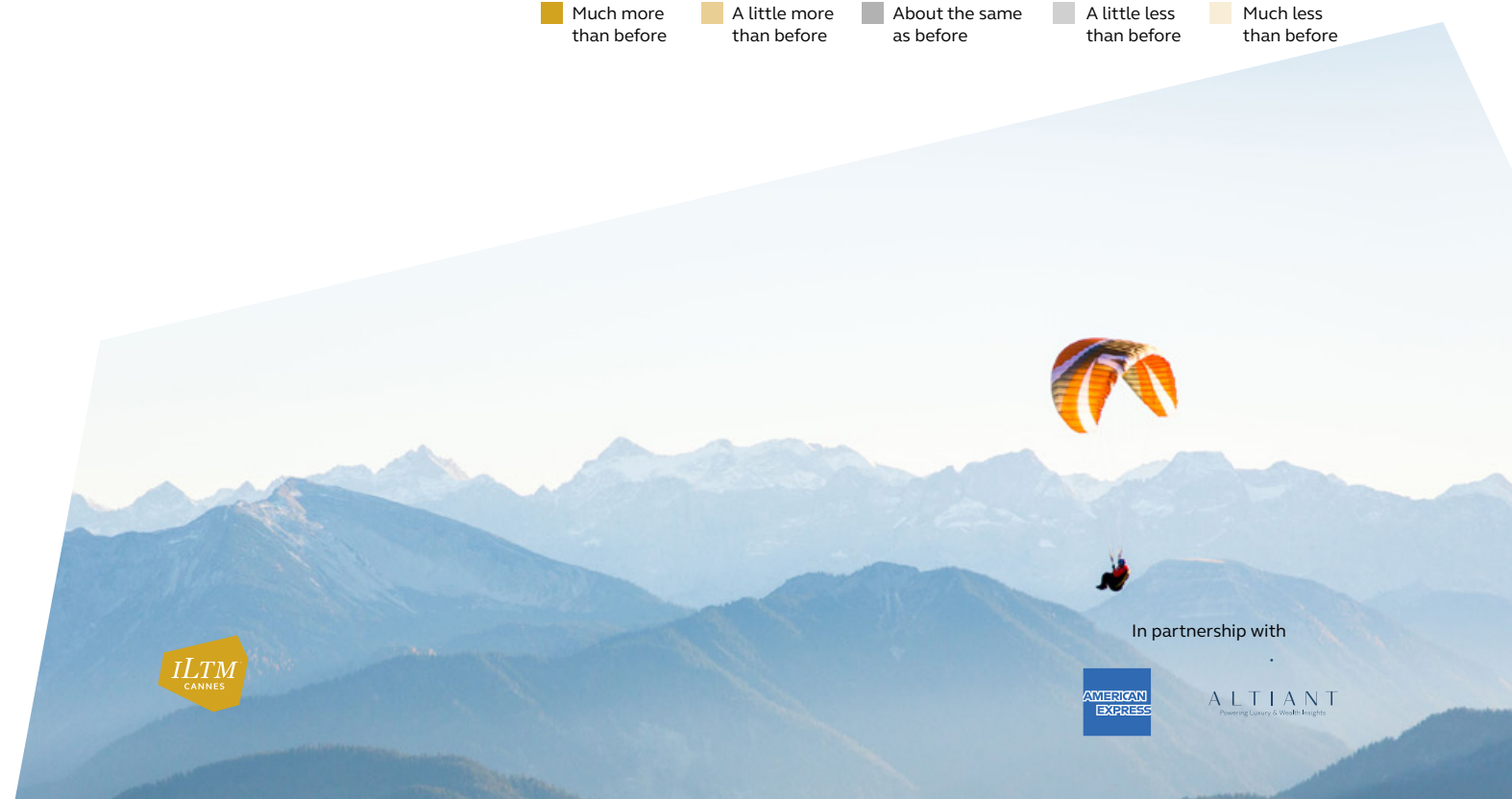
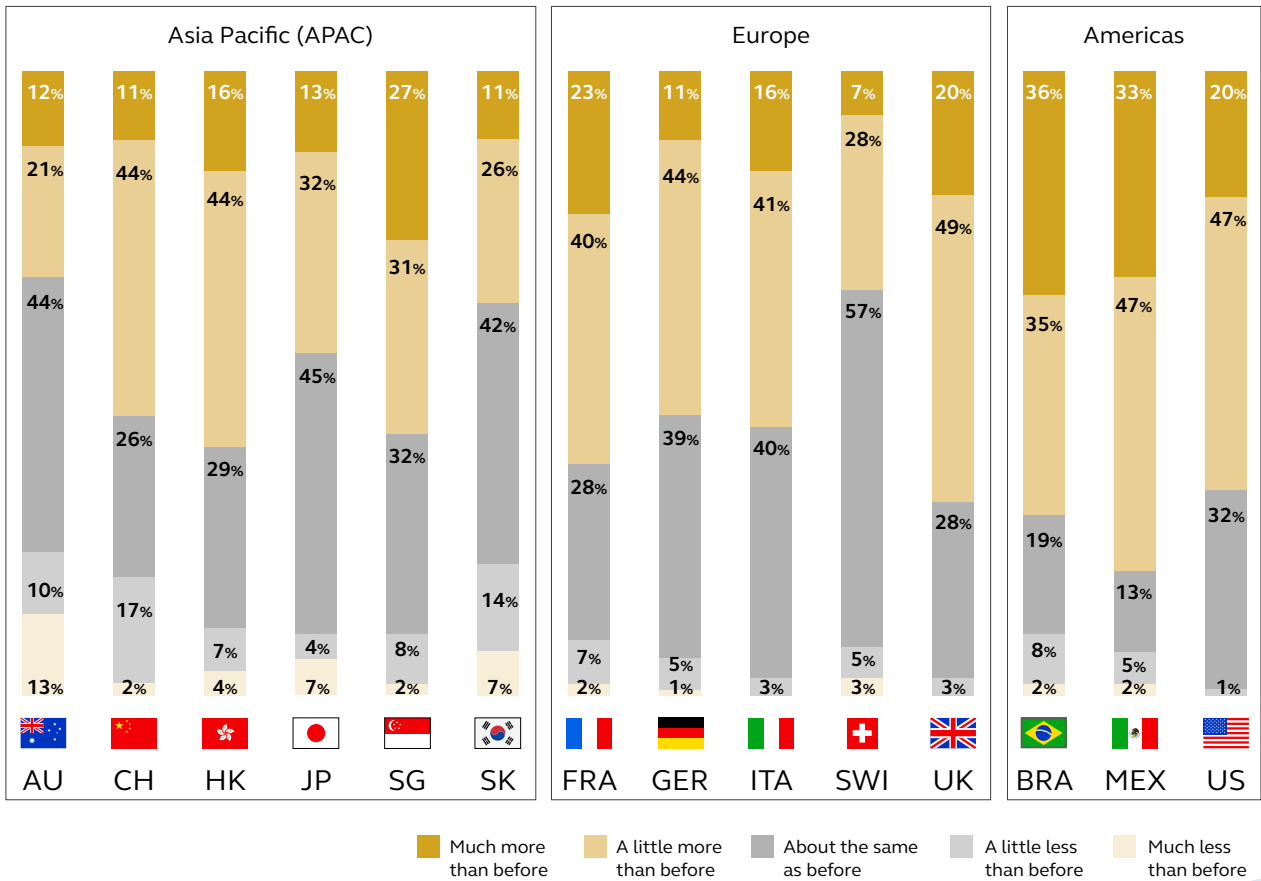
American 45-54-year-old male

Europeans are also upbeat about their spending intention, with around two-thirds expecting to spend more in all five countries. Meanwhile, Asian travellers are the most conservative, a likely reflection of ongoing pandemic uncertainties and lockdowns at the time of the APAC research (July 2022). Singaporeans plan to increase their spending the most, with 27% saying they will spend much more than before, and 31% a little more. However, only around a third of Australians and South Koreans expect to spend more, with almost a quarter cutting back vs pre-Covid trips.



# Over the next 12 months, do you plan to spend more or less on holidays than for pre-Covid trips?

Fig. 10

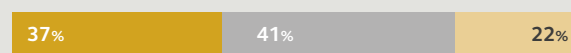


## Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

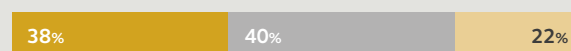
Fig. 11

### APAC

I am planning to take more extravagant holidays than before



I am planning to travel more in case restrictions re-emerge



I am planning to travel more to make up for lost time



I plan to take a celebration trip (e.g. birthday, anniversary) within the next year

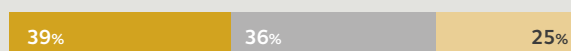


### Europe

I am planning to take more extravagant holidays than before



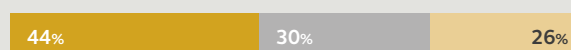
I am planning to travel more in case restrictions re-emerge



I am planning to travel more to make up for lost time



I plan to take a celebration trip (e.g. birthday, anniversary) within the next year



### Americas

I am planning to take more extravagant holidays than before



I am planning to travel more in case restrictions re-emerge



I am planning to travel more to make up for lost time







I plan to take a celebration trip (e.g. birthday, anniversary) within the next year



■ Agree    ■ Neutral    ■ Disagree

## Most likely to agree

I am planning to take more extravagant holidays than before I am planning to take more extravagant holidays than before	 CH	59%
I am planning to travel more in case restrictions re-emerge	 MEX	59%

I am planning to travel more to make up for lost time	 BRA	65%
I plan to take a celebration trip (e.g. birthday, anniversary) within the next year	 MEX	77%

Traveller sentiment from the Americas is also particularly positive about making up for lost time, driven mainly by wealthy Brazilians and Mexicans. Almost three-quarters say that they plan to take a celebratory trip within the next year, while 61% plan to travel more to make up for lost time. These numbers are comfortably higher

than in Europe and APAC, where there is nevertheless still a clearly positive sentiment for these statements. Chinese travellers are notably more likely than average to agree here, reflecting the ongoing lockdowns which they have experienced over the past two years.

*“I prioritise quality of life. Travelling is an excellent therapy for our mental health.”*

**Brazilian 55-64-year-old female**

*“It feels like it’s time to resume a full travel schedule. While we travelled some during Covid, it was mostly domestic. Often, we found services unavailable, lack of staff, confusing Covid restrictions dampening our interest in traveling. While we are fully vaccinated and have booster shots, we are now seeing countries release their restrictions and start to get back to normal again.”*

**American 45-54-year-old female**

*“Planning holidays in quieter times, to less busy places, with more open fresh air such as beaches or rural”*

**Japanese 45-54-year-old female**



## SECTION 2.

# Push and Pull Factors

### KEY POINTS

- 1/** Health and safety/hygiene of the location is the most influential factor for holiday bookings. Just over half (54%) of the total sample now prioritise this, peaking among wealthy travellers from APAC and the Americas.
- 2/** Health and safety concerns are also the most likely deterrent to visiting a location or travelling there more (51%), peaking among APAC travellers at 59%.
- 3/** Holidays booked in advance (60%) and new venues/experiences (56%) are now strongly preferred over trips booked at the last minute (13%) or to previously visited places (20%).
- 4/** Holidays which are taken overseas, last a week or more and are relaxing or 'slower' in nature are also all preferred by 50% or more of wealthy global travellers.

# Health and safety/hygiene lead the way in importance for holiday bookings

**The health and safety/hygiene of a location is something which many travellers may have largely taken for granted and expected by default prior to 2020. However, the enduring impact of the pandemic means that this is now the leading factor in all three regions (54% overall).**

More than half of wealthy travellers from APAC and the Americas now list this as influential for them for holiday bookings, falling slightly to 46% among Europeans. This is a likely reason for the popularity of domestic tourism as seen in Section 1, with many affluent travellers preferring the relative security of remaining within their own country.

Overall, retail and food/drink is the second most important factor influencing holiday bookings, cited by 40% overall but rising to 60% of wealthy Americans. This is followed closely by culture, arts and history (35%), which also peaks among wealthy travellers from the Americas. Price is a somewhat more peripheral consideration for affluent

travellers overall (31%), with Australians being the most price-sensitive (62%). Just under a third also state that the people will influence their next booking, again reflecting many travellers' wish to reconnect with others and have more human experiences.

**On the back of Cop27 in Egypt, there continues to be considerable ongoing discussion about how travel fits into a world grappling with the climate crisis. The need for the tourism industry to 'build back better' after Covid is resonating with many wealthy individuals, with just over a quarter saying that sustainability and environmental protection are important to them (rising to 35% of under-45s and 62% of Chinese).**

Other countries in the study also show markedly different priorities, such as Germans' preference for seclusion and privacy, the Swiss' desire for customised itineraries and South Koreans' interest in therapy retreats.



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





























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## Thinking about your next holiday booking, which of the following factors are most important to you?

Fig. 12

	APAC	Europe	Americas	Highest	
 Health and safety/hygiene of the location (e.g. country/city)	57%	46%	58%	Mexico (61%)	
 Retail and food/drink (e.g. shopping/restaurants/wine tasting)	41%	38%	41%	US (60%)	
 Culture/arts/history (e.g. theatre)	28%	39%	42%	Mexico (50%)	
 Price	34%	27%	32%	Australia (62%)	
 Seclusion and privacy	31%	34%	29%	Germany (51%)	
 The people	21%	37%	36%	US (52%)	
 Sustainability and environmental protection of the accommodation	31%	27%	25%	China (62%)	
 Customised itineraries	24%	37%	28%	Switzerland (47%)	
 Geo-political situation of the country/region	23%	32%	14%	France (49%)	
 Physical wellness (e.g. fitness classes, health/beauty treatments)	24%	28%	24%	Italy (41%)	
 Nightlife/entertainment	12%	18%	28%	Brazil (32%)	
 Therapy retreats/services specially directed at mental health	19%	13%	18%	S. Korea (34%)	
 Sporting and music events	11%	9%	18%	Brazil (24%)	
 Philanthropic travel (e.g. giving back to communities)	13%	9%	10%	China (26%)	
Other/None of these	3%	3%	1%	—	





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## Many wealthy individuals are changing their travel behaviour

A variety of different behaviours have begun since the start of the pandemic, mostly relating to planning in advance and trying to mitigate unforeseen events. Some of the responses from this research are shown below:

*"Covid has made me even more aware that life is impermanent, and we must live in the moment and be happy in time!"*

**Hong Kong 25-34-year-old female**

*"I am now reducing the number of holidays I take, but extending their length."*

**British 25-34-year-old female**

*The real difference is in recognising the value of not taking holidays for granted but as a real opportunity to embrace other cultures and experiences. Covid shrank the world, and I/we want that world of experience opened up again.*

**British 45-54-year-old male**

*"I am searching for more information about tourist destinations and spending more time planning trips."*

**Italian 45-54-year-old male**

*"I looked at the distance and thought that given the CO2 cost of long-distance leisure travel was not a necessity, it was better to go less far and discover and rediscover nearer locations."*

**French 55-64-year-old female**

*"I am going more to quiet places but where you can meet the locals, get into local life."*

**French 55-64-year-old female**

## Planning holidays in advance come to the fore

**Overall, the pandemic appears to have had an impact on spontaneity when it comes to planning holidays. Three in five wealthy travellers now say that they prefer to plan in advance, rising to 69% among those from the Americas. Only 13% have a stated preference to now book at the last minute, suggesting that travel operators should be exploring and incentivising travel options with their clients well in advance.**

The other least divisive factor in our research is that 56% of the total sample prefer new venues/experiences vs only 20% favouring ones which they have had before. The pandemic has led many travellers to want the new and unique, a mindset which also applies when they are travelling. Similarly, 49% say that they prefer holidays where they explore the local area (with Europeans the most adventurous at 58%), vs only 28% who prefer trips where they mostly stay at the hotel/resort.

*“I am choosing the destination well in advance now.”*

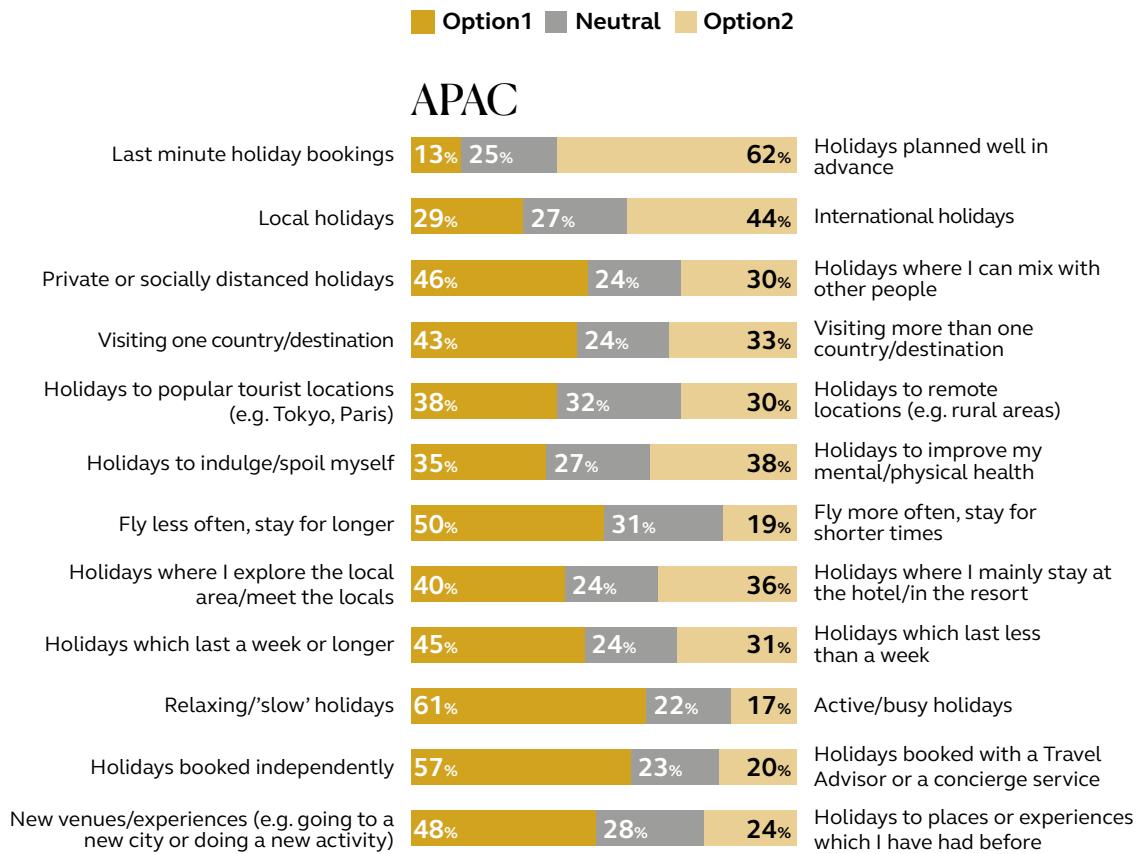
**Brazilian 25-34-year-old female**

*“New experiences can make you happy, every trip is a little adventure. You can explore your own limits, expand them and overcome fears. I’ve finally realised what I’ve always dreamed of. Swimming with dolphins? Diving with sharks? Hiking through the Grand Canyon? There is hardly anything that will make you happier than realising your dreams.”*

**German 45-54-year-old female**

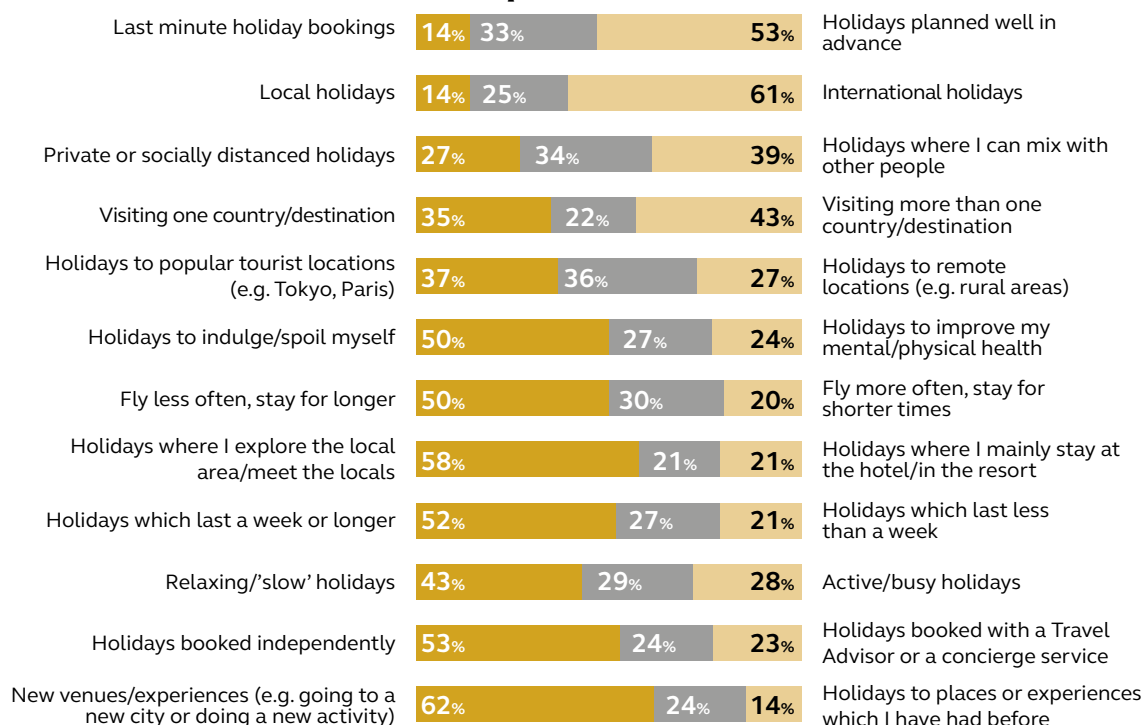
# Which of the following is most relevant to your holiday plans over the next year?

Fig. 13

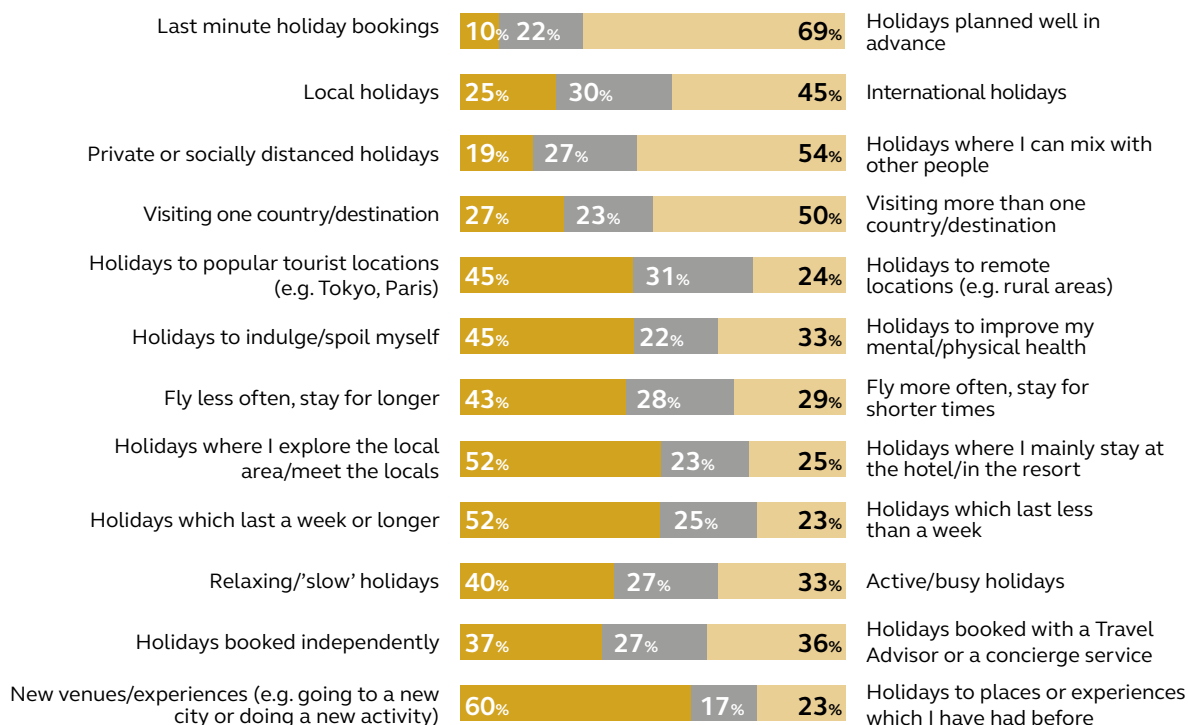




## Europe



## Americas



The pandemic has also meant that relaxing/slower holidays are now more popular than active ones (50% vs 25%) as people look to unwind and recuperate after the past two years. This should continue buoying growth in the wellness and therapy sector. Wealthy APAC travellers are particularly likely to prefer sedate trips, whereas there is a more equitable preference for active and lower-key options from the Americas.

Another related trend which has accelerated since 2020 has been the desire for longer holidays which last a week or more: 50% prefer these vs just 25% for shorter trips. Similarly, almost half (48%) say that they prefer to fly less often and stay for longer rather than taking whistle-stop, superficial breaks (22%). These results point towards more sedate and relaxing holidays where travellers can unwind, but also gain a greater understanding of the places and communities they visit.

We are now also seeing clear signs of pre-Covid trends returning. Travel over the past two years has had been heavily oriented towards seclusion and privacy, but only a third of wealthy global travellers now prefer private or socially-distanced holidays, driven by the APAC response (46%). Instead, many travellers, particularly those from the Americas (54%), are showing a clear preference for mixing with other people on their holidays.

Travellers from the Americas are also the most likely of the three regions to prefer going to popular tourist locations with lots of people (45% vs 39% overall). Furthermore, half of the sample now say they prefer international holidays vs 23% for those which are more local. These findings point towards rising confidence in seeing the world again and taking more exploratory, social holidays.

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*“...Extending the holiday beyond just a few days, spending more time in one location, not rushing from place to place.”*

**American 35-44-year-old male**

*“I want to take more advantage of the opportunities to know new places, to relax with my family, especially after everything that the world has lived in recent years; so I want to enjoy myself more.”*

**Brazilian 35-44-year-old male**

# Health and safety concerns will continue to influence bookings

**Health and safety concerns relating to Covid-19 continue to shape travellers' plans. Many wealthy travellers say that they are now checking factors such as vaccination, infection rates and hotel cleaning protocols before choosing where to travel. This is the leading deterrent in all three regions (51% overall), rising highest among APAC travellers to 59% vs just under half of those from Europe and the Americas. It remains important for travel companies to focus on exemplary cleaning standards and reassuring guests of their safety whenever possible.**

The next most influential deterrent relates to personal safety/security concerns, cited by 44% of the total sample. Brits are the most likely of the 14 countries surveyed to cite this as a negative, as well as being the most likely to be put off by uncertainty about local politics/customs and potential delays or

cancellations of flights. A number of airport and flight issues over summer 2022 may have elevated this response among British travellers, with over-45s also being more likely to be deterred by this issue.

Elsewhere, there is a rather wide variance of deterrents across the different countries. While Australians are most likely to be deterred by cost, the French are by climate/temperature, Swiss by poor sustainability credentials and South Koreans by language barriers and cultural differences. This again underlines the wide diversity of preferences and behaviours among international travellers.

*"I am planning ahead and aware of health and safety issues at my travel locations."*

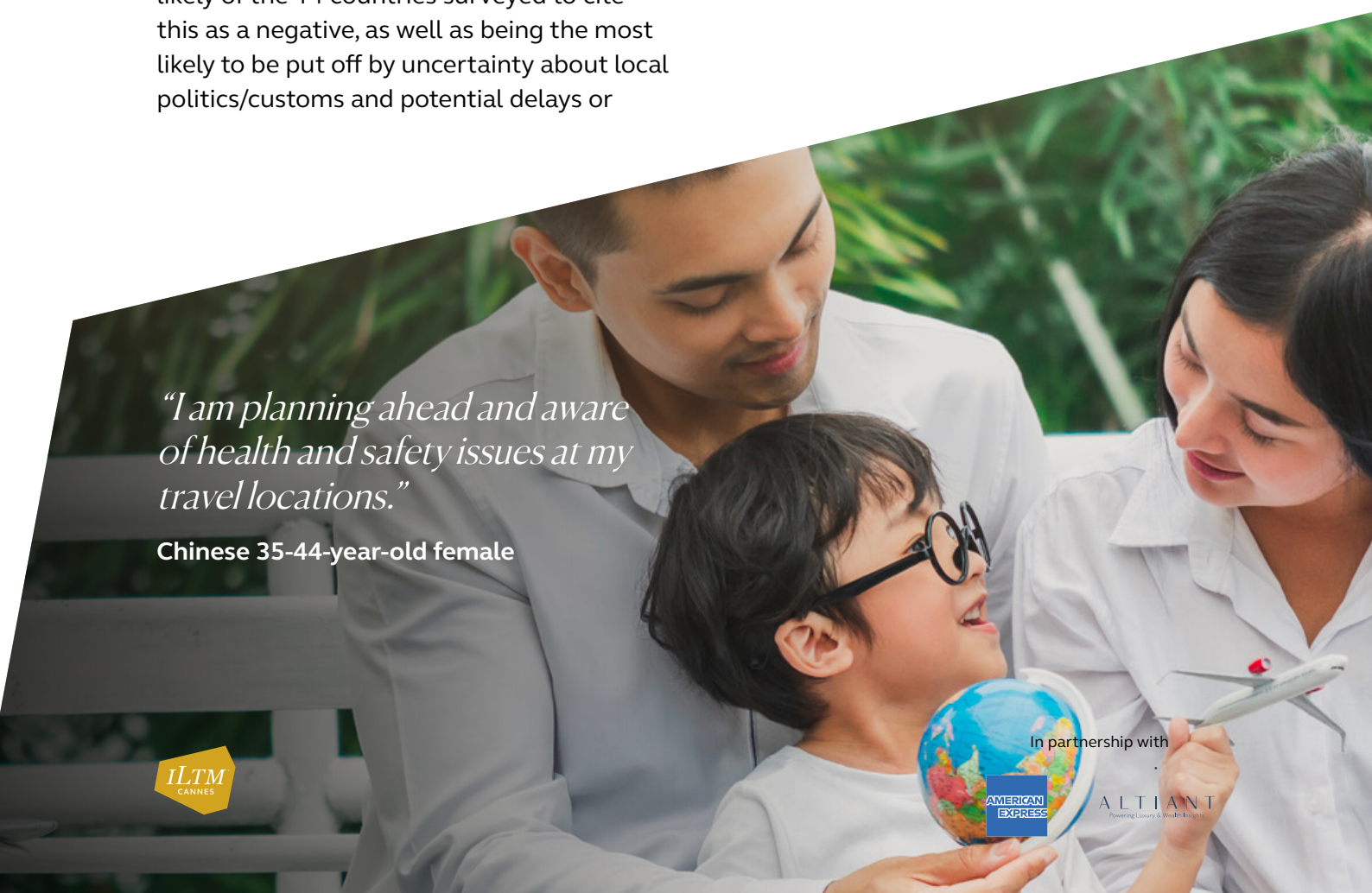
Chinese 35-44-year-old female



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# Which of the following would stop you from visiting a location, or from travelling there more?

Fig. 14

	APAC	Europe	Americas	Highest	
Health and safety concerns (e.g. relating to Covid)	59%	43%	48%	S. Korea (67%)	
Personal safety/security concerns (e.g. fear of discrimination)	45%	43%	43%	UK (59%)	
Uncertainty about local politics/customs (e.g. alcohol consumption, Covid restrictions)	37%	43%	35%	US, UK (50%)	
Potential delays/cancellations of flights	30%	37%	34%	UK (51%)	
Transport infrastructure/difficulty getting around	32%	28%	28%	Japan (40%)	
The climate/temperature	25%	27%	30%	France (34%)	
Cost	28%	21%	34%	Australia (58%)	
Poor sustainability credentials (e.g. overtourism, damage to environment)	20%	28%	22%	Switzerland (33%)	
The cuisine	17%	13%	15%	Italy (24%)	
Language barriers	16%	10%	14%	S. Korea (30%)	
Cultural differences from what I'm used to	13%	9%	13%	S. Korea (18%)	
Distance from home/time zone difference	12%	12%	8%	Singapore (20%)	
Other/None of these	5%	7%	3%	—	

# Sustainability indicators for holidays can be influential

Some companies and booking platforms are looking to tap into this mentality by including information about the environmental impact of their trip. Clearly including this information to tap into the greater awareness of greener tourism could be a helpful tool for many and would be unlikely to actively deter travellers.

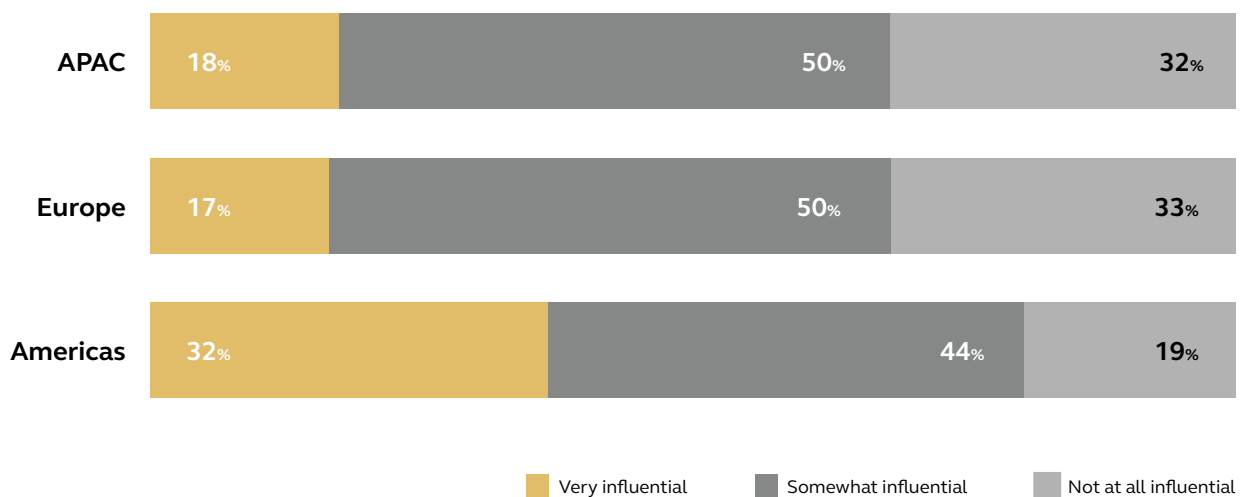
The ongoing climate crisis means that the onus is on the tourism industry to proactively tackle this issue and promote green travel as much as possible. Consumer sentiment continues to move in a more environmentally-friendly direction and companies are under increasing pressure

to also play their part. For example, 45% of wealthy global travellers now say that they are planning to take more sustainable/eco-friendly holidays in the future (see Section 3).

Indeed, sustainability indicators would be generally well received among affluent travellers; overall 49% say that it would be somewhat influential while 22% deem them very influential (rising to 32% among under-45s and 37% in the Americas). Australian (48%) and Japanese (46%) travellers are the most likely to state that they would not have any influence.

## Some travel companies are now including sustainability indicators to display environmental factors such as how much carbon is emitted on a flight or holiday. To what extent would these influence your booking decision if you saw them?

Fig. 15



## SECTION 3.

# Attitudes Towards Luxury Travel

### KEY POINTS

- 1/** Half (52%) of affluent individuals say they would prefer five hours more of free time per week, rising to 67% of Germans and 86% of Chinese. The other 48% of the sample favour \$800/week extra.
- 2/** Half (52%) of wealthy global travellers now prefer to spend their money on luxury experiences rather than luxury goods. Around half also have bucket lists of places and experiences which they are trying to complete, and prefer to take holidays with close friends and family since the pandemic.
- 3/** Three in five (61%) say that health and wellness is now a big factor when planning a trip, while 45% expect to take more sustainable/eco-friendly holidays in the future.
- 4/** Close family, partners and friends are the most influential people over holiday bookings. Travel Advisors still have a key role to play, with two-thirds (65%) saying that a Travel Advisor will be influential.



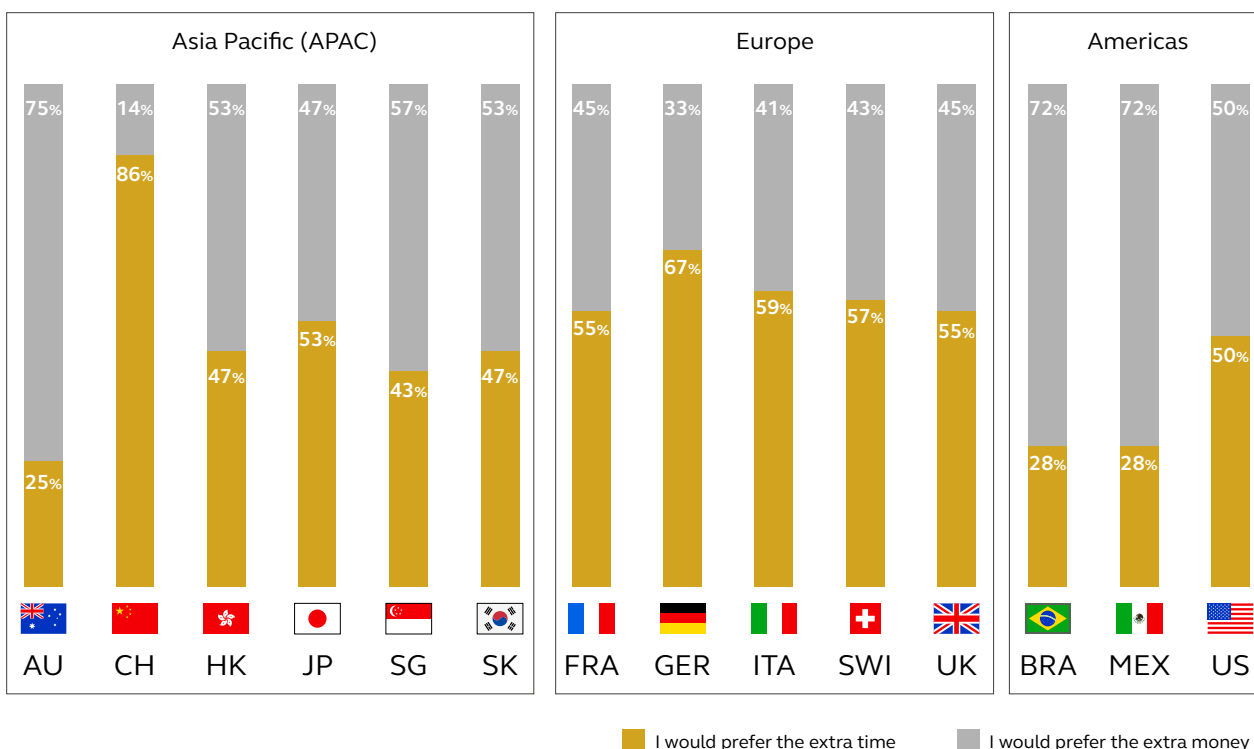
# Chinese travellers are most likely to prefer extra time over money

The sudden outbreak of Covid-19 has had a fundamental impact on people's lives and led many to reappraise what is important to them. This is also true of the global affluent, many of whom have sacrificed their free time in order to build their wealth. With the immediate threat of the pandemic receding, there is now clear evidence of people looking to make up for lost time via 'revenge spending.' Travel is ideally placed to capitalise on this after being prohibited for large parts of the past two years.

Nevertheless, when asked if they would prefer \$800 more (or equivalent) or five hours more free time per week, many would still like to grow their finances further. Most of the 14 countries surveyed here show an approximate 50:50 split between the two options, with Chinese and Germans being the most likely to prefer the extra time and Australians, Brazilians and Mexicans favouring the additional money.

Would you prefer to have \$800 more [or equivalent] per week or five hours of free 'me time' each week to pursue your interests/hobbies?

Fig. 16



*“Covid has made me realise that time is precious and travel is important to my general wellbeing.”*

British 45-54-year-old male

*“I was not allowed to do anything for two years and therefore have the great need to catch up on all this now.”*

German, 35-44-year-old female

*“During the pandemic, I was not able to travel as I would like. Now, I want to enjoy it and make up for this time.”*

Brazilian 18-24-year-old female

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## Bucket lists and holidays with family/friends remain popular

Another Covid-influenced shift has been many people's move away from spending their money on luxury goods and more on experiences such as travel. Overall, 52% now agree that they prefer to spend their money on luxury experiences (only 9% disagree), with Brits the most likely of the 14 countries surveyed to agree (71%).

There has also been a growing inclination for spending leisure time such as holidays with close friends and family. Overall, two in five wealthy travellers globally plan to take an extended family holiday over the next year (also see Section 2). Two in five (42%) agree that they now prefer taking these types of

holidays since the pandemic, with Hong Kongers (63%) the most likely to do so. However, that 58% are neutral or disagree with this statement again suggests a returning confidence that holiday-goers are keen to resume trips that enable them to meet and interact with others.

**As tourism returns to pre-Covid levels, many wealthy travellers are looking to visit new locations. Three in five (59%) agree that they have a bucket list of places and experiences that they are trying to complete, rising highest among Mexicans (78%) and the French (71%).**

However, ongoing global concerns such as the climate crisis or international

conflicts could dampen how adventurous travellers are: almost half agree that this is making their holiday choices more conservative.

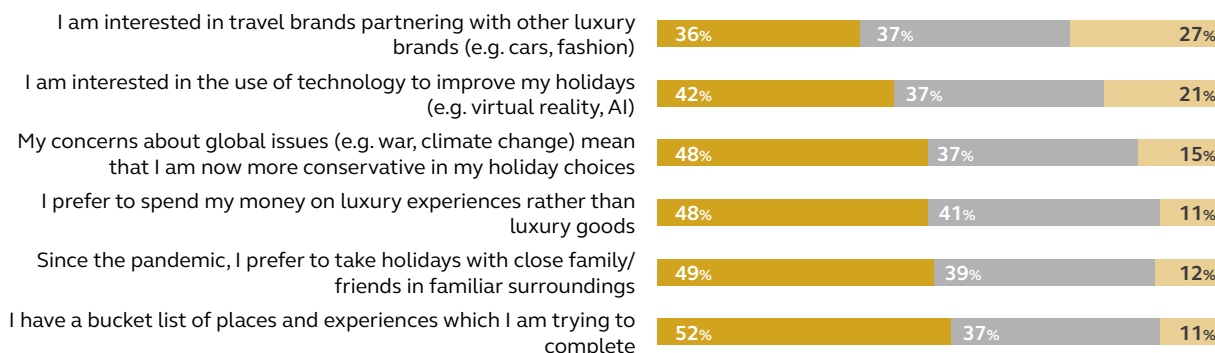
A number of luxury brands are also moving into luxury travel, with branded residences (e.g. the Palazzo Versace in Gold Coast, Balenciaga's Only YOU hotels) and collaborations (e.g. the Dior Suite at the Regis New York) becoming more commonplace.

Overall, 36% of wealthy individuals agree that they are interested in these types of partnerships, rising to 55% in France and 64% in China. That only 27% disagree shows how this could be another lucrative segment in the coming years.

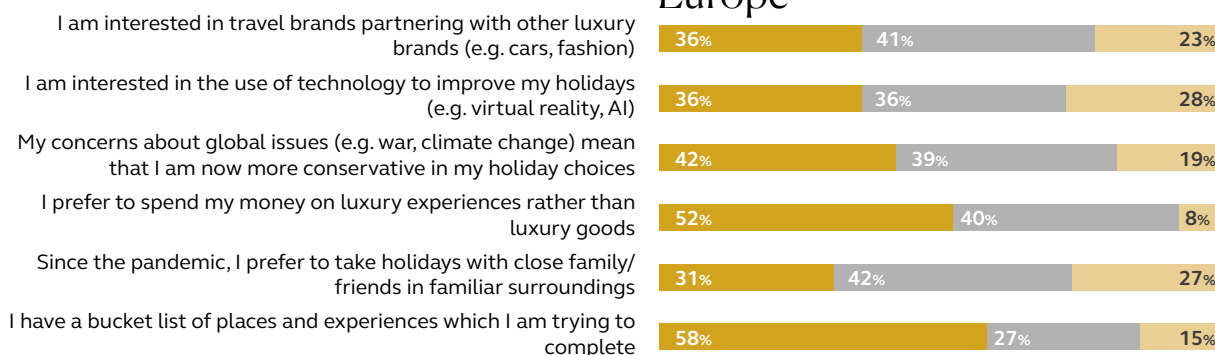
# Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Fig. 17

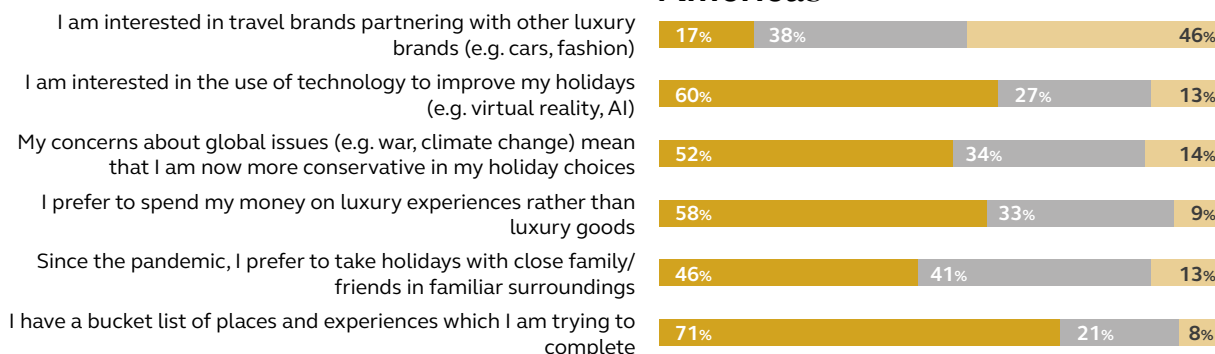
## APAC



## Europe



## Americas



■ Agree    ■ Neutral    ■ Disagree

## Most likely to agree

I am interested in travel brands partnering with other luxury brands (e.g. cars, fashion)	CH	64%	I prefer to spend my money on luxury experiences rather than luxury goods	UK	71%
I am interested in the use of technology to improve my holidays (e.g. virtual reality, AI)	CH	70%	Since the pandemic, I prefer to take holidays with close family/friends in familiar surroundings	HK	63%
My concerns about global issues (e.g. war, climate change) mean that I am now more conservative in my holiday choices	BRA	59%	I have a bucket list of places and experiences which I am trying to complete	MEX	78%

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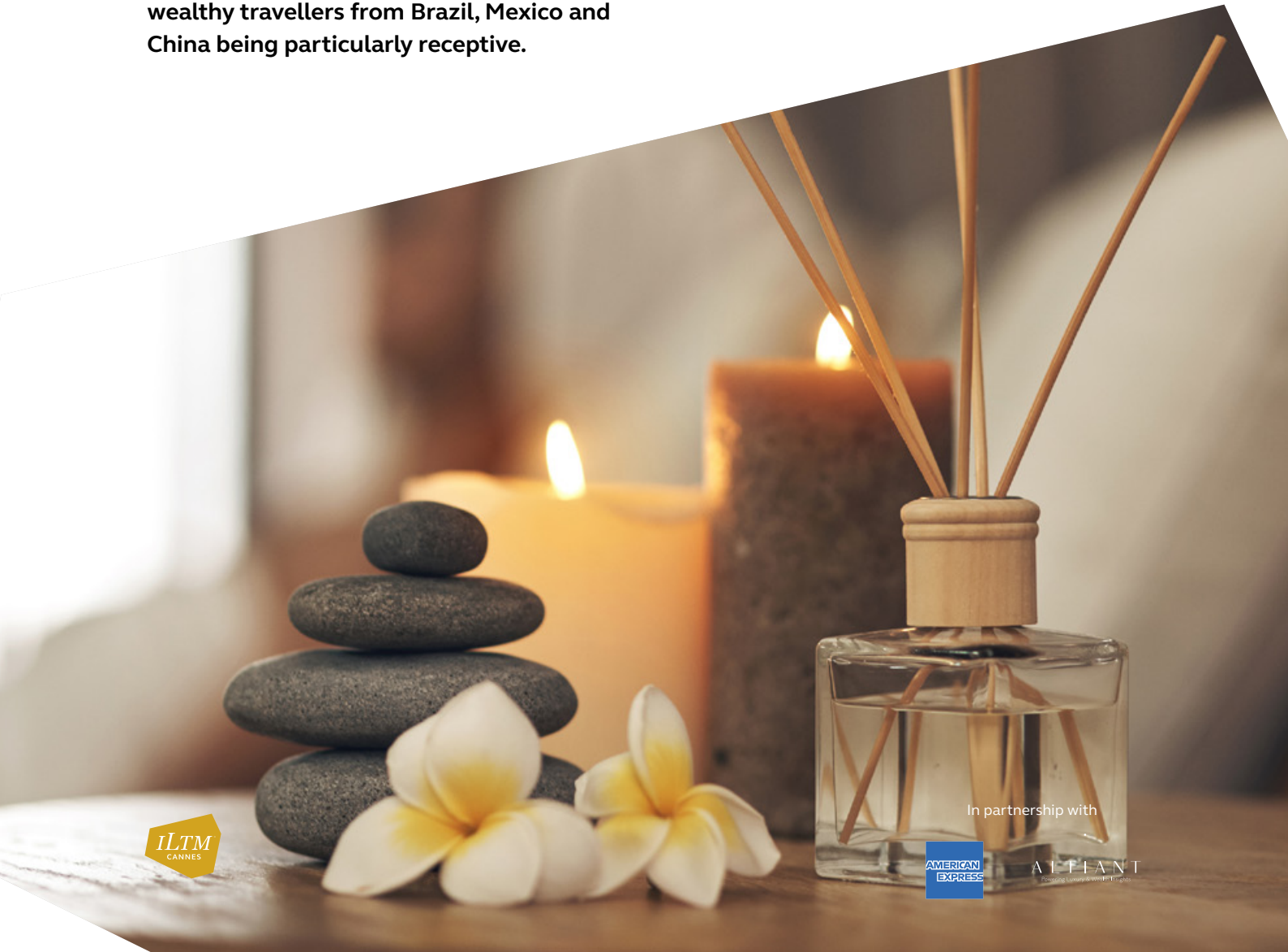


## Three in five say that health and wellness is now a key holiday consideration

Continuing several years of strong growth, the health and wellness travel market reached almost \$5 trillion prior to the pandemic according to the Global Wellness Institute. While Covid led to its value dropping to \$4.4 trillion, traveller interest in this sector has remained robust and, arguably, even strengthened.

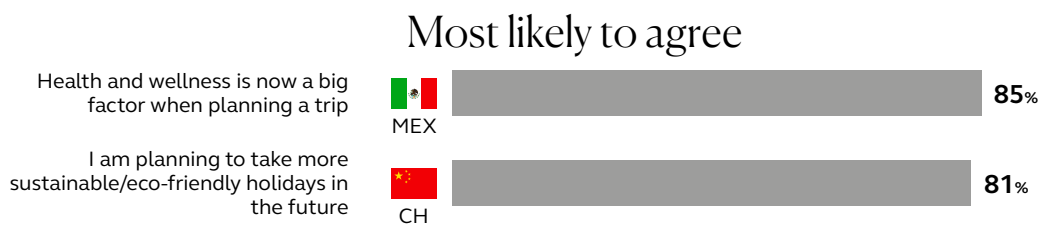
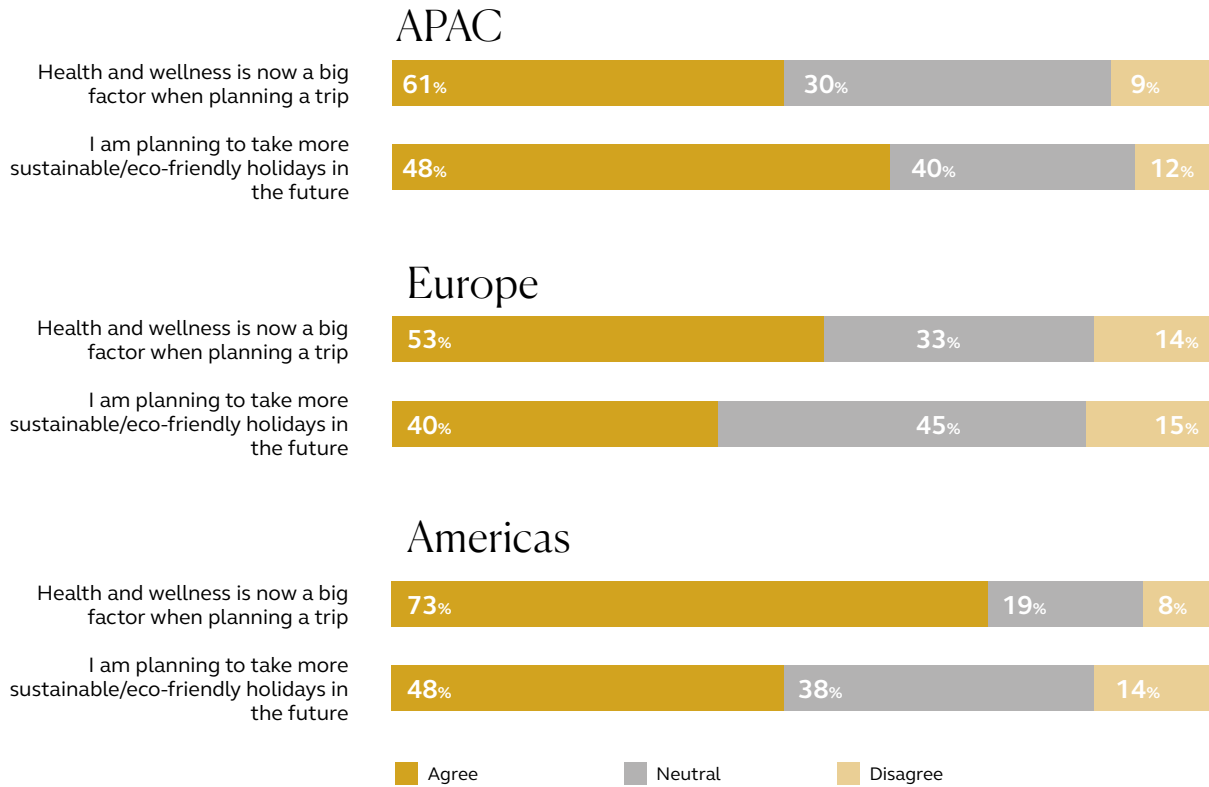
**A heightened focus on healthy lifestyles and a need to destress and recharge should lead to a rapid recovery in the value of the wellness sector. Overall, three in five now say that health and wellness is a big factor when planning a trip, with under-45s and wealthy travellers from Brazil, Mexico and China being particularly receptive.**

Chinese travellers are also strongly guided by sustainability and environmental protection. Four in five (81%) say that they are planning more sustainable/eco-friendly holidays in the future, comfortably ahead of any other country and the overall average (45%). Under-45s also continue to exhibit a greater consideration for their environmental footprint than over-45s, with a notably higher share agreeing with this statement (54% vs 37%).



## Do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

Fig. 18



There is a plethora of ways for travel companies to make themselves greener, something which they should now be proactively working towards. Strategies such as using renewable energy, growing food on-site and partnering with local conservation

organisations will be enthusiastically welcomed by many wealthy travellers. Indeed, 94% are prepared to pay a little more for sustainable holidays, with more than half (51%) willing to pay upwards of 20% extra for these types of trips.

# Travel Advisors will remain influential when booking holidays

As expected, people's friends and relatives are the most likely to influence holiday bookings. Overall, 86% say that their partner has a role to play, with 64% saying they are very influential. Family members and friends have a similarly high level of influence, with 49% and 39% respectively saying that they are very influential over their decision.

**Nevertheless, it is clear that Travel Advisors will still have a key role to play in the coming years: 27% of the global wealthy say that they are very influential, with a further 41% saying they have some impact.**

In many of the countries surveyed, around 70% attribute some level of influence to Travel Advisors, peaking among Mexicans (84%), but falling back among wealthy Swiss, Japanese and Australians. Travel blogs/vlogs

follows an almost identical pattern in each of the countries, suggesting that there is a blurring of lines and influence between blogs and Travel Advisors.

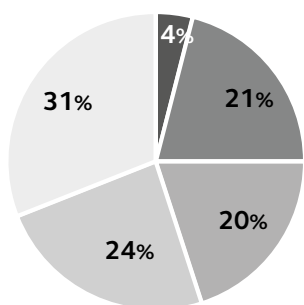
Elsewhere, two-thirds list print and digital advertising as influential, although only 18% say that they are significantly so, with a similar story for advertisements on social media. Doctors/medical staff, work colleagues and social media influencers are the groups who are least likely to be influential over holiday bookings.

Only around a quarter of affluent British, Swiss, Japanese and Australian travellers say that social media influencers have any sway at all over their decision, indicating that they may be less effective in these countries.

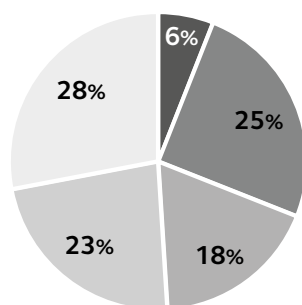
## For each of the three time periods below, how often do you use Travel Advisors, concierge services and tour operators?

Fig. 19

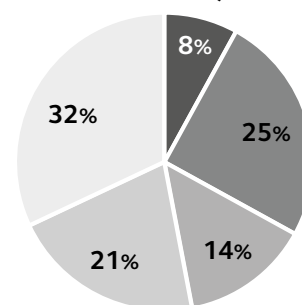
**Personalised itineraries  
(e.g. health & safety  
advice)**



**Sustainable holidays  
(e.g. supporting the local  
community)**



**Set up that is suitable for  
business/working (e.g.  
hotels which have suitable  
workspaces/ equipment in  
bedrooms)**

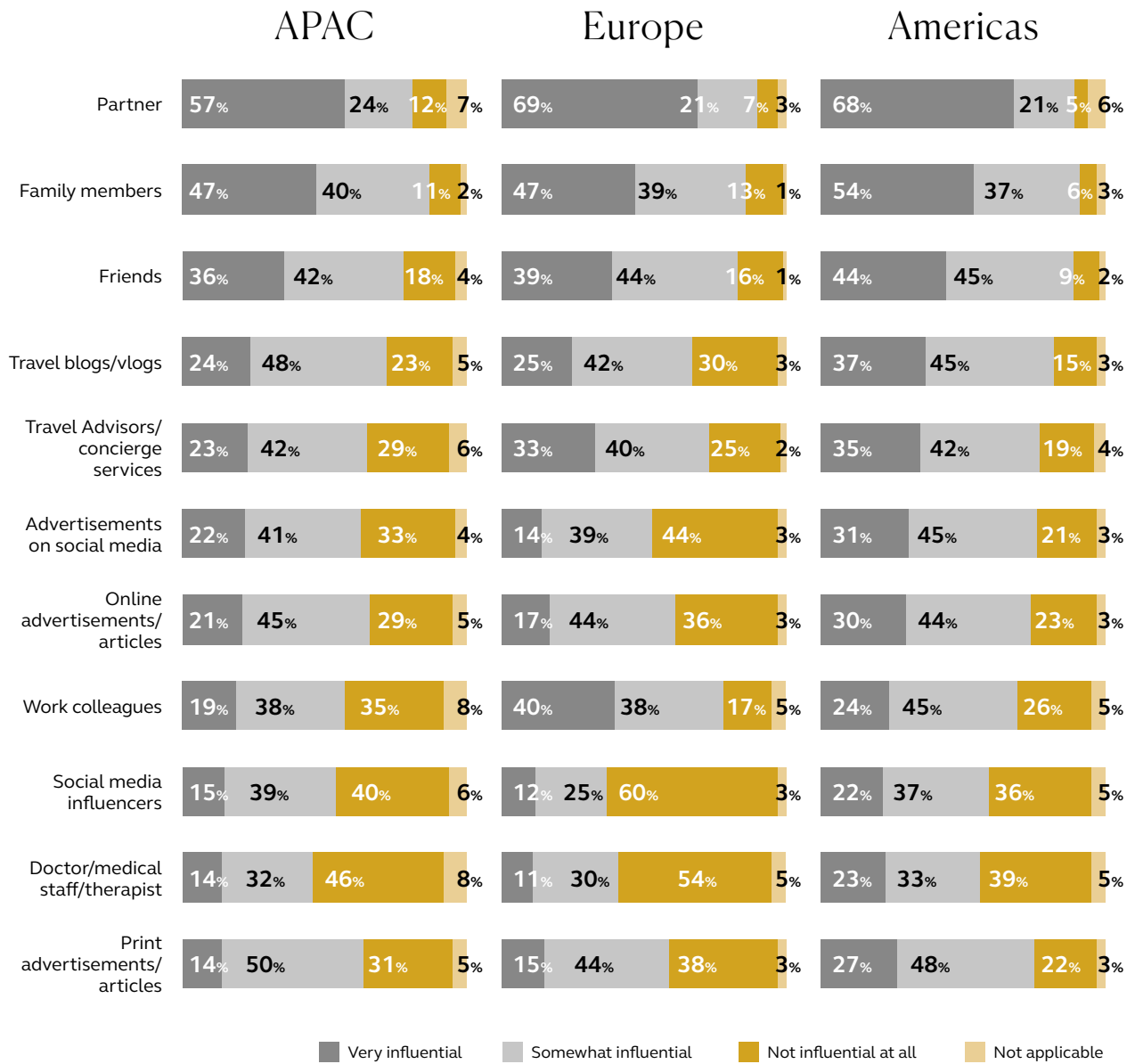


Legend: 0% (darkest), 1-10% (dark), 11-20% (medium-dark), 21-30% (medium-light), More than 30% (lightest)



# How influential would the following be when booking a holiday over the next 12 months?

Fig. 20



## SECTION 4.

# Travel Advisors

### KEY POINTS

- 1/** More than nine in ten wealthy travellers plan to use Travel Advisors for at least some of their holiday bookings over the next year, with all three regions showing an increasing reliance on them.
- 2/** Two in five (41%) wealthy Asian and European travellers plan to use Travel Advisors for more than half of their holiday bookings over the next year, rising to 59% among travellers from the Americas.
- 3/** Flexibility to adjust to booking changes and being up-to-date on the latest travel rules and regulations are the two main reasons why wealthy travellers plan to use Travel Advisors.
- 4/** Factors such as transparency around cancellations, monitoring Covid statuses and getting hygiene information are new responsibilities which most affluent travellers now expect Travel Advisors to deal with.

# Travel Advisors become even more important for post-Covid travel

The significant majority of the affluent said that they used Travel Advisors to book at least some of their trips both pre-Covid and since its outbreak. Two in five used Travel Advisors for around half of their holiday bookings, with a minority doing so for more than three-quarters.

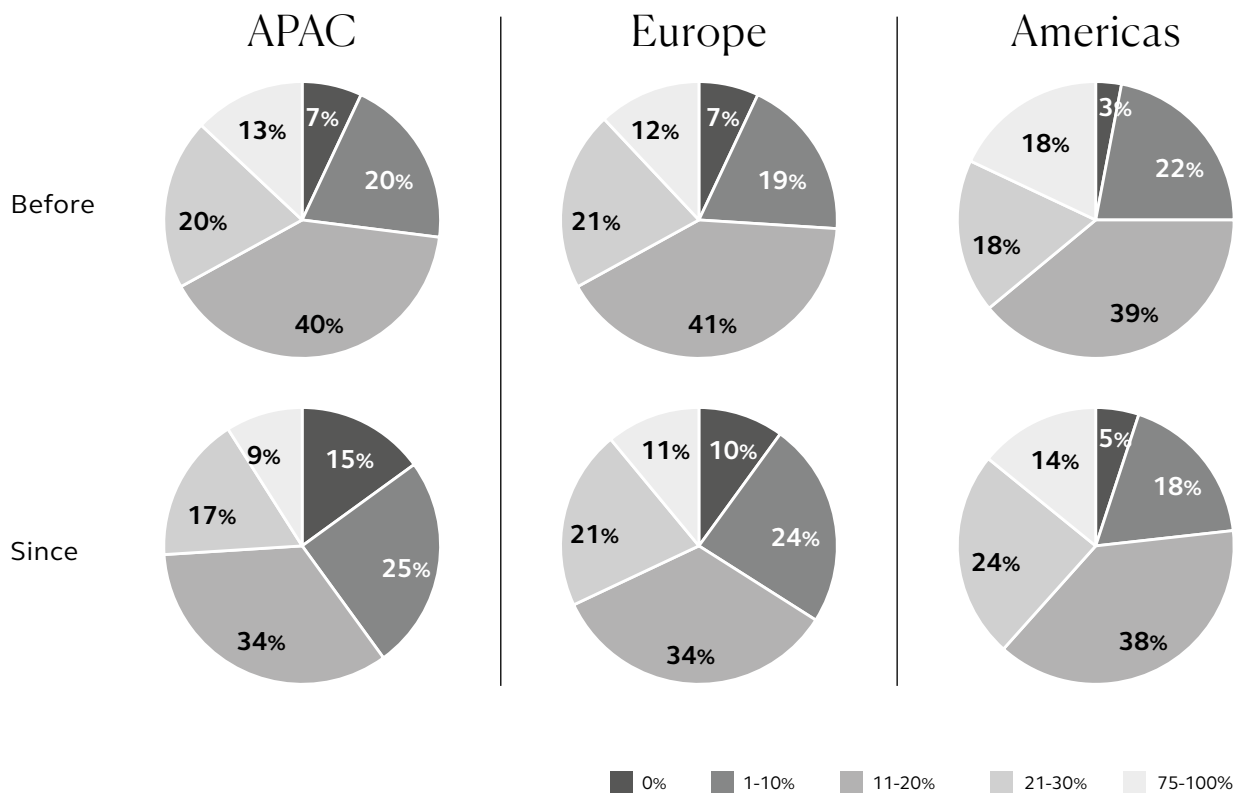
As we emerge from the pandemic, Travel Advisors remain a key resource for many

wealthy travellers. Indeed, their importance may have grown further after the past two years, with the increasing bureaucracy and complexity of travelling making them even more valuable.

Around half of those who use Travel Advisors do so for a combination of services, with relatively few using them to only help book flights or hotels.

For any holidays pre-2020 and since the Covid-19 outbreak (January 2020-present), how often did you use Travel Advisors, concierge services and tour operators?

Fig. 21

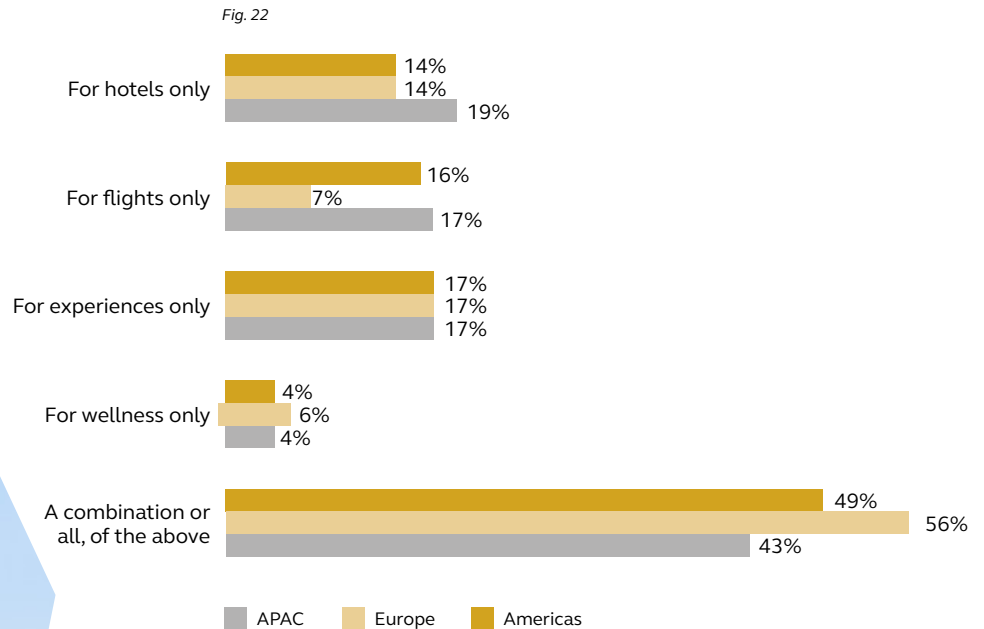


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## Which of the following do you use Travel Advisors for when booking holidays?



Looking forwards, wealthy travellers who use Travel Advisors are doing so for more of their holiday bookings. Overall, fewer than one in ten say they expect to have no interaction with Travel Advisors at all, while 59% plan to use them for half or more of their bookings and 9% for all of them. There is a clear uplift in the 75%+ bracket, particularly in the Americas (+20), with Mexicans and Brazilians (and Italians) the most likely to be more reliant on Travel Advisors when planning their holidays.



For any holidays you expect to take over the next year, how often do you plan to use Travel Advisors, concierge services and tour operators?

Fig. 23

	APAC	Europe	Americas
0%	8% (+1)	6% (-1)	3% (=)
1-25%	19% (-1)	22% (+3)	15% (-7)
26-50%	32% (-8)	31% (-10)	23% (-16)
51-75%	24% (+4)	19% (-2)	21% (+3)
76-100%	17% (+4)	22% (+10)	38% (+20)

\* Note: Numbers in brackets represent the percentage point change vs pre-Covid use (Fig. 21)



## Knowledge and special offers are key attractions for using Travel Advisors

**Only 16% of affluent travellers expect to use Travel Advisors less over the coming year, underlining their importance for post-Covid travel. Overall, Travel Advisors' knowledge and specialisms (41%) and finding the best special offers (38%) are the leading reasons why wealthy global travellers use Travel Advisors.** APAC countries such as South Korea and Hong Kong place particularly high importance on these factors.

Flexibility to adjust to booking changes and being up-to-date on the latest travel rules and regulations, both cited by a third, are two other reasons which have become

considerably more pertinent since the start of the pandemic. Meanwhile, around a quarter want to use Travel Advisors for various other reasons such as finding quieter locations, personalised holiday experiences, or simply to manage the increasingly complex nature of making bookings. Under-45s stand out for being notably more likely than over-45s to use Travel Advisors to help them find less well-known locations, book experiences and improve their mental/physical wellness.



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## Why do you plan to use Travel Advisors the same/more than you did since the start of the pandemic?

Fig. 24

	APAC	Europe	Americas	Highest	
Their knowledge/specialisms	41%	41%	41%	S. Korea (52%)	
Finding the best special offers for me	43%	26%	46%	Hong Kong (53%)	
Flexibility and insurance to adjust to changes in my booking (e.g. cancellations)	31%	31%	38%	Mexico (50%)	
Being up-to-date on the latest travel rules and regulations	34%	28%	31%	Australia (45%)	
Finding locations/holidays which are not well-known	22%	32%	34%	Mexico (41%)	
Help suggesting or booking experiences (e.g. sporting, theatre, culture, restaurants)	23%	27%	37%	Mexico (42%)	
Outsourcing the complexity of booking for myself and family/friends	27%	25%	29%	China (43%)	
The personalisation of booking with a Travel Advisor	23%	34%	22%	France (39%)	
Helping to improve my mental/physical wellness	20%	13%	21%	China (44%)	

## Increasing use of Travel Advisors means new expectations

**Factors such as transparency around cancellations, monitoring Covid statuses and getting hygiene information are new responsibilities which most affluent travellers now expect to be at least partially taken care of for them. The majority of global travellers also expect Travel Advisors to help them with matters such as insurance, wellness, sustainability and even giving back to local schemes/communities.**

The growing interest in using Travel Advisors is a clear positive for the industry, although this does come with a caveat. **Traveller demands appear to be higher than ever and Travel Advisors are often now expected to deal with a range of responsibilities which they may not have had before.** Indeed, some

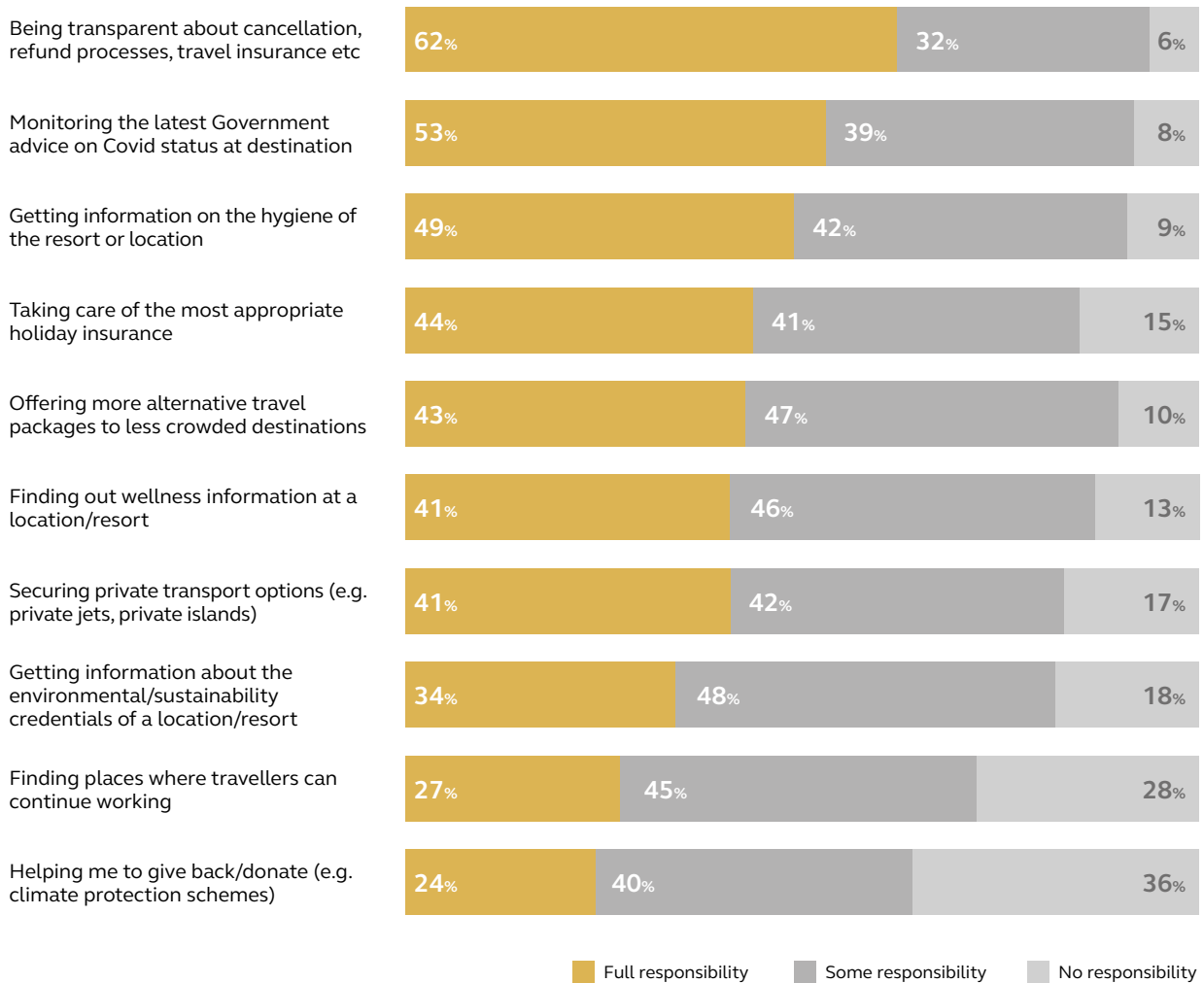
countries in our research are particularly demanding and appear to expect Travel Advisors to take care of almost everything for them. While this can command a fee from the individual, Travel Advisors' time will become increasingly stretched due to the demands on them.

For Travel Advisors, making commitments such as signing up to The Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism or showing the carbon footprint of trips would be well received by many clients.



# How much you would expect a Travel Advisor to take care of each of the following responsibilities for holiday bookings over the next year?

Fig. 25





# A Snapshot of Wealthy Travellers by Country

## Asia Pacific (APAC)



### Australia

- Strongly likely to prize extra money over time
- Price-conscious and guided by cost of holidays
- Strong preference for domestic or regional trips (e.g. New Zealand)
- Most likely country to expect a Travel Advisors to be up-to-date on latest travel rules and regulations
- Least likely to consider sustainability in a holiday booking



### China

- Highly focused on sustainability and low carbon travel
- Mental and physical wellness are key holiday considerations
- Most likely country to prize extra time over money (86% vs 14%)
- Interested in philanthropic travel which 'gives back'
- Like to use Travel Advisors to outsource the complexity of holiday bookings



### Hong Kong

- Most likely country to prefer taking holidays with friends and family since the pandemic
- Most likely in APAC to expect to spend more on holidays in the year ahead (60%)
- Likely to have a strong preference for holidaying in Japan
- Strongly influenced by work colleagues about holiday choices
- Like to use Travel Advisors to find them special offers



### Japan

- Least likely to travel next year (although 85% do plan to do so)
- Much more likely to still take domestic trips (partly due to government restrictions)
- Relatively low level of interest in beach holidays
- Most likely country to cite transport infrastructure/difficulty getting around as a holiday deterrent
- Not show any interest in, or be influenced by, social media influencers for travel



### Singapore

- They are prolific travellers: all respondents said they plan to holiday next year
- Most likely of APAC countries to spend much more on travel next year (27%)
- Prefer to visit nearer countries such as Australia and Japan
- Most likely country to cite distance from home/time zone difference as a holiday deterrent
- Expect Travel Advisors to monitor latest Government advice on Covid status at destinations



### South Korea

- Most likely country to have taken a private transportation trip last year (e.g. jets/yachts)
- Most likely country to look for mental health therapy retreats/services for their next trip
- Most likely country to cite health and safety concerns (e.g. relating to Covid) as a deterrent
- Use Travel Advisors for their knowledge/specialisms
- Have high expectations of Travel Advisors, specifically relating to wellness and hygiene information

## Europe



### France

- Prolific travellers and most likely to take several holiday types such as cultural, physical wellness and extended family trips
- USA and Japan are particularly popular destinations to visit
- Often consider in the geo-political situation of the country/region when holidaying
- Most likely country to cite the temperature/climate as a deterrent
- Like to use Travel Advisors for the personal touch



### Germany

- Often prioritise seclusion and privacy in their next booking
- Two thirds prioritise having extra time over extra money
- Highly likely to respond favourably to sustainability indicators for holidays
- Expect Travel Advisors to find out wellness information at holiday locations/resorts
- Often look for customised itineraries when travelling



### Italy

- Most likely country to have taken beach and travelling (e.g. river cruise) holidays last year
- Strong preference for US, Australia and Japan for travel destinations
- Most likely country to take a physical wellness trip on their next holiday
- Most likely country to cite the cuisine as a holiday deterrent
- Strongly expect Travel Advisors to monitor latest Government advice on Covid status at destinations



### Switzerland

- Preference for travelling domestically or to nearby countries such as France
- Most expect to keep their travel spending level for the year ahead (57%)
- Most likely country to take an activity trip on their next holiday
- Customised itineraries hold a relatively high level of appeal
- Most likely country to cite poor sustainability credentials as a holiday deterrent



### United Kingdom

- Strongly favour visiting English-speaking countries such as the US, Australia and New Zealand
- Most likely country to take beach, city and rural/countryside trips next year
- More than two thirds (69%) plan to increase their travel spending next year, the highest of the European countries
- Show a high level of concern for their personal safety/security concerns and uncertainty about local politics/customs when travelling
- Strongly favour Travel Advisors offering alternative travel packages to less crowded destinations

## The Americas



### Brazil

- Highly enthusiastic travellers, with the US a clearly leader for preferred destination
- Most likely country to take several types of holidays next year such as mental wellness, boat cruises and workations.
- Nightlife/entertainment and sporting events are strong attractions in a holiday
- Most likely country to agree that they will take more trips to make up for lost time
- Receptive to Travel Advisors helping them to give back/donate (e.g. climate protection schemes)



### Mexico

- Frequent travellers, with France cited as the most popular location
- Most likely country to plan to spend more on travel in the year ahead (80%)
- Most likely country to cite health and safety and culture/arts as important booking factors
- Travel appears to be particularly motivated by concerns that Covid restrictions will be reimposed
- Like to use Travel Advisors to find lesser-known locations and to adjust to any booking changes



### North America

- Most likely country to take an extended family holiday next year
- Preference for visiting Italy, Australia and Japan on holidays
- Retail and food/drink options and the people carry a high level of attraction in a holiday
- Can be deterred from visiting a location due to uncertainty about local politics/customs
- Strong expectation for Travel Advisors to being transparent about cancellations and refunds, and to help them secure private transport when needed



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The pandemic will undoubtedly continue to shape travel for years to come with a renewed need for escapism and exploration fueling growth, as wealthy travellers look to make up for lost time.

In conclusion;

- 1/** Many affluent individuals have saved money over the past two years and are now looking to travel in style with more unique and memorable trips ('revenge travel').
- 2/** Making up for lost time will also drive the continued upturn in the popularity of multi-generational trips. Visiting family and friends will drive destination choices for many.
- 3/** Slow travel is on the rise as the wealthy look for longer and more relaxing holidays to unwind and recharge.
- 4/** Travel Advisors are becoming even more integral for the global affluent, with 59% planning to use Travel Advisors for half or more of their holiday bookings over the next year.
- 5/** Traveller demands are higher than ever and Travel Advisors are often expected to deal with various new responsibilities which they may not have had before.
- 6/** A comfortably higher share of affluent travellers now prefer to plan their holidays well in advance rather than doing so last-minute, a trend which should benefit Travel Advisors.
- 7/** Wellness continues to move up the list of priorities that wealthy travellers factor into their holiday bookings, with mental wellbeing an area of particular interest for many.
- 8/** Sea/river cruises and cultural trips should see a big upturn in popularity as the affluent look to experience different types of holidays from their usual choices.
- 9/** Health and safety will remain one of the key factors shaping holiday bookings, especially for more at-risk groups such as the over-65s.
- 10/** Donating to local communities, flying less and prioritising sustainability in their bookings are just three ways in which the affluent are showing greener considerations in their travel choices.

## Methodology and Sample

This unique piece of research focuses solely on affluent and HNW individuals' views on luxury travel. Altiant gathered quantifiable data across 14 countries, from 1,200 affluent and high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs) across the second half of 2022. In July, affluent/HNW Asians were interviewed across Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and South Korea. This was followed by an additional survey in October covering Europe (UK, France, Germany, Switzerland and Italy) and North America (USA, Mexico and Brazil).

All surveys were conducted online, using sampling methods and generating statistically significant insights based on gender, age groups and wealth levels. Participating members were exclusively extracted from the top 5% of their country's income earners or wealth holders, and each of them has been manually validated.

Across the whole sample, 53% identified as male and 47% as female. In age terms, 51% were aged 45 or under, with 49% being over the age of 45.

For the sake of report concision and visualisation, only key findings are displayed here.

Please contact Altiant if you would like to see any of the results in more detail ([reports@altiant.com](mailto:reports@altiant.com)).

# Buzz vs. Reality

Edition #2

**Global: Decoding the Luxury Travel Consumer's Mindset**  
December 2022

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## About American Express Travel

American Express Travel is a global, full-service travel and lifestyle services provider with over 100 years of delivering personalized, premium experiences to meet Card Members' needs. American Express Travel provides best-in-class service, added value and exclusive access to a unique suite of benefits through an extensive global network of partners and 7,000 Travel Consultants in 23 territories.



## About Altiant

Altiant is a fieldwork entity specialised in quantitative market research and operating exclusively in luxury and wealth management industries. Through its private global online community of affluent and high net worth individuals (HNWIs) LuxuryOpinions®, Altiant empowers researchers, insights experts and marketing teams to make more informed insight-driven decisions. Through deep online quantitative research expertise, sophisticated tools and a thoroughly validated proprietary panel, it turns marketing and commercial questions into actionable insights – quickly and accurately.

Altiant conducts affluent/HNWI research in over 15 countries. Its consultative approach helps find the optimal balance between the research objectives and what is possible within this hard-to-reach demographic. Altiant is relied on by dozens of the world's leading wealth and luxury companies as well as the best-in-class research agencies.

Our consultative approach and unique access to validated affluent panels help organisations to find the optimal balance between their research objectives and what is possible within this hard-to-reach demographic. We have a wealth of experience in various aspects of luxury travel and luxury hospitality. Reach out to us at: [contact@altiant.com](mailto:contact@altiant.com)



## About ILTM

ILTM is a global collection of invitation-only events that bring together leading international buyers to meet and discover the most luxurious travel experiences. Each event introduces an unrivalled selection of luxury travel brands to ILTM's extensive network of hand-picked luxury Travel Advisors through bespoke appointment programmes and networking sessions. Alongside global flagship events in Cannes and Asia Pacific, ILTM has three core local events; ILTM Arabia, ILTM Latin America and ILTM North America, as well as one specialist event, ILTM Africa.