

Travel Trends to Watch in 2026

Thinking about your 2026 travels?

Industry experts agree: the future of travel is all about purpose, value, and memorable experiences. Here are some of the biggest trends shaping the way we'll explore the world next year.



Experiences Over Things

Travelers are investing in transformative journeys, whether that's wellness retreats, culinary adventures, or once-in-a-lifetime bucket-list trips. Wellness travel is experiencing a surge in popularity, from meditation retreats to "sleep tourism" designed for ultimate rest.



Luxury Travel Thrives

Luxury bookings are stronger than ever, with more travelers seeking exclusivity and personalization. Autumn has now overtaken summer as the busiest luxury season, with Europe, safaris, and wine regions topping wish lists. Cruising is also being redefined: new ultra-luxury yachts from Four Seasons, Aman, and Orient Express will bring hotel-style experiences to the sea.



Emerging Destinations

While Sicily and Japan continue to draw crowds, advisors point to Slovenia and Korea as rising stars for 2026. Barcelona will also shine, celebrating the completion of Gaudi's Sagrada Família on the 200th anniversary of his death. For those looking beyond the usual, expect more travelers to choose 'destination dupes', less-crowded alternatives to popular hot spots, such as Korea for cherry blossoms instead of Japan or Italy's Dolomites instead of the Swiss Alps.



Smart, Value-Led Choices

Economic realities mean travelers are paying closer attention to exchange rates and value for money. Authenticity matters too, expect more interest in locally owned businesses, community-based tourism, and off-the-beaten-path exploration.

Practical Changes to Know

- ✓ **ETIAS Launches:** Starting in 2026, travelers from Canada, the U.S., Australia, and other visa-exempt countries will need to apply for an ETIAS visa waiver to visit most of Europe.
- ✓ **Climate-Focused Fees:** More destinations (like Hawaii, Greece, and New Zealand) are adding "green fees" to fund climate resilience and conservation.
- ✓ **New Routes:** Airlines are expanding to fresh destinations, from Eastern Europe to Southeast Asia, making it easier than ever to explore somewhere new.



Contact your Tier One Travel Consultant to book your 2026 getaways!

