

# AUSTRALIA TRAVEL TRENDS 2020



# Travel Trends in 2020

Hey traveller, it's going to be an exciting new decade in travel. And what better way to kick us off than to take a look at the trends that will become popular in Australia over the next 12 months.



## From Solo to Slow

There's been a shift in preference for Aussie travellers to favour longer trips and taking it easy in 2020, with Slow Travel set to be the most popular type of trip (19% share). Up by 20%, it surpassed Solo Travel – which was the most popular trip type in 2019. The need to leisurely take time for exploring destinations have also placed Micro Escapes – short, quick getaways nearby – in the fifth spot (~28% growth).

The Australian travellers' thirst for adrenaline continues to grow with a 17% increase in adventure-based trips to be taken in 2020. This has jumped up two spots from 2019. Australia is also the market with the highest share of adventure-based trips compared to other markets in APAC.

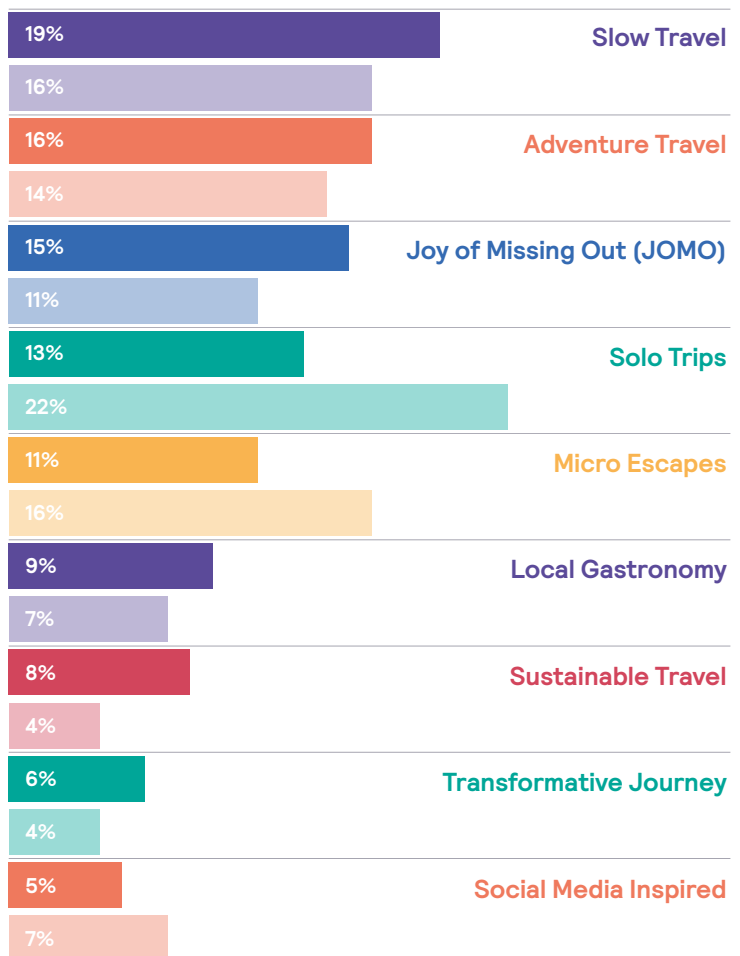
Also up two spots is the trend where Aussies opt for holidays to avoid other Aussies. 15% of trips to be taken in 2020 are to destinations with significantly fewer tourists. Looks like JOMO, or the Joy of Missing Out, is set to be the new self-care.

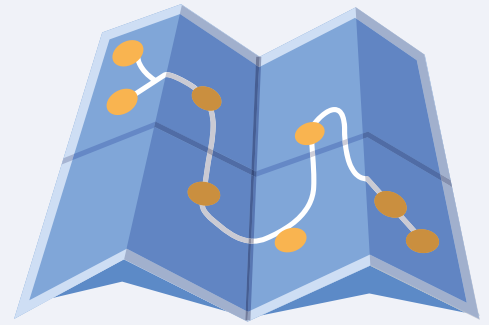
Travellers have also indicated that they would like to travel more sustainably in 2020, with a 103% increase in the number of eco-friendly trips to be taken in 2020.

Here's an in-depth look at the most popular travel trends which recorded positive growth for 2020.

### 2020 vs 2019 Trips

\*% share of responses from trips travelled in 2019, and potential trips in 2020.





## Slow Travel



Have you ever returned from a holiday feeling tired and in need of another? You're not alone. Our data shows a 20% YoY increase in Aussie travellers wanting to slow down and prioritise quality over quantity during their 2020 holidays. Originating from the Slow Food Movement, Slow Travel emphasises on connecting with the location, your travel mates and a leisurely way of living. From one week, to once-budget-runs-out, Slow Travel welcomes long walks and unscheduled activities for those who are not in a hurry and want to prioritise rest over sightseeing.

## Adventure Travel



Who's ready for a real adventure? Defined as trips that involve some element of risk, special skill with physical exertion or extreme sport, Adventure Travel is growing increasingly popular with adrenaline junkies chasing new experiences in remote or exotic locations. Whether it is climbing up, jumping off or hiking through different terrains, Adventure Travel allow them to push their limits outside of their comfort zones. 16% of trips by Australian travellers in 2020 are slated to be adventure-based, an increase of 17% from such trips taken this year.

## Transformative Journeys



Travel truly has the power to change us in so many ways and no one understands this more than the Transformative Traveller. Recording a 44% YoY increase in interest on personal growth and charity-related trips, Australia has the largest share of travellers interested in embarking on a transformative trip in 2020. Whether it's self-improvement like running a marathon and meditating at a yoga retreat, or helping others like teaching locals a new language, planting trees or helping to build houses for the less fortunate – Transformative Journeys take many forms but they must all have meaning.

## JOMO Trips



If you think it sounds familiar, that might be because you've heard of its cousin, FOMO. JOMO, or the 'Joy Of Missing Out', is choosing to enjoy your trip instead of worrying about how it looks on social media. The JOMO Traveller is particular about escaping the hustle, opting to travel off-season to alternative destinations to avoid crowds and other Aussie holiday revellers. The ability to explore a place before it gets too popular is probably why JOMO trips are recording a 31% YoY increase among Aussie travellers for 2020.

## Sustainable Tourism



Travelling sustainably is gaining more awareness, as indicated by a 103% YoY increase in interest for more eco-friendly trips in 2020. The Sustainable Traveller is someone who makes conscious decisions based on how their choices affect the environment: from selecting Greener Choice flights, offsetting carbon emissions, to visiting destinations that are culturally and environmentally responsible. At every destination, they make sure to support local establishments, uphold their own green practises like reducing linen changes and taking public transport, walking and cycling to experience their destination better. They are spearheading a new wave of modern travel.

## Local Gastronomy



Who's hungry? Aussies, it seems. Food-motivated trips are likely to make up 9% of trips in 2020, up 23% from 2019. After all, the quickest way to get to know a place and bond with locals is through food and the Local Gastronomist knows this well. Before travelling to a destination, they would have researched online, watched every foodie show, and asked everyone for recommendations. While they are there, they'd probably chat with local cabbies and service staff with gusto to get their uniquely local picks. From 3-Michelin-star restaurants to street food stalls, the Local Gastronomist isn't picky with where the best eats are... as long as every bite is worth it.

# Emerging Destinations in 2020



## Key Highlights

- Longer trips to cultural destinations gain popularity as interest in Bogota, Budapest and Istanbul increases.
- Aussies' sense of adventure continues, with growing interest in places like Kathmandu, where hiking and nature takes precedence.
- Cities like Busan are still growing in favour as Korean culture and K-pop continues its world domination down under.

Destinations	Change in rank	YoY growth in bookings
Bogota, Colombia	↑16	62%
Kathmandu, Nepal	↑8	51%
Istanbul, Turkey	↑4	26%
Budapest, Hungary	↑13	20%
Busan, South Korea	↑9	20%
Yangon, Myanmar	↑9	19%
Buenos Aires, Argentina	↑6	16%
Dubai, United Arab Emirates	↑4	15%
Athens, Greece	↑6	12%
Nairobi, Kenya	↑5	10%

Destinations determined by recorded year-on-year growth in bookings in 2019.



## Bogota

Colombia

**62%** YOY  Rank **↑16**

The soaring interest in Colombia reflects its growing status as a safer city with plenty to see and do. Most travellers often start their visit in Bogota and stay within Colombia, but eventually intend to return to South America later to see more of the continent.

**Famous for:**

The Andes. Go on a tropical day trip to the mountain range. Bogota is also known for its abundance of emeralds.

**Best time to visit:**

**Most popular:** January and February

**Most affordable:** December and March

**Least crowded:** During rainy summer, between June to August.

**Best kept secret:**

Every Sunday, 120km of streets in the capital are closed to cars in order to encourage cycling.

### When in Bogota

- Visit the Gold Museum (Museo del Oro) to see ancient, shiny relics.
- Climb to Mount Monserrate to see the remote sanctuary.
- Shop with the locals at Mercado de las Pulgas de Usaquen.



# Kathmandu

## Nepal

**51** %   
YOY Rank ↑8

Surrounded by the Himalayan mountains, Kathmandu is a joy for all the senses. When you arrive, you'll see the amazing temples, smell the enticing local dishes and hear the bustle of a busy day. This is a place of pure beauty so enjoy every minute.

### Famous for:

Nepal is home to Mount Everest, the world's highest mountain peak. Kathmandu has the country's busiest international airport and is the obvious entry point into the country.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** October to December

**Most affordable:** January to April

**Least crowded:** June marks the start of the monsoon season

### Best kept secret:

Got a dental problem? Kathmandu is home to the Toothache Tree. Nailing a coin to this timber stump rids you of all tooth troubles.

### When in Kathmandu

- Book a scenic flight around Mount Everest.
- Get up early and watch the monks at Boudhanath Stupa.
- Take the cable car up Chandragiri Hills and enjoy a snack while admiring the view of the Himalayas.



# Istanbul

## Turkey

**26** %   
YOY Rank ↑4

For most, Istanbul makes a great destination for a stopover on the way to Europe, but if you took a few days to venture out of the airport, you'll see that the most populous city in Turkey has so much culture to offer.

### Famous for:

Turkish tea, spices and being the cultural gyre where Asia and Europe meet.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** Peak season is from June to August, and accommodation prices increase to match the demand.

**Most affordable:** March to May and between September and November

**Least crowded:** December through February due to the rainy, snowy and chilly weather.

### Best kept secret:

Tucked away from the tourist's gazing eye is the Tophane District. This formally gritty neighbourhood is now home to bohemian cafes, independent galleries, boutique shops as well as the edgiest street art.

### When in Istanbul

- Experience and rejuvenate at a traditional Turkish bath.
- Get the best view on the rooftop of Büyük Valide Han.
- Buy an antique tea brewing set in the Cihangir District.



# Budapest

## Hungary

**20** %   
YOY Rank ↑13

History has given Budapest a unique mix of cultures, as seen everywhere from the cafes, bathhouses to restaurants.

### Famous for:

Coffee, first introduced from Turkey, plays a huge part in Hungarian life and the quality found in Budapest's cafes is outstanding.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** June to August

**Most affordable:** March to May and September to November

**Least crowded:** January and February

### Best kept secret:

Budapest is growing a reputation for its 'ruin pubs'. Start in Szimpla Kert and explore all the other weird and wonderful options.

### When in Budapest

- Enjoy the hot springs, like those at Szechenyi Spa.
- Take a river cruise along the Danube. Ask tour operators to allow you back on the boat for a night time view.
- Walk about and you might see the statues of Ronald Reagan, Steve Jobs and Columbo.



## Busan South Korea

**20%** YOY  Rank **↑9**

Relatively more affordable than Seoul, Busan is fast becoming a destination in its own right. Experience beaches, temples and mouth-watering food... and there's always a bullet train ready to take you to the capital should you wish.

### Famous for:

Busan is Korea's most popular seaside resort. Dip your toes in the water (the ocean or the hot springs) and take a moment to reflect.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** June to August

**Most affordable:** May or September

**Least crowded:** December to February

### Best kept secret:

On the outskirts of Busan is Gamcheon village, a hillside population that is coming to fame thanks to its vibrantly colourful buildings.

### When in Busan

- Admire the Haedong Yonggung Temple that's by the seaside.
- Laze on the gorgeous Haeundae Beach.
- Spend an afternoon snuggling up to new fuzzy friends in a puppy cafe.



## Yangon Myanmar

**19%** YOY  Rank **↑9**

Only recently opened to tourists, Myanmar has a reputation for being genuine and unspoilt. It's one of the few Asian countries yet to have a McDonald's.

### Famous for:

Shwedagon Pagoda, a golden gem-infused temple that is believed to hold some of Buddha's hair, which has restorative powers for visitors.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** November to February

**Most affordable:** March through to May

**Least crowded:** June to October

### Best kept secret:

The Pegu Club was once a luxurious building during the colonial era but has since gone into disrepair, giving it a spooky aura.

### When in Yangon

- Wake up for breakfast and have a bowl of mohinga.
- Take the Yangon Circular train and watch rice fields and rustic villages whizz by.
- Bring your loved one to Inya Lake for a peaceful day of chilling.



## Buenos Aires Argentina

**16%** YOY  Rank **↑6**

Buenos Aires is a city with a soul. With so much to see and do, it's a true example of slow travel and, with direct flights from Sydney, Argentina's capital is easier than ever to get to.

### Famous for:

Soccer. Some of the world's best-ever players hail from Argentina and the capital is mad for the game, with 24 professional clubs in the city.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** December to February

**Most affordable:** Spring and autumn

give a good mix of affordability and pleasant weather.

**Least crowded:** June to August

### Best kept secret:

El Ateneo Grand Splendid – an ornate theatre that's been turned into a ridiculously beautiful bookshop.

### When in Buenos Aires

- Wander the streets and soak in the incredible architecture, even the cemeteries are beautiful.
- Visit as many art galleries as you can: start at Museo de Arte Latinoamericano de Buenos Aires.
- Learn to tango.



# Dubai

## United Arab Emirates

**15%**   
YOY Rank **↑4**

While Dubai is growing in popularity, one of the big reasons it's on this list is because travellers are taking advantage of the ability to add on a second city to your trip for free. For flights from Australia to Europe, a stop in the Middle East makes perfect sense.

### Famous for:

Opulence. If you want to know where the world's best or biggest is, there's a good chance it's in Dubai.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** January and February  
**Most affordable:** December and March  
**Least crowded:** April and May

### Best kept secret:

Skiing. Dubai loves big and expensive things – like an indoor ski mountain inside a shopping centre.

### When in Dubai

- Take a day trip out into the desert.
- Go up the Burj Khalifa to the world's highest restaurant or observation deck.
- Dubai Miracle Garden is the world's largest flower garden, with more than 50 million flowers.



# Athens

## Greece

**12%**   
YOY Rank **↑6**

A true bucket-list destination, Greece is one of the few European countries that Australians like to take their time in, rather than tick off on a guided tour.

### Famous for:

Some of the world's most iconic architecture – the Parthenon, Acropolis, Plaka and more.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** June to August  
**Most affordable:** Shoulder seasons (April–May and September–October)  
**Least crowded:** December to February

### Best kept secret:

The Athenian Agora is so secret that not even the locals have seen all of it yet. The ancient marketplace is still being discovered.

### When in Athens

- Make sure to book a tour to see some of the world-famous landmarks.
- See culture of a different kind at Dora Stratou Greek Dances • Theatre.
- Treat your kids (or inner child) to a day at Allou! Fun Park.



# Nairobi

## Kenya

**10%**   
YOY Rank **↑5**

Kenya is growing in popularity with travellers from around the world. Its capital, Nairobi, is the obvious starting point and has plenty to offer for those who want to see more than just the natural wonders.

### Famous for:

Animals! Take your pick from many attractions like the popular Giraffe Manor: a hotel where you can feed the long-necked creatures from your window.

### Best time to visit:

**Most popular:** July and August is dry season, best time to visit the animals.  
**Most affordable:** September to October  
**Least crowded:** March, April and May

### Best kept secret:

At Kitengela, you can explore a sculpture park in the desert that also doubles up as shade.

### When in Nairobi

- Bring your hiking boots and visit Karura Forest.
- Learn about the local community when you visit a Karen village.
- Grab a cuppa at the Karen Blixen coffee garden and cottages.



Nairobi, Kenya



# Top 10 Popular Destinations in 2019



- Bali continues to reign supreme as London and Bangkok stays firmly in place.
- India moves up to the top five, due to the growth of Indian tourism driven by its growing economy, trade opportunities, stronger international education market and cricket.
- Major cities such as Tokyo and Singapore remain in their previous ranks.



Rank	Destinations	Rank change	Average length of return trip	Best Time to Book (from Origin City)	Most booked price (AUD)	Potential savings (AUD)
1	Bali, Indonesia	0	8 days	24 weeks From Sydney	\$795	\$189 (23%)
2	London, United Kingdom	0	21 days	17 weeks From Melbourne	\$1,594	\$239 (15%)
3	Bangkok, Thailand	0	15 days	20 weeks From Brisbane	\$956	\$247 (26%)
4	New Delhi, India	↑1	23 days	24 weeks From Melbourne	\$1,140	\$228 (20%)
5	Auckland, New Zealand	↓1	8 days	8 weeks From Melbourne	\$608	\$224 (36%)
6	Tokyo, Japan	0	13 days	22 weeks From Melbourne	\$966	\$155 (16%)
7	Manila, Philippines	0	20 days	8 weeks From Melbourne	\$804	\$237 (29%)
8	Singapore	0	8 days	13 weeks From Sydney	\$939	\$360 (38%)
9	Seoul, South Korea	↑1	15 days	24 weeks From Melbourne	\$981	\$222 (22%)
10	Hong Kong	↑1	11 days	17 weeks From Melbourne	\$819	\$121 (15%)

Potential savings indicated are determined by the difference between the most booked price and when booked at the recommended best time to book prior to departure dates.

Bali, Indonesia



# Best Value Destinations



Overall, there was a 3% drop in average flight prices for international flights from Australia. This was driven mostly by falling flights prices to popular destinations like London (-5%) and Tokyo (-6%) in 2019.

Based on significant fare decrease, here are the five best value destinations to consider in 2020:



## Port Vila Vanuata

An alternative to Bali

With an average flight price of AU\$750, Port Vila registered a fare decrease of 13%. This was driven by Air Vanuatu's new non-stop flights between Melbourne and Port Vila, as well as sale offers from Virgin Australia.

## Queenstown New Zealand

An alternative to Auckland

Flight prices to Queenstown have also fallen by 13% from an average of AU\$677. This is attributed to Qantas' new seasonal trans-Tasman flight between Queenstown and Melbourne from late June to August to better serve travellers on their way to ski areas at Coronet Peak and The Remarkables.

## Amritsar India

An alternative to New Delhi

Flight prices to Amritsar have decreased by 7%, making it only an average of AU\$1,006 for return trips. Factors for this drop include AirAsiaX launching flights between Kuala Lumpur and Amritsar, improving the accessibility and connectivity between Australia and Amritsar.

## Busan South Korea

An alternative to Seoul

Also recording a 7% drop in fares was Busan, amounting to an average price of AU\$971 for a return trip. Eastar Jet and Jeju Air had expanded its offering with more flights to Busan from Singapore, improving Busan's accessibility with affordable fares for Aussies.

## Las Vegas United States

An alternative to Los Angeles

It was also cheaper to travel to Las Vegas instead of its popular neighbour Los Angeles. Especially with a price drop of 12%, equating to an average flight price of AU\$1,323 thanks to promotions offered by Virgin Australia and Qantas throughout the course of 2019.

# Popular Days to Travel



According to the data, travellers could have saved up to 14% on return fares by flying on Skyscanner recommended days.



Destination	Most popular day	Skyscanner recommended day to fly	Cheapest price (AUD)	% Savings
Sydney → Tokyo	Friday	Tuesday	\$911	-13%
Sydney → Auckland	Friday	Thursday	\$410	-4%
Melbourne → Bali	Friday	Monday	\$575	-14%
Melbourne → Hong Kong	Friday	Monday	\$700	-8%
Perth → Manila	Friday	Monday	\$645	-10%
Perth → New Delhi	Friday	Monday	\$800	-7%

# Cabin Class Trends in 2019



## A Year of Luxury Travel

Premium Economy bookings increased by 20% and Business Class by 19%. This was due to a number of reasons: more airlines and OTAs were actively promoting luxury travel packages. There was also the introduction of newer fleets with updated Premium cabins that provide better, more comfortable in-flight experiences, especially on long-haul routes. It also helped that Business Class and Premium Economy both experienced an overall price drop of 9% and 8% respectively.

Premium Economy flights to destinations within the US and to Tokyo recorded the strongest growth in bookings as well as significant fare drops of at least AU\$391.

Routes	Premium Economy bookings growth %	2019 Average flight fare (AUD)	Savings (AUD)
Melbourne → Los Angeles	15%	\$2,754	\$391 (12%)
Sydney → Los Angeles	42%	\$2,732	\$243 (8%)
Sydney → Tokyo	54%	\$2,027	\$72 (3%)

Most popular routes for Premium Economy			Growth in bookings (%)	Change in avg flight fare (%)
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Sydney	↔	Los Angeles	43%	-8%
Sydney	↔	Tokyo	54%	-3%
Melbourne	↔	Los Angeles	15%	-12%
Brisbane	↔	Los Angeles	32%	-11%
Sydney	↔	London	16%	-2%



Most popular routes for Business Class			Growth in bookings (%)	Change in avg flight fare (%)
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Sydney	↔	Bangkok	30%	-7%
Sydney	↔	New York	30%	-4%
Melbourne	↔	Singapore	27%	0%
Sydney	↔	Shanghai	76%	-11%
Sydney	↔	Honolulu	25%	-10%

# Beyond 2020

## – Sustainability & Travel



In the last year, one in every 10 flights booked on [skyscanner.com.au](https://www.skyscanner.com.au) was an eco-friendly one\*.

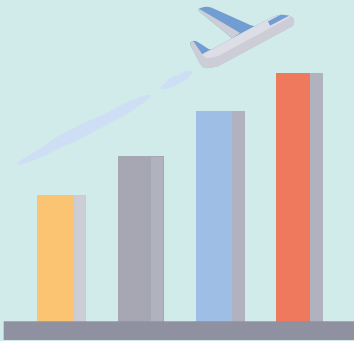
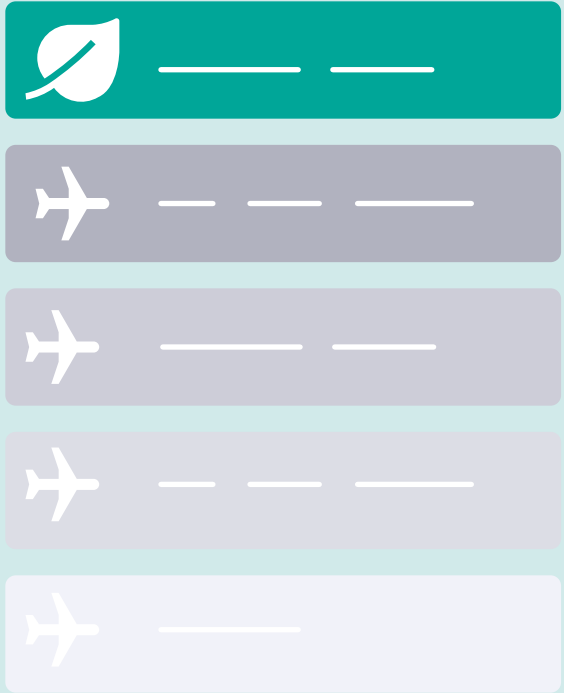
Travel is an important part of modern life. It helps us to be closer to distant family, appreciate other cultures, allows businesses to grow, and inspire a more cohesive world that's based on understanding and the exchange of ideas.

As powerful as travel can be, it is also extremely important that we explore in a responsible way. 2020 is the year that the world will look at what it means to travel sustainably.



\*Based on web-only bookings from Skyscanner users from Australia. 'More eco-friendly' here refers to flights that emit less than the average amount of CO<sub>2</sub>.





Our survey revealed an

**103% YoY**

increase in interest for more eco-friendly or sustainable trips to be taken by Aussies in 2020.



## Greener Choice

You too can do your part. Searching for a direct flight? Look for our Greener Choice badge. They help identify which flights emit less than the average amount of CO<sub>2</sub> based on route, fuel efficient engines and cruise time.

## The Travalyst Initiative

Led by His Royal Highness The Duke of Sussex, Travalyst is a first-of-its-kind global initiative founded in late 2019 by Skyscanner, Trip.com, Booking.com, TripAdvisor and Visa, with the ambition to change the impact of travel, for good.

The initiative aims to promote sustainable travel through relieving pressure on overcrowded tourist destinations, and empowering local communities to use tourism as an additional form of income for community building.

It also aims to preserve and prevent exploitation of animals and nature, as well as reduce and eventually eliminate single-used plastics and other unsustainable factors linked to travel.



# Research Methodology

## How did we get our data?

### Quantitative Data Collection Methods

The findings presented in this report were based on proprietary data extracted from Skyscanner Travel Insights, which analyses the behaviour of over 100 million Skyscanner users each month. This report dived specifically into understanding the travel trends and patterns of today's Australian travellers to identify where and how they'll be travelling the future; comparing the differences between the time periods October 2018 to September 2019, and October 2017 to September 2018.

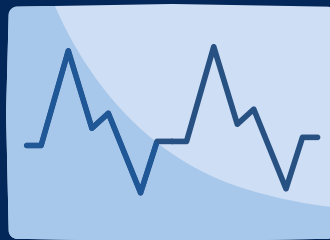
A survey to identify travellers trip preferences in 2019 and 2020 was also conducted in Australia with 1,452 participants.

The Travel Trends report primarily looked at bookings growth in 2019, against the previous year, to inform trends for 2020. The reference to 'bookings' within the report are redirects made on the Skyscanner platform (i.e.: when a traveller selects a flight option with a partner on the Skyscanner booking panel).

Price change or fare savings is calculated by how much the average flight price has increased or decreased in 2019 when compared to the average flight price in 2018, unless otherwise stated.

### About Skyscanner Travel Insight

Travel Insight is Skyscanner's powerful business planning and analytics data source based on a big data set that draws data from the search behaviour of 100 million Skyscanner users every month and is updated daily to offer unique insight and market intelligence into what travellers want today and in the future. The travel analytics offered through Travel Insight also helps leading airlines plan routes and revenue management, airports around the world to find new opportunities and catchment areas, and tourism boards to shape demand.



### About Skyscanner

When we started in 2003, we set out to do things differently. We wanted to show all flight options in one place, creating a simple alternative to the confusing sites that make travel feel like hard work.

Fast forward to today and we've gone from a flight search engine to a global leader in travel, working with 1,200 travel partners. We're proud that more than 100 million people across the world rely on our app and website each month to help them with their travel plans. Dedicated to making travel as simple as possible, we help each and every one of them find the best options across flights, hotels and car hire to book the perfect trip. But we're not stopping there. It's our mission to lead the global transformation to modern and sustainable travel.

Now part of Trip.com Group, we're operationally independent and growing fast, with offices across Europe, North America and Asia.

For more information, visit [skyscanner.com.au/about-us](https://www.skyscanner.com.au/about-us)

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