



Booking.com

**Sustainable
Travel Report
2022**

“With increasing awareness of the climate crisis, people are traveling more thoughtfully, more creatively and more intentionally.”



Now in its seventh year, Booking.com’s annual Sustainable Travel Report, which gathered insights from over 30,000 travelers across 32 countries and territories, indicates that travelers are selecting planet-first options and looking to brands for sustainable choices and more purposeful travel.

As the climate crisis deepens and global awareness increases, people are carving out new experiences and traveling more thoughtfully, creatively and intentionally. The most extensive Sustainable Travel research from Booking.com to date reveals that sustainable travel is no longer the ambition of the few but of the many. It highlights the increasing desire to make more conscious choices across the entire travel experience, from transportation to accommodation, as well as how and where people spend their money during their trips.

Sustainable travel means more than recycling and limiting waste to travelers today. With a growing respect for the world’s local communities, the environment and biodiversity, a regenerative philosophy is starting to influence decision-making. More people are seeking authentic cultural experiences that bolster and add value back into local communities,

while actively avoiding over visited destinations and traveling outside of peak season to avoid overcrowding.

With more travelers making decisions informed by climate concerns, they are also mindful about how far they travel and how they get there; opting to travel closer to home and choosing public transport and renting bicycles once there to reduce their carbon footprint.

While the travel industry is making strides in providing options that allow travelers to make more sustainable choices, the report exposes the barriers that remain. There are still a significant number of people who are unaware of sustainable trip options and where they can access this information. For some, the term ‘sustainable travel’ holds connotations of having to sacrifice luxury or settle for less appealing destinations.

Travelers need accessible sustainable options, more meaningful and trustworthy information and tools that they can use to make good travel decisions. Where there is interest, there is opportunity and travel providers have a promising chance now to make sustainable choices easier for everyone.

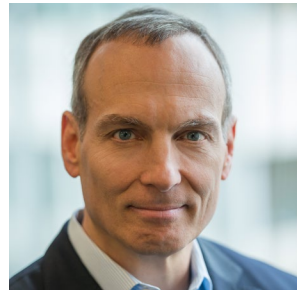


30,000+ travelers



32 countries and territories





Glenn Fogel
CEO of Booking.com

Sustainability is shaping the future of travel

“Over the seven years Booking.com has conducted this research, it’s inspiring to see awareness of the importance of sustainable travel grow consistently, not only with travelers but also our partners. With increased pressure on our natural resources and the undeniable impact our way of life is having on the environment, our partners recognize the need to prepare for a more resilient and regenerative future for their businesses and wider communities.

Sustainable travel means different things to different people, and protecting the natural environment isn’t the whole story; we must also consider the social, economic and cultural impact. At Booking.com, we believe that travel can be a powerful force for good, bringing enhanced cultural understanding, socio-economic opportunities for communities and the potential to help rejuvenate and protect our planet for future generations.

This report highlights an encouraging shift in desire to travel more sustainably. It also reveals that people are feeling empowered to transform sustainable intentions into impactful choices across the entire travel experience.

Still, it’s clear there’s work to be done to evolve perceptions and change behaviors. The more sustainable practices we can help our partners to identify and implement, the more we can experiment with how best to highlight this information to customers, ultimately making sustainability a transparent and easily identifiable part of their travel decision-making process.

While the traveler insights identified in this report give us direction, solutions give us pathways forward. We took some big steps in 2021 to make sustainable travel an easier choice for everyone. Our new Travel Sustainable badge breaks new ground by recognizing the sustainability efforts of more

than 95,000 properties around the world, and provides travelers with a consistent and easy-to-understand way to identify a wider range of sustainable stays.

And we believe 2022 will give us the opportunity to have even more of an impact. At Booking.com, we will be expanding our Travel Sustainable programs and supporting more efforts to decarbonize the travel industry. We want to use our voice to speak to a broader audience and ultimately accelerate impact across the whole industry.

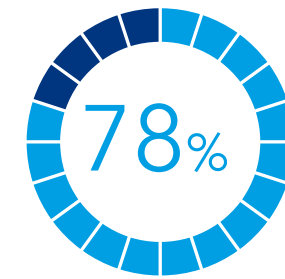
We have ambitious goals for what we want to achieve. Building a truly sustainable travel industry will take time, coordination and concerted effort, but progress is possible through continued innovation, partner support and industry collaboration. Together, we will continue to make it easier for everyone to experience the world in a more mindful and responsible way.”



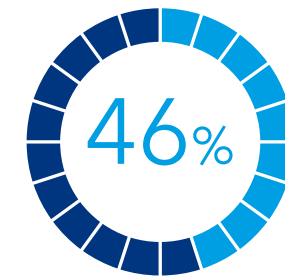
“It’s increasingly evident that eco-friendly, sustainable and responsible travel is much more than a trend. It must become the industry standard.”

In search of more sustainable stays

There is no doubt sustainable travel is important to global travelers, with over four in five (81%) confirming this to be true for them. Half (50%) of global travelers say that recent news about climate change has influenced them to make more sustainable travel choices, and the desire to travel more sustainably is growing:



of global travelers intend to stay in a sustainable property at least once in the coming year



of global travelers have stayed in a sustainable accommodation at least once over the past year and the reasons vary:



71%

of travelers want to make more effort in the next year to travel more sustainably (up 10% from 2021)



53%

are more determined to make sustainable travel choices when they travel now than a year ago.

41% wanted to help reduce their impact on the environment

33% wanted to have a more locally relevant experience

31% believed sustainable properties treat the community better

Encouragingly, awareness and visibility of more sustainable stays continues:



40%

confirm they have seen a sustainable place to stay on an online travel site over the past year



38%

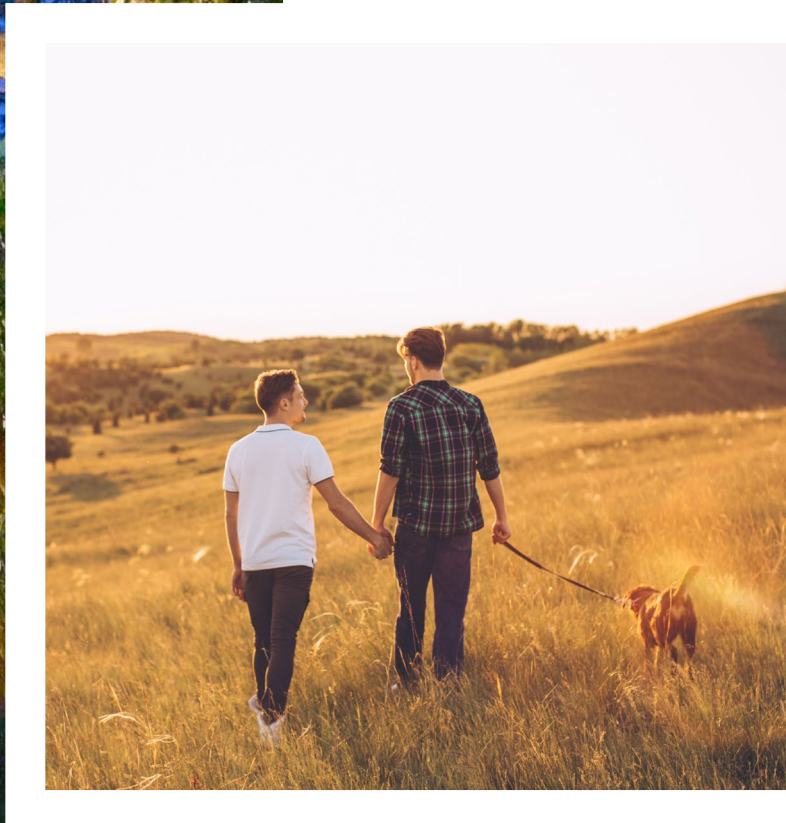
actively look for information about the sustainability efforts of a property before they book



For some, the sustainable experience is more about the aesthetic:

19% perceive sustainable properties as stylish and trendy

16% believe they are perfect for posting on social media



Of those who didn't stay in a sustainable accommodation over the past year:



didn't even know they existed (**down 5% over 2021**)



didn't know how to find them

While the research indicates that awareness of sustainable stays is clearly growing, there is still work to be done to make more sustainable stay options easier for everyone to find. A significant portion of people still seem unsure as to how to travel more sustainably, highlighting a need for the travel industry to make information transparent and understandable for a broad audience of travelers.



57%

would feel better about staying in a particular accommodation if they knew it had a sustainable certification



56%

don't actively look for the sustainability efforts of a property before they book, but if easily accessible they will review it



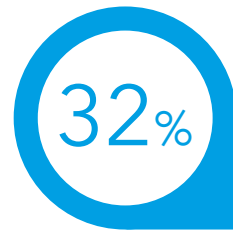
54%

want to filter their options for those with a sustainable certification

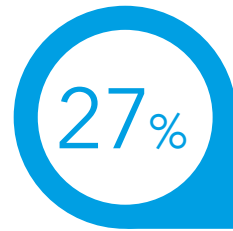
Busting sustainable travel stereotypes

A number of global travelers have a specific perception of sustainable accommodation and the destinations where these properties are located. Ultimately, there is a belief the breadth of choice won't fulfill their wants or needs, with the type of trip only found in remote or less appealing destinations.

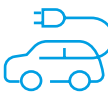
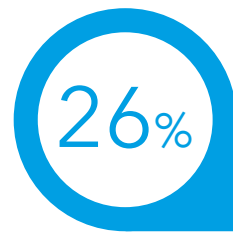
But sustainable travel comes in all forms, which presents an opportunity for travel platforms to surprise and delight people with sustainable options where and how they may least expect it.



say that although they see more sustainable travel options, other options tend to appeal more to them



say that sustainable travel doesn't provide the luxury and comfort they want on vacation



say that sustainable travel destinations appeal to them less than other destinations



Of those who haven't stayed in a sustainable accommodation this year:



believe there weren't any in their preferred destination



think they are only available in remote areas, and these travelers prefer to stay in cities or metropolitan areas



believe they seem less luxurious

Seeking alternative destinations and timing

With 50% of global travelers saying the news about climate change has influenced them to make more sustainable travel choices, there's an emerging consensus of wanting to avoid busy and over-visited destinations to ensure a more even dispersal of the impact and benefits of their visit.

This indicates an opportunity for travel platforms to work with accommodation providers to highlight more sustainable options in busy cities and other popular tourist destinations as well as to help people discover alternate times and places to take their trips - without sacrificing on experience.



Over the last 12 months


To avoid overcrowding, travelers have:

33%  chosen to travel outside of peak season


27%  chosen to go to a less popular travel destination

Looking forward to the next 12 months

To mitigate overcrowding and/or ensure the dispersal of tourism, travelers say they would be willing to:

64%  avoid popular tourist destinations and attractions

40%  exclusively travel in off peak seasons or outside of peak season

31%  choose an alternative to their preferred destination

Many are at a loss as to where to find these less crowded locations. Over two in five travelers (42%) struggle to find appealing destinations that are less crowded, while over a third (34%) feel like it's not possible to find sustainable travel options in cities or other popular tourist destinations.

However, 28% say that travel companies proposing alternative destinations to prevent overcrowding would encourage them to make more sustainable travel choices.

This presents opportunity for everyone:

- 1 Giving accommodation providers the incentive to progress their sustainability journeys
- 2 Giving travel platforms the opportunity to highlight more sustainable options
- 3 Ultimately helping travelers discover alternate times and places to take their trips, without sacrificing on experience

Increased connection to culture and local communities

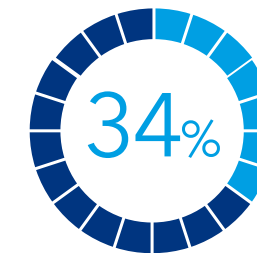


Bringing people and cultures closer together is what travel does best. Research reveals a growing desire amongst global travelers to get closer to culture and community when traveling, with 45% believing that protecting and learning about local cultures is part of sustainable travel.

This regenerative philosophy is influencing decision-making. By creating and offering more sustainable choices, it's possible to create tourism opportunities that drive positive impact and trip satisfaction.



Despite the appetite of global travelers to give back and connect during their travels:



said they don't know how or where to find activities or tours that ensure they are giving back to the local community



think that travelers are responsible for reducing negative impacts of travel and tourism



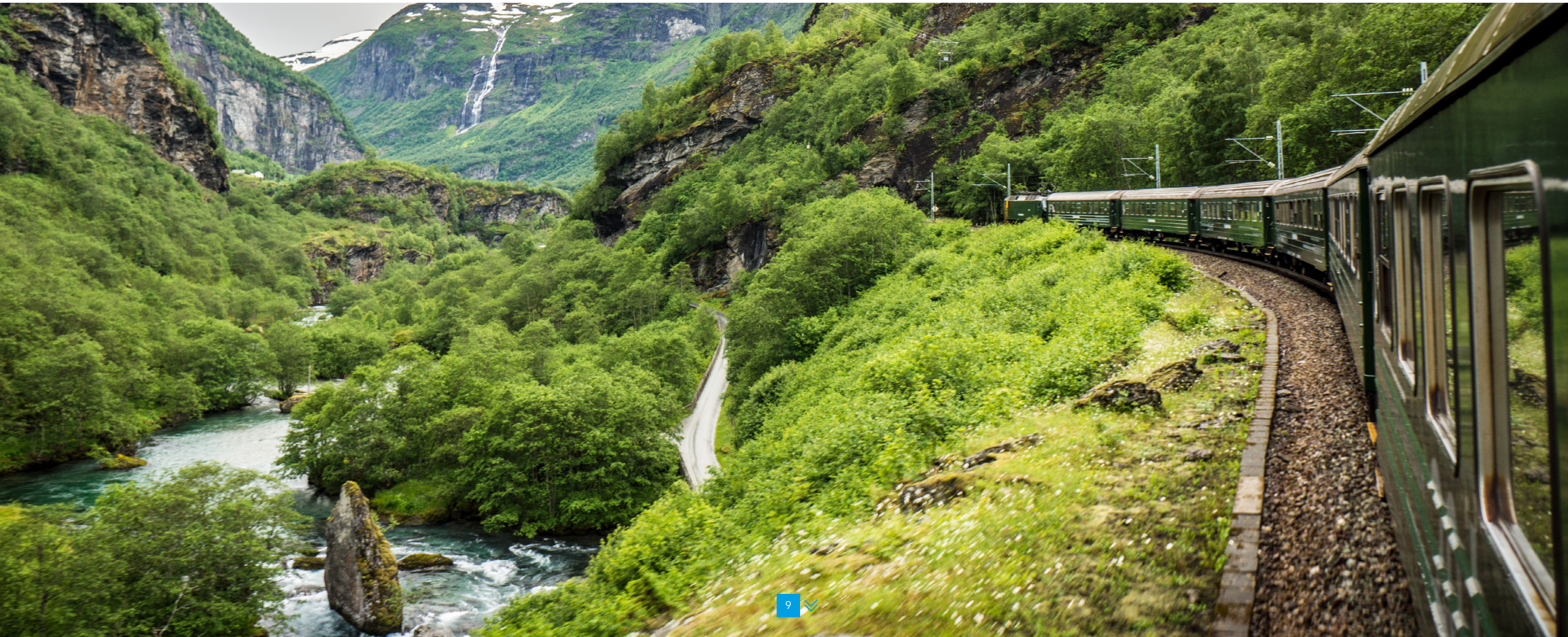
would like travel companies to suggest things to do and places to visit while on vacation to ensure they are giving back to the local community



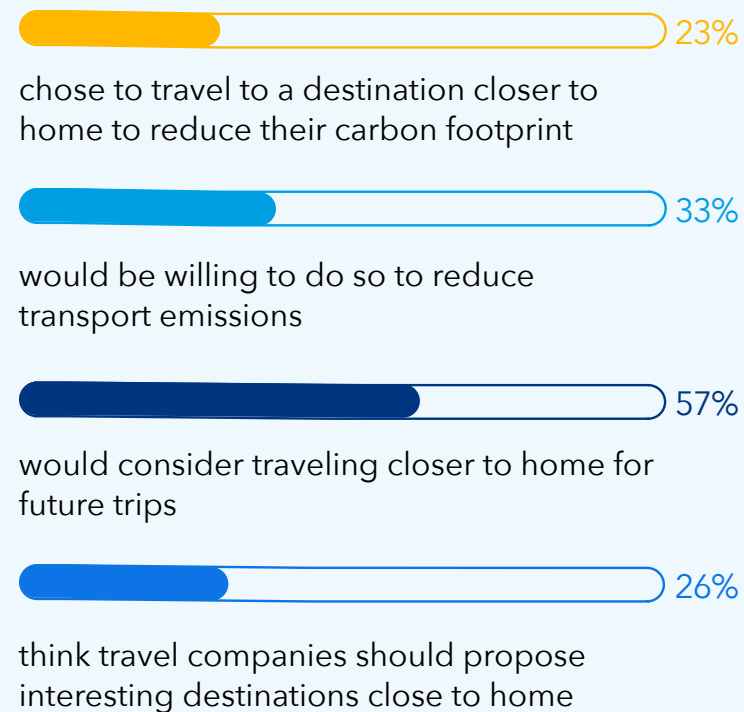
Tipping point for transportation

Global travelers are mindful about how far they travel, how they get there and how they get around once they're there - with over half (51%) deeming lower-to-no CO2 emissions through their transportation choice a key part of what constitutes 'sustainable travel'.

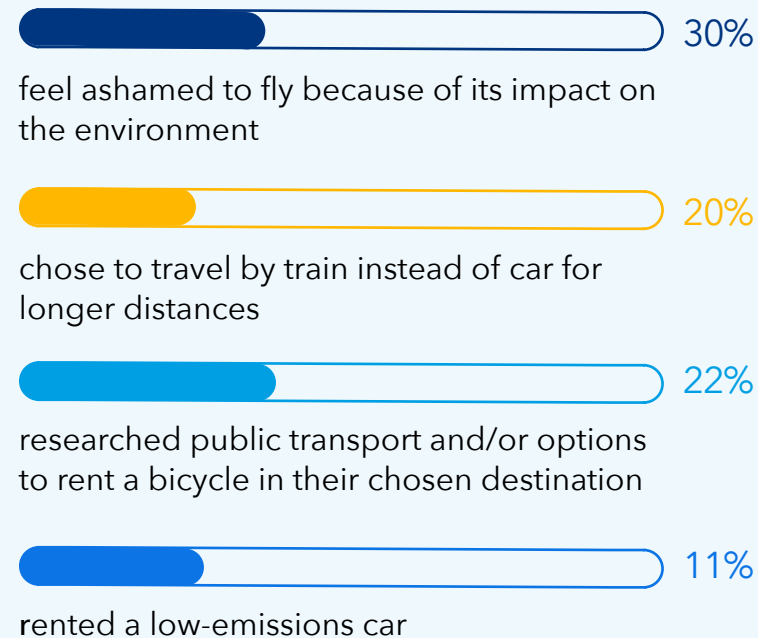
As people bid to make more sustainable travel choices, a wide range of opportunities open up for transport and travel providers to deliver more sustainable options across the entire trip experience.



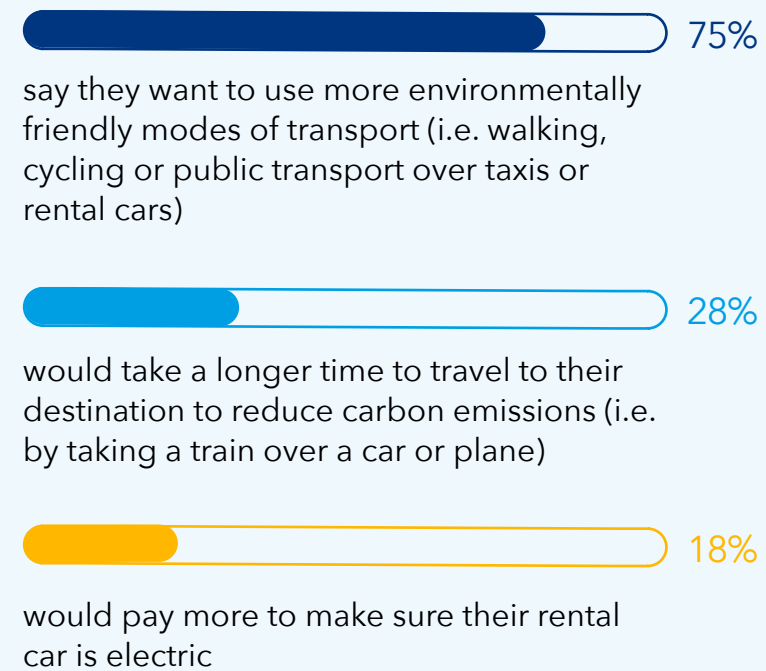
When it comes to exploring closer to home...



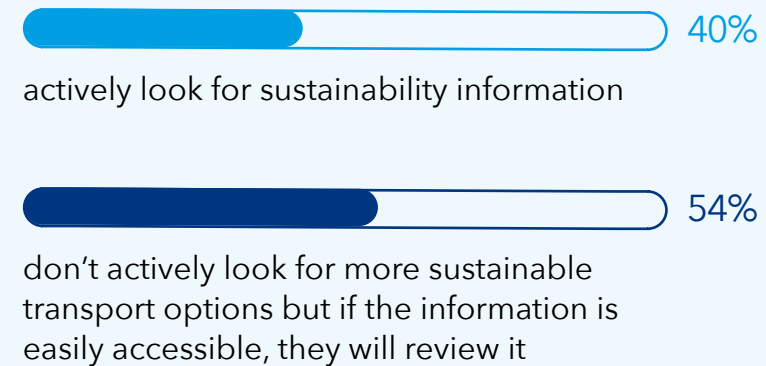
When it comes to modes of transport...



When it comes to future trips and the actions travelers are willing to take...



When it comes to booking transportation for their trips...



For those travelers who don't actively look for sustainable travel options, sustainability efforts ultimately do play a role in their decision making:

31%  say sustainability efforts don't play a strong role in their transport choices but it can influence their final choice

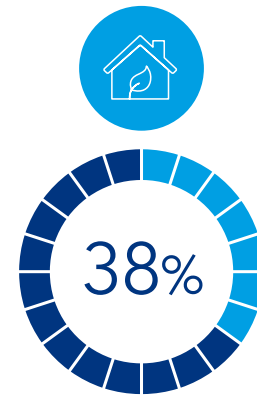
23%  say that sustainability efforts play no role in their choice of transportation, but knowing that the transport option booked follows sustainability best practices makes them feel good

Transforming sustainable intentions into impactful actions

According to the research, intentions to make future trips more sustainable reveal travelers' increasing readiness to take matters into their own hands and take personal responsibility for their own travel behavior. This suggests that people are continuing to think holistically about their impact, including making more sustainable accommodation choices.

While not all travelers are actively looking for sustainable properties, the research shows that the majority are open to consideration if options are presented to them. Serving people with sustainable options when they are not specifically on the lookout, has a positive effect on their ability to make more sustainable choices.

When it comes to booking accommodation for their trips...

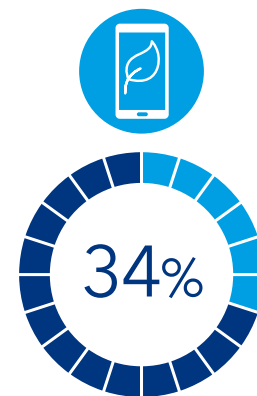


actively look for information on the sustainability efforts of a property



don't actively look for the sustainability efforts of a property, but if the information is easily accessible they will review it

Global travelers said that they would be encouraged to make more sustainable travel choices on online travel booking websites if:



travel platforms offered a sustainable filter option



travel platforms used a clear label so they can easily identify when something is sustainable





More sustainable travel for everyone

As part of Booking.com’s mission to make it easier for everyone to experience the world and, as a leader in travel, we believe we have an important responsibility to make sustainable choices easier, both for accommodation providers and travelers. Our Travel Sustainable badge now provides travelers with a transparent, consistent and easy-to-understand way to identify a wider range of more sustainable stays, no matter where they want to travel. A first of its kind in the industry, the initiative - that launched in 2021 - is available to any kind of property from apartments to hotels and even treehouses that have implemented a combination of sustainable practices that meet the requisite impact threshold for their destination.

With more than 95,000 properties globally now recognized for their sustainability efforts with a Travel Sustainable badge on Booking.com, we have further expanded the number of third-party certifications and labels that automatically qualify accommodations to receive it. In addition to those officially approved by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), Green Tourism and the EU Ecolabel, this now includes Green Seal, Nordic Swan Ecolabel, Green Hospitality Ecolabel, Ibex Fairstay, Fair Trade Tourism, LEED and Edge.



Becoming carbon conscious

We know how important it is to set a good example and to hold ourselves to account. Since Booking.com became operationally carbon neutral in 2020, we've remained carbon-neutral in our operations and transitioned to 100% renewable electricity, a significant milestone for our business and part of the company's contribution to Booking Holdings' Climate Action Plan. The first of its kind for any global online

travel company, our Climate Action Plan functions as a strategic framework for how Booking Holdings intends to make its operations, services and the travel industry more sustainable. In line with the measurements established by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi), the Climate Action Plan includes ambitious targets that aim to help the company achieve net-zero emissions by 2040.



Methodology

Research commissioned by Booking.com and independently conducted among a sample of 30,314 respondents across 32 countries and territories (1,000 from USA, 958 from Canada, 1,009 from Mexico, 1,001 from Colombia, 1,003 from Brazil, 1,017 from Argentina, 1,000 from Australia, 486 from New Zealand, 998 from Spain, 1,003 from Italy, 996 from France, 495 from Switzerland, 980 from the UK, 998 from Germany, 1,014 from the Netherlands, 991 from Belgium, 985 from Denmark, 984 from Sweden, 964 from Croatia, 976 from Russia, 1,008 from Israel, 1,002 from India, 1,004 from

China, 925 from Hong Kong, 1,006 from Thailand, 988 from Singapore, 1,002 from Taiwan, 1,004 from Vietnam, 1,004 from South Korea, 1,003 from Japan, 1,006 from South Africa and 504 from Kenya). In order to participate in this survey, respondents had to be 18 years of age or older, had to have traveled at least once in the past 12 months and must be planning to travel in 2022, and be either the primary decision maker or involved in the decision making of their travel. The survey was taken online and took place in February 2022.