



# A STUDY ON TOURIST PREFERENCES FOR TRAVEL POST-PANDEMIC

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**Abstract:** Tourism sector is one of the fastest growing industries in India with contribution of 09 % to the economy. The Novel corona virus (Covid – 19) originated in city of Wuhan (Hubei Province) in China in December 2019 and spread globally in a short span of time. In December 2020, Covid -19 was declared a pandemic by WHO. This resulted in closure of all international borders, lockdown, and ban on the travel. It created global economic crisis and disrupted daily living. Tourism sector was badly hit by the pandemic with decline in foreign earnings and unemployment of tourism and hospitality professionals. While the world is still struggling with the pandemic, in a post-Covid era, there will be inevitable changes in tourism industry, which will be influenced by tourist preference, availability of the destination and present rules and regulation due to pandemic. The study aims to identify and analyze various factors which will affect travelers decision is selecting a travel destination post Covid. A descriptive and exploratory design is used for this study. Primary data is collected by surveying 108 Indian travellers from different states. Secondary data is collected from various articles, e-newspaper and journals. The study revealed that majority of the travellers plan to take a long trip of more than 3 days. They prefer domestic travel which is inter-state. They wish to travel to leisure getaways, mainly for relaxation and get connected with nature with a change of location or a visit to a beach and for visiting Family and Friends.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic which hit China in end- 2019 & India in March 2020 has brought travel and tourism to a near-standstill, and no one is sure when it will restart. The Tourism and Hospitality sectors have almost collapsed due to this unprecedented disaster. The coronavirus has shattered economies around the world and disrupted life in many ways. The world will never be the same post- pandemic. But at some point in the future, both the industries will start coming back to normal and people will start travelling again. Industry experts feel that when travel begins again, it may limp-start with road trips closer home, such as trips to the countryside or the outskirts of the city, as tourists are now more apprehensive about undertaking long distance travel. The new travel normal may mean an increasing shift to vacation rentals over hotels, driving rather than flying, and an increase in the use of travel insurance and personal travel advisors. *Tourists now* prefer domestic destinations reachable by car and stays at private rental properties instead of crowded hotels and resorts.

Any bounce back in tourism, brought to a sudden halt by the pandemic, will start slowly and stay closer home. People will visit local eateries, stay local for a weekend getaway or travel domestically prior to international travel.

Accommodation across Airbnb, Booking.com and other sites show higher demand for domestic travel and occupancy in drive-to destinations. Sanitization will be of utmost importance. Many vacation homes are installing automatic locks that can be opened via cellphone app, arranging contactless food deliveries and spacing out rental periods, to ensure complete disinfection.

There's a definite move toward vacation homes over hotels, as hotels have a lot of turnover of guests and in the dining room. Airbnb apartments advertise the property as— 'Sanitized, highly clean, Covid-friendly' which indicates to customers, that it is a safe location. Family and multi-gen travel will see a rise in bookings of villas and private homes and less crowded experiences.

People are still in the wait-and-see mode, because until the virus is under control and efficient systems are in place to restore confidence in travel, they will initially start with domestic travel and then move to international destinations. Yet, there is a lot of optimism and people are planning ahead.

According to an article on Big Shift in Travel Trends for Indian travelers in Covid times, there has been a big change in the way Indians travel presently in the post-Covid era. From short weekend getaways, staycations and road trips, many people are resorting to 'revenge travel' to escape the monotonous routine or 'lockdown fatigue' brought about by the second wave of the coronavirus lockdown.

People are tired of following the same humdrum routine every day, working from home, unable to step out in the fear of contracting the virus, leading to fatigue that makes people want to escape to the hills or other tourist destinations.

Indian travellers are now flocking to popular local hotspots close to nature, accommodations based on the health and hygiene policies the destination has and will avoid some destinations due to safety concerns. International travel trends cannot be predicted as it is subject to factors like air bubbles between India and other countries, vaccination drives, and long-term government policies.

Indian travellers are looking for experiences that will allow them to reconnect with friends and family, that are off-the-beaten-track and offer affordability and adventure while benefitting local communities. They prefer travel that balances their itinerary with a slow pace affording them the time to explore more while reducing the stress of rushing around many places. Many tourists are now planning solo trips.

Two major factors are driving people for luxury in travel – safety and hygiene, leading many to opt for higher category hotels, premium home stays, independent villas and non-hotels that promise the comfort of a vacation while meeting additional requirements, such as heritage homes, havelis and villas. With the line between living and travel blurring, people want to experience longer stays in some of these accommodation formats.

In post-Covid times, the tourism and hospitality industry are trying to instill trust and confidence among tourists by making services contactless. From online check-in at airports and hotels, to ordering food and beverage and concierge services at hotels, contactless services are becoming the norm.

Tourists would look at sustainable travel options in 2021, that are closer to remote communities and nature, providing a boost to these communities, are accessible and affordable and contribute to unique and individual travel experiences. Majority plan to travel post lifting of restrictions, and/or within the next 3-6 months, and some ready to travel post unlock.

Covid numbers have reduced in the past few months in India, but it is still each one's responsibility to follow Covid-related protocols till the situation completely gets back to normal.

Travel trends emerging in the post-Covid era are in contrast from pre-Covid period and tourists now prefer travel choices that provide hygienic staying options and safety protocols.

As lockdowns lift and the pandemic recedes in many parts of the world, quarantine-weary countries have one question: When can tourists travel again – and where will they chose to go? In India, it may depend on the extent of control in the virus' spread. India has seen high rate of transmission and the infection has spread from big cities to small towns. Where countries are planning to reopen to tourists, officials from the World Health Organization have urged countries to reconsider until the COVID virus is under control.

As travel restrictions ease, fully vaccinated people are making plans to visit destinations from their bucket-list. Leisure and Adventure travel has gone up, while pilgrim tourism has gone down, as temples are yet to open in many places. Indian travellers have equal preferences for both domestic and international travel. Among the domestic destinations, Kashmir, Leh-Ladakh, Himachal, Andamans, Goa and Kerala are popular choices, while Dubai-Abu Dhabi, Maldives, Mauritius, Thailand, France, Europe remain choicest travel destinations globally. Leisure and honeymoon travel to Maldives and Europe has escalated since the first two Covid waves.

### **Keywords –**

Covid-19, Lockdown, Tourism, Revenge travel, Lockdown fatigue, Hospitality ,Leisure Tourism, Pandemic, Protocols, Risk Perception, Tourist preferences

### **Objectives of the study:**

- To study the possibility of travel by tourists post –pandemic.
- To identify the frequency of travel by tourists post –pandemic.

- To explore preferred tourist destinations.
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### **Scope of the study:**

The scope of the study is limited to tourists in India.

## **II .LITERATURE REVIEW:**

Spalding (2020) has mentioned that in a post-Covid world, there will be inevitable changes in tourism industry, which will be influenced by tourist preference, availability of the destination and present rules and regulation due to Pandemic. Traveler's numbers will reduce and less populated unexplored areas such as secluded beaches, wild life sanctuary, less developed or newly developed locations, country side locations and natural reserves will be in demand. This will result in less traffic and lower pollution levels. Italy has started restricting number of visitors onto beaches to avoid large gathering. Low tourist traffic will help the nature to recover and this time should be productively used by the tourism corporations to formulate action plan for a sustainable tourism development.

[T Matiza](#) (2020) has cited that due to difficult condition and ambiguity of events tourist may consider risk factors associated with the travel such as health, psychological, physical, equipment, financial, satisfaction, time and social risk. For an international tourist food safety, climate conditions, behaviour of the host community, psychological risk, violence, cultural acceptance will be concerning factors while choosing a destination. Some travellers may avoid visiting a country as a part of their protective behaviour. For example Chinese tourist did not visit Bhutan due to potential health risk. Hence in the present situation of Covid, some may skip particular destinations or countries which have reported highest number of corona patients.

Das (2020) has mentioned that the risk associated with the travel will alter the tourist behavior and their preference to travel, which may result into cancelling/postponing/ selecting short vacations. Due to the present situation of pandemic, tourist will ensure their health and safety while travelling and those who are scared of pandemic will avoid travel and stay at home. The New normal practices of wearing a mask, washing hands, using a sanitizer, social distancing, avoiding crowded public places, cough and sneeze etiquettes will be strictly followed during the travel as a part of defensive mechanism against the Covid.

Ivnov (June 2020) has stated that unlike the previous pandemic of SARS, MERS and Ebola, Covid -19 caused drastic decline on a global economy. Hospitality industry is susceptible to disasters which affect the revenue and tourist flow. Tourism industry had a negative impact due to border closure and restrictions on air travel. For revival of the tourism, research should be done to understand change in the traveler's behavior and demands associated with hygiene and safety measures. Their study of post pandemic Bulgarian travel revealed that they will prefer domestic travel with personal mode of transport and will choose a destination with trustworthy hotels for a sanitized lodging. Women and senior travelers are more concerned about health and security. Bulgarians will travel post 2 months after the travel restrictions are eased.

Livemint.com/news (November 2020) had conducted a survey of Indian travelers to access their choice of selecting a tourist site based on safety, stay options and transport arrangements. As per the survey, post pandemic travelers will prefer to visit offbeat destinations in the proximity of nature. Workstations topped the list for a weekend break with family and friends. They would travel more frequently in their own vehicles or by flight. Tourism industry will now need to redesign their products and services in line with consumer behavior patterns laying emphasis on social distancing and hygiene. Thrillophilia (a travel agency) is working with various state tourism departments to promote the local tourism and to develop new off beat destinations in India.

Chaudhary (August 2020) has opined that due to the pandemic many countries released new travel guidelines and some even forced a complete lockdown with border closure. This uncertainty affected the tourism and hospitality industry. The service industry hiked their prices to cope with high sanitation costs. The number of visitors visiting a destination/hotel/restaurant is now restricted. In order to cope with the new restrictions, he suggested to provide safety to guests by use of technology during check in and for payment of services, placement of plastic barriers between check in counters and the guests, to avoid gathering of guests in the restaurants, facility of room service should be provided for residential guests, Use of



automation and artificial intelligence can reduce costs and increase performance stability of the Industry. These measure will help the tourist to feel safe at their accommodation.

Balakrishnan (2020) has mentioned that the Indian Aviation industry should elevate customer experience by using technology and innovation to ensure travelers safety. Due to lockdown in India, air travel has decreased as corporate employees are working from home. According to survey done by IATA (International Air Transport Association) 60% of the tourist will book their air travel after 02 months of pandemic is controlled and 40 % of the tourists will book their plane tickets after 06 months post pandemic. Considering the present situation, Travelers are booking their air tickets few days before their travel due to uncertainty of events. Thus airlines should use recent technology to confirm the bookings immediately. The aviation sector should determine the present market needs and should plan the strategy as per the demand.

Roy (2020) has stated that in India, tourism industry provides 12.75% of total employment in the country. To increase the international tourist traffic, India allotted E visa to 169 countries in the year 2019. When any disaster hits any country, hospitality and tourism industry gets badly affected. Due to the corona pandemic in India, the tourism industry and its stakeholders suffered a huge loss in tourist income and foreign exchange, affecting the hospitality and transport sector. In the beginning of the lockdown in the March 2020, hotel booking declined by 65%, restaurant industry had to lay off 15 % staff, 60 % of the hotel sector was closed, restrictions on the mass gathering resulted in loss of MICE bookings. Online booking sites of tourism did not earn revenue as summer travel was banned in the country.

Sinha (November 2020) has mentioned in his article that Yatra conducted their annual survey and found that travelers will book their tickets in advance to serene destinations to rejuvenate. 61 % of the tourist will travel during their religious festivals. Budget of the travel will be around Rs. 10,000/- to Rs. 15,000/- .While selecting a destination they will consider certain factors such as government regulations, active corona patients in the area, sanitation of the monuments and places of interest, and hospital facilities. They will also buy a health insurance before their travel. During their hotel stay, they will prefer dining in the room rather than having a meal in the hotel restaurant. Amongst the leisure segment, visit to hill station will be ideal destination and second ideal place will be a beach destination.

Palisetty (October 2020, Times Life) has stated that as per OYO's survey, post pandemic, Indian tourists will prefer road trips within their current state up to a distance of 200 km. They do not wish to travel for a long journey; hence they are preferring tourist places within the state or which are nearby their home. The second preference is for trekking to forts and valleys as trekking is such an activity where norms of social distancing can be maintained and large gathering of crowd is avoided. The trending destinations are Jaipur, Deharadun, Shimla, Landsdowne and McLeodGanj which are suitable options for trekking in the fort, mountains or Valley.

Ali (December 2020, Times of India) has opined that Indian travelers are tired of working from home. To overcome the boredom, they intend to travel to a safe destination before this year ends for a weekend break, staycation( a type of a vacation where a tourist travel to places nearby his home for a day and which does not require overnight stay) and drivecations. ( a type of travel where a traveler stay in his car or a van which is converted with necessary amenities to stay in the vehicle) Weekend travelers are visiting Alibaug, Lonavala, Coorg, Mussoorie, Rishikesh, Shimla and Jaipur. Hospitality industry is also offering lucrative offers for Christmas and New Year staycation. Leisure hotel segments in Goa, Bhimtal, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Mandawa, Palampur, Mashobra and Thekkady are getting good response from travelers from neighboring cities and states. For international destinations, Maldives and Dubai are favorites amongst Indian travelers.

Wachyuni (2020) has stated that in order to survive during the pandemic, the tourism industry should study changes in the tourist behavior. Theory of planned behavior can be applied to understand the changes. There are various personal and social factors which affects the purpose and willingness to travel. If tourists do not feel safe and secure, they will not be at ease and might cancel their travel plans. Anxiety amongst tourist can also cause decline in frequency of travel. Anxiety can be towards the current events, potential physical threat or fear of the virus. In the future there will be a demand for destinations which are safe, hygienic, cool and memorable.

Singala (June 2020) has stated that the pandemic has put tourism industry in a difficult situation with less salaries being paid to staff, fear of losing job and increased competition from newly emerged services such as Airbnb, Zomato, Swiggy, Dunzo and Uber Taxi. Considering the recent norms of social distancing and limitations on the gathering of tourists at one place, tourism industry is offering new packages for small number of tourists with outdoor activities such as winery visit, hiking, trekking, and outdoor entertainment. Hospitality industry is concerned about safety of their employees as well as guests. Many hotels are displaying hygiene certificates on the website to gain trust of the customers and have adapted to new technology with usage of sanitizers and disinfectants.

Kiesnoski (May 2020) from CNBC news has opined that the new normal for the industry will be U.S. tourists preferring local destinations, driving in their personal vehicle, choosing a short duration travel, week end travel, increase in the use of travel consultants and once they get confidence of travelling they will travel aboard. Tourists will choose vacation home rentals over hotels for a short stay; eat in local restaurants and will visit national park. According to Robin from America for Guetsy, US travelers are positive to travel in the near future and there is an increase in the future booking for Christmas holidays as compared to the year of 2019 as tourists do not wish to travel in month of June, July and August.

Southan (October 2020) has opined in his article published in the Euro news that in the Post Covid era, there will be an increase in the conscious travelers who will choose remote places, who will interact with locals and will spend thoughtfully on their travel. There will be a demand for Eco tourism, (a type of tourism which is responsible to conserve the natural environment and which involves supporting the local people and educating the tourist), adventure tourism and Wellness tourism. Online reviews and recommendations from friends and family will help in promoting tourist destinations. Travelers will make their travel bookings last minute after analyzing the COVID situation in the area which they intend to visit. Hospitality industry will have to implement flexible cancellation policy for accommodation to suit the guests demand as some may cancel the bookings due to unavoidable events.

Molinaro (2021) has stated that any tourist while deciding on his travel destination (Domestic or international) considers risk factors and collects data either from online websites or from those who have visited the destination. Mass media and information provided by the government affects the travel decision. Any risk associated with tourist places should be communicated before it creates a negative impact. Level of perceived risk differs according to profile, occasion to travel, culture and nationality and type of tourists. Frequent traveler do not pay much attention or do not postpone their travel plans as they perceive less risk than a raw traveler. Situations such as pandemic, terrorist attack, tsunami, draught, flood, earthquake, hurricane affects the travel schedule, which results into cancellation or postpone of the travel.

Dogra (September 2020) has cited that Indian tourism industry was growing rapidly with multiplier effect. In the year 2018 tourism industry contributed 9.2 % of India's GDP and created 42.673 million jobs and with 8.1% of the total employment. As a result of imposed lockdown due to spread of Covid -19, according to Indian associations of Tour Operators, industry will incur a huge loss of Rs. 85 billions and may result into unemployment of around 38 million jobs. In order to overcome the challenges caused by the pandemic, Indian Tourism industry has implemented various programs to increase tourist arrival. Prime Minister Narendra Modi initiated digital India mission, which includes 'DigiYatra' which helps the travelers in digital check in, safe entry and exit with facial recognition during air travel. Road transport such as Indian Railway is providing hands free amenities, copper coated hand rails, air purification and titanium di oxide coating to reduce the containment.

Bloom Consulting and D2-Analytics (April 2020) conducted a study on 'How a COVID vaccine might impact leisure travel', and assessed people's potential behaviors for the coming year by proposing a range of different scenarios for travel.

In the first scenario, respondents were told the virus was controlled and has become a part of our lives. Although travel restrictions would not require quarantines when entering chosen destinations, 45% said they still wouldn't be ready for a leisure trip. In the second scenario, the virus was nearly eradicated, but a treatment had been developed. Despite access to the medication, 35% polled said they'd stay in. In the third potential scenario, the virus was fully eradicated. In this case, there was no risk of infection from COVID-19 and no restrictions to navigate. Despite these facts, 15% of all tourists polled said they still would not leave their homes for a trip. This reveals a key travel barrier that did not widely exist in the pre-COVID-19 era: **Fear**. A majority said fear was the main reason they wouldn't travel in the coming year.

### III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

#### Population and Sample:

The population for the study identified was tourists from India. There was only one sampling frame designed to carry out this research. Respondents were from different age groups and cities from India.

#### Sample Size:

Estimated population size was infinite. The sample chosen was general consumers who travel to other cities, states and countries. Around 108 samples were surveyed.

**Scope of the study:**

1. The study analyses preferences and perceptions of respondents travel post pandemic.
2. The scope of the study includes Indian travellers.

**Limitations:**

- The researcher has collected data by distributing questionnaire online/by e-mail, thus data collected is more or less quantitative and less qualitative.
- Data is collected from Indian travellers only.
- Sample size is not too large to generalize results.
- Limited information is provided by primary and secondary data.

**Research Instrument:**

A structured questionnaire was used to collect the primary data by distributing it online.

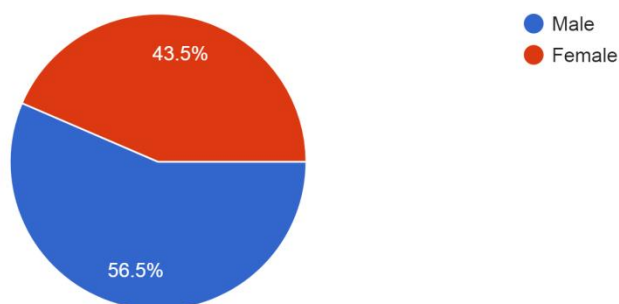
**Sources of Data:**

- **Primary data:** The study was conducted in distinct phases using a questionnaire: A sample questionnaire survey of 108 travellers who were randomly selected on the basis of simple random sampling. Data was then analysed keeping in mind the objectives of the study.
- **Secondary Data:** Secondary data was collected through extensive review of literature on the topic. Research papers from reputed academic journals (Print and online versions) and databases, published articles, newsletters and internet websites pertaining to Tourism and Hospitality sector were referred.

## IV DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Gender

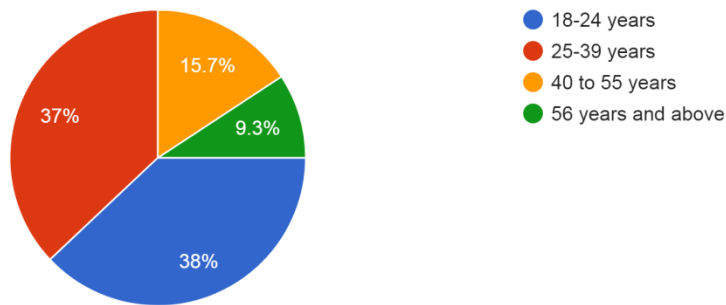
108 responses



Interpretation: The pie chart denotes the gender distribution of the travelers included in the study sample. Among total of 108 respondents, male travelers was 56.5 % whereas the percentage of female traveler was 43.5%. It can be observed more than half of the respondents were male travelers.

## Age

108 responses

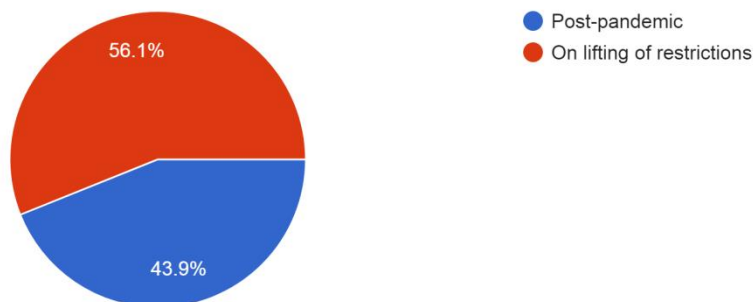


Interpretation: The response was collected from people of different age groups to understand their perspective of travelling post Covid. Age is a crucial factor as travelers from senior age groups might perceive risk of travelling differently. Amongst 108 respondents 38% were between the age group of 18-24 years, 37% of the respondents were from the age group of 25-39 years, 15.7 % were from 40-55 years age and 9.3% belonged to the senior age group of 56 years and above.

Almost half of respondents (42.5%) are residents of Pune. Rest of them are residents of various cities like Mumbai, Satara, Karjat, Dhule, Jammu, Ahmedabad, Vizag and Bangalore.

## Would you be interested to travel -

107 responses



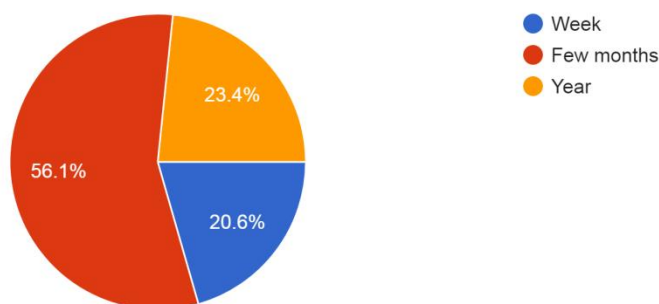
Interpretation: According to the responses received, more than half of the respondents 56.1 % are interested to travel on lifting of lockdown restrictions and 43.9 % will make their travel plans post pandemic.

## What is your reason for travel -

As per the responses received motive for the travel is relaxation, VFR, business travel, to get away from the routine, to get in touch with the nature and medical travel.

Would you like to travel in the next -

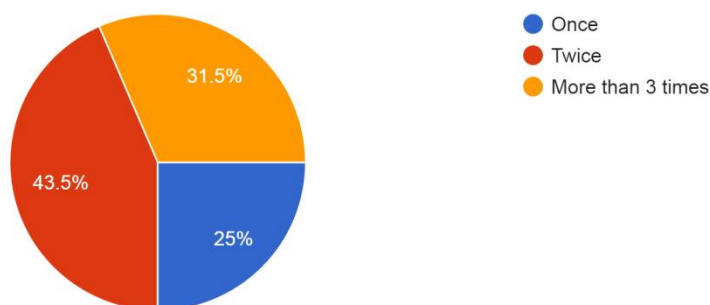
107 responses



Interpretation: As per the above pie chart 56.1 % of the respondents will travel in upcoming few months, 23.4 % will travel in a year and 20.6 % wish to travel in upcoming weeks.

How frequently would you prefer to travel post-pandemic in a year -

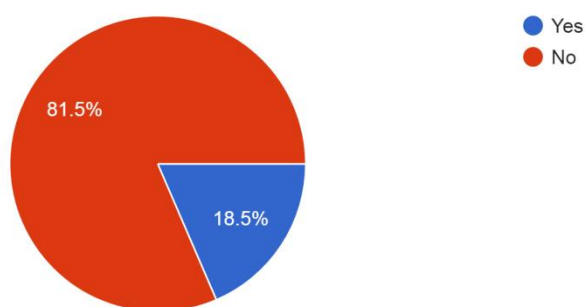
108 responses



Interpretation: The above chart denotes frequency of travel by tourists. 43.5 % of travelers will travel twice in a year, 31.5 % will travel more than 03 times in a year and 25 % will travel once in a year post pandemic.

Have you made a travel/ hotel booking already -

108 responses

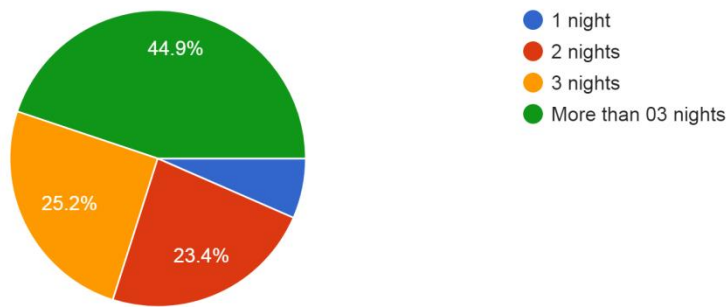


Interpretation: 81.5 % of the travelers have not made travel/ hotel booking yet. 18.5 % have made their travel and hotel bookings for their upcoming travel.



What would be your duration of stay in a hotel -

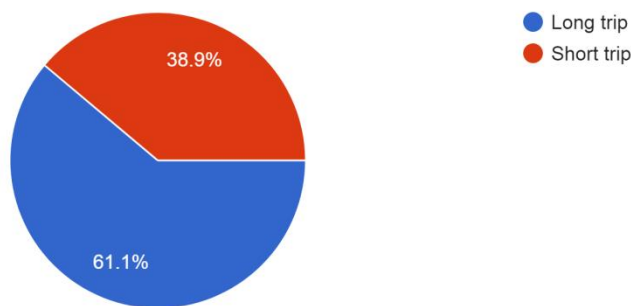
107 responses



Interpretation: Near to half of the respondents 44.9 % will book a hotel room for more than 03 nights, 25.2 % of the travelers will stay for 03 nights, 23.4 % will spend 02 nights in a hotel and 6.5% will stay overnight during their travel.

Would you prefer a -

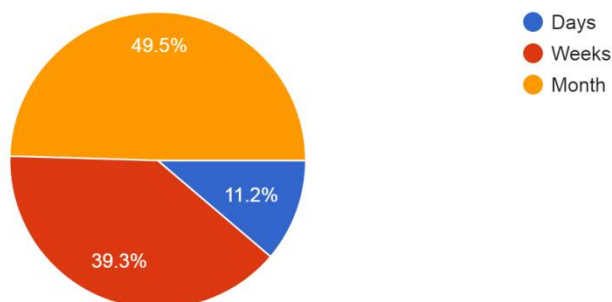
108 responses



Interpretation: More than half of the travelers 61.1% will take a long trip and 38.9 % will travel for short duration.

How much in advance would you plan your next trip -

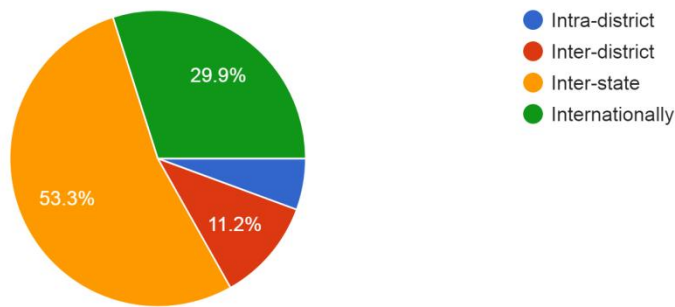
107 responses



Interpretation: As per the responses received 49.5 % of the travelers will plan their travel few months in advance, 39.3 % will decide on their travel in a week's time and 11.2% will make spontaneous trip in a day's time.

Where would you prefer to travel

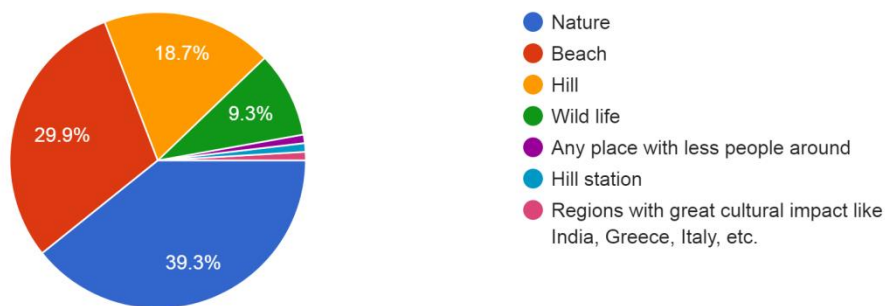
107 responses



Interpretation: 53.5% of the respondents are inclined for inter state travel, 29.9% prefer to go on an international trip, 11.2% will travel inter district and 5.4% will travel within the district.

Which is your preferred destination of visit -

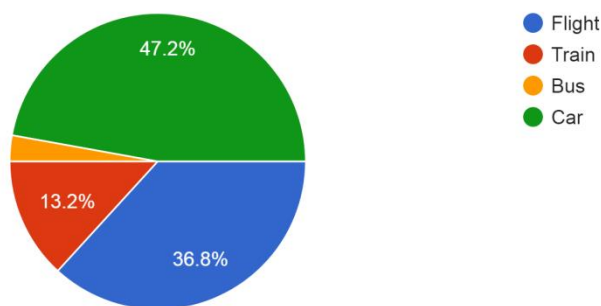
107 responses



Interpretation: 39.9% of the respondent’s wishes to get connected with nature, 29.9% will visit beaches, 18.7% will travel to hills, and 9.3% will travel to wild life sanctuaries. Remaining 3% wish to visit destinations which are less crowded and cultural destinations.

What mode of travel would you prefer -

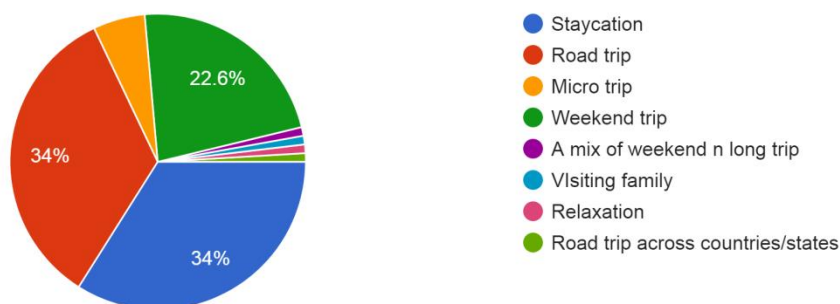
106 responses



Interpretation: Car is a preferred mode of transport for 47.2% of the travelers, Air travel will be opted by 36.8 %, travel by train in preferred by 13.2% of the respondents and 2.8% will travel by bus.

Would you prefer a -

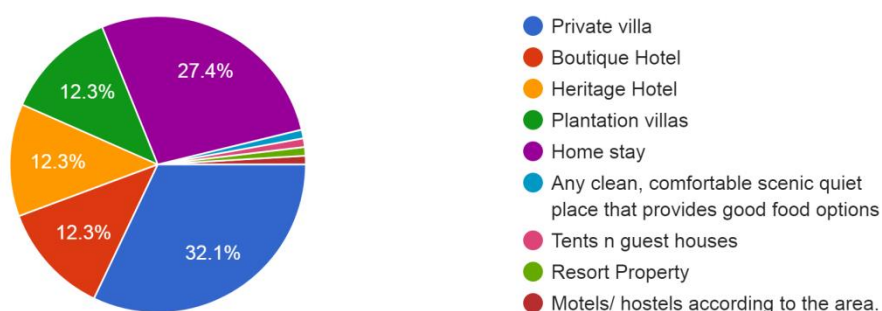
106 responses



Interpretation: Staycation and Road trips are preferred by 34 % of the respondents in each category. 22.6 % will go on a weekend trip and 5 % will prefer a micro trip.

What accommodation would you prefer -

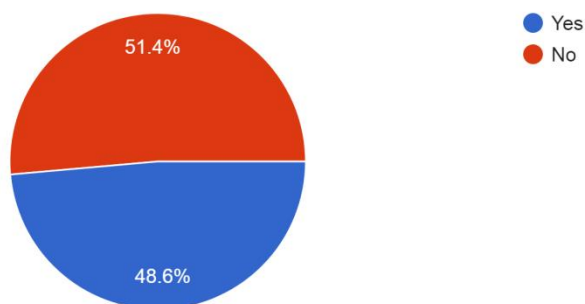
106 responses



Interpretation: 32.1 % of the travelers will stay in private villa, 27.4% will book a home stay, Heritage hotels, Boutique hotels and plantation villa will be booked by 12.3 % of the travelers in each category. Others will prefer tents, hostels, motels, guest houses and resorts.

Have you been fully vaccinated -

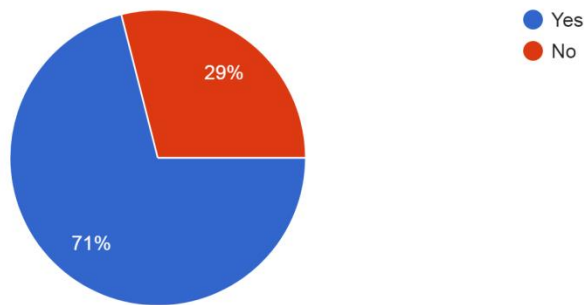
107 responses



Interpretation: 51.4 % of the respondents have been fully vaccinated and 48.6 % have not yet taken their both vaccine dose.

Would you be willing to take an RT-PCR test for travel -

107 responses



Interpretation: Majority of the respondents 71% are willing to an RT-PCR test for travel and 29% are not willing to take RT-PCR test.

Preferred destinations of visit -

Majority of the respondents wished to travel to domestic destinations. Top destinations for domestic travel are Himachal Pradesh, Leh-Ladakh, Kashmir, North-east India, Hrishikesh, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Konkan and Goa.

International destinations preferred are the UK, France, Canada, New Zealand, Maldives, Mauritius, Singapore, Norway, Australia, Japan, Russia, Mexico and Switzerland.

## FINDINGS

### Demographic profile of Respondents (tourists):

- It can be observed that more than half the respondents were male travelers.( Table 4.1)
- To understand the perspective of travelling post Covid, from people of different age groups, it was observed that most of the travelers (38%) were between the age group of 18-24 years & (37%) were from the age group of 25-39 years.
- Almost half the respondents (42.5%) are residents of Pune. Rest of them are residents of various cities like Mumbai, Satara, Karjat, Dhule, Jammu, Ahmedabad, Vizag and Banglore.

### Assessment of travel trends amongst tourists:

- More than half of the respondents (56.1 %) are interested in travelling on lifting of lockdown restrictions and the remaining will make their travel plans post pandemic.
- Motives for travel is mainly relaxation, VFR, business travel, to get away from routine, to get in touch with nature and travel for medical reasons, in that order.
- More than half the respondents will travel in upcoming few months, almost equal numbers (23.4 %) will travel in a year and in upcoming weeks.
- A majority (43.5 %) of travelers will travel twice in a year, post pandemic.
- A majority (81.5 %) of the travelers have not made travel/ hotel bookings yet.
- Nearly half the respondents (44.9 %) will book a hotel room for more than 03 nights, an equal number (25.2 %) of the travelers will stay for 03 nights & 02 nights in a hotel respectively.
- More than half of the travelers (61.1%) will take a long trip.
- Almost an equal number (49.5 %) of the travelers will plan their travel few months in advance and a week in advance, and a minimal number will make spontaneous trips in a day's time.
- A majority (53.5%) of the respondents are inclined for inter-state travel and some (29.9%) prefer to go on an international trip,
- A significant (40%) of the respondents wish to get connected with nature, followed by visit to beaches.
- Car is a preferred mode of transport for 47.2% of the travelers followed by Air travel (36.8 %)
- Staycation and Road trips are preferred by 34 % of the respondents in each category.
- 32.1 % of travelers prefer to stay in a private villa, while 27.4% will book a home stay,



- Around half (51.4 %) the respondents have been fully vaccinated and almost half (48.6 %) have not yet taken both their vaccine doses.
- Majority of the respondents (71%) are willing to undergo an RT-PCR test for travel.

## V CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Travel trends in the post-Covid era vary from short weekend getaways, staycations and road trips, as many people are resorting to 'revenge travel' to escape the monotonous routine or 'lockdown fatigue' brought about by the second wave of the coronavirus lockdown.

- Tourists either prefer to travel on lifting of lockdown restrictions or post pandemic.
- They wish to travel to leisure getaways, mainly for relaxation and get connected with nature, followed by a change of location, a visit to a beach, Visiting Family and Friends, for business and medical reasons.
- Tourists plan to travel in the upcoming few weeks or months, some will travel in a year after the pandemic recedes. They plan to travel twice a year, post - pandemic.
- Tourists are unsure about their travel plans in view of the pandemic situation, hence, they have not made travel/ hotel bookings yet. Most of them prefer to stay in private villas, while some prefer a home stay.
- Travellers plan to take a long trip of more than 3 days. They prefer domestic travel inter-state. Some tourists also plan to undertake overseas travel. Staycation and Road trips are preferred by tourists. Car is a preferred mode of transport for most of the travelers followed by Air travel.
- Tourists are even willing to undergo an RT-PCR test for travel, as exotic locations open up for fully vaccinated people and those having negative RT-PCR reports.

Leisure travel faces a new barrier that did not exist pre-COVID: Fear. The way governments have managed the COVID pandemic will impact tourists' decisions in choosing a destination. A majority of tourists prefer a destination that has a good health system. Communication of the safety measures in place and developing a sense of safety in tourists post-pandemic is crucial. Destination Marketing Organizations must develop tourism products that are tailored to tourists' new needs. This will help secure a positive reputation for the country and help to manage the current situation, prepare for the aftermath of the pandemic and anticipate future problems. Less crowded destinations and improved healthcare systems are tourists' main requirements. The brand strategy should communicate that the destination is appealing and safe once restrictions lift. The product offer must be adjusted to tourists' new expectations and needs. For this purpose, the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) has launched a "Safe Travels" global safety and hygiene stamp for destinations and their products. This indicates that protocols are followed and backed by the United Nations World Tourism Organization and is based on recommendations from the WHO.

## VI RECOMMENDATIONS

Some of the key strategies and recommendations that can guide hard-hit countries like, India as well as any country facing the challenges of building back its tourism industry are: Countries, like India, hit hard by COVID, will need to take travelers' new concerns into account to build back tourism, such as how well the virus is being controlled in different areas when planning travel.

Brand strategies by Government, State Tourism departments & private tourism agencies will need to take into account travelers' fears regarding the virus and promote hygiene and safety.

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