

Travel trends for Boomers, Gen X, Y and Z to look out for

Travellers from across the globe representing all generations, now have a common interest in activities and experiences that are now influencing, indeed in many cases driving their travel decisions, according to new research from Expedia Group Media Solutions.



Image source: [Gallo/Getty](#)

The research underscores the notion that cultural and once-in-a-lifetime experiences, exploring new destinations and interactive activities, are ranked by all generations significantly higher than value or a discounted price.

Arabian Travel Market (ATM) 2020, which takes place at Dubai World Trade Centre from 19-22 April 2020, will bring together travel and tourism experts from across the globe to discuss the growing global tours and activities market, which according to New York-based Skift Research, is estimated to be worth \$183bn this year, a 35% increase since 2016.



3 ways to appeal to the youth travel market

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"Although all generations are now looking for activities and experiences, above all else, what makes this market more complex, is the individual preferences and demands of each generation and of course ultimately, the challenge facing marketers trying to engage with them," said Danielle Curtis, Exhibition Director ME, Arabian Travel Market 2020.

ATM is holding a series of seminars on its Global Stage identifying the latest in hospitality concepts as well as the most recent trends in cultural tourism to future developments in the wellness economy and responsible tourism. And addressing these issues ATM has recruited industry experts from Kerten Hospitality, Accor, as well as representatives from Abu Dhabi and Ajman tourism boards.

Generational preferences and demand

Boomers, born between 1946 and 1964 are the least concerned about budget and are especially interested in sightseeing and in the case of American tourists, 40% will plan their holiday around food and drink. They want safety, security and service and the so-called Platinum Pensioners are a much sought-after demographics – they want to relax and generally

avoid long haul trips.

Gen X travellers who are now typically aged between 40 and 56 years, travel least out of the generations, due to corporate careers, 50% of all leadership roles worldwide are occupied by Gen Xers. As such, they value work-life balance and prefer relaxing holidays to de-stress. Interestingly, 25% of Gen X will accept word of mouth during their decision-making process and are especially drawn towards cultural experiences. Expedia research found that 70% enjoy museums, historical sites and art galleries.

Generation Y or Millennials, who are today aged between 25 and 39, are the most talked-about generation and are the undisputed champions of the frequent traveller title, technically adept and the great disrupters. More than anything, Millennials crave adventure and experiential variety and although they are careful with their budget, in gross terms it the largest submarket by revenue, generated through sheer volume.

Ipsos research in September 2018, concluded that 25% of the MENA region's population is made up of Millennials; 97% are online; 94% are present on at least one social platform; 78% share content weekly; 74% have interacted online with a brand and 64% are always looking for best offers and deals available. This may have something to do with the fact that 41% of MENA's Millennials feel overwhelmed by the financial burden, and only 70% of those of working age, are actually employed.

"One emerging trend travel and tourism experts will be watching is Generation Alpha - the children of the Millennials. According to Skift these kids, born after 2010, will start making their own travel arrangements well before the end of this decade and there is a belief that they are expected to be even more disruptive than their parents," added Curtis.

Finally, **Generation Z**, those born between 1996 and 2010, aged between 10 and 24 years, spend 11% of their travel budget on activities and tours the highest of any generation according to Expedia research. What sets this open-minded, interactive generation apart from the others, is that 90% are inspired by peers on social networks and 70% are open to creative ideas. As true digital natives, they are comfortable researching, planning and booking their travel from their mobile phone and yearn for new, unique and authentic experiences.

"So, in response, apart from the challenges of marketing to these disjointed generations, the ATM seminars will also be examining how hotels, destinations, attractions, tours and other activities are created, packaged and priced, to meet demand. We will also be launching the Middle East's first-ever edition of Arrival Dubai at ATM showcasing the next generation of in-destination trends and innovation, as well as exploring the various opportunities that sector presents," said Curtis.

ATM, considered by industry professionals as a barometer for the Middle East and North Africa tourism sector, welcomed almost 40,000 people to its 2019 event with representation from 150 countries.

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