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TripAdvisor Survey Reveals International Air Travel on the Rise for U.S. Fliers in 2015

Seat Squeeze Ruffles Feathers, but Fliers Applaud Recent Improvements to Online Booking and Comparison Shopping for Flights

NEWTON, Mass., April 28, 2015 (GLOBE NEWSWIRE) -- [TripAdvisor®](#), the world's largest travel site*, today announced the results of its annual air travel survey of more than 2,700 respondents. More U.S. travelers are expecting to fly this year, as 92 percent intend to take a domestic flight at least once in 2015, up slightly from 89 percent who said they flew domestically last year. International air travel is also expected to climb, with 67 percent planning flights abroad, compared to 60 percent who did so in 2014.

"This year, we're seeing more interest in international flights as favorable exchange rates have piqued the interest of U.S. fliers in traveling abroad," says Bryan Saltzburg, general manager of TripAdvisor Flights. "More U.S. travelers are taking to the skies in 2015 and while there's still unrest about seat space, fliers recognize recent improvements to in-flight entertainment, Wi-Fi options and the online shopping experience."

Air Travel Preferences and Pet Peeves

When asked what they enjoyed most about the air travel experience, travelers listed the excitement and adventure of jet-setting at the top of the list.

Top 5 things travelers like most about air travel:

1. Thrill of getting to a new destination - 67%
2. Sense of adventure - 43%
3. Looking out of the plane's window during take-off / landing - 28%
4. Chance to take a break from work (e.g., email) during the flight - 20%
5. Chance to rest during the flight - 17%

When asked what they enjoyed least about the air travel experience, travelers identified discomfort aboard the flight along with extra airline fees as the top frustrations.

Top 5 things travelers like least about flying:

1. Uncomfortable seats / limited legroom - 77%
2. Added fees (e.g., baggage fees, seat selection fees, etc.) - 71%
3. Unpredictable flight delays / cancellations - 67%
4. Cost of airline airfare - 62%
5. Loud / crying children - 50%

Fliers Sound Off About Getting the Squeeze on Seats

- 82% of fliers are "strongly opposed" to airlines installing narrower seats in the economy class cabin
- 57% of fliers say they are more likely to pay for a better seat assignment now than they were five years ago
- Of the 40% of travelers who have experienced slim-line seats, 65% say they're less comfortable than existing economy seats, 16% say some slim-line seats are more comfortable than others and 14% can't tell the difference

Given shrinking seats, it may be no surprise the biggest improvements travelers want is space. Here are the top three amenities travelers say would make the air travel experience better:

1. More legroom - 29%
2. More space between other passengers - 26%
3. More comfortable seats - 22%

Most Improved Aspects of Air Travel over the Past Five Years

When asked about the top air travel improvements over the past five years, travelers gave ease of comparison shopping and booking flights online as their top choices.

Top five biggest improvements in air travel:

1. Ease of booking online - 63%
2. Comparison shopping on flight search sites - 55%
3. Availability of in-flight Wi-Fi - 33%
4. Airline check-in process - 30%
5. Ability to find comprehensive fare, flight and price information on a single site - 29%

A closer look at how travelers shop for and book flights:

- The top three factors for choosing a flight are lowest price (63%), direct vs. non-direct (62%) and departure and arrival time / desired time of day to travel (58%)
- While the vast majority of fliers say they typically book flights on their laptop or PC (87%), 18% say they have booked a flight on a mobile device
- 90% of travelers say it's important to use flight search sites for price comparison
- 69% of travelers book their domestic flights between 1-3 months before their departure, while 61% book their international trips 3 or more months out
- 59% of travelers check 2-3 sites when shopping for airfare
- 60% of fliers are loyal to a particular airline, with 70% of those that are noting it's because of the frequent flier program

TripAdvisor Flights Provides First Class Booking Insights

To help travelers make the best booking decision, TripAdvisor Flights features comprehensive in-flight insights, amenities information and candid traveler photos along with the ability to scan for the lowest prices for airlines globally. Travelers can learn more at www.TripAdvisor.com/CheapFlightsHome.

About TripAdvisor

TripAdvisor® is the world's largest travel site*, enabling travelers to plan and book the perfect trip. TripAdvisor offers trusted advice from travelers and a wide variety of travel choices and planning features with seamless links to booking tools that check hundreds of websites to find the best hotel prices. TripAdvisor branded sites make up the

largest travel community in the world, reaching 315 million unique monthly visitors**, and more than 200 million reviews and opinions covering more than 4.5 million accommodations, restaurants and attractions. The sites operate in 45 countries worldwide. TripAdvisor also includes TripAdvisor for Business, a dedicated division that provides the tourism industry access to millions of monthly TripAdvisor visitors.

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*Source: comScore Media Metrix for TripAdvisor Sites, worldwide, December 2014

**Source: Google Analytics, average monthly unique users, Q3 2014

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