

What's an 'alpha city'? These are the top travel trends for 2023 – plus, five buzzy places to go this year

Industry experts share the themes shaping travel for 2023.



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While global pandemic restrictions ease, travel is roaring back. Canadians are plotting their next trips, from familiar favourites to once-in-a-lifetime bucket-list adventures.

Early data reveals that Canadians are intending to get back to travel at the highest rate since the Before Times (or December 2019). The latest quarterly travel intentions survey by the Conference Board of Canada (CBoC) shows that pent-up demand for outbound travel is finally being released, with nearly six in 10 Canadians planning to take at least one overnight trip this winter, and preferably outside of Canada.

Short-haul sun destinations – including places in the Caribbean, Mexico and the U.S. this winter – are especially hot, literally and figuratively. Even high inflation and the rising cost of flights and vacation packages are doing little to deter travellers.

“It may sound kind of crass, but as long as Canadians can keep the heat on and put food on the table, they’re going to travel,” says Jennifer Hendry, a senior researcher with the Canadian Tourism Research Institute at CBoC. “Our winters are long, and the world is accessible to us.”

Looking further into the future, here are five key travel trends that Hendry and other international travel industry experts are eyeing for 2023.

Now trending: Where to go in 2023

Riviera Maya, Mexico

A steady stream of barefoot-luxe hotel openings – including the new [Casa Chablé](#), and the forthcoming [St. Regis Kanai Resort](#) and [Riviera Maya Edition at Kanai](#) – means the Riviera Maya will “remain a firm favourite for beach holidays,” predicts Southan. Beyond new hotels, the last section of the controversial Maya Train project – which will connect Cancun to Tulum, and the Yucatan Peninsula’s resorts to archeological sites – is expected to open by the end of 2023.

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