

 Skyscanner

Horizons

Travel's resilience and trends shaping recovery
May 2022

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The enduring love of travel

In the face of new COVID variants, the war in Ukraine, high jet fuel prices and the west's rising cost of living, travel is continuing to prove its resilience.

Travel is firmly back on the agenda for 2022, despite the continued pandemic and the emergence of new challenges.

While we predict a full recovery won't happen until 2023-24, there's positive momentum in many parts of the world.

Long haul is coming back, people are prioritising their spend on travel and booking longer trips. City breaks are also making a triumphant return.

The preference today is booking short haul and searching long haul, a result of testing and quarantine requirements in some destinations. When those requirements are removed, we're seeing leisure demand rebound very quickly.

Aviation is still some way from a full recovery, but market conditions are leading to important shifts that will ultimately benefit travellers. These include:

- The streamlining of fleets by retiring older aircraft and introducing newer, more fuel-efficient models.
- New direct domestic and international routes connecting travellers with parts of the world only previously reachable via a one- or multi-stop journey.
- New airlines entering the market, including a focus on low-cost long haul.

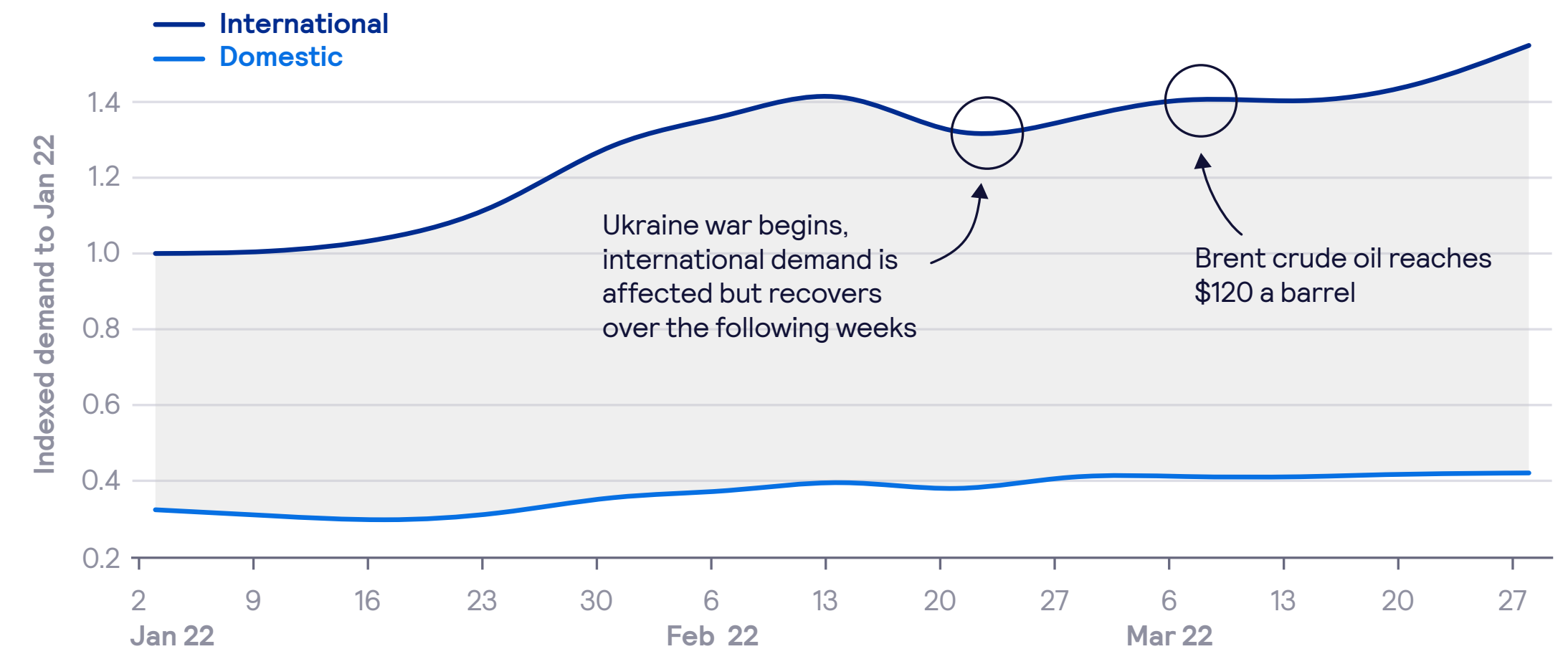
In our previous Horizons report of October 2021, we revealed how low prices, free cancellation and greater ticket flexibility provided the biggest incentives for travellers to book a flight. These factors remain true through 2022.

What's resoundingly clear today – and showcased in this report – is that travellers are eager to get back out there, discover new experiences and create more memories.

International travel demand continues to grow

Although 2022 is presenting a number of global and regional challenges – the war in Ukraine, the Omicron variant, the rising cost of living and hikes in jet fuel prices – demand for international travel, after taking a small dip in February, is increasing.

While we predict a full recovery is some way off, there's certainly positive momentum in many parts of the world.



View from the experts



Despite challenging headwinds, the aviation industry continues to prove its resilience, driven by considerable traveller demand across all regions. Our latest report crunches three months of data to provide unrivalled insight into the latest traveller behaviours and patterns – and how they compare to pre-pandemic.

It's clear that travel will take a greater share of wallet this year than any other leisure spending, as more parts of the world are within reach than at any other time over the past two years. In the immediate term, there's clear demand for domestic and short-haul travel, with long haul's recovery on the horizon as airlines relaunch pre-pandemic routes, announce new destinations and restrictions in many countries in APAC are relaxed.

There's good news for aviation and the wider travel sector too. We're seeing positive signals that seasonality is returning in both booking horizons and trip lengths, providing a degree of certainty going forward.

Hugh Aitken

VP of Flights, Skyscanner



The aviation industry has weathered a devastating storm over the last two years. While still some way from a full recovery, there is broad-based and strongly positive sentiment for growth beyond 2022. Highlighted in Skyscanner's informative new research paper, aviation market conditions are proving as resilient as ever and leading to important shifts that will ultimately benefit travellers. A focus on more sustainable aircraft, new route options and safety will ensure we see continued growth and the resumption of a strong travel industry.

Marco Navarria

Global Content & Marketing Director, CAPA-Centre for Aviation



Skyscanner's 2022 Horizons report reveals once again the need to keep a close eye on the market and understand consumer travel preferences through the ever-changing lens of the post-pandemic traveller. Despite ongoing challenges faced by many, these insights reveal considerable optimism, that confidence is well on its way to being fully restored and that the 'dreaming' stage of travel does indeed convert when barriers are eventually lifted.

The findings serve as a reminder as to just how resilient travel can be, with recovery on-track with previous predictions, even with the backdrop of fresh challenges. For industry, understanding the evolving preferences for longer relaxation breaks, as well as the growing demand for sustainable choices, are going to determine competitiveness – not forgetting that the need for flexibility and confidence remain high.

Nick Hall

CEO, Digital Tourism Think Tank

JLS Consulting

We're seeing both greater airline agility in switching capacity more quickly and a greater willingness to test new markets, as well as numerous new start-ups taking advantage of the availability of cheaper used and new aircrafts. We're also seeing niche long-haul developments with airlines – Qantas being the most recent example – adding more ultra-long-haul routes using the range / payload capacity of new generation Airbus A350 and Boeing 787 aircraft. Evidence so far is that in well-chosen markets, these can attract significant volumes of premium traffic.

John Strickland

Director of JLS Consulting

Chapter 1:

People are prioritising spend on travel in 2022

Though faced with a rising cost of living, travellers are planning to spend more this year – their budgets are higher, they're booking longer trips and spending more on accommodation. But they remain price conscious.

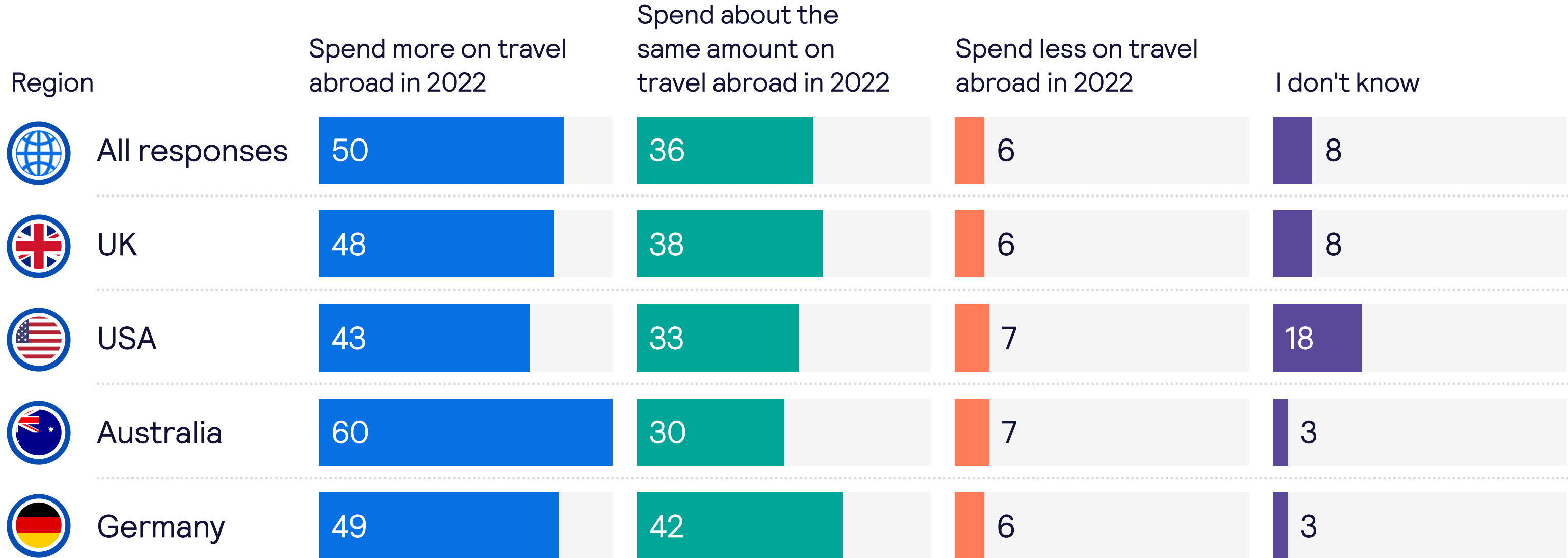


One in two travellers plan to spend more than in 2019

We conducted a survey of 4,000 travellers in the UK, US, Australia and Germany to understand their attitudes towards travel spending in 2022.

Nearly 90% are planning to spend more or the same on travel abroad than pre-pandemic, with half spending more. Leading the charge are Australians, with 60% keen to splash out more this year. Only 6% of travellers across all markets surveyed are planning to spend less. Travellers do remain price conscious, however, and will be flexible on when and where they go to secure the best deals.

Q: Are you going to spend more or less money (per person) on travel abroad in 2022 compared to 2019 (pre-pandemic)?



n=4000

Longer trips and travel upgrades

People are making up for lost time in 2022 by going bigger and indulging more.

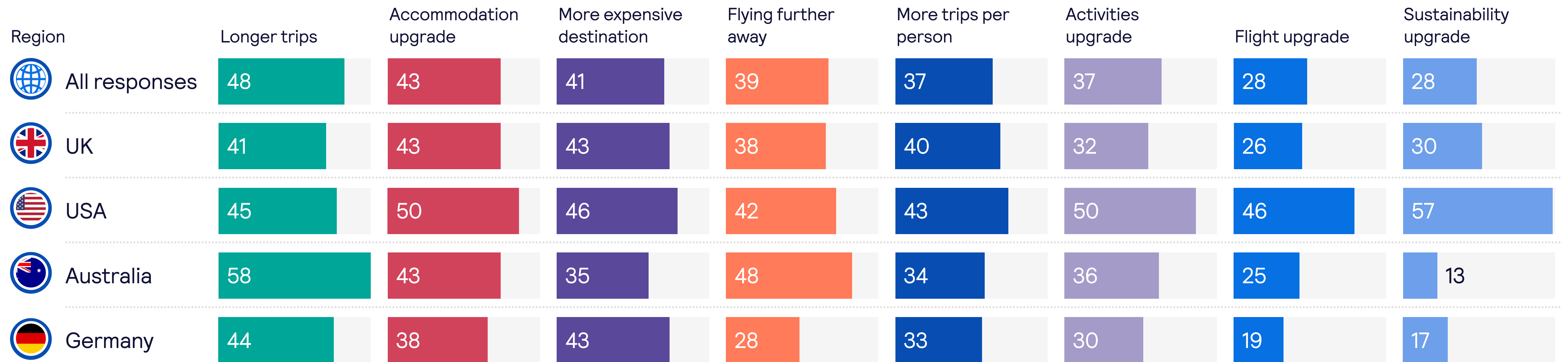
Those with higher budgets are planning to spend their money on:

- Longer trips (48%)
- Accommodation upgrades (43%)
- More expensive destinations (41%)

Longer trips are most popular with Australians (58%), as are holidays further away (48%), while UK travellers are going to upgrade their accommodation and choose more expensive destinations. German travellers are eyeing up longer trips and pricier accommodation.

Americans lead the way when it comes to spending more on cabin class and rooms, with 46% planning to upgrade their airfare and 50% their accommodation. More Americans also want to increase their spending on sustainable initiatives, such as greener flights or carbon offsetting, than other nationalities.

Q: Which of the following will you spend more money on for travel abroad in 2022 compared to 2019?



n=2000

Chapter 2:

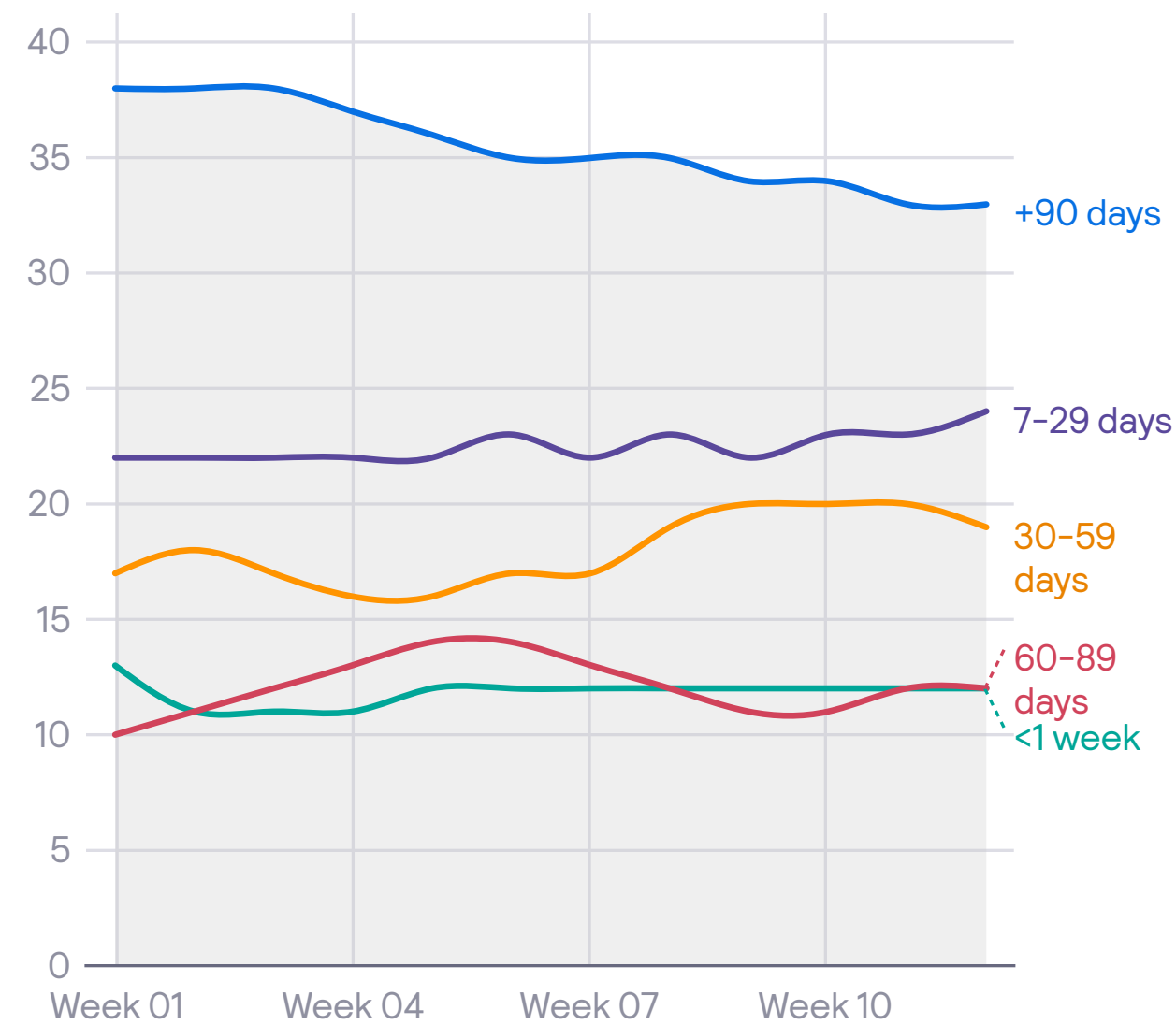
Is the sun setting
on pandemic
booking and travel
behaviour?

Booking horizons, haul
type and trip length are
starting to return to
normality as traveller
confidence accelerates.

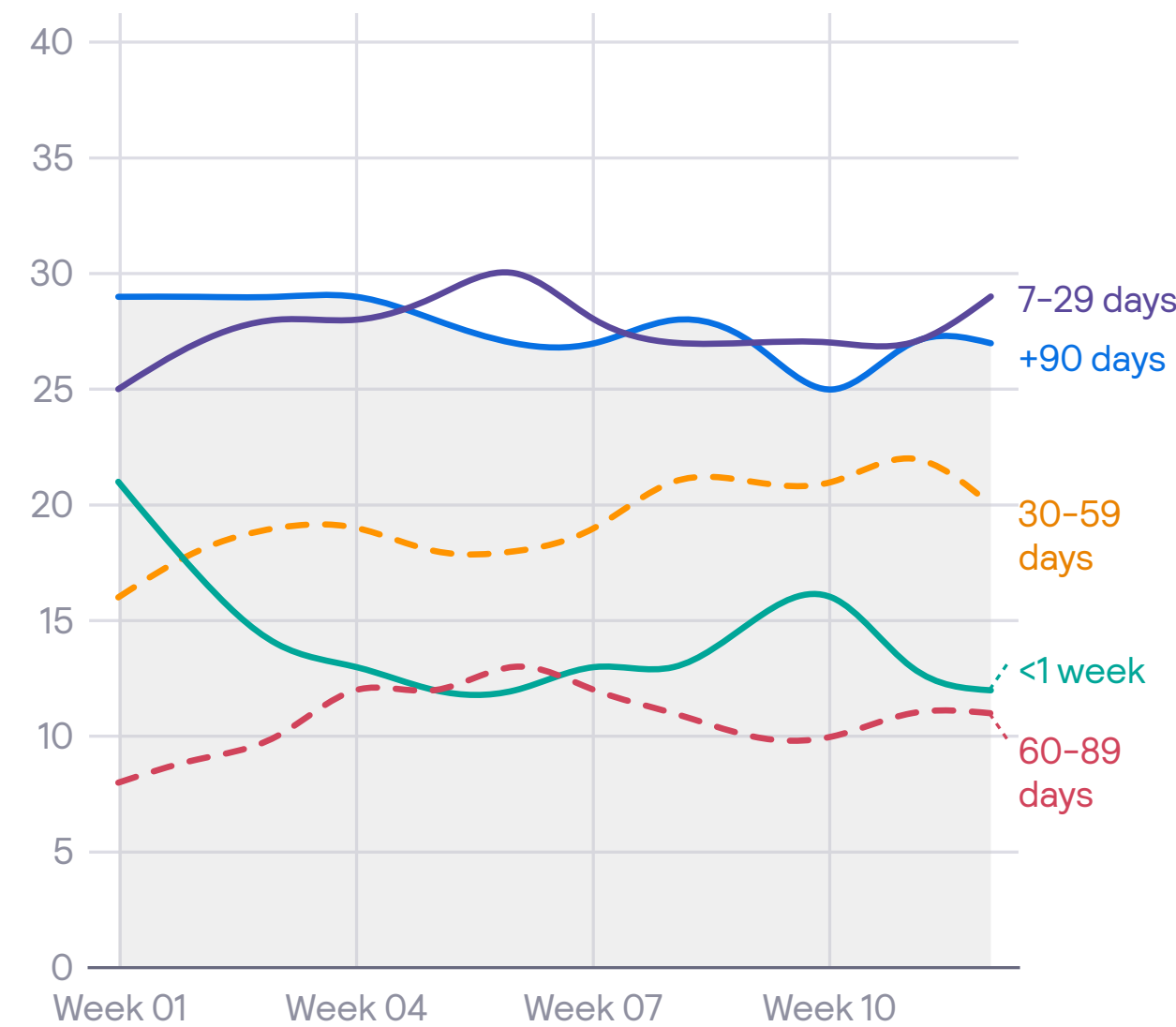
Travellers in EMEA are searching for trips in the short and long term

In 2019, traditional booking behaviour is clear – high numbers of travellers (35%) were planning and booking trips 90 days or more before departure.

EMEA booking horizons 2019



EMEA booking horizons 2022

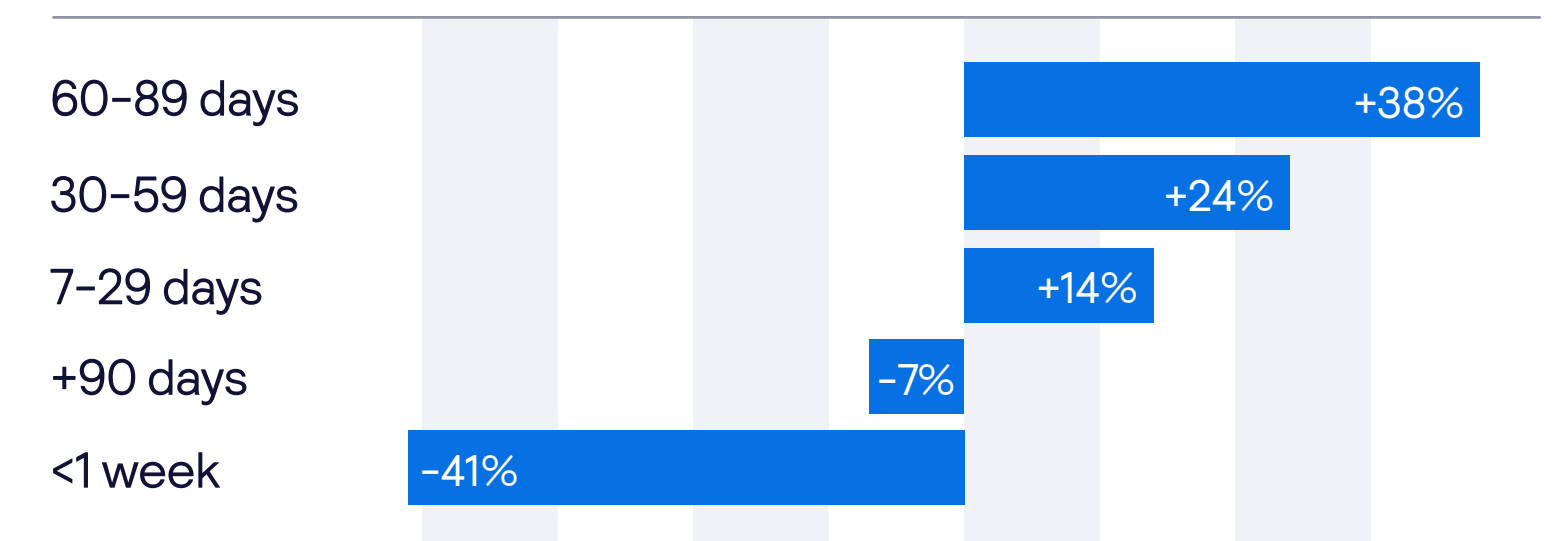


The volume of +90 days in 2022 has been and continues to remain lower than 2019 (on average 7% lower), with growth in 30-59 days (+24%) and 60-89 days (+38%) over the period analysed, as booking horizons of <1 week decline steeply.

This year, there's more demand for the short 7-29-day segment, currently tracking on average 5% higher. Its recent uplift is likely due to late European ski vacations and short-haul Easter trips.

Overall, while shorter booking horizons remain popular (lingering behaviour from the pandemic), travel demand is strong and summer is likely to be a positive one for airlines.

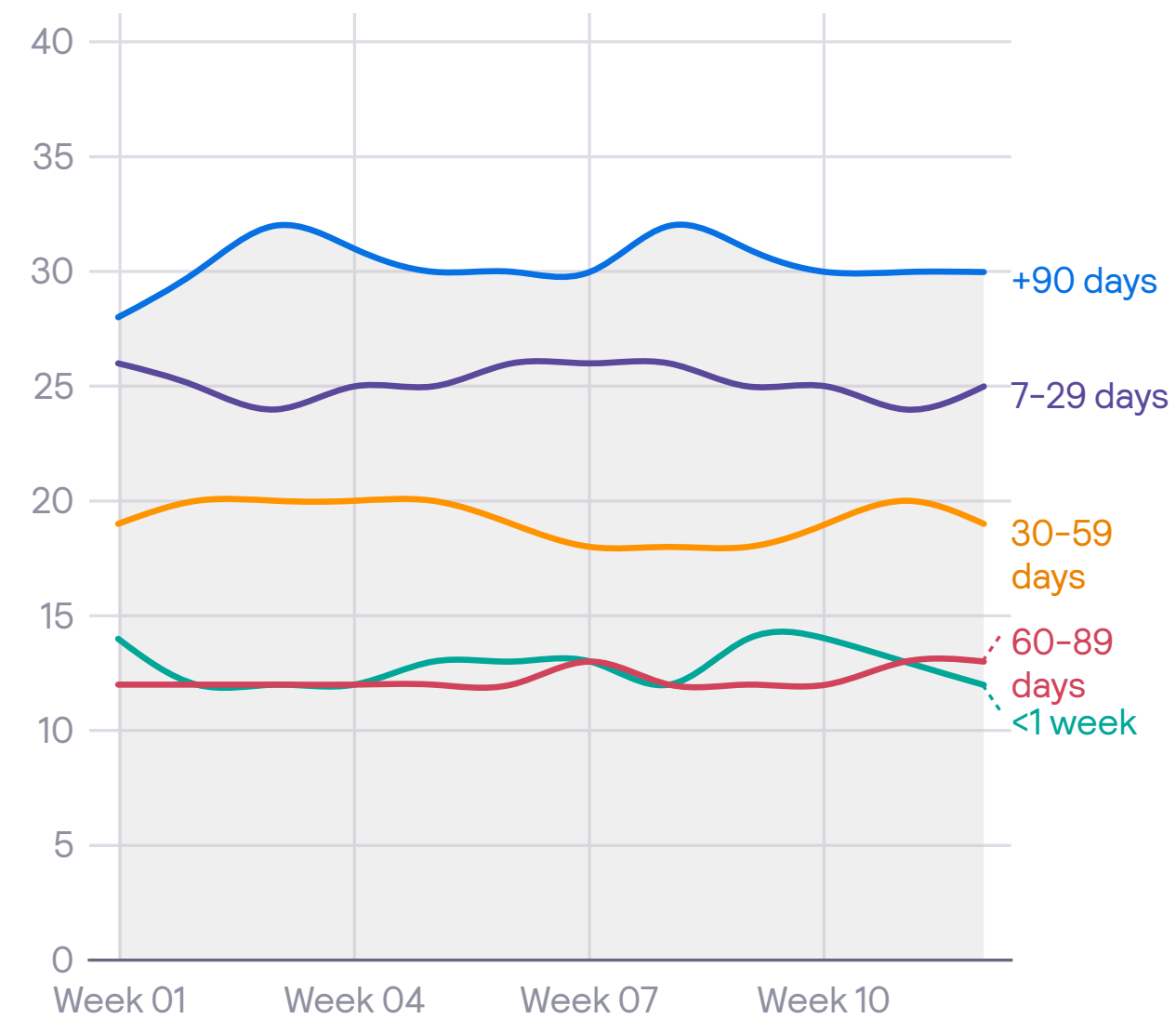
% change week one vs. week 12



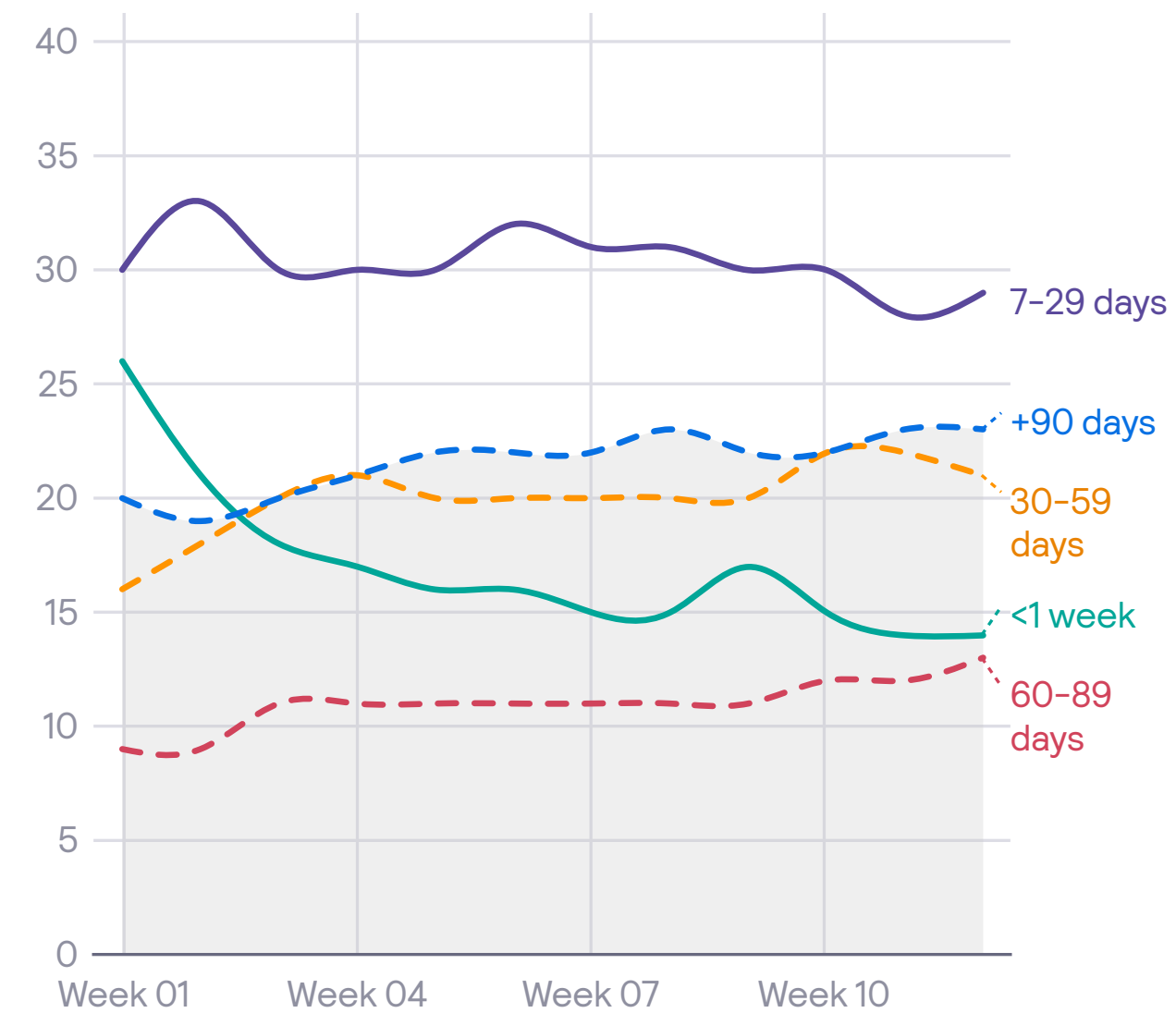
Travellers in the Americas are looking to fly within the next month

Like EMEA, +90 days segment volume in the Americas this year is lower compared to pre-pandemic (on average down 8% over the period). However, from week one to week 12 of 2022, there's growth (+15%) in this segment, as well as 30-59 days (+31%) and 60-89 days (+44%), as travellers look ahead to key seasonal travel periods.

AMERICAS booking horizons 2019



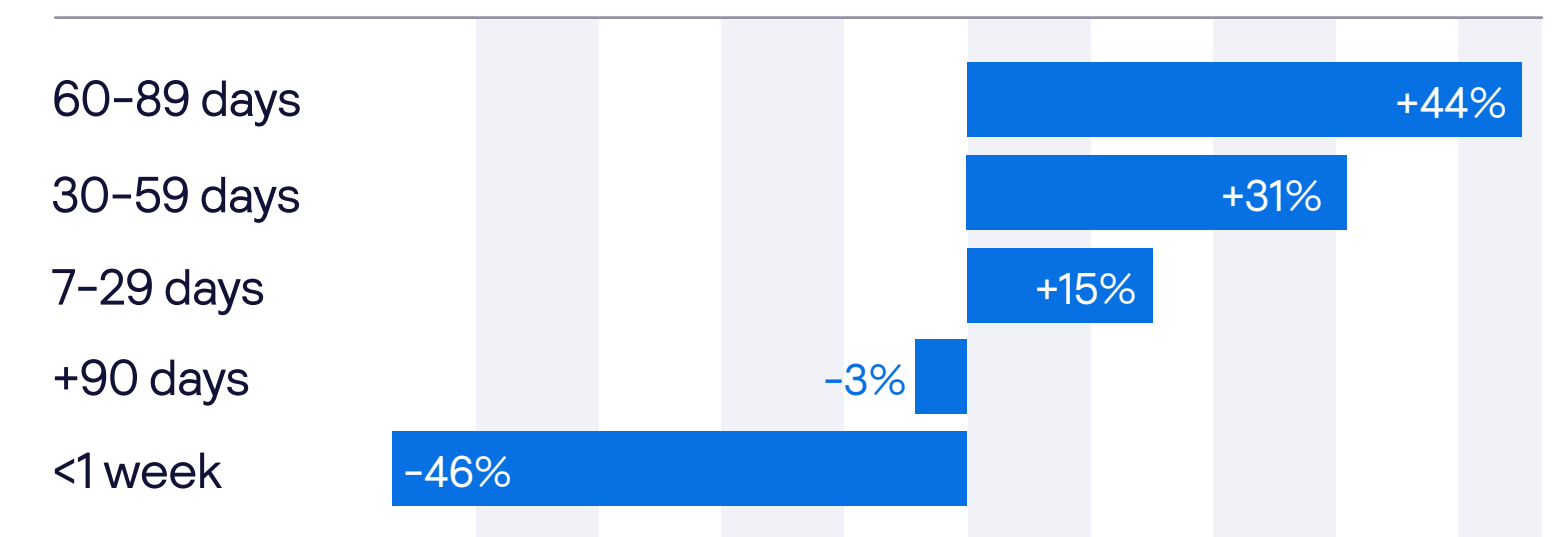
AMERICAS booking horizons 2022



At 29%, the 7-29-day segment has the highest volume as of week 12, compared to 25% in 2019. A sharp decline in <1 week booking horizons (-46% over the period analysed), brings the segment in line with 2019 behaviours. A good sign of recovery.

We expect to see booking horizons normalising in the coming months as traveller confidence returns alongside robust domestic and international demand in markets such as North America and Brazil.

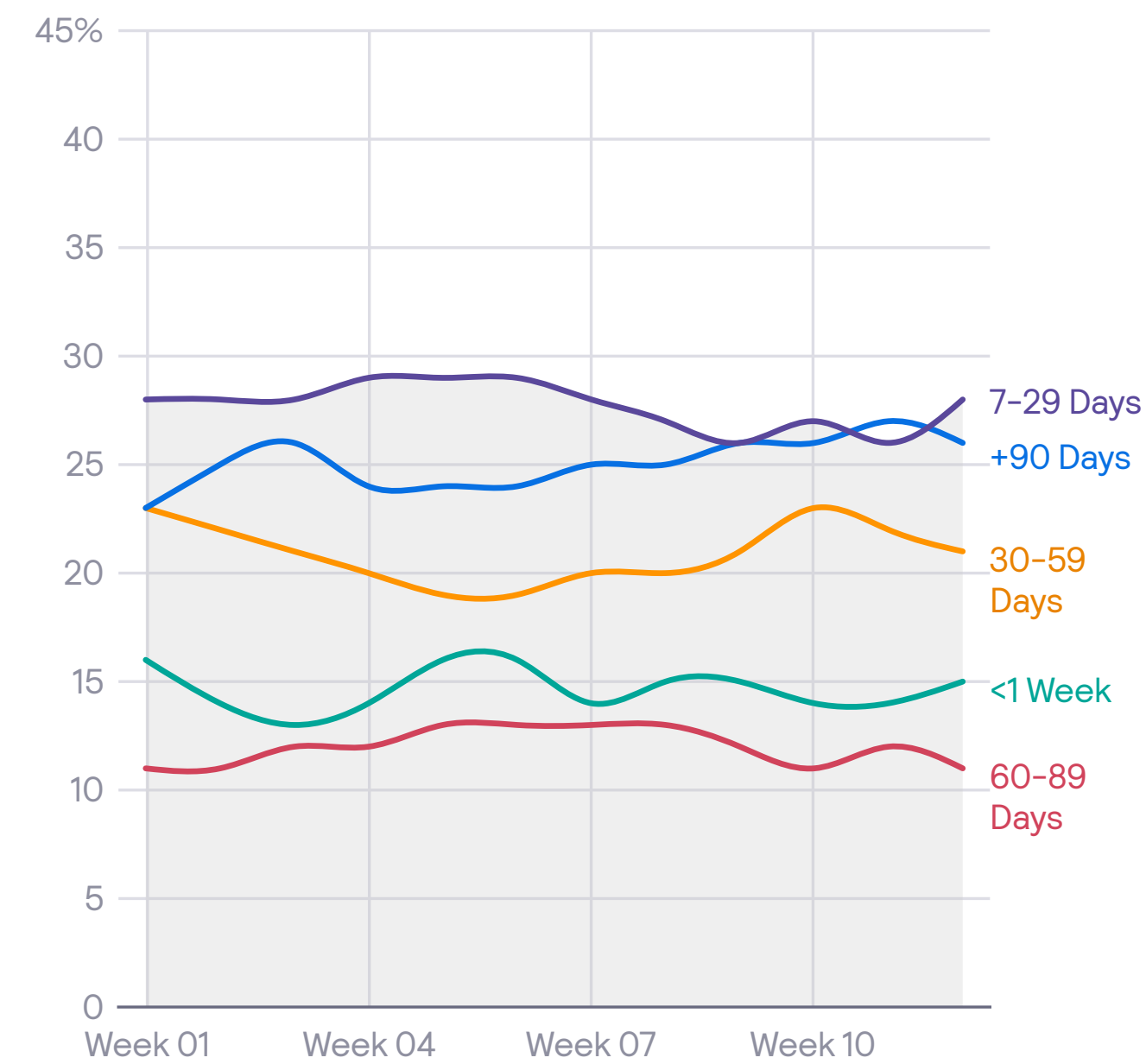
% change week one vs. week 12



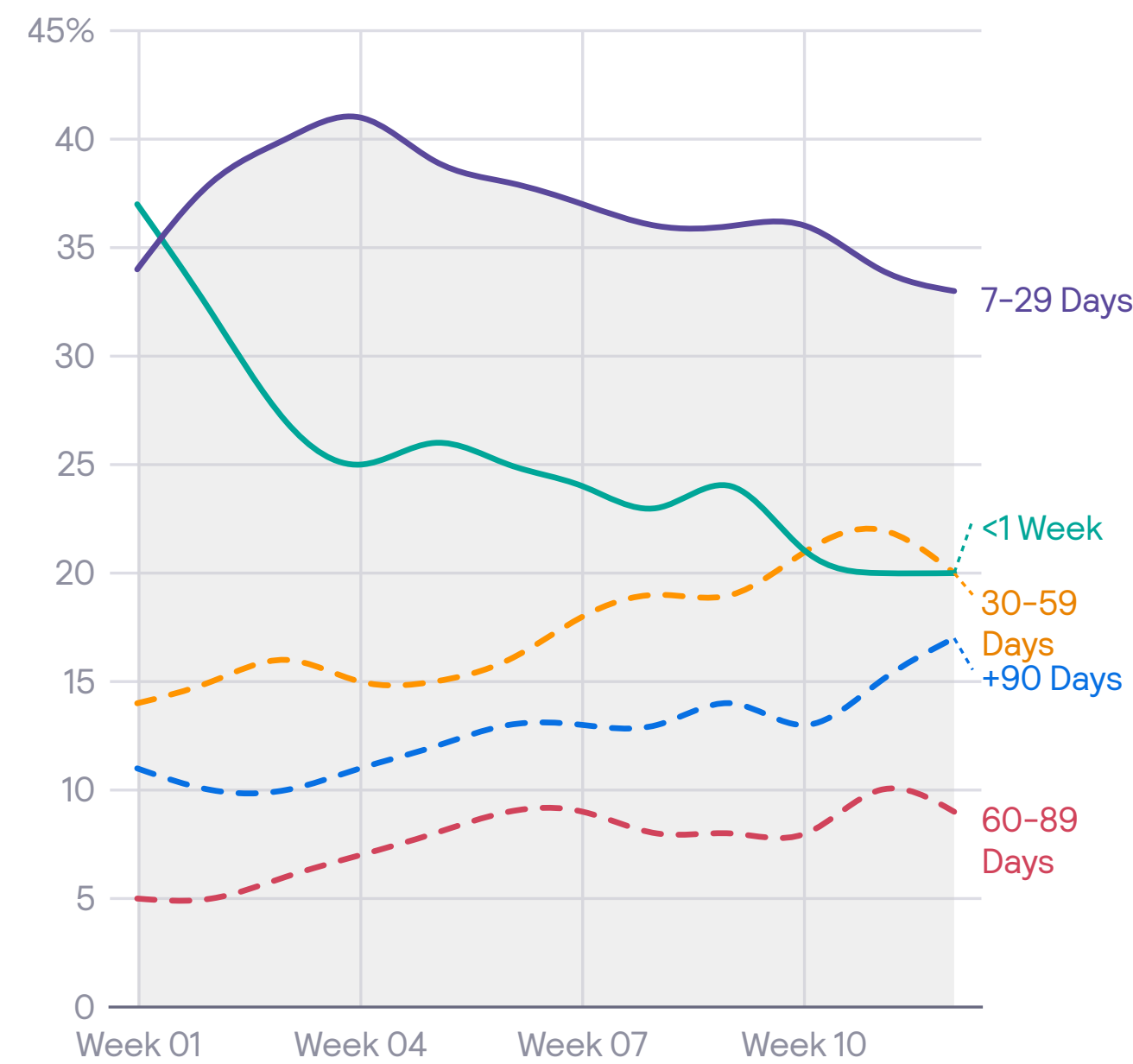
APAC travellers are thinking short term, but longer segments surge

Booking horizons in APAC are further off pre-pandemic 'norms' than in other regions. On average, the share of 7-29 days remains significantly higher in 2022 than 2019 (37% vs 27%), as does the share of <1week (25% vs 15%), despite a sharp decline. This reflects behaviour where travel demand bounces back as soon as restrictions are removed or relaxed.

APAC booking horizons 2019



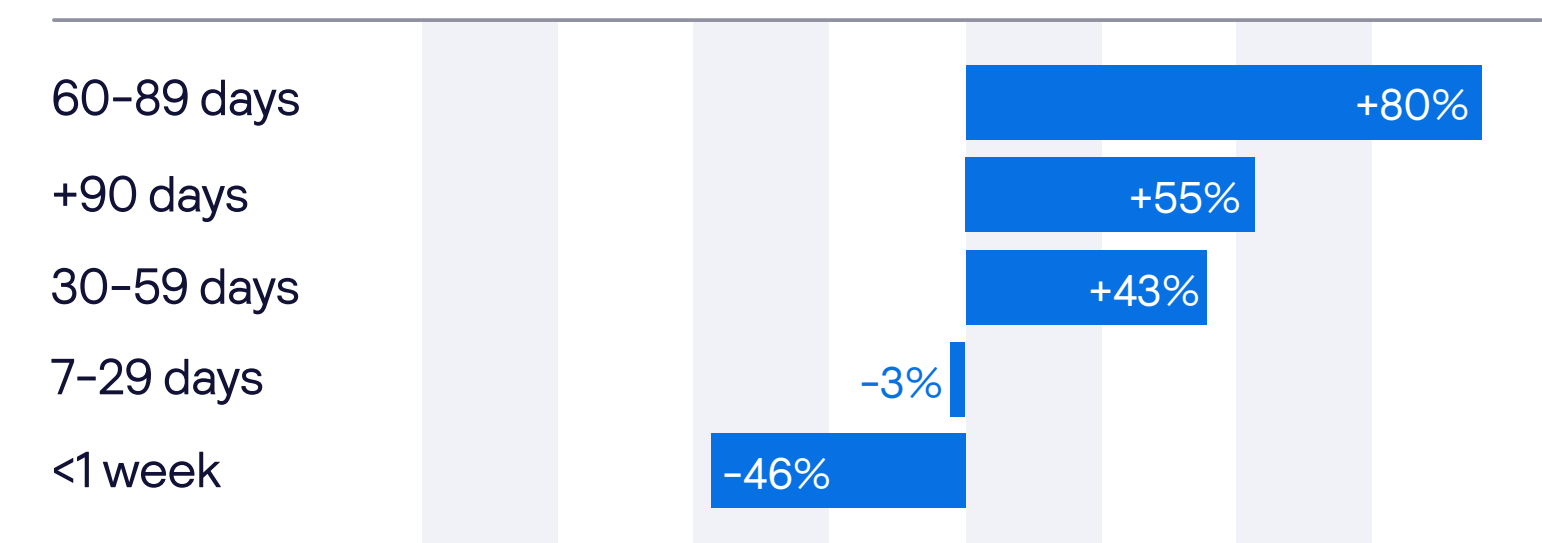
APAC booking horizons 2022



As markets like Australia, India, Thailand, Vietnam and Indonesia re-open, we see surging growth across all longer segments: +90 days (+55%), 60-89 days (+80%) and 30-59 days (+43%) over the period analysed. However, overall volumes for +90 days and 60-89 days remain below pre-pandemic levels.

This booking behaviour follows similar patterns we're seeing in EMEA and the Americas, demonstrating demand where people are keen to travel as soon as they're able.

% change week one vs. week 12



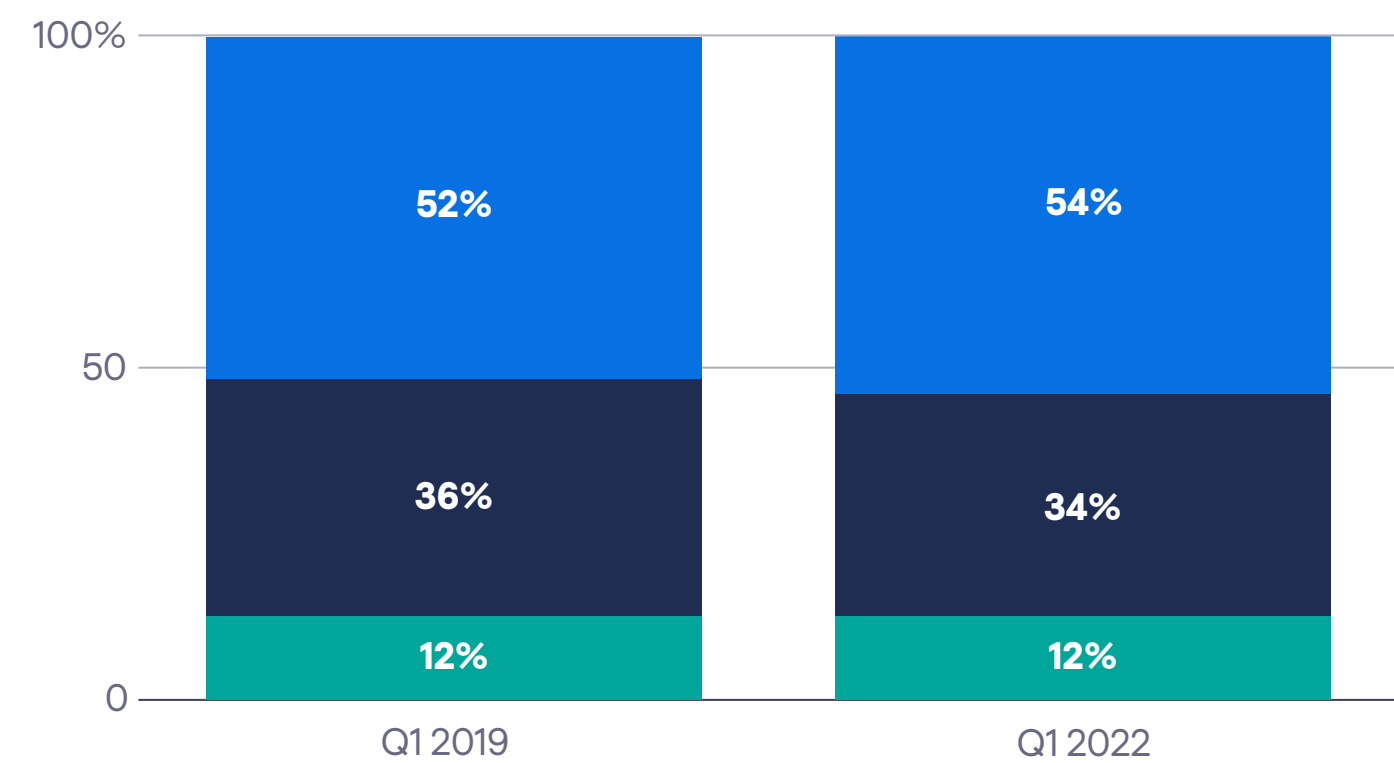
Long haul's average share is down on 2019 but growing fast

EMEA

Overall, the haul type mix is almost identical to pre-pandemic, with short haul continuing to represent over 50% of total volume. This year, however, short-haul volume is 2% higher than 2019 and long haul is 2% lower.

This was driven by a 13% growth in short-haul travel from week one to week 12 in 2022 as restrictions were relaxed in Europe and the Middle East. During this time, domestic volume fell by 16% compared to the same period in 2019.

EMEA - haul type by year

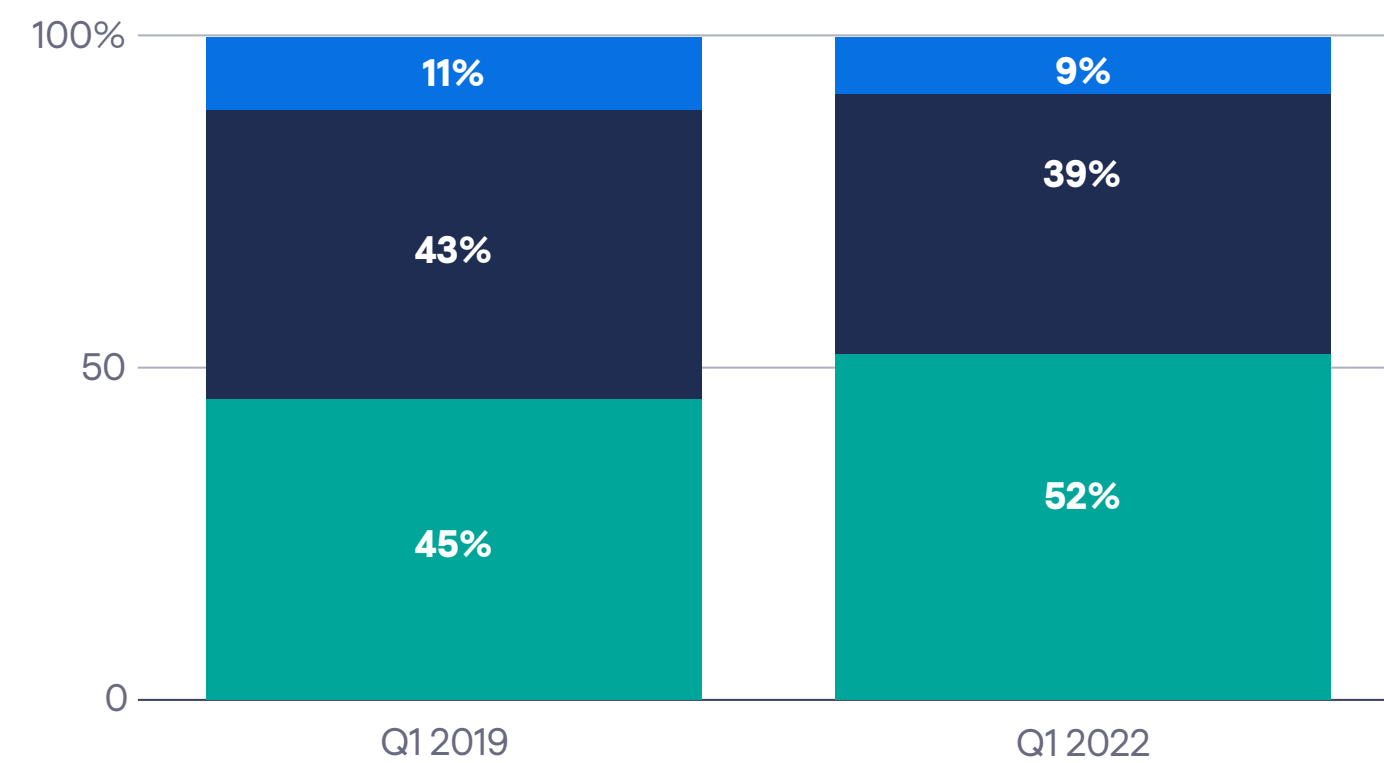


AMERICAS

Domestic travel volume is 7% higher this year than 2019, as demand grows across North America and Brazil.

Long haul's share over Q1 has dropped 4% from 2019 – but grew 16% over the period analysed as more long-haul destinations opened to travellers from the Americas, particularly in Europe and APAC.

AMERICAS - haul type by year

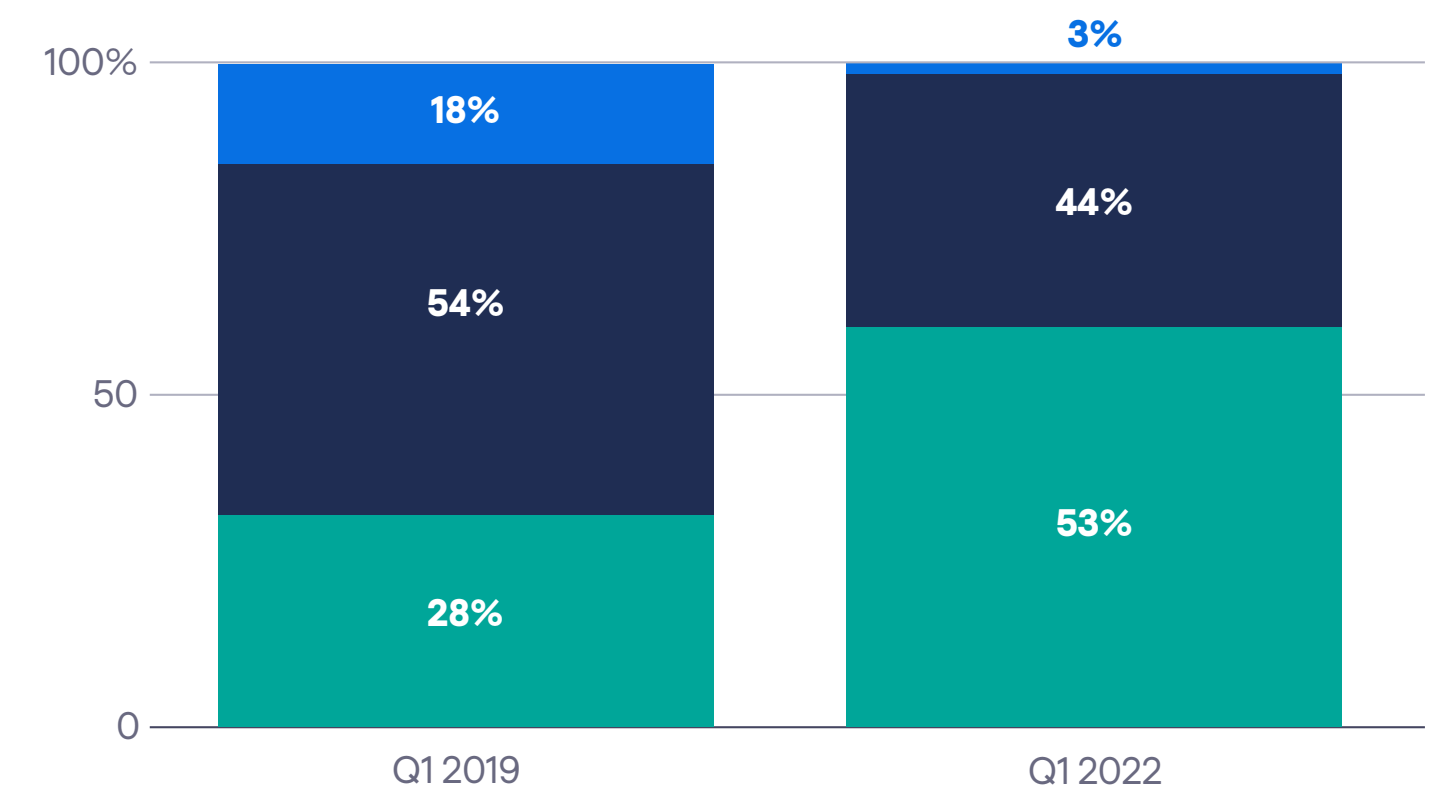


APAC

Domestic travel in Q1 2022 is significantly higher (+25%) than in 2019, with long haul and short haul down -10% and -15% respectively – a result of countries across APAC re-opening later than those in EMEA and the Americas.

However, both long haul (+34%) and short haul (+137%) have seen strong growth over the quarter following rising demand after many APAC countries re-opened in March.

APAC - haul type by year



● Domestic ● Short Haul ● Long Haul

Traditional seasonality is returning as longer trips are planned

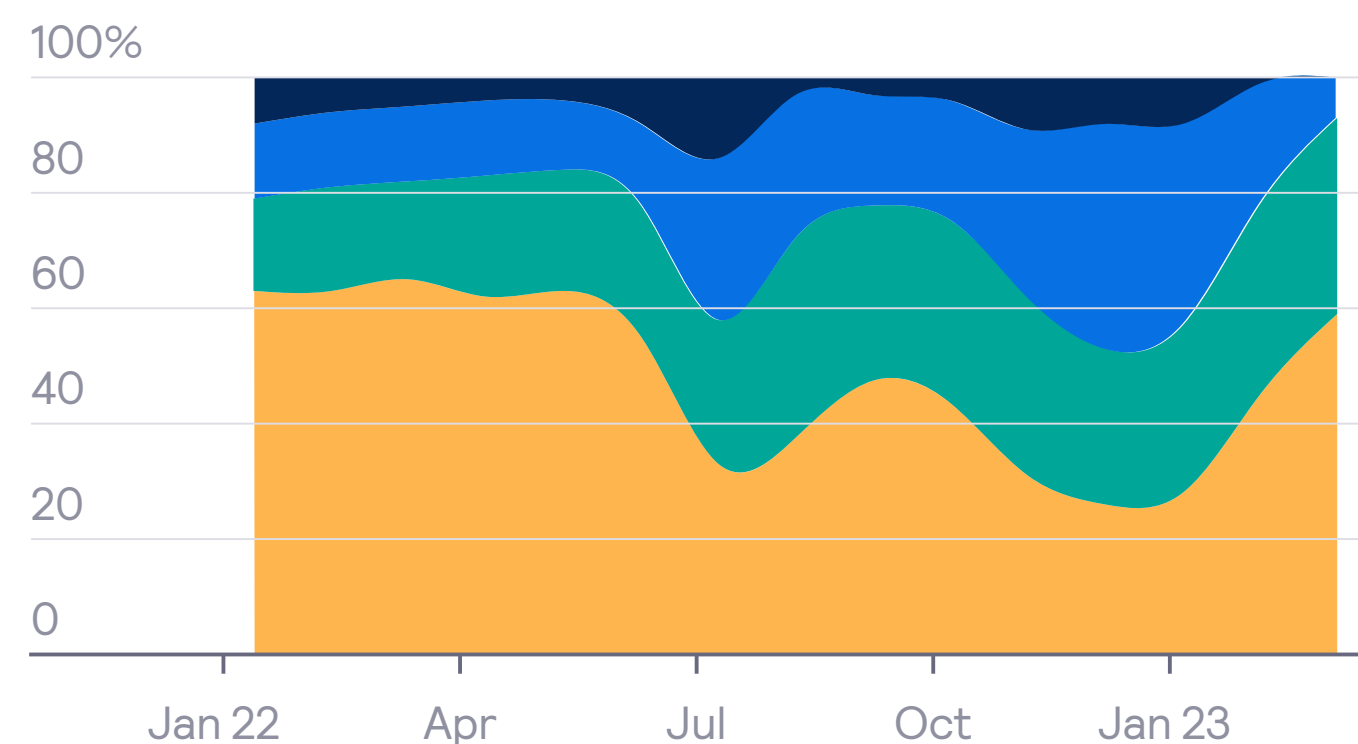
EMEA

Trip length increases in July is a sign that summer holidays are back on the agenda: 67% of trips are for longer than a week, nearly a third are for two weeks to a month and 14% are for longer than a month.

Trip length shortens again in September, with nearly half of demand (47%) for a week or less, while 1-2 weeks increases its share to 30%.

Another notable spike in trip length is visible in December and January next year as travellers search for bigger trips. 35-40% of demand is for trips of two weeks to a month and a third for trips of 1-2 weeks.

EMEA trip length over time

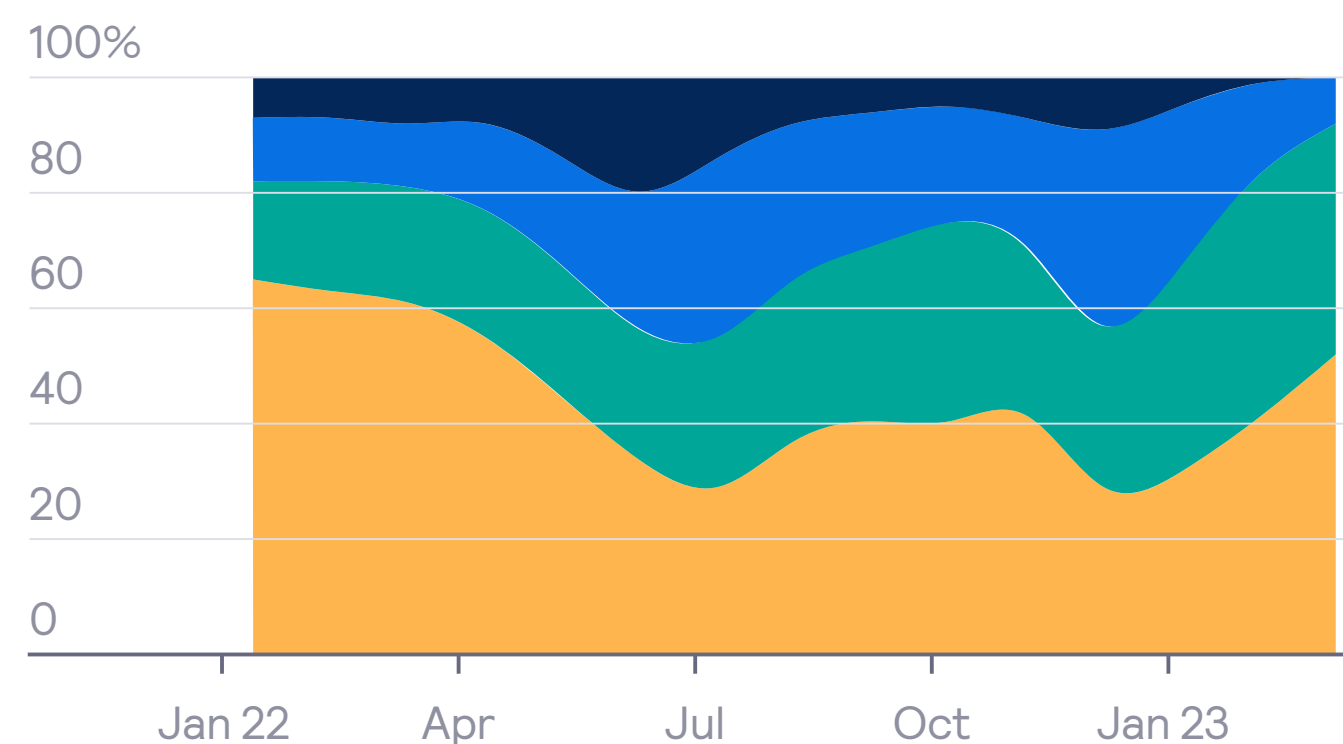


AMERICAS

In the Americas, trip length began lengthening from March. In June, 66% of demand is for trips longer than a week, with a fifth for trips over a month. In July, segments of 1-2 weeks and two weeks to a month make up over half (57%) of demand.

Like EMEA, there's also an increase in shorter trip lengths after summer, with one week or less reaching 40% of demand volume and 1-2 weeks hitting 34% in October. Again, there's a surge in demand for trips of two weeks to a month (34%) in December. And from January, we see trip lengths of one week or less and 1-2 weeks regaining popularity.

AMERICAS trip length over time



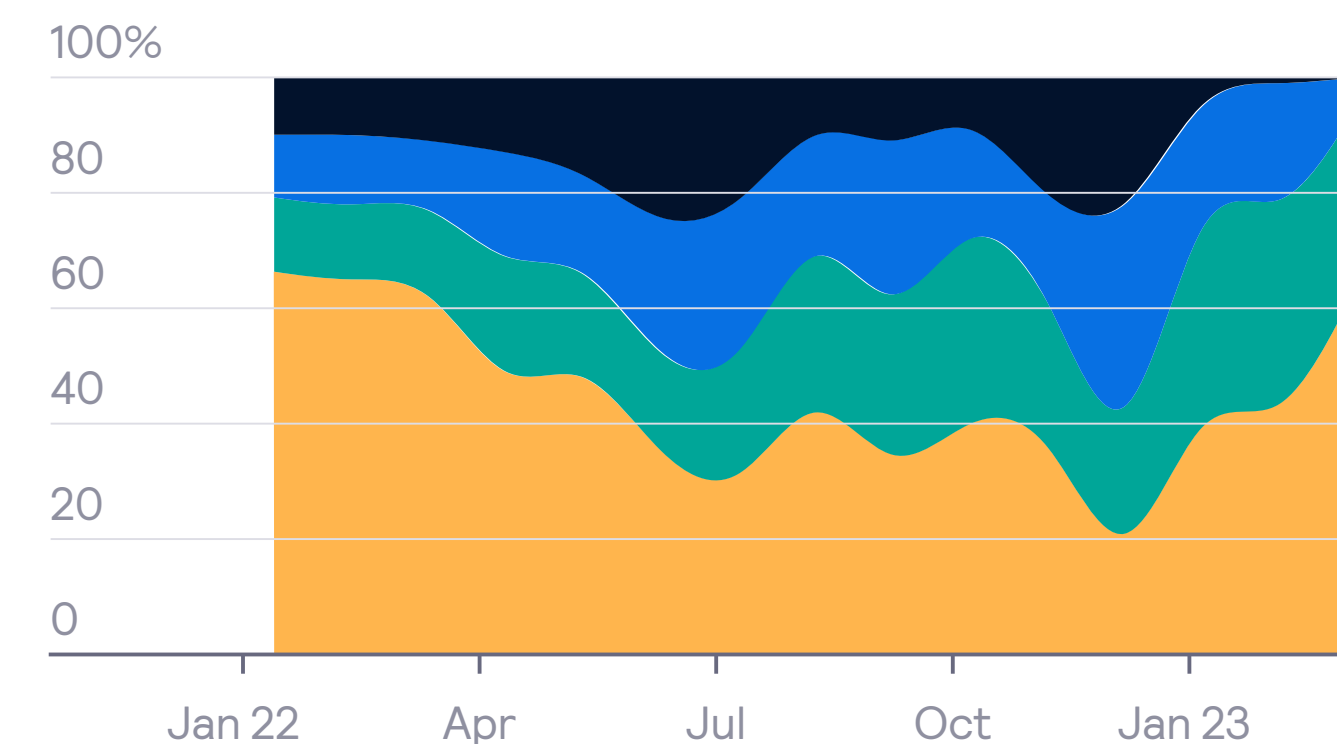
APAC

Trip lengths in APAC vary more over the next 12 months than in other regions but follow a similar overall trend.

Longer trips increase from March and peak in June and July where nearly half (47%) are for two weeks to a month and longer than a month. From August to October, 1-2 weeks and two weeks to a month are the most popular, making up over half of all trip lengths.

Like EMEA and the Americas, demand for longer trips increases in December: 79% are for longer than a week, 35% for two weeks to a month and over 20% for longer than a month.

APAC trip length over time



● A week or less ● 1-2 weeks ● 2 weeks to a month ● Longer than a month

Chapter 3:

Sea, sunshine and city breaks – what and where’s trending

Ultimate relaxation holidays and bucket list adventures take centre stage this year.

Getaways to ease the mind, body and soul

This year, the three most popular trip types across our surveyed countries are:

41%

Ultimate relaxation

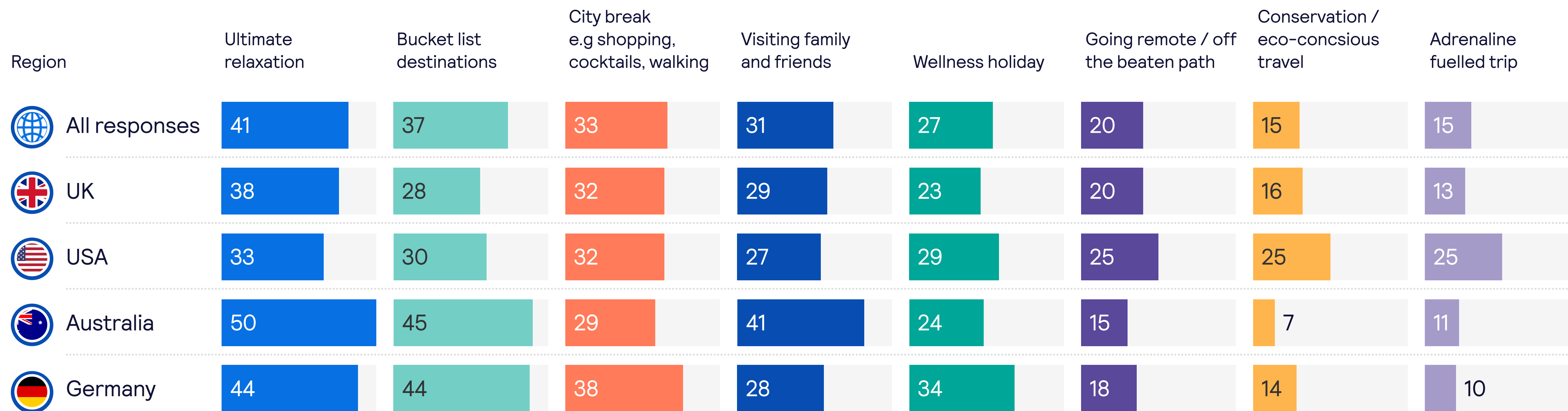
37%

Bucket list


33%

City break

Q: Which of the following will you spend more money on for travel abroad in 2022 compared to 2019?



25% of Americans are planning an eco-conscious trip in 2022 – the highest of any country.



Australians and Germans are most excited about relaxation and bucket list experiences, while Australians are dreaming of reuniting with family and friends after a long time apart.

UK travellers are also dreaming of kicking off their shoes and relaxing. Americans, on the other hand, are excited about all sorts of trips – remote adventures, eco-conscious travel and adrenaline-fuelled are especially popular.



The city lights are calling

In our first Horizons report of May 2021, we revealed that the early stage of the pandemic had upset the traditional destination apple cart. There was a desire from travellers to seek out quieter, coastal areas away from the crowds. The world's biggest cities, particularly in Asia, were being usurped by smaller ones.

But this year, city breaks are back on the global agenda as the third most popular trip type, as travellers regain confidence in visiting busy urban destinations.



City breaks are back for 2022 in a clear sign confidence is returning.



Trending destinations for EMEA travellers

Year-on-year rank change: 2022 vs 2019

Rank	Destination	Rank change
1	Doha	172
2	Izmir	161
3	Mexico City	127
4	Gothenburg	94
5	Helsinki	79
6	Zagreb	76
7	Amman	69
8	Manila	59
9	Singapore	59
10	Bari	47

Long-haul search demand is being driven by travellers in EMEA looking for sunny beach holidays in Mexico and South-east Asia.

Doha is the highest trending destination

These are the top 10 global destinations with the biggest rise in search ranking from 2019 to 2022 by travellers in EMEA.

The region's top 10 is a mix of short- and long-haul destinations.

Doha has surged 172 places as football fans prepare for the 2022 world cup in Qatar in November and December. Izmir, on Turkey's Aegean coast, has risen by over 150 spots as airlines launch new routes. While Amman, Jordan's capital, is also seeing large growth courtesy of new routes to and from Europe.

Travellers seeking sun and beach holidays are behind the rise of long-haul destinations. Mexico's relaxed entry rules continue to draw travellers after the country's tourism boom of 2021, while Manila and Singapore make the list as restrictions ease across Asia-Pacific.



Trending destinations for AMERICAS travellers

These are the top 10 global destinations with the biggest rise in search ranking from 2019 to 2022 by travellers in the Americas.

Doha has jumped 262 places to take the top spot. Below Doha, five US cities have benefitted from more low-cost carrier routes and increasing interest in second cities from travellers.

Amman features again, moving up 120 places following the addition of new long-haul flights from the US. In South America, domestic searches by Brazilians have pushed Curitiba, the capital of Paraná state, up to ninth.

Year-on-year rank change: 2022 vs 2019

Rank	Destination	Rank change
1	Doha	262
2	St Louis	196
3	Monterrey	166
4	Halifax	150
5	Charlotte	140
6	Minneapolis	123
7	Amman	120
8	Jacksonville	96
9	Curitiba	93
10	Managua	90

Trending destinations for APAC travellers

Year-on-year rank change: 2022 vs 2019

Rank	Destination	Rank change
1	Newcastle	214
2	Hyderabad	194
3	Boston	175
4	Doha	169
5	Mexico City	122
6	Yogyakarta	100
7	Amman	88
8	Chengdu	81
9	Helsinki	66
10	Glasgow	51

These are the top 10 global destinations with the biggest rise in search ranking from 2019 to 2022 by travellers in Asia-Pacific.

Newcastle, in Australia's state of New South Wales, tops the list as restrictions ease across the country. It's a similar story for Hyderabad, the capital of India's Telangana state, where restrictions allowing summer travel were eased at the end of March.

Indonesia's Yogyakarta, famed for its cultural heritage, moves up 100 places due to the Eid al-Fitr holiday, while Chengdu in China increases its popularity by 81 places.

Most destinations, though, are outside of Asia-Pacific, reflecting both a desire for long-haul travel and the opportunity for friends and family to reunite after such a long period apart.

Conclusion



The year ahead as travel bounces back

Highlights of our report reveal that:

- 86% of travellers plan to spend more or the same on international travel than they did in 2019, with half planning to spend more.
- Of those spending more, 48% are putting this money towards longer trips and 43% towards accommodation upgrades. But travellers do remain price conscious.
- Shorter booking horizons remain popular in all regions, but there's growth in 30-59- and 60-89-day segments as confidence accelerates and seasonality starts to return.
- Seasonality is reflected in trip length as demand for longer holidays grows for key summer and winter periods.
- Demand for domestic and short-haul flights is higher than pre-pandemic, but long-haul travel is making a comeback.
- Travellers cite ultimate relaxation holidays, followed by bucket list travel and city breaks, as the top trip types for this year.
- Doha is the world's top trending destination, with the biggest rise in searches over the last three years.
- Other top trending destinations are a mix of short and long haul as new routes are launched, countries re-open and travellers seek to reunite with friends and family.

A trusted partner

We're one of the world's leading flights, hotels and car search sites, with a highly engaged flights audience. As travel continues its route to recovery, Skyscanner is acting as a trusted advisor to our partners inside the travel ecosystem.

75m+

unique users/month

30%

YoY reachable audience growth

52

markets globally

Our global presence gives us deep insight into almost every market. We talk with our partners every day about evolving travel habits and behaviour and how they can capitalise on new trends and opportunities.

Confidence is returning, but travellers still need help navigating where to go, how to book and what the rules are. As a Skyscanner partner, we'll help you address these unmet needs and be there for people as they start exploring the world once again.





About our data

Empowering businesses as travel returns

As a world-leading travel marketplace, millions of people open our app or visit our website every day to find their perfect flight, hotel or car rental – for travel dates up to 12 months into the future – as well as to search for trip and destination inspiration.

The powerful, forward-looking data this creates helps businesses in the travel ecosystem to understand more about traveller habits and behaviour, discover how demand changes over time, and spot and capitalise on new trends as they happen.

Traditional, backward-looking data only shows what's happened before, not where people want to go in the future. If a flight's schedule or price aren't popular, people won't book and no data is collected. Skyscanner is different. Our data shows the popularity of flights, routes and destinations at both the search (desire) and booking (intent) level – revealing true, unconstrained demand.

Our Travel Insight data tool is helping businesses rapidly respond to market changes, stay one step ahead of emerging trends and guide their COVID-19 recovery strategies.

Find out how it could transform your business at partners.skyscanner.net/data/travel-insight.

Methodology

Consumer survey data n=4000 conducted 31 March to 6 April 2022 by OnePoll. Adults who intend to travel abroad in 2022 (UK, US, AU, DE).

Demand data is based on Skyscanner search and redirect data across all platforms analysed in April 2022. Search and redirect data from January to March for all outbound travel dates in 2022 and compared to the equivalent period in 2019.



For more information, visit
partners.skyscanner.net