



FACTUM

Canadians Back Behind the Wheel Planning Road Trips for 2022

Reconnecting with family and friends a draw for many

Toronto, ON, May 13, 2022 – As Canadians pass the 2-year anniversary of the COVID-19 pandemic, many may be feeling that a “return to normal” is on the horizon. A recent poll conducted for Toyota Canada shows that nearly all (91%) Canadians are planning to reinstate activities that they had to set aside over the past several years.

What are Canadians planning? The summer staple of a road trip is on the agenda for many: three quarters (77%) are likely to take a road trip outside their city/town, while 43% intend to travel by road outside their province, and a quarter (24%) are planning an international road trip. While this suggests that many are returning to the road, the data suggests that road trips planned in summer 2022 may still look different from our pre-pandemic norms.

Family Fun a Main Motivation for Road Trips

For those intending to take a road trip, the driving factor for many is the opportunity to reconnect: 56% of those planning a road trip say their destination is a family/friend's home followed by an overnight stay in another city/town (52%), the beach (34%), national parks (31%), campgrounds (30%), and cabins (25%). Visiting family (48%) and visiting friends (45%) are also the most mentioned experiences that Canadians are planning to do this year, having put them off for the past several years.

How far are Canadians willing to drive to reconnect with their loved ones? Short range distances are the preference for those planning a road trip: two in three (67%) who have access to a vehicle say they would drive for a maximum of 6 hours for a road trip (7% less than an hour, 29% 1-3 hours, 31% 4-6 hours) and the remaining one in three (33%) are willing to drive 7 hours or more (16% 7-10 hours, 8% 11-24 hours, 9% more than 24 hours) to reach their destination.

Not only are shorter driving distances preferred, but so too are short term stays. For those planning a road trip this summer, a day trip (48%) or a weekend/long weekend getaway (59%) are the most commonly planned. Week-long trips (36%), trips longer than one week (18%), and an international trip, renting a vehicle at the destination (7%) see lower uptake.

However, the destination is only part of the enjoyment of a road trip. For those planning a road trip of some kind this summer, 61% highlight that what they enjoy most about a road trip is admiring the scenery along the way, while 37% enjoy having fun and chatting with friends/family in the car. In fact, four in ten (40%) note that what they enjoy most about a road trip is visiting attractions along the way, indicating that for many planning a road trip this summer, the journey itself may be more important than the destination.

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Planning a Getaway

With mask mandates lifting and travel restrictions loosening, Canadians are taking increasing advantage of the opportunities to step away from work. Four in ten (39%) Canadians are planning to take more vacation time this summer than they did last year. While the majority of Canadians indicate they will take one (38%) or two (29%) weeks of vacation, longer holidays are preferred by some: 13% say they will take three weeks of vacation, while 19% say they will take four or more weeks holiday this summer.

Despite vacation plans on the horizon for many, the pandemic continues on and 79% of those who are planning a road trip say they will take COVID-19 precautions while on their trip. Nearly half (48%) say they will wear masks while out in public or limit the amount of time spent among crowds (45%) while close to four in ten (37%) will be limiting their contact with those outside their immediate circle.

Most Travelers Road Ready, Although Rising Gas Prices a Consideration

Planning the destination is only one aspect of a road trip. Practical considerations including vehicle selection are also necessary. Eight in ten (83%) have access to a vehicle: 69% own a vehicle, 12% have access to a vehicle through a friend or family member, 8% are able to rent, and 2% participate in a vehicle-sharing service. The vast majority (85%) of those who own or have access to a vehicle feel their current vehicle meets their needs for summer travel plans, although 7% feel it does not, and 7% do not own a vehicle, but plan to rent or borrow one.

While the data shows that the enjoyment of a road trip is a motivating factor for many, the increasing price of gas has added in a new layer of complexity. For those who have access to a vehicle, six in ten (58%) cite good fuel efficiency/mileage as the top vehicle feature consideration for a summer road trip. Furthermore, more than half (53%) of Canadians state that increased gas prices have affected their summer 2022 road trip plans with 14% deciding against a road trip this year due to gas prices.

While some are foregoing trips altogether, others are finding ways to save on gas, including 22% of those planning a road trip who say they will take shorter trips, and 20% who will ensure that their vehicle is properly serviced. For some, the switch to electric is the best way to save on gas: 5% of those who are planning a trip this summer say they will be using an electric/hybrid vehicle that they already own, whereas 3% respectively say they will rent or buy an electric/hybrid vehicle as a way to save on gas.

While the uptake of electric vehicles remains relatively low, there is burgeoning interest in electric for road trips: 54% of Canadians agree they'd feel better about going on a road trip in a hybrid electric or plug-in hybrid electric vehicle because of the fuel efficiency, mileage, and cost savings, while 47% highlight the environmental benefits.



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About the Study

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos poll conducted between March 22-23, 2022, on behalf of Toyota Canada. For this survey, a sample of 2,000 Canadians aged 18+ was interviewed online. Quotas and weighting were employed to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the Canadian population according to census parameters. The precision of Ipsos online polls is measured using a credibility interval. In this case, the poll is accurate to within ± 2.5 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, had all Canadians aged 18+ been polled. The credibility interval will be wider among subsets of the population. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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