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Faulty GPS and Backseat Drivers Top List of Car Travel Annoyances; Screaming Babies and Inconsiderate Passengers Most Annoying Air-Travel Irritants



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New York, NY – Holiday travel spending is on the rebound in America, following cautious holiday-travel spending last year, according to a new Ipsos Public Affairs poll conducted on behalf of Allianz Global Assistance USA. Among the nearly six in ten (56%) Americans who say that they are confident (45% very confident/11% somewhat confident) that they will take a holiday trip this year, they anticipate spending an average of 14% more than last year's travelers anticipated spending. Moreover, more Americans this year than last year say they are 'very confident' (45% this year vs. 42% last year) that they will take a holiday trip, spending at least one night away from home.

Among those who are likely to travel, they are budgeting to spend \$1116, on average. Compared to last year's travelers who were budgeted to spend \$980, on average, this represents a 14% increase in spending among travelers, suggesting that travelers are loosening the purse strings after tightening them last year, when they anticipated cutting their spending by 6%

Taking an annual holiday trip remains important to 55% of Americans (30% very/25% somewhat), up 1 point from last year.

With so many Americans being very confident that they'll take a holiday trip this year, it's interesting to note that nearly half (47%) of likely travelers are booking early (down 2 points): one quarter (25%) are booking their travel three months or more in advance, while another 22% are booking between 2 and 3 months in advance. One quarter (25%) of Americans will book their travel 1 to 2 months ahead of time, while 26% leave it to a matter of a few weeks (16%) or just a week or less (10%) ahead of time.

Travel by car (59%) continues to be the most-used form of transportation for these holiday trips (down 1 point). One in three (33%) American holiday travelers intends to fly this year, which is down slightly from last year (down 1 point). Other Americans are most likely to do most of their travelling by train (2%), bus (2%), cruise (2%) or some other method (2%).



Is the Journey Half the Fun? Not with a Backseat Driver or a Crying Baby...

While some people argue that the journey is half the fun, it is not without its annoyances. Thinking about travelling by car, three in ten (26%) say their biggest annoyance is a GPS/navigation system that fails, is outdated, or provides directions that cause the driver to get lost. One quarter (22%) say their biggest annoyance is the backseat driver that shouts driving tips. Others say the biggest annoyance is a passenger who asks to stop every other hour to use the restroom (15%), a driver who listens to the worst songs ever (10%), hearing the question “are we there yet?” (9%), or arguing over the ideal air conditioner/heater settings (5%). One in ten (12%) don’t know which of these is their biggest annoyance.

Air travel is apparently not without its annoyances, either, as nearly four in ten (39%) say they’re most annoyed by a kicking and screaming baby sitting in the seat behind them. Two in ten (19%) say watching another passenger smash your carry on items in order to make room for theirs is most annoying, while 15% say the flyer seated at the window in your aisle who has to get up multiple times to use the bathroom is most annoying. One in ten (12%) are most annoyed by loud music coming from a neighboring passenger’s headphones. Two in ten (17%) don’t know which of these is most annoying when travelling by plane.

Some Americans have even fessed-up to having done some pretty embarrassing things while on the road. One in ten (10%) have bought last-minute gifts at the airport en route to their holiday destination; an equal proportion (10%) admit to having done the same thing, buying last-minute gifts at a rest stop on the interstate. 8% have had one-too-many drinks in the airport or on the flight on the way to their holiday destination. And 7% didn’t feel like travelling home for the holidays and made up an excuse on why they couldn’t travel.

These are some of the findings of Ipsos polls conducted November 8-13, 2012. For the survey, a nationally representative sample of 1,000 randomly-selected adults aged 18 and over residing in the U.S. was interviewed by telephone via Ipsos’ U.S. Telephone Express omnibus. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate within ± 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire population of adults in the U.S. been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population. These data were weighted to ensure the sample’s regional and age/gender composition reflects that of the actual U.S. population according to data from the U.S. Census Bureau.



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