



GHA DISCOVERY

GLOBAL HOTEL ALLIANCE UNVEILS TRAVEL PLANS, PREFERENCES AND TOP DESTINATIONS FOR 2025

- *Japan and Thailand holiday favourites for second year running, followed by China, Australia, New Zealand and Italy*
- *Business travel makes a comeback (13% increase in planned business trips globally), led by travellers in China, Germany and Spain*
- *Asia and Europe dominate business and leisure travel plans for 2025*
- *Longest vacations planned by travellers in China, Thailand, and the UAE*
- *Relaxing and unwinding overtakes exploring new destinations as #1 travel motivation*
- *Friends and family recommendations remain the leading source of inspiration*
- *Loyalty platforms still the top tool for hotel search and booking*

Dubai, UAE, 25th November 2024: [Global Hotel Alliance](#) (GHA), the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands, has revealed its [GHA DISCOVERY](#) members' top destinations and travel motivations for 2025.

For the second year running, **Japan and Thailand** rank as the most popular holiday destinations, while **China** climbs to third, overtaking Spain. Australia, New Zealand, and Italy tie for fourth, pushing out 2024 favourites Canada and Hawaii.

Leisure travel continues to dominate, with 99% of members surveyed planning holidays in 2025, while business travel is rebounding – 62% are planning work trips, with travellers based in China, Germany, and Spain leading the resurgence.

More than 93% of members are expecting to travel internationally for leisure next year, and 69% expect to do so for business, with business trips largely being within the region of residence, while leisure travel is expanding further, with Europe and Asia being the preferred regions for all source markets. Travellers plan to take six leisure trips on average (similar to 2024) and more than five business trips with an overnight stay in 2025 (a 13% increase year over year).

Travellers in China anticipate the most business trips (7 trips on average), followed by Germany (6 trips) and Spain (5). For leisure, China dominates again, with members based in this market planning the most stays (7), followed by those in Thailand and the United Arab Emirates with 6 trips planned.

Regional highlights

Asia: For business travel, **93% of Singaporean members** plan international trips. Members in **China and Australia** focus on domestic business travel, while Australians also target **Oceania** and Indians the **Middle East** for work. Leisure travel shows similar patterns: **75% of Singaporeans** plan overseas vacations, while Indians favour the **Middle East**. **Japan** is the top

holiday destination for members in **China, Australia, Thailand, and Singapore**, while Japan-based members prefer **Thailand** and Indians are keen on **Europe**.

Europe: Travellers from **Spain, Germany, and the UK** favour **Thailand and Japan** as holiday destinations for the third year in a row. Renewed interest in **Dubai, New York, and the Caribbean** replaced last year's choices of Spain and Italy. Business trips will stay within the region, followed by **Asia, North America**, and, to a lesser extent, the **Middle East**.

North America: US members are planning vacations domestically as well as across **Europe and the Caribbean**, with familiar hotspots like **Hawaii, Spain, and Italy** still popular. While **Japan** remains on the list, its appeal has slightly declined since 2023. For business travel, **domestic trips** will dominate in 2025.

Middle East & North Africa: For UAE-based members, **Thailand** has surpassed **Japan** as the top holiday destination and **Vietnam** has emerged as one to watch for 2025. Intra-regional holidays within the **Middle East** are also expected to remain popular. On the business front, **international travel** will significantly outweigh domestic trips.

Motivations, inspirations and preferences:

Relaxation rules

Relaxing and unwinding is the leading reason for travel in 2025, with 72% of members prioritising it. This overtakes last year's focus on exploring new destinations and cultures, which now ranks second at 62%, followed by escaping everyday life in third (46%). Family and foodie breaks, as well as city and cultural activities, remain popular, while most members plan to travel with a spouse or partner, mirroring 2024 trends.

Mixing the old with the new

Members aim to balance new destinations with revisiting old favourites. Those from India, China, and Spain are more inclined to travel somewhere new, while members in Germany, Singapore, and the UAE prefer a mix. In line with last year's preferences, cities and beaches/tropical destinations dominate, more so than mountains and countryside.

Friends and family inspire

43% of members rely on recommendations from friends and family, whether through word of mouth or social feeds, which follows 2024's trend. Travel magazines continue to influence 20% of members, maintaining their relevance from last year.

Loyalty platforms lead the way

Loyalty programme websites, apps, and social pages are now the top choice for travel research and booking across all regions, continuing the upward trend seen in 2023 and 2024. More than one-third (35%) of members turn to these platforms to search for hotels, while a striking 50% of travellers in China, India, and the UAE prefer booking through hotel loyalty programme websites or apps. Online travel agent (OTA) sites remain the second most popular source for research, echoing last year's patterns.

When choosing where to stay, travellers prioritise the quality of accommodation, loyalty programme benefits, and the property's location or neighbourhood, all above the price or hotel brand. This ranking is largely consistent across markets and even across loyalty tiers.

Upgrades and recognition rock

Room upgrades, early check-in, and late checkout retain their status as top perks for higher loyalty tiers especially in Japan (94%) and Germany (84%), while member rates and discounts remain the priority for lower tier members.

“2025 promises to be a year of exploration, with destinations like Japan, Thailand, UAE and Italy continuing to captivate our members, alongside new favourites like New Zealand, and Vietnam” said Kristi Gole, Executive Vice President of Strategy at GHA.

“As business travel continues its long recovery and longer leisure stays take centre stage, we're seeing a clear shift towards blending work and relaxation. And with loyalty programmes increasingly influencing choice, we are in a prime position at GHA to help our members make the most of their travels across these sought-after destinations.”

For more information visit [Global Hotel Alliance](#) and [GHA DISCOVERY](#)

GHA DISCOVERY is complimentary to join, and travellers can [sign up online](#) or download the GHA DISCOVERY app and register on their mobile phones. Travellers can also connect with GHA DISCOVERY on Instagram and Facebook.

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About GHA and GHA DISCOVERY:

Global Hotel Alliance (GHA) is the world's largest alliance of independent hotel brands with 40 brands and more than 800 hotels in 100 countries. Its award-winning loyalty programme—GHA DISCOVERY—provides 28 million members with recognition, D\$ rewards and exclusive experiences across its hotels and partners, both with and without a stay. GHA DISCOVERY generated US\$2.3 billion in revenue and 10 million room nights in 2023.

Through membership in GHA, brands expand their global reach, drive incremental revenue and reduce dependence on third-party channels, all while maintaining management independence and individual positioning. For more information, visit globalhotelalliance.com or ghadiscovery.com.