

CANADIAN SURVEY: GROWING NUMBER OF GREEN TRAVELERS



Are you a traveler who prefers greener lodging? Then you are among the new age globetrotters who are paving the way for a cleaner environment combined with leisure, for long-term benefits.

Ottawa launched their green key eco ratings program 15 years ago. Since then, they have witnessed the lodging industry slowly embrace the green culture of sustainability, within their day to day operations. **This movement towards greener practices has resonated with Canada's leisure and business travelers.** This has been observed by the Canadian Hotel Association, in their annual release of the travel intentions survey, earlier this year.

The survey has tracked the green tendencies of leisure and business travelers since 2009. However, this year, the results have shown an increased preference of travelers towards consideration of specific green factors, while planning their travel. Initiatives like conservation efforts and recycling programs remain crucial among the respondents. The key responses have shown a positive 6% growth. It has jumped from 39% in 2009 to 44% this year.

In 2010, the respondents were asked to value the properties that make eco-friendly products, offered to travelers like bathroom amenities. Year over year, an increased number of leisure (30% in 2010 jumped to 36% in 2013) and business (34% in 2010 jumped to 36% in 2013) travelers have indicated the significance of offering such products. 53% of leisure travelers stated the significance of hypo-allergenic rooms for their families.

Over the last four years, a traveler's willingness in paying to participate in the carbon offset program of a hotel has fluctuated. In 2009, 48% were willing to pay up to \$5 per night, in order to participate in such type of a program. This percentage has dipped between 2010 and 2012. However, it reached 49% this year. **The significance of an environmental certification program has also seen a growth with 26% of leisure travelers stating the significance of these programs as compared to 22% in 2010.**

Hotels that endeavor to reduce their operational impact on their guests' and staffs' health are also preferred by travelers. Being a part of an environmental certification program will assist hoteliers in meeting the expectations of their environmentally conscious guests, for savings and improvements in the long term.

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