

TECHNOLOGY TO CHANGE OUR TRAVEL HABITS



While Mark Zuckerberg continues to believe in the metaverse, the virtual reality (VR) market is struggling to really take off. However, this technology has possible applications in tourism and is likely to change people's travel habits. At least, this is what emerges from a global study conducted by Booking.com. The survey asked 24,179 respondents in 32 countries.

Among the main conclusions of the study is that 43% of the participants would like to book their next vacation following a visit made in VR. **They could thus go through their travel destinations by using this type of technology.**

Some go even further, with 35% of respondents believing that a simulated experience over several days could simply replace a real vacation without having to travel at all. But this option is not appealing to everyone, with 60% of respondents saying it would be a far cry from a real tourist getaway.

The survey also found that 46% of respondents felt that destinations they hadn't thought of at first might appeal to them as a result of using virtual reality. Time will tell, but as the VR market grows, it could have a real impact on the tourism industry and our travel habits.

In any case, we have already seen in the past that technological evolutions impact vacation choices. One way this is happening is through streaming platforms. Last year, Netflix conducted its own study by surveying its subscribers in Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom, Brazil, and France about productions set in South Africa: the documentary *My Octopus Teacher* and the series *Blood & Water*.

The findings are clear, as users who have viewed these productions are 3.1 times more likely to visit the country than those who have not. Similarly, they are 5.6 times more motivated than other subscribers to learn Afrikaans, one of South Africa's 11 official languages.

Explaining these results, Shola Sanni, Netflix's director of public policy for sub-Saharan Africa, said at the time, "They saw themselves reflected in these stories. One American viewer said he felt that people in South Africa had the same aspirations and life experiences as those in his country."

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