

A THIRD OF GERMAN TRAVELERS DON'T CARE ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY



Booking.com has recently published the results of a new survey examining travelers' current attitudes, priorities, and influences toward sustainable travel. The survey, conducted annually, reveals a continued desire and awareness for more sustainable travel, with eight out of ten German travelers confirming that sustainable travel is important to them.

However, the survey also found that sustainability is not the main criterion when planning or booking trips. In fact, around one-third of Germans even reported feeling tired of constantly hearing about climate change.

Positive Intentions Meet New Challenges

The study found that 60% of German travelers want to travel more sustainably in the next twelve months. This could be because they believe it's the right thing to do (36%) or feel guilty when making less sustainable choices (38%).

However, some travelers feel disillusioned with sustainable travel choices. The study, which examines new areas for the first time this year, revealed that over a quarter (27%) of German respondents think the damage caused by travel is irreversible and that their choices won't make any difference. Furthermore, 27% of respondents don't believe climate change is as serious as it's portrayed, which could impact their travel plans.

In addition, some travelers feel that their time is too valuable to prioritize sustainability when making decisions (28%). The lack of sustainable measures implemented in some destinations also contributes to a sense of powerlessness, with over a quarter (27%) of travelers feeling that behaving sustainably is pointless if the destination doesn't prioritize sustainability.

Shared Responsibility

Travelers have a significant role in managing their travel's negative impacts, and they expect collaboration in this regard. According to a survey, 58% of German travelers want to leave the places they visit better than they found, up from 51% last year. The survey also found that 45% of travelers think there is potential to do something about the social impact of travel. However, 36% believe governments have the most potential to address the economic impact, while 43% think travel service providers can act on environmental protection factors. Furthermore, 24% of German travelers believe that governments are responsible for educating people about the impacts of travel and tourism.

To achieve their intentions, travelers need support and accountability. Almost half of travelers (42%) are more attracted to accommodations that are designated as sustainable. Consistency in certification standards is essential in identifying sustainable options, as 64% of travelers believe that all travel booking sites should use the same sustainability certifications or labels. However, the number of travelers who want to learn more about why a property is labeled in a particular way has decreased by 16% compared to last year (45% this year versus 61% in 2023). Direct and clear communication should facilitate decision-making, regardless of priorities.

Sustainable Bright Spots

Many German travelers find that sustainable travel experiences bring value to their trips. According to the data, **almost half (49%) of German travelers feel that they become the best version of themselves when they travel sustainably and carry this positivity back home.** Additionally, 50% of travelers are inspired by sustainable measures on their journeys to act more sustainably in their everyday lives. Among those who practice sustainable behavior during their travels, 91% found it enriching to take part in tours or activities to have authentic, local, and cultural experiences. Shopping in small, independent stores was equally rewarding for 89%, while 86% planned their trips so that they could get around on foot, by bike, or by public transport.

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