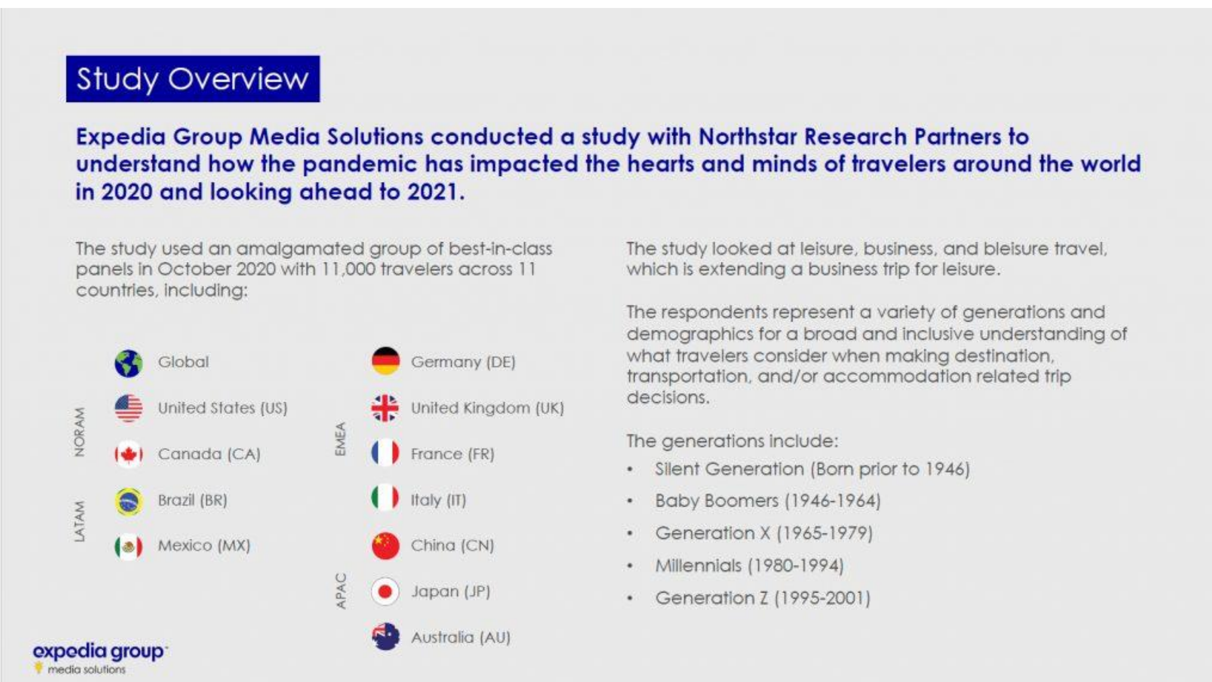
Traveler Sentiment & Influences: How Consumers Feel About Travel Now

Given the rapidly evolving state of travel around the world, stakeholders are struggling to stay informed and ahead of emerging consumer behavior and trends.

Expedia has been tourism stakeholders understand and navigate shifting travel shopper behaviors and identify areas of opportunity to reach customers. One way they've assisted stakeholders stay informed is via data and insights; by combining Expedia's traveler intent and demand data they've been able to release reports.

Expedia in partnership with **Northstar Research Partners**, engaged 11,000 people across 11 countries: Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Mexico, the UK, and the U.S. To examined how the pandemic has impacted travel attitudes and shopping behaviors. It has also helped us understand how travel shoppers are making destination, transportation, and accommodation decisions. The report **Traveler Sentiment & Influences study**.

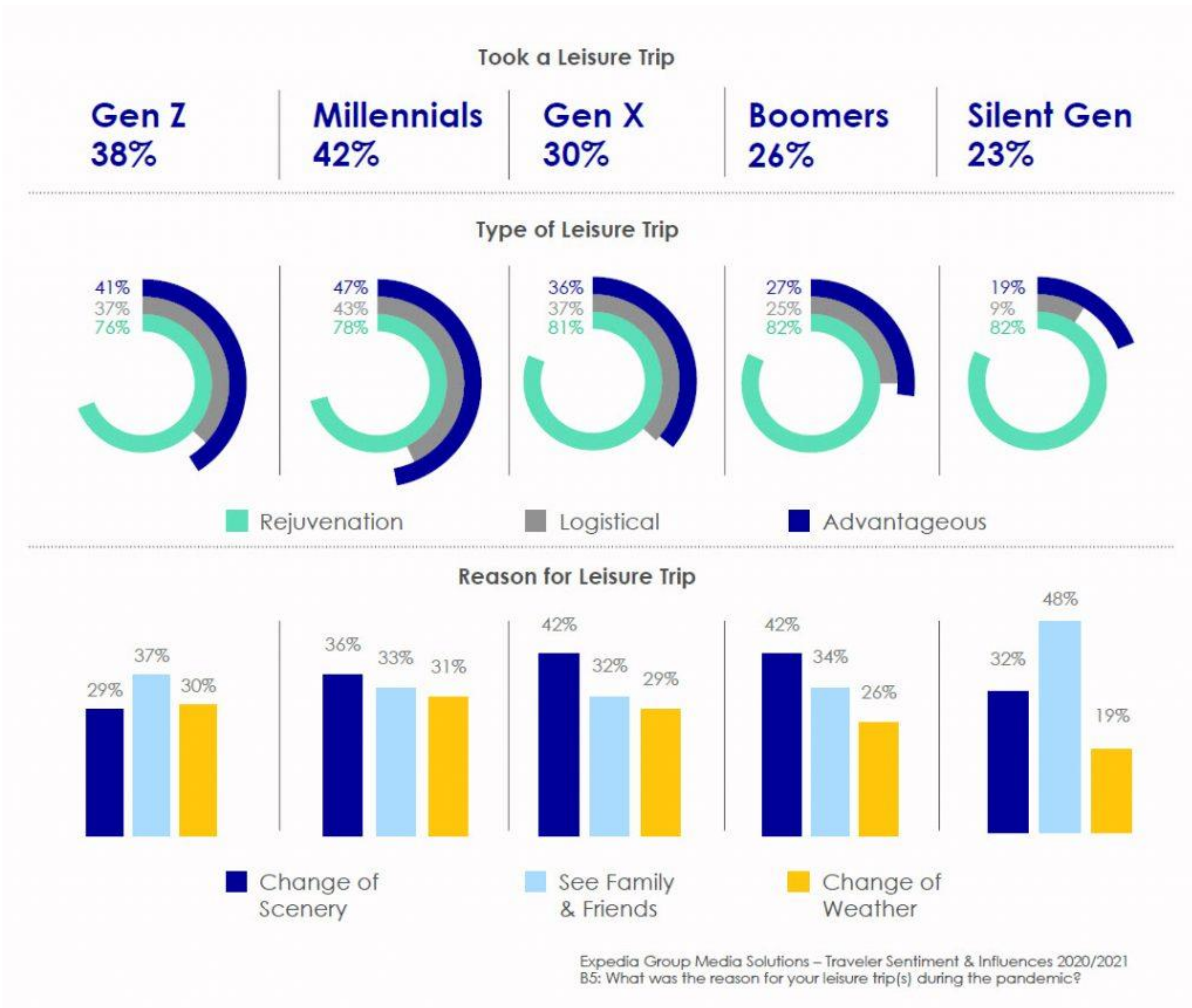


The research revealed some good news: Though consumer confidence in travel varies by country and generation, 1 in 2 travelers feel optimistic—comfortable or even excited—about taking a trip in the next 12 months. The importance of hygiene measures, flexibility, and financial peace of mind is more universal: seventy five percent of travelers said measures such as mask enforcement, reduced capacity or contactless services, and flexibility (like easy refunds or cancellation policies), will inform where they stay on their next trip.

Key Insights and Marketing Takeaways

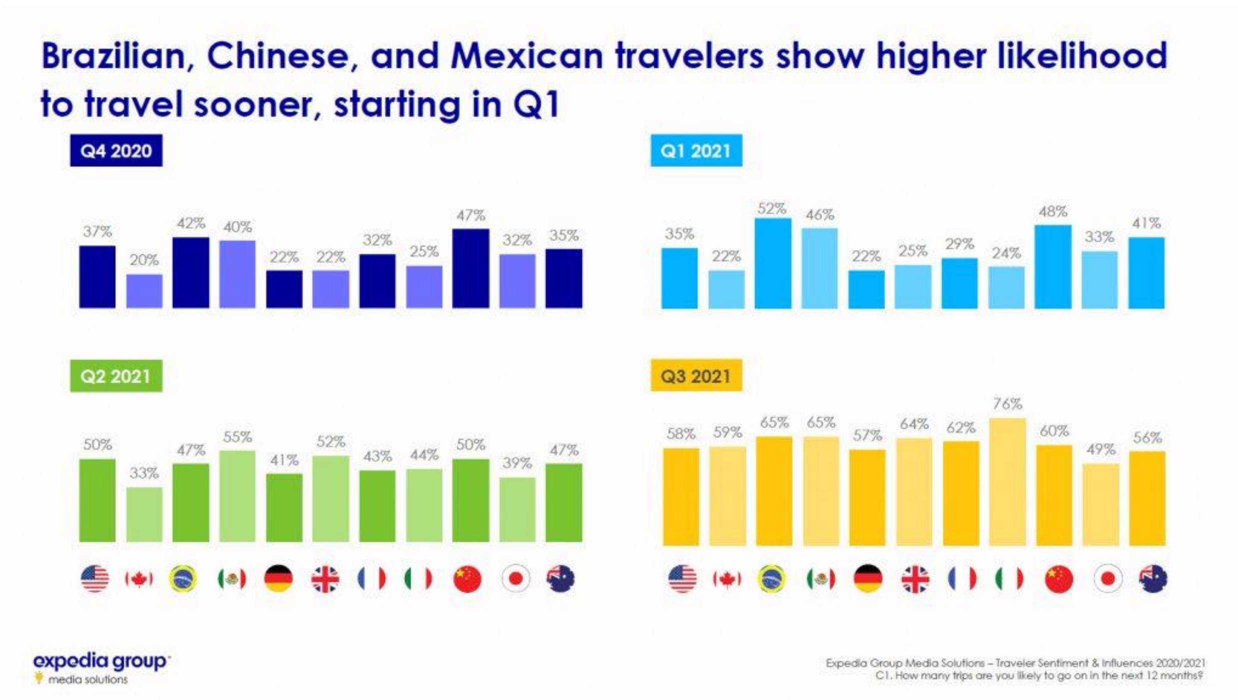
Looking Back: Travel Impact

Globally, two-thirds of travelers cancelled a planned trip due to COVID-19 and only 33% of travelers have taken a trip during the pandemic. Of those who took a trip, 8 in 10 traveled for rejuvenation–which the study defined as seeking a change of scenery or different weather, seeing family or friends, or celebrating an event.

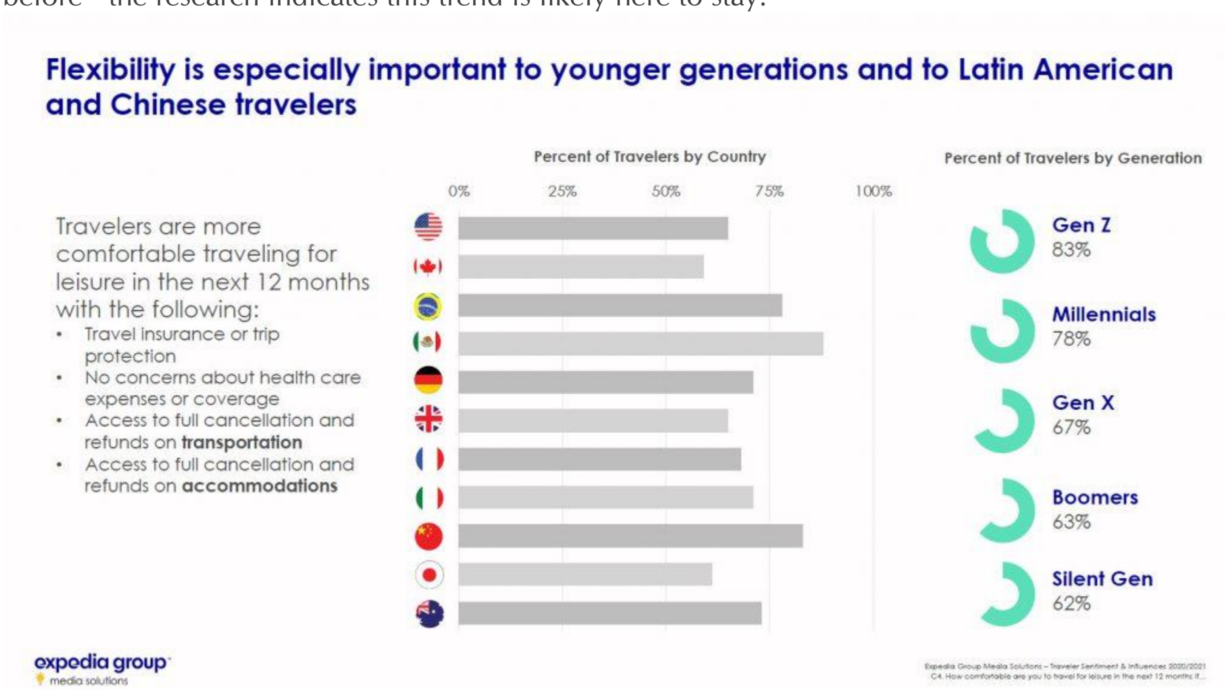


Looking Ahead: the Next 12 Months

Around the world, travelers said that they are more likely to take trips between April and September 2021. Brazilian, Chinese, and Mexican travelers show a higher likelihood to travel even earlier—between January and March 2021. Gen Z and Millennial travelers are 1.5x more likely than other generations to take a leisure trip by Q1.

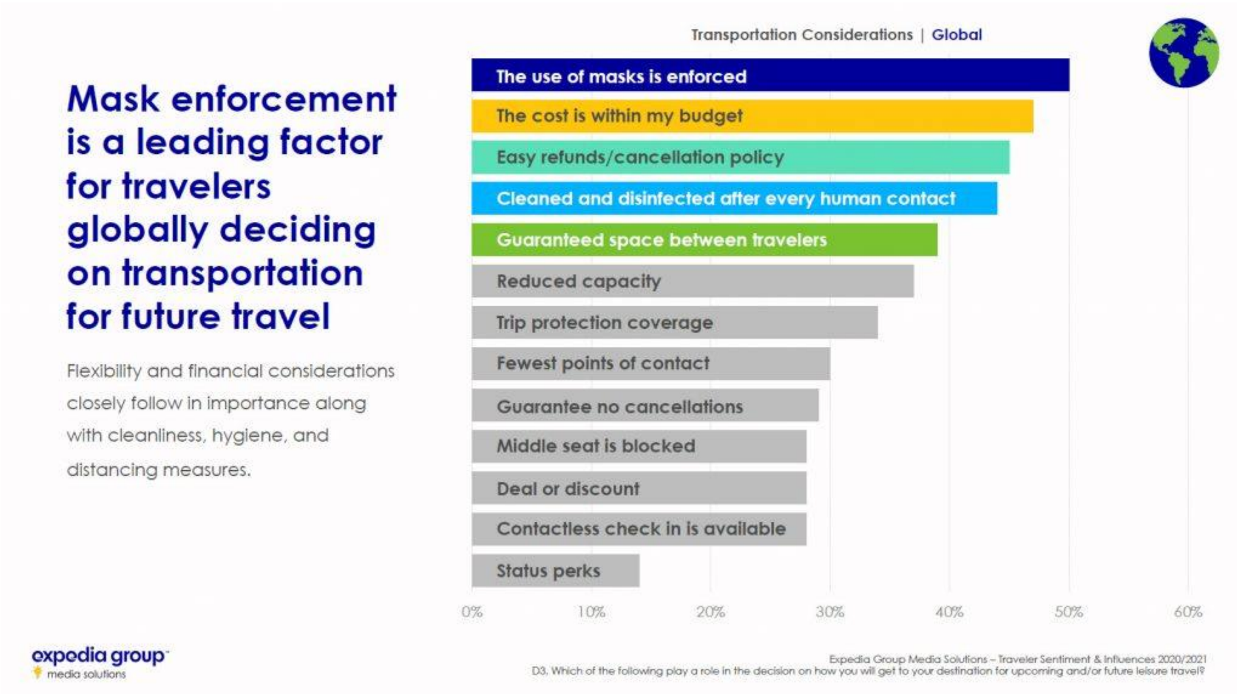


75% of travelers said they would be comfortable traveling if a vaccine is widely available, which is promising given that this sentiment was captured in October, prior to **November and December's positive vaccine news**. 70% of travelers want added flexibility, such as travel insurance and trip protection, full cancellations, and refunds on transportation and accommodations. Expedia.com's lodging data shows that travelers booked refundable rates 10% more often in 2020 than the year before—the research indicates this trend is likely here to stay.

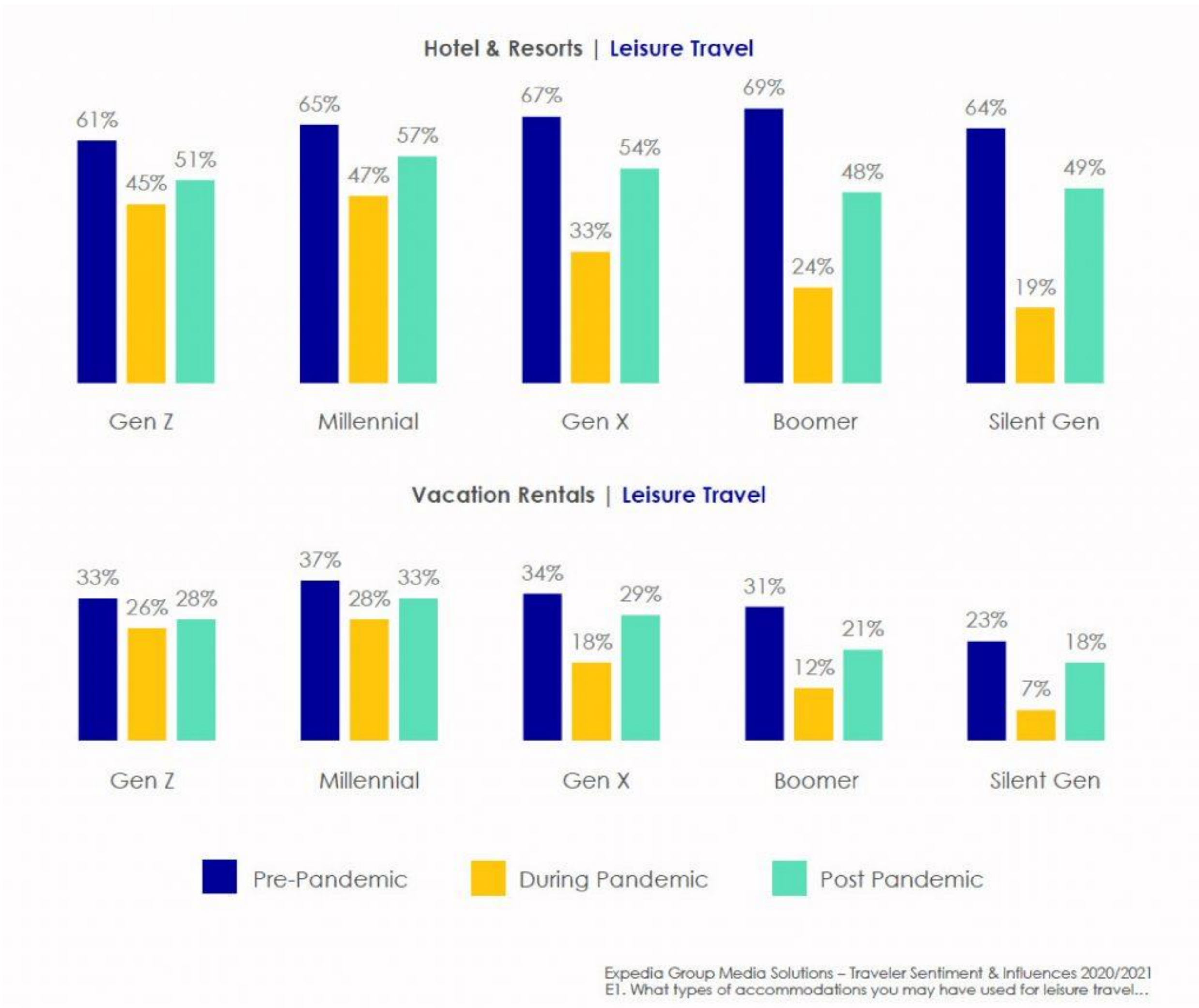


Transportation & Accommodation Priorities

Travelers also want reassurances that travel providers are following and enforcing pandemic protocols. Mask use and enforcement (50%), cost (47%), and easy refunds or cancellation policies (45%) will be the leading factors in future transportation decisions, though the importance placed on each varies by mode of transportation. For future air travel, 60% of travelers would be most comfortable traveling if social distancing measures are in place.



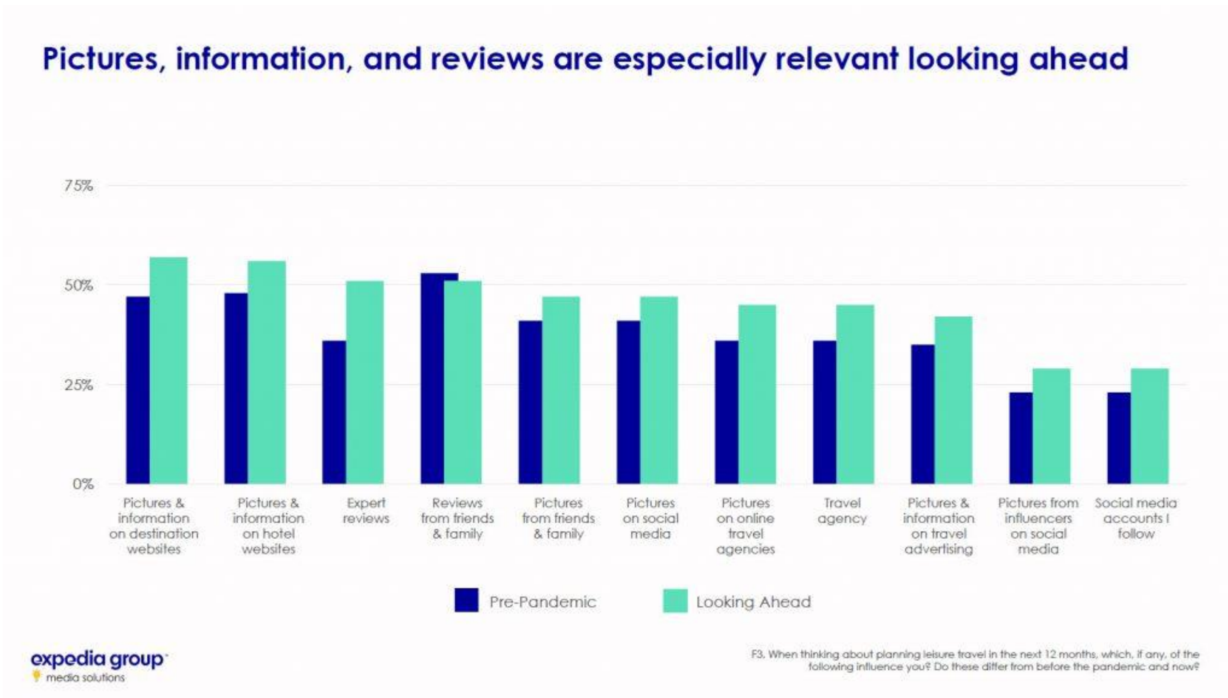
Travelers will return to trusted accommodations like hotels, resorts, and vacation rentals post-pandemic, and younger generations will be at the forefront of driving demand.



Travel Resources & Influences

Travelers are turning to online travel agencies for information and travel planning 24% more than pre-pandemic, while destination websites saw a 20% increase in use as a planning tool. All generations expect to increasingly look to news sources and media for travel information, however, post-pandemic, the Silent Generation will get travel information from news sources 42% more than pre-pandemic.

Pictures and informative messaging in travel advertising are 20% more influential than pre-pandemic, along with travel organizations and experts. This reflects a shift in traveler priorities—with hygiene measures and flexibility overtaking experiences and activities—and the increased importance of credible, up-to-date information from trusted sources.



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