

Australia Regains Top Position for Vacation Destination

Italy drops back to number two

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – July 9, 2009 – After dropping out of the top spot last year, Australia is once again the favorite vacation destination outside the United States for Americans – if cost was not a consideration. Last year was the only year, since 1997, Australia was not in the number one position. Italy, which was number one last year, drops back down to the number two.

The next most popular countries are the same as last year:

- Great Britain at number 3,
- France at number 4,
- Ireland at number 5,
- Germany drops two spots to number 6,
- Japan stays the same as last year at number 7,
- Greece moves up two spots to number 8,
- New Zealand moves up two spots to number 9, and
- Spain remains in the number 10 spot, for top vacation destinations.

These are some of the findings of The Harris Poll, a new nationwide survey of 2,177 U.S. adults surveyed online between June 8 and 15, 2009 by Harris Interactive.

Rounding out the top 15 destinations:

- Canada - number 11, down from number 9 last year,
- Switzerland - number 12, same as last year,
- Mexico - number 13, same as last year,
- Brazil – number 14, returning to the list this year, and
- Jamaica – number 15, same as last year.

Dropping off the top fifteen vacation destinations this year is the Bahamas, which was number 14 last year.

Differences Among Demographic Groups

Australia and Italy vie for the top spot among different demographic groups:

- Italy is the favorite for Echo Boomers (aged 18-32), Gen Xers (aged 33-44) and Baby Boomers (aged 45 - 63) while Australia is number one for Matures (aged 64 and older); and,
- Men and women have different favorites – Australia is number one for men while Italy is tops for women.

Favorites by Region

Breaking this down by overall region:

- Overall, half of all adults (50%) would choose a European country for a foreign vacation if cost was not a consideration. This is up from last year when 48% chose a country in this region;
- One-quarter (24%) would choose a country in Asia or the Pacific, the same as last year;
- Looking at the Caribbean or the Americas, 15% said they would go to a country in this region, the same as last year; and,
- A very small number of people (4%) say they would not travel anywhere outside the United States.

So What?

Considering the economy and that summer vacations are becoming “staycations” this year, the fantasy of traveling far and wide, assuming money is not a consideration, is even a more appealing dream than it was last year. This could be why a trip across the globe for Americans is back up to the top spot of most popular destinations.

**TABLE 1
TOP COUNTRIES CHOSEN FOR VACATION DESTINATION**

“If you could spend a vacation in any country in the world, outside the United States, and you would not have to worry about the cost, what one country would you choose?”

Base: All U.S. adults

Rank	'97	'98	'99	'00	'01	'02	'03	'04	'05	'06	'07	'08	2009
Australia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Italy	5	4	4	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2
Great Britain (England, Scotland or Wales)	2	2	2	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
France	3	3	5	3	4	6	4	4	5	5	4	4	4
Ireland	7	6	7	5	6	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5
Germany	4	5	3	6	5	7	6	6	6	6	6	8	6
Japan	=13	10	=13	13	10	*	8	=11	=8	11	7	7	7
Greece	=11	14	11	=14	=14	=14	10	14	=8	9	10	6	8
New Zealand	=13	15	=13	=14	=14	13	7	8	11	8	8	11	9
Spain	*	11	12	11	=12	11	9	9	12	12	9	10	10
Canada	6	7	6	7	9	4	=12	7	7	7	11	9	11
Switzerland	9	8	=9	=8	8	8	11	=11	10	13	13	12	12
Mexico	8	9	=9	=8	=12	12	=12	10	13	10	12	13	13
Brazil	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	=15	*	*	14
Jamaica	=11	12	8	10	7	=9	*	13	14	=15	*	15	15

Notes: * Not in top 15; = indicates a tie

Countries which were in the top 15 last year, but dropped out this year:

Bahamas (was #14)

**TABLE 2
TOP FIVE COUNTRIES – BY AGE AND GENDER**

"If you could spend a vacation in any country in the world, outside the United States, and you would not have to worry about the cost, what one country would you choose?"

Base: All U.S. adults

Rank	Generation				Gender	
	Echo Boomers (18 to 32)	Gen X (33 to 44)	Baby Boomers (45 to 63)	Matures (64+)	Men	Women
1	Italy	Italy	Italy	Australia	Australia	Italy
2	Australia	Australia	Australia	Italy	Italy	Australia
3	France	Great Britain	Great Britain	Great Britain	Great Britain	Great Britain
4	Great Britain	Ireland	France	Ireland	France	France
5	Japan	France	Ireland	Germany	Japan	Ireland

**TABLE 3
U.S. ADULTS' TOP COUNTRIES CHOSEN FOR VACATION DESTINATION
SUMMARY BY REGIONS OF THE WORLD**

"If you could spend a vacation in any country in the world, outside the United States, and you would not have to worry about the cost, what one country would you choose?"

Base: All U.S. adults

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A European country	48	44	46	50	51	50	51	50	48	50
A country in the Asia or Pacific region	24	22	18	25	26	26	26	25	24	24
A country in the Americas or Caribbean	13	17	19	12	13	12	14	11	15	15
A country in Africa	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3
A country in the Middle East	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1
Other country	*	*	1	1	*	1	*	1	*	*
Wouldn't go anywhere outside U. S.	4	7	5	3	4	2	2	6	6	4
Not sure/refused	5	3	8	3	1	2	1	2	2	2

Note: Percentages may not add up exactly to 100 percent due to rounding.

* Less than 0.5 percent.

Methodology

This Harris Poll was conducted online within the United States between June 8 and 15, 2009 among 2,177 adults. Figures for age, sex, race/ethnicity, education, region and household income were weighted where necessary to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Propensity score weighting was also used to adjust for respondents' propensity to be online.

All sample surveys and polls, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error which are most often not possible to quantify or estimate, including sampling error, coverage error, error associated with nonresponse, error associated with question wording and response options, and post-survey weighting and adjustments. Therefore, Harris Interactive avoids the words “margin of error” as they are misleading. All that can be calculated are different possible sampling errors with different probabilities for pure, unweighted, random samples with 100% response rates. These are only theoretical because no published polls come close to this ideal.

Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in Harris Interactive surveys. The data have been weighted to reflect the composition of the adult population. Because the sample is based on those who agreed to participate in the Harris Interactive panel, no estimates of theoretical sampling error can be calculated.

These statements conform to the principles of disclosure of the National Council on Public Polls.

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