

Pasta, the Sistine Chapel and Gondolas: Americans Choose Italy as Top Vacation Destination Outside U.S.

Australia, last year's number one, drops to second on the list

New York, N.Y. — July 22, 2010 — It's a fantasy everyone has – if money was no object, think of the one place you would want to go on vacation. Some might choose a historic location, for others, a far-away beach getaway or maybe a romantic second honeymoon. For Americans, if they could vacation in any country in the world, outside the U.S. without any worry about the cost, Italy would be the number one country, up from number 2 on the list last year. Australia drops from number 1 to number 2 this year; only the second time since 1997 it has left the top spot.

These are some of the results of **The Harris Poll** of 2,227 adults surveyed online between June 14 and 21, 2010 by **Harris Interactive**.

Moving up to number 3 from 5th last year is Ireland, while Great Britain drops one spot to 4th and France drops one spot to 5th on the list this year. Rounding out the top ten, in a tie for 6th is Greece (up from 8th last year) and Germany (6th last year); Japan is number 8 (down from number 7); Spain moves up one spot to number 9; and New Zealand moves down one spot to number 10. Looking a little further into the list, Israel returns to the list for the first time since 2001 at number 11, followed by Canada at number 12 (down from number 11) and Mexico at number 13 again this year. The Netherlands debuts on the vacation destination list at number 14 and Switzerland is at number 15, down from 12th on the list last year.

Two countries drop off the list this year – Brazil, which was number 14 last year and Jamaica, which was number 15.

Men and women have different favorites. For men, Australia is number one, while for women, Italy takes the top spot. There are also differences by generation. Echo Boomers (those 18-33) and Baby Boomers (those 46-64) choose Italy as their top vacation destination. However, for Gen Xers (those 34-45) and Matures (those 65 and older), Australia is number one.

It is also possible to look at the top countries chosen by geographic region. By region, almost half of Americans (49%) choose a country in Europe, while one-quarter (24%) choose a destination in Asia or the Pacific region. Just over one in ten U.S. adults (11%) pick a country in the Americas or the Caribbean, while 4% choose a country in Africa and 3% choose one in the Middle East. There is also a small percentage of people (7%) who wouldn't go anywhere outside the U.S., more than last year (4%).

So What?

As the summer moves out of July and into August, the summer vacation season is in high gear. Potentially, a number of Americans are in Italy, Australia or Ireland this year. But, for many others, these types of vacations are dreams to save up for, not routinely take. But fantasizing about these destinations can certainly help get one through a rough work week.

**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	'09	2010
Italy	5	4	4	2	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	1
Australia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2
Ireland	7	6	7	5	6	5	5	5	4	4	5	5	5	3
Great Britain (England, Scotland or Wales)	2	2	2	4	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
France	3	3	5	3	4	6	4	4	5	5	4	4	4	5
Greece	=11	14	11	=14	=14	=14	10	14	=8	9	10	6	8	=6
Germany	4	5	3	6	5	7	6	6	6	6	6	8	6	=6
Japan	=13	10	=13	13	10	*	8	=11	=8	11	7	7	7	8
Spain	*	11	12	11	=12	11	9	9	12	12	9	10	10	9
New Zealand	=13	15	=13	=14	=14	13	7	8	11	8	8	11	9	10
Israel	10	13	*	=8	11	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	11
Canada	6	7	6	7	9	4	=12	7	7	7	11	9	11	12
Mexico	8	9	=9	=8	=12	12	=12	10	13	10	12	13	13	13
Netherlands	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	14
Switzerland	9	8	=9	=8	8	8	11	=11	10	13	13	12	12	15

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

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

Brazil (was # 14), Jamaica (was # 15)

**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 33)	Gen X (34 to 45)	Baby Boomers (46 to 64)	Matures (65+)	Men	Women
1	Italy	Australia	Italy	Australia	Australia	Italy
2	Australia	Italy	Australia	Italy	Italy	Australia
3	Ireland	England	England	Ireland	England	Ireland
4	England	France	Ireland	England (=4)	Ireland	France
5	France	Ireland	France	France (=4)	Japan	England

TABLE 3
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	2010
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
A European country	48	44	46	50	51	50	51	50	48	50	49
A country in the Asia or Pacific region	24	22	18	25	26	26	26	25	24	24	24
A country in the Americas or Caribbean	13	17	19	12	13	12	14	11	15	15	11
A country in Africa	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	4
A country in the Middle East	3	4	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3
Other country	*	*	1	1	*	1	*	1	*	*	*
Wouldn't go anywhere outside U. S.	4	7	5	3	4	2	2	6	6	4	7
Not sure/refused	5	3	8	3	1	2	1	2	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 14 and 21, 2010 among 2,227 adults (aged 18 and over). 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.

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***The Harris Poll*® #92, July 22, 2010**

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