

Family Favorite Travel Trends – Laurie Campbell

As we move further into the year of the two's, 2022, we turn our attention once again to 'who' is traveling, who can we expect to walk through our doors, and more importantly who should we be trying to attract. Remember, as if we could forget, our hotel is not the only one out there! The competition is tough! Corporate travel continues to trickle in with hopeful expectations that it will suddenly turn into a flood, but realistically at the moment, it is not our strongest market. When we consider group business there is a lot of discussion around the SMERF market, but let's face it, there are several pieces of the SMERF market (social, military, educational, religious, and fraternal groups), that have not found their way to getting back together quite yet. So, who will we welcome in 2022?

Travel experts and professionals believe that families are coming back! Rajeev Shrivastava, CEO of VisitorsCoverage.com, a travel insurance marketplace says "2022 is shaping up to become the year of family travel" (Elliot, 2021). A recent survey by VRBO suggests that parents are feeling a little guilty about having been tucked away for the last two years and many may consider a bigger and better vacation to reward the kids for having hung in there (Elliot). A few travel trends that we can expect...

The GOAT Mindset

According to Expedia, [2022 will be the Year of the GOAT](#) (Greatest of All Trips) with families planning to go all out on their next vacation (Loweth, 2021).

Highlight family-friendly restaurants, events, and attractions near your hotel. Theme parks fit this bill perfectly but so do children's museums, zoos, aquariums and parks.

Expedition Cruises Will Satisfy Those Who Want to Hit the High Seas

Cruising took a big hit due to COVID and many of us are not ready to head back to the huge cruise ships quite yet. Travelers are looking to expedition cruises for similar adventures on a much smaller scale (Loweth).

Are you near a cruise port? Leverage your hotel as a pre- or post-cruise spot. Consider partnering with your tourism departments to feature local attractions as an add-on to the cruise experience.

Pet Travel Is a No-Brainer

With everyone and your neighbor getting a pandemic puppy, you'll likely see more spots catering to families who want to bring Fido, (or Fifi) along for the vacation (Loweth).

We love our furry family members! Making it easier for our guests to bring them along and take care of them during their stays will make choosing your hotel over the competitor so simple. Providing dog walk maps, pet relief areas, even an amenity geared to pets (dog bowl with a chew toy, waste bags, treats, etc.), are nice touches.

Road Trips (Still) Reign Supreme

2021 really brought back our love of the road trip (Loweth). Families are itching to find new destinations in 2022.

Help them find you. Gear your social media connections to family travel sites. Partner with AAA, your CVB and Tourism departments to feature your property as a stop along the way.

More Travel with the Grandparents

We expect to see a surge in multi-generational travel in 2022 with families looking to [get out and travel with grandparents](#). Whether you [send the kids off on their "gramping" adventure](#) without you or are looking for somewhere that three generations can enjoy, there are plenty of options out there (Loweth).

Gramping! I have six grandchildren ranging in ages from seven months to 22 years! While a vacation with the 22-year-old may look very different compared to one with the younger bunch I'm sure their parents would be all for it! Traveling together with the "whole" family is something we've always *tried* to do. Think about pricing family-appropriate room and dining packages that a multi-generation family would find attractive. Perhaps a fourth-night free, pizza dinner deal, or third room at half price, option? Don't forget about connecting rooms!

Spring Break is approaching and Summer will be here before you know it. Look ahead and prepare for the travel trends we may be experiencing in 2022. As always, please be sure to share your ideas and successes with your NHG sales family. We want to celebrate, promote and *borrow* your successes!

Elliott, C. (2021, December 31). *Family travel is back. here's how to cope, whether that family is yours or someone else's*. USA Today. Retrieved February 21, 2022, from

<https://www.usatoday.com/story/travel/advice/2021/12/31/family-travel-coming-back-2022-heres-how-cope/9048243002/>

Loweth, K. (2021, December 30). *16 family travel trends to watch for in 2022*. Tinybeans. Retrieved February 21, 2022, from <https://tinybeans.com/top-travel-trends/>