



**ADVENTURE TRAVEL**  
TRADE ASSOCIATION

**flywire**

# Diversity in Adventure Travel: U.S. Travelers of Color

*From the Adventure Travel Trade  
Association, Flywire, and the Dominican  
Republic Tourism Board*

OCTOBER 2020

# Foreword

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“One of the most enriching aspects of travel is the ability to immerse ourselves in cultures unlike our own. Experiencing new destinations improves our diversity consciousness and provides us a deeper appreciation for people with different backgrounds. Given this, the onus is on key players within the travel industry to ensure equal access to these experiences, regardless of one's race or ethnicity. This new report underscores the importance of operating travel business with Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DEI) not only embedded, but also top of mind. Not only is it the right thing to do, but these findings suggest it's also an economic imperative.”

**- Mike Massaro, CEO, Flywire**

“Cultural exchange and interaction is one of the three core components that define adventure travel, which comes with a responsibility to respect, honor, and care about local people, their customs, and the environment in places we visit. Yet for too long, our industry has lacked a truly inclusive representation of the diverse identities of travelers themselves in our marketing, products, and organizations. As the industry positions for recovery, we have both a moral accountability to align with our own values and an economic opportunity that can help us thrive and prosper doing what we love to do: open minds and hearts through experiences while protecting the natural resources and beauty of the world and all the different people in it.”

**- Shannon Stowell, CEO, ATTA**

“Dominican Republic embraces diversity in our own way of life and welcomes all visitors to our island. Known for our warm and hospitable people, we are a destination like no other, featuring astounding nature, intriguing history and rich culture.

Activities for adventure travelers of all abilities and identities abound, and many opportunities exist to interact with the local people and learn about our diverse offerings.”

**- Wendy Justo, Director, Dominican Republic Tourism Board Miami**





# About This Report

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This report shares data from a **statistically-significant 2019 random U.S. population survey**, which looked at the size and preferences of U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers. Because the data shared in this report is from a single market, the findings are true only for U.S. adventure travelers of color. However, recommendations shared in this report may be applied to cater to a wider set of adventure travelers from different markets and cultural identities.



# Introduction

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“After months of canceled flights, hotel closures, and restricted access to popular destinations worldwide, on the horizon is a remarkable opportunity to welcome back much of the business activity the industry has lost as well as a yet untapped customer base.

Disparities in access to personal wealth and social mobility have for decades, even centuries, allowed many adventure travel destinations and their related activities to become segregated along racial lines. The same systems of oppression and discrimination that deprived people of color the means and opportunity to achieve equality as citizens also prevented them from experiencing the great outdoors for recreation.

Backpacking, kayaking, mountain biking, and skiing are typically pastimes that are popular among those with the disposable income, leisure time, and cultural inclination necessary to pursue them. But as people of color in the U.S. and around the world have improved their economic stability and affluence, many of these activities are now within reach of a much broader cross section of the population.

This new study shows that non-white consumers represent a lucrative and emerging demographic of impressionable customers. The adventure travel industry just has to figure out how to reach them.”

**JAMES EDWARD MILLS, JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR OF THE BOOK  
*THE ADVENTURE GAP: CHANGING THE FACE OF THE OUTDOORS***



# Faces of the Future

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“It’s estimated that the United States will become a non-white majority population by the year 2045. That’s in the foreseeable future of most businesses; that’s only 25 years away. If we’re not successful in attracting, retaining, and expanding the number of people of color who represent the fastest growing segment of our population, what happens when these emerging communities grow beyond the current white majority of the United States?

How can we make sure that all these wild and scenic places, these destination recreation areas, are not only available, but we have the ability to create a population of people who feel welcome, secure, and hopefully encouraged and inspired to spend time in these places?

Armed with the knowledge from this new report we are aware that this market exists. By engaging new customers in a different way, we can welcome more people from all walks of life to our destinations and lead them on our trips. Through broader representation and diversity of participants, the adventure travel industry can affirm its strength and longevity for years to come. The road ahead may seem long and more than a bit frightening, but with the right guides we can make our way forward to a brighter future. And what a great adventure it will be!”

“**The face of adventure is starting to change, and it’s critical that the outdoor recreation and adventure travel industry follow suit.**”

**JAMES EDWARD MILLS, JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR OF THE BOOK  
THE ADVENTURE GAP: CHANGING THE FACE OF THE OUTDOORS**



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# Key Findings

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- There are approximately 22 million U.S. adventure travelers of color, representing \$51 Billion in annual revenue.
- Adventure travelers of color are taking 2.5 trips per year on average, 2 of which are international.
- Outbound U.S. adventure travelers of color are spending comparable amounts to white adventure travelers from the U.S. overall, but spend more in-destination on things like dining, tours, shopping, entertainment & transportation.
- Generally, U.S. adventure travelers of color are willing to try new activities; they like to participate in more than one or two when the occasion arises. Most book their paid group activities prior to arriving at the destination.
- Social media is the biggest source of inspiration for U.S. adventure travelers of color, followed by travel-specific publications and television.
- Web-based channels are the preferred way of booking flights and accommodations for U.S. adventure travelers of color. Approximately 30-40% prefer a live/phone interaction.

# Reaching New Markets

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**“ The first step to reaching a new audience is to acknowledge that you don’t know everything, and you want to learn. When you reach out to that audience, genuinely ask the question, ‘We’re trying to learn, can you help us?’”**

**SOPHIA HYDER HOCK, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION CONSULTANT, CEO OF PAPILIA**







# 1. Profile of U.S. Outbound Adventure Leisure Travelers of Color

# Methodology

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- A random population survey was conducted by an ATTA research partner in the summer of 2019 to size the U.S. outbound leisure adventure travel\* market for the Dominican Republic Tourism Board.
- More than 4,300 U.S. adults (18+) were sampled and 823 respondents qualified to complete the survey. To qualify, the respondent must have had taken at least one international adventure leisure trip in the past 24 months and intend to take another adventure leisure trip in the next 24 months.
- A demographics question in the survey asked U.S. adventure traveler respondents which race or ethnicity they most associate with, and that forms the market segmentation basis for this report. Response options were Black, Hispanic, Asian and Other Non-White, White, and Prefer Not to Say.
- Recommendations for travel businesses and destination marketing teams are included in closing to help inform their efforts to appropriately source travelers from these markets.

*\*Adventure travel may be any tourist activity, including two of the following three components: a physical activity, a cultural exchange or interaction and engagement with nature.*



# Definitions

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- **Adventure Travel:** Any tourist activity including two of the following three components: a physical activity, a cultural exchange or interaction, and engagement with nature. (source: [ATTA](#))
- **Race:** Any one of the groups that humans are often divided into based on physical traits regarded as common among people of shared ancestry. ([source](#))
- **Ethnicity:** Affiliation with large groups of people classed according to common racial, national, tribal, religious, linguistic, or cultural origin or background. ([source](#))
- **People of Color:** People of races other than white in the United States. (source: SATW\*)
- **Black:** As of June 2020, the Associated Press Stylebook capitalizes the “B” in the term Black when referring to people in a racial, ethnic, or cultural context. This conveys an essential and shared sense of history, identity, and community. African American is also acceptable for those in the U.S., but the terms are not necessarily interchangeable. Americans of Caribbean heritage, for example, generally refer to themselves as Caribbean American. (source: SATW\*)
- **Hispanic:** A person from, or whose ancestors were from, a Spanish-speaking land or culture, or from Latin America. This term tends to be used by the people who the terms describe over the more modern alternatives (Latino/Latina/Latinx) at this time. (source: SATW\*)
- **Asian:** A person descending from any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or Indian subcontinent. ([source](#))
- **White:** People belonging to a group or race characterized by light pigmentation of the skin (predominantly descendants of the original peoples of Europe). ([source](#))
- **“Other” Non-White:** In this report, denoting respondents who did not identify as Black, Hispanic, Asian, or White as a race or ethnicity, but are included as people of color.

*\*Excerpted from SATW (Society of American Travel Writers) [“Language of Diversity” Glossary](#)*

*NOTE: Definitions were not provided to survey respondents, but are listed here in an educational context.*



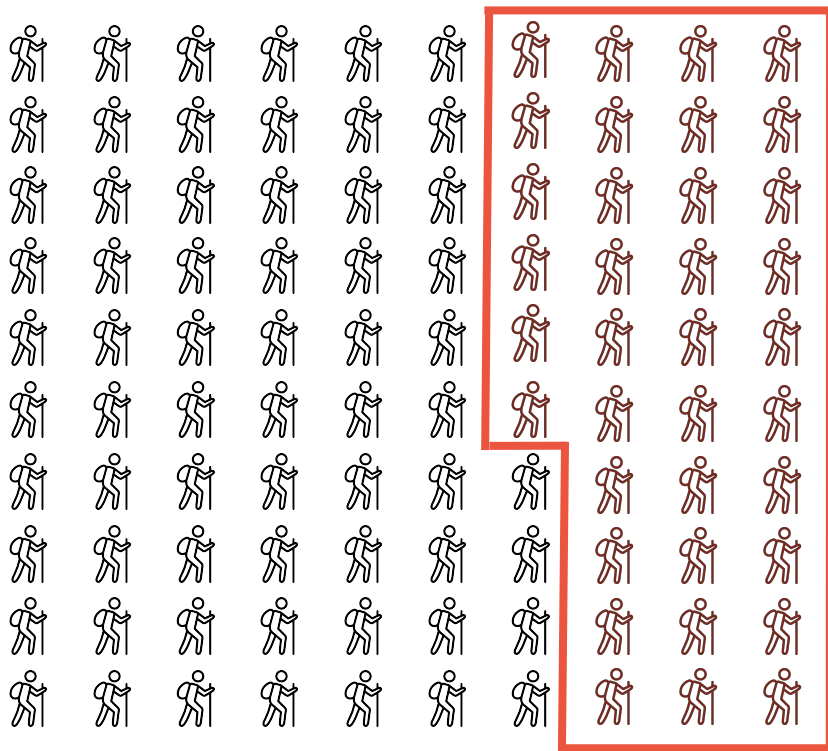




**1.1**

# Market Size and Opportunity: U.S. Adventure Travelers of Color

# More than one-third (36%) of U.S. outbound adventure travelers (age 18+) are people of color.



# 36%

Estimated percentage of  
U.S. outbound adventure  
travelers of color

<b>13%</b>	Black
<b>12%</b>	Hispanic
<b>9%</b>	Asian
<b>2%</b>	Other Non-White



Collectively, they represent an estimated **22 million** U.S. adventure travelers (age 18+).

**22 Million** 

~22,196,000 Outbound Adventure  
Travelers of Color in the United States

**8.2 Million**

Estimated # of Black  
American Adventure  
Travelers

**7.5 Million**

Estimated # of Hispanic  
American Adventure  
Travelers

**5.3 Million**

Estimated # of Asian  
American Adventure  
Travelers

**1.2 Million**

Estimated # of Other  
Non-White American  
Adventure Travelers

**Q46:** What race or ethnicity do you most associate with?

**Market Sizing Variable:** U.S. adult population

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)



**On average, they took 2+ trips between the summers of 2018 and 2019, and they are primarily heading **abroad** to vacation.**

U.S. Outbound Adventure Travelers by Race/Ethnic Identity	Average # of All Trips in the Past 12 Months (Both Domestic & International)	Average # of International (Outbound) Trips Only in the Past 12 Months
Black	2.71	2.29
Hispanic	2.51	2.17
Asian	2.31	1.79
Other Non-White	2.69	2.25
White	2.80	2.12

**Q4:** How many active leisure trips did you take in the last twelve months? Please consider all U.S. and international trips.

**Q5:** How many international active leisure trips did you take in the last twelve months?

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers (n=823)



# When it comes to **travel spending**, **U.S. adventure travelers of color** are **spending comparable amounts** to **U.S. white adventure travelers**.

U.S. Outbound Adventure Travelers by Race/Ethnic Identity	Median Per Person Per Night Hotel Expenditure	Median Per Person Per Day In-Destination Expenditure*	Median Per Person Total Expenditure on a 7 Nights/8 Days Vacation**	Median Total Expenditure on a 7 Nights/8 Days Vacation for 2 People**
Black	\$100 USD	\$200 USD	\$2,300 per person	\$4,600 for 2 people
Hispanic	\$125 USD	\$165 USD	\$2,195 per person	\$4,390 for 2 people
Asian	\$125 USD	\$200 USD	\$2,475 per person	\$4,950 for 2 people
Other Non-White	\$110 USD	\$150 USD	\$1,970 per person	\$3,940 for 2 people
White	\$135 USD	\$150 USD	\$2,145 per person	\$4,290 for 2 people

\*The **in-destination expenditure** includes dining, tours, shopping, entertainment and transportation expenses.

\*\*Excludes international flights.

**Q10:** When traveling for leisure purposes, how much do you typically spend per night on a hotel room or other accommodation? Please consider daily rate for hotel only.

**Q11:** When traveling for leisure, approximately how much do you budget for daily activities including dining, tours, shopping, entertainment and transport? Please consider per-person daily budget. Please exclude air travel and hotel.

**Base: U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers (n=823)**



**And the U.S. adventure travelers of color represent a \$51 billion annual market opportunity (on the basis of one 7-night/8-day trip per person).**

# \$51 Billion

Estimated Annual Travel Market Share  
Represented by U.S. Outbound Adventure  
Travelers of Color

(market share by one 7-night/8-day trip per person; derivation formula below)

**\$19 Billion**

Total Estimated Market  
Share Represented by Black  
American Adventure  
Travelers

**\$16 Billion**

Total Estimated Market  
Share Represented by  
Hispanic American  
Adventure Travelers

**\$13 Billion**

Total Estimated Market  
Share Represented by Asian  
American Adventure  
Travelers

**\$2 Billion**

Total Estimated Market Share  
Represented by Other  
Non-White American Adventure  
Travelers

**Market Sizing Derivation:** Target Population x [(Median Hotel Spend Per Person Per Night x 7 Nights) + (Median In-Destination Spend Per Person Per Day x 8 Days)]

**Base: U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)**



**29% of U.S. adventure travelers of color traveled on a group package tour on their last trip. The estimated packaged adventure travel market size and expenditure data is shared below.**

U.S. Outbound Adventure Travelers by Race/Ethnic Identity	% That Traveled on Packaged Tours	Estimated Market Size by Population	Estimated Market Size by Expenditure <i>*Basis: A 7 Nights/8 Days Trip</i>
Black	37%	3.0 million	\$7.0 billion
Hispanic	25%	1.9 million	\$4.1 billion
Asian	25%	1.3 million	\$3.3 billion
Other Non-White	25%	0.3 million	\$0.6 billion
<b>Estimated Total</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>6.5 million</b>	<b>\$15.0 billion</b>





**1.2**

## Last Trip Activities and Travel Preferences



**U.S. outbound adventure travelers of all race and ethnic identities almost equally partook in soft adventure activities on their recent travels. More than half (51%) of Black Americans in the sample participated in a hard adventure activity.**

U.S. Outbound Adventure Travel Markets	Soft-Adventure Activities Participation Rate	Hard-Adventure Activities Participation Rate
White	81%	56%
Black	74%	51%
Hispanic	84%	42%
Asian	76%	42%

\*Soft/hard adventure activities classification can be located in the [Adventure Tourism Market Report 2010](#) report.

\*Other non-white identifying adventure travel market data was omitted due to the low sample size.

**Q7:** Which of the following activities have you participated in during your recent travels? Consider the last 24 months. Check all that apply.

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as Black, Hispanic, or Asian (n=280)

## Hiking and camping are the top two soft adventure activities that Black, Hispanic and Asian American adventure travelers recently participated in on their travels.

	Black American Adventure Travelers	Hispanic American Adventure Travelers	Asian American Adventure Travelers
1	Hiking /Trekking (20%)	Hiking /Trekking (25%)	Hiking /Trekking (27%)
2	Camping (17%)	Camping (23%)	Camping (18%)
3	Zip Lining (16%)	Zip Lining (16%)	Snorkeling (15%)
4	Fishing/fly-fishing (13%)	Surfing (15%)	Fishing/fly-fishing (13%)
5	Sailing (13%)	Bird-Watching (14%)	Bird-Watching (13%)

\*Soft/hard adventure activities classification can be located in the [Adventure Tourism Market Report 2010](#) report.

\*Other non-white identifying adventure travel market data was omitted due to the low sample size.

**Q7:** Which of the following activities have you participated in during your recent travels? Consider the last 24 months. Check all that apply.

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as Black, Hispanic, or Asian (n=280)

## Mountain biking, climbing and kayaking (sea/whitewater) are the top hard adventure activities that Black, Hispanic and Asian American adventure travelers recently participated in on their travels.

	Black American Adventure Travelers	Hispanic American Adventure Travelers	Asian American Adventure Travelers
1	Mountain Biking (14%)	Climbing-mountain/rock (15%)	Kayaking-sea/whitewater (14%)
2	Climbing-mountain/rock (14%)	Motorized sports-motorcycle, snowmobile, etc. (12%)	Climbing-mountain/rock (13%)
3	Kayaking-sea/whitewater (12%)	Kayaking-sea/whitewater (11%)	Scuba diving (13%)
4	Rafting (11%)	Mountain Biking (10%)	Mountain Biking (6%)
5	Scuba diving (10%)	Caving (10%)	Caving (6%)

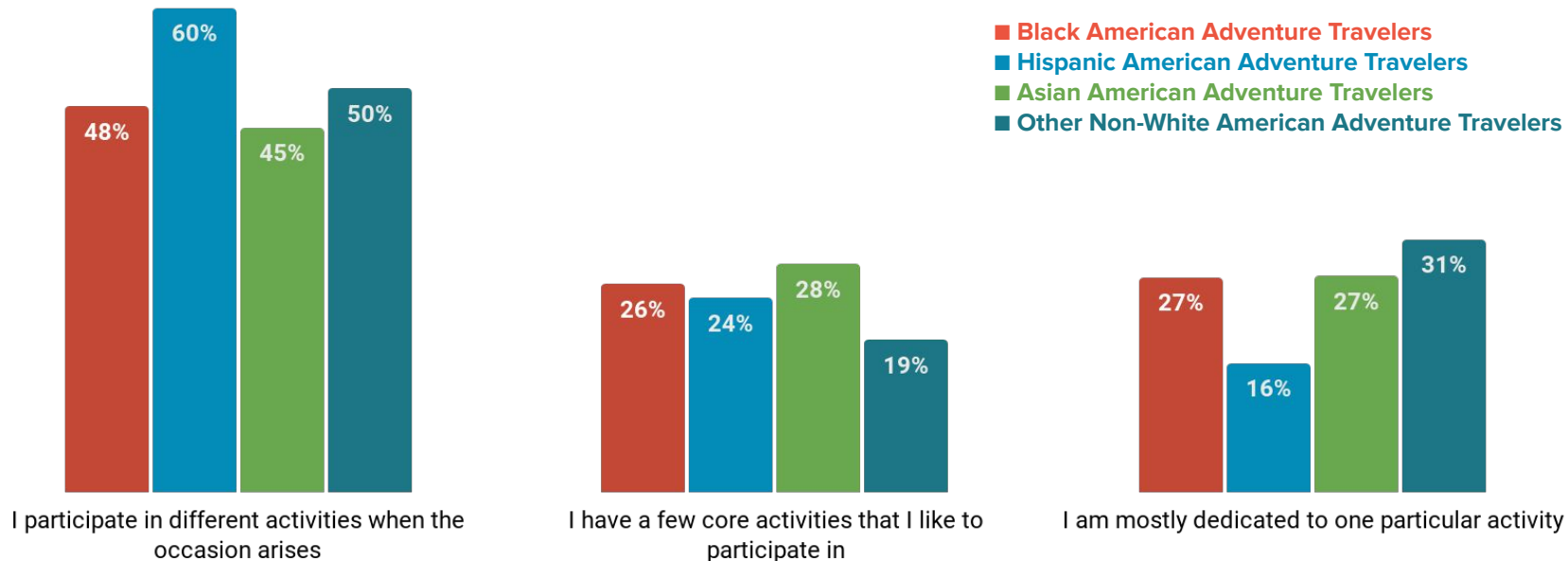
\*Soft/hard adventure activities classification can be located in the [Adventure Tourism Market Report 2010](#) report.

\*Other non-white identifying adventure travel market data was omitted due to the low sample size.

**Q7:** Which of the following activities have you participated in during your recent travels? Consider the last 24 months. Check all that apply.

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as Black, Hispanic, or Asian (n=280)

## Generally, U.S. adventure travelers of color like to participate in different adventure activities when the occasion arises.

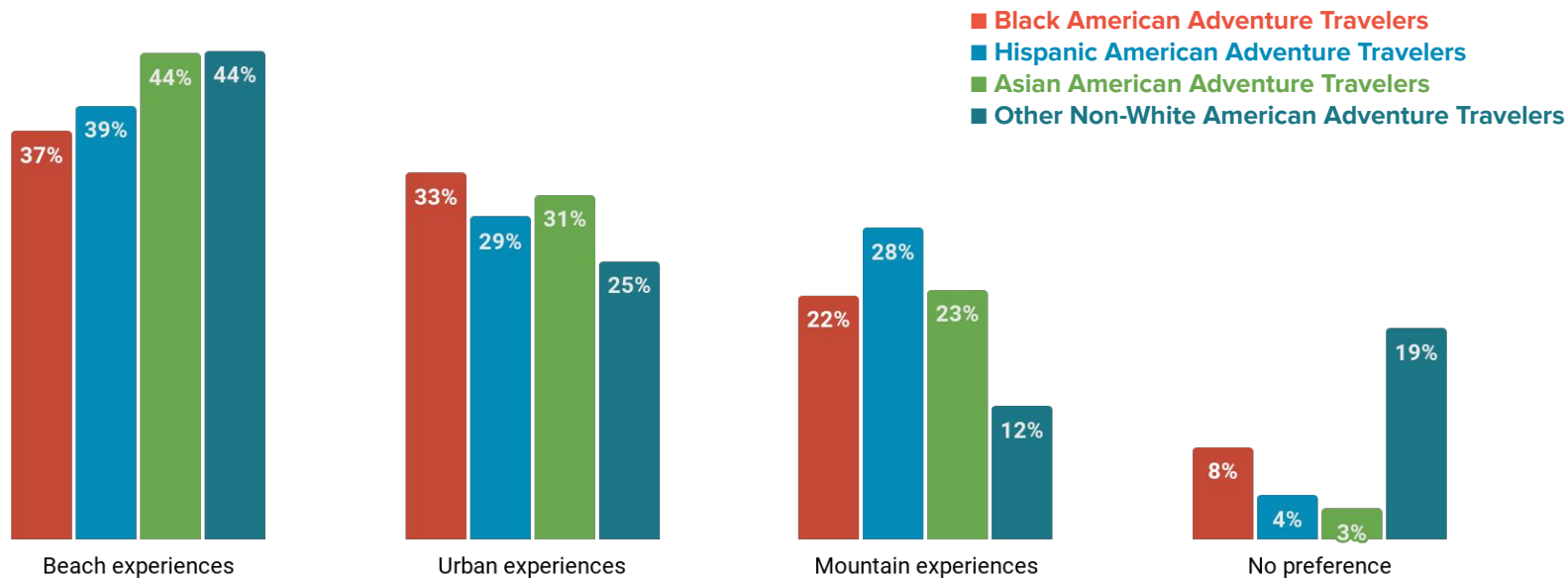


Q17: Which of these statements best describes your habits when participating in active leisure travel?

Base: U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)



## Beach experiences top the leisure trip setting preference for U.S. adventure travelers of color, followed by urban and mountain experiences.



**Q30:** Overall, which of these leisure trip settings is most attractive to you?

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)

**In terms of where the Black, Hispanic, and Asian American adventure travelers traveled on their last trip, the top 5 countries below offer a glimpse (*data collected in summer 2019*). This data should not be interpreted as the top inbound markets for these travelers.**

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	<b>Black American Adventure Travelers</b>	<b>Hispanic American Adventure Travelers</b>	<b>Asian American Adventure Travelers</b>
	<b>39%</b> of the sample segment represented below	<b>43%</b> of the sample segment represented below	<b>45%</b> of the sample segment represented below
<b>1</b>	Bahamas	Mexico	Philippines
<b>2</b>	Canada	Dominican Republic	United Kingdom
<b>3</b>	United Kingdom	United Kingdom	India
<b>4</b>	Jamaica	Bahamas	China
<b>5</b>	Australia	Australia	Japan



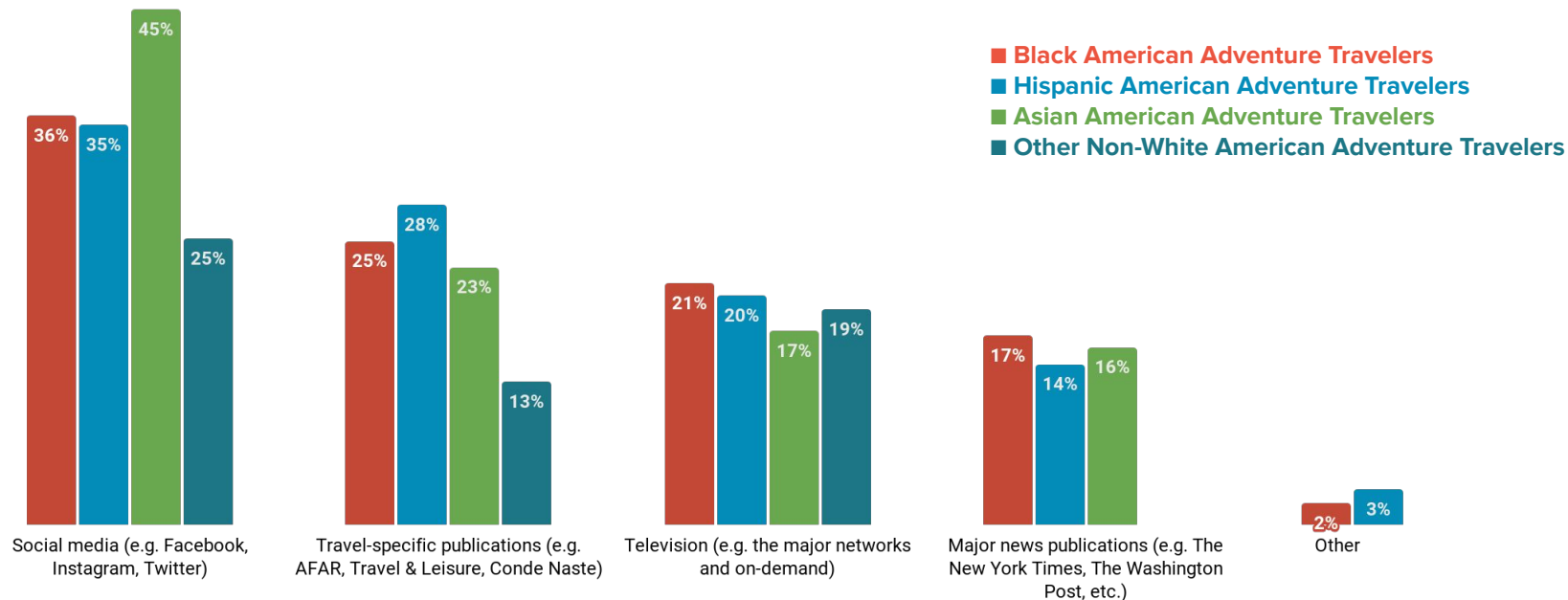
**Q6:** Which country did you visit for your last international active leisure trip? Please consider the primary destination of your trip.

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as Black, Hispanic, or Asian (n=280)



# **1.3** Marketing and Booking Preferences

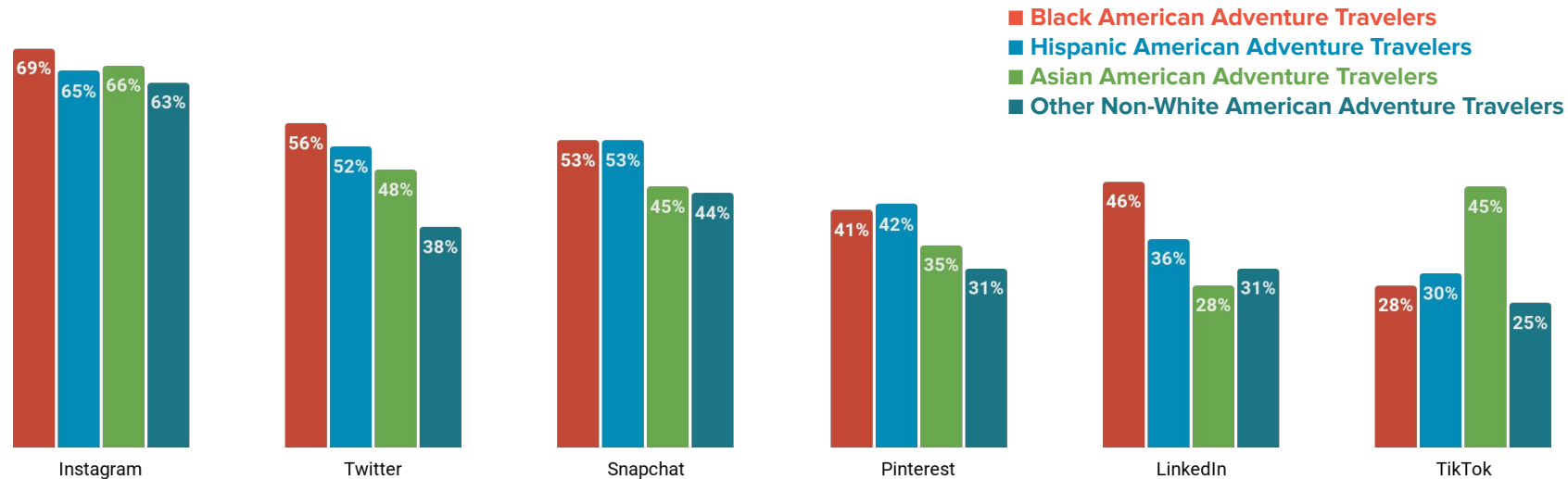
# Social media is the biggest source of inspiration for U.S. adventure travelers of color, followed by travel-specific publications and television.



**Q20:** Which of these media channels are you most likely to find inspiration on where to go for your next leisure trip?

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)

# When it comes to **daily-use (one or multiple sessions)**, Instagram, Twitter and Facebook\* are the most popular social media platforms.



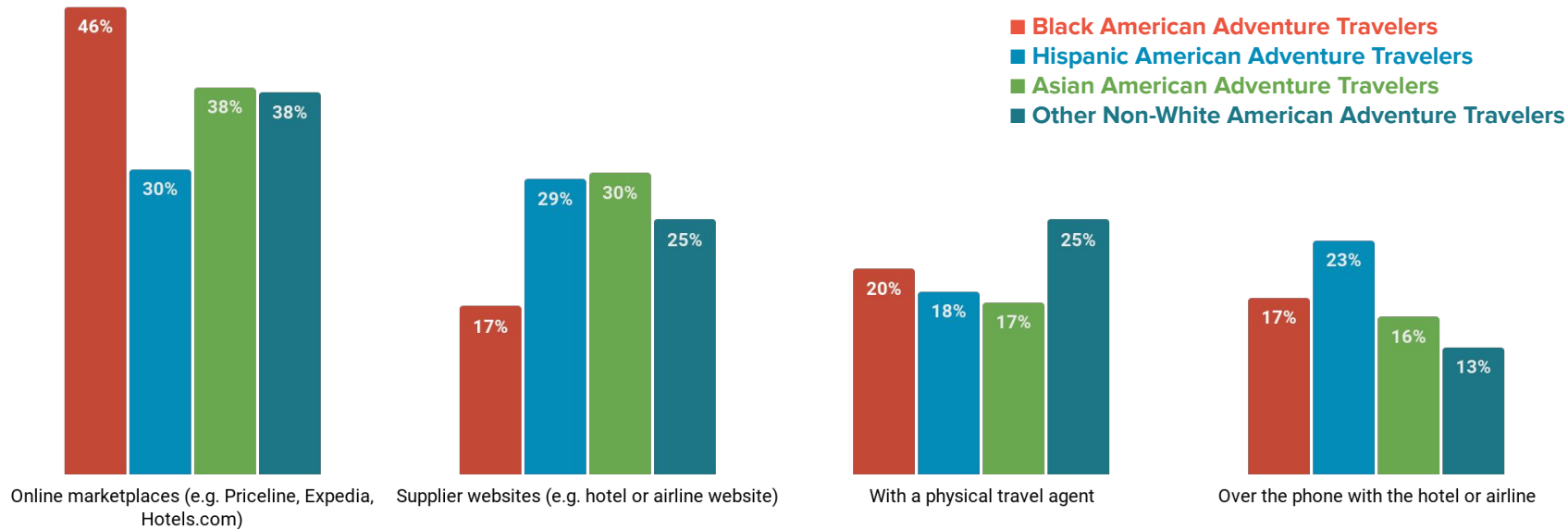
\*The dataset is missing Facebook data, however, it is one of the biggest social media platforms (bigger than Snapchat), and thus, demands acknowledgement.

**Q21:** Which of the following social media channels do you access at least once per week? Select all that apply.

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)



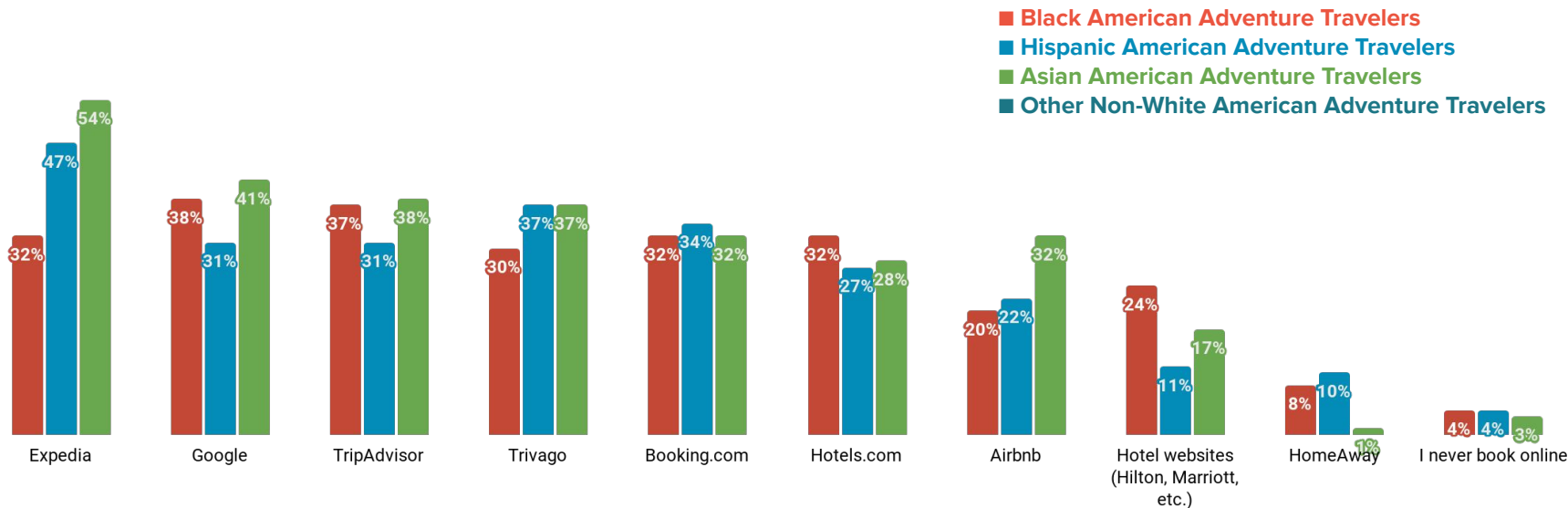
# Web-based channels are the preferred way of booking flights and accommodations for U.S. adventure travelers of color. Approximately 30-40% prefer a live/phone interaction.



Q22: Which channels do you prefer most when shopping for flights and accommodations?

Base: U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)

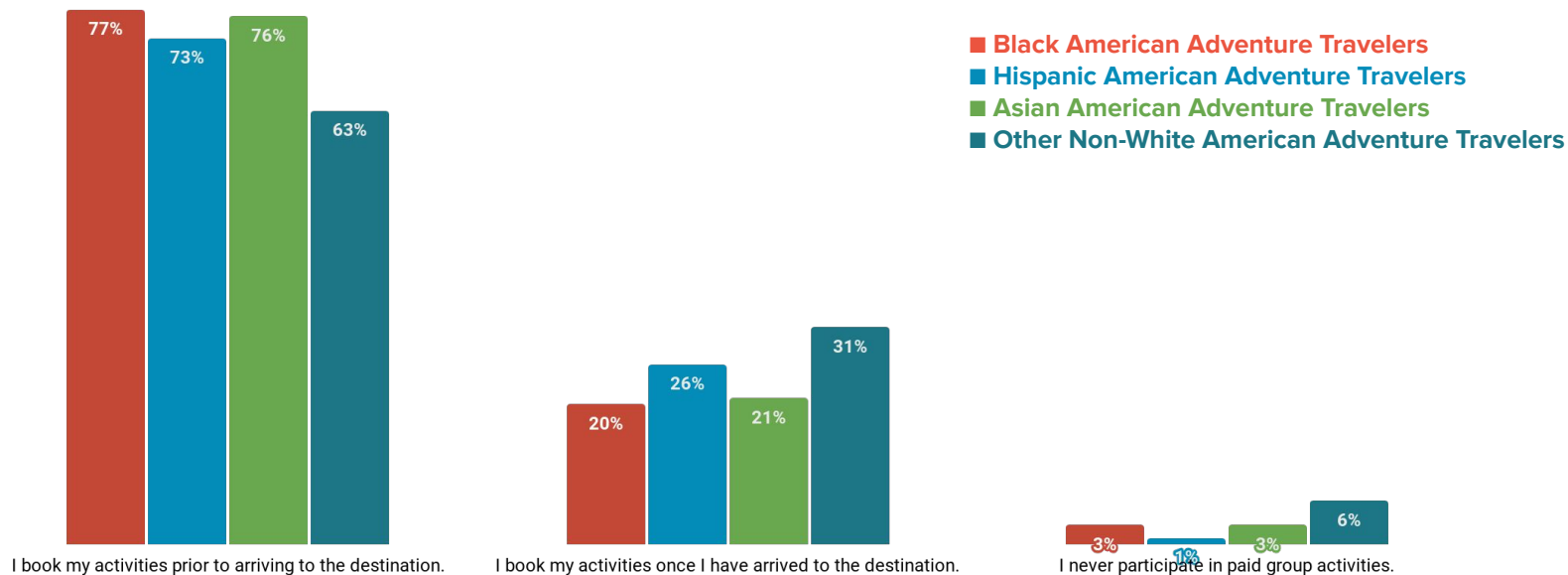
# Expedia, Google, and TripAdvisor are the top marketplaces used by U.S. adventure travelers of color to book flights, accommodations and other services for their recent travels.



**Q24:** Have you used any of the following online marketplaces to book your recent leisure travel flights, accommodations, or other services? Select all that apply.

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)

## Most book their paid group activities prior to arriving at the destination.

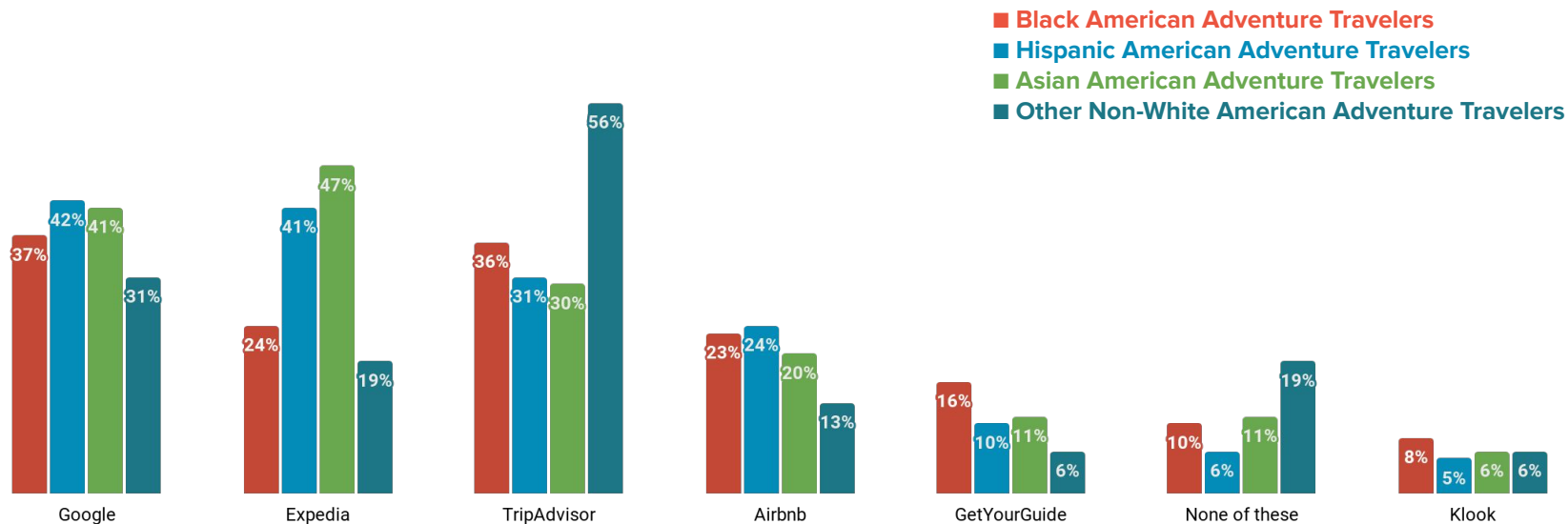


**Q23:** Which of the following statements best describes the way you typically book your paid group activities? Paid group activities included tours, excursions, and day trips.

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)



# Google, Expedia, and TripAdvisor are the top booking channels for single-day activities such as tours, kayaking, snorkeling or biking.



**Q25:** For your recent travels, have you used any of the following sites to book single-day activities such as tours, kayaking, snorkeling, or biking? Consider the past 24 months.

**Base:** U.S. outbound adventure leisure travelers identifying as non-white (n=296)



# 1.4

## Research Sample Demographics



# Black American Adventure Travelers

- Majority of the respondents (73%) are from the U.S. South (45%) and Northeast (28%).
- Approximately half of the sample is male, and half female. One respondent identifies with another gender.
- Half of the respondents are under the age of 34, and half 35 and above.
- 69% of the sampled travelers work full-time. 18% own their own businesses or are a business partner. 6% are retired or are a stay-at-home partner.
- 32% are married, 36% reside alone, and 32% live with their extended family or roommates.
- 60% have children under the age of 18 residing in their household.
- 19% have a household income of \$120,000 USD or more, 18% of \$90,000-\$120,000, 28% of \$60,000-90,000, and 35% of below \$60,000 before taxes.

# Hispanic American Adventure Travelers

- Majority of the respondents (89%) are from the U.S. South (37%), Northeast (39%), and West (23%).
- Approximately half of the sample is female (52%), and half male (48%).
- Approximately half of the respondents are under the age of 34 (54%), and half are 35 and above (46%).
- 64% of the sampled travelers work full-time. 23% own their own businesses or are a business partner. 6% are retired or are a stay-at-home partner.
- 40% are married, 30% live alone, and 30% live with their extended family or roommates.
- 64% have children under the age of 18 residing in their household.
- 26% have a household income of \$120,000 USD or more, 22% of \$90,000-\$120,000, 23% of \$60,000-90,000, and 29% of below \$60,000 before taxes.



# Asian American Adventure Travelers

- The respondents reside in U.S. West (32%), Northeast (30%), and Midwest (20%) and South (18%).
- Approximately two-thirds of the sample is female (64%), and one-third male (48%). 1 respondent identifies with another gender.
- 45% of the respondents are under the age of 34, and 55% are 35 and above.
- 58% of the sampled travelers work full-time and 21% part-time. 10% own their own businesses or are a business partner. 11% are retired or are a stay-at-home partner.
- 55% are married, 21% live alone, and 24% live with their extended family or roommates.
- 48% have children under the age of 18 residing in their household.
- 30% have a household income of \$120,000 USD or more, 13% of \$90,000-\$120,000, 25% of \$60,000-90,000, and 23% of below \$60,000 before taxes.



**Segmentation Basis: Q46:** What race or ethnicity do you most associate with?

**Base:** U.S. Asian adventure travelers (n=71)

# Other Non-White Adventure Travelers

- The respondents reside in U.S. West (33%), South (33%), Northeast (25%) and Midwest (13%).
- 75% of the sample are female, and a quarter are male (25%).
- 44% are under the age of 34, 56% are 35 and above.
- 50% of the sampled travelers work full-time and 12% part-time. 19% own their own businesses or are a business partner. 19% are retired or are a stay-at-home partner.
- 81% are married, 21% live alone, and 24% live with their extended family or roommates.
- 44% have children under the age of 18 residing in their household.
- 38% have a household income of \$120,000 USD or more, 13% of \$90,000-\$120,000, 25% of \$60,000-90,000, and 25% of below \$60,000 before taxes.



## 2. Recommendations

# Recommendations - Travel Marketing

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Review and analyze your current target market to make informed decisions for the future.

Like all expressions of hospitality, adventure travel is about putting people at ease and allowing them to feel comfortable.

“

**I know it's cliché but I need to see myself in that mountaineering ad. If I don't see myself in it and it's still just the rugged white guy that looks like he just came down from Everest, then I will feel that it's not a space for me. But if they show people that look like me, doing those things then the adventure industry is actively saying, you are welcome. It's no longer a white boys' club.**

”

**LOLA AKINMADE ÅKERSTRÖM**

**AUTHOR AND TRAVEL PHOTOGRAPHER, DIGITAL CONTENT CREATOR**

# Recommendations - Travel Marketing

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Ensure your target market is involved in the content creation process so they are marketed to appropriately, and be wary of stereotyping.

Marketing materials and social media content should be created using producers and firms with a specialty in framing stories from the people of color (POC) perspective.

“**Don't try to tell our stories for us. Be our amplification, not our storytellers. That's not your job. It's also not your expertise, because this isn't your point of view.**”

**EVITA ROBINSON, AUTHOR AND ENTREPRENEUR,  
FOUNDER OF NOMADNESS TRAVEL TRIBE**

# Recommendations - Travel Marketing

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When it comes to connecting with POC, it's important to manifest points of engagement that are *authentic*.

Authenticity and transparency are more than just buzzwords; they're what actual travelers are looking for.

“

**Facebook is an excellent source for referrals, reposts, and shares for Hispanic travelers, and the live streaming feature creates the human connection and trust factor while sharing inspiration and creating digestible recommendations. Including pricing in marketing materials is important too, as we tend to want to see 100% of all major charges up front.**

”

**JAVIER VALDEZ, CEO AND FOUNDER OF TRAVEL WITH MYGHT  
AND MYGHT FULL SERVICE DIGITAL MARKETING**

# Recommendations - Travel Marketing

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Word of mouth is incredibly important.

People look to their friends, families, and extended networks for advice and recommendations, especially for intangible and subjective experiences. Facebook affinity groups in particular can be a great way to reach communities.

“**Social media has a huge influence on our buying decisions. When people of a certain color see other people of certain color doing things on social media, especially when they are out of the ordinary, we're going straight through that post or page to book. This is a peer recommendation we trust.**

”

**MARTINIQUE LEWIS, DIVERSITY IN TRAVEL CONSULTANT  
AND PRESIDENT OF THE BLACK TRAVEL ALLIANCE**



# Recommendations - Travel Product

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Experts agree that the best way to directly engage communities of color is to frankly ask them what they want. Though the initial conversations may be somewhat awkward and uncomfortable, a sincere effort to achieve an authentic understanding of the different audiences you want to reach can go a long way toward creating the experiences and amenities your customers want most. This can be done through avenues such as your website, social media, and preferred marketing channels for new customers to share feedback and personal insights.

“ **You have a sweet spot you don’t realize, and I guarantee you’re not utilizing it correctly. The only person that knows what it’s like to be in your destination and experience it from the Black point of view are the Black people that live there as residents. You need to seek them out. You need to take them out to dinner. You need to take them out for a drink, invite them down to the board of tourism office. It may be a humbling experience, but you’re going to learn stuff. You need to approach it from the space of being a student at all times. Take those notes and start to craft what an experience can be.** ”



**EVITA ROBINSON, AUTHOR AND ENTREPRENEUR, FOUNDER OF NOMADNESS TRAVEL TRIBE**



# Recommendations - Travel Product

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When it comes to food/experiences/drinks, this segment tends to splurge on exciting and new things. The current trend here is street-style foods, rather than high-end restaurants.

Adventure travel extends beyond the younger generation; many groups encompass multiple generations.

“**Multi-generational travel is popular in the Hispanic American community, so it’s important to offer something for every age and physical ability. The direct client representing the family is often someone in their 30s or 40s representing the family from the middle generation, and they and their children influence the decision, but the final say comes from the eldest in the group.**”

**JAVIER VALDEZ, CEO AND FOUNDER OF TRAVEL WITH MYGHT  
AND MYGHT FULL SERVICE DIGITAL MARKETING**



# Recommendations - Organizational

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“The best way to begin incorporating diversity and inclusion into your organization is to assess current company practices. Analyze the diversity of your organization and your target market. Consider developing a short- and long-term diversity and inclusion strategy that integrates into the overall company operating approach. To get started, consider improving hiring practices and staff retention methods, marketing to more diverse audiences, and varying ways of generating revenue.

This certainly comes into play when recruiting new staff members. When marketing to U.S. adventure travelers of color, it is helpful to have a team that represents and truly understands the market. To change the composition of their workforce, companies need to change their practices. Stop recruiting in the same places; if you go where you're comfortable, you'll only get what you've always gotten. Go to organizations that are directly related to the groups that you want to attract. Directly engage the people you want to talk to. You can't assume they know everything about you—you have to go to them.

For example, when recruiting interns and other entry-level positions, go to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and establish relationships with people who are advising young people on the careers that they will pursue. Direct connections with organizations involving people of color can help companies open communication and recruiting channels.”

**JAMES EDWARD MILLS, JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR OF THE BOOK  
*THE ADVENTURE GAP: CHANGING THE FACE OF THE OUTDOORS***



# Recommendations - Organizational

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When it comes to improving the approach of an existing team, businesses can consider offering cultural awareness training to staff members. Simply getting employees involved in the broader conversation, and encouraging them to share their own viewpoints and make suggestions about improving awareness of diversity will also go a long way.

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**As a Latino business owner and responsible travel industry leader, I've found that empowering a diverse community creates the most change and impact both on the community level and for your business. Create opportunities for a diverse team or suppliers and allow them to integrate your values into their processes. Give them the freedom and resources to share their point of view through your platform.**

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**JAVIER VALDEZ, CEO AND FOUNDER OF TRAVEL WITH MYGHT  
AND MYGHT FULL SERVICE DIGITAL MARKETING**

# Moving Forward

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“The consequence of doing a poor job of community engagement is making a brand damaging mistake. In the current ‘cancel culture climate’ many organizations would rather do nothing at all than risk, despite their best efforts, the prospects of doing something horribly wrong or offensive. The reality is the world is changing. If we fail to address the needs of these new customers, adventure travel destinations and the industry as a whole could become culturally irrelevant.

It’s from an attitude of genuine curiosity and a willingness to understand that we can transform the industry to become more diverse and inclusive of all people. If travel destinations and trip providers can tap into this market, we can become a global force of economic recovery as we slowly emerge and rebuild from the COVID-19 Pandemic. But we must be prepared to be vulnerable and willing to make mistakes along the way.”

**JAMES EDWARD MILLS, JOURNALIST AND AUTHOR OF THE BOOK  
*THE ADVENTURE GAP: CHANGING THE FACE OF THE OUTDOORS***



# Moving Forward

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“ **The term diversity and inclusion has become a ‘check the box’ term where organizations feel like they need to do something to comply rather than taking time to understand the true value diverse and inclusive practices can bring to an organization. If we open ourselves to fresh perspectives and ideas, we open ourselves to endless untapped innovation.** ”

**SOPHIA HYDER HOCK, DIVERSITY AND SOCIAL INCLUSION CONSULTANT, CEO OF PAPILIA**





### 3. Resources & Further Reading

# Resources & Further Reading

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## Books

- [The Adventure Gap: Changing the Face of the Outdoors](#) by James Edward Mills
- [Black Faces/White Spaces: Reimagining the Relationship of African Americans to the Great Outdoors](#) by Dr. Carolyn Finney
- [Gloryland](#) by Shelton Johnson
- [Trace: Memory, History, Race, and the American Landscape](#) by Lauret Savoy
- [Mississippi Solo](#) by Eddy Harris
- [The Home Place: Memoirs of a Colored Man's Love Affair with Nature](#) by Drew Lanham

## Organizations

- [The Avarna Group](#)
- [Black Travel Alliance](#)
- [Green 2.0](#)
- [The Greening Youth Foundation](#)
- [MYGHT: Journey to Purpose](#)
- [National Blacks in Travel & Tourism Collaborative](#)
- [NOMADNESS Travel Tribe](#)
- [Travel Unity](#)





# Thank You!

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At Flywire, we believe promoting Diversity, Equity & Inclusion is not only the right thing to do in terms of social justice, but also for improving bottom lines. We are proud to be a sponsor of ATTA's efforts in this cause.

As part of our continued support of the adventure travel community, Flywire is offering all ATTA members a **free travel payments assessment**. To learn how Flywire can reduce your payment costs and improve your guest experience, request an assessment by clicking the link below:

**[flywire.com/assessment](https://flywire.com/assessment)**





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# Propel Your Adventure Career Forward With the ATTA

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# About the ATTA

Established in 1990, the Adventure Travel Trade Association is the largest global network of adventure travel leaders. Our community is made up of ~30,000 individual guides, tour operators, lodges, travel advisors, tourism boards, destination marketing and management organizations, outdoor educators, gear companies and travel media who share a belief and commitment to sustainable tourism. The connections and creativity of this vibrant community come together both virtually and in person to create and deliver the solutions that propel our businesses and our communities toward a responsible and profitable future.

## About our Research

The ATTA strives to produce regular reports that take the pulse of the industry through our membership as well as the global travel industry. In addition, consumer research studies lend insight into the fast paced and changing world of travel and travelers' perceptions of it. At [adventuretravel.biz](https://adventuretravel.biz), our Research Reports can be located that dive deeply into the motivations of adventure travelers, the size of the industry, the landscape and health of the industry at large, as well as other targeted reports on subjects ranging from Travel Agents to adventure travel in specific destinations.

## The ATTA's Web Properties



**ADVENTURE TRAVEL**  
TRADE ASSOCIATION

The ATTA's homepage online  
at [adventuretravel.biz](https://adventuretravel.biz)



**ADVENTURE**  
Travel News

The adventure travel  
industry's source of trade  
news online at  
[adventuretravelnews.com](https://adventuretravelnews.com)



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