



# OUTDOOR HOSPITALITY: WHERE ADVENTURE MEETS COMFORT

2025 CONSUMER INSIGHTS & OPPORTUNITIES



WATAUGA GROUP

# PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

This report provides the latest insights into the Outdoor Travel Enthusiast (OTE) audience, highlighting their behaviors, preferences, and decision-making processes when booking their next adventure. It examines how these factors influence travel planning and media consumption, offering strategic recommendations to optimize brand messaging and visitor engagement. As we look to 2025 and beyond, the following key insights reveal opportunities to better connect with Outdoor Travel Enthusiasts. These are experience-driven consumers who prioritize immersive, one-of-a-kind stays that create lasting memories.

**1** OTEs prioritize cost-effective options, researching deals and affordability while making intentional travel choices.

**2** OTE travelers seek authentic, less-traveled destinations, balancing detailed planning with spontaneous exploration.

**3** OTEs engage with media purposefully, prioritizing research and utility over passive entertainment.

**4** OTEs have diverse life stages, from independent adventurers to family-oriented individuals, each with different priorities.

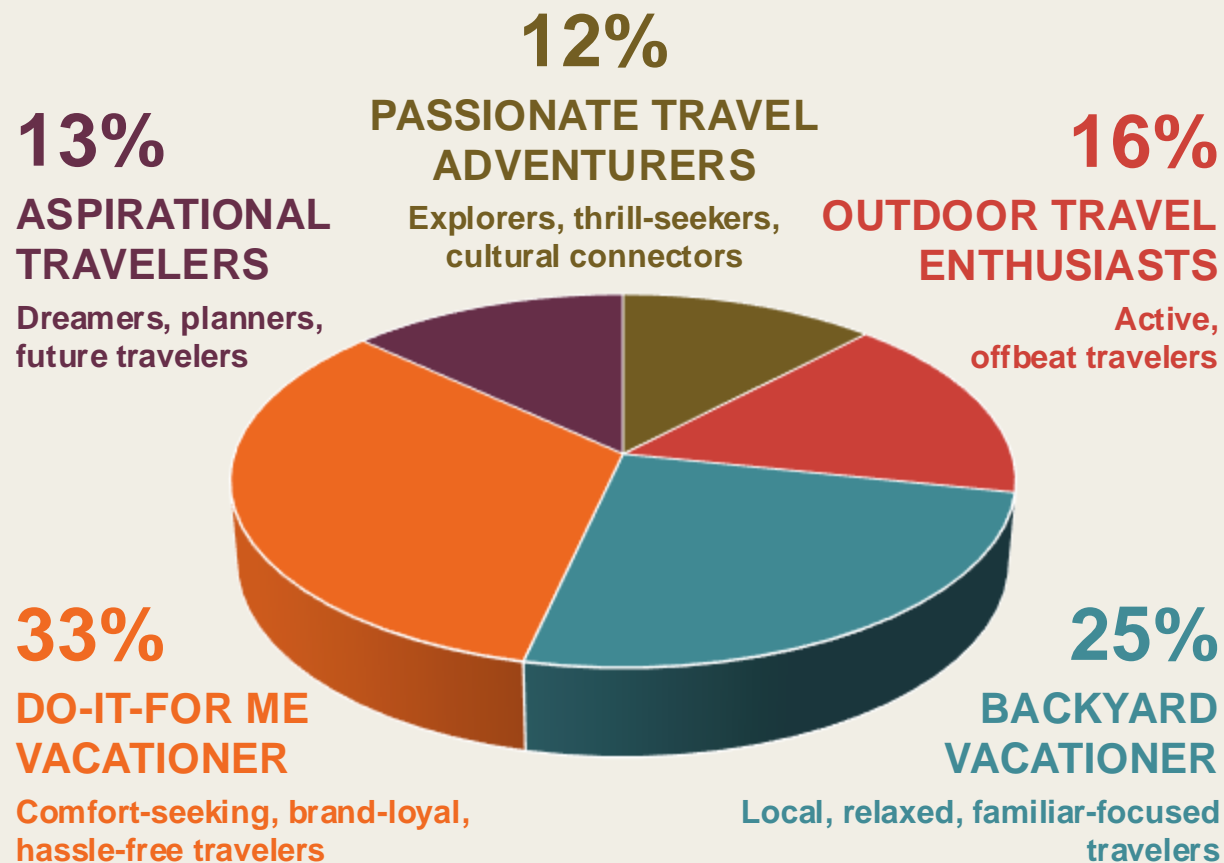
For resorts, boutique hotels, and glamping brands, understanding what inspires experience-driven travelers can unlock powerful opportunities. By crafting messaging that speaks to their desire for adventure, discovery, and emotional connection, brands can build stronger engagement and drive increased bookings. Watauga's insights and strategic recommendations outlined here are designed to empower hospitality brands to deepen connections with this valuable audience, unlocking new opportunities to grow reservations and occupancy for your properties.





# THE OUTDOOR TRAVEL ENTHUSIAST

The Outdoor Travel Enthusiast (OTE) is a segment of vacation travelers that prioritize journeys offering discovery, personal connection, and authenticity—seeking transformative destinations over transactional ones. These experience-driven consumers value experiences that immerse them in nature, culture, and adventure, aligning with brands that provide distinctive outdoor hospitality, such as Trailborn, Postcard Cabins, AutoCamp, LOGE Camps, and Collective Retreats.



# VALUE-DRIVEN TRAVELERS

## TAKEAWAY

This is an opportunity for hotels, glamping retreats, and outdoor resorts to highlight cost-effective yet high-quality experiences through strategies like bundled packages, limited-time offers, and transparent pricing. By showcasing how your brand delivers luxury outdoor escapes that align with budget-conscious travel preferences, you can maximize occupancy by positioning yourself as the trusted choice for these discerning travelers.

## INSIGHTS

Outdoor Travel Enthusiasts are diligent money managers who prioritize saving and making informed decisions about every trip they book.

### MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME

# \$104,907

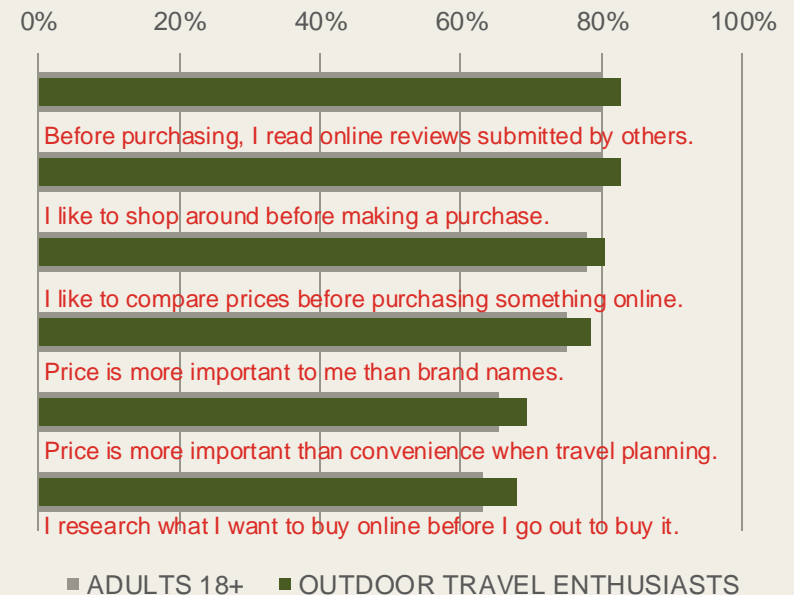
**1** OUT OF **3**  
are  
**CAREFUL  
MONEY  
MANAGERS**

While recent financial strains have challenged their fiscal optimism, they remain highly selective, seeking value through research, deals, and affordability.

### CONSUMER CONFIDENCE

**28%** of households are financially worse off than a year ago

### Psychographic Attitudes: Any Agree



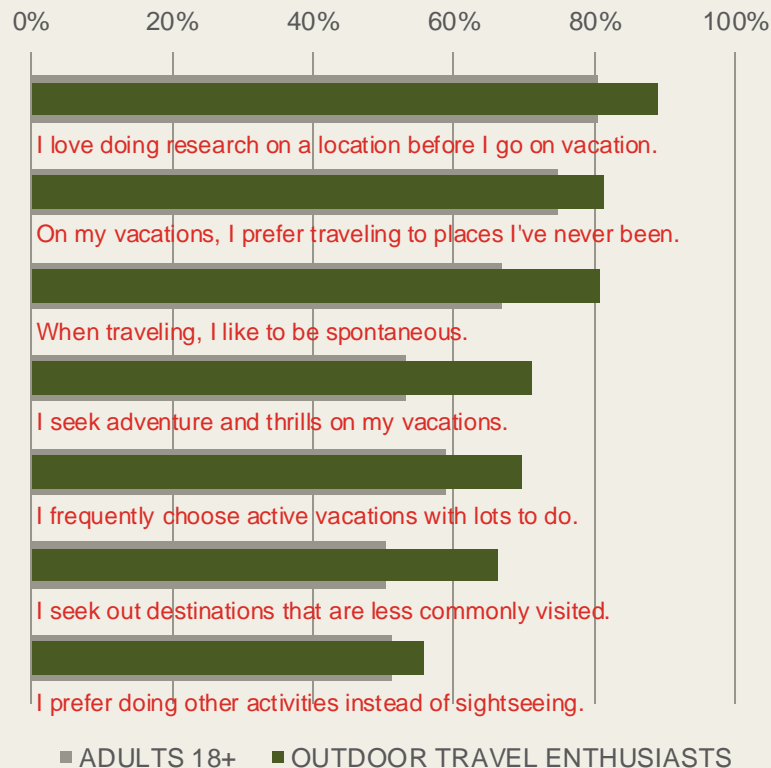
# EXPLORERS AT HEART

## TAKEAWAY

Highlighting off-the-beaten-path destinations, customizable itineraries, or quick getaway packages can position your brand as the ideal choice for these experience-driven, adventure-seeking travelers—turning their desire for discovery and convenience into bookings and increased occupancy.

## INSIGHTS

### Vacation Travel Attitudes: Any Agree



Outdoor Travel Enthusiasts prioritize discovery, favoring unique destinations and active vacations. They enjoy trip planning but embrace spontaneity once on the road.

 **66%**

often take long road trips for vacation.

**44%**

Have Spent  
**2 to 4  
Nights Away**

### Activities on Vacation Trips



BEACH



SHOP  
LOCAL



HIKING



NATIONAL  
PARKS



CULTURAL  
SITES

Outdoor Travel Enthusiasts crave authentic experiences and flexibility.

# PRACTICAL MEDIA CONSUMERS

## TAKEAWAY

Their media habits highlight the need for marketing that feels informative, not intrusive. For experience-driven travelers, media should help them envision and plan their trip. Messaging that provides value—such as hospitality offerings, guest experiences, and destination insights—can build trust and encourages engagement, positioning your brand as a valuable travel resource rather than a hard sell.

## INSIGHTS

Outdoor Travel Enthusiasts approach media with purpose and skepticism.

Attitudes Toward Advertising: Any Agree

80%+

Manipulative  
and  
Annoying

Audio stands out as their trusted and preferred medium, serving as a source of:



LEARNING



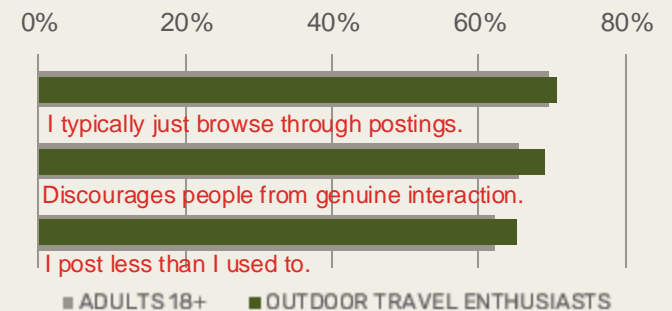
RELAXATION



ENTERTAINMENT

While they use social media, they prefer to observe rather than actively share or engage.

Social Media Attitudes: Any Agree



Their online activities are primarily functional, focusing on efficiency and practicality.



66%  
BANKING



62%  
WEATHER



62%  
NAVIGATION



61%  
CALENDAR

## VARIED LIFESTYLES

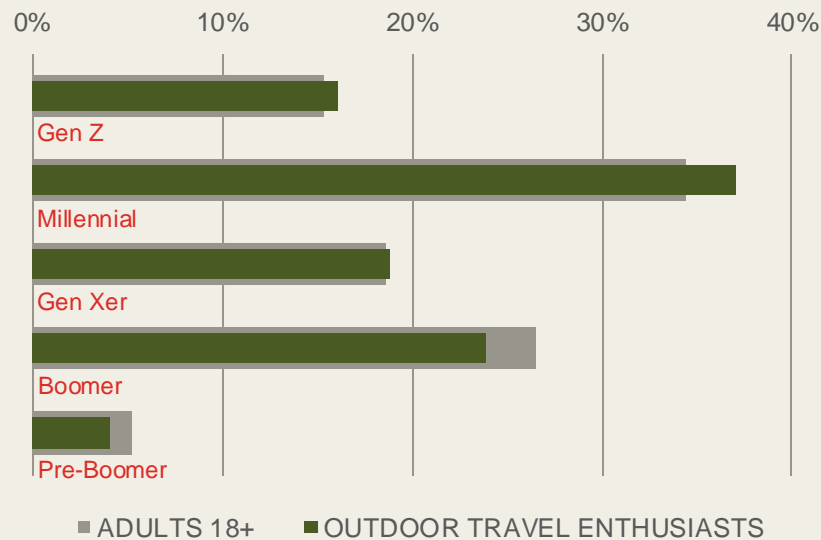
### TAKEAWAY

The demographic versatility of Outdoor Travel Enthusiasts presents an opportunity for hospitality brands to emphasize experiences that appeal to both independent adventurers and family-oriented travelers. From solo-friendly boutique stays to family-focused glamping sites, offering tailored options that fit their lifestyle preferences can help increase occupancy and bookings.

### INSIGHTS

Outdoor Travel Enthusiasts skew younger, often prioritizing personal growth, cultural immersion, and creating meaningful memories.

#### Age By Generation



**36%**  
**URBAN**  
INDEX 86



**32%**  
**SUBURBAN**  
INDEX 107



**31%**  
**RURAL**  
INDEX 114

Preference for residing in less urbanized areas reflects a lifestyle rooted in nature and community rather than dense city living.



**52%**  
**MARRIED**



**67%**  
**OWN HOME**

This group spans diverse life stages—from individuals embracing flexibility and spontaneity to those tied to more traditional family structures.