

Brits Demanding More Meaningful Travel Experiences

From Route 66 and Everest Base Camp to Petra and the Great Wall of China



Researchⁱ is showing that Brits are turning their backs on traditional beach holidays and are looking for longer and more meaningful experiences when they book their 2010 and beyond travel plans. This new breed of traveller craves more memorable and experiential holidays, with 81% of adultsⁱⁱ now rejecting shorter term getaways in favour of more adventurous experiences such as road trips e.g. Route 66, long-haul treks e.g. the Great Wall of China and thrill-seeking adventures e.g. Everest Base Camp.

A study by the Chicago and Illinois Tourist Office shows that Brits view the following, in order of popularity, as once in a lifetime, must-have experiences:

1. One of the world's oldest monumental structures set in the sizzling heat of the desert – **The Egyptian Pyramids**
2. A real slice of iconic Americana with 2,448 miles of pleasure – **Route 66 in America**
3. Asia's most symbolic treasure, in the heart of scenic Oriental wilderness – **The Great Wall of China**
4. Made of pure white marble and nestling amongst ornate gardens and flowing rivers – **The Taj Mahal in India**
5. Situated on Africa's Southern tip, giving breath-taking views of the deep blue Southern Ocean – **Table Mountain in South Africa**
6. A unique city, hand-carved into the landscape and positioned near the Dead Sea – **Petra in Jordan**
7. Surprise inclusion but a staple for any MME traveller; a classic icon – **The Eiffel Tower**
8. One of the most challenging and enthralling places known to man – **Everest Base Camp in Nepal**



Additional findings from the study included that:

- 89% of adults are now prepared to save up for a more meaningful holiday experience
- 73% of adults prefer to have fewer, higher quality trips rather than a series of smaller, more frivolous breaks
- 89% of adults want to experience a variety of activities and sights whilst abroad
- 81% of adults are now more discerning about their choice of holiday and want them to be memorable

Jan Kostner, Deputy Director of the Chicago and Illinois Tourist Office says, “With 2009 being year of the ‘Staycation’, Brits are now hungry to get out and explore. We understand that travellers now value *experience* for money, like an iconic road trip adventure on Illinois’ Route 66, over value for money itself, and our recent study of British travel preferences reinforces this.”

Route 66: The Example

49% of the British public voted Route 66 the most iconic road trip in the world, with 79% of them saying the route reminded them of ‘living the American dream’ and of classic Hollywood glamour. In fact, 65% believe a road trip such as Route 66 would provide them with a memorable adventure for life.

Kostner goes on to comment: “Housing the start of the historic road, Illinois offers an expansive mix of big city excitement with charming Route 66 attractions like the Polk-a-Dot Drive In, Shea’s Gas Station Museum and Palms Grill Cafe.”

Often recognised as ‘The Mother Road’ in popular culture, Route 66 is one of the original U.S. highways, starting in Chicago and continuing through Illinois into Missouri, Kansas, Oklahoma, Texas, New Mexico, Arizona and California, before ending in Los Angeles and measures 2,448 miles in total.

-ENDS-

For more information or to obtain a brochure, call the Chicago and Illinois Tourist Office’s Freephone Brochure Line on 08700 503410 or visit online www.gochicago.com

For further information on the city of Chicago and Illinois’ ongoing initiatives, please contact Jackie Cooper PR: Sophie Rhatigan on 020 3047 4069/sophie_rhatigan@jcpr.com

Notes to Editors

ⁱ The research was carried out by www.opinionmatters.com on behalf of the Chicago and Illinois Tourist Office, between 1st – 10th February 2010. There were 2,100 respondents in total.

ⁱⁱ Results based on adults aged 25-34 years