



## CONTIKI FINDS GEN Z DOESN'T TRUST AI TO BOOK THEIR TRIPS

*The Global Travel Brand for 18-35 Year-Olds Shares Customer Insights From Technology Preferences to Sober Tourism To Help Advisors Connect With Gen Z Clients*

**Cypress, CA** - February, X, 2025 – [Contiki](#), the leading global travel brand for 18-35-year-olds, reveals that Gen Z travelers are reimagining how technology enhances their travel planning. As conversations around artificial intelligence (AI) continue to make headlines, insights from Contiki's annual Voice of a Generation survey, show this digitally native group embraces AI for research but prioritizes a human touch when it comes to booking their trips. The survey also highlights rising trends impacting this demographic's travel patterns, such as sober tourism, sustainability-focused adventures, and off-the-beaten-path destinations, offering valuable insights to help advisors tailor experiences to Gen Z's evolving preferences.

Contiki's survey revealed that while Gen Z embraces AI for inspiration, such as finding local activities (56%) or snagging travel discounts (60%), they're far less comfortable handing over full control. **Only 7% of respondents said they'd let AI book their entire trip**, and **77% admitted they hadn't used AI** for any part of their travel planning.

"For travel advisors, these findings highlight a golden opportunity: Gen Z values technology as an enhancement, not a replacement, for personalized, human-guided booking experiences," says Melissa DaSilva, Interim CEO of TTC Tour Brands.

"This generation is reshaping what adventures can and should look like—from embracing destination dupes as alternatives to iconic hotspots to prioritizing experiences that focus on mindfulness and connection. By understanding these values, advisors can tap into Gen Z's unique approach to travel and create unforgettable journeys tailored to their preferences."

Key trends shaping the 2025 travel season for Gen Z Americans according to Contiki's annual Voice of a Generation survey include:

**Sober Tourism:** As clear-minded travel gains popularity, 83 percent of respondents show interest in booking sober experiences, signaling a shift away from the party-centric traveler of the past. Gen Z is now more focused on immersing in local culture (32%), learning something new and enriching (22%), relaxing and rejuvenating (22%), and seeking adrenaline-pumping adventures (23%).

"Contiki recently launched a new range of trips for travelers who are sober curious, with six departures across [Britain, Ireland, and Scotland](#) taking place in August 2025. Beyond these new tours, advisors should consider promoting experiences to Gen Z customers that focus on active pursuits such as hiking and trekking, food-focused culinary experiences that showcase local culture, or destinations that don't have much of a drinking culture, such as Morocco," says DaSilva.

**Planet-Friendly Travel:** Gen Z has had a front-row seat since childhood to the devastating effects of climate change, spurring this generation to prioritize the planet in their purchasing decisions more than

most. 91 percent of 18-35-year-old American travelers stated sustainability was important to them while traveling, with the most important causes being 'leaving a positive impact on the destination and visited communities' (43%), and 'helping to preserve wildlife' (39%). Conversations around carbon emissions ranked less important (16%), and 59% of Gen Z travelers said that while sustainability in travel is important, they wouldn't want to incur too many extra costs to explore responsibly.

"Advisors can focus on remote, nature-based, sustainable travel experiences for Gen Z clients while pointing out the value of a particular trip and its immersive possibilities. For instance, advisors can highlight itinerary inclusions that give back to local communities, such as Contiki's [MAKE TRAVEL MATTER® Experiences](#), which include hands-on activities that give back – like learning how ProTrack rangers protect the Big Five from poaching in South Africa, or supporting Middle Eastern and African refugees while cruising the canals of Amsterdam," says DaSilva.

**Alternative Adventures:** When it comes to destinations, Gen Z is more open-minded than previous generations. Although European classics like Rome, Paris, and Barcelona are still of interest, 84% of travelers in this age bracket said they would be more than happy to discover a destination dupe like Albania instead of Croatia, or the Philippines instead of the Maldives. 56% of travelers said they would prefer to visit off-the-beaten-path destinations instead of ticking off all the main attractions.

"Gen Z is more in tune with the hidden gems the world has to offer, thanks in part to content creators showcasing unique and unusual experiences on social media. In 2025, advisors should prioritize marketing up-and-coming destinations that offer similar experiences as their more popular neighbors without the crowds, often at a much better price point and with more unique experiences," says DaSilva.

To view more trends specific to American Gen Z travelers, visit <https://www.contiki.com/six-two/article/voice-of-a-generation-2024-usa/>.

## **ABOUT CONTIKI**

Contiki are the global leaders in travel for 18-35s. We've been providing amazing travel experiences for young travelers since 1962. Imagine how good you'd be at something if you'd been doing it for more than 60 years? Everything about Contiki is deeply rooted in our brand philosophy of 'Travel.Together.' which means to travel in accordance with one another, the destinations we visit, the cultures we enjoy and the environment, too.

## **About The Travel Corporation**

The Travel Corporation is a global portfolio of 18 exceptional, market-leading travel brands including the world's number one escorted tour operator Trafalgar, award-winning Uniworld Boutique River Cruises, premium guided vacation company Insight Vacations, youth travel specialists Contiki, and Celtic travel experts Brendan Vacations among many others. After more than a century of blending transformative travel with extraordinary service, the esteemed company remains committed to its signature 'Driven by Service' philosophy and to consistently delivering outstanding experiences and value to travelers, guests, and partners. Committed to MAKE TRAVEL MATTER®, TTC is dedicated to creating a positive impact on people, the planet, and wildlife. This commitment is reflected in the philanthropic work of its not-for-profit TreadRight Foundation, as well as its How We Tread Right

sustainability strategy, a five-year plan aligned to advance the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. For more information, visit [TTC.com](https://www.ttc.com).