



THE RESULTS ARE IN... AITO'S TRAVEL INSIGHTS 2025 REVEALS KEY TRENDS IN SPECIALIST TRAVEL

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The results of **AITO's Annual Travel Insights Survey 2025**, in conjunction with Spike Insight and Wanderlust, were announced today at the **Royal Geographical Society, Kensington**, delivering significant insight into the key trends affecting the specialist travel industry in 2025.

The survey was completed by **nearly 14,000 travellers**, from a wide range of different specialist travel companies (AITO Tour Operators, AITO Travel Agents and AITO Tourist Board Partners).

The majority of responses (over 90%) were from the 50+ market, who rate travel as an important part of their overall lifestyle, and it is a market that continues to thrive, with **28% of those who took part (a 16% increase on last year) saying that they plan to travel more in 2025**. The financial status of the specialist traveller is robust – the majority of those who took part in the survey describe themselves as 'well-off', and 83% believe their financial situation will stay the same or improve in 2025.

Key findings from the survey include the prevalence of loyalty within specialist travel. The data shows that 68% of customers have travelled more than once with their tour operator, indicating that **long-lasting relationships and highly-personalised customer service are of the utmost importance**. Spike Insight, however, found that due to a lower number of first-time customers rebooking for the following year, there is a potential revenue of approximately £500,000 that tour operators could be missing out on.

The **Net Promoter Score (NPS)**, demonstrating a customer's likelihood to recommend to a friend or family member, for 2025 has increased to 67.1 from 64.8 in 2024, and the latest Travel Agency Net Promoter Score is a world leading 86.3, likely due to the more personal relationship between a travel agent and customer.

The average spend on an experiential holiday through AITO specialist tour operators is higher than in other sectors of the travel industry, and over **61% of respondents spend in excess of £2,500 per person** (a 10% increase on last year's figures). **The key factors affecting the decision-making process for these high-value holidays include customer service, expertise and knowledge, plus ongoing support**. Customers also value knowing that the company they book with is a member of a reputable travel trade association and that their holiday is financially protected. Both of these areas were considered crucial with over 84% of responders.

Another factor influencing decision-making is the use of review sites. From the survey results, 62% of respondents said that they have never used review sites. Of those that are used regularly, TripAdvisor ranked highest (40%), with Google Reviews (17%) and Trust Pilot (14%) also popular.

The **sustainable travel credentials of a company remain important to travellers, with 80% claiming that this is a deciding factor in their holiday plans**. **Views on the importance of carbon footprints have, however, decreased to just over 33% – the lowest score in the past three years**. AITO travellers do, however, believe that travel is a force for good (75%), and feel that helping a local economy to prosper is important, too (82%).

In terms of destinations, **the USA and Canada remained the most popular long-haul choice for travellers**, with the Indian Sub-Continent and Africa both climbing up two places since 2024. Interest in **South America has decreased slightly, with Australia and New Zealand** also dropping three places on the list. **Trends in short-haul travel show that Spain is the number one destination for AITO's UK travellers in 2025**, closely followed by Italy and France. There is also a growing popularity in northern and eastern Europe, with countries such as Latvia and Georgia, plus the Balkan States, featuring more.

Remarking on the 2025 survey, AITO's Executive Director, Martyn Sumners, said: "We hope that the results of this survey will provide our members with some useful insights into the overall specialist travel customer base, and the key factors affecting customers' decision-making processes.

"I extend our warmest thanks to our business partners, Wanderlust and Spike Insight, who together have enabled us to carry out this valuable research for the 11th year in succession. Travel Insights continues to be a useful source of data and analysis for the specialist travel market, and we hope that our members can use this information to enable them to better engage with their clients, ensuring that each customer books the holidays and experiences that they seek in 2025."

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