

Inspiring the NextGen of Family Travel

What Today's Travelers Want –
and What's Stopping Them

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Why Multi-Gen Travel is Your Next Growth Opportunity

Travel is changing – not just where we go, but who we go with.

Multi-generational trips are on the rise, driven by emotional connection, post-pandemic reconnection, and the evolving structure of the modern family. And yet, **most of the travel industry is still optimized for couples, nuclear families, or solo travelers.**

At Morning Light Strategy, we wanted to understand what's really happening beneath the surface.

So, we asked 150 US adults who have taken (or would consider) a trip with 3+ generations of family to tell us what works and what gets in the way. What they shared was a mix of joy, frustration, and unmet opportunity.

Among 150 multi-gen travelers surveyed:

- **62%** are already planning another trip
- **74%** would consider a cruise
- **5** key truths emerged

These insights reveal not just a demographic trend, but a strategic opportunity. Let's take a look at the **5 truths that should be shaping your approach to family travel.**

5 Truths that Should Shape Your Strategy

Through this research, we uncovered **5 human truths that travel brands should understand if they want to win the multi-gen traveler**. Each one reveals not just what families value, but how brands can better meet their needs.

01 | Connection is the emotional core

02 | Planning power lies with older adults

03 | Success is defined by simplicity

04 | There's strong demand for more

05 | Barriers are practical but solvable

01. Connection is the emotional core

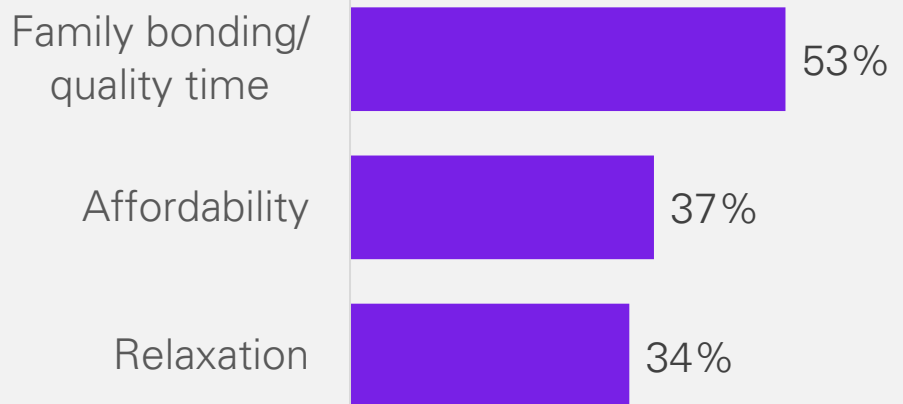
Emotional connection is more important than price, destination, or even relaxation.

Across all ages, the #1 driver of multi-gen travel is quality time together.

“ *I love traveling with my family because taking them makes anywhere feel at home* - Age 18-24



Top 3 Factors in Choosing Trip



Implication: Position your offer as a memory-maker, not just a destination. Use **messaging that showcases shared joy across ages.**

02. Planning power lies with older adults

Trip ideas may come from anyone in the family, but **trip planning falls on older adults** more often than not.

74%

of multi-gen travelers aged 45+ say they plan and organize the trip



Implication: Market to both the inspirer and the planner.

Inspire younger audiences with big ideas, but **reassure older planners** with details about ease, safety, and accessibility.

03. Success is defined by simplicity

The best multi-generational trips are the ones that are **easy to book, flexible, and fun for everyone**.

Cruises and all-inclusives score well because they **eliminate planning friction**.

“ *I hate the ‘what do you want to do’ question...*

- Age 45-54

48%

of multi-gen travelers want help choosing a destination that works for all ages

Implication: Brands that can **reduce decision fatigue** and **centralize logistics** will win.

Emphasize pre-planned itineraries, built-in options, and package pricing.

04. There's strong demand for more

Most travelers want to go again. But they want more time, more budget, and more space to relax.

Over **60% of multi-gen travelers have already booked or started planning** their next multi-gen trip.

5 days

Avg. length of most recent multi-gen trip

“ *Maybe a day or two longer. Never enough time with my family.*

- Age 65-74

Implication: There's a **repeatable revenue stream** here.

Encourage rebooking and loyalty by positioning these trips as family traditions.

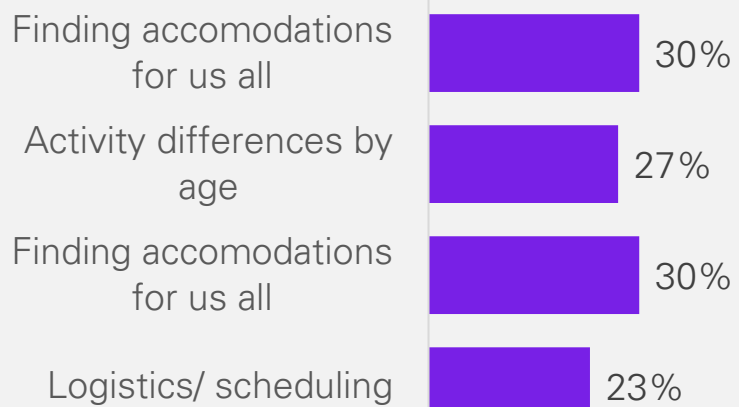
05. Barriers are practical but solvable

Cost is the top barrier. But **what really derails trips are issues like:** finding a place that works for everyone, planning activities across age groups, and scheduling.

These are things travel brands can solve.



Top 3 Challenges of Trip (other than cost)



Implication: Lead with how you **remove friction.**

The new differentiators include things like flexible bookings, staggered arrivals, family-focused rooming, and built-in downtime.

Segment Spotlight: Cruises

Cruises have a natural strategic advantage: They naturally solve many pain points (planning, lodging, meals, all-ages entertainment as well as 'me time').

- **74%** of multi-gen travelers would consider a cruise for a future multi-gen trip.
- Among cruisers, that number jumps to **85%**

But...

Only 10% of the most recent multi-gen trips were cruises.



Implication: There's **room to grow**.

Highlight flexibility, accessibility, and shared experiences to expand appeal beyond cruise regulars.

“Activities for all ages, food is included, and there's minimal planning once onboard - **Age 35-44**

“You can take off on your own and always find something fun to do or you all do everything as a group. - **Age 75-84**

Segment Spotlight: Hotels & Resorts

Hotels are still built for nuclear families, but families have changed. Multi-generational travelers need more space, more flexibility, and less stress.

- **30%** of multi-gen travelers said “finding a place for everyone to stay” was a top challenge.
- **28%** of multi-gen travelers want to ensure they have some privacy and “me time” built into their trip.

But...

Most hotel booking flows still assume 2 adults, 2 kids.



Implication: There's **a gap in the market.**

Position family suites, kitchenettes, adjoining rooms, and flexible layouts as **key multi-gen solutions**, not just amenities.

““ *Next time, I'd book a place with a kitchen.*
- **Age 35-44**

““ *Next time, I would book three suites.*
- **Age 55-64**

Segment Spotlight: Theme Parks & Destinations

Theme parks are a magnet for milestone trips, but not always a fit for all ages. The excitement is real, but so is the exhaustion.

- **44%** of multi-gen travelers would consider a theme park for their next multi-gen trip.
- **27%** of multi-gen travelers called out “activity differences by age” as their biggest challenge on a recent trip.

But...

Too many destinations assume more = better.



Implication: There's **room to re-frame “fun”**

Design and market experiences that serve **all generations**, not just the youngest. Position “fun” as inclusive of rest, bonding, and age-appropriate pacing.

““ *We adults got tired more quickly than the children.*
- Age 35-44

““ *Next time, we'd schedule more downtime to rest between busy days.*
- Age 35-44

Let's Talk

At Morning Light Strategy, we help brands and organizations understand, innovate, and communicate for today's shifting demographics.

If you're building for the future of travel, let's talk about how to apply these insights to your business.

Discover More:



www.morninglightstrategy.com