

Media Release

Travellers using AI to 'holiday max'

- *New research¹ from lastminute.com shows almost half (45%) of European holidaymakers surveyed have used AI as part of the holiday planning process in the last 12 months*
- *Comparing prices (40%), recommending destinations (29%) holiday inspiration (27%) and itinerary planning (25%) are listed as what holidaymakers surveyed are happy to let AI do on their behalf, but despite this just 12% are happy for AI to book their holiday*
- *With lastminute.com data showing overall departures up 5.4% in volume year-to-date, and 21% of consumers surveyed taking more holidays now vs five years ago, travellers are aiming for more, more, more when it comes to holiday choice*

Amsterdam/Chiasso, 24 September 2026 - lastminute.com has today released its **Travel Horizons report** looking at the trends shaping Europe's holiday habits, revealing an AI-powered 'Holiday maxing' mindset leading the way when it comes to booking and travel behaviours.

The findings combine lastminute.com's proprietary data with extensive consumer research conducted by Censuswide across five key European markets. The new research shows that AI is no longer just a planning or discovery tool, but is increasingly being used on trips by over a third of respondents (37%). While on holiday, over a third of travellers actively use AI for holiday maxing: 34% to find restaurants, bars and cafes; 33% to research places to visit; and 28% to translate languages or read signs and menus.¹

The latest report by the online travel company looks at how consumers are demanding more than ever from both the booking process and the holiday experience, and are using AI to get it.

Alessandro Petazzi, CEO of lastminute.com, said: *"Holiday maxing is really about getting more of what matters from every trip. Travellers are becoming smarter about where they spend, how they use their time and the experiences they prioritise. Increasingly, technology is the tool helping them do it - turning more choice into better, more confident decisions. Customer adoption of AI continues to accelerate, and we'll continue to use the technology to give them the best experience."*

While the general trend is towards using more AI than ever before as part of the holiday process, Europe isn't completely aligned when it comes to how much they want to use it. Brits are behind their European counterparts when it comes to using AI to plan a trip. Almost twice the proportion of travellers in Spain and Italy (57% and 51% respectively) have used AI to plan a holiday, versus just 30% in the UK.

¹ Based on consumer research completed by Censuswide across five core European markets (UK, Germany, France, Italy, Spain) - 5,001 respondents surveyed in August 2026

Younger holidaymakers are open to letting AI do more, with the 25-34 year-olds the most convinced (19%) about letting AI actually book a holiday, compared to just 7% of over-55s. The over-55s are keen to let AI recommend destinations, as a quarter said they'd be happy to use the technology in this way.²

The four ways travellers are holiday maxing in 2026:

Prompt to Paradise – Experience

AI is becoming a genuine travel companion, helping people get more from the experience before and during a trip. Almost half (45%) of those surveyed have used AI to plan a holiday in the past year, while 37% admit to now using it while they're away - although only 12% across Europe would let AI actually book the holiday for them. For Brits, it's translating languages or reading signs and menus (29%), The French are using AI to find interesting places to go (34%) and the Spanish are using it to find restaurants, bars and cafés (41%).³

Travel, Tailored - Value

Travellers are getting smarter about where they spend, saving on some parts of the journey so they can prioritise what matters most. Nearly six in ten bookings (59.6%) pair a low-cost flight with a 4-star-or-higher hotel, while parking is having a moment, with parking as a package add-on jumping 156.6% year on year.⁴

Weekend Worth It - Time

That Fri-yay feeling is alive and well when it comes to short breaks - with Friday departures up 10.1% year on year, with Friday now the biggest departure day for short breaks⁵, while 16% of consumers expect to take more frequent trips over the next two years and 27% of people expect to do more shoulder season travel⁶. Those surveyed aged 18-24 average the highest number of annual trips abroad 2.33 per year, with Brits travelling the most, averaging 1.84 trips⁷.

Holidaying Against the Heat - Comfort

Travellers are also adapting where and when they go to make holidays more comfortable. Bookings to "coolcation" countries, including in Scandinavia, the Baltics and Switzerland, are up 9.3% year on year, ahead of overall departure growth of 5.4%, while family bookings to cooler destinations have risen at a rate of 18.9%⁸. Extreme weather (15%) is now the second-biggest factor consumers believe will change how they travel over the next five years, behind cost⁹. Almost one on ten consumers say they want to spend more

² Based on Censuswide research above

³ Based on Censuswide research above

⁴ Based on lastminute.com's own booking data alongside year-on-year booking comparisons to end August 2026.

⁵ Based on lastminute.com's own data

⁶ Based on Censuswide research above

⁷ Based on Censuswide research above

⁸ Based on lastminute.com's own data

⁹ Based on Censuswide research above

on convenience¹⁰ and our booking data shows they're doing it with 8% of bookings now including pending on transfers, baggage and fast-track services¹¹.

- Ends -

Notes to editors:

Download the report here: [Travel Horizons September 2026 Report](#)

Research methodology

Based on consumer research completed by Censuswide across five core European markets (UK, Germany, France, Italy, Spain) - 5,001 respondents surveyed in August 2026.

Censuswide is a member of the Market Research Society (MRS) and the British Polling Council (BPC), and a signatory of the Global Data Quality Pledge. We adhere to the MRS Code of Conduct and ESOMAR principles.

lastminute.com booking data

Destination trends are based on aggregated booking data from lastminute.com's own booking channels across the UK, France, Germany, Italy and Spain. The analysis compares 2026 bookings with the equivalent period in 2025, with data extracted on 31 August 2026. For a like-for-like comparison, bookings for both years are restricted to those made by 31 August of the relevant year. This ensures that 2026 bookings are compared with 2025 bookings at the same point in the booking cycle. "Full year" refers to departures between January and December, while "summer" refers to departures between June and August. Where destination growth is referenced, destinations must have recorded more than 100 bookings in 2026 and more than 10% year-on-year growth. Destinations are ranked by 2026 booking volume. The same methodology is applied consistently across the different departure periods analysed.

About lastminute.com

lastminute.com is the European leader in Dynamic Holiday Packages. Our mission is to design, deliver and take responsibility for curated, integrated travel experiences so people can travel with confidence. Thanks to the iconic brand lastminute.com and a rich portfolio of vertical brands, we meet the most diverse needs of travellers across the entire holiday experience. As one of the few fully licensed European tour operators, we manage the full complexity of modern travel, combining flights, hotels, and ancillary services in real time through our proprietary technology to curate holidays with precision and reliability. lastminute.com N.V. is a publicly traded company listed under the ticker symbol, LMN on the SIX Swiss Exchange.

Press Contact
corporatepr@lastminute.com

Press Contact
lastminute@teneo.com

¹⁰ Based on Censuswide research above

¹¹ Based on lastminute.com's own data