

What are top scientists working on?

Click to find out

imagination at work



Sound: OFF



featuring

Today Show

Nightly News

Dateline

Meet the Press

MSNBC TV

search site

web

MSN Home

Mail

More

Sign In



U.S. news

MSNBC Wire Services

Categories

U.S. news

Crime & courts

Security

Education

Environment

Life

Military

Faith

Giving

Race & ethnicity

Weird news

World news

Politics

Business

Sports

Entertainment

Health

Tech & science

Travel

Weather

Local news

Browse

Video

Photos

Community

Disable Fly-out

Marketplace

Shopping

via MSN Shopping

Start a business

Entrepreneur.com

Dating

via PerfectMatch.com

Homes for Sale

via JustListed.com

Investments

\$7 online stock trades

Career Center

via Monster

Autos

via MSN Autos

By MEGAN K. SCOTT

Associated Press Feb. 13, 2008

NEW YORK - Forget the tan, the Mickey Mouse photos and the cliché souvenirs.

These days, travelers want to experience something more than the gated resort and the cruise ship buffet. They want to go on a walking tour, climb a mountain and kayak down a river - adventures that can make a vacation more meaningful.

"In travel, people are increasingly seeking the authentic unique experiences that stretch the imagination and create potent memories that last a lifetime," says Chris Doyle, vice president of the Adventure Travel Trade Association (ATTA). According to the organization, adventure travel is the fastest growing segment of the leisure travel industry.

Story continues below

advertisement

Mortgage Update!

Fed Cuts by Another Half Point to 3%!



Think you pay too much for your mortgage? With the recent interest rate cut, it's likely that mortgage rates will also fall. Find out what your lowest monthly payment could be.

Click here to estimate your new payment or select your state below.

397 Ratings

Select Your State:

Of course, adventure is in the eye of the traveler, and ranges from a walking tour to whitewater rafting. But because of that, it remains relatively unaffected by the weak dollar and economic downturn, says David Larkin, managing director of AdventureUs.com, a social networking and directory for adventure travelers.

Here, according to the experts, are some of the latest trends in adventure travel.

GIRLFRIEND GETAWAYS: More women are leaving the men at home. More than 50 percent of adventure travelers are women and most fall between ages 41 and 60, according to a 2006 survey by the ATTA. "We used to think of active holidays for 20-somethings," says Evelyn Hannon, creator of journeywoman.com, an online travel resource for women. "Now it's not unheard of for 50- and 60-year-olds to be going kayaking, mountain climbing, surfing."

Most popular

Most viewed - Top rated - Most e-mailed

UPDATED Pentagon to shoot down broken spy satellite

UPDATED Bernanke: Economic outlook has worsened

Clinton leading Obama in Ohio, Pennsylvania

Judges pick the 24 semifinalists on 'Idol'

TODAY apologizes for Jane Fonda gaffe

Most viewed on msnbc.com

Photo features



Reuters

The Week in Pictures

A desperate toss saves a baby, snow spreads joy and danger, and twisters wreak destruction.



Reuters

PhotoBlog

View and discuss the pictures and issues that caught our eyes.

NBC Field Notes



NBC News correspondents and producers across the U.S. shed light on the news of the day.

Sponsored links

Free Trading Seminar In San Francisco

Trade like the pros. Learn to master the stock market and win big www.trading-classes.com

Alternative To Open Back Surgery

World Leader of Arthroscopic Procedures for Back and Neck Conditions! www.laserspineinstitute.com

Hot Stock Alert - OXFD

Profit From Mortgage Meltdown. Value Stock Investment Opportunity. www.OxfordFunding.com

AARP Auto Insurance From The Hartford

Over 49? Save Hundreds On Fast, No Hassle Auto Insurance. Free Quotes! AARP.TheHartford.com

Hot Stock Alert - GFET

Green Energy, Cellulose Ethanol. Growth Stock Investment. www.GulfEthanolCorp.com

Resource guide



Dating - Get two months free!



Search Jobs



Find Senior Housing Options



Find your next car



Free Home Listings



Find a business to start



\$7 trades, no-fee IRAs

VOLUNTEER VACATIONS: Combining volunteerism with vacation continues to be a growing trend; Global Volunteers saw a 30 percent increase in participation last year, according to co-founder Michele Gran. Baby boomers still rule, she says, but the fastest growing demographic in the last 18 months has been people under age 20, more than likely baby boomers who bring their children with them.

EXPEDITIONARY TRAVEL: More people are helping researchers through the Earthwatch Institute, an international volunteer organization supporting science. Expeditions include surveying coral reefs on a remote Bahamian island or feeding and caring for cheetahs in Namibia. Most of the trips are two weeks, and no special training is required. (Exceptions may be trips that require scuba-diving certification or a high fitness level). Other examples include conservation-minded tours to watch giant sea turtles lay their eggs in coastal areas of the southeastern U.S., Mexico and Costa Rica.

CHARITY TRAVEL: Think an extreme version of a walkathon. Venture Expeditions, a Christian-based organization, sponsors trips to raise awareness and funds for various organizations, such as biking through Thailand to raise money for an orphanage. Travelers pay for the trip and then make a minimum donation to the charity.

ACTION-PACKED VACATIONS: Some people call action-packed vacations "The Bucket List" for the movie starring Jack Nicholson and Morgan Freeman, two terminally ill patients who want to complete a list of things to do before they kick the bucket. Ultimate 5 Lifetime Adventures packs five of what it calls the world's greatest adventures into one week: a military-developed Ropes Challenge Course, skydiving, Indy car racing, rappelling and piloting a primary combat trainer aircraft.

FAMILY ADVENTURE VACATIONS: Some families (including multigenerational) are forgoing theme parks and all-inclusive resorts for "more genuine nature-based, cultural, and education and learning excursions," says Doyle. He attributes this in part to baby boomers who have the means to travel "coupled with a strong interest in bonding more deeply with families." GordonsGuide.com, a Web site on adventure and active travel, says the top vacation requests are all family friendly _ dude and guest ranches, houseboat rentals, whitewater rafting and horse pack trips and trail rides.

SOFT ADVENTURE VACATIONS: An increasing number of people are choosing a vacation that centers around a theme, such as a culinary tour in Asia or wine vacation in Israel. Yoga has also seeped into the mix. Best of Both Women's Adventures has yoga on all of its trips and a specific yoga and surf vacation in Puerto Rico. (Surfing is one of the top activities that women want to do, says Dez Bartelt, co-founder of Best of Both Women's Adventures.) Other combinations include yoga and snowboarding or yoga and wine tasting.

EXPEDITION CRUISING: Look for more people to take expedition cruises to Antarctica, the Galapagos and Alaska, says Carolyn Spencer Brown, editor-in-chief of CruiseCritic.com, three places that are hard to see without sailing there. The cruises, while less glitzy than big ship cruise lines, include lectures and presentations about the place. "On an expedition cruise, everything revolves really around what you see off the ship," says Brown. "On the big ship cruises, everything revolves around what happens on board and the ports are sort of an addendum."

ROOTS VACATIONS: With an increasing number of people swabbing their cheek to find their roots, some are taking it a step further and traveling to the places where their ancestors lived. Discover Natural Ancestry (amazingdna.com) not only provides DNA analysis and genealogy services, it puts people in touch with tour operators who plan the trip for them. "If they are breathing, then they have a genetic story hidden within them and we help them to discover and explore the unknown secrets about their heritage," says Yvonne Walker, marketing director for Discover Natural Ancestry.

AFRICAN TRAVEL: While the Kenya Tourist Board says the sporadic and isolated violence has calmed and tourists were never in danger (the

Buyer's guides

- Laptops
- HDTVs
- Smartphones
- Digital cameras

features:
options
buyer's
guides
types:feature

situation was internal and occurred in places where tourists generally don't go), there has been a downturn in tourism in Kenya and some spillover to other countries in East Africa, says Wil Smith, director of Deeper Africa, a tour operator with trips to Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania.

"I believe the bounce back in the neighboring countries is going to be swift," he says. "I think it's probably going to take best scenario, six months for Kenya to recover."

When the region recovers, look for more people to go gorilla tracking in Uganda and Rwanda; visit Ethiopia, an emerging destination, and climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Tanzania, before the snow on its peak, which has been gradually receding, disappears.

Copyright 2008 The Associated Press. All rights reserved. This material may not be published, broadcast, rewritten or redistributed.

Rate this story **Low** ☆☆☆☆☆ **High**

Current rating: 0 by 0 users • [View Top Rated stories](#)



Print this



Email this



Blog this



IM this

Top msnbc.com stories

UPDATED [Pentagon to shoot down spy satellite](#)

[Bernanke: Economic outlook worsens](#)

[Poll: Clinton leads in Ohio, Pa.](#)

[Hezbollah chief threatens Israel](#)

[Strong quakes strike southern Greece](#)

NBC News highlights

[Ex-mayor in doo-doo over Shih Tzu](#)

NEW [TODAY apologizes for Fonda's gaffe](#)

[Cabbie plays matchmaker to passengers](#)

[Help! My boyfriend has no ambition](#)

[Valentine's Day guide](#)

[Get listed here](#)

Get Rid Of Stretch Marks

Proven Stretch Mark Formula. Doctor Recommended. Try It Free.

[StriaeMax.com](#)

Borba Special Offer

Borba Age Defying Skin Care System, Act Now & Try the Kit at No Risk

[www.borbabeauty.com](#)

Lower Your Blood Pressure

Non drug. No side effects. Proven to work in 10 clinical trials.

[resperate.com](#)

Get Rid Of Cellulite

Proven Cellulite Formula. As Seen on Oprah, Tyra, & CNN.

[HydroShape.com](#)

Want a Career in Healthcare?

Request free info from schools with Health Care courses online!

[www.ClassesUSA.com](#)



A Fuller Spectrum of News

Featuring [Today](#) [Nightly News](#) [Dateline](#) [Meet the Press](#) [MSNBC TV](#) [Newsweek](#)

Categories [Top stories](#) [Local news](#) [U.S.](#) [World](#) [Politics](#) [Business](#) [Sports](#)

[Entertainment](#) [Health](#) [Tech & science](#) [Travel](#) [Weather](#)

About [About us](#) [Contact](#) [Site map](#) [Jobs](#) [Terms & conditions](#)



Alerts via IM



E-mail updates



RSS & feeds



Mobile headlines



Podcasts



Widgets