

# In the News

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INDUSTRY INSIGHTS

## U.S. BLACK TRAVEL MARKET IS NOW A \$145 BILLION AUDIENCE ACCORDING TO NEW RESEARCH



Anthony Tes On February 25, 2025



### PORTRAIT OF BLACK TRAVELERS IN AMERICA

*MMGY partners with Black Travel Alliance and the National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals for an in-depth, multiyear examination of this growing travel segment*

New research by MMGY Travel Intelligence unveils compelling insights into the travel motivations, planning behaviors and spending patterns of U.S. Black travelers, highlighting notable shifts in preferences for 2025. Safety and a welcoming atmosphere continue to dominate the priority list for this growing demographic, with 79% citing these factors as highly influential in their travel decisions.



Presented in partnership with the Black Travel Alliance (BTA) and the National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP), the comprehensive study shares findings from three data sources: a national survey of 2,000 Black leisure travelers, intelligence from DK Shifflet's *TRAVEL PERFORMANCE/Monitor*<sup>SM</sup> and an online survey of 200 members of the NCBMP.

"Creating memories, relaxing and exploring new destinations while feeling safe are paramount for today's Black travelers," said Simon Moriarty, Vice President of Research & Analytics for MMGY Travel Intelligence. "By offering actionable insights, these studies empower travel businesses to develop tailored strategies and solutions that resonate with the needs of each audience, driving both personalization and profitability."

Leadership for the BTA and NCBMP echoed the importance of this research.

"The data shown in these reports speaks to the significance of Black travelers. It also is a wake-up call to many destinations that are considering adapting their current engagement strategy," said BTA President  nique Lewis.

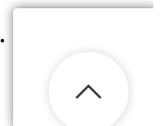
"Once again, the data is clear: Black people do travel, and our buying power does impact communities," said NCBMP CEO Jason Dunn. "This should no longer be a question but a fact and a speaking point in all boardrooms, particularly in this climate of indecisiveness."

A summary of the report's three sections and their key findings follows.

### ***Portrait of Black Travelers in America***

Based on a survey conducted by MMGY in fall 2024, the core report provides detailed insights and analysis of the Black travel audience in the U.S. Key findings include:

- **High Intent to Travel:** Over three-quarters (76%) of Black travelers plan to take a domestic vacation in 2025, with more overnight leisure trips planned than day trips during this period.
- **Travel Planning Trends:** Word-of-mouth recommendations from friends and family remain the primary driver of travel planning decisions, particularly for Boomers. Notably, 87% of Black travelers express a willingness to pay for premium travel upgrades, including hotel accommodations and airline seat selections. Additionally, nearly half (46%) are members of Black travel groups like Black Travel Movement and Black Women Travels, which foster a sense of community and provide culturally tailored experiences.
- **Travel Motivations:** Millennials show a particularly strong inclination toward destinations that celebrate Black culture, seeking opportunities to engage in cultural experiences and support Black-owned businesses. In contrast, Gen Zers and Boomers emphasize affordability as a key driver, reinforcing the desire for memorable and high-value travel experiences.
- **Spending:** Travel expenditures are expected to increase by \$1,300 per traveler compared to the past 12 months, bringing the average total spend to \$2,992 in 2025. Higher-income travelers allocate 59% of their budget to transportation and accommodations, compared to 51% among lower-income travelers.



- Additional insights from the study include behaviors and preferences specific to the segments of international travel, business trips and more.

## Black Leisure Segment Profile

This section of the report profiles the unique and varied habits of Black travelers through comparisons to the overall U.S. leisure travel market, examining data from DK Shifflet's 2023 *TRAVEL PERFORMANCE/Monitor*<sup>SM</sup>. Based on a sample size of 6,523 Black leisure travelers and a total U.S. leisure travel sample size of 54,428, the findings include:

- Black leisure travelers are somewhat different from the average U.S. leisure traveler – they tend to be younger, more likely to be employed, less likely to be retired, have a lower median income and are more likely to have children in the household.

Spending for the U.S. Black leisure travel market totaled **184.12 million**, accounting for 11% of the U.S. leisure market. As a segment, this audience spent **\$145 billion** on their travels in 2023, with transportation and food and beverage accounting for the largest shares of spending.

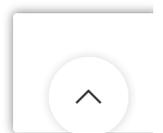
- A majority of U.S. Black leisure travelers (79%) took their trips by car, traveling an average of 247 miles one way.
- Other valuable insights from this section include destinations visited, travel party composition, accommodations, activities and more.

## Black Meeting Planner Segment Profile

For the meetings section of the study, MMGY and NCBMP engaged 200 members of the professional trade organization in a January 2025 survey. Key findings include:

- The Black meeting professional plans an average of **5.5 meetings per year**, down from 7.5 in 2020. This suggests that many meetings are being consolidated or held virtually.
- Typical meetings involve 501–2,000 peak room nights. Average annual meetings spend exceeded **\$2 million** for respondents in 2024, with 7% reporting expenditures over \$5 million.
- Significantly more meetings with 100 or fewer room nights were planned in 2024 (19%) when compared to 2020 (12%), indicating that **smaller, more personal meetings** have become increasingly popular over the past five years.
- Other findings indicate the types of meetings planned, off-site activities, destinations of choice, key challenges facing their profession and the demographics of the planners themselves.

To ensure the report appropriately documented the true sentiment of the Black traveler, survey questions were developed with oversight and input from a steering committee of diverse industry experts and through partnerships with the BTA and NCBMP.



This study is now available for purchase or as part of an all-access subscription to MMGY's Intel Library. All proceeds from report sales will benefit the BTA and NCBMP to support their respective missions on behalf of this traveler audience. **To learn more or to purchase the study, click here.**

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### About MMGY Travel Intelligence

MMGY Travel Intelligence is MMGY's data and insights division, offering proprietary data and research including *Portrait of American Travelers*™ as well as DK Shifflet's *TRAVEL PERFORMANCE/Monitor*SM, which utilizes the largest continuous consumer travel database in the industry. Travel Intelligence's services are designed to power travel industry decision-makers through consumer insights, travel performance data, and audience modeling and segmentation. To learn more about the extensive collection of research, analytics capabilities and strategy services, visit [store.mmgymintel.com](https://store.mmgymintel.com) or email us at [research@mmgyglobal.com](mailto:research@mmgyglobal.com).

### Black Travel Alliance

Black Travel Alliance is a professional non-profit organization [501(c)(3)], created in 2020 to encourage, educate, equip and excel Black travel professionals in education, media, and corporate positions. Our three pillars of the community are alliance, amplification, and accountability. As travel authors, bloggers, broadcasters, journalists, photographers, podcasters, social media influencers, and vloggers, we unify to amplify. We also aim to provide training and business support to our members, as well as hold destinations and travel brands accountable on the issue of diversity in travel marketing and storytelling.

With professional resources and a vast network, Black Travel Alliance is positioned as the organization that is trusted by the industry to directly connect brands with Black travel media, conduct and report research that supports insights and analysis on the Black traveler and the state of the industry in relation to Black travel professionals. As well as provide knowledge and training to the industry to help brands connect with Black travelers online and through traditional marketing.

### About National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals

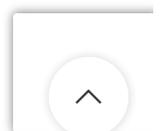
The National Coalition of Black Meeting Professionals (NCBMP), founded in 1983, is a non-profit organization dedicated primarily to the training needs of Black meeting professionals and all humans who support equity. NCBMP is committed to providing professional development, leadership training and enhancing the meetings, conferences and conventions managed by our members.

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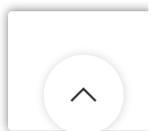


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