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BECAUSE MULTI-GENERATIONAL TRAVEL CAN MAKE FOR SOME OF THE MOST MEMORABLE JOURNEYS AND IS THE BUZZWORD IN TRAVEL RIGHT NOW

# GENERATION FLY

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PHOTOGRAPHY: ANDREW COWAN

You've probably been hearing about multi-generational travel lately if you've been sharing your holiday stories with friends. That's right, going on a trip with mum, dad and the kids *and* the grandparents is one of the hottest new trends in travel. The 2015 Virtuoso Luxe Report, a forecast of luxury travel trends based on current reservations at North American luxury travel agents, stated that almost half of all affluent clients book multi-generational trips with their families. And it is not just happening among the wealthy in the US. Darren Lloyd, general manager of Escape Travel, says going away with the whole family has gone from being almost non-existent to a dominant sector of the Australian market in just a couple of years. Escape

emerging, multi-generational travel is already morphing, with grandparents taking one or more grandchildren on trips without their parents, and groups of families travelling together with uncles and aunts and cousins.

## HOW YOU SHOULD APPROACH IT

As the number of people in a group goes up and the age range varies across the generations, so too does the complexity of bookings. While some people make their own arrangements, many like to work with travel agents to ensure all the fiddly details like transfers and synchronising flights from multiple locales are handled properly.

While a number of tour operators have incorporated multi-generational families into their existing small family group tours, you will also find that some offer

## GENERATIONS CAN BOND OVER SHARED INTERESTS.

Travel is currently developing a multi-generational package range that will be released in February.

Sure, Aussies have long been booking villas in Bali and interconnecting hotel rooms in Fiji so several generations can hang out together, but this new style of travel is much more ambitious. Now we're talking about three generations journeying together on cruises, wilderness and cultural escapes in South-east Asia, long-haul trips to North America and Europe, African safaris, and even on adventures doing different activities in places like Costa Rica or Italy.

"As families get busier, with working parents and even grandparents working longer, going away together becomes an important way to enjoy quality time," says Intrepid Travel's deputy managing director Robyn Nixon, who has just returned from an Intrepid trip in China with her 12-year-old grandson. "Grandparents are fitter and more active and want to combine their own interest in travel with contributing to a grandchild's education by sharing a learning experience together."

There are so many benefits to taking the whole family with you on a trip. Families can mix it up helping with the kids, with grandparents babysitting to give the parents a night off, while single grandparents get to travel and enjoy the company of family. Anyone can opt in and out of an activity and bond over shared interests.

Generally, it is the grandparents who pay for the family holiday, which is often linked to a special occasion like a big birthday or anniversary. It enables grandparents to celebrate with their extended family that otherwise might not have the resources to make the trip. And while it is still

private multi-generational set tours or they can design a custom trip for you. If you are going to plan the trip yourself then the big trend for multi-generational travel, especially in cities like London, New York or Paris, is to rent centrally located apartments rather than hotels.

## THE OPERATORS LEADING THE CHARGE

**Preferred Hotels** ([preferredhotels.com](http://preferredhotels.com)), a global collection of independent hotels and resorts that offer the space, privacy, and flexibility of a home with the luxuries and convenience of a hotel stay, has had a long-standing commitment to multi-generational travel. It has 300 Preferred Family Certified hotels and resorts (as well as a dedicated family website) that not only deliver the best amenities for multi-generational travellers, but also interesting activities such as cooking classes at the Dhara Dhevi Chiang Mai, Thailand, and fly fishing for the entire family at the K Club in Kildare, Ireland.

In addition to offering multi-generational cruising in the South West Pacific, **Escape Travel** ([escapetravel.com.au](http://escapetravel.com.au)) is working on three flexible long-haul, multi-generational itineraries: to the USA, including Anaheim, San Francisco, Las Vegas and New York, often with a cruise to Mexico or the Caribbean; in Western Canada, with Vancouver, Whistler, Banff, Jasper and Calgary; and Europe, taking in London, Paris, Nice and Monte Carlo, often with a cruise between Barcelona and Venice. >>





At the pointy end of bespoke tours, **Abercrombie & Kent** ([abercrombiekent.com.au](http://abercrombiekent.com.au)) started in the 1960s as the first luxury African safari specialists. It was bringing wealthy multi-generational families to see wildlife long before the term was even coined. Now they offer high-end adventure travel experiences all over the world. "African safaris remain especially popular for multi-generational families," says Melbourne managing director Sujata Raman. "Our travel

Multi-generational cruising is one of the big growth areas across a number of operators. Indeed, **Uniworld** ([uniworld.com/au](http://uniworld.com/au)) is tripling its multi-generational itineraries and offers special family programs like language classes and dessert-making workshops. Meanwhile other operators provide big ticket items such as wildlife adventure cruises to the Galápagos and the Amazon, and voyages to the Arctic to see the Northern Lights.

# VIETNAM OFFERS A TERRIFIC COMBINATION OF CULTURE, GREAT FOOD AND BEACHES


specialists tailor the itinerary, taking into account the age of each traveller and their travelling experience. A safari appeals to all generations. It has educational elements, wonderful wildlife and it's also visually and physically exciting."

**Intrepid Travel** ([intrepidtravel.com/au](http://intrepidtravel.com/au)) just won an award for best tour operator from *Family Traveller* magazine in the UK. Out of Australia, its most popular family trips are in South-East Asia, because of the cheap flights. Vietnam tops the list as it offers a terrific combination of culture, great food, beaches and fun experiences like kayaking on Halong Bay, cooking classes in Hoi An and home stays in the Mekong Delta. Borneo is also appealing because of its orang-utans, climbs of Mt Kinabalu, jungle canopy walks as well as beach time.

**World Expeditions** ([worldexpeditions.com/au](http://worldexpeditions.com/au)) sees families celebrating significant birthdays with UTracks's active self-guided and small group holidays in Europe and even on some of the easier walks in Nepal, while **The Travel Corporation** ([thetravelcorporation.com](http://thetravelcorporation.com)) offers more mainstream adventures through a variety of its brands. Premium tour operator **Insight Vacations**' ([insightvacations.com](http://insightvacations.com)) most popular multi-generational trip is its Winter Europe Program that includes a range of Christmas markets. **Trafalgar's** ([trafalgar.com](http://trafalgar.com)) Rockies Thrills and Glacier Chills in Canada is particularly popular with grandparents, while its Gladiators, Gondolas and Gold bus tour of Rome, Florence and Venice is a favourite with parents.



*The essential elements of a perfect multi-generational trip...*

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  1. Have a team leader who takes charge of the trip for the whole family.
  2. Schedule breaks from the group so everyone can recharge.
  3. Pick activities that older and younger generations will enjoy doing together. Include options to allow some choice.
  4. Everyone has different styles of travelling, so allow for various paces for getting ready, packing and walking.
  5. Have one or two bases (or a boat) so you are not constantly repacking and there is a place for different family members to rest.
  6. Encourage each generation to contribute to a treasured memory book of the holiday.



THE BEST MULTI-GENERATIONAL HOLIDAYS

**Wildlife viewing**

- African safaris, from Tanzania to South Africa, Victoria Falls to the Okavango Delta, offer the opportunity to share a passion for wildlife viewing as well as walking safaris, canoe trips and cultural experiences with the Maasai and other tribes.
- The Galápagos and Costa Rica are other popular destinations that offer remarkable wildlife encounters as well as plenty of adventure.
- Closer to home (and cheaper), Malaysia and Indonesia have terrific wildlife experiences both in the jungle and under the sea at their many coral reefs.

**Big cities, big vistas and cultural icons**

- North America is high on the list for many families. Canada delivers the spectacular Rocky Mountains, and popular destinations Stateside include Anaheim, San Francisco and New York, its national parks and dude ranches of the American West.
- London, Paris and Rome have plenty of iconic sights that appeal to every generation while winter visits to Finland's Santa Claus village are also popular.

**Adventure destinations**

- Vietnam and Japan are top multi-generational destinations because of the sheer diversity of adventures, the great shopping and terrific food.
- Multi-generational hiking and biking trips are popular throughout Europe and multi-sport adventures in Costa Rica are also gaining traction.

**Cruising**

- Going on a cruise in the Southwest Pacific offers an affordable adventure with access to a diversity of cultures including Fiji, Vanuatu, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.
- Barging in France and England offers some fun hands-on adventures for all the family, while fully crewed Turkish gulet sailboat trips offer a relaxing way to explore this spectacular coastline. ✈

# BECAUSE WE TAKE TRAVEL (AND A GOOD CUP OF TEA) VERY SERIOUSLY

A new study conducted by TripBarometer (on behalf of TripAdvisor) of more than 44,000 travellers and hoteliers worldwide has discovered some interesting facts about how we travel. According to the figures...

AUSTRALIAN SPENDING IS UP, WITH 49 PER CENT INTENDING ON SPENDING MORE IN THE COMING YEAR BECAUSE THEY ARE PLANNING A LONGER TRIP.



Australians lead the world when it comes to travel budgets, spending around \$15,000 compared to the global average of just \$7000 (the Swiss are next at \$13,900, followed by the Americans on \$11,600).



A significant number of Australians (41 per cent) will choose alternative accommodation if the room they are considering doesn't come with a kettle, tea bags and coffee.

AUSTRALIANS ARE SWAYED BY RECOMMENDATIONS, WITH 32 PER CENT SAYING THEY VISITED A DESTINATION BECAUSE FAMILY OR FRIENDS HAD A GOOD TIME THERE.

# BECAUSE WHO WOULDN'T WANT ONE OF THESE?

RALPH LAUREN'S CASHMERE TRAVEL SET HAS A LUXE CABLE KNIT BLANKET AND PILLOW, PLUS A MATCHING EYE MASK TO LULL YOU INTO A LONG-HAUL SLEEP. IT COMES IN A GORGEOUS PALETTE OF COLOURS, FROM CREAM TO PINK TO POLO NAVY (OF COURSE) AND COSTS \$550, OR \$555 IF YOU WANT IT MONOGRAMMED. YES PLEASE!

