

Fall beats summer as the top season for weekend trips

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Key Takeaways,

- Weekend getaways are eclipsing longer vacations, with 60% of travelers planning a short fall trip, outpacing short trips during every other season.
- The majority of Gen Z travelers are “lore-tripping” to lesser-known destinations with quirky legends this fall, with affordability and authentic experiences driving the appeal.
- “Groundhopping” is turning stadiums and music venues into destinations of their own, with nearly 70% of travelers seeking famous venues.

This fall, travelers across generations are taking more weekend trips, while Gen Z specifically is “lore-tripping” and gravitating toward lesser-known US destinations steeped in local lore.¹ Meanwhile, a rising trend in sports and live event tourism is turning stadiums and music venues into destinations of their own.

Fall is the season of weekendening

Fall-themed travel wishlists are growing this year compared to last, led by five key search terms: fall getaway, fall foliage, leaf peeping, apple picking, and fall roadtrip.² Rather than planning extended vacations, travelers are opting for shorter trips that make the most of the season, whether that means driving winding backroads to catch peak foliage or spending an afternoon in an orchard:

- 60% of survey respondents say they’re planning a weekend getaway this fall³
- A significant share of fall bookings to-date are for weekend getaways⁴
- More weekend trips happened in fall than any other season in 2025⁵

Here are this fall’s top trending weekend-trip destinations for US guests:⁶

- **Tannersville, NY:** Catskill peaks blaze with color around this Main Street village, with chairlift rides up neighboring Hunter Mountain and mountain-view breweries a short drive away.
- **Jim Thorpe, PA:** Victorian rooftops and Lehigh Gorge overlooks give this former coal-shipping town a storybook fall look, especially from the scenic railroad.
- **Blue Ridge, GA:** A scenic railway follows the Toccoa River through the foothills, paired with apple picking and trout-stream backdrops around town.
- **Blowing Rock, NC:** High-elevation views along the Blue Ridge Parkway just outside town deliver some of the region’s most dramatic fall color.
- **Fayetteville, WV:** New River Gorge’s rim blazes with color above the longest single-span steel arch bridge in the US, with overlooks and scenic drives.
- **Glenwood Springs, CO:** Aspen groves turn gold on the back roads above town, with hot springs a short walk from downtown.
- **Oshkosh, WI:** Lakeside trails and orchard visits make for a low-key Midwest foliage weekend, with color along the Fox River and Lake Winnebago shoreline.
- **Bend, OR:** Golden aspens and larches light up the high desert against snow-dusted Cascade peaks, with river trails and brewery patios.

- **Camden, ME:** Harbor views dotted with sailboats meet fiery hillsides, making it one of the most photogenic foliage stops in New England.
- **Hartford, VT:** A covered bridge over the Ottauquechee, framed by fiery maples, makes this a quintessential New England foliage postcard.

Catskills Cabin Escape with Hot Tub (Tannersville, NY)

Family Retreat | Hot Tub, Mini Golf, Rafting, More (Jim Thorpe, PA)

Spectacular Views | POOL | FirePit | GameRoom (Blue Ridge, GA)

Modern Luxe A-Frame: Sauna, Hot Tub & Fire Pit (Blowing Rock, NC)

Red Barn Retreat (Fayetteville, WV)

Hot Tub & Sauna, Firepit, Patio, Views, Romantic (Glenwood Springs, CO)

Large Unique Barn Rental (Oshkosh, WI)

PineHaus (Bend, OR)

Camden Crossing (Camden, ME)

The Quechee Haus: VT Retreat with Outdoor Hot Tub (Hartford, VT)

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Gen Z is “lore-tripping” to quirky, lesser-known towns this fall

Small towns and under-the-radar destinations are shaping Gen Z’s fall travel plans, as the generation embarks on “lore-trips” to towns with colorful backstories rather than major cities and well-known hotspots:

- 90% of Gen Z survey respondents say small towns and under-the-radar destinations appeal to them this fall.⁷
- Affordability, authentic local culture, and offbeat, only-here attractions are the biggest draws, cited by half of respondents.⁸
- Nearly half of Gen Z’s trending fall destinations booked this fall are small towns.⁹

That shift is already showing up in Airbnb search data: some small towns are seeing double-digit growth among Gen Z travelers, including Twentynine Palms, CA (up over 50 percent), Hot Springs, AR (up 30 percent), and Helen, GA (up 15 percent).¹⁰ Three of the small towns below—Hot Springs, Bemidji, and Gibsonton—are featured in Airbnb’s new ‘have u considered’ campaign as suggested destinations for Gen Z travelers. From Mothman sightings to Bavarian cuckoo clocks, here’s some fall inspiration for unique small towns for Gen Z to explore:

- **Hot Springs, AR:** Historic bathhouse row and a gangster-era past give this spa town a steamy, old-world intrigue.
- **Helen, GA:** Faux-Alpine facades and a fall festival season of oompah bands and beer halls turn this North Georgia mountain town into a little slice of the Alps.

- **Point Pleasant, WV:** A winged, red-eyed creature spotted near Point Pleasant in 1966 spawned the Mothman legend, now marked with a museum, statue, and annual festival in its honor.
- **Twentynine Palms, CA:** High desert murals and Joshua Tree’s rock formations give this artsy outpost at the park’s north entrance a gritty, otherworldly charm.
- **Rapid City, SD:** Life-size bronze statues of nearly every US president line the downtown sidewalks, earning this Black Hills city its “City of Presidents” nickname.
- **Williams, AZ:** The last town on Route 66 to be bypassed by the interstate, holding onto its neon signs, vintage diners, and a 1908 depot where a revived railway still sends trains to the Grand Canyon.
- **Wildwood, NJ:** Neon-lit signs and a retro boardwalk keep pockets of Doo Wop charm alive along this stretch of the Jersey Shore.
- **Gibson, FL:** Once the off-season home base for traveling circus and carnival performers, “Gibtown” still carries that sideshow legacy in its local lore and roadside oddities.
- **Leavenworth, WA:** A railroad and logging town reinvented as a full-blown Bavarian village, with alphorn concerts and cuckoo clocks tucked into the Cascade Mountains.
- **Bemidji, MN:** Giant statues of Paul Bunyan and Babe the Blue Ox anchor the Lake Bemidji shoreline of this former logging town, giving it an outsized folk-hero personality for its size.

MacArthur Geodesic Dome | Starlight Haven (Hot Springs, AR)

Himmelhaus-Luxury Hot Tub Retreat•Fire Table•Movie (Helen, GA)

Frazier’s Cabin (Point Pleasant, WV)

Pool, Spa, Stars, Mid-Century Style, 8 Min to JTNP (Twentynine Palms, CA)

Creekside Sanctuary (Rapid City, SD)

Custom Mountain Retreat, 4 bedroom, A/C, Sleeps 8 (Williams, AZ)

3 Br 2 Ba- Outdoor Shower- and Beach Box (Wildwood, NJ)

The Guest House at Riverbend Retreat Fla. (Riverview, FL)

The Matterhorn Chalet (Leavenworth, WA)

The White House (Bemidji, MN)

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Groundhopping emerges as a growing sports and live event travel trend

A new travel trend is taking hold among fans: “groundhopping,” the practice of visiting as many stadiums, arenas, and venues as possible to check live event landmarks off a list. Nearly 70 percent of survey respondents say the trend appeals to them, building on this summer’s record-breaking wave of soccer fans traveling across North America.¹¹

Here are available stays near some of the most in-demand venues fans are wanting to travel to around the world, whether they’re chasing a tour date or a rivalry game:

Exquisite 3-Bed Apt, 20 Min to Central London (London, United Kingdom)

Luxury King Beds Rogers TIFF MTCC Parking Gym Pool (Toronto, Canada)

Bright, Lux Home Steps from Bryant-Denny Stadium (Tuscaloosa, AL)

Light-Filled 3BR w/ En-Suite Baths | Near Azteca (Mexico City, Mexico)

Walk to Lambeau & Resch, Sauna, Nice Yard (Green Bay, WI)

Cozy House Walkable to Siam Free Airport Transfer (Bangkok, Thailand)

Beautiful Apartment in the Heart of Downtown! (Nashville, TN)

LUX | Walk to AT&T Stadium | GlobeLife | GameRoom (Arlington, TX)

Luxury 4BR | 2.5BA Back Bay Duplex (Boston, MA)

Mid Century Modern Loft in Downtown LA (Los Angeles, CA)

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