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**EMBARGOED UNTIL JUNE 26, 2023**

**AAA: Record-Breaking Travel Volumes Expected July 4<sup>th</sup> Weekend**

*Number of Americans traveling by car and air over the holiday projected to be highest on record*

AAA projects 50.7 million Americans will travel 50 miles or more from home this Independence Day weekend\*, setting a new record for the holiday. Domestic travel over the long weekend will increase by 2.1 million people compared to 2022. This year’s projection surpasses the previous July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend record set in 2019 of 49 million travelers.

“We’ve never projected travel numbers this high for Independence Day weekend,” said Paula Twidale, Senior Vice President of AAA Travel. “What this tells us is that despite inventory being limited and some prices 50% higher, consumers are not cutting back on travel this summer. Many of them heeded our advice and booked early, another sign of strong travel demand.”

This July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend is expected to set a new record for the number of Americans traveling by car for the holiday. AAA expects 43.2 million people will drive to their destinations, an increase of 2.4% over 2022 and 4% higher than 2019. This summer, gas prices are well below what they were one year ago. The national average for a gallon of regular was \$4.80 on July 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022. Gas prices have remained steady the past couple of months, with the national average hovering around \$3.50 to \$3.60 a gallon, thanks to the lower cost of oil.

Air travel is also expected to set a new record. AAA projects 4.17 million Americans will fly to their destinations Independence Day weekend, an increase of 11.2% over 2022 and 6.6% over 2019. The previous July 4<sup>th</sup> weekend air travel record of 3.91 million travelers was set in 2019. The share of air travelers in the overall holiday forecast this year is an impressive 8.2% - the highest percentage in nearly 20 years.

**AAA 2023 July 4th Travel Forecast**

**Share of Travelers by Mode**



■ Auto 85.2%  
 ■ Air 8.2%  
 ■ Other 6.6%

**Number of Travelers by Mode**

	Auto	Air	Other	Total
<b>2023</b> (forecast)	43.2M	4.17M	3.36M	50.7M
<b>2022</b>	42.2M	3.75M	2.72M	48.7M
<b>2019</b>	41.5M	3.91M	3.54M	49.0M
<b>Growth*</b> (2022 to 2023)	2.4%	11.2%	23.8%	4.3%
<b>Growth*</b> (2019 to 2023)	4.1%	6.6%	-4.8%	3.7%

\*Percentages may differ due to rounding. | Source: S&P Global Market Intelligence

Other modes of transportation are also on the rise this year. AAA expects 3.36 million people will travel by bus, cruise, or train over the long weekend, an increase of 24% over last year. While more travelers are turning to these modes this year, the number is not expected to surpass 2019’s total of 3.54 million.

## Best/Worst Times to Travel and Peak Congestion by Metro

INRIX, a provider of transportation data and insights, **expects Friday, June 30 to be the busiest day on the roads** during the Independence Day holiday weekend, with average travel times up nearly 30% over normal. Major metros like Boston, Seattle, and Washington, DC are expected to see the worst traffic. INRIX recommends leaving in the morning or after 6 p.m. to avoid the heaviest holiday congestion.

“With record-breaking travelers expected on the road this holiday weekend, drivers should prepare for above-average delays to their favorite destinations,” said Bob Pishue, transportation analyst at INRIX. “Using traffic apps, local DOT notifications, and 511 services are key to minimizing holiday travel traffic frustrations this Independence Day.”

Best and Worst Times to Travel by Car		
Date	Worst Travel Time	Best Travel Time
Thu, June 29	4:00 - 6:00 PM	Before 12:00 PM
Fri, June 30	10:00 AM - 5:00 PM	Before 10:00 AM, After 6:00 PM
Sat, July 1	1:00 PM	Before 12:00 PM
Sun, July 2	<i>Minimal Traffic Impact Expected</i>	
Mon, July 3	<i>Minimal Traffic Impact Expected</i>	
Tue, July 4	12:00 - 3:00 PM	Before 11:00 AM, After 6:00 PM
Wed, July 5	3:00 - 6:00 PM	Before 2:00 PM

Peak Congestion by Metro				
Metro	Route	Period	Peak Congestion Est. Travel Time	Compared to Typical
Atlanta	Savannah to Atlanta via I-16 W	Tue, 6PM	6 hrs 18 mins	67%
Boston	Boston to Hyannis via Pilgrim Hwy S	Fri, 11AM	2 hrs 24 mins	63%
Chicago	Chicago to Indianapolis via I-65 S	Wed, 5PM	5 hrs 30 mins	33%
Washington DC	Rehoboth Beach to Washington via US-50 W	Tue, 5PM	4 hrs	82%
Denver	Fort Collins to Denver via I-25 S	Fri, 1PM	2 hrs 24 mins	60%
Detroit	Cleveland to Detroit via I-90 W	Fri, 10AM	4 hrs 36 mins	73%
Houston	Houston to Galveston via I-45 S	Sat, 11AM	1 hr 18 mins	52%
Los Angeles	Los Angeles to Las Vegas via I-15 N	Sun, 6PM	6 hrs 12 mins	60%
Minneapolis	Minneapolis to Eau Claire via I-94 E	Wed, 6PM	2 hrs 36 mins	30%
New York	New York to Jersey Shore via GSP S	Fri, 5PM	2 hrs 48 mins	64%

Portland	Portland to Cannon Beach via US-26 W	Sat, 1PM	2 hrs 18 mins	35%
San Diego	Palm Springs to San Diego via I-15 S	Wed, 7AM	3 hrs 30 mins	17%
San Francisco	San Francisco to Sacramento via I-80 E	Fri, 12PM	2 hrs 18 mins	48%
Seattle	Seattle to Ellensburg via I-90 E	Fri, 3PM	2 hrs 36 mins	43%
Tampa	Tampa to Orlando via I-4 E	Tue, 11AM	2 hrs 24 mins	69%

## Summer Travel Trends and Tips

Travel demand has been steadily increasing since 2020, and this summer is poised to be one for the record books. Here are some trends and tips from AAA Travel.

- Air travel is seeing the biggest spike despite high ticket prices. Passengers are paying 40% - 50% more for flights compared to last year, but AAA data shows bookings aren't slowing down. Many airlines are responding to demand by hiring more staff and taking smaller regional planes out of service and replacing them with larger ones to increase capacity. However, there are still challenges, including a shortage of air traffic controllers that has led to reduced service in and out of New York City area airports.
  - **AAA Travel Tip:** Apply for [TSA Precheck](#) to avoid long security lines at packed airports. You can enroll at participating AAA branches during TSA PreCheck® by IDEMIA pop-up events, which are posted [HERE](#) 45 days in advance.
- Hotel prices are up slightly over 2022, but not by much. While the number of domestic hotel bookings is about the same as last year, AAA data shows international hotel bookings are up 80% compared to 2022. International travel demand is booming and so are passport applications. The U.S. State Department says it's processing half a million applications a week. Routine service is averaging 10-13 weeks.
  - **AAA Travel Tip:** Need a passport fast? [RushMyPassport](#) provides expedited services and discounts for AAA members. This past May, they handled more than 1,100 applications from AAA members, compared to just 73 applications in May of last year.
- Car rental shortages seen during the pandemic have improved. Inventory has been increasing steadily since last year, with newer models and electric vehicles added to fleets. AAA data shows rental prices are down slightly from last year. Demand for international rental cars is up more than 80% compared to 2022.
  - **AAA Travel Tip:** If you're planning to drive abroad, keep in mind some countries require [International Driving Permits](#). AAA is one of only two private entities in the U.S. authorized by the State Department to issue IDPs. This year, AAA reports demand for IDPs is double what it was in 2022.
- Cruising is back to pre-pandemic numbers, with sold-out ships and advance bookings. Prices are about the same as 2022, with certain cruises a bit higher this year due to demand. Alaska cruises are particularly popular this time of year. AAA booking data also shows Caribbean cruises and European river cruises are top vacations in 2023.
  - **AAA Travel Tip:** Protect your investment with [travel insurance](#). AAA data shows demand for travel insurance is up more than 100% over last year, as more travelers now see the need to prepare for the unexpected.

# Holiday Forecast Methodology

## Travel Forecast

In cooperation with AAA, S&P Global Market Intelligence developed a unique methodology to forecast actual domestic travel volumes. The economic variables used to forecast travel for the current holiday are leveraged from S&P Global Market Intelligence's proprietary databases. These data include macroeconomic drivers such as employment, output, household net worth, asset prices including stock indices, interest rates, housing market indicators, and variables related to travel and tourism including gasoline prices, airline travel, and hotel stays. AAA and S&P Global Market Intelligence have quantified holiday travel volumes going back to 2000.

Historical travel volume estimates come from DK SHIFFLET's TRAVEL PERFORMANCE/Monitor<sup>SM</sup>. The PERFORMANCE/Monitor<sup>SM</sup> is a comprehensive study measuring the travel behavior of U.S. residents. DK SHIFFLET contacts over 50,000 U.S. households each month to obtain detailed travel data, resulting in the unique ability to estimate visitor volume and spending, identify trends, forecast U.S. travel behavior and position brands—all after the trips have been taken.

The travel forecast is reported in person-trips. In particular, AAA and SPGMI forecast the total U.S. holiday travel volume and expected mode of transportation. The travel forecast presented in this report was prepared the week of May 15, 2023.

### \* Independence Day Holiday Travel Period

For purposes of this forecast, the Independence Day holiday travel period is defined as the five-day period from Friday, June 30 to Tuesday, July 4. When the Fourth of July falls on a Wednesday, it is considered to be a six-day holiday period, when it falls on any other day of the week the holiday period is a five-day window.

### About AAA

Started in 1902 by automotive enthusiasts who wanted to chart a path for better roads in America and advocate for safe mobility, AAA has transformed into one of North America's largest membership organizations. Today, AAA provides roadside assistance, travel, discounts, financial and insurance services to enhance the life journey of 62 million members across North America, including 56 million in the United States. To learn more about all AAA has to offer or to become a member, visit [AAA.com](http://AAA.com).

### About S&P Global

S&P Global (NYSE: SPGI) provides essential intelligence. We enable governments, businesses and individuals with the right data, expertise and connected technology so that they can make decisions with conviction. From helping our customers assess new investments to guiding them through ESG and energy transition across supply chains, we unlock new opportunities, solve challenges and accelerate progress for the world. We are widely sought after by many of the world's leading organizations to provide credit ratings, benchmarks, analytics and workflow solutions in the global capital, commodity and automotive markets. With every one of our offerings, we help the world's leading organizations plan for tomorrow, today. For more information, visit [www.spglobal.com](http://www.spglobal.com).

### About DKSA

DK SHIFFLET boasts the industry's most complete database on U.S. resident travel both in the U.S. and worldwide. Data is collected monthly from a U.S. representative sample, adding over 60,000 traveling households annually and is used daily by leading travel organizations and their strategic planning groups. DK SHIFFLET is an MMGY Global company.

### About INRIX

Founded in 2004, INRIX pioneered intelligent mobility solutions by transforming big data from connected devices and vehicles into mobility insights. This revolutionary approach enabled INRIX to become one of the leading providers of data and analytics into how people move. By empowering cities, businesses, and people with valuable insights, INRIX is helping to make the world smarter, safer, and greener. With partners and solutions spanning across the entire mobility ecosystem, INRIX is uniquely positioned at the intersection of technology and transportation – whether it's keeping road users safe, improving traffic signal timing to reduce delay and greenhouse gasses, optimizing last mile delivery, or helping uncover market insights. Learn more at [INRIX.com](http://INRIX.com).

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As Upstate New York's largest member services organization, AAA Western and Central New York provides more than 862,000 members with travel, insurance, financial and automotive related services. Since its founding in 1900, AAA has been a leading advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. Visit AAA at [www.AAA.com](http://www.AAA.com) or [www.NewsRoom.AAA.com](http://www.NewsRoom.AAA.com) or download our mobile app at [www.AAA.com/Mobile](http://www.AAA.com/Mobile).

