



# **Southern Living** COVID-19 Travel Impact: Wave 2 Report

Survey among 1,300 Southern Living women to understand Summer travel priorities & behavior amidst a global pandemic

# Methodology

- An online survey to the Southern Living Porch panel **July 1 – 3**;  
additional battery fielded **July 21-24**
  - ✓ eBlast sent to panelists who complete survey anonymously
- **1,330 respondents** completed the survey across a broad age range, **21 to 60 years**
- Panel research participants comprised **of SL subscribers, digital users, newsstand buyers, pass along readers**
  - ✓ Survey data statistically analyzed for accuracy and validity

Source: Covid Travel Impact, August 2020

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# Profile of survey participants...



**48 yrs.**  
Median Age



**56%**  
Kids in HH



**77%**  
College Graduates+



**70%**  
Employed



**\$132K**  
Median Income



**How She's Feeling**  
About Travel Right Now



# Her travel mindset APRIL vs. AUGUST...

She's still thinking about travel, particularly within her region, but is MORE safety-oriented

## TOP ATTITUDES: APRIL

“ I am still thinking about future trips in hopes that travel restrictions will subside, **80%**

The pandemic has made me more thankful for travel destinations close-to-home in the South, **78%**

This year, more than ever, my family will need a great vacation to get away, **73%**



## TOP ATTITUDES: AUGUST

“ I think leisure travel right now will look very different with most of us avoiding crowds, **90%**

I feel safer taking a trip to places that encourage outdoor activities, **82%**

The pandemic has made me more thankful for travel destinations close-to-home in the South, **80%**

I am still thinking about future trips in hopes that travel restrictions will subside, **80%**



# Her travel planning APRIL vs. AUGUST...

Her attention toward safety has increased possibly causing some to be less cost oriented

## TOP TRAVEL PLANNING HABITS: APRIL

- #1** Focus on safety
- #2** Look for places with special discounts
- #3** Read reviews of travel destinations from experts

## TOP TRAVEL PLANNING HABITS: AUGUST

- #1** Focus on safety
- #2** Plan travel to stay with/visit family
- #3** Researching healthy & safe dining options

# The **safety issues** that most **heavily influence** her travel decisions...

Plenty of open space and a careful cleaning protocol that is clearly communicated rank #1

	% Very Important
There is plenty of open space to social distance	83%
A careful cleaning protocol has been communicated and followed	83%
The area is not crowded	79%
I can clearly see for myself that safety guidelines are being enforced	78%
Face masks are being worn by others	72%
The area has low covid-19 outbreak	68%
I know and trust those who own/are responsible for the place	57%

# What type of **information** do you **want to receive** from **travel destinations** when planning a vacation right now?

Specific information on cleaning procedures and proper execution of safety protocol are top themes

For hotels/home rentals, it is **VERY important to know what the cleaning procedures are** and that they have expanded those procedures (beyond normal cleaning).

What cleaning protocols are in place. **When was the last person in my room?**

What **safety and cleaning protocols** are in place to help keep guests safe.

Want to know **if staff are complying with cleaning procedures** for public areas, wearing masks and social distancing.

What their safety protocols are, as well as **how they are enforcing those protocols**.

We just went to Brevard, staying at an Airbnb, and **I loved knowing that we could be completely secluded in the home, unlike a hotel**. The cabin we rented was very clean and **had nice Covid touches** like a plastic-wrapped sponge for the kitchen dishes. To better answer your question, we based our trip on a location that was going to include a lot of outdoor time and a secluded place to stay. **We appreciated learning what parks would be open and what extra measures were being taken for safety**.



# The process she follows to assess the places that are safe when travel planning...

She monitors the news for a specific area and makes a judgement call based on safety guidelines

How do you decide when planning travel right now what places are safe to visit?

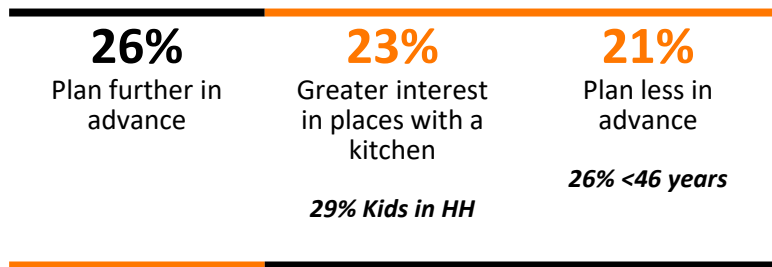
I keep track of the news for that area	70%
I make a judgement call myself based on public guidelines of what is safe	59%
I read reviews/ratings online from recent travelers	56%
I only go to places I know and trust based on previous experience	45%
I talk to others who have visited the location recently	43%
I call ahead of time to ask those in charge how they are addressing safety	42%
I read social media	29%

How do you decide when planning travel right now what places are safe to visit? Check all that apply.

# Other aspects of her travel planning seem unphased

Around 1 in 4 are planning further in advance; around 1 in 5 are planning less in advance

How has the pandemic impacted how you plan your travel this summer?



**77%**

More than ever, I rely  
on trusted sources like

**Southern Living**

for reliable travel  
ideas



## Snapshot of Her Current **Travel & Activities**



# What she's excited to do again APRIL vs. AUGUST...

Her list of anticipated activities at the beginning of quarantine closely match what she's doing again NOW

## MOST EXCITED TO DO AGAIN: APRIL

- #1** Visit family
- #2** Eat at a restaurant
- #3** Take a trip
- #4** Go on date with spouse/partner
- #5** Browse shops/boutiques



## TOP ACTIVITIES DOING THIS SUMMER: AUGUST

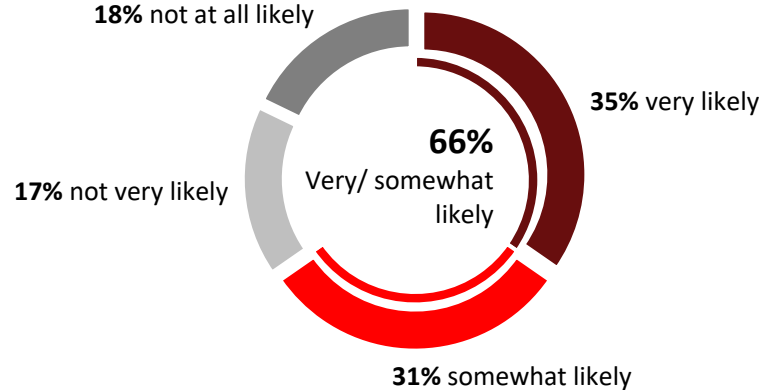
- #1** Take a trip (60% have taken trip this summer)
- #2** Just relax (Higher among under 46 yrs.)
- #3** Got to hair/nail salon
- #4** Eat at a restaurant
- #5** Visit family (Higher among under 46 yrs.)

Which, if any, of the below activities have you started doing again this summer?

**Dining out remains important to her travel experience; she seems committed to supporting local patrons. The ability to dine outside seems particularly important**

**2 in 3 are likely to dine out while traveling this summer**

Likelihood of dining out while traveling this summer



**"Restaurants have always had guidelines to follow for proper cooking, cleaning, and disinfecting, and with the added measure of wearing a mask I feel comfortable with the risk of being exposed. Plus eating outdoors is very enjoyable, if there is shade and a nice breeze."**

**"I will choose restaurants with outdoor seating that allow for social distancing. I want to patronize local restaurants and enjoy the food and atmosphere."**

How likely are you to dine out while traveling this summer? Why do you say that?

# There is a clear passion to **support local communities and business owners through dining...**



*I try and support local businesses when I can. It is not their fault that **the virus has stopped customers from coming** into their establishments.*

*I want to **support mom and pop restaurants**.*

*I **love restaurants** and they need us.*

*Many places in our home state have outdoor dining-and **restaurants are also working hard to stay within social distancing** guidelines and maintain their business.*

*I have my favorite restaurants where we are going and **we will definitely support those places** if they are open.*

*I want to **support the ailing service industry**.*

*I want to **support my local business owners**.*

*We will try to do either **take-out to support local businesses** or will eat outdoors.*

# Clear & strict cleaning procedures heavily influence where she dines

## Factors influencing their decision to dine out while traveling

**#1**

Clear and strict cleaning procedures

**#2**

Friendly/helpful staff

**#2**

Severity of Covid outbreak in area/city/town

**#3**

Lower occupancy to reduce crowding

**#4**

Ability to address specific concerns before booking

**#5**

Know and trust the place based on previous experience

**#6**

Cost

How important are these factors in influencing your decision to dine out while traveling? Scale: Very/somewhat important

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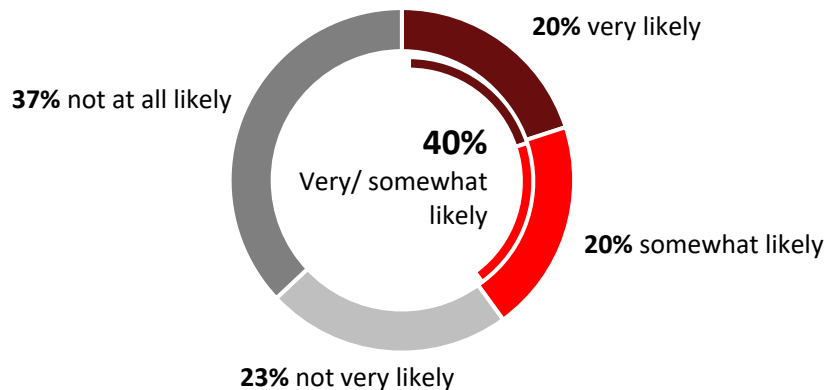




# There is more concern over **staying at a hotel**; some are skeptical of the **quality of cleaning** between check-out's and check-in's

4 in 10 say they are likely to use a hotel this summer

Likelihood of staying at a hotel, inn or resort this summer



"I am **not comfortable traveling or staying in an environment not within my control**. I am practicing social distancing and plan to engage in only essential trips for the foreseeable future. I will not expand trips in or out of my community until COVID-19 cases significantly lower."

"I **don't feel that proper sterilization could be done** between check-outs and check-ins."



# Clear & strict cleaning procedures also have the highest influence on her decision to stay at a hotel

Factors influencing their decision to stay at a hotel, inn or resort

**#1**

Clear and strict cleaning procedures

**#2**

Severity of Covid outbreak in area/city/town

**#3**

Friendly/helpful staff

**#4**

Ability to address specific concerns before booking

**#5**

Lower occupancy to reduce crowding

**#6**

Know and trust the place based on previous experience

**#7**

Cost

***More important among <46 years***

How important are these factors in influencing your decision to stay at a hotel, inn or resort right now? Scale: Very/somewhat important



# There is **more openness to rentals** in the current travel climate

72% more likely/as likely to use rental

## Likely to use rental sites this summer compared to previous years

More likely

19%



25% <46 years,  
24% kids in HH

As likely

53%

Less likely

28%

Will you be more or less likely to use rental sites such as VRBO and AIRBNB this summer compared to previous years?

# For about half, there is **greater reservation** toward **using a car service**

Less than 3 in 10 are less likely to use a rental site this summer

Likely to use car services compared to previous years

More likely	1%
No change	49%
Less likely	50% ▶

Will you be more or less likely to use car services such as Uber and Lyft compared to previous years?





# The **two types of trips** she is most inclined to take right now—a **road trip** & a **beach trip**

Most will be taking their trips end-of-summer

Type of trips...	Have already taken + plan to take	Taken in last month	Will take in next 2 months
Road trip within my state	60%	22%	43%
Visit the beach/coast	53%	20%	37%
Road trip outside of my state	49%	17%	37%
Visit small town in the South	43%	15%	31%
Visit Southern city	43%	14%	32%
Visit the mountains/mountain town	34%	11%	26%
Weekend getaway with spouse/partner	37%	8%	30%
Multi-generational trip with extended family	20%	6%	15%
Weekend getaway with friends	22%	5%	18%
Fly on an airplane for leisure	14%	2%	13%
Amusement park	6%	0%	6%
Trip outside the U.S.	4%	0%	4%
Cruise	2%	-	2%

We're curious to know what your summer travel looks like amidst the pandemic. Which of these types of leisure trips have you already taken in the last month and/or plan to take in the coming two months?

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# With a greater interest in outdoor activities, there is a range of things **she is more likely to do outside**

Online sessions from local gardening experts or virtual bike tours might peak interest for a specific area

## TOP “Much More Likely” To Do:

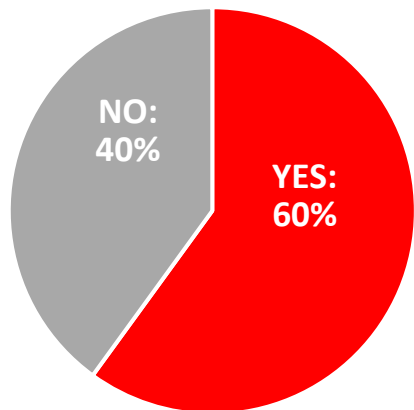
Flower Garden  
Vegetable Garden  
Online Fitness  
Online Class  
Ride Bikes

	<b>% Much More Likely To Do</b>
Flower gardening	53%
Vegetable gardening	51%
Online fitness class	42%
Online class to learn new skill/hobby	39%
Ride bicycles	38%
Hiking	37%
Visit state park	34%
Boating	34%
Fishing	30%
Virtual concert	29%
Virtual cooking class	29%
Virtual museum tour	27%
Camping	24%
Visit national park	24%
Use an RV	23%

Are you more likely to do any of these activities due to the pandemic?

# 6 in 10 think family vacation season will extend into Fall

"Yes" Likely to Extend  
Vacationing into Fall:



## UNUSED VACATION:

"Most people (myself included) **had to cancel vacations this spring so we have extra vacation days.** We are more likely to plan an extended vacation since we have more vacation days to use."

## LATE START TO SUMMER:

"It almost feels like summer is **postponed.** We **ALWAYS** spend a few weeks at the coast while my son is out of school, but it just doesn't feel safe. **We are going to wait until after Labor Day when (hopefully) the crowds dissipate.**"

## ONLINE SCHOOLING:

"People canceled vacations early on. Now **many of our children aren't going back to school in person.** They can do schoolwork anywhere, so they could travel in the Fall."

Do you think families will be more likely to extend their vacationing into the Fall this year, given the impact of the pandemic on Summer travel and the uncertainty of kids going back to school in-person?



# Road trips, the mountains, visiting family and the beach top her Fall travel wish list

1 in 4 are very likely to go camping; 1 in 5 to take an RV trip

## Type of FALL trips...

## RANK LIKELY TO TAKE THIS FALL

Road trip	#1
Mountains	#2
Visit family	#3
Beach	#3
Southern city	#4
Small town	#4
State park	#5
National park	#6
Camping	#6
RV trip	#7

How likely is your family to plan any of these trips for this Fall?

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# Most of the **targeted states for travel this summer** offer a coastal destination

TOP 5 STATES EAGER TO  
VISIT FROM APRIL:

#1 FLORIDA

#2 NORTH CAROLINA

#3 SOUTH CAROLINA

#4 GEORGIA

#5 TENNESSEE

## Tier #1

Have already taken +  
plan to take in next 2  
months

North Carolina

#1

Georgia

#2

Florida

#3

South Carolina

#4

Tennessee

#5

Alabama

#6

Texas

#7

Virginia

#8

Kentucky

#9

## Tier #2

Have already taken +  
plan to take in next 2  
months

Mississippi

#10

Louisiana

#10

Maryland

#11

Arkansas

#12

Washington, DC

#13

West Virginia

#14

Oklahoma

#14

Missouri

#14

Delaware

#15

Which Southern state have you visited in the last month and/or plan to visit within the next two months?



# The 6 Key Takeaways:

1. Prospective travelers are **safety focused**. There are 3 specific safety issues of greatest importance—**cleaning procedures, crowd control & social distancing**
2. Communicating safety procedure isn't enough—**she wants assurance staff is executing!**
3. **Outdoor leisure is a natural and safe fit for families right now.** Communicate outdoor offerings, especially as we move into Fall
4. Hotels should work hard to **convey a delayed check-in/check-out** window for extra cleaning and extra steps being taken to **ensure staff is executing cleaning correctly**
5. **Most still embrace dining** out as a cherished aspect of travel. Promote **outdoor dining** options. They are **passionate about supporting locals**
6. There is a strong prospect for a **busy Fall travel season**. The top three trips for Fall—**road trips, mountains and beaches**





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