NEXTGEN THAI TRAVELERS 2025

Thailand Tourism Forum

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THAILAND TOURISM FORUM 2025
SEIZING POTENTIAL

C9 HOTELWORKS

dusit thani college

INTRODUCTION

Executive Summary

"As the hospitality industry pivots to meet the demands of the next generation, understanding what drives Thai travelers has never been more important.

The NextGen Thai Travelers 2025 report, presented by C9 Hotelworks in collaboration with Dusit Thani College for the Thailand Tourism Forum 2025, aims to analyze the lifestyles, behaviors, motivations, and choices of Thailand's emerging traveler demographic.

This report offers a deep dive into the mindset of the next generation of Thai travelers, examining their daily priorities, habits, and spending patterns at home and how these evolve when they travel. It highlights the significant role of social media and technology in shaping modern travel behaviors, where video-based platforms such as TikTok and YouTube heavily influence dining, accommodation, and activity preferences.

The findings reveal that lazy travel, which emphasizes low-effort planning and personalized experiences, is a growing trend. Travelers are seeking balance, with a focus on relaxation, wellbeing-related activities, and meaningful experiences like spending quality time with loved ones through cultural exploration. Food plays a central role in travel, with travelers willing to spend more on culinary experiences during trips compared to daily life, reflecting a strong connection between gastronomy and travel satisfaction.

Additionally, the next generation values convenience in their travel decisions, favoring accommodations that provide easy access to essential services and leisure opportunities. The rising significance of wellness facilities and sustainable practices reflects a heightened awareness of health and environmental considerations. These insights present a roadmap for the hospitality industry to cater to the evolving preferences of this dynamic demographic."

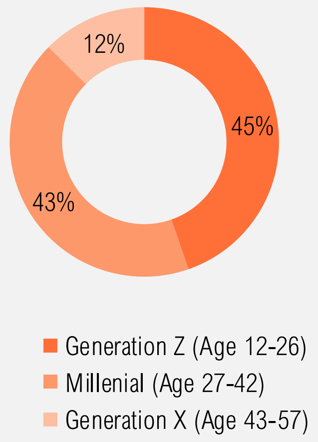
Viona Zhang, Deputy Managing Director, C9 Hotelworks

Methodology

The survey targeted Thai travelers from Generation Z and Millennials (born between 1981–2021). Designed with a structured questionnaire featuring multiple-choice and Likert scale questions, it was conducted online between December 1, 2024, and January 5, 2025.

A total of 620 responses were collected, with 88% of respondents identifying as Generation Z or Millennials. Of the participants, 95% are residing in Thailand and 84% have Thai nationality.

88% of respondents are Generation Z and Millenials



95% of respondents resides in Thailand

84% of respondents are Thais

59% Full-time Employees

29% Students

57% of respondents are Male

41% of respondents are Female

2% of respondents preferred not to say

Source: NextGen Thai Travelers Survey, C9 Hotelworks Market Research

THE JOURNEY OF NEXTGEN THAI TRAVELERS

INSIGHT 1 – Demystifying NextGen Lifestyles

INSIGHT 2 – Decoding Travel Motivations and Behaviors

INSIGHT 3 – Discovering Destinations Choices

INSIGHT 4 – Savoring Food-centric Experience

INSIGHT 5 – Stay & Play: A Guide to NextGen Traveler’s Preferences

INSIGHT 1:
Demystifying NextGen Lifestyles

NextGen Thai Travelers emphasize balancing family, work, and personal relaxation. The majority live with companions, and their living arrangements have minimal impact on travel spending. With lower budget allocations for housing and higher disposable income, this generation views travel as essential and is willing to invest in it.

Social media is a dominant force in their daily lives, with 56% spending 2–6 hours on screens for personal entertainment. Platforms like YouTube and TikTok are especially popular, reflecting a shift toward engaging, visual-first content that shapes their aspirations, including travel.

LIFE PRIORITIES

Family	Work	Relaxation/ Leisure Time	Financial Stability	Health/Fitness
68%	63%	55%	52%	48%

SPENDING POWER

44% of respondents allocate less than 20% of their income to housing expenses

51% of respondents have a disposable income exceeding THB 10,000

LIVING SITUATION

71% of the respondents do not live alone

72% indicated that their living situation has little to no impact on their travel spending.

EATING HABITS

74% of respondents consume meals outside their home

ACTIVITIES DURING FREE TIME

Social Media	Hangout with Friends/ Family	Watching TV/Streaming	Exercising /Fitness	Shopping
65%	64%	46%	34%	32%

TRAVEL

67% of respondents are willing to allocate more than 10% of their income to travel, and 62% consider travel important and essential in their lives.

TOP SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

YouTube	Instagram	Facebook	TikTok
67%	66%	55%	54%

SCREEN TIME

	Screen time
34%	2 to < 4 hours
22%	4 to < 6 hours
20%	6 hours or more

Source: NextGen Thai Travelers Survey, C9 Hotelworks Market Research

INSIGHT 2: Decoding Travel Motivations and Behaviors

MAIN REASON FOR LEISURE TRAVEL

Relaxation & Escaping Routine	58%
Family & Friends Bonding	53%
New Culture, Cuisines & Traditions Exploration	37%
Personal Growth & Learning Experiences	33%
Discovering Less-explored Destinations	32%

KEY TRAVEL ACTIVITIES

44% Indicated they value Wellbeing-related activities (relaxation, wellness, fitness, outdoor activities, and nature scenic experience)

TRIP PLANNING TOOLS

1 Online Searches

2 Social Media

3 Words of mouth

AI Tools

41% stated AI tools (e.g, ChatGPT) has been helpful in Trip Planning

SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCES

40% indicated they mostly use video-based platforms.

91% Influencing Dining and Accomodation Choices

76% Inspring Ideas e.g, sightseeing, local experiences, activities ideas

TRAVEL COMPANIONS

90% Travel with Companions

47% Family
25% Friends
17% Partner
1% Group Tour

Relaxation and bonding are key drivers for travel, with NextGen travelers seeking to escape routine and spend quality time with family and friends. These motivations highlight a shift away from fast-paced lifestyles toward prioritizing meaningful, restorative experiences. Additionally, cultural exploration and personal growth are increasingly important, underscoring the rising appeal of transformational and experiential travel.

Digital tools and video-based platforms are revolutionizing trip planning for this generation. AI is increasingly seen as an efficient, all-in-one tool for generating ideas and simplifying trip planning. Platforms like YouTube and TikTok provide inspiration for dining, accommodations, and activities, reflecting a growing preference for independent and personalized travel over traditional group tours.

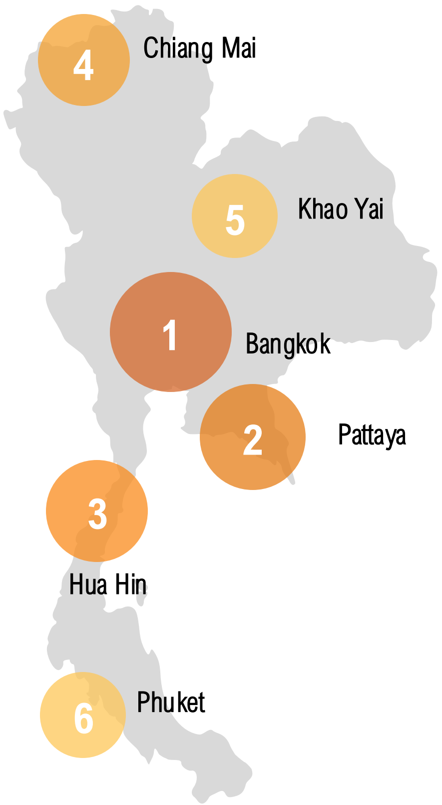
Relaxation is further emphasized through highly valued wellbeing-focused activities such as mindfulness, self-care, and fitness. This aligns with the NextGen's broader approach to balancing leisure with health and overall wellbeing in their travel preferences.

Source: NextGen Thai Travelers Survey, C9 Hotelworks Market Research

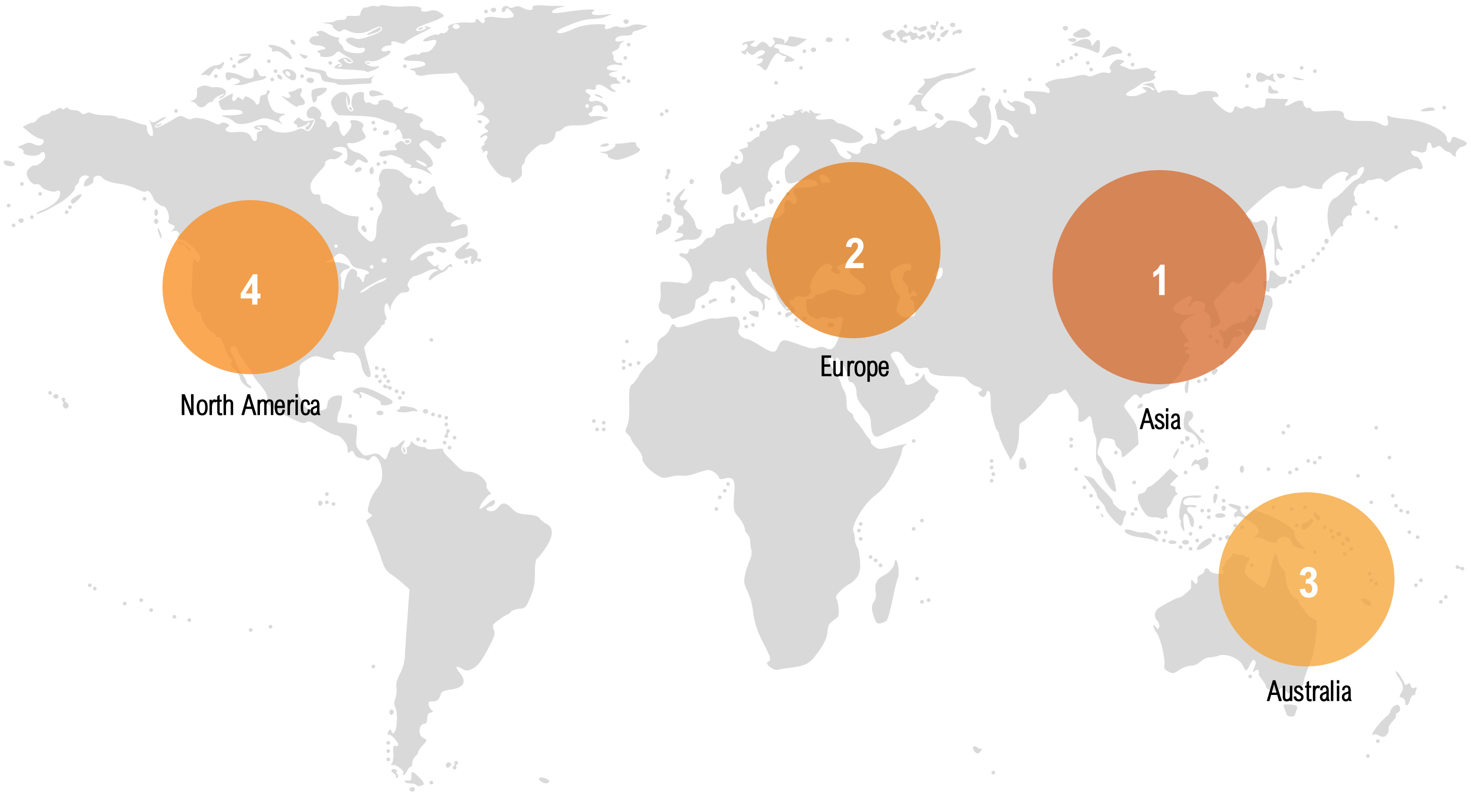
INSIGHT 3:
Discovering Destinations Choices

Over 48% of respondents expressed a strong desire to explore more within Thailand. Domestically, urban hubs like Bangkok and Pattaya remain popular for their vibrant city experiences, attracting travelers from other parts of the country. In contrast, Hua Hin and Khao Yai are increasingly sought after for tranquil, nature-focused getaways within easy driving distance of Bangkok. Chiang Mai continues to draw interest as a budget-friendly alternative to pricier beach destinations like Phuket. Internationally, short-haul travel dominates preferences, with Asia leading the pack.

TOP DOMESTIC DESTINATIONS



TOP INTERNATIONAL DESTINATIONS



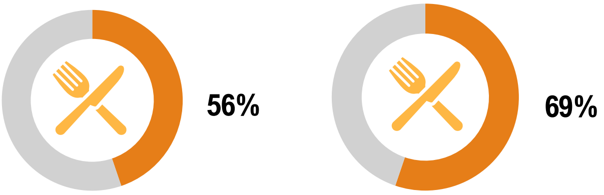
Source: NextGen Thai Travelers Survey, C9 Hotelworks Market Research

Note: For top domestic destinations, the results are as follows: Bangkok received 217 votes, Pattaya 156 votes, Hua Hin 151 votes, Chiang Mai 115 votes, Khao Yai 90 votes, and Phuket 89 votes. For top future destinations, Asia received 443 votes, Europe 338 votes, Australia 186 votes, and North America 164 votes.

INSIGHT 4: Savoring Food-centric Experience

Food and culinary experiences ranked as the most popular activities among travelers. **3rd**

BUDGET ALLOCATION: FOOD AND DRINKS



Spend at least 20% on Food daily

Spend at least 20% on Food during trips

HOTEL RESTAURANTS

62%

Of NextGen would dine at hotel restaurants

FACTORS INFLUENCING DINING CHOICES

59% Convenience (e.g, proximity tourist attractions or accommodations)

55% Social Media Reviews and Buzz

50% Google Map Search (e.g., restaurants near me)

TYPES OF F&B OUTLETS

- **67%** Cafes/Coffee Shops
- **59%** Street Food/Markets
- **57%** Casual Dining Restaurants
- **56%** Local Specialty Restaurants
- **21%** Dessert Shops/Bakery
- **15%** Night Markets & Bars

NextGen Thai travelers highly value food as a core aspect of their travel experience, emphasizing both convenience and the exploration of local flavors. Social media and technology-driven tools are pivotal in influencing dining decisions, while a preference for casual, local, and experiential dining options strongly resonates with this group.

Source: NextGen Thai Travelers Survey, C9 Hotelworks Market Research

INSIGHT 5: Stay & Play -A Guide to NextGen Traveler's Preferences

42% Stated they prefer staying at economy or midscale hotels

19% Stated they are willing to spend on upscale and luxury hotels

TOP 3 HOTEL FEATURES ★★★★★

89% Wellbeing-related Facilities (e.g, swimming pool, fitness, spa)

60% On-Site Dining Options (e.g., restaurants, cafes, rooftop bars)

43% Entertainment and Outdoor Spaces (e.g., movie rooms, gardens, terraces)

TOP 5 HOTEL ROOM FEATURES

73% Bed Comfort (e.g., quality of mattress and pillows)

61% Bathroom Quality (e.g., rain showers, bathtubs, luxury toiletries)

56% Room Size and Layout (e.g., spaciousness, seating areas)

52% In-room Technology (e.g., Wi-Fi, smart TV, universal power outlets)

51% View from the Room (e.g., cityscape, ocean, mountain views)

Eco-friendly practices and Co-working spaces are emerging as increasingly popular hotel features.

HOTEL BOOKING PREFERENCES

56% Prefer to plan their trips independently without any tours

48% Book hotels through OTAs

30% Book directly with the accommodation

LOCATION PREFERENCES

72% stated "Convenience" is the top priority

56% Proximity to Public Transportation

51% Accessibility to Convenience Stores/Restaurants

42% Locating in the City Centers or Key Attractions

38% Close to Green Spaces or Nature

NextGen Thai travelers prioritize convenience when choosing accommodations. Proximity to essential services such as public transportation, restaurants, and convenience stores is highly valued, alongside access to leisure amenities like swimming pools and fitness centers.

Wellness facilities and sustainability are gaining importance, showcasing this generation's growing focus on health, mindfulness, and eco-conscious travel.

Source: NextGen Thai Travelers Survey, C9 Hotelworks Market Research

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