

Skift Travel Health Index September 2023 Highlights

The Skift Travel Health Index stands at 106 this month, achieving a new record high. However, there is a disparity in the performance of several countries in the Asia Pacific, suggesting that efforts to attract Chinese travelers to nations dependent on inbound tourism may be progressing at a slower pace than anticipated.

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Executive Summary

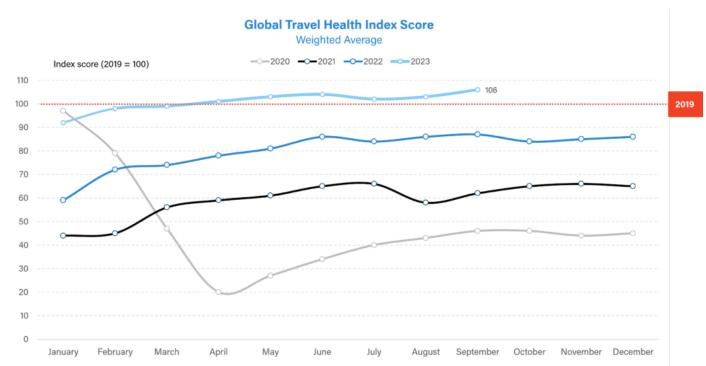
The Skift Travel Health Index grew 3 percentage points (pp) over August 2023 and stands at 106 this month, achieving a new record high.

All regions registered growth over the previous month, with Argentina and China leading the charts. However, travel performance growth in several countries in the Asia Pacific seems to be moving at a slower pace, suggesting that efforts to attract Chinese travelers back to tourism-dependent Southeast Asian nations may not yet have yielded the expected results.

Performance across all travel sectors is on an upward trajectory. Hotel performance did experience a 2-point dip this month, although it still retains a robust 9 pp advantage over 2019 levels.

Global Travel Performance Hits New Peaks

Global travel achieved a significant milestone, surging 3 percentage points (pp) over August 2023, reaching a new record high. The Skift Travel Health Index stands at 106 in September 2023.



Source: Skift Research from partner data. All data vs same month in 2019.

All Regions Surpass 2019 Levels

All regions this month surpassed September 2019 performance levels. Except for Europe, other regions gained 2 to 3 pp over the past month.

Skift Travel Health Index Performance by Region

Regions	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Aug-Sept
Asia Pacific	102	102	102	100	101	104	+3
Europe	100	102	102	99	101	101	0
Latin America	112	109	110	108	109	111	+2
Middle East and Africa	101	110	103	99	104	106	+2
North America	99	102	109	107	107	110	+3

Delving into country-level performance shows that Argentina's travel boost drove Latin America's index this month. In Europe, only Germany and Russia experienced month-on-month gains, although they have not yet fully recovered to 2019 levels. This explains the slow progress seen in the European region.

Except in China, travel growth was rather slow across the rest of Asia Pacific. Hong Kong replicated last year's performance trends, dropping 10 pp month-over-month, mirroring the 8 pp drop between August 2022 and September 2022.

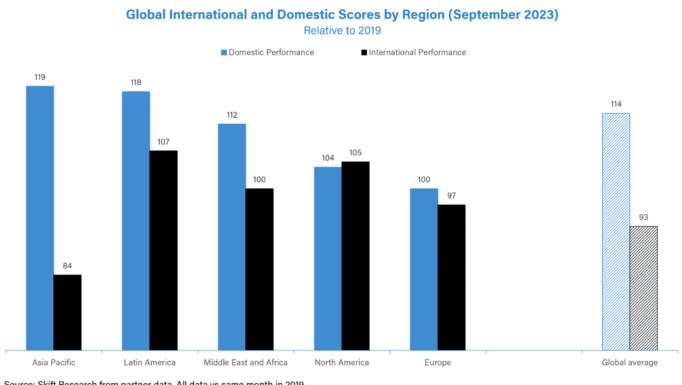
Skift Travel Health Index Performance by Country

Country	Sep-23	Aug-23	MoM Growth (abs)	YoY Growth (abs)
Argentina	109.5	101.4	+8	-1
China	102.7	96.4	+6	+47
United Arab Emirates	118.2	113.1	+5	+13
Germany	95.7	91.1	+5	+9
Australia	100.6	97.6	+3	+3
U.S.	110.9	108.1	+3	+6
Canada	107.8	106	+2	+9
Thailand	98.2	96.8	+1	+19
Mexico	115.9	114.7	+1	+2
Russia	67.2	66.7	+1	+10
Indonesia	94.2	94.1	0	+14
Italy	102.4	102.7	0	+2
India	115.8	116.2	0	+9
Brazil	109.7	110.5	-1	+9
France	107.1	108.2	-1	+10
Spain	103.5	104.8	-1	+9
Turkey	119.1	120.5	-1	+7
Singapore	96.8	98.5	-2	+8
South Africa	89.1	90.8	-2	+2

Country	Sep-23	Aug-23	MoM Growth (abs)	YoY Growth (abs)
United Kingdom	108.7	110.4	-2	+10
Japan	108.2	110.4	-2	+37
Hong Kong, China	90.7	100.4	-10	+37

International Travel is Still Recovering

When splitting the indicators by domestic and international performance, we see that international performance is pretty much on par with domestic performance in most regions. It is actually clocking a higher score than domestic performance in North America. International performance is slightly lagging in Europe but is significantly held back by Asia Pacific, mainly due to China's slow recovery.



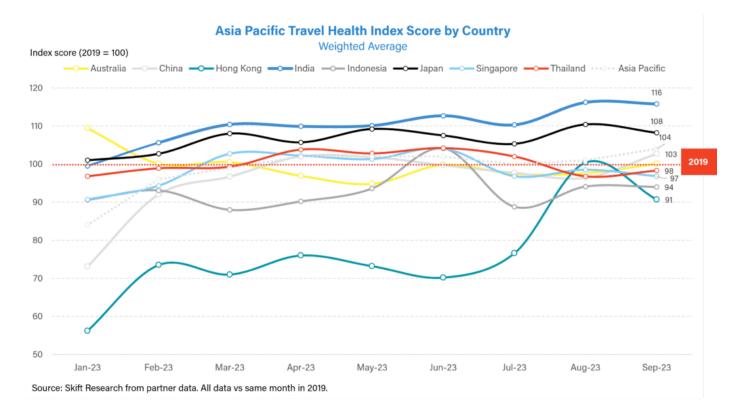
Source: Skift Research from partner data. All data vs same month in 2019.

Southeast Asian Nations Await Chinese Travelers

Of all the countries tracked in the Asia Pacific region, it is evident that India and Japan have been the primary drivers of the upward trajectory of the regional index. However, Asia Pacific's health index overtook pre-pandemic levels only after the

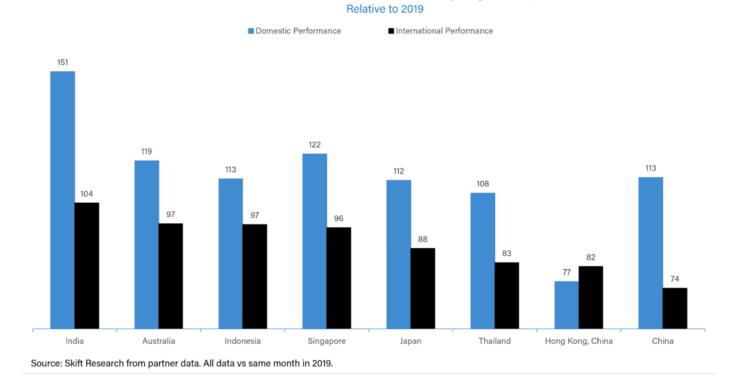


reopening of China. However, outbound travel from China has yet to completely recover. As a result, countries reliant on inbound tourism are experiencing a sluggish rebound.

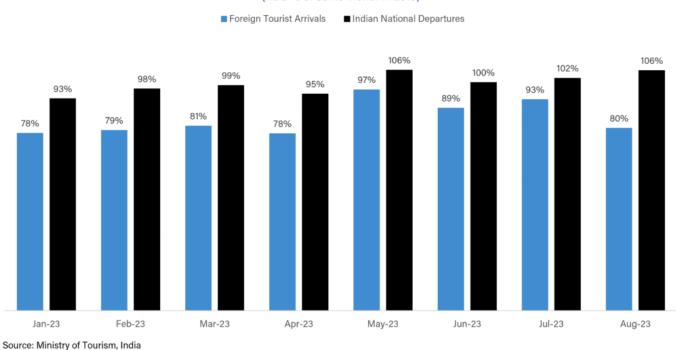


Domestic travel within the Asia Pacific region has notably exceeded pre-pandemic levels. India stands out with the most significant rebound in domestic tourism, recording a remarkable 51% increase above September 2019 levels. However, Hong Kong remains an exception, with domestic travel performance falling behind. This trend suggests that residents of Hong Kong might prefer traveling outside the region, including trips to China, benefiting from the proximity.





India is also the only country to have achieved an international performance recovery. Foreign tourist arrivals to India are still recovering; however, the number of Indians traveling out of the country overtook pre-pandemic levels in May this year. Another promising development is the initiative by the Indian airline Vistara regarding the <u>commencement of direct flights</u> to Hong Kong, scheduled to begin in late October this year. This is expected to further stimulate the recovery of international travel within the region.

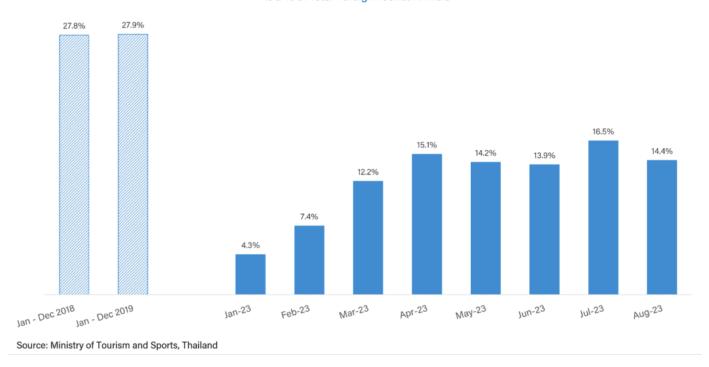


India: Foreign Tourist Arrivals and Indian National Departures 2023 (As a % of Same Month in 2019)

China is the weakest performer in terms of international travel indicators within the Asia Pacific region. This highlights that the growth witnessed in China's travel performance is primarily fueled by the domestic travel surge. The reopening of the country has positively impacted international performance in most countries. However, a full recovery is still pending due to the sluggish revival of outbound Chinese travel.

<u>Daily Lodging Report</u> highlighted that efforts to entice Chinese travelers back to Southeast Asian tourism-dependent nations may not be as fruitful as expected. 12%-16% of foreign visitors to Thailand from January to August this year were Chinese. This figure, however, was ~28% prior to the pandemic.





As a % of Total Foreign Tourist Arrivals

Thailand's visa exemption for Chinese tourists, starting on September 25, led to a remarkable <u>72.5%</u> increase in Chinese tourist arrivals during the period from September 25 to October 1 compared to the previous week. The shooting of a Chinese visitor in Bangkok was a setback, but overall, the visa-free program appears to be working. Thailand's travel performance gained 1 pp over August 2023 this month.

Hotel Performance Softens While Other Sectors Witness Boost

When assessing the different verticals within the travel industry, we see that aviation continues to make a steady recovery. Vacation rentals and car rentals displayed impressive leaps in performance compared to August 2023. Overall, sector performance is looking up; however, hotel performance softened by 2 pp this month. Nevertheless, it still maintains a solid 9-point lead over 2019 levels.

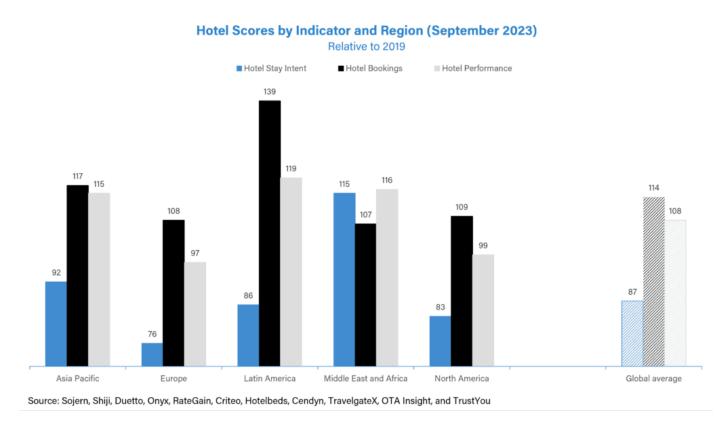
Skift Travel Health Index Performance by Sector

Sector	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Aug-Sept
Aviation	84	88	92	93	95	96	+1
Hotels	110	112	115	109	111	109	-2
Vacation Rentals	137	135	130	129	127	135	+8
Car Rental	112	109	108	103	103	115	+12

Hotel Performance

With the exception of North America, hotel intent, which is represented by hotel stay searches, continues to be weak across all regions, leading to a decrease in the total hotel index. This aspect of our index primarily focuses on hotel websites, possibly pointing to the shift from hotel websites to online travel agents or Google as primary search platforms for hotels across the other regions.

Conversely, hotel bookings and key performance indicators (hotel performance) remain strong, with the exception of Europe and Latin America, where hotel performance slightly dipped below September 2019.



According to <u>STR</u>, as the summer travel season winds down, global hotel RevPAR experienced a modest 2 pp deceleration by mid-September. The UK achieved

remarkable occupancy levels, surpassing 80%, while countries like France, Italy, Brazil, and Singapore achieved hotel occupancy rates ranging from 70% to 80%.

ADR growth, however, was a mixed bag. Data from <u>OTA Insight</u> reveals a significant 20% improvement in hotel published rates in the UK compared to August 2023. The G20 Summit held in New Delhi, India, in early September, helped drive hotel rates in the country. <u>RateGain's</u> demand index for New Delhi spiked by 40% over the historical average during this period.

Turkey, Singapore, and Hong Kong, on the other hand, experienced notable drops in hotel rates, ranging from 20% to 30%. Consequently, <u>RevPAR growth</u>, which is primarily driven by ADR growth in most regions, slowed down.

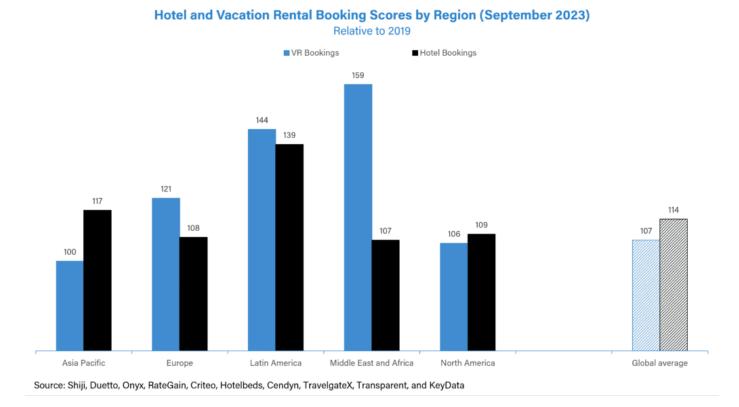


Vacation Rental Performance

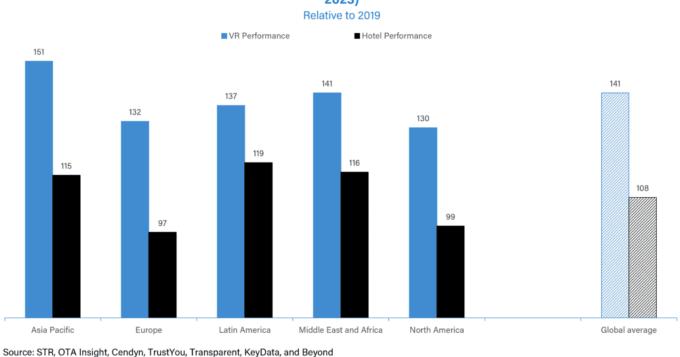
Vacation rental bookings continue to excel in most regions, although there appears to be a softening trend in the Asia Pacific. Globally, hotel demand is showing faster improvement than the demand for vacation rentals. This could also be attributed to the vacation rental supply growing faster than the hotel supply.

Rising costs in labor, land, and building materials have caused delays in many hotel projects. The rental sector faces challenges too, including limited housing availability and higher interest rates, hindering its growth. However, rentals have consistently

seen year-over-year supply growth exceeding $\underline{15\%}$, while hotels have remained below $\underline{5\%}$ for each quarter from early 2022 to the second quarter of this year in the U.S.



When we look at the actual key performance indicators like occupancy, ADR, and RevPAR, vacation rentals continue to exhibit stellar performance, with significant growth over 2019 levels across all regions.



Hotel and Vacation Rental Key Performance Indicator Scores by Region (September 2023)

Conclusion

The global travel industry is on an upswing, with all regions registering growth over the previous month. The global Travel Health Index stands at 106 this month, 3 pp higher than August 2023.

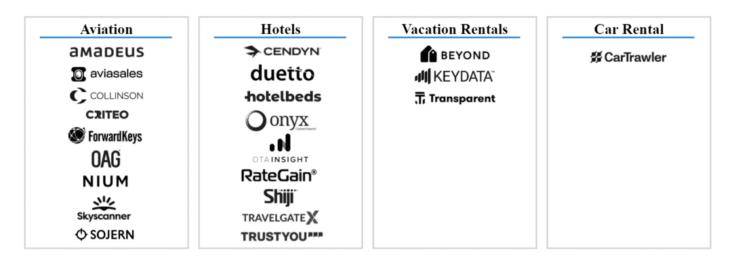
Argentina and China lead the month-over-month travel performance growth. However, there is a disparity in the performance of several countries in the Asia Pacific, suggesting that efforts to entice Chinese travelers to nations dependent on inbound tourism may be progressing at a slower pace than anticipated.

The aviation sector continues its steady path to recovery, while vacation rentals and car rentals have notably surged in performance when compared to August 2023. Overall, sector performance shows an upward trend. However, there is a marginal decline of 2 pp in hotel performance this month. Nevertheless, the hotel sector still maintains a robust lead of 9 pp over 2019 levels.

Methodology

Data Partners

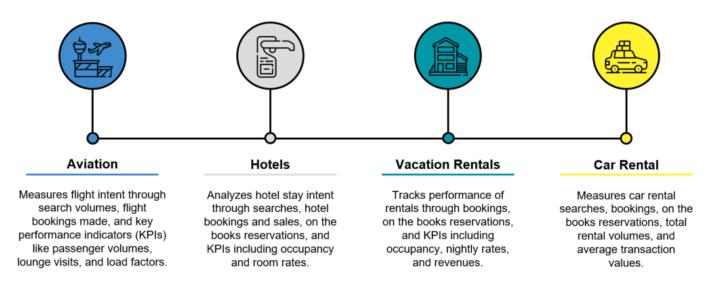
Skift Research collects and analyzes data from 22 different data partners to provide the most comprehensive view of the travel industry's performance.



Index Design

The Index tracks 84 indicators per country to assess the health of the travel industry in each country. These indicators are aggregated into performance categories and sub-categories. The top level of division is by travel vertical, and each vertical is further divided by intent indicators, booking indicators, and key performance indicators.

The Index covers the following travel sectors:



October 2023



Country Coverage

The Index focuses on the travel performance in 22 of the largest tourism economies, combined accounting for 62% of inbound tourism receipts, 67% of outbound tourism expenditure, and 78% of global 2019 GDP.

- Argentina
- Australia
- Brazil
- Canada
- China
- France
- Germany
- Hong Kong, China
- India
- Indonesia
- Italy
- Japan
- Mexico
- Russia
- Singapore
- South Africa
- Spain
- Thailand
- Turkey

- U.S.
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom

Index Score Calculation

The Index is designed to provide an easy overview of the health of the travel industry. We have tracked the industry since the beginning of 2020. For 2020, 2021, 2022, and 2023 data, the performance of each indicator is compared to the same time in 2019. The Index provides a score relative to a baseline reading of 100 for the same month in 2019.

The full methodology can be found on our <u>website</u>.

Data Tables

Total Skift Travel Health Index Scores by Country

	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
Argentina	94.9	103.0	109.6	100.5	106.0	104.4	101.4	109.5
Australia	100.1	100.5	96.9	94.8	99.8	97.4	97.6	100.1
Brazil	107.8	110.3	112.2	111.3	109.7	108.1	110.5	109.7
Canada	98.2	98.0	100.9	104.9	109.4	106.8	106.0	107.6
China	92.0	96.7	102.0	101.8	99.7	97.7	96.4	102.7
France	106.6	104.4	111.6	112.3	110.1	105.2	108.2	107.1
Germany	89.8	90.1	93.7	93.2	96.5	92.0	91.1	95.7
Hong Kong, China	73.5	71.0	76.0	73.2	70.2	76.6	100.4	90.7
India	105.6	110.4	109.9	110.1	112.7	110.3	116.2	115.8
Indonesia	93.1	88.0	90.2	93.6	104.1	88.8	94.1	94.0

	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
Italy	100.9	104.8	102.4	109.0	106.1	102.9	102.7	102.3
Japan	102.7	108.0	105.7	109.2	107.5	105.3	110.4	108.2
Mexico	119.3	119.2	116.3	114.7	116.4	112.0	114.7	116.0
Russia	67.7	66.7	64.4	65.9	69.0	69.1	66.7	67.2
Singapore	94.3	102.7	102.2	101.3	104.1	96.8	98.5	96.8
South Africa	93.0	92.7	90.8	92.7	93.3	90.9	90.8	89.1
Spain	105.1	106.8	107.3	104.5	102.7	103.5	104.8	103.4
Thailand	98.9	99.3	103.8	102.8	104.2	102.0	96.8	98.3
Turkey	89.5	104.5	107.8	118.7	120.6	108.0	120.5	119.1
U.S.	101.3	97.7	98.9	102.6	109.1	108.0	108.1	110.8
United Arab Emirates	109.0	105.2	109.1	121.6	110.8	104.7	113.1	118.3
United Kingdom	102.6	103.9	105.3	110.4	108.7	109.6	110.4	108.9

Aviation Scores by Country

	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
Argentina	82.1	87.3	98.5	84.4	95.6	94.3	92.4	92.7
Australia	101.8	103.6	94.5	93.3	99.6	101.2	104.6	105.6
Brazil	100.3	104.1	110.4	113.2	106.8	106.4	110.1	100.2
Canada	89.4	89.6	88.1	89.5	95.2	99.8	102.1	100.4
China	57.0	58.5	61.2	63.0	64.4	66.7	66.5	67.3
France	96.9	98.3	105.7	99.4	96.1	95.6	98.1	96.4
Germany	87.8	90.3	92.1	90.2	94.1	93.6	93.0	90.6
Hong Kong, China	50.7	51.5	54.6	53.0	56.3	59.8	77.9	76.4

	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
India	103.2	105.5	104.1	110.3	112.8	109.8	112.3	113.7
Indonesia	67.9	62.1	64.8	68.0	83.6	64.7	71.9	74.8
Italy	106.0	110.2	100.3	117.0	110.8	109.7	109.8	111.3
Japan	87.8	94.2	89.5	95.7	95.7	95.7	106.2	105.6
Mexico	111.3	111.7	111.4	109.6	109.6	112.9	114.2	116.5
Russia	74.3	74.0	70.7	73.9	79.9	79.0	72.6	76.0
Singapore	77.1	75.3	76.2	75.8	86.1	83.8	82.2	82.0
South Africa	75.7	73.6	73.6	75.0	71.5	72.5	71.2	73.7
Spain	115.6	113.9	111.3	109.3	107.0	108.0	108.2	109.4
Thailand	82.1	79.5	83.9	81.6	91.1	88.2	91.0	91.8
Turkey	94.2	92.9	104.5	114.1	114.0	107.8	114.6	109.7
U.S.	94.9	90.8	92.0	97.3	108.8	112.9	114.3	116.3
United Arab Emirates	101.7	97.3	96.0	112.6	102.4	99.7	104.7	107.0
United Kingdom	91.3	93.9	92.4	99.7	95.2	100.2	103.6	104.0

Aviation contributes 40% to the total score. The scores in this table have been indexed to give a better insight into performance. 100 = pre-pandemic level.

Hotel Scores by Country

	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
Argentina	113.3	124.7	124.4	123.9	128.2	120.5	118.9	129.9
Australia	94.0	92.7	88.8	88.5	96.6	90.0	91.8	91.3
Brazil	128.8	140.2	132.3	128.7	135.4	127.7	131.1	131.1
Canada	100.6	102.5	110.9	124.4	131.7	117.1	113.1	121.3

	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
China	105.3	107.5	112.6	113.9	113.6	108.6	110.2	115.4
France	110.9	111.9	113.6	121.4	125.7	115.1	118.1	111.8
Germany	96.1	97.6	100.4	100.5	110.3	98.9	98.9	106.7
Hong Kong, China	81.2	74.0	87.6	75.2	68.6	81.3	121.6	100.8
India	103.6	115.9	116.7	109.6	115.1	111.2	123.9	121.9
Indonesia	112.3	106.8	110.6	115.0	127.5	103.7	110.3	108.0
Italy	100.7	104.3	108.4	108.0	105.9	101.4	100.0	95.7
Japan	118.4	120.9	120.7	121.8	122.9	124.3	128.6	111.9
Mexico	127.5	129.8	126.4	125.2	130.1	115.7	125.9	120.7
Russia	51.7	52.7	48.3	47.2	46.7	46.7	46.6	44.9
Singapore	108.2	127.6	131.6	128.5	122.2	106.6	111.1	111.2
South Africa	112.8	113.5	111.2	111.4	116.5	110.2	113.6	105.4
Spain	96.8	105.4	109.6	106.1	102.7	101.9	104.1	95.0
Thailand	109.4	123.2	134.1	123.8	124.0	117.3	107.6	108.1
Turkey	86.2	119.9	113.3	135.9	141.5	109.5	134.5	135.6
U.S.	103.7	102.7	105.1	112.5	117.2	112.1	108.6	103.2
United Arab Emirates	105.2	102.4	113.7	127.7	110.8	97.8	108.1	115.0
United Kingdom	108.2	110.5	116.2	122.9	124.3	123.4	120.0	111.2

Hotels contributes 35% to the total score. The scores in this table have been indexed to give a better insight into performance. 100 = pre-pandemic level.

Vacation Rental Scores by Country



	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
Argentina	144.4	142.8	147.3	147.1	149.2	154.9	153.9	157.3
Australia	132.9	135.0	137.8	129.6	132.1	131.5	123.0	133.5
Brazil	131.3	122.2	129.5	125.6	125.6	131.6	129.4	133.5
Canada	120.9	127.2	130.0	127.8	129.8	138.1	135.2	126.5
China	180.0	180.0	178.1	175.4	154.4	147.7	141.7	159.2
France	131.7	130.5	135.9	137.0	135.3	133.0	130.0	148.1
Germany	114.8	109.5	112.4	105.1	100.8	101.8	102.7	107.8
Hong Kong, China	79.5	81.9	83.9	82.4	85.3	93.1	108.1	109.1
India	111.8	108.3	112.4	113.9	119.5	122.8	123.7	123.2
Indonesia	98.1	89.4	92.9	99.8	107.3	114.3	111.5	109.9
Italy	131.7	139.3	134.6	138.3	133.2	131.9	135.0	139.0
Japan	119.0	130.6	128.8	133.1	123.3	122.1	126.1	129.2
Mexico	137.1	132.0	126.8	126.7	127.0	119.3	130.2	132.3
Russia	113.7	101.8	107.5	113.3	121.7	126.2	128.8	125.7
Singapore	119.2	117.4	117.9	120.3	121.7	124.8	128.3	117.4
South Africa	97.5	95.5	97.5	102.8	101.2	106.2	101.7	101.8
Spain	132.4	129.7	125.8	124.4	125.5	124.0	129.6	134.7
Thailand	136.8	126.6	118.3	109.4	108.1	115.0	114.1	110.3
Turkey	110.0	115.5	117.7	122.1	126.0	131.9	132.5	140.6
U.S.	127.8	124.8	125.7	120.8	123.6	123.4	119.9	125.4
United Arab Emirates	147.1	140.0	140.1	144.9	140.0	150.7	155.1	172.8
United Kingdom	130.1	133.8	129.6	127.0	128.0	130.8	127.1	128.2

Vacation Rentals contributes 10% to the total score. The scores in this table have been indexed to give a better insight into performance. 100 = pre-pandemic level. 2021 VR data for Argentina missing.

	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
Argentina	88.9	85.9	97.5	93.7	88.9	77.9	85.3	92.6
Australia	106.3	105.5	107.1	105.6	101.5	99.6	90.3	98.8
Brazil	98.8	94.3	98.7	100.9	96.8	96.2	91.2	109.5
Canada	126.2	119.4	118.3	116.5	110.4	107.2	106.8	113.4
China	101.4	124.0	135.0	128.0	131.1	121.3	119.7	135.6
France	129.9	115.5	121.4	123.9	109.3	101.4	103.4	106.2
Germany	84.7	85.7	85.0	88.1	82.8	80.0	72.3	84.7
Hong Kong, China	121.6	117.5	109.8	116.6	109.8	108.3	114.5	101.8
India	121.3	121.2	117.3	116.7	111.3	110.4	112.7	111.1
Indonesia	121.3	121.2	117.3	116.7	111.3	110.4	112.7	111.1
Italy	79.7	83.7	84.4	85.2	87.8	84.2	77.4	81.2
Japan	113.1	117.6	116.7	117.7	110.4	111.6	104.7	110.3
Mexico	124.0	120.5	113.4	110.0	109.9	107.2	94.1	103.5
Russia	74.6	74.6	74.6	74.6	74.6	74.6	74.6	74.6
Singapore	127.0	120.0	116.2	111.3	110.0	101.9	110.8	107.0
South Africa	107.9	105.5	103.0	101.6	104.0	96.5	88.3	95.8
Spain	87.6	87.9	88.1	89.9	84.8	87.6	83.8	92.2
Thailand	107.3	100.5	98.7	110.6	104.0	103.0	88.9	98.1
Turkey	95.3	104.3	109.2	94.2	103.6	95.3	95.3	97.4
U.S.	107.0	98.2	97.1	93.6	96.6	89.8	97.3	115.9

Car Rental Scores by Country

	Feb 2023	Mar 2023	Apr 2023	May 2023	Jun 2023	Jul 2023	Aug 2023	Sep 2023
United Arab Emirates	121.2	114.4	121.5	124.5	123.1	112.7	123.8	128.6
United Kingdom	113.3	110.2	107.2	108.0	104.6	100.4	101.1	109.7

Car Rental contributes 15% to the total score. The scores in this table have been indexed to give a better insight into performance. 100 = pre-pandemic level.

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