

SPOT 2024 The State of Adventure Travel Survey

Data from SPOT reveals adventure travel is trending, but adventurers lack tools, skills, and confidence for safe journeys

[SPOT](#), a leader in satellite messaging and emergency notification technologies, released its annual survey to understand the adventure travel experiences, skills and motivations of today's explorers. The results found that 70% of people are interested in adventure travel experiences to lesser-known and isolated destinations, however, only about half (57%) said they are confident in their safety and preparedness knowledge.

Communication Emergencies Are the Most Common Travel Crisis, Why Are We Still Only Carrying Phones?

SPOT's survey uncovered that about two thirds of Americans (66%) are likely or very likely to consider traveling alone – in fact, only 5% of Millennials would be very unlikely to travel alone. Yet, about half (47%) say they are not confident in their basic survival skills if they were lost in the wilderness with no technology – underlining the key need for younger generations, interested in solo and adventure travel, to carry satellite messenger devices with SOS capabilities.

When asked which communication tools people are most likely to take on a solo adventure, 76% said they would take a phone or tablet, with only 9% carrying a satellite messenger. Meanwhile, more than 50% cite traveling to places with no cell service at least 1-10 days per year; 42% of respondents said they experienced communication emergencies – including no access to phone or internet – while traveling.

Flying Solo

When looking at the increased interest in solo travel, 43% of respondents travel alone three to seven days per year.

- Data shows Millennials driving the trends, with 75% of Millennials likely or very likely to consider traveling alone, while only 57% of Boomers and Gen X feel the same.
- What's more, the main reason across age groups to not travel alone was desire for companionship (40%). Interestingly, more men (47%) than woman (32%) cited this as the main reason.
- When asked what would make travelers feel safer when traveling alone to isolated areas, 28% said a satellite messenger or GPS device. Additionally, 30% of women would prefer group travel options, compared to 18% of men.

Survival of the Fittest

When asked about specific basic survival skills, respondents said they are most capable of building a fire (55%), finding drinking water (54%) and building shelters (50%) – while 15% said they are not capable of any survival skills. Only 25% believe they could navigate home without a cell phone or GPS.

- What's more, 45% of travelers have shared or used a survival tip from a TV show or movie.
- Additionally, 43% said they have shared or used a survival tip from a social media or an influencer.
- For those that have considered adventure travel experiences, 27% said they are thrill-seeking, while 21% are looking for personal growth.

- While 44% believe bears and other large wild animals are the biggest safety risk when hiking, only 8% thought drowning was a concern – the actual largest cause of fatalities in national parks.

Close Encounters of the Animal Kind

The survey also found that many people are not aware of how to handle encountering dangerous animals that commonly appear on hikes and nature travel.

- Of those surveyed, 33% consider bears the most dangerous animal to encounter in the wild, followed by snakes (24%) and mountain lions (15%) – when in fact ticks and poisonous insects are among the top dangers when hiking.
- Nearly half (43%) of people don't know how to handle seeing a bear – with 43% saying they would either run, fight back, make themselves small or climb a tree.
- Similarly, only 27% of respondents know what to do in the event of a snake bite – with 27% believing they should suck the poison out themselves.

SPOT aims to make adventures safer for outdoor enthusiasts everywhere with communication capabilities – even when users are out of cell range – and can initiate search and rescue if needed. The survey sheds light on the growing need for satellite messengers like the SPOT X even for the general consumer, who is more likely to go off the grid unprepared.

The U.S.-wide survey was conducted online by Pollfish on behalf of SPOT in March 2023. It includes responses from 1,000 people.