

For Immediate Release

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Travel Trends for Autumn 2007 (Sep. 1~Nov. 30)

70% of Over-60s Plan to Travel this Autumn.

--Preferences are for weekday departures between late September and October.--

--Men prefer to travel with their wives, women with their friends.--

--A surprisingly high 18.8% plan to travel alone.--

Those in mid-career link paid vacations with long weekends; some move up-market.

JTB Corp. has just published a survey of travel trends for the autumn season (from Sep.1 through Nov. 30). The survey was based on an Internet questionnaire completed by 1,300 respondents (130 men and women in each of five age categories from 20s to over 60s) and on bookings with JTB Group companies, etc. The results of this, the third such survey since the first in 2005, follow.

1. Over Half of Respondents Plan to Travel this Autumn.

The Proportion of those with Travel Plans is Rising Each Year.

The questionnaire revealed that respondents who had already made a journey or had definite plans to do so amounted to 58.1% of the total, one percentage point higher than the previous year and 2.8 points higher than in 2005. Even in comparison with the encouraging figure of 55.2% for the 2007 summer season (July and August) this is strong endorsement of the old saying "Autumn is the time to enjoy travel" and evidence of healthy demand.

Confirmation of these findings comes from bookings for JTB's domestic and overseas package tours, which are trending well above the previous year. *Domestic travel tends to focus on the Iwami Ginzan Silver Mine (now registered as a World Heritage Site) and on central Japan*, see Table 1, while overseas travel shows *healthy trends for Asian destinations and for travel by the middle-aged to Europe*, although bookings for November are lagging slightly, see Table 2.

Table 1. Bookings for ACE JTB Domestic Package Tours

(For Tours Departing Greater Tokyo; Percentages of previous year in parentheses as of September 16)

Month	Overall	Preferred Destinations within Japan		
		Sep.	111.9%	Kii Peninsula.....(172.5%)
Oct.	101.4%	Kii Peninsula.....(144.0%)	Chugoku & Shikoku..(110.8%)	Kanto.....(106.1%)
Nov.	106.4%	Chugoku & Shikoku (127.5%)	Kanto.....(112.7%)	Kii Peninsula (112.4%)

Table 2. Bookings for LOOK JTB Overseas Package Tours

(Percentages of previous year in parentheses calculated as of September 14)

Month	Overall	Preferred Destinations Overseas		
Sep.	109.9%	Asia.....(118.3%)	Oceania.....(111.2%)	Europe (107.2%)
Oct.	100.8%	Asia.....(115.0%)	China.....(112.3%)	Europe (111.6%)
Nov.	93.1%	Europe (102.7%)	N. America ..(99.7%)	Asia.....(98.4%)

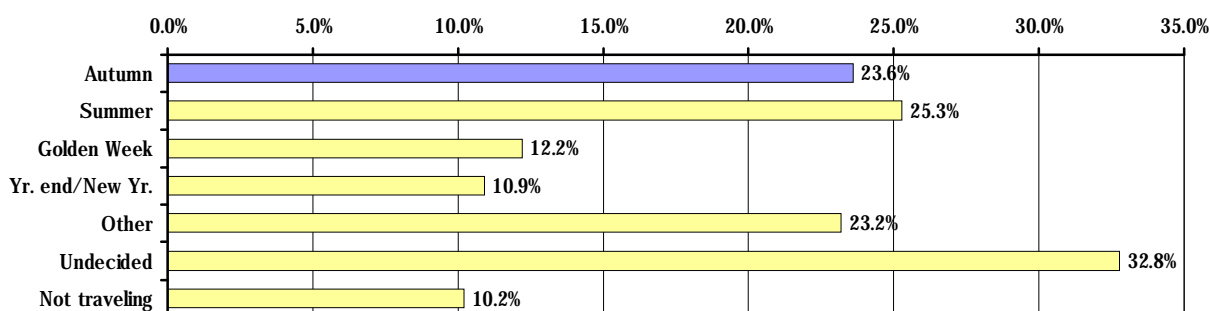
Desire to Travel this Autumn is Strong, and Rises with Increasing Age.

By age segment, some 70% of both men and women over 60 stated a clear intention to travel, whereas for those in their 20s and 30s the percentage was about 50% for men and 55 to 60% for women. This shows a desire to travel that rises with increasing age. It also suggests that those in middle life, who can travel on the day and in the season of their choice, see autumn with its pleasant weather as the ideal season for travel.

Autumn—the Season for Travel

In response to the questionnaire’s “When do you prefer to travel?” the most common reply was “Undecided” (with 32.8%), but the facts that 23.6% of respondents replied “Autumn,” while 25.3% chose “Summer” and 23.2% some “Other” period show that autumn is comparable with other travel seasons (see Table 3).

Table 3. Preferred Seasons in Which to Travel (multiple answers)



2. Congenial Companions are Preferred Fellow Travelers.

Friends, Acquaintances and Married Couples are the Mainstream, but Surprisingly Many Choose to Travel Alone.

Most respondents prefer to travel with friends and acquaintances (31.5%), closely followed by travel as a married couple (29.5%), showing a strong tendency to want to travel with congenial adult companions. Surprisingly numerous in all age groups (at 18.9%) were those who choose to travel alone. These appear to be journeys to indulge a personal enthusiasm such as photography, or the composition of *haiku*, etc. Also, whereas in the summer season family travel tends to be by those taking their children, in the autumn the travelers are more usually mothers traveling with their adult daughters.

Choices of Fellow Travelers Differ with Age and between Middle-Aged Men and Women.

By age group, there are differences in the choices of travel companions. And *while 60% of men in their 60s travel with their spouse, only 26.7% of women in this age group do so*: with the latter, friends and acquaintances come top by a long way (at 42.2%). Men depend upon their wives for enjoyable travel, but while women will travel as a married couple it looks as if they prefer to enjoy traveling with congenial friends.

Indeed, the desire to travel with friends and acquaintances was strong in all age groups. Younger people travel as couples, middle-aged women travel with congenial companions. Men in their 30s and 40s characteristically travel with friends and acquaintances. Not only are there more unmarried travelers but also when spouses' schedules differ, increasing numbers will seek out friends and acquaintances with whom they share interests as travel companions (see Table 4).

Table 4. Preferred Travel Companions by Age and Gender (multiple answers)

Age/Gender		1 st Choice	2 nd Choice	3 rd Choice
20s	M	Friends & acquaintances (43.1%)	Alone (29.2%)	Family (15.4%)
	F	Friends & acquaintances (46.5%)	Alone (18.3%)	Family (18.3%)
30s	M	Taking children (31.7%)	Friends & acquaintances (30.2%)	Alone (28.6%)
	F	Taking children (31.2%)	Married couple only (26.0%)	Family (22.1%)
40s	M	Friends & acquaintances (27.2%)	Taking children (27.1%)	Married couple only (25.9%)
	F	Married couple only (34.3%)	Family (25.4%)	Taking children (20.9%)
50s	M	Married couple only (39.7%)	Friends & acquaintances (25.0%)	Family (16.2%)
	F	Married couple only (38.3%)	Friends & acquaintances (37.0%)	Family (34.6%)
60s+	M	Married couple only (60.9%)	Friends & acquaintances (28.3%)	Alone (20.7%)
	F	Friends & acquaintances (42.2%)	Married couple only (26.7%)	Alone (20.0%)

3. Autumn, the Season to Enjoy Travel and a Good Appetite, but Some are “Too Busy” to Go.

Answers to the questionnaire reveal that the reasons for traveling in autumn are (1) the weather is good, (2) the scenery is beautiful, and (3) the food is good, see Table 5, and that the purposes of autumn travel are (1) to admire Nature, (2) to eat delicious food, and (3) to relax in hot springs (in that order). The old sayings “Autumn is the season for travel” and “Autumn is the season of good appetites” still hold true.

On the other hand, all age groups cited as the reasons for not traveling (1) could not take a holiday, (2) didn't have the time and (3) no particular reason, while neither “I already traveled in Golden Week or the Summer” nor “I traveled at another time” were cited at all frequently. *Those who like to travel will strongly tend to want to enjoy autumn travel even if they have already traveled during the summer.*

Table 5. Reasons for Traveling or Not Traveling in the Autumn
(top five choices, multiple answers)

Reasons for Traveling in the Autumn			Reasons for Not Traveling in the Autumn		
1	The weather is good	45.2%	1	Could not take a holiday	30.1%
2	The scenery is beautiful	32.3%	2	Didn't have the time	24.8%
3	The food is good	31.9%	3	No particular reason	20.0%
4	It just happened to be autumn	24.6%	4	Travel is expensive	16.3%
5	Travel costs are lower	15.2%	5	Family & friends had different plans	14.7%

4. Mid-career Travelers Tack Paid Holidays onto Long Weekends in Sep. and Oct.—Over 60s Prefer Weekdays in the Good Weather of Late Sep.~Oct.

The questionnaire revealed differences in the date and day of the week for departure between age groups. Many men and women over 60 and women in their 50s choose to depart on weekdays in the good weather of late September through October. The middle-aged and elderly have greater freedom to set their schedules and obviously use it to enjoy travel in this pleasant season.

On the other hand, men in mid-career—from their 30s to their 50s—make use of the long weekends in September and October by tacking on paid holidays. *In response to direct questions on whether they used paid holiday entitlements, this sector alone responded very positively.* In addition to those who travel at the weekend or on long (three-day) weekends, there are both those who use paid holidays to travel on weekdays and those who tend to combine weekends, including long weekends, with paid holidays.

Table 6. Preferred Departure Dates by Age and Gender
(1st choice, blue; 2nd choice, yellow; 3rd choice pink.)

		September			October			November		
		Early	Mid	Late	Early	Mid	Late	Early	Mid	Late
20s	M		30.8%	29.2%		20.0%				
	F		25.4%		22.5%	23.9%				
30s	M		22.2%	41.3%	25.4%					
	F		20.8%	32.5%	29.9%					
40s	M			28.4%	22.2%	18.5%				
	F		23.9%		25.4%		22.4%			
50s	M		23.5%	32.4%	22.1%					
	F				24.7%	29.6%	23.5%			
60+	M					35.9%	19.6%		23.9%	
	F			23.3%		24.4%	27.8%			

5. Some are Enjoying a Move Up-market

The questionnaire revealed that the amounts people spent on travel each time were (1) 20,000 JPY or over but less than 30,000 JPY (by 23.3% of respondents), (2) 10,000 JPY or over but less than 20,000 JPY (by

17.9%) and (3) 30,000 JPY or over but less than 40,000 JPY (17.0%). However, the proportion spending 40,000 JPY or over but less than 100,000 JPY was a considerable 39.7%. (Multiple answers were permitted, so the percentages do not add up to 100%.) Because autumn travel is primarily by adults, it appears that expenditures are on the high side. Bookings with JTB suggest that there is a self-indulgent trend to move up-market, as detailed below.

Making Use of Early-Booking Discounts to Fly Business Class

In bookings for LOOK JTB to Guam, there are packages that offer special discounts for bookings placed at least 35 days in advance. For departures in late September, the supplementary cost of flying Business Class is only 20,000 JPY for those who make use of these discounts. For departures other than the weekend, the basic charge is about 100,000 JPY per person. A 20,000 JPY excess charge is apparently well worth it for family travel.

Seeing the Autumn Colors by Taxi

Many packages offer scenic tours of autumn colors. Notable this year is the use of Taxis by groups of women traveling together and by families. The convenience and ease of taxis is attractive to the middle-aged and elderly.

Survey Methodology

Survey period	Sep. 7 (Friday) through Sep.10 (Monday), 2007.
Respondents	Men and women over the age of 20
Sample size	1,300 individuals (130 of each gender from five age groups; those in their 20s, 30s, 40s, 50s and over 60)
Subjects	Those having spent or intending to spend at least one night away from home in the period Sep. 1 through Nov. 30, 2007 excluding business or commercial travel.
Method	An online Internet questionnaire.

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