

For Immediate Release

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Travel Trends for Year-End/New-Year (Dec. 23~Jan. 3)

Taking Jan. 4 Off Makes a 9-Day Sequence, Boosting Domestic & Overseas Travel

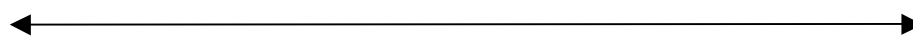
--Overseas Departures Exceed the Previous Year, Reach 3rd Highest Ever Total.--

--Christmas Puts Europe Top; Families Prefer a New Year in Ever-Popular Hawaii.--

--After the New Year, It's Closer Destinations in Asia.--

Choices of Holiday Dates and Expenditures Disperse Departure Dates.

12/22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	1/1	2	3	4	5	6
Sat	NH	NH	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	NH	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun



Survey period (departure base)

JTB Corp. has just published a survey of travel trends involving at least one overnight stay for the year-end New-Year season (from Dec. 23 through Jan. 3 on a departure basis). The survey was based on a questionnaire completed by 1,200 respondents, bookings with JTB Group companies and airline reservations, and industry trends, etc. The results of this, the 39th such survey since the first in 1969, are as follows.

Table 1: Estimates	Figures for 2007/2008	Comparison with previous year	Figures for 2006/2007
Total no. of travelers	30.094 million	+0.2%	30.043 million
Domestic	29.450 million	+0.2%	29.400 million
Overseas	644,000	+0.2%	643,000
Average domestic expenditure on travel	34,210 JPY (297.50 USD)	+0.1%	34,160 JPY (297 USD)
Average overseas expenditure on travel	214,700 JPY (1,867 USD)	+2.0%	210,510 JPY (1,831 USD)
Total expenditures	1,145.8 billion JPY (9.964 billion USD)	+1.9%	1,124.3 billion JPY (9.777 billion USD)
Domestic	1,007.5 billion JPY (8.761 billion USD)	+0.3%	1,004.3 billion JPY (8.733 billion USD)
Overseas	138.3 billion JPY (1.203 billion USD)	+2.2%	135.3 billion JPY (1.177 billion USD)
Average length (days)	3.9	+0.1	3.8

Note: In the table on the previous page, overseas travel expenditures are the average amounts for bookings with JTB and do not include expenditures overseas such as souvenirs.

Also, USD amounts are given, for information purposes only, based on a rate of 115JPY/USD.

Characteristics of Year-End/New-Year Travel

1. Taking Jan. 4 Off Creates a 9-day Holiday Sequence, Stimulating Travel Demand.

This year, *the holidays generally extend from Saturday Dec.29 through Thursday Jan.3, a six-day sequence (one day longer than the previous year). But taking Friday Jan.4 off extends this to an unbroken nine-day sequence*, a pattern that encourages travel to more remote destinations. This favorable holiday sequence promises to encourage more travelers this year than last.

Despite negative factors that include uncertain outlooks for corporate profits, soaring petroleum prices causing higher prices for many daily necessities, and large discrepancies between the bonuses paid by companies large and small, the questionnaire reveals an increase of 4.5 percentage points in those expressing a desire to travel, and shows keen motivation for year-end/New-Year travel.

At 644,000 (a +0.2% rise over the previous year), the number of travelers heading overseas is the third highest ever, not far behind the record 684,000 who traveled in 1996~'97, when there was a “golden” nine-day holiday sequence, and the second-highest 655,000 who traveled in 2000~'01 on the rebound that followed the Y2K scare of 1999~2000.

2. Expenditures Rise with the Increasing Popularity of Remote Destinations, High-Ticket Packages and Luxury Hotels.

More remote destinations are popular this year—Hokkaido in the north of Japan and Okinawa to the south for domestic travelers, and Europe overseas. Not only that, but higher-priced packages and luxury hotels are also popular. The yen has appreciated by about six yen against the US dollar in the past year, but it has slipped by about nine yen against the Euro, so expenditures are higher for Europe this year than last. This popularity of high-ticket packages and luxury hotels in more remote destinations is common to both domestic and overseas travel, and both promise to involve higher expenditures than last year.

(Reference: Tokyo's TTS foreign exchange rates according to the Bank of Tokyo-Mitsubishi UFJ)

Table 2: Exchange Rates	30 Nov. 2007	30 Nov. 2006
US Dollar	111.15 JPY	117.48 JPY
Euro	164.21 JPY	154.64 JPY

3. Changes in Employment Practices, Use of Holiday Entitlements, and Cost-Related Decisions

Departures at the year-end/New-Year season, particularly those for overseas destinations, peak as usual on Dec. 29 and 30. However, in comparison with ten years ago, there are far more weekday departures—on Jan. 2 and 3 of the New Year and Dec. 26 through 28 of the Old Year.

(Reference: A Comparison of Numbers of Travelers by Departure Dates for Years with Similar Holiday Sequences to that for 2006~2007: Percentages in parentheses are proportions and changes)

Table 3: Departures Dates	(A) '06~'07 No. (%)	(B) '00~'01 No. (%)	(C) '95~'96 No. (%)	(A) - (B) Change	(A) - (C) Change
12/26~28	152,000 (23.7)	147,000 (22.4)	141,000 (23.2)	+5,000 (+1.3)	+11,000 (+0.5)
1/2~3	127,000 (19.8)	116,000 (17.7)	98,000 (16.1)	+11,000 (+2.1)	+29,000 (+3.7)
12/23~1/3	643,000	655,000	607,000	-12,000 (-1.8)	+36,000 (+5.9)

This year's LOOK JTB bookings also show that departures are not limited to the usual year-end/New-Year holiday period but also, increasingly, appear to be occurring on holidays taken just before or after it for the following reasons:

1. Forms of employment, particularly in the service industry, are diversifying, and this can mean working through the official holiday period and taking time off afterwards. This is become much more frequent (for example in the information technology sector).
2. More people are also using their paid holiday entitlement to tack days off onto the start or the end of the official holiday so as to take a longer break.
3. More cost-conscious travelers avoid the peak days of the year-end/New-Year holiday, choosing departure dates to take advantage of the slightly lower tariffs immediately before and after them.

Characteristics of Overseas Travel

1. Christmas Puts Europe Firmly in Top Place; Families Prefer a New Year in Ever-Popular Hawaii. After the New Year, It's Closer Destinations in Asia.

Christmas in Europe

This year, it looks as if the dazzling illuminations of the Christmas season in Europe are attracting many people to spend the festive season there. The peak is moving from Friday Dec. 28 to Sunday Dec. 30, reflecting the fact that by taking Jan. 4 off, a nine-day holiday sequence can be enjoyed. But the fact that departures over Christmas cost less than those right at the end of the year are also encouraging many to make

earlier starts. In terms of bookings for LOOK JTB package tours, similar numbers of people are departing on each of the days from Dec. 23 (a National Holiday) through Wednesday Jan. 2.

Another characteristic feature this year is the healthy demand for luxury rather than economy packages, which is an indication of the kind of travelers who choose to travel in this season. The attractions of Europe are apparently triumphing over the disincentive of fuel surcharges rivaling those of last year and a nine-yen depreciation in the value of the yen vs. the Euro.

Family Travel is to the All-Time Favorite, Hawaii.

Hawaii is the perennial favorite for New-Year travel, and generally takes the form of a six- or seven-day stay, so the holiday sequence this year could hardly be more favorable. Departures peak on Saturday Dec. 29 through Monday Dec. 31, while the return to Japan is generally between the 3rd and 6th of January.

The most popular rooms are those with a tower view in luxury hotels like the Halekulani, the Hyatt Regency or the Sheraton Waikiki, etc. High-ticket packages are selling well.

Also, charter flights from regions throughout Japan are helping to sustain the general numbers of travelers.

In the New Year, Closer Asian Destinations...

Another characteristic of year-end/New-Year travel this year is the preponderance of four-day trips to closer Asian destinations such as Hong Kong and Macao. LOOK JTB bookings suggest that departures will peak on Wednesday Jan. 2, Saturday Dec. 29 and the National Holiday on Jan. 1, in that order.

With topical interest in Macao, several charter flights have been arranged, and courses taking in the MGM Grand Macao Hotel (opening on Dec. 18) are popular, reflecting the reputation MGM has earned in Las Vegas.

Bali Island, which finally completed a full recovery in the summer, is proving very popular this year-end/New-Year season. Flights using business class are a frequent choice.

Families Use Condominiums in Guam & Saipan.

Along with the popular closer Asian destinations, New-Year departures to Guam & Saipan are also common. Prices have declined slightly, and their popularity with families has increased. The most popular accommodations with families are easily-used condominiums or connecting rooms. Additional charter flights are all fully booked.

Characteristics of Domestic (Japanese) Travel

1. White Illuminations in Hokkaido and Okinawa Resorts Remain Popular.

With winters in Hokkaido regularly getting snow over the New Year recently, more and more travelers are enjoying the pure white delights of high-quality snow on Hokkaido's ski slopes. Overseas visitors from Taiwan are among the repeat visitors from outside Hokkaido who enjoy its brilliant white illuminations.

In contrast, there are the year-round attractions of Okinawa's resorts. Warm, authentic resorts and the growing availability of high-quality accommodation for adults make it ideal for a relaxed and leisurely celebration of the New Year.

2. Many Celebrate the New Year in a City-Center Luxury Hotel.

The Ritz-Carlton and the Peninsula hotels, both of which opened this year in central Tokyo, are among luxury city-center hotels that are fully booked for New Year's eve, Monday Dec. 31 and New Year's day, a National Holiday. Many appear to have been fully booked by early November. First to be booked were high-ticket New-Year packages offering suites or rooms with superior views at well over 200,000 JPY for a three-day, two-night stay.

The attractions of metropolitan Tokyo for a leisurely stay in a stylish luxury hotel, savoring gourmet meals, entertainment and amusements so as to get the most out of the New Year break, seems to have taken firm root among the more affluent.

Survey Methodology

Survey locations	200 locations throughout Japan. Stratified comparative distribution.
Survey period	Nov. 11 through 19, 2007.
Respondents	Males and females between the ages of 15 and 79.
Sample size	1,200 individuals (6 at each of the 200 locations)
Content	Travel plans involving at least one night away from home departing between Dec. 23, 2007, and Jan. 3, 2008.
Method	Individual surveys conducted by specialist staff using a questionnaire (100% response) on personal visits.

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Table 4: Numbers of Overseas Travelers (Dec. 23, 2007 through Jan. 3, 2008)

(Units, 1,000s)

	2007/2008	2006/2007	Ratio
Total Numbers	644.0	643.0	100.2%
Asian Total	361.0	360.0	100.3%
Korea	83.0	82.0	101.2%
China	80.0	90.0	88.9%
Hong Kong	38.0	35.0	108.6%
Taiwan	44.0	44.0	100.0%
Thailand	43.0	40.0	107.5%
Singapore	16.0	16.0	100.0%
Indonesia	18.0	15.0	120.0%
Malaysia	9.0	9.0	100.0%
Others	30.0	29.0	103.4%
North American Total	44.0	47.0	93.6%
US Mainland	39.0	41.0	95.1%
Canada	5.0	6.0	83.3%
Hawaii	60.0	58.0	103.4%
Guam & Saipan	52.0	51.0	102.0%
European Total	84.0	81.0	103.7%
Oceania Total	34.0	37.0	91.9%
Australia	23.0	25.0	92.0%
New Zealand	5.5	6.0	91.7%
S. Pacific Islands	5.5	6.0	91.7%
Others (Middle East, Africa, Latin America, etc.)	9.0	9.0	100.0%

Table 5: Fellow Travelers**(Single Answers)**

	%	Change
Family Members	74.7	▲3.0
Children (through junior high school)	38.5	0
Married couples traveling together	13.2	▲1.5
Family, friends & acquaintances	7.8	2.9
Others (mothers & daughters, three generations)	15.2	▲4.4
Friends & acquaintances	10.7	▲1.9
Groups (colleagues, etc.)	0.0	▲0.7
Solitary	11.7	4.0

Table 6: Purpose of Travel (Multiple answers)

	%	Change
① To visit the family home	40.5	4.1
② Because I go every year	40.0	0.2
③ Relaxing at resort or hot springs	20.0	▲0.9
④ To enjoy the New Year mood	13.7	3.2
⑤ Family service, harmony.	12.7	▲3.3
⑥ To enjoy good food	12.7	4.3
⑦ It's the only time we can go together	10.7	▲1.9
⑧ To enjoy nature and scenery	9.3	2.3
⑨ It's the only long holiday we have	7.8	▲3.8
⑩ To visit theme parks or amusements	7.3	1.7

Table 7: Length of Trip (Single ans.)

	%	Change
2 days, 1 night	26.8	▲0.5
3 days, 2 nights	30.2	▲4.1
4 days, 3 nights	15.6	7.2
5 days, 4 nights	9.8	0
6 days, 5 nights	7.3	▲3.9
7 days, 6 nights	2.4	▲1.8
8 days, 7 nights	2.0	▲0.1
More than 8 days	4.9	2.8

Table 8: Reasons for Not Traveling (Multiple answers)

	%	Change
① I prefer to relax at home.	48.9	▲5.3
② It's too crowded.	34.5	▲2.5
③ Travel costs too much.	22.0	▲5.0
④ Cannot take time off work, etc.	19.5	6.7
⑤ Prefer to travel at other times.	15.7	—
⑥ Domestic situation.	13.8	4.2
⑦ Home budget restrictions.	12.2	2.0
⑧ No particular reason.	10.6	▲6.1
⑨ Bad economic situation.	9.2	▲0.5
⑩ Wanted to do something other than travel	6.1	0.8
⑪ Family holidays clashed.	6.0	0.8
⑫ Health considerations.	4.0	▲2.3
⑬ Couldn't make the booking I wanted.	2.8	▲1.4
⑭ Wanted to buy something else, not travel.	1.7	▲1.5

Table 9 Changes in Motivation to Travel (by year—figures in parentheses are changes)

	2007/2008	2006/2007	2005/2006
Would like to spend more	8.0 (+0.2)	7.8 (▲4.6)	12.4 (▲5.0)
Would like to spend about the same			
More trips at lower unit cost	8.4 (+2.4)	6.0 (+0.5)	5.5 (▲6.2)
Fewer trips at higher unit cost	6.6 (+0.6)	6.0 (+1.3)	4.7 (▲2.0)
Same unit cost and trip frequency	39.7 (+0.2)	39.5 (+0.7)	38.8 (+2.1)
Would like to spend less	30.9 (▲3.5)	34.4 (+4.0)	30.4 (+6.7)

Table 10: Trends in Year-End/New-Year Travel (Dec.23-Jan.3) from 1990/1991 to 2007/2008

Year	Travelers (thousands) (and % of previous year)			Average Expenditure (per person, Yen)		Total Expenditure (billions of Yen)	No. of Days (& change from prev. yr.)
	Total	Domestic	Overseas	Domestic	Overseas		
1990/1991	28,221	27,780	441	44,445	304,000	1,368.7	4.0
	100.5%	100.4%	110.3%	100.0%	110.5%	102.1%	0.0
1991/1992	31,152	30,690	462	44,854	284,000	1,507.8	4.1
	110.4%	110.5%	104.8%	100.9%	93.4%	110.2%	0.0
1992/1993	25,446	24,980	466	43,720	262,000	1,214.2	4.1
	81.7%	81.4%	100.9%	97.5%	92.3%	80.5%	+0.1
1993/1994	25,403	24,870	533	40,379	239,000	1,131.6	4.2
	99.8%	99.6%	114.4%	92.4%	91.2%	93.2%	+0.1
1994/1995	26,755	26,200	555	37,458	229,000	1,108.3	3.8
	105.3%	105.3%	104.1%	92.8%	95.8%	98.0%	-0.4
1995/1996	27,227	26,620	607	35,666	225,800	1,086.5	4.0
	101.8%	101.6%	109.4%	95.2%	98.6%	98.0%	+0.2
1996/1997	28,754	28,070	684	36,370	242,120	1,186.5	4.5
	105.6%	105.4%	112.7%	102.0%	107.2%	109.2%	+0.5
1997/1998	28,931	28,295	636	35,820	243,570	1,168.4	3.9
	100.6%	100.8%	93.0%	98.5%	100.6%	98.5%	-0.6
1998/1999	28,332	27,701	631	34,750	224,550	1,104.3	3.8
	97.9%	97.9%	99.2%	97.0%	92.2%	94.5%	-0.1
1999/2000	27,567	27,106	461	33,986	222,152	1,023.6	3.7
	97.3%	97.9%	73.1%	97.8%	98.9%	92.7%	-0.1
2000/2001	29,885	29,230	655	36,766	223,284	1,220.8	3.5
	108.4%	107.8%	142.1%	108.2%	100.5%	119.3%	-0.2
2001/2002	30,227	29,727	500	37,216	216,927	1,214.8	3.7
	101.1%	101.7%	76.3%	101.2%	97.2%	99.5%	+0.2
2002/2003	29,254	28,653	601	35,390	225,170	1,149.4	3.9
	96.8%	96.4%	120.2%	95.1%	103.8%	94.6%	+0.2
2003/2004	29,296	28,710	586	34,576	224,940	1,124.5	3.7
	100.1%	100.2%	97.5%	97.7%	99.9%	97.8%	-0.2
2004/2005	29,358	28,739	619	34,472	195,923	1,112.0	3.6
	100.2%	100.1%	105.6%	99.7%	87.1%	98.9%	-0.1
2005/2006	29,931	29,303	628	34,093	199,449	1,124.3	3.8
	102.0%	102.0%	101.5%	98.9%	101.8%	101.1%	+0.2
2006/2007	30,048	29,400	643	34,160	210,510	1,139.7	3.8
	100.4%	100.3%	102.4%	100.2%	105.5%	101.4%	0.0
2007/2008	30,094	29,450	644	34,210	214,700	1,145.8	3.9
	100.2%	100.2%	100.2%	100.1%	102.0%	100.5%	+0.1

Trends in Year-End/New-Year Overseas Travelers

