

# 2019 family travel forecast: Millennial travel is about to change

By [Chelsey Hale](#)

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Family travel is set to grow by 25% in 2022, from 300-million trips recorded in 2017 to an estimated 376-million over the next four years, according to research by data and insight agency GlobalData.



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"Millennials are growing up, and so are their kids," says Sharmila Ragunanan, marketing manager of Dream Hotels and Resorts.

"While perhaps timing it later than previous generations, what has been characterised as the 'me, myself and I' generation is transitioning into a 'me and my child' generation, driving demand for family-orientated travel products and services."

MMGY Global, one of the largest integrated marketing companies specialising in the travel, hospitality and entertainment spheres, says Millennials aren't only travelling more than ever before, but 44% of them are also travelling with their children.

The travel-loving Millennial generation is continuing its 'experiences over stuff', globetrotting lifestyle through parenthood, explains Tanya Badenhorst, founder of Things to Do with Kids, an online magazine aimed at South African families.

"With scores of travel companies, marketers and bloggers turning their attention to family travel, and offering accessible resources online, it has become much easier for them to do so, and with more encouragement, compared to previous generations."

## **Family holidays of choice**

Millennial parents want their children to become citizens of the world, and family travel is moving beyond water parks and pony rides to become just as interesting as any other type of travel, explains Ragunanan.

"Increasingly, it is not about unique destinations only, but more cultural trips and activity-filled adventures for family members providing that much-needed time to reconnect with each other and create lasting memories."

Things to Do with Kids readers indicate adventure travel is another popular trend that will continue into 2019. "When South African families seek accommodation, now they look for plenty of activities to keep the entire group engaged, and not just the kids," says Badenhorst.

Both Millennials and Generation X parents value healthy outdoor activities with tour operators such as Acrobranch, Scootours, and Cape Canopy Tours here in the Western Cape. Educational experiences also top the list, especially where it involves connecting with nature."

Ragunanan says: "When it comes to accommodation, hotels, lodges and resorts need to look at pleasing not just parents, but their increasingly sophisticated young travellers. Across our portfolio of hotels and resorts, we have incorporated aspects from junior gourmet menus, mini ranger courses, family walking safaris, cooking classes, star gazing, and many other enriching educational programmes."

## **"When I was young..."**

Not only are Millennial parents travelling more than other generations, but they also want to expose their children to travel from a young age. At the fourth annual TMS Family Travel Summit held in 2017, 62% of travelling Millennials took their children under the age of five.

Just like generations before them, Millennial parents foster a desire to recreate their fondest childhood holiday memories with their own children, in the same places that they went when they were young adds Ragunanan. "It shows at many of our family-friendly resorts, such as the well-loved Blue Marlin Hotel in Scottburgh in KwaZulu-Natal and Piekenierskloof Mountain Resort in the Western Cape."

Ragunanan expects more multi-generational travel next year, indicating a high rate of repeat business from families that also include grandparents, great aunts, uncles and grandchildren.

"In many of our interviews with mommy bloggers relating to childhood travel memories, most have physically revisited their own childhood holiday destinations with their offspring," says Badenhorst. "This continuing trend makes marketing to families a long-term investment for travel stakeholders and accommodation establishments. Building consumer relationships with Millennial and Generation X parents means building into their family traditions and memories, resulting in customers for generations to come."

## **2019 travel for South African families**

Millennial or not, South African families need to start planning early and budgeting carefully for the upcoming holiday period, says Ragunanan.

"Taking the economy into consideration, young South African families place a premium on authenticity – and they don't like being 'sold' to," adds Badenhorst. "Many turn to their friends for affordable travel suggestions, as well as various family community groups on social media."

Badenhorst concludes by saying: "These areas are a place in which to connect with other young families, and discuss any concerns regarding holiday safety too."

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Chelsey Hale currently works as a content writer and brand owner for Big Ambitions, a specialist travel and tourism marketing and content agency based in South Africa. Changing countries every two years or so, travel is what she knows and how she lives. Her passion lies in writing and research, which is much like her very own superpower.

She is originally from the city of Durban where she gained her degree in English and History and considers herself as being more of a quintessential treasure hunter, often exploring new locations, cultures and city hot spots whenever she can.

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