



# VisitBritain Consumer Trends 2026



Chester, England ©Marketing Cheshire/Kat Hannon





# Consumer Trends

2026/2027  
(and onwards)

 **Foresight  
Factory**

# Trends Overview 2026/2027 (and onwards)

## Experience like a Local

Demanding offerings and experiences that authentically connect to local culture, people and place.



## Travel for Good

From low impact to lasting impact: consumers increasingly aim to give back more than they take.



## Real Connections

Seeking connection through shared moments and cultural exchange in a divided world.



## Back to Nature

Reconnecting with the wild to reset, recharge, and restore balance in a fast-paced world.



## Healthy Habits

Building physical, mental, and emotional resilience through travel.





# Trend 1: Experience like a Local

Demanding offerings and experiences that authentically connect to local culture, people and place.

## In a nutshell:

- **Seeking authentic immersion:** In an era saturated with curated content and AI, travellers increasingly seek experiences that embed them in real local life. Beyond just visiting, they want to live the culture, even briefly.
- **Cultural fluency as status:** The new badge of sophistication lies in knowing where locals go, how they spend their time, and being able to navigate destinations with insider knowledge.
- **Crafted by people, not algorithms:** As digital experiences grow more automated, travellers are placing higher value on human-made, community-rooted offerings.



**Best seasons:** Spring (Apr–Jun), Autumn (Sep–Oct)

Travellers looking to experience Britain “like a local” are best served in the shoulder seasons, when crowds are thinner, pricing is softer, and locals are more visible in daily routines.

# Tapping into the trend

## Trend 1: Experience like a Local

Demanding offerings and experiences that authentically connect to local culture, people and place.

### Tapping into the trend:

- Create content that immerses audiences in the **real pace and pulse of local life** – from neighbourhood cafés to seasonal rituals – highlighting *when and how* to visit without disrupting that rhythm.
- Shift **from generic authenticity to place-specific character** – show how geography, history, culture and community shape a location's essence and everyday experiences.
- Feature **locals as co-creators**, not just narrators – blending their perspectives into curated itineraries, event spotlights or city hacks to show travellers how to navigate like an insider.
- Launch **seasonal content** to encourage travel during quieter times, spotlight destination dupes, and **connect authenticity to timing and tempo**



Manchester, England ©VisitBritain/Shadman Chowdhury



# Trend 2: Travel for Good

From low impact to lasting impact: consumers increasingly aim to give back more than they take.

## In a nutshell:

- **From minimizing harm to leaving a positive impact:** Travellers are moving beyond low-impact tourism toward experiences that actively restore and uplift local environments, economies and communities. The most valued experiences now invite travellers to contribute meaningfully while enriching their own journey with deeper purpose and connection.
- **Ethical travel as identity signal:** As awareness rises, travel choices increasingly signal personal values. High-impact tourism may face social backlash, while regenerative participation becomes a marker of cultural intelligence and moral leadership.
- **Regeneration as a brand and partner imperative:** As expectations rise, destinations like Britain will be judged not just on sustainability claims but on visible, place-sensitive contributions to local communities and ecosystems. This means spotlighting partners and products with credible regenerative impact and encouraging industry collaboration that balances commercial goals with long-term destination stewardship.



**Best seasons:** Spring (Mar–May), Autumn (Sep–Nov)

Britain's regenerative tourism offers are most accessible and appealing in the temperate, activity-friendly seasons. Spring and autumn are also periods of local conservation work and rural regeneration, allowing visitors to engage with nature and community at a meaningful pace.

Alnwick, Northumberland, England ©VisitBritain/Pinzutu



# Tapping into the trend

## Trend 2: Travel for Good

From low impact to lasting impact: consumers increasingly aim to give back more than they take.

### Tapping into the trend:

- Shift from abstract sustainability messaging to **tangible, place-based impact stories** – showing how rewilding projects, craft revival initiatives, or zero-waste innovations are reshaping destinations across Britain.
- Elevate **local changemakers and community-led stories** – from farmers and food cooperatives to youth-led climate groups – offering travellers meaningful insight into what it means to give back, and also showing travellers the human side of impact – not just the eco side.
- Create content that helps travellers understand **how their visit can have a positive impact** – from supporting community-owned businesses to choosing experiences that contribute to local regeneration and cultural preservation.
- **Lean into place-based purpose** – illustrate how each destination's needs and opportunities are unique, and how travellers can match their values to those – including areas that would benefit most from regenerative tourism.



Alnwick, Northumberland, England ©VisitBritain/Pinzutu

# Trend 3: Real Connections

Seeking connection through shared moments and cultural exchange in a divided world.

## In a nutshell:

- **Social wellness as a core pillar of travel:** In a time of rising loneliness and digital overload, people increasingly recognise that meaningful, in-person connection is essential to overall wellbeing. Travel offers a unique space to step outside routine and engage deeply with others – even briefly.
- **Seeking shared moments:** Whether it's a conversation over a communal meal, joining a local ritual, or simply sharing a view with a stranger, these real, human, quality moments are increasingly what travellers seek – adding emotional and social meaning to their trips.
- **Connection as growth:** In a divided world, shared experiences with people from different backgrounds offer a way to feel part of something bigger and better understand other perspectives. Experiences that nurture shared belonging and development will become the new markers of socially intelligent travel.



**Best seasons:** Summer (Jun–Aug), Winter hols. (Dec)

Summer enables social, shared outdoor moments, winter holidays (especially Christmas in the UK) are emotionally potent periods, when themes of warmth, nostalgia, and togetherness align with this trend. However, the trend is not highly seasonal: focus here is on shared cultural moments (e.g. Bonfire Night, Christmas markets, local traditions).

London, England @Getty Images/Compassionate Eye Foundation/Gary Burchell

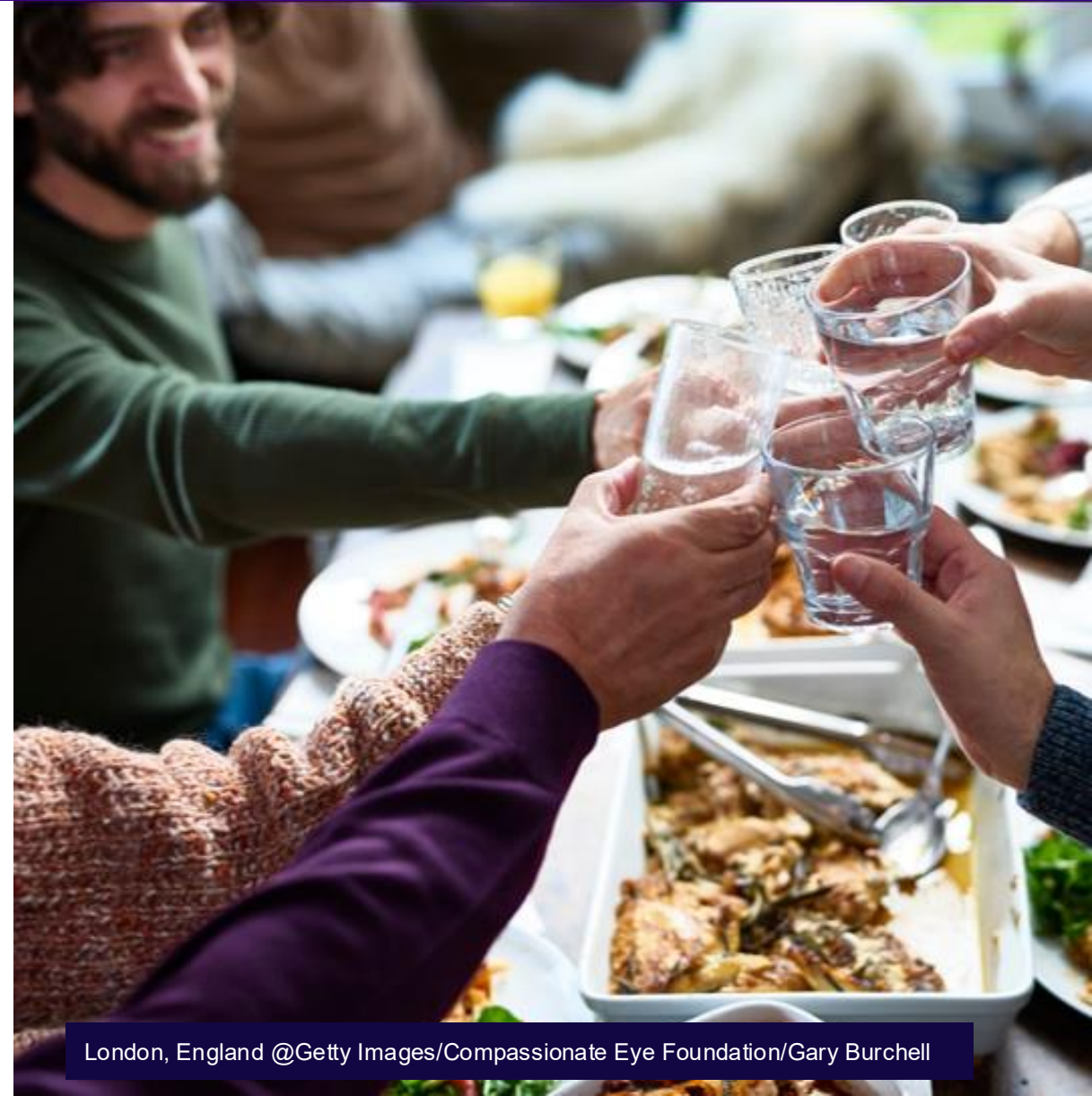


## Trend 3: Real Connections

Seeking connection through shared moments and cultural exchange in a divided world.

### Tapping into the trend:

- Create content and itineraries that facilitate **shared human moments** – from supper clubs and workshops to neighbourhood events and seasonal rituals – spotlighting the emotional value of these moments, not just the activities.
- **Celebrate fleeting yet meaningful encounters** – a shared view, a pub cheer, or a festival dance – capturing the emotional texture of such connection through image, sound, or story.
- **Feature cultural connectors** – chefs, musicians, artists, local hosts, performers – who create spaces for shared experience, mutual exchange and community.
- **Explore belonging through local eyes.** Use local voices to reflect on what makes a place feel connected or inclusive – prompting travellers to rethink what “connection” means on the road.



London, England @Getty Images/Compassionate Eye Foundation/Gary Burchell

# Trend 4: Back to Nature

Reconnecting with the wild to reset, recharge, and restore balance in a fast-paced world.

## In a nutshell:

- **A backlash to modernity:** As modern life accelerates, more travellers are turning to the natural world not just for escape, but for reconnection – seeking silence, space, and sensory grounding.
- **Nature as medicine:** Forests, coastlines, and countryside retreats are now seen as sources of mental clarity, emotional reset, and physical restoration – tapping into the rising desire for holistic wellbeing. While remote experiences lead this trend, pockets of nature within cities – like parks, green rooftops, and waterside paths – also offer valuable sanctuaries.
- **Off-grid is the new luxury:** Disconnecting from tech, routine, and urban intensity is emerging as a status symbol – experiences that offer seclusion, self-sufficiency, or immersion in nature's rhythms are increasingly coveted.



## Best seasons: Spring–Autumn (Apr–Oct)

This trend performs best when access to nature is easy, comfortable and beautiful. Autumn, in particular offers a strong emotional pull with seasonal colour, quiet countryside, and reflection. In winter, the trend can still resonate with snow, cold-water dips, remote coastal escapes, or dark skies tourism, but overall appeal may drop due to weather constraints and limited daylight.



## Trend 4: Back to Nature

Reconnecting with the wild to reset, recharge, and restore balance in a fast-paced world.

### Tapping into the trend:

- **Create content that inspires travellers to slow down and reconnect with natural rhythms** – from forest trails and stargazing spots to coastal walks and seasonal foraging – showing how nature in Britain can restore clarity and calm.
- **Shift from nature as scenery to nature as sensation** – Use sensory storytelling (e.g. birdsong recordings, misty visuals, barefoot walking shots) to help audiences feel the mood-enhancing power of the wild, not just see it.
- **Blend urban and rural nature escapes.** Champion Britain's lesser-known green spots in cities (like Manchester's Castlefield Viaduct or Glasgow's Pollok Park) alongside more remote retreats, proving that nature connection is possible on any itinerary.
- **Lean into the emotional power of seasonal change.** Use autumn foliage, spring awakenings or winter stillness to create content that helps travellers reflect, recharge and mark life transitions through nature.



Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire, England ©Getty Images/iStockphoto

# Trend 5: Healthy Habits

Building physical, mental, and emotional resilience through travel.

## In a nutshell:

- **Escaping everyday stressors:** Travellers are seeking refuge from environmental and urban stressors like noise, air pollution, overstimulation and extreme temperatures – looking for cleaner, calmer and more restorative destinations.
- **Protecting and enhancing wellbeing:** With health risks increasingly linked to climate change and modern lifestyles, consumers are proactively choosing travel that supports both physical resilience and long-term vitality – from “Blue Zone” destinations to movement-friendly itineraries.
- **Curating emotional balance:** With mental health and wellbeing in focus, travellers are also designing trips around how they want to feel – whether calm, joyful, inspired or invigorated. Emotionally intelligent travel is gaining value as a tool for managing mood and mental state.

**Best seasons:** January, Spring (Mar–May), Autumn (Sep–Oct)

The post-holiday reset in January is a key trigger moment for travellers looking to prioritise wellbeing. Spring and autumn are also prime windows for wellness travel.



Bridlington, East Yorkshire, England ©East Yorkshire/Tom Arran



# Tapping into the trend

## Trend 5: Healthy Habits

Building physical, mental, and emotional resilience through travel.

### Tapping into the trend:

- Create content that helps travellers identify destinations with **low-stress environments and activities** – highlighting areas with cleaner air, reduced sensory overload, and gentler rhythms that support physical and mental restoration.
- **Curate experiences that promote intentional rest and balance** – from slow-paced retreats and sleep-friendly stays to active recovery through walking, wild swimming, or open-air yoga.
- **Blend wellness with the wild:** feature nature-based practices with proven mental and physical health benefits, such as forest bathing or cold-water immersion, explaining the science behind the benefits.
- **Reflect the shift toward conscious living while away** – cover destinations and experiences aligned with mindful consumption and wellbeing trends like sober-curious breaks, gut-health-friendly food, tech-lite retreats and movement-based activities.



Bridlington, East Yorkshire, England ©East Yorkshire/Tom Arran





# Appendix

- Weaker Emerging trends
- Seasonal focus
- Additional competitor activity





# Weaker Emerging Trends - Snapshot

## Experience like a Local

- Destination Dupes
- Farm Stays & Agritourism
- Neighbourhood-Focused Itineraries
- Craft & Maker Experiences
- Culinary Tourism



## Real Connections

- Communal Dining / Dinner with Strangers
- Event Tourism (e.g. Music, Festivals, Sports, Film...):
- Spontaneous Moments
- Urban Saunas & Bathhouses
- Cultural Exchange Homestays



## Healthy Habits

- Blue Mind Breaks
- Vegan / Plant-Based Travel
- Cold Water Culture
- Urban Wellness (e.g. Saunas, Bath-houses)
- Farm Stays



- Purpose-Led Stays
- Rewilding Tourism
- Sustainable Food Tourism
- Values-led Itineraries
- The Slow Travel Movement



## Back to Nature

- Seasonal Nature Escapes
- Digital Detox Retreats
- Foraging Retreats
- Nature-Integrated Architecture
- Dark Skies Breaks / Astro Tourism



## Weaker Emerging Trends relevant to **Experience like a Local**

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- **Destination Dupes:** Taps into the rise of overtourism-conscious travel by spotlighting under-appreciated alternatives to mainstream locations (e.g. “The new Cornwall”), helping travellers experience local culture with less commercialisation and crowding.
- **Farm Stays & Agritourism:** Connects visitors with rural culture, food production and seasonal cycles through immersive farm experiences—whether feeding animals, harvesting produce or dining with hosts, ideal for regional storytelling.
- **Neighbourhood-Focused Itineraries:** Supports deeper urban discovery through local-led tours and itineraries that focus on everyday places – cafés, parks, corner shops – offering a real feel for the daily rhythm of local life.
- **Craft & Maker Experiences:** Provides hands-on opportunities to engage with local and heritage skills and artistry – such as pottery, weaving, or traditional baking and brewing.
- **Culinary Tourism** champions the exploration of unique gastronomic experiences, encouraging travellers to delve into the flavours and traditions of local cuisines while fostering connections with local communities and culture.



# Weaker Emerging Trends relevant to Travel for Good

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- **Purpose-Led Stays:** Accommodation that prioritises positive social or environmental outcomes – whether through community reinvestment, nature restoration, or inclusive employment – offering travellers a values-aligned place to stay.
- **Rewilding Tourism:** Encourages visitors to engage with or support land restoration and biodiversity efforts – whether through immersive nature stays, guided wildlife walks, or direct contributions to rewilding projects.
- **Sustainable Food Tourism:** Experiences that connect food and sustainability – e.g. visiting farms reviving heritage crops, foraging experiences, or dining at restaurants sourcing from regenerative producers and using closed-loop kitchens.
- **Values-led Itineraries:** Curated travel routes built around B Corps, social enterprises, and cooperative ventures – making it easy for travellers to align their spending with their values while exploring a destination.
- **The Slow Travel Movement** advocates for a more leisurely and mindful approach to travel, encouraging travellers to take time to immerse themselves deeply in local cultures and prioritise the journey over the destination to minimise their carbon footprint.

# Weaker Emerging Trends relevant to Real Connections



- **Communal Dining / Dinner with Strangers:** Experiences that bring people together around a table – whether in local homes, supper clubs, or pop-up eateries – offering travellers meaningful connection through shared food, conversation, and culture.
- **Event Tourism** (e.g. Music, Festivals, Sports, Film...): Major and niche events offer ready-made moments of unity – whether it's singing with strangers at a gig or bonding with locals at a football match, these are emotionally charged, socially rich experiences.
- **Spontaneous Moments:** Focuses on the value of unscripted, fleeting connections – like striking up a conversation on a park bench or joining a local dance in the street – where serendipity becomes the highlight.
- **Urban Saunas & Bathhouses:** Social wellness hubs offering shared relaxation, conversation, and ritual—bringing together locals and visitors in low-pressure, communal environments (e.g. London's Arc Community, Brighton's Beach Box Spa).
- **Cultural Exchange Homestays** offer travellers with the opportunity to stay with local families or communities, immerse themselves in local customs and traditions, and forge meaningful connections with people from different backgrounds.



## Weaker Emerging Trends relevant to **Back to Nature**

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- **Seasonal Nature Escapes:** Encourages travellers to tune into the rhythms of the natural world – like autumnal foliage walks, spring wildflower spotting, or winter stillness – timing travel with nature's emotional and sensory cues.
- **Digital Detox Retreats:** Remote or rural escapes that encourage switching off from tech, routine and digital and urban noise – creating space for introspection, creativity, and deep rest in natural settings.
- **Foraging Retreats:** Offer nature-based learning and nourishment through seasonal foraging, and wild food preparation – blending physical wellbeing with a deeper knowledge of the land and nature-rooted traditions/remedies.
- **Nature-Integrated Architecture:** Unique stays – like treehouses, earth lodges or cabins – that disappear into the landscape and provide guests with a seamless connection to the wild, often built using sustainable or vernacular materials.
- **Dark Skies Breaks / Astro Tourism:** Stays designed around stargazing and skywatching in certified low-light zones – such as Exmoor or Northumberland – offering stillness, perspective, and wonder through celestial immersion.

# Weaker Emerging Trends relevant to **Healthy Habits**

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- **Blue Mind Breaks:** Water-based escapes that support emotional balance and stress relief through proximity to natural water sources.
- **Vegan / Plant-Based Travel:** Itineraries and stays that prioritise plant-based cuisine and conscious consumption, appealing to health-conscious and sustainability-minded traveller options.
- **Cold Water Culture:** Highlights the rise of cold dips, lidos and wild swimming in urban areas (e.g. London's Hampstead Ponds, Bristol Lido, Victoria Baths in Manchester) as well as in more remote/rural locations as a revitalising practice for both body and mind.
- **Urban Wellness (e.g. Saunas, Bath-houses):** Brings moments of recovery into city breaks – through rooftop saunas, sound baths, yoga cafés or wellness hotel –allowing travellers to weave micro-wellbeing into urban travel.
- **Farm Stays:** Reconnecting with slow living, natural food cycles, and physical activity through immersive stays on working farms.