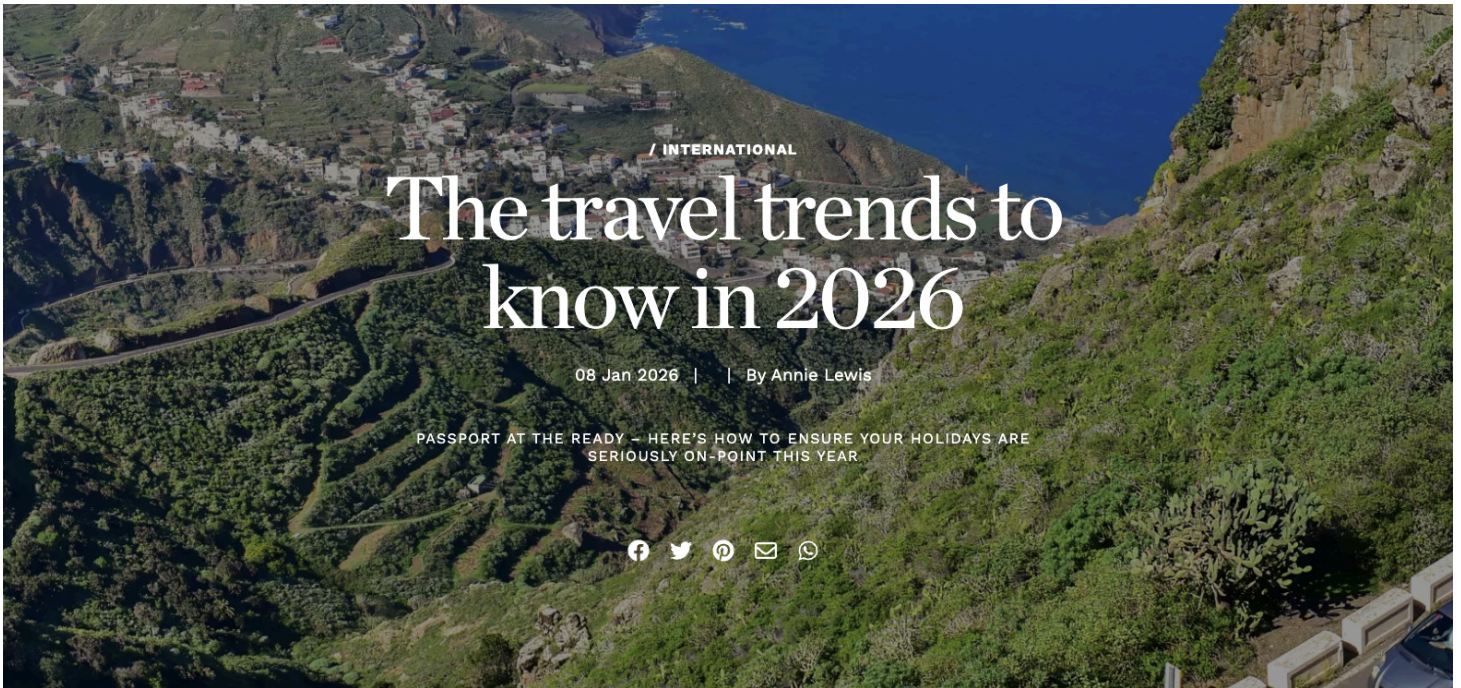


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The travel trends to
know in 2026

08 Jan 2026 | | By Annie Lewis

PASSPORT AT THE READY – HERE'S HOW TO ENSURE YOUR HOLIDAYS ARE
SERIOUSLY ON-POINT THIS YEAR

January is traditionally a busy month for holiday planning. With festive fun packed away for another year, the reality of going back to work in cold, grey weather makes us all yearn for a sun-drenched escape. Unsurprisingly, 2026 is set to be no different, as January sees UK travel companies brace themselves for a booking boom. In fact, the Civil Aviation Authority estimates 200,000 more travellers will book trips this month compared to the 4.3 million who did in 2025 – and we're firmly of the opinion that, if you can't beat them, join them.

In that spirit, we've delved into the 2026 travel trends promising to shape the way we rest, relax and recharge this year. From literary-inspired escapes – nodding to a surge in bookings for cruises down the Nile to mark the 50th anniversary of Agatha Christie's death – to swapping the Med for mountains this summer, here's how to be ahead of the crowds in 2026.

MOUNTAIN SUMMERS



According to Mr & Mrs Smith, travellers are looking to the mountains for their summer sojourns, rather than the beach. As high-summer alpine travel surges, with the Dolomites especially in demand due to the 2026 Winter Olympics, this trend echoes the rise in nature-first, wellbeing escapes. Pinterest also reported mountain destinations as the top choice for disconnected travel, seeing a 530 per cent increase in searches for ‘quiet travel destinations’.

It’s no secret that the Med is becoming increasingly hotter during the summer months, and for some, the idea of 35-40°C is not ideal for languid lounging. It comes after a 2025 report published by the European Travel Commission (ETC) found 81 per cent of Europeans have tweaked their holiday plans because of factors related to climate change. No surprise then that a summer holiday in the mountains provides a cooler (both literally and figuratively) alternative to a trip to St Tropez.

Best mountain resort: Grand Forest Metsovo, Greece



A world away from Santorini – and cooler in the most literal sense – are the rugged Pindus mountains in north-western Greece, which draw skiers in winter, and hikers from spring through to autumn. Perched atop a private mountain within the Pindus National Park is **Grand Forest Metsovo**: a five-star Mr & Mrs Smith hotel renowned not only for its curated concierge, but panoramic views of the surrounding black pine forest and picturesque town of Metsovo. Take in the vistas from the comfort of one of the 62 suites, thoughtfully designed with beamed feature ceilings and exposed stonework. This is Greece like you’ve never seen it before.

From £160 per night.

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