

Travel trends for youth travellers

 By [Kelly Jackson](#)

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Where, what, how and when? These are the top trends that will drive youth and millennial travellers in 2018.



Kelly Jackson, GM, Contiki SA

Structured tours with built-in flexibility

Today's millennial traveller is looking for the best of both worlds. They want the structure and hassle-free nature of group travel but they also want to have the freedom to break away from the group and do their own thing. Youth travellers love the peace of mind a guided tour offers but they're also looking for a trip that offers more flexibility and freedom.

Food remains a driving factor

We all do it about three times a day and when we travel we tend to sink our teeth even deeper into the local cuisine. Whether it's nibbling on bitterballen in Amsterdam or indulging in a hearty bowl of French onion soup in Paris, sampling the local fare remains a top priority for youth travellers.

To satisfy the demand for new taste experiences, Contiki introduced their Munch offering in 2017. Munch embodies Contiki's continual love affair with food and through a partnership with European Masterchef, Thomas Castberg, they put on food at their special stopovers that showcases local, authentic food at its best.

Taking this one step further is VizEat, a partnership which takes food to another level where Contiki guests are invited into the homes of locals, rooftop gardens or cooking schools to have an immersive dining experience. I really feel that we will see more of this – brands tailoring their offering to provide young travellers with the unique foodie experiences they so desire along their travels - in 2018.

Europe still top of the pops

So, where are the youth and millennials travelling to?

Europe remains a top destination and the prediction is Greece will be the comeback kid of 2018. Italy and Spain remain firm favourites and of course, the Island Hoppers to Thailand and Bali never cease to amaze travellers. Neither Thailand nor Bali requires South African passport holders to have a visa, as these are issued on arrival, making them a very attractive prospect.

Early/late bookers

There are two types of bookers driving this trend - those travellers who like to get in early and book as soon as the new sales season opens in September so that they can maximise the discounts on offer and those who leave it to the very last chance. It seems to be a toss-up between the planners and their opposite numbers the spontaneous last minute dot commers.

Responsible travelling

Youth travellers are increasingly more conscious of the impact they make on the environment and this is set to become an even bigger priority in 2018. The 18 to 35 segment are truly focused on leaving a positive impact on the world and as such are actively looking for ways to give back to the environment either on a volunteer basis or through using companies who are socially conscious.

Through the TreadRight Foundation, Contiki offers travellers the chance to give back to the communities they visit and by partnering with MeToWe travellers can ensure they leave behind only footprints.

ABOUT KELLY JACKSON

Kelly Jackson is the General Manager of Contiki in South Africa and recently celebrated nine years with the brand. Jackson has almost 20 years of experience within the travel and tourism industry - having studied travel and tourism, and working her way through various sectors of the industry ranging from a junior domestic travel consultant, wholesale sales representative, business development manager, and senior contracting manager, before settling into the world of sales and marketing with Contiki.

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