



Vacation Rentals • Management • Real Estate



2021

Vacation Rental Search Report

*How today's vacation rental
guests are looking & booking*



What you'll find in this report

On the cusp of a record summer for vacation rentals, we have more data than ever about what guests are looking for in their (long-anticipated) stays. How much comparison shopping are they doing? What amenities are most coveted? What trends are taking shape? Time to find out.

We dug into 12 months of proprietary data from Vacasa.com, encompassing tens of millions of users and site visits, and thousands of vacation home listings. We've distilled it down to our top 15 findings about travelers' browsing and purchase behavior. And we pulled out insights—some expected, others surprising—about guests' vacation rental preferences as we look ahead.

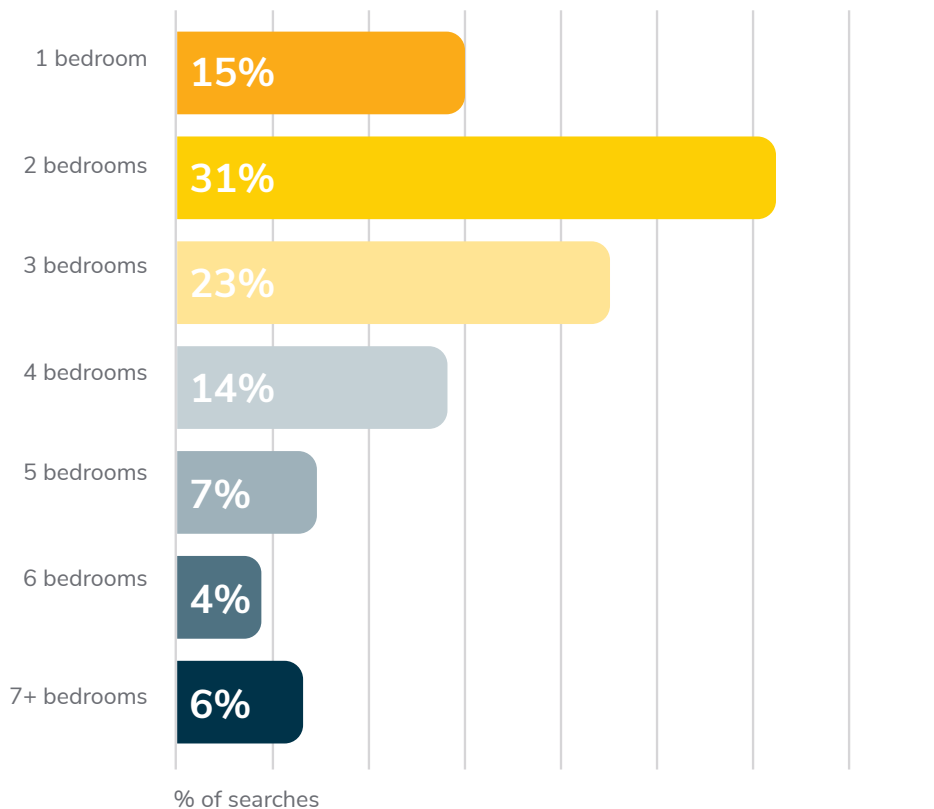


If you own a vacation home or are in the market to buy one, keep an eye out for our top tips to boost your revenue and stand out from the competition. *(Hint: partnering with Vacasa for vacation rental management can give you a big leg up.)*



01. Smaller homes, bigger demand

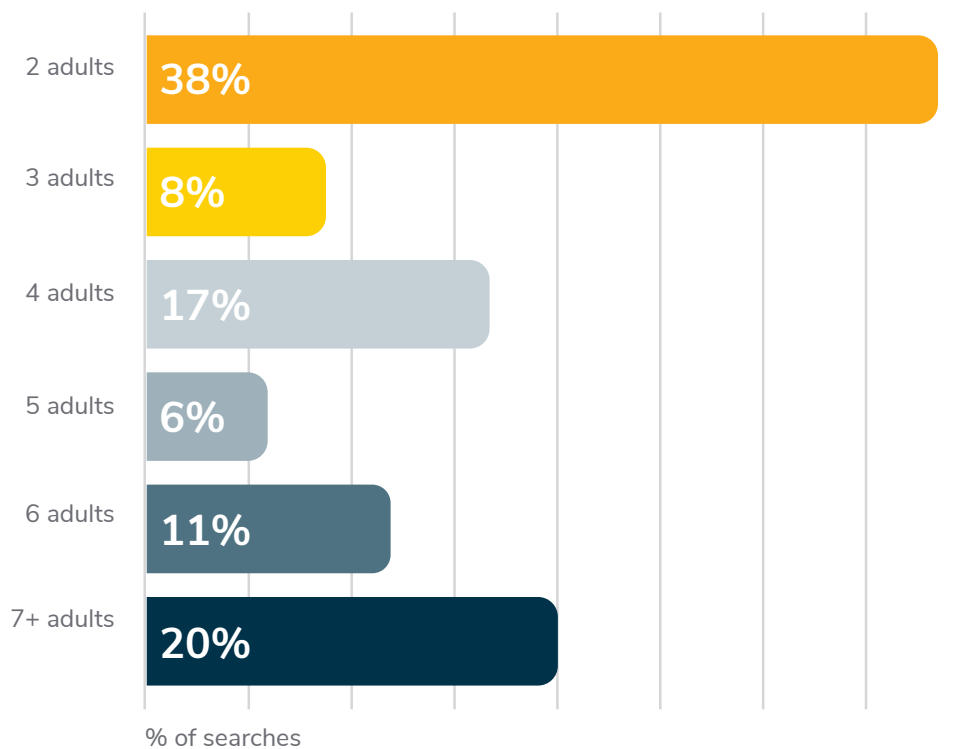
Across our portfolio, more guests search for 2-bedroom homes than any other size—suiting a couple, a few friends, or a small family.



The popularity of 2- and 3-bedroom homes is no surprise given the past year, when many guests have been traveling with just their households.

02. Coupling up

Once you dive into larger homes, we see a pattern: guests seeking out homes for groups of couples. Guests are more likely to hunt for homes that fit an even number of adults than an odd number.



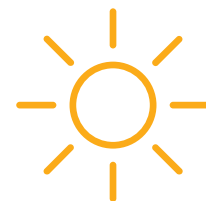
Extra beds can help you meet more demand. But think about furnishing your vacation home with beds that suit couples, and an even number of guests. An extra twin bed or daybed might not be as useful in the long run as a full-size sofa bed that can fit a couple.

03. Seeking sunshine

Destin homeowners, lucky you. You own a slice of our most popular destination over the last year.

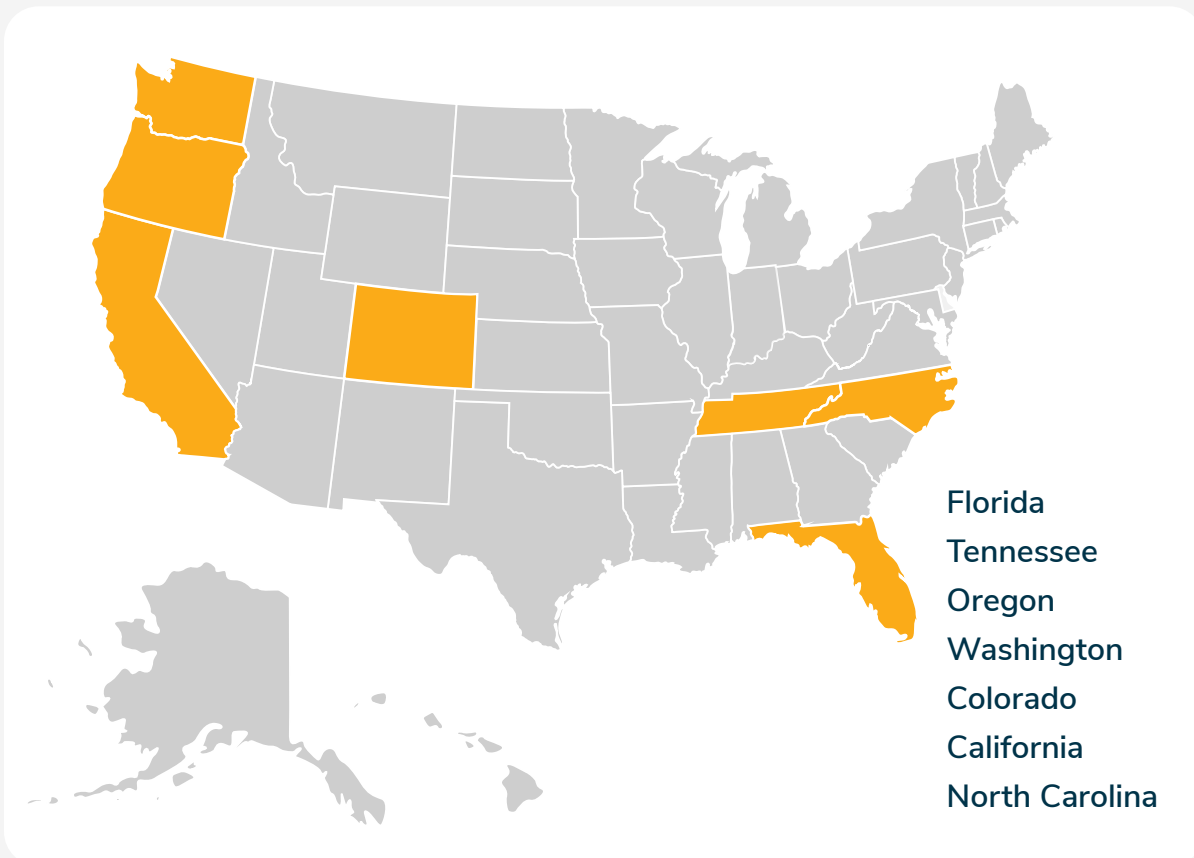
And with so many travelers eager to get outside, it's no surprise that sunny beaches dominated the rest of our top 10 most-searched cities.

1. Destin, FL
2. Panama City Beach, FL
3. Gulf Shores, AL
4. Orange Beach, AL
5. Gatlinburg, TN
6. Hilton Head, SC
7. Pigeon Forge, TN
8. Miramar Beach, FL
9. Lincoln City, OR
10. Anna Maria, FL



04. Get away, anywhere

On the flip side, not every guest is searching with a specific city in mind. Of our top 20 searches overall, 7 are for states—suggesting that many guests have a general idea of where they want to go, but aren't picky about exact location.



Guests also often search by destination more broadly, especially those where outdoor activities abound. (Think Lake Tahoe, the Smoky Mountains, and the Oregon Coast.)

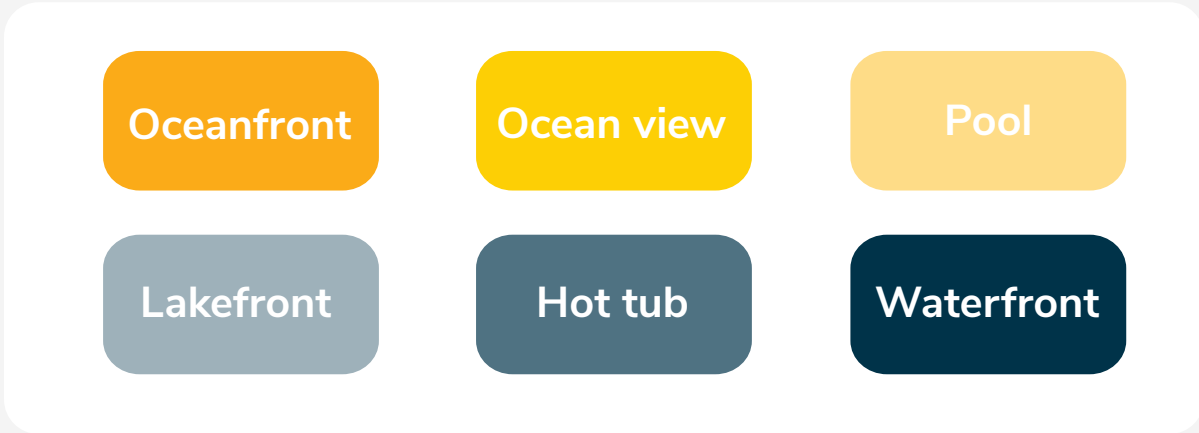


If you're not in a vacation hotspot, consider features that can make your home an appealing destination in and of itself—like unique interior design, popular amenities, or a beautiful backyard. You could draw in guests who are pickier about their lodging than the specific location.

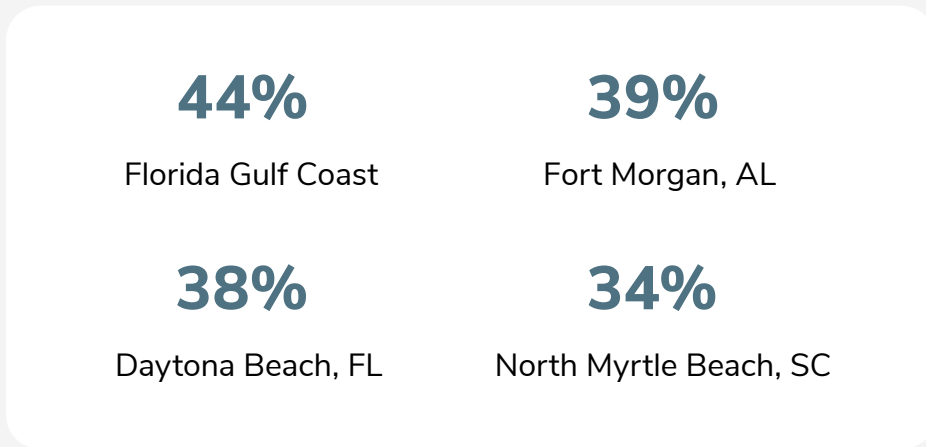


05. Water, water everywhere

When it comes to home amenities, guests love to be near the water—in any form. These are 6 of the 7 amenities guests search for most often:



In certain markets, travelers think it's especially vital to be right on the ocean. More than a third of guests filter by oceanfront homes in:

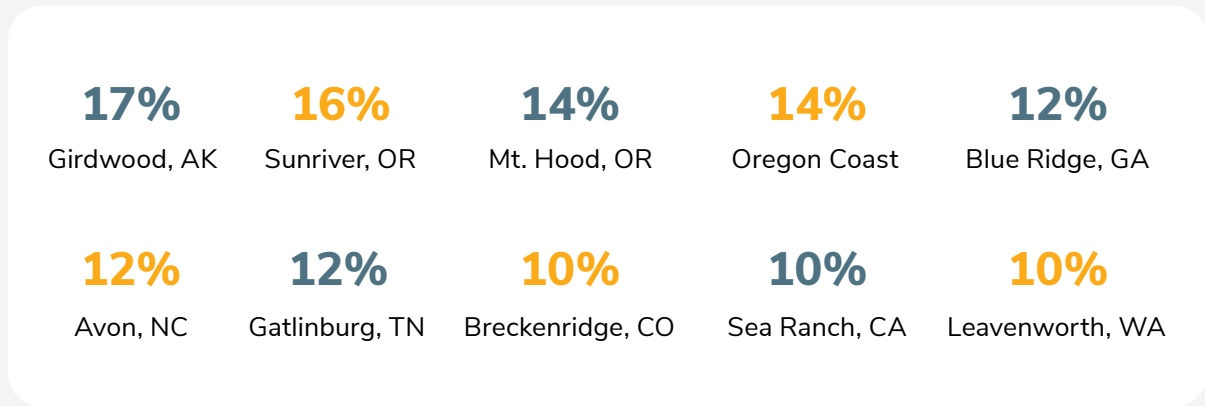


Meanwhile, travelers to North Carolina's Outer Banks want it all:



06. Where hot tubs are hottest

Don't live on the coast? Have no fear—hot tubs are our guests' fourth most desired amenity. Some markets stood out as being hotspots for hot tubs (see what we did there?).



Installing a hot tub can raise your annual revenue by 15–20%. Even better, sit back and let our team handle the installation and maintenance for you. Find out more at vacasa.com/soak.

07. The most loyal guests

The third most sought-after amenity on our website? Dog-friendliness. About 13% of reservations booked on our site include at least one dog.

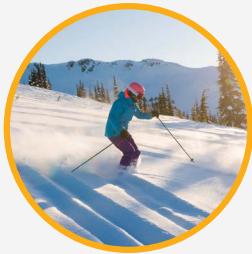
In New England and Texas Hill Country, travelers really love their pets. More than a third of guests searching for homes in those areas filter for dog-friendly rentals.



On average, homes that allow pets have 10–20% higher rental income and 6% higher overall occupancy than those that don't. Learn more at vacasa.com/woof.

08. Local amenity insights

Some markets stood out in our analysis for the importance of one specific amenity. These stats showed some guest preferences we didn't see coming.



Where do you think guests most covet direct ski access from their vacation rental? Turns out it's **Killington, VT**, where 22% of guests filter for ski-in/ski-out homes. (That's a higher percentage than in any of our Colorado markets and other ski havens like Big Sky, MT.)



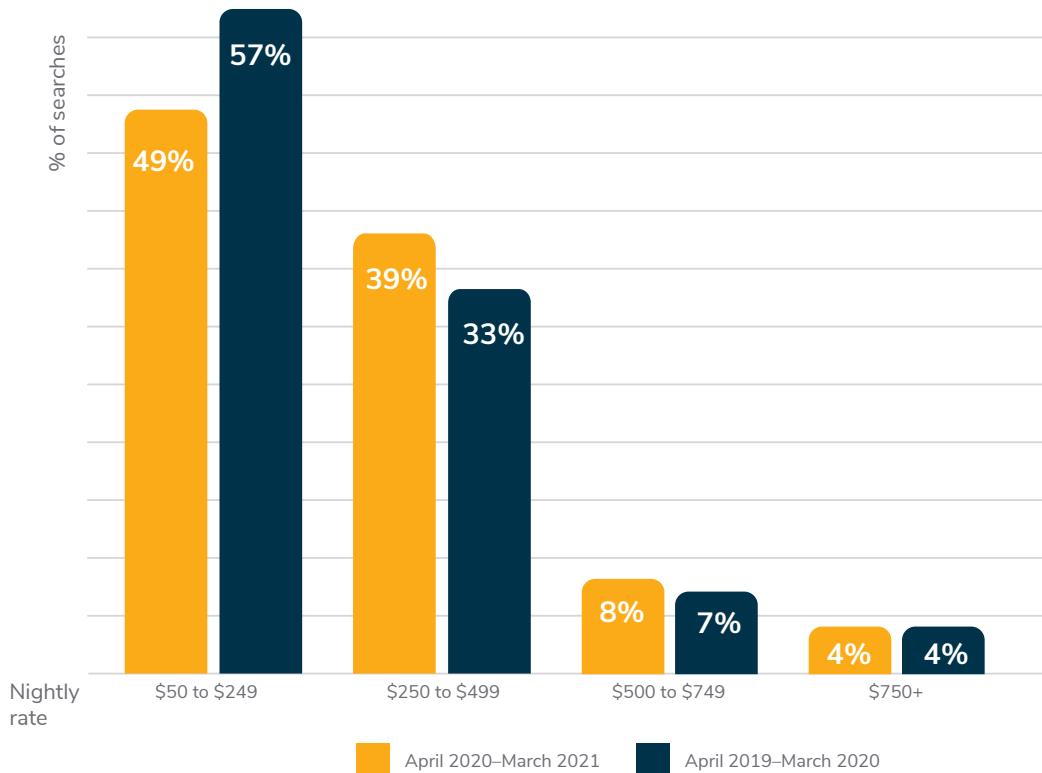
We always knew outdoor adventure abounds in **Sunriver, OR**. But it still surprised us that travelers looking at Sunriver are responsible for more than 20% of all Vacasa.com searches for homes with bicycles for guest use.



How about a game of pool? **Pigeon Forge, TN** has you covered, with over 200 homes with pool tables—and 13% of all Vacasa.com searches for that amenity.

09. Spending habits

We weren't shocked to see that many travelers are budget-conscious. Almost half of guests who search for a specific price range (49%) are looking for homes with a maximum nightly rate between \$50 and \$249.



At the same time, guests seem more willing to spend on vacation compared to pre-pandemic. The average total reservation cost has grown 22% over the last year, driven by longer stays and slightly higher average rates. We've seen this trend continue through 2021.



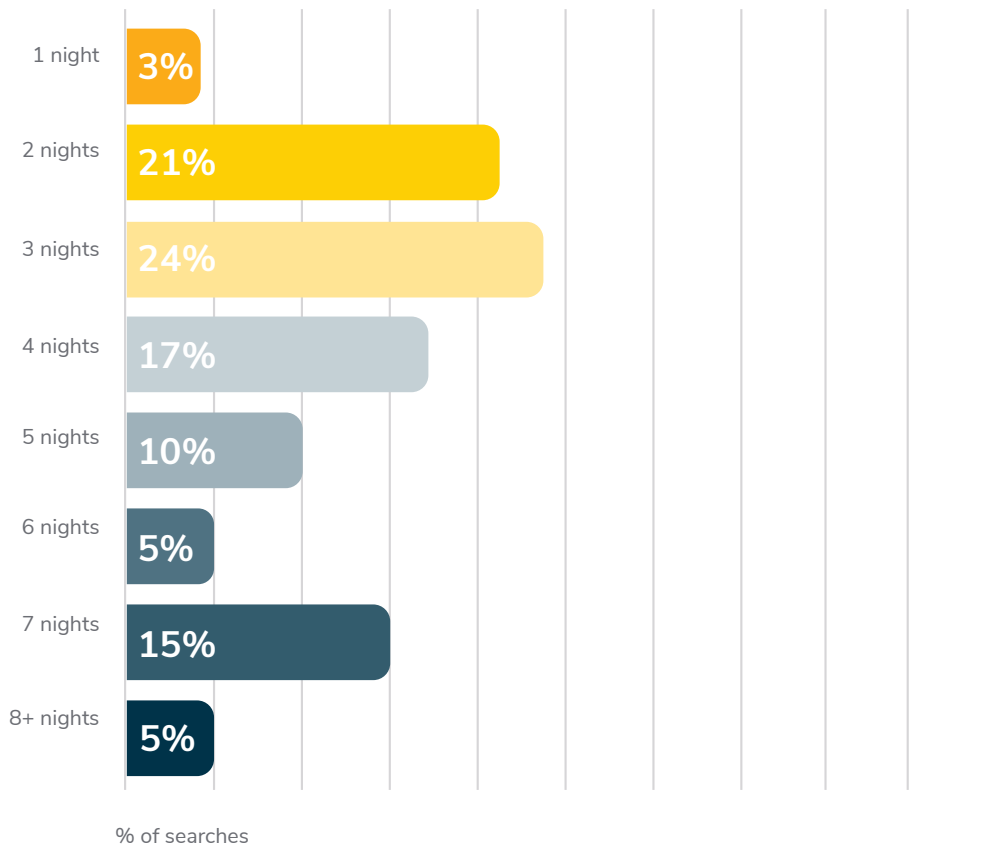
Dynamic pricing is a great way to encourage those longer stays—with generally lower midweek rates and peak prices on the weekends. Learn more at vacasa.com/revenue.



10. Settling in for a week

All in all, the average guest stay is 5% longer compared to last year. Short trips are declining in popularity: 1- and 2-night stays represent 24% of our total bookings, compared to 34% the previous year.

On the flip side, we've seen more 4- to 7-night trips. The new star of the show is 7-night stays. They make up 15% of reservations on our site (up from 10% the previous year).



Make sure your home feels comfortable for a longer vacation. Hotel-quality sheets, anyone? Learn more at vacasa.com/snooze.

11. Planning ahead

We're starting to see an increase in the median booking window (how far in advance guests book their reservations), signifying more confidence in travel. This trend started in January and February, coinciding with when guests usually start booking travel for summer and beyond.

20–30 days

Median booking window for most of 2020

35–40 days

Median booking window for the first 3 months of 2021

(That's actually 10 days longer than the median booking window for 2019.)

Of course, last-minute, quick getaways have their place, too. For 2-night trips, guests typically book closer to their arrival date—about 3 or 4 weeks ahead.

12. First impressions matter

A strong vacation home listing can catch guests' eyes with a single image. More than half of guests (54%) look only at the first photo of a property, rather than scrolling through multiple images.

Guests who do browse the photo gallery often like to explore most or all of a home. They scroll through 18 photos, on average.

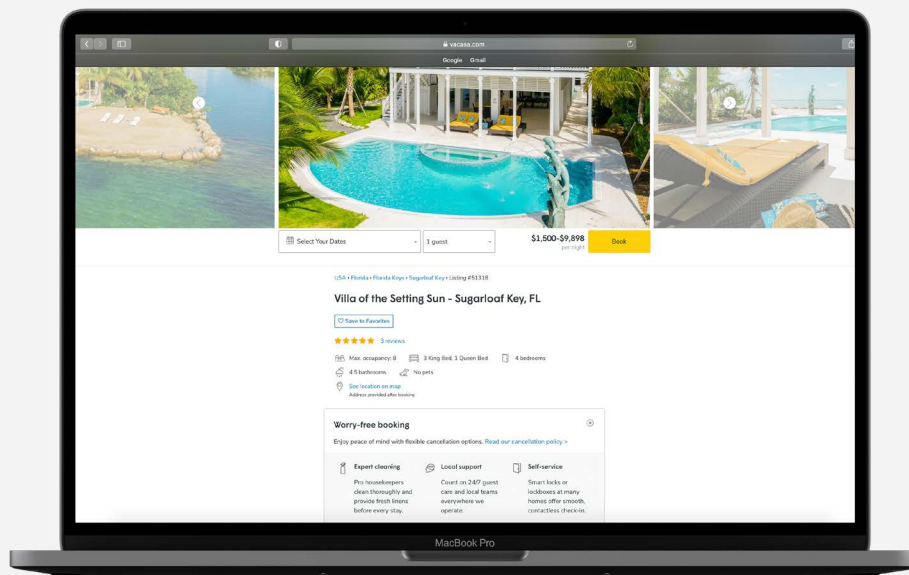


Professional photography comes standard with our property management services. We invest in every home before it's even open for bookings—outfitting your online listing with high-quality photos (plus a Matterport 3D tour) at no added cost.

13. Narrowing it down

When a guest lands on a Vacasa.com listing, they make up their minds pretty quickly. The majority (73%) decide to either book a home or move on before they scroll past the halfway mark. So keep descriptions short and sweet—every word counts.

According to our data, you can expect a guest to view about 4 different home listings before booking. They're weighing a few options and comparison shopping.



To capture guests' attention, we frontload every Vacasa.com listing with photos, a custom-written description, and a list of amenities in the top half of the page. See more at vacasa.com/standout.



14. Twice the traffic

The vacation rental boom is no exaggeration. We've seen Vacasa.com site traffic and the number of users more than double compared to the previous year.

Organic search traffic

↑ **124%**
year over year

Homes viewed

↑ **151%**
year over year

Visitors to Vacasa.com

↑ **116%**
year over year

Searches on Vacasa.com

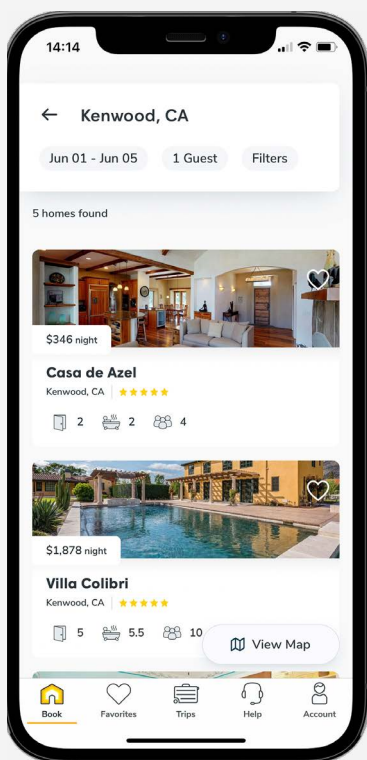
↑ **235%**
year over year

Translation: more guests are seeking out vacation rentals and clicking our way.



The tactics that help us rank on Google can help you, too—from keyword strategies to content production. Read our full guide to vacation rental SEO at vacasa.com/optimize.

15. Finding homes on the go



While guests themselves weren't as mobile during the last year, phones held steady as the preferred device for browsing vacation homes. Throughout the pandemic, more than 60% of guests explored our website on their mobile devices.



Smooth travels ahead: Our mobile app makes it easy for guests to browse and book any Vacasa home. And, once they've got a reservation on the books, all the details are available at a glance (from driving directions to the WiFi password).



Homes that take you places.

Vacasa is the trusted partner for all things vacation rental. Our homeowners enjoy industry-leading financial returns on their vacation homes, delivered by our unmatched technology platform that adjusts rates in real time and maximizes revenue. And guests can relax comfortably in one of our professionally managed homes across North America, knowing that 24/7 customer care is just a phone call away. In the past 11 years, Vacasa has grown to become North America's leading vacation rental management platform.

For more information, visit [Vacasa.com](https://www.vacasa.com).



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