

The
TRAVEL
ISSUE
PART ONE
NOVEMBER
2018
by
HYPE
COLLECTIVE

The background features a blurred action shot of a soccer player wearing a red jersey with yellow accents, possibly from the Spanish national team. The player is positioned centrally, with their head and upper body visible through the grid of text.

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And other things students want from travel

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Hype Collective is a student marketing agency. But it's run by two people whose student days are, sadly, long behind them.

So, every couple of months, we conduct research into what students actually want, to prevent the agency from working on the assumptions of the past.

This time, we looked at travel.

We conducted 10 focus groups of students across the UK, discussing everything from their dream destination to whether they think Brits on Tour are embarrassing. (Spoiler alert: they do.)

To stress test a couple of areas we were unsure about, we also conducted a Google Survey of 500 people aged 18-24 who live in the UK.

Our special thanks goes to StudentUniverse, Hostelworld and the British Educational Travel Association (BETA), for helping us with the research.

This research was fully conducted between August and October 2018.

Death of the lads holiday

Gone are the days when being a student and being perpetually hungover were one and the same.

If you're over the age of 25, the chances are that when you were younger, your parents told you drinking wasn't cool. If you're under 25... they probably told you the same thing, but in a surprise to everyone, they were actually right.

Getting drunk is now seen as something that old people do. Only one in ten young people think it's 'cool'. Far more would describe it as 'pathetic' or 'embarrassing'.

However, to say that young people aren't drinking at all any more is at best hyperbole, and at worst total bullshit. But it's no longer enough to sell a holiday.

The consensus in most of the focus groups we ran was: **what's the point?** If all you want to do is get hammered, you can do that wherever you are. Whether you're in Shoreditch, Birmingham or Wrexham, you can probably find some sort of boozery. Very few things unite the British High Street quite like the easy access to alcohol.

Students want more out of a holiday. In our focus groups, we lost track of the number of times that people said the words 'culture' and 'experience'.

They want to eat the local food, see the local wildlife, meet the local people. Then, maybe they'll go and get absolutely fucked in the evening. But that's not why they're there.

We asked 100 students to describe 'holidays like Magaluf, Faliraki and Zante' in a few words. Here's what they said.

Dont know / I would never go / Never been / Bad example of the British / cheap / Absolutely horrid / They are so amazing / super / Not interested / Awful / Too mainstream / Class / dirty / Would be epic / Some laugh some booze / horrible / awful / I would rather go somewhere else / rough / Not my thing / Not my cup of tea / absolute scenes / Bloody great / i think every lad needs to experience one of these places before they settle down into the adult life / I am not a fan myself / appalling / dead / unbelievable, amazing / awful / nope / Awful / NO WAY / good / Awful / I dont care / don't care / I have never heard of those places. / Class / not relevant to me / Never been / Can think of better places to go / tacky tacky tacky / grimey / Awful / a load of rubbish / its ok / No comments / Awful / i dun know / grim / Awful / Messy lol / Fights / A disaster. / shit / Dont know / Shite / So sick bro / i dont know and dont care / good / Such a shame for lovely islands to be ruined / TACKY / No / scary / Shite / Awful / Absolute hell holes / sound / Cheap, bad representation of english / Sick / Personally never rated them, just an excuse for Rugby boys to get completely wasted and try and prove their masculinity. / amazing / No / Rubbish / No thanks, not my cup of tea / Rubbish / they are in nice locations but have been ruined by package holidays / nah / Puts the brits in a bad light - brits abroad / messy / disgusting / all the lads, beers beers beers / drink / terrible craic / Young british people having fun at the expense of locals / Booze / Rubbish / Fun / Rubbish / Dont know / hate them / abs amazing / Awful / Good fun, but have to be careful / jelly babies / Awful / typical / Rubbish / nothing / Fun /

Negative: 58

Positive: 25

Neutral or ambiguous: 17

It's good to try something new. Like, if you come back and then someone asks, 'What did you do on holiday?'... 'Oh, I went to the club'... You're a student – that's your full time job anyway!

Reiss, 19

I'd choose walking in the mountains over doing Jagerbombs at 2am

Stephanie, 18

Magaluf is kind of like Little Britain. There's no point going there if you're already here

Dee, 18

You'll just have the hangover for the entirety of your holiday and probably on the way back as well... it just sounds like a dreadful experience

Francesca, 19

To see the video with all of these quotes in context, go to page 9

Broadly speaking, we're seeing that the traditional English-speaking Gap Year destinations are continuing to grow at the expense of traditional 'party holiday' destinations in Spain. While South East Asia continues to be popular, Thailand's growth has slowed in contrast to emerging destinations such as Bali and Vietnam.

Sam Willan, StudentUniverse



Watch one of the focus groups:



Reading an old-fashioned print version?
Get online and head to vimeo.com/297707009

Rise of the (female) solo traveller

Travelling alone. It's a divisive topic. For some it's the ultimate freedom: pack a bag, walk out the door and go wherever the wind takes you.

It can also be a bit sad, going on holiday all alone. Table for one. Every night. Hello again. Still just you? Same as last night? Carbonara and half a carafe?

We discussed this with our focus groups to get a sense of which way students are leaning on the issue.

It was pretty clear that very few people saw it as sad or depressing. Most people wanted to travel, and were happy to go on their own.

We spoke to Hostelworld, who told us that they've seen a 42% increase in solo traveller bookings. Most

interestingly, the growth in female solo bookings has outstripped the growth in male solo bookings.

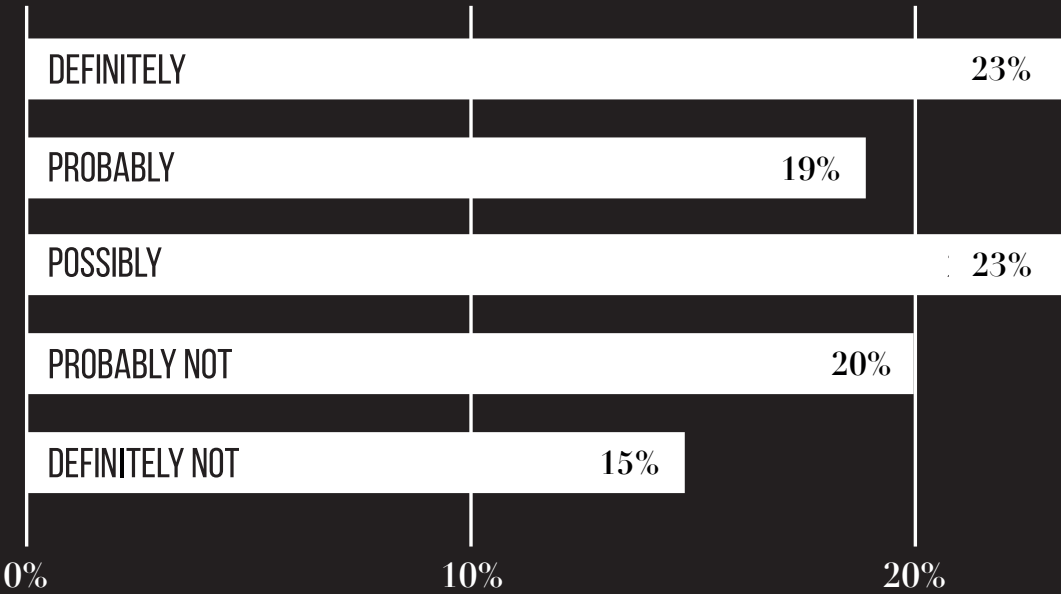
When we discussed this in the focus groups, the consensus among men and women alike was that solo travel is appealing. Many participants described it as an experience unlike your typical holiday, and said they would want to experience it at least once in their lives.

Issues of safety were raised, and some said that they'd love to go but didn't feel safe. However, many students brushed off that concern. One said, "I'm very aware of the political culture... I wouldn't pick a destination where I'd be at risk."



Would you go travelling by yourself?

Google Survey of 500 women aged 18-24 who live in the UK



Growth in solo hostel bookings

Travellers' bookings with Hostelworld between 2015 and 2017

42%

increase in all
solo traveller
bookings

45%

increase in
solo traveller
bookings
from women

40%

increase in
solo traveller
bookings
from men



Watch one of the focus groups:



Reading an old-fashioned print version?
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Crossing borders for the Gram

We know what you're thinking, but don't worry. This isn't going to be a thinkpiece about how Instagram is an important channel for student marketing.

Obviously Instagram is an important channel for student marketing. And it should come as no surprise that it's particularly influential when it comes to travel, which is arguably the most visual mass-market consumer industry.

But when we started speaking to students about how Instagram influences their buying decisions, we quickly realised something: people weren't just influenced by Instagram

posts from other people – they were actually thinking about how their own feeds would look if they went on a particular holiday.

Some of the students were actually booking holidays to get good content. It wasn't the only reason they booked, of course, but it was clearly a significant buying decision for many people in our focus groups.

The destination that came up the most was Cappadocia in Turkey – a remarkably pretty stretch of land, home to a lot of hot air balloons. These hot air balloons were initially for people to tour the fairytale region, but they're now a draw in >>



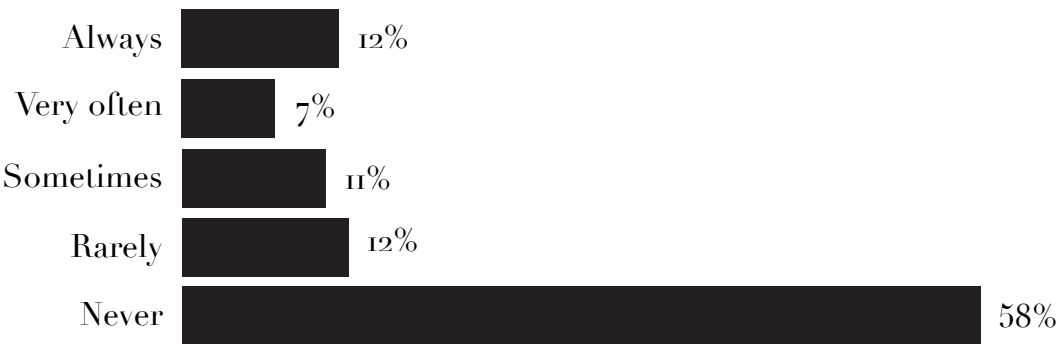
Cappadocia, Turkey

themselves, because the combination of honeycombed hills and colour-dotted skies makes for one hell of a photo. Students spoke of how they'd see a shot such as that – and how they'd want to capture it for themselves.

It's important to keep in mind that this was an extremely divisive topic, with approximately half of the students in our focus groups flat-out denying that they would ever consider their Instagram feed when booking a holiday.

Nearly a third of survey respondents said they consider their Instagram photos when they book a holiday (always, very often or sometimes).

Google Survey of 500 people aged 18-24 who live in the UK



We know that final 'Never' block is pretty dominant. But the fact that one in three people consider their Gram game when booking a holiday is still pretty striking.

But it was interesting to see that once someone sheepishly admitted to it, the whole group would often own up to acting in a similar manner.

If the first person to speak up was particularly critical about the idea, however, the whole group would agree. We switched up our approach when we realised this, and also ran an anonymous survey to test it. The results are below.

People are actually crossing borders to up their Gram game. That's pretty nuts.



Watch one of the focus groups:



*Reading an old-fashioned print version?
Get online and head to vimeo.com/297707023*

Brexit on tour

The Brits. We've never had the best reputation on tour. And it's safe to say that it's at an all-time low right now, thanks in large part to our absolutely-in-no-way-controversial decision to leave the EU.

We asked students whether or not they feel more conscious of their reputation abroad since the public vote in favour of Brexit.

In the quantitative survey, 45% of respondents said that on their

travels since Brexit was announced, they're more conscious now of the reputation of Brits abroad.

In the focus groups, around half of the students said they're more conscious of how they act abroad. Some even said they'd be more likely to shun the typical British tourist destinations, as they're increasingly aware of the negative stereotypes around Brits on Tour.

More bad news for Magaluf, then...



That's your lot.

We were tempted to close this issue by including a few photos of the agency's founders when they were 18 and on holiday with their mates. Upon reviewing the various albums, we realised that was a terrible idea. But we have agreed to share them with anyone who sends us a brief, so if you'd like to see our creative director's trip to Faliraki, do get in touch.

Thanks for reading – we hope you enjoyed it. (No, really, we do. We hate dull industry research papers and are determined to make something a bit more interesting.)

We'll be running another set of focus groups in a few months. We have no idea what they'll be about yet but, like this one, they will focus on what students want. If you've got any burning questions or bright ideas for our next issue, we'd love to collaborate with you. Drop our MD a line on simon@hypecollective.co.uk.



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Hype Collective

Hype Collective is a student marketing agency. We work with clients such as Co-op, Abercrombie & Fitch and StudentUniverse to deliver campaigns on campus, on social and in the media.

We work with a network of over 5,000 sports teams and societies from across the UK, with a combined membership of around 250,000 students. We utilise this

network in our campaigns, helping us to promote our clients both online and offline.

We also conduct regular focus groups and panels with students, in order to keep in touch with how they perceive the brands we work with and the industries we work in. It's what led to this very magazine.



Watch our lovey MD chat about the findings



*Reading an old-fashioned print version?
Get online and head to vimeo.com/300282405*

Special thanks to:



HOSTELWORLD



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