



# 2021 Independence Day Travel Forecast

June 2021

## 2021 Independence Day Holiday Travel to Exceed 47 million, Second-Highest on Record

**At 47.7 million,**  
Independence Day  
holiday travel to reach  
97% of 2019 total



As most states have relaxed pandemic-related restrictions, travelers will push Independence Day holiday travel volume to 47.7 million, just 2.5% below 2019, nearly 40% higher than last year and the second-highest holiday travel volume on record.

**Car travel to set a  
record, exceed 2019  
high point**



Car travel during the holiday will exceed the 2019 volume by 5%. Despite expensive gas prices, the 43.6 million auto trips will be 2 million more than the pre-pandemic high. The number of auto travelers is 9.2 million more than was forecast for the recent Memorial Day holiday.

**Air travel to top 3.5  
million, just 10% lower  
than in 2019**

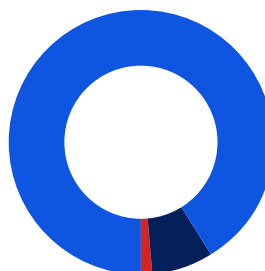


Air travel will increase 164% from 2020, with 3.5 million travelers expected to fly during the holiday. That total is 90% of the volume seen pre-pandemic and 1 million more than the 2021 Memorial Day air travel forecast.

### Key Takeaways:

- 2021 Independence Day holiday travel is expected to not only rebound to nearly pre-pandemic levels with 47.7 million travelers, but be the second-highest travel volume for the holiday on record since AAA began recording. Total travelers will be 97% of the 2019 total and 40% higher than in 2020.
- Travel by car is expected to remain the dominant mode of travel during the holiday period, which will push car travel nearly 5% higher than the previous record volume of 2019. The 43.6 million car trips will be 34% higher than last year and 2 million above the 2019 volume.
- With 3.5 million travelers expected to fly during the holiday, air travel will reach 90% of the 2019 volume. The 2021 forecast is 164% above last year's air travelers.
- 620,000 people will travel by other modes (including bus, rail and cruise ship). While the 2021 volume will be 72% higher than last year, the figure remains 83% below the 2019 total.
- The 2021 Independence Day holiday period is defined as Thursday, July 1, through Monday, July 5.

### Share of Travelers by Mode



Auto	91.3%
Air	7.4%
Other	1.3%

### Independence Day Travelers (millions)

	Auto	Air	Other	Total
2019	41.5	3.91	3.54	48.92
2020	32.5	1.34	0.36	34.18
2021 (forecast)	43.6	3.52	0.62	47.71
Change (2019 to 2021)	5.1%	-10.3%	-82.5%	-2.5%
Change (2020 to 2021)	34.1%	163.8%	72.7%	39.6%

## About AAA

AAA provides more than 62 million members with automotive, travel, insurance and financial services through its federation of 30 motor clubs and nearly 1,000 branch offices across North America. Since 1902, the not-for-profit, fully tax-paying AAA has been a leader and advocate for safe mobility. Drivers can request roadside assistance, identify nearby gas prices, locate discounts, book a hotel or map a route via the [AAA Mobile app](#). To join, visit [AAA.com](#).

## About IHS Markit

[www.ihsmarkit.com](#)

IHS Markit (NYSE: INFO) is a world leader in critical information, analytics and solutions for the major industries and markets that drive economies worldwide. The company delivers next-generation information, analytics and solutions to customers in business, finance and government, improving their operational efficiency and providing deep insights that lead to well-informed, confident decisions. IHS Markit has more than 50,000 business and government customers, including 80 percent of the Fortune Global 500 and the world's leading financial institutions. Headquartered in London, IHS Markit is committed to sustainable, profitable growth.

## About DK SHIFFLET

[www.dkshifflet.com](#)

DK SHIFFLET boasts the industry's most complete database on U.S. resident travel both in the U.S. and worldwide. Data is collected monthly from a U.S. representative sample, adding over 60,000 traveling households annually and is used daily by leading travel organizations and their strategic planning groups. DK SHIFFLET is an MMGY Global company.

## Economic trends include the following:

- Falling COVID-19 case counts, increased progress in vaccination and continued improvement in the labor market have generated steadily rising consumer confidence and a rebound in consumer spending.
- GDP should increase 6.7% compared to a year ago while the unemployment rate is expected to fall to 5.3%.
- Daily TSA data and weekly vehicle-miles driven data show continued return to pre-pandemic levels of movement while other high-frequency data such as weekly credit/debit card spending, hotel revenue data, dining reservations, and cinema revenue all show steady improvements.
- Consumer sentiment, while down from April's numbers, remains well above last year's levels.
- Gas prices remain elevated, averaging over \$3/gallon for May 2021. Motorists will pay the most expensive gas prices for the Independence Day holiday weekend since 2014 (\$3.66/gallon).

## Holiday Forecast Methodology: A Brief Overview

### Travel Forecast

In cooperation with AAA, IHS Markit — a world leader in critical information, analytics and expertise — developed a unique methodology to forecast actual domestic travel volumes. The economic variables used to forecast travel for the current holiday are leveraged from IHS Markit's proprietary databases. These data include macroeconomic drivers such as employment, output, household net worth, asset prices including stock indices, interest rates, housing market indicators and variables related to travel and tourism, including prices of gasoline, airline travel and hotel stays. AAA and IHS Markit have quantified holiday travel volumes going back to 2000.

Historical travel volume estimates come from DK SHIFFLET's TRAVEL PERFORMANCE/Monitor<sup>SM</sup>. The PERFORMANCE/Monitor<sup>SM</sup> is a comprehensive study measuring the travel behavior of U.S. residents. DK SHIFFLET contacts over 50,000 U.S. households each month to obtain detailed travel data, resulting in the unique ability to estimate visitor volume and spending, identify trends, forecast U.S. travel behavior and position brands — all after the trips have been taken.

The travel forecast is reported in person-trips. In particular, AAA and IHS Markit forecast the total U.S. holiday travel volume and expected mode of transportation. The travel forecast presented in this report was prepared the week of June 1, 2021.

### Independence Day Holiday Travel Period

For purposes of this forecast, the Independence Day holiday travel period is defined as the five-day period from Thursday, July 1, to Monday, July 5. When the Fourth of July falls on a Wednesday, it is considered to be a six-day holiday period, when it falls on any other day of the week the holiday period is a five-day window.