

WHAT WOMEN WANT

From solo adventures to safety concerns, our exclusive survey gives unique perspectives on everything the modern-day woman traveller wants

DECODING THE WOMAN TRAVELLER

What do women want? That's a multifaceted question. However, when it comes to travelling, women in India are now using the act of travel and their unique journeys as tools for self-discovery and empowerment. Outlook Traveller and Toluna surveyed the travelling patterns of women in India and what they look for to make their experiences great. According to the survey, around 60 per cent of women are actively involved in the decision-making process preceding a trip. However, for 8 out of 10 respondents, family still plays a monumental role in influencing solo travel decisions.

Another crucial factor impacting decisions is local transportation safety, with 57 per cent stating the need for well-monitored public transport systems with dedicated women's compartments. Nearly 90 per cent prioritise safety while zeroing in on a destination. An intriguing highlight of the survey was that in the 18 to 24-year age demographic, 56 out of the 347 respondents stated they preferred religious sites and pilgrimage destinations. This number constituted 16 per cent, nearly four times higher than the total 4 per cent. Further, Kedarnath and Tirupati took the top spots in spiritual destinations, snagging 35 per cent and 31 per cent votes, respectively.

There's no denying the significant societal changes around women travelling solo in recent years. Dr Asheesh Kumar, Assistant Professor at Centre for the Study of Social Systems, JNU, says, "Travelling solo for

leisure and tourism is still largely an urban, gendered and class-based phenomenon. The commercialisation of leisure activities as a medium to assert one's individuality has given travelling solo a newfound meaning as an expression of empowerment."

If you ask most women how comfortable they feel travelling in India solo, many will dwell on the negative. The survey echoes the same sentiment, with almost 59 per cent of respondents stating they have faced gender-based harassment while travelling in the country. Despite this, nearly 80 per cent believe India is largely women-friendly for travel. South India is perceived as the safest destination by 37 per cent of respondents, while over 40 per cent believe North India to be the least safe.

Sumitra Senapaty, founder of Wow Club, a women-only travel community, said, "Women are curious to know how comfortable it is to share their trips with a group of unknown women." She added that the primary concerns for most are safety, the quality of accommodation and their room partners.

In terms of safety, one poignant question still hovers around us. How can the travel industry and policymakers work to create safer environments for women travellers? Kumar says, "In India, the tourism industry contributed 5.8 per cent (178 billion USD) to the country's GDP. From this perspective, the sector is very promising if we could make it more attractive to women, policy-wise."

He adds that sensitisation of people, especially the industry stakeholders, could be an essential tool for change. "With prompt and responsive policing and creative use of technology, we could create a more inclusive and safe space for solo women travellers."

100
60
0

60%

OF FEMALE TRAVELLERS
DRIVE DESTINATION
DECISIONS AND
MANAGE BOOKINGS
INDEPENDENTLY

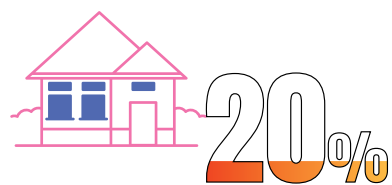
METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted online in English using a standard, structured, self-filled questionnaire. A total of 1,214 interviews were conducted, spanning 14 cities, including the top four metros and as well as non-metro cities. The fieldwork for the survey ran from February 6-13, with the target segment being women aged between 18 and 45 years who have travelled at least once in the past 12 years with a minimum of a night's stay at their respective destinations.

List of Cities Covered:

Delhi NCR, Lucknow, Jaipur, Chennai, Bangalore, Hyderabad, Kochi, Vijayawada, Kolkata, Patna, Bhubaneswar, Mumbai, Ahmedabad and Pune.

60%
PREFER HOTELS, WHILE

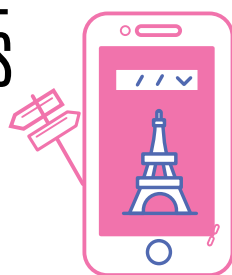


20%
OPT FOR VILLAS/
HOMESTAYS/CAMPS

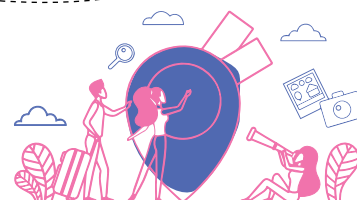
1/3RD
FAVOUR RURAL
DESTINATIONS



NEARLY
80%
EMBRACE SOLO
OR WOMEN-ONLY
GROUP TRAVEL
INFLUENCED
BY DIGITAL
PLATFORMS



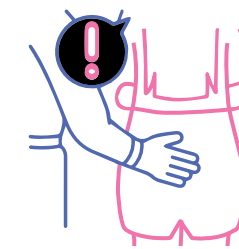
90%
PRIORITISE WELL-
KNOWN DESTINATIONS
RECOMMENDED BY
FRIENDS OR RELATIVES



60%
WORRY ABOUT
HARASSMENT DURING
NIGHT TRAVEL



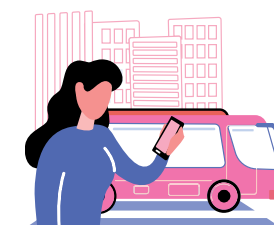
59%
REPORT GENDER-BASED
HARASSMENT, BUT



80%
BELIEVE IN INDIA'S
WOMEN-FRIENDLY
TRAVEL VIBE



57%
DESIRE IMPROVED SECURITY
IN WOMEN-FRIENDLY
ACCOMMODATIONS AND
MONITORED PUBLIC
TRANSPORT FOR SOLO TRAVEL



57%

WOULD PREFER SOLO TRAVEL IF SAFETY CONCERNS DECREASE



KEDARNATH IS THE PREFERRED SPIRITUAL DESTINATION FOR

35%

OF RESPONDENTS, FOLLOWED CLOSELY BY TIRUPATI AT

31%

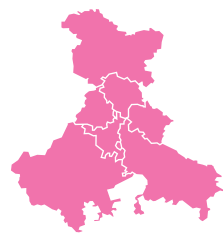


37%

PERCEIVE SOUTH INDIA AS SAFEST

40%

CONSIDER NORTH INDIA LEAST SAFE



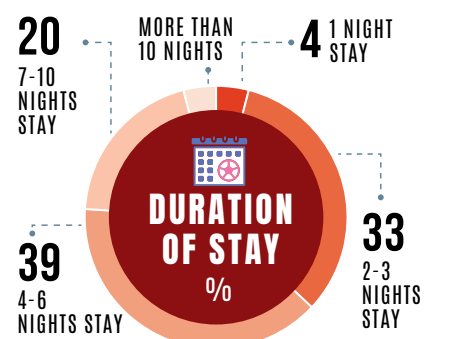
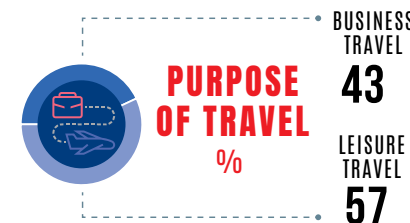
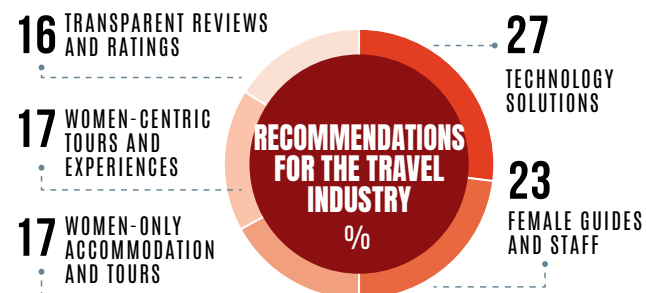
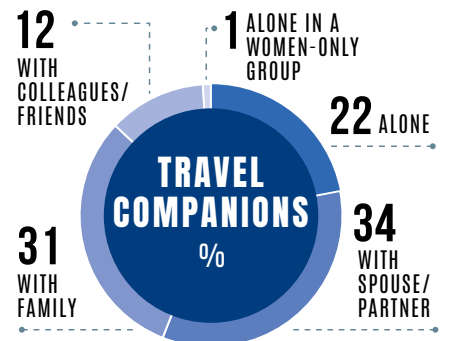
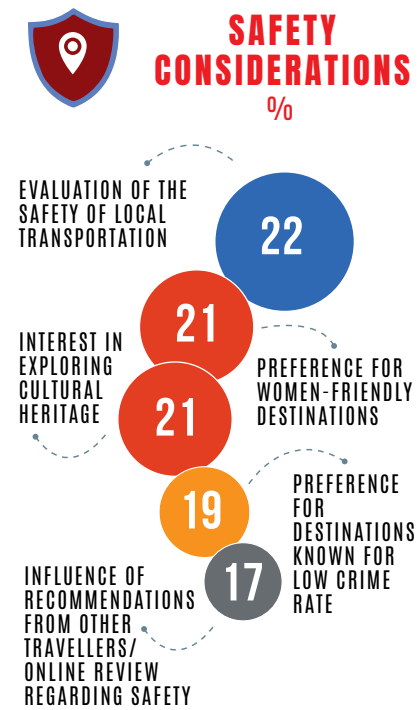
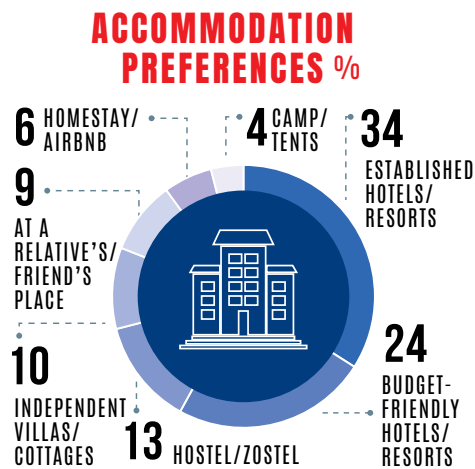
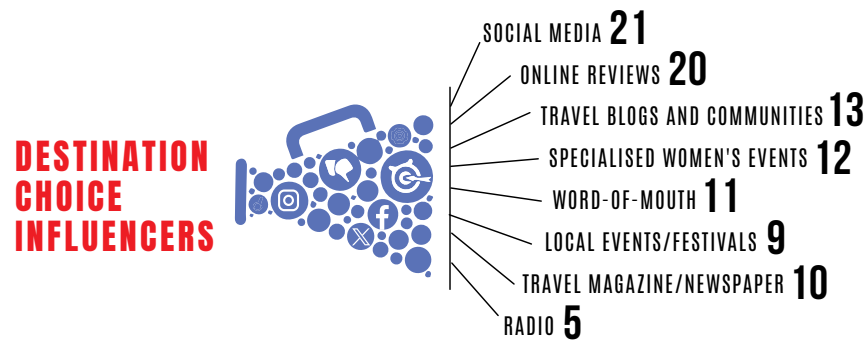
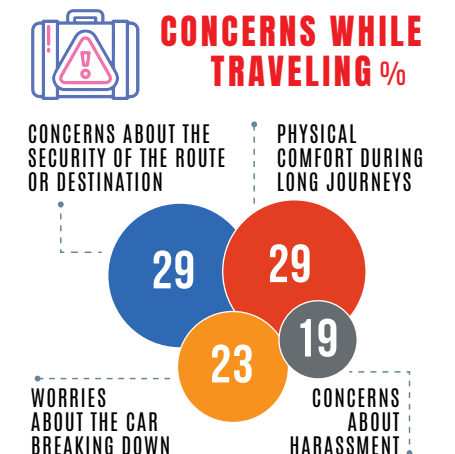
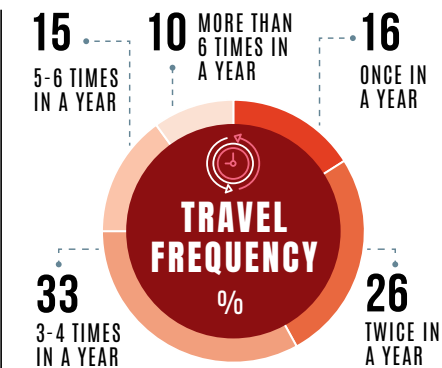
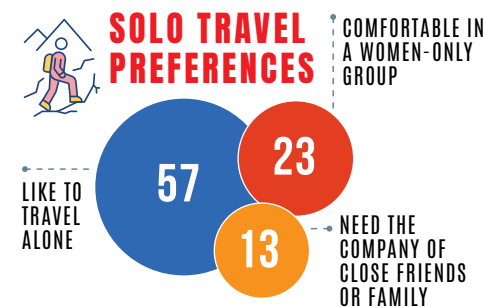
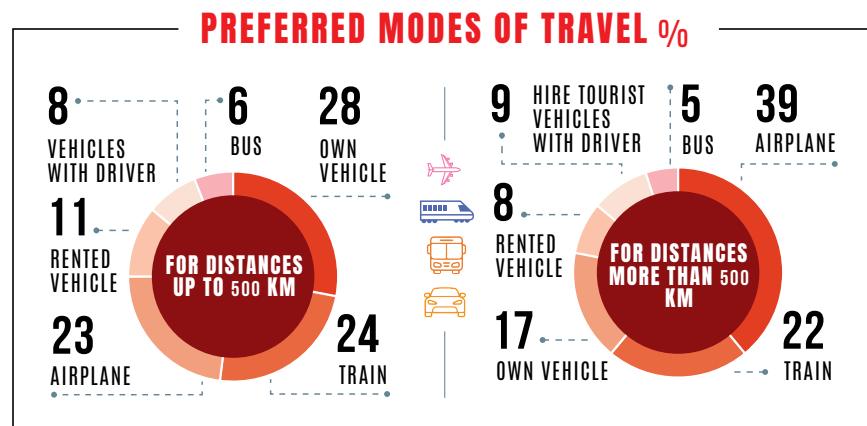
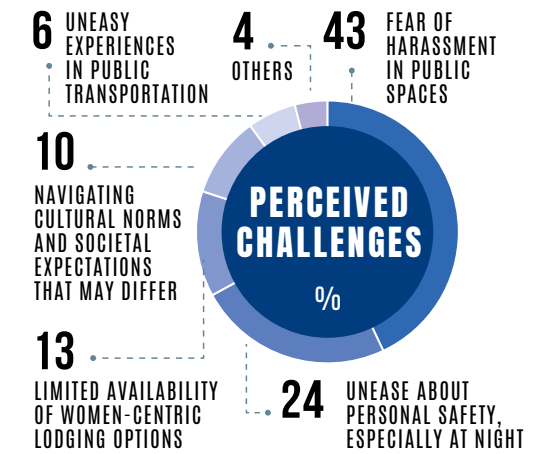
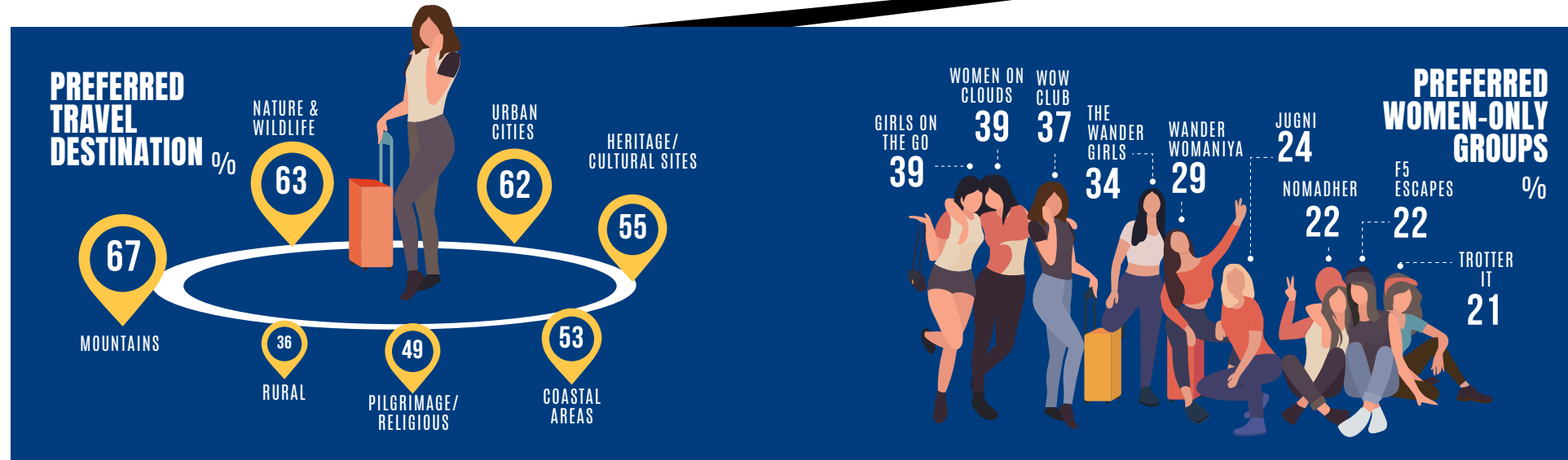
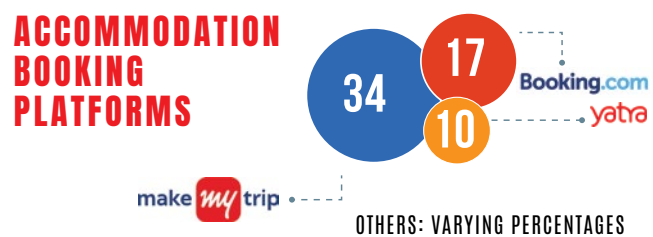
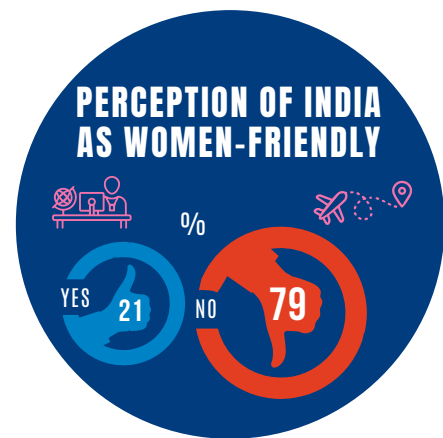
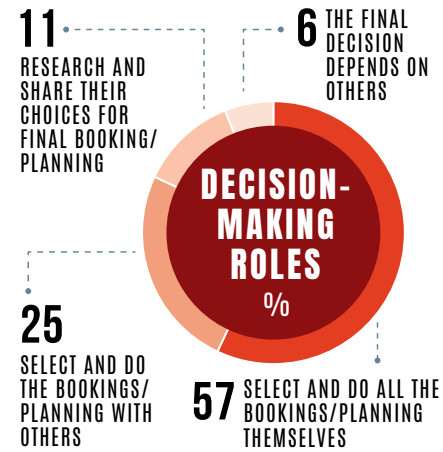
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Corporate Office: 9th Floor, Block - 1, Phase - 1,
International Tech Park, Near Sector 59, Gurugram - 122101
T. +91 981 864 4484 or +91 124 404 9044 E. consumerinsights@toluna.com



*All data is in percentage