



In This Article:

AAL -2.73%

IHG +0.57%

HLT -0.19%

In this article, we shall discuss the 30 most fun cities in the US in 2024. To skip our detailed analysis of the tourism industry in the US in 2024, go directly and see [10 Most Fun Cities in the US in 2024](#).

US Travel Industry Outlook 2024: Major Trends

Although [data](#) from the WTTC demonstrates that global travel will amount to a \$15.5 trillion industry by 2033 and account for more than 11.6% of the global economy, a [report](#) by Bloomberg sheds light upon the fact that the American tourism industry is plummeting. Persisting staffing shortages, visa delays and political turbulence has caused the United States to trail competitors in reclaiming its share of international tourists post the COVID-19 pandemic. As major markets around the world are expecting to exceed 2019 figures by the end of 2024, the US travel segment is projected to reach 98% of 2019 visitation levels by the end of the year. Tourist spending levels in some of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**, when adjusted for inflation, are not projected to see any recovery until late 2026. According to [forecasts](#) by the US Travel Association, headwinds exacerbated by a global macroeconomic slowdown, a strong dollar exacerbating inflationary pressures in middle-income countries, and slow bureaucratic proceduralism are inhibiting future growth of the US travel industry. Other competitors in the market - like France and Spain - have increased their share of the global travel market. To read more on trends affecting the global travel industry, check out our coverage of [35 Most Visited Countries in the World in 2024: 2024 Rankings](#).



That Beautiful Bean Co.

BUY NOW

The slowdown in international tourism to the US can be effectively gauged by the performance of prominent travel ETFs like US Global Jets ETF (NYSE:JETS) that provides investors access to prominent stocks in the airline industry, including airline operators and manufacturers, not only from the United States, but from across the world. With net assets valued at more than \$1.29 billion and an expense ratio of 0.6% as of April 19, the ETF mirrors the performance of major travel stocks like American Airlines Group Inc. (

NASDAQ:AAL) and Alaska Air Group Inc. (

NYSE:ALK). The ETF is a good indicator of the slump in international visitation to the US, considering the fact that since 2019, the fund is down 31.97% as of April 22. ETFs like Defiance Hotel Airline and Cruise ETF (NYSE:CRUZ) which track the performance before fees of companies from the hospitality industry like

Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc. (

NYSE:HLT) and

InterContinental Hotels Group PLC (

NYSE:IHG) also mirror the assertion that US travel is struggling to recover to pre-pandemic figures. In the last five years, the ETF is down more than 11.2% as of April 22. You can read more on companies dominating the US travel space in our article [12 Best Travel Stocks To Buy Right Now](#).

One of the major trends influencing travel to some of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024** is the growth of business travel, which albeit at slower rate, is still expected to grow and reach 95% of 2019 visitation levels in 2024, up from 89% in 2023. Business travel is integral to travel providers not only in traffic but also in profitability; in 2018, it made up for more than 21.4% of the global travel and hospitality industry, with spending raking in more than \$1.4 trillion. Since corporate travelers are much more likely to opt for more expensive services, they tend to drive profit ranging from 55% to 75% for top airline and hospitality companies like Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc. (

NYSE:HLT), InterContinental Hotels Group PLC (

NYSE:IHG), and American Airlines Group Inc. (

NASDAQ:AAL). More than half of business travel is concentrated in two economies, namely the United States and China. The economic disruptions perpetrated by the COVID-19 crisis has severe implications for the revival of business travel to the United States, making business-travel patterns much more volatile. According to [McKinsey](#), consumers will return to business travel in phases, with regional and domestic travel picking up steam first and foremost. This will primarily be driven by in-person sales and client meetings, with the hardest-hit sectors being the last to resume corporate travel.

Lastly, as consumer spending decelerated considerably owing to higher borrowing costs, tighter credit regulations, and the restart of student loan payments in the United States, leisure travel growth slowed down through three quarters of 2023, picking up in the last quarter. The domestic sector was able to achieve a full-scale recovery to pre-pandemic levels in 2022 in many of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**. International visitation has not followed suit. Extensively long visa wait times have led to international tourists foregoing as many as 3 million trips to the US annually, resulting in more than \$7.4 billion in tourist spending seeping through the cracks. According to a [report](#) by Tourism Economics, this number could climb up to a staggering loss of \$150 billion over the next decade.

Technological Innovation at US Airports: An Overview

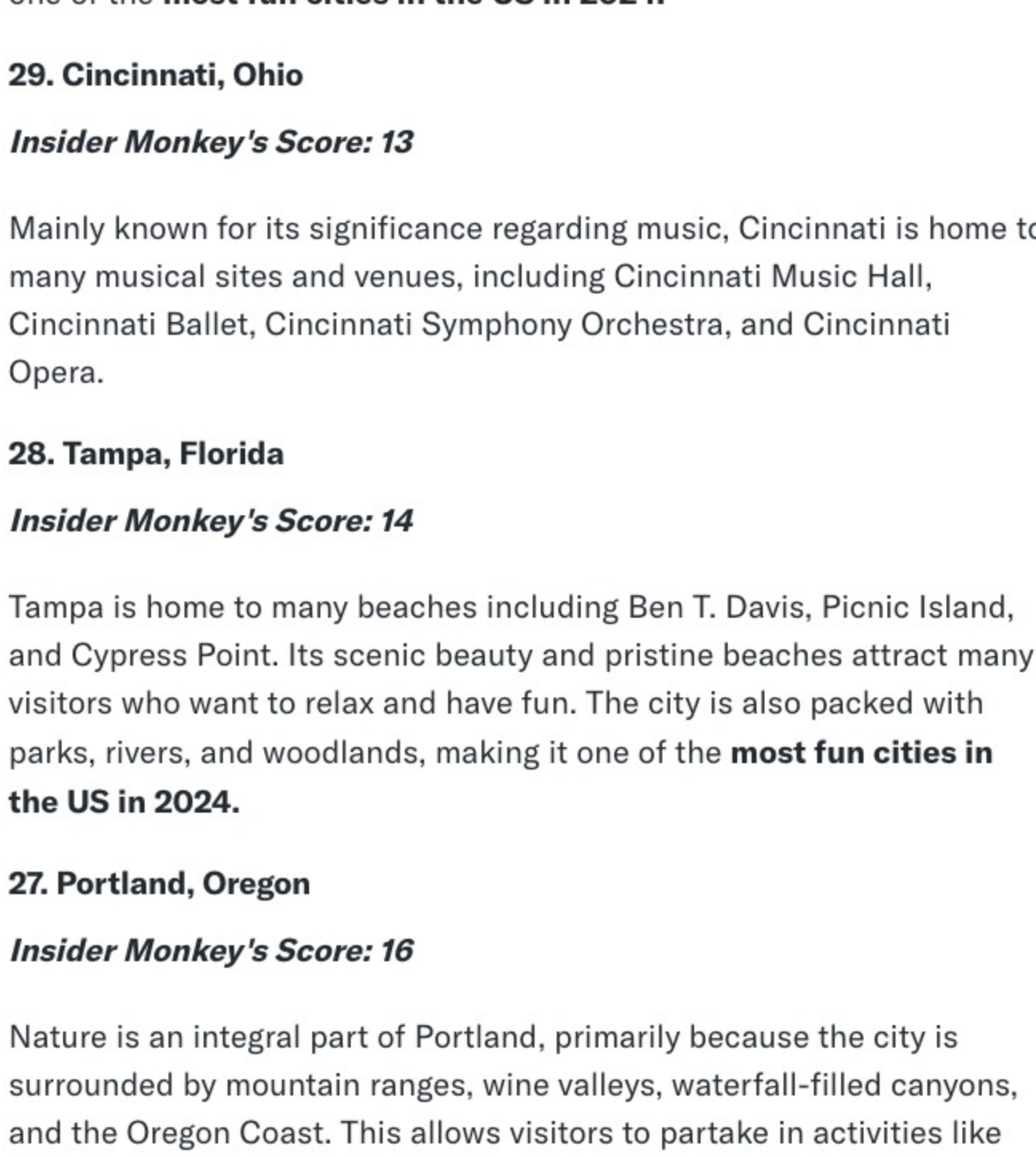
In what seems like good news for major players in the US travel industry like Hilton Worldwide Holdings Inc. (

NYSE:HLT), InterContinental Hotels Group PLC (

NYSE:IHG), and American Airlines Group Inc. (

NASDAQ:AAL), a [report](#) by Bloomberg highlights the fact that the US Customs and Border Protection has expanded the use of technology in a bid to seamlessly process an increased number of international visitors to the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**. During fiscal year 2023, the agency processed more than 394 million travelers at the ports of entry, which indicated a 24% increase compared to 2022. At the [20 Busiest Airports in the US by International Passenger Traffic](#), officers were able to process 31% more tourists as average wait times increased merely by 11%. At certain pain points, wait times had negligibly increased and in certain circumstances, even decreased. For instance, at JFK Airport in New York, which is one of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**, wait times went down by 0.4 of a second on average as CBP officers processed 33% more visitors.

This is owing to the fact that the CBP has moved towards app-based technologies like the Mobile Passport Control app to optimize passengers' movement through the airports of some of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**. In 2022, a record 4.1 million people were able to optimize their entry into the United States using the application. In September 2022, the CBP also inaugurated an application tailored to passengers who use Global Entry regularly. This ramped up applications to the Global Entry program, with 2023 seeing more than 3.2 million people send in their applications.



Syda Productions/Shutterstock.com

Our Methodology

To compile our list of the **30 most fun cities in the US in 2024**, we decided to undertake a consensus-based approach using a diverse variety of credible sources and Reddit threads. We then shortlisted more than 50 cities which appeared most frequently during our research. Since fun is an incredibly multifaceted and complex phenomenon, we decided to consider a 2023 [study](#) by the Journal of Multidisciplinary Academic Tourism, which thematically analyzed dozens of interviews to determine attractions which made people's tourist experiences memorable. We used some of the most common findings to establish a three-pronged criteria; the criteria is premised on each city's nightlife (20 points), architecture and heritage (15 points), and ethnic and cultural districts (10 points). We then proceeded to award each city a cumulative score according to the aforementioned criteria and selected 30 cities which scored the highest points. Subsequently, we ranked each entry based on the total points scored, from lowest to highest. Where there was a tie, we broke it based on the city's entertainment options.

By the way, Insider Monkey is an investing website that tracks the movements of corporate insiders and hedge funds. By using a similar consensus approach, we identify the best stock picks of more than 900 hedge funds investing in US stocks. The top 10 consensus stock picks of hedge funds outperformed the S&P 500 Index by more than 140 percentage points over the last 10 years ([see the details here](#)). Whether you are a beginner investor or professional one looking for the best stocks to buy, you can benefit from the wisdom of hedge funds and corporate insiders.

30 Most Fun Cities in the US in 2024

30. Austin, Texas

Insider Monkey's Score: 13

Austin is famous for its nightlife. With an abundance of bars and nightclubs, the city does not fail to entertain its visitors at any time of the day or night. It is popularly known for its food and music, making it one of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**.

29. Cincinnati, Ohio

Insider Monkey's Score: 13

Mainly known for its significance regarding music, Cincinnati is home to many musical sites and venues, including Cincinnati Music Hall, Cincinnati Ballet, Cincinnati Symphony Orchestra, and Cincinnati Opera.

28. Tampa, Florida

Insider Monkey's Score: 14

Tampa is home to many beaches including Ben T. Davis, Picnic Island, and Cypress Point. Its scenic beauty and pristine beaches attract many visitors who want to relax and have fun. The city is also packed with parks, rivers, and woodlands, making it one of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**.

27. Portland, Oregon

Insider Monkey's Score: 16

Nature is an integral part of Portland, primarily because the city is surrounded by mountain ranges, wine valleys, waterfall-filled canyons, and the Oregon Coast. This allows visitors to partake in activities like skiing, whale watching, and surfing.

26. San Diego, California

Insider Monkey's Score: 17

Ranking extremely high in entertainment and recreation, San Diego is home to countless restaurants, bars, art galleries, gardens, and music venues. Some of its main attractions include Balboa Park, San Diego Zoo, and the USS Midway Museum.

25. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Insider Monkey's Score: 17

Philadelphia is known for its historical sites; however, the city offers a lot more to its visitors. Philadelphia is home to numerous restaurants and shopping districts that attract many tourists, making it one of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**.

24. Charleston, South Carolina

Insider Monkey's Score: 19

Charleston is an ideal city for tourists who like to visit different restaurants and breweries. The **Charleston** City Market attracts many shopaholics as local vendors offer various artisanal goods.

23. Salt Lake City, Utah

Insider Monkey's Score: 19

Known for entertainment and recreation, Salt Lake City offers various outdoor activities to its visitors including biking, hiking, boating, and kayaking. Tourists can also enjoy breweries, local architecture, and gardens located in the city.

22. Tempe, Arizona

Insider Monkey's Score: 20

Home to places like Tempe Beach Park, Marquee Theatre, and Kiwanis Park, Tempe offers different kinds of activities to its visitors, ranging from watching performances to paddle boating. The city is also home to the world-famous Legoland Discovery Centre, making it one of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**.

21. Knoxville, Tennessee

Insider Monkey's Score: 21

While visiting Knoxville, one can experience its culture, history, nature, and cuisine, all at once. The city also hosts many festivals throughout the year. One of its most famous festivals includes the Dogwood Arts Festival, which attracts many visitors.

20. Memphis, Tennessee

Insider Monkey's Score: 23

Famously known as a musical destination, the nightlife in Memphis greatly involves sophisticated and up-to-the-beat music. The locals in the city are also known to be extremely welcoming and hospitable towards visitors, making it one of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**.

19. Honolulu, Hawaii

Insider Monkey's Score: 24

Honolulu is one of the **most beautiful cities in the United States** as it provides visitors not only a backdrop of mountain ranges but also pristine beaches. Apart from that, one can also explore botanical gardens and local farmers markets in the city.

18. Fort Lauderdale, Florida

Insider Monkey's Score: 26

Home to Las Olas Beach, Fort Lauderdale is one of the **most fun cities in the United States**. It allows its visitors to engage in water activities like dolphin activities, river tubing, kayaking, and shark diving.

17. San Antonio, Texas

Insider Monkey's Score: 26

Located in the southern-centra area of Texas, San Antonio is known for its historical significance. Some of its most iconic sites include the Alamo Plaza, HemisFair Park, and San Antonio Missions National Historical Park.

16. Nashville, Tennessee

Insider Monkey's Score: 27

Known as America's beating musical heart, Nashville is home to numerous musical spots including the Country Music Hall of Fame and Museum, Ryman Auditorium, and Grand Ole Opry.

15. Houston, Texas

Insider Monkey's Score: 28

Among the cities in the United States with the most dance clubs and park playgrounds, Houston is one of the most fun cities in the US. It also hosts various festivals throughout the years, including the Kite Festival.

14. Dallas, Texas

Insider Monkey's Score: 28

Dallas is primarily famous for beer and cowboys; however, the city has a lot more to offer to its visitors. Tourists can visit the Dallas Botanical Gardens, the Sixth Floor Museum, and the Valley House Gallery, making it one of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**.

13. Boston, Massachusetts

Insider Monkey's Score: 28

Known for its heritage and colonial heritage, Boston is one of the most fun cities in the United States for visitors who enjoy exploring historical spots. Some of its iconic sites include the Old North Church and Paul Revere's House.

12. Chicago, Illinois

Insider Monkey's Score: 30

On the shores of Lake Michigan, Chicago is home to one of the most beautiful landscapes in the United States. Some of its most famous spots include Millennium Park and Navy Pier which offer greenery and attractions along the waterfront, respectively.

11. Atlanta, Georgia

Insider Monkey's Score: 31

Atlanta is primarily known for its abundant dining and clubbing options. Regardless of the area, one can experience great nightlife as it includes all kinds of bars including rooftop bars and cocktail bars, making it one of the **most fun cities in the US in 2024**.

[Click here to continue reading and see 10 Most Fun Cities in the US in 2024.](#) Suggested Articles:

- [20 States with the Highest Divorce Rates in the US](#)
- [10 Best Multibagger Stocks to Buy Now](#)
- [40 Best Places to Visit in India Before You Die](#)

Disclosure: None. [30 Most Fun Cities in the US in 2024](#) is originally published on Insider Monkey.

[View Comments](#)