**Top International Travel Trends for 2016**

Americans are setting sail for the Caribbean, according to a new survey of travel experts. Once again, Caribbean cruises comprise the most popular international vacation “destination” for 2016.

In its Travel Trends Survey, Travel Leaders Group polled 1,316 U.S.-based travel agency owners, managers and front-line agents asking them to name the five top international destinations they’re already booking for clients in 2016. Caribbean cruises came out in first place with 42.9 percent; followed by Cancun, Mexico, 35.1 percent; European river cruises, 24.4 percent; London, 23.5 percent; and Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, 19.8 percent.

The demand for Caribbean cruises means that there are always new choices for travelers. In November, Carnival Cruise Line’s newest ship, Vista, will set sail from Miami to ports throughout the region, with an onboard brewery and the first IMAX Theatre on a cruise ship. Holland America is launching the Koningsdam this year, which will feature the cruise line’s first staterooms specially designed for families and solo travelers. As a new entrant into deep sea cruising, Viking Cruises has several new Caribbean itineraries for 2016, including an 11-day trip from San Juan, Puerto Rico.

Located near Mexico’s ancient Mayan ruins and with miles of pristine white beaches, Cancun is a perennially popular vacation choice, with numerous options for hotels and resorts for every taste and budget. For travelers who love to party as well as soak up some sun, there’ll be a new place to stay in 2016. The adults-only Breathless Riviera Cancun Resort and Spa from AMResorts opens in April, with plenty of ways to kick back and have some fun, including a masquerade party every Saturday.

With their leisurely pace and fascinating ports of call, river cruises are a great way to experience Europe’s history and culture. Their growing popularity moves them up from fourth place in 2015 to third place this year in the Travel Leaders survey. River cruising takes travelers through the heart of such major European cities as Budapest, Vienna, Paris, while offering themed cruises on everything from D-Day to Valentine’s Day.

In 2016, visitors to London can help celebrate the life and legacy of William Shakespeare on the 400th anniversary of his death. There’ll be performances by the Royal Shakespeare Company and London Philharmonic, as well as exhibits and guided tours examining the history of the English-speaking world’s greatest playwright. London’s new attractions include the Shard, which is the European Union’s tallest building and offers incredible views of the famous Tower Bridge and nearby Tower of London from its rooftop. There’s also the Magic Garden at Hampton Court Palace and a tunnel slide set to open in the spring in Olympic Park.

Punta Cana is on the easternmost point of the Dominican Republic, and apart from its beautiful beaches where the Atlantic and Caribbean meet, it’s known as a haven for some of the region’s top all-inclusive resorts. Adventure travelers enjoy the area because of the opportunities ranging from kayaking and windsurfing to zip-lining. Plus, Punta Cana’s relative cost and proximity to the southeast United States make it an ideal weekend getaway.

For help planning a trip anywhere in the world, contact your travel agent.