

7 less expensive summer vacation destinations

Priced out of your dream vacation spot? Here's where to go instead.

By Natalie B. Compton

May 11, 2022 at 1:37 p.m. EDT



Summer vacation dreams are clashing with the reality of travel prices. Trips to Europe, Mexico and Central America are slightly more expensive this summer than they were in 2019, according to data from the travel booking app Hopper. Hotels.com says travelers can expect to pay more for rooms this summer than they did three years ago.

It's a classic case of supply and demand, says Mark Crossey, travel expert for the airfare booking site Skyscanner, with interest in travel back in full force. However, prices aren't necessarily up across the board, and "there are still incredible deals to be found for travelers who can be flexible or are open to exploring less-well-known destinations," Crossey says.

To find those deals, you can use Kayak's [Explore Tool](#), search on [Skyscanner](#) for flights to “everywhere” or try [Google Flights](#) for trips to specific regions during a range of time (i.e., a two-week trip from Los Angeles to Europe in July). You can also set up price alerts from those sites, as well as Hopper or [Airfarewatchdog](#), or sign up to get flight deals from services such as [Scott's Cheap Flights](#) or [Thrifty Traveler](#).

To jump-start your trip brainstorming, we picked seven cheaper alternatives to popular summer travel spots.



Guadalajara Cathedral. (Emmanuel Flores/Getty Images/iStock)

Instead of Bangkok, try Guadalajara

Interest in Thailand is on the rise, thanks to loosening travel restrictions, but the cost of airfare could be a barrier. If Southeast Asia isn't doable, head south to Mexico, where incredible street food, perfect mangos and exciting cultural attractions also await.

Based on average ticket prices booked through May 2 for travel between June and August, Expedia shows you can find summer flights from the United States for less than \$350 round trip to Guadalajara, the gateway to tequila country. For domestic options, food lovers on a budget can also turn to alternatives such as Nashville, [Houston](#), Philadelphia or New Orleans.