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GLOBETRENDER



London, June 20, 2024

This week's edition of VOLT explores "Music Tourism", and the wider opportunities that headline concerts and festivals offer the travel and hospitality industry - from friendship bracelets to fully booked hotels.

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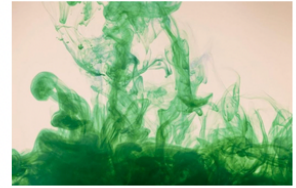
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The trend: Music Tourism

By Angelina Villa-Clarke

One of the most significant travel trends of 2024 (as predicted by Globetrender in a November 2023 white paper for travel tech giant [Amadeus](#), as well as our spring 2022 edition of VOLT on [Festival Hopping](#)), Music Tourism has been growing in momentum since the restrictions of the pandemic were lifted. While it could be argued that people have always travelled to see their favourite acts, the truth is that they haven't done so in the same way that we are seeing now.

In 2022, Music Tourism – the act of travelling to a destination solely to see a concert or music event – was valued at [US\\$5.5 billion](#) and it is predicted that this will grow to [US\\$11.3 billion](#) by 2032. Not only are fans happy to [travel longer distances](#) to see live music, but they are also content to spend [more money](#) on individual gig tickets and for secondary service industries, (such as hotels and restaurants) when in the host destination, than ever before.

Some call it the "[Swift Effect](#)" (read more on this in the case study below),

based on the financial impact that Taylor Swift has wherever she tours. While Taylor Swift may well be in a league of her own, there are many other artists, such as [Beyoncé](#) and [Coldplay](#), who have their own incredible "pulling power" that boosts tourism wherever they set up their microphones.

A recent One Poll survey commissioned by the [Advantage Travel Partnership](#) revealed that 14% of respondents had specifically planned a holiday around a music event such as a gig or festival. "What's more, music events can often be cheaper to attend abroad than in the UK and enable travellers to simultaneously see their favourite artists and explore lesser-known destinations, something which 29% of consumers surveyed are now looking to do," a spokesperson for Advantage tells VOLT. In terms of lesser-known destinations, Advantage is seeing a rise in European city break destinations such as Porto and Copenhagen being booked, both of which will be hosting some of the world's top musical talent this summer, including Justin Timberlake, Pink and Take That.

The [Here, There and Everywhere 2023 Report](#) by UK Music, the collective voice of the UK music industry, looked at the escalation in popularity of live music in 2022, the first year that was free from many restrictions following Covid-19. It revealed that 14.4 million music tourists helped to generate £6.6 billion in spending in 2022, and supported 56,000 full-time jobs. Furthermore, as reported by [Statista](#), three years after the pandemic temporarily muted live music around the world, 2023 saw the industry shattering its previous record. "The 100 largest tours of 2023 grossed more than US\$9 billion, exceeding the previous record, set in 2022, by almost 50%."

"A new boom in concerts and festivals has tapped into a desire for connection."

Clare de Bono, country manager, Amadeus UK

The continuous rise in demand for live music is undoubtedly helped by the growth of TikTok and other social media platforms as a tool to hype up "must-see" live music events, create a feeling of FOMO (fear of missing out) and advertise the appeal of the collective experience (something many of us were yearning for after the singularity of the pandemic). As a consequence, the Music Tourism trend, also known as "[Gig-Tripping](#)", is so influential that there is even talk of introducing a bill in the US, entitled the [American Music Tourism Act 2024](#), to help support the industry.

Meanwhile, the hospitality industry is also pivoting to encompass the swell in numbers at certain times of the year. The [Four Seasons Hotel London at Park Lane](#), for instance, has launched a "Gig-Tripping" package, aimed at Gen Z guests attending performances at Wembley and other London venues. Guests receive a "Concert Comfort Kit" with a tote bag, portable charger and other essentials, and pre-concert perks such as early check-in, a customised concert guide, an in-room karaoke system, a "Glitter Groove" cocktail on arrival and a friendship bracelet kit. An additional £200 supplement is applied to the stay for the package. Then there is [Forte Village](#) in Sardinia, which has created its own Forte Arena (once an unused outdoor space) to offer guests an in-house musical experience, with the likes of Sting lined up to perform this summer.

Neal Jones, chief sales and marketing officer at [Marriott International EMEA](#), tells VOLT: "Over the past year we have seen an increase in music tourism, as consumers seek travel experiences that they can share with friends and family which play to their musical passions." Tim Hentschel, CEO and co-founder of [Hotelplanner.com](#), agrees. He tells VOLT: "Event-based travel is at its most impactful in 2024. Tours by major artists have a profound impact on global consumer behaviour and subsequently the cost of average daily rates across hotels and flights."

Laura Baker, assistant vice president of corporate communications - Europe, at [Shangri-La Group](#), tells VOLT: "The emerging trend of Gig Tripping provides our hotels with great opportunities to drive revenue. We believe this rising phenomenon, which combines guests' passion for music and travel, will continue to grow, and we plan to continue to tap into it by

tailoring stays towards music lovers."

Angelique Kuiper, founder of [Resonance](#), a studio of strategists, creatives and production experts, believes the thrust of music tourism lies in the power of artists' fan communities. She tells VOLT: "Fans can significantly impact travel trends and economic activity while demonstrating their collective power and support to their favourite artists. Harry Styles' 'Love On Tour', for example, led to a massive influx of fans travelling to cities across the globe. While a [walking tour](#) of the same star's hometown in Cheshire has had an influx of fans from all parts of the world, including Uruguay, Japan, Colombia, Canada and the US.

"Festivals, such as Glastonbury, Coachella, Tomorrowland, Lollapalooza, SXSW, Burning Man and Exit, are also major players when it comes to attracting tourism," she continues. "These festivals are known for their high-profile music artists, but they are also iconic events and attending them is often seen to be a 'badge of honour' that unites fans and music lovers around the world."

With Ed Sheeran headlining the [Rock in Rio Lisboa](#) festival in Lisbon this summer, and the city boasting a vibrant music scene, Portuguese hotel group Martinhal has reported an uptick in hotel bookings. Chitra Stern, founder and CEO of [Martinhal Resorts](#), tells VOLT: "Lisbon's vibrant music scene is drawing tourists in a new wave. The city boasts a thriving live music scene, in both small and intimate venues, as well as in large open-air spaces, throughout the year. Martinhal's proximity to the MEO Arena allows our guests access to the city's music concerts and the neighbourhood's many attractions. This convergence of world-class music, a wider cultural offering, and high-quality hotel service means an attractive proposition for visitors."

With stars such as the [Red Hot Chili Peppers](#) and the [Rolling Stones](#) currently promoting world tours, and rumours that [Drake](#) (Spotify's [most-streamed male artist](#) of all time) will be bringing his 'It's All A Blur' tour to Europe next year, there is no sign of the trend waning. Claire Bentley, managing director of [British Airways](#), tells VOLT about the impact the trend has had on flight bookings: "Following [Adele](#)'s

announcement of tour dates in Munich in August 2024, for instance, British Airways Holidays has seen a 174% uplift in looks for the destination. With the rise of 'Tour Tourism' it has never been a better time to see your favourite artist and experience a new city at the same time."



The case study: Taylor Swift



Taylor Swift's "[Eras Tour](#)" has consisted of 152 shows across five continents and is thought to be the highest-grossing tour of all time, bringing in US\$2.2 billion in North American ticket sales alone. The in-rush of fans and subsequent tidal wave of spending in the destinations she performs in has been dubbed the "[Taylor Swift Effect](#)", writes Angelina Villa-Clarke.

With Taylor Swift coming to London this month, the megastar is also set to take her blockbuster musical extravaganza to a slew of global destinations including Amsterdam (July 4-6), Vienna (8-10 August), London again (August 15-17, 19, 20), Toronto (November 14-16, 21-23) and finally to Vancouver (December 6-8). Showcasing songs from each of her ten albums, the already

bulging set-list was revamped in May 2024 to incorporate new songs from her 11th studio album, *The Tortured Poets Department*, which sees a continuation of her well-trodden, autobiographical songwriting path.

The so-called "Swift Effect" has not only seen tickets for her juggernaut "Eras Tour" selling for thousands of pounds each in some places but it has been widely documented that the singer triggers a secondary mega-boost to economies in the destinations where she plays. The UK leg of the "Eras Tour" alone has been predicted to bring a [£1 billion](#) boost to the economy.

As a touring sponsor of Taylor Swift's "Eras Tour", [Marriott Bonvoy](#) has seen summer bookings "significantly tracking with the European cities where she is playing." Neal Jones, chief sales and marketing officer at Marriott International EMEA, tells VOLT: "Across the 18 European concert destinations our hotel occupancy is 15% points higher compared to occupancy levels pre- and post-events, and we are also seeing an influx of US travellers to the concert destinations. Rather than travelling just for the one night of the concert, 60% of the bookings are for stays of two-four nights as fans make the most of their time away and enjoy spending more time in the destinations, which is great news for the city's tourism sector."

[Hotelplanner.com](#) also reports that Travelodge properties in Edinburgh, Liverpool and Cardiff were sold out for the days around the concerts in June almost instantly. While price hikes across hotels are consistently higher across the tour locations. Hentschel tells VOLT: "Average hotel prices in Liverpool are 116% higher for Eras Tour dates when compared to the week before. UK restaurants, bars and shops are also expected to benefit, just as much as hotels, as inbound tourism is expected to surge."

Design-led hostel brand, [Generator](#), also reports boosts in revenue linked to Swift gigs. The Generator Miami has forecasted an impressive 700% year-on-year increase in revenues during her performances in the city, along with a 50% surge in Stockholm and Dublin. The brand has also launched a Taylor Swift package, which sees themed cocktails, friendship bracelets and "Taylist" tunes to sing on the "Swiftly-ok'e" included.

Amanda Cupples, general manager for the UK and Northern Europe

at [Airbnb](#), was quoted in a press release as saying: "When tickets for the UK leg of Taylor Swift's 'Eras Tour' went on sale last July, searches for Airbnbs in London, Edinburgh, Cardiff and Liverpool during the concert dates increased by 337%, compared with searches for those dates the previous month. With people willing to travel further afield to celebrate their fandom, we hope our curated list of extraordinary stays help bring Taylor's iconic Eras set list to life."

So what is it about the singer from Pennsylvania that has caught the zeitgeist? Isabelle Thomas, senior account director at the luxury travel PR agency [Grifco PR](#), is a devoted "Swiftie", and has secured tickets for one of her London shows. She has the last word: "Those of us nearing 30 feel we have grown up with her. She takes us back to carefree times when nothing else mattered. Fans are travelling in these insane numbers, not just for the performance but to be part of a shared experience with thousands of others, where personal memories of first love, empowerment and euphoria come to life."



The data

14.4 million - the number of tourists who travelled to the UK for music events in 2023 [Source: [UK Music](#)]

473% - the rise in searches for travel to Stockholm for when the Taylor Swift concert was on in the city (May 17-19), compared to the same dates last year [Source: [Opodo](#)]

60% - the percentage of Americans who are open to travelling abroad to save money on music events [Source: [Skyscanner](#)]

1 in 10 - the number of American fans who would travel 500 miles or more to attend a concert [Source: [Thrillist/Price4Limo](#)]

US\$21.2 billion – the amount of revenue from live music in the US in 2022
[Source: [Statista](#)]



The perspective



Clare de Bono, country manager at [Amadeus UK](#), the global travel technology company, speaks to VOLT about the implications of Music Tourism. The company provides software solutions for airlines, airports, hotels, travel agencies and tour operators, helping them to connect to the travel ecosystem. It cited Music Tourism as a growing trend in its [2024 Travel Trends](#) report, which was produced in partnership with Globetrender.

Why is Music Tourism becoming so significant?

"After the social isolation of the pandemic, when bands and musical artists were grounded for months, a new boom in concerts and festivals has tapped into a desire for connection. That trend has accelerated in 2024, with some of the biggest acts in the world currently out on the road, and this has a huge impact on tourism.

"For example, when Coldplay announced tour dates for this year, Amadeus research found that their dates in Romania and Greece had a significant impact on search and booking volumes in both countries. Flight searches to Athens, Greece, also increased by 62% in the week the concert was announced. The concert announcement also influenced the searches for flights to Romania, which rose by 91% during the week of the show when compared to the prior week."

Is this a recent phenomenon and is it growing?

"We saw the trend repeat earlier this year, when Colombian singer Karol G

confirmed she would play three nights in Madrid in July. After the dates were confirmed, data from Amadeus Master Pricer and Amadeus Agency Insights, revealed domestic searches to Madrid increased by a significant 187% in the week before ticket sales opened. At the same time, domestic flight search volumes were 84% higher when comparing the data with the previous year. Similarly, domestic searches for weekend trips to Madrid increased by 700%. In short, there seems to be a lot of life left in the Music Tourism trend right now."

Why has this type of travel struck a chord in 2024?

"There has been a shift toward experiences and away from products in recent years - and a trend towards live music ties into that, especially for younger travellers. [Forbes](#) points out Millennials are especially interested in unique experiences, with 67% finding they will pay incrementally for them."

What is it about Taylor Swift that has captured the zeitgeist?

"Many [experts](#) have weighed in on just what it is that makes the singer so popular. But, essentially, Taylor Swift has a reputation for openness on everything, from her struggles to her triumphs, and this has endeared her to her fans. She often shares behind-the-scenes insights and personal anecdotes, creating a sense of authenticity and connection. At the same time, the 'Eras Tour' has redefined elaborate stage and musical production values and allowed fans to connect through her emotional performances. Her marketing strategies, including surprise album releases, [concert films](#) and creative promotional campaigns, also generate significant interest."

How does a trend like this influence a company like Amadeus?

"Amadeus puts the traveller at the heart of everything we do and a prerequisite to building a better travel experience is understanding the minds of travellers. Consumer research shows that this year travellers are on the lookout for new experiences - and what better experience can there be than sharing a music festival or concert with friends, family or like-minded fans? With artists, such as Taylor Swift and Coldplay on the road, we are seeing strong demand across Europe for travel, with music fans planning to enjoy a range of performances across the continent."

What destinations have been or will be affected by Music Tourism?

"A new research project, carried out by [YouGov for Amadeus](#) across four

European markets, finds Music Tourism impacts different markets in different ways. For example, we found some 49% of Spaniards have previously travelled to attend a concert or festival (spending at least one night away from home), along with 48% of Brits, 44% of Germans and 34% of French travellers. Interestingly, German music fans were the most adventurous, when it comes to international travel, with 18% headed abroad for a show, compared to 11% of Spanish travellers, 9% of those from Britain and just 7% of French travellers.

"When it comes to how much a traveller would spend, British travellers were the most frugal. Some 58% of British music fans who had previously embarked on a trip to see a concert or festival would look to spend less than £300 in the future (not including the cost of the event ticket), compared to just 40% of both French and Spanish travellers, and 39% of Germans. In contrast, 15% of German and 13% of Spanish and French music fans who had previously travelled for a live music event would be willing to spend over €600 to do so again, compared to only 9% of Brits."



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