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# Nearly 4.65 Million Floridians Expected to Travel for Thanksgiving

## Concerns over flight cancellations could push more travelers to hit the road



AAA projects that **4.65 million Floridians** will travel at least 50 miles from home during the Thanksgiving holiday period, which runs from Tuesday, November 25 to Monday, December 1. This marks a **2.6% increase over last year** and sets a new record for Thanksgiving travel in the Sunshine State.

**Nationwide**, AAA expects **81.8 million Americans** to travel for Thanksgiving. That's an **increase of 1.6 million travelers** compared to 2024. Thanksgiving remains the busiest travel holiday of the year, surpassing both Memorial Day and Independence Day.

### Thanksgiving Florida Travelers

- **Total Travelers:** 4,646,085 (+2.6%)
- **By Car:** 4,259,644 (+2.6%)
- **By Air:** 298,712
- **By Other Modes (bus, train, cruise):** 87,729 (+7.3%)

"Floridians are embracing the Thanksgiving spirit with record-breaking travel plans this year," said **Debbie Haas, Vice President of Travel for AAA – The Auto Club Group**. "Whether it's driving across the state or flying across the country, people are making time to connect with loved ones. Even with concerns about flight cancellations, travelers are showing flexibility and resilience and relying most on driving."

### Traveling By Car

AAA projects that nearly **73 million Americans will travel by car** this Thanksgiving,

representing almost 90% of all holiday travelers. **In Florida, more than 4.25 million** residents **will drive** to their destinations. That number could rise if travelers opt to avoid potential flight disruptions.

**Rental Cars:** Hertz, AAA's car rental partner, reports that Wednesday will be the busiest day for vehicle pick-ups. **Orlando and Miami rank among the top five** U.S. markets for rental demand. Good news for renters: domestic **car rental rates are down 15%** compared to last year.

**Gas Prices:** Drivers can expect lower gas prices on Thanksgiving than last year, when the **state average was \$3.11 per gallon**. AAA recommends filling up the night before travel and checking your battery and tire pressure. **Last year, AAA responded to nearly 600,000 roadside assistance calls** nationwide, many for dead batteries, flat tires, and empty fuel tanks.

**Impaired Driving:** AAA and MADD urge travelers to plan ahead and avoid impaired driving. Between 2019 and 2023, 868 people died in drunk-driving crashes during Thanksgiving, accounting for 35% of all traffic fatalities during the holiday period.

### **Traveling By Air**

AAA expects **6 million Americans to fly** domestically this Thanksgiving, a 2% increase from 2024. In **Florida, nearly 299,000 residents** will take to the skies. Given recent flight reductions, that number could end up being lower as flights get cancelled or travelers make other plans.

**Airfares:** Domestic airfares are **similar to last year**, averaging \$700 for a round-trip. Flying on Thanksgiving Day can offer savings, but return flights on Sunday and Monday tend to be the most expensive. Some travelers are adjusting their schedules to avoid peak travel days. "With recent flight reductions and the potential for last-minute cancellations, we encourage air travelers to build flexibility into their plans," **Haas continued**. "Consider flying on less busy days, booking early morning departures when delays are less likely, and having a backup plan in case your flight is disrupted. Whether that means adjusting your return date or being ready to drive, a little preparation can go a long way in helping you navigate the unexpected."

### **By Other Modes**

Travel by bus, train, and cruise is **expected to rise 8.5%** nationally, reaching nearly 2.5 million travelers. **In Florida, more than 87,000 residents will travel by these modes**. Cruise travel continues to surge, with AAA projecting 20.7 million U.S. cruise passengers in 2025 and 21.7 million in 2026. Thanksgiving cruises to the Caribbean are especially popular for their warm weather and all-inclusive appeal.

## Top Thanksgiving Destinations

The top holiday destinations listed below are based on AAA booking data for the Thanksgiving travel period. Florida is the most popular domestic destination, thanks to the area's theme parks and cruise ports. The international list is a mix of Europe, the Caribbean, and Australia for its warm spring weather this time of year.

DOMESTIC	INTERNATIONAL
Orlando, FL	Paris, France
Fort Lauderdale, FL	Amsterdam, Netherlands
Miami, FL	Vienna, Austria
Anaheim/Los Angeles, CA	Cancun, Mexico
Tampa, FL	Punta Cana, Dominican Republic
New York, NY	Basel, Switzerland
San Francisco, CA	Sydney, Australia
Honolulu, HI	Barcelona, Spain
Las Vegas, NV	Budapest, Hungary
Atlanta, GA	Oranjestad, Aruba

## Best/Worst Times to Drive

According to INRIX, **Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons** will be the **most congested** travel times before Thanksgiving. Heavy traffic is expected all day Sunday as travelers return home. AAA recommends leaving early and staying alert for construction, crashes, or weather delays. Remember to Slow Down and Move Over for emergency responders and stopped vehicles.

Best and Worst Times to Drive		
Date	Worst Travel Time	Best Travel Time
Tuesday, Nov 25	12:00 PM - 9:00 PM	Before 12:00 PM
Wednesday, Nov 26	11:00 AM - 8:00 PM	Before 11:00 AM
Thursday, Nov 27	Minimal Traffic Impact Expected	
Friday, Nov 28	1:00 PM - 7:00 PM	Before 11:00 AM
Saturday, Nov 29	1:00 PM - 8:00 PM	Before 10:00 AM
Sunday, Nov 30	11:00 AM - 8:00 PM	Before 11:00 AM
Monday, Dec 1	12:00 PM - 8:00 PM	After 8:00 PM

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### Holiday Travel Forecast Methodology

In cooperation with AAA, S&P Global Market Intelligence (SPGMI) developed a unique methodology to forecast actual domestic travel volumes. The economic variables used to forecast travel for the current holiday are leveraged from SPGMI's proprietary databases. These data include macroeconomic drivers such as employment, output, household net worth,

asset prices including stock indices, interest rates, housing market indicators, and variables related to travel and tourism, including gasoline prices, airline travel, and hotel stays. AAA and SPGMI have quantified holiday travel volumes going back to 2000.

Historical travel volume estimates come from MMGY's TRAVEL PERFORMANCE/MonitorSM. The PERFORMANCE/MonitorSM is a comprehensive study measuring the travel behavior of U.S. residents. MMGY contacts over 50,000 U.S. households each month to obtain detailed travel data, resulting in the unique ability to estimate visitor volume and spending, identify trends, and forecast U.S. travel behavior, all after the trips have been taken.

The travel forecast is reported in person-trips. In particular, AAA and SPGMI forecast the total U.S. holiday travel volume and expected mode of transportation. **The travel forecast presented in this report was finalized the week of October 20, 2025.**

Because AAA holiday forecasts focus on domestic leisure travel only, **comparisons to TSA passenger screening numbers should not be made.** TSA data includes all passengers traveling on both domestic and international routes, whether traveling for work or leisure. Additionally, TSA screens passengers each time they enter secured areas of the airport, therefore each one-way trip is counted as a passenger tally. AAA focuses on person-trips, which include the full round-trip travel itinerary. As a result, direct comparisons of AAA forecast volumes and daily TSA screenings represent different factors.

### **INRIX Methodology**

INRIX blends statistically grounded models with real-world road behavior to forecast travel conditions on the most heavily traveled routes across the U.S. during peak holiday periods. INRIX's holiday traffic forecast combines pre-selected high-impact travel routes, rich multi-source traffic data, and a statistically robust linear regression model to generate detailed, time-specific travel delay predictions. INRIX's data sources include a wide array of vehicle-based and infrastructure-based inputs. These include connected vehicle GPS data, mobile apps and navigation services, roadside sensors and cameras, and commercial fleet telematics. With expansive coverage, high temporal resolution, and historical context, this forecasting process provides essential insights for travelers, media, and agencies alike.

### **Thanksgiving Holiday Travel Period**

The Thanksgiving holiday travel period is defined as the seven-day period from Tuesday, November 25 to Monday, December 1, 2025. This Thanksgiving travel window was instituted starting in 2024. Historical results were calculated dating back to 2019 using the same seven-day period.

### **About S&P Global**

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make decisions with conviction. From helping our customers assess new investments to guiding them through ESG and energy transition across supply chains, we unlock new opportunities, solve challenges, and accelerate progress for the world. We are widely sought after by many of the world's leading organizations to provide credit ratings, benchmarks, analytics, and workflow solutions in the global capital, commodity, and automotive markets. With every one of our offerings, we help the world's leading organizations plan for tomorrow, today. For more information, visit [www.spglobal.com](http://www.spglobal.com).

### **About MMGY**

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### **About INRIX**

Founded in 2004, INRIX pioneered intelligent mobility solutions by transforming big data from connected devices and vehicles into mobility insights. This revolutionary approach enabled INRIX to become one of the leading providers of data and analytics into how people move. By empowering cities, businesses, and people with valuable insights, INRIX is helping to make the world smarter, safer, and greener. With partners and solutions spanning across the entire mobility ecosystem, INRIX is uniquely positioned at the intersection of technology and transportation – whether it's keeping road users safe, improving traffic signal timing to reduce delay and greenhouse gasses, optimizing last mile delivery, or helping uncover market insights. Learn more at [INRIX.com](http://INRIX.com).

### **About AAA - The Auto Club Group**

The Auto Club Group (ACG) is the second largest AAA club in North America with more than 13 million members across 14 U.S. states and two U.S. territories. ACG and its affiliates provide members with roadside assistance, insurance products, financial services, travel offerings and more. ACG belongs to the national AAA federation with more than 65 million members in the United States and Canada. AAA's mission is to protect and advance freedom of mobility and improve traffic safety. For more information, get the [AAA Mobile app](#), visit [AAA.com](http://AAA.com), and follow us on social media.