

TRAVEL

DISPATCHES



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

Las Vegas scored the highest in visitor satisfaction in a new survey.

Travelers love these cities

Among the U.S. destinations that make travelers the most satisfied are Las Vegas, Austin, Orlando, New York — and Columbus, Ohio. That's according to JD Power's inaugural assessment of most popular vacation spots in the United States.

The study found a direct link between traveler satisfaction and the money spent at the locale: Happy travelers spend \$277 more than the average traveler on restaurants, souvenirs and more. Those travelers who were not so satisfied spent \$250 less per trip than the average traveler, the study found.

JD Power has for years gathered opinions on electronics, cars, health care and other segments of society consumers want to rate.

Out of a possible 1,000 index points, the cities with the highest overall satisfaction scores for traveling were: Las Vegas with 827; Austin, 818; Orlando, 814; New Orleans and Miami, tied with 814; New York 805; and Columbus, 799.

Columbus scored high for its infrastructure, food and beverage scene and affordability.

Travelers also rated their top foodie and beverage cities. Their choices were: New Orleans, Oahu, in Hawaii, New York, San Antonio and Las Vegas.

For best hotels they chose Las Vegas, New Orleans, Orlando, Miami and Fort Worth. Best entertainment destinations were Orlando, Las Vegas, Anaheim, Oahu and New Orleans.

The study was based on responses between February and July 2016 from more than 26,000 travelers who visited a U.S. metropolitan city between December 2015 and July 2016.

Nancy Trejos



DELTA AIR LINES

Delta Air Lines workers' new looks were designed by Zac Posen.

Delta unveils new uniforms

Delta Air Lines gave a first look at long-awaited new crew uniforms for more than 60,000 workers Tuesday during a "fashion show" rollout in the company's hometown, Atlanta.

To help create the new uniforms, Delta turned to celebrity New York fashion designer Zac Posen, whose work has included outfits for first lady Michelle Obama, Gwyneth Paltrow and Rihanna.

Delta's new uniforms will go to all of the company's front-line workers, though it's the customer-facing uniforms for flight attendants and airport-based customer service agents that will be the most visible to passengers. Pilots are not included in this round of uniform updates. The last broad overhaul of uniforms for Delta's front-line workers came in 2006.

Delta called the new design "contemporary," saying the update "fuses together bold color palettes and classic styles, while paying homage to the heritage and iconic design from decades past."

Designer Posen said it was "thrilling" to be asked by Delta to help the carrier achieve a new look and called it a "lifelong dream come true" to be able to help design uniforms that will soon be worn worldwide by employees of an "iconic" U.S. airline.

Ben Mutzabaugh



PHOTOS BY ASHLEY DAY, USA TODAY; ABOVE, A TASTING FLIGHT AT HI-WIRE BREWING

ASHEVILLE

LOCAL BEER AND GLOBAL TASTES IN ONE DIVERSE SCENE

North Carolina city mixes art and innovation with a side of Southern charm

Ashley Day
USA TODAY

ASHEVILLE, N.C. On one side of the bar, primitive tools and shield-like menu boards evoke medieval times. Opposite sit framed pictures of Tom Selleck and Sloth from *The Goonies*, who also are painted in a mural on the building's exterior. The sun has just set and though it's our third brewery stop, Burial Beer Co. is the first to become crowded and chaotic.

The bartender sets down a tasting flight of four, details the brews, then adds a fifth glass — "and *that* is the saison you forgot," he shares before getting back to the demanding crowd.

I light up and look back at my newfound friends, Brewgrass festivalgoers whom I've just told that everyone in Asheville offers up extra tastes when I'm indecisive, and I didn't even know he'd taken my flight card.

A cook at Rhubarb offered a sample of the gnudi last night when I opted for duck confit after an extended ordering dilemma; a woman next to me at Chai Pani let me try her fried okra after I didn't believe my server's recommendation (they were right); and the veteran beer travelers and I have been sharing tastes from Hi-Wire Brewing to Twin Leaf to here at Burial.

It's no secret that Asheville is the place for beer lovers in the Southeast, but those who have visited will tell you the scene is travel-worthy for anyone in America, with 20 breweries and counting — the second most per capita behind Bend, Ore.

"It's like the Napa Valley of beer," says Adam Charnack, owner and operator of Hi-Wire Brewing. "People look to Asheville as this cultural bright spot in the area, and there's a lot of really talented people doing cool things. We're a really artistic community, and I think food and beer fit that, and culturally beer's a big part of that."

What sets this beer town apart is that it's as much, if not more, of a dining destination. Asheville is as innovative and diverse as it is warm and welcoming. In one day I have pizza with local shrimp at All Souls, Brussels sprouts battered in local beer at Village Social, raw local trout at Cúrate and a sour ale aged with local coffee at The Funkatorium. On another, I try Indian chaat (street food) at Chai Pani, Korean dumplings at Gan Shan Station, American sake at Ben's Tune-Up (a beer garden made entirely of recycled materi-



The duck confit is a good choice at Rhubarb.

"It's like the Napa Valley of beer. ... We're a really artistic community, and I think food and beer fit that."

Adam Charnack, owner and operator of Hi-Wire Brewing (als), and coconut brown ale in a brewery with ping pong tables and foosball inside at Twin Leaf Brewery.

Here, as much thought goes into the barbecue, doughnuts and tacos as the farm-to-table fare, Spanish tapas and steakhouses. It's still a capital of the South with its own biscuit chain, Biscuit Head, perfectly good vegetables deep fried as menu sides, and an old-school soda fountain preserved inside a former Woolworth's store (now home to an art gallery). But international specialties have taken root.

"They have Himalayan and

Mediterranean and French and Indian and southern — it's so eclectic for a town this size," says visitor Tommy Davis of Ringgold, Ga. "Normally you have to go somewhere like New York, Atlanta or Chicago to get the variety of restaurants here."

Of course, Americana abounds. The city channels Portland, Ore., at Trade & Lore, a coffee shop where hipsters can pay extra for the effort of a manual brew and stay for spoken word on a stage above the dining area; Brooklyn with kombucha on tap all around town; and Austin with its trademark barbecue spot, Buxton Hall Barbecue, gracing national headlines and drawing lines.

"It's really wonderful to be in a place where nobody's resting on their laurels," says Katie Button, chef of Cúrate and The Nightbell, and a cookbook author as of this month. "There are so many people doing so many interesting things here in a community that supports really unique, independent businesses."

Only here, Poppy Handcrafted Popcorn offers tasting flights of six of its rotating flavors (like vanilla berry); One World Brewing includes home-brewer recipes on the rotating taps in its nano-brewery beneath Farm Burger downtown; the city's first hard cider company, Noble, is on almost every beverage menu I perused.

Beyond the menus, Asheville remains an appealing destination with Appalachian beauty, quirky culture and art and exceptionally friendly locals. It's also perfect for a fall visit with stunning foliage and plenty of patios to enjoy it.

The beer garden at Ben's Tune Up is made entirely of recycled materials like this container.