

# The wellness escape

## Why 2025 is the year of the wellbeing reset

A national insight report from InsureandGo

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# Running on empty: why 2025 is the year of the wellness reset

With 96% of UK adults rating health and wellbeing as a key consideration when booking holidays for the year ahead, 2025 is set to be defined by a national quest for mental restoration through travel. Yet as the importance of wellbeing grows, many Britons find themselves facing significant barriers to taking the breaks they desperately need.

**InsureandGo's** latest research for 2025 reveals a striking wellbeing paradox: as mental health awareness increases, our ability to disconnect properly is diminishing. For many people, holidays have transformed from luxury indulgences to essential tonics for mental health – a critical reset button in our increasingly demanding lives.

This is particularly evident among the UK's 5.5 million small business owners, where more than one in three (35%) entrepreneurs say they haven't been able to take a proper two-week holiday – citing financial constraints and operational challenges. Even more concerning, 7% don't take holidays at all – sending their families away while they remain at home to oversee business operations.

This reality has created a nation running on empty – where the very breaks designed to restore wellbeing are compromised by the pressures they're meant to escape.

**"Small business owners across the UK are facing a harsh reality – many are too overworked and financially stretched to take a much-needed holiday, potentially pushing themselves to the brink of burnout."**



Garry Nelson  
Head of Corporate Affairs,  
InsureandGo



When holidays do happen, they're increasingly shortened to accommodate work demands:

- 24% opt for shorter breaks or quick city trips to minimise time away
- 15% choose UK holidays so they can return quickly if needed
- 24% admit they wouldn't be able to fully switch off, expecting work contact

These wellbeing impacts extend beyond business owners. For Londoners, who make 27.4 million commuter trips every day and work the longest hours in the UK, the need for wellbeing holidays has reached critical levels. A staggering 72% of people in the Capital say they are prioritising health and wellbeing aspects in their summer holidays this year – significantly higher than the national average of 51%.

These context points are important. They remind us that, to many people, holidays are not frivolous flights of escapism or moments of opulent indulgence. Holidays play an important role in helping millions of British adults to strike a more sustainable work life balance. This new report looks at the key issues for 2025 and offers some clues on how wellbeing may shape peoples holiday choices for peak season this summer.

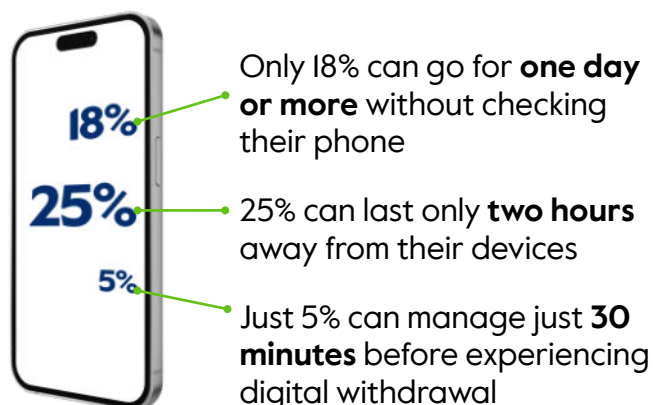




## 1. The great digital detox: why 'off-grid' is the new luxury

At the heart of the 2025 wellbeing travel trend is a growing desire to escape not just physically, but digitally. **InsureandGo's** research reveals that 35% of UK adults plan to seek remote destinations far from everyday stresses this summer, while 11% are taking this further by looking for 'off-grid' holidays – places offering a complete switch-off from the internet and mobile phones.

Yet this aspiration for digital disconnection is also, in part, based on recognition by many people that unless they go fully 'off grid' they will maintain the usual habit of being glued to their devices while abroad:



This addiction to connectivity is preventing the very mental reset that holidays are increasingly valued for. A remarkable 98% of holidaymakers say that, typically, they would check something regularly on their smartphone during their holidays abroad – with 8 of the top 10 smartphone activities focused on maintaining connections with life at home, often the very source of the stress they're trying to escape.

### Top 5 smartphone activities on holiday:

1. Messages from friends (47%)
2. Social media feeds from home (38%)
3. Local weather at resort (36%)
4. Travel maps for excursions (30%)
5. Checking bank account (28%)

Regional research findings around the UK also tell an interesting story:

- People in the North (Scotland, North-East, and North-West) find it easier to disconnect digitally than their southern counterparts
- Welsh residents are most addicted to social media while on holiday
- Londoners are the people least able to switch off from work emails (22%), national news (25%), and online shopping (20%)

For stressed urbanites, particularly in London, the concept of 'sleep holidays' has emerged as a significant wellbeing priority, with 16% of survey respondents interested in breaks specifically designed to promote better sleep patterns and a full mental switch-off.

This growing digital detox trend signals a fundamental shift in how we view holiday time – from entertainment and leisure to essential mental restoration – yet our dependence on constant connectivity presents a significant barrier to achieving genuine wellbeing benefits.

**"Our new research shows how many people want holidays to give them an escape from everyday life – whether this involves trekking to remote locations, reconnecting with nature or even finding those far-flung places that have no WiFi."**



Letitia Smith  
Head of Communications,  
InsureandGo







## 2. Biophilia bloom: from boardrooms to beach rooms

The human desire to reconnect with nature – known as biophilia – has emerged as a dominant factor in 2025 wellbeing holiday choices. Our research shows that three in ten respondents (30%) are specifically seeking nature-based or wildlife-oriented holidays to reconnect with the natural world as a direct response to increasingly urbanised, technology-driven lifestyles.

This nature-seeking behaviour transcends demographics but is particularly pronounced among London's professionals, where the contrast between everyday concrete environments and natural settings appears to deliver maximum wellbeing benefits. For these urban dwellers, specific wellbeing strategies have emerged:

### Top wellbeing holiday strategies for Londoners

- Meditation/mindfulness classes (34%)
- Stress management courses (33%)
- Suitable routes for running (33%)
- Sleep therapy (32%)
- Diet/healthy eating lessons (31%)

Beyond structured wellbeing activities, certain holiday types consistently deliver superior mental health benefits. Contrary to the perception of beach holidays as "lazy" options, they consistently rank as the most effective type of break for nearly all wellbeing metrics.



## Beach and pool holidays rank highest for:

- Getting a good night's sleep (52%)
- Socialising (52%)
- Getting off-grid/no devices (52%)
- Exercise (46%)

The surprising effectiveness of camping holidays for mental wellness also stands out, with camping scoring particularly high for:

- Being surrounded/inspired by nature (44%)
- Getting off-grid (33%)
- Break from social interaction (31%)

The connection with animals represents another significant biophilia trend, with 12% specifically wanting holidays involving animal interactions – from horse riding to farm stays to swimming with dolphins.

Guaranteed sunshine also rated highly for 32% of adults. During winter months when many suffer from seasonal affective disorder (SAD), the promise of sunshine is viewed as essential to mental wellbeing rather than merely a pleasant luxury.

**"Given the stressful nature of everyday life, holidays are an opportunity for many people to reset, to reflect on life at home and restore a sense of balance."**



Chris Rolland  
Head of Communications,  
InsureandGo



### 3. Holiday Inequality: the wellbeing divide

While wellbeing holidays are increasingly viewed as essential rather than luxury, our research reveals a concerning wellbeing divide, with certain groups systematically missing out on the mental health benefits of proper breaks.

Small business owners emerge as a particularly vulnerable "wellbeing underclass," with financial and operational pressures creating significant barriers to taking adequate time off:

#### Top reasons entrepreneurs can't take proper holidays:

- 43% can't afford the financial hit of taking two weeks off
- 24% wouldn't be able to fully switch off from work concerns
- 22% feel more stressed about their business when away
- 21% worry about illness/injury taking them out of action
- 14% believe no one can manage their business in their absence

This inability to disconnect properly extends beyond business owners. Most UK adults (83%) experience stress from the very thing meant to provide relief – their holiday. For some, stress begins before they even reach their destination, with packing (21%) and flight delays (33%) among the top tension points.

#### Top 5 causes of holiday stress:

1. Flight delays (33%)
2. Weather concerns (28%)
3. Cost of things at resort (25%)
4. Poor service/rude staff (23%)
5. Packing (21%)

Travel companions represent another significant source of holiday stress, with 75% citing fellow travellers as a source of tension. The generational divide is notable here, with young people more likely to be stressed by companions (87%) compared to over-55s (69%).

Economic considerations are also creating wellbeing inequalities. As holidays become more expensive while disposable incomes shrink, 88% of adults surveyed will be making economic sacrifices at home to afford their 2025 holidays:

- 17% will delay home improvements
- 15% will put off buying a new car
- 17% will sacrifice short city breaks to save for a main summer holiday

To manage costs, 88% are adopting strategies like avoiding peak travel times (49%), choosing all-inclusive deals (26%) or opting for DIY holidays (10%). More worryingly, however, is that 28% plan to cut costs on travel insurance – potentially exposing themselves to risks that could undermine any wellbeing benefits gained.

As mental health awareness continues to grow, addressing these wellbeing inequalities becomes increasingly important – ensuring that the restorative benefits of proper holidays are accessible to all, not just those with the financial freedom and workplace flexibility to take them.

**"Our research suggests many people could be running on empty, sacrificing their own wellbeing for the sake of their businesses – and this is not sustainable. Taking time away from work is not just beneficial for wellbeing, it's also important for long-term success."**



Garry Nelson  
Head of Corporate Affairs  
InsureandGo



# Concluding remarks

“In recent years, our research has explored people’s attitudes to sustainable travel. Climate change has been an obvious consideration, but sustainability has a much broader meaning – and people’s health and wellbeing is part of that broader definition.

“Our research tells us that holidays play an important role to make people’s daily routines more sustainable: A break from the stresses and demands of everyday life - and long working hours - is crucial to so many people. Our research findings from small business owners and Londoners were particularly eye opening here.

“But beyond the need for a good two-week escape in the sun with loved ones, wellbeing considerations are now also playing out in the types of holidays people are picking – the destinations some people are choosing and the in-resort services that are now seen to be more important.

“At **InsureandGo** we aim to make it easy for people. Holidays are treasured moments of the year, and we aim to make it straightforward for people to get the right travel cover before they head off abroad.”



*Garry Nelson*

Garry Nelson  
Head of Corporate Affairs  
InsureandGo

## About InsureandGo

**InsureandGo** is one of the best-known names in travel insurance in the UK. Based in Southend-on-Sea with over 100 staff, it is a multi, award-winning travel insurance company. Two **InsureandGo** policies have been awarded the prestigious 'Best Buy' status by Which?

**InsureandGo** has helped more than 27 million travellers with travel insurance, products that combine quality cover with value for money.

To discover more about **InsureandGo** visit: [InsureandGo.com](https://www.insureandgo.com)

## Research methodology

The research was conducted by Walr Research for **InsureandGo** among a nationally representative sample of 2,000 UK adults in February 2025.