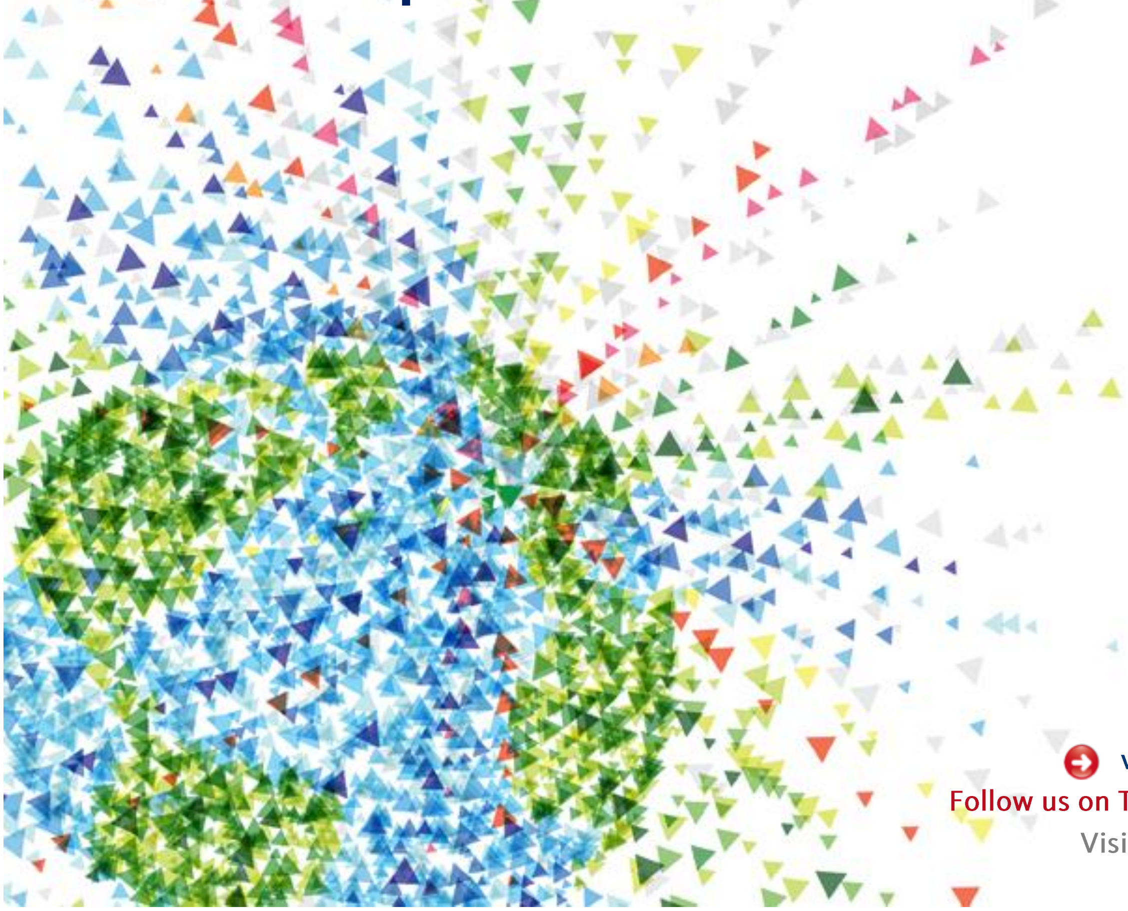
Foresight – issue 132
Exploring Britain Research in Emerging Markets

October 2014



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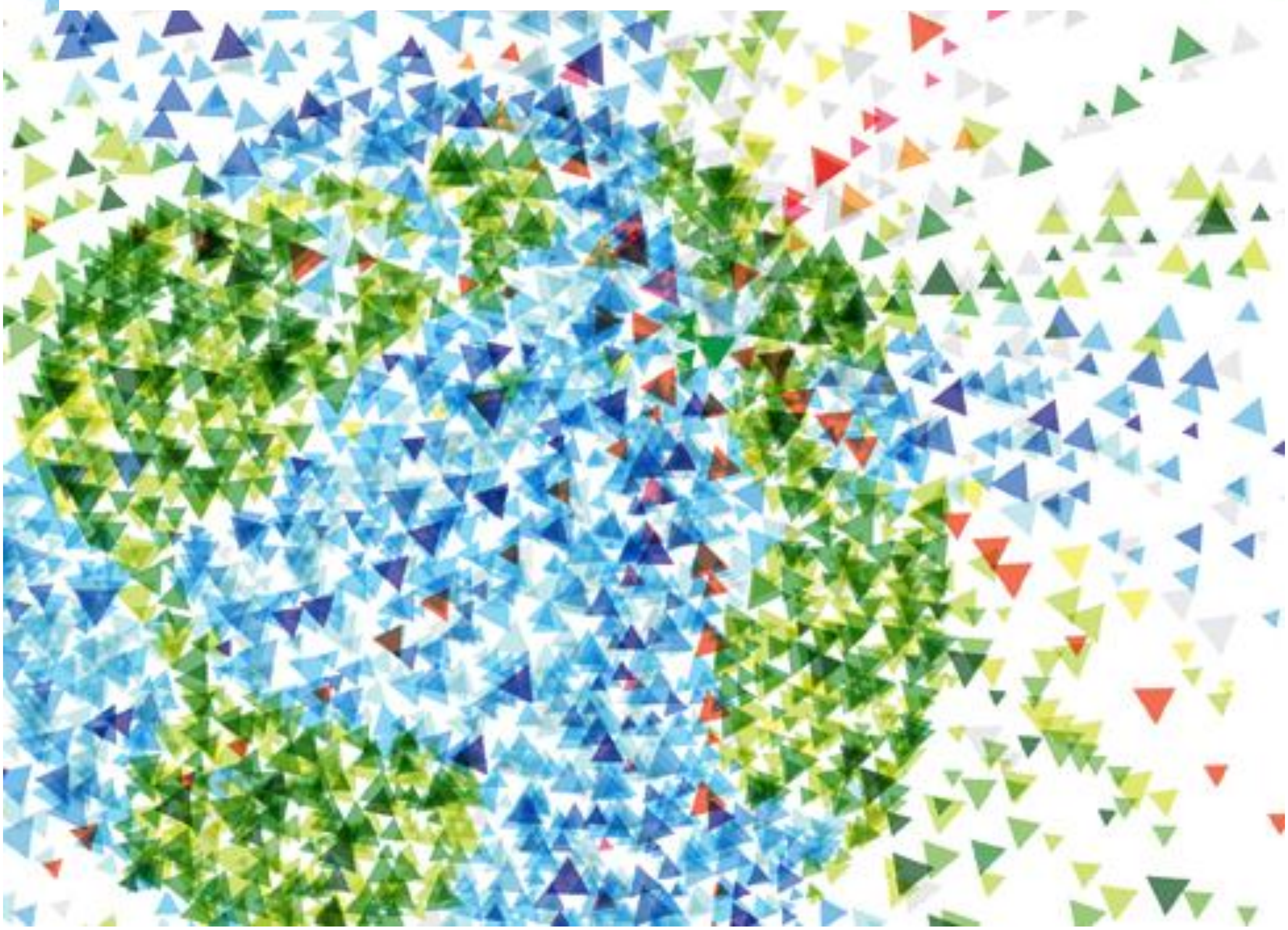
They paint a detailed picture of past, present and future inbound UK tourism trends, helping you gain an insight into how markets and segments are performing, as well as how Britain is perceived by prospective visitors.



Exploring Britain Research in Emerging Markets

Background

Delivering greater 'regional spread' is one of the challenges for inbound tourism to Britain. Whilst there are many opportunities for Britain to grow inbound tourism one of the barriers to growth is low awareness of Britain's offer outside London. As a tourist destination Britain competes against a number of other destinations where overseas visitors tend to visit a wider range of destinations, not just the capital city. For comparison the table below shows the proportion of visitor nights spent in the UK capital with that of France and Italy. This does suggest there is scope for UK visitors to explore beyond the capital city.

Table 1: Regional spread within UK and competitors in 2013

	% of nights from overseas visitors spent in capital city	Total staying visits to country (million)
UK	40%	31.2
France	26%*	84.7
Italy	13%	47.7

** only available for 2012*

During 2013 and the beginning of 2014 VisitBritain commissioned a two-wave study to explore this topic in more detail – to identify the current barriers and investigate the opportunities that exist for VisitBritain and the wider industry to encourage visitors to explore all of Britain. The first wave was completed at the start of 2013 in four of our established markets - France, Germany, Norway and the USA. The results from this research have been collated and reported in Foresight 117 in July 2013.

This edition of Foresight will look specifically at the second wave of research completed towards the end of 2013 and into 2014 in some of our emerging markets – Brazil, India and the GCC nations (predominately Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates/Dubai).

VisitBritain wished to gain in-depth knowledge into the barriers, either real or perceived, currently preventing visitors from travelling the width and breadth of Britain while on holiday here. To complete our understanding the study explored the regional offerings which had attracted previous visitors to all corners of Britain and offerings that would encourage potential visitors to venture wider and deeper within Britain.

Introduction

VisitBritain uses a range of terminology to define the groups of markets – Brazil, India and the GCC all take up a place in our emerging markets category. These markets are integral in our strategy and will be key to reaching our 2020 target of international tourism growth. It is therefore important that we capture our share of these growing markets and realise their contribution to the UK economy.

Since 2009 all of the emerging markets in this research have recorded strong growth in spending from holiday visitors posting double digit growth, and an increase in visits. While this is impressive, the scale of this growth can really be appreciated when compared to the UK average over the past 5 years. See Table 2.

Table 2: 2009-2013 Average growth in visits and spend (holiday visits only)

	Visits	Spend
India	5%	10%
Brazil	15%	27%
GCC (combined)	14%	26%
UK TOTAL	**3%**	**9%**

Furthermore, the average length of a holiday visit from these markets was longer than the average for all UK visits in 2013. Those from India and Brazil tended to stay at least a week in 2013, while it was almost 2 weeks in the case of our Gulf visitors. These all compare favourably to the UK average of a little over 6 days.

Table 3: Average length of stay 2013 (holiday visits)

	Average Length of Stay (nights per visit)
India	6.8
Brazil	7.9
GCC (combined)	12.5
UK TOTAL	**6.2**

Holiday visitors from these emerging markets were less likely than those from other markets to have visited the UK at least once in the last 10 years. Around half of all visitors from India indicated they had previously visited the UK while just under a third of visitors from Brazil had previously visited. The exception market in this study was the combined GCC region where almost 9 out of every 10 visitors had previously visited the UK. This may be explained by the high level of British expats on the IPS sample and the annual habitual travel to the UK from this market.

Table 4: Repeat visits in the last 10 years (holiday visits only, 1999-2009)

	Proportion of visits which were return
India	50%
Brazil	30%
GCC (combined)	88%
UK TOTAL	**62%**

VisitBritain will again be asking about repeat visits in the 2015 Office for National Statistics, International Departing Passengers Survey with results expected in the spring of 2016.

Although a relatively high average length of stay and propensity to visit multiple times, visitors from these emerging markets tended to be more capital city centric than most during 2013, suggesting there is an opportunity for the wider Britain offer to appeal to these markets.

Table 5: Proportion of visits to London only (all visits, 2013)

	Proportion of Visits to London Only
Brazil	77%
India	55%
GCC	54%
UK TOTAL	**47%**

Connectivity has a large role to play in opening up parts of a country to visitors. During 2013 the connectivity of Britain bound flights from these markets was skewed towards London. Table 6 illustrates the role London plays connecting the UK with the emerging markets included in this research. The table shows the proportion of direct arrival flights into the UK, by city during 2013.

Table 6: Britain flight destination cities from emerging markets, 2013

From/To	London	Manchester	Birmingham	Glasgow	Newcastle
India	96%	1%	3%		
Brazil	100%				
Bahrain	100%				
Kuwait	100%				
Oman	100%				
Qatar	80%	20%			
UAE	65%	17%	7%	7%	4%

In summary, we continue to see good growth from the emerging markets in this study – both in visits and spend. With a longer than average length of stay there is scope to encourage exploring all corners of our country while on holiday here and potentially return visits to Britain.

Please note this study focused exclusively on holiday visitors - those visiting purely for a holiday and staying in paid accommodation. We know that those visiting friends and families/relatives (VFR) are more likely to travel outside London as they have strong links to particular parts of Britain. The study also excluded those visiting for study or business, who would have a different profile to holiday visitors with their trip being prescribed by their business/study needs.

Importance of Regional Spread

Encouraging visitors beyond London has clear benefits in terms of employment and income for places all over Britain. Indeed, recent holiday visitors who had been beyond London from India, Brazil and the GCC interviewed as part of this study were more likely to stay longer and to return more often (in the past 5 years) than visitors who had not ventured beyond the capital on a previous visit.

Chart 1: Repeat visits amongst recent visitors

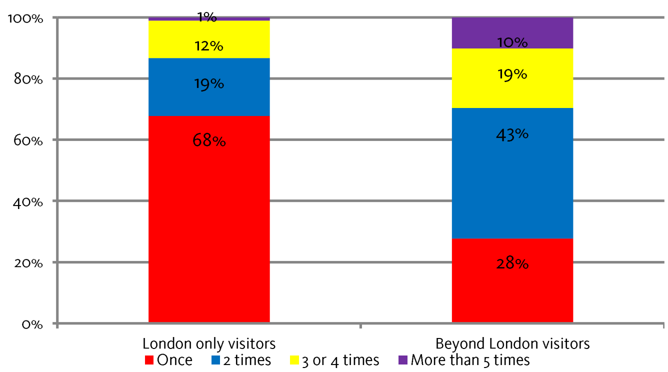
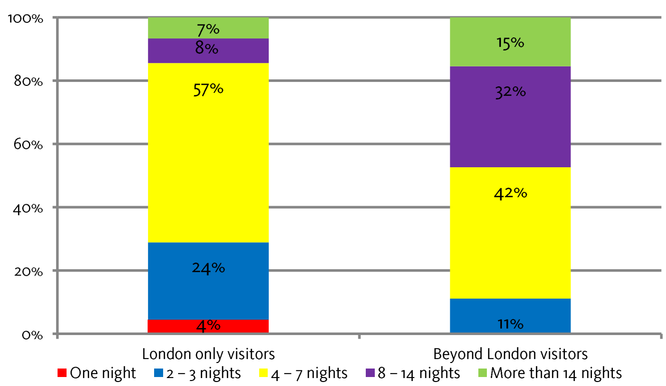


Chart 2: Length of stay amongst recent visitors



Claimed Knowledge

To begin to understand the barriers we first asked respondents to tell us how much they thought they already knew about places and activities within Britain. On a scale of 'knowing nothing' to 'knowing a great deal' they rated a number of places and activities. The chart shows the percentage of respondents who indicated they knew at least a bit about each place/activity – top 2 boxes of a 5 point scale.

Chart 3: Proportion claiming knowledge of wider Britain places and activities

It is clear respondents feel some connection and awareness of current wider Britain offer. GB's world famous sights resonated with a high proportion of respondents (71%), followed by attractions and activities for families (60%) and historical or heritage sites (58%).

Respondents were less sure about the British offer around unique experiences (35%) or the more than 11,000 miles of UK coastline (30%).

On average levels of agreement with these statements amongst those who had previously visited Britain were 5-10% higher than considerers who were yet to visit our shores, but were thinking about it.

Barriers to Exploring More of Britain

The reasons given by respondents for not going outside of London were explored with visitors who visited Britain but hadn't been outside the M25 and those who were considering a capital city visit only. Whilst the list of barriers might seem long at first they can be grouped into 3 categories – Iconic Images, Practical Concerns and Competition, each of which is explored in more detail below.

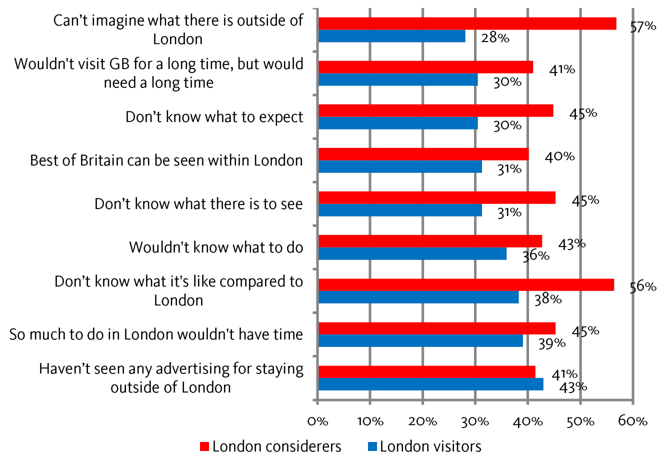
Almost all barriers tested in this study attracted higher levels of agreement (strongly/slightly) with considerers than visitors – this finding proposes the perceptions of barriers currently held in these markets is higher than they actually are when experienced by visitors in Britain.

Iconic Images

Over half of those who were considering a British bound holiday agreed they didn't know what the rest of GB is like compared to London nor could they imagine what there was there (56% and 57% respectively). Even amongst our recent visitors there was uncertainty of the offer outside London. This is perhaps indicative of a certain level of scepticism that whatever the offer is, it is probably not that different to London.

While proportions of our recent visitors were less likely to agree with this statement, suggesting they may have some idea of Britain beyond the M25, 2 in 5 visitors didn't know what it was like compared to London and over a quarter agreed they found it difficult to imagine Britain outside the capital.

Chart 4: Iconic barriers for visitors and considerers

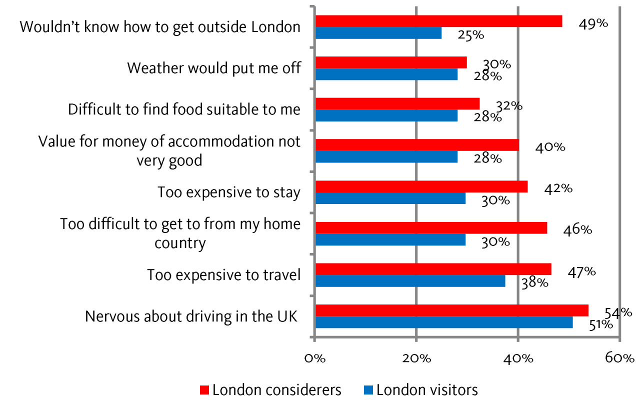


With images and mind-sets amongst holiday makers from these emerging markets strongly linked with iconic London, respondents indicated that they hadn't really considered visiting further afield than the capital.

Practical Concerns

The second batch of barriers can be categorised as practical. There were a number of practical concerns noted by respondents in this study. As was found in the previous wave of research amongst holiday visitors from mature markets, the number 1 practical barrier was transport. Just over half of both recent London visitors and London considerers indicated they were nervous about driving in the UK (51% and 54%) and a high proportion thought it would be too expensive to travel further once here (38% and 47%).

Chart 5: Practical barriers for visitors and considerers

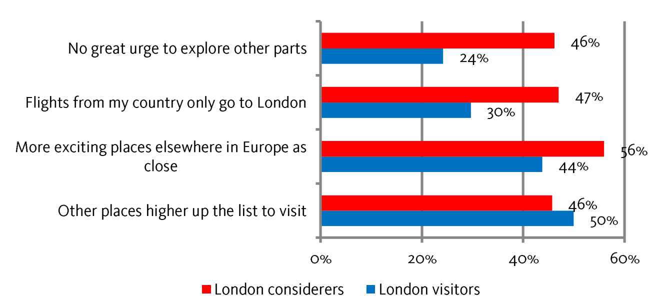


While perceptions of transport were at the top of practical barriers, around a third thought it would be difficult to find suitable food outside the capital and the British weather would be a barrier to exploring (28% and 30%). The difference between the proportions of visitors and considerers agreeing with 'Wouldn't know how to get outside London' (25% vs 49%) suggests in reality the ease of getting outside London once here, exceeded visitors previous perceptions.

Competition

Amongst those who had been here there is an appreciation that there might be more. This is demonstrated in the chart below where visitors were less likely to agree with most competitive barriers than those who were only considering a visit. Around half of recent London visitors and those considering a London visit agreed that other European destinations were more exciting than Britain (44% and 56%). Similar proportions also agreed that there were other places higher up their list to visit, ahead of Britain (50% and 46%).

Chart 6: Competitive barriers for visitors and considerers



While there is evidence of a lack of appreciation of the wider Britain offer *salience* is perhaps the best word to describe the idea here. It is not that there is a lack of appreciation or desire to see more of Britain beyond London. Desire doesn't really come into it as you can't lack desire of something you don't know to exist.

This idea of salience is especially strong in the GCC and Brazil, but in India, their historical connections and the British and continuing Commonwealth ties there is more knowledge and therefore higher levels of desire within this market.

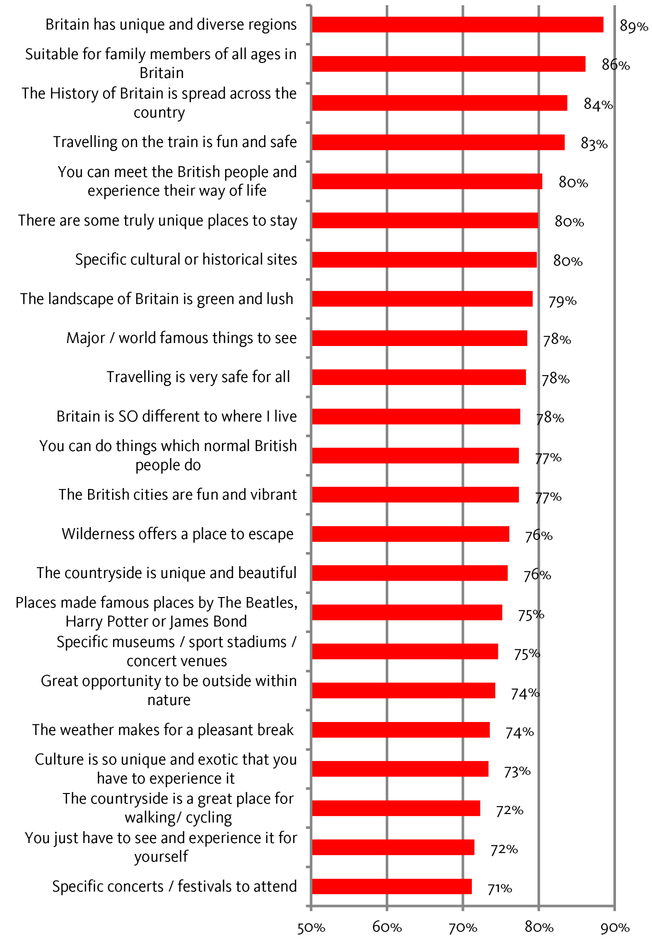
Great Britain Appeal

The appeal to explore all corners of Great Britain was investigated with respondents who had previously stayed outside the capital and amongst those who intended to visit the width and breadth of the country. This was to understand the specific draws of the wider Britain offer that will resonate within these markets.

Respondents were presented with a list of statements about the wider Britain offer and asked to what extent they agreed with the statement. There was generally more agreement across all statements amongst visitors than intenders suggesting the reality of the experience exceeds the expectation and therefore opportunities to recruit advocates for exploring Britain.

There was an almost unanimous appreciation of the diversity offered by the regions of Britain. As we saw previously with the levels of claimed knowledge, there is an acknowledgement the wider Britain offer is suitable for all of the family with British history is also a draw. Of note, amongst those from the emerging markets, travelling by train is seen as fun and safe and offers a solution to the number 1 practical barrier of being nervous driving on the wrong side of the road.

Chart 7: Reasons given by beyond visitors and considerers for exploring

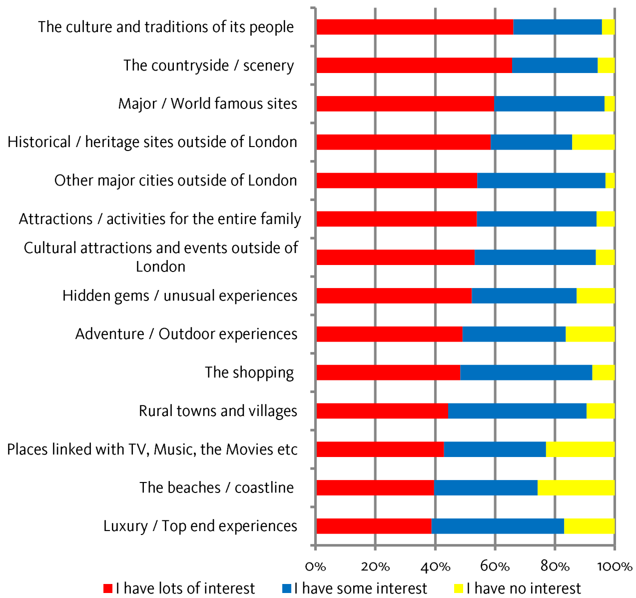


Levels of Interest in Britain

Chart 8 investigates aspects which piqued the interest of respondents. There was generally a lot of interest in the wide range of the British offer, with perhaps places made famous for connections with film, TV and music and beaches attracting the least interest at this time.

The draw of the British culture and tradition along with world famous sites and other major cities, (outside the Capital) attracted the highest levels of interest in these markets and could be an area of focus to draw visitors from these markets beyond the M25.

Chart 8: Expressed levels of interest in British offer



Specific Market Differences for Maximising Appeal

While there is willingness to travel further and deeper in Britain from emerging markets, however knowledge must be built in the minds of visitors and potential visitors to shift Britain from a consideration destination to top spot above the competition. The wider Britain product has the ability to do this and should enhance a holiday.

As well as the communicating the wider British offer to visitors and potential visitors from these markets it is important to note they are not all the same. Below are 5 top tips for each market we recommend considering when communicating with these markets to maximise appeal.

GCC

- Promote the real British way of life. There is a desire to experience what 'normal' British people do.
- Educate on the diversity of the British regions – the real Britain is much more than a limited number of iconic sites.
- Accessibility to food and other needs – reassure all of Britain caters to these needs. There wasn't strong agreement that Britain didn't do this, but there was evidence this might be a barrier.
- Cities and traditional countryside resonate strongest here. Ensure promotion of this offer to draw visitors to all corners of Britain.
- Trains are a draw amongst this group and will overcome the driving barrier. Furthermore, packaged overnight and multiday tours were shown to have some appeal in this market.

India

- Our history and heritage can be used as a draw amongst Indians. There is an acknowledgment that staying in one place limits the amount of history that can be seen as history is all over Britain.
- The vibrancy of towns/cities like Manchester and Liverpool appeals to those from India. With the British education held in high regard, Cambridge and Oxford resonated with this audience.
- The British countryside can be motivating as well. It is seen as a chance to escape and relax - to get away from hectic cities.
- Whole family activities can encourage wider travel – knowing there is something for everyone will be reassuring to these visitors that the extra mile will be worth it.
- There is an openness to use trains and being able to book in one location/website would be appreciated by visitors from India. Rail tours could be an option here.

Of all the markets in this study India showed the most enthusiasm to discover the wider Britain offer. This may be linked to generally higher levels of knowledge and awareness of Britain due to the strong Commonwealth ties.

Brazil

- There is a natural attraction to travel and using a train to get around Britain appeals here.
- A genuine curiosity for contemporary British culture (for example the Beatles and Harry Potter) offers an opportunity to attract visitors from Brazil.
- It is generally accepted the diverse British regions can make for a richer trip – the history and unique experiences are of interest here.
- Oxbridge and the excellent British academic offer resonated with this market.
- Brazilians are social and the opportunity to meet local people, to experience local culture is attractive, especially if the whole family can get involved.

More detailed information on each of the markets is available on our website. Our [Market Reports] include in-depth coverage of regional spread, market conditions, attitudes to holidays, reaching consumers, the travel trade, our latest market intelligence and much more. Reports are available for over 20 markets including Brazil, India, United Arab Emirates and a market snapshot for Saudi Arabia.

Role of the Travel Agent

Travel agents play an important part helping clients with researching, planning and booking holidays. While just under half of those visiting from Brazil consulted experts for information or booking the likelihood to contact an agent in India is even higher - just over 2 out of every 3 indicating a travel agent had a role in their last trip to Britain.

Table 7: Proportion of recent visitors who had used a travel agent

	India	Brazil	GCC
Yes	68%	46%	60%
No	32%	54%	40%

Given the influence and level of consulting with travel professionals in these markets, Olive Insight spoke directly to the travel trade in Brazil and the GCC as part of this research. All of those who took part in the research regularly sold Britain. In total 10 interviews were completed – 5 in each of Brazil and GCC.

Most agents felt their clients came to them when they already had some idea of where they wanted to go, how much it was likely to cost and what they wanted to do. Travel agents then helped their clients build their itineraries with further suggestions to make the most of their holiday. Travel agents can therefore be very influential in encouraging further exploring outside the capital.

Details of the Study

The research analysed in this edition of Foresight was conducted by Olive Insight. The research objective was clearly defined as:

to explore the opportunities to encourage visitors from the emerging markets to stay longer and deeper in Britain (i.e. beyond just London) and how this opportunity should be optimised.

The study was undertaken in the winter of 2013/2014 and consisted of three stages, split across the 3 markets:

- Immersion sessions and meetings with VisitBritain research strategy, marketing and press staff as well as in country managers for each market.
- Qualitative exploration in the form of 48 in depth interviews with past visitors and those considering visiting London. The sample was evenly distributed to include those who had been or were considering a London only visit, and respondents who had been or were considering a trip to Britain, beyond our capital city. Given the important role of travel agents booking holidays in Brazil and the GCC region there were an additional 10 interviews with travel agents.
- The third phase was quantitative validation of findings with a total of 910, 20 minute online interviews. See table 8 below for the breakdown of the quantitative sample by country, visitor/considerer and London Solus/Beyond London.

Table 8: Sample breakdown

	India	Brazil	GCC
VISITOR TOTAL	**45%**	**45%**	**8%**
Solus London	19%	19%	4%
Beyond London	26%	26%	4%
CONSIDERER TOTAL	**55%**	**55%**	**92%**
Solus London	26%	24%	27%
Beyond London	29%	31%	65%
TOTAL SAMPLE	**300**	**308**	**302**

For the purpose of this survey visitors were defined as having visited Great Britain and 1 other European country in the last 5 years. Considerers were respondents who had never visited Great Britain but put it in the top 5 places to go in the next 5 years.

While the study was designed to achieve an even split between visitors and considerers Olive encountered difficulties recruiting GCC nationals so the quotas were relaxed and the majority of the 300 completed interviews were from considerers.

Further Information and Research

VisitBritain makes International Passenger Survey data from the Office of National Statistics available to download from our website. You can view visits, nights and spend to different areas of the UK, much of which is broken down by market, journey purpose and more here: Inbound visitor statistics for UK nations, regions, counties and cities/towns.

Data Sources

Table 9: Data sources

Source	Charts/Tables
Office for National Statistics, International Passenger Survey, 2013 unless specified	Table 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
UNWTO, Biacna d'Italia, French Ministry of Commerce and Tourism	Table 1
Capstats (as at 30 September 2014)	Table 6
Olive Insight, London and Beyond (commissioned by VisitBritain), Winter 2013	All other tables and charts

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