

Understanding and engaging with UK expats in the UAE

VisitBritain

Research conducted by Kubi Kalloo in March-April 2021



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Background

- The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is an important source market for inbound tourism to the UK, ranking 20th for visits among all inbound markets in 2019, and 9th for spend. This market is the source of exceptionally valuable visitors, with the average spend per visit being more than double the all-market average in the same year.
- The UAE is unique within the GCC for its high proportion, and variety of, expat residents. A large number of these are British, and UK expats living in the UAE constituted 31% of visits from this market in 2019. Three quarters of British expats who visit from the UAE come to visit friends and family.
- Before this project, this group had not been the subject of specific research from VisitBritain. Sentiment data suggests that post COVID-19, VFR* visitors, who have a pre-existing purpose for visiting the UK, will become an important audience to drive recovery. Some of the most valuable of these visitors are likely to come from the UAE, so it is important to fully understand this audience in order to maximise their future spending potential.
- With this research, we aimed to gather robust numbers to gauge the potential of this audience, as well as get under their skin to understand their attitudes and behaviour in order to inspire strategies to engage with them.

Methodology

Quantitative survey

Fieldwork 18th March – 1st April 2021

300 UK Nationals living residents in any area of the UAE



- ✓ Gender / Age / Region lived in the UAE left to fall-out naturally
- ✓ Have taken a trip back to the UK to visit friends and family in the past 3 years
- ✓ Are all holiday decision makers – solely responsible or jointly responsible




Qualitative in-depth interviews

Fieldwork 26th March – 1st April 2021

8 UK Nationals living residents in any area of the UAE



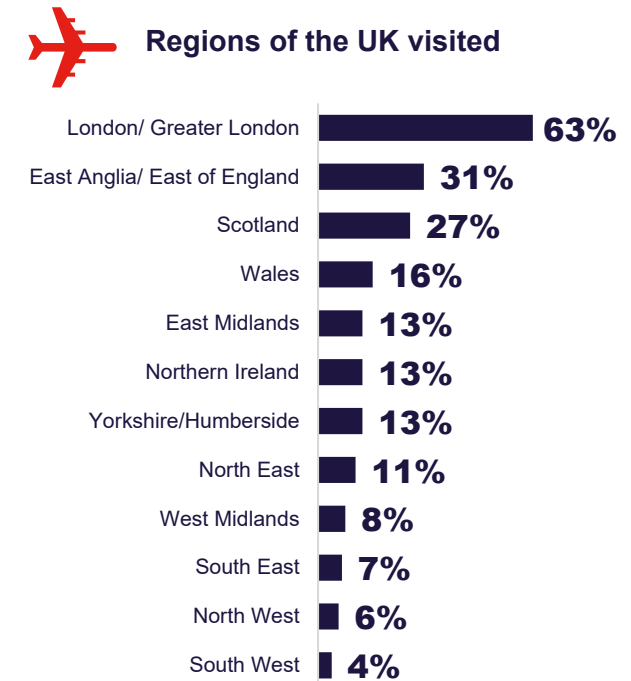
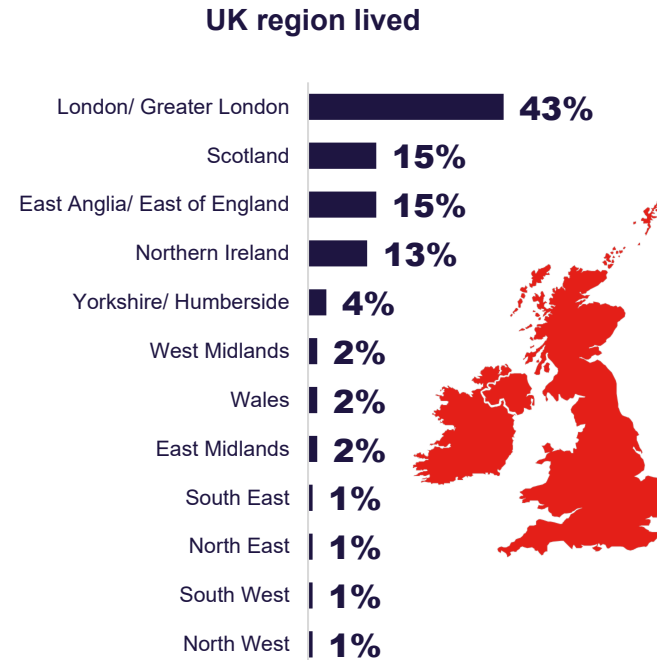
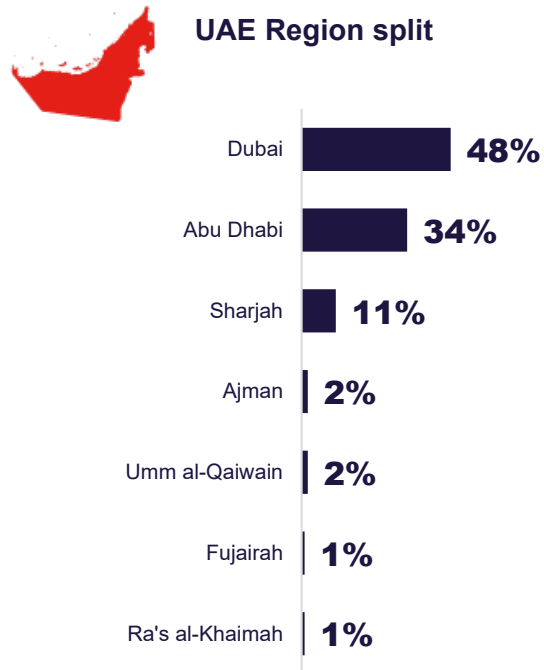
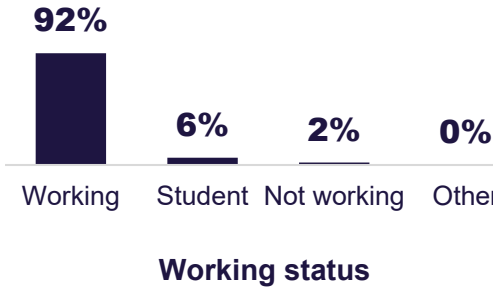
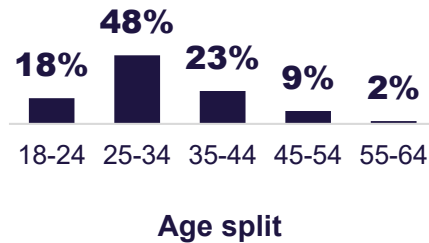
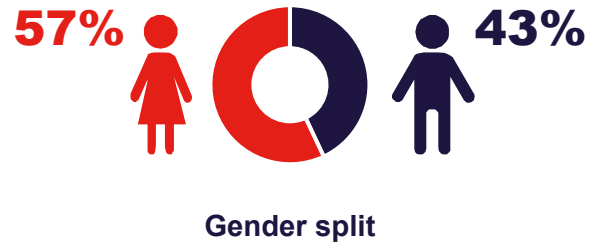
Sample evenly split between those who are:

-  Living alone in the UAE
-  Living in the UAE with partner / spouse only
-  Living in the UAE with partner / spouse only and children
-  Living in the UAE with partner / spouse only but children are at home
- ✓ Even split of gender/ age

Survey sample

Household income

AED11,999 **4%**
 AED12,000 – AED15,999 **29%**
 AED16,000 – AED19,999 **37%**
 AED20,000 – AED39,999 **26%**
 AED40,000 – AED59,999 **5%**





**How much are
UK expats in
the UAE worth
for UK
tourism?**



UAE expats spend, on average **10.7 days** on a visit to the UK.

They spend, on average **£1,250** during their trip.

They spend approximately **£117 each day** (which is unlikely to include a hotel stay).

This is in comparison to the average international visitor to the UK in 2019 (IPS). While visiting the UK they spend on average 7.1 nights in the UK, spending £696 per visit, and £98 per night.



Reluctant Returner*
expats spend, on
average
9.8 days
on a visit to the UK.

They spend on
average
£1,000
during their trip.

They spend on
average
£102
each day.

UAE expats spend,
on average
10.7 days
on a visit to the UK.

They spend,
on average
£1250 during
their trip.

They spend
approximately
£117
each day
(which is unlikely
to include a hotel stay).

Valiant Visitor*
expats spend, on
average
11.5 days
on a visit to the UK.

They spend on
average
£1,350
during their trip.

They spend on
average
£117 each day.

How much are UK expats in the UAE worth?

To generate an additional £1m in spend, the UK would need to encourage just under 1% of the UAE expat population to spend an extra 4 nights in the UK each year.

How much more could each UAE expat persona be worth?

If the UK convinces just 1% of visitors like Reluctant Returners to spend 4 days extra in the UK, this could equate to an additional £408,160 in spend.



If the UK convinces just 1% of visitors like Valiant Visitors to spend 4 days extra in the UK, this could equate to an additional £631,088 in spend.



And what is desire to visit the UK like post COVID-19?

98% of UAE Expats intend to visit the UK either the same amount as they did Pre-COVID (44%) or more (54%) than they did Pre-COVID, suggesting that the UK is top of the UAE Expats' list to travel to next

The UK needs to engage Expats differently to how we engage tourists



Tourists

Tourists are engaged by what the UK has to offer as a destination on its own.

The UK needs to be the foreground to their trip



Expats

Expats are coming back to the UK to build and maintain human relationships.

Their friends and family should be in the foreground of their trip with the UK in the background.

Before speaking to them, it's important to understand the UK's role is supporting their trip not the singular focus of their trip



Who am I?

UAE Expat Personas

Why are we using personas?

Not every UAE expat is the same. Their experiences, relationships with the UK and behaviour are likely different. We have used our data to generate two different personas based on demographic and attitudinal statements, that help to give flavour to who UAE Expats are.



How the Personas were created

A mixed-modal cluster analysis was run amongst our UAE Expat respondents. We aimed to understand their demographic and attitudinal differences, to see how these related to their overall behavioural relationship with the UK and travel behaviour generally. We settled on the following variables as solid explainers of the UAE Expat groups:

- Gender
- Age
- Region living in the UAE
- Holiday decision making behaviour
 - Attitudinal Statements
 - Household income
 - Working status
 - Social media usage
 - UK Region lived

This created 2 distinct personas which are outlined in the rest of this report.

Persona 1: Reluctant Returners



Younger than Valiant Visitors (77% 18-34 year old).



Tech savvy (75% willing to invest in new tech) UAE expats who are always on their phone (76% spend a high proportion of time online/on phone).



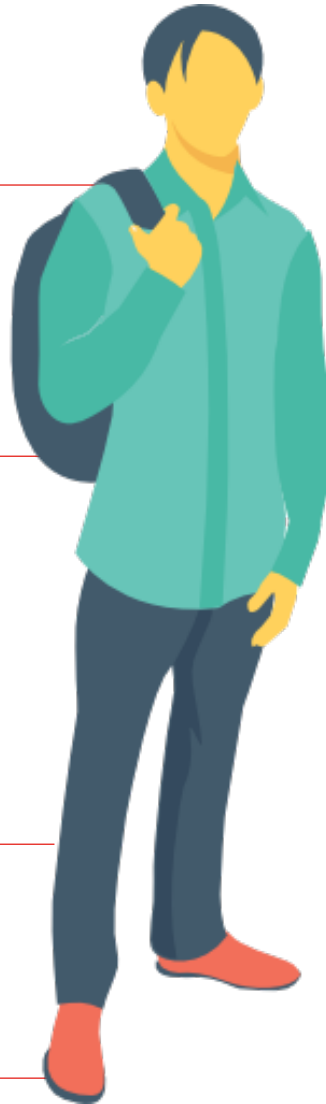
They are likely to have been in the UAE for between 0-4 years (85%) and either came over to the UAE **alone (38%)** or moved **with their parents / siblings / grandparents (50%)**.



Which is why they make their travel decisions alone (83%).



This group are keen to get **vaccinated**, and are dead set on **travelling again as soon as they can** (84%). And will visit London (85%), The East of England (31%) or Scotland (31%) when they can



They are likely to be earning between **16,000-19,999AED a month**, which makes them slightly less affluent than Valiant Visitors.



They love the life that the UAE offers them, as they are **able to earn and save more money** than ever before, which they like to **spend on weekends away all over the world; holidays filled with action and excitement (62%)**.



They have, on average, taken **3 holidays in the past 3 years**.

They do, however, see their trips back to the **UK as a chore (82%)**, as it takes up a large proportion of their time they could spend travelling elsewhere.



They are less likely to visit **the UK on business (41%)**, but if they do, very few are likely to stay **longer on holiday (16%** of all Reluctant Returners) or just **visit their friends and family (13%)**

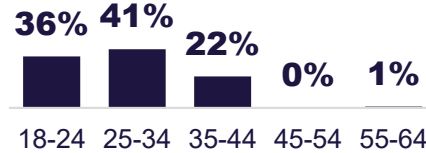
Reluctant Returners in detail

Household income

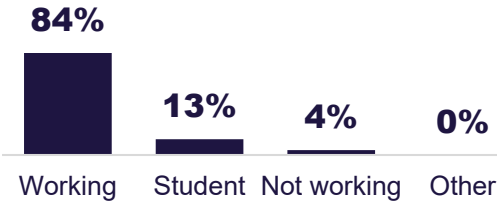
AED11,999 **6%**
 AED12,000 – AED15,999 **34%**
 AED16,000 – AED19,999 **40%**
 AED20,000 – AED39,999 **19%**
 AED40,000 – AED59,999 **1%**



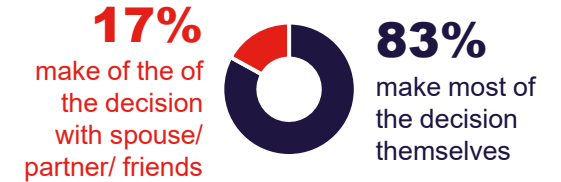
Gender split



Age split

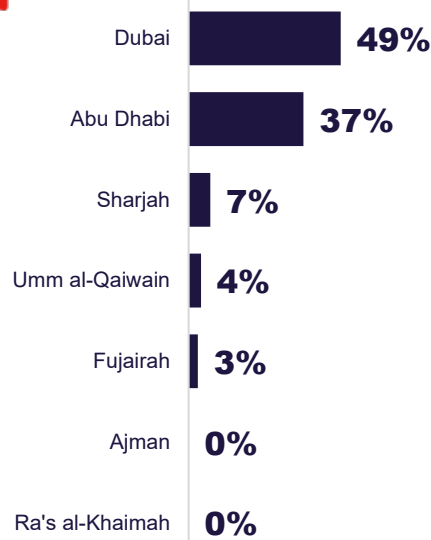


Working status

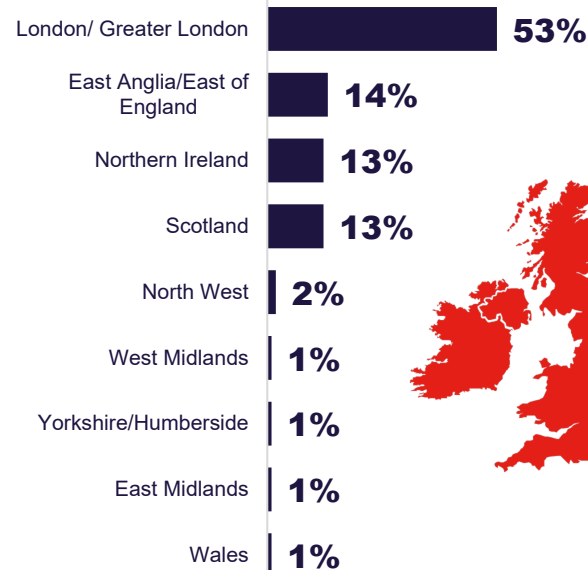


Holiday decision making behaviour

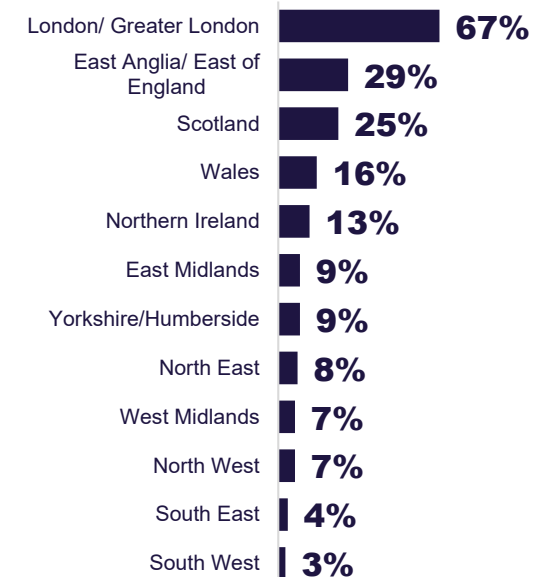
UAE Region split



UK region lived



Regions of the UK visited



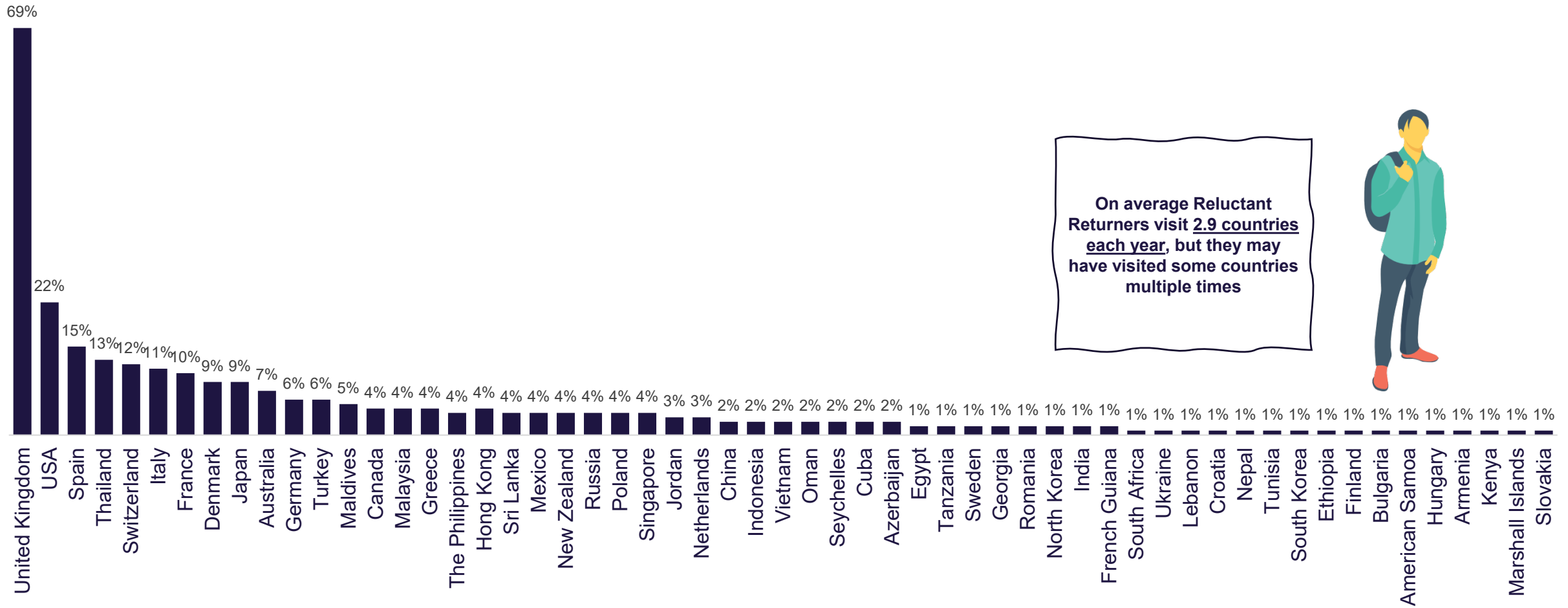
Reluctant Returners will travel as soon as possible. Most likely to the UK; but this is because they feel they should



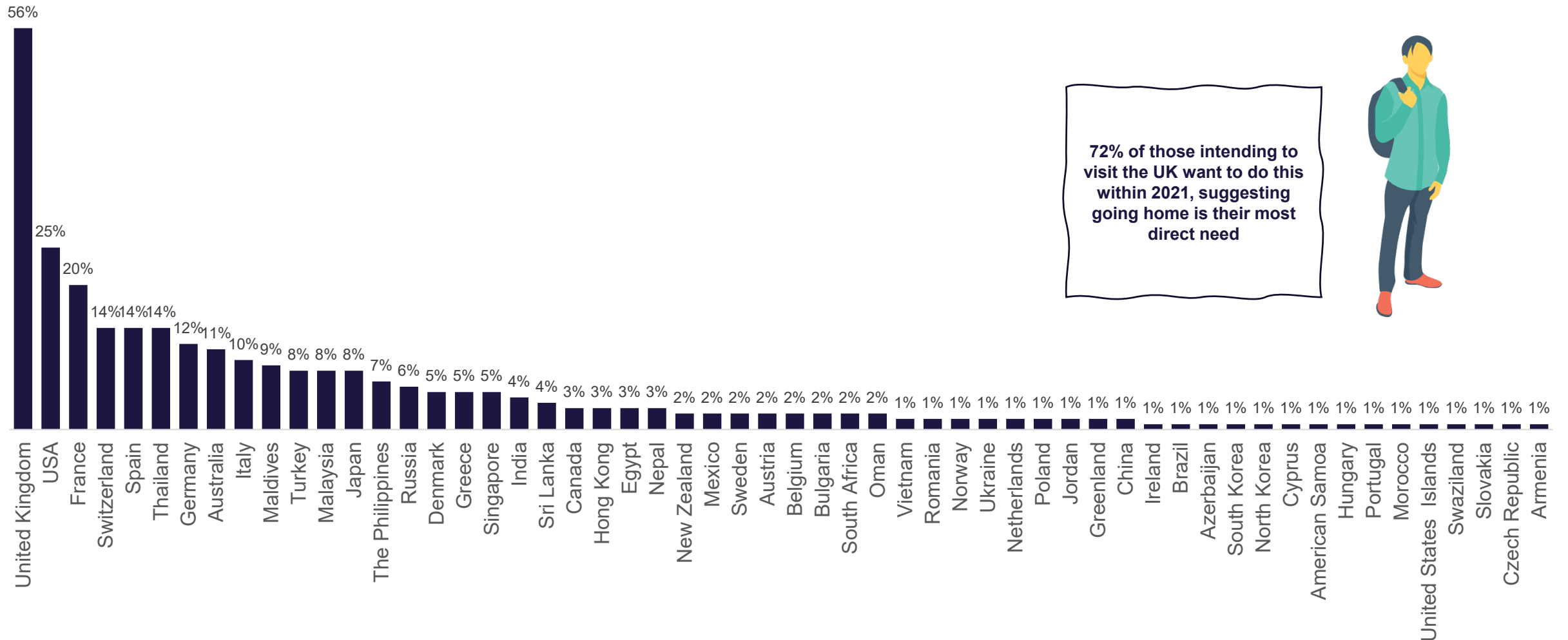
They miss the UK and what it has to offer, but this perception is not stronger than the need or duty to return home, which is very strong in this group



Reluctant Returners have visited a plethora of different destinations in the past 3 years



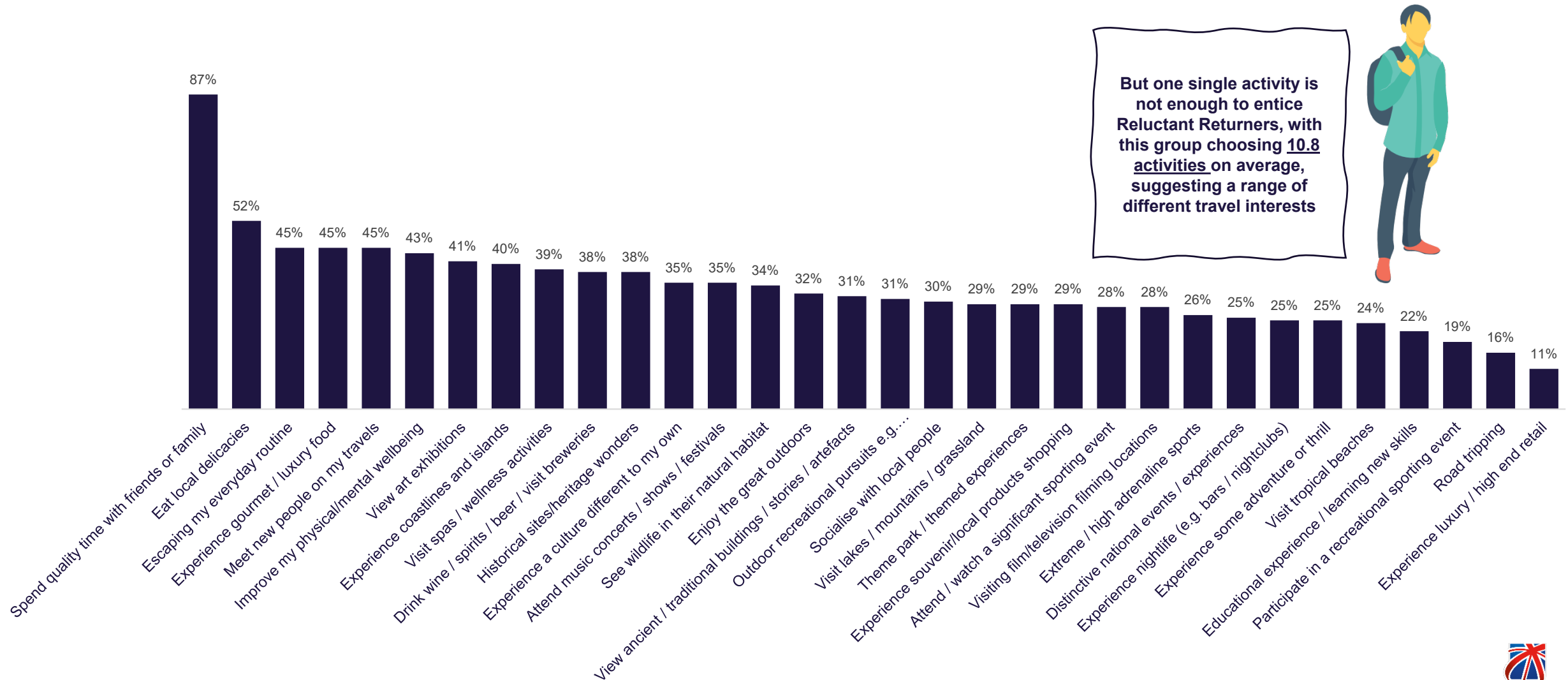
And their main, most immediate desire is to visit the UK



72% of those intending to visit the UK want to do this within 2021, suggesting going home is their most direct need



Reluctant Returners are motivated by a wide variety of activities when it comes to travelling



Reluctant Returners are looking to visit London, the East of England and Scotland as their first priority



Persona 2: Valiant Visitors



Slightly older (43% 35+) over-index as 35+ years old.



They have been in the UAE for longer than Reluctant Returners (**26% 5+ years**). They moved over with their **families, their spouse (33%) and/or children (30%)** and are beginning to see their life as a UAE resident.



They have a clear, positive perception of the UK, and are **less likely to see the UK as a place they 'should' visit (61%)**.



More likely to have been **vaccinated** as of April 2021, and are interested in **travelling again as soon as they can (64%)**, although this desire is not as strong as Reluctant Returners. They will visit London (66%), the East of England (36%) or Scotland (33%) first



They are slightly more affluent (**39% between AED20,000 - AED59,999**).



They are **travelling around the Gulf and the UAE** domestically with their family. This persona has visited, on average, **3 countries in the past 3 years**. They want a holiday at a more relaxed, slower pace (54%).



They are setting roots for themselves and their family, growing into not just what travel opportunities the UAE gives them. They are working hard, but playing hard at home.



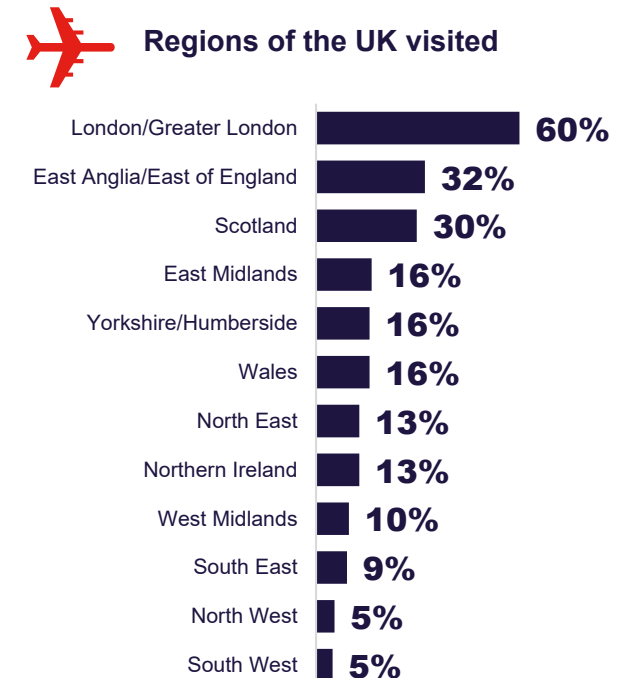
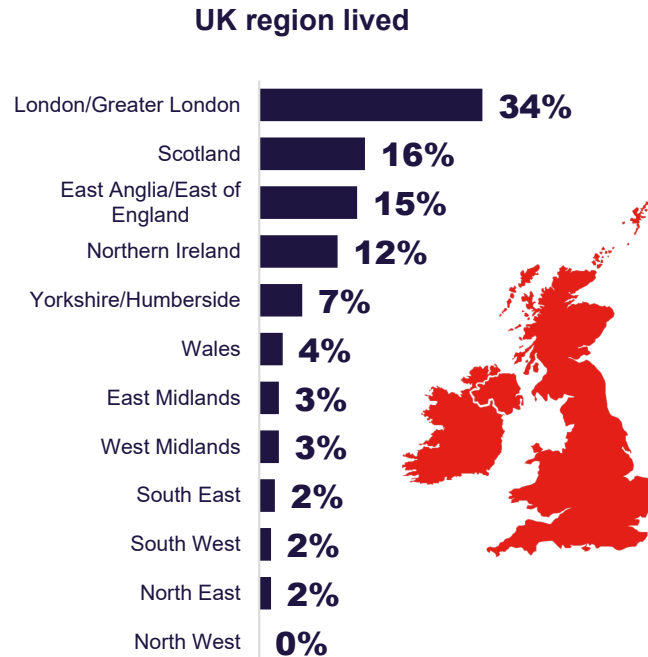
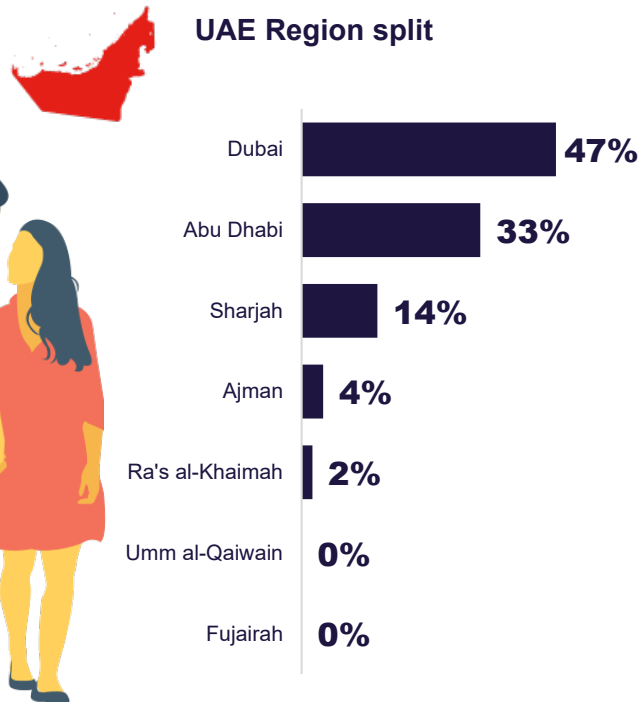
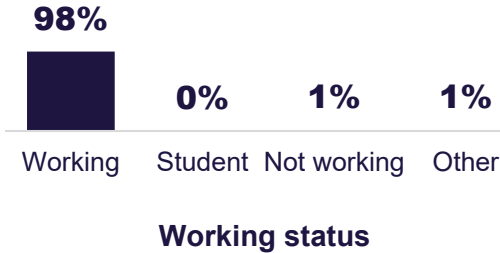
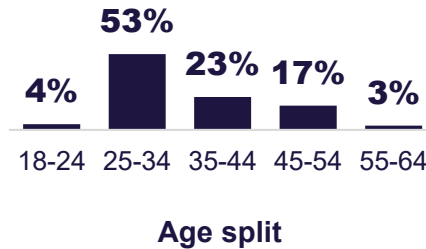
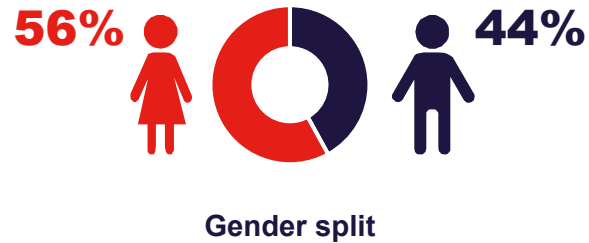
Less than half of Valiant Visitors visit **the UK on business (44%)**, but if they do they are most likely to visit some friends, family and have a short break (13% of Valiant Visitors), than just stay for business purposes (11%)



Valiant Visitors in detail

Household income

AED11,999 **2%**
 AED12,000 – AED15,999 **25%**
 AED16,000 – AED19,999 **34%**
 AED20,000 – AED39,999 **31%**
 AED40,000 – AED59,999 **8%**



Source: VisitBritain/Kubi Kalloo Quantitative research; Quantitative fieldwork March-April 2021. A10. Gender; A20. Age; F20. Working status; F10. Household income; A50. Holiday decision making behaviour; A30. UAE State of residence; F50. UK Region; A40. Regions of the UK visited (total); Base size: Valiant Visitors n=166

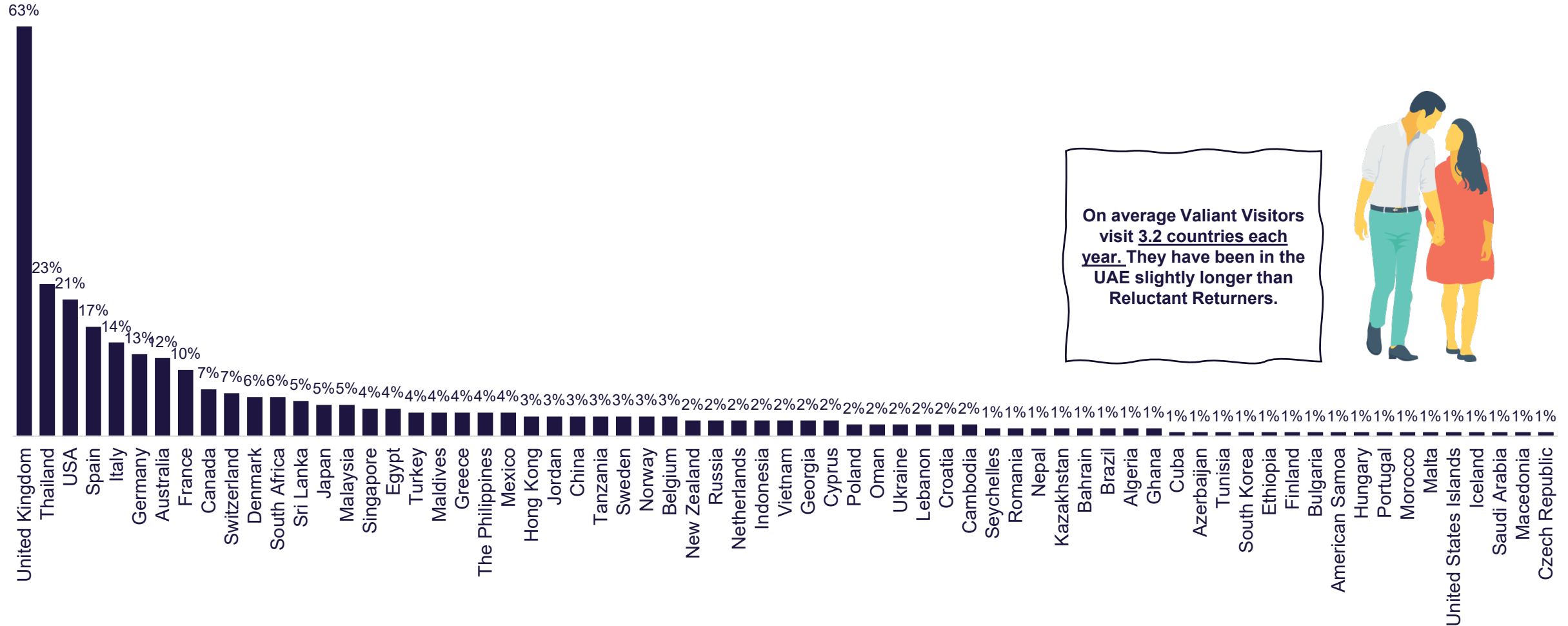
Valiant Visitors are less intent on travelling as soon as possible compared to Reluctant Returners



They too miss the UK, and are less likely to see a visit to the UK as a chore compared to Reluctant Returners



Valiant Visitors have visited very slightly more countries than Reluctant Returners in the past 3 years

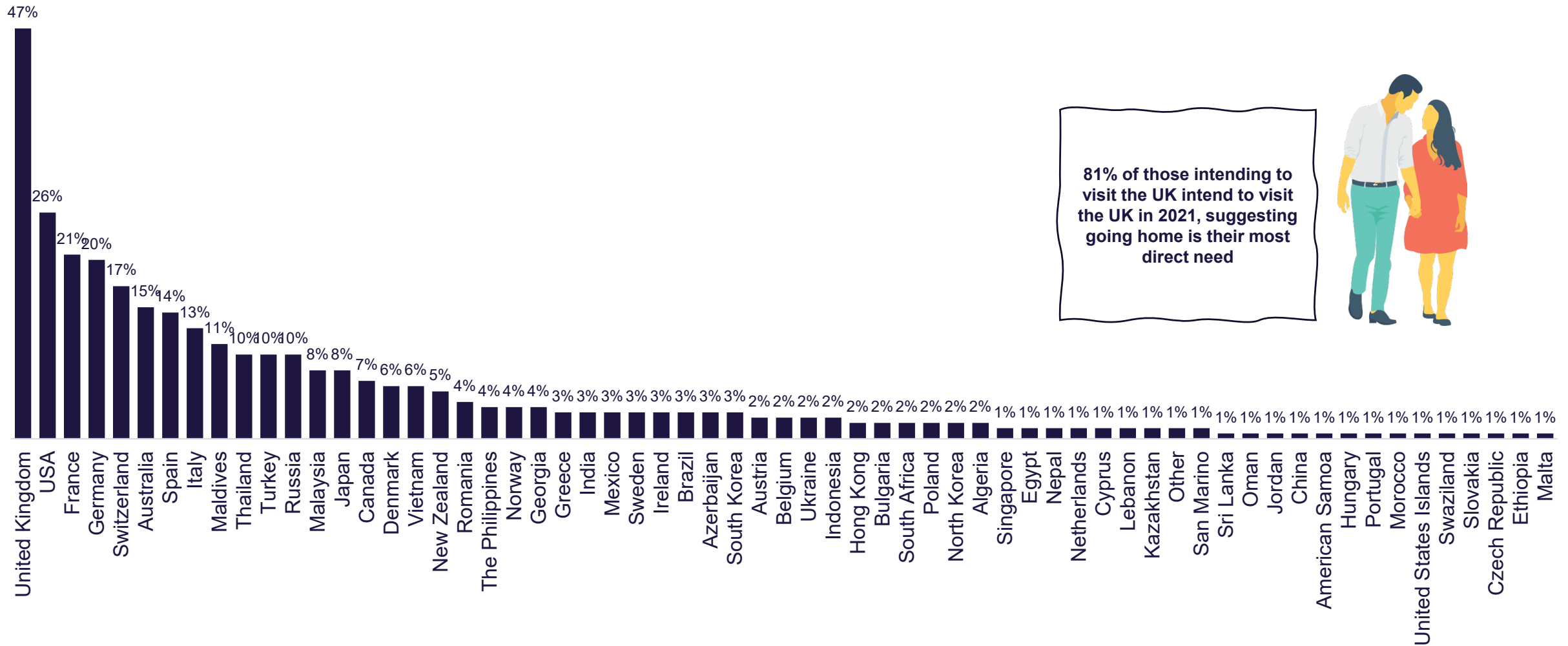


On average Valiant Visitors visit **3.2 countries each year**. They have been in the UAE slightly longer than Reluctant Returners.

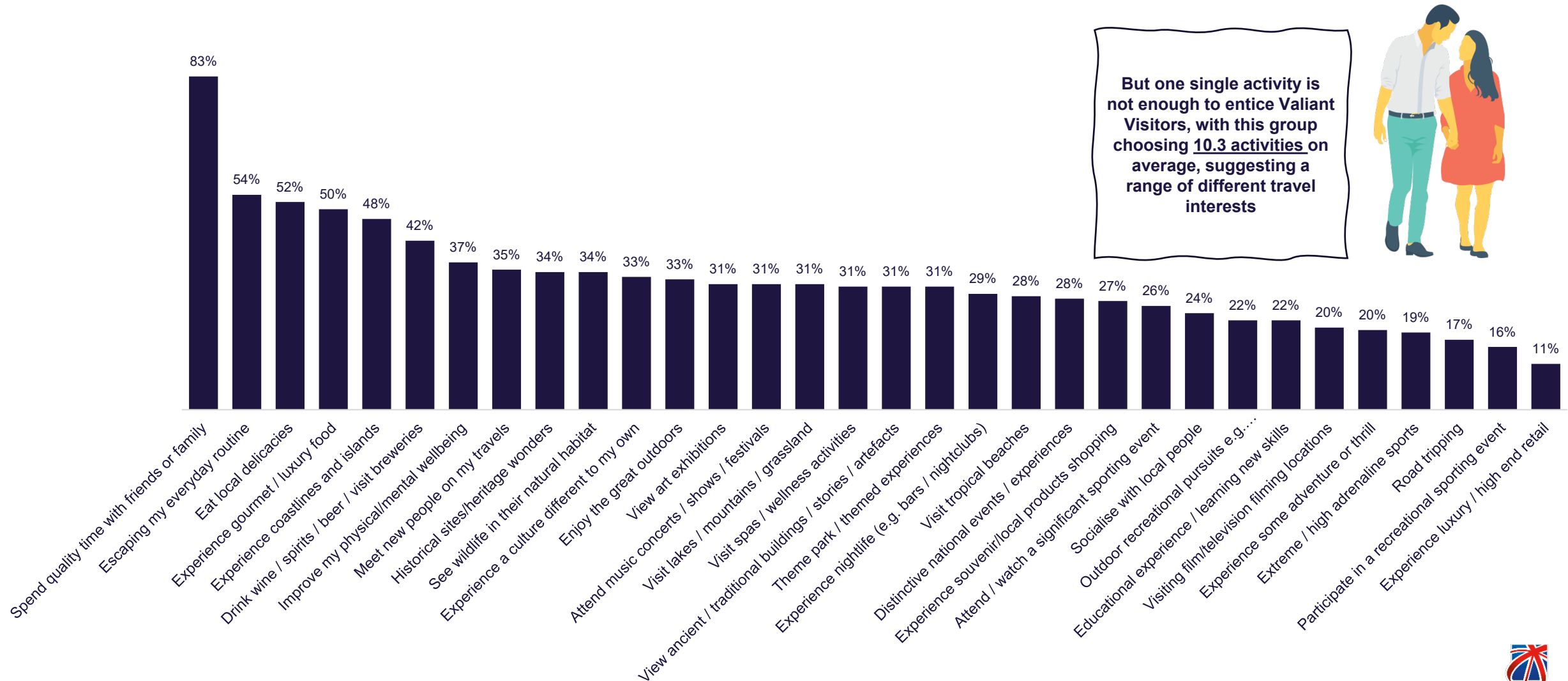


Source: VisitBritain/Kubi Kalloo Quantitative research March-April 2021; B30. Countries visited in past 3 years / Valiant Visitors n=166

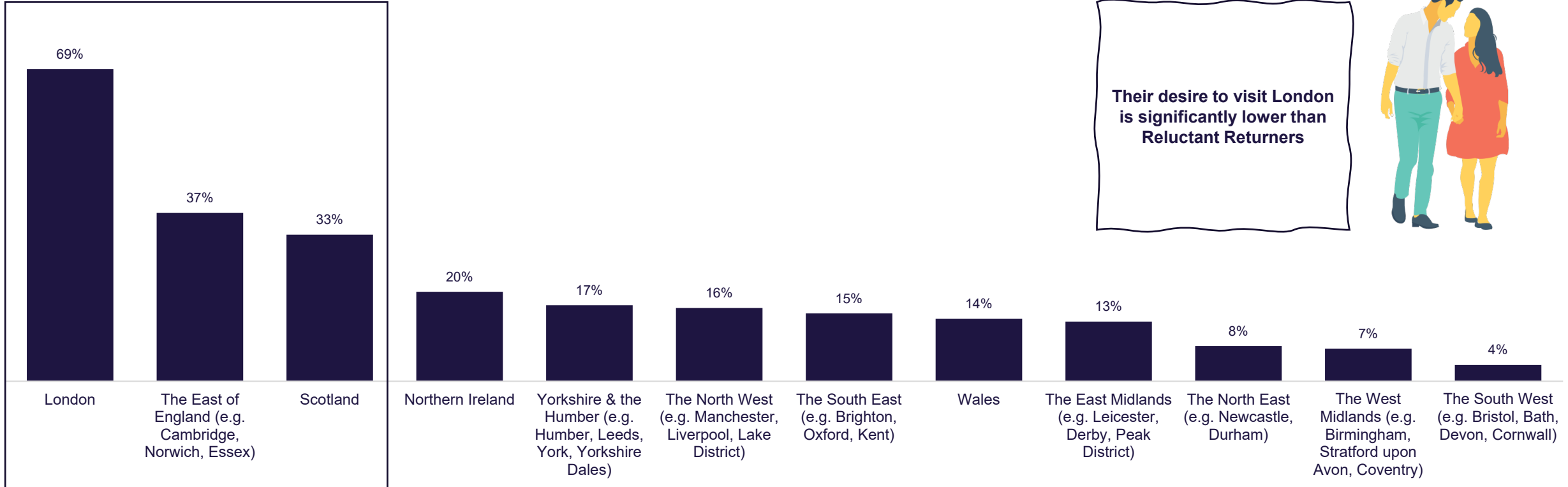
Valiant Visitors have a strong desire to visit a wide variety of destinations, with the UK most top of mind



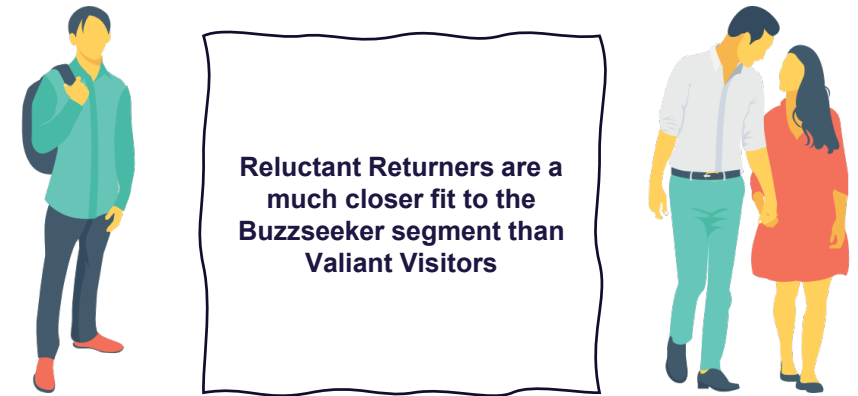
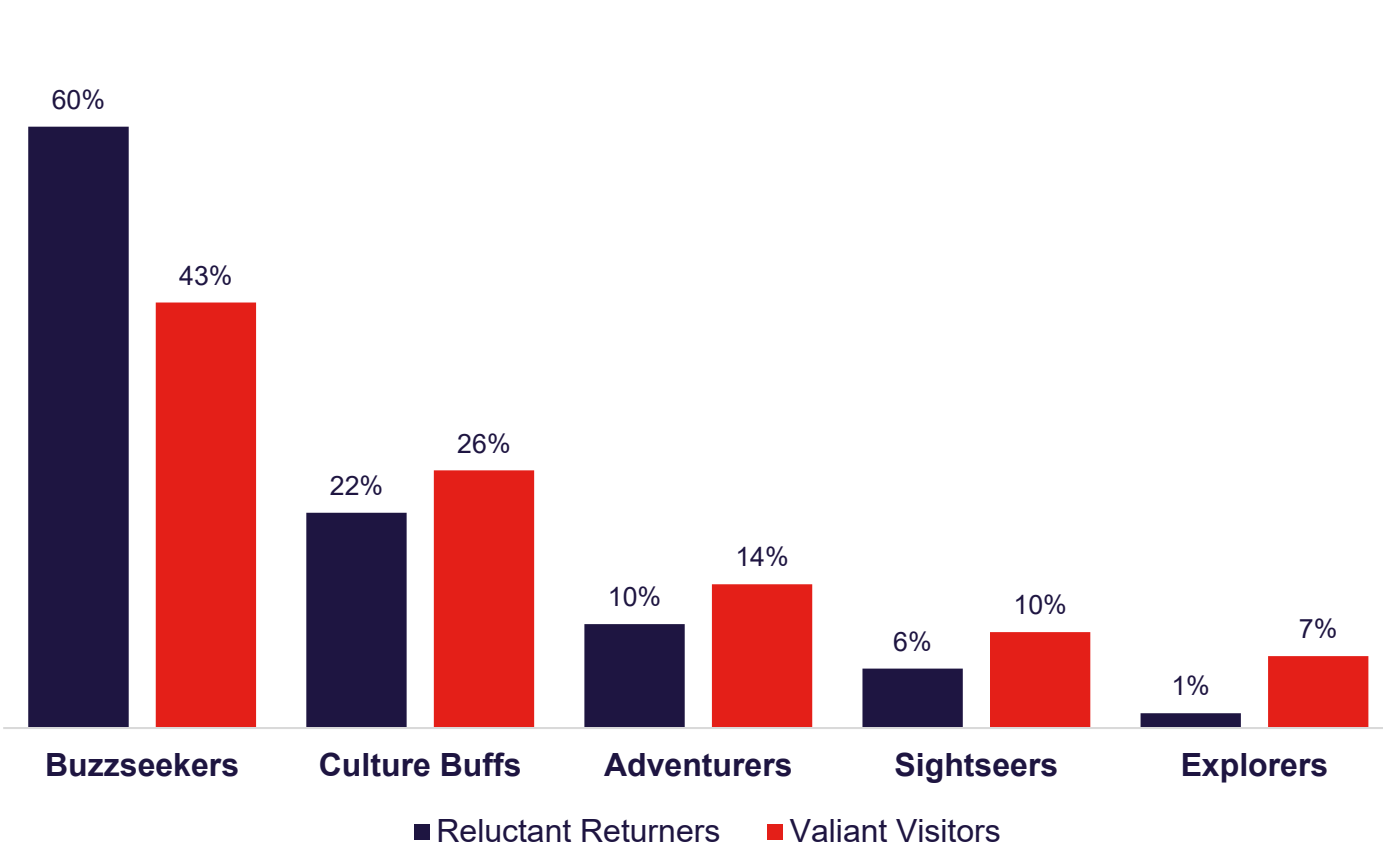
Valiant Visitors just want to escape from their lives, amongst their friends and family



Valiant Visitors are looking to visit London, the East of England and Scotland as their first priority













Reluctant Returners and Valiant Visitors have some alignment with the VisitBritain Buzzseekers segment

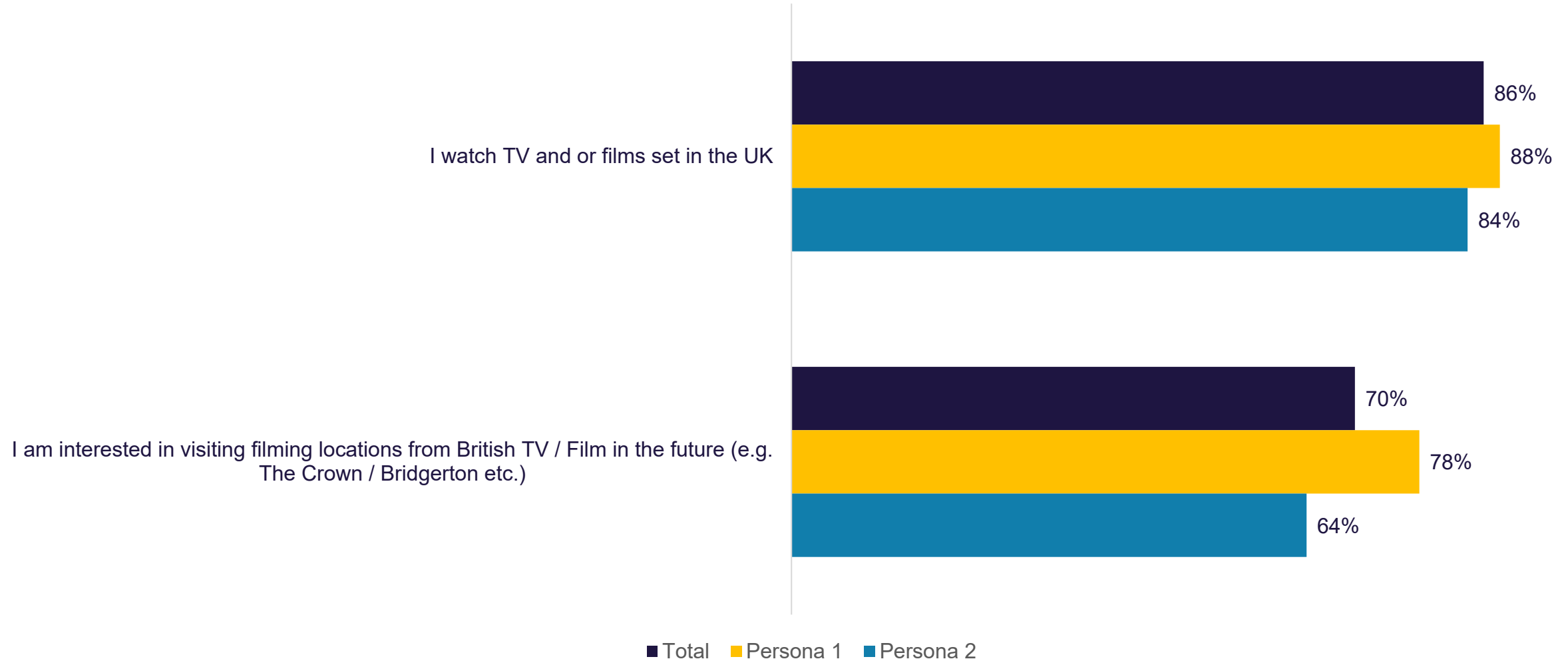


From 2017, VisitBritain carried out a research project to define global audience segments. To learn more about Buzzseekers, and the other segments, visit our page on [understanding our customers](#).

Reluctant Returners are more tech savvy, and more 'across' different social media sites compared to Valiant Visitors

	 Reluctant Returners	 Valiant Visitors
 Instagram	92%	92%
 Facebook	76%	67%
 LinkedIn	71%	64%
 Twitter	32%	25%
 TikTok	28%	29%
 Pinterest	23%	9%
 Twitch	13%	15%
 Reddit	9%	8%

Reluctant Returners are more interested than Valiant Visitors in visiting TV locations on a future trip





My new lifestyle!

How is my life going
in the UAE?



Reluctant Returners



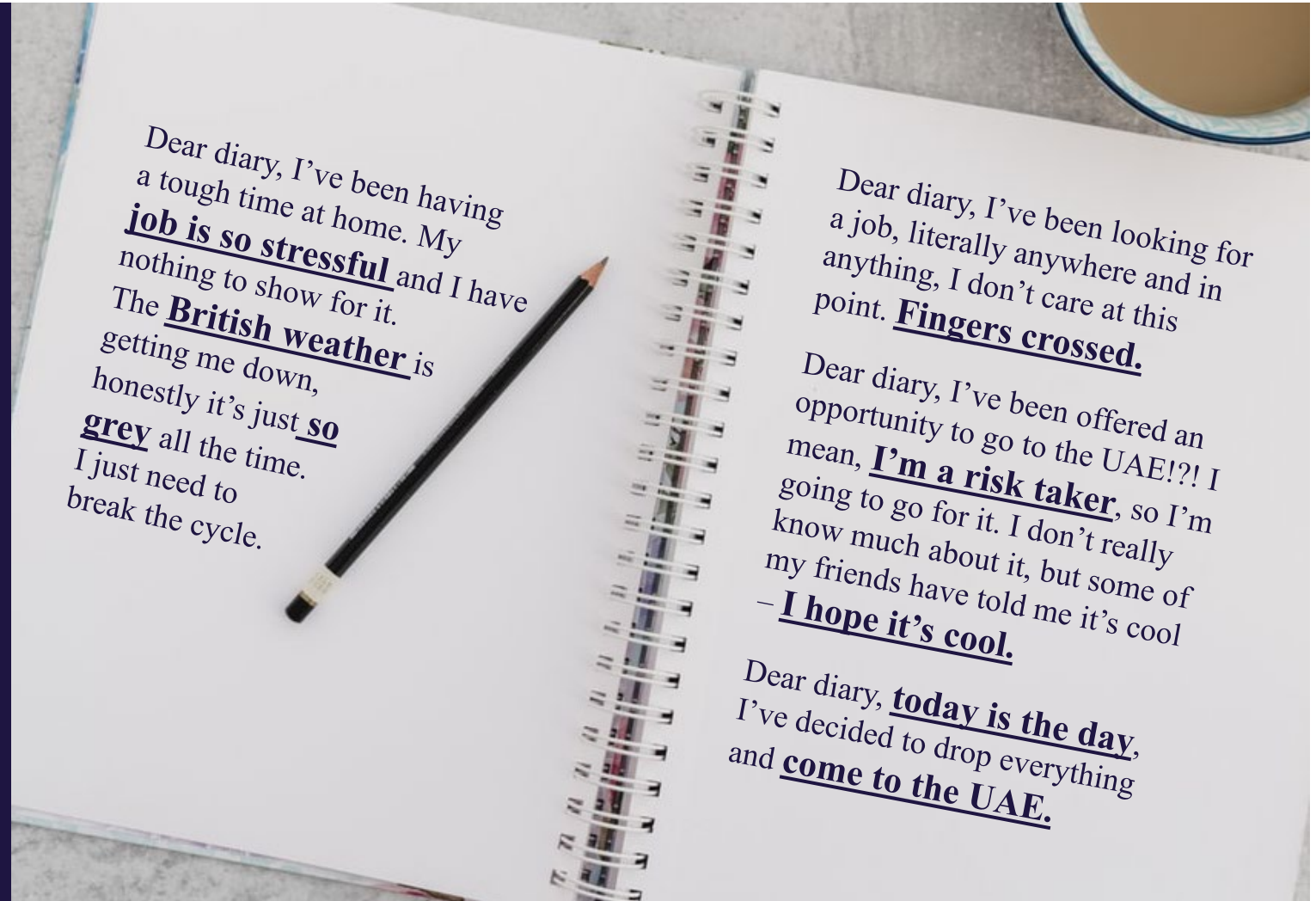
How did they get here?

38%



of Reluctant Returners came to the UAE alone.

A further 50% came with their parents / siblings / grandparents.



And how is it going?

They have been here for (on the whole) 0-4 years (85%) meaning they are relatively new to the UAE.



Hi!
Life in the UAE is AMAZING!!!
I love my new life, it's so cool being "the person that moved to the UAE."
There is so much to do here, honestly "If you can think of it, the UAE has got it."
And don't get me started on the travel! I can spread my wings and fly. I can go for a weekend in Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia, the Seychelles, even Kenya!!!
I never thought I'd go to these places, let alone for a weekend!
I love my life here. The weather is better. The money is better (I've never saved so much in my life!) Honestly, the UAE isn't as strange as I thought it would be.
I can prioritise fun, and I have had so many brunches it's insane
The UAE is the key that has unlocked my world
Miss you!
Reluctant Returner
x





Valiant Visitors

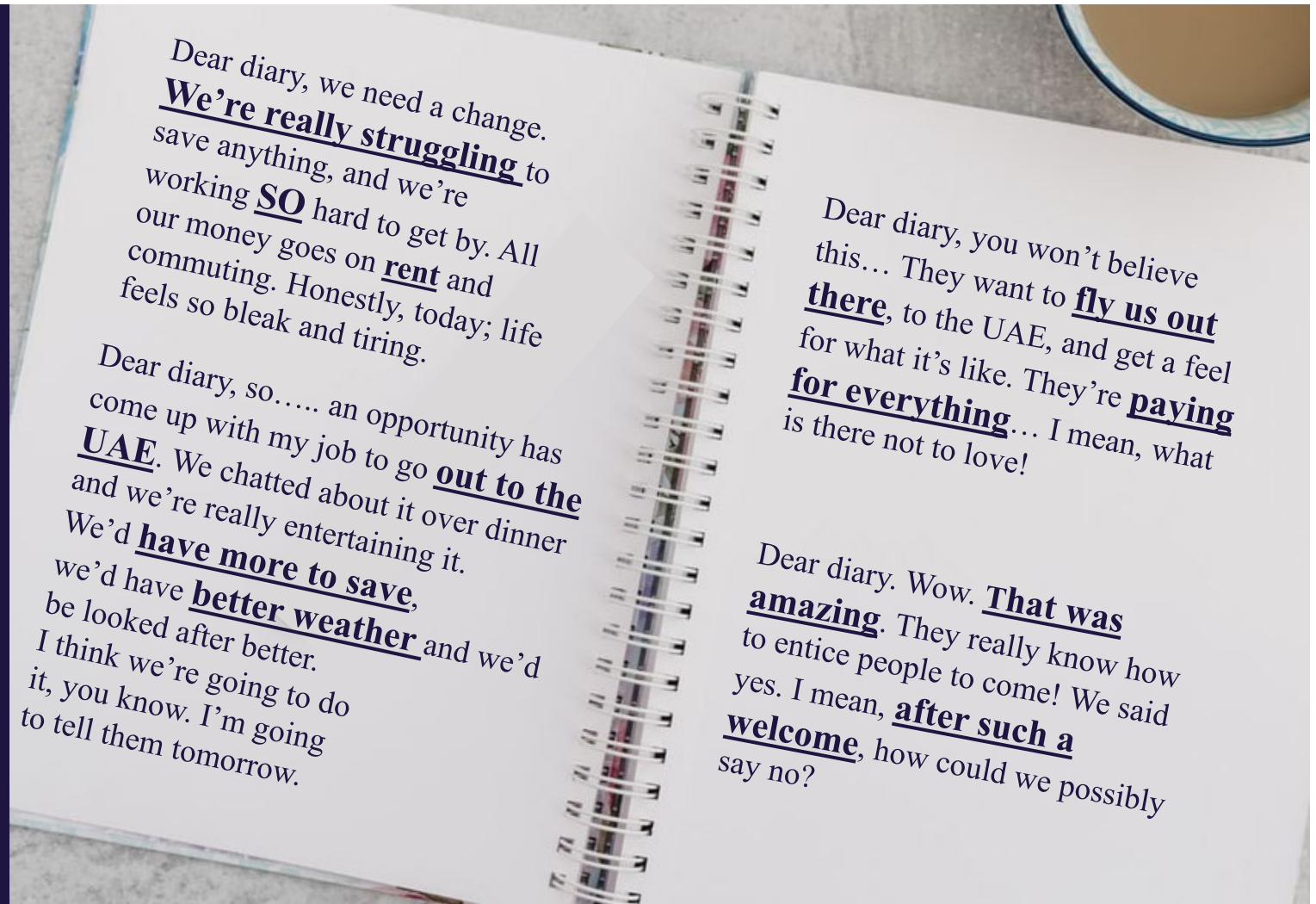


How did they get here?

33%

of Valiant Visitors came to the UAE with their spouse / partner.

A further 30% came with children.



And how is it going?

Valiant Visitors differ in their time spent in the UAE

Most have been here for (on the whole)

0-4 years

(74%) with Valiant Visitors over-indexing on residents who have been here for 5+ years (26%).

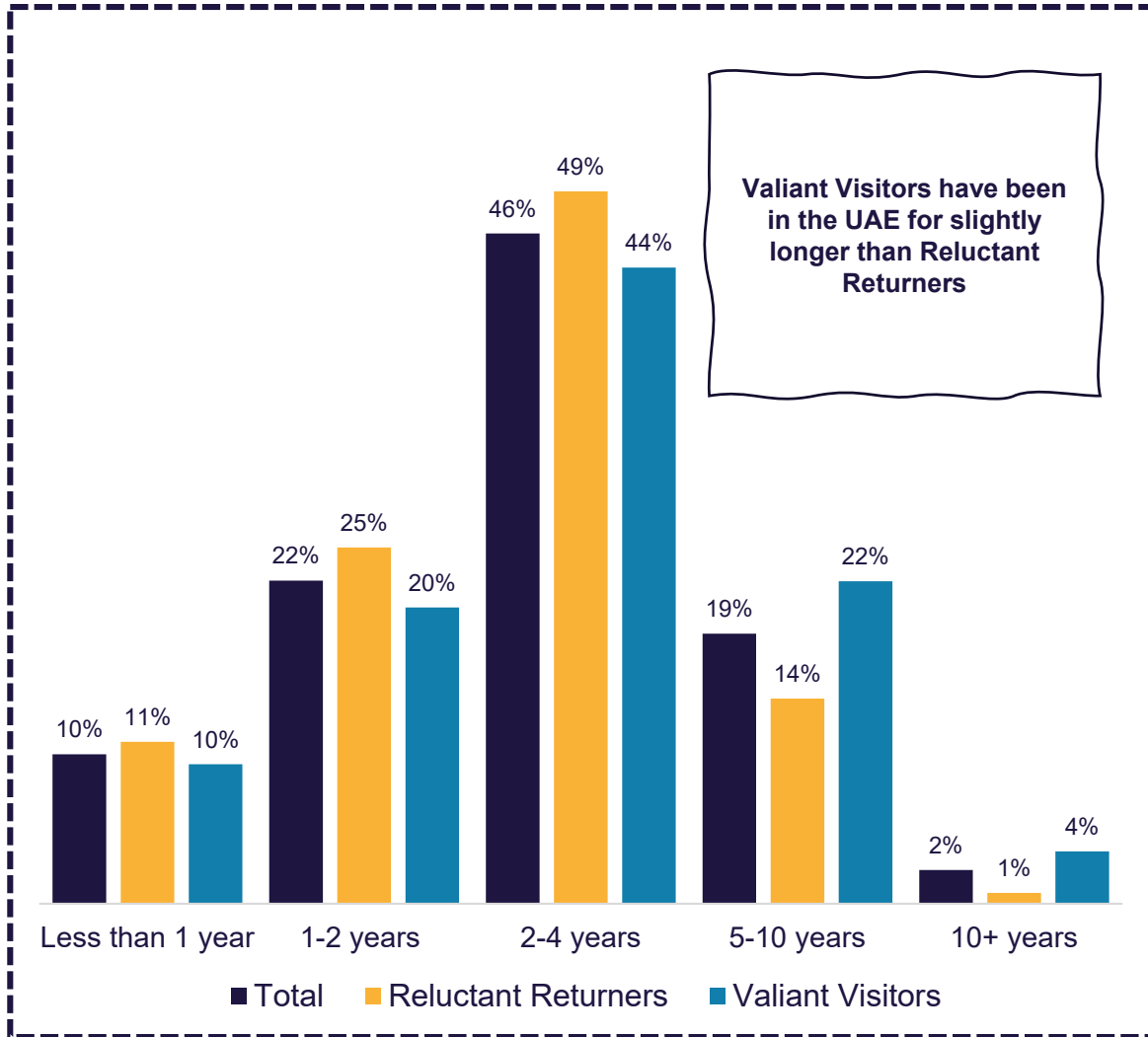


Hello from the Sunny UAE!
Honestly, the sun is ALWAYS shining here and we've got so much saved up!
We've just got back from a trip inside the UAE, honestly there are so many nice places here! It's nice to just see what the country I live in has to offer, you know?
Don't worry, we're still travelling just as much as usual, it's just more relaxing not taking a flight. We've still got a few countries left to tick off, which we need to get booked soon!
We've actually just got a gardener! Never had a gardener in the UK. And guess what, it's only £40 a month. I know, I know, it's not much for the gardener, but the garden has never looked so good.
I do have to say, the supermarkets here are terrible! I honestly just miss Sainsburys.
But it's relaxing. It's peaceful. I feel good.
Miss you!
Valiant Visitor

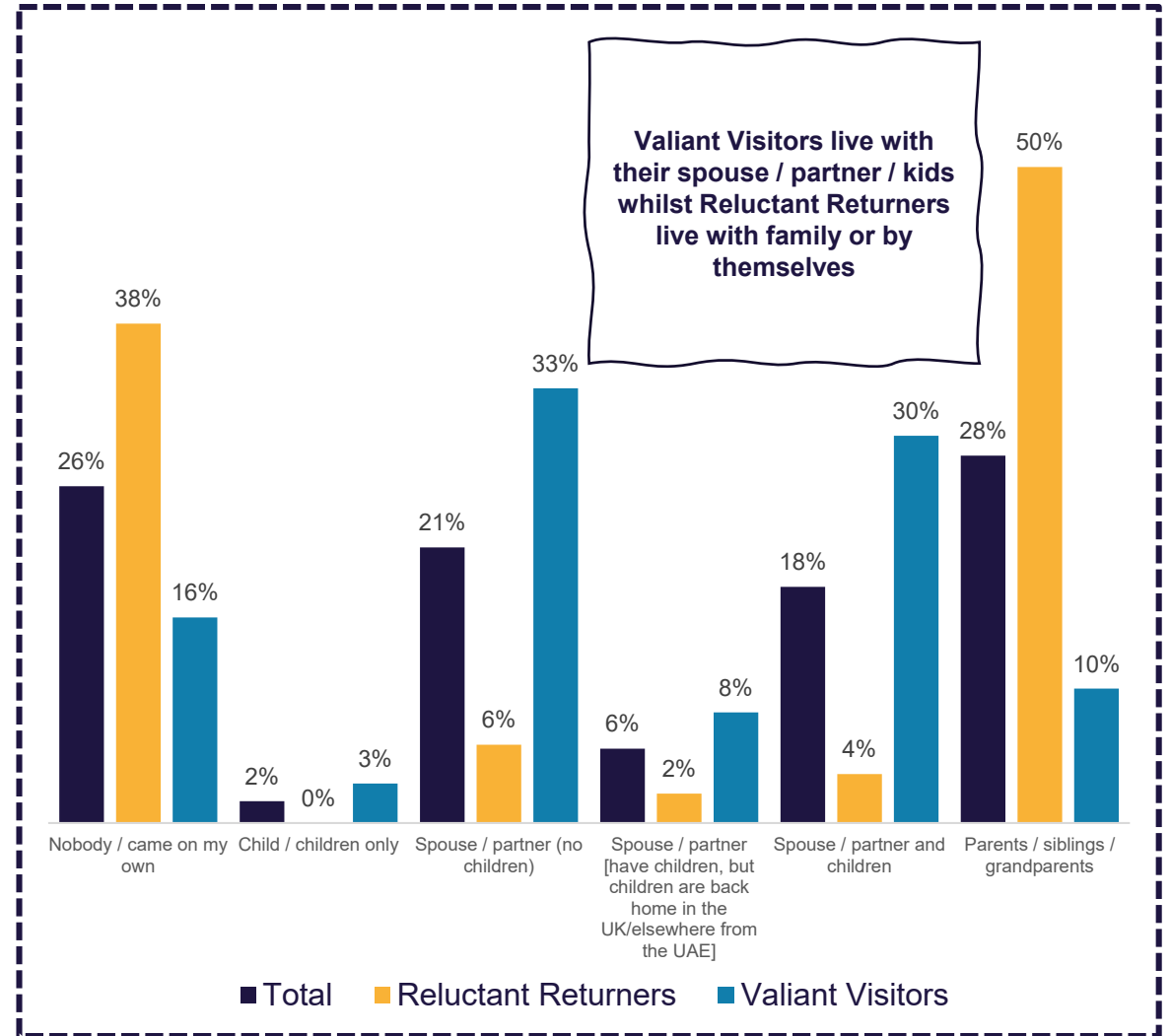
And how long will they stay?



Length of time in the UAE and who they live with in the UAE



Source: VisitBritain/Kubi Kalloo Quantitative research March-April 2021; C10. Length of time in the UAE | Total n=300; Person 1 n=134 Valiant Visitors n=166



Source: VisitBritain/Kubi Kalloo Quantitative research March-April 2021; C20. Living with in UAE | Total n=300; Person 1 n=134 Valiant Visitors n=166

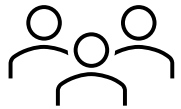


My relationship with the UK

How do I feel about
the UK?

The UK is all about cultural comfort, the diversity of weather and scenery it offers expats

Cultural comfort



It has the people that made me who I am

The UAE Expat thinks of the people back home when they think of the UK. The people are what make the UK special, and is what make the **UK home**. This is stronger amongst Valiant Visitors (70% say it feels welcoming where anyone can belong) compared to Reluctant Returners (54%). Valiant Visitors are more focussed on their network, and think about them more regularly as they have been away from them for longer.

Diversity



It can be visited anytime of year

UAE Expats are less bound by season and are more likely to come and visit the UK anytime. 52% of Reluctant Returners and Valiant Visitors visited the UK in the Winter, and springtime and autumn time also proving popular. Unlike the majority of tourists, they can be enticed to visit anytime.



And it feels safe to visit

The UK offers a safety net for our UAE expat. Amongst the different, diverse countries they are visiting, the UK offers a feeling of safety. It is their home, they know where to go, what to do and how to behave. It is reliable.



It has landscapes and coastlines

The UAE does not offer the most diverse range of terrain, boasting beautiful beaches and vast expansive deserts. The UK has greenery, calming walks across serene coastlines and beautiful landscapes that can't be experienced in the UAE.

How does this differ between Personas?

Reluctant Returners

Reluctant Returners have a more muted perception of the UK, believing other destinations have more to offer than the UK. It is seen as a chore to visit after all.

The opportunity is to communicate what the UK has to offer, to strengthen the perception of the UK.



Believes the following perceptions are owned by the UK**



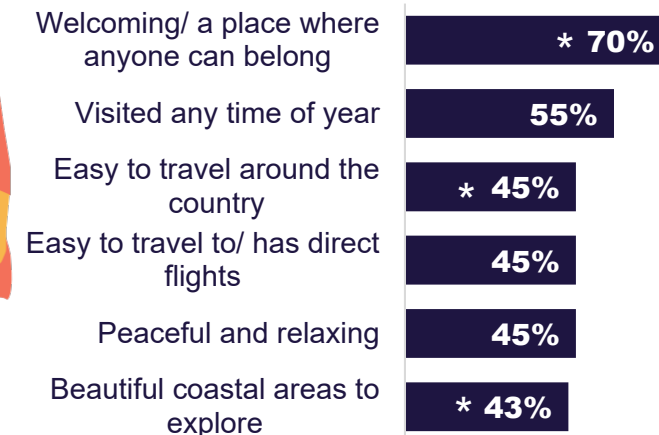
Valiant Visitors

Valiant Visitors have a clearer, more complete picture of what the UK has to offer. They see the UK as less of a chore to visit.

The opportunity here is to further talk up the aspects they know, the peaceful, beautiful coastal areas of the UK.



Believes the following perceptions are owned by the UK**



Source: VisitBritain/Kubi Kalloo Quantitative research March-April 2021; D10. Imagery Statements; Reluctant Returners n=134; Valiant Visitors n=166 **Question asked respondents to match attributes with a range of destinations, meaning that percentages are slightly lower than what would be seen from a question with only the UK listed

*significantly higher than Reluctant Returners at 90% CI



Why do I visit the UK?

What does a trip to the UK look like?

Why do visit the UK?



**To visit
friends
& family**



81%

visit their friends and family on their trip



67%

only return home to visit their friends and family



16%

use this trip as an opportunity to stay longer on a trip

And desire is stronger in 2021 because of the separation UAE Expats have felt due to COVID-19



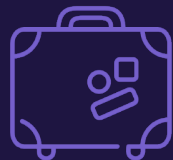
Reluctant Returners



Why do I go to the UK?

66%

of Reluctant Returner's trips were solely to visit friends & family



14%

of this group stayed longer on this trip to holiday

81%

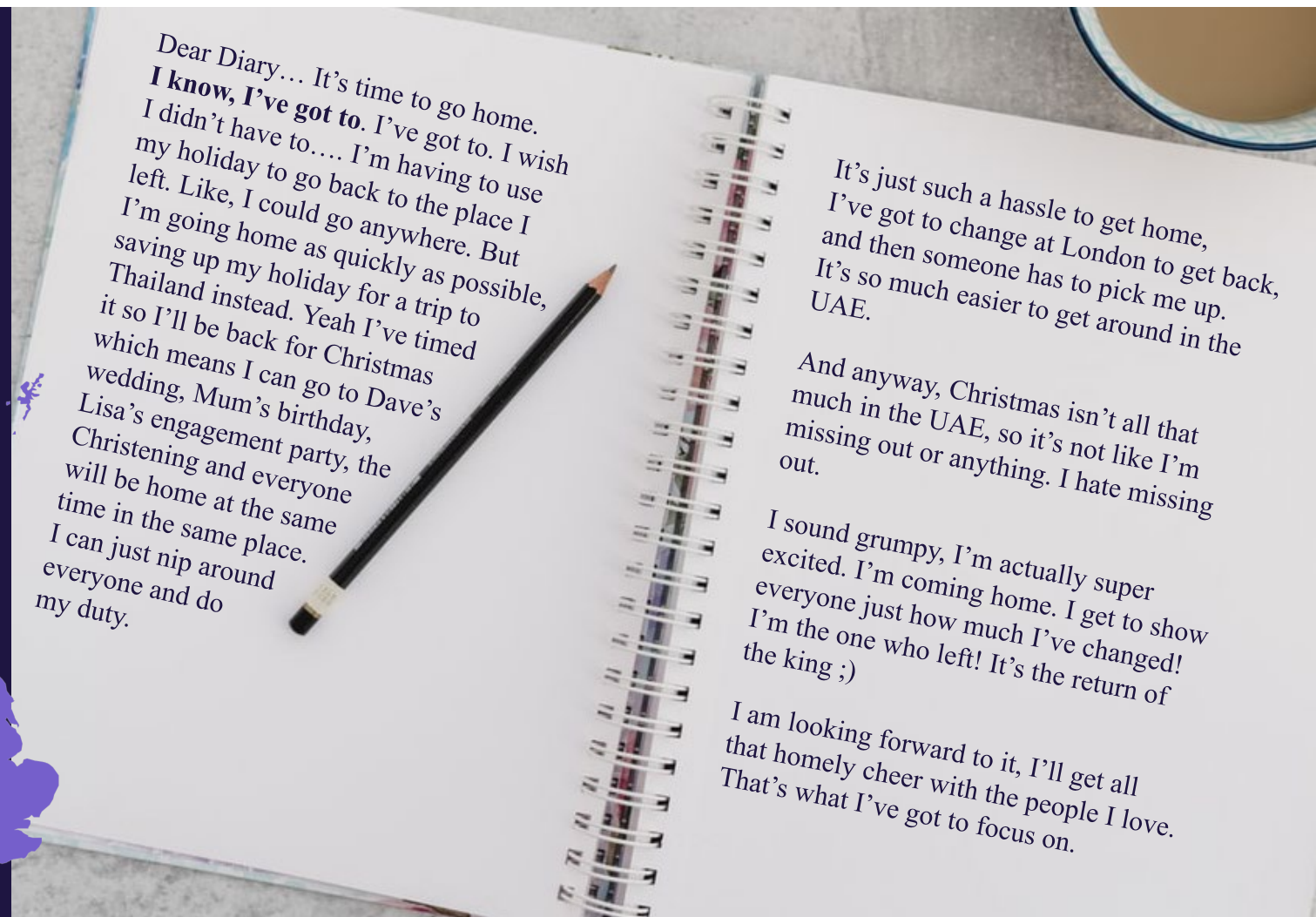
spent quality time with friends or family on their trip

83%

go home because they feel they should

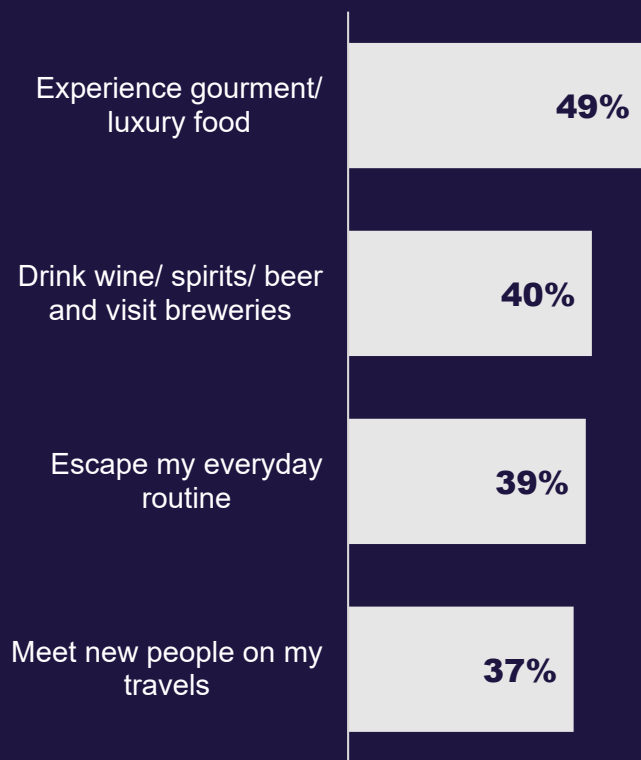
49%

go home during winter



What do I do when I'm here?

Other than visiting friends and family, Reluctant Returners like to:



Hey! How's the UAE?

So much to think about. So much going on. I've got so much planned, but nothing planned. I feel like a royal on the tour of a country. Honestly, here is just two days of what I'm up to:

- Lunch with Grandma.
- Pints with Uncle Tim and his boys.
- Curry with the lads.
- Family dinner with Mum.

Don't get me wrong, I love being the centre of attention, but this is getting really busy. I'll be happy to be home I'm sure.

I'm starting to get excited though, I've missed a good old curry. Not that I can't get a curry out there, but it's not a British curry, you know. I want the curry I grew up with.

I can't wait to show everyone how much I've changed!

Where do I stay, for how long, who do I travel with and how much do I spend?



The lure of travelling alone fuels their love of this persona of 'The person who lives in the UAE.'



They are more likely to 'nip back home'
50% of their trips home are for 1-7 nights
The average number of nights **9.9 nights**.



Although they aren't staying in hotels, they are spending a large amount in the UK.
51% of Reluctant Returners spend between £1,001 - £1,500 on a trip to the UK and a further **20% spending over £1,501**
They are earning more money, and they can show their friends and family a good time because of it.



And how do I plan and book?

78%

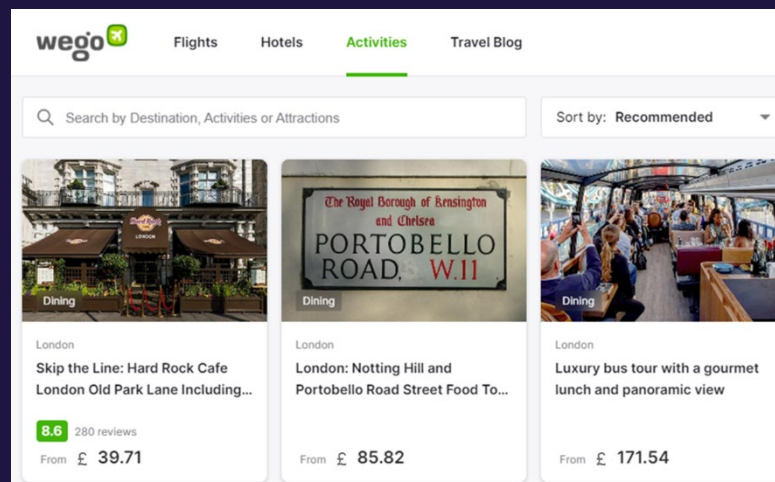
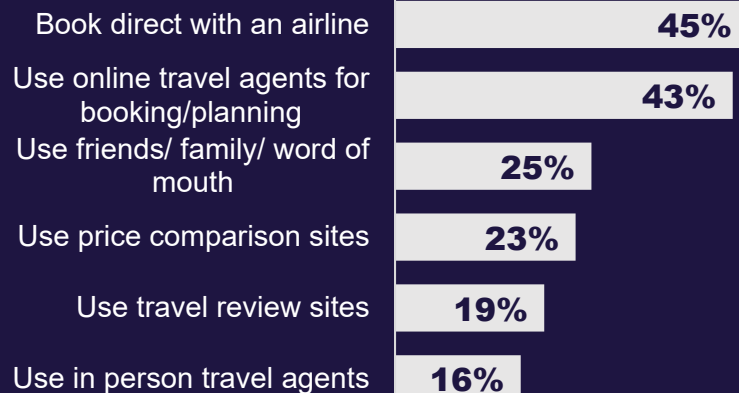


tend to plan for 1-2 months, spending a long time deciding when to come, what window of time to visit, and how long.

88%



The booking process takes less time. They are more likely to take less than a month.



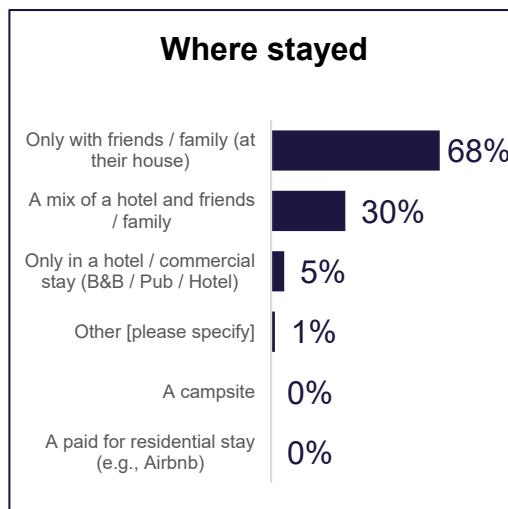
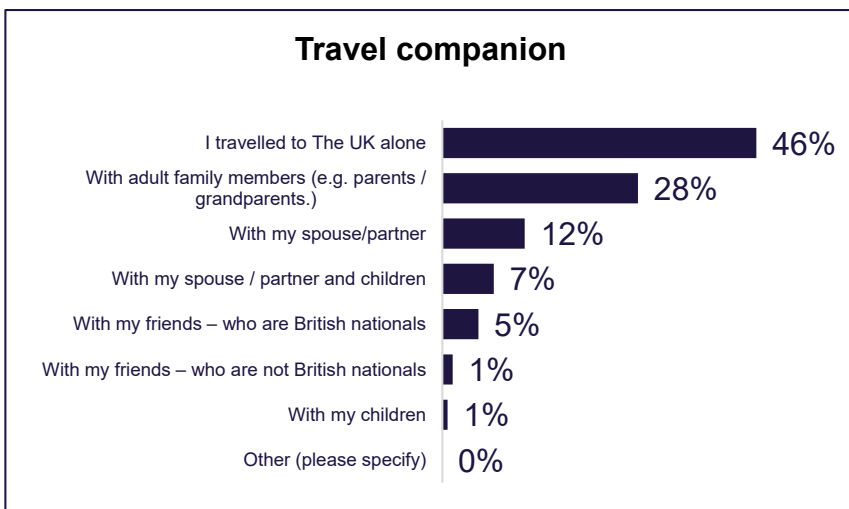
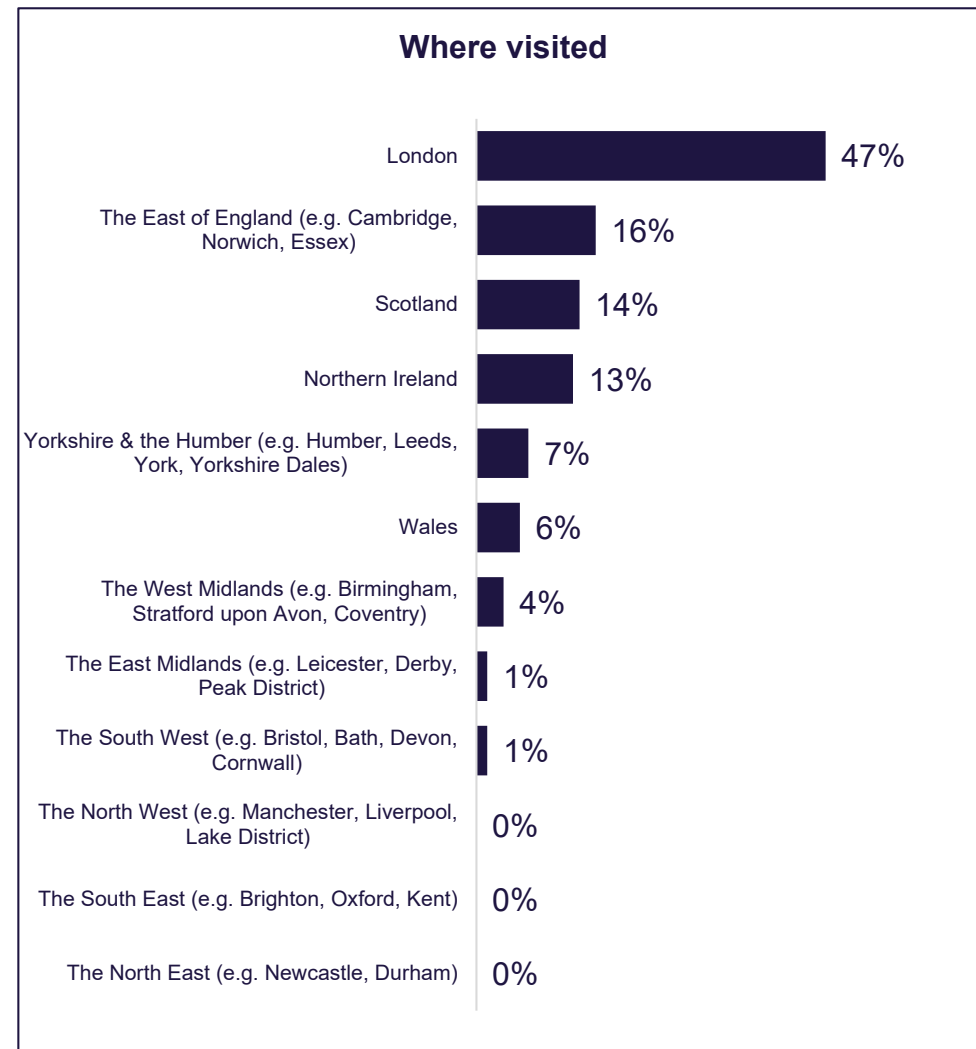
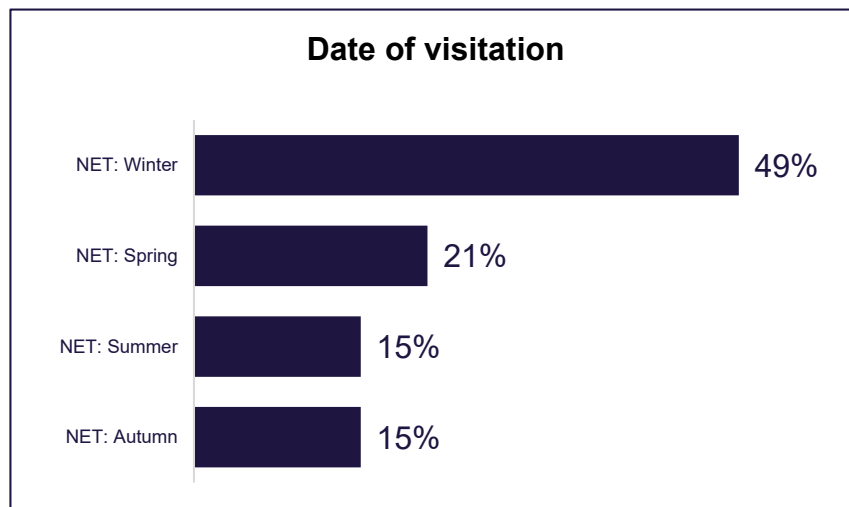
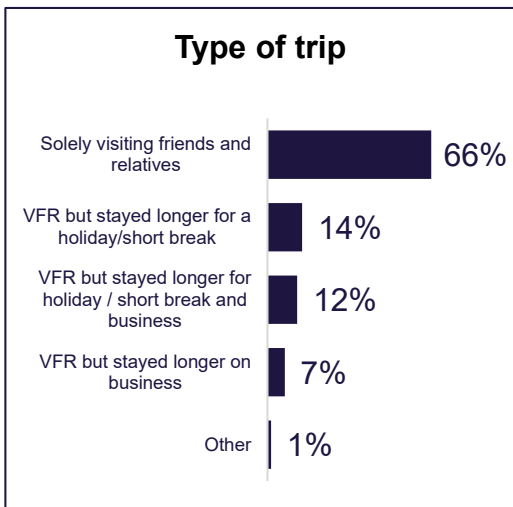
Text Message
Today 6:21 PM

Mum, what's there to do still? Is the pub still open? Any new restaurants? Is it still the same vibe?

No no, it's the same as always! How are you booking? Do you have Skyscanner out there? It's cheaper! Don't book directly with the airline!

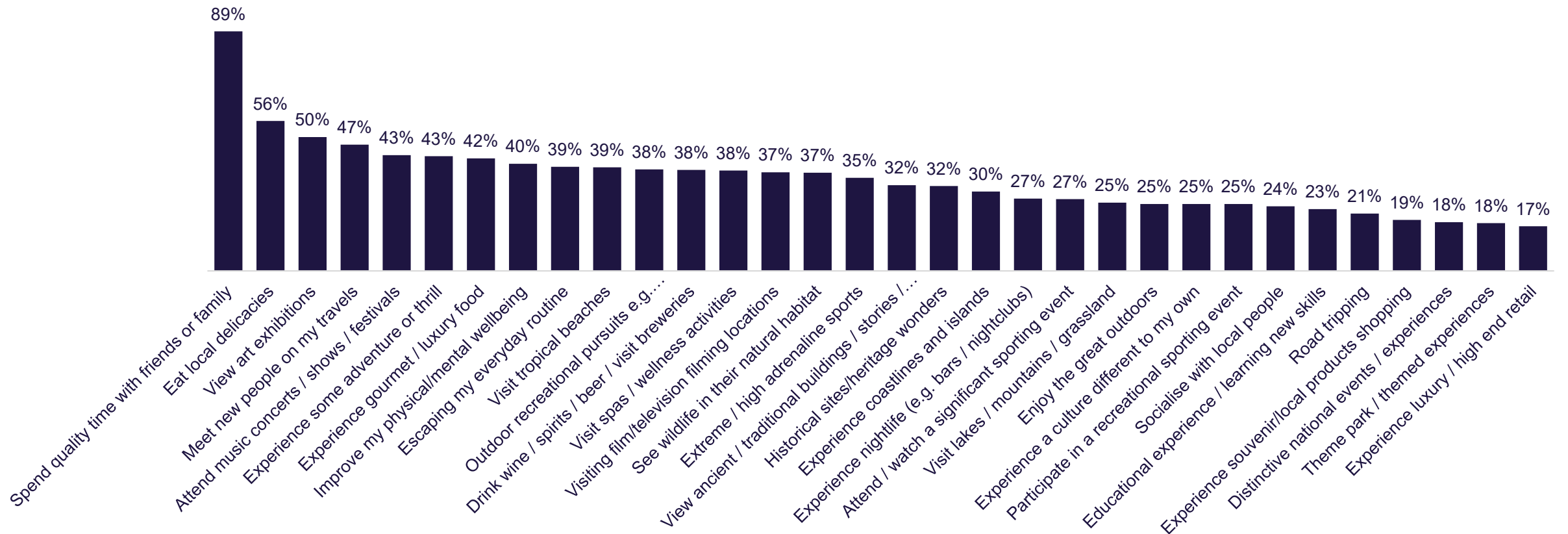
No, Mum, I'm booking direct with Emirates. Yeah I've got points with them so I can hopefully get a flight to somewhere I actually want to go... **JUST JOKING!** No I looked on the price comparison sites but it's not much of a saving anyway!

Reluctant Returners – their last trip to the UK



Reluctant Returners mainly come to the UK to satisfy their need to visit their friends and family

% who actually did an activity they were initially interested in, on their last trip to the UK





Valiant Visitors



Why do I go to the UK?

68%

of Valiant Visitors' trips were solely to visit friends and family

17%

of this group stayed longer on this trip to holiday

80%

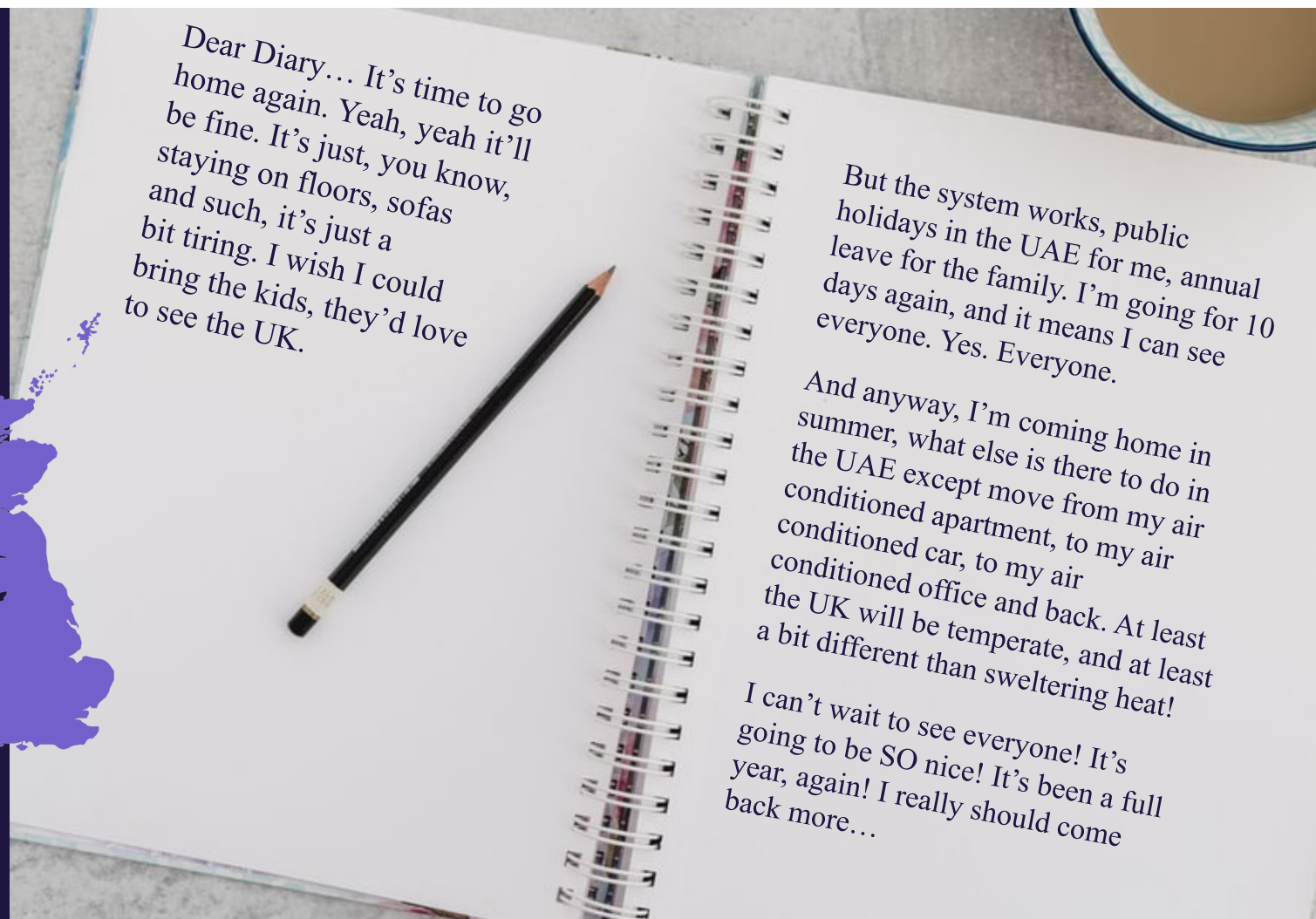
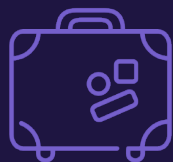
spent quality time with friends or family on their trip

61%

return home because they feel like they should

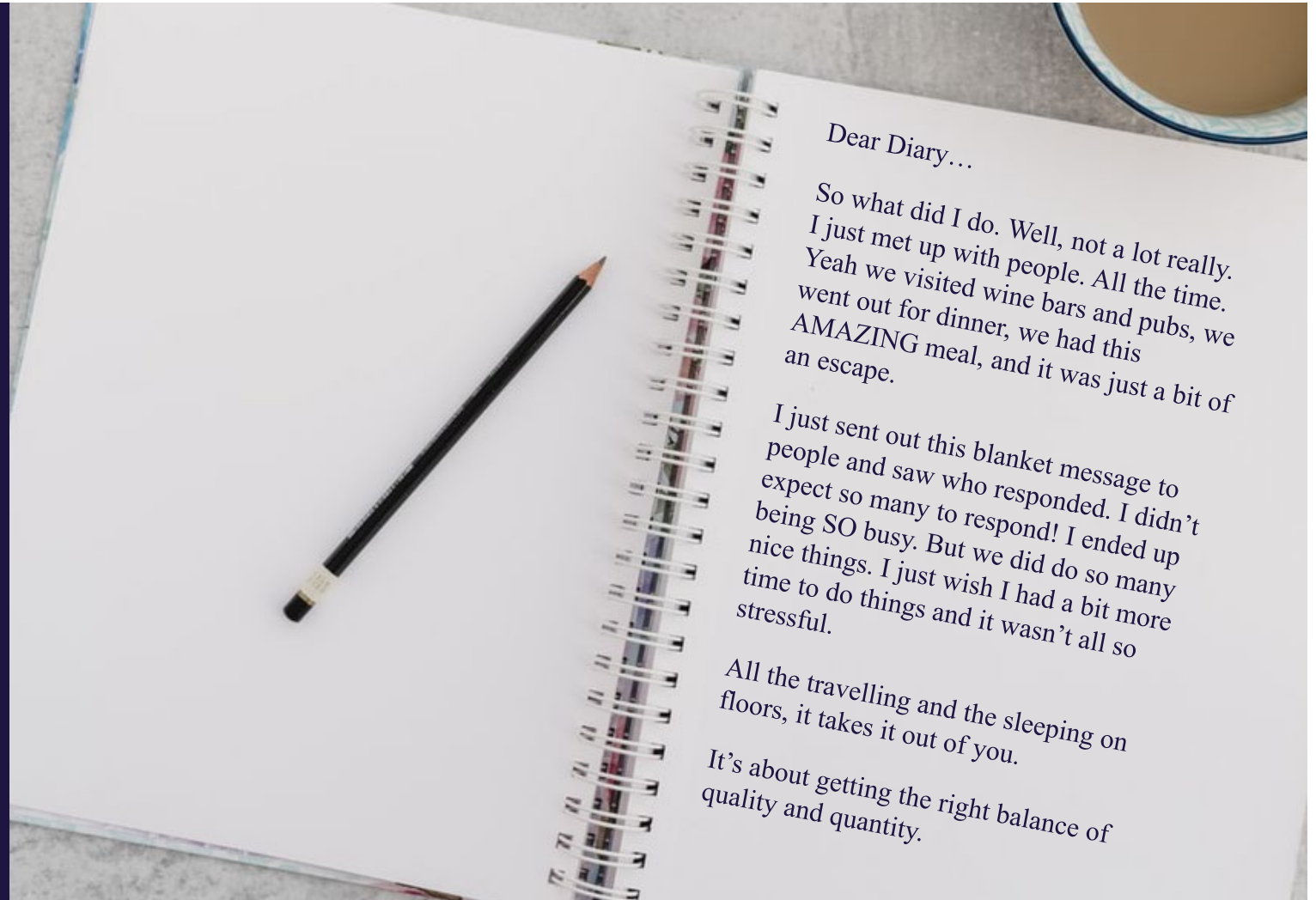
20%

visit the UK during Summer



What do I do when I'm here?

Other than visiting friends and family, Valiant Visitors like to:



Where do I stay, for how long, who do I travel with and how much do I spend?

They travel back with their spouse/ partner

Surprisingly unlikely to travel back with their children **(only 39%)... suggesting the trip home is for the spouse/partner.**

72%

of Valiant Visitors stay only with their friends and family

"It becomes very tricky to stay with friends and families when you have children," which may be the reason they are left behind.



✓ Length of visit:

70%
7 nights+



✓ Spend **11.4 days** in the UK on their trip.



40% spend £1,001 - £1,500

27% spend £1,500+

- ✓ Willing to spend on their trip in the UK.
- ✓ Not interested in saving costs.
- ✓ More likely to spend the money to enjoy themselves with their friends and family.

And how do I plan and book?

71%



spend between **3 weeks and 2 months planning their trip home...** But it can be shorter, with **18% completing their planning in 2 weeks.**

88%



The booking process takes them approximately **less than a month to get everything booked for their trip.**

Book direct with an airline

84%

Use in person travel agents

53%

Use destination websites to plan their trip

26%

Use their friends/family to plan their trip

23%



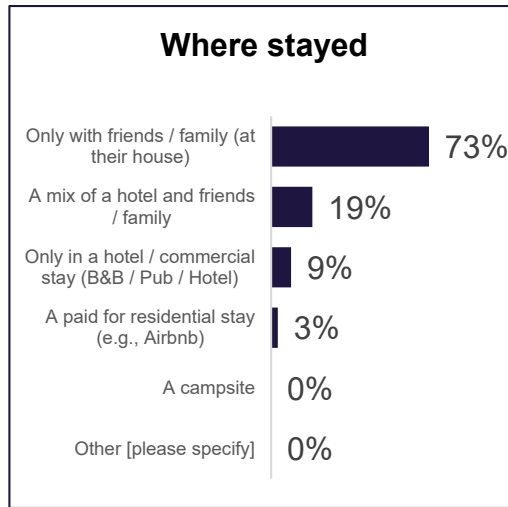
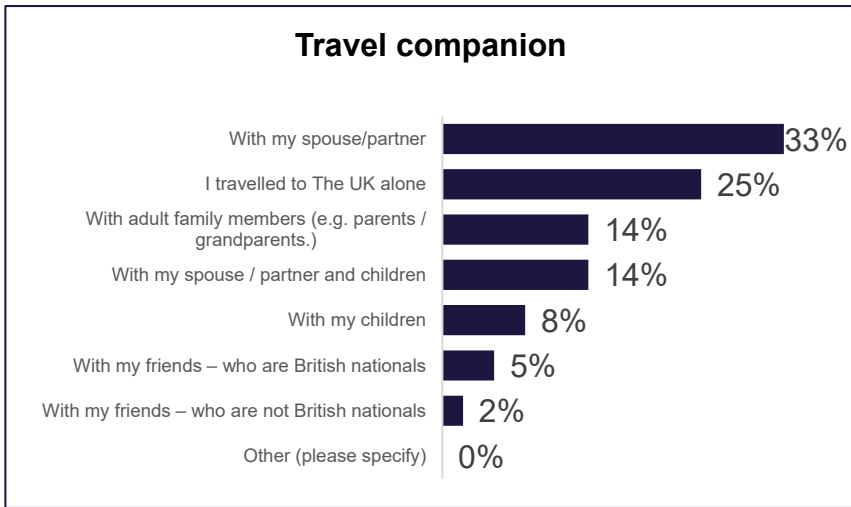
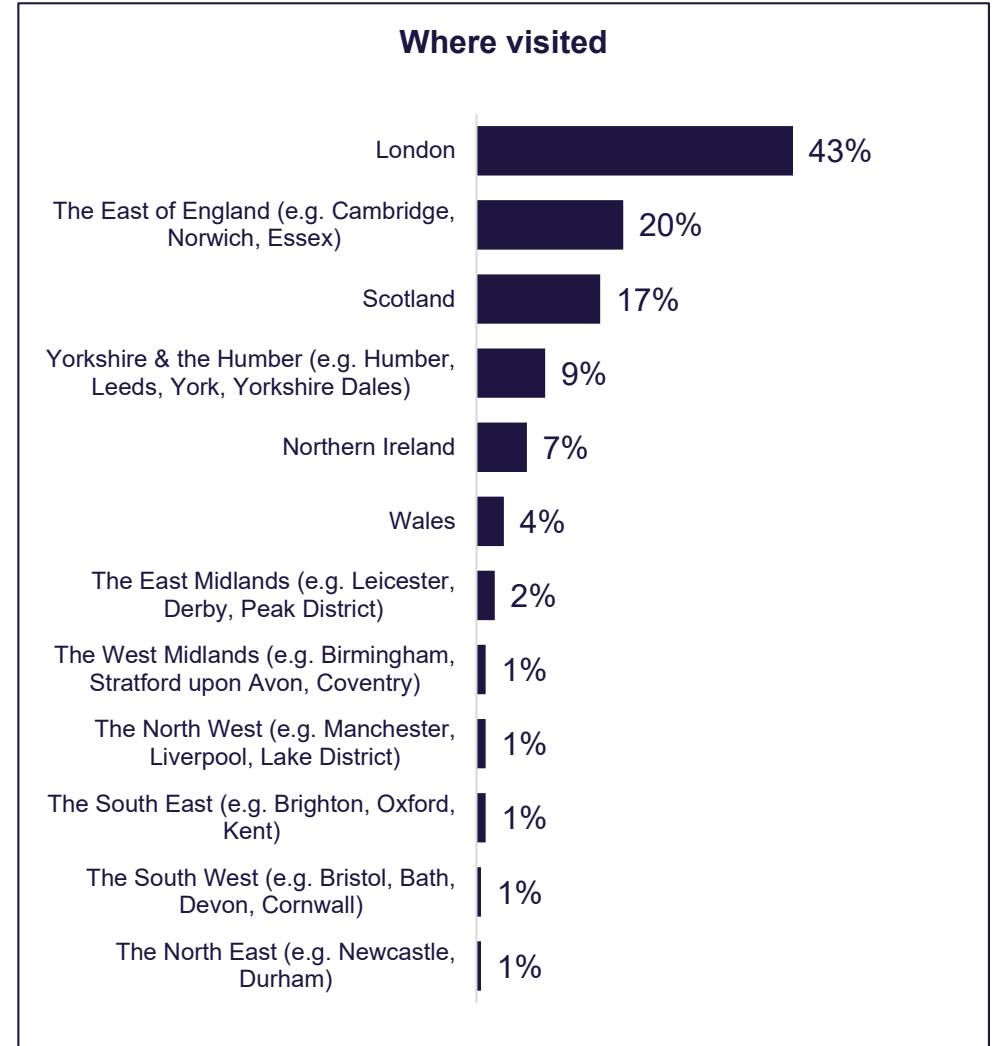
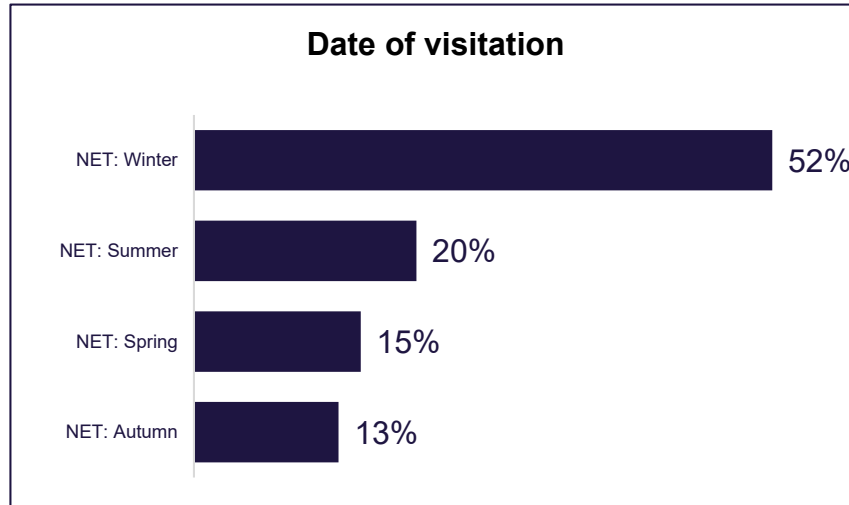
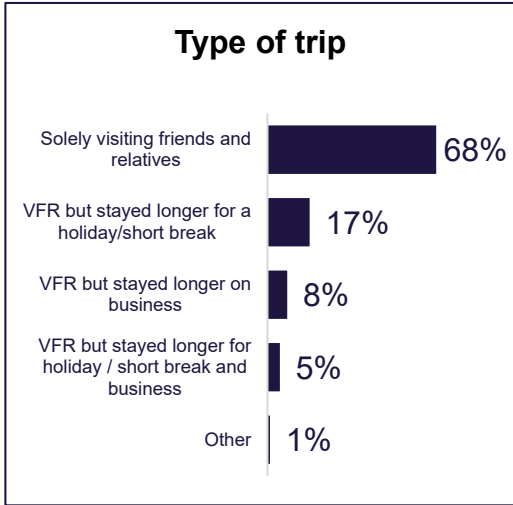
Text Message
Today 9:38 AM

Hey guys! Anyone know any new places that you that you really want to go in the area? Our treat x

Can't wait ☺ who are you booking with? You should be using a price comparison site!

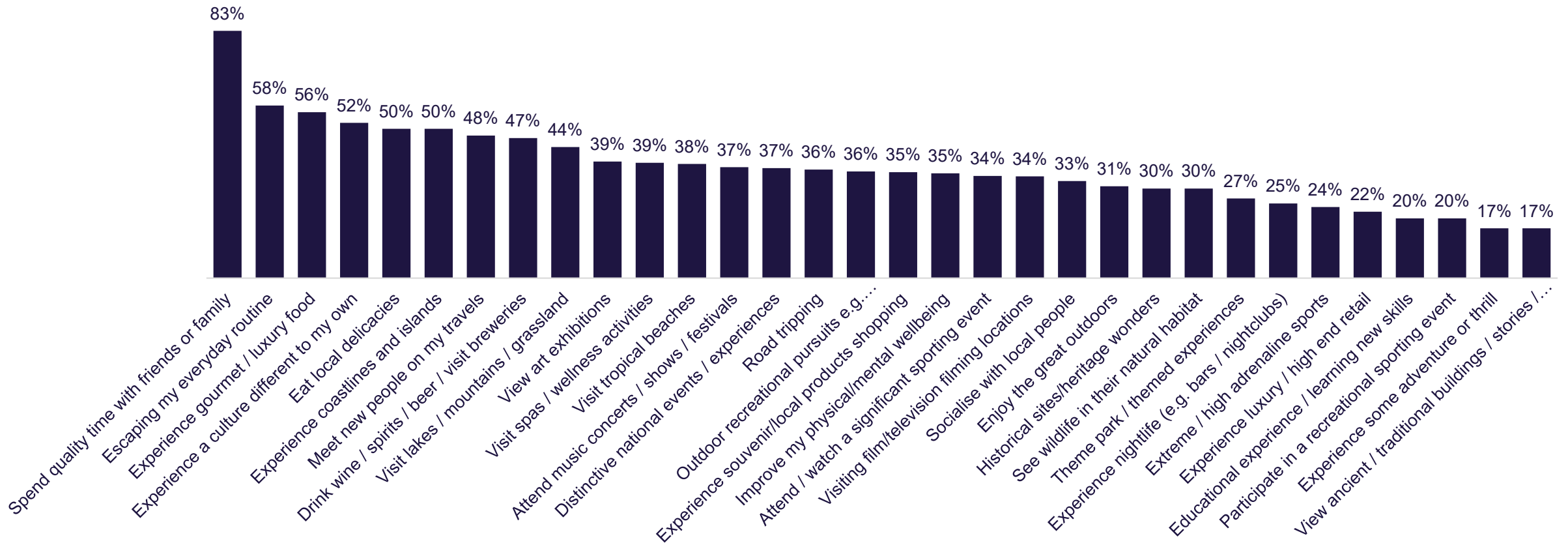
Yes Mum, I know price comparison sites exist, but we get points with Emirates that we use on other trips. We tried with Wego but it was only a bit cheaper. Don't worry we can afford it x

Valiant Visitors – their last trip to the UK



Valiant Visitors escape their everyday routine in the UK, alongside their friends and family

% who actually did an activity they were initially interested in, on their last trip to the UK





What does the UK mean to me?

What themes do I respond to?

What captivates me?



Lachlan Gowen at Unsplash

Expats in the UAE respond to the UK's culture. In the UAE, they are living an idyllic lifestyle where they are never left wanting.

They aren't captivated by activities. They are lured by home. It is not just nostalgia. It is more nuanced than just nostalgia for the place they left behind.

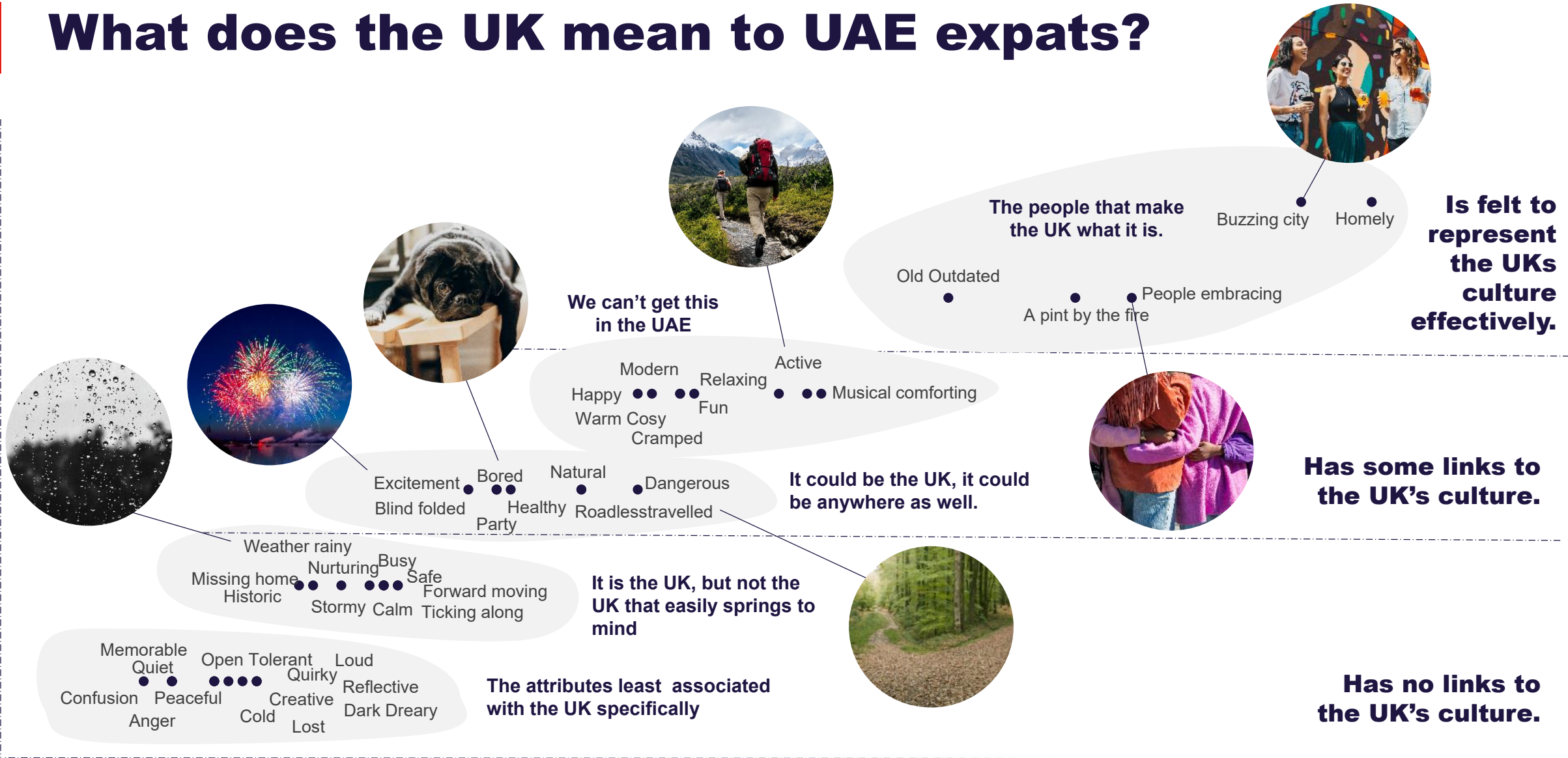
It's a motivation for a lifestyle they used to live by; an ethos. Capturing that ethos is key to capturing their interest.

"If I want to go skydiving at a moments notice, within a few clicks I could do it."

"There's so much to do, I'm spoilt for choice."

What does the UK mean to UAE expats?

Qualitative feel for whether image represents UK culture



% selecting image represents UK

What best represents the UK for Reluctant Returners?

My friends and family, they are the UK to me

33%



A Sunday Roast style meal reminds them of 'Family', 'the warmth I feel back home,' it makes them 'miss our traditional way of making food'; it creates smells that remind them of home, and as one person put it 'it depicts the warmth I feel back home.'

25%



The friends embracing images remind them of all their friends and family back home. It makes them picture their trips back 'the first thing I do when I am back home is spend time with friends' and that 'weekends in the UK are so special. It makes me nostalgic.' It reminds of their friends, of the memories they've created in the UK, and makes them think of what they will do when they get home.

25%



Friends embracing remind them of family activities, of the 'warm community inside the UK,' of 'love,' and of 'memories of friends.' It creates a loving, thoughtful image of the UK.

21%



The pint by the fire reminds is a quintessential British image. It 'reminds me of the long nights of chit chat and laughter.' It is cosy, and reminds people of the nightlife of the UK.

20%



And the balloons with happy faces remind them that 'People in UK are lovely and always smiling', it reminds them of the humour and the people of the UK. It makes people think of happiness and joy, which makes them think of the UK.

What best represents the UK for Valiant Visitors?

My friends and family, they are the UK to me

33%



Friends drinking outside reminds them of 'Friends... It reminds me of how my friends welcome me when I am back in the UK.' It's all about the welcome, the image they hold when they step off the plane, because 'spending time with my friends is one of my priorities when I am back home.'

30%



The Sunday Roast meal is a positive reminder of their family. It 'reminds me of my mother's cooking back at home.' And it can't be replicated as they have 'never found any like the taste and smell of UK food.' Supermarkets are also a particular pain point for the UAE Expat.

27%



A pint by the fire reminds people of the way it used to be 'Drink... our night was never complete without drinking.' And this is an important image for people, 'it's one of my favourite parts of the UK.'

27%



Friends embracing, like the friends drinking outside, reminds of the kindness of people. It gives them FOMO, they miss the togetherness and the feeling of belonging.

25%



And the old TV reminds them of the TV culture in the UK, it reminds them that 'old is gold,' and gives them a nostalgic image of 'family gatherings on comedy shows'.

So what do they respond to?

- UK Expats in the UAE responds to imagery relating to the warm, welcoming people that make the UK their home. Their experience in the UAE is idyllic. They can do anything they want, whenever they want. But the people they left behind: that is the UK to them.
- So to them, the UK is not about the history, the nature, the nostalgic place that they left behind. It is the people, and capturing the place where they can truly reconnect with those people is key to enticing a longer stay in the UK.



**What
opportunities
exist?**



VisitBritain[®]

To summarise each persona



Reluctant Returners like to come home to treat their friends and family, and show them how much they've changed

Who am I?

I'm a risk taker who loves being the centre of attention. I love my home in the UK, but it is a little bit of a chore for me to come all the way back!

What do I think about the UK?

The UK is my home. It's nurturing and homely and offers me an escape from my everyday UAE lifestyle. It's the people I love, who are warm, lovely and welcoming

What do I like to do on holiday?

Other than meeting my friends and family, I look for both gourmet / luxury food and local delicacies. I like to escape my everyday and meet new people whilst on my travels



So what does my UK trip need to have?

It has to include my friends and family, they won't forgive me otherwise! But I want to give back and treat my loved ones to wonderful, memorable experiences. A fancy meal out, or a wild night out; I just want to give them something they'll never forget.

Valiant Visitors want to come home and see their home for all it's worth

Who am I?

I'm settled in the UAE with my partner and/or children. I love my lifestyle out here in the UAE and everything it gives me, but my eyes are starting to turn towards home and all it can offer

What do I think about the UK?

The UK is home. It's made up of the most wonderful people. In the most wonderful settings. The UK is like a great big hug, I just wish my visits weren't so stressful

What do I like to do on holiday?

Other than meeting my friends and family, I look to escape my everyday routine, through visiting coastlines and islands. I want to taste everything the country has to offer, be it the local delicacies, or a little treat



So what does my UK trip need to have?

I won't go unless I see my friends and family. But I want to see them in a relaxed setting, experiencing the beauty of the UK, going at a more relaxed pace

How does the UK tourism industry use this information?

Strategy ideas to engage this audience

Focus on new memories, not the UK they left behind

The UAE Expat, in both cases, made the decision to leave the UK behind. Don't think about nostalgia, which puts the UK in the past, think about, creating and maintaining *new* memories



Encourage UK Expats in the UAE to:

Re | Generate

Re; your link to the past

Re |

It's all about fuelling the version of oneself that the UAE Expat left behind. Without their personal relationships, their old UK persona does not exist. Forging the new version of themselves cannot happen without appealing to their old identity.

Generate; maintaining and growing relationships

Generate

Nurturing and growing one's relationships is invigorating for the UAE expat. The new version of oneself, forged in the UAE, has no friends at home. But the old version does. Generating a combined person that maintains their loved relationships at home, whilst fuelling their new identity in the UAE is key to unlocking desire in the UK leisure break.

Encourage your UK Expats to:

Re | Generate

It's important to create the right conditions to allow UAE Expats to renew existing relationships and forge new memories. Your job is to provide the place for regeneration.

But keep in mind the following golden rules



Focus on the people, not the places. They can go anywhere from the UAE, but they can't get the people from the UK anywhere else.



Focus on relaxation and escape, rather than hustle and bustle. The UAE Expat trip back home is chaotic and stressful, when really they need to escape.



Focus on emotions, through warmth and compassion. They don't miss the UK for its attractions so tap into the emotions that are felt amongst these people; finally seeing their friends again.



Understanding and engaging with UK expats in the UAE

VisitBritain

Research conducted by Kubi Kalloo in March-April 2021

