

TO: U.S. Travel Association
FR: Morning Consult
DT: June 2026
RE: FIFA World Cup Tourism

Morning Consult conducted a survey on behalf of the U.S. Travel Association among 2,205 adults across the United States with oversamples of 331 adults in Houston and 330 adults in Kansas City to assess the public's awareness and sentiment toward the 2026 FIFA World Cup and its tourism impact. The findings reveal broad positive sentiment towards international tourism from the World Cup.

Key Findings

- Most Americans know the U.S. is co-hosting the World Cup, and host-city residents are especially tuned in. But not many Americans have personally interacted with an international visitor. Those who have are dramatically more engaged, more positive, and more likely to see the tournament as meaningful.
- Americans – and especially Kansas City and Houston residents – feel genuine pride and joy when they see international tourists enjoying the country. Residents broadly support hosting more global events and recognize the economic and reputational benefits of making visitors feel welcomed.
- Americans are rallying behind the United States national team, while host-city residents also show real affection for top international contenders. Lionel Messi leads Cristiano Ronaldo as the crowd favorite across all three markets, with Kansas City showing especially strong Messi support.

Detailed Findings - World Cup Awareness and Viewership

- Two-thirds of Americans nationally (63%) **know the U.S. is co-hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup** — a number that rises to 89% in Kansas City and 78% in Houston.
- Viewership follows a similar pattern: 39% of Americans have watched at least some of the World Cup, compared to roughly half of residents in both host cities.
- Among those who have personally interacted with an international World Cup visitor, viewership jumps to 79% nationally — and to 85% in Houston and 76% in Kansas City. Personal contact doesn't just create goodwill; it creates fans.



- Content about the World Cup is reaching people, too. Half of Americans nationally (50%) have seen or read news or social media coverage about international tourists' experiences in the U.S., compared to 77% in Kansas City and 66% in Houston.
 - Among those who have seen this coverage, the overwhelming majority describe it as positive across all three markets.
- Direct personal interaction remains limited, however. Just 17% of Americans nationally and about one-in-four in Kansas City (27%) and Houston (26%) report personal interactions with tourists visiting the United States for the World Cup.
- Those who have describe the experiences warmly: spontaneous conversations at bars and fan fests, tourists raving about American food and culture, visitors saying they don't want to go home.

NATIONAL ADULT

"Met a guy from Germany at a local pub during the matches. We grabbed some drinks and talked about football for hours."

HOUSTON ADULT

"I met a group of fans from Germany at a local restaurant during the tournament. they were incredibly friendly, excited to talk about their team's chances and we ended up sharing recommendations for local sports."

KANSAS CITY ADULT

"Went to fan fest in Kansas City... and ran into people from Canada, Scotland and England and had a beer with them all. None of have been to America until now. And I asked them all and they all said they don't want to go home. They said the like the food and the country and the real freedom..."

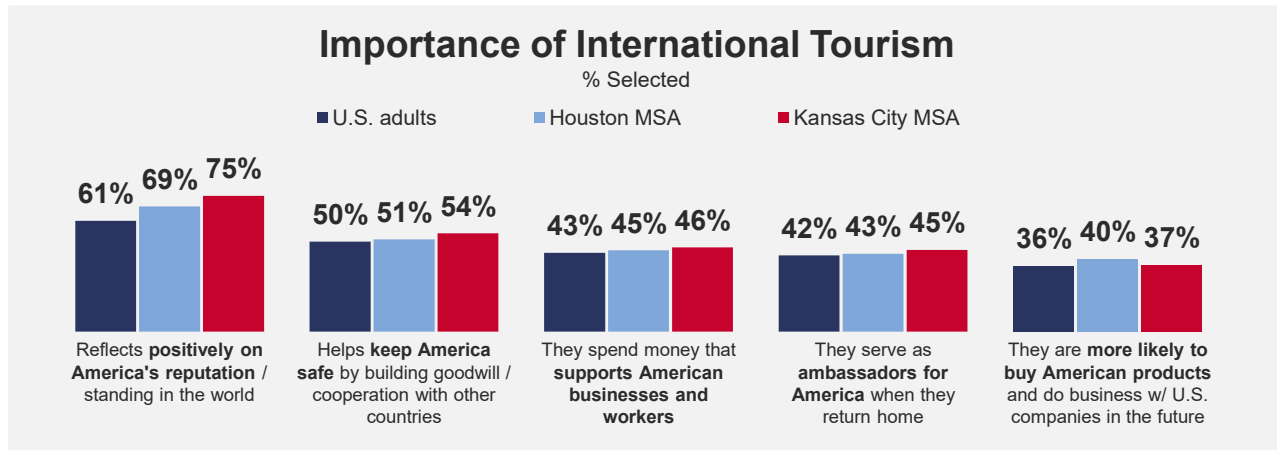
Detailed Findings – Tourism Impact

- When Americans see international tourists enjoying the country, it moves them. Seeing tourists experience American food, culture, and attractions gives 81% of Americans nationally a **sense of pride in being American**, and 86% **feel genuine joy watching visitors have positive experiences**.
 - This sentiment is even stronger in host cities. Nine-in-ten Americans in Houston (88%) and Kansas City (90%) feel greater pride in being American when they see international tourists experiencing American food, culture, and attractions.
- When it comes to how international visitors form impressions of America, most Americans believe nothing beats being here in person — 50% nationally, 54% in Houston, and 71% in Kansas City say visiting the U.S. gives the most accurate picture of American culture.
 - Among Americans who have actually interacted with World Cup tourists, 34% point to social media as the most accurate cultural lens — compared to just 11% of those who haven't. Having a real conversation with a visitor appears to shift how Americans think about the role digital content plays in shaping perceptions abroad.



Prepared for the U.S. Travel
Association

- Four-in-five Americans (81%) think it is **important for international tourists to have a positive experience** in America – including the vast majority of Americans in World Cup host cities Kansas City and Houston.
- Such positive experiences are considered important for America's reputation, safety, and economy:



- Most Americans (70%) believe the United States should seek to host more major global events like the World Cup, Olympics, or the World Fair – including 82% of those in Kansas City and 81% in Houston.

Detailed Findings – Favored Winners of the World Cup

- The **United States is favored to win the World Cup** among Americans nationally (43%) and those living in Houston (36%) and Kansas City (35%).
 - Host city residents show more affinity for top international contenders. Some in Houston see Argentina (17%) or France (11%) as likely winners, while 23% of those in in Kansas City see Argentina as the likely winner behind the United States.
- More Americans **choose Messi over Ronaldo as their favorite player**. 43% of Americans nationally prefer Messi, compared with 32% who prefer Ronaldo. This trend remains in host cities, where most Americans choose Messi in Kansas City (60%) and nearly half in Houston (48%).