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Report: No surprise here, Millennials love glamping

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If you've ever wondered whether anybody actually goes "glamping," a new report offers a resounding answer: yes, lots of anybodies.

According to the first major survey of the new-ish upscale practice of glamping (camping, but glamorous), 30% of North American travelers surveyed say they've indulged in the past two years. Included in the glamping category are canvas safari tents, Airstream trailers, teepees, tree houses and other fancier-than-a-regular-old-tent overnight accommodations. To clarify, a glamping spot will often have a bed and electricity but usually not a bathroom or plumbing.

The survey findings, published Tuesday and commissioned by Kampgrounds of America (KOA), indicate that the main participants are Millennials (48% of respondents), followed by Gen X-ers (28%), Gen Z-ers (12%), Boomers (9%) and "Mature" travelers (3%).

The report captured information from 4,034 self-identified leisure travelers in the U.S. and Canada who had indicated that they had traveled for leisure or camped in the past two years. Forty-two percent of them are people of color; 45% are couples with children. KOA, which operates campground-RV parks around the country, releases a report on the continental camping industry each year.

Glamping is gaining ground, according to the new report. Seventy-seven percent of survey respondents who said that they had glamped said they'd like to do so again.

“We’ve been tracking glamping as an emerging travel trend for the past several years as we’ve seen growing demand for different types of glamping experiences, and Deluxe Cabins in particular, at our KOA campgrounds across North America,” KOA president and CEO Toby O’Rourke said in a statement.

“The results of this new research reinforce that North American travelers are in fact seeking different ways to experience the outdoors, even if they aren’t traditional campers.”

California appears to be experiencing a mini glamping boom — particularly in the area around Yosemite National Park.

An RV park in Groveland (near Yosemite’s west entrance) recently started offering covered wagon sites. Another, near the park’s south entrance, features overnight yurt rentals. Yet another, on Highway 140 in Mariposa, rents out Airstream trailers.

Last year, glamping company Tentr announced plans to launch more than a thousand new campgrounds in California by the end of this year. Around the same time, the ritzy Ventana Big Sur hotel rolled out its own deluxe glamping site featuring canvas-top tents.

Industry pioneer Under Canvas is opening four safari-tent style glamping sites in the state over the next two years — near Yosemite National Park, in Joshua Tree National Park, on Catalina Island and in Sonoma County.

“One of the most interesting findings in the report was how the self-definitions of glamping varied among travelers, indicating that there’s interest in a variety of glamping experiences,” O’Rourke said in her statement. “This presents opportunities for those in the outdoor industry to innovate and create the types of glamping experiences today’s traveler seeks.”

CORRECTION: An earlier version of this article misidentified Toby O'Rourke's gender. The Chronicle regrets the error.