

From Exterior Facelifts To New And Improved Activities, Hoteliers Are Preparing For Summer Traffic

B [bisnow.com /national/news/hotel/how-hoteliers-prepare-for-summer-travelers-74520](https://bisnow.com/national/news/hotel/how-hoteliers-prepare-for-summer-travelers-74520)

[Memorial Day](#), known as the gateway to summer, is fast approaching, and with it comes increased pressure on hoteliers to get their properties ready for summer travelers.

New York's [LW Hospitality Advisors](#) president and CEO [Daniel Lesser](#) said summer is the peak revenue season for many properties and a time when hoteliers do exterior improvements and spruce up their locations, including landscaping and recreational facilities.



Courtesy of Erik A. Svensson

Courtyard by Marriott in downtown Santa Monica

For U.S. vacationers, the most popular months to travel are May, August and September, according to a report by Adobe Digital Insights, with the Fourth of July expected to be a summer blockbuster.

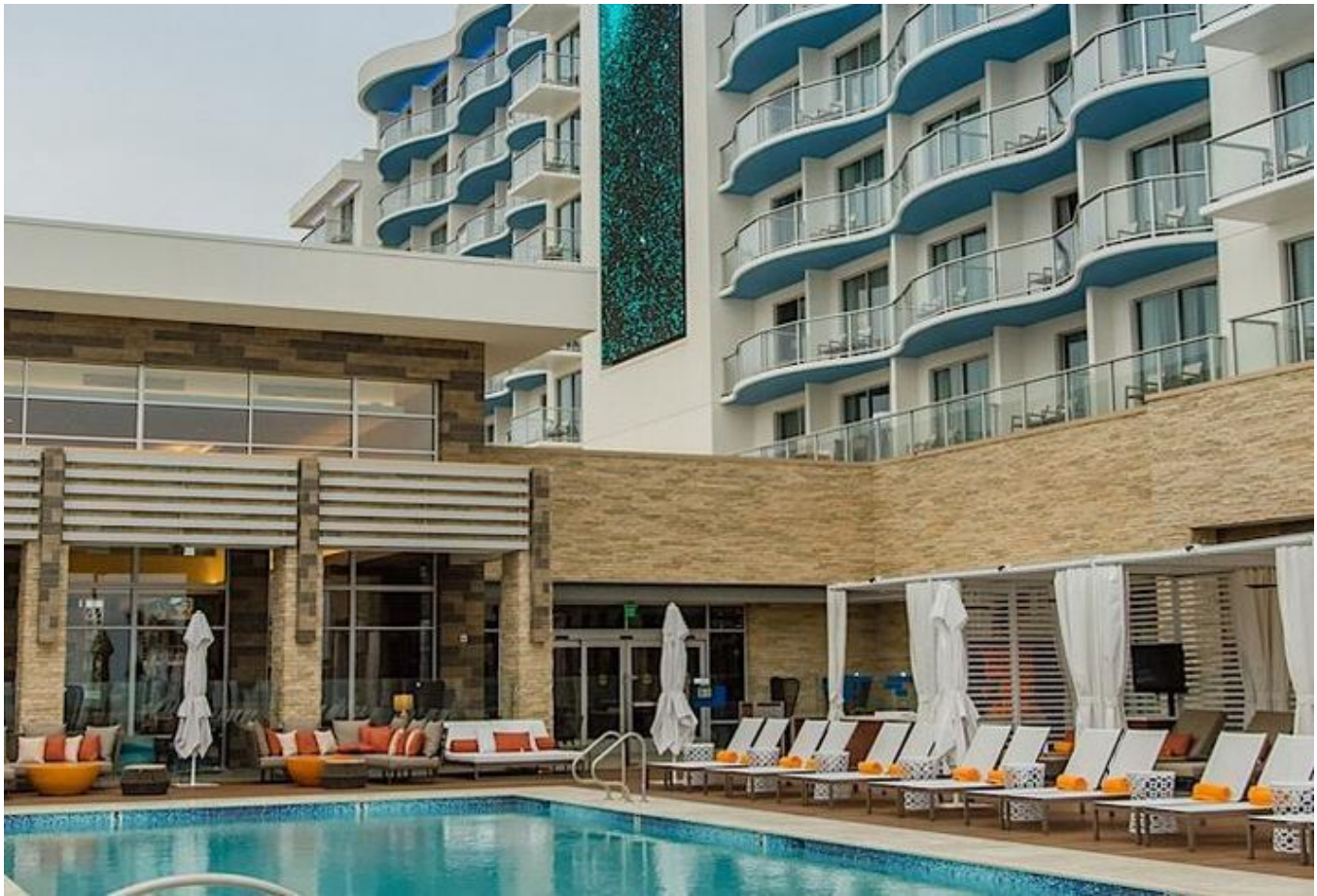
"Marketing and advertising is heightened in advance of Memorial Day and through Labor Day," Lesser said.

Though hoteliers are busy preparing, this year's summer season may not be as profitable as last year's, according to the same report.

Consumer travel spending for the summer is only expected to grow 5% to \$98B from May 29 through Sept. 4. That is a 66% decline compared to the \$297B travelers spent during the same time period last year.

Adobe's report also forecasts a slowdown in international travelers coming to the U.S. this year. This projection is shared by industry association Tourism Economics, which [predicts hotel bookings will shift](#) from the U.S. to Europe and Asia in response to the new administration's foreign policy and President [Donald Trump's travel ban](#).

The association's National Travel & Tourism report initially forecast a 0.3% decrease in occupancy in U.S. hotels for the year, but a RevPAR bump of 2.5% in 2017, spurred by increased travel to the U.S. Tourism Economics president Adam Sacks has revised those forecasts in response to White House policies, predicting a 3% contraction in international tourism, leading to \$10B in lost revenue.



Courtesy of R.D. Olson Development

Pasea Hotel & Spa

Hoteliers nationwide, however, are making big plans for those who will be traveling.

"Southern California is big for summer," R.D. Olson Development president [Robert Olson](#) said. "It's our big season."

R.D. Olson Development has about 20 properties in its portfolio, including the Paséa Hotel & Spa in [Huntington Beach](#), California, Renaissance Clubsport in [Aliso Viejo](#) and the [Courtyard by Marriott](#) Goleta/Santa Barbara. Olson's company also owns properties in [Hawaii](#), including the [Residence Inn by Marriott](#) in Wailea and Courtyard by Marriott Kahului, both in Maui.

The hotel's location determines what preparations are made for summer travelers, Olson said.

Local businesses and hoteliers will rally together in Huntington Beach this year for an annual major summer event that takes place in July.

The company's Surf Open event takes place at the end of [Huntington Beach](#); many local hotels and businesses are planning for it.

Around 300 of the top surfers in the world are expected to gather in Huntington Beach to compete at the weeklong 2017 Surfs Open event this year, and hotels are gearing up to temporarily house those players and their friends, family and fans for the event.

In addition to competitions in a surf arena, skateboarding and BMX are scheduled at the annual event. There will also be free, outdoor movies, autograph sessions with the athletes, music and art installations at the free, family-friendly event.

"It's our big season," Olson said. "It's a very important part. We need to meet the demands of our customers, what they're looking for when they arrive."



Courtesy of Thompson Chicago

Thompson Chicago general manager Steve Shern

Luxury boutique hotel [Thompson Chicago](#), located in the heart of the city, also takes big strides to get ready for summer.

"Our operational teams really work together to make sure we're ready to serve our summer travelers' every need," Thompson Chicago general manager Steve Shern said.

The first thing on the to-do list is making sure the hotel has enough employees, supplies and equipment for the peak summer season, according to Shern.

"Our sales and revenue team will have some fun, creative packages to offer our guests and get them loaded onto the website," Shern said.

These include a partnership with Lululemon to design complimentary, personalized running tours for hotel guests and private, 90-minute walking tours in the hotel's neighborhood.

Hoteliers nationwide are also boosting their activity offerings for children this summer.

Thompson Chicago plans to have its fourth annual City Summer Camp program, which offers guests a curated list of unique activities and personalized experiences, according to Shern. There will be five new camp courses this year, including terrarium building classes, a summer cocktail class, private tennis or golf lessons and gelato making.