

## **American Automobile Associations Travel Advisory for Thanksgiving 2017**

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This Thanksgiving, American roads and airports will be stuffed with an estimated 51 million folks — a 3.3 percent increase over last year and the highest Thanksgiving travel volume since 2005, according to AAA.

*— This article is a combination of announcements from AAA, AAA Northeast and, at the bottom, from Metro-North.*

The AAA annual holiday travel survey says that of the overall number hitting the roads and flying skies in time for Granny's pumpkin pie:

- **89 percent**, or 45.5 million people, expect to drive 50 miles or more. This is a 3.2 percent increase over last year.
- Another estimated **5 percent**, or 3.95 million, will travel by plane, up 5 percent compared to last year; and
- **1.1 percent** or 1.48 million will go by train, boat or some other type of transportation.

- **Drivers beware, however: based on historical travel trends, drivers will experience the greatest amount of congestion as early as TUESDAY EVENING of Thanksgiving week, when commuters mix with holiday travelers.**

So what's driving this year's Turkey travel between Nov. 22 and 26?

- **First, a strong economy coupled with a strong labor market.** Together, they're generating higher income and greater consumer confidence. In other words, Americans are feeling good about life.
- **Second, to quote Tevye from Fiddler on the Roof, it's "Tradition."** Thanksgiving has always been known as the holiday for family and friends to gather so that desire to spend time with loved ones is propelling the increase.

In this year's holiday travel survey, AAA found air travel shows the largest growth this year because it appears consumers will be paying the **cheapest average airfares since 2013**.

On the downside, however, drivers — who, as expected, make up the bulk of holiday travelers — will pay the **highest Thanksgiving gas prices since 2014**. November's average so far (from Nov. 1 to 14) is 37 cents higher than last year.

Today's national average is \$2.56 and Connecticut's \$2.72 average are both 41 cents higher than this time last year.

#### **Avoid Locking Yourself Out or Getting a Flat Tire**

AAA expects to rescue more than 330,000 motorists this Thanksgiving weekend, with the primary reasons being lockouts, flat tires and battery-related issues.

AAA recommends motorists have their vehicles inspected by a trusted repair shop, such as one of the more than 7,000 [AAA Approved Auto Repair](#) facilities across North America. Members can download the [AAA Mobile app](#), visit [AAA.com](http://AAA.com) or call 1-800-AAA-HELP to request roadside assistance.

#### **Uses for the AAA Mobile app**

Before setting out for the long Thanksgiving weekend, download the free AAA Mobile app for iPhone, iPad and Android. Travelers can use the app to map a route, find the lowest gas prices, access exclusive member discounts, make travel arrangements, request AAA roadside assistance, find AAA Approved Auto Repair

facilities and more. Learn more at [AAA.com/mobile](http://AAA.com/mobile).

#### **A Mixed Bag for Airfares, Hotel rates, Car Rentals**

According to AAA's Leisure Travel index:

- Travelers flying the skies will pay the lowest average in five years for a round-trip flight to the top 40 domestic routes. At \$157, on average, that is a 23 percent fare drop year-over-year.
- On the other hand, the money you save on your flight will be applied to renting a car. At \$70 a day, the daily car rental price average is 34 percent more than last year and the highest rate for a Thanksgiving weekend since 2013.
- Travelers also will pay more to stay in a AAA Three Diamond-rated lodging with the average price 14% higher at \$176 a night. On the other hand, AAA Two Diamond-rated hotels are cheaper at a nightly average cost of \$117, a 5% decrease from last year.

#### **We're Visiting Mickey, the Big Apple and Diamond Head**

The survey also identified this year's top vacation destinations for Thanksgiving, based on AAA.com bookings: Orlando, Anaheim, New York City, Honolulu, Las Vegas, Punta Cana, Cancun, San Francisco, Maui, and Fort Lauderdale.

AAA's travel projections are based on economic forecasting and research by IHS Markit, which first teamed with AAA in 2009 to jointly analyze travel trends during major holidays. AAA has been reporting on holiday travel trends for more than two decades.

AAA Northeast is a not-for-profit auto club with 62 offices in Rhode Island, Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Jersey, New Hampshire and New York, providing more than 5.2 million local AAA members with travel, insurance, finance, and auto-related services.

In Connecticut, we serve a half-million members living in is Fairfield, New Haven, and Litchfield counties  
Follow us on Twitter: @AAANe\_CTnews and Facebook at [facebook.com/AAANortheast](https://facebook.com/AAANortheast)

#### **If You're Taking a Train This Thanksgiving**

*From a Metro-North [announcement](#):*

On **Wednesday, November 22**, take flight like a turkey (yes, they do fly when they aren't being cooked) on one of our early getaway trains, which begin departing Grand Central Terminal at around 1 PM. Because of reduced ridership, some evening trains may be cancelled or combined. See a regular timetable for details.

*Darienite*  
*News for Darien*  
<http://darienite.com>

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On **Thanksgiving, Thursday, November 23**, we will operate a modified weekend schedule with additional inbound trains for those of you heading to the Macy's Thanksgiving Holiday Parade.

And we will have plenty of additional outbound service to get you home to the dinner table.

[See a special Holiday Timetable.](#)

On the **Day After Thanksgiving, Friday, November 24**, a Saturday schedule will be in effect with additional AM inbound and PM outbound trains, so you can take advantage of all those Black Friday sales or simply enjoy all of the holiday decorations.

On **Saturday and Sunday, November 25 and 26**, we will provide regular weekend schedules with additional Shoppers' Specials trains.

[See a special Holiday Timetable.](#)

Off-peak fares are in effect for the entire four-day holiday period Thursday through Sunday, and you can take advantage of free parking at many of our stations. (Check for signs at stations, or call 511 for details. Outside of New York, call 877-690-5114.)

If you are traveling to/from Manhattan with family and friends to see the holiday sights, we recommend you use [MTA eTix®](#), the mobile ticketing app that enables you to purchase one way, round trip, ten-trip, weekly and monthly passes on your smartphone or mobile device. [See details.](#)

If you are traveling in a group, why not purchase a ten-trip off-peak ticket and save 15% off the one-way fare? The ticket can be used by more than one person, even when you are traveling together.

Or use our Family Fare and pay \$1 per ticket for up to four children (ages 5 to 11) when they are traveling with a fare-paying adult. (The fifth child and all other children pay Child Fare).

[See our fare page for details.](#)

Finally, here's our recipe for happy Thanksgiving travel: Buy your tickets in advance (like your turkey). Thanksgiving is the busiest travel day of the year, and if you're leaving New York after the parade, you must have your ticket before boarding your train at Grand Central or Harlem-125th Street Station. Again, we suggest you use [MTA eTix®](#). (You'll be thankful you did!)