

More people expected to travel Labor Day weekend

AAA Travel projects 34.7 million Americans will journey 50 miles or more from home during the Labor Day holiday weekend, the highest volume for the holiday since 2008 and a 1.3 percent increase from 2013.

Nearly 86 percent of travelers (29.7 million) will celebrate the holiday with a final road trip before summer comes to a close. The Labor Day holiday travel period is defined as Aug. 28-Sept. 1.

Most U.S. consumers are paying the lowest gas prices for early August since 2010. AAA expects gas prices to have little impact on the number of people traveling for Labor Day, though lower prices could help make travel more affordable. Barring a major development, such as a Gulf Coast hurricane, prices are likely to remain relatively low leading up to the holiday weekend compared to recent years. The current price of gas is \$3.44 compared to \$3.59 on Labor Day last year.

According to AAA's Leisure Travel Index, hotel rates for AAA Three Diamond lodgings are expected to increase 6 percent from one year ago with travelers spending an average of \$171 per night compared to \$161 last year. The average hotel rate for AAA Two Diamond hotels has risen 9 percent with an average cost of \$125 per night.

Weekend daily car rental rates will average \$51, the same as last year. Airfares have risen 2 percent, with the average round-trip, discounted fare for the top 40 U.S. routes costing \$219, up from \$214 last year.