

Visit South Walton

Emerging Market Study: Houston

March 2017

Phillip Downs, Ph.D.
Joseph St. Germain, Ph.D.
Rachael Anglin
Downs & St. Germain Research



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Executive Summary

Emerging Market Study: Houston



Introduction

- Because of modest market penetration (7%) & significant market potential (1.6 million), Houston was selected as the Emerging Market for marketing focus by Visit South Walton.



Purpose

- Establish a baseline for Visit South Walton's marketing push into the Houston market.
- Conduct follow-up study in a year to measure the impact of marketing initiative.



Methodology

- 446 internet & telephone surveys with the following Houstonians:
 - \$100,000+ household income
 - Vacation decision maker
 - Taken a 5-night pleasure vacation in past year & stayed in paid accommodations

Awareness of South Walton

Unaided awareness of South Walton®, the brand name, is negligible, while aided awareness of South Walton or 1 of its beaches¹ is encouragingly high (74%).



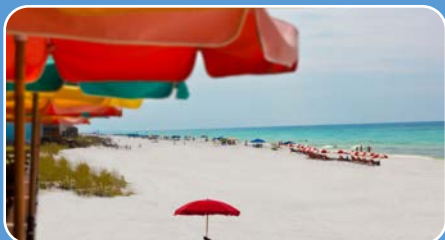
Unaided awareness

- 3% for South Walton or at least 1 of its 16 beaches
- <1% for brand name South Walton®



Aided awareness

- 74% for South Walton or at least 1 of its 16 beaches
- 30% for the brand name South Walton®



Aided awareness for 16 beach areas

- 34% - Miramar Beach
- 31% - Sandestin
- 27% - Seaside
- 18% - Santa Rosa Beach

Vacation experiences

South Walton is well positioned for Houstonians who prefer Florida only to Texas as a vacation destination and prefer beach and family vacations over all other types.



Domestic vacations in the past few years

- 63% - Texas
- 49% - Florida
- 36% - California



Global vacations in the past few years

- 14% - Canada
- 11% - France
- 11% - Great Britain



Preferred types of vacations

- 72% - Beach
- 66% - Family
- 48% - City

Vacation intent

Houston is a fertile market for South Walton: 1. Florida is the preferred state for a week-long vacation outside Texas; 2. Interest in vacationing in South Walton is nearly as high as interest in trying any new vacation destination.



Future 5-7 night vacation outside of Texas

- 11% - Florida
- 6% - California and Mexico
- 5% - Hawaii and New York



Interest in trying new beach vacation destinations

- 33% - Extremely high (10 on a 10-point interest scale)
- 63% - High (8 to 10 on a 10-point interest scale)



Interest in vacationing in South Walton¹

- 24% - Extremely high (10 on a 10-point interest scale)
- 62% - High (8 to 10 on a 10-point interest scale)
- 1 in 6 say they will definitely vacation in South Walton in the coming year

South Walton vacation

1 in 3 Houstonians have experience with a South Walton beach. Over half noticed information about South Walton, yet only 3 in 10 definitely knew where South Walton is located.



Experience with South Walton

- 8% say they have vacationed in South Walton®
- 33% have vacationed at 1 of the 16 beaches in South Walton



Searched for or noticed information about South Walton – 58%

- 22% - VISIT FLORIDA
- 15% - Social media
- 8% - VisitSouthWalton.com
- 8% - Travel Guide for South Walton



Know where South Walton is located

- 68% - Florida
- 30% - Florida Panhandle
- 70% - Really do not know

Perceptions of South Walton

While nearly half of Houstonians say they absolutely perceive South Walton as a destination they would enjoy, it is clear they do not truly understand that South Walton is so distinct from Destin and Panama City Beach. They correctly perceive South Walton as a family destination.



South Walton is a destination Houstonians would enjoy¹

- 45% - Absolutely
- 70% - Most likely



Beaches perceived to be similar to South Walton

- 39% - Destin
- 33% - Panama City Beach
- 27% - Pensacola Beach



Perceptions of the types of people who vacation in South Walton

- 44% - Families
- 16% - Beach lovers
- 10% - Retirees, older people

Perceptions of South Walton

Responses to these perceptual statements are key baseline data against which to measure future marketing effort.



South Walton is a perfect escape for me¹

- 23% - Strongly agree
- 57% - Strongly agree + agree



South Walton is ideal to create fond family memories¹

- 22% - Strongly agree
- 60% - Strongly agree + agree



I can be truly carefree in South Walton¹

- 21% - Strongly agree
- 55% - Strongly agree + agree



South Walton is a place of utter relaxation¹

- 22% - Strongly agree
- 60% - Strongly agree + agree

Sources of information

Houstonians' vacation search activity does not differ from the process that typical upscale vacationers use.



Sources of information when planning a new vacation

- 62% - Internet search
- 60% - Destination website
- 57% - Talk to friends



Key internet searches

- 52% - Expedia, TripAdvisor, Travelocity, etc.
- 52% - Hotel website
- 44% - Priceline, Trivago, Kayak, Hotels.com, etc.

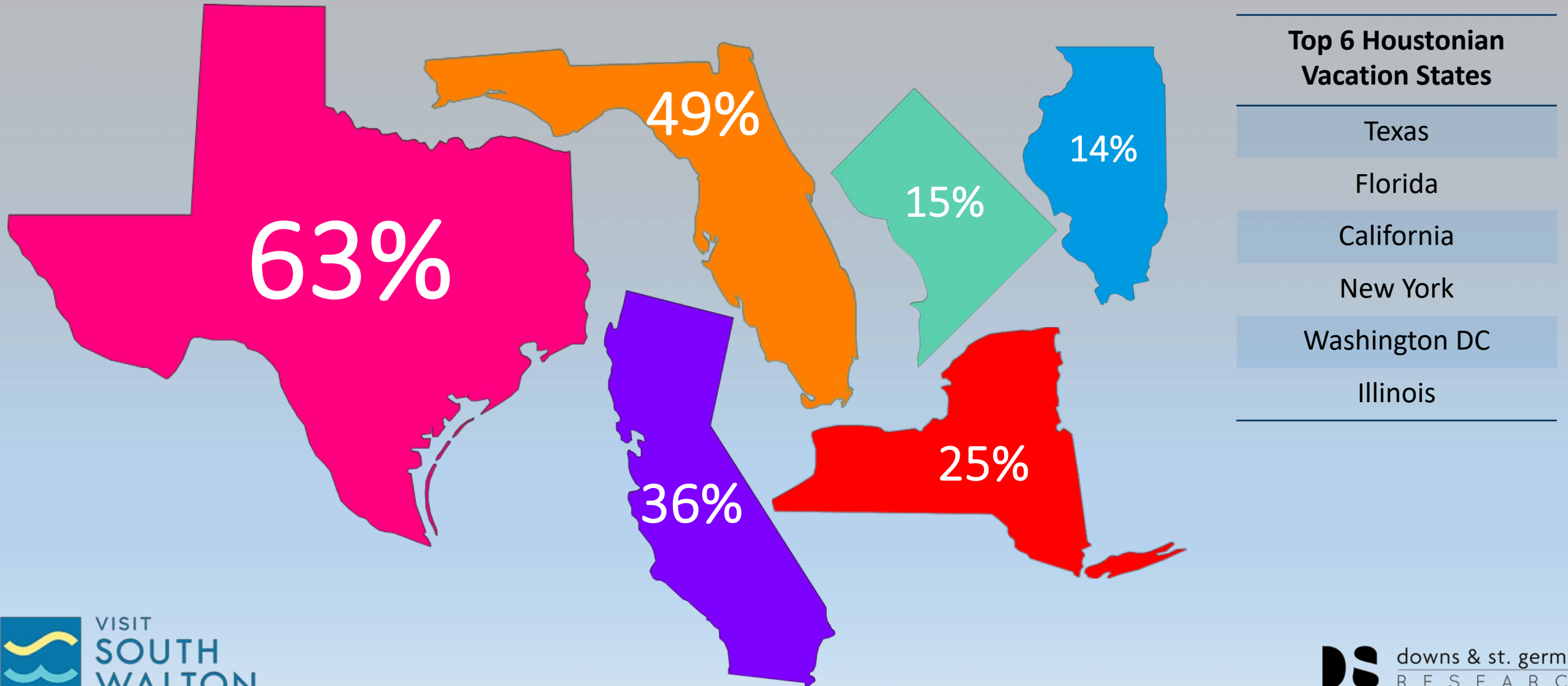
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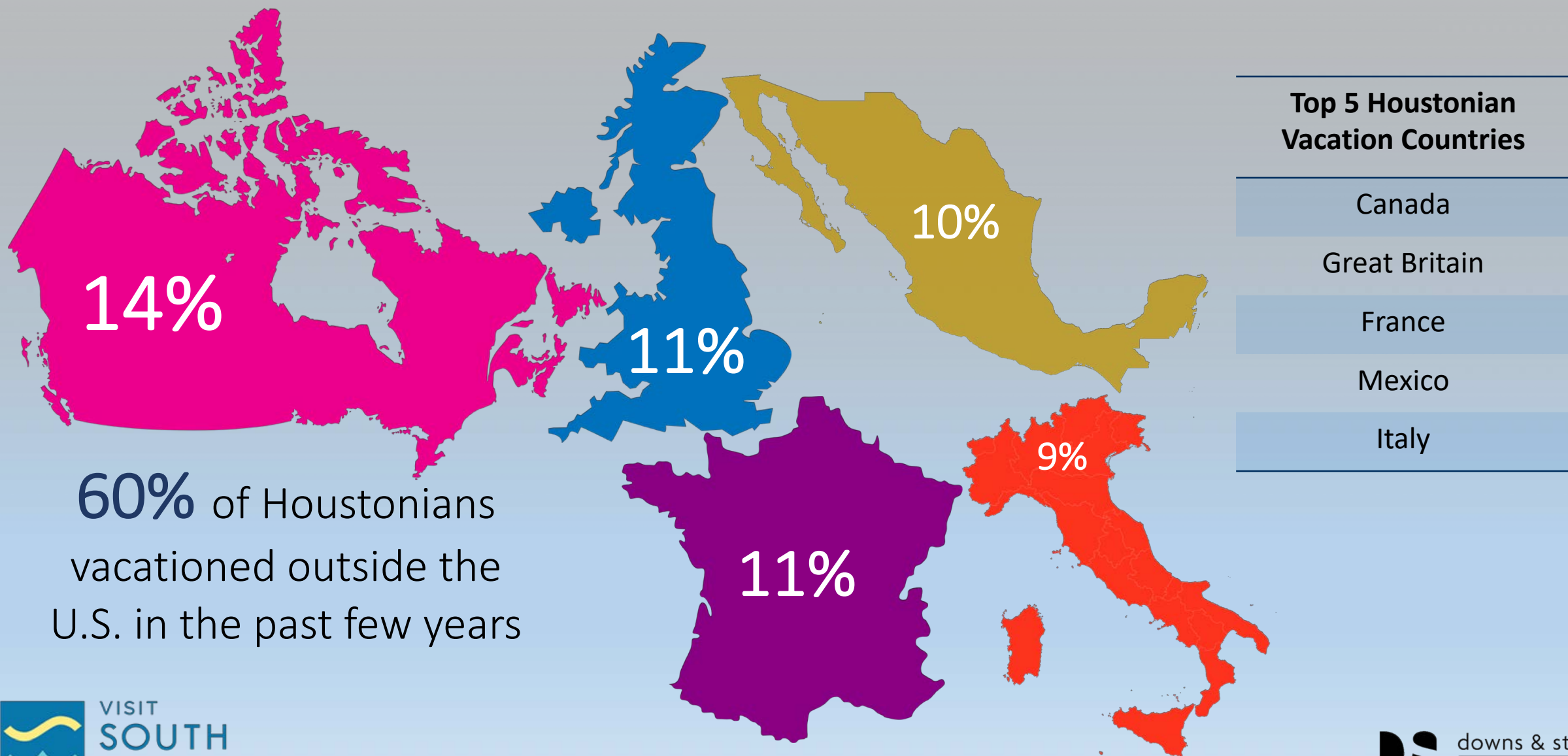
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Detailed Findings

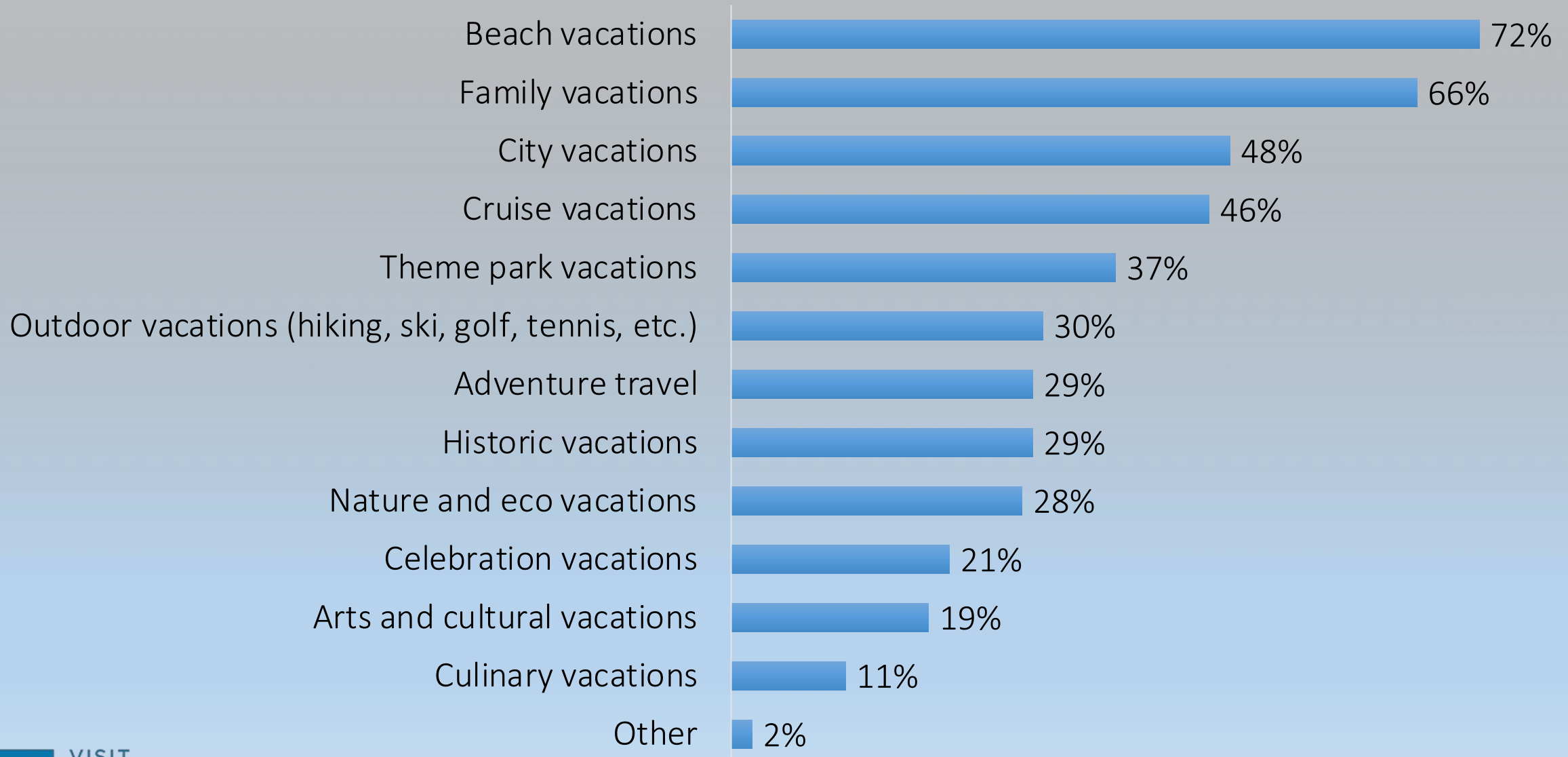
Houston residents' domestic vacation experiences



Houston residents' global vacation experiences

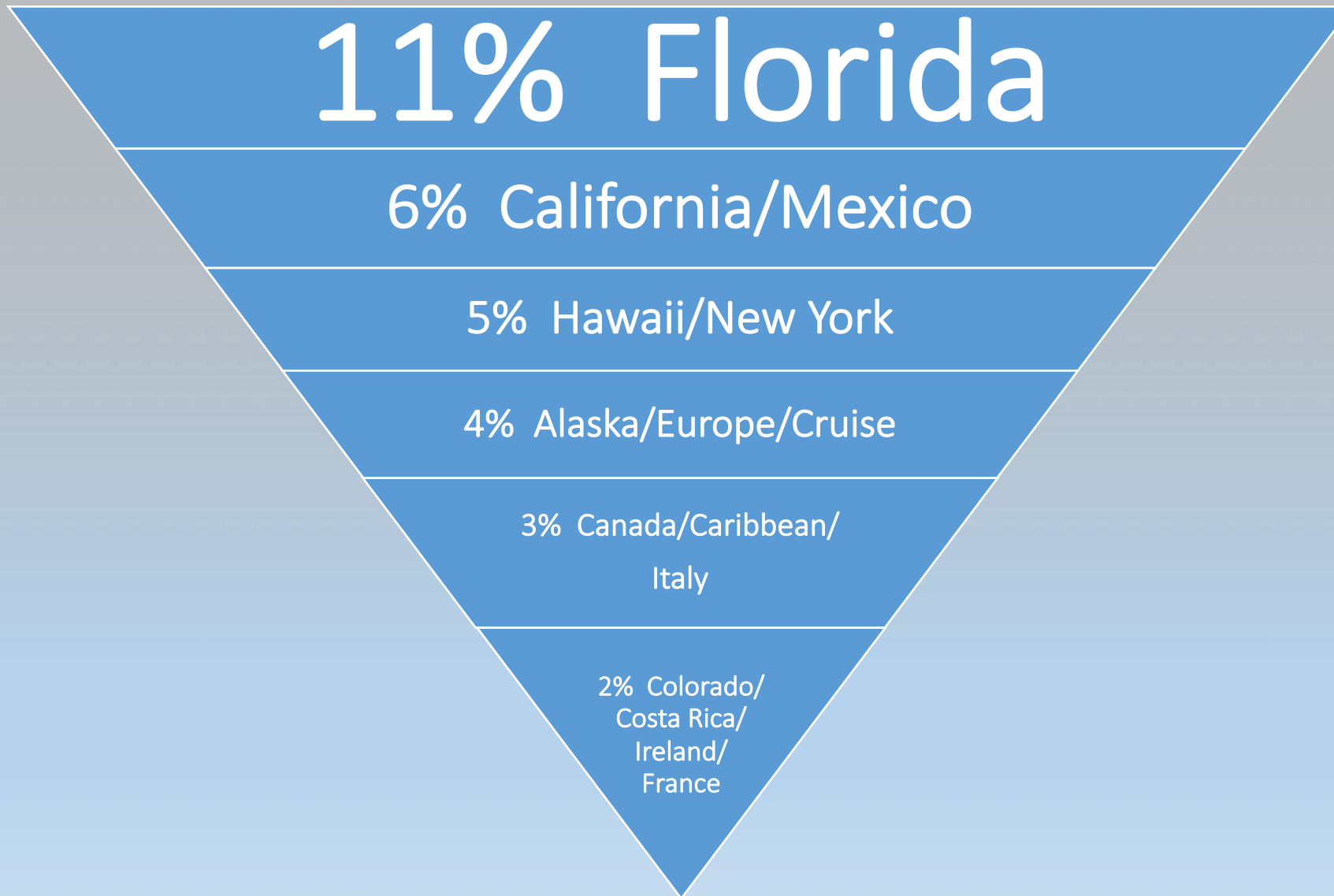


72% of Houston residents take beach vacations¹



¹Multiple responses permitted

11% of Houston residents will vacation in Florida¹



¹If they took a 5-7 night vacation outside of Texas. Open-ended responses.

Unaided awareness: Top-of-mind for vacation destinations in Florida¹

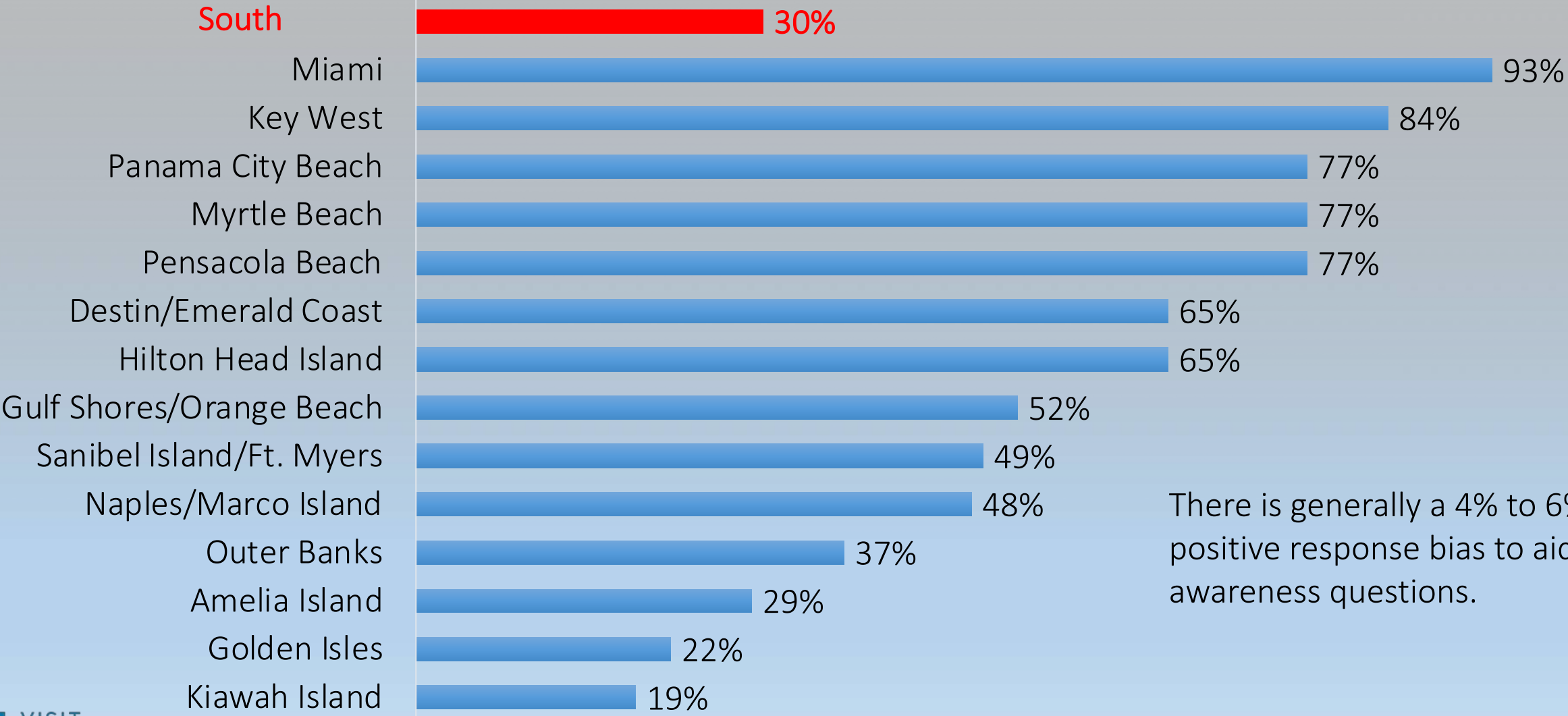
Florida Beach Destinations	%
Miami	50%
Destin	34%
Key West	21%
Orlando	17%
Fort Lauderdale	15%
Daytona Beach	10%
Pensacola Beach	10%
Tampa	9%
Panama City Beach	8%
Florida Keys	8%
Disney	7%
Clearwater	6%
Fort Myers	5%
Cocoa Beach	5%
Palm Beach	5%
Naples	4%

Florida Beach Destinations	%
Fort Walton	4%
St. Petersburg	3%
West Palm Beach	3%
Sarasota	3%
Jacksonville Beach	3%
Sanibel Island	2%
Siesta Key	2%
Boca Raton	2%
Marco Island	1%
Vero Beach	1%
Rosemary Beach	1%
St. Augustine	1%
Amelia Island	1%
Cape Canaveral	1%
WaterColor	1%
South Beach	1%

Unaided awareness: Top-of-mind for vacation destinations in Florida - South Walton responses¹

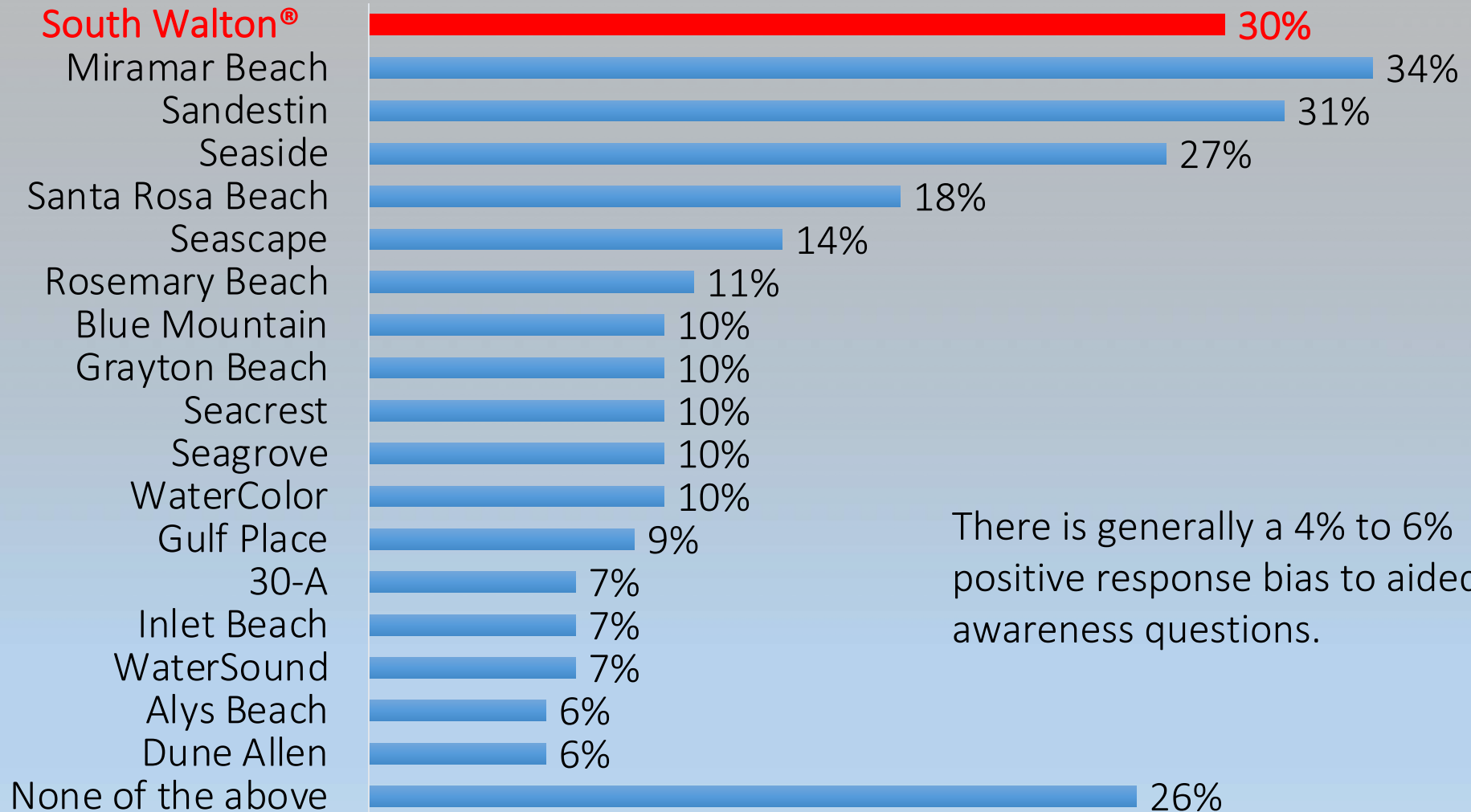
Beach destinations	%
Rosemary Beach	1.1%
WaterColor	0.9%
Seaside	0.7%
Alys Beach	0.4%
Sandestin	0.2%
30A	0.2%

Aided Awareness: 30% of Houstonians have heard of South Walton®



There is generally a 4% to 6% positive response bias to aided awareness questions.

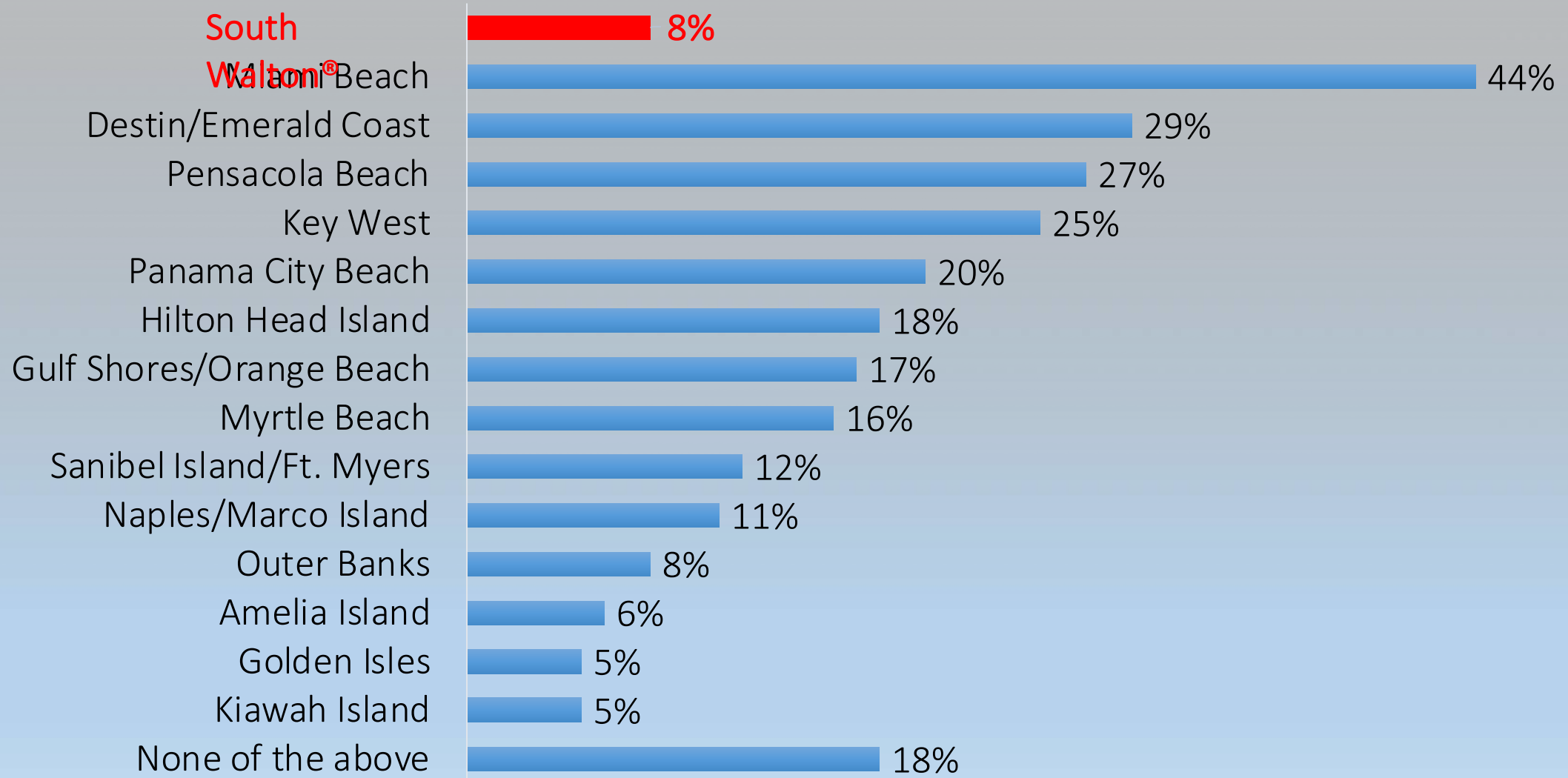
Aided Awareness: 74% have heard of SW or 1 of its beach areas¹



There is generally a 4% to 6% positive response bias to aided awareness questions.

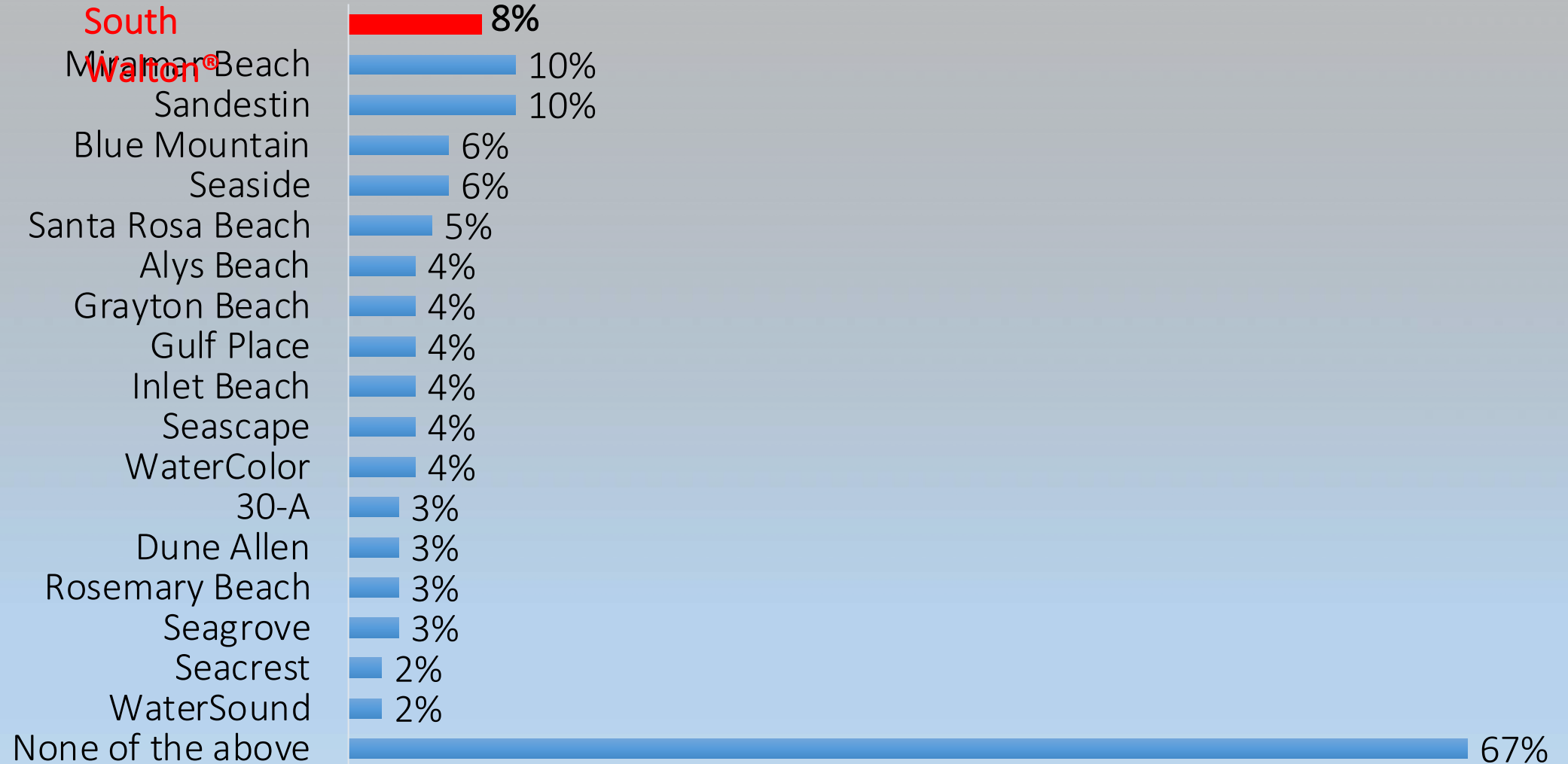
¹Multiple responses permitted

8% of Houston residents have vacationed in South Walton[®]



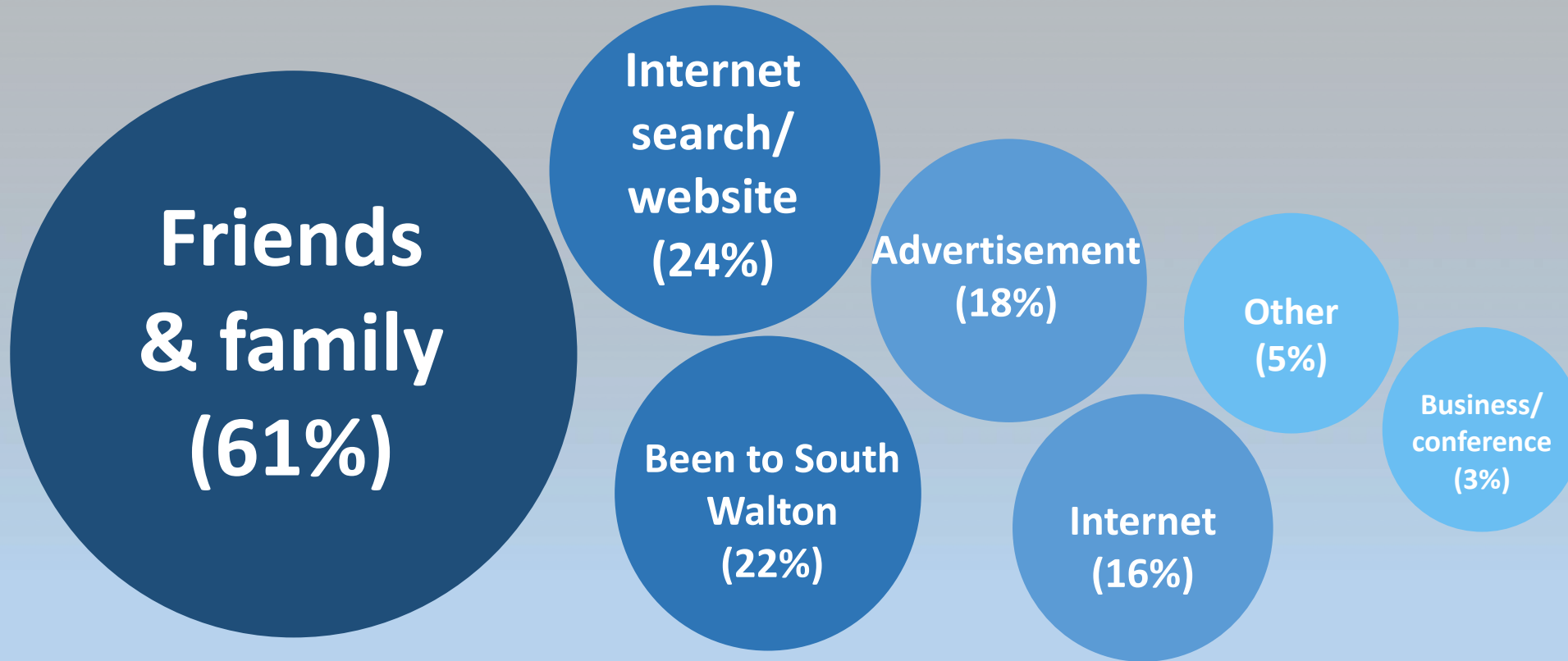
Multiple responses permitted

33% have vacationed in South Walton or 1 of its 16 beach areas¹



Sources of information about South Walton¹

30% of Houstonians are aware of SW: 61% of those became aware through family friends.

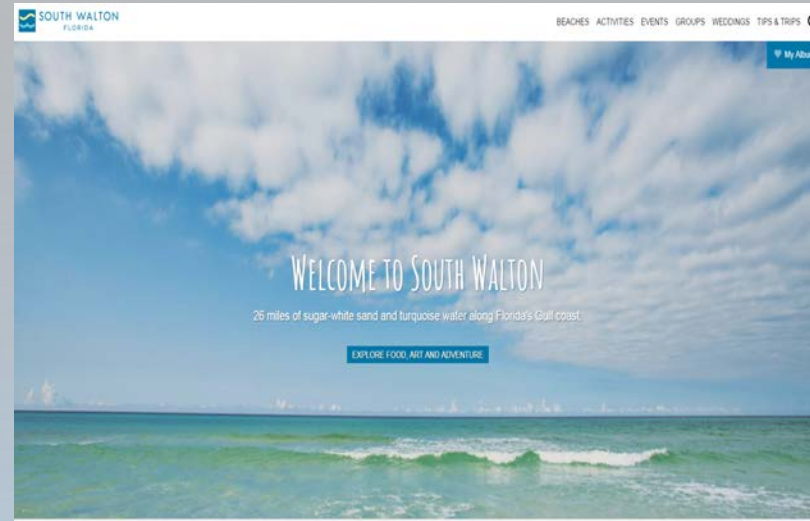
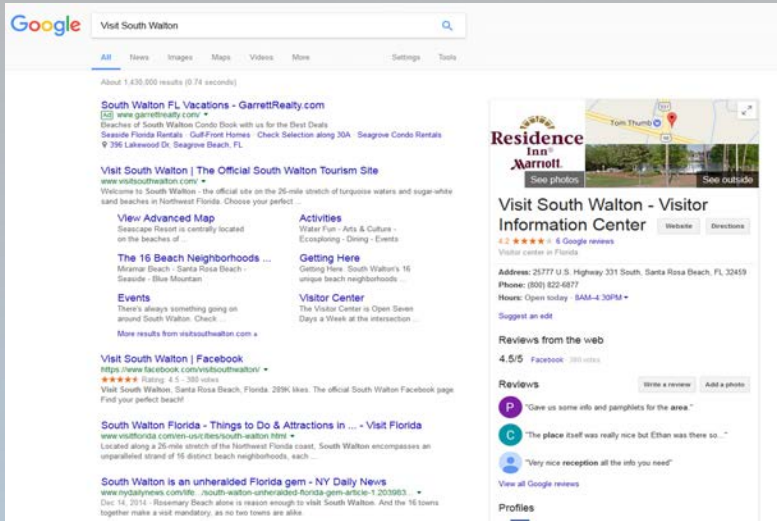


Interest in trying new beach destinations

63%

of Houston residents are highly interested in trying new beach vacation destinations¹

3 in 5 Houstonians do the following when planning a new beach vacation¹

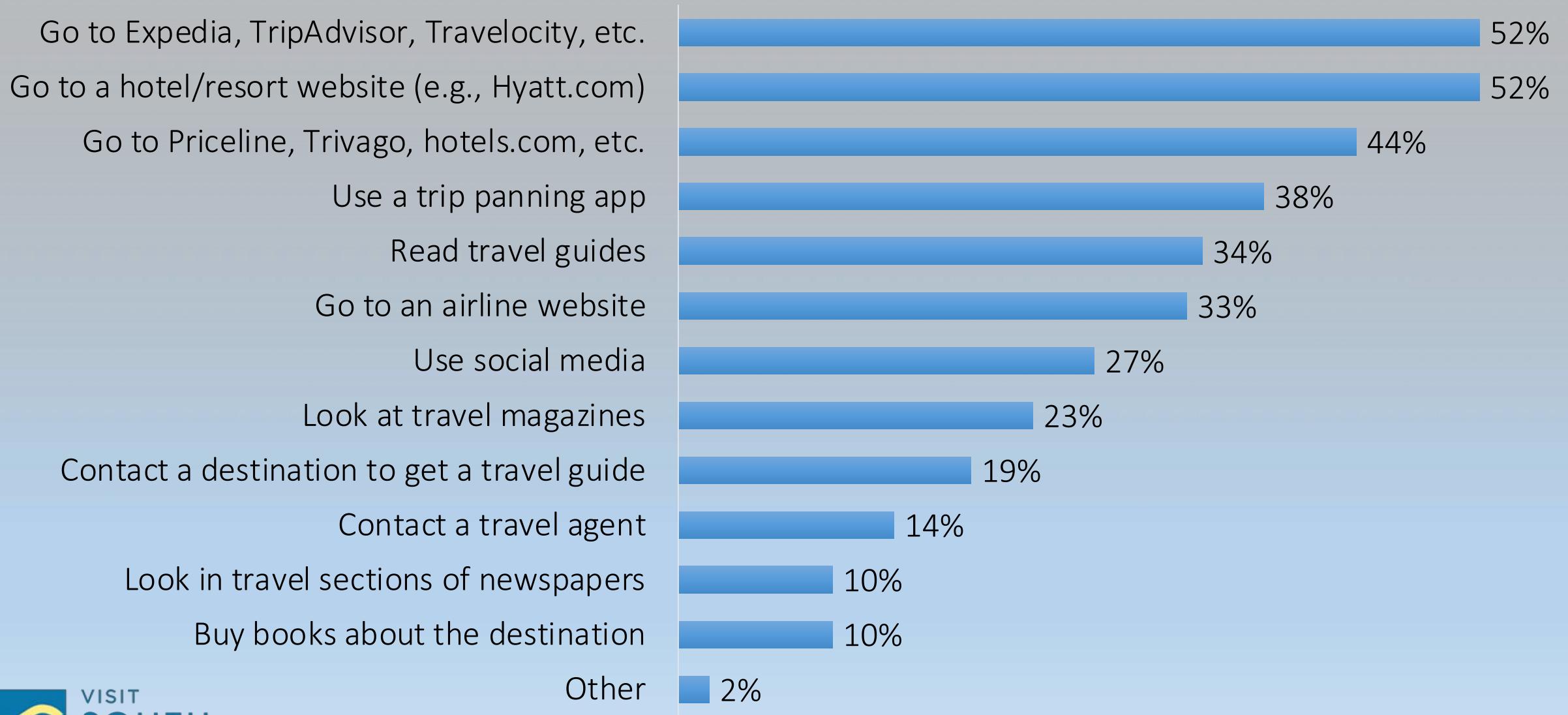


Search on
Google, Bing,
etc. (62%)

Go to the
destination
website (60%)

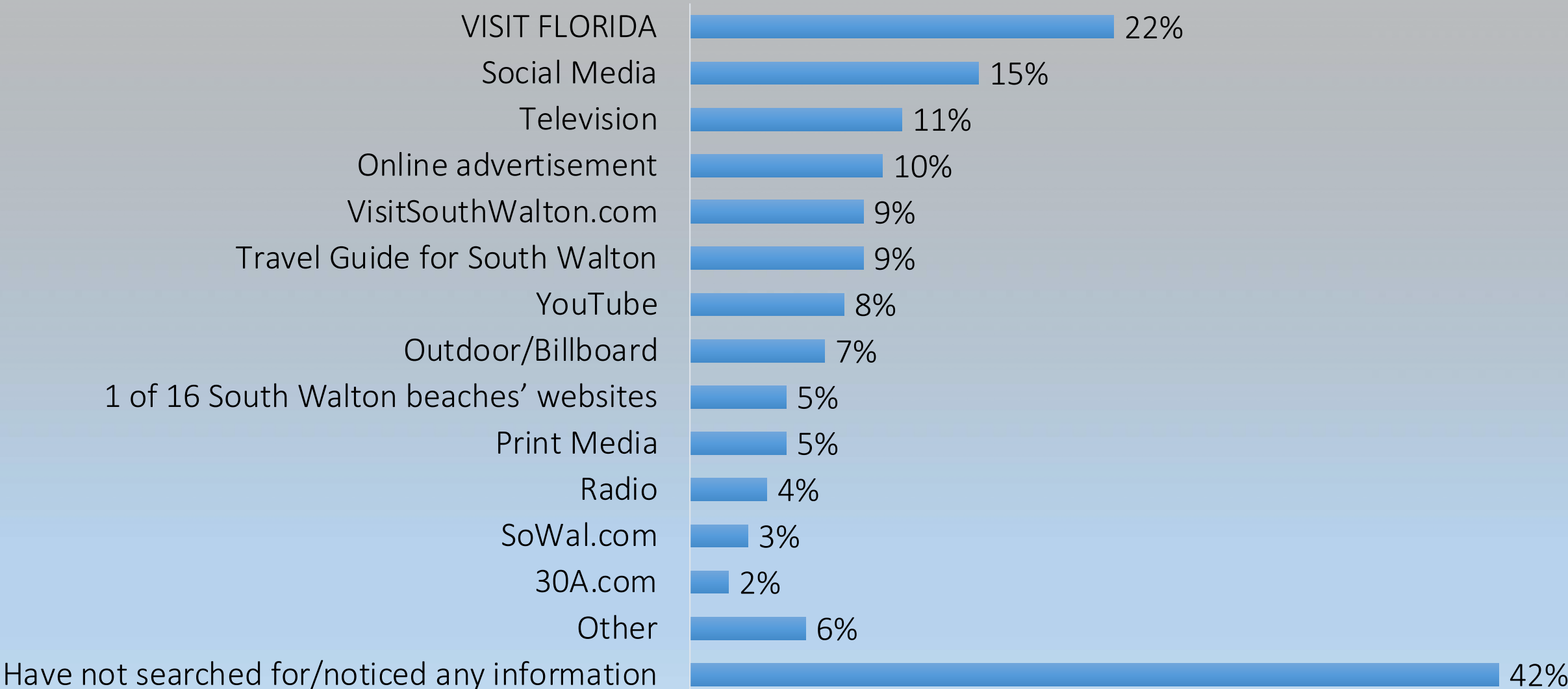
Talk to
friends &
family (57%)

Information sources when planning a new beach vacation¹



¹Multiple responses permitted

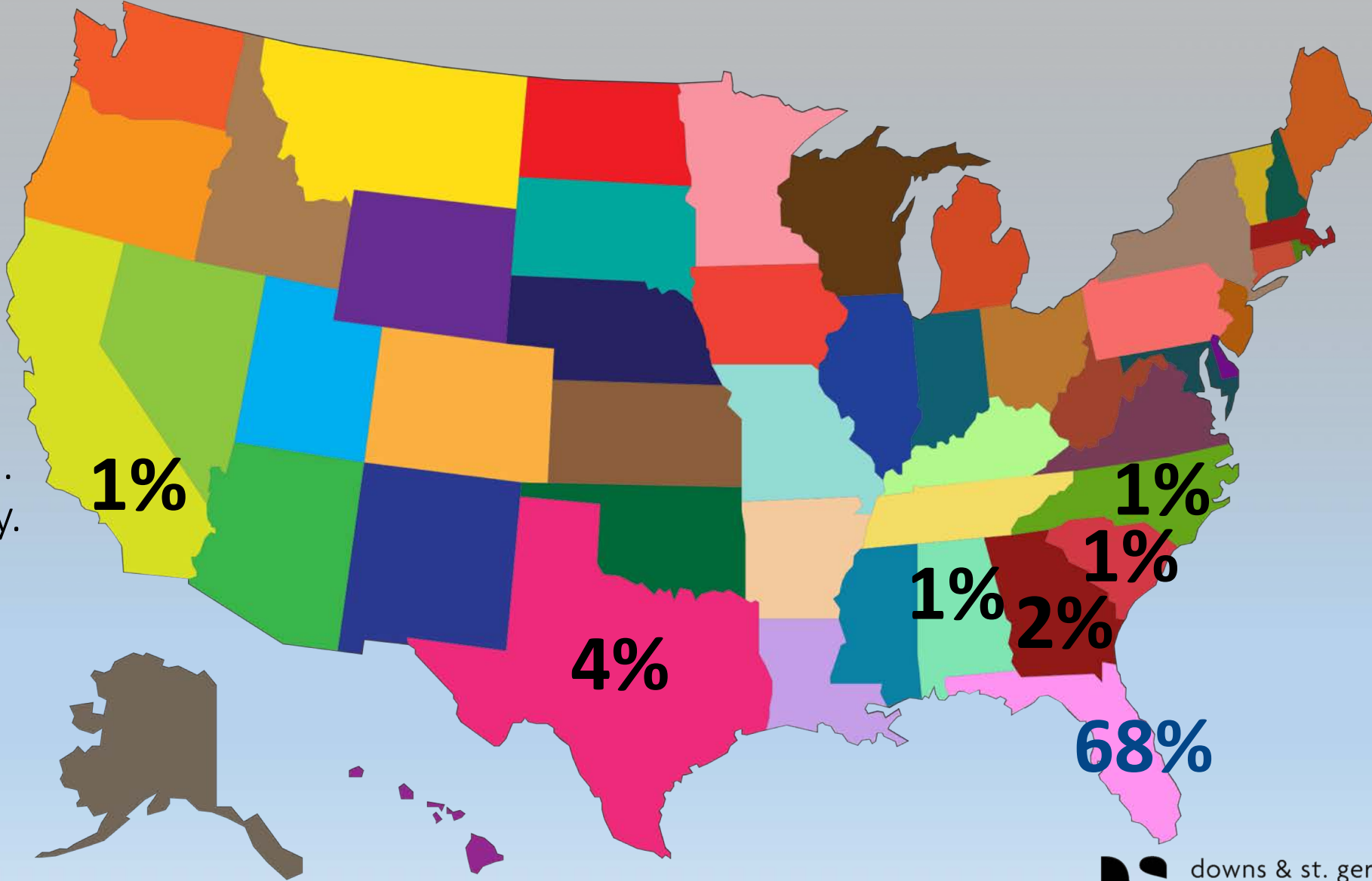
58% of Houstonians have searched for or noticed information about South Walton¹



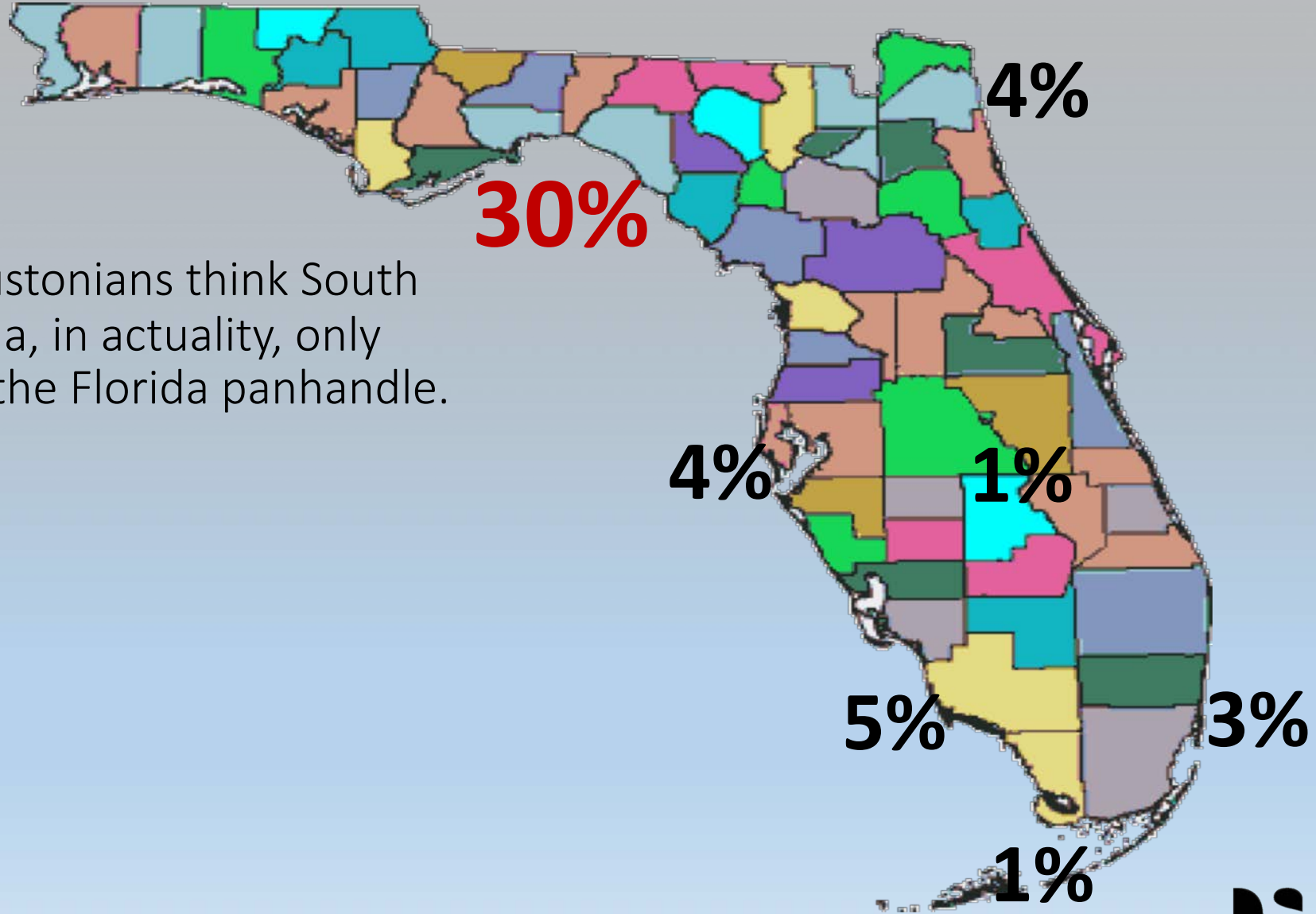
¹Multiple responses permitted

68% of Houstonians think South Walton is located in Florida

22% of Houston residents say they have no idea in which state South Walton is located. 10% guessed incorrectly.



30% of Houstonians know South Walton is located in the panhandle near Panama City:



While 68% of Houstonians think South Walton is in Florida, in actuality, only 30% know it is in the Florida panhandle.

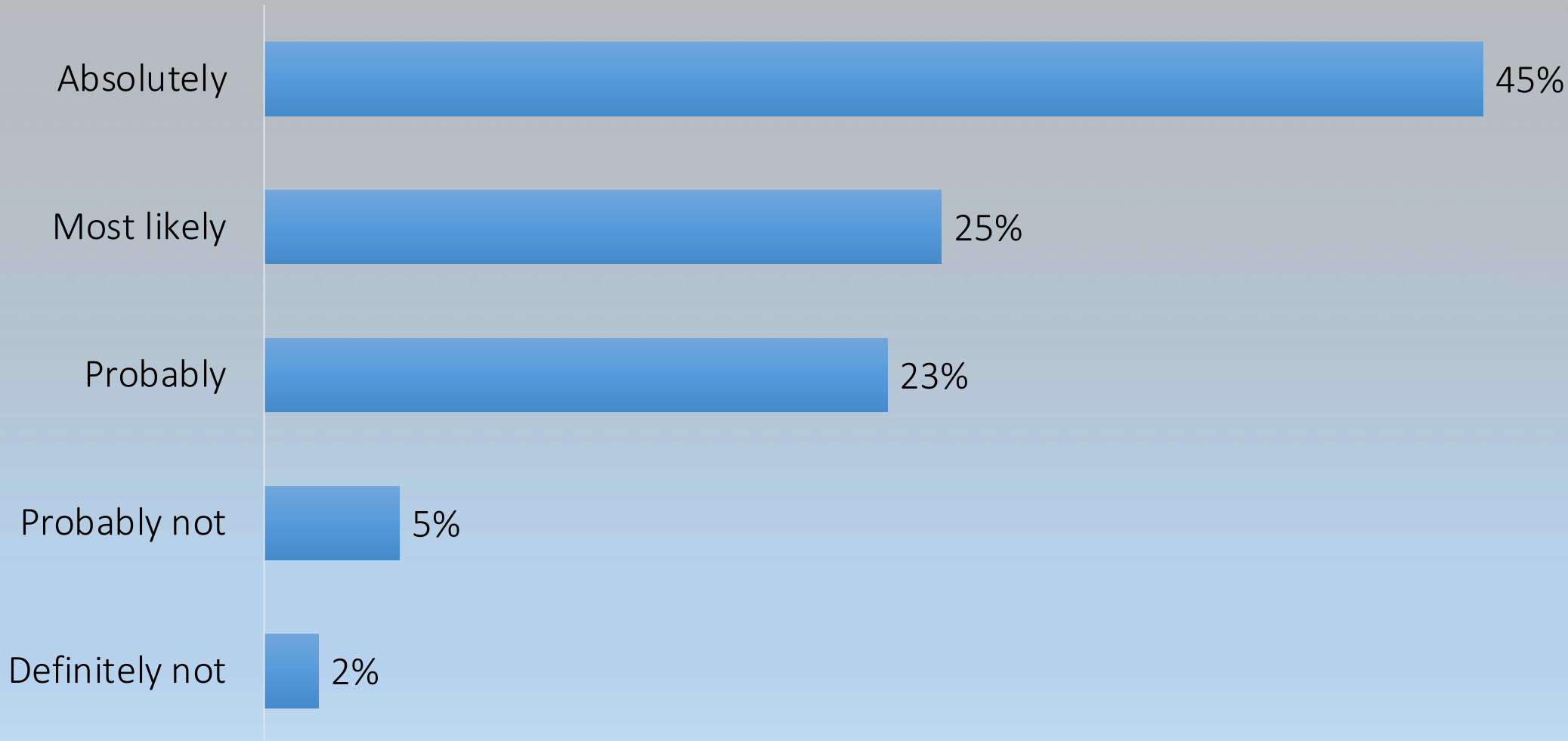
Houston residents were given the following description of South Walton:

South Walton is a beach destination between Destin and Panama City Beach, in the panhandle of Florida.

It includes 16 unique beach communities (Alys Beach, Blue Mountain, Dune Allen, Grayton Beach, Gulf Place, Inlet Beach, Miramar Beach, Rosemary Beach, Sandestin, Santa Rosa Beach, Seacrest, Seagrove, Seascape, Seaside, WaterColor, and WaterSound).

It has sugary white sandy beaches and turquoise blue water, as well as dune lakes for paddle boarding.

45% of Houston residents say South Walton sounds like a destination they would absolutely enjoy



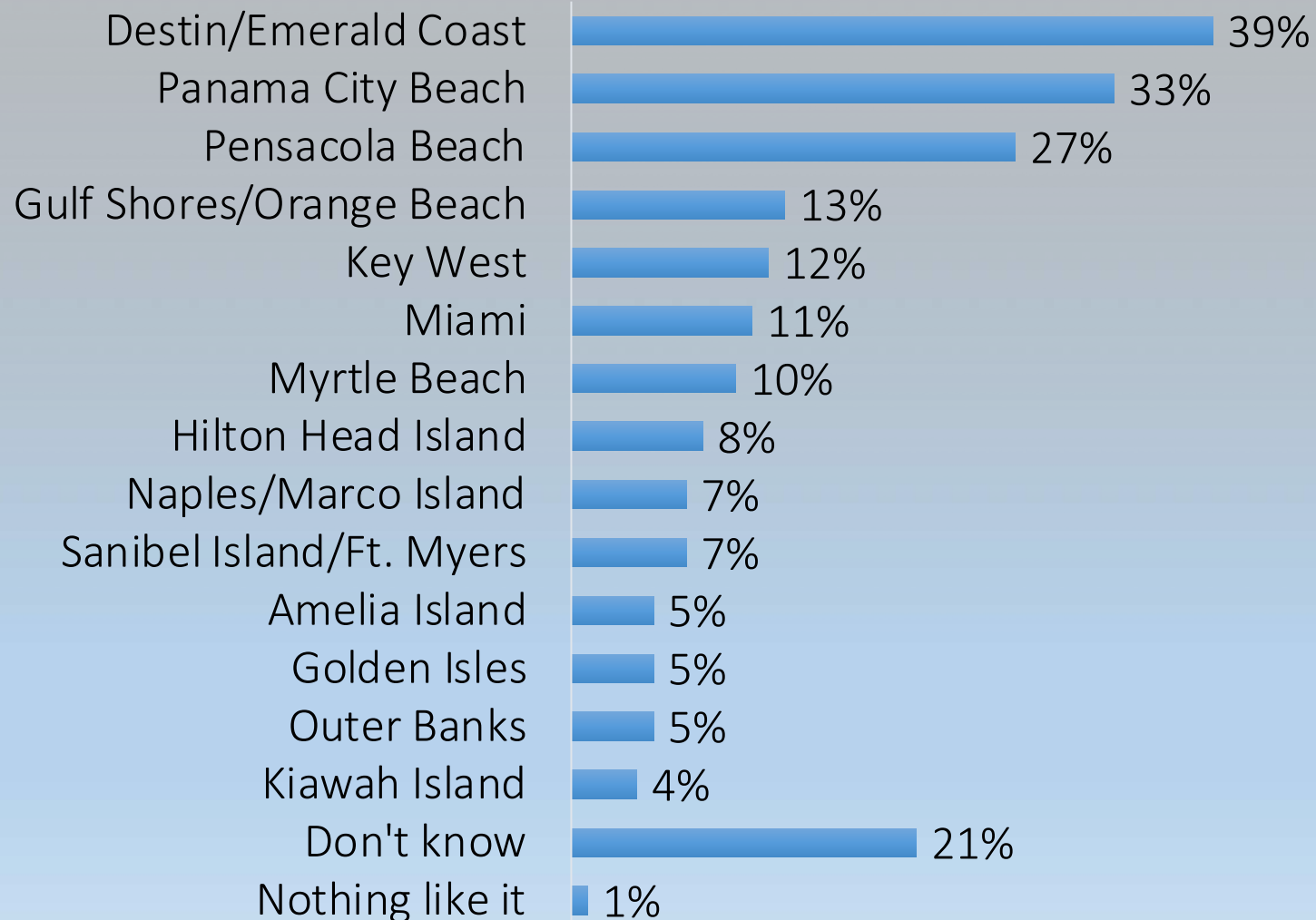
62%

of Houston residents give South Walton a high rating as a vacation destination¹



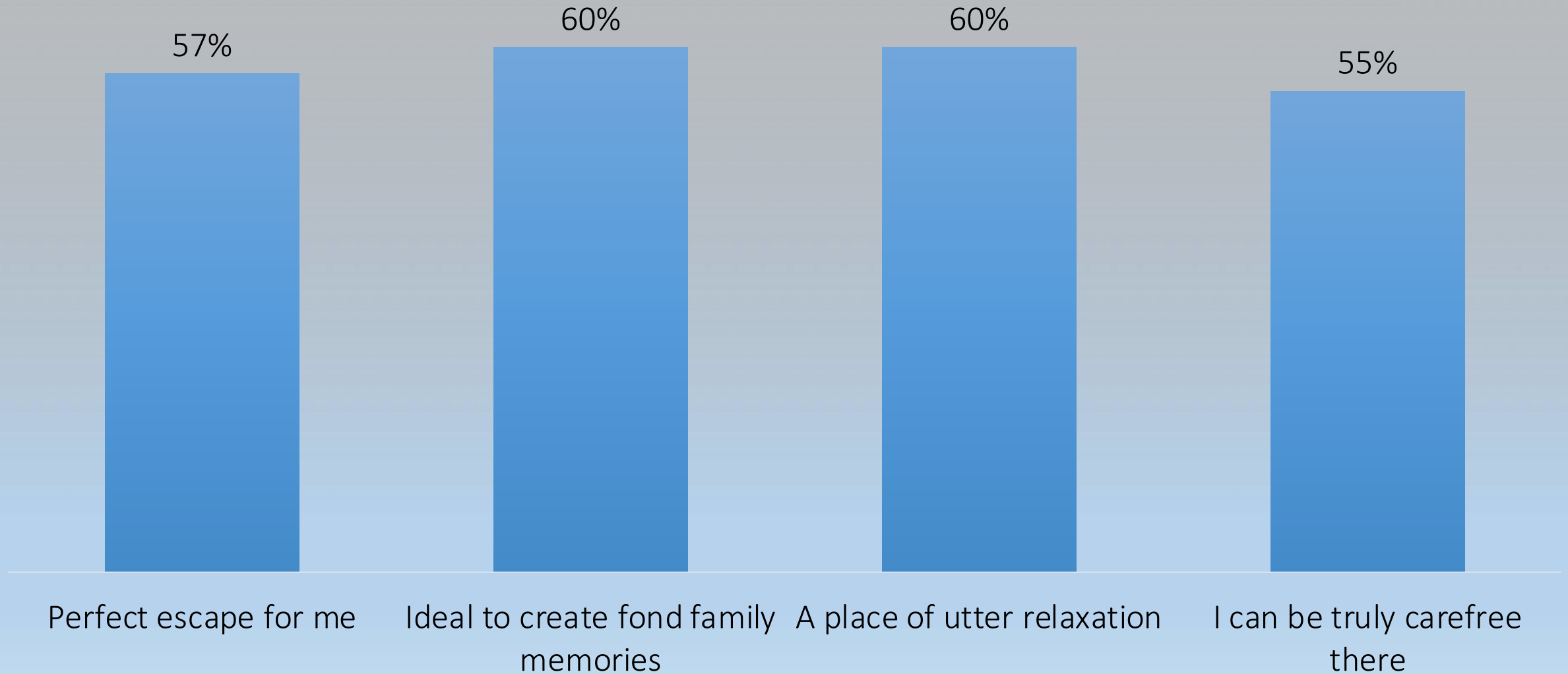
Beaches comparable to South Walton¹

Houston residents think South Walton is most similar to Destin/Emerald Coast, Panama City Beach and Pensacola Beach



¹Multiple responses permitted

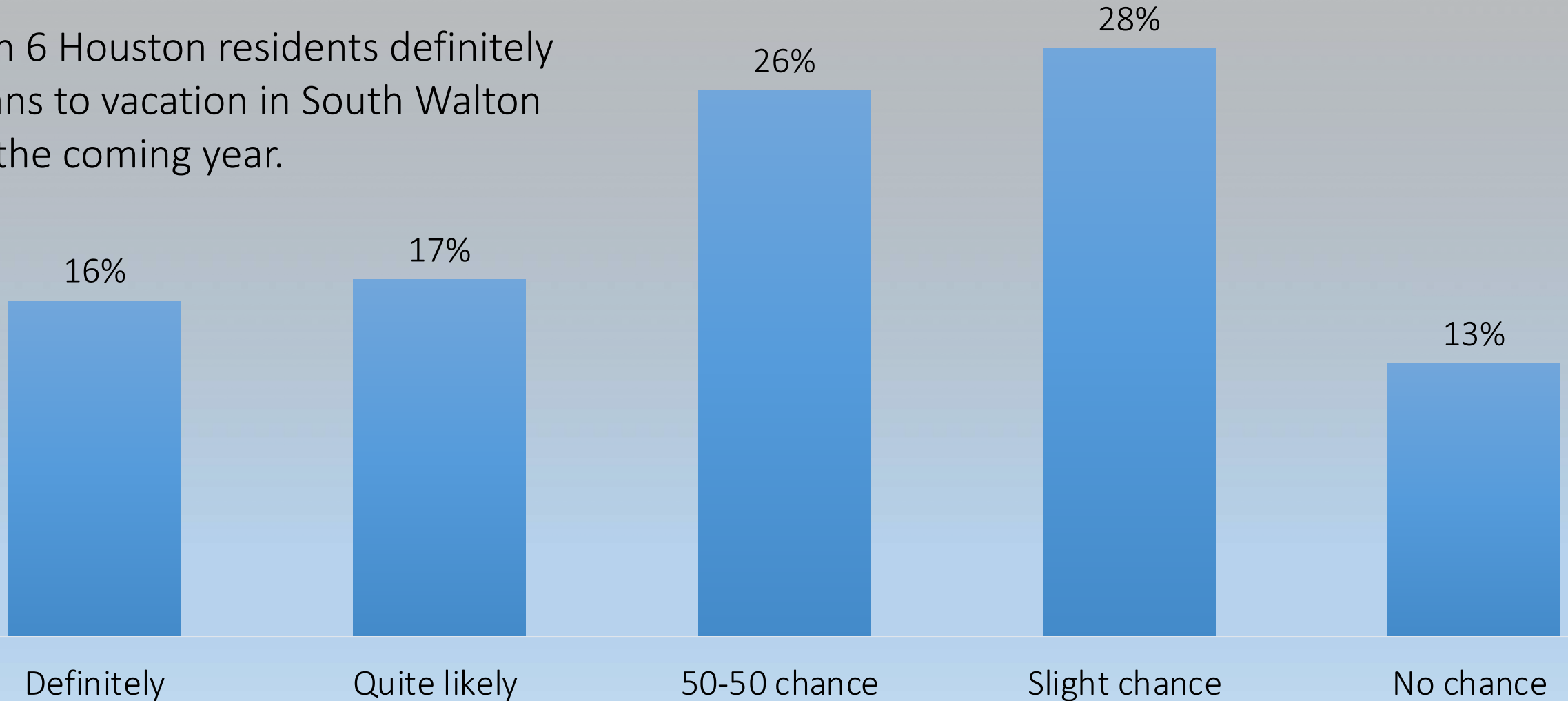
Perceptions of South Walton¹



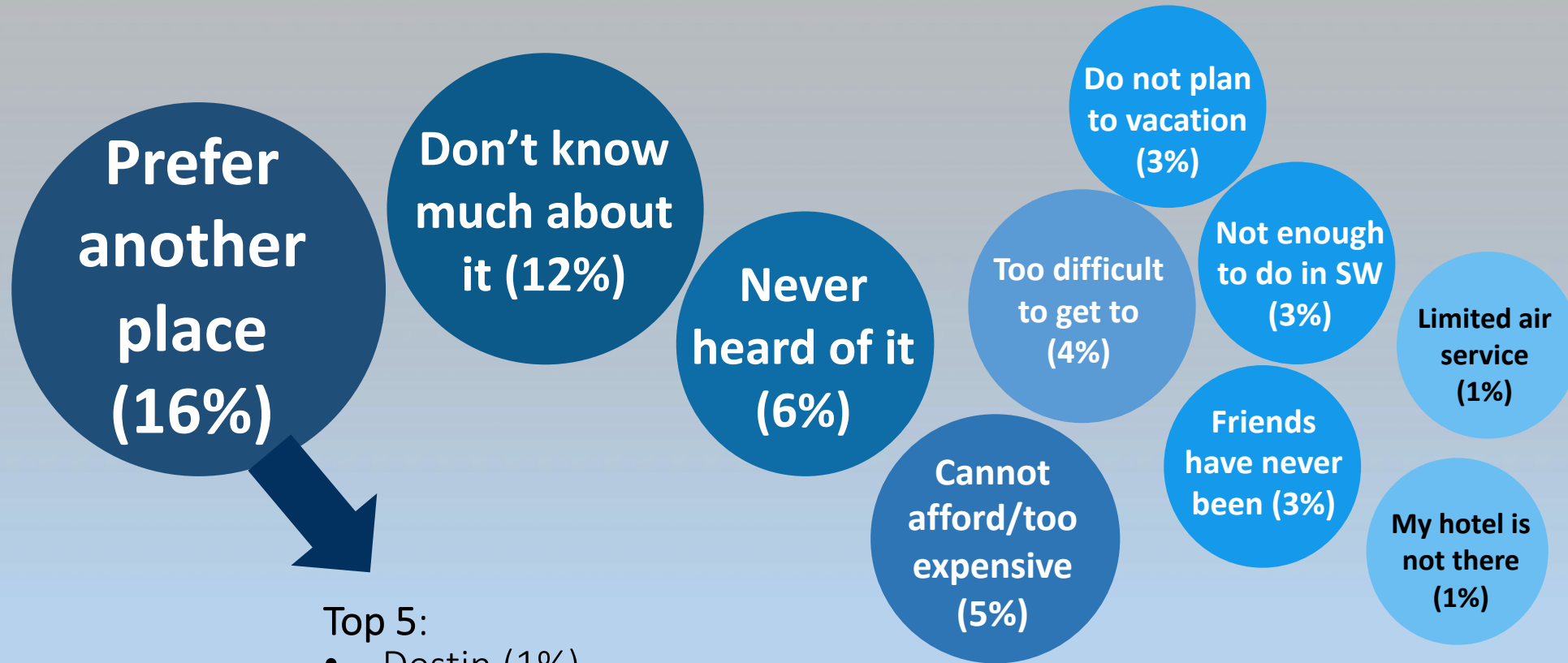
¹Strongly agree + agree

Likelihood of vacationing in South Walton in the next year

1 in 6 Houston residents definitely plans to vacation in South Walton in the coming year.



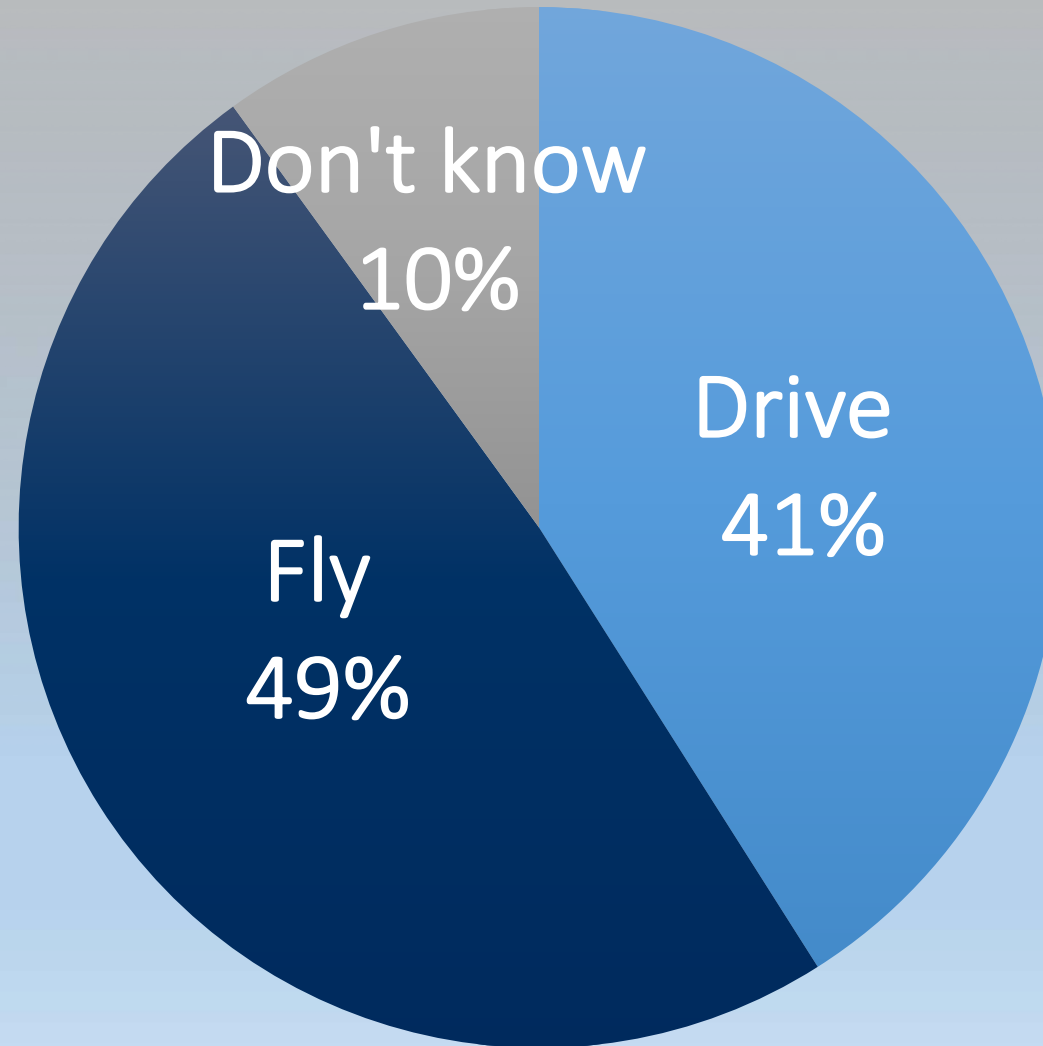
Reasons for not coming to South Walton



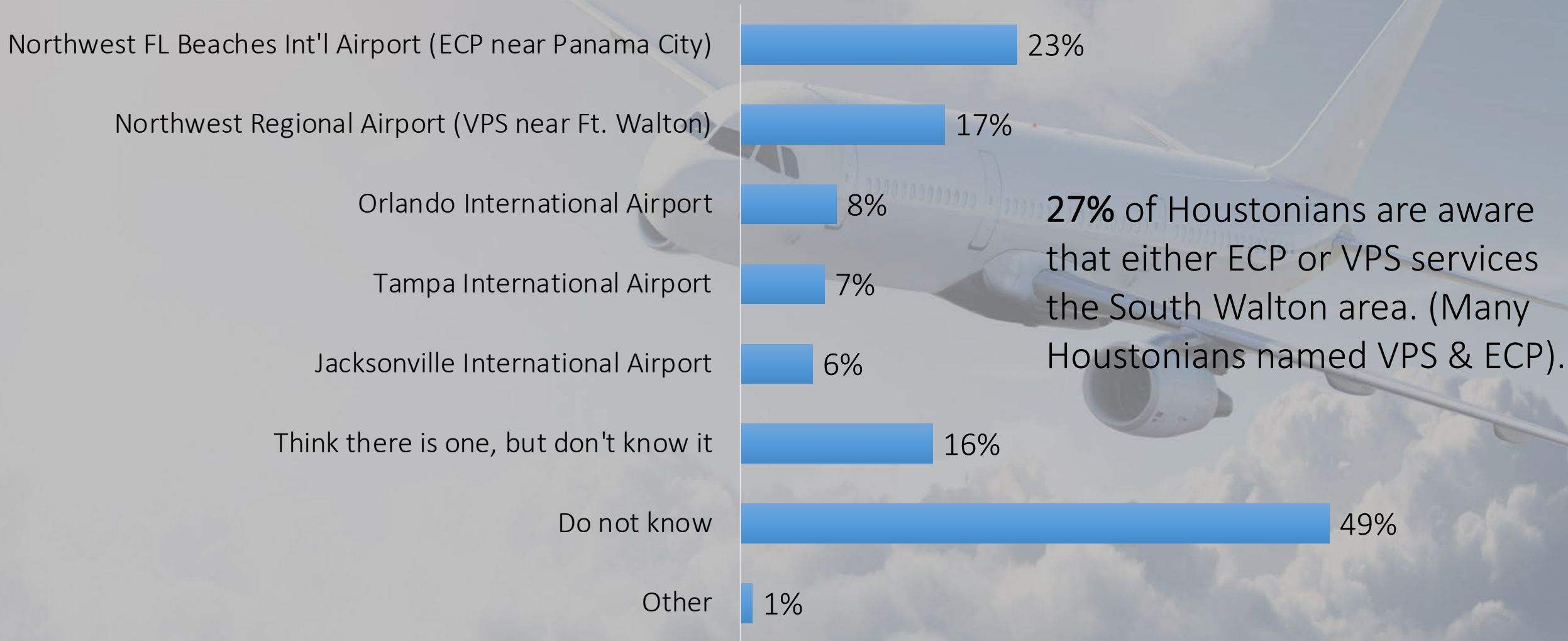
Top 5:

- Destin (1%)
- Key West (1%)
- Mexico (1%)
- Cruise (1%)
- National Parks (1%)

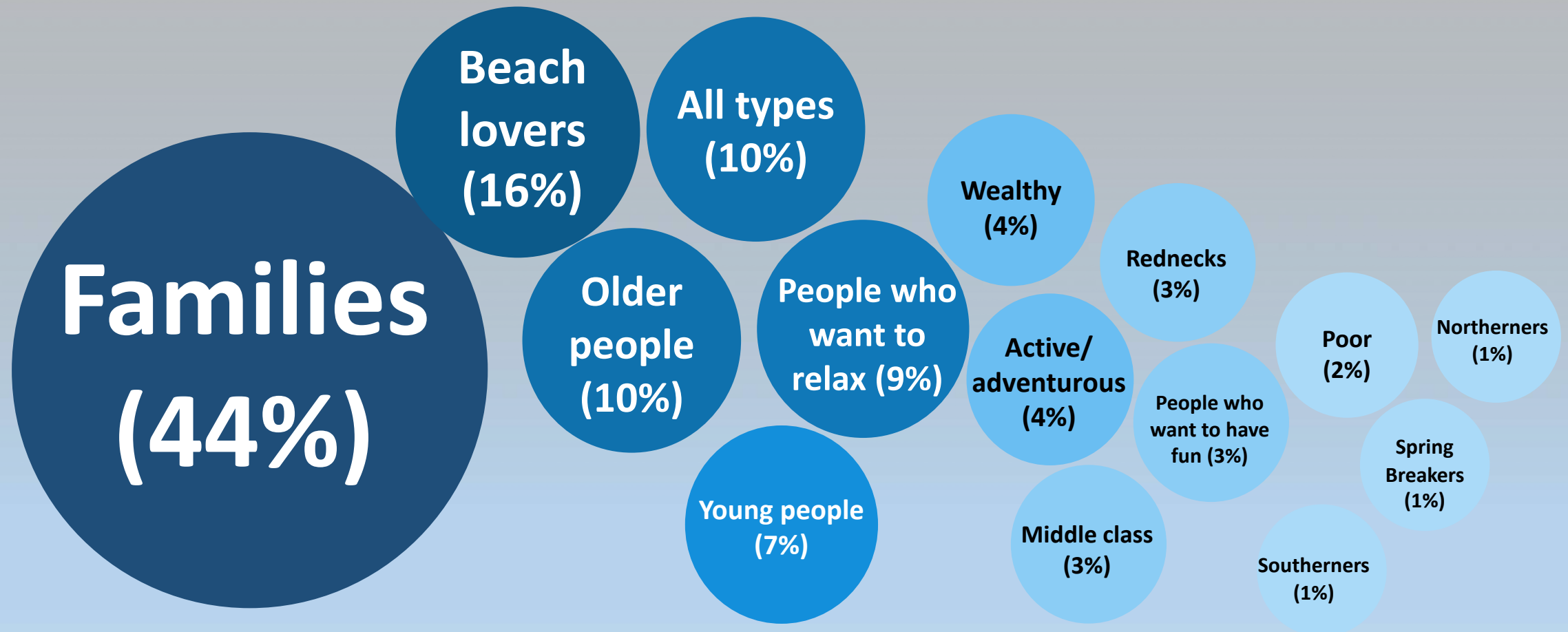
Half of Houstonians will fly if they vacation in Florida



Awareness of airports servicing South Walton¹



Perceptions of people who vacation in South Walton



Houstonians' annual vacation frequency

2.5

spring and summer vacations

&

2.0

fall and winter vacations

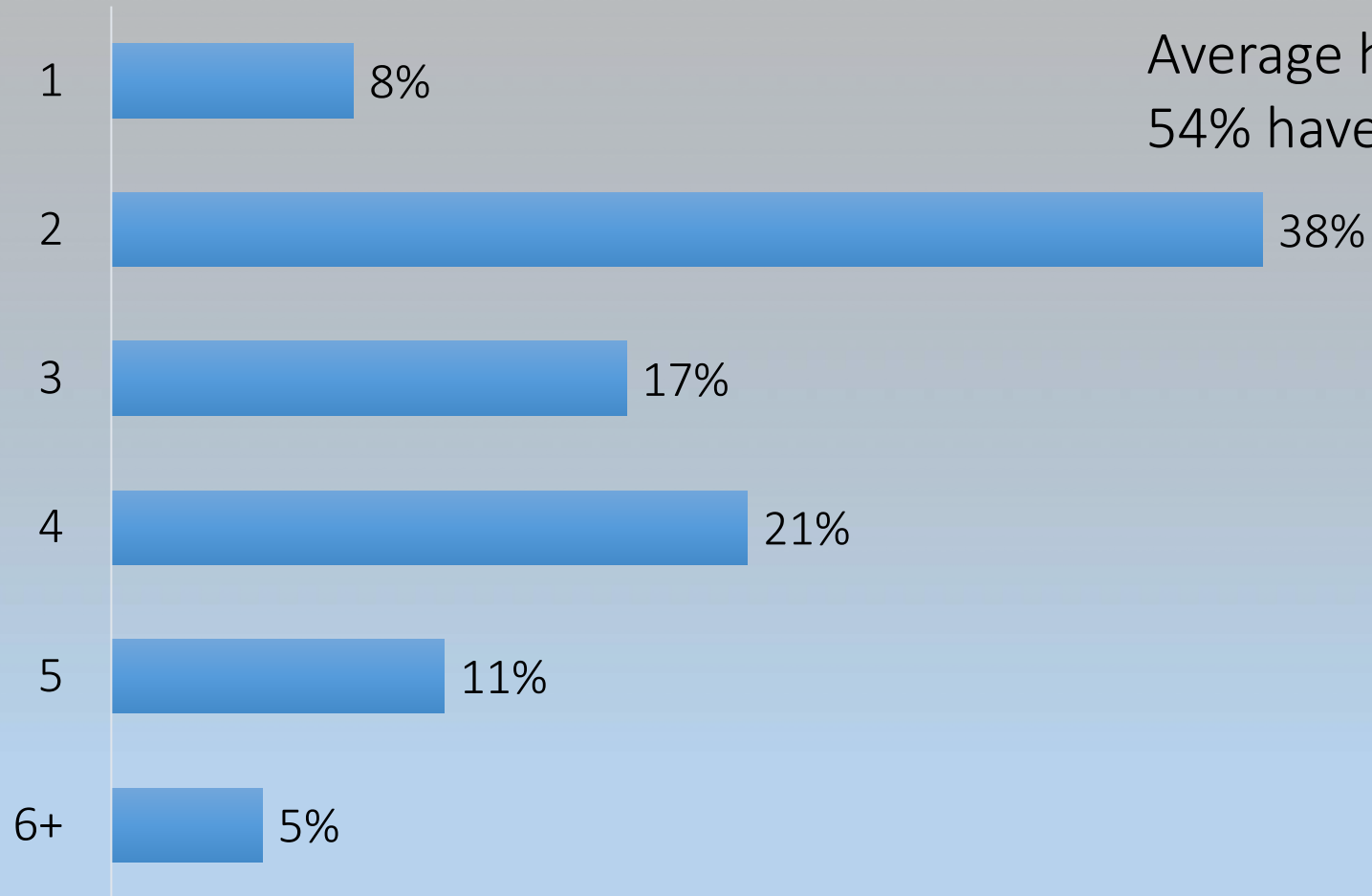
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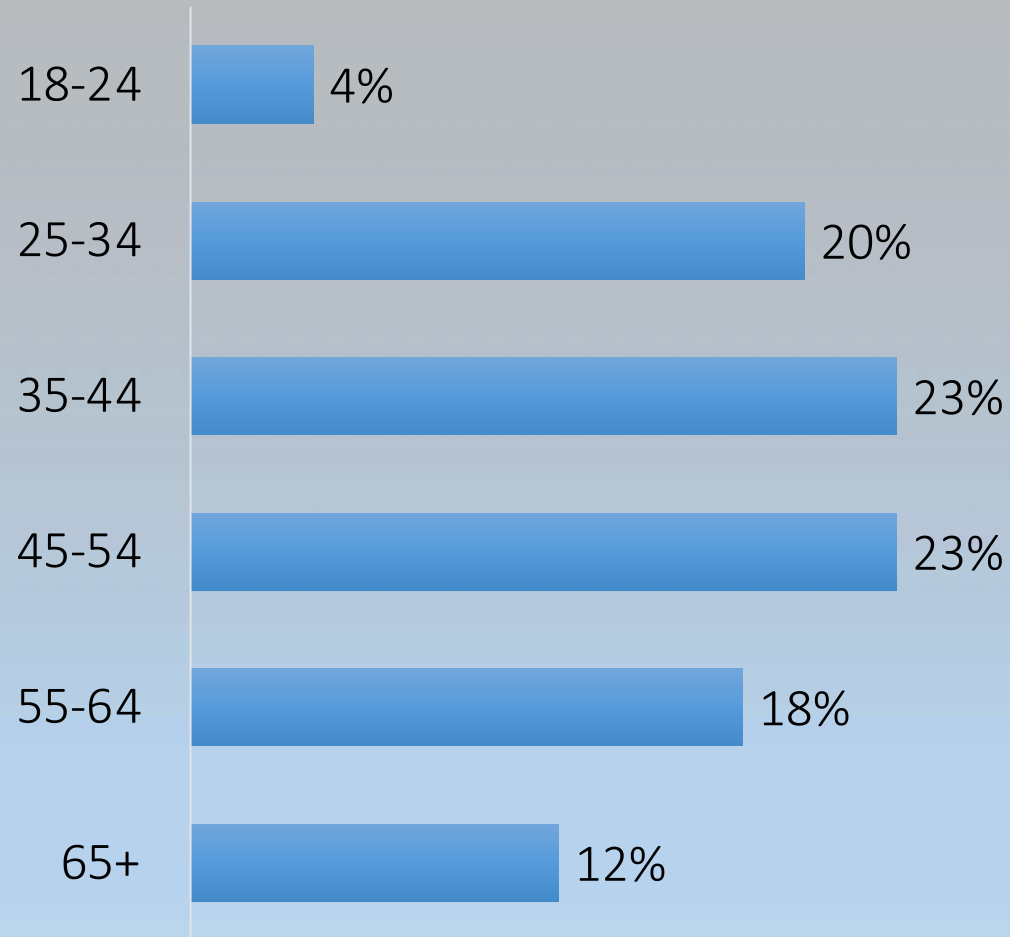
Profile of Houston Participants

Household size



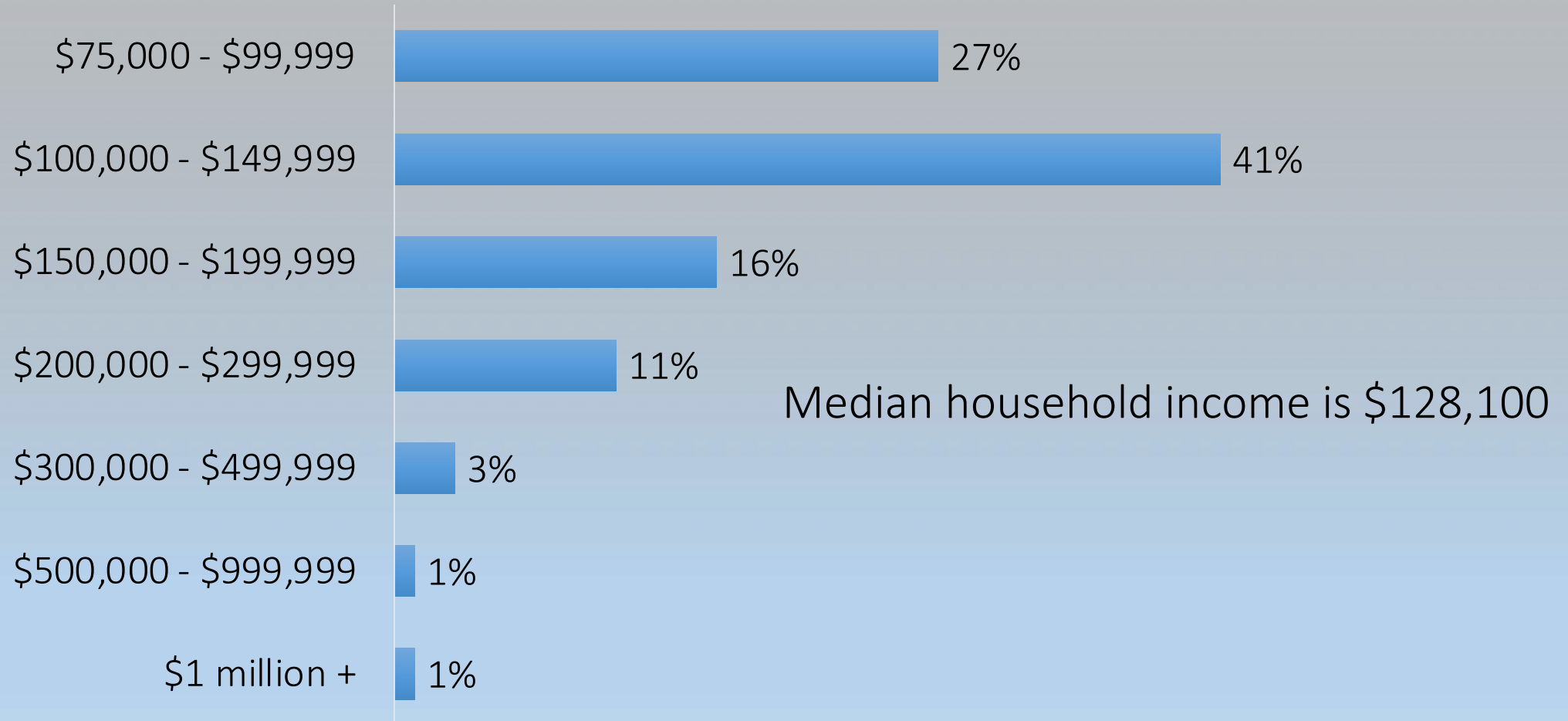
Average household size is 3.2 people;
54% have children (21 or younger)

Age

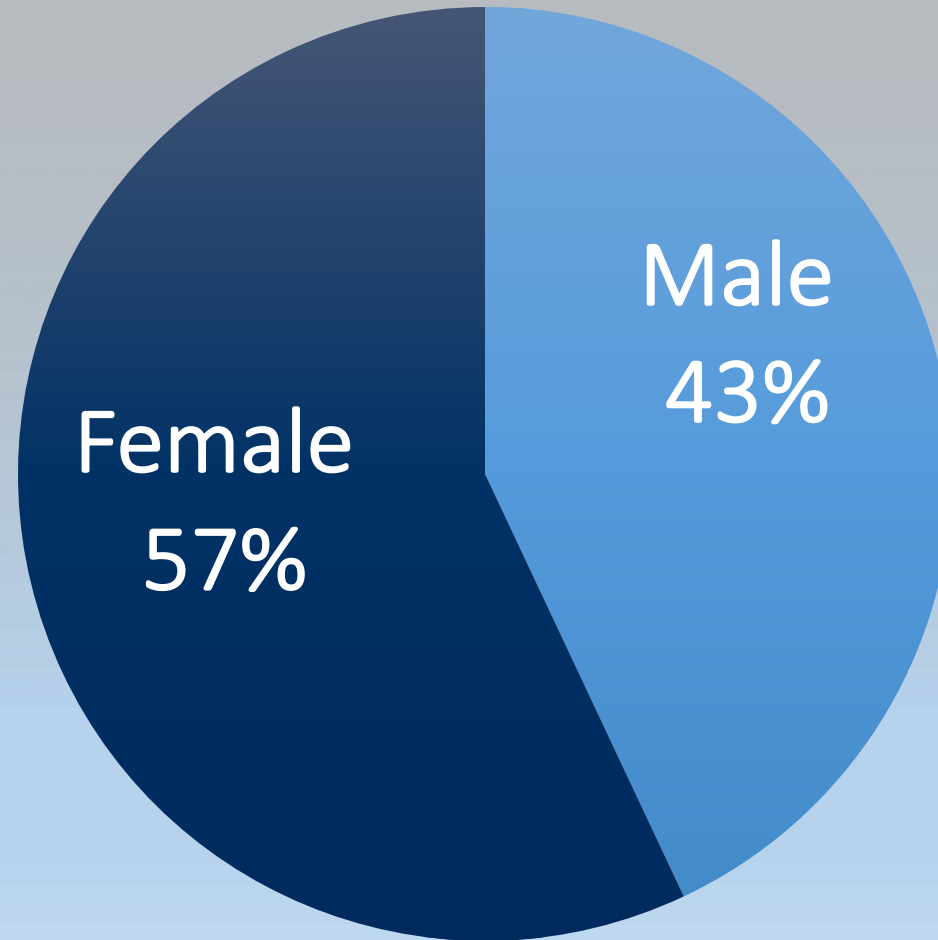


Median age is 46 years old

Household Income



Gender



Methodology

- 446 surveys were completed by residents of Houston who met the following profile:
 - \$75,000+ household income
 - Vacation decision maker
 - Taken a 5+ night vacation in the past year and stayed in paid accommodations