

Game On: What Pickleball Brings to The Table

At Renard International, we pride ourselves on staying ahead of global trends that shape the future of hospitality. As the industry evolves, so do the interests and expectations of modern travellers.



One such trend making waves across resorts, cruises, and destination experiences is the rise of pickleball tourism. In collaboration with hospitality expert and thoughtful leader Daniel Beeman, we explore how this fast-growing sport is creating exciting opportunities for hotels, resorts, and travel companies worldwide.

Renowned for his leadership in hospitality, tourism, and event management, Daniel Beeman brings over two decades of experience in enhancing guest satisfaction and generating revenue across global markets. A key voice in the emerging field of pickleball tourism, Beeman is the author of influential studies such as “The Implications of Pickleball for Resorts and the Rise of Pickleball Tourism.” His work has not only advanced industry knowledge but has also shaped the very infrastructure of pickleball-focused travel.

Beeman’s contributions include founding a premier company specialising in pickleball-related travel services, from organised group trips and travel clubs to comprehensive resort experiences. Backed by a

strong background in executive leadership—having held top roles at organisations like Caruso Affiliated, The Mill(s) Corporation, and Club Med—Beeman continues to champion the integration of sport and leisure in tourism.

But what is pickleball, anyways? And why does it matter for tourism?

Pickleball is a paddle sport that combines elements of tennis, badminton, and ping-pong. Played on a court that is half the size of a tennis court, it's possible to set up at least two pickleball courts in the space of one tennis court. With its simple rules, pickleball is highly accessible to players of all ages and skill levels.

Official pickleball courts measure 20 x 44 feet and include specific zones such as a 7-foot-non-volley area (the “kitchen”) and lowered net heights, making the game fast-paced and dynamic while remaining low-impact—ideal for both seasoned and casual players. Its simplicity and social nature have fuelled a massive surge in popularity. In the U.S. alone, participation grew by over 200% in just three years, reaching 13 million players by 2023. Canada and Australia have also seen exponential growth, with interest more than doubling in the past year.

In Beeman’s articles, pickleball tourism refers to travel experiences that revolve around playing or learning the sport. This includes:

- Resorts offering dedicated pickleball courts and programs,
- Cruises equipped with pickleball activities and tournaments,
- Travel companies designing custom pickleball-centric itineraries.

What differentiates this trend from traditional tourism is that the main purpose of the trip is participation in the sport. Beeman was quick to recognise the potential of this movement, leading to the creation of Superlative Pickleball Travel and Resort Services, which caters to this emerging market by combining sport with premium travel experiences.

From budget-friendly accommodations to high-end luxury resorts, properties around the world are incorporating pickleball facilities to appeal to this growing audience. Some go further, offering certified coaches, tournaments and personalised services to enhance the guest experience.

Cruise lines are also getting on board, retrofitting their ships to include courts—demonstrating the broad appeal of the sport to travellers of varying age groups and travel preferences, including Gen Z, Millennials, and international tourists.

Although this sport was originally associated with older demographics, pickleball is rapidly gaining traction among younger generations. Today, the average player is around 35 years old, and the sport’s largest demographic is ages 25-34. Participation is also rising among those under 24, with a notable increase in families and younger couples travelling for the sport.

This shift signals a diversification of the pickleball tourism market. Resorts are responding by curating experiences that blend active leisure with culture, wellness, and local exploration.

Importantly, pickleball welcomes players of all skill levels. Whether you're a beginner, casual player, or seasoned athlete, the combination of physical activity, relaxation, and community makes pickleball tourism a compelling offering.

For hotels, resorts, cruise lines, and destination planners, the rise of pickleball tourism presents a strategic opportunity to expand services and attract a loyal, growing demographic. Offering high-quality pickleball facilities and experiences can set a property apart in a competitive market.

Incorporating pickleball into travel offerings allows for:

- Diversification of recreational programs,
- Increased bookings from solo travellers, families, and sport groups,
- Enhanced guest engagement through social, skill-based activities.

Pickleball tourism is not limited to North America. The Caribbean and Mexico have become key destinations—blending tropical leisure with well-equipped resorts. It is also preached that Europe is embracing the trend, with guided pickleball tours in countries like Spain, Portugal, Italy, Croatia, and Greece—often incorporating cultural and culinary experiences.

Asia, including countries such as Japan and Thailand, is beginning to enter the market as well.

Looking ahead, sustainability and technology are expected to play larger roles. Eco-conscious pickleball courts and sustainable accommodations will likely appeal to the environmentally aware traveller. Meanwhile, digital platforms may allow players to book pickleball travel experiences, find local matches, and participate in international tournaments with ease.

While some speculate that pickleball could be a passing trend like past fitness crazes, current data and industry investments suggest otherwise. The infrastructure is expanding, and participation continues to grow across demographics and regions.

For stakeholders in the hospitality and travel sectors, now is the time to invest in this evolving niche. Pickleball tourism offers a unique opportunity to blend sport, culture, community, and wellness into memorable guest experiences.

At Renard International, we encourage you to explore Daniel Beeman's in-depth research for valuable insights into how pickleball is reshaping travel trends and redefining guest expectations. You can reach him at dan@superlativepickleball.net.

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