

and all of the supporting facilities needed to draw and host visitors. It provides a convenient approach to classifying these destinations based on seasonality and level of commercial development.

As we discussed in Chapter 9, seasonality is frequently a major concern for managers of attractions. The same is true for destinations. It is obvious that snow resorts in the Northern Hemisphere will experience the peak of their season during the winter months. To the contrary, similar resorts in South America see their greatest demand during June through September. However, seasonality is a more complex concept than simple weather conditions at destinations. Seasonality is also a factor, because of the weather conditions and life patterns of people's hometowns. If you live in the northern part of the Northern Hemisphere, such as Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, during the winter, you may dream of a vacation to Florida, the south of Spain, or the Caribbean to escape the cold. A resident of Phoenix, Arizona, or Houston, Texas, may save up vacation time to travel to the Rocky Mountains during August, fleeing the sweltering heat or humidity of the dog days of summer. So, in addition to the direct effect of weather on a destination, weather has an impact on a destination because of its effect, especially if it is predictable, on the travel desires of potential customers in important geographic market areas. Hawaii has beautiful weather all year long, but its primary season is winter because that is when potential visitors are most likely to want to travel to Hawaii to escape the cold.

Interestingly, sometimes neither the weather at the destination nor in primary geographic market areas explains the ebb and flow of demand to the destination. Sometimes it is simply that one season is traditional for travel to that destination. Look back at Figure 9.2. Note the peak periods for White House Visitations. What is the single unifying reason for the ups and downs of visits? School and work vacation periods. Although the weather in Washington, D.C. is less than ideal during the summer, The White House experiences its longest sustained peak season during the summer months, because families can travel then.

Using a concept called **strategic grouping**, we can categorize these destinations into groups that share similar characteristics. Although all destinations will not easily fit into a grouping, these groupings provide a useful framework for understanding the similarities and differences among types of destinations.



The soothing waters of spas served as destinations during the Roman Empire and continue to attract visitors in the 21st century. Photo by Thomas Sun