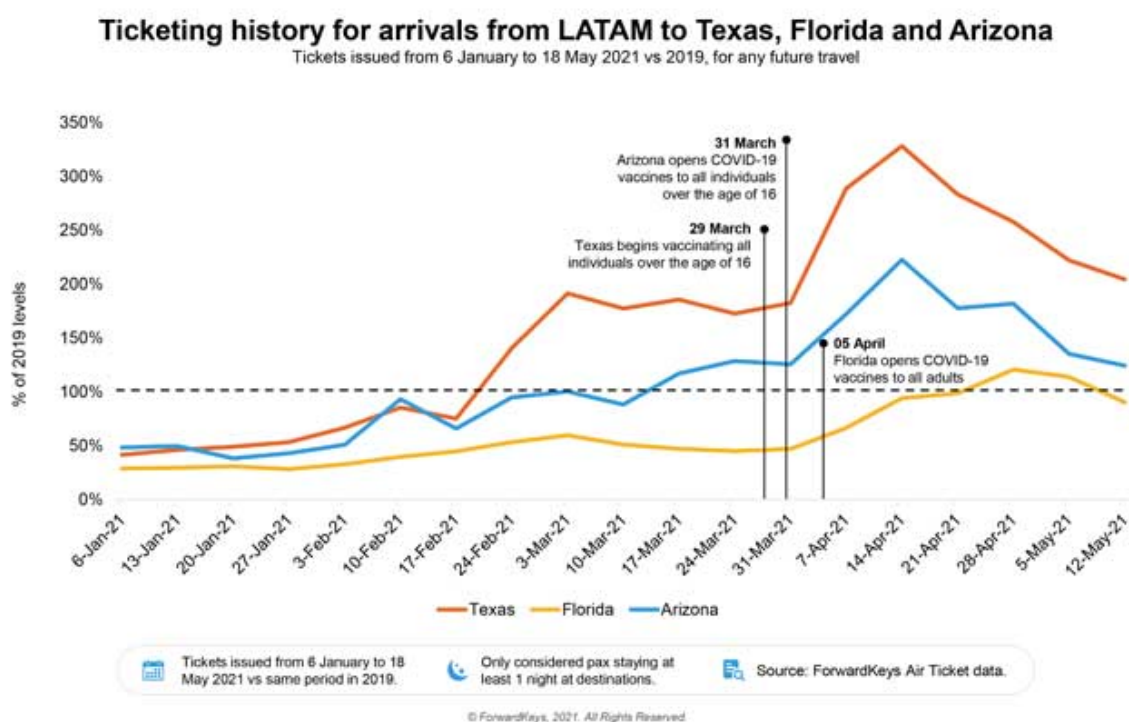


ForwardKeys reveals emergence of vaccine tourism



The latest research from ForwardKeys, which has the most up-to-date and comprehensive flight booking data available, suggests that people are traveling to the USA to receive a COVID-19 vaccination. This trend is most pronounced in travel from Peru, and other parts of Latin America, especially to Arizona, Florida and Texas.

ForwardKeys’ analysis of flight tickets issued up to May 18 reveals a substantial uplift in international bookings to Texas and Florida, during the fortnight after those destinations opened up vaccinations to all adults – including visitors.

Bookings from all origin markets to Florida increased from 44% of 2019 levels to 67% and bookings from all origin markets to Texas increased from 58% to 91% of 2019 levels.

Bookings from Latin America to Arizona soared from 126% of 2019 levels to more than 220% and bookings to Texas rocketed from 180% to 330%.

The most eye-opening increases in flight bookings have been to Texas – from Peru, 684% ahead of 2019 levels, followed by Costa Rica, 338% ahead, and from Mexico, 317% ahead.

The leading “post-vaccination” Latin American origin markets for Florida are Peru, 161% ahead, and Colombia and Guatemala, both 88% ahead.

Arizona has also seen similar strong increases in flight bookings – from Peru 166% ahead of 2019 levels, from Ecuador 135% ahead and from Mexico 129% ahead.

Analysis of “post-vaccination” travel reveals that there has been an increase in bookings for short

stays (1-3 nights), particularly for Texas, and an even greater increase in long stays (≥ 22 nights), particularly for Florida and Arizona, where the proportion of visits exceeding three weeks has more than doubled. This would be consistent with people flying in to receive a vaccination and combining the jab with an extended vacation.

“As the pandemic progresses, we are seeing how closely linked vaccination is to tourism revival. Last month, we saw countries like Greece and Iceland, which declared themselves open to vaccinated visitors, gaining many more bookings than competitor destinations. This month, we are seeing the emergence of what could be called vaccine tourism, which is travel to a specific destination to receive a vaccination,” explains Olivier Ponti, VP of Insights, ForwardKeys.