

2021 TO BRING OUT A NEW FACET OF TRAVEL

SHAPING TRENDS THAT ARE LIKELY TO LEAD THE WAY THROUGH RECOVERY AND BEYOND



Travel has always been an integral part of our lifestyle, but the sector has been thrown into disarray this past year with travellers catching flights out of necessity rather than for leisure or business. The building blocks of the travel industry, including hospitality and aviation, have and continue to suffer huge losses and setbacks due to the spread of COVID-19. 2020 has indeed been a challenging year putting various industries in shambles but with 2021 expected to bring exciting opportunities to adapt and innovate, we can see the light at the end of the tunnel. Although many people are wondering what travel will look like in 2021, the formation of new opportunities through change is expected to bring the industry back to life. And it is, therefore,

By Gagneet Kaur & Sayanti Halder

obvious that while we are learning the limitations of human contact during travelling, evolution and transformation will become more significantly superior, eventually laying out a master blueprint on how to seize the reset moment, accordingly. The travelling experience might look and feel different once the world heads out to explore again but people can still bank on the positive impacts of travel. On that note and in search of insights about how likely the way we travel in the future will change, we gather the predictions from the tourism, aviation and hospitality gurus.

Here's what the experts have to say:



RADHA BHATIA, CHAIRPERSON, BIRD GROUP

TREND-O-SCOPE

In the times of the global lockdown, travelling has evolved to greater heights and significant dimensions. Some of the trends that are likely to become significant in the new age travelling, post lockdown, would include making travelling as contactless as possible alongside systematic testing of international travellers, which would permit lifting of borders restrictions and provide an alternative to current quarantine rules. The industry's continuing commitment to expedite globally-agreed biosafety protocols and implementation of IATA travel pass, a digital health pass that will support the safe opening of borders is the need-of-the-hour. In this way, the IATA travel pass will manage and verify the secure flow of necessary testing or vaccine information among the governments, airlines, laboratories and travellers.

SAFE TRAVELS

Contactless travel and operation will become essential norms. Sustainable or responsible travel will require great care and precautions by all stakeholders to ensure the following of laid down guidelines for travelling without risk to self and others



SANDEEP DWIVEDI, CEO, INTERGLOBE TECHNOLOGY QUOTIENT (ITQ)

TREND-O-SCOPE

This situation is going to bring us superior technologies next year to initiate and improvise tourism, such as cyber tourism and hospitality bought, sold and experienced on smart apps; wearable tech for identification; space tourism and hospitality-focused

on experience; smart apps for bookings and modifications based on live updates and notifications; social service blended with tourism; driverless AI vehicles for tourists programmed to deliver extensive information and answer questions about tourist spots, famous attractions, history and culture of the city; and cubicle dining to list a few besides the much-discussed technology upgrades such as biometric identification, robot assistants, contactless boarding, etc.

SAFE TRAVELS

I am rooting for enhanced eco-labelling, mindful consumption and allocation with more followers than rule-breakers, especially now with a growing interest in eco-friendly consumption. Alongside, sustainable developments in aviation regarding reduced carbon emissions with more advanced and ambitious emission plans are expected to emerge



GAURAV CHIRIPAL, CEO, QUADLABS

TREND-O-SCOPE

As we all are aware that travel will never be the same again. Travel and tourism industry has to go through a fundamental shift to sustain and grow from the current state. The foremost importance will be given on health checks and health e-pass which will become a mandate in the days to come. Airlines will have to monitor and maintain the customers' health and travel history. Each need to carry a health pass, which should have details of their travel history, medical history and vaccination certificates. Just like the yellow fever certificates, COVID-19 vaccination certificate will also become the mandate for travellers. Governments have to pitch in to maintain price parity and fair pricing standards.

SAFE TRAVELS

Responsible Travelling does not only limit to the individual but also every stakeholder in the customer's journey. Airlines, transportation providers and hotels have to come together and create a seamless process to maintain a hygiene level, which helps the customer to travel with trust and satisfaction. Moreover, the traveller should be responsible to maintain social distancing and adhere to the guidelines. Vaccination may not be completed for the next 24 months and precautions are required throughout this time. The capacity planning has to be done based upon the demands or else the entire sector will collapse.



ANKUSH NIJHAWAN, CO-FOUNDER, TRAVEL BOUTIQUE ONLINE (TBO) GROUP & MD, NIJHAWAN GROUP

TREND-O-SCOPE

The year 2021 seems comparatively more positive from April 2021 as more travellers would be willing to step out for both domestic and international travelling. We may expect to witness around 20 to 25 per cent of the rise in tourists' traffic alongside the opening of several new embassies in the country for further representation. Within a span of the first six months of 2021, we can surely anticipate a 40 to 50 per cent of the increase in tourism. Safety and hygiene will become higher priorities like never before.

SAFE TRAVELS

Speaking of travelling responsibly, tourists will ensure the usage of mask and hand sanitisers more meticulously. Travellers will go till the level of paying extra money to ensure a sanitised and safe travel or stay and more of brand consciousness will surface as a trend



AJAY BAKAYA, MANAGING DIRECTOR, SAROVAR HOTELS AND RESORTS

TOPPING TRAVEL TRENDS

For travellers and our industry, safety and hygiene will continue to be top priorities. International travel will take some time before it comes to near normalcy. We can expect an uptick in travel demand from domestic customers who may opt to choose either flights or road trips for their travel. Another trend, which is going to continue, will be the work-from-anywhere concept. In this case, people are actively looking for longer stays preferably in leisure destinations which are less crowded. Unlike the past, the hotel industry