

Travel agents to be preferred

A new Travelport research has revealed that travellers in India will prefer to book through a travel agent now more than ever. The report also delves on some key trends it sees among Indian travellers, including their being safety-conscious. In fact, demand for almost every safety measure is the highest in India among the countries surveyed.

 TT Bureau

Travelport, in its new independent research, has revealed that travellers in India are now ready to consider booking domestic and international trips, but only if airlines, airports, hotels and car rental companies collectively implement 10 different safety measures throughout

their journey, which includes fully flexible or refundable flight tickets. Another finding of the research was that the demand for almost every safety measure is highest in India of the five countries surveyed. It was also found that travellers found it critical that during all parts of the travel journey, they must have social distancing rules, mandatory use of face masks,

and ready access to sanitising gel or wipes, face masks and gloves. Another revelation was that additional measures still need to be implemented by airlines, airports, hotels and car rental companies to fully restore consumer confidence.

Travelport's Guide to Recovery report also revealed. It also highlighted that globally, this

trend was much more evident among millennials (44 per cent). Overall, around three-fourth of travellers in India (73 per cent, compared to 65 per cent globally) who claimed this said it's because they feel travel agents are best placed to provide them with the latest travel safety information.

✦ Air travel

More than half the travellers said that to consider booking a flight, they need to know in advance that a wide array of specific measures have been implemented by both the airport and airline. At the airport, these include temperature checks on arrival (66 per cent), plexi-glass at check-in desks (58 per cent), and managed boarding by row (56 per cent). When it comes to airlines, measures in high demand include enhanced cleaning (71 per cent) and disinfection (70 per cent), further

A clearer picture is a must-have today

"Travellers' safety and consistent communication of respective safety measures, including frequent modifications, is of utmost importance to restore confidence in travel. Travelport's latest study is a commendable step in this direction, one that will help travel agents understand ongoing procedures and identify opportunities to offer better experience to end traveller."



Sandeep Dwivedi
COO, InterGlobe Technology Quotient

temperature checks before boarding (66 per cent), socially distanced seating (66 per cent), and fully flexible or refundable tickets (64 per cent).

✦ Hotels

The study revealed that for travellers to have the confidence to book a hotel room, the majority want six specific safety measures in place including enhanced cleaning (73 per

cent) and guest services accessible via their mobile phone (51 per cent).

✦ Car rental

Also, it was revealed that to book a car rental, majority of travellers want five key safety measures in place both at rental destinations and in vehicles, including contactless car collection and drop-off (55 per cent).

| | Airports | | Airlines | | Hotels | | Car Rentals | |
|--|----------|--------|----------|-------|--------|-------|-------------|-------|
| | Global | India | Global | India | Global | India | Global | India |
| 1. Enhanced cleaning and/or disinfection | Global | Global | 71% | 72% | 73% | 74% | 72% | 73% |
| 2. Access to sanitizing gel/wipes, face masks and gloves | 69% | 76% | 61% | 65% | 70% | 77% | 66% | 75% |
| 3. Social distancing | 68% | 80% | 66% | 76% | 66% | 78% | 64% | 77% |
| 4. Temperature checks | 66% | 74% | 66% | 75% | — | — | — | — |
| 5. Mandatory wearing of face masks | 64% | 80% | 64% | 79% | 64% | 77% | 61% | 74% |
| 6. Fully flexible or refundable tickets | — | — | 64% | 61% | — | — | — | — |
| 7. Improved air filtration | — | — | 62% | 62% | — | — | — | — |
| 8. Contactless services | 58% | 65% | — | — | 58% | 68% | 55% | 63% |
| 9. Plexi-glass at check-in | 56% | 62% | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| 10. Plexi-glass at check-in | 56% | 63% | — | — | — | — | — | — |

KTO focus on luxe experiences

Expecting a rise in demand for luxurious experiences in the near future, Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) has been conducting a series of webinars focusing on unique destinations and activities, some of which can only be booked through a DMC or a travel agent.

 Hazel Jain

Korea Tourism Organization (KTO) has been conducting a series of webinars for the travel trade, and one of them focused on luxury options and experiences available in South Korea. The main aim behind this was to provide agents a competitive edge in the coming times as a lot of the activities can neither be booked online nor through an OTA. If clients want to include them in their

itinerary, they will have to book through an agent. This webinar also saw some participants joining in from the Middle East.

Luxury travel in South Korea is being highlighted as KTO believes that going forward, travellers would prefer exclusive experiences where they can have privacy and an itinerary that allows them to travel at their own pace without being a part of larger groups. The options that were highlighted in

this webinar included curated experiences in South Korea where physical distancing can be maintained and places that have the best of health and hygiene protocols in place.

Traditional stays: Hanoks

An exclusive and unique stay for families and solos, hanoks are private without many hotel staff or guests. These traditional Korean stays come with the comfort of modern amenities and are available in various locations across South Korea. Hanoks are centuries-old but maintained and preserved well till date and are ideal for families with children as well. All hanoks have in-built floor heating system, making it very comfortable even for winter holidays.

Traditional cuisine

Visitors can experience the authentic local cuisine and

appreciate Korea's unique flavours with a private food experience across the country, both for vegetarians as well as non-vegetarians. Courses range from 14-150 items.



Unique activities

The next section of the presentation was dedicated to activities that can be safely undertaken by travellers. One of them is visiting Korea's museums that do not involve large groups of

people. Some of the museums are private in nature and can be done with appointment only, escorted by the staff or the curator of the place, and where all safety measures are in place.

have been designated as a national heritage.

A unique sightseeing option includes a visit to the Panmunjom – the demilitarised zone where leaders of North and South Korea meet for official purposes. Other premium products include yacht experiences, cruises, wellness experiences, etc. Self-drive options are also easily available for Indian visitors on international licence.

Webinar Alert!

The presentation, a DMC list, and a MICE support document are available to download on **TravTalk's** social media platforms. The next webinar will be conducted on September 4, and will focus on unique educational tours in South Korea.

