

THE ECONOMIST | LONELY PLANET

What awaits tourists when they re-emerge from lockdown?

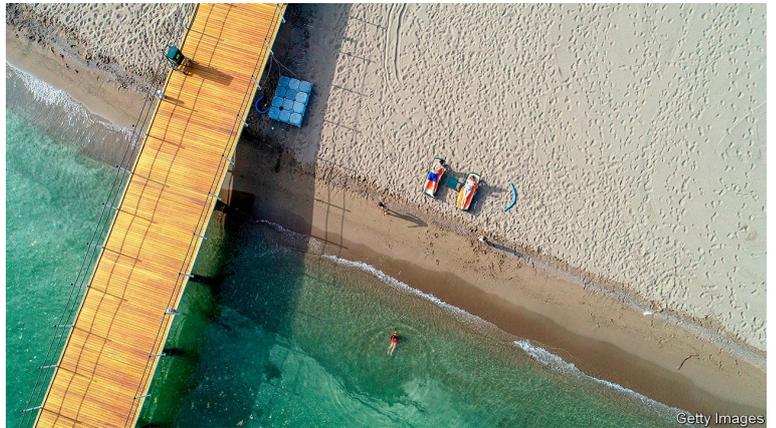
Covid-19 will change the way people travel

A recent article from The Economist identified a number of trends that will have a significant impact on the travel and tourism industry. It also identifies potential changes to the industry that need to be addressed by all.

Key points from The Economist article:

Travel redistribution

- ⇒ Travel redistribution: people taking trips to out-of-the-way places rather than the usual metropolises.
- ⇒ Urban destinations have fallen out of favour. Rural or out-of-the-way getaways by contrast are in demand.
- ⇒ This trend has become “turbocharged”. Due to Covid-19 travellers habits will not take 20 to 30 years to change - “it will happen in mere weeks or months”.
- ⇒ Upending the world’s travel habits even for a few months will have long-term effects. If tourists discover the virtues of new locations, they will want to return.



Touchpoints

- ⇒ The economics of providing travel services will change in other ways.
- ⇒ Making things easier to clean and reducing touchpoints will be priorities.
- ⇒ Hotels are ditching carpets in favour of bare floors. Throw cushions are being thrown out. Restaurant menus will probably become digital or appear on chalkboards. Kitchens will offer fewer dishes, to simplify the cooking process and to avoid wasting stocked ingredients in case of more enforced closures.
- ⇒ Other disappearances will be more noticeable.
 - The buffet has probably seen its last supper.
 - Check-in will be automated.
 - Expect mobile check-in, room keys on phones and more voice-activated room controls.

Airports

- ⇒ Airports will also emphasise hygiene.
- ⇒ There will be a move to minimise contact during any travel experience - pushing us over the edge to having a contactless journey.
- ⇒ Once you get into the terminal, your passport will be scanned, an image of your face will be taken, you will drop your bags, and then stroll through checkpoints as cameras use facial recognition to open gates.

Cruise liners

- ⇒ Giant cruise-liners carrying thousands of often-old people will take longer to recover their appeal—if they ever do.