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# Five Ways The Travel Industry Will Win Back Tourists In 2021



**Corrina Allen-Kiersons** Contributor ⓘ ⊕

ForbesLife

*I cover fashion, film, pop culture, travel and television.*



Hoteliers are working to support coral reefs in the Maldives GETTY

With vaccines beginning to be rolled out in several spots across the globe, a return to travel will also soon be on the horizon. The industry has been hard hit by the pandemic and, especially considering the overall economic downturn, may be one of the slowest sectors to recover. With that in mind, tour companies, hoteliers, and travel agencies are already working hard to woo future travellers to explore again once it's safe to do so. Here's how they'll be fuelling our urge to get out and see the world.

## **Dateless departures**

For the relaunch of their 2021 schedule, Exodus Travels is offering tour-goers a spot on their very first trips to reopened destinations — whenever that might happen. Playing up the idea that trip anticipation is one of the highlights of travel, [the Exodus program](#) will guarantee travellers a spot on the first tour to their clients' destination of choice — be it Japan, Kenya, or the Amalfi Coast. If the dates don't line up with a traveller's desired vacation time, Exodus will rebook them on an alternative tour, making it a win-win situation.

## **Increased online engagement**

Leading up the holidays, brands like Belmond have been getting their clients' attention with virtual events that not only inspire travel, but offer fun, informative, and festive activities that serve as mood-lifters during this unusual holiday season. Making the most of [their IGTV channel](#), the brand offers masterclasses in Christmas cracker-construction and wreath-making and will end the season with a spirited carolling session on December 22.

Since the onset of the pandemic, Viking has been offering clients virtual tours of historic estates like Downton Abbey's Highclere Castle, hosting ['Foodie Friday'](#) online cooking classes with their renowned chefs, and organizing talks with acclaimed authors like Jeffrey Archer. Each event is designed to get travellers dreaming about a particular destination by invoking the culinary or cultural experiences typically tied to international travel. Ultimately, however, increased online engagement will keep these brands top of mind when travel resumes.



Highclere Castle, the official residence of the Earl of Carnarvon. Highclere was also the location ... [+]

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## **Maintenance of pandemic-era cleaning and service standards**

During the pandemic, hotels and hospitality providers have struggled to find a balance between safety and providing guests with the same level of personalized service they have come to expect. At Berlin's [Hotel de Rome](#), Regional Quality & Training Manager Tiago Brandt says, "Wherever possible, we offer contactless services and reduce interaction at the request of our guests and in accordance with current regulations. Even though — especially in the technological field — many things become more practical

and faster, we also make the experience that many of our guests appreciate and seek a personal service and interpersonal interaction.”

This is indeed sometimes challenging in the current situation,” he adds. “It is of course our aim that our guests feel comfortable with us and, despite the current regulations, receive the personal and individualized service they are used to. Therefore we train with our team the use of body language and non-verbal communication elements in the interaction with our guests, to counteract face masks and distance rules, as an example. We consider successful communication to be essential. Our Guest Relation and Concierge team also approaches guests in the lobby even more proactively in order to provide individual service.”

Post-pandemic, expect top hotels to have honed hospitality skills even further, having achieved a level of safety, cleaning, and maintenance standards that allow guests to enjoy worry-free stays.

### **Environmental, cultural and community activism**

From combating climate change to supporting Indigenous populations through tourism, travel providers are redoubling their efforts to do good while doing their jobs. The Waldorf Astoria Maldives Ithaafushi is inviting guests to adopt a coral frame in an effort to rehabilitate the region’s delicate reefs, already threatened by climate change. In Jamaica, the famed [GoldenEye](#) hotel and its Oracabessa Foundation partner have launched a new dive shop where locals and guests alike can take part in replanting the country’s reefs.



Green sea turtle rescued from a fisherman's net and taken for daily swims until it is perceived as ...

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## Travel bubbles

Trust will be paramount when travel reopens and some tour operators are offering travellers the opportunity to travel with the people they trust most: their own friends and family. Trafalgar, Cost saver and Insight Vacations all offer the “[travel bubble](#)” option — small, private group trips for their upcoming 2021 journeys that allows a set of family and/or friends to share a tour while maintaining a safer distance from people they’re unacquainted with. As a bonus, this type of travel will give those who’ve been separated from loved ones over the course of the pandemic to reunite and reconnect in 2021.

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**Corrina Allen-Kiersons**

I'm a former fashion and film industry professional who, after a decade working as a costumer and stylist, pivoted to writing about the subjects I love while freeing...

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