

MORE EQUAL THAN OTHERS - RICH PEOPLE FACING CRISIS IN A SPECIAL WAY



Private jets, yachts, private emergency rooms - in view of the spread of the coronavirus, wealthy people are resorting to means that are unthinkable for most citizens. Over 120,000 people worldwide have now contracted the new coronavirus and are facing a crisis; more than 4200 have died as a result of infection. These are the latest figures from the "Coronavirus Resource Center" at Johns Hopkins University in Baltimore, which is publishing a live map of confirmed cases. According to the World Health Organization, more than a hundred countries are now affected. In its spread around the globe, the virus does not distinguish between social classes. However, not everyone is equal in dealing with the epidemic.

Private Jets and "Evacuation Flights"

There are few places where people from all over the world crowd together in such a small space as in airports. In the planes, they usually sit close together. One way of avoiding this is apparently being used more and more in recent weeks: private jets.

Richard Lewis of the "Insignia Group" said that the number of inquiries for private planes has increased. This was especially true for long-distance flights. The company organizes trips for wealthy customers. According to Lewis, their motives are: **"They do not want to share their cabin with other people."**

Not having to share your cabin comes with a price. A round-trip flight on the New York-London route in a "Gulfstream IV" private jet for 12 people costs around 140,000 dollars, according to the report. With a full plane, that's almost \$11,700 per person.

Other private jet rental companies are also reporting increased demand. Bloomberg, like the Guardian, reported on "evacuation flights" from areas particularly affected by the coronavirus. Large companies and rich families booked private planes for this purpose.

The requests for evacuations had initially concentrated mainly in Southeast Asia, said Adam Tidwell, head of the private jet service provider "Private Fly". "However, we are increasingly seeing customers wanting to book private flights between a variety of global destinations in order to avoid crowds in cabins and airport terminals."

Not only to avoid congestion along the way, but also at the destination. The seclusion of yachts and lonely huts is increasingly in demand.

Despite the increased demand, private jet providers are worried about the spread of the virus. All short-term profits would face longer-term challenges, said "Private Fly" boss Tidwell. This particularly includes the impact of the virus on the global economy.

Private Emergency Room

There is also a VIP area for medical care. The New York service provider "Sollis Health" offers its customers a medical "concierge service". According to the "New York Times" a family membership costs around 8000 dollars per year. In return, the company offers access to "VIP emergency rooms"

in three of the most expensive areas of the metropolitan region. The benefits include round-the-clock access to doctors and accelerated appointments with specialists.

Since the Corona-fear has reached the USA, the request for memberships has skyrocketed, according to Ben Stein, the medical director of "Sollis Health". Members hoarded drugs against flu and respiratory diseases out of fear. Another problem, quoted Stein, concerns a possible shortage of face masks.

This concern is also driving the demand for designer face masks. Actress and influencer Gwyneth Paltrow posted a photo of herself on Instagram in late February. On her way to "Paris Fashion Week", she wore a black face mask from the Airinium company.

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