

# FIGHTING THE VIRUS - WHAT IS THE FUTURE OF TRAVELING?



It was a summer season like no other before: travel warnings, Corona measures and the request of numerous governments to take vacations in their own country. A call that many people followed. Bookings fell dramatically all over the world. The calls to stay at home have naturally had a negative impact on the global tourism industry. What is the future of traveling?

Anyway, some experts point out to Italy's example. The country was badly shaken by the first wave. **The majority of Italians, therefore, decided this year not to travel at all and spent their vacations at home.** As a result, the number of cases in Italy is now manageable. If the country had not requested for vacations to be spent at home, then the consequences would not be relatively glaring so far.

Although tourism alone is not responsible for the recent increase in infections, mobility is an essential factor in the spread of the virus.

One thing is certain for the tourism experts in any case: in the medium term, a lot will change. Post-Covid tourism will not be the same as the one we have known so far. The longer the crisis lasts, the more lasting and serious the change. Business trips, cruises and city trips will be most affected. The companies recognize that many trips can be replaced by online meetings at low cost. City trips, on the other hand, are decreasing, since crowds of people are avoided by consumers as far as possible. Cities are considered risk areas for many travelers. Post-Covid tourism will not be the same as the one we have known.

After years of boom, cruises are also facing a reorientation. There is a hardcore of cruisers who will go on a ship again and again. However, it is difficult for shipping companies to win new customers. The trend is therefore moving away from the recent years' gigantism, in which larger ships were still being built. The future belongs to smaller boats with fewer passengers.

Experts predict, it will be a long time before people undertake long-distance travel again. It is likely that the future of traveling will focus on shorter distances. We have now made the experience that it can be difficult to come back in case of a crisis. Therefore, vacations will mainly take place in countries that are on short and medium distances. Regions would therefore have to reorganize themselves and develop a new market. Thus, inner-European tourism will become more important, and inner-Asian tourism will become more important in Asia.

The fact that humans want to refrain completely from journeys in the future is not conceivable. Will this crisis also create opportunities for tourism? Absolutely. **After all, mass tourism, in particular, had already been hotly debated before Corona.** There were flight shame and climate movements, for example. Everything that is now moving towards sustainability could benefit from it. The crisis has also made it clear to people what freedom of travel really means. Before Corona, many of us flew to Barcelona for a weekend for little money, without giving it much thought. That will change. Partly because travel will become more expensive in the medium term. And experts are also convinced that the population's awareness regarding travelling will increase again.

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