

TOURISM INDUSTRY HEADING TOWARDS GREATER SPECIALIZATION AND INNOVATION



Next year will be crucial for the recovery of the global tourism industry as borders start to gradually open following the announcements of various coronavirus vaccines, which means that tourism is heading towards a search for greater specialization, innovation, flexibility and proximity in bookings, while maintaining health recommendations for at least another period.

Many experts worldwide currently analyze the strategies, demands and forecasts that the main players in the global tourism industry will face. **Post-Covid tourists have become even more demanding, so, in addition to comfort and services, they look for things such as health, social distancing and freedom;** but at the same time, they want to enjoy their holidays as much as in the past, respecting capacity, schedules, security measures while being much more conscious than before.

The restrictions experienced in 2020 will cause travel to skyrocket as soon as there is health stability, and as long as the economy allows families to stay afloat. So, what will define the tourism industry in 2021?

Vaccines will be essential to see the end of the pandemic, and for this it will be necessary to verify the degree of effectiveness of the different vaccines that will soon be distributed massively.

Another essential aspect will be having an important network of public aid since, despite its resilience, the tourism industry has been affected in such a way that its recovery will necessarily have to go hand in hand with financing and economic and fiscal aid from national and international public bodies. Experts consider that the closing and sale of hotels will be essential for surviving hotels.

In general, the entire hospitality sector will continue to experience the coronavirus crisis for some time, with the MICE market being the most affected and the last to recover.

It is considered that the pandemic could give way to a rapid increase in the productivity of the surviving companies as a result of adopting new processes and technologies. In the case of tourism, all this will be depend on digitization.

The arrival of 5G and other innovations will revolutionize transport, logistics and hospitality. Technological development and social media are going to become even more essential tool to obtain information, organize trips, share opinions between businessmen and tourists, build customer loyalty, showcase products and services, and improve online reputation, among others.

The prices will continue to be the main aspect, but reserve conditions will also be very important in terms of making cancellations, exchanges and refunds easier in order to stimulate demand and build trust. It will be very difficult to make long-term forecasts as it is a global problem that changes every week and depends on laws and restrictions, thus making way for new processes, products and even new forms of hospitality.

In this sense, premium brands will stay ahead in the recovery phase, as well as everything related to the luxury market. Customers will be willing to pay more for private services, exclusive products and benefits that reduce contact with other guests or passengers.

Once the pandemic is over, it is highly likely that travelers will search for safe destinations, without crowds, far from large cities and close to nature. The rural tourism industry will continue to expand.

It is also often emphasized that the crisis could pose a scenario of opportunity. Venture capital funds, start-ups, technology multinationals, real estate investment companies, among others, are going to take positions in an industry with such great growth potential as tourism, and all this without forgetting the health security.

According to the experts, even if the pandemic ends, travelers around the world will continue to follow COVID-19 protective recommendations. Health and hygiene measures, such as social distance, will continue throughout 2021 to rebuild trust in the entire industry.

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