

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Privacy will be the new luxury in travel post-COVID-19

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Lights on for luxury travel. Image credit: Quinn

By [Florence Quinn](#)

As people start to travel post-COVID, luxury travel will come back first, and privacy will be the new luxury.

Travel and hospitality brands that cater to this new mindset will reap the rewards of more reservations as well as the added bonus of bookings at higher price points.

Travel by yacht, private jet, serviced residences, private rentals, and secluded hotels and destinations will boom as affluent consumers look for getaways with fewer crowds, more privacy and the ability to gather with loved ones.

Far from the madding crowds

According to a new survey by [LuggageHero](#), 25 percent of travelers will try to avoid crowded commercial flights and public transportation in a post-coronavirus world.

Private aviation companies such as [VistaJet](#) anticipate new travelers entering into the market as private jets offer an easily controlled environment limiting exposure to other travelers.

There will be a surge of interest in private accommodations, such as larger suites, villas, residences and private yachts, where people can gather with family and friends while social distancing from others.

According to a recent survey by [Full-Time Travel](#), 79 percent of respondents intend to travel with family or friends.

Luxury vacation providers are already experiencing demand as a result of consumers' pent-up need to travel and get out.

At [Exclusive Resorts](#), a members-only vacation club with 400-plus residences, there are more than 1,100 new bookings for villas and residences for this summer.

"COVID-19 has brought family, friends and loved ones closer together," said James Henderson, CEO of Exclusive Resorts. "Once things go back to normal' people will have an emotional need to travel with people they know and trust."

Also among the first vacation properties to be booked will be those with the privacy of full-floor accommodations, such as [ESPACIO the Jewel of Waikiki](#), and standalone accommodations such as the over-the-top cottages at [The Roxbury](#) in the Catskills.

At [Hotel Metropole Monte-Carlo](#), guests can book the entire top floor of seven suites designed by Jacques Garcia with helicopter transfers.

In major metropolitan cities, travelers will be drawn to the controlled privacy of furnished suites and townhouses with kitchens that luxury brands, such as [AKA](#), provide.

"Self-sufficiency and privacy will rise," said Larry Korman, president of AKA.

Other hotels and resorts are adjusting and catering to this new need for privacy.

At the idyllic [Inns of Aurora](#), three boutique inns can be rented in their entirety with fully stocked kitchens and meal deliveries from onsite restaurants.

The property's naturally social-distancing setting of expansive private lawns on one of the majestic lakes of the Finger Lakes in rural New York State will also be appealing.



Florence Quinn is founder of Quinn

Not all at sea

While the cruise industry will take some time to rebuild, there will be a noticeable uptick in the number of travelers chartering yachts with companies such as [Northrop & Johnson](#) and [B&B Yacht Charter](#).

Yachts are considered to be more hygienic, given the ratio of crew to guests and the exclusivity of being on a private boat.

Many yacht providers believe the current situation will lead to a stronger interest in yachting as travelers who have been isolating at home will want to explore open waters.

Chartering a yacht to explore under-the-radar places such as the Croatian island of [Hvar](#) is an ideal way to get away from crowds.

When shopping for travel, affluent consumers will be looking for new levels of cleanliness and safety protocols

When shopping for travel, affluent consumers will be looking for new levels of cleanliness and safety protocols. Health and safety will be their number-one priority. Being able to social distance from other people will be equally important.

New cleaning guidelines and distancing protocols under the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines will need to be implemented and clearly communicated before, during and after the reservation process.

PERHAPS THE BEST news of all for luxury travel providers is that affluent consumers are planning now.

Almost 90 percent of full-time travel survey participants, with an average household income of \$178,000, will continue to travel frequently as soon as restrictions are lifted.

According to [Amy Virshup](#), travel editor of *The New York Times*, domestic travel will come back first, and road trips will be more interesting since there is more control for consumers.

To prove her point, 40 percent of Exclusive Resorts members have a confirmed trip between May and July, and all thirteen homes in Sea Island, GA are sold out this June.

Full disclosure: This article mentions clients of the author. It is not a paid post, but simply a narration of how the author's clients are adapting to the new privacy and safety expectations and requirements in the COVID-19 era.

Florence Quinn is founder of [Quinn](#), a marketing and PR firm that specializes in luxury travel, with offices in New York, Los Angeles and Miami. Reach her at fquinn@quinn.pr.

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