

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Luxury camping actualizes travelers' need for uniqueness

January 11, 2018



Rosewood's Hill Top tent that creates a one-of-a-kind experience. Image credit: Rosewood

By BRIELLE JAEKEL

As the affinity for experiential and culturally authentic travel grows, hotel brands and affluents alike are changing the high-end hospitality sector through an embrace of the luxury tent industry.

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In the age of social media, where a multitude of consumers compete to post the most unique travel experiences, affluent adventure seekers are looking for one-of-a-kind trips that luxury camping can fulfill. Brands such as Abercrombie & Kent, Rosewood Hotels & Resorts and Collective Retreats are embracing this new trend that goes beyond the popularized term "glamping," but instead allows affluents to have deeply authentic experiences without missing out on luxury amenities.

"Travellers are looking for ways to experience destinations in the most authentic way possible, which in some locations translates to luxury camping," said Stefanie Schmudde, product development at [Abercrombie & Kent](#). "In Africa, we've seen not only an increase in the number of luxury camps, but significant investment for ongoing maintenance and renovations."

"We've also seen the introduction of African-style luxury camps to other regions, which speaks to how well these camping experiences resonate with guests," she said. "We've seen a lot of expansion in Jordan and Chile, where we've developed a highly exclusive camping experience in the Atacama Desert for no more than six guests at a time."

Setting up camp

Rosewood is one of the brands who is bringing camping to higher level, literally. The travel brand is opening a new luxury encampment located in the hills of Laos' forests in Southeast Asia.



Rosewood's balcony as part of its tent encampment. Image credit: Rosewood.

Since the forest has remained largely untouched, the experience is significantly authentic. But it is Rosewood's tents that make the trip a once-in-a-lifetime travel memory.

The encampment features 22 tents each equipped with a rain shower, an oversized balcony, a private dining area and pool, king-sized bed, oversized daybed and large classic bathtubs. These tents are located alongside a winding river and waterfall with access to spa treatments and gourmet cuisine.

Rosewood Luang Prabang integrates the local culture into its establishment and offers ways to experience the customs nearby such as an elephant sanctuary and the city's historic district.



Collective Retreat looks to create unique experiences. Image credit: Collective Retreat.

Collective Retreat allows visitors travel experiences where normally hotels cannot be built such as Yellowstone, Montana and the Hudson Valley in New York, where the atmosphere remains genuine.

However, high-end linens, electricity, chandeliers, wooden floors, spas, L'Occitane bath products, gourmet coffee, special meals and activities make this camping experience different from what consumers traditionally think of as camping.

Abercrombie & Kent has been relishing in the growth in popularity of safaris with its safari camp experience. The travel brand's tents are up to 28 feet long by 14 feet wide with a height of nine feet.



Abercrombie & Kent experience in Tanzania. Image credit: Abercrombie & Kent.

Each one features a furnished veranda along with amenities usually unavailable when on safari such as electric lighting, a wardrobe, safe, luxury beds, private bathrooms with running water and a valet service.

The most popular destination for safari camping with Abercrombie & Kent is the Sahara Desert in Morocco.

Experiential travel

These types of experiences are attracting affluent consumers who do not want to scrimp on luxury amenities but want to experience a truer form of travel.

Affluent consumers are interested in the most convenient methods of travel so they can maximize the experiences had on their vacations, according to a new report from TCS World Travel.

The private jet firm released the top travel trends that interest high-net-worth individuals, and ease of travel as well as one-of-a-kind experiences top the list. Consumers who are interested in luxury are looking for experiences to add to their repertoire and do not want to cut into this experience time with excessive travel pains; the easier the better ([see more](#)).

While 2017 was a solid year for luxury, 2018 is projected to see slight increases to total spending, with most of the growth coming from travel-related purchases.

This data comes from Luxury Institute's annual study on the state of the luxury business, which surveyed thousands of affluent customers from the wealthiest nations in the world. The data supports the growing understanding that luxury consumers are beginning to value experiences over products ([see more](#)).

"Guests typically rate the Sahara Desert camping experience in Morocco as the highlight of their visit," Abercrombie & Kent's Ms. Schmudde said. "Here, guests sleep under the stars at an A&K-exclusive desert tented camp, complete with mint tea, traditional Moroccan cuisine and local entertainment."

"Situated in a remote area in the Sahara, overlooking the Erg Chebbi Dunes, and far from other travellers, the spacious, traditional Caidal tents have high ceilings (tall people can stand up in comfort) and a lush, colorful interior," she said. "They enjoy a traditionally-cooked Moroccan dinner served around the campfire complete with traditional entertainment."

"The highlight is usually the sunset camelback ride through the Sahara's shifting, dazzling expanse (and, if guests choose, at sunrise as well) with the Erg Chebbi dunes, renowned for their immense size, in the background."

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