

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Gen Xers leading wellness travel trend as consumers seek calm

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Oceania offers more than 50 wellness tours. Image credit: Oceania Cruises

By STAFF REPORTS

Meditation and mindfulness are the top desires of wellness travelers, according to a new trend report from Virtuoso.

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A survey of agents from Virtuoso's network who specialize in wellness found that the typical wellness traveler is a Gen X woman, who either travels alone or with friends. Per the poll, wellness journeys are more about relaxation and stress relief than physical well-being.

Searching for stress relief

The top motivator for wellness travel is stress and anxiety reduction, as travelers seek to recover from their busy lives. Coming in second is rest and relaxation.

While mind, body and spirit transformation is a key reason why travelers seek out wellness travel, this ranks third behind the desire for calm.

Reflecting this motivation, consumers are most likely to take advantage of meditation and mindfulness activities. Second most popular are massages and spa treatments.

Ranking behind these activities is yoga, healthy eating and outdoor activities.

The most popular wellness destinations are the United States, Bali, Thailand, Costa Rica and Italy. Virtuoso's network identified Bhutan, Croatia, Vietnam, Portugal and South Africa as the locations that are seeing the greatest increase in interest for wellness tourism.

Ninety-eight percent of those surveyed say that the wellness travel trend is growing. For 2020, 45 percent believe wellness travel sales will increase, while 53 expect sales to be the same as 2019.



Regent has launched a new wellness brand. Image courtesy of Regent

The top emerging trends identified by the panel include hotels that have wellness amenities, spiritual retreats, mental wellness, purposeful travel and consumers desiring to pick up wellness skills while away.

Interest in wellness travel is not losing momentum, according to industry experts speaking on a panel at *Cond Nast Traveler's* Points of View Summit.

From cruises and spas to family resorts, the hospitality industry continues to add wellness offerings such as fitness, healthy meals, spa treatments and digital detoxes. While interest in wellness travel is present across generations, different demographics have different interpretations of wellness ([see story](#)).

Hospitality group AccorHotels is tracing the rise of the wellness movement and the related opportunities for the travel sector in a whitepaper designed to help guide its own health-conscious efforts around the globe.

The company, which includes the Fairmont, Raffles and Sofitel brands, is outlining both the growing wellness expectations of travelers and the ways in which its own hotels are strategizing to meet expanding consumer demands. By leveraging data, the report seeks to identify the commercial impact and opportunity of wellness in the luxury hospitality business ([see story](#)).

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