

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## Travel and hospitality sector's top 10 headlines of 2019

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*Four Seasons has created customizable beds to help guests get a good night's sleep. Image credit: Four Seasons*

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By STAFF REPORTS

Hospitality groups are helping consumers travel more mindfully, whether by rolling out wellness workshops or instituting sustainability measures.

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Younger generations of consumers are playing a key role in tourism, as Gen Z travelers come into their purchasing power and Gen Alphas influence their families' vacation plans. With this generational shift comes an even greater emphasis on values as well as alternative accommodations.

Here are the top 10 travel and hospitality headlines of 2019, in no particular order:



*Homes & Villas property in Anguilla. Image courtesy of Marriott International*

### Marriott makes home-sharing move as rental market grows

Hotel group Marriott International is embracing the sharing economy with a new rental division poised to compete with hospitality disruptors such as Airbnb.

Dubbed Homes & Villas by Marriott International, the platform will enable consumers to rent properties from third-

party companies through the world's largest hotel group. While other hospitality companies have added rental firms to their portfolios, and Marriott has tested a similar concept in Europe, this will mark the first United States rental platform powered by a hotel operator ([see story](#)).



*Family travel is a growing segment. Image credit: Ritz-Carlton*

### Millennial families represent travel marketing opportunity

Millennial consumers with children are a significant \$39.2 billion portion of the travel market, and they plan to up their vacation spending by 12 percent in the coming year.

During a keynote presentation at The New York Times Travel Show on Jan. 25, an executive from MMGY explained that millennials are the only generation expected to up their travel spending this year, and about half of the age group now has families of their own. About a third of all vacations taken in the last year included children, and minors are having a heavy influence on family travel plans, making both parents and their progeny a target for travel marketing ([see story](#)).



*Marriott is getting rid of single-use plastic toiletry bottles. Image courtesy of Marriott*

### Latest hospitality environmental efforts target toiletries

As luxury hotel brands ramp up sustainability efforts with support from a growing number of environmentally-minded consumers, many have pushed to reduce reliance on single-use plastics.

Hospitality brands are not alone in being proactive about eliminating single-use plastics, with city and state governments also looking to reduce plastic waste. After straws became the subject of widespread scrutiny last year, toiletries have become the latest target ([see story](#)).

### Sleep quality leads to hospitality loyalty: J.D. Power

Hotels can earn guests' return business if they deliver an elevated sleeping experience, but a new report finds that only 42 percent of luxury hotel guests have had their expectations exceeded.

J.D. Power's North America Hotel Guest Satisfaction Index Study found that 71 percent of guests who get a better than expected night's sleep would stay again with the same brand. While luxury hotel brands often emphasize factors such as on-property amenities and service, setting guests up for a restful night can have one of the greatest impacts on their attitudes ([see story](#)).



*The Peninsula Hotel Hong Kong is located near the site of many protests. Image credit: Peninsula Hotels*

### Hong Kong hospitality sees downturn as protests continue

Hong Kong's luxury hospitality industry is starting to suffer as widespread anti-government protests in the region approach their third month.

As interactions between protesters and police become increasingly violent, some nations have issued travel advisories to warn citizens to exercise caution if they are traveling to Hong Kong. Tourism is a leading industry in Hong Kong, and many luxury hospitality brands have ramped up investments in the area ([see story](#)).



*AccorHotels is leaning into wellness. Image credit: AccorHotels*

### AccorHotels looks to drive loyalty through wellness

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](#)).



*Ancient Chinese saying: "In the universe, there is heaven; on earth, there is Hangzhou." Seen here: Four Seasons Hotel Hangzhou at West Lake. Image credit: Four Seasons Hotels & Resorts*



## Global luxury tourism to reach \$831B this year with China, India driving growth

Global luxury tourism will reach \$831 billion this year out of a total \$5.9 trillion overall spend in the tourism sector.

New DossierPlus data from Statista claims that luxury tourism will grow at an annual compounded growth rate of 7.3 percent in the next five years, outpacing the 6.4 percent forecast for the overall tourism market ([see story](#)).



*Younger consumers are most likely to splurge while traveling. Image credit: Marriott International*

## Gen Z most likely to splurge on experiential travel

As Generation Z consumers continue to acquire purchasing power, they are outspending other generations on luxury hotels and unique culinary experiences while traveling.

According to a survey from CIT Bank, the number of consumers making travel saving a priority more than doubled from 2018 to 2019. Following Gen Z, millennials are the second most likely to splurge on different aspects of their vacations ([see story](#)).



*Crystal's new digital tool is part of its larger digital efforts. Image credit: Crystal*

## Luxury hospitality is not about thread count, but what counts: Crystal exec

Luxury tourism in 2019 is going to be about personal service, exclusivity, individuality, emotions and enrichment, according to a panel at The New York Times Travel Show.

During the discussion, moderated by Insider Travel Report's editor in chief James Shillinglaw, speakers noted that much of the growth in luxury tourism is coming from consumers' interest in gaining access, whether it is the opportunity to meet royalty or sailing to previously unavailable destinations on a smaller, more nimble cruise ship. While new trends are emerging, luxury hospitality will remain centered on the human connection above all ([see story](#)).



*VistaPet aims to make traveling with man's best friend easier. Image courtesy of VistaJet*

### VistaJet aims to commoditize private jet travel through experiences

Private aviation firm VistaJet is leaning on partnerships and services to differentiate its flying experience and brand, looking to simplify air travel for clients who are wealthy yet time poor.

With travelers spending so much time moving around the globe, VistaJet is seeking to turn the cabin into the extension of a family home, with services that focus on real needs rather than extravagance. Responding to a client need, the company is now extending its offerings to non-human family members with the launch of VistaPet, a global travel program that focuses on making pets feel more comfortable in the air ([see story](#)).

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