

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

Luxury hotels and resorts reopen to a changed world

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The Hotel Villa Magna in Madrid, Spain. Image credit: Rosewood Hotels & Resorts

By NORA HOWE

Luxury hotel brands around the world have begun reopening as pandemic restrictions lift, inviting guests to rediscover and reignite their passion for travel.

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Global hospitality brands such as Taj Hotels, Rosewood Hotels & Resorts, Auberge Resorts and Mandarin Oriental have reopened their doors in the downswing of the COVID-19 global pandemic. They have recently released video ad campaigns encouraging people to rediscover their love for travel and luxury in a post-COVID world.

"People are feeling stay-at-home fatigue and are more eager by the day to plan their next luxury getaway," says Tiffany Dowd, founder and president of **Luxe Social Media**, Boston. "While international travel continues to have its restrictions, now is a great time for hotels to reopen to attract local visitors within driving distance and allow people to enjoy a stay-cation."

From quarantine to "workcation"

Earlier this year, hotels and resorts were forced to close temporarily due to the pandemic, thus affecting their brand and marketing strategies. For many, this also meant reimagining travel and hospitality in a future post-pandemic world. Industry leaders predicted changes in dining, social interaction, and technological advancement regarding cleanliness ([see story](#)).

Now that many restrictions have been lifted worldwide, hotels and resorts are beginning to reveal their new marketing strategies which seem to include a few of the precautions predicted months ago. One common trend that has seemingly become popular within the travel landscape is the "workcation."

Work, Learn, and Play with Auberge

With so many individuals still working from home, brands like **Auberge Hotel Collection** and **Mandarin Oriental** are introducing remote long-term stay packages to accommodate working individuals looking for a vacation while still navigating the pandemic. Some packages even include tutoring for children who are attending school remotely.

The Mandarin Oriental Workcation package includes private sanctuaries in selected rooms, complimentary Wi-Fi,

printing, dining credit, as well as temperature checks, increased cleaning measures across all areas and even PPE for all guests.

As these regulations and amenities continue to reflect the world's new normal for the foreseeable future, video ad campaigns remain consistent with the opulent and peaceful nature on which these brands were founded.

Auberge Private Residences

"While the popularity of quick weekend trips at local destinations will inevitably continue in the foreseeable future, those looking to travel abroad will likely take longer vacations versus short-term trips," Ms. Dowd said. "More people are able to work or attend classes remotely allowing for more flexibility to extend their stay."

Relief efforts and a glimpse of normalcy

The travel and hospitality industries were hit tremendously hard by the impact of COVID-19 and the world temporarily shutting down. Despite not being able to serve guests safely, many companies still worked to assist in pandemic relief efforts, such as offering free stays to healthcare personnel and delivering food and materials to essential workers ([see story](#)).

Rosewood Hotels and Resorts used their pandemic recess to launch the Rosewood Raise Relief Fund, which assisted their associates affected by COVID-19. They also introduced a health and safety program, Commitment to Care, dedicated to providing a strict standard for hygiene, cleanliness and care ([see story](#)).

Surfacing ad campaigns and adjusted travel packages imply a subtle shift back to pre-pandemic normalcy, something many people have been desperate for since February. Hotels worldwide have worked tirelessly the past six months to ensure that guests can return to the same luxury experience they were accustomed to, with safety remaining the top priority.

"The essence of hospitality is about conveying a human connection, which is why many hotels are forgoing wearing masks in video communication - to feel more connected with their guests," Ms. Dowd said. "It will be very important for hotels to convey a message of what the new normal truly looks like to properly manage guest expectations regarding health and safety measures."