

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

VistaJet's Leona Qi: Luxury Woman to Watch 2021

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Leona Qi

By LUXURY DAILY NEWS SERVICE

Luxury Daily annually honors smart women executives who show the potential to make a difference next year in the luxury business. This year's list features 26 honorees who have set ambitious goals to achieve in a luxury market that, while growing, is also challenged by rapid changes in consumer behavior and technology.

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Here is one honoree:

Leona Qi, president, **VistaJet U.S.**, New York

"With luxury travel continually evolving, private aviation will become the new normal for the remainder of the year and well into 2021"

What do you like most about your job?

What I like most about my job is to work with some of the most successful businesses and people in the world.

Private aviation is a business tool in bringing people from point A to point B while simultaneously aiding global recovery.

One of my favorite facts I like to share is that when a private jet lands in a destination, it brings the economy up by 20 percent.

I enjoy changing people's perceptions and seeing private aviation in a new light.

What is the biggest challenge in your work?

As business aviation is typically the first industry to get hit and the last to recover with any global crisis, COVID-19 has been our biggest challenge this year.

It's been challenging, yet rewarding, to combat the pandemic as we've been working tirelessly to facilitate repatriation flights, work with medical officials to transport key medical supplies and experts, bring families home from other countries and more.

How have you adapted to the new order of things with the public health crisis?

Thanks to my supportive and driven team, I have adapted well to the new normal that we are living.

With weekly and sometimes daily Zoom calls on the business-front and a solid schedule for my family, I've had the opportunity to spend much more time with my loved ones, which I normally would not have traveling at least two to three times per month.

This time at home, along with the support of my team, has allowed me the opportunity to watch my 13-month-old son have his "firsts." From hearing his first words to watching him take his first steps, this extra family time has been wonderful.

What is your work priority for 2021?

My biggest work priority for 2021 will be focusing on our newly unveiled Global 7500 aircraft.

We just introduced the Global 7500 to our fleet earlier in 2020 and it's the world's largest and longest-range business jet that offers four luxurious living spaces, a full-size kitchen, visionary lighting and the industry's first circadian-rhythm lighting system to combat jetlag.

What is your proudest achievement in luxury?

My proudest achievement at VistaJet has been growing the North American customer base as it continues to be the biggest and fastest-growing market in business aviation and for VistaJet.

Over the past four years, my team and I have garnered double-digit year-on-year growth over successive years.

How do you see luxury evolving in 2021?

With luxury travel continually evolving, private aviation will become the new normal for the remainder of the year and well into 2021.

As private aviation offers the security, flexibility of travel and privacy that is not guaranteed by any other type of transport, we foresee a lot of new entries from first or business class flyers shifting into flying private.

As of now, we've already seen a huge uptick with 71 percent of incoming sales calls coming from those who have never flown privately before. We expect this number to increase as 2021 rolls around.

[Please click here to see the entire Luxury Women to Watch 2021 list](#)