

TRAVEL AND HOSPITALITY

## Asian affluents would opt for vaccine passports to travel safely

July 29, 2021



*More than three-quarters of Asian affluents are receptive to vaccine passports. Image credit: International Luxury Travel Market*

By SARAH RAMIREZ

Pent-up demand for travel is so high among affluents that more than three-quarters are willing to carry vaccination certifications if it means returning to "normal" trips.

Subscribe to **Luxury Daily**  
Plus: Just released  
State of Luxury 2019 **Save \$246 ▶**

According to new findings from market researcher [Altiant](#) and events company [International Luxury Travel Market \(ILTM\)](#), affluent and high-net-worth individuals in Asia are more interested in vaccination passports or connected devices as a way to safely travel in the aftermath of COVID-19 than quarantines or frequent tests. Without the ability to travel internationally, respondents have traveled more domestically and expect to continue traveling closer to home after the pandemic.

"It is challenging to predict the volume of domestic, inter-regional and international luxury travel due to fast-changing regulations and quarantine measures," said Meryam Schneider, vice president of marketing and partnerships at Altiant, Paris. "But it is clear that the Asia-Pacific luxury traveler is willing to endure more effort to make up for lost time and missed celebrations."

The findings are based on a survey of almost 500 verified affluent and HWNI respondents from Australia, China, Hong Kong, Japan, Singapore and South Korea.

### Post-pandemic priorities

While controversial in certain markets, 77 percent of APAC affluents would be receptive to needing a vaccine passport before traveling internationally.

Chinese travelers are the most accepting of vaccine passports at 88 percent, while Hong Kong travelers are the least interested at 68 percent still representative of a strong majority.

Seventy-seven percent of respondents are also willing to carry a connected device while traveling internationally. This would allow travelers to receive vaccination alerts, participate in contact tracing or other warnings.



*APAC travelers are more willing to use vaccine passports than quarantine. Image credit: International Luxury Travel Market*

At 90 percent, Chinese travelers are the most receptive of connected devices compared to 65 and 61 percent of South Koreans and Australians, respectively.

Less than half of all APAC luxury travelers, 44 percent, would be willing to quarantine for a short period on entry to another country or test for COVID-19 every 48 hours while traveling either domestically or internationally.

As leisure travel does resume in the area, 39 percent of respondents plan to travel both internationally and domestically within the next year. About a third will primarily travel domestically, while 23 percent will primarily travel within Asia Pacific.

Only 5 percent of APAC affluents and HWNI are likely to not make any travel plans in the near future.

Additionally, about four in 10 respondents plan to travel more within their country of residence than they did before the pandemic. Only a quarter plan to increase their time spent traveling to other countries in Asia Pacific, and 14 percent plan to travel more to other regions entirely.

Between 60 and 64 percent of respondents cited rebooking canceled trips, belated celebrations and making up for lost time as motivations for travel.

After the pandemic, 44 percent of travelers expect to take more family or beach holidays. Thirty-five percent plan to increase trips to the countryside compared to 30 percent preferring city vacations.

Wellness vacations centered around physical or mental wellbeing will also be popular, while only 16 percent are interested in more solo travel after a long period of isolation.



*Wellness will remain an important aspect of luxury travel. Image credit: Mandarin Oriental Beijing*

Luxury travelers are also more willing to splurge on workcations, personalized itineraries or experiential holidays.

However, 61 percent cited health and safety as an important factor when booking their next trip, including 71 percent of Chinese travelers. Shopping, culture, privacy and sustainability are also important booking factors, albeit to lesser extents.

Time for vaccine passports?

While affluent and HWNI consumers in Asia are receptive to vaccine passports as a requirement to resume

traveling, the documentation remains controversial in many countries and regions.

Some countries have already implemented requirements to show proof of COVID-19 vaccination, while others are in the process of developing their own systems. Businesses from event venues to cruise lines are also setting vaccination requirements, adding to the list of evolving regulations that consumers must be aware of as they navigate a post-lockdown era.

Most countries as well as airlines and hotels have already implemented safety measures such as requiring negative COVID-19 test results, mask wearing, temperature checks, social distancing and more ([see story](#)).

According to Deloitte, these vaccine passports may prove essential in protecting both consumers and employees as well as speed up economic recoveries.

Creating secure and transparent vaccine credential systems can also improve consumer confidence, both in using certificates and participating in events or activities that require such certificates. Implementing digital health certificates now may also help avoid complications in the coming years, if new COVID-19 variants are identified or vaccine efficacy wanes possibly requiring credentials to expire or be revoked. ([see story](#)).

"When asked about the factors that will be important when booking their next holiday, the APAC wealthy travelers cited fine dining and beverages in the second position right after health and safety considerations," Ms. Schneider said. "This demonstrates strong intentions to resume activities within the travel ecosystem.

"We will certainly see a positive impact at a domestic and regional level first, and international duty-free retail, for example, might be slower to re-emerge."

---

© 2021 Napean LLC. All rights reserved.

Luxury Daily is published each business day. Thank you for reading us. Your [feedback](#) is welcome.