

THE POWER OF THE COLLECTIVE

EPISODE 03

OUR NEW NORMAL: 5 PREDICTIONS FOR THE
POST-CRISIS CUSTOMER MINDSET

MODERATED BY:**TANSY KASCHAK**

Sustainability Editor, *A Hotel Life*

PANELISTS:**JENNY GRAHAM**

Managing Director,
Quintessentially Travel

**SERDAR KUTUCU**

CEO, Slow Hospitality

Since lockdown came into effect across regions, two main predictions about post-crisis travel have emerged:

- People will be more safety-conscious than ever before, when they resume travelling
- Many of us will use travel as a way to reunite and reconnect with loved ones

But what other micro-trends are likely to emerge? The third episode of our digital series posed this question to Jenny Graham and Serdar Kutucu, who forecast the five trends below based on their recent conversations with clients and peers. Consider the below your post-COVID crystal ball.

01.

Nostalgia will trump new experiences.

Travellers will be seeking familiarity and reassurance – and what could be more comforting than returning to a place where happy memories were made? “Travellers won’t necessarily want [something] new, but something meaningful and important,” opined Serdar. For travel advisors, this means encouraging clients to revisit the resort where they celebrated a milestone anniversary, all-time family reunion, or memorable childhood vacation. What was old will become new again.

02.

Stays will last longer but be closer to home.

Both speakers predicted that the era of multiple-yearly-vacations may be over, with extended weekend trips and even sabbaticals taking their place. “People have had time to re-evaluate their value systems, slowing down and discovering what’s important,” agreed Jenny, who has already fielded requests for sabbaticals post-lockdown. Due to border restrictions and social distancing, people will be looking to avoid air travel and drive to destinations closer to home instead. Retreats near urban hubs – like the English countryside or Portugal’s Lisbon Coast – are likely to spike in popularity.



03.

Privacy and nature will be a priority.

Many people will continue to seek seclusion, even after lockdown is lifted. From private villas to intimate resorts, travellers will look for more privacy than ever before. Serdar predicts this could also help mitigate overtourism, with second cities and lesser-visited destinations becoming more desirable than ever.

04.

Transparency will be expected.

Assurances of safety measures (room service over buffets; contactless entry over key cards, etc.) are a given, with many hotels already sharing meticulously updated housekeeping and sanitation policies for when they do reopen. But in a post-COVID world, travellers will expect brands and hotels to go beyond their ethical obligations and be fully transparent about not only their safety practices, but their supply chain and sustainability, too. The onus will also be on travel brands to show how they can actively improve their customers' lives. "There will be a deeper engagement with every trip we make – an expectation that holidays contribute not only to a better life, but better wellbeing," forecast Serdar.



05.

'Bleisure' will become a reality.

Yes, it's yet another millennial portmanteau, but 'bleisure' – you guessed it; the blurring of business and leisure – could actually become a way of life in our new normal. Whether you love it or hate it, WFH has now become a daily reality, and many have found it actually works. "The next generation will master how to live, work and travel in harmony, creating 'home offices' wherever they go," agreed Serdar. For the contemporary travel niche and L.E/Miami collective, this is highly promising news, with boutique hotels particularly well-placed to benefit from bleisure travel.