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GLOBETRENDR

## Travel Trend Report

October 2020

**travel after 2020**

what will **tourism** look like  
in our **new reality?**

euronews.  
TRAVEL



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Jenny Southan is editor and founder of Globetrender, a travel trend forecasting agency and online magazine dedicated to the future of travel. Jenny is also a public speaker and freelance journalist who writes for publications including Conde Nast Traveller, The Telegraph and Mr Porter. Previously she was features editor of Business Traveller magazine for ten years.

## Contributor



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*Euronews Travel Contributor*

Eva zu Beck is an adventure YouTuber and travel TV host with a community of 2 million fans across her social media channels. She travels to countries rarely covered by mainstream media, and tells the stories of overcoming challenges in some of the planet's most remote places.

# introduction

**Hit hard by the global Covid-19 pandemic, the travel and tourism sectors are facing a rapidly changing future.**

As brands and businesses look to recover losses, there's also a need to re-think their offerings, amid changing consumer behaviour and habits. New mindsets, needs, wants and desires – some fuelled by lockdowns – are emerging.

**With so much change on the horizon, there's lots for the industry to think about and embrace.**

Evolving trends will need to be understood and embedded into services and products and their associated marketing and communication – if providers are to remain relevant and in touch with the traveller of tomorrow. It is against this backdrop, in a year of extraordinary change, that Euronews – in partnership with travel trend forecasting agency Globetrender – is publishing this Trend Report, **Travel After 2020: What Will Tourism Look Like In Our New Reality?**

## Leading the conversation

**As Europe's leading international news channel, Euronews is helping to lead the global conversation and debate around the future of travel and tourism.**

This is not only reflected through news and programme coverage, but also the hosting this year of a **special series of virtual debates**, dedicated to the future of the sectors. These sessions have provided a **platform for leaders and thinkers** from national, European and global tourism organisations, to help map out the coming months and years for an industry that is crucial to so many economies.

**The publication of this Trend Report also coincides with the launch of Euronews Travel, a brand new vertical, telling the stories at the heart of all this change.** Despite travel almost grinding to a halt in 2020, we discovered increasing audience interest in the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on the industry. We saw an opportunity to address a **new type of consumer – the Conscious Traveller** – with the launch of the new editorial offer, tailored to those who want to **see the world in a different way**. Those who are hungry to generate **unique experiences and memories, but not at the cost of the planet and local communities**.

## Rise of responsibility

*“People are going to make choices in a very different way. Taking much more responsibility about their decisions and actions while being on holiday or planning a holiday,” says Eduardo Santander, Executive Director of the European Travel Commission (ETC). “Safety and security will be the most important priority for everybody, for both destinations and travellers. We'll see that people are starting to look for a much more customised product. Consequently, we'll probably be facing completely new product development.”*



Photo: Green People

## New trends

With the Conscious Traveller at its heart, this report seeks to explore how consumer behaviours are changing and to highlight the trends that will impact the industry for the months and years to come. **Our research highlights six emerging trends within existing travel and tourism themes: wilderness** (celestial escapes), **nomadic** (glampervan journeys), **eco** (cultivacations), **wellness** (longevity retreats), **authentic** (community immersion) and **mindful** (co-working camps). Whether it's star-gazing in Namibia and Bolivia or mixing the wild beauty of the Scottish Highlands with some nature conservation, an earthly connection is a big part of consumer desires.



# introduction

“I think everyone has been forced to take stock and look at the bigger picture and look at what is actually relevant to them,” says Chris Mears, Chief Executive of the African Travel & Tourism Association (ATTA). “From a tourism and leisure perspective, I think people are going to continue travelling. They might not travel as frequently as they used to and what they might do is longer trips. Spend longer in one destination, so that they can really actually get to know it.”

All this means extended experiences such as trekking across the Moroccan desert for months, or taking an ultra-slow rail adventure, are set to grow in attraction.

## Rethinking tourism

**The rising interest from tourists for new, nature-based experiences will also open-up new opportunities for rural areas,** which historically have had to fight harder for a slice of the travel cake.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says there’s now a chance “to rethink how tourism interacts with our societies, other economic sectors and our natural resources and ecosystems; to measure and manage it better; to ensure the fairer distribution of its benefits and to advance the transition towards a carbon-neutral and more resilient tourism economy”.



**Combining work with travel has also been identified as a major trend.** The digital nomad can now operate from almost anywhere in the world, provided they have wifi access. As a consequence, “Co-working Camps” are springing up in exotic destinations, enabling lovers of travel to combine exploring with the 9 to 5.

## A ‘regenerative’ future

“Obviously, everybody wants to have travel and tourism back, it’s not a question of that, it’s about how you want the industry to be,” says the European Travel Commission’s Eduardo Santander, as he ponders a post-Covid future.

“We advocate for a transformative, regenerative process. It’s only in the darkness that you can see the stars. There are a lot of lights out there, we just have to follow the right ones.”

**What do the trends we have identified mean for travel and tourism leaders?** Just because there is a global pandemic and a climate emergency, it doesn’t mean people have stopped thinking about their own personal needs and happiness. On the contrary. Although most tourists hate to think that their presence is damaging in anyway, in 2021 and beyond, the priority for most people will be to experience **freedom, a change of scene, and time with family and friends.** Support from travel companies will be vital for years to come – whether it is in the form of rigorous hygiene measures, carbon offsetting on the customer’s behalf or guaranteeing fully flexible bookings.

**The Conscious Traveller of tomorrow doesn’t want to make sacrifices** or be a martyr – they have spent the best part of a year being grounded so it’s important to remind people that travel is a reward they have earned, and that **the industry is becoming more responsible** on their behalf.

## METHODOLOGY

**A variety of research and analysis methods were used in the creation of this Trend Report.**

The six trends, identified by Globetrender as being the most relevant for 2021 and beyond, were based on in-depth qualitative research, in the context of current STEEP (social, technological, economic, environmental & political) forces.

The six themes were informed by conversations, perspectives and analysis arising from a recent series of virtual debates on the future of travel, hosted by Euronews, against the backdrop of the global pandemic.

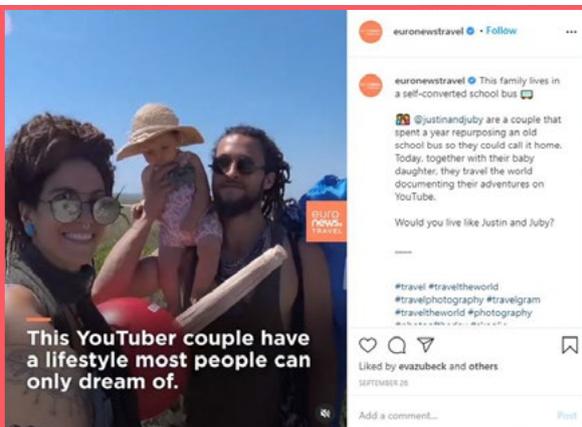
The six case studies were based on remote video interviews with key representatives from each of the countries featured: Japan, Bulgaria, South Africa, Scotland, Morocco and India.

Interviews were also conducted with the European Travel Commission and the African Travel & Tourism Association. Other sources consulted included social media analytics, industry data, UNWTO reports, the Ipsos Affluent Survey & the GlobalWebIndex (GWI).

# creating travel content for conscious travellers

## Time to reframe how we look at travel.

Euronews Travel is **Euronews' new digital destination** aimed at a European audience of people who travel to discover **new places, cultures and encounter new perspectives**. Here, **Eva zu Beck, Travel content Creator, social media influencer and Euronews Travel Consulting Editor**, gives her take on where travel and tourism are headed post-2020 and what it all means for the platform's editorial offering.



This YouTuber couple have a lifestyle most people can only dream of.

## What's the reaction been on social to the pandemic and its impact on travel?

**Eva zu Beck:** Everybody knows that some behaviours that used to be completely normal in the past are not going to be around for the foreseeable future. For example, things like country-hopping and weekend trips. They're not something that influencers are advertising for or advocating at all these days.

I think there is generally a mood that everyone's aware that the next trend is going to be slower and more sustainable travel. So, for example, purchasing a ticket to Mexico nowadays doesn't mean that you will go to Mexico and then from there, fly to Brazil or some other place in South America. Not at all. In fact, you're going to stay there for a while and do a deep dive into the country.

## Is it time for a big re-think?

**Eva zu Beck:** I think the whole pandemic situation has been a wake-up call, the fact that airlines have been doing so poorly, has kind of shown us that maybe there is a different way to travel. A way that doesn't rely so much on flying and doing travel quickly, but rather maybe doing road trips, investing in an alternative, more eco-friendly, more planet-friendly and more authentic local way to see places and explore cultures.

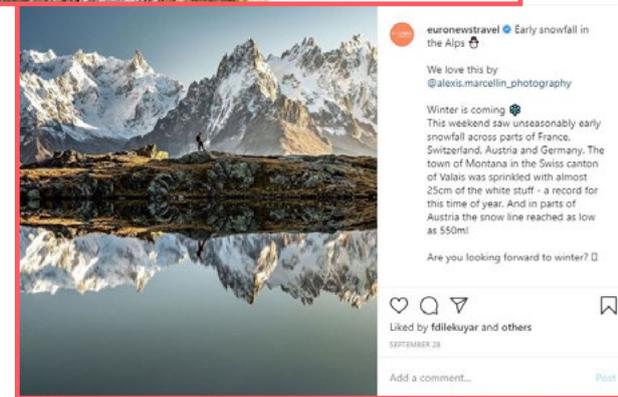
One kind of reality that I've been confronted with as a social media creator in travel is that people have felt frustrated about seeing influencers jetting around the world, promoting lovely destinations, going from one place to the next. Almost promoting quantity over quality. What we're seeing now is definitely a move in the opposite direction. People are still hungry to travel but I'm seeing adaptation.

# creating travel content for conscious travellers

## How will the industry adapt? What will be the focus for consumers?

**Eva zu Beck:** I think there is definitely going to be more of an emphasis on things like remote travel, wilderness travel, going out camping and hiking, exploring nature on your own two feet or a bicycle. I think another trend we're really seeing, and that we'll see more of, is tour agencies and companies advocating for longer experiences. So, for example, instead of checking out three different cities in Morocco over a week, maybe the new proposition will be to stay with a family in the mountains that's more remote and you can really absorb the culture.

What I am really hoping to see is that those in the industry who do survive will be the ones who promote a slower, more sustainable way of travelling. I don't think that we should go back to pre-pandemic levels.



## What does this all mean for your editorial approach at Euronews Travel?

**Eva zu Beck:** A lot of the content themes that we're focusing on really revolve around this idea of conscious travel, that consumers deeply evaluate their travel choices. To think about how the journey to their destination will impact the planet, but also how their choice of travel agent or destination affects the local culture or community.

The kind of stories that we are sharing are more centred around wilderness travel. We're also showcasing things like local foods that people may not have thought about trying. Also sharing alternative accommodation ideas, such as renting homes or staying in tents.

We're even trying to encourage people to reconsider their lifestyles. We're focusing on people who are sort of 'van-living' their way across the world or living off-grid, installing new kinds of power sources in their holiday homes, that sort of thing.

It's about reframing how we look at travel – it should be less of a commodity and more a tool for personal growth and enlightenment.



Photo: Eva zu Beck

# six trends shaping travel after 2020

WILDERNESS TOURISM

**#1 Trend:**  
Celestial Escapes

ECO TOURISM

**#2 Trend:**  
Cultivacations

NOMADIC TOURISM

**#3 Trend:**  
Glampervan Journeys



WELLNESS TOURISM

**#4 Trend:**  
Longevity Retreats

AUTHENTIC TOURISM

**#5 Trend:**  
Community Immersion

MINDFUL TOURISM

**#6 Trend:**  
Co-Working Camps

# #1 wilderness tourism

After months of cabin fever, there is a universal hunger for wide-open spaces. In the US, for example, state and national parks have experienced huge influxes of visitors post-lockdown, and the trend is set to continue in 2021 and beyond as time spent in the wilderness is felt to be an antidote to modern urban life.

With constant “noise” from our cities, as well as the news and social media, the search for silence will be a top priority. Non-profit organisation Quiet Parks International will be leading the way with its mission to protect places of natural peace – in 2020, Yangmingshan National Park in Taiwan became the world’s first Urban Quiet Park.

With ever-greater numbers of tourists, the number-one priority will be to preserve wilderness locations, imposing immediate caps on visitors if necessary.





# celestial escapes

A combination of on-going pandemic anxiety and over-technologised living has meant that re-connecting with the natural world is becoming increasingly important.

For the Conscious Traveller, **finding space from crowds in beautiful natural environments** will be high on the agenda in 2021 and beyond. Within the Wilderness Tourism theme there are numerous subtrends – in this case we are highlighting Celestial Escapes.

As the world becomes more urbanised, finding night skies that are unpolluted by artificial light is getting increasingly harder. Up until now, most people plan holidays around what they do in the daytime but as **the call of the wild** becomes more pronounced, **post-dusk experiences** such as campfires, starlight cinemas, astronomy classes and sleeping under the heavens will become more popular.

Anticipating demand for Celestial Escapes, luxury travel company Black Tomato can arrange for stargazing holidays to Namibia's Dark Sky Reserve (the only one in Africa) and Bolivia's Salar de Uyuni salt flats.



At the latter, **guests stay in dome tents** right on the lunar terrain. Meanwhile, at the Amanjena hotel in Morocco, Aman has introduced a new "Into the Wilderness" experience in the Agafay desert that gives guests the chance to eat a Berber-style **dinner in the light of the stars**.

**What's motivating people?** Tom Marchant, co-founder of Black Tomato, says: *"These days people are looking for escapes, and looking at the stars is a window into other worlds. People have been losing themselves in the night sky since the beginning of time and this is no exception – stargazing is a way of discovering ancient methods of navigation, advances of modern science, and the ability to dream all at once."*

 **SOCIAL MEDIA VIEW**

Social media influencers have been promoting wilderness travel in 2020 partly as a solution to deal with the difficulty of urban travel. A common trend is to promote destinations which facilitate social distancing, and which offer a respite from the stress associated with the pandemic. Beyond 2020, this trend could lead towards an increase in interests around hiking, camping or even survival, as part of the wider wilderness travel theme.

**What is the impact for marketers?**

*With space tourism on the horizon, the celestial escapes trend can be used as a segue into talking about life beyond Earth and unique after-dark experiences. The Conscious Traveller wants to get out there, amongst the wilderness, closer to nature, so the time is now for marketers to create and promote 'out of this world' experiences which not only amaze and satisfy, but also create lasting memories.*

# going wild & giving back

THEME #1

Escaping to the wilderness, while also giving something back. That's the driving force behind Wildland, which has a 200-year vision to preserve and conserve the rich natural heritage of the Scottish Highlands.

It's appealing to the Conscious Traveller, hungry for new experiences that are both raw and rewarding.

*"What we have noticed is a great embracing of the landscape by guests, looking to create experiences that help immerse them in nature itself,"* says Lavinia Turner, from Wildland. *"Be it staying in a remote bothy [hut], to having a picnic on a hill to more natural activities. Things like walks with a ranger and wild swimming."*

Wildland has 12 sprawling estates in the Highlands. It offers accommodation designed for all budgets, ranging from remote bothys and lodges to luxurious boutique hotels. It's currently renovating a castle on Loch Ness.

*"We've been looking to create a kindred emporium of 'beyond ordinary' experiences for travel and hospitality. Simplifying, going back to nature, going back to beautiful property, beautiful landscapes and looking at the restoration and the pure enjoyment of those,"* explains Lavinia.

Wildland, owned by a Danish businessman, is ploughing all its revenues into realising this ambition. *Its ethos is allowing nature to "heal, grow and thrive."*

Lavinia says: *"We want to look after landscapes that have been decimated by deforestation, where species have been lost and where there's been an erosion*



Photo: Visit Scotland

*of habitats. Not just land, but also architecture. So a complete regeneration. It's very much about creating a landscape which is full of hope for the future."*

*"You can head out with a ranger, learning about the habitat, about the wildlife,"* adds Lavinia, as she explains the role visitors can play. *"Also, we look for help to restore some of our locations and landscapes, even down to general tidying-up, looking after our peat lands."*

Scotland has long attracted first-time and repeat visitors with its wild and rugged beauty, but now it's about having that deeper connection.

*"We refer to things like forest bathing, the growth in open water swimming. People are developing an almost spiritual attitude to engagement with the wilderness,"* says Chris Greenwood, Senior Tourism Insight Manager at Visit Scotland. *"Life is stressful enough. People want that escapism and they want to do that in pristine environments. But it's more than just the wilderness, it's that connection to culture, heritage, seeing the real destination."*



Photo: Visit Scotland

# #2

# eco tourism

According to the International Ecotourism Society, ecotourism is “responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people and involves education”. It takes many forms, and has been a type of travel that has grown in popularity over the past decade.

In the wake of the pandemic, people will be thinking far more carefully about the way they travel, and seeking out hotels and companies that are doing everything they can to minimise their impact on the planet. We can also expect accreditation to gain prominence, as consumers look for reassurance from legitimate “eco tourism” and “carbon negative” certifications.





TREND #2

# culti vacations

Ever since Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg came on the scene and the term “flight shame” entered common parlance, the term “Eco tourism” has taken on new meaning and significance.

Doing a bit of volunteer work and washing in an outdoor shower by no means goes far enough when it comes to travelling in a way that is **“ecologically” kind to the planet**. Can travelling ever be zero-impact? Or better still, have a positive impact? It’s a big challenge but thanks to pandemic-induced travel bans, there is a chance to **start afresh** and do things better in the years ahead.

In this Trend Report, from the viewpoint of the Conscious Traveller, we are looking at an emerging Eco tourism sub-trend that we have called “Cultivacations” (a portmanteau of “cultivation” and “vacations”). In the age of Covid-19, there has been a clear shift towards **learning how to grow, connect with the earth and make things by hand** (just look at how gardening and bread-making took off during lockdown).

This, combined with a desire to steer clear of crowded cities in favour of more **rural and forested settings** (where the risk of contagion is lessened) will see a rise in travellers seeking to spend time on farms, ranches and self-sufficient hotels where they can harvest vegetables, forage and discover the joys of agriculture.

 **SOCIAL MEDIA VIEW**

Eco tourism has been trending on social media more than ever, thanks to increasing conversations around climate change and the slower pace of travel imposed on us by the pandemic. Influencers in the travel space are increasingly getting questioned on their environmental practices, and “flight shaming” is not uncommon. In the future, these conversations are likely to become louder and more dominant on social media, as Conscious Travellers begin to highlight environmentally friendly tour agencies, hotels and destinations over all others.



Photo: Hoshino Resorts

Places that are manifesting this trend include Hoshino Resorts’ Risonare Nasu in Japan, which opened in 2019 is a **working organic farm**; and the Newt in Somerset (UK), which is a **country house hotel** that has incredible gardens. (In 2021, between April and September, it is offering “Great Garden Escape” day trips from London by train.) Also operating in the UK is culinary adventure travel company Sorn, which arranges “epicurean adventures” that include learning how to smoke trout and identify edible mushrooms, for example.

The Torgglerhof Apple Hotel Italy, meanwhile, is a high-end, farmcum-hotel that gets people **fruit picking** and riding around in tractors. It also produces its own sparkling apple wine. A spokesperson says: “We are convinced that the great approval for agrotouristic concepts roots in people’s growing interest in **escaping stressful urban environments and common daily routines.**”

In Sweden, Stedsans in the Woods is a self-sufficient lakeside hide-out with wooden cabins and its own **permaculture plots for growing food**. Co-founder Flemming Schiøtt Hansen says: “Next year we will expand our concept doing retreats **reconnecting people with nature.** We will offer talks and cooking classes, take people foraging and forest bathing, get them to help in the gardens, do cacao ceremonies and sit around a fire.

**What is the impact for marketers?**

*Eco-minded travellers are looking for so much more than tokenistic attempts to woo them in. For marketers in this sector, communicating experiences that have a genuine connection with nature is now even more crucial. It’s about making that link to the food we eat and promoting experiences that allow travellers to immerse themselves in the landscape and to get to grips with agriculture. In some cases, to also help revive traditional methods of farming that may be at risk of disappearing. Travellers want to know how they’re leaving a positive footprint. This is also about educating people how to live more sustainably.*

# eco-minded 'goat villages'

If you are keen to do something for the planet and escape the hustle and bustle of urban life, how about heading for the Himalayas?

The Indian state of Uttarakhand, visited for centuries by Hindu pilgrims, is pioneering a new blend of eco, agro and rural tourism.

At around 7,700 feet, you'll find eight "Goat Villages" run by an organisation whose mission it is to inject new life into abandoned communities and help reverse the migration of farmers.

The Green People offer farm retreats and homestays where visitors can immerse themselves in basic lifestyle experiences. Goat farming and other agricultural practices are being revived, with economic, environmental and conservation benefits at the heart of it all.

"These are remote areas, most of them are without electric and roads," explains Shiv Raj Singh, Owner and Managing Director of Atithi Voyages, which promotes the Goat Villages to travellers.

Different types of Goat Villages are on offer, including the "Goat Village Hideout" – where you can work within the local community. "Visitors can stay as long as they want and pay what they feel is justified. They can also not pay and help work here, give back to society and to the local farmers in this particular way," says Shiv Raj Singh. "People can come in, bring their own ideas.



Photo: Green People

*"They could be co-hosts, they could be managers, they can help build homes, keeping the ecological balance and eco tourism in mind."*

The impact of the global coronavirus pandemic could ultimately bring more conscious, eco-minded travellers to this remote part of India.

*"They will want to get into the deepest roots of the civilisation that has been one of the most ancient and to try to understand the evolution of humankind and how we have walked over everything," Shiv Raj Singh predicts. "Whether it's nature, whether it's climate change, you know the complete degradation of society."*

The Green People organisation is also encouraging farmers to grow local produce by helping them to get their goods into the food supply chain.



Photo: Green People

# #3

# nomadic tourism

The point-to-point holiday, whereby travellers fly to a single location and then return home, will be rivalled by an emerging trend for trips that take in multiple domestic locations, occur at a slower pace, and are as much about the journey as the ultimate destination. Connected to the trend for digital nomadism that sees people able to work from anywhere, annual leave allowances will become far less restrictive, allowing holidays to last longer.

In the future, being “on the go” will be a far more common state, be it among untethered Gen Z singletons, millennial professionals who can earn a living from a laptop or free-from-responsibility retirees. Health concerns are also motivating more and more people to buy cars to replace public transport – although worse for the environment, this will give way to a boom in road trips.





TREND #3

# glampervan journeys

Nomadic tourism is a theme we have chosen to focus on because of the dramatic, global shift to remote working, which in turn will see many laptop-centric professionals able to work from anywhere (“workations” will be a buzzword in 2021).

It also ties in with the **surge in domestic travel** as a consequence of Covid-19 border restrictions, a desire for post-lockdown freedom, and the rise of the sabbatical as a consequence of redundancy or simply a change in direction.

Because the safest way to travel during the pandemic is in your own vehicle and the fact that, for many people, **leaving one’s own country is too difficult, unsafe or expensive**, road trips will boom. Inspired by the nomadic #vanlife lifestyle concept (the phrase has appeared more than 8.3 million times on Instagram), at the more upmarket end is the trend for Glampervan Journeys.

In Europe, Indie Campers offers the largest fleet of rental caravans and motorhomes on the continent, with pick-up points in more than 40 cities. Demonstrating that demand has been increasing, in summer 2020,



Photo: BowlusRoadChief, EndlessHighways Performance Edition

the Financial Times reported that **bookings were up 350%** compared with the year before. At the same time, US-based peer-to-peer RV rental marketplace RVshare says it has experienced a 166% year-on-year increase in bookings this autumn (September-November 2020).

RVshare spokeswoman Maddi Bourgerie says: “RV [recreational vehicle] and campervan travel has been a growing trend over the past few years. However, buying a recreational vehicle isn’t plausible for most. Peer-to-peer platforms such as RVshare have made renting a campervan more accessible. Due to the pandemic, travellers are now more aware of RVs as an option. As consumer priorities change, RVs are a perfect option for **reconnecting with nature, discovering domestic destinations**, and making unique memories with loved ones.”

For those with a sizeable amount of budget (£75,000/€83,175 in this case), the new GlamperRV Business Line is a new luxury RV with **“business class” facilities** such as mobile wifi and a Nespresso machine. Then there is the cutting-edge Niesmann+Bischoff’s iSmove (€90,870) which has five-star hotel-style interiors including a proper kitchen and shower room, and Bowlus Road Chief’s “Endless Highways Performance Edition” RV (US \$225,000/€189,590), which has its own Bluetooth power system for going off-grid. Airstream trailers will also be making a comeback – for example, Autocamp is opening a stylish Airstream glamping site in Cape Cod, US, in 2021.



## SOCIAL MEDIA VIEW

‘Vanlife’ might just win the title of 2020’s most popular buzzword in travel. As remote working rose in popularity during lockdown, the concept of working while travelling has suddenly become realistic for wider audiences. With this in mind, and with more and more travel influencers choosing to pursue extended road trips in their own vehicles, this trend is likely to be part of the mainstream for a long time to come. We might even see a rise in popularity of more niche travel styles: bike packing, sailing or motorbiking.

## What is the impact for marketers?

Consumers who may never have considered hitting the road in a van are now doing so, helping to fuel this sector of the travel market. For marketers, it means spreading the word about road trip routes and itineraries to those hungry for an adventure: what’s out there, where and what you need to make it happen. Creative story-telling depicting nomadic experiences help to create a buzz. Highlighting ways to rent RVs in different parts of the world is another way to connect with this kind of traveller.

# living like a desert nomad

THEME #3

If you want to truly experience nomadic life, then the Moroccan desert provides escapism from the well-trodden tourist trails. Here you can go back to basics, trekking for months with just camels and local guides for company.

*“What this journey has really given me is a sense of intense connection, connection with the earth,”* says Edinburgh-born Alice Morrison.

She’s taken on a seven-month journey of discovery, trekking 4,000 kilometres across the desert and mountains of Morocco, accompanied by camels and guides. Alice **has fully embraced a nomadic lifestyle.**

*“We need to have water to drink, we need places to graze the camels, the right kind of herbage. When it’s a hot, a tree with shade is the best thing you can ever find, when it’s cold you feel it,”* she explained, during the final leg of her journey. *“It’s very simple, everything is so simple. I find that simplicity is extremely enriching. It sounds like you’re taking things away but in fact you’re gaining.”*

Morocco-based Desert et Montagne organises this kind of long experience, for travellers and adventurers from all sorts of backgrounds.

*“Often, we have people who are looking for some sort of retreat, to find inner-peace or to achieve a new experience or challenge. We also have groups looking for a therapeutic atmosphere, to heal personal problems,”*



Photo of Alice Morrison, during a Desert et Montagne journey

says Jean-Pierre, from the company. *“Nomadic journeys open up a new way of travelling, like crossing oceans in sailing boats. A great journey of a lifetime.”*

Amid the **rise of digital nomads**, with more people choosing to **move abroad to work remotely**, the desert could also become the new office for some.

*“It might be possible to do distance work because the internet is often available in some places,”* explains Jean-Pierre. *“Furthermore, we can assist with working materials for the long journey.”*

But for Alice: *“The whole business of exploring means that your life is full. Seeing new things every day, meeting new people, learning about a new way of life. After two weeks on the road, you’re really settled into a new routine and **your mind has emptied of all the stress, the noise and hubbub of everyday life.**”*



Photo: Desert et Montagne

# #4

# wellness tourism

Travel has, for centuries, been seen as a gateway for personal betterment – from accessing the healing powers of water in European “cure towns” to signing up for yoga retreats in India. In the viral age, the quest for improved health and immunity will be a powerful motivation for tourists globally, who will be seeking out places that boost their wellbeing.

In 2021 and beyond, we can expect beachgoers to be swapping sun and pina colodas for shade and coconut water. Even if visitors aren’t specifically travelling for a detox or bootcamp experience, they will want to book trips that leave them feeling better than before when they return home. Some will also be willing to go to extremes for radical physical overhauls.





TREND #4

# longevity retreats

Wellness tourism has been one of the most significant shifts the industry has seen in traveller motivation over the last few years, and as the Conscious Traveller becomes even more aware of their own health and mortality, this trend is only going to keep on growing.

According to the Global Wellness Institute, wellness tourism will be worth US\$919 billion by 2022, representing **18% of all tourism globally**. In this Trend Report, we are choosing to focus on the fledgling sub-trend for Longevity Retreats, a niche but important facet of wellness tourism that many spas, overseas clinics, health-focused hotels and travel companies will be wisely tapping into.

Just as **modern life with all its stresses and strains** has been pushing people to travel for physical transformation; the pandemic is also reminding people of their ultimate vulnerability as humans with a finite amount of time on the planet.

The world's **"Blue Zones"** (found in Greece, Sardinia, California, Costa Rica and Japan) are places that have been identified by experts as places where people live the longest. In the future, these will become hotbeds for longevity tourism.

On the Japanese island of Okinawa, for example, the Halekulani hotel has already been offering "Secrets of Longevity" retreats, while in Puglia, Italy (not far from Sardinia), luxury hotel Borgo Egnazia is selling Blue Zone-inspired "Longevity Programmes".



Photo: Borgo Egnazia, Vair Spa

Other frontrunners of this trend include hotel-clinic Buchinger Wilhelmi on Lake Constance in Germany, which launched an "Immunity+" programme in September 2020; Revivo in Bali; and the forthcoming Zual Wellness Resort in Qatar which will be a **"full-immersion wellness destination"** when it opens in Q2 2021, and also the world's first centre for traditional Arabic Islamic medicine.

Over in Switzerland, Clinique La Prairie's Revitalisation Premium programme claims to provide the world's most advanced (and possibly most expensive) **anti-ageing and longevity treatment**. It costs CHF 40,200 (€37,321).

Simone Gibertoni, CEO of Clinique La Prairie, says: *"The Covid-19 pandemic is inspiring all of us to be more conscious of our health, and seems set to drive demand for holistic wellness travel in the long-term once restrictions allow this. At our clinic in Montreux, our clients are increasingly seeking preventative and longevity-based wellness treatments, and we expect interest for these types of treatment to grow still further. At Clinique La Prairie, we believe that our health is our true wealth. We have integrated DNA testing into our signature programmes since 2018 and are now taking a particular interest in research on microbiota and senescent cells and their markers to determine how they can be used to promote longer lifespans."*



## SOCIAL MEDIA VIEW

The wellness tourism space is still ripe for the taking on social media: travel influencers rarely address wellness, while beauty influencers, even as they travel, rarely address local culture. This niche provides an opportunity to attract audiences from both the health and beauty and travel segments, and cover a vast range of subjects, from hyper-local and natural medicine, to luxury spa destinations.

## What is the impact for marketers?

*The fast-growing wellness sector will become even more important after 2020, with the Conscious Traveller thinking about their health more than ever. Positioning of wellness services is set to change from indulgences to necessities, with travellers prioritising fitness, stress-relief and therapeutic treatments. With health concerns being at the forefront, marketers will need to emphasise the scientific credentials of their wellness offerings, whilst also reassuring consumers about hygiene measures.*

# Bulgaria's natural medicine

THEME #4

Spa tourism is at the heart of Bulgaria's tourism offering. Home to an abundance of thermal waters, with 1,600 springs dotted throughout the country, it's keen to seal its slice of the global wellness market.

*"Provoked by the Covid-19 outbreak, health and wellness tourism is becoming more and more important,"* says Bulgaria's Minister of Tourism, Mariyana Nikolova.

*"The effects and healing results of water therapy have been researched in depth and proven. There are already agreements in place with German health insurance funds, making available to German citizens our resorts for recreational and recovery tourism in Bulgaria."*

Head west and you'll find **Kyustendil**, known as the **"town of springs"**. The area is said to have once been a gathering place for tired Roman warriors, coming for treatment, recreation and entertainment.

The Strimon Garden Medical Spa Hotel is drawing on this history to offer a range of treatments and therapies, **using natural resources**.

*"Most of the people come to relax, but some of them are coming just for prevention or using our services to cure some diseases. Our water is very good for immune system diseases,"* explains General Manager Stanislavs Tsvetkova.



Photo: BrandBulgaria.eu

The hotel, which typically welcomes small groups from northern Europe and Israel, is now planning to **expand its spa facilities and services**. *"It is the future of tourism,"* says Stanislavs.

But a new breed of visitor is likely to want more than just a spa experience when they visit a country. *"I think that the traveller of the future, especially considering the current situation and the changing perceptions about tourism and travelling globally, will be interested in so-called individual visits, individual packages,"* says Mariyana Nikolova. *"For example, a combination of mountainous climate and conditions and mineral water treatments. On top of these, traditional sights and cultural tourism as well."*

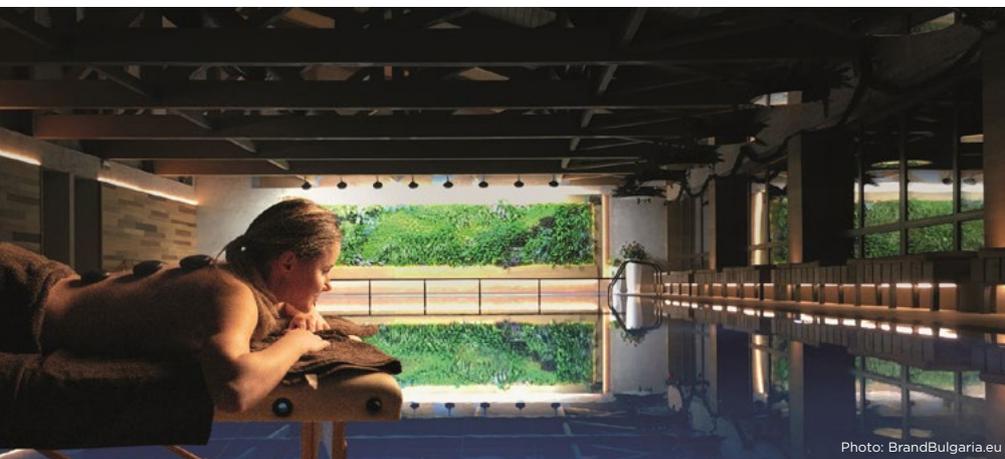


Photo: BrandBulgaria.eu

# #5 authentic tourism

In the Instagram age, authenticity has become an ideal to be aspired to, particularly when so many aspects of Western people's lives are curated and seemingly flawless online. When it comes to travel, visitors don't want to visit identikit resorts that are disconnected and sterile. They want to immerse themselves in destinations and experience something "real".

Engaging with local communities in a safe and respectful way will be an important aspect, with tourists keen to learn and form human connections. When it comes to authentic tourism, travellers also want to leave a positive footprint - to give something back - whether that is paying direct or volunteering.





# community immersion

In 2019, travel and tourism contributed US\$8.9 trillion to the global economy, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council.

Although it was responsible for giving 330 million people jobs (one in ten jobs globally) the global pandemic has meant a lot of these have been lost, and the way the money flows through the industry means that a lot of the time, **the poorest people in many countries don't directly benefit from foreign visitors.**

To make travel truly ethical and sustainable, **using tourism to alleviate poverty** should be a top priority. By creating opportunities for outsiders to have **direct contact with local communities** (when it is safe to do so, post-pandemic), a mutually beneficial ecosystem will be created. For many travellers, staying in a hotel or resort means being isolated, but as the over-arching trend for Authentic tourism continues to gain traction, so too will the sub-trend for "Community Immersion".

We have seen companies like Airbnb do a great job of helping people **"live like a local"** (its Experiences and Adventures platforms are great add-ons to the home-let element) but this is just the beginning. In 2021 and beyond, spending time with economically marginalised residents (sometimes staying with families themselves) will **build and revitalise human connections** and direct funds straight into the pockets of those who need it most.



Intrepid Travel has been promoting community based tourism (CBT) for a number of years, with projects in both Nepal and Myanmar created in partnership with Action Aid and the World Wildlife Fund. Zina Bencheikh, managing director EMEA for Intrepid Travel, says: *"Community-based tourism is one the most effective and sustainable ways to improve livelihoods for local people, particularly in remote rural communities where there is a lack of economic opportunity. Not only does it generate income for families, but it allows community members to build new skills and share their history and culture."*

Cookson Adventures is another leader in this field, with the capabilities and connections to arrange for outsiders to meet with some of **the most remote tribespeople** on Earth in Papua New Guinea. Responsible Travel gives the opportunity to live alongside eagle hunters in Mongolia, and Original Travel, meanwhile, can take people into the heart of Transylvania where they can learn "lost skills" such as how to identify medicinal herbs, forge iron tools and learn folktales.

Being a specialist in adventure travel should not prevent travel companies tapping into this trend - even Virgin Voyages, which is launching in December 2020, is arranging for cruise-goers to **spend time with local entrepreneurs** when they go ashore. Alex Zeitz, senior manager of Sailor Experience, says: *"Virgin Voyages 'Shore Things' allow Sailors time to re-energise the soul and actively explore, uncovering culture a tourist guide might miss."*



## SOCIAL MEDIA VIEW

Luxury travel may have dominated the Instagram travel space in its early days, but this has been changing in recent times. We are now seeing a fledgling shift among travel influencers towards travel that is less polished and more authentic. From extra-remote destinations, such as the Siberian steppes, to authentic experiences, such as visiting remote tribes. In particular, much viral YouTube content in the travel space focuses on these unique, one-off experiences that create bridges between cultures.

## What is the impact for marketers?

*Done correctly, community-based tourism can bring great rewards and create long-lasting memories for all. But cultural sensitivity and ethical investment must be at the heart of all offerings and experiences. The Conscious Traveller will want to see evidence of that in marketing and communications, ensuring that their arrival helps to empower local communities and populations. It's about getting an insight into other cultures and ways of life that are enriching for all, not exploitative.*

# a taste of buddhist life

THEME #5

Take a train two hours south of the bright lights of the Japanese city of Osaka and you can immerse yourself in a completely different way of life.

The town of Koyasan, a UNESCO World Heritage site in Wakayama prefecture, is steeped in history. Kobo Daishi, who is said to have brought Shingon Buddhism to Japan in 806, built a headquarters here.

Today, the area is home to almost 120 active temples and more than 50 of them are now offering visiting travellers and pilgrims a place to stay for the night, in lodgings known as “shukubo”. It’s a chance to take up an authentic experience – sampling the traditional lifestyle of Buddhist monks.

“There are so many places removed from the cities in Japan that still have those deeply rooted traditions that they still follow,” explains Jonas Wisner, International Relations Coordinator at the Koyasan Tourism Division.

“Buddhists don’t eat meat. So, when you stay at a Buddhist temple, you can have ‘shojin ryori’ which is vegetarian cuisine. Another highlight is when you stay overnight at a temple, the next morning you can sit in on the Buddhist morning ceremony. They’ll wake you up around 5am ready for a 6 o’clock start. That’s a really good opportunity to honestly start your day.”

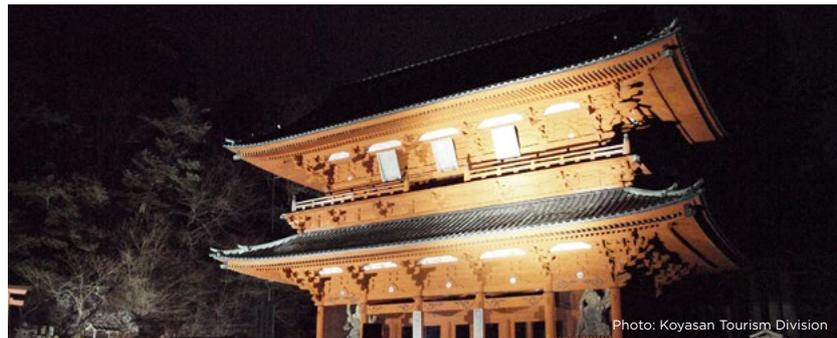


Photo: Koyasan Tourism Division

Jonas continues: “I think it’s not only important to be able to experience that on your own, but to be able to let people know that these things still exist and that there are still people living these kind of lives.”

Japanese and international visitors are attracted to the town, with some dropping in from nearby hiking routes.

“Koyasan’s history runs so deep,” says Jonas. “There are still these traditions that even after a thousand years are being kept up today. The monks want to convey the traditions to not only Japanese people, but to people from outside Japan as well, so that Koyasan still has a future to look to.”



Photo: Koyasan Tourism Division

# #6

# mindful tourism

Mindful tourism is about forging deeper connections with the places people visit and travelling with an attitude of “less is more”, eschewing itineraries packed with “the highlights”. Having a bucket list has been a way of building social prestige, but as travel as a consumerist act falls out of favour, more humble trips to less glamorous destinations will be what the Conscious Traveller seeks.

As the idea of the “holiday” starts to feel anachronistic, simply “being” abroad will be the mindful alternative. This will manifest in the rise of workations, where visitors combine work with vacations, embedding themselves for longer periods of time in a certain place.



# co-working camps

COWORKING CAMPS

TREND #6

“Mindful travel” is a term that has been popping up in magazines and on social media for a few years (on Instagram there are almost 60,000 posts with the #mindfultravel hashtag)

Mindful travel has never taken on such resonance as during the pandemic when people truly gained an appreciation for the **damage that “over tourism” has had** on the environment, historic cities and protected sites, and the way in which travel has been seen as a right, not a privilege.

Even at the tail end of 2020, most countries still have very strict rules about who can enter as tourists, and some, such as Australia and New Zealand probably won't open up until some time in 2021. Interestingly, the convergence of several factors is bringing about the rise of “Co-working Camps”, a trend born from the **boom in remote working, the problem of quarantines and testing** which puts people off taking short holidays, and the fact that some countries are beginning to target longer-stay tourists.

For example, from October 2020, Thailand is inviting visitors to stay up to 90 days (THB2,000/€54), with the option to extend up to 270 days, under a **new special tourist visa scheme.** Meanwhile, Bermuda and Barbados are offering year-long work visas to digital nomads (for US\$263/€222 and US\$2,000/€1,686 respectively).



## SOCIAL MEDIA VIEW

On social media, the philosophy of travelling mindfully has been gaining traction since before the pandemic – but, thanks to growing concerns around “over tourism”, it's only now entering the mainstream. Slower, regional travel, as well as longer stays with deeper cultural immersion have been all the rage among the influential voices in the travel sphere. There is huge, mostly untapped potential in this niche: from low-emission transport, to responsible travel initiatives that give back to the community.



Photo: Ethos Remote Habitat

As many more people shift to remote working and setting up their own businesses, **spending a month or two abroad to work on projects and explore will replace weekend city breaks and two-week “fly and flops”.** It will also help lower people's overall carbon footprint as they won't jet around so often.

Setting the trend for Co-working Camps are companies such as Roam, which has **co-live/work outposts** in places such as San Francisco and Miami, and Desa Potato Head, which has a new “creative village” in Bali. Meanwhile, Unsettled organises **co-working retreats** in places such as Medellin, Buenos Aires and the Peruvian rainforest, in a similar way to Workwanderers, which will be hosting groups of digital nomads in South Africa, Vietnam and Bali next year. Even Balance Holidays has announced that it is pivoting to encompass **longer-term stays for remote workers** with curated experiences.

Ethos Remote Habitat debuted in autumn 2020, with events, fitness classes, co-working facilities, accommodation, “family” dinners and wifi included. The idea is that **individuals and companies can relocate to an exotic remote work campus for between one and six months,** with rates starting from US\$1,450/€1,223 a week. Janko Milunovic, CEO and co-founder of Ethos Remote Habitat, says: “*Unlike just renting your own Airbnb or staying in a hotel, with us, you get to live in a community alongside inspiring individuals and revitalise your mind and body through nourishing and organic food, transformational workshops, group activities and learning immersions.*”

## What is the impact for marketers?

For marketers, long-stay travel is a rising phenomenon to focus on now. It's about highlighting destinations that are going out of their way to welcome this kind of visitor. Spreading the word about hotels and resorts which are offering packages for digital nomads. Things like working spaces being combined with upskilling courses and chances to meet entrepreneurs from all sorts of backgrounds are also attractive to those looking to combine business with pleasure in an overseas location.

# the blue train takes the strain

THEME #6

Public transport has long been seen as just a way to get from A to B. But mindful travel – along with changing consumer behaviour brought about by the global pandemic – is helping to fuel a renaissance in rail, where the journey is now the destination.

Step onboard **The Blue Train in South Africa** and you can step back from life, slowing down to a much gentler pace. To ponder where you've come and where you're going.

Described as the “**window to the soul of Africa**”, The Blue Train is a luxurious service running at ultra-slow speeds primarily between Pretoria and Cape Town, and vice versa.

On a route that would normally take less than two hours, this train journey affords passengers **two nights on board in their own suite**. It had originally been a one-night experience up until a couple of years ago.

Now there's even more time to take in the passing farmlands, mountains, wine lands and an excursion stop, **while being pampered with high-end dining and a personalised butler service**.

*“The Blue Train offers a resort-on-wheels kind of experience. When guests come on board, they are treated like the kings and queens that they are,”* says Executive Manager Vincent Monyake.



Photo: The Blue Train

*“They get treated to five-star gourmet meals in our dining car, which is a **very elegant** affair. In the observation car at the rear end of the train, there are large windows that offer a **panoramic view of the scenery** as the train traverses through the countryside. Something that you wouldn't have seen if you were to fly from Pretoria or Johannesburg to Cape Town.”*

The Blue Train attracts international travellers from all over the world including the US, Europe, Australia, New Zealand and Japan.



Photo: The Blue Train

# conclusion

**Never has there been a more important time to understand the future of travel.**

While there are plenty of reasons to be pessimistic, optimism is a choice – and when you view the world through a lens of **positivity**, you can start seeing opportunities instead of challenges.

It may not always be obvious but the Covid-19 pandemic is giving the travel industry a chance to rebuild itself in a **more ethical, considerate and regenerative way** for the planet and its people.

This report provides an understanding of what the **Conscious Traveller of 2021** and beyond will be looking for from the travel experience, and how some of the cultural trends emerging from the crisis – from remote working to lifespan extension – will shape our mindsets and the way we live for many more years to come.

After choosing a range of key themes, we then identified **six standout travel trends**, such as Co-working Camps and Longevity Retreats, to show the new directions taking place.

“Before the pandemic, UNWTO noted a growing demand for unique and authentic travel experiences, and a desire among tourists to make a positive impact on the places they visit. This trend is now likely to accelerate. This will help drive the sustainable development of rural communities, creating jobs and other opportunities outside of big cities, while at the same time helping protect and promote cultural and natural heritage.”

*UNWTO Secretary-General  
Zurab Pololikashvili*



Photo: Marten Bjork

## What are the key takeaways?

It may not be until 2022 that all the countries of the world have reopened their borders, and until there is a vaccine for the Covid-19 virus, testing will become a regular part of our lives, especially when it comes to travel.

For this reason, **going abroad will become a much more precious commodity** – an experience to be planned and savoured, mindfully. But there will also be an **urgent need for freedom and human connection**, manifested in trends such as Glamper-van Journeys and Community Immersion.

The Conscious Traveller isn't one person and doesn't apply to everybody but they do represent an **overwhelming shift in behaviour and sentiment towards appreciating the Earth and what it has to offer**: whether that's harvesting apples on a farm in Italy (Cultivacations) or taking a slow train instead of a fast plane; spending time with local families or sleeping under the stars (Celestial Escapes).

While 2020 has been about panic and endurance, 2021 will be about acceptance and resilience. **People are incredibly adaptable and the answer to every problem is almost always innovation.**

# further insights

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DEBATES

**Euronews Debates, our special series of virtual debates,** have provided a platform for conversations on the future of travel and tourism in the wake of the coronavirus pandemic.

**Featuring leading industry figures and thinkers,** representing a variety of brands, organisations and destinations, they have brought fresh perspectives from all over the world - with focuses on Europe, Asia and Africa.

**Our hosted discussions have also enabled consumer and business audiences to interact,** putting their questions to those at the heart of mapping out the travel of tomorrow, in this year of seismic shocks and unprecedented change.

Thank you to our speakers:

**Rita Marques,** Secretary of State for Tourism  
Portugal

**Matthew Baldwin,** Deputy Director-General  
European Commission, Mobility & Transport  
Directorate-General (DG MOVE)

**Eduardo Santander,** Executive Director  
European Travel Commission (ETC)

**Belén González del Val Subirats,** Head of Connectivity,  
Department of Strategic Marketing Planning, National  
Tourist Board of Spain (Turespaña)

**Alessandra Priante,** Regional Director for Europe  
World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

**Mikko Turtiainen,** Vice President  
Market Management, Finnair

**Jane Jie Sun,** Chief Executive Officer  
Trip.com Group

**Parami Fernando,** Head of Media  
& Communications, Sri Lanka Tourism

**Flor Diaz Pulido,** Head of Unit  
Aviation Policy, European Commission

**Elcia Grandcourt,** Regional Director for Africa  
World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO)

**Sisa Ntshona,** Chief Executive Officer  
South African Tourism

**Tim Cordon,** Area Senior Vice President,  
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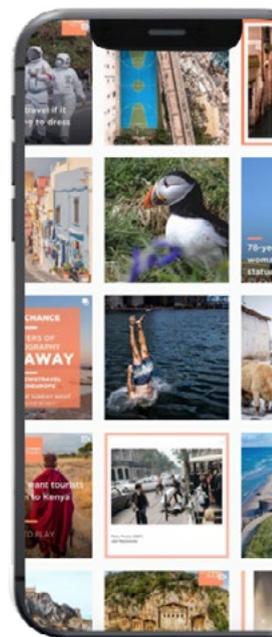
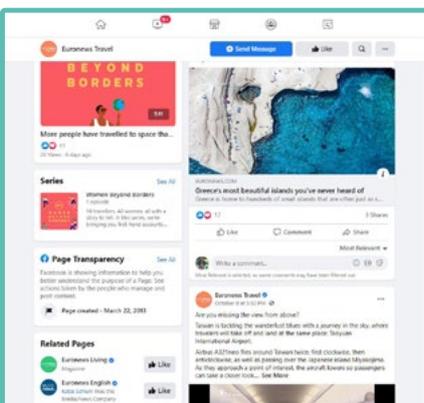
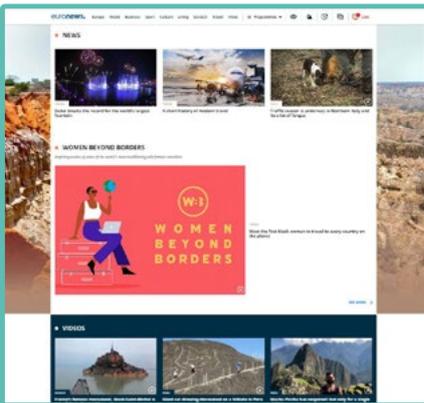
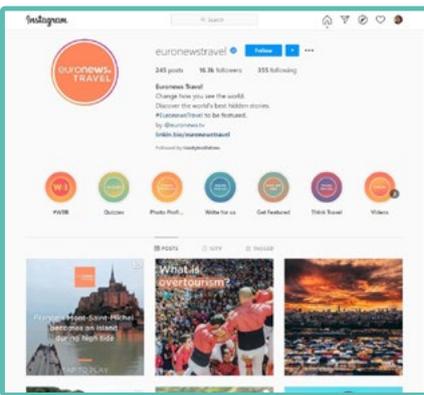
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**Globetrender delivers the future of travel** through a number of products and services including its online magazine at [globetrender.com](http://globetrender.com), free weekly trend briefings, in-depth trend reports, commissioned research projects and bespoke consulting.

**Globetrender constantly observes the global cultural and societal shifts** that influence how travellers feel, think and behave. Its expert trend forecasters identify patterns to accurately predict what consumers will want in years to come, enabling brands to stay ahead of the competition.



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