



# 2022

Forces, Places & Trends  
Shaping the Future of Travel





# Introduction

It's 2022, and not much has changed since 2020 as far as travelers are concerned. But behind the scenes, the work continues for companies and destinations eager to hit the ground running when the world inevitably enters its post-pandemic future.

While there is still much left to the imagination, small shifts and movements are slowly determining what that future might look like. In this trend report, we highlight the forces shaping the future of travel, trends to watch as well as the exciting places where travel is headed.

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# Forces Shaping the Future of Travel

The Wellness Imperative  
Business Travel 2.0  
Climate Realities  
Asia Rising  
China Outbound Rebound

# 1. The Wellness Imperative

Forget business versus leisure travel—if there ever was a line to cross that wellness travel today is more than just a visit to a spa, it is now. It's hard to see travel's recovery without looking at it through the lens of how wellness will influence, drive, and define how destinations, hotels, airports, aviation, cruise ships, and overall guest experiences will be designed and marketed. Virtually every touchpoint will be driven by a wellness imperative that will define how an experience will improve guests' physical, mental, and perhaps even spiritual wellbeing.

Pre-pandemic, wellness was typically defined by a set of behaviors and concrete offerings such as spa treatments, hikes, meditation sessions. Today and looking ahead, a paradigm shift is afoot. Following such a stressful period

that has upended lives all over the world, people will approach travel with more intention than before. Wellness has become a state of mind and a way of living. Travelers now seek experiences that promote and enhance their overall well-being, whether they're traveling for business, leisure, food, and more. Hospitality businesses will need to respond to changes in lifestyles that many have adopted over the pandemic, in ways that are intuitive and wholly innovative.

While the Global Wellness Institute's latest report has already projected that wellness tourism will reach US\$1.3 trillion by 2025, this figure doesn't even begin to take into account **how pervasive wellness' influence will be on virtually every aspect of the travel industry.**





## 2. Business Travel 2.0



There is no doubt that business travel will resume—the million-dollar question is when. A silver lining has emerged, with the technology sector making efforts to assist travel and tourism companies in surviving and even turning crisis into opportunity. **Tech's reimagination of business travel will shape its recovery** and offer a glimpse of the innovative ways that MICE will need to consider in organizing events, customizing incentive trips, building connections and more.

New tech taking the spotlight includes extended, augmented, and virtual reality (XR/AR/VR), which gives guests an immersive digital experience that is more than a sneak peek of a particular venue or even an experience. The metaverse is set to break boundaries and facilitate more open communication in the digital space, while hologram technology can elevate virtual presence, presentation, and interaction anytime, anywhere. Smart devices are now equipped with advanced voice recognition for simultaneous language interpretation, and integrated software allows facial recognition and engagement analysis technology without compromising privacy, matchmaking algorithms and Bluetooth beacon tracking function, boosting effectiveness not only for event organizers but also physical and virtual attendees at hybrid events.





### 3. Climate Realities

Today's travelers are more aware of climate challenges, pushing the industry to higher standards when it comes to embracing practices that delay—or in the case of regenerative travel, reverse—the effects of climate change.

While a place's environmental approach may not be its biggest attraction, countries branding themselves as sustainable destinations are earning plus points for their progressive, considerate stance. Iceland, where nearly 100 percent of electricity is generated from renewable energy, is a meaningful case study in sustainable transformation. Famed for its dramatic, otherworldly landscapes,

Iceland's appeal now stretches beyond its considerable natural beauty, offering travelers a taste of "safe and sustainable tourism". Scotland, the first country to commit to Tourism Declares a Climate Emergency, has won hearts of the likes of *Condé Nast Traveler* for its extensive efforts toward conservation and rewilding.

The seasonality of travel will be dictated not only by ideal weather but the preponderance of natural disasters and this will increasingly dictate how and where we travel. The effects of climate changes cannot be overstated.



## 4. Asia Rising

Rapid economic transformation and elevated standards of living are indicating where the next big travel markets might be. By 2030, over three billion Asians could join the world's emerging middle class, at a speedier rate than in Europe and the Americas. At present, Asia already comprises more than half of the world's middle class, accounting for 41 percent of the group's consumer spending. In just a decade, however, its share is expected to exceed 50 percent, or half of global spend—making them an all-important consideration when it comes to any industry, especially for travel and hospitality. While the pandemic has dealt a tough hand to countries all over the world, Moody's Investor Service forecasts that emerging markets in Asia are likely to fare better than in other regions.

Developing Asian markets such as the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, and Indonesia have upwardly mobile and digitally savvy populations eager to have a piece of the consumer pie. Southeast Asia alone contributes 350 million digital consumers, with new additions in one year equivalent to the population of the United Kingdom.

Other subsets to watch in Asia include the silver set, or over-50s and retirees in pursuit of enjoying well-earned time off, as well as solo travelers who are increasingly viewing travel as a means to connect with themselves.





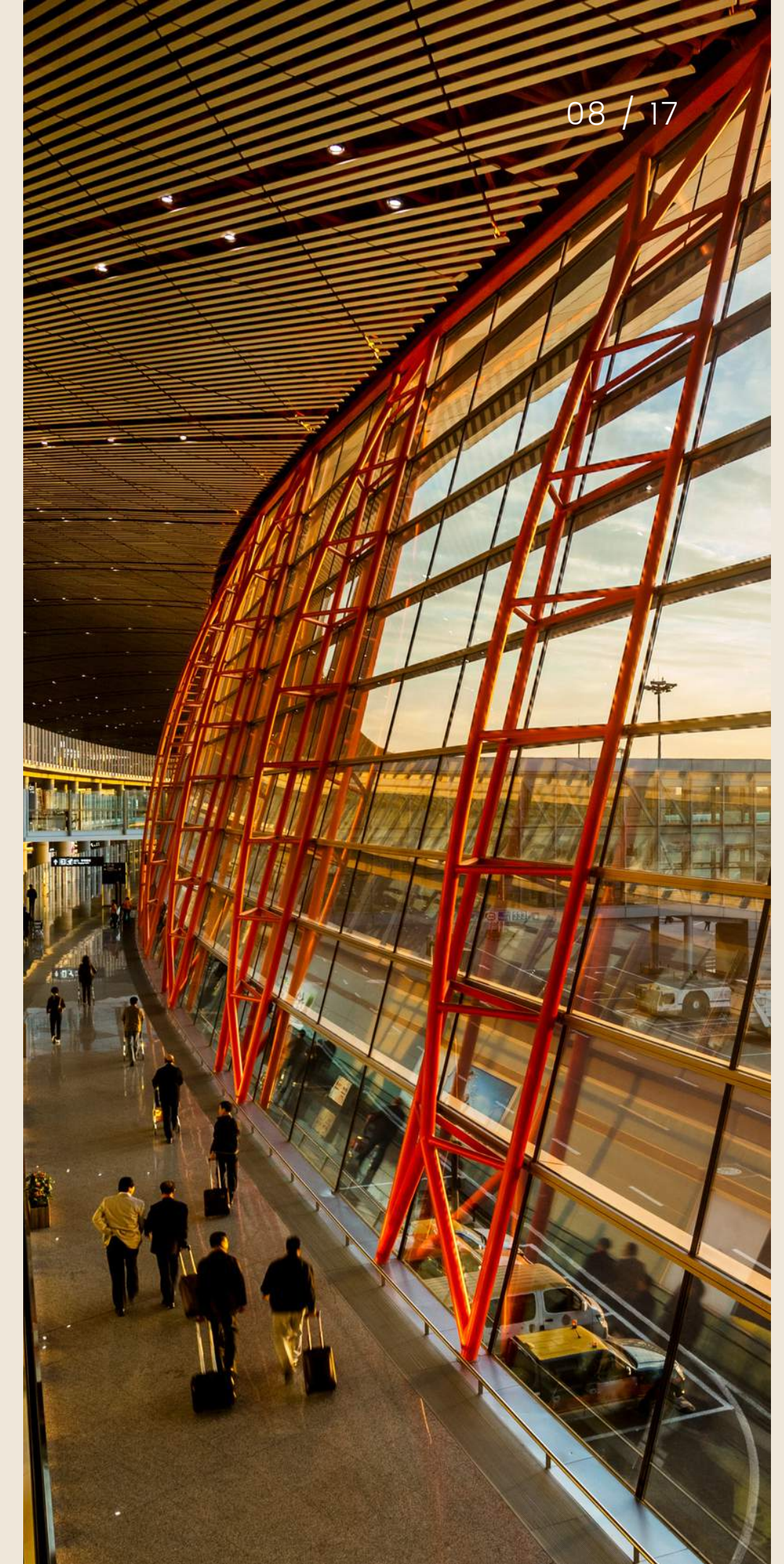
## 5. China Outbound Rebound

Pre-pandemic, Chinese travelers comprised at least one-fifth of global travel movement, with some 155 million Chinese making overseas trips in 2019. While domestic travel on the mainland has boomed (Chinese tourists enjoyed about 230 million trips locally over its five-day Labor holiday in May 2021), the recovery of global travel will rely on how the world re-engages with Chinese consumers, whose tastes will have evolved since countries last welcomed them in 2019.

Research pinpoints that rising trends and preferences of Chinese travelers notably include more personalization and self-guided trips, or free independent travel (FIT). These highly customized, more intimate journeys are a far cry from the large group tours once favored by the market. Sparked by fanfare around the Beijing 2022

Winter Olympics, sports tourism is also on their radar. Over 150 million people across China participated in snow sports in the previous winter, with indoor ski parks and resorts in Southern China attracting middle- to high-end consumers. Wellness is also a major attraction, with a rising number of young Chinese consumers demonstrating interest in physical fitness and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM).

It will be interesting to observe how this dynamic will play out within the context of the ongoing geo-political tensions. The reality is, as it was pre-pandemic and going forward, **global travel will continue to depend on China outbound simply because of the sheer size of the market** and its appetite to engage with the world.







# Destinations Pointing to the Future of Travel

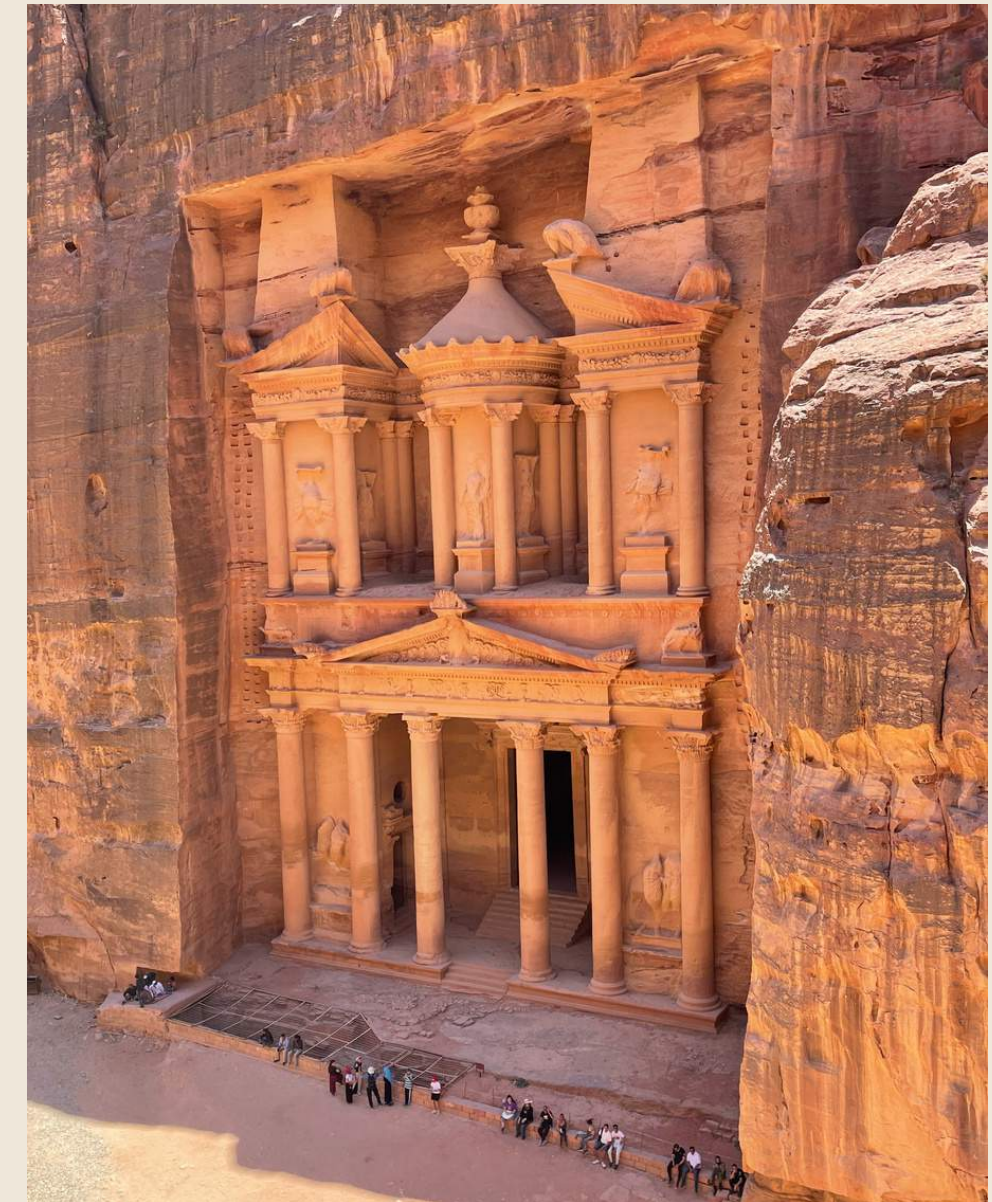
- Iceland
- Singapore
- Jordan
- UAE
- Vietnam
- Japan
- Mexico
- Turkey
- Italy
- Mozambique
- USA
- Qatar





**01** **Iceland**  
for its advanced approach to  
environmental sustainability

**02** **Singapore**  
for its courageous 'live with  
Covid-19' strategy



**03** **Jordan**  
for its conservation and  
restoration initiatives also  
designed to empower local  
communities



**04** Abu Dhabi, UAE  
for its innovative 'Abu Dhabi Concierge' simplifying travel amid the pandemic



**05** Ho Chi Minh City and Red River Delta, Vietnam  
for embracing cultural heritage in the midst of modernization

**06** Kyoto, Japan  
for celebrating traditional architecture

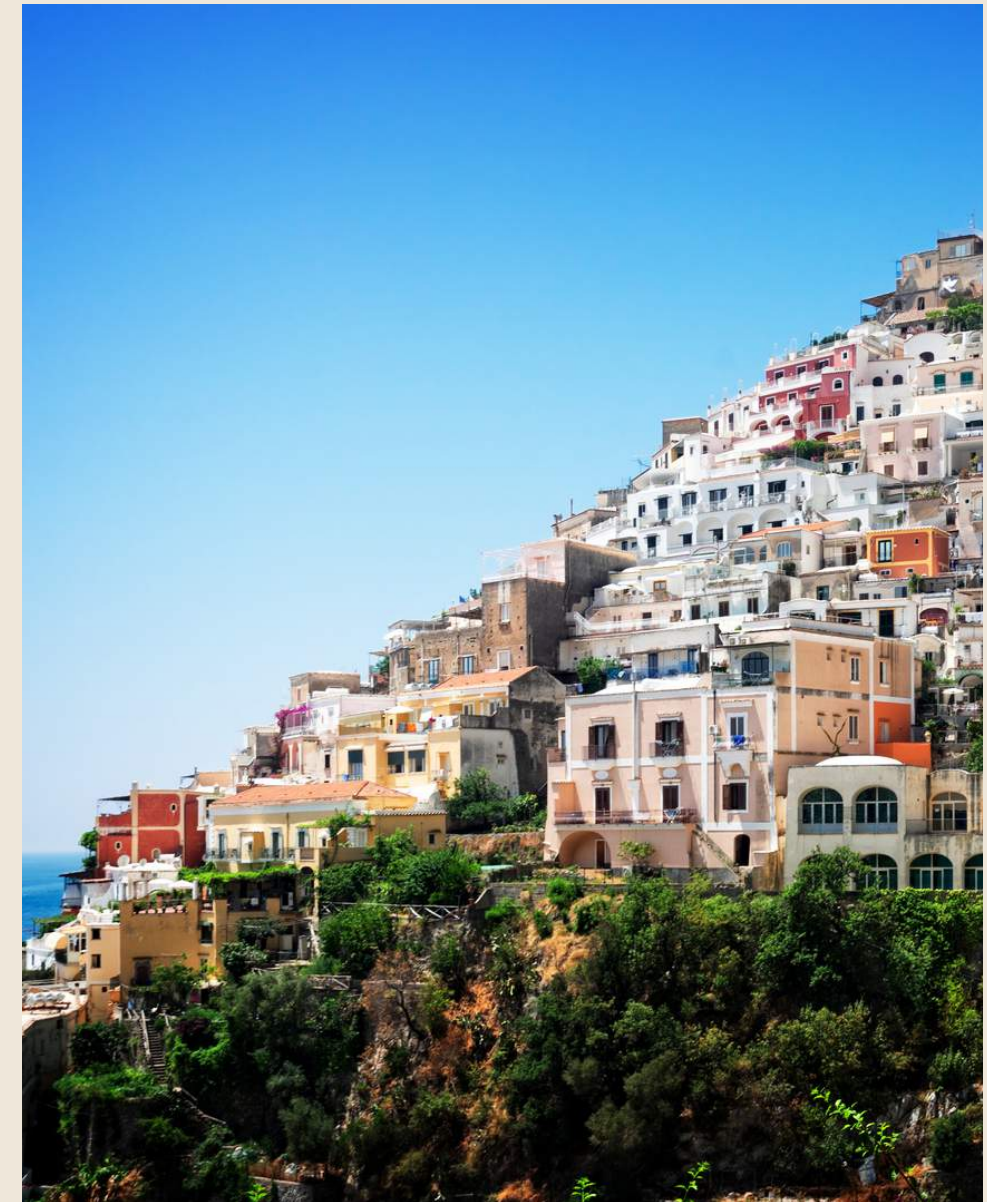






**07** Mexico City and Oaxaca, Mexico for a booming F&B, art and design scene, and stylish take on adventure travel

**08** Istanbul, Turkey for a slew of grand openings set to refuel the city's cultural landscape



**09** Naples, Italy for exciting art, design and heritage initiatives

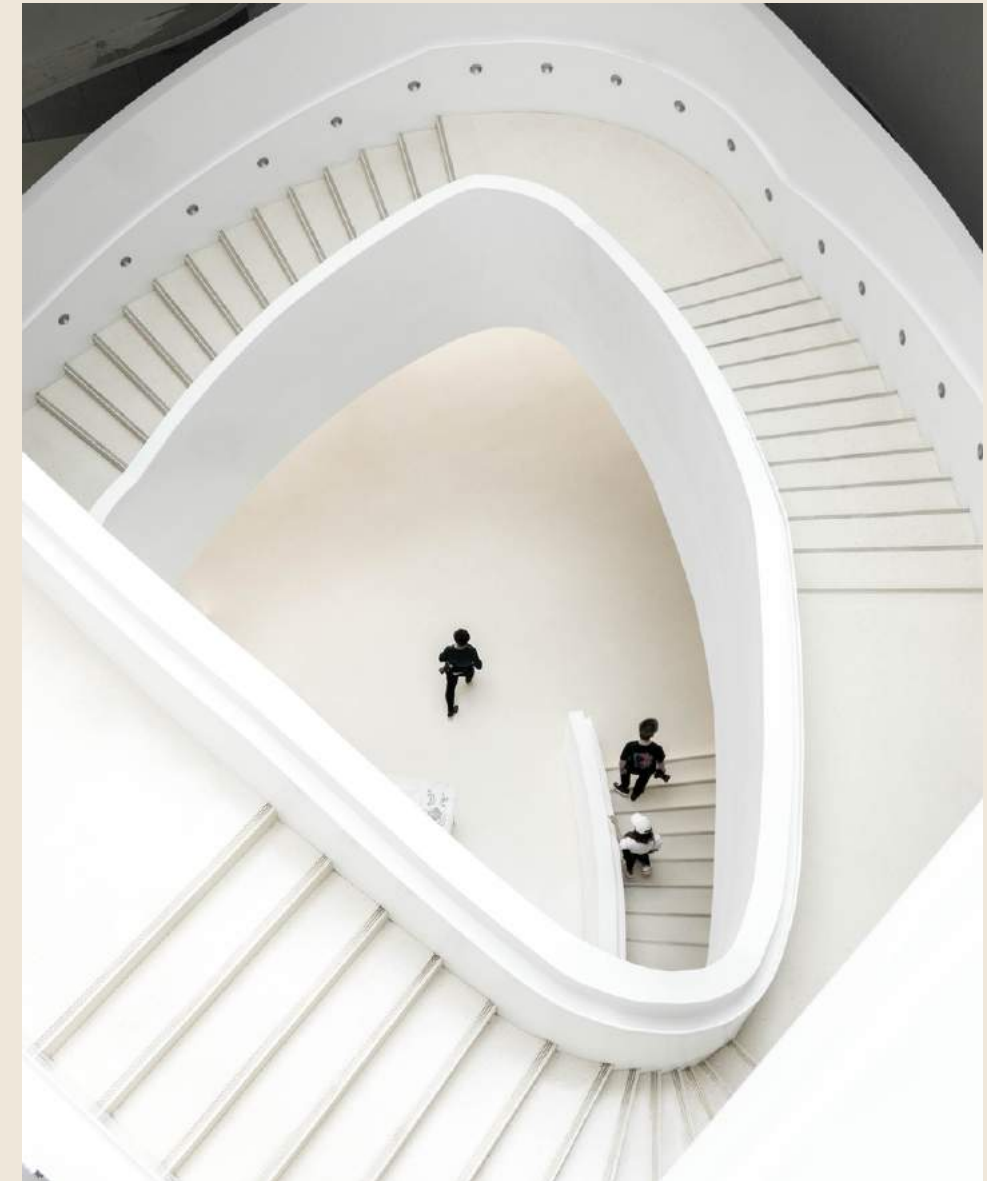


**10** **Mozambique**  
for showing resilience  
and honoring its wildlife



**11** **Arizona, USA**  
for thriving wellness destinations  
across the state in Morristown,  
Sedona, Tucson, and Scottsdale

**12** **Doha, Qatar**  
for East-meets-West initiatives  
and world-class architecture







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Travel Trends  
to Watch



## 1. Expedition Cruises

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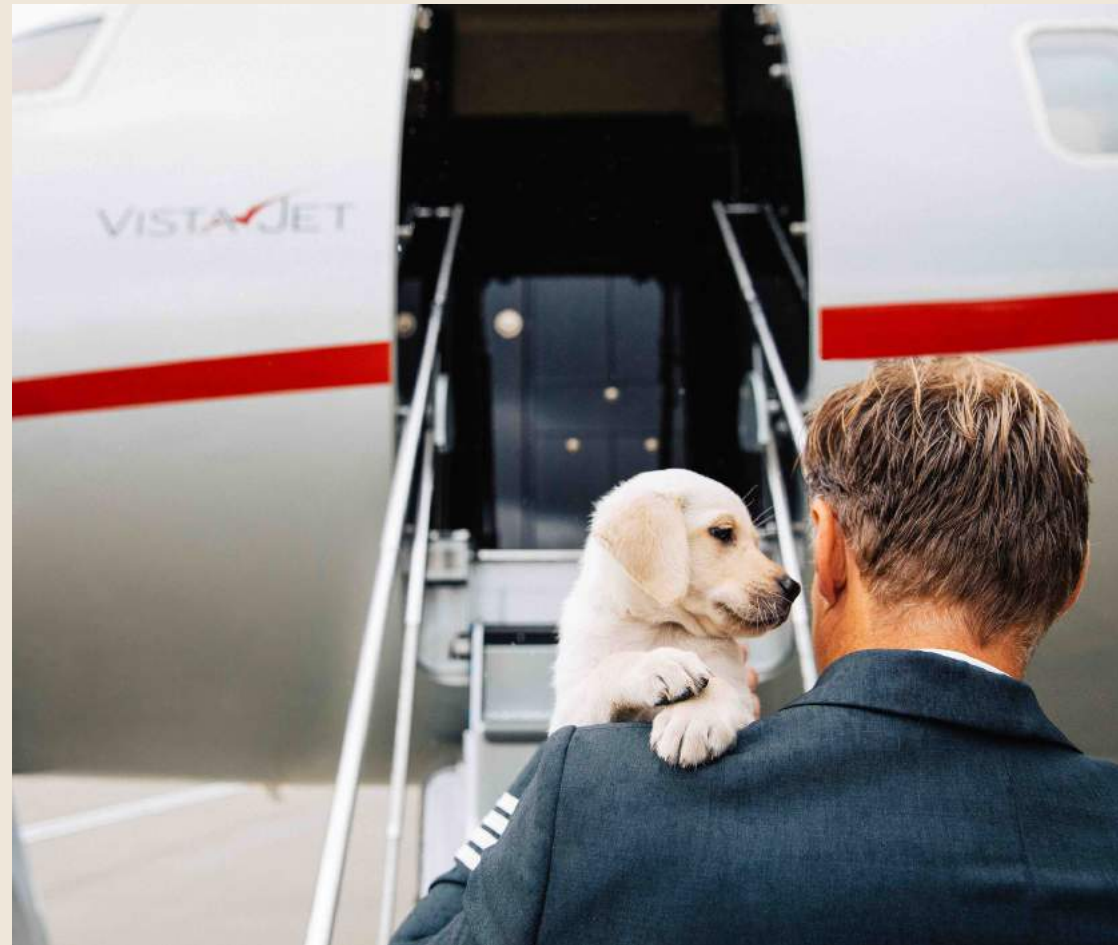
The pandemic might have deterred the cruise industry, but travelers' emerging preference for long, slow tourism means expedition cruises to far flung destinations are in big demand.



## 2. Pet Travel Boom

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“No pet left behind” seemed to be everyone’s motto over the pandemic. Private aviation companies like VistaJet, which reports that one in four members are taking their pets on trips, are pulling out all the stops to ensure cabins are as comfortable for loyal companions as they are for human beings.



## 3. Full-Boarding Benefits

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Following such a fraught time for travelers, convenience will come first. Expect more hospitality companies offering all-inclusive packages that contain food and drink, various activities, and more—all for one cost.





#### 4. Modernized Ryokans

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The traditional ryokan, beloved to fans of Japan, sees a rebirth because they represent the quintessence of leisure travel blending culinary, wellness, and cultural offerings. Exhibiting the pinnacle of Japanese hospitality, modern ryokans offer the best of Japanese culture at the highest standards.



#### 5. 'Homing Pigeons'

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Get ready for the 'homing pigeons'—retirees and digital nomads who are taking advantage of their flexibility and money to immerse in longer-term vacations and staycations, wherever the seasons might take them. As travelers-slash-residents, they will be looking to comfortable villas and homestays for a home away from home.





# #doyoucatchon



## **About CatchOn, A Finn Partners Company**

CatchOn, a Finn Partners Company, is a brand communications consultancy with offices in Hong Kong, Shanghai, and Beijing. It is part of Finn Partners, a global integrated PR and marketing agency with a travel practice that consists of top PR pros in Destination Marketing, Lodging, Aviation and Cruise, F&B, Health and Wellness, Responsible Tourism, Economic Development, MICE and Trade Representation, Crisis and Image Management, Promotions and Experiential Marketing. Our 100+ person travel group spans the globe with offices in the United States, the United Kingdom/Europe and Asia.