

# Tourism and Travel Trends 2021



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# Top Travel Trends For 2021

As leaders in African tourism marketing, Eco Africa Digital highlights the most important travel trends for the African tourism industry for 2021.

1. Smaller Groups & Privacy
2. Regenerative Travel
3. Bye-Bye 9 to 5: Work Wherever You Want
4. Vital Value: Maximising Travel For Less
5. Flexible Cancellation Terms & Safety
6. Travel Bubbles
7. Preference for Outdoor Experiences
8. Rise in Popularity of Local Travel



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## Trend 1 - Smaller Groups & Privacy

- Minimising contact with strangers.
- Travel with close friends and family.
- Private tours will make it possible to make up for lost time and memories at birthdays, anniversaries and weddings, etc.
- More clients want small-group charters, purchasing suite and villa accommodations and booking private transfers and private safari vehicles.



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## Trend 2 - Regenerative Travel

- The idea of 'travel for good' has flourished as people had time to reflect on HOW they travel.
- We see reports of an abundance of wildlife and nature returning to areas previously affected by over-tourism.
- This time apart has also given the opportunity for some hotels, tour companies, safari outfits and the like to rethink their offering and how they can improve their environmental impact.



## Trend 3 – Bye-Bye 9 to 5: Work Wherever You Want

- With remote work becoming a long-term reality, we will soon be able to set up an office anywhere.
- 2021 could bring a significant rise in travellers looking to take longer trips that combine work and pleasure.
- Over half of global travellers (52%) said they would take the opportunity to extend any business trip so that they could schedule in some leisure time. The idea of a “workation” takes root.
- Over one third (37%) of these travellers are mostly looking for accommodation that has home office facilities, including fast Wi-Fi and most importantly, a spectacular view or cosy area to help make the work day fly by.



## Trend 4 - Vital Value: Maximising Travel for Less

- Travellers will prioritise value for money, as well as flexibility around date changes without penalties.
- Travellers will prefer destinations with deals - with the pandemic impacting job security and financial growth across the globe, travellers are focused on value for money when booking their trips.
- 55% of travellers are more likely to hunt down promotions and savings.



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## Trend 5 - Flexible Cancellation Terms & Safety

- 74% of travellers said they want travel booking platforms to increase transparency around cancellation policies, refund processes and trip insurance options.
- 46% of travellers saying they will consider refundable accommodation a must-have.
- 59% of travellers will avoid certain destinations if it means avoiding crowds.
- 70% will also expect tourist attractions to adapt to social distancing rules.
- 70% of people will only book if they know which health and hygiene policies are in place.
- 75% will favour accommodations that provide antibacterial and sanitising products.



## Trend 6 - Travel Bubbles

- People want to travel together and stay in their travel bubble.
- There is an increase in new small-group safaris for 2021, with a maximum of six people.
- These trips offer spending more time in nature and more private options to keep clients' bubbles small.
- People are taking longer trips, staying at the same place, with fewer stops at different establishments.
- Instead of 10 night safari with 2 nights at 5 places, the trend is rather for 5 nights at 2 places.
- We also see the rise of slow travel and getting to know one area better, rather than jumping around.





## Trend 8 - Rise in Popularity of Local Travel

- Border closures in 2020 led people in some countries to visit hotels in their own cities and escape to their own neighbouring cities.
- Normally lasting only a day or two, “staycations” or “holistays” appear to be one of the upward travel trends for 2021, especially in Western countries.
- A large percentage of consumers plan to support community businesses through lockdowns.



## Trend 8 - Preference for Outdoor Experiences

- In an effort to social distance and avoid crowds of people (and cabin fever), travellers are increasingly booking outdoor holidays.
- The call of nature has been strong this year. The same will likely prove true in 2021, as individuals and families travel to remote and open areas to explore.
- Nature lovers and adventure seekers will continue going on safaris and visit luxury safari lodges in South Africa and Southern Africa.



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**Be top of mind with your potential guests as soon as they are ready to travel.**

Contact us for a free 15 min consultation to discuss your best marketing options for 2021.

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