

THE MANGO AGENCY

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“We have to respect it, but we don’t have to fear it.”

While the positive message from the [UNWTO was that](#) 40% of all destinations worldwide have now eased Covid-19 restrictions on at least some international travel, this is still a worrying time for hospitality when spikes can come quickly.

Last week the industry and consumers felt immediate repercussions from the flash travel restrictions for Spain and the ongoing talk of a possible second wave (or potentially one big one.) What started off as a feasible V-shaped, or even U-shaped recovery, now looks set to be a slower journey. The WSJ [reports that while tourism is coming back](#), many across the globe are staying close to home in the short term.

In the longer term, [The New York Times](#) noted an emerging trend for *Longer, Slower, Farther*, and stated: “In the travel lull induced by the pandemic, many people are planning ambitious, once-in-a-lifetime trips. Optimists are targeting 2021.” Red Savannah reported a 160% increase in bookings over this time last year.

In the UK, local is winning, with domestic bookings looking very positive across self-catering and hotels alike; accommodation is scarce and rates soaring. Some hotels are reporting [22-50% increase in occupancy](#) this year from the same time in 2019 and [cottage rentals have nearly doubled](#). Hotels are also still opening with Nobu London, The Mitre Hampton Court, and Nomad London (Covent Garden) planning on 2020.

The UK travel media is still heavily supporting the industry, with stories focussing on the joys of [European travel at this time](#), and many editors calling for the Government to exclude the Spanish islands from the quarantine. The [BBC](#) reported that talks are already underway to make this happen.

This week, in what was called a ‘[lifeline for the industry](#)’, the government launched the [Eat Out to Help Out scheme](#), which offers a discount to diners eating in restaurants Monday-Wednesday through August. However, any positivity has been dampened by Covid-19 spikes in the North of England and restriction reversals across the whole country with further possible mandates in discussion.

In Europe, the damage to Spain is immense with [more than 10,000 British tourists](#) cancelling holidays to Majorca alone in the first two weeks of August. Spain promised a ‘no tit for tat’ quarantine on holidaymakers. Reyes Maroto, the country’s tourism minister, said that Spain is in a phase of “reactivation” and had “learned to co-exist” with Covid-19. “We have to respect it, but we don’t have to fear it.”

Italy, also suffering from damage to its perceived safety, is making a vocal attempt to get some tourism back for 2020. The country’s foreign minister, [Luigi Di Maio said](#): “Britons who decide to spend their holiday in Italy will find not just the beautiful country that we all know, but the enthusiasm and energy of a people who are getting going again after living through a dramatic period. British citizens visiting Italy will find a safe country because the epidemiological situation is under control.”

While many countries across Europe are struggling, with Portugal [reporting a 96% drop in foreign](#) tourist from this time last year, the attachment to travel is still enduring. Greece and Scandinavia are amongst destinations gaining interest and many travellers are still willing to take the risk of quarantine measures on return.

In the U.S. the travel media looked slightly more positive with domestic and international travel getting coverage, but it is still incredibly hard when travel for U.S. citizens is so limited. *The Wall Street Journal* asks, [‘Where to travel now? We’re all just guessing’](#). [Last week the Bahamas](#) began barring commercial flights and passenger ships entering from the U.S., even as it opened to Canadian and European tourists. The Dutch countries of St. Maarten and Curaçao have also reopened to almost everyone but U.S. travellers.

At a U.S. domestic level, which is seeing last minute bookings taking shape, [some luxury hotel brands](#) are promoting the idea of a nostalgic road trip, but [upscale motels are seeing](#) a real resurgence in interest with affordability, privacy and abundance make them a top choice.

Private jet travel continues to get [eyeballs and bookings](#) and some companies are starting to make it more accessible. While not completely private, JSX is a hybrid charter private jet service that departs from private terminals and can fly 29 travellers to select destinations, mostly on the West Coast, with some prices beating domestic.

In Asia. Governments continue to take a cautious approach to reopening as countries in region battle new outbreaks of infection. [Hong Kong’s leader Carrie Lam announced they would be delaying the elections](#) to 6 September this year as Covid-19 cases continue to spike. Racing to stop its third wave of infections, [China has organised a 60-person team to conduct widespread Covid-19 testing](#) in the territory. Hong Kong has seen a surge in locally transmitted cases in July, forcing it to introduce a raft of tightening measures including restricting gatherings to two people and mandating face masks in all outdoor public spaces.

A week after announcing it would [reintroduce the Movement Control Order if new cases reach three digits](#), the [Malaysian government has made the wearing of face masks mandatory in public spaces](#) to stem the tide of Covid-19 infections. If caught without a mask, citizens will be fined RM1,000 (USD237). The Health director-general added that the long-term plan will be to eventually get everyone to wear a face mask once they stepped out of the house.

Thailand continues to mull ways to open to tourism safely. Speaking to [Travel Weekly Asia](#), Tourism Authority of Thailand Governor Yuthasak Supasorn says: “Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) aims to help Thai tourism make a slow but cautious recovery”. As plans for travel bubbles delay due to infection resurgences in the region, [the country has permitted some foreign](#) visitors such as essential workers and people seeking medical treatment to enter, with plans in the sixth phase of reopening to open doors to travellers with the “Thailand Elite Card” or under “Alternative State Quarantine”.

[Singapore and Malaysia have announced more details for essential travel between the countries.](#) Open for applications from 10 August 2020, travellers can apply for long-term immigration passes under the Periodic Commuting Arrangement (PAC) or shorter-term travel of up to 14 days under the Reciprocal Green Lane (RGL). Visitors with a PAC must serve a mandatory stay-home notice of at least seven days and take a Covid-19 swab test. Those entering under the RGL will have to take a Covid-19 test within 72 hours from departure, another swab test upon arrival and share a pre-declared controlled itinerary.

Transportation & Corporation News

- [Etihad](#) announced it is gradually resuming services to more destinations across its global network. This follows the easing of travel restrictions by United Arab Emirates (UAE) regulatory authorities on outbound and inbound travel for citizens and residents. All travel remains subject to the entry and health regulations set by UAE authorities and those at the end destination.
- [While there are reports](#) that the airline industry won't fully recover until 2024, [The Economist](#) suggests that the sudden collapse of the industry will now reshape it. Airlines are starting to make moves with [American and JetBlue](#) announcing a new alliance and others likely to follow.
- [Hotels Magazine](#) asks how social brands, built on community, can be safe without spoiling the fun and also releases its annual ranking of the world's biggest hotel groups. [SKIFT](#) suggests that Covid-19 will bring a shift toward a personalised experience-based loyalty program.
- In another blow to the cruise industry, [Thirty-three crew](#) members of a Hurtigruten cruise in Norway have been diagnosed with Covid-19, with four hospitalised and the rest in isolation.

Media feedback:

- Hillary Khang becomes Digital Editor of luxury profile magazine, A Magazine
- Chinese luxury lifestyle magazine MU/SE launches their special commemorative issue this month in line with Singapore's National Day, all about restarting in the new normal and the magazine features words of encouragement from industry leaders
- Tatler Singapore moves, settling into smaller office arrangements
- The Peak Singapore focuses on profiling movers and shakers of the industry
- In a bold [move for the](#) industry, Hearst publishing staff unionize
- The UK media is getting more vocal in support of travel and, while once strictly lifestyle journalists, some are becoming unofficial lobbyists
- Tik Tok comes into question in the U.S. with Microsoft expressing interest

More next week...