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## Wellness travel: Why it could be the post-coronavirus stress-buster you need

10th July 2020 by Florence Derrick



Planning your first post-coronavirus trip? Consider wellness travel to our hand-picked remote destinations, one of the ways to rejuvenate and recharge.

These past few months have been tough. We're all dreaming of travel and when the time is right what better trip than one where you unwind and recharge. Our guide to the best places for some wellness travel will have you feeling soothed in no time.

### Why travel for wellness now?

If being cooped up has left you dreaming of escapism in the form of blue skies and golden sands, you're not alone. Wellness travel and slow travel were already huge industry trends, combating problems of over-visited cities (think pre-COVID Barcelona, or Amsterdam) and with travellers becoming more socially conscious of the impact of their vacations.

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According to the Global Wellness Institute, wellness tourism was a \$639 billion industry in 2017. That figure is predicted to hit \$919 billion by 2022. Post-COVID 19, we've never had more of a collective need to rejuvenate and recharge. Travel will certainly be a part of the healing process – [provided it's done responsibly](#).



## What will wellness travel look like post coronavirus?

The Wellness Tourism Association defines Wellness Travel as, travel that allows the traveller to maintain, enhance or kick-start a healthy lifestyle, and support or increase one's sense of wellbeing.

[Experts say](#) that coronavirus will escalate the existing slow travel trend further. Group trips will become more scarce – good news for Europe's overcrowded capitals – and a focus on local communities and the environment will increase.

According to Booking.com's Sustainable Travel Report for 2020, 82 per cent of travellers worldwide identify sustainable travel as important. The travel industry, especially hotels, is responding in kind, prioritising the health of its staff and guests by putting social distancing and extensive cleaning measures in place. In terms of guest offerings, expect a greater emphasis on relaxing spa treatments, local, small-group experiences and access to the outdoors.

Part of wellness travel 2020 will mean reconnection with nature, especially if you've spent lockdown in a densely populated city environment. We'll see an increase in activities like forest bathing, a Japanese tradition that's made wellbeing-focused walks trendy around the world. It's been shown that even looking at trees decreases levels of the stress hormone cortisol, and walking in the woods lowers blood pressure and heart rate, especially when

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Stay at [Seaham Hall](#), a vast, Georgian manor house at the north end of Durham's Heritage Coast. Alongside its 37 acres of landscaped gardens and small number of rooms – just 21 boutique suites – the hotel has also opened a series of health-prioritising activities. Think outdoor movie screenings from pod beds; picnic hampers to go, packed with locally sourced goods; personal spa sessions on a secluded terrace; and bike hire for tackling the coastal path.

## For comfort eating: Puglia (Italy)

There's a reason why Italy's sunny heel is one of its defining tourism regions: it practically spills over with intricately carved churches, ancient towns and some of the country's finest food (which is saying something). The go-to place for olives, burrata and all manner of sun-ripened fruits and vegetables, it's Puglia's countryside that is its heart. All the better for any traveller in search of comfort and wellbeing via their stomach, who can forage their way through the Forest of Umbra or wander between olive and almond groves in the Valle d'Itria. All of Italy's flavour, with none of the crowds.



Stay at [Paragon 700 Boutique Hotel & Spa](#), which has just opened in Ostuni, Puglia, with a focus on tailor-made, local experiences. These include individual visits to a burrata cheese maker, private cooking classes, or exclusive trips onto the Adriatic Sea on the hotel's private boat, Dragonfly.

## For restorative sun: Corfu, Greece

It doesn't take long to find a sunny corner of this Ionian Island to have all to yourself. Despite its pre-COVID 19 crowds of tourists, the island's more remote rugged hills and sanded coves were never more than a stretch of headland away. Now, vitamin D-deficient travellers (that's everyone who just spent lockdown indoors) can head to Odysseus's island to find a pocket of sunshine for that much-needed R&R.

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