



Hotel guests checking in for the long haul

Shivani Vora, CNN • Published 31st July 2020



(CNN) — Forget checking into a hotel for a long weekend or a week. In the wake of Covid-19, travelers around the world are booking stays that last a month or even longer.

According to hoteliers globally, it's a pattern that started this summer when their properties reopened after being shuttered for several months. This trend appears to be continuing through the fall everywhere from Aspen and Ontario to all over Mexico and in Italy.

Dede Moan, the owner of Southampton Inn, in Southampton, New York, for instance, says that she has around a dozen reservations for month-long stays in August and September this year, compared with a handful last year.



At Timbers Kauai, 25% of current guests are staying for a month or longer.

Courtesy Timbers Kauai

Auberge Resorts Collection, with 19 properties globally, has several dozen long-term stays in the fall, compared with few to none last year, says chief marketing officer Mike Minchin.

And Timbers Resorts, with 17 international locations, reports a rise in stays of 30 or more days in at least a half dozen properties. One example is the Timbers Kauai where 25% of current guests are staying for a month or longer.

Aldo Melpignano, the owner of Borgo Egnazia, a 250-acre resort in Puglia, Italy, reports the same elevated numbers. "Normally, we have one or two guests staying with us that long, but this year, it's been a flood," he says.

"The global lockdown has led to a whole new way of thinking about hotel stays," says Andrew Steinberg, a luxury travel adviser with Ovation Travel in New York City. "People have been homebound for a while, and while they have more freedom now, they're still working remotely and have wanderlust. A long-term stay changes up the environment while allowing them to stay connected to work."

City, country, mountains, sea

Most of the travelers who are booking these multi-week reservations live in urban or suburban areas, says Steinberg, and are seeking resorts in country, mountain and beach settings where they can enjoy plenty of open space and outdoor activities.

"These properties are spread out, which allows for automatic social distancing and make guests feel more comfortable and safer about their stays," he says.



India-based Cecilia Morelli chose a long-term stay for her family at Borgo Egnazia in Puglia for its expansive size and amenities.

Courtesy Borgo Egnazia

Cecilia Morelli and her husband Rohan Parikh are one example: the Mumbai, India-based couple, who have Italian passports, left the country with their five-year-old daughter in May as soon as the Indian government reinstated flights for European citizens to Europe.

They flew to France and then headed to Italy where they checked into Borgo Egnazia for a month (their stay is ending in early August).

They chose the property, says Morelli, for its expansive size and long list of amenities including two beaches, a golf course, tennis courts, a pool, a spa, a large fitness center and multiple dining options.

"We have had such a fantastic time at a place that is very Covid friendly, and Rohan and I have been able to keep working throughout," says Morelli. "Our daughter has been beyond entertained, and when we have breaks, we water ski, golf, workout and indulge in great food and wine."



Scott Lippman's family left Santa Fe for a seven-week stay at the Viceroy Snowmass in Colorado.
Courtesy Viceroy Snowmass

In the United States, Scott Lippman's seven-week stay at Viceroy Snowmass, in Snowmass, Colorado, with his wife and one of their college-aged daughters, has also meant memorable diversions.

The Santa Fe, New Mexico resident, who works at a liquidation company, says that he especially loves mountain biking. "The pandemic left us wanting a change from where we live, and we've been lucky enough to get that and take advantage of an amazing destination," he says.

Discounts and incentives for long-term stays

In a bid to cater to the demand for long-term stays and incentivize travelers to reserve with them, properties are offering discounts as well as other inclusions. They're also making it convenient for their guests to continue working while they're away from home.

"Occupancy rates are low across the hotel industry so properties are reducing their rates for long stays," says Tony Shepherd, the chief executive of [Four Hundred](#), a members-only concierge company that has received dozens of requests for extended hotel reservations since April.

"It's a win for them because it creates a multi-week revenue stream and a win for travelers who get a price break and can have a self-contained, safe getaway."



Keeping social distancing front of mind on the grounds of the Southampton Inn.

Courtesy Southampton Inn

Moan, of Southampton Inn, says that she gives discounts that vary depending on the length of the stay. "We look at each reservation on a case-by-case basis," she says.

Starting in September, the property will have a dedicated area with workstations where guests can use their laptops and have access to printers, a fax machine, office supplies and free coffee.

"We have also enabled WiFi everywhere outside so you can sit in a lounge chair by the pool or on the lawn and stay plugged in," says Moan.

At Eden Roc Cap Cana, in the Dominican Republic, an extended stay package geared to families includes accommodations in a two-bedroom beachfront suite, all meals (dinner is three courses), an office setup with a desk, printer and office supplies and unlimited kids activities such as cooking classes, Spanish and piano lessons, bike tours and kayaking.

Adare Manor, in County Limerick, Ireland, is offering a 40% discount off usual rates for stays of seven days or longer. The Canvas Hotel, in Dallas, is offering a nightly rate of \$80 for stays that are five nights or longer. The usual rates, in comparison, range between \$139 and \$199 a night.



Tuck in and stay awhile at Viceroy Snowmass -- long-term guests get discounts.

Courtesy Viceroy Snowmass

At Viceroy Snowmass, the perks for staying 30 or more days include discounts on parking and the daily resort fee and not paying the 12% hotel tax that's added onto every bill.

Still a minority of hotel occupancy

While there is clearly a growing interest in long-term leisure stays, Bjorn Hanson, an adjunct professor at the Tisch Center of Hospitality at New York University, says that they account for only between 3% and 5% percent of overall hotel occupancy.

"Checking into a hotel for several weeks makes sense in the current environment and is happening, but these stays are still in the small minority of the total guest makeup," he says.

The guests who do hang their hat for a longer period, however, may end up booking more extended stays in the future.

John Bannon and his family, Toronto residents, are in the midst of a month-long stay at TownePlace Suites by Marriott in Prince Edward County, in Ontario, Canada, and are thrilled with their setup.

"I have an office area where I can work, and we have so much green space around us," he says. "We go on long walks, visit wineries and have picnics. It's a completely different and idyllic world here than what we have at home."

Link: <https://www.cnn.com/travel/article/long-term-hotel-stays-covid-19/index.html>