

5 ways to help the travel industry right now

 By [Guy Stehlik](#)

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We are still in the thick of the coronavirus pandemic and, while we are slowly starting to lift restrictions, industries like travel and tourism are still unable to operate and most likely won't be able to for at least the near future. This is quite significant for a country like South Africa, where approximately one in every 22 working citizens is employed in the tourism sector.



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While South African Tourism is working on the recovery plan for the industry, there are still things we can do in our own capacity to help out. Read on for five ways to support the travel industry right now.

Buy now, stay later

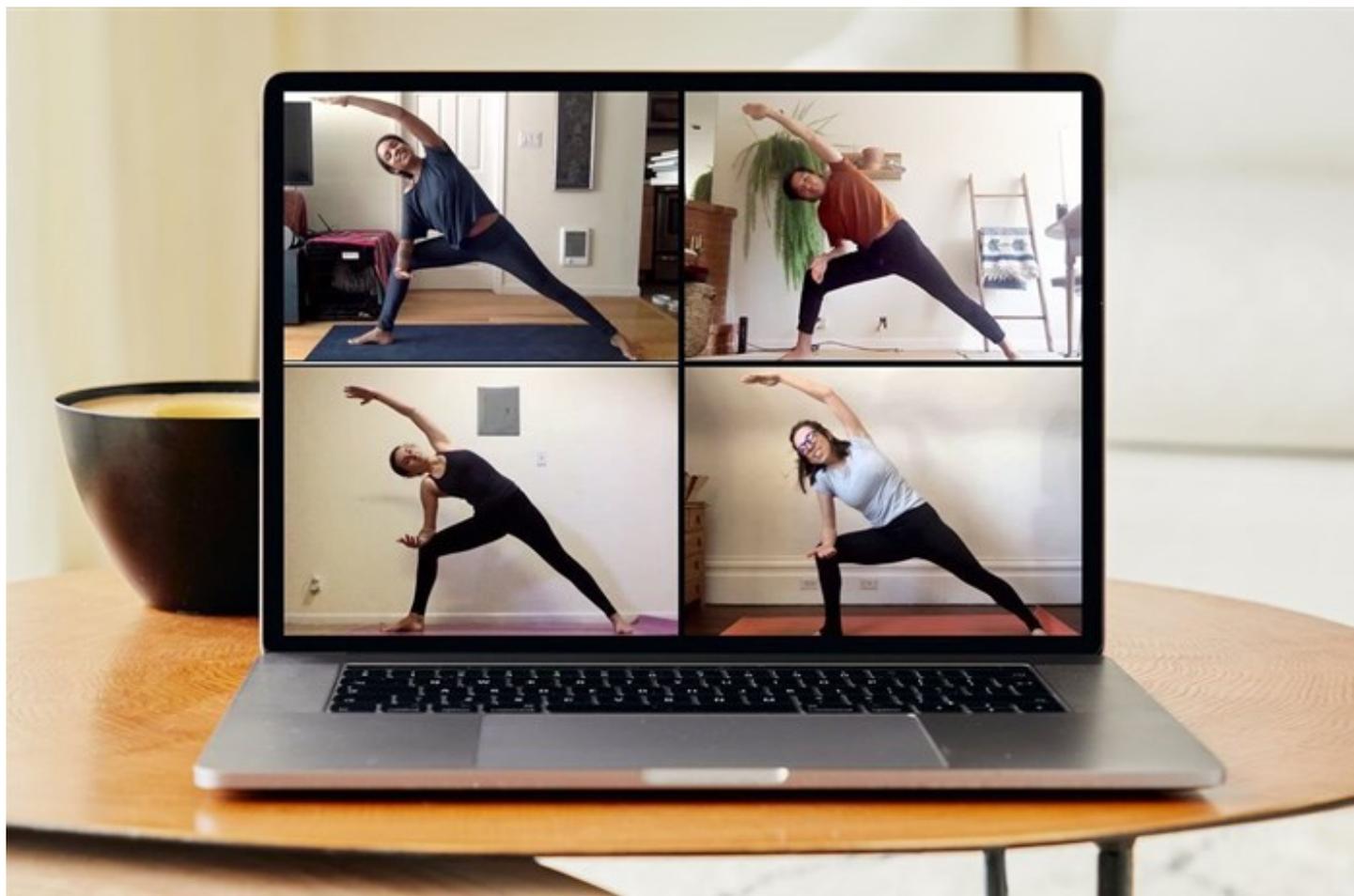
Although hotels and other accommodation establishments are not able to accept guests at the moment, you're still able to book now and stay later. Think of the upcoming winter months when it's the best time to venture into the Lowveld for a wildlife safari, for example. In particular, Buckler's Africa Lodge by BON Hotels is accepting bookings from 1 June 2020, allowing you to plan your trip in advance.

Worried about extended restrictions and forfeiting your booking? There are cancellation policies that protect your booking and allow you to modify your dates free of charge! Start dreaming of your brush with nature now, and give yourself something to look forward to.

Travel online

Who would've thought that, during lockdown, you could still enjoy a local jazz club's cocktail hour, do a mind and body class with an Olympian, or do sound bath meditation with a Singapore DJ? Airbnb recently announced the launch of Online Experiences, in a bid to allow people to explore the world from home, while also giving their Experience hosts a way of continuing to earn an income.

From living rooms in New York, to kitchens in Italy, there is something for everyone to enjoy. These Airbnb Experiences make for fun birthday gifts, or even virtual date nights. Moreover, it's a unique way to experience different cultures from the comfort - and safety - of home.





Finally do those online reviews

Many of us are guilty of promising to leave a review once leaving a great restaurant, spa or tour and just not quite getting round to it. We're often busy, and these things can slip our minds.

Now that most of us have extra time on our hands, leaving online reviews on sites like TripAdvisor and Google could be the difference between someone booking for later or purchasing a voucher. It takes only a few minutes, and will really help support businesses who need it.

Postpone your trip

While we understand that going on a well-deserved trip right now is not possible, and we need to do what's best to overcome Covid-19, it is still a bit of a let-down. This doesn't mean that you have to totally let go of your plans, however. If you are in a position to do so, postpone your travels instead of cancelling them, especially if you have booked stays and experiences with small businesses.

Refunds will be hitting the industry very hard, and every little bit that they are able to save would be helpful. Perhaps your destination would be just as beautiful in a different season, and this leaves even more time to plan ahead and find spots off the beaten track.



Support your local spots

This one is a win-win, because you get to support a local business while treating yourself. Many restaurants are now open for deliveries, and cities like Cape Town and Durban are especially known for the great eateries, which attract many tourists. Now is a great time to support these spots, to ensure they stay open as our borders open up to welcome visitors again.

KwaZulu-Natal's renowned LivingRoom restaurant at Summerhill Estate will be accepting orders by way of a menu that changes once a week, and includes baskets with selections of light meals and mains. In the Mother City, restaurants like FYN are also delivering their Experience Menu straight to your door, chocolate truffles included.

ABOUT GUY STEHLIK

Guy Stehlik is the CEO and founder of BON Hotels and Director of BON Hotels International West Africa. Having vast experience in all aspects of Hotel Management as well as having owned his own hotels, Guy created BON Hotels as an "owner-staff-community-guest" centric company to herald in and define an exciting new era in hotel management.

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