



## Travel Industry Update

December 14, 2020

### Southwest CEO Sees ‘Really Rough Months’ Looming for Early 2021

- Southwest Airlines Co. expects depressed travel amid the nationwide surge in coronavirus cases and typically weak seasonal demand to combine for a difficult start to 2021 for the industry.
- “January and February are bound to be really rough months — winter time, high caseloads — and they are seasonally soft anyway,” Chief Executive Officer Gary Kelly said Thursday in an interview with the Wings Club of New York. “We can get started on the vaccine process and get started on recovery, but we’ve got a long way to go.”

### Hong Kong temporarily blocks some airlines' routes in Covid-19 prevention measure

- Hong Kong has put a temporary ban on four international airlines flying specific routes into the city under a new law aimed at stopping the spread of Covid-19, the Hong Kong government told CNN Friday.
- In a blow to potential holiday travelers, British Airways passenger flights from London into Hong Kong have been banned from December 12 to December 25, authorities said.
- These flights were added to a growing number of banned flights Friday, according to Hong Kong officials, who cited a British Airways flight that arrived in Hong Kong on December 8 with four Covid-positive passengers and one passenger who failed to comply with prevention requirements.
- Under strict new rules the Hong Kong government is now prohibiting British Airways, Emirates, KLM Royal Dutch Airlines and Nepal Airlines from flying specific routes into Hong Kong for 14 days, with dates that vary by airline.

### US borders with Canada, Mexico to stay closed through at least Jan. 21

- As expected, U.S. border closures will be extending into the New Year.
- Due to the rise in COVID-19 coronavirus cases, the land borders with Canada and Mexico will remain closed through Jan. 21, Chad Wolf, acting secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security announced on Friday.
- The borders have been closed since March, with DHS issuing month-to-month extensions.
- "In order to continue to prevent the spread of COVID, the US, Mexico, & Canada will extend the restrictions on non-essential travel through Jan. 21," Wolf wrote on Twitter. "We are working closely with Mexico & Canada to keep essential trade & travel open while also protecting our citizens from the virus."

## **CDC Once Again Advises Against Cruising**

- Less than a month after the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention lifted its no-sail order for cruise ships operating in U.S. waters, the agency is now recommending that travelers avoid cruise ships, including river cruises, worldwide, "because the risk of Covid-19 on cruise ships is very high," according to its latest [statement](#) on the topic.
- Major cruise lines have extended their sailing suspensions following the health organization's latest statement that warns of the risk of contracting Covid-19 on ships.

## **New health-security evaluation platform for hotels**

- Atlanta-based digital health specialist Sharecare has collaborated with Forbes Travel Guide to launch a new health-security evaluation platform for hotels and resorts, which Sharecare claims can simplify the Covid-19 protocol confirmation process for advisors and other members of the travel trade.
- The Sharecare health-security evaluation system centers on a checklist of nearly 300 yes-no questions, which cover topics ranging from health and hygiene measures to administrative and emergency response procedures. These include questions asking whether a property has a defined crisis response team on the property or whether there are procedures in place in the event a hotel has to deal with a Covid-positive guest.
- Once all the criteria on the checklist is confirmed by a property, they're added to a directory and are able to display a Sharecare badge on emails, their website and across other marketing and communication channels. When a traveler clicks on the badge, they're directed to further information on a hotel's specific protocols and the date a property most recently completed the process.
- The checklist is updated as guidance on best practices evolves, with participating properties prompted to reconfirm their status as the Covid-19 landscape shifts.

## **Half of American Travelers Say They'll Take the COVID-19 Vaccine as Soon as Possible, While Others Will Wait to See If It Is Effective**

- MMGY Global has released the latest findings of its Travel Intentions Pulse Survey (TIPS) and Travel Safety Barometer, with data answering questions about how Americans feel about travel amid news of effective vaccines and COVID-19 cases rising sharply in the U.S. Among the 1,200 American leisure and business travelers surveyed in November for TIPS Wave XI, the most important consideration for making future travel plans is the availability of a vaccine that is proven to be clinically effective.
- Fifty percent of respondents would get the vaccine as soon as it's available to them; 40% would wait at least a few months to see if it is effective; and 9% would not get the vaccine.
- People are becoming more concerned about how family and friends will judge their decisions to travel, with 31% of respondents saying the opinions of family and friends are an important consideration affecting future travel plans (an increase from 25% in October).

## **Hawaii Authorities Overwhelmed with 20,000 in Quarantine, Mayor Kirk Caldwell Says**

- Roughly 20,000 people are in travel-related quarantine on Oahu and authorities are unable to keep up with enforcement.
- "Being forced into quarantine right now is not a good thing for Oahu because there's about 20,000 people in quarantine on any given day that (the Honolulu Police Department) has to enforce against and it becomes harder and harder as more and more people are in quarantine," on Wednesday, adding that HPD is having to do sporadic enforcement because it is "impossible" to call and knock on doors three times a day for every person in quarantine.