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Renewed And Redefined

THE BUOYANT AND DYNAMIC HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY IS GEARING UP TO WELCOME TRAVELLERS PROACTIVELY, REPORTS **SIMRRAN GILL**

Infrared cameras, people clad in white bodysuits with barely visible faces and thermal guns. No, this is not the opening sequence of a sci-fi movie, rather a glimpse into your next getaway. Hotels across the world are gearing up to open gradually, for a season of renewed travel. Hospital-grade disinfectants, on-call doctors, sanitisation booths, and indicators for physical distancing is what's replacing the otherwise enriched hotel lobbies now. The latest government protocols for 'accommodation units' in the country aim to minimise all possible touch points between the staff and the guests. And it begins the moment you hail the hotel's chauffeur-driven car. If you're already packing your bags,



here is how your next vacation will differ from the last one, on a whole new level.

Airport Transfers

Stepping into the car, the usual cold towels are going to be replaced with a sanitiser spray and wipes. Marriott International, across its properties in eastern India, is equipping their transfer cars with an amenity kit consisting of masks, gloves and a sanitiser. The transfer cars will also undergo a thorough sanitisation process inside out, between all transfers. It'll be no surprise to spot the chauffeur in a mask and gloves. In order to ensure minimum contact, some properties like Lemon Tree hotels have also done away with valet parking temporarily.

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Check-In Protocols

Thermal screenings and luggage sanitisation is going to be a common sight. Luxury resort Aman-i-Khas is all set for a disinfectant tunnel with mist sprayers and infrared cameras to detect and capture temperature records. The friendly handshake will also be replaced by either a Japanese style bow with a hand on the chest or the good ol' Namaste with folded hands. Most properties are leaning towards app-based check-ins, however, those still in transition will ensure interaction through a plexiglass sheet and will encourage using personal pens to minimise contact. As per the government mandate, the guests will also have to fill out extensive and detailed forms and use app-based health data to determine physical health.

Rooms

The last time we checked, hotel rooms were decked up with artefacts and comfortable furniture. Halfway into 2020, a list of do's and don'ts have been added to the decor. The knick-knacks in the mini-bar and more than one toiletry kit will soon be history. The daily news dose will come in a strictly digital PressReader subscription. To ensure minimum contact, Aman properties has assigned a 'Batman' to every tent, who will be the only contact person.

Sanitisation

The latest government protocol specifies the use of a sodium hypochlorite solution with at least 70% alcohol to clean all touchpoints such as doorknobs, handles, elevator buttons, etc on a regular basis. Properties are now to keep a linen count and handle it only with gloved hands. Taking 'cleaner' a step forward, all Hyatt hotels across the globe will get a Global BioRisk Advisory Council (GBAC) accreditation and a trained hygiene manager.

Dining and Common Area Access

Emphasising in-room dining, Hyatt Regency, Delhi, and Marriott properties in eastern India have come up with QR codes to access the menu, right on your phone screens. Dine-in restaurants and bars—which will now need prior reservations—have also reduced their seating capacity by half. Disposable cutlery might be the new norm. Now is probably a good time to ditch the elevator, as the updated protocols permit only four people, not facing each other.

Check-out Protocols

Mindful at every step of the way, hotels are going to adhere to minimal contact even while processing check-outs. Hotels like Aurika require the guests to inform three hours prior to their check-out, to facilitate the process of electronic billing. The staff will collect the luggage from outside the room. And in case of multiple check-outs, satellite counters will be arranged, information regarding which will be shared with guests in advance.



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