

"Destination Me" - reconceiving tourism amidst and post Covid-19 era Geo Routes addresses travelers' novel behaviors regarding safety, security and privacy

article by

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No doubt travel, tourism and events are among the most affected sectors around the world, while scenarios estimate **frictions** in **revenues** (up to 1 trillion USD), in international **arrivals** (up to 1 billion travelers) and **job losses** (up to 120 million) during 2020 and most probably 2021. Meanwhile, states and industry professionals urge to unlock tourism while focusing on sector's recovery the soonest possible. Yet, one **critical factor** tends to remain unknown in this puzzle for the near-future: 'How will **travelers' novel behaviors** be towards **safety, security and privacy amidst and post Covid-19 era**?' This is the challenging bet for the survival and rapid recovery of the industry.

We at **Geo Routes** understand the changing face in the future of travel and the rising need for personal space and launched "**Destination Me**"; a customers centered solution for people who are seeking to explore, experience and being part with the 'most pure' side of **Greece in safety, security and privacy**.

Geo Routes "Destination Me" effective July 1st 2020 will feature:

- ◇ **All the 30 cultural heritage journeys** of Geo Routes to Athens and Greece - held under the auspices of the H.N.C. for UNESCO- are turning into **private**. Any journey is only for couples (2 persons) and families/friends (up to 6 persons), in which no other traveler is allowed to mix with the small groups.
- ◇ The **overnights** at multi-day trips are in premium hotels, mansions etc, most of them **below 20 rooms**.
- ◇ All journeys include in-depth visits by **licensed tour guides**, who safeguarding travelers' social distancing measures.
- ◇ Experienced chauffeurs and **solely private transportation** by cars, vans or mini-buses, is disposed to travelers.
- ◇ Nearly all journeys **focus** on rural areas and the legends of Greece, facilitating intercultural dialogue and contributing to the sustainable development of the local societies.
- ◇ **No groups** scheduled departures will be available (groups only possible to corporate or associations).

How Geo Routes reads tourists' near-future perceptions?

In 2011, first ever in Greece, Geo Routes launched cultural heritage tourism as a key for sustainable development. Furthermore with 35 years under our belt, we keep on working, brainstorming and analyzing trends, challenges, risks and opportunities across travel and events' industries. About tourists' **perceptions related to Covid-19, and the impact of those perceptions on future travel decisions**, we estimate the following trends and aspects to appear; among which no. 1-9 below were considered for launching "**Destination Me**":

- 1) Travelers' increased awareness about the cleanliness, hygiene and safety standards at places visited
- 2) Travelers' rising consciousness for (social) distancing and privacy throughout the journey
- 3) Positive demand for boutique services and personalized experiences; group travel is expected to shrink
- 4) Need for real-time information on course of the journey and upfront about the destination
- 5) Nature, slightly isolated areas & open-air activities are of increasing appeal over crowded favorites of yore
- 6) Road-trips with private automobiles may be greatly favored; such travelers may increase near-city vacations
- 7) Adventure in food (Asian, Indian etc) may take a beating; Mediterranean cuisine opts increased market shares
- 8) Experiences may prevail over the physical; people may surface as reasons to holiday, but holiday differently

under the Auspices of the Hellenic National Commission for UNESCO

- 9) Industry may take anything up to 24 months to start climbing back to previous peaks. Till then the headwinds will be strong and severe
- 10) Increased levels of travel anxiety and concern; fears of infection or 'stuck' away from home
- 11) Priority to domestic and short-haul escapes; overseas journeys or densely populated areas are avoided
- 12) Flying becomes unpleasable as health-checks get added to check-in routines, enhancing the wait at airports
- 13) Business travel adjusts rapidly from in person meetings to teleconferencing communication
- 14) Physical travelling can never be replaced by digital travelling
- 15) School trips may dry up and be curtailed out of fear for safety of the kids, rather than affordability
- 16) Air travel may become more expensive and airline tickets will go sky-high
- 17) Cruises may be shunned for a while; the flow is going to move into unchartered waters for some time
- 18) Service providers may cease to be arrogant and inflexible to customers; series of offers & freebies are expected

About Geo Routes Cultural Institute

Geo Routes Cultural Institute, a nonprofit & nongovernmental organization, is planning, developing and providing cultural heritage journeys and events of cultural, environmental and educational character in Greece and beyond.

In Greece, [Geo Routes eco & cultural journeys](#) highlight cultural heritage, facilitate intercultural dialogue, foster welfare while contributing to the development of rural societies. Geo Routes journeys are held under the auspices of the HNC for UNESCO and since 2013 are acclaimed as UNESCO "best practice" in the framework of the programme Culture-Tourism-Development.

Furthermore, Geo Routes is owner and official organizer of the leading international conferences, the [Balkans & Black Sea Cooperation Forum](#) and the [AgriBusiness Forum](#).