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Five places business travel has changed post-pandemic



By Lindsey Galloway 28th April 2022

As Covid restrictions and quarantines continue to lift around the world, work-related trips are bouncing back in a big way in 2022.

Article continues below



While all travel took a tumble during the pandemic, international business travel, in particular, was hit hard, as video calls and conferencing quickly took the place of on-site visits and in-person client meetings. But as the world learns to live with the virus, work-related trips have come bouncing back in a big way in 2022.

In fact, according to travel management company **TripActions**, business travel bookings for the first three months of 2022 alone surpassed more than half of all bookings for 2021, with an 875% increase from March 2021 to March 2022. Because of the newfound acceptance of remote work, business travellers are also booking longer "bleisure" stays, combining business trips with extra days for fun. More than a third of business travellers are booking longer (four- to seven-day) stays, a boost of three percentage points from last year.

As Covid restrictions and quarantines continue to flare around the world, certain places are seeing the biggest boom in this type of travel. We selected five countries that are seeing impressive rebounds across different international regions, based on the number of international business travel bookings (which include flight, hotel, rail and black car bookings) within the TripActions platform, and spoke to residents to find out how business travel is changing and how to have a more sustainable work-play stay.



Guadalajara has seen big investments into business over the past two years
(Credit: Elijah Lovkoff/EyeEm/Getty Images)

Mexico

With the most business travel bookings of any Latin American country, Mexico maintained some of the most open travel policies during the pandemic, with anyone allowed arrive by air for business or leisure, regardless of vaccination status. Due to this, the nation has seen both an influx of digital nomads, as companies adopted more expansive remote-work policies, and an increase in corporate retreat bookings, as **employees take the opportunity to gather** outside an official HQ space.

While Mexico City remains the most important economic hub, Guadalajara, the country's second largest city, has made big investments into business over the past two years. The country's largest convention centre, **Expo Guadalajara**, invested more than \$23m Mexican pesos during the pandemic to facilitate hygienic practices, implement testing procedures and build isolation areas.

The region has also seen a spate of new openings in the past year. Fernanda Landa, director of the Guadalajara Tourism Board, recommends restaurant **Yunaites**, which opened in January 2021. "It's a new concept in Mercado IV Centenario [a city marketplace], inspired by high-quality dairy products from the small town of San José de Gracia," she said. "Try the *mole cosechero* [a pork and cumin-flavoured sauce dish], *minguiche tacos* [which include chilies, cheese and cream] and *encotijadas* [similar to an enchilada, but with a Cotija cheese sauce], which can be enjoyed from communal seating."

She also recommends MATEOS restaurant located within the newly opened **Bellworth Hotel**, which aims to make it easier for people to transition to a plant-based diet by offering primarily vegetarian options that highlight local produce in traditional Mexican dishes.