



NAMASTE



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Dashain Cuisine Promoted by HAN



During Dashain Festival, Hotel Association Nepal (HAN) started an initiative of promoting authentic Nepali Dashain Cuisine to the tourists in its member hotels across Nepal. As part of the campaign, typical Dashain Cuisine that is prepared and served in Nepali household was also made available to the guest starting from the day of Ghatasthapana to Kojagrat Poornima. The member hotels promoting the cuisne include: Hotel the Kingsbury and Hotel Mechi Crown in Jhapa, Tiger Palace in Bhairahawa, Dreamland Gold Resort in Manigram, Dream International Hotel in Butwal, Jungle Safari Lodge in Chitwan, Hotel Barahi in Pokhara, and Airport Hotel in Kathmandu. Additionally, Aloft Kathmandu Thamel, Dwarika's Hotel, and Nepali Ghar, Thamel also prepared special menu for the

purpose. Furthermore, hotels also offered a considerable discounts on delicacies eaten during Dashain Festival and many other hotels served the guests a la carte as well. The initiative which was conducted for 15 day with the sole motto of promoting heritage and festival food of Nepal remained highly popular amidst tourists. The foreigners working in missions in Nepal, corporate clients, and domestic visitors relished the typical flavor and authentic taste of Dashain. Meanwhile, the campaign gained popularity and drew wider attraction as it was well timed with the 11th Global Conference and Election of Non-Resident Nepali Association (NRNA) where 87 National Coordination Council representatives were assembled in Kathmandu alongside observing Dashian Festival in the motherland.

HAN Recognized



On the occasion of 50th Anniversary of Nepal Mountaineering Association (NMA), HAN has been awarded with the 'Certificate of Appreciation' for its leadership in responsible tourism, thereby elevating tourism landscape of Nepal in the international level. President Mr Binayak Shah received the recognition from the chief guest Rt. Honble President of Nepal on November 1, 2023.

HAN with KMC Mayor Shah



HAN President Mr Binayak Shah together with Secretary General Mr Sajan Sakya called on Mayor of Kathmandu Metropolitan City Mr Balendra Shah on October 12, 2023. At the meeting, HAN President Mr Shah proposed for a joint meeting to outline model of collaboration and action plans, thereby preparing the ground for joint action on tourism development. Mayor Shah expressing a positive note, urged for a joint initiatives to bring about remarkable change in the existing mode of tourism in the country.

How travel has returned to being a growth sector – and why its bullishness is justified

Anyone who is still wondering whether travel has emerged from the shadow of Covid need only take a deep dive into the September Atol renewals for reassurance.

The figures not only show a record number of authorised packages, but also a reversal of the fall in the number of Atol-holders. Moreover, the industry's changing structure means the newer players – OTAs – are expanding without threatening its overall stability. In October, the CAA authorised 31.6 million Atol-protected packages for the period through to the end of September 2024. This autumn authorisation is a 20% year-on-year increase, and a leap from a pre-Covid high of 28 million.

"It's the highest I've ever known," Martin Alcock, director of Atol consultancy Travel Trade Consultancy, tells TTG. "The growth numbers are incredible for some. It underlines this feeling of bullishness."

Some fear a price war or worse next year given the current climate of high inflation and cost of living, plus conflict in the Middle East and Ukraine that could suppress demand.

But Alcock stresses how different the situation is compared with a decade ago. Then, he explains, there were more integrated groups with their own aircraft that needed to be filled, and with Monarch Airlines and Excel Airways selling seats to the trade.

Now, there are fewer players with fixed costs and less chance of seat dumping and price wars.

The slack left by Thomas Cook's demise in 2019 disappeared as soon as Covid abated, and the pre-Covid high of 28 million Atol-licensed passengers is now surpassed. This had dipped to 25 million following Cook's collapse before a trough of 16.9 million during the pandemic.

Last year, the market recovered to 26.2 million before reaching this year's all-time high.

"We all expected some changes in the Atol holders list post pandemic as we returned to the 'new normal', but the speed at which the industry has bounced back and grown is reflective of the hard work everyone put in to get their businesses back on track.

"The travel industry is a growth sector, and I hope the government starts to give it the recognition it deserves." Jet2holidays, Tui and easyJet holidays all increased their Atols sizeably in September, but hot on their heels are the OTAs, many of which did not exist 10 years ago.

In fact, half the top 10 Atol brands are now OTAs, which can sell hotel rooms and flights on a more ad-hoc basis than conventional operators.

Alcock points to Booking.com, which in September 2022 held an Atol for 285,000 passengers, making it the ninth biggest Atol brand. A year later, it is authorised for 2.4 million passengers and sits in fourth place.

However, Booking.com's ambition does not alarm him. "It's not like they've bought a load of seats," he says. "If bookings don't materialise, it's not a disaster like it was 10 years ago."

The OTAs may be piling on capacity, but a potential barrier to growth in Europe could be an unwillingness by airlines like easyJet to sell them seats or in Ryanair's case, to work with them at all.

This is likely to mean no price war in Europe and OTA growth centred on long-haul instead, fuelled by their already vast turnover.



In terms of consolidation, the top 10 Atol holders appear to be closing their grip on the market slightly – they currently account for 24 million of all licensed passengers (66%), whereas in 2018, the top 10 accounted for 16 million of 26 million (62.5%).

The effect is more pronounced looking at the top 20, where the proportion of authorised seats has grown from 74% to 84% in the past four years. "Outside the top 20, it's a lot harder," Alcock warns. "If you're mass

market, volume is in fewer and fewer hands."

'Positive market statement'

However, the picture is still one of industry expansion beneath the top 20. The decline in the number of Atol-holders over the past few years has reversed, with the total growing from 1,580 to 1,600.

Alcock says the turnaround began at the last March renewal. "It is small growth, but it has definitely reversed the decline."

He adds there had been issues with small companies accessing investment during the pandemic, but

otherwise the figures were "a really positive statement for the market" with demand and pricing strong and "positive" feedback from clients.

"There is not any sign of what you would call a crash," he adds, while cautioning: "Operators are just starting to need to be a bit smarter; whereas this time last year (with exceptional demand), they just turned off their marketing."

Source: ttgmedia.com (by Gary Noakes)

China's flagging economy gets a temporary boost as holiday travel returns to pre-pandemic levels

Chinese tourists jammed popular sites as travel bounced back to pre-pandemic levels during a recent eight-day national holiday, giving a temporary boost to China's flagging economy.

The government said that tourism revenues reached about 753 billion yuan (\$103 billion) during the combined Mid-Autumn Festival and National Day holiday period that ended Friday, a rise of 1.5% over 2019 and 130% compared to last year when pandemic restrictions were still in place.

China maintained locked-downs and other restrictions much longer than most other countries, enforcing a "zero-COVID" policy until last December. But a hoped-for consumer spending boom after the lifting of restrictions hasn't materialized, as many Chinese remain cautious with an unfolding real estate crisis weighing on the economy and youth unemployment topping 20%.

That didn't stop tourists from flocking to the Great Wall and the teeming pedestrian-only shopping streets in Shanghai, Beijing and other cities. Few wore protective masks in shoulder-to-shoulder crowds in night markets and other popular destinations.

Source: AP

The Future of International Travel Is Passport-Free

Biometric technology is replacing the need for passports at the world's most modern airports.

Travelers at some of the best airports in the world no longer need to show passports, thanks to new technology that is making airport immigration smoother than ever. In September, Singapore announced that its Changi airport will be the first international hub to go completely passport-free in early 2024 when it implements an automated immigration checkpoint that uses passengers' biometric data. Instead of presenting a passport to an immigration officer at a kiosk, passengers will simply step up to the automated checkpoint for a facial scan that verifies their identity without needing an exit stamp. All travelers will be able to use the technology, including visitors.

Biometric passport clearance is a trend that will likely begin to catch on at more airports, as leveraging the technology becomes more popular. Dubai International Airport is also replacing traditional passport checks with biometric clearance—meaning that travelers will be able to walk through the terminal and onto their plane or through immigration using only their face as their ID. No more scrambling for travel documents at every point of the travel process.

Source: LinkedIn (By Jessica Puckett)

Want to rent out your home to tourists? Make sure to follow these new rules around Europe



Florence is the latest city to place restrictions on short-term holiday lets. Short-term holiday rentals are controversial in a lot of destinations around the world. They can be an easy investment or source of extra income for property owners in popular tourist spots. But they can also push up prices for local residents, creating housing crises and forcing people to move away from well-visited cities. They are often more lucrative for landlords than conventional long-term rentals and can leave hundreds of properties vacant in the off-season. As the EU gradually introduces rules and regulations that apply to the whole of the 27-nation bloc, some cities and countries are battling the growth of holiday rentals in their own way.

Paris has a special unit to crack down on illegal holiday rentals

There's a registration process in

most towns and cities across France for anyone who wants to rent out a whole house or apartment short term. Once registered, the town hall will give you a number that must be linked to your online listing before visitors can come and stay. In Paris, the rules are even stricter. The city recently won a lengthy legal battle with Airbnb which found the online rental platform jointly responsible for the illegal subletting of a property in the city - just one part of its ongoing crackdown. As sites like these have grown in popularity, Paris has introduced ever more restrictive legislation on what can and can't be rented out. You can rent out your primary residence on a platform like Airbnb for 120 days a year but need to be registered with the local town hall.

For second homes or to rent out a property for longer than 120 days, you need to officially convert it to a

furnished tourist accommodation.

This isn't easy and that is on purpose. The city is struggling with a housing crisis and second homes and holiday lets don't help.

Paris even has a dedicated unit to hunt down illegal rentals. In four years the French capital has netted €18 million in fines from people not following the rules properly.

Portugal cracks down on holiday rentals across the country

Portuguese Prime Minister Antonio Costa recently introduced a series of measures to crack down on short-term rentals. The country's last census in 2021 revealed that there were more than 720,000 vacant housing units in Portugal.

In an effort to tame rapidly rising rental prices, the country won't be issuing any new licenses for Airbnbs and other similar holiday lets. The only exceptions will be in rural areas that don't suffer from urban

pressures.

All licenses for holiday lets will now be reviewed every five years and a new system to control rental prices is also being introduced. Airbnb owners are also being offered a tax break if they convert their properties back into ordinary homes.

The crackdown comes as Portugal also brings an end to its Golden Visa scheme. It offered foreigners the chance to get citizenship by buying property in the country worth at least €500,000 - an attractive prospect for those looking to get EU residency.

But it has led to 10 per cent of all property purchases in Portugal being made by people overseas.

Spanish cities fight back against spiralling rental costs

Spain has also seen a boom in short-term rentals as tourism has picked up post-pandemic.

Data from the National Statistics Institute shows that the number of holiday lets is growing across the country. In some areas, as many as one in four properties are registered as tourist rentals.

There isn't yet a nationwide law but a number of Spanish destinations are fighting back against Airbnb-style properties as the price of renting a home has spiralled.

In 2021, Barcelona became the first European city to ban short-term private room rentals. It has a dedicated team that checks for illegal listings and has them taken down.

Letting out entire homes or apartments is still allowed - but the owner of the property needs to hold the appropriate licence. And the city hasn't issued any new licences for quite a while.

In February, Valencia announced plans to ban using homes for occasional tourist use in its historic centre. It was initially overturned by the courts but the town hall says it

will continue to fight against short-term holiday lets.

Palma, the popular Mallorcan capital, was successful in its legal challenge to ban tourist rentals in apartment buildings. It means visitors can only pay to stay at single family homes which must be isolated houses or villas rather than in flats or apartments.

Across Spain, the rules vary but as holiday lets continue to increase, restrictions are only likely to get tighter.

Italian tourist hotspots limit short-term rentals

In Italy's popular tourism hotspots, local authorities are also limiting short-term rental options. Mayor of Venice Luigi Brugnaro told the local press in March that the city centre has suffered from depopulation and now needs to fight to keep its soul.

He plans to introduce a system that will only allow homes to be rented to tourists for 120 days a year. Brugnaro said that anyone exceeding this limit would find police "at the door".

In June, Florence announced plans to limit new tourist accommodation in its historic city centre.

Italy's rental income tax rules also mean that platforms like Airbnb have to collect a 21 per cent levy and share information with tax authorities.

The rules on what property owners need to do vary from municipality to municipality. In most places, you'll need to inform authorities that you are starting a short-term rental business.

Some will give you a number to add to your listing. Many require you to report statistics about how many guests you've hosted and for how long using this same code.

It's also common for hosts to be required to provide each guest with a written short-term rental contract signed by both parties when they

check-in.

Rules could soon be enforced nationwide, as Italy's tourism ministry recently drafted a law to curb short-term holiday lets across the country.

The law, which targets rentals under 30 days, is yet to be finalised. It would enforce a two-day minimum stay in cities and popular tourist destinations.

The Netherlands has some of the strictest rules on holiday lets

You might have noticed that it isn't easy to book a short-term rental on Airbnb, Booking.com or Expedia in Amsterdam. This is due to some of the strictest rules for holiday homes on this list.

To rent out your home or houseboat in Amsterdam, you'll need a permit. It has to be your permanent address, the licence will cost you €48.10 and is only temporary.

This system limits you to renting out the property for no more than 30 nights a year, to a maximum of four people and you can't offer bed and breakfast. Before your guests arrive, you have to let the municipality know the holiday rental period.

There are even more forms to fill in and regulations to follow if you plan to run a bed and breakfast or any other short-term holiday rental. To let out your whole home for more than 30 nights, you'll need a specific permit like a short-term stay licence.

It isn't easy and for good reason. As the city hopes to shed its reputation for badly behaved tourists, this is just another in a series of measures to encourage quality over quantity. And, with the Netherlands facing a housing crisis, Amsterdam wants the homes it builds to be lived in not used as investment properties to be rented out to tourists.

(Source: euronews.travel)

The world's best tourism villages in 2023

For travellers looking for inspiration for their next city break, dozens of best-of lists abound. But for those in search of a slower pace, natural scenery and local traditions, there's a different resource to turn to: the world's best tourism villages, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).

For the past three years, the UNWTO has recognised villages across the world that "are leading the way in nurturing rural areas and preserving landscapes, cultural diversity, local values and culinary traditions", and it has just put out its list for 2023. These 54 villages were selected based on nine different criteria, including how well they are preserving (and showcasing) their natural environment, their commitment to economic and environmental sustainability and their conservation of cultural heritage.

Here, we take a look at five of the most interesting rural villages around the world from the new list.

Hakuba, Japan

Twenty years ago, Tony Anderson of Melbourne, Australia, came to Hakuba to snowboard. He returned to the village, located in the Japanese Alps about 45km west of Nagano, the next year to buy property – and has lived there ever since.

As a hotelier himself, Anderson says Hakuba's culture of hospitality makes it particularly welcoming for visitors.

When he travelled here as a tourist, he remembers going to hotels, only to find them booked up; but rather than being sent away, he was invited to put a futon down in the hallway. Even today, he said, "The policy is never to turn anyone away. Everybody's welcome."

Lerici, Italy

Move over, Cinque Terre: for travellers looking for striking sea views, clean beaches and colourful homes, there's another destination to add to the list in the Liguria region. Located on the north-western Italian coast, 100km south of Genoa (or 10km south of La Spezia, a popular travel hub for getting to the Cinque Terre), Lerici isn't exactly a secret. Still, its location – particularly its lack of a train station – means it's been a bit more protected from overtourism than many of its neighbours.

Dubbed the capital of the "Gulf of Poets", it hosts numerous cultural and artistic festivals, such as the Lerici Music Festival, the Premio

Lerici Pea Golfo dei Poeti literary competition, and regular art exhibitions, including at its medieval castle. "Over the centuries, Lerici has welcomed great names in culture, literature and art who have chosen it as a place of inspiration," said Lerici mayor Leonardo Paoletti, including poet Percy Bysshe Shelly, novelist Virginia Woolf and writer and director Pier Paolo Pasolini. "Today this legacy persists."

Lephis, Ethiopia

For natural beauty and wildlife, it's hard to beat the village of Lephis, located in Lephis Forest, around 160km south of the Ethiopian capital, Addis Ababa. Travellers can trek or horseback ride past the striking Lephis Waterfall and through hills and valleys, catching glimpses of animals including colobus monkeys, leopards

Douma's commitment to preserving its architectural and cultural heritage and "avoiding chaotic urban expansion" played a major role in its selection to the 2023 list.

The UNWTO notes that Douma has protected other aspects of its cultural heritage, too, such as its local food traditions. According to Tanissa, the "Raha sweet", made with biscuits, is one favourite, as are the town's zaatar, olive oil, cheeses and jams. Many of the ingredients come from local farms and vineyards. That said, Douma isn't just about tradition: the village has undertaken a number of new green initiatives, too, including using 600 solar panels to generate electricity for the village, planting trees and encouraging composting.

Zapatoca, Colombia

Six years ago, after spending three



and mountain nyala. Birdwatchers are in for a particular treat, with species including the Abyssian oriole and white-cheeked turaco.

"I often go there with tourists to see fauna and flora," said Biruk Chiksa, a tour guide at Venture Ethiopia Tour and Travel. "I love it a lot." And as Chiksa points out, so do foreign travellers.

Douma, Lebanon

Traditional stone houses with red-tiled roofs, views of the surrounding Batroun Mountains, centuries-old churches and a recently restored souk: the village of Douma, located about 80km north-east of Beirut, is nothing if not picturesque.

"My first impression was the beauty of the village," said Rana Tanissa, a Lebanese archaeologist and rural tourism consultant who writes about travel to Lebanon, recalling her first visit to the town. "And the history of the village is incredible – one feels as if you're entering a history book."

In fact, according to the UNWTO,

decades working as a teacher in other parts of Colombia, Guillermo Rincón Velandia decided to launch the tour company Colombia Trails SAS – and he returned to his native town of Zapatoca, Colombia, to do it. The reasons are many, he said, and they echo why the UNWTO lists Zapatoca, located in the north of the country, as one of its best tourism villages for 2023.

First, there's the natural landscape. Located on a plateau between three canyons some 1,700m above sea level, Zapatoca has a "rich and unique geological heritage", Velandia said, including some of the oldest marine fossils in the world. The diversity of its landscape stands out, too, with ancient underground caves, tropical forests and mountains to hike, trek and explore. The climate, however, is remarkably stable: it maintains a temperature of about 20C year-round, leading locals to call it "The Village with the Silk-Like Climate".

(Source: BBCtravel)

HAN Activities in Nutshell

- President Mr Binayak Shah and First Vice President Mr Prabin B Panday attended a meeting with Minister and Secretary of Ministry of Industry, Commerce, Supply on October 1, 2023. The meeting dealt with demands submitted to minister, namely Priority Industry Status and treatment of Manufacturing Industry and Foreign Investment and Technology Transfer Act provision of management fee.
- President Mr Binayak Shah inaugurated Food & Beverage Hospitality 2023 organized by House of Rajkarnikar on October 5, 2023 at Bhrikutimandap.
- Prabin Bahadur Panday - Senior Vice President attended a luncheon meeting at Marriot hotel hosted by ADB in honor of Executive Director / Board Group Team Leader on October 7, 2023. Mr Panday made suggestions to ADB board to discuss with the government to consider hotel's foreign currency earning as export & and provide hotel industry as priority industry status .
- Treasurer Mr Youb Raj Shrestha attended the 18th Annual General Meeting of Fast Food Association Nepal on October 7, 2023 as the Special Guest.
- HAN Secretary General Sajan Shakya attended as a Special Guest of the Closing ceremony of NTB-UNDP STLTP 3 days Comprehensive Hospitality Training for Small & Medium Size Hotel at Malekhu, Dhading on October 10, 2023.
- Secretary General Mr Sajan Shakya attended the National Fiscal Dialogue which was attended by the Prime Minister and industry leaders on 12 October, 2023.

Hotel rate rises: how much is too much?



Since the pandemic, hotel room rates have been increasing drastically and this summer saw travellers paying prices that well exceeded 2019's prices or any ever seen before. In fact, based on data from travel intelligence provider Mabrian, in August average hotel prices Vs 2019 were up by 16.75% in Europe, 48.5% in Asia and a massive 64.03% in North America.

Will this trend continue or slowly go away as 'revenge travel' fades? At what point do very high prices become counterproductive because guests feel ripped-off and won't come back? And what role does technology and innovation play in responding to all of these challenges?

We spoke to experts from throughout the travel supply chain to get their take on whether the rates are here to stay, and how the industry should respond.

These higher-than-average hotel room rates will provide opportunities for tech-savvy travel sellers who can

use innovative ways to help their travellers find the best deals, says Christian Sabbagh from Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) group Travelsoft – owner of distribution platforms such as Traffics, Orchestra and Travel Compositor: “Travel agencies and third parties can develop new strategies for helping customers find great deals on rooms while still offering competitive pricing options. Additionally, as customer demand continues to grow suppliers can expand their services with innovative approaches like dynamic pricing models or integrated loyalty programs that reward users who book multiple stays at affiliated properties.”

Hotel revenue management experts BEONx warn that the higher-than-average prices are unlikely to last forever as consumers won't put up with this even if they have the money. Chief Marketing & Innovation offices Alex Barros comments that “how much is too much?”

