



THE RISE OF TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL

Shifting Toward Meaning, Purpose, and
Personal Fulfillment

Presented by

Skift.

+



SINGAPORE
Passion Made Possible

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ABOUT SKIFT

Skift is a travel intelligence company that offers news, data, and services to professionals in travel and professional travelers, to help them make smart decisions about travel.

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INTRODUCTION



Photo: Singapore Tourism Board

Travelers today are increasingly drawn to travel as a form of self-actualization and personal transformation and growth. They want more than a simple visit to a new destination or days spent relaxing on a beach. Instead, the travel they're seeking is an experience of the world that goes deep — one that changes them in ways they may not even be aware of.

With personal growth now a central goal of many travel experiences, brands, companies, and destinations operating in the travel and tourism space can thrive by helping travelers enrich their inner lives as they explore outwardly.

Skift identified travel focused on personal fulfillment as one of its 2018 Megatrends, “Personal Fulfillment Is the New Ultimate Luxury.” According to the Megatrend, the evolving wants and needs to travelers in the luxury sector are undergoing a tangible shift. While memorable, bespoke experiences are still important to these travelers — which we've seen through the focus on experiential travel over the last decade or so — they're no longer enough. For luxury travelers, the personal fulfillment and self improvement one gains from an experience now takes precedence.

The trend began in the adventure-travel sector and has since become correlated with the luxury segment. But like experiential travel, which is now readily available to travelers outside of the luxury category, the focus on personal fulfillment is also gaining wider traction among travelers in general.

WHAT IS TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL?

Skift defines transformative travel as any travel experience that empowers people to make meaningful, lasting changes in their lives, whether big or small. The term was popularized by the Transformational Travel Council, an organization started in 2016 by Jake Hauptert and Michael Bennett, adventure-travel-company owners who wanted to help others transform their lives through travel.

The Council aims to create a movement around traveling like a “HERO” — that is, “traveling with **H**eat; seeking **E**ngagement; having the **R**esolve to work through challenges; and leaving your heart, mind, and soul **O**pen to the unknown.” Approaching travel in this thoughtful way dramatically increases one’s likelihood of having a life-changing experience.

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I think people are desperate to alter their minds.

- Beth McGroarty, director of research and PR, Global Wellness Institute

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Beth McGroarty, director of research and public relations at the Global Wellness Institute, calls travel that gets people out of their usual mindset and exposes them to new ways of being and thinking “a kind of shortcut — a brain shake-up and a life shake-up.”

These “shake-ups” come in many forms. A trek into the mountains, a homestay, a silent meditation retreat. A training course with a local artisan, behind-the-scenes access to performing artists, volunteer work in communities. A shake-up experience can be something simple — a person’s first trip to a big city or a moment of understanding with someone far different than oneself. The list of transformational opportunities is as endless as travelers’ — and the travel industry’s — resourcefulness and creativity.

Luke Bailes, owner and CEO of Singita, which runs luxury African safari lodges and reserves, identified three essential elements of a transformative travel experience: connection, personalization, and authenticity.

“It’s the combination of those three things that defines how impactful and meaningful the journey is for tourists,” he said. “Our fundamental belief is that travel changes the way people see the world. By being able to stay in locally owned and operated accommodations, using local transport, being led by a local leader, getting to the heart of the communities, having real life experiences — you’re actually getting a more diverse set of life experiences. And we know when that takes place it transforms you.”

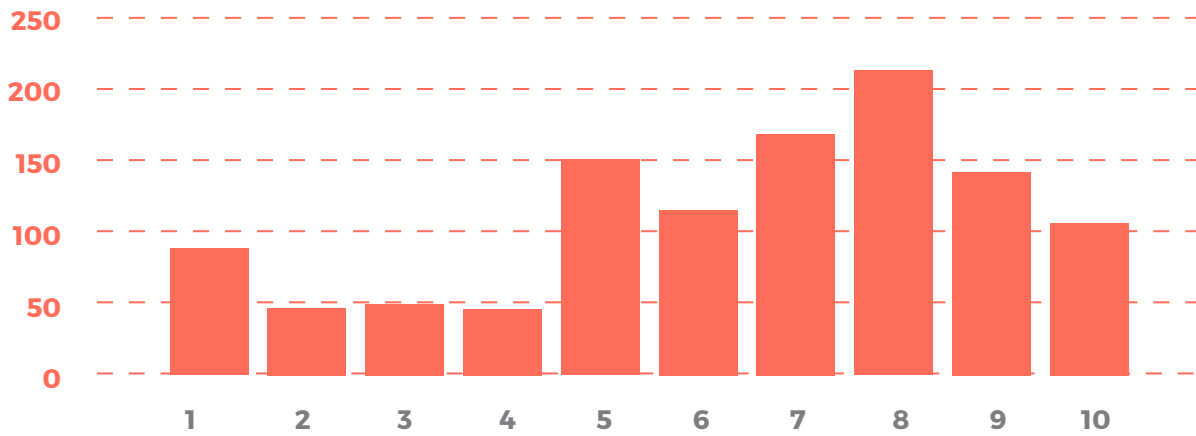
DIGGING DEEPER INTO TRAVELERS' SHIFTING VALUES



Photo: Singapore Tourism Board

The idea of “transformative travel” is taking hold across all segments of the industry and catching the imagination of travelers of all stripes. A survey conducted by Skift in 2017 found that this was a growing trend among travelers. In the survey of 1,350 travelers, 54 percent of respondents ranked the importance of transformative travel as 7 out of 10 or higher and 52 percent said they place increasing value on this type of travel.

On a scale of 1-10, how much importance do you place on transformative travel experiences? (10 = most important)



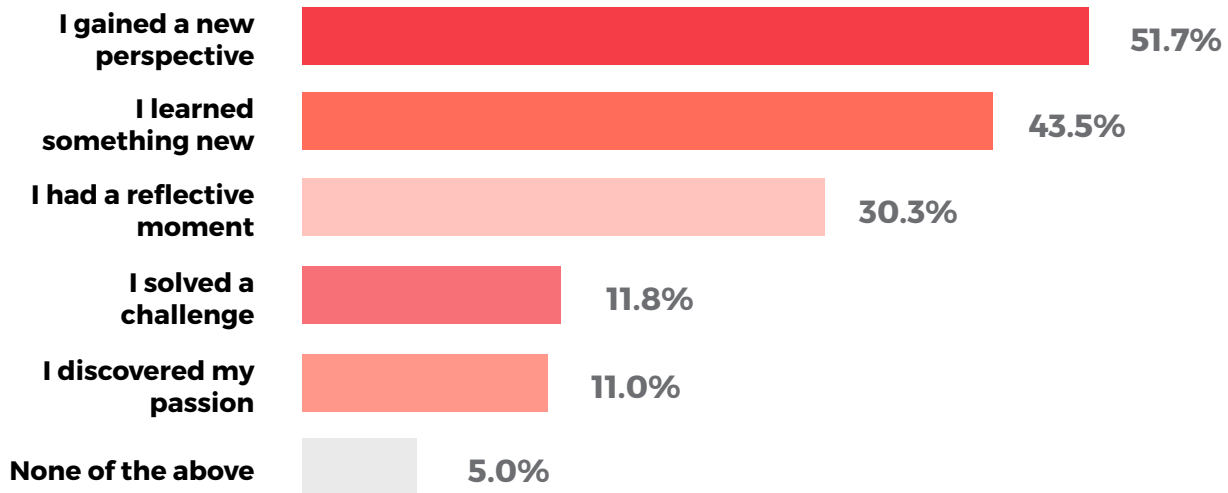
Source: Skift Survey, 2017

A follow-up survey of 500 people conducted by Skift in 2018 took a deeper look at how travelers consider these experiences and showed that there’s real opportunity for travel brands and providers to help drive such moments. The survey found that 32 percent of consumers have had an experience while traveling that has transformed them in a positive way, while another 24 percent of consumers have not had such an experience, but would like to.

There are a number of reasons why a travel experience transforms someone. In the survey, travelers who have had such an experience were most likely to say that gaining a new perspective and learning something new took the experience to the next level, at 52 percent and 44 percent, respectively. Reflective moments played a large role as well, with 30 percent of travelers saying these led to a personal shift.

Why was the experience transformational ?

621 answers from 405 respondents

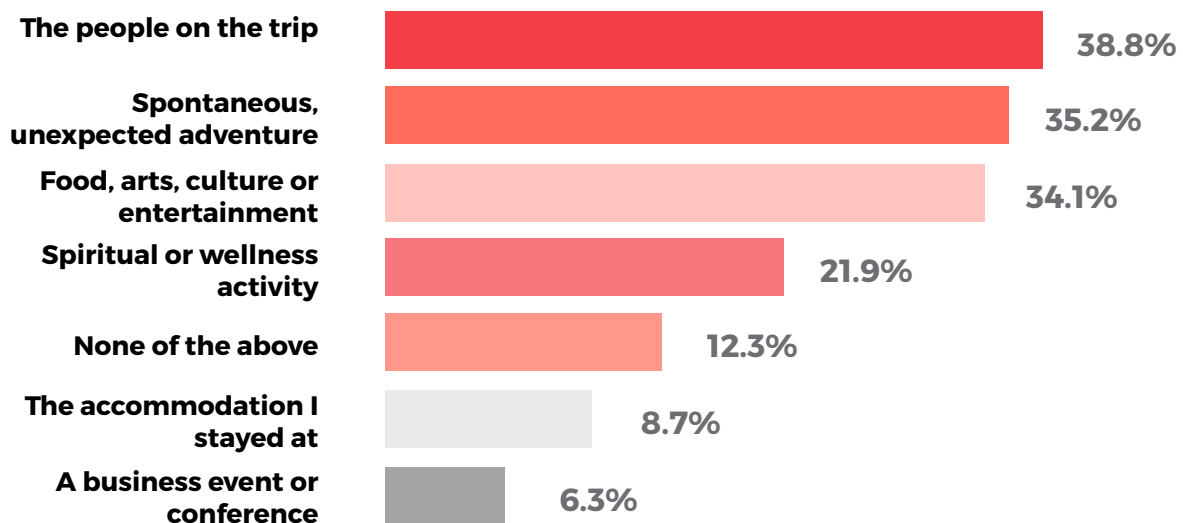


Source: Skift Survey, 2017

There were a number of factors that led to that transformational moment. Nearly 40 percent of overall respondents said that the people on the trip influenced the experience, while more than one-third said that a spontaneous, unexpected adventure, and food, arts, culture, or entertainment contributed in this way. Interestingly, food, arts, culture, and entertainment ranked much higher for millennials, with nearly half of 18- to 34-year-olds saying one of these elements led to a transformative experience.

Which external factors led to that transformational moment ? (choose top two)

631 answers from 401 respondents



Source: Skift Survey, 2017

THE NEW TRANSFORMATION ECONOMY



Photo: Singapore Tourism Board

This shift toward self-actualization and personal transformation is a reflection of a broader movement within the global economy. Companies increasingly position their products not just as objects or even enablers of experiences, but as essential elements in the creation of an improved self.

Apple, for example, doesn't sell hardware or the efficiency that hardware provides, as much as it purveys the promise of a hip, optimized, future-oriented way of life. Patagonia is another example of this shift — it doesn't sell clothing or enable adventures as much as it retails an ethos of passion about and responsibility for the environment.

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More people are getting their basic needs met, so people have started searching for things that can fulfill them on a higher level — not just physically, but spiritually and emotionally.

- Richard Goodstone,
co-founder, Superfly

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The marketing sector has framed this change in terms of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, based on the theory of famous psychologist Abraham Maslow, which posits a progression of growth stages in human development. At the upper end of this scale are "esteem," "self-actualization," and "self-transcendence."

From a marketing perspective, the global economy is shifting from a focus on esteem — that is, gaining the recognition and approval of others — toward self-actualization, in which consumers frame their purchasing choices in terms of how a product or service will help them reach their full potential and become who they dream of being.

The shift from an esteem-focus to a self-actualization-focus is ushering in what has been described as a "Transformation Economy." Considering that travel is already a prime source of life-altering experiences, the industry is well-positioned to engage with this new reality. Those companies and destinations that have a purpose-driven business ethic are best situated to attract customers looking for these experiences, as their messaging will authentically align with their offerings. While it's possible to use "transformative" as a branding buzzword, this approach is most effective when a company's or destination's offerings are an extension of its essential nature.

"There's an obvious relationship between transformative travel and experiential travel, which is a widely encompassing term that describes travel experiences that go beyond consumption of a product or service," said Sharon Cohen, vice president of Fairmont brand management for AccorHotels. "I think transformative travel takes place when experiential travel goes a step further and expands the mind, shifts perspective, pushes boundaries of one's comfort zones, and creates cultural understanding."

Photo: Singapore Tourism Board



THE MAKING OF A TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

There's no one type of transformative travel experience, and travelers define these experiences in different ways. Some find transformation in wild exploits, remote places, or cultures extremely different from their own. Others can find a spark of magic closer to home or in experiences that may seem mundane to more adventurous travelers.

"It doesn't have to be this crazy, lofty thing," said Jake Hauptert, co-founder of the Transformational Travel Council. "It can be a woman who goes to New York for the first time on her own, books a hotel, and takes an elevator up by herself at night — a little scary. And now she leaves with a newfound confidence."

What people are looking for is an experience — whether extraordinary or not — that will make an indelible impression.

"We're seeing more and more people want to travel to Cuba and interact with the locals to learn what it's like to live there," said Leigh Barnes, regional director of North America at Intrepid Travel. "Or to go to Nepal to trek to Everest Base Camp, to Rwanda or Uganda to see the gorillas first-hand, or to go on a food adventure in Vietnam."

Central to these experiences is broadening one's perspective to encompass places, people, and circumstances that may have previously seemed forbiddingly foreign.

"Empathy and education through experience are fundamental to everyone's personal development — and are needed now more than ever," said Richard Goodstone, co-founder of Superfly, a company focused on creating meaningful experiences that shape and influence culture.

The transformation brought about by this experience can be complete, said Tracey Friley, founder of Passport Party Project, a global awareness initiative that gets underrepresented kids passports and takes them on their first international journeys.

"It's a process; they just start to think differently. When you take [kids] on that first trip without their parents, there's this huge shift."

Some of the students she takes abroad report that "everything is different" after they return. Their travel experiences change their priorities: They go on to study abroad, take on leadership roles, and set new goals for their educations and their lives.

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When you start learning about other people and accepting other people, that's where transformation begins.

- Tracey Friley, founder,
Passport Party Project

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CASE STUDY: HOW GARDENS BY THE BAY CREATES A SENSE OF WONDER AND SURPRISE

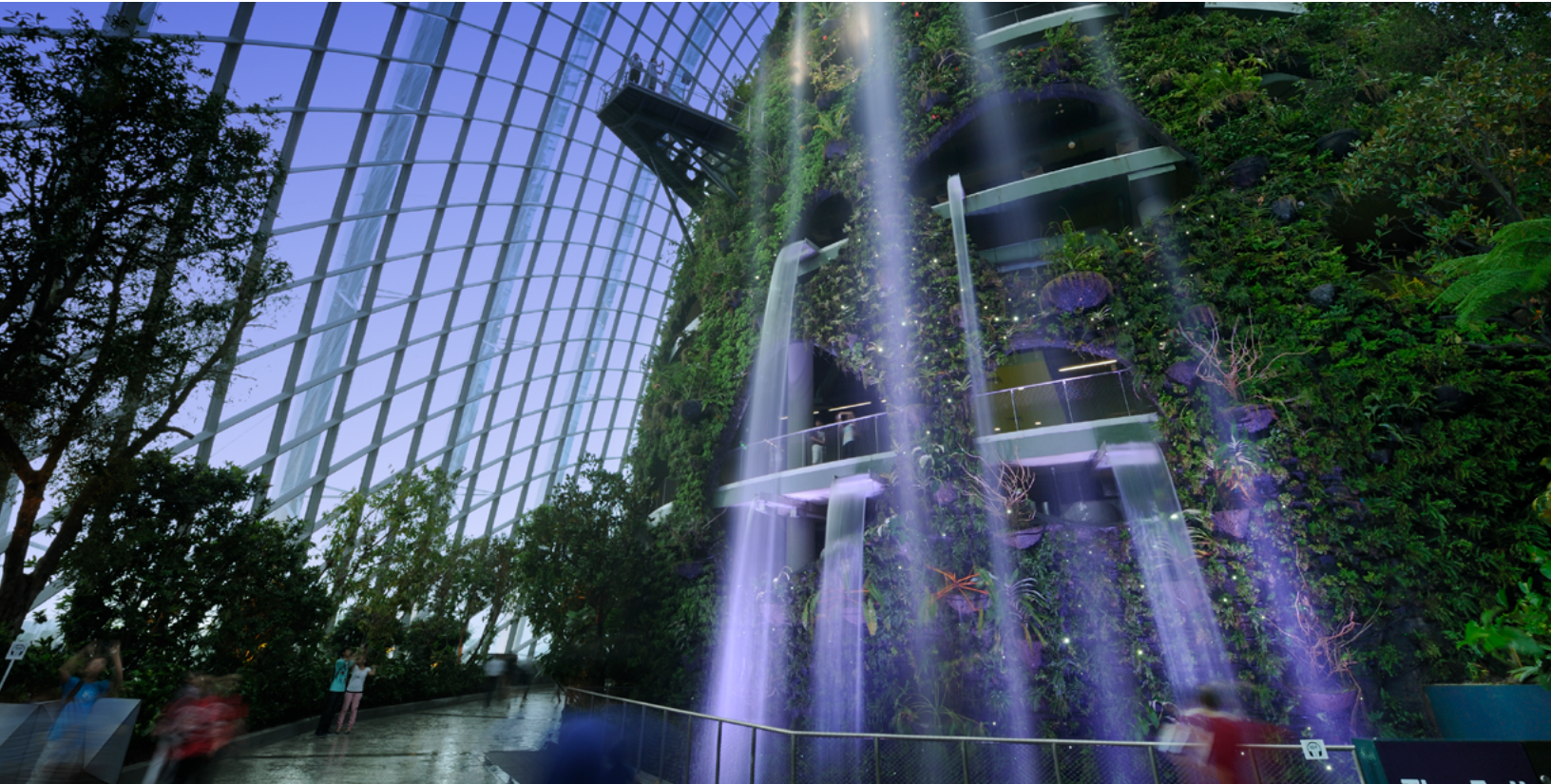


Photo: Gardens by the Bay

In Singapore, a remarkable attraction called Gardens by the Bay offers a good example of a sight that's purpose – to educate and inspire visitors about nature – is aligned with offering a transformative experience.



“We want to change the perception of what a garden should be,” said Dr. Kiat W. Tan, corporate advisor to Gardens by the Bay and advisor to Singapore’s National Parks Board. “It required exploration of boundaries and thinking out of the box, breaking away from the typical convention of a garden.”

The result is a 250-acre nature park in three segments, situated in the heart of Singapore. The complex includes themed gardens showcasing tropical plants, miles of waterfront promenades, an elevated walkway, a children's garden, and two enormous, environmentally friendly cooled conservatories.

Visitors are particularly amazed by the 160-foot Supertrees, massive solar-powered tree-like structures that support vertical gardens of ferns and orchids, and host sound-and-light shows in their branches at nights. Similarly jaw-dropping is the Cloud Forest, a huge biodome that recreates a cool-moist forest of the tropical highlands. Orchids, pitcher plants, and ferns soak up the mist generated by the world's tallest indoor waterfall. Two walkways – the Cloud Walk and the Treetop Walk – immerse guests in this cloudy, enchanting world.

The Cloud Forest conservatory, as well as a second conservatory that recreates the cool-dry climate of the Mediterranean, is central to Gardens by the Bay's groundbreaking sustainability efforts. Using cutting-edge technologies for energy-efficiency, the structures reduce energy consumption by at least 30 percent over conventional cooling methods. Additionally, the Gardens' system of lakes incorporates natural ecological processes that support a sustainable ecosystem, such as filtering run-off and maintaining water circulation.

Gardens by the Bay is designed to captivate visitors with an unexpected experience as they discover that a garden can be so much more than they had imagined. The gardens offer a perspective on Singapore as a place where amazing things are possible, where Singaporeans' spirit of discovery and ethic of self-reliant determination are made manifest in the amazement visitors feel as they make their way through this remarkable attraction.

"When they enter the dome, there's this 'wow,'" said Tan. "You always need to have the element of wonder and surprise."

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**When they enter the dome,
there's this 'wow'.**

- Dr. Kiat W. Tan, corporate advisor,
Gardens by the Bay

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Photo: Gardens by the Bay



CASE STUDY: HOW SINGAPORE IS BRINGING PASSION AND MEANING TO THE FOREFRONT

Transformative travel experiences are as diverse as the travelers seeking them. But no travel experience will be transformative if it doesn't stir up passions in its participants and provide them with a sense of meaning.

Singapore is already well-known among most travelers for its functional core strengths: stability, excellent infrastructure, ease, and convenience. However, the country has long been home to people with vision, determination, and ingenuity to overcome adversities and push boundaries. Only 52 years ago, Singapore was a remote fishing island with few natural resources to help grow the country. The Singaporean people's passion and drive built a world-class city from scratch — basically creating something great from nothing.

In August 2017, the Singapore Tourism Board, together with the Singapore Economic Development Board, unveiled a unified brand “Singapore – Passion Made Possible,” to market Singapore internationally for tourism and business purposes. The new brand was developed to change existing perceptions and build positive mindshare globally amidst increasing competition by articulating Singapore's attitude and mindset.

The Passion Made Possible brand aims to reflect Singapore's authenticity and depth of character, allowing the country to build stronger emotional connections with consumers, even when they are not actively thinking about travel. According to Lynette Pang, Singapore Tourism Board's assistant chief executive, marketing group, “It incorporates the attitude of a passion-driven, never-settling spirit of determination and enterprise that constantly pursues possibilities and reinvention that captures the spirit of Singapore — a place shaped by its people and their passions.”



Photo: Singapore Tourism Board



Photo: Singapore Tourism Board

The brand was developed through an “inside-out approach,” celebrating the deeper stories and authentic experiences of Singapore and keeping in mind that travelers increasingly wish to live like locals and be transformed by their journeys.

As Pang explained, “With that in mind, we grouped potential visitors into seven major ‘Passion Tribes,’ based on their lifestyles, interests, and what they travel for: the Foodies, the Explorers, the Collectors, the Progressors, the Culture Shapers, the Action Seekers, and the Socialisers.”

This approach aimed to position Singapore as a place that fulfills individual passions and inspires new possibilities — where one can be inspired not just by what one can do, but what one can be. “Visitors can pursue their passions as a foodie, an explorer, or an action seeker. And they will find many like-minded people here to share and celebrate their passions with,” said Pang.

Singapore Tourism Board is working with a range of partners to integrate Passion Made Possible into its core tourism products and experiences. The goal is to share the deeper stories and experiences of Singapore, build emotional connections with travelers, and enhance its destination appeal.

Singapore Tourism Board offers 24 “Passion Tours” that showcase the passions of Singaporeans and cater to the various Passion Tribes. “The Next-Generation Hawker Food Tour” promises Foodie visitors up-close encounters with up-and-coming Singaporean hawkers who retain the original flavors of traditional local dishes, while catering to the changing palates of younger consumers. “The Good Morning, Joo Chiat! Tour” lets Explorer visitors roam a Singaporean neighborhood in vintage Vespa sidecars, often encountering surprises in corners and back alleys.



Photo: Lynette Pang, Singapore Tourism Board

Singapore Tourism Board is also partnering with hotels to enhance visitors' stays in Singapore by elevating the hotel experience beyond functional accommodation and appealing to various passions and interests through storytelling and tours. For example, in March 2018, Amara Resort Sanctuary Sentosa launched a Heritage Tour, which leverages the rich history and elements of Sentosa. Participants are immersed in stories of historic Singapore, Sentosa, and the British Colonial times, and have an opportunity to visit Singapore's last two remaining World War II air raid shelters.

Come June 2018, the Village Hotels & Residences by Far East Hospitality will open “Made-in-Singapore” rooms inspired by the country's heritage precincts. Guests booking these room stays will receive a package including a Village passport to “Explore like a local,” tickets for two to “Eat like a Local,” a take-home recipe card of recommended local dishes, and a Singapore-inspired souvenir.

“Such diverse and simulating experiences, which offer a richer and more meaningful insight into a country's culture and heritage, leave a more lasting impression on travelers. Travel is no longer about what visitors can do, see, and buy — it's about how experiences shape our passions, tease out the possibilities of who we can be, and ultimately change us as people,” said Pang.

INTERVIEW: HOW INTREPID TRAVEL STRENGTHENS COMMUNITY THROUGH TRANSFORMATIVE EXPERIENCES

Leigh Barnes, Intrepid Travel's regional director of North America, spoke to SkiftX about how the company delivers transformative experiences to their travelers, why sustainability plays an important role, and how integrating with local communities has benefited both their travelers and the destinations they work with.

SkiftX: How does Intrepid help travelers achieve transformational experiences?

Barnes: Our fundamental belief is that travel changes the way people see the world. By offering trips that allow people to stay in locally owned and operated accommodations, use local transport, and be led by a local leader, travelers are getting to the heart of the communities they're visiting and receiving a more diverse set of life experiences. At the same time, we can ensure the money goes directly into local communities. We're also a responsible, purpose led business, and I think that plays an important role. Our trips are all carbon offset, and we invest in wildlife conservation projects, human rights initiatives and other environmental sustainability platforms as well.



Photo: Leigh Barnes, Intrepid Travel

SkiftX: Can you tell us more about Intrepid's community-based tourism projects?

Barnes: Community-based tourism involves interactions between the visitor and the host community that are managed and owned by the community, for the community. We launched these projects to establish tourism that benefits the local community without disrupting the local environment and existing way of life in the area. For example, we recently launched Journey into East Arnhem Land in northern Australia. The trip is an opportunity to witness how the Yolngu people — Australia's indigenous people and the oldest civilization in the world — connect to the earth while giving the Yolngu people the opportunity to fulfill their goal of sharing their culture and history with the outside world. We're also currently working with a community in Chitwan National Park in Nepal, which was once home to a royal hunting reserve, with their wildlife conservation efforts.

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The experience that had the biggest impact on me was trekking to Everest Base Camp in the Himalayas ... It really transformed me to be a lot more tolerant and understanding of people.

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Photo: Intrepid Travel



Photo: Intrepid Travel

SkiftX: Did you have your own personal experience that pursued you to think about travel in this way?

Barnes: The experience that had the biggest impact on me was trekking to Everest Base Camp in the Himalayas about four years ago. Being able to walk through such an amazing part of the world, I really learned that people aren't too dissimilar from each other. Regardless of their religion, their country, or their political beliefs, at the end of the day, everyone works hard, they want to support their families, and they want to be good to others. It really transformed me to be a lot more tolerant and understanding of people.

SkiftX: Are there any challenges Intrepid faces when it comes to delivering on transformative travel experiences?

Barnes: What's most challenging is that there's no right way to do it. That, and the fact that every place we travel to is constantly evolving. There are always new destinations emerging and there are always new experiences available. Keeping up with that constant change can be a challenge. It really comes down to leaning into the community to learn about what experiences and opportunities are out there.

Photo: Intrepid Travel



INTERVIEW: WHY THE FOUNDERS OF BONNAROO VALUE SERENDIPITY IN A WORLD OF INCREASING CURATION

Rich Goodstone is co-founder of Superfly, a company that fosters shared experiences and narratives through live events and multi-platform experiences. The company produces festivals and events such as Bonnaroo and Outside Lands and creates solutions for brands to build audiences, establish their identities, and tell their stories.

SkiftX: How does Superfly help travelers achieve transformational experiences?

Rich Goodstone: Most people exist throughout their daily lives with their head down and arms folded. When people attend a Superfly event, their arms are wide open. At Bonnaroo, we literally have a “high five lane” as you’re walking into the festival where people are lined up high fiving for hours, excited to be there. They’re in a completely different mindset and are ready to open up to each other and create their own communities. They’re ready to experience the different activities we offer that align with their passions, whether that’s seeing a comedy performance, dancing to a DJ, watching a film, or participating in a yoga class. We built our company around a purpose founded on creating cultural experiences that can enrich lives and build communities. While it’s ultimately up to the individual to create their own transformative experience, we see ourselves as providing the canvas and the paint that allows people to do so.

SkiftX: We hear so much talk about the increased importance of curation and personalization in travel. What are your thoughts on this as it relates to the value of serendipity and discovery?

Goodstone: I think serendipity is incredibly important. Luckily, we have so much time to spend with people at our events that there’s no way for there not to be serendipitous moments. There’s no way to curate every single second. You’re going to meet new people and see things you’ve never seen before, as long as your mind is open. This is obviously the same when it comes to most travel experiences, or at least it should be. It’s important that everything isn’t perfectly planned out. Those unplanned moments are likely to be full of surprises that can give deeper meaning to the experience and transform the individual.



Photo: Rich Goodstone, Superfly

SkiftX: How do you work to understand what motivates and excites consumers who are attending your events?

Goodstone: We're always engaging with our audience and working to get to know them through audience surveys and constant communication. Millennials and Gen Zers make up the majority of our audience, so we make sure they're working in our offices and are part of our planning process. We also make sure we pay attention to what's happening out there in the world and continue to evolve our experiences as both the culture and people's wants and needs shift.

SkiftX: How do you think the event sector is relevant to the travel sector? What learnings can be applied?

Goodstone: There's certainly a lot of crossover. We're both in the hospitality industry and cater to an audience that's trying to learn from others and from new experiences. We allow people to take a break and let go of their daily monotony. The environments we create — whether in the event space or the travel space — should aim to relax the mind and allow people to experience a bigger part of their true selves.

Photo: Superfly



INTERVIEW: HOW FAIRMONT HOTELS HELPS TRAVELERS LOOK INWARD TO FIND THEIR PLACE IN THE WORLD

Sharon Cohen, vice president of Fairmont brand management at AccorHotels, is responsible for Fairmont's global brand strategy, product development and positioning, and brand standards. Fairmont, along with other AccorHotels luxury brands, has made transformative experiences a focus of their hospitality offerings.

SkiftX: How do you think transformative travel fits into the hospitality sector?

Sharon Cohen: I think our role in hospitality is to facilitate and set the stage to give guests the opportunity to have a transformative experience. How far they take it and how deeply they're impacted is ultimately up to them.

SkiftX: Can you give some specific examples of how Fairmont works to facilitate these experiences?

Cohen: It comes in a lot of different forms. For example, at our Fairmont The Palm property in Dubai, we offer a monthly full moon yoga session on the beach. At the Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, which has been offering wellness retreats for years at its mountainous resort, visiting mindfulness instructors and creativity coaches often come and help inspire guests to self-reflect and renew. Fairmont Yangcheng Lake gives adults the chance to let loose and embrace their inner child by offering them the opportunity to fly kites on the banks of the lake or in the fields. Again, it's about setting the stage for people to have that transformative experience.



Photo: Sharon Cohen, Fairmont Hotels

SkiftX: What are Fairmont's customers specifically looking for when it comes to these experiences?

Cohen: Our customers tend to be experienced travelers. They don't consider themselves tourists. They want all the bells and whistles but want to be cared for in an authentic and tailored way — it can't feel too scripted. They want to hear the stories, myths, and history of the place that they're visiting and want to learn about the local culture, arts and entertainment, and geography — but not in a tour group setting. They want an insider's view. They then want to use these experiences to learn something new about themselves. By working to understand what our guests are passionate about, we're able to develop innovative programming and customized experiences to help them curate their time with us in the destination.

SkiftX: Have you witnessed an increase in how travelers are demanding these types of experiences?

Cohen: The desire to transform ourselves through meaningful experiences has been around forever, but I don't think it's been well-packaged until recently. We're now able to better understand our customers through new technologies and data, so we're more adept at learning about what their passions are.

Photo: AccorHotels



CASE STUDY: HOW SINGAPORE'S JEWEL CHANGI AIRPORT IS MAKING THE JOURNEY AS TRANSFORMATIVE AS THE DESTINATION



Photo: Jewel Changi Airport Devt

Singapore's Changi Airport is an extension of the city's full-surround strategy of giving visitors deeper, more satisfying experiences. It has long been more than a transit hub, incorporating enjoyable experiences and attractions for travelers, such as a variety of gardens, art installations, shopping galleries, and a multimedia entertainment center. But next year, with the opening of the Jewel Changi Airport facility, the airport will go even farther in becoming a unique standalone destination that serves up amazement along with its transit services.

"Travelers today are exploring less discovered destinations to gain meaningful experiences on each new trip," says Ms. Hung Jean, CEO of Jewel Changi Airport Development. "This makes the role of air hubs even more important in their travel journeys as these savvy travelers prefer to book their own flights to these secondary cities and choose the airports they wish to transfer to and transit in."

The 1.5 million square-foot, 10-story complex connecting three of Changi's terminals will incorporate a variety of attractions, a hotel, aviation facilities, and hundreds of retail and dining offerings. Designed by world-renowned architect Moshe Safdie, this new star in Singapore's crown will continue with the theme of "city in a garden," incorporating nature as an integral aspect of its design. The compound uses the monumental scale and comforting familiarity of elements like trees and waterfalls to create an indoor space that is both restful and awe-inspiring.

"We want to introduce the concept where the 'outdoors are brought indoors,' so that visitors to Jewel will be able to enjoy nature through our many gardens and trails under all weather conditions and have a memorable experience like none other," says Hung.

Visitors will find a magical, transformative realm at Jewel that takes them far from the humdrum business of baggage and boarding. The Rain Vortex, a massive column of water that will play host to sound-and-light shows, will displace Gardens by the Bay's Cloud Forest waterfall as the world's tallest indoor waterfall. Forest Valley, a five-story indoor garden with some 3,000 trees, will be a peaceful place for travelers to stroll and rejuvenate. Canopy Park, on Jewel's top level, will feature gardens focused on animal-shaped topiaries and seasonal floral displays.

Other out-of-the-ordinary attractions include a massive hedge maze, a garden-based mirror maze, "sky nets" where people can bounce above the treetops, a 165-foot-long canopy bridge suspended 75 feet above ground, a complex of contoured slides, and concave mist-filled "foggy bowls" that allow children to play in the clouds.

The creative and inspiring nature of Jewel will help make Changi Airport "a compelling destination to fill travelers' needs for an experiential journey, even if they are only here for a transfer or transit," says Hung. But for those who are visiting Singapore, Jewel is designed to be the city's "first and last gateway" — a remarkable element of each travelers' experience that showcases the unique, passionate spirit of Singapore.



Photo: Hung Jean, Jewel Changi Airport

FIVE KEY TAKEAWAYS TO SET THE STAGE FOR TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL EXPERIENCES

Certain sectors are particularly well positioned to take advantage of the global economic trend toward emphasizing self-actualization. The travel industry tops the list, as one of its core objectives is offering consumers meaningful, potentially life-changing experiences. According to Havas' 2017 "Meaningful Brands" report, travel, tourism, and leisure ranks as the world's most meaningful industry.

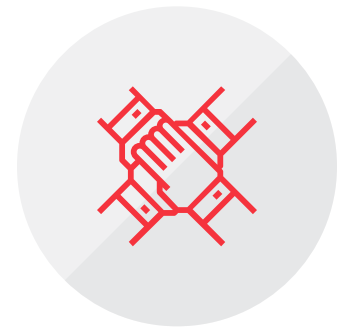
With the transformative travel trend gaining steam, travel companies and destinations may want to consider how to engage customers who are looking for experiences that go beyond the ordinary and provide a deeper sense of meaning. Here are five tips from industry experts.

Be Genuine

Those looking to capitalize on this trend should steer clear of using "transformation" as a superficial marketing buzzword or otherwise trying to overlay this messaging on existing products that don't reflect this ethos. Companies that incorporate a sense of purpose into their operations and approach to business will be better positioned to speak with authenticity about how travel can transform their potential customers.

"The key is to be genuine," said Barnes of Intrepid Travel. "If you care about people and you care about the planet, travel customers will pick up on that passion."

A good strategy is to focus on partnering with local communities to develop trips that give travelers meaningful experiences while also empowering communities and helping the local economy. For example, Intrepid partners with a Yolngu community in Australia's East Arnhem Land to give travelers a culturally sensitive introduction to this ancestral land and to provide the community an economically empowering opportunity to share their culture and history on their own terms.



Understand Your Vision and Purpose

The key to being genuine is having a good sense of why you do what you do. What deeper meaning does your company draw from the type of travel experiences it's cultivating?

The most important thing a brand can do is understand its true identity," said Goodstone of Superfly. "The brand should have a vision and purpose. It's not easy, especially when a company has 70,000 employees. But the values have to be clear, true, and authentic."



Focus on Credibility

Travel companies that people will trust to provide them with transformative experiences must be "a credible source" for those experiences. "Creating transformative travel experiences where you have credibility is the most important element," said Cohen of AccorHotels.

Part of credibility is knowing what your customers are looking for. Dr. Tan of Gardens by the Bay notes that many companies are not making themselves relevant to their clientele. Companies should ensure that they know their audience and how to engage them. Havas' 2017 "Meaningful Brands" report found that 60 percent of content produced by brands is seen as poor or irrelevant.



Break Constraints

Dr. Tan of Gardens by the Bay advises those seeking to create transformative experiences for travelers to be bold in innovation and breaking boundaries. The "wow" factor central to the Gardens' appeal is carefully cultivated.

Jake Hauptert of the Transformative Travel Council advises resisting the stifling over-curation of travel experiences, allowing more breathing room for discovery to engage those who seek deeper meaning. "I think the thing that [the luxury travel sector] missed is that travel is meant to be more unplanned," he said. "It's supposed to have peaks and valleys and ups and downs. If...you don't have the opportunity to have unplanned exploration, which is a critical piece, then you're guarding yourself."



Act Responsibly

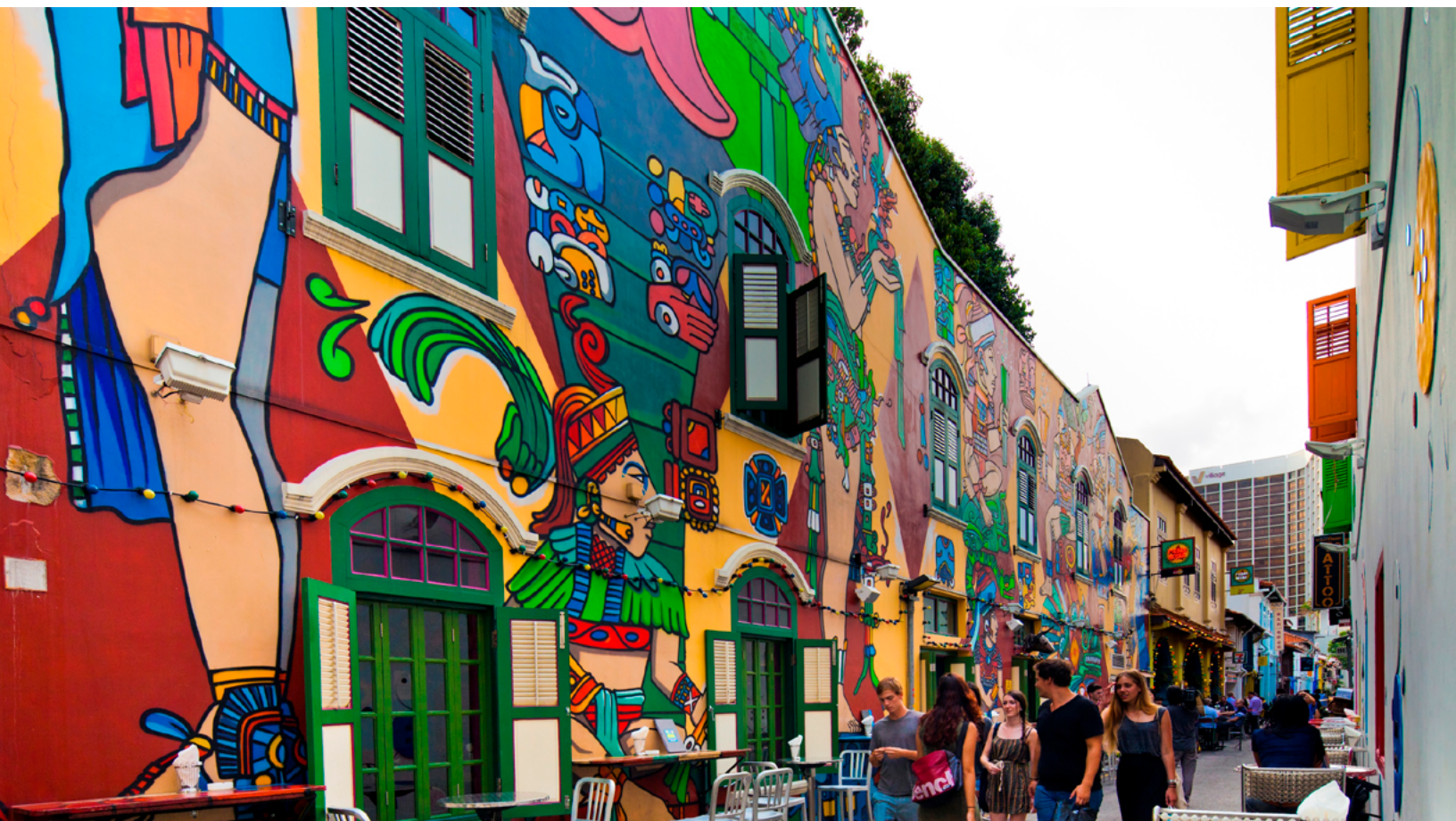
Travelers can leave a heavy footprint in the places they visit if they're not sufficiently cognizant of how their presence affects local communities. To provide transformative experiences, companies first need to understand their own role in the places they visit. Customers will expect a high level of self-awareness from providers they choose for a transformative journey.

"More and more, people want to have a positive impact and deeper purpose," said Barnes of Intrepid. "They're going to demand the same of the brands they interact with. Companies truly need to ensure that their products are socially responsible and contribute positively in some way."

Travelers are looking for experiences that go a step deeper, and they want those who provide those experiences to be right there with them.



Photo: Singapore Tourism Board



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