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THE TRENDS OF TOMORROW BECOME THE BUSINESS OF TODAY AT BIT 2022

- While the quest for safety and sustainability continues, travellers are now also seeking sustainable, open-air luxury and style. Working on holiday is no longer taboo, as long as the work is digital, and travel agencies take centre stage once again thanks to their invaluable role as consultants.
- BIT 2022 will help operators anticipate and interpret these trends, and more, turning them into business opportunities.

Milan, December 15th, 2021 - Returning in-person to fieramilanocity from Sunday the 13th to Tuesday the 15th of February 2022, BIT - The International Tourism Exchange is Italy's leading international tourism supply and demand matching platform.

At a time when courses are still being charted, **BIT 2022** is a one-of-a-kind opportunity to **take stock** of the industry's performance and **exploit emerging trends in business terms**. According to the **UNWTO** (United Nations World Tourism Organization) world tourism barometer on November 28th, international tourist arrivals **increased by 58%** in July-September 2021 compared to the same period the previous year. And it was **Europe** that recorded the best relative performance in this quarter, nearing **50% of pre-Covid levels**.

So which **trends** could further improve these figures in 2022? At the forefront, further emphasised over the last two years, is **sustainability**: the report ***Italiani, turismo sostenibile ed ecoturismo [Italians, sustainable tourism and ecotourism]*** released by **Fondazione UniVerde** shows that **74%** of Italians believe **sustainable tourism** is the safest post-Covid, while **71%** consider it **more ethical** and closer to nature, and **84%** also see it as **an opportunity for economic development**.

Even according to the study ***The 2022 Traveler: Emerging Trends and the Redefined Traveler***, the new traveller has reacted to the pandemic by developing a new sense of **caring for the environment and nature**, though also seeks **wellness** in all its forms and has a desire to continue cultivating **hobbies** rediscovered during lockdowns. Some niches we are going to see grow next year include **pet lovers**, those who do not give up travelling with their four-legged friends, **sustainable food and drink** and **digital nomads**.

Meanwhile, emerging trends from analysing **OTA data** include the search for a **new luxury** focused on relaxation and spending time on oneself, the desire to strike up **relationships with people** and rediscover **distinctive features of local areas**. Whether it's a staycation or mid-to-long haul destination, there is renewed appreciation for **the travel experience** itself after being deprived of it for so long. A travel experience that, in any case, will remain **marked by open-air** for a long time, though often in the name of comfort, for example with **glamping**: according

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to an analysis by the platform campsites.com, **81%** of travellers who have tried this experience are willing to relive it, perhaps in its sustainable, high-tech version, **bubble glamping**, in which accommodation is simply a transparent “bubble” to admire nature from.

Specialist industry analyst **Regiondo** highlights six trends in particular that will dominate next year in terms of the slow exit from this intense health crisis. First, **an evolution of the staycation**, in which travellers use their own home as a base for exploring nearby destinations. There will continue to be a strong emphasis on **Covid-free destinations**, or those perceived to be safe, and on nature and sustainability as safe holiday factors, although, **the workcation**, a new way of combining working and holidaying for digital nomads, and Travel with Style, a new **luxury tourism** concept associated with “taking time for oneself” and therefore with less frequent but longer holidays, will also become established. An interesting trend, partly because of its counterintuitive nature, is the return of **travel agencies** in a big way, whose advisory role will be increasingly appreciated at a time still characterised by uncertain information.

In this context, **BIT 2022**, the first tourism exhibition of the year in Italy, through its diverse audience of Italian and international exhibitors, will truly be “**small-scale world tour**” throughout the event’s three days. Professional operators will have the chance to **network with all key supply chain players** and **seize new business opportunities**, while travellers, throughout the day the exhibition is open to the public, can discover what operators have to offer and tourist destinations that meet the new **travel needs** of the “new normal”.

At BIT 2022, these and many other trends will be foreseen and translated in terms of business in an extensive programme of events divided into five macro-areas, **Food Travel, Travel Lab, Hot Topics, Travel Tech and Sustainability**, the latter will also feature as a cross-cutting theme for all events alongside innovation and a focus on the traveller.

Further ideas and innovations are due to be highlighted throughout the exhibition, divided into three areas: **Leisure, BeTech and MICE**.

The BIT 2022 exhibition is taking place at **fieramilanocity** from **February 13th to 15th, 2022**.

For details: www.bit.fieramilano.it; @bitmilano