

An aerial photograph of a tropical beach. The water is a vibrant turquoise color, transitioning to a deeper blue further out. A narrow strip of white sand beach runs diagonally across the middle. In the foreground, there are several thatched huts with conical roofs, surrounded by lush green vegetation. The sky is bright blue with scattered white clouds.

KUONI
Travel FORECAST 2021

KEY PREMIUM

travel trends *emerging for 2021*

The holiday shopping list

Having missed out on a holiday for a year or more, plus honeymoons and special occasions trips put on hold, people are coming to the Kuoni team with a “shopping list” of trips they want to book throughout the year, from romantic weekends in Rome to trips of a lifetime on safari.

Planning much further ahead

Sales of 2022 holidays are already taking off – at this point in the year enquiries and bookings for departures more than a year out are well ahead of what we’d normally see at this time.

“Pimp” your holiday

The Kuoni team report that they are seeing more people upgrading their holiday for next year with business class flights, helicopter transfers and extra experiences such as hot air balloon flights. Our average selling price per booking has risen from £8549 to £9231 per person in 2021.

“Let’s do this” super late bookers

There’s a big upturn in trips being booked within eight weeks of departure, people who want to get away - and quickly. They’re saying to us: “tell me what’s open, we’re happy to get tested and go within a few days or weeks.”

Isolated retreats/bubble travel

Online searches for isolated retreats are 50% up and bookings made by the Kuoni team so far reflect this trend. Villas with private pools are one of the most requested holiday types.

An aerial photograph of a Maldivian atoll. The image shows a large, circular island with a central green area containing buildings and palm trees. Surrounding the island is a shallow lagoon with clear, turquoise water, where numerous over-water villas are arranged in a semi-circle. The water transitions to a deeper blue as it meets the open ocean. The sky is a clear, vibrant blue with a few wispy white clouds.

MALDIVES

Island *heaven*

How do you improve on paradise? It's a tall order but somehow this Indian Ocean heaven just gets better. Helped by direct flights and a hassle-free post-pandemic welcome for travellers, we expect strong demand for Maldives holidays in 2021.

The islands' sumptuous over-water villas lend themselves perfectly to away-from-it-all "bubble" accommodation. Brand new for next year is the spectacular Kagi Spa Island resort, in North Male Atoll. The jewel in Kagi's crown is a spherical spa island which floats like a giant donut over the peacock-blue lagoon.

Many resorts in the Maldives have spent recent months upgrading. The chic Maafushivaru in South Ari Atoll, is a firm favourite. Refreshed for 2021 it has brand-new pool and garden duplex villas, ideal for families or groups of friends.

Unesco-protected Baa Atoll celebrates 10 years of 'World Biosphere' status in 2021. For divers this is this is one of the best places in the world to see giant plankton-feeding manta rays. Snorkellers might spot sea turtles, bottlenose dolphins and whale sharks, who mate in these waters.

With kayaking, game fishing, spectacular diving and wakeboarding also on the agenda, even die-hard adventure seekers will leave paradise with a smile.

ITALY

The Italian *affair*

From Positano glam and lakeside luxury to ruins in Syracuse and journeys on the Venice Simplon-Orient-Express – our customers can't get enough of Italy.

We hope tourism soon gets back on its feet, however cities like Venice and Rome are likely to remain quieter well into 2021 and this could be a draw for those dusting off their bucket lists.

Italophiles seeking inspiration might indulge in one of our expert-crafted culinary journeys to Puglia, Sardinia and Sicily or hire a car to discover Italy's secret borghi – those elusive off-the-beaten track villages. When it comes to all-round romance Italy excels. Whether it's friends gathering in a traditional trullo in a Puglian olive grove, a honeymoon suite at the Cipriani in Venice or a family holiday in Sardinia, Italy delivers. In an upturned world, peace of mind is not to be sniffed at.



BOTSWANA

Under African skies

We know that many Kuoni customers want the freedom to roam and to explore under big skies. With opportunities for bush walks, day and night-time game drives and exploration by moroko (traditional canoe), Botswana, now on the travel corridor list, is one of Africa's best-kept secrets and is just the type of big-ticket wildlife holiday garnering interest for early 2022.

Hippos, wildebeest, crocodiles and giraffes roam the flooded Okavango Delta while

Chobe National Park supports the world's largest surviving African elephant population and one of Africa's healthiest big cat populations. Botswana's low-impact approach to tourism could not be more suited to the new travel landscape. Small and intimate lodges accessed by small plane or boat are ideal for discerning customers looking for a tranquil escape (early booking for 2021 is essential). Favourites include Camp Okavango, a 12-room island retreat in the Delta.

Built with sustainable timber and managed by locals, the camp sources most of its energy from a solar farm. Then there is Xugano Island lodge, one of the most spectacular permanent water sites in the Delta. Thatched lagoon-facing chalets and a floating deck for sundowners make it the ultimate escape for honeymooners... or any special occasion for that matter.





GREECE

A return to old favourites

What can we say about Greece that hasn't already been said? For one thing, the great reset of 2020 has made us appreciate the joy in simple pleasures – with many of us finding joy in things we previously took for granted. The same can be said for travel. Who'd have thought this time last year, that eating alfresco in a sun-drenched Mediterranean fishing harbour would feel like such a privilege? We've seen a steady flow of enquiries for 2021 and expect Greece to be in high demand by the summer.

Whether it's summer-holiday fun, late-season walking or an activity-based trip Greece fits like a favourite glove - warm, dependable and easy. And yet, Greece is several destinations in one. For some it will always be about iconic monuments and its historical legacy; for others it's aquamarine bays and beaches and a harbourside supper of ocean-fresh plate fish. No two islands are the same - the Cyclades is as different to the Ionian Islands group as Crete is to Athens which is what makes it such a great all-rounder. Whether it's a pool villa in the mountains, a chic beach hotel or family resort or a sailboat, Greece always delivers.



SEYCHELLES

Nature's *bounty*

So spectacular are the Seychelles' scalloped, boulder-strewn beaches that it is easy to overlook that fact that much of the land is national park and marine reserve designated. In a year when many will be looking for spectacular settings in which to holiday again, this Indian Ocean archipelago will be in high demand.

The islands (there are 115 in total) boast not one but two World Heritage Sites: the atoll of Aldabra, home to giant tortoises, and the lush Vallée de Mai Nature Reserve on Praslin, home to the rare and endemic Coco de Mer. We always encourage our guests to combine two or more islands. Travel in style by helicopter or opt for one of the small aircraft, seaplanes or boats that zip between the islands. Accommodation is as varied as the islands themselves and includes the luxurious Constance Lemuria and rustic properties like Cerf Island – where bungalows cling to forested hillsides for the ultimate “Castaway” vibe.

Other must-visit islands include Praslin, traffic-free La Digue (get around by ox cart or by bicycle) and ravishing Silhouette where the Hilton Labriz Resort is a great example of how sustainable practises can work in tandem the local community.



JAPAN

There's *nowhere* quite like it

Still very much a part of the zeitgeist, Japan was selling like hotcakes before the pandemic. Although the country has yet to re-open to visitors, we expect renewed interest. Japan is known for being an incredibly clean and safe destination as well as one that is easy to explore. Time-honoured temples, ancient cities, quirky ryokan, onsen and magnificent gardens are just one side of the coin. Families love it for its myriad distractions - its achingly cool

cities, loveable robots and curious cuisine. And let's not forget its expressive contemporary architecture and dependable Bullet trains. Among our favourite hotels is Hotel Gajoen Tokyo – where you could be forgiven for thinking you've checked in at a chic gallery.

Next year we expect strong demand for our Japanese Alps itinerary which combines spectacular alpine scenery with a stay at a

hot-spring hideaway and visits to off the beaten track towns. Our collection of behind-the-scenes tours continues this theme. A food and culture tour in Takayama for example, offers an insight into Japanese cuisine and gives visitors the opportunity to meet locals at the colourful Jinya-Mae morning market.

If the Tokyo Olympics goes ahead in the summer of 2021, we will be off with the starting gun.



THAILAND

Sunshine *and smiles*

With its motherlode of temples and profusion of beaches, national parks and coral-fringed islands Thailand was the reason many of our customers fell in love with Southeast Asia back in the 1990s.

Although Thailand's borders remain closed for now, we are anticipating strong demand for winter 2021/22. Thailand is one of the easiest places in the world to kick back whilst immersing yourself in exotic culture, whether it's snorkelling in a turquoise lagoon, indulging in a Thai massage at a world-class spa or trekking to a remote hill-tribe village. Offering exceptional value for money it is a great long-haul choice for families and one that works equally well for some serious and stylish upgrading. Thailand lends itself perfectly to twin-centre holidays. City and beach, trekking and beach, culture and beach each or even beach and beach... there are no rules.

The stylish Sindhorn Midtown Bangkok is new to Kuoni and has one of the coolest rooftop pools in town. In Krabi, the stylish and intimate Banyan Tree Krabi promises romance in spades, while wildlife encounters are guaranteed at the Golden Triangle's Anantara Resort and Spa. Get comfy in a 'jungle bubble' and observe the roaming herd as the light fades and again when the sun rises. No wonder that with so many customers seeking out old favourites the Land of Smiles is sure to be a winner.



KENYA

Live the *African dream*

Opportunities to see the Big Five and the wildebeest migration in the Maasai Mara are reason enough to visit Kenya. Add to that its World Heritage Sites, conservancies, great lakes and Indian Ocean coastline and it's easy to see why Kenya is one of our 'trusted favourites'. With so many opportunities for game spotting it's hard to imagine a better first-time safari destination however Kenya is much in demand for repeat visitors. Families, couples and even honeymooners return for the sheer diversity of game, those vast iconic savannas and the familiar warm Kenyan welcome – exactly the sort of soul-nourishing experience we will be looking

for in the post-pandemic world. For 2021 we're excited to introduce Governors' Mugie House. Offering sweeping views across Laikipia, to Mt Kenya, Mugie is situated on a private 40,000-acre conservancy in northern Kenya and is home to endemic northern Kenyan species such as Grevy's Zebra, Jackson's Hartebeest and Reticulated Giraffe.

A slice of Indian Ocean brings relaxation following the thrill of a safari. At Diani – an endless stretch of white-sand beach on Mombasa's south coast – we feature the boutique AfroChic. More private villa than hotel, it's the perfect way to round off a trip to this fantastic wildlife destination.

ANTIGUA

The *bounteous* Caribbean

A picture-perfect island with a wonderfully laid-back vibe, Antigua is the Caribbean with a sprinkling of stardust. Direct flights boost its appeal, and all signs are that clients will be making a beeline for its azure seas and sugary beaches in 2021. A typical day might include watching some beach cricket, a visit to the UNESCO World Heritage site of Nelson's Dockyard and a little shopping at boutique-chic Redcliffe Quay in St John's followed by a

slow amble to Shirley Heights for panoramic views, a traditional Antiguan 'jump up' and one of the best sunsets in the Caribbean.

Hotels range from small and intimate retreats to larger, more lively resorts with multiple dining options and activities on offer. From adults-only hideaway Galley Bay to chic plunge-pool villas at the brand-new Hammock Cove and cliffside luxury suites

with panoramic views, there's something for most tastes. With 27 rooms and cottages boutique hideaway Keyonna Beach is one of our customer favourites. Antigua is compact and easy to navigate, so we recommend hiring a car or getting off the beaten track with a driver and guide in search of rugged walks, hidden coves and celebrity hideouts... and to try and put a dent into a handful of the island's 365 beaches.



SRI LANKA

From temples *to tea*

From surf-washed beaches and low-lying jungle to verdant tea plantations and colonial forts, diminutive Sri Lanka punches well above its weight. Some areas of Sri Lanka have thrived during lockdown. In the hill country there have been more leopard sightings than ever before, while in the lowland rainforest areas in the southwest a rare species of orchid has been discovered.

We were seeing strong signs of recovery for Sri Lanka early on this year. It's worth remembering that Sri Lanka is not just a winter-sun destination. The wild and unspoilt east

coast, which has gradually opened up to tourism over the past decade, enjoys a slightly different climate. At Arugam Bay in the southeast travellers will find white sand beaches, world class surf and small boutique style hotels. The climate here is similar to the UK's which means the summer months are high season. For something a little different we suggest combining a few days touring the country's magnificent temples and cultural sights with a few nights at Kottukal Beach House or the eco-friendly Jetwing Surf on the east coast, before heading off to see elephants in Yala National Park.



BALI

A natural beauty

With Hindu temples on every corner, horizons filled with dazzling green rice terraces and seascapes and village festivities likely to unfold in a blur of offerings and colour at any moment it's no wonder the "Island of the Gods" continues to woo Kuoni customers. Bali is one of the few long-haul destinations whose peak weather dovetails with the British summer, making it a particularly good choice for honeymooners. We're already seeing strong interest for 2021 holidays.

Charming, friendly tropical Bali encapsulates that very particular brand of 'Asian luxe' – think luxurious pool villas overlooking river or coast, infinity pools that 'drop' into rainforests, softly-softly service and indulgent pampering at some of Asia's most beautiful spas.

Bali offers an excellent range of beach resorts that include family-friendly, lively, relaxed and low-key, and stylish adult-only hotels. The Spa Village Resort Tembok offers access to waterfalls and dive sites and the family friendly Laguna Resort and Spa features seven lagoon pools that meander their way through exotic gardens. On the outskirts of Ubud, Bali's artistic hub, one of our most popular hotels is the family run Viceroy hotel, where 30 pool villas overlook Bali's Valley of the Kings. The views, and the service, are nothing short of spectacular.

