

Eco and Ethical Tourism: Inc Impact of COVID-19 - Ireland - May 2020

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This report looks at the following areas:

- The impact of COVID-19 on consumer behaviour and market dynamics in the tourism sector.
- Consumer awareness of the carbon footprint associated with holidaying.
- How much are consumers willing to tackle eco and environmental issues while on holiday?
- 'Green' innovations and how tourism providers and those directly serving the tourism sector can engage with an increasingly eco-conscious consumer.

The travel and tourism industry has been left shaken as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and at this stage, holidaying in Ireland has come to a standstill – much like the rest of the world's tourism industry. When the lockdown and social distancing measures are lifted later in 2020, we could see consumers' fear of travelling linger, but this could also create opportunities as Irish consumers opt to holiday domestically and thus potentially benefit Ireland's tourism industry. In terms of eco and ethical tourism, green-energy and providers which take a strong stance in waste reduction and recycling will reach a wide audience of eco-conscious holidaymakers. Moreover, offering reassurance in social distancing and hygiene/cleansing efforts will also be key to creating a positive narrative around domestic tourism.

While the outbreak has put a pause on domestic and overseas travel in the short term, in the long term Irish consumer attitudes towards sustainable travel are changing – becoming more of an expectation rather than a 'nice to have'. Holidaymakers often want to do 'the right thing' but are looking to companies to take the lead on providing creative opportunities to 'do the right thing'.



"COVID-19 has resulted in a massive slowdown of the tourism sector, meaning it is one of the most affected industries across the globe. As social distancing measures are prolonged, companies and providers within the tourism industry are having to be more strategic in complying with social distancing."

– Emma McGeown, Research Analyst, 17 May 2020

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