

Reunion trips during Covid-19: How family and friends pull it off

Shivani Vora, Special to CNN • Published 14th October 2020



Editor's Note — The US State Department advises that travelers consult country-specific travel advisories [via their website](#) or consult the [CDC's latest guidance](#). Before you make any international travel plans, check these sites first.

(CNN) — After months of lockdown and isolation in Barcelona, lawyer Alberto Merlo was ready to [travel](#) and reconnect with friends, many of whom live abroad.

His regular vacation companion, Jason Miller, owner of the travel company [The Accomplished Traveler](#), is a New Yorker. In an ordinary year, the two would have months of back and forth dialogue about where they wanted to go.

"The world was at our fingertips, and it was hard to narrow down the choices and finalize a [destination](#)," says Merlo.

Then came the pandemic.

"We were looking to travel in August and had a hard time finding a country we were both allowed to visit," says Merlo. "And if we were allowed in, we needed to find a country where we didn't have to quarantine. Let's just say it wasn't that easy."

The new travel game plan

Traveling to meet up with friends and family who live in other cities or countries has always been a logistical challenge. The upside, of course, was a fantastic vacation with loved ones, making memories that last a lifetime.

During this pandemic, any kind of traditional multi-city vacation planning been nearly impossible -- but it is a bit more doable as destinations reopen.

First you need to know the latest in border restrictions and quarantine rules.

And probably more importantly, you need to gauge your risk tolerance -- as well as that of your travel companions. According to the [US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), "Travel increases your chance of getting and spreading Covid-19. Staying home is the best way to protect yourself and others from Covid-19."

Are you covered by medical insurance if you should fall ill while traveling? Are you OK with the possibility of being trapped by unexpected border closures or other restrictions? These are not small things to consider.

Turkey and Mexico emerge as go-to countries amid restrictions

Limitations for travel in the United States has led to determined travelers meeting up in a handful of countries abroad where all parties involved are allowed in.

Zachary Rabinor, the founder of the Mexico travel company [Journey Mexico](#), said that his business has planned more than 30 such trips since mid-July. Most travelers live in the United States and Canada, he says, and are interested in stays at villas, especially in Cabo San Lucas, Journey Mexico's top selling destination in the country.



Palmasola, a nine-bedroom beachfront estate in Punta Mita, Mexico, has been booked by groups of friends and family, reuniting after months apart.

Courtesy Palmasola

In Punta Mita, Mexico, [Palmasola](#), a nine-bedroom, 25,000 square-foot beachfront estate, has been booked solid since July for weekly stays, says Lillian Aviles, the director of sales and marketing.

The fall and winter season are also largely booked. "Our guests are all groups of friends and family who are reuniting after months of not seeing each other," she says.

Danny Peykoff, a Newport Beach, California, resident and entrepreneur, stayed at Palmasola in August with 15 family members including his wife and children, his in-laws and their kids, who live in Las Vegas. Everyone flew to Mexico on a private jet and enjoyed a week of swimming, fishing, golfing and relaxing.

The group was celebrating his father-in-law's 70th birthday.

"We wanted to do something spectacular and looked at going to Bahamas, but travel is restricted there," says Peykoff. "Mexico is easy to get to and open. Being at Palmasola was just amazing and a great way for us to bond and celebrate a birthday as well as the world opening up again."

Read the full article at [CNN](#)