

What the World says about the current Hiring Dilemma: Voices from ASIA and the USA



THAILAND

A slew of luxury hotels opening in Thailand amid the Covid-19 pandemic are pinning their hopes on a government plan to lure high-spending tourists, betting those seeking five-star quarantine will help cushion the devastation wrought on the travel industry.

About half-a-dozen luxury hotels that opened in Bangkok during the pandemic, or will open soon, from Four Seasons, Kempinski and Capella are likely to benefit from a new visa aimed at attracting long-stay visitors, high-spenders and medical travelers to put the economy back on a growth track.

While Thailand has weathered the virus outbreak better than most other Southeast Asia nations, it is faced with one of its worst recessions on record because of the loss of tourists, who in 2019 pumped \$62 billion into the economy.

Targeting luxury travelers who stay longer and spend more could staunch some of those losses, said Deepak Ohri, chief executive officer of Lebua Hotels & Resorts. “The pandemic has given Thailand the opportunity to hit reset on how the tourism industry will look after Covid-19,” he said in an interview.

Starting this month, tourists with the new visa will be allowed into Thailand for the first time since borders closed in late March. They will be required to stay at least 90 days, including a mandatory 14-day quarantine, which can be served in a luxury hotel. After that, they will be free to travel anywhere they want.

“These groups of travelers have the highest potential of increasing money spent on lodging and dining, which can help boost the economy, especially during these difficult pandemic times,” said Yuthasak Supasorn, the head of the Tourism Authority of Thailand. “We have about 800 to 1,000 Chinese tourists who are ready to travel here on private jets in the first phase of reopening.”

Even so, the government, which used to worry about the effects of over-tourism, expects about 1,200 visitors a month to use the new visa, generating about 1.2 billion baht (\$38 million) in revenue -- a fraction of the amount spent by mass-market holidaymakers. A majority of Thais don't agree with the plan to open the borders, a survey showed Wednesday.

“It's a good starting initiative to focus on quality instead of quantity, but it won't be enough to make up for the lost revenue,” said Somprawin Manprasert, chief economist at Bank of Ayudhya Pcl. “Tax measures aimed at middle- to high-income Thais to promote spending would help inject more money into the economy.”

The Capella opened on Oct. 1, making it the latest of several luxury hotels that have entered the market since the pandemic began. Before Covid-19, the hotel was expecting up to 90% of revenue to come from foreign travelers. Next door, The Four Seasons is set to open by year-end. This follows other top-end hotels such as the Rosewood

HONG KONG and China

COVID fatigue is definitely increasing in HK! With the new wave mid-July we went back into lockdown, and have gone back down the slippery slope again, just when we were about to make a breakeven for our HK hotels with food and beverage picking up at least moment...[Seeing](#) a number of global meetings/webinars of late, [I believe](#) it will be a long time before we see air travel resume to any positive effect..... & we've been at this for more than a year with HK protests last year for 6 months.

Despite the state of HK's business, Mainland China is moving well again their economy is up to 4% GOP and most hotels supported by local travel is averaging 65%, We're grateful [we](#) have a job at least and making a positive difference (I hope) when so many are out of work in our industry, the resumes I'm

receiving these days is heart-breaking..... I have never worked harder, but this is usually the case in crises, year as a result of the riots. We will recover, recalibrate, readjust, and travel again. Looking forward to the beautiful rainbows!

USA

The current situation is very bad and has been hard on us all. Some more than others.

Like many, I have given up any hope of finding gainful employment in the industry I have spent 30 years. Not blaming anyone, but after hundreds of applications and rejections, it's just too hard mentally to keep getting rejected over and over. It's soul-sucking and degrading. Can't be good for anyone's mental state.

Over the past few months we have seen senior level Jobs (GM and up) basically dry up and any available are being filled by young internal candidates or have so many candidates applying for the same job, it's like hitting the lottery just to get an interview. I am also seeing a lot of consolidation where GMs are managing clusters of hotels and Regional VP's are either being let go or also given additional properties. The salaries I have seen being offered in many cases have dropped to levels I haven't seen since the 1980s. It also seems few are interested in anyone over 50. The irony is that I can even get considered. Seems I am in a conundrum, I am too young to retire but too old to be hired. I have no doubt it will come back but nobody knows when. It could be in 6 months or it could be 2 years. What happens when savings run out in the meantime? How does one survive until then? We all need food and a roof over our heads. I try to keep positive but we also need to be pragmatic. I'll look at other options and perhaps move to another industry if they'll have me. With some luck something will pan out in a new direction.