

China ' s tourists are set to stick close to home and take advantage of discounts as they take time off for the first major holiday since the easing of coronavirus lockdowns, offering a glimpse of what travel may look like after the epidemic.

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“It’s encouraging to see signs of recovery after a long, cold winter,” said Jolyon Bulley, chief executive of InterContinental Hotels Group Greater China, who told Reuters May Day bookings were showing some positive signs.

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Many people were planning to visit places in home provinces or nearby cities, Trip.com said, citing ticket sales.

Trip.com????????????????????

Half of its presold rooms were for five-star hotels, indicating travellers were seeking better quality accommodation due to epidemic concerns, it said.

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They are also taking advantage of cheap domestic flights and hotel deals being offered by airlines and hotel chains eager to get people travelling again.

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Prices for popular routes such as Beijing to Sanya have been slashed by up to 90%, with booking on average 30% down, according to Alibaba Group’s travel booking platform Fliggy.

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In the financial hub of Shanghai, Marriott is offering guests a 2,202 yuan package that includes a one-night stay at its upscale W Hotel, a cocktail and tapas dinner and spa treatments.

????????????????2202????????W Hotel????????

Jiang Qin, a 38-year-old Beijing office worker, said she was going away but not too far. She aimed to take her 2-year-old daughter to the nearby city of Tianjin, having scrapped a plan to go to Hainan because of Beijing’s quarantine requirements.

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“Tianjin is not the best alternative, but I just want to travel. Anywhere is better than nowhere,” she said.

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However, industry executives warn that it's too soon to say how robust the recovery in holiday travel will be given concern about a second wave of the coronavirus.

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International travel remains out of the question for most, due to border restrictions imposed by other countries, a lack of flights and two weeks of quarantine that await people coming back to China.

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Major tourism sites and some restaurants have and been told to limit occupancy to as low as 30% of normal levels, capping any recovery.

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The China Tourist Attractions Association estimates that destinations will see an 80% drop in revenue in the first quarter.

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"The uncertainties are not completely gone, and no one would be able to tell exactly what will happen," said Bulley.

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"Recovery will continue to come in phases in China, and what we can do is to be fully prepared under the new norm."

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