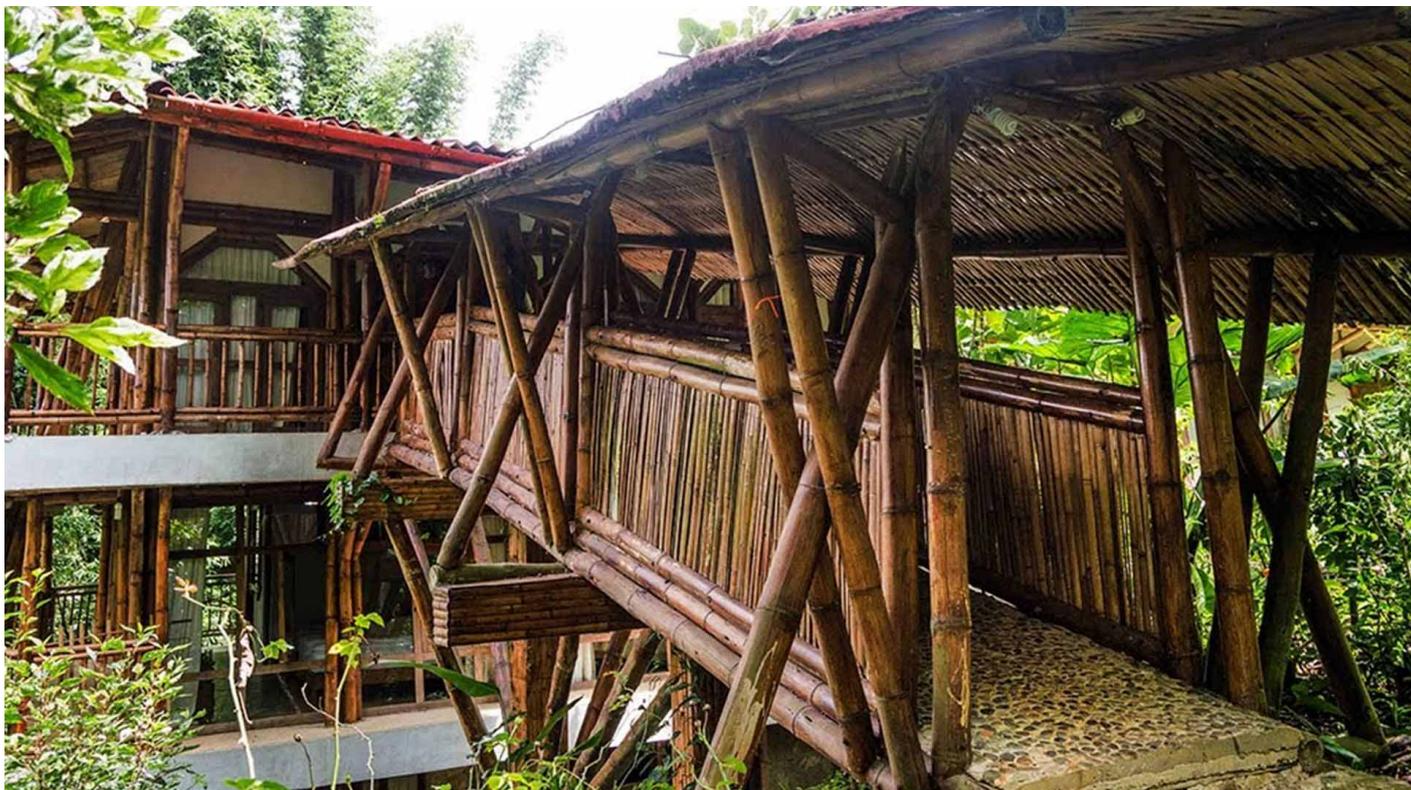


Hult Prize winner Rutopía encourages tourism with social distancing



[Rutopía](#), the **Mexican ecotourism** company that won the [2019 Hult Prize](#), is offering natural destinations with all the **health protocols** for **relieving the stress** caused by the **COVID-19 pandemic**.

This company is committed to promoting **wellness tourism** with those activities in contact with nature it **has carried out since its inception**, but which in the current circumstances are more relevant and of **great interest** to tourists.

*“There’s going to be a very big transformation in tourism: firstly, **travelers are going to be much more conscientious about their trips** and what tourism is doing to the environment.*

*“Secondly, they want to **escape from isolation and stress** as they enter the new normal, **in destinations that are not for the masses, in the open air, in contact with nature**, which is what we’ve been doing at **Rutopía** for the past three years,” explained Leslie, one of its founders.*

Wellness tourism offers experiences designed by local hosts from **one to five days with everything included** in different activities.



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This initiative is focused on those tourists who want to discover Mexico from a **conscientious, sustainable, and transformative** perspective, i.e. with **experiences** in which they can **learn and connect with nature** alongside indigenous communities and local hosts.

After four months of **zero income** for these groups of hosts with accommodation and activities in **ecotourism destinations**, some have begun to **reopen** by implementing **all the health measures** required by the federal government.

“Our model has always been to offer experiences. As of the start of this year, we had 12 active destinations with more than 30 experiences.

“When the pandemic came, it was in the run up to Holy Week, which is a strong season for these destinations. We decided to help them through a landing page where hosts could upload their information and some photos, which we publicized so that people would know of the existence of these types of destinations.

*“That was a great idea that we’ve adopted permanently at **Rutopía** and there are now more than **400 public nature destinations** on **rutopia.com**.”* shared Leslie Pérez.



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Hidalgo, Oaxaca, Campeche, Chiapas, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo are some of the state that are currently taking part in this **reopening of destinations** and experiences through **rutopia.com**.

Rutopía wants to be the **first and biggest digital community** for **sustainable Mexican ecotourism**, connecting travelers to hosts and places that offer ecotourism products.

They also carry out activities for preserving and regenerating the environment, thus contributing to the **reactivation of national and local economies**.

These destinations also offer other activities such as forest and mountain hiking, hill tours on foot, bicycle, or horseback, visits to waterfalls, kayaking, and hikes through mangroves.

You can also taste and learn to cook traditional dishes and create the wonderful handicrafts that are typical of these communities.



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The top 5 Rutopía destinations

Here are the **Top 5** destinations recommended by the founders of **Rutopía** for getting away from it all during the pandemic:

Lacandon ceremony at the Yatoch K'uh temple in Chiapas

Ancestral rituals from the Hach Winik culture (“Lacandon Maya” in the mother tongue). Through singing, clay censers, burning copal wood and xata palm, Don Antonio Chankin, one of the most senior Lacandon people from Nahá, provides thanks, offering, and asks for protection from Hach Akium (god of the Lacandon Maya), at their K’unah temple.



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Visit the Lol-Ha cenote in Yucatán.

You can find the Lol-Ha cenote, which means “flower of water”, in the center of the town of Yaxunah, right in front of the tourist center. It’s an open cenote with crystal-clear fresh water, just waiting for you to take a refreshing dip!



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Kayaking, mangroves, and crocodiles in Campeche

Venture on a canoe trip in the Isla Arena estuary, stow the oars and float in the tranquil waters or dare to cross the estuary and enter a creek between the mangroves.

Enjoy the peace and wonderful expression of nature. The sea, estuary, fish, birds, breeze, and glowing orange and pink sunsets make this a place for connecting with nature.



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Hiking in the woods of Puebla

You'll walk through the forest to arrive at a waterfall, where you'll breathe in fresh air, enjoy the region's aromas, birdsong, and verdant landscapes.



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Aquatic tour in Quintana Roo

You can spot birds, dolphins, turtles, and go snorkeling in the second largest and most important barrier reef in the world, to relax in a shallow part of the sea with a sandy bottom, a natural pool.



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COVID-19 protocol

A **Rutopía** guide on safe operations has been created in order to continue working together and providing travelers and hosts with low-risk experiences.

This guide contains information on the new way of working and recommendations to be followed for everyone's wellbeing in order to reestablish the influx of visitors gradually, bearing in mind that people's safety is paramount at this time.

What is Rutopía?

Rutopía is a social enterprise that **connects travelers** to a **network of hosts in Mexico's ecotourism destinations** so they can discover its **cultural and natural riches**.

It offers **community ecotourism** with **authentic experiences off the beaten track**.

On September 14, 2019, **Rutopía** was the **global winner** of the 2019 Hult Prize **social entrepreneurship** competition.

*"This gave us a great opportunity to continue developing our technological platform, because **we want it to be a really useful tool for travelers and hosts**, while we seek **to generate social transformation**,"* concluded Leslie.

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