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# Four Seasons Cairo At The First Residence GM On Luxury And “The New Normal”



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Travel

*I write about peak experiences with a focus on movies, TV and travel.*



The First Nile Boat docked at The Four Seasons Cairo at the First Residence THE FOUR SEASONS HOTELS

As hoteliers everywhere are holding their collective breath and waiting to see how life after the “pause” looks like, the Four Seasons Hotel Group are considering how to slowly begin to think about opening in a “new normal” pre-vaccine period.

Mahmoud Elikeiy, General Manager of the [Four Seasons Cairo at the First Residence](#) says that the Four Seasons Group has been having bi-weekly meetings with the President of the Group about how to manage a luxury hotel as lockdowns ease, but prior to a vaccine opening the traveling world in a wider way.

“I cannot tell you when business will come back but we think that by mid-June we will see some slow return of guests in a “new normal” scenario,” he says.

Elikeiy says the pandemic in Egypt is “well-controlled” which has helped the hotel to look at a late May reopening.



TOPSHOT - A picture taken on April 18, 2020 show the Great pyramids lighten-up with blue light and ... [+] AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

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However, the reopening will be a controlled, social distanced one.

The hotel's restaurants at their property and at the adjacent First Nile Boat will remain closed for now. A full back and front of the house cleaning is currently being done. The hotel's pool and other areas like sauna, steam rooms and spa will be closed. All of the hotel's staff, including front desk personnel will wear masks, although guests will not be mandated to wear them.



The Great Pyramids of Giza are seen on the outskirts of Cairo, on 15 March 2019. (Photo by Mohamed ... [+] AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES)

“The whole idea of service and interaction will be changed,” Elikeyi explains. “Interaction with guest service, interaction with the front desk will be changed, luggage will need to be disinfected. For the coming three weeks we will be training our staff to deal with this “social distancing.”

Other changes will include limousine service configured with a glass separating the driver from the guest as in London cab services, sanitizing gel stations throughout the hotel and a new front of the house entrance cubicle that disinfects guests and their luggage with a colorless, odorless powder spray.

“It is harmless and will be used at many locations in Egypt,” Elikeyi says. “Guests will also be having their temperature taken at arrival at the airport and the hotel.”

Although Elikeyi sees leisure travel in the luxury sphere returning to something resembling “normal” he says that about 30 percent of conferences may not.

“People are conferencing with Zoom and other media and that aspect of travel may not return to normal,” he says.

Instead, “intrepid” travelers from markets like China and Latin America may step in to fill in the breach.

“We are very excited about these new markets,” Elikeyi says.





Rear view of a female tourist enjoying a tour to the Pyramids of Giza in Egypt. GETTY

**Luxury travel operators** have also voiced their support of Egypt as one of the first destinations to look towards after lockdowns ease due to its low rate of infection, the warm climate and good government control.

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