



AS IT IS

## More Hotels Competing on Cleanliness

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As the United States eases coronavirus restrictions and reopens for business, big hotel companies are competing on cleanliness.

At the end of May, hotel stays in the U.S. were down 43 percent compared to May of 2019, reported market research business STR.

As more people travel, hotels consider increased cleanliness measures in an effort to make visits more appealing to the public. The companies also see a chance to get back business from competitors, such as the home-sharing company Airbnb.

Larry Yu is a professor at George Washington University's School of Business in Washington, D.C. He said some hotels are **stricter** about cleanliness than others. But stronger measures for cleaning operations are happening everywhere.

"Everybody is doing it, because it is now expected by **consumers**," he said.

David Whitesock recently moved from Colorado to New York. He stayed in hotels in Iowa and Ohio along the way. "I felt like it was a safe place to be, that they had done the best that they possibly could given the **circumstances**," he said. "A lot of it comes down to: do you trust the hotels and the people who you are going to come into contact with there?"

Albert Ko says visiting hotels is still risky even if they have established more protective measures. Ko is a professor of epidemiology and medicine at Yale University's School of Public Health in New Haven, Connecticut. Hotels can bring together people from states and countries where disease rates are higher, for example, and many people may not show signs of infection.

“That’s the kind of thing that we’re worried about in terms of public health,” he said. “These settings can be the cause of outbreaks.”

Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky thinks guests will prefer separate homes to hotels filled with people. Airbnb will continue to expand and improve its cleaning measures, he said.

“Health and cleanliness are going to be one of our biggest **focuses**,” Chesky said.

But Yu said hotel companies can make sure their sites are meeting cleanliness requirements through their normal **auditing** process. That could be more difficult for Airbnb. Yu noted that the company has rules on cleanliness in place, but might have more trouble than hotels in making individual Airbnb operators obey those rules.

I’m John Russell.

*John Russell adapted this story for Learning English from the Associated Press news reports. Katy Weaver was the editor.*

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## Words in This Story

**strict** - *adj.* complete or thorough

**consumer** -- *n.* a person who buys goods and services

**circumstances** - *n.* [plural] : the way something happens : the specific details of an event

**focus** -- *n.* a main purpose or interest; a subject that is being discussed or studied

**audit** -- *v.* to check the financial records of (a business or person) : to perform an audit on (a business or person)

