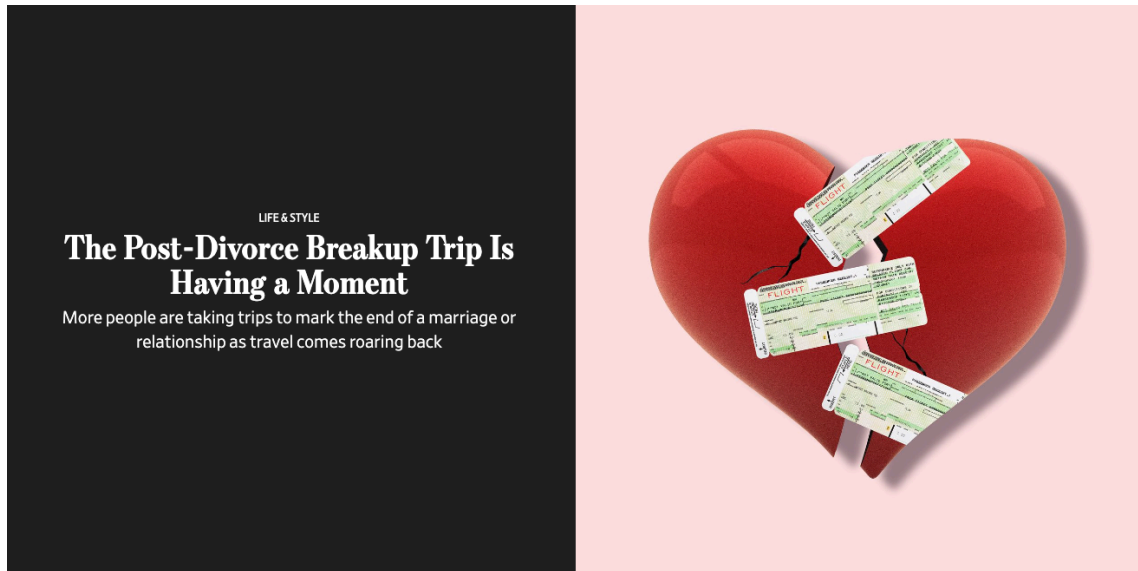


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Journaling, group therapy and a dating-profile photoshoot: Welcome to the breakup trip.

More people are taking trips to mark the end of a marriage or relationship, say resorts, destination spas and travel advisers. [Travel has come roaring back](#) this year, and some people whose [relationships ended during the pandemic](#) are looking to observe the split with a trip. To woo guests looking to heal broken hearts—or celebrate their newly single status—hotels are rolling out new services and packages. Many hotels already have honeymoon offerings; the breakup trip caters to the other end.

Travel after the end of a relationship can offer catharsis, reflection and a chance to re-energize, people who have taken breakup trips say. But there are some pitfalls to avoid: Choose your destination wisely, because it may forever remind you of your split after the trip. And you might want to steer clear of group trips to romantic destinations that are likely to be filled with lovey-dovey couples.

At Lake Austin Spa Resort in Austin, Texas, staffers noticed that more guests were sharing that they were going through divorces and [other losses](#) as the pandemic dragged on. So this February, Lake Austin began putting a little “loss and grief” gift basket in those guests’ rooms. It includes a journal, a candle and a porcelain dish with the inscription “Wishing you strength for today and hope for tomorrow.”

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PREVIEW



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Staff at Shou Sugi Ban House, a wellness resort in Water Mill, N.Y., said so many guests were telling them they were going through breakups, divorces and career changes that they launched “Rituals for Transformation” in 2020, a 75-minute \$275 service that includes guided meditation, journal writing, aromatherapy and sound to “calm their nervous system and clarify how to move forward,” says Jodie Webber, the property’s creative director and head of healing arts.

In the Maldives, guests going through breakups are fueling interest in the “Solo Experience” at Gili Lankanfushi, says Nicolas Khairallah, the luxury resort’s general manager.

The package includes a “Dine in the Dark” dinner where the guest is blindfolded and guided through the meal by a staff member. “You are eating alone but you’re not alone,” Mr. Khairallah says.

The package also features a photoshoot by one of the resort’s butlers. “You get photos next to a palm tree, in blue water. This would make great pictures for a dating profile,” he says.

Alice Haddon, a counseling psychologist in London, found that many of her friends’ marriages were imploding during the pandemic. At the same time, she was dealing with her own grief after the death of her mother. In November 2021, she began running retreats for women going through divorces and breakups under the name the Heartbreak Hotel.

The retreats, which take place in cozy homes in England’s Peak District and Norfolk coast, consist of three days of intensive group therapy, as well as [nature walks](#) and “mocktail” hours.

Efforts by the [wellness travel industry](#) to cater to this type of guest are part of a larger move to address mental health, says Beth McGroarty, vice president of research at the Global Wellness Institute, a nonprofit research and advocacy group. More properties are contracting with psychiatrists, psychologists and social workers to offer guests more robust mental-health services during their stay, she says.

Today, more than half of the guests at Canyon Ranch's wellness resorts are going through some kind of transition, including [career changes](#), retirements and relationship breakups, says Jim Eastburn, Canyon Ranch's corporate director of transformational experiences. That is a marked increase from before the pandemic, he says.



After her marriage ended, Tricia Tait took a bike trip to Italy.

PHOTO: TRICIA TAIT

of two sons, now ages 19 and 21.

The company's "Build Resilience" and "Reconnect with Joy" packages, launched in 2020, are popular with breakup travelers, he says. Both include sessions with a licensed therapist and a spiritual practitioner.

People who have done breakup trips say they can provide a welcome distraction from the drama and pain of divorce. In the year after Tricia Tait's 25-year marriage ended suddenly in 2018, she traveled with friends to more than a half-dozen destinations including Hawaii, Las Vegas and the Bahamas. She also took a bike trip to Italy, even though she hadn't been on a bicycle in 30 years.

"It was good for my mental health to be out of our family home and out doing stuff and having new experiences," says Ms. Tait, 52, who owns a catering business in Toronto and is the mother

Travel advisers and therapists say there are pitfalls to avoid when planning a breakup trip. Shelley Hanson, a licensed marriage and family therapist based in Arizona, advises patients to choose the destination carefully: If you're grieving the relationship, don't pick a beloved spot because it might taint your experience of the place for you in the future. Choose travel companions who can handle the intense emotions you may be feeling, she notes.

Before Kathryn Schutz, a travel adviser in Chicago, books a group trip for someone coming off a breakup, she contacts the company running the tour to get some details on the other participants. "I do not want to send them if there's just going to be all couples on a trip," she says.

SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS

Have you ever gone on a post-breakup trip? What was that experience like? Join the conversation below.

Backroads, which runs biking, hiking and other tours, steers breakup travelers away from their France, Italy and Portugal trips because they tend to be more romantic and couple-focused, says spokeswoman Liz Einbinder. Luxury tour operator Butterfield & Robinson says newly single travelers often gravitate toward places like Bhutan, Peru and India.

Ms. Hanson warns the heartbroken to choose healthy escapes. "You may have some buddies who say, 'Let's go to Vegas and get hammered,'" she says. "But that may not be very good for you."