

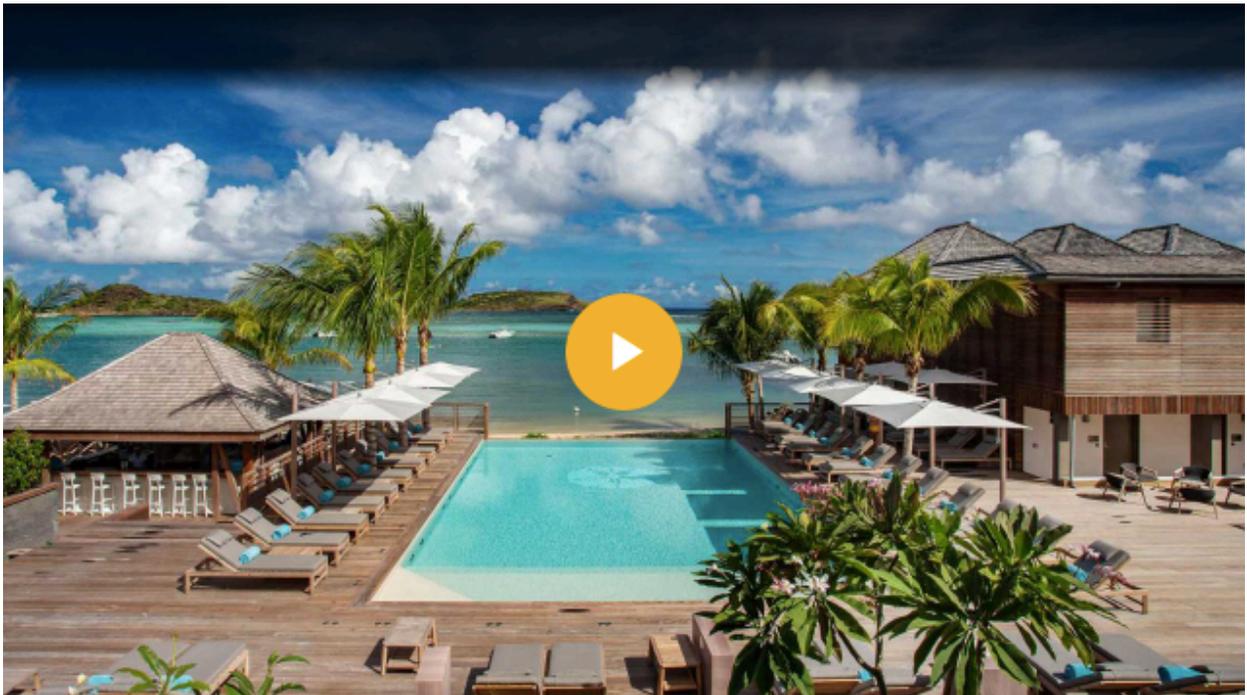
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These Hotel Gift Cards Increase in Value Over Time so You Have Even More to Look Forward to on Your Next Trip (Video)

Independent hotels around the world are asking guests to “buy now, stay later.”

BY [PAUL BRADY](#) | UPDATED MAY 04, 2020



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Hotels around the world have seen demand for rooms fall to record lows as the [coronavirus pandemic](#) has almost everyone postponing stays. Now, some in the travel industry are turning to a very old idea to solve a very modern crisis. A loose coalition of hotels are offering bonds that you can buy now only to redeem far in the future, once it's safe to travel again.

Here's how it works: Travelers can book reservations at a growing number of properties in \$100 increments. After at least 60 days from the date of purchase, travelers can redeem their bonds for \$150 each, with the extra \$50 representing interest on the "bond." It's like a gift card that grows in value, sending cash to the hotels that need it today while letting travelers plan ahead for the day that they can once again travel safely.

While the list of participating hotels is still small — it includes Greydon House in Nantucket, LondonHouse Chicago, and [Le Barthélemy Hotel & Spa](#) in St. Bart's — organizers of the effort are hoping it will grow. "We want to encourage travel enthusiasts from around the world to help support our friends working in the hospitality industry," said Rachel Harrison, the co-founder of a travel public relations firm that created the campaign. "This initiative is meant to help the hotel industry support their housekeepers, hosts, bartenders, concierges, and everyone in between."

The full list of participating hotels is available at [BuyNowStayLater.com](https://www.buynowstaylater.com).

The “buy now, stay later” concept has seen other adopters as well. The travel app Porter & Sail has started a “[Hotel Credits](#)” program that works largely the same way: Travelers can pay today in \$200 increments to redeem for \$300 worth of stays in the future — with credits valid through 2022. Participating hotels include Entre Cielos in Mendoza, Argentina, the Sixty Hotels properties in New York City and Los Angeles, and Flemings Mayfair, in London.



PHOTO: COURTESY OF LE BARTHÉLEMY HOTEL & SPA

“As we look to protect the jobs of our staff and the future of our business, we are thankful for those guests who are willing to invest in a future stay with us and take advantage of some great savings when doing so,” said Henrik Muehle, managing director of Flemings Mayfair, in a statement.

The idea is even catching on among tour operators, who are being similarly pinched by the coronavirus pandemic. “The entire travel business is in a cash-flow crunch at the moment,” says Rob Harper, the co-owner of Namu Travel, which organizes trips throughout Central America and to Colombia. “We’ve asked our top clients — those who’ve traveled with us half a dozen times or more — to make down payments now for future vacations — even if they don’t know the dates.” Namu is also offering a 20-percent credit to guests who postpone rather than cancel any previously planned trip.

The company’s “Don’t Cancel, Postpone” campaign, which encourages visitors to keep their plans, is already generating some buzz: Costa Rican President Carlos Alvarado Quesada shared Namu’s effort recently with his 135,000 Twitter followers:



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