

Your Guide to Adding a Bleisure Travel Program Into Your Business-

The why and the
how to!



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What is bleisure?

When you hear the word Bleisure, what comes to mind? A long weekend tacked onto to a business trip, in a tropical destination?

Bleisure actually refers to the trend of combining business travel with leisure activities. This may involve extending a business trip to include sightseeing, shopping, or relaxing at the beach.





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*“As the post COVID trend of striving for a better work-life balance continues, there has been a significant increase in the number of bleisure trips being taken by business travellers, as they look to make the most of personal travel opportunities either side of a work trip,” said Corporate Traveller Australia Marketing Manager, Kim Robertson, at the latest Unpacked In-person Webinar on **The rise of the bleisure traveller: A win for businesses and employees.***

“As an employee traveller, bleisure provides massive travel cost and annual leave reductions through leveraging an existing trip airfare and travel time. It is a wonderful opportunity to see new places, have fun and rejuvenate, that costs less, so who would not love that!”

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Blesisure is growing!

According to our data, business travellers are increasing the length of domestic trips. We also found a growth in bleisure travel, driven by hybrid and flexible working arrangements and the need for work-life balance. Conversely, short trips saw negative growth this year.

To gauge length-of-stay trends, we analysed the percentage increase in same-day and one-to-six-day flight bookings from 1 May to 31 October 2023 compared year-on-year.

- We found short-stay trips dropped by an average of 3.9 per cent this year, while longer trips increased by an average of 4.6 per cent. Specifically, there was negative growth in same-day, two-day and three-day trips this year, at -2.3 per cent, -1 per cent, and -8.4 per cent respectively.
- From there, the trend in negative growth saw a marked turnaround, with a consistent increase in bookings for trips longer than three days. Corporate Traveller saw a 3.8 per cent growth in four-day trips, a 4.2 per cent growth in five-day trips, and a 5.8 per cent growth in six-day trips.

Length of stay	% increase from 1 May - 31 October 2023 YoY
Same-day return	-2.3
2 days	-1
3 days	-8.4
4 days	3.8
5 days	4.2
6 days	5.8

Australia-based Global Managing Director, Tom Walley, points to changing attitudes and working arrangements driving the growth in longer trips.

“The shift to longer business trips is influenced, in part, by changing work patterns. Many executives in hybrid and flexible working arrangements can base themselves anywhere on their remote working days and remain productive. This flexibility encourages business travellers to take extended stays, which then gives them freedom outside of working hours to add on leisure activities in a new destination.”

Tom says flexible working arrangements have also created greater awareness of the need for work-life balance.

“At Corporate Traveller, we have observed an increase in bleisure travel, whereby travellers weave short breaks into work trips. Our data shows an increase in trips of four days or more, which suggests many travellers are opting for a ‘long weekend’ or ‘week away’ approach to their trips.



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“Aside from extra accommodation, extending a corporate trip has no impact on the cost of flights as they are already booked. In fact, there can be perks to extending a trip, such as discounted rates or cheaper return flight dates. Some organisations are realising that enabling staff to combine business with leisure has a positive impact on staff morale which, in return, positively impacts business success.”

“Understanding the shifting preferences of business travellers is essential for the travel industry to adapt and cater to the evolving needs of travellers across different trip lengths. The growth in bleisure travel this year reflects a changing mindset among travellers that will continue shaping the industry and its offerings to meet that growth in demand.”

Bleisure trends

Female business travellers are more likely to take bleisure trips at 8.5% for women vs

6.8%
for men.

The greater the distance for travel, the greater the likelihood of bleisure travel. Intercontinental trips rates for bleisure travel were three times higher than domestic trips.

Older **travellers** preferred using the time to visit friends and family.

Younger travellers are more likely to take bleisure trips. Those aged 20 to 25, the rate was close to

15%.

Millennials preferred bleisure trips that allowed for sightseeing and exploration.

Bleisure travel isn't going anywhere anytime soon, so make sure your company is prepared for all the questions your employees may have about bleisure travel.

Biggest benefits of bleisure for your business and your employees

You may be asking, what is the benefit for businesses? The answer is that it addresses a huge challenge that SME businesses have right now with attracting and retaining talent.

Did you know two thirds of medium and large businesses reported difficulty finding suitable staff in June 2022 (latest ABS Business Conditions) which has only become more challenging.

A business promoting bleisure travel to staff can mean:

- Talent attraction and retention with a policy that encourages Bleisure travel and connects employees to great options
- An improved company image: Businesses that support bleisure travel are seen as being more progressive and accommodating by potential employees
- Less stockpiling of annual leave (staff tend to stockpile to accrue major time overseas to justify airfares).
- Increased employee satisfaction: Employees who are happy with their work-life balance are more likely to be productive and engaged.

Bleisure travellers often report feeling more refreshed and energised after a trip, which increases productivity when they return to work. And it costs the business very little – *it's more of a policy to implement with connection to partners.*





Top tips for creating a bleisure travel policy

Every company with travelling employees should have a travel policy. Bleisure is one of the latest trends to start being included in that policy.

By addressing the below suggestions, companies can empower travellers to book bleisure trips confidently and compliantly while aligning with the company's policies and objectives.

Gather feedback from your travellers, road warriors and key stakeholders;

- Understand what travellers are missing from their current experience while travelling for work and understand how to start incorporating leisure components into their trip
- Research what other companies are doing well
- Talk to Corporate Traveller about what their clients are implementing & what are overall trends in the bleisure market

Develop a bleisure policy outlining very clear guidelines and processes including;

- Eligibility criteria
- Approval process

- Preferred booking method
- Expense guidelines & any other reimbursements available (company vs personal expenses)
- Travel insurance cover
- Adherence to any legal or tax implications combining business and leisure travel
- Provide education and training sessions if required

Internally communicate & promote the benefits of the bleisure policy for travellers which include;

- Access to a dedicated travel manager to facilitate the whole trip, offering guidance and 24/7 support
- Familiarity with the same online booking tool they use for their work trips
- Travellers receive 1 itinerary combining business and leisure components
- Access to current preferred suppliers and corporate rates

Work with your HR team on how this could attract future employees to the business

- Promote the bleisure policy as an employee benefit
- Report on staff uptake and communicate some fun travel stories & experiences

Who pays for what

Flights

Businesses will need to get travellers to the destination they're working in, so businesses will book flights to and from the destination. If your travellers are hoping to stop at another destination on the way home, they will likely have to foot that bill. In some cases, travellers may need to chip-in for the flights if they're looking at coming back at a busier time than if they headed home immediately.

Travel insurance

This depends on your business's travel insurance plan. In some cases, employees may need to take out a separate travel insurance policy for the leisure portion of their trip.

Domestic Travel Insurance

If you are an Australian travelling domestically you can't be covered for medical expenses within Australia by any travel insurance policy. So, travellers won't need to take out a separate policy for medical unless travelling on a cruise ship. Any loss or damage to work property should still be covered by your business's insurance policy.

International Travel Insurance

If you are an Australian travelling abroad and your business policy doesn't cover leisure components of a business trip, travellers may want to take out a separate insurance policy for the leisure time.

Accommodation & Food

Whether your travellers receive a travel allowance or use a company credit card – employers won't pay for any components of traveller's trips that are for private purposes. According to the Australian Tax Office, you can only claim meals, accommodation, and incidentals if travellers are staying overnight for work. Make sure your travellers understand their expenditure limits and eligibility.

Bleisure destinations to consider

Looking for inspiration? Here are our top three destinations for Australians on business trips. Dive into our amazing bleisure itineraries for you to use as travellers or to take back to your team!

International – Singapore

The travel hub of the world, many international travellers from Australia have stopped over in Singapore. Instead of hanging out at the airport, next time extend your trip and spend a few days in this beautiful country.

Gardens by the Bay

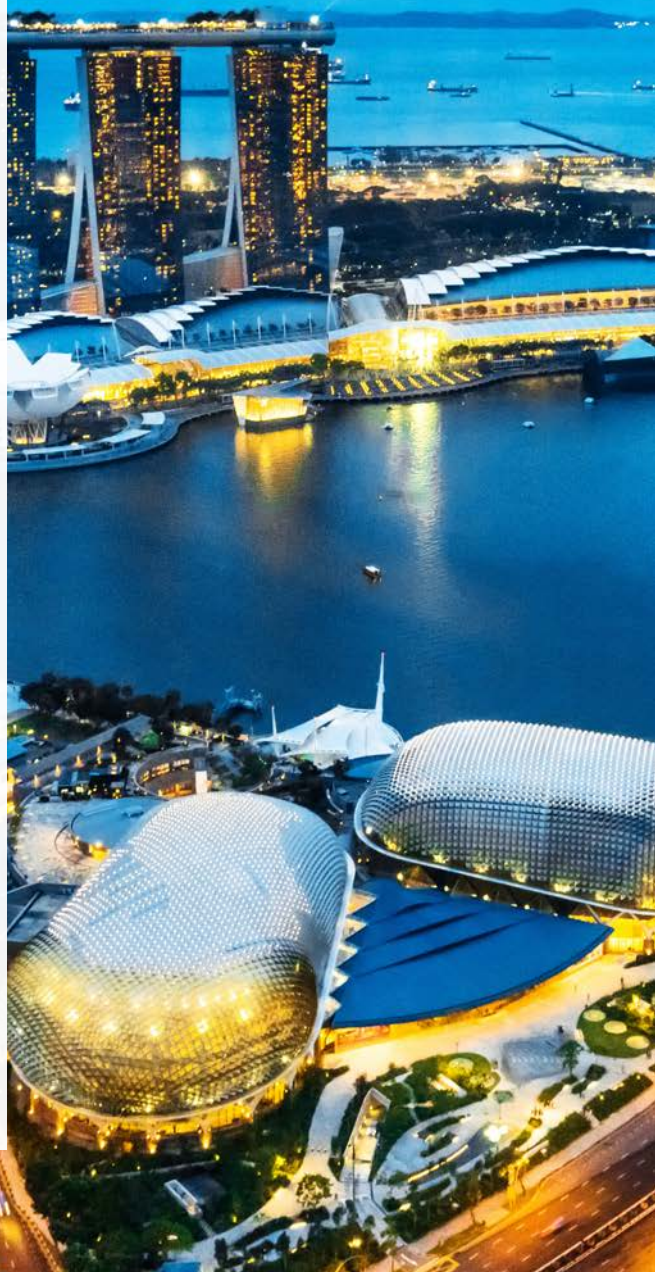
A colourful park in the bay area of Singapore and marvelled for its architecture. You need to see the famous supertree structures if you're heading to Singapore. A fun destination for all ages and for anyone who appreciates futuristic architectural beauty.

Universal Studios Singapore

The first amusement park of its kind to open in Southeast Asia, Universal Studios Singapore is a must. With more than 20 attractions and themed zones, whether you have kids or are just a big kid, you'll have a ball.

Singapore Flyer

See the city sights from the sky with the giant Ferris wheel the Singapore Flyer. It's built over a three-story terminal building and it the world's largest observation wheel. See Singapore River, Marina Bay, Empress Place and more from atop Singapore.



International – London

Well, you're already half a world away, you might as well make the most of your trip to London. While there's a lot to see in this great city, we've narrowed down the list to a few must-see places.

Tower of London

From royal residence to zoo to prison, the Tower of London has seen a lot of action over the centuries. Now a historical site, you can visit the Tower of London for tours, food, shopping, and visit the crown jewels. It's right next to the Tower Bridge, so you can kill two birds with one stone.

London Eye

Fancy a view? The London Eye (aka the giant Ferris wheel) is on the South Bank of the River Thames. It offers the highest viewing point of London, so make sure you pay it a visit. Big Ben and Westminster Abbey are just on the other side of the river, so you'll have great views.

Buckingham Palace and Changing of the Guard

Feeling royal? Pop by Buckingham Palace to see where the Queen spends her time. You can book a tour to see the State Rooms which are open to visitors, but they're only available at set times of the year. You can watch the changing of the guard at 11:00am Monday to Saturday and 10:00am on Sundays. The ceremony usually lasts about 30 minutes. Otherwise, you can wait patiently outside the gates of Buckingham Palace and hope that Lizzy takes a trip that day.

International – Doha

Qatar has been on the tourist radar for less than 20 years, but it's made a rapid rise. Thanks to one of the world's best airlines, a growing crop of luxury hotels and a hugely successful gig hosting the FIFA World Cup in 2022, Doha is now the hottest stopover destination in the Middle East. Here's how you can spend some time in the Qatari capital.

Shop til you drop

Doha is home to grand shopping malls packed with international designer labels, local boutiques and some seriously over-the-top extras. You could spend the entire day inside Doha Festival City, a 600,000 square metre complex containing endless stores and places to eat, as well as an indoor snow park, huge digital gaming centre and the exciting Angry Birds World theme park.

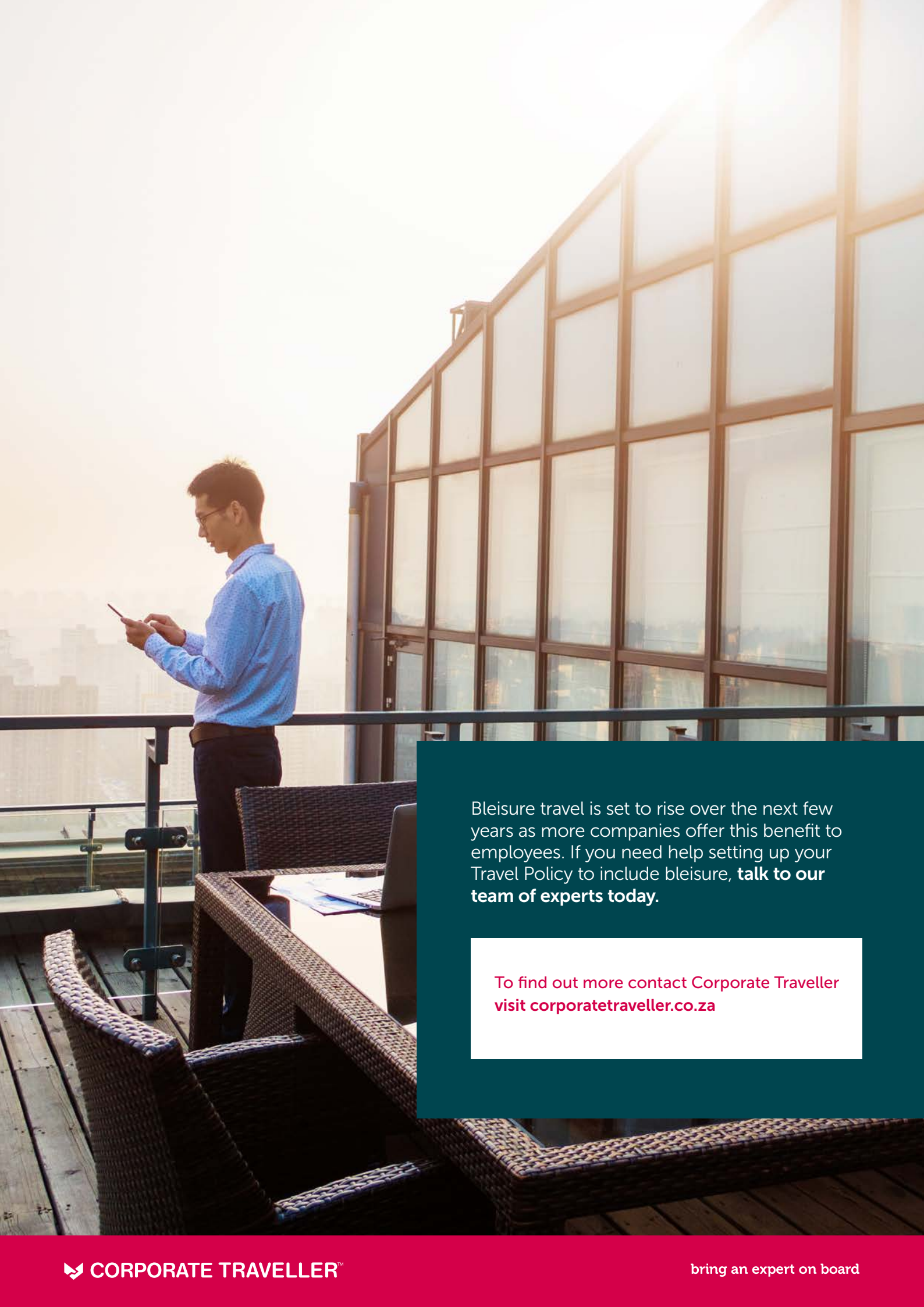
Stroll the Corniche

One of the city's most iconic attractions, the Doha Corniche is a seven-kilometre stretch of gorgeous waterfront promenade overlooking the glassy waters of Doha Bay. Bookended by the pyramid-shaped Sheraton hotel at the north end and the dramatic Museum of Islamic Art at the south, the Corniche offers the best views of the city's modern skyline.

Discover Doha after dark

Whether you're looking for live music, rooftop cocktails or late-night dancing, you can find a spot in Doha that ticks all the boxes. Public House Doha at the swish Marsa Malaz Kempinski on the humanmade Pearl Island is styled like a retro American diner and sports bar, complete with cocktails, burgers and even a jukebox. Skybox 61 is part of the city's other Kempinski hotel, back on the mainland, and has exquisite views over Doha from its perch on the 61st floor.





Bleisure travel is set to rise over the next few years as more companies offer this benefit to employees. If you need help setting up your Travel Policy to include bleisure, **talk to our team of experts today.**

To find out more contact Corporate Traveller
visit corporatetraveller.co.za