



Book a holiday and give free nights to a medical worker at the same time | Photo source [Link Hoang on Unsplash](#)

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BOOK A HOLIDAY AND GIVE ONE FREE TO A MEDICAL WORKER

 TRAVEL & TOURISM

A new initiative offers discounts to users who book a future holiday, and gives free stays to healthcare workers for each holiday booked

Spotted: Among the businesses that have been hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic are those associated with travel – including airlines, hotels, B&Bs, resorts, and more. Now, an initiative called BuyOneGiveOne “Vacay Layaway” (BOGO) allows users to purchase future travel at a discount, while also donating a holiday to a health care worker.

Participants in the programme include chains such as Fairmont Hotels & Resorts, Red Lion Hotels Corporation, Funjet Vacations, Outrigger Hotels and Resorts, and others. Each participating hospitality brand has created special offers for BOGO participants. These range from discounted stays to extra loyalty points that can be redeemed just before travel.

For each BOGO holiday purchased, the brands also donate room nights, gift cards or loyalty points to charitable health care organisations, such as the American Nurses Association. These are then distributed to healthcare workers, who can use them to help pay for a well-deserved holiday. For example, bookings at Outrigger’s Waikiki resorts are up to 20 per cent off and for every booking, the company will provide a free night to healthcare workers. Outrigger aims to give away 1,000 free nights.

The initiative’s [stated mission](#) is to provide “immediate funds to hotels in this unprecedented time, in addition to a much-deserved respite to those who have put their lives on the line to care for the sick.” The initiative is running through the end of June.

As the coronavirus lockdowns are gradually eased, a big concern is how to help the many businesses in the hospitality sector recover and rebuild their customer base. Initiatives such as BOGO's "Vacay Layaway" are a part of this recovery. Other innovations we have seen are a [live-streamed, remote-controlled](#) tour of the Faroe Islands, which aims to keep the destination in the forefront of people's minds, and a renewed emphasis on [sustainability](#) in travel companies.

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Takeaway:

The BOGO initiative is one of many that are aiming to help hospitality businesses recover from the economic downturn caused by the coronavirus pandemic. These initiatives may also signal a change in how the hospitality industry markets itself in the post-virus period. Some are suggesting that, at least in the near term, the industry may need to adopt a range of measures. These could include adjusting brand strategy to appeal to a younger demographic, who are most likely to risk travel; providing more automated services and meal deliveries; updating health and safety policies and procedures; and focusing more on local visitors, rather than those from abroad.