

# Lockdown diaries: Lauren, from long distance to lockdown

*My advice to anyone under lockdown with a significant other is to try to understand that this is a scary time and you're both sure to experience a range of emotions.*

Lauren Bonheim is a globe-trotter, digital marketing consultant and the founder of [Lauren on Location](#), a travel site that has taken a huge hit following the outbreak. Lauren has been living on and off in Madrid for the past six years, but recently moved back in January to join her boyfriend who was relocated to the Spanish capital for work. Madrid is Lauren's true happy place and no matter where her adventures abroad take her, her heart always leads right back here.

## What was your life like just before the lockdown vs. today?

I officially moved back to Madrid just a little over a month before the Coronavirus came to Madrid and the lockdown was announced. I work remotely, and so I had just set up my home office and was getting used to working from the quiet comfort of my new home, in my loungewear sans make up. After almost a year of nonstop travel, I was loving the alone time to focus in on my work and catch up on delayed projects.



Police checkpoint outside my apartment

Then the lockdown happened. My once solo working environment is now shared with my boyfriend, who is also working from home. He works in sales and is constantly on the phone. All. Day. My once calm and quiet sanctuary has been invaded by ringing cellphones and noisy conference calls. It's been extra hard to concentrate, but we're working together to find

solutions, like using headsets for calls and designating separate work spaces.

Before the lockdown, I also left my apartment at least twice a day. I usually start my mornings early, either by going on a run or attending a workout class. I also work from a [coworking space](#) or a café once a week, and have Spanish classes first thing in the morning twice a week. So, being stuck inside involuntarily, without the option to go for a walk, or meet a friend for coffee is obviously much more restrictive than before.

Even as someone who's used to spending immense amounts of time within my apartment, these 12+ days in home quarantine have been extremely taxing.

## **How has the lockdown impacted your industry?**

The travel and tourism industry has taken a huge hit following the outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic. Many of my friends and family who work within the industry have had their salaries reduced, been forced to take unpaid vacation time, or even been laid off. My travel site, along with many other bloggers I know, is seeing a major dip in traffic, and most press trips and sponsored collabs have been postponed until further notice.

## **Do you have any tips for how we can help**

those in need?



Takeout from [Mazal bagel shop](#)

While this situation is affecting everyone, there are certain industries and small businesses that are really suffering

right now. Their business's cash flow has been abruptly cut off and if they're going to make it through this, they need our help. If it's allowed, order takeout or delivery from local restaurants. And if you can afford it, reach out to your favorite small business owners like your yoga teacher or physical trainer, etc., and offer to buy a gift certificate or front them the money for a future service like a yoga class.

## **Have there been any comical moments in this unprecedented time?**

I'm very fortunate that my partner is a total clown and keeps me laughing daily. Even when things get stressful, tense or scary, we've been trying to combat the negative feelings with silliness and laughter. We've realized that since this whole situation is out of our control, all we can really do is focus in on our happiness and make it a priority in the coming weeks. Whether that means an impromptu tickle attack or Twizzler war, or blasting reggaeton and dancing around the kitchen, our plan is to keep on laughing.

## **How are you coping?**

I'm taking my lockdown day by day. There are days I wake up energized, motivated and ready to crush my to-do list. Other days I wake up feeling fatigued, anxious, and can hardly muster the motivation to get out of bed. It's been a real emotional rollercoaster.

The best way I'm finding to cope through this quarantine is to listen to my body and not judge my feelings. I'm trying my

best to be nice to myself and to others. When I'm feeling productive, I work my way through this list of [100+ home activities](#) I created last week, and when I'm feeling low, I let myself rest.

## **What goals are you hoping to achieve as our time in lockdown continues?**

I have such a long running to-do list of things I'd like to accomplish during this lockdown, but my main focus is to simply maintain my normal routine of exercising, working and eating healthy, the best that I can. My other goals include developing my meditating practice, getting some major spring cleaning done, and spending quality time with my boyfriend (although that one's kind of been forced on us!)

## **What's the first thing you'll do once this lockdown is over?**

Go for a run. The first thing I will do is throw on my running shoes, plug into a good podcast and take a long run around the Canal track. Running is my "me time" and what allows me to clear my head and combat stress. Being pent up inside, and not able to run, especially now, has been extremely taxing.

## **Who are you in quarantine with? Any advice for people in your similar**

## situation?

I'm currently in quarantine with my boyfriend. We recently transitioned from being in a long-distance relationship (*him here in Spain and me in NY*), to living together. And now we're under lockdown. It's been quite the interesting adjustment, but for now we're fairing the abrupt contrast pretty well. We've made a list of things we'd like to do together over the next few weeks, from recipes we'd like to try, to home improvement tasks we'd like to tackle, and are trying to use this time to connect on a deeper level and get to know each other better.

**My advice to anyone currently under lockdown with a significant other is to try to understand that this is a scary time and you're both sure to experience a range of emotions.** It's important to be patient with one another, support each other during both the high moments and the low moments, and give each other space when needed.

Another thing I've found helps a lot when it comes to working from home together, is to discuss a plan and set boundaries before things start to get tense. Doing things like designating separate work spaces and setting daily working hours, will help you stay focused, motivated, and on the same page as your partner.

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If you'd like to get involved and share a compelling story from this ongoing chapter of history, reach out to Daphne Binioris ([daphne@veracontent.com](mailto:daphne@veracontent.com)) and Daniel Catalan ([a96039@aup.edu](mailto:a96039@aup.edu))