



## Pilgrimage and Travel in the Time of Covid

We might like to think that the pandemic has waned to the point where we are safe from infection. The reality is, however, that international travel carries the risk of Covid infection. It's important to remind ourselves, agree to certain conditions and be transparent about costs and logistics associated with Covid, and other illness, while on a pilgrimage.

1. All travelers must be vaccinated for Covid. If you are not able to be vaccinated for medical reasons, please provide documentation from your doctor.
  2. All travelers are asked to do a home test for Covid just prior to departure. You must test negative to come on the pilgrimage.
  3. All travelers are asked to bring along home testing kit(s) for Covid.
  4. All travelers will be masked when asked to mask by the tour operators and leaders or the people with whom we stay or visit.
3. **Travel insurance is highly recommended.**
- a. Current CDC guidelines state 5 days of isolation after testing positive and 24 hours without a fever prior to flying. This could mean 6 days of extra hotel and meal expenses if illness occurs at the end of a trip.
  - b. All transfers (to the airport, to a doctor, etc.) beyond on the group arrangements are out of pocket expenses to those who need them. Be sure your travel insurance includes this kind of reimbursement.
  - c. The operator can provide assistance for making arrangements for hotels, meals and transfers. At the end of the pilgrimage, billing for these services will be on a case by case basis at the discretion of the operator per services rendered. Again, insured travelers will be able to make a claim for all services.
  - d. At the end of pilgrimage, travelers may, of course, make all their own arrangements for an extended stay. In fact, this would be greatly appreciated.

4. If you decide to **buy travel insurance**, consider doing so early.
  - a. For pre-existing medical conditions to be covered, many companies require that you purchase your plan within 14 - 30 days of making your initial non-refundable deposit, which could be your flights or the \$100 flight deposit (if you use the group flights.)
  - b. There are more options for coverage when you buy early.
  - c. Read policies carefully to make sure you have coverage that makes you comfortable. Some exclude Covid related expenses.
  - d. Do your own research. The travel agent can recommend - but search for your own coverage, too. There are many reliable companies to fit your needs and pocketbook.
  
5. All medical treatment in Israel/Palestine is paid for in cash or credit card and reimbursed by your medical insurance or travel insurance.
  - a. Medicare does not reimburse international health care expense.
  - b. Check with your insurance carrier to make sure you are covered for international travel and health care reimbursement.
  - c. The process for obtaining **Paxlovid** for Covid treatment in Israel is complicated and must go through the National Health Care system. This means you first have to get a PCR test from an approved medical facility and will be reported to their Covid data base and monitored for a negative test before leaving on a flight. So, if you want to take **Paxlovid** in the event that you contract Covid, bring some with you after being cleared to take it by your primary care physician.
  - d. Bring a 7 - 10 day EXTRA supply of all your medications.
  
6. If anyone should test positive for Covid during the pilgrimage, they will continue on with the group travel (double masked) if they are well enough to come along.
  - a. They will be asked to isolate in your hotel room as the group tours and wear a mask.
  - b. Every effort will be made to procure them a single room. We ask that the additional expenses be covered by the person who is Covid positive. This expense can be added to the travel insurance claim.
  - c. Meals will be brought to your room, and lunch will be arranged.
  - d. If you feel as if you want to see a doctor, those arrangements will also be made by the operator and expensed accordingly.
  - e. If you decide to return home early or late, the operator and travel agent will assist as needed. The group flights require a fee of \$100 currently to be changed. All early or late transfer costs fall outside of the group transfers and are paid by the traveler.
  - f. If you are too ill to travel, you will not be left alone in a hotel as the group continues. The solution to this, which could be a paid steward or a friend or group leader who stays behind with you, will be decided on a case by case basis.
  
7. If you decide not to purchase travel insurance, be sure that you have the reserves in cash or credit card to cover all your expenses at the conclusion of the pilgrimage.

I have read and understand and support the Covid related differences, costs and possibilities outlined above, and realize there may be further considerations and changes to this page.

---

name

date

Please return this form with your deposit, registration form and copy of passport.

General Covid Addendum

INITIAL\_\_\_\_\_