

## GENERAL TRAVEL INFORMATION FOR ALL TOURS

### COVID-19 TRAVEL GUIDELINES

**Air:** Some travellers wonder if the air on a jet makes it easier, or harder, for COVID-19 to spread. The CDC reports most viruses are not easily spread on flights because of how airplanes circulate and filter the air. Air is circulated up to 6 times per hour and processed through HEPA filters which remove 99.97 percent of particles passing through them.

**Jet Hygiene:** Airlines are increasing their hygiene protocols to ensure onboard transmissions remain low. Some airlines are using UVC lights to clean surfaces. As an added precaution, you will want to bring your own supply of disinfecting wipes to wipe down tray tables, seat arms, windows and walls.

**Queues:** The greater risk of COVID-19 exposure comes from passing time in ticket lines, security queues, departure gates, jetways, and passenger seats—each of which potentially puts you in close proximity with other people and frequently touched surfaces. Streamline your queue time by having all the necessary documents and information at the ready.

**Mask On:** Keeping your face properly masked and always covered, except when TSA agents need to confirm your identity, is the safest option. Almost all major airlines require passengers to wear a face mask or face covering during your flight. It is strictly enforced once you enter the airport terminal, at check-in, at departure gates pre-boarding and post-flight at baggage carousels. Passengers are reminded and encouraged to wear them during the entire flight.

**Onboard Seating:** Physical distancing is more difficult in a confined space like an airplane. Wearing your mask is essential when physical distancing is not possible.

**Double Check:** Travellers need to call ahead or log into the airline's website to get the most up-to-date information, and check for updates regularly. Changes in flight schedules, travel restrictions, airline recommendations and regulations—and how they are being enforced—can occur frequently. Your entire trip could be ruined by relying on old and incorrect information, and you may not be allowed to board the plane if you are not able to comply with the rules.

**Testing:** Currently, a few airlines and airports are conducting on-site rapid tests for the virus of arriving passengers, as well as other customers who want one. Experts suggest this could be the new normal for airlines going forward.

**Track and Trace:** You may be asked a few questions while making a reservation or during check-in, including: Have you travelled out of the country in the last 14 days? Have you been in contact with anyone who has tested positive for coronavirus? Have you had any of the following symptoms: fever, dry cough, or difficulty breathing?

**Signage:** Most airports have placed markers in areas where line-ups occur to reinforce physical distancing as travellers wait in line. Passengers are also scanning their own boarding passes—



both paper and electronic—rather than exchanging them with TSA officers.

**Wash Your Hands:** Travellers should wash their hands regularly or use a minimum 60 percent alcohol-based (70 percent isopropyl alcohol) disinfectant before and after using the check-in kiosk, completing the security screening process, and showing your ticket at the gate.

**PASSPORTS & VISAS**

Travellers from the USA and Canada must carry proof of citizenship. A valid signed passport with an expiration date at least six months beyond the tour return date is required. Make sure your passport is in good physical condition with no stains or other damage, or your airline may deny you boarding.

Photocopy your passport’s identification page and keep it separate from the original when you travel. For added security, we request that you forward a copy to our office, and leave a copy with a friend or a relative at home. These steps may speed the replacement process if you lose your passport. We also recommend that your passport, cash, and other documents not be kept together while travelling in case of loss where you would then lose everything.

TourMagination will inform you if tourist visas are required for a destination on your specific tour. If visas are required TourMagination will provide the application forms and detailed instructions to assist you in securing your visa(s). It is the responsibility of each tour participant to apply for their visa(s) prior to the departure of the tour according to the instructions provided.

**FLIGHTS - CHANGES AND CANCELLATIONS**

Be aware that flights are ALWAYS subject to schedule changes/aircraft changes as well as cancellations that are beyond their control. While the airline will do what is within their power to protect you, passengers should be

proactive and protect themselves by purchasing travel insurance for these unexpected or unforeseen events.

If your flight has been cancelled and your departure is outside of 24 hours: if your ticket was purchased through our partners at Bonaventure Travel, please call 204-594-7608 for assistance as this number is monitored. If you are already checked in for your flight and are under airport control, you must go directly to the airline’s desk at the airport for assistance.

**LUGGAGE AND CARRY-ON**

TourMagination recommends one checked-in piece of luggage and one carry-on bag per person. Restrictions on size and weight vary by airline.

For most airlines, the checked-in bag must not exceed 50 pounds (22.7 kg) and must measure 62 inches (157 cm) or less by adding the height, width, and length. For many airlines, the carry-on bag must not exceed 17 pounds (7.7 kg) and must measure 45 inches (114 cm) or less by adding the height, width, and length. We recommend you look at the baggage allowance requirements on your airline’s website. Checked bags will almost always have an additional fee so please be prepared for this, including on in-country flights within tours.

TourMagination encourages the minimalist approach to packing which will make you more comfortable and more mobile. We recommend a 24” suitcase as the maximum size. You are responsible for your own luggage so please ensure that you can handle it by yourself. Porterage service will not be available at every location.

It is important to have the following with you onboard your flights: passport, cash, wallet/purse, medicines, medical devices, essential overnight items in case your baggage is delayed or lost, and if applicable electronic



equipment such as laptop computer and camera.

**SECURITY**

It is important to be at the airport for your international flight at least 3 hours prior to your departure time as security procedures can be time-consuming.

Because of certain restrictions please be sure you do not have sharp objects in your carry-on luggage, such as scissors, pocket knives, nail clippers, needles, etc. Regular quantities of liquids, gels, or aerosols are also not allowed in your carry-on luggage, such as shampoo, toothpaste, hair gel, etc. These items should be packed in your checked luggage.

Exceptions include: Liquids, gels, and aerosols can be brought through security screening provided that the items are packaged in containers with a capacity of 100ml/100grams/3.4oz or less and that the containers fit comfortably in one clear, closed, and re-sealable plastic bag with a capacity of no more than one litre/one quart. One bag per passenger will be permitted.

If you have had a knee or hip replacement, which will be detected by the metal detector, it is advisable to carry a card or note from your doctor to speed the security process.

Anyone who carries an EpiPen for an allergy reaction should notify our office. For your flight, be sure to carry your EpiPen in your hand luggage in its original carrier tube. Have a copy of the pharmacy label that includes the name of the person the pen was prescribed for and the name of the prescribing physician.

**CUSTOMS**

Canadians can claim \$800 per person anytime you have been absent from Canada for at least 48 hours. Duty must be paid on all items in excess of this amount. An unlimited number of

gifts valued up to \$60 each may be mailed to Canada duty-free. These do not count as part of your exemption. Label the package “Unsolicited Gift— Value under \$60.”

US residents may bring back \$200, \$800 or \$1600 (dependent on countries visited) per person worth of foreign goods duty-free if you have been out of the country for at least 48 hours, and have not already used any part of the exemption in the past 30 days. You may mail packages valued at up to \$200 to yourself and up to \$100 to others, duty-free, with a limit of one parcel received per addressee per day. On the outside, identify the package as being for personal use or an unsolicited gift, specifying the contents and their retail value. Mailed items do not count as part of your exemption.

To expedite the trip through customs, keep receipts handy and have all purchases in one bag.

Canada and the US also have restrictions on the types of items that can be imported into the country. Be careful when making purchases overseas that you will be allowed to take these items home with you. For details regarding these restrictions, please visit the following websites:

**Canada:** [travel.gc.ca/returning/customs/what-you-can-bring-home-to-canada](http://travel.gc.ca/returning/customs/what-you-can-bring-home-to-canada)

**US:** [www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go/prohibited-and-restricted-items](http://www.cbp.gov/travel/us-citizens/know-before-you-go/prohibited-and-restricted-items)

**HEALTH AND PRESCRIPTION INFORMATION**

Make sure your routine immunizations are up to date before travel.

TourMagination strongly recommends you contact your health provider or nearest travel clinic to receive their latest immunization recommendations for your location of travel.



They will have information on the latest requirements and suggestions for any given geographic area.

If your tour goes to higher altitudes, you should speak to your health provider on your risks involving altitude sickness. Those with high blood pressure or a heart condition should be particularly cautious. Your health provider can prescribe medication to assist with altitudes.

It is advisable to take along enough prescription medicine for the whole tour and to carry a prescription that lists both the generic and trade names of your drug(s). This is beneficial in case your medication is lost or stolen and avoids any misunderstanding if your medicines contain habit-forming drugs or narcotics. These safeguards could save you considerable trouble.

Bring a supply of commonly used medications. The most common health problems associated with travelling are diarrhea and upset stomach. Your pharmacist will be able to provide you with suggestions. It is important to carry your own medical kit with you.

## OTHER ITEMS TO TAKE

Suggested items: sunglasses, sunscreen with a SPF of 30 or more, an umbrella, a camera, pen and journal, a travel sewing kit, and washcloths.

## PHOTOGRAPHY

Standard courtesy always applies when taking photos. Please ask permission before photographing people and ask parents if you want to take a photo of children. Most people like having their picture taken. In some countries, taking pictures of military personnel, police, their equipment, and installations is prohibited. For reasons of physical safety, some people may prefer not to have their pictures taken. This is particularly true in politically sensitive situations.

## PROTECTING YOURSELF

Guard against pickpockets. Never carry your wallet in your back pocket. An under-the-clothes money belt or pouch is advised for your cash and passport. In crowded busy marketplaces, purse or wallet snatching is a distinct possibility. Keeping things safe in bags or pockets that are zipped or buttoned so no stranger can easily reach in is less hassle than replacing them.

Also, use common sense methods to guard against being targeted. Avoid pulling out and counting large amounts of cash in public places. Walk with others and in well-lit areas. Take your cues from your tour guide and leaders.

## PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT IN A HOST COUNTRY

- Minimize garbage.
- Be mindful not to waste food or water.
- Be careful with resources such as toilet paper, paper towels, and other consumables.
- Stay on paths in natural areas, and do not remove rocks, sticks, flowers or other natural items from their settings.
- Respect wild animals. Keep your distance. Do not feed them human food.

If you are concerned about the environmental impact of your flight for the tour, consider a donation to Mennonite Central Committee projects that help farmers adapt to climate change and feed their families.

### US travellers donate here:

[donate.mcc.org/cause/care-creation](https://donate.mcc.org/cause/care-creation)

### Canadians give here:

[donate.mcccanada.ca/cause/care-creation](https://donate.mcccanada.ca/cause/care-creation)

## READING AND LISTENING

If you wish to make the most of your tour experience, you may consider preparing yourself by reading books and articles, watching



videos, etc., about the places and the people you will visit. A list of suggested titles is provided by TourMagination for most tours to start you off.

Your leaders will provide you with valuable and interesting information as you travel. Please give them your full attention.

### REQUESTS BY LOCALS

On this tour, you may be asked for help from a local. Some suggestions:

- Respond courteously without making any commitment in the moment. Say something like, “Let me check with my guide about that.”
- Consult with someone who knows the local situation well, like your tour leader or local guide, about any requests you receive or gifts you feel moved to give.
- Let your presence and friendship be the gift to the people you meet rather than gifts of cash, personal belongings, or small items and candy for children.
- When we visit charitable projects, TourMagination will provide an opportunity to give a donation through trusted organizations that are aware of the local situation.

### GUIDELINES TO CONSIDER AS YOU GO ON A GROUP TOUR

- Arrive with a genuine desire to learn about a culture. Listen and observe with open-hearted curiosity as you respectfully ask questions, taste novel foods, participate in new activities, and experience new ways of living.

- Be aware that people from other cultures may have different concepts of time and different thought patterns.

- Be mindful of how your words, tone, dress, and body language may impact others. Be careful not to cause or take offense.

- New experiences may challenge what you believe about yourself and the world. Reflect on your experiences to deepen your understanding. Respect the opinions of other tour members as they process their experiences too.

While travelling, things may not go as planned – service might be slow, lines could be long, or the culture and customs may seem very foreign. If you can accept these inconveniences with a sense of humour, graciousness, and a spirit of adventure, you are the kind of traveller who will be welcomed and appreciated, and who will have an enriching, never-to-be-forgotten experience.

### A FINAL WORD

TourMagination wants to encourage positive connections within our tour groups and with the communities we are visiting. We know that there may be discussions on our tours that touch on political views. We ask that TourMagination people be respectful of the diversity of politics that make up our clients, and respectful of the politics within the country we are visiting.

Our desire is that discussions that touch on politics are viewed as opportunities for learning and understanding rather than promoting political viewpoints or speaking to the detriment of others.