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Indagare's Travel Safety FAQ



Courtesy Indagare

Since March 2020, the global travel landscape has been ever-shifting and challenging to navigate. Covid-19 has changed the way we travel—perhaps forever in some instances—and has made considerations of when and how we go where more complicated than ever before.

And the landscape is still shifting, especially as Omicron makes headlines across the world.

Indagare is here to help. We cannot make decisions or recommendations about your future travels, but we can offer advice, based on our experiences and the intelligence we have been gathering from our team and our extensive network of partners on the ground around the globe.

Below, find answers to many of your most frequently asked questions.

Contact [Indagare](#) or your Trip Designer for more information on coronavirus travel safety, including the destinations that are open to travel, new COVID-19 hotel policies, future trip-planning advice, inspiration and ideas.

Indagare Members can also see our curated list of Indagare's favorite destinations open to U.S. passport holders now: [Coronavirus Travel Information: What's Open To Americans](#)

Pre-Travel Considerations: How to Make the Trip Go Smoothly

These are the steps we recommend travelers consider before their departure date.

OPT FOR REFUNDABLE TRAVELS

Travel has rarely been so unpredictable. And while airlines and hotels were initially more flexible with their cancellation policies back in 2020, recent trends have been to reinstate change fees or cancellation fees. The safest way to ensure smooth cancellations or postponements is to purchase a refundable ticket or hotel rate.

GO FOR THE INSURANCE

If the cancellation policy on your hotel, flight or car rental is forgiving, then it might not make sense to purchase additional insurance. But if there's a large advance deposit—often required on safaris, villa rentals or yacht charters—or a less relaxed cancellation policy, Indagare always recommends trip insurance. And it's important to consider that some airline cancellation policies expect you to rebook within a certain amount of time, often a year. If your travels are event-specific and unlikely to be repeatable at a future date, that insurance helps.

Only a few insurance companies are still offering Cancel For Any Reason (CFAR) policies, but these provide the most security—especially since pandemics and border closings aren't usually covered by other policies. While you aren't able to secure a full refund even with CFAR, these policies typically cover up to 75 percent of a trip's total cost in the event of cancellation.

LOOK INTO GLOBAL RESCUE OPTIONS

Having a sound plan for worst-case scenarios can help bring peace of mind. Melissa

Biggs Bradley, Indagare CEO and founder, recommends [Medjet](#), which provides Covid evacuations within the Continental U.S., Canada, Mexico and much of the Caribbean (as well as non-Covid medical transports home from around the world). Global Guardian's emergency protection services also provide for medical evacuations for travelers around the world. [Contact Indagare](#) to talk through your options.

SCHEDULE YOUR COVID TEST(S)

Depending on your home state and your destination, multiple Covid-19 tests may be required before, during and after your trip. Many countries, including the U.S., require initial proof of a negative result from within a few days before travel to enter. This means scheduling one during the right window, while giving enough time for the results to come back, is crucial.

Some destinations require additional testing after travel. And since December 2021, all international arrivals—including returning U.S. citizens—to the United States must have proof of a negative test result (or documentation of having already contracted the virus) from within the day before their return flight.

It can be challenging to find test centers, both at home and abroad, but Indagare and our partners around the world can often help recommend and coordinate testing schedules to keep your journeys running smoothly. Another option: [government-approved self-tests combined with telehealth services](#).

PRINT THE TEST RESULTS...

Most often, your Covid test results will be sent via text and/or email. In many cases, key information such as your name, the test date, or proof of the test being PCR is hidden when presented on a smartphone, making it time-consuming (or even impossible) to pass through health checks. And some destinations require results in paper form. To save time and stress, Indagare always recommends travelers print several copies of any required health forms and test results.

...AND SEE IF YOUR AIRLINE IS USING DIGITAL HEALTH PASSPORTS

Several airlines are now or will soon be allowing for digital health passports. Using apps like VeriFly or TrustAssure, the process lets passengers upload their negative test results and required health forms for the airline to pre-approve in the app. This way, you avoid the stress of showing up to the airport only to realize you don't have the proper paperwork. (We still recommend bringing hard copies.) Currently, American Airlines offers this feature for travelers on any flight within or to

the U.S., plus international flights to the eight countries (including the UK, Colombia, Jamaica and Chile). Delta and Alaska Airways are set to launch their own programs soon.

PICK THE RIGHT SEAT

It's widely accepted that airplanes' rapid filtration systems help keep them a safe means of transportation. Still, being in closed quarters for hours does come with risks (minimized by the use of face masks by passengers and crew). A [2018 study from Emory](#) looked at transmission rates of infectious diseases on aircraft and concluded that window seats typically offer the most isolation, as opposed to middle and aisle seats which come into contact with many more passengers.

SIGN UP IN ADVANCE TO AVOID LINES

The number of travelers plummeted in March 2020, but has since returned almost to 2019 levels. Airport lines to check bags and go through security can still be unpredictable. But there are a few easy steps to avoid them.

Bag-Check Lines

Flying with carry-on only is one answer, but for longer trips, another option is to simply ship your baggage in advance. Indagare can help discuss the various services that do this.

Airport Security

Global Entry and TSA Precheck usually help, but the programs don't actually guarantee Pre-check every time, and many airports have limited the Pre-check security checkpoints with fewer travelers passing through. Having Clear, meanwhile, guarantees line-free security screenings at more than 30 airports around the country.

PURCHASE THE RIGHT PPE & SANITIZERS

Face coverings are required on flights. Another tip: bring antimicrobial wipes for international travel instead of large amounts of liquid hand sanitizer. Not only do they make it easier to give your immediate surroundings an extra cleaning, but they won't set off any security issues that liquids sometimes can. TSA has expanded their fluid allowance—up to 12 ounces—for sanitizer, but as Melissa Biggs Bradley discovered on her October trip to Kenya, the team at Heathrow doesn't make the same exception.

The Indagare Take

“You have to be sure that you have the masks and the sanitizer, and the Lysol wipes, but actually, I was surprised to feel safe, from the moment I got to JFK to getting off my first flight. It’s all about your comfort level. I really loved Delta, and I was surprised to find that the passengers (both in the airport and on the plane) were actually very mindful and respectful of each other’s space. It’s given me real hope.”—Diana Li, Marketing Director, who flew to Delta and United for her [National Parks road trip](#)

During Your Trip: Minimize Exposure, Maximize Meaning & Go with the Flow

How we travel matters now more than ever, as the global tourism industry—which accounts for millions of jobs and 10 percent of the world’s GDP—faces an uphill battle to regain its staggering losses from 2020.

One way we recommend ensuring your trip is meaningful, is to opt for [considered vs. consumptive travel](#). “Back when it was harder to get places,” says Melissa Biggs Bradley, “you stayed longer, you looked deeper, you expected fewer habitual comforts and you brought less of your routine with you—instead you surrendered to the foreign.” That’s exactly the type of journey that helps a community rebuild its travel sector. Instead of “hitting the highlights,” trips in 2021 and beyond can be slower, with activities chosen carefully to both limit exposure and maximize impact on projects that are critically important, from conservation campaigns to educational or entrepreneurial programs for women. On our recent Insider Journeys Impact Trip to Kenya, for example, travelers visited and supported various foundations, including the David Sheldrick Trust, Angama Foundation and Big Life and Wilderness Trust to support conservation and community efforts.

Another way to maximize impact: Ask the individuals you encounter—in a socially distant setting—what’s needed most. Learning how Covid has impacted their communities is the best way to help them move forward.

And finally, travelers now need to be flexible about possible surprises during their trip. Flights are canceled more than before, destinations may enforce new regulations—from testing requirements to curfews—at any time, and hotels may close abruptly if guests or someone on staff tests positive for Covid. At every step of the way, Indagare is here to be your advocate to help you find solutions should things not go as planned.

After You're Home: Share Your Stories

Once you're back at home, and have respected your local regulations regarding tests or quarantines, share your travel experiences with your network of friends and family. Where did you feel safest? Were there any surprises? How was the TSA line? Sharing these details helps people avoid potential pitfalls and learn first-hand that traveling can be responsible and safe.

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- Peter Schlesinger on January 12, 2022

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