

Walking Adventures International

Coronavirus Update

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We live in unprecedented times! For the past few weeks, much of the world has been focused on the health threat of COVID-19. It has consumed our attention at WAI, as well. We would like to have been more communicative with you during the past couple of weeks, but the pace of change and the rate of new information from hour to hour and day to day has rendered much of what we would have wanted to share outdated.

One of the aspects of travel we value greatly is that of gaining perspective by seeing things from different points of view. Perspective is easy to lose under the glare of the 24/7 news cycle. Making plans during uncertain times with a whirlwind of anxiety-inducing headlines is challenging, at best.

Rest assured that WAI's top priority is the safety of our travelers; we will only travel if we believe we are taking you someplace inherently safe. At the same time, life does not come with guarantees and there are calculated risks inherent with every new day that we greet. One of the realities of operating tours is that the money flows from you to WAI to providers of service located throughout our destination. The purpose of cancellation policies and deadlines is to recognize that when that money is paid, we usually do not have recourse to get it back. At some point in time, our suppliers need that commitment from us and we, in turn, need that commitment from you.

Our goal at WAI is to find the balance between remaining flexible in order to operate adventures as scheduled and offering maximum control to travelers. The Coronavirus situation has upset all of that. Finding a balanced perspective that addresses traveler expectations and honors our commitments to our suppliers is proving difficult. We are a small, family-owned travel business with limited ability to refund payments to travelers that we are not getting back from our suppliers.

We still believe in the incomparable value of travel, when and where it's safe to do so. Below we've laid out our best attempt to date to find a balanced perspective and present you with our model of decision-making. The situation is extremely fluid, and we are evaluating conditions on a daily basis. We recognize, however, that the decision about travel is ultimately yours and highly personal, based upon your own research and understanding of what is best for you.

Going forward, we are regularly monitoring the [World Health Organization](#), the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#), and the [US State Department](#) for updates on how global conditions related to COVID-19 are unfolding.

What are current travel situations monitored by WAI?

Conditions for travel in Europe are rapidly changing. The United States announced on March 11 that it will restrict travel by foreign nationals between Europe (the 26 countries that are part of the visa-free travel area known as the Schengen Area) and the United States for 30 days, effective March 13 through April 10. This will not include UK or Ireland. At this time, the ban does not apply to US citizens or legal permanent residents.

- WAI has no European programs scheduled during this 30-day period.

A Global Level 3 Health Advisory has been instituted by the US State Department. This health advisory highlights that traveler mobility may be unexpectedly impacted by quarantines or border restrictions enacted on short notice. For those traveling abroad, the State Department recommendation is to visit [travel.state.gov](#) to view the individual Travel Advisories for your destination countries to understand the level of threat to your specific destination.

- WAI has two international programs with start dates in the next month - *Costa Rica: Land of Natural Wonders*, beginning March 24, and *Mosaic of Morocco*, beginning April 15. Because of uncertainties generated by recent events and pronouncements, WAI has decided to cancel these two programs. Though WAI, tour participants, and partners in-country have invested countless hours in planning for these two adventures, risks of negative impacts of operating these two tours at this time, and the tension of traveling under these conditions, outweighs disappointments caused by cancelling them. WAI will be in touch with participants to discuss their options.

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