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When can we start travelling again?

When will we be able to travel again? Find out more about what travel will look like after the coronavirus pandemic, and what measures might be put in place to facilitate it.

Practio
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The COVID-19 pandemic has brought about an unprecedented halt to global travel, with restrictions and travel bans being put in place all over the world. One of the questions being asked is when it will be safe to travel again. In this article we'll explain what needs to happen before borders can open, what coronavirus vaccines mean for travel, and what measures might be put in place in order to facilitate travel.

Can we travel now?

Travel is currently permitted in the UK, under certain conditions. Depending on which country you travel to, you may need to be vaccinated against coronavirus, get tested before you travel, or both. It is important that you check current travel restrictions in the UK and the restrictions in the country that you are travelling to.

It is also recommended that you check vaccination recommendations for the specific country that you are travelling to. Popular travel destinations such as Thailand, Mexico, India, and Vietnam, also have the risk of infectious diseases such as Zika and malaria.

When will we be able to travel again internationally?

Many international borders still remain closed for most travellers. It is likely that it will take some time before travel returns to normal as many regions across the world are still experiencing high levels of coronavirus infections.

Will we be able to travel after everyone has had the coronavirus vaccine?

A large percentage of the UK population has already received at least one dose of a coronavirus vaccine. This is an important step in order for travel to return to normal, however, a growing number of scientists are saying that it is possible that coronavirus will become endemic. This means that it might never be eradicated entirely, even if the majority of the UK population is vaccinated.

What does this mean for the future of travel? According to Jonas Nilsen, MD and co-founder of Practio "we may not have to wait until everyone in the world is vaccinated against the novel coronavirus to travel". A combination of high levels of vaccination, as well as improved testing and measures to track and contain coronavirus, could allow people to move around the world more freely. There will likely be restrictions in place for the foreseeable future, but travel without quarantine could become a possibility with the right measures.

Coronavirus travel restrictions need to be lifted

What everyone needs to bear in mind is that individual governments must first formulate plans and implement them before people can travel again. Once the number of confirmed cases of coronavirus is low enough that it is considered manageable, governments will issue guidance on travel, so it is important that you check what current restrictions are in place before booking any holidays.

What will travel look like next year?

Many parts of the travel industry will not be able to survive the pandemic, predicts Mads Mikkelsen, CEO and co-founder of Practio.

"This will most likely lead to fewer travel options, as smaller destinations won't be as accessible". Travel in 2021 will also be moulded by current coronavirus restrictions, with "big cities that used to be overcrowded probably seeing fewer tourists, at least for the near future, while people will most likely prefer the more remote and less crowded destinations".

This could lead to an increase in demand for small boutique hotels and villas in more secluded areas, rather than big hotels which might have been popular before the pandemic.

Travel destination before coronavirus restrictions

Travel may never return to "normal"

It is likely that travel will look very different after the coronavirus pandemic. Once it is safe to travel, there will likely be a boom in international travel, says Mikkelsen, as people will want to reconnect with the world after months spent in isolation. Local travel will increase too, particularly for people who feel safer staying closer to home.

Countries that rely heavily on tourism will probably introduce extra measures to entice travellers back after the pandemic has passed, "offering discounts to encourage people to return to travel and help them recover from the damage that coronavirus has caused".

Which will be the best countries to travel to?

Some countries have managed to limit the spread of coronavirus more significantly than others, so much so that countries have already taken steps to open up again.

"Considering the positive development in these countries, amongst others, I can imagine they will be ready to open their borders for travellers earlier than others, though there will certainly be some restrictions to this" Nilsen says. It is also likely that the most popular travel destinations will open up earlier than others because people will still perceive them as being safer.

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