

At Travel Counsellors, we are committed to providing you with the best possible travel experience. Before you embark on your journey, here is a comprehensive guide to help you prepare and stay informed.

Travelwise

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) provides advice on travelling abroad and keeping safe and well in your destination.

We strongly recommend you read the link below for up to date information about the destinations you plan on travelling to:

[Latest worldwide travel advice from the DFA](#)

Please note that it is your responsibility to regularly check the latest travel advice in relation to your destination.

Travel Counsellors regularly monitor travel advice and other sources of information. Where any changes to advice results in disruption or changes to your travel arrangements, rest assured that we will fully explain the decisions taken around this to ensure your safety and security.

Travel Insurance

We strongly recommend that before confirming any travel arrangements you ensure that your existing personal travel insurance is adequate and relevant for the countries you are planning to visit and for the purpose of your travel, ensuring you check for any exclusions to the policy.

Travel Counsellors can quote for a new travel insurance policy with our preferred partner Blue Insurance.

You may be entitled to reduced cost medical treatment in some European countries with a

[European Health Insurance Card \(EHIC\)](#), which is free to apply for either online or by phone.

Passports & Visas

It is your responsibility to ensure that you travel with the required documentation for entry to your destination. It is advisable to check the [DFA travel advice](#) page prior to travel as passport and visa requirements are subject to change at any time. It is important to apply for a visa well in advance of your expected travel date, as different country visas can take longer.

It is recommended that you take a photocopy of all your important travel documentation in the event, for example, if a passport is stolen, or personal items are lost. It is important to keep these copies separate from the originals. It is also advisable to advise your next of kin (not travelling with you) of your travel arrangements and to provide them with copies of your travel documentation.

Medical & Health

Vaccinations are recommended and/or required for certain destinations. Please check with your GP at least eight weeks before travel and refer to [The World Travel Guide](#) for up-to-date country specific health advice.

You should carry any medication/prescriptions that you take regularly in your hand luggage, with a copy of the prescription and a letter from your GP explaining your condition as this may be helpful at customs at your destination.

Some countries have strict laws concerning the import of drugs, whether they be medically recognised prescription drugs or over the counter medicines. You may therefore need prior agreement from the authorities, and it is recommended that you verify with the destination embassy or consulate before you travel.

Travelling with Infants & Children

Parents travelling alone with children should be aware that some countries require documentary evidence that both parents have given permission for the journey before allowing one parent/guardian to leave the country. This may require a Solicitor providing a letter of consent (notarised affidavit) authorising the child to your care.

If you are travelling with a child who does not have the same family name as you, we advise that you contact the destination's embassy for advice on travelling with children.

International airline regulations allow only one infant per adult to travel. Most airlines offer bassinets for infants; however, this is not a guaranteed service and will be provided on a first come first served basis.

Schedules & Check-in times

Schedules are planned many months in advance and rescheduling does occur and the transport providers reserve the right to amend the schedules at any time. We will inform you of any changes as soon as we are made aware, however we cannot accept liability for any extra charges incurred because of rescheduled services.

Passengers are generally required to check in for flights between 2 and 3 hours before scheduled departure. All flight times are 24-hour clock and are local timings. For other modes of transport, the details will be stated in your travel documentation.

If you are denied boarding for failure to check-in on time, we will not be responsible. However, we will offer our assistance with rebooking alternative arrangements and any additional costs incurred will be your responsibility.

Luggage

There are items which cannot be carried in hand luggage nor in hold luggage for safety and security reasons and this information is available at check-in desks. Luggage allowances vary dependent on your form of travel so please be aware of luggage restrictions for all elements of your travel arrangements before you travel.

Special Assistance

Carriage of mobility aids and other essential medical equipment policies do vary and therefore it is essential to advise your Travel Counsellor at the time of booking to allow good time to confirm the necessary arrangements with the suppliers.

Destination Airport Tax

Some destinations have a mandatory local tax to be paid either on arrival or departure in local cash currency. Please note that airport taxes are subject to change without notice and not inclusive within your air ticket fare or holiday price.

Transfers

It is important to review the meeting instructions and contact details of the transfer supplier provided in your travel documentation as services do vary with each supplier. Transfer times given are approximate and are dependent on normal traffic conditions and distances. Shuttle transfers are a shared vehicle transfer with other passengers to a central drop-off and pick-up point for all passengers staying in the same resort. Private transfers means that you and your party have the sole use of the vehicle, whether it be a car, minibus, or coach, and unless notified you will be taken directly to your accommodation and collected directly from the same for your return.

Driving & Vehicle

You will need your driving license to drive abroad, and an International Driving Permit may be needed in some non-EU countries.

For vehicle hire, a credit card in the name of the named driver is required as a form of identification and a swipe is taken on collection as a form of security deposit in the event of the vehicle not being returned and/or damage to the vehicle. We strongly recommend that, prior to signing the rental company's vehicle rental agreement, you ensure that the details on the rental company's vehicle agreement match those details on your vehicle rental voucher if you have pre-paid. Any additional purchases accepted to your credit card after the vehicle rental agreement has been signed will be your own financial responsibility. Child Seats are not a legal requirement in some countries and therefore we recommend that where practical and possible that you take your own child car seat. Driving regulations, road infrastructures, local driving standards and customs vary globally so take extra care when driving in unfamiliar areas and be aware of the flow of traffic and pedestrians.

Resort Infrastructure

Water and electricity services vary worldwide and depending on the infrastructure and development of the country, some services may be restricted and there may be occasional power cuts and water shortages. Public services and facilities may also be affected by maintenance, bad weather and so on, all of which are beyond our control, and we cannot take liability for building works outside the accommodation or elsewhere in your destination. We recommend you contact the local tourist information office at your destination for the latest resort development information.

Local Customs and Law

It is important to respect local traditions, customs, laws, and religions at all times and be aware of your actions to ensure that they do not offend other cultures or religious beliefs. Be aware of the penalties if your behaviour or actions are considered disrespectful or illegal by the local authorities. During public, national, or religious holidays, it may be that some facilities at the destination are restricted or closed e.g., banks, museums.

Accommodation Ratings

Accommodation gradings are classified by the individual countries within which they operate and may not be comparable to Irish standards and equivalent ratings. There is no internationally recognised system for grading tourist accommodation and therefore it is important to note that standards can vary between countries, as well as in the same country. City hotels which may cater for business travellers as well as tourists may offer a higher standard than a beach resort but may well be graded the same rating.

Accommodation Descriptions

All information given to you about the services and facilities at your chosen accommodation is supplied to us directly from the accommodation supplier itself and this information is passed to you in good faith. We have no control over the content of the information provided to us and as such, this information is subject to change. We cannot accept any liability for the information you source from independent third parties over whom we have no control. If we are made aware of any significant changes to the information provided to you and the availability of facilities, we will endeavour to notify you before departure, however it is at the discretion of the accommodation management and our third-party suppliers to notify ourselves.

Any facility not pre-paid and not confirmed as part of your holiday price (but provided locally) must be paid for at the published rates and we cannot accept any liability for this. These may include (but not restricted to) Wi-Fi, parking, sun loungers, pool towels, water sports, games, kid's clubs, safety deposit boxes, TV remote controls, satellite TV, kettles, toasters etc. and are at the sole discretion of the accommodation management. Cleaning charges may also be applied for self-catering properties. On-site sport facilities such as gyms and spas may have a minimum age restriction and require adult supervision. Air conditioning may be centralised within a hotel or be individual units and there may be a locally payable charge. Some accommodations charge resort fees or city tax which is a mandatory daily additional charge per person to be made directly to the accommodation for their on-site facilities. Travel Counsellors will endeavour to notify you of these resort fees/taxes where possible, but we will not be responsible for these charges and in particular where accommodation has failed to advise us that resort fees/taxes are to be charged.

Accommodation Restaurants

Individual accommodations will have different policies and full details will be provided locally and are at the discretion of the management. As a guide, hotels may place restrictions on meals and restaurant arrangements where half board, full board and all inclusive is offered. Half board is usually breakfast and evening meal. All-inclusive may not necessarily mean that food and drink is available for 24 hours a day or that all restaurants are always open. Customers who stay at hotels during the festive periods may be required to pay a compulsory additional charge for gala dinners. Some restaurants will have a dress code and more formal attire may be required for formal evenings or gala events. Should you have any dietary requirements, such as gluten free diet or peanut allergy, please inform your Travel Counsellor at the time of your booking.

Accommodation Renovations and Refurbishments

From time to time and depending on the season, some facilities may not be open, or fully functional or maintenance and general refurbishment of accommodation facilities may be required. This is entirely at the discretion of the accommodation management and when we are told about any planned works, we will notify you as soon as possible where this could reasonably be expected to affect the enjoyment of your stay.

Accommodation – Check-In and Check-Out Times

Some destinations and hotels have minimum age restrictions for check-in, and it may be that you are required to be at least 21 years old. The standard check-in times for hotels are generally 3pm and check-out between 10am and 12noon, irrespective of your arrival or departure time. On arrival at the hotel, you may be asked for an imprint of your credit or debit card. Some accommodations may require a security deposit at the time of your arrival, this may be required in cash or by credit card and therefore your card may be swiped, and a minimum payment taken. Should you require your room to be ready and have an early check-in or retain the room with a late check-out, this should be arranged with the hotel concierge/reception directly and may incur an extra night's charge. If you have a night flight, the hotel may provide a day room for guests to use at the discretion of the hotel management.

Accommodation – Other Guests

We do not have any control over the acceptance of other bookings and guests from different countries with diverse cultures and customs. Some hotels cater for groups, conferences, and celebratory functions and at times there may be large groups of guests.

Safety and Security

The safety standards, protocols and regulations of tourist services provided overseas may differ to those that you would expect or are indeed familiar with in the UK. We do ask that you are mindful that there may be differences and it is the responsibility of the local authorities to enforce the safe practices and regulations of tourist services.

Fire

Familiarise yourself with the layout of your accommodation and read the fire safety instruction notices so that you are aware of how to raise the alarm and how to exit the building quickly in the event of an emergency. If on a cruise ship, follow the emergency evacuation drill procedures.

General

All children should be supervised at all times on balconies and all guests should avoid leaning or climbing on the balcony or the balcony furniture. Any full-length glass panels may not be fitted with toughened glass and in bright sunlight it may not be obvious that the doors or windows are closed. If your room is fitted with cooking appliances, please ensure you read the instructions and know how to operate them and if unsure, seek assistance from reception. If you smell gas, immediately report any concerns to reception.

Swimming

Familiarise yourself with the shallow and deep ends of swimming pools as depth markings may not be clear. Look out for an information board with the swimming pool safety rules and whether there is a lifeguard present during the daytime. Familiarise yourself with the beach flag warning system and observe associated beach rules and local customs if public beaches. All children should be supervised at all times.

Activities and Excursions

Prior to taking part in any activities, check that your personal travel insurance covers you for specific activities. Some excursions and activities may require you to be in good physical and mental health, and you should therefore make consideration as to whether you will be able to participate. Book with a reputable local supplier, with appropriate insurance, and where sufficient safety instruction and supervision is provided.

Sun Care

Ensure all members of your party have appropriate sun care including sun lotion, hats, and sunglasses. Take regular breaks from the sun and drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration. Report any symptoms or instances of illness to reception immediately and seek medical attention.

Personal Safety

Ensure your room is always left secure and use the safety deposit boxes available in your room or reception for all your valuables (use of these may be a condition of your insurance policy). Be extra vigilant in busy public areas and on public transport and be mindful of not carrying expensive personal items. Be respectful and aware of local customs to avoid causing any offence.

Seasonal Weather and Natural Disasters

Your travel and accommodation arrangements may be affected by such weather patterns however this is difficult to predict accurately and is beyond our control. If a storm or natural disaster is forecast to affect a destination, we will work with our local agents and international authorities to keep you informed of the situation.

Consulate Assistance

If you are unfortunately a victim of a crime abroad, report any incidents to the police as soon as possible. In most countries, you must report the crime before you leave the country for the crime to be investigated. It may also be a condition of your travel insurance cover to provide an official police report to support any travel insurance claim.

Travel Counsellors 24hr Duty Office Assistance

Travel Counsellors offer 24-hour assistance for emergency situations and to help with issues whilst you are abroad, with contact details available in your travel documentation. If a problem occurs whilst you are abroad, you must firstly inform the relevant supplier (e.g., car rental company, transfer, airline, or accommodation) immediately. Should the matter not be resolved to your satisfaction, please contact the local representative service as detailed on your travel documentation.

If the supplier or representative service cannot resolve the problem to your satisfaction, you must contact Travel Counsellors immediately by telephoning our offices on the emergency number 00 44 161 608 1052 or your Personal Travel Counsellor so that we may help.

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