

## WINGS HEALTH PROTOCOLS

Group travel has inherent risks. While we can mitigate some health risks with appropriate precautions, it's impossible to control each environmental factor within the diversity of our destinations. Please read through this document to have a sense of our general health practices and expectations, as well as participants' responsibilities prior to and during the tour.

**Please note this document is subject to updates.**

**COVID UPDATE:** In May 2023 the WHO (World Health Organization), the CDC (United States Centers for Disease Control), and other health organizations downgraded their alert level for COVID-19 and declared an end to the pandemic. WINGS will follow their recommendations accordingly and adjust our policies. This doesn't mean that the risks are gone, however, so we will continue to follow commonsense guidelines to keep participants as healthy as possible on tour.

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**COVID-19 VACCINATION REQUIREMENT:** We have successfully run many tours in the last few years, in part because we have required COVID-19 vaccinations since they first became available. We will continue to enforce this policy on tours through the end of 2023. Starting in 2024, we will reframe this requirement to be in line with our standard vaccination policy, which is that we will *highly recommend* keeping up to date on all relevant vaccinations for travel.

**For tours ending prior to 31 December 2023, WINGS tour participants and leaders will be required to have completed the primary doses of an approved COVID-19 vaccine at least two weeks prior to the start of the tour.** We also recommend getting a current booster at least two weeks prior to the tour, if available.

Note: Some destinations may still require proof of vaccination (or testing) to enter the country. We will adhere to these country-level policies where applicable, even after our own policy has lapsed.

**Please carry proof of full vaccination** with you on tour. An image on your mobile phone is sufficient in most cases but be prepared to bring the physical document if required by the specific destination.

If testing is required within the tour, such as for transit from one destination to another, or at the end of a tour to re-enter your home country, those costs are not included in the tour price. We will, however, make sure that the group has the opportunity to complete the proper testing.

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**TRAVEL INSURANCE:** Many travel insurance providers offer plans that cover illnesses or expenses, including for COVID-19-related disruptions. We recommend travel insurance in general, but highly recommend a plan that covers COVID-related interruptions.

Should a participant be unable to join (or continue) on with their tour due to a COVID-related reason or other medical reason, **all costs associated with isolating and/or later rejoining the tour are the**



**participant's responsibility. This is also true for delays getting home after a tour. Additionally, we cannot offer any refunds for missed days of the tour.**

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**PRIOR TO THE TOUR:**

- Travelers should familiarize themselves with the entry/exit requirements of their own journey to and from the tour destination. This includes reviewing and monitoring the embassy websites for any changes that can occur up until the tour commences.
- In the two weeks leading up to the tour, please continue to practice standard health protocols to limit your exposure to various illnesses (flu, COVID, common cold, etc). If you have not already done so, we recommend getting a seasonal flu shot at least two weeks prior to departure.
- We recommend mask-wearing in airports and on planes and other public transportation, especially en route to your tour start. This is a personal decision, of course, but getting sick just prior to the tour will have potential repercussions for both you and the entire group.

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**ON-TOUR PROTOCOL:** Tour participants will be in close proximity during much of the tour and are encouraged to exercise commonsense health practices. Vaccine recommendations are available for most destinations and we will follow published guidance. Please note on-tour health protocol may change on short notice. Simple common courtesy will go a long way in making the tour experience better for everyone.

Effective immediately, **WINGS will no longer require COVID testing or immediate removal from a tour** due to COVID. However, our leaders will still have the right to exercise on-tour protocol such as isolation or mask wearing on a case-by-case basis.

- Our leaders have latitude to require mask wearing at times on tour, in accordance with local guidelines or as on-tour needs demand. Group mask wearing may still be required in group vehicles (for example, for the first several days of the tour). You are, of course, always welcome to wear a mask while on tour if that is your preference. **You must follow the tour leader's directives.**
- Please bring an adequate personal supply of well-fitting and effective masks with you on tour.
- Please advise the leaders if you feel sick or are exhibiting sickness symptoms while on tour. Leaders will also monitor the group, and may request that a sick participant, or participant exhibiting symptoms, wear a mask while in close quarters with the group (in the van, for example).
- If a participant is sick while on tour, the leader has the right to ask them to stay back and rest at the hotel for a day or two if circumstances allow. This is for the participant's own good, as well as the good of the group.