



General Information

We have compiled this information using our experience as market leaders in Worldwide Escorted Holidays over the last twelve years together with the invaluable comments and suggestions of our customers - many thanks to all those who have been in touch. We hope you find it beneficial.

How do I book?

You can book any of our holidays by telephone on 01 637 1600 or via our web site www.thetraveldepartment.ie. A non refundable/non transferable deposit of €200 per person secures the holiday of your choice (€300 per person for holidays outside Europe). Deposits are accepted by most major credit cards and debit cards. There is no extra credit card charge on deposits. If you wish to book a holiday within 10 weeks of departure, full payment is required at time of booking. After booking we send your booking confirmation invoice to the address provided. We strongly suggest you take fully comprehensive travel insurance that includes cancellation cover from the time of booking.

What Happens Next?

1. Please check your booking confirmation invoice carefully and make sure it reflects exactly what you intended to book.
2. Please check the spelling of names on your invoice corresponds with the spelling of names on passport(s) (first name and surname suffice). These names will ultimately appear on airline tickets and may be expensive or not possible to change. If there is a discrepancy you must contact us immediately and we will send you a new invoice reflecting the amendments.
3. Any special requests must be made to us in writing (special meals, dietary requirements). These will be passed on to our partners but cannot be guaranteed.
4. Your holiday must be paid for by the due date. This date is printed on your invoice and is 10 weeks prior to your departure. Failure to comply may result in your holiday being cancelled. Balances can be paid by cheque, bank draft, bank transfer, laser or credit card. A 2% surcharge applies to balance payments made by credit card, no surcharge applies to laser card payments.
5. Your travel documents will be posted to the address given at the time of booking approximately 10 days prior to your departure.
6. Please ensure in good time that you have a valid passport/visa for travel.

What's Included In My Holiday?

All items that are included are clearly stated in the offer. If you are unsure please ask our reservations team and they will answer any queries you may have. Add-ons such as tax, insurance and single room supplements are mentioned separately. In some cases (however rarely) you may have to pay a local departure tax or local transport cost. Our local guides will assist you with these. Tipping is not included in your holiday price and information regarding tipping will be included with your travel documents.

Passports & Visas

If you hold an EU passport and are an Irish Citizen you do not need a visa to travel within the EU. You must however have a valid passport. For travel outside the EU, you may require a visa. It is the responsibility of each traveller to ensure they have the correct documents for each destination. The Travel Department has a special arrangement with certain embassies for handling visa applications for our clients, please enquire. We cannot be liable for declined visas and normal cancellation charges will be levied. Vaccinations are required before travelling to certain countries, please check with your GP.

Each country has different requirements with regard to the period for which your passport must be valid following your arrival into, or departure from, that country. Please check with our reservations staff for advice if your passport is due to expire soon. As a rule of thumb, your passport should be valid for at least 6 months beyond your intended date of departure from the country to which you are travelling. Children must have their own passports to enter the United States and certain other countries, please check with the relevant embassy in plenty of time.

Currency

The vast majority of banks abroad allow you to use their ATM facilities to withdraw local currency. However, you should confirm with your local bank that your ATM card is enabled for this. We do not recommend that you carry large amounts of cash on holiday. We do recommend that you always use the safe facilities at the hotel (either in your room or at reception).

"Trust in Allah, but tie your camel." ~ Old Muslim Proverb

For some countries, local currency can only be purchased on arrival and it may not be taken out of the country when returning to Ireland. Our reservations staff will be happy to provide you with further information on currencies, as required.

Travel Insurance

All customers travelling with The Travel Department must have adequate travel insurance. The Travel Department sell a comprehensive policy that provides both medical and cancellation cover and we suggest you avail of this. You must make the insurance company aware of any existing or past conditions/illnesses or material facts - failure to do so may result in your insurance being void. It is the sole responsibility of the customer to ensure they have adequate insurance. If you have any queries please feel free to contact us.

Transport

AIR - All flight times and transport times are given in local time. It is important to arrive in good time for your flight particularly during peak season when airports can be congested. After check-in we suggest you proceed immediately to the departure gate and watch the monitors for your boarding instructions. On arrival at your overseas destination please proceed immediately to the arrivals area after you have collected your luggage. If you have a problem with luggage it is essential that you get word to our representative in the arrivals area as soon as possible. If you are travelling alone please ask a fellow passenger to relay the message. Neither The Travel Department nor our representative have access to airline flight manifests and therefore can not confirm either way if a passenger actually travelled on the flight from Ireland. Most airlines charge for catering - airline food is not included in the price of your holiday. It is now possible to use the 'Automated Check-In' facility at Dublin airport for all Aer Lingus flights.



COACH - All our coaches are modern and comfortable. We operate a non smoking policy on all coaches. In some instances your coach may be fitted with a WC, however in most cases it is not operational due to health and safety concerns. Your coach will make regular stops at conveniences. Don't be shy, if you need to go to the bathroom the coach will stop! For various reasons it is not always possible for your coach to park in front of your hotel - the driver will endeavour to get as close as possible to the entrance and will park in a safe place. Therefore, we recommend that you bring luggage that can be easily wheeled. Please be advised that some coach journeys include sections of mountainous roads (Amalfi drive, Italian Lakes etc...). Please note that seats cannot be reserved on coaches and that passengers may sit where they please each time they board the coach.

Luggage

The transport of luggage is the responsibility of each passenger. In some cases portorage is included however it is your sole responsibility to ensure that your luggage travels with you. Please make sure your bags are tagged inside and out and that you always take your own bag and not another one by mistake! In the event of delayed/lost baggage at an airport you should report the loss to the airline or their handling agent. These offices are located in the baggage hall of the airport. You should keep all receipts and documents safe as you may need to rely on them at a later stage and/or for an insurance claim. For multi centre holidays please pack sensibly and ideally bring wheeled luggage. Valuables and essential medication should be carried in your hand luggage and stored in a safe at your hotel. Note that there are restrictions on items that may be carried on board aircraft (such as liquids, sharps objects etc). Please check with the airport for the latest regulations in advance of travel. Any passenger exceeding their checked baggage allowance will be charged an excess baggage fee by the airline at check-in and such fees may be exorbitant. Some airlines do not permit the pooling or sharing of baggage allowances, even within a party travelling on the same reservation.

Accommodation and Meals

The Travel Department personally inspect all the hotels we use. We also work in conjunction with local partners to ensure the highest quality of our services at all times. The hotel grading systems used are based on local ratings and these can vary considerably from country to country and from region to region. A four star hotel in Italy may differ considerably from a four star hotel in Spain and so on. In some cases, it may be necessary for The Travel Department to substitute one hotel for another of equal standard. This rarely happens and if it does we will advise you at the earliest opportunity.

SINGLE/TRIPLE ROOMS - If you book a single room at a supplement, you will most likely get a room with a single bed and not a double bed. The additional cost is levied by the hotel as it costs more than half the double occupancy rate to provide a single room. Essentially a single room is usually bigger than half a double room and is more costly to service pro rata. If you specifically require a double room for single use we can of course request a rate for you. A triple room is generally a twin room with an additional (often a fold-away) bed.

FOOD & BEVERAGES - Where meals are included they are generally of a set menu variety. In some cases other groups in the same hotel may have different menus. Many hotels offer inclusive evening meals to The Travel Department at a relatively low additional cost per person. Therefore, we often include some or all evening meals in the price of the holiday at a negligible additional cost. The menu offered is consistent with local standards and the low cost at which the hotel supplies set meals for groups. Most hotels offer continental breakfasts which consist of some or all of the following: pastries, breads, cheese, ham and cereals. Generally tea and coffee are not taken at the same temperature we in Ireland might be used to. Tea is generally taken with a slice of lemon and hence water is usually hot rather than boiling. We do try and advise hoteliers of Irish tastes, however when travelling abroad, we must respect the way food and beverages are prepared in different countries.

"I dislike feeling at home when I am abroad." ~ George Bernard Shaw

Itinerary

We endeavour to keep to the itinerary that you will receive as part of your travel documents. In some instances your tour escort will make alterations to this itinerary for reasons such as weather, traffic, public holidays, local markets, essential maintenance etc... You will be advised locally of any changes. Generally a tour escort will be responsible for transfers and a guide will be responsible for sight seeing tours. Should you need any information while away please approach the escort or guide and they will be pleased to help.

Emergency Procedure

In the event of a medical emergency while away please do as you would at home. Take the appropriate action immediately and never let uncertainty get in the way of dealing with the situation. Your insurance company should be contacted as soon as possible but deal with the emergency first. Your insurer should give you a 24 hour assistance number and your representative should also be contacted as soon as practicable. You can also call our office at any time in the event of a medical emergency.

Difficulties Abroad

In the unlikely event of experiencing any problem, for example with your room, please speak with the front desk of the hotel or your tour escort. In most cases they will be happy to move you to another room subject to availability. We would encourage all of our customers to try to deal with grievances locally so you can get on with enjoying your holiday. Please always advise your tour escort of any shortcomings. They will, as a matter of course, report back to our office. We must be given the opportunity to put matters right at the time of the grievance - this is for your benefit as well as ours.

Flight Delays

The EU provides legislation for all carriers based in the EU and flying within the EU (EC No 261/2004) to compensate passengers in relation to delayed, cancelled flights etc. However, there are exceptions to the rule. Passengers are not entitled to compensation if the following have caused the delay or cancellation of the flight: political instability/bad weather/security risk/unexpected flight risk/strikes. The Travel Department, through their tour escorts and local agents abroad will assist passengers to secure accommodation, meals etc in the event of any of these exceptional circumstances, however The Travel Department will not have any liability financial or otherwise in these cases (above mentioned). We strongly suggest you always have funds available at the end of your holiday to deal with these situations if they arise, however, in our experience it is highly unlikely you will be affected. Do as you would if you were travelling alone - be prepared!

"The world is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page." ~ St. Augustine

Thank you for booking with The Travel Department – we greatly appreciate your custom.

