



**ISRAEL & COVID-19 TRAVEL UPDATE
APRIL 26, 2021**

1. Israel is the envy of the world for its remarkable Covid situation!

- * All vaccines are Pfizer.
- * More than 60% of the population is vaccinated.
- * More than 80% of the seniors over 50 are vaccinated!
- * More than 28% of teens over 16 are vaccinated.
- * By November, Israel will vaccinate most of the 12-15 years old.
- * This, with the almost 8% of the population that was infected by Covid, will put Israel at almost herd immunity.
- * In fact, in the last 4 weeks, the extremely slow Covid numbers (in all parameters) are as if Israel already has herd immunity.
- * In the last days Israel had ZERO mortality from Covid.
- * As of last week, the economy is 90% open. Sport facilities, shopping centers, cultural events are all fully back to normal operation, with some restrictions, but operating.
- * As of last week, Israel cancelled the need to wear masks in open areas. In closed areas masks are still required.
- * Today Israel announced that as of next week there will be no limit on passenger numbers on trains and public buses.
- * All hotels are fully open, including swimming pools, gyms, spas and dining rooms.
- * Last week Israel announced that it is the first country in the world to sign a purchase agreement with Pfizer and Moderna for the third dose, that may be needed in 2022.

2. On May 23 Israel will begin to gradually open tourism, starting with a pilot of 10 to 20 groups. By mid-June, the expectation is to start accepting individuals and families.

No specific protocol has been officially set for the pilot, but the expectation is that each person will need to have/do:

- Proof of vaccination
- A negative Covid test within 72 hours prior to arrival
- A negative Covid test to be done upon landing in Israel (There is a new Covid lab at the airport.)
- A Covid antigen test to be done upon landing in Israel. (A special lab will be open by May 23 at the airport.)
- Valid travel insurance.

We hope that requirements and protocols for the pilot will be officially announced by June.

Please see a link to a fresh video by the Israeli Ministry of Tourism.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e9EHdY2ne3Q>

3. As of today Israel does not recognize the CDC issued vaccine cards as they are so easy to forge. Israel is conducting talks with the Biden administration to find a solution to that issue. The expectation is that by the end of the summer this issue will be resolved. It's probable that travelers to Israel will be required to have one of the 3 vaccines that are recognized in Israel: Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (as opposed to the Russian and Chinese vaccines that are problematic). Once this agreement is reached Israel will open for American visitors.

4. The international travel industry is paying attention to Israel's status as the leading country in the world with Covid vaccines and treatment:

- * American Airlines launched a brand-new flight in mid-April: daily nonstop from JFK to Tel Aviv.

- * By Labor Day American will add daily flights from Miami and Dallas to Tel Aviv.

- * By June, United & Delta each will have more than 10 weekly nonstop flights to Tel Aviv, plus the 5 weekly flights on El Al!

- * Fall of 2021 and winter 2022 are already very busy with pilgrimages and other groups planning to travel, many of which having already made full payment to suppliers to confirm space and prices.

These companies are analyzing the situation and putting their money where they see it is safe and profitable for them to fly.

Those are the facts as of today, April 26, 2021. Yet, the most important questions remain unanswered:

- * Will vaccines be required to enter Israel past the pilot period?

- * What will be the protocol to enter Israel for those who can't or won't be vaccinated?

Our team in Israel is working with officials of the association of inbound travel companies, the Israeli Ministry of Tourism, the Israeli Ministry of Health and the Israeli Ministry of Transportation to voice our opinion on what is going on in the U.S. travel market and what we think is the most reliable protocol to adopt, as well as to get the most accurate information. We will share updates as they come in.

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