

U.S. TO WELCOME INTERNATIONAL TRAVELERS AGAIN IN NOVEMBER



New York, Los Angeles and Miami, some of the most visited destinations, will soon welcome visitors again. The United States has announced that it will lift restrictions on international travelers, a ruling that has been in effect for 18 months following the COVID-19 crisis, as well as updating the requirements.

Travelers will be able to visit the North American country in November, but only those coming from countries of the EU, Brazil, the United Kingdom and China. **Land borders with Canada and Mexico will remain closed for the time being.**

The lifting of the ban affects the 26 Schengen countries, as well as the United Kingdom, Ireland, Brazil, China, Iran, South Africa and India. The European Union has allowed the entry of Americans since July, although the principle of reciprocity was not applied.

According to statistics, around 40.4 million tourists from overseas (excluding Canada, Mexico and Co) traveled to the USA in the entire year 2019. The reopening of the borders is expected to help boost the tourism numbers again.

New Requirements to Travel to the U.S.

To travel to the United States, tourists will need to be fully vaccinated and show a proof of vaccination. A negative COVID-19 test is also necessary, taken at least three days before entering the U.S., as explained by the White House COVID-19 Response Coordinator, Jeff Zients, who announced yesterday that restrictions would be relaxed.

This vaccination requirement seems to be the best tool to keep people safe and prevent the spread of the virus. In addition, fully vaccinated international travelers should not quarantine once in the country, but must provide contact information for tracing in case of contagion easier, a task that airlines will have to perform.

In the coming days, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will issue an order to require airlines to “collect contact information” from passengers to maintain a reliable tracing system in case of contagion.

One Step Closer towards Travel Normalcy

Executive Vice President of the European Commission and Commissioner of Trade, Valdis Dombrovskis, said that it was good news, adding that it is “great to see the US relax travel restrictions for vaccinated passengers. As we enter the recovery, this is excellent news for businesses, trade and investors - also for U.S. - E.U. ties.”

In fact, the current restrictions were being the subject of criticism from the EU, especially due to the lack of reciprocity from the Biden administration after Europe allowed the entry of U.S. travelers vaccinated or with a negative COVID-19 test since July.

No Mandatory Quarantine

The only way for international travelers to enter the U.S. until now was by spending 14 days in a country that was not on the restricted list. The American business sector had expressed concern in this regard.

Following the announcement, the U.S. Travel Association, which represents hotels, casinos and airlines, praised the decision. The President of the association, Roger Dow, highlighted in a statement that it is “a major turning point in the management of the virus,” and that it “will help revive the American economy and protect public health.”

Restrictions for Unvaccinated U.S. Travelers

The travel restrictions, introduced during the Trump administration, had been in effect since the start of the pandemic in 2020 and had been maintained by President Joe Biden, who took office in January of this year.

Unvaccinated U.S. travelers (as of now, the vaccination rate in the country is 65.8% compared to 70% in the EU), must show a negative COVID-19 test one day before departure, and undergo a second test once back in the United States.

The decision comes after the latest rise in COVID-19 cases in the U.S. caused by the spread of the Delta variant, with around 150,000 new daily infections.

In the hopes of containing the spread, the Biden administration has ordered the mandatory vaccination of all federal employees and tightened the requirements for vaccinations and tests in private companies.

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