

The CDC Has a New “Do Not Travel” Advisory System

Just last week, there were 89 countries on the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC’s) [Level 4 “Do Not Travel” advisory list](#). Today, there are none. So, what changed from one week to the next? Did 89 countries suddenly become less of a risk for travelers? Not necessarily.

As of April 18, the CDC has [changed how it classifies international destinations](#) under its COVID travel advisory system.

“To help the public understand when the highest level of concern is most urgent, this new system will reserve Level 4 travel health notices for special circumstances, such as rapidly escalating case trajectory or extremely high case counts, emergence of a new variant of concern, or healthcare infrastructure collapse,” the CDC said in a statement about the new classifications.

Whereas now Level 4 is deemed “Special Circumstances/Do Not Travel,” previously Level 4 simply indicated a “very high level of COVID-19,” and came with the advice to avoid travel to the destination. This encompassed countries that surpassed certain thresholds for new counts of cases and upward case trajectories.

This new advisory system makes it easier for travelers to assess the most critical pandemic-related concerns around the world. When a multitude of countries is deemed “high risk,” that can either deter travelers from international travel completely or can turn them off from an advisory system that paints the world in broad brushstrokes of risk.

“With this new configuration, travelers will have a more actionable alert for when they should not travel to a certain destination (Level 4), regardless of vaccination status, until we have a clearer understanding of the COVID-19 situation at that destination,” the CDC stated.

Each week, the CDC releases its updated travel health notices and corresponding map, and in recent weeks the number of countries deemed Level 4 or “do not travel” had included the vast majority of countries in the world—in early February 140 countries were on the Level 4 or “do not travel” list. This week, under the new classification system, there are no countries with a Level 4 designation, and there are 122 countries and territories that fall under the Level 3 or “COVID-19: High” list.

Levels 1, 2, and 3, represent incidents of COVID-19 that are “low,” “medium,” and “high,” respectively. There are also several countries marked as “level unknown,” which are designated in gray on the map. Knowing these designations can help travelers make informed decisions about where they feel comfortable traveling and any additional precautions they may want to take before, during, or after their travels. For all levels, the CDC recommends that travelers are up to date on their COVID-19 vaccines, but does not recommend avoiding travel there, which means there is currently nowhere in the world the CDC deems unsafe to travel to in the context of the pandemic.

A private pilgrimage of Assisi and Rome escorted by Father Steve Kluge of St. Francis of Long Beach Island.

October 26th-November 3rd, 2022

Our private tour includes:

Round trip airfare non-stop on United from Newark (including all current government taxes and fees), private motor coach with professional driver/guide, seven nights first class hotels as indicated: (4-Giotto Hotel Assisi and 3-Hotel Palatino Rome), full breakfast daily and six dinners (two at local restaurants). Highlights include: Basilica of St. Mary of Angels, Casa del Cioccolato Perugia, St. Domenico Church, Siena Cathedral, Catacomb of St. Sebastian, St. Peter's in Chains, Colosseum and Forum, Vatican Museum and Sistine Chapel, Scala Santa and St. Paul Outside the Walls Basilica.

The rate per person based on double occupancy is \$3698.00 (based on a minimum of 20 passengers) plus insurance. Insurance is based on age and the amount of trip and will be quoted once deposit is made. A limited amount of singles are available for a supplement of \$550.00. A deposit of \$500.00 is required to sign up and is non-refundable. Insurance is highly recommended and would have to be taken within 14 days initial deposit. Deposit must be done by check no later than April 22, 2022 to secure a spot on this Pilgrimage.

ICELAND HOLIDAY WEEKEND FEBRUARY 16-21, 2023

Explore the land of Fire and Ice over President's weekend 2023. See spectacular waterfalls, boiling geysers and enjoy a few hours relaxing in the thermal waters of the Blue Lagoon. A visit to Thingvillar National Park is not to be missed; called the Grand Canyon of Iceland because this is where the tectonic plates of North America and Europe come together creating this awesome sight. We have the opportunity of seeing the Aurora Borealis* or Northern Lights one night and a re-do if no lights are spotted the first evening. The weather in February is usually +32 degrees (warmer than NYC because of the jet stream) and daylight hours are from 9:30am to 4:30pm. Experience sunrise with a cocktail at the Blue Lagoon.

Our customized trip includes:

- Round trip airfare from Newark Liberty to Reykjavik on Icelandair
- Four nights at the 4* Fosshotel Reykjavik
- Four full buffet breakfasts (plus one continental breakfast the morning of arrival)
- Transfers in Iceland
- Admission to the Blue Lagoon, Golden Circle full day tour with tomato soup lunch with greenhouse tour
- Northern Lights evening tour and admission and breakfast at the Viking World Museum.
- All current air, city, hotel taxes and government fees
- Optional tours will be available on our free day

A passport is required and must be valid for six months after return travel. Up to date COVID-19 requirements will be advised closer to departure as will be info on US return requirements. The tour price is \$1,889.00 per person double and limited singles will be available at a surcharge if \$400. Insurance is recommended and price is based on age and must be taken out with deposit of \$300 per person. Deposit and insurance must be paid by check. Any additional payments by credit card will have a 2.5% surcharge. The price is based on a minimum of 20 passengers and limited to 40 passengers. Deposits are non-refundable without insurance and final payment is due by November 4, 2022.

Shrimp and Avocado Salad

~FROM STAR CLIPPERS' GALLEY~

INGREDIENTS



1/4 cup chopped red onion
2 limes (for juice)
1 tsp olive oil
1/4 tsp kosher salt, black pepper to taste
1 lb jumbo cooked, peeled shrimp, chopped
1 medium tomato, diced
1 medium avocado, diced (about 5 oz)
1 jalapeno diced fine (seeds removed)
1 tbsp chopped cilantro

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small bowl, combine red onion, lime juice, olive oil, salty and pepper; marinate for at least five minutes or more if desired.
2. Combine chopped shrimp, avocado, tomato and jalapeno in a large bowl.
3. Add ingredients from marinade and combine; add cilantro and gently toss
4. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Canada hotel, travel, air groups urge testing cutback

A coalition of Canadian hospitality, travel and airline businesses is urging the government to accelerate the easing of COVID-19-linked travel restrictions. Canadian Travel and Tourism seeks repeal of pre-departure testing entirely for those who are fully vaccinated before April 1.

Hawaii Guide
plan, book, pack, and go...

ALOHA!

It is now official - the end of Safe Travels is coming later this month. Earlier this week, Hawaii's governor David Ige announced the state will drop the current 'Safe Travels' program for domestic travelers at midnight on March 25, 2022. A decision on the indoor mask mandate will follow; likely in April 2022—but potentially sooner. We will keep you posted!

Margaritaville Resort Village Coming to the Poconos



Margaritaville has announced the first **Margaritaville Resort Village**. Located in the **Pocono Mountains**, the destination development will begin construction in 2023 and is expected to be completed in mid-2024. **Margaritaville Hotel Pocono Mountains** will pay homage to the original **Pocono Manor** built in 1902, with gardens, restaurants, swimming pools, activities and live entertainment. The **LandShark Bar & Grill**, adjacent to the hotel, will offer views of the Poconos.

The resort village will offer multiple options for visitors. **Camp Margaritaville** will offer a range of luxury camping opportunities including RV and **Super Premium RV Suites and Cabins**. **RV Suites** will feature a golf cart, covered charging station, hot tub, hammock, fire pit, Adirondack chairs and a covered "living room." Camp Margaritaville will also have a retail store, Fins Up! Fitness Center, Cheeseburger in Paradise restaurant, **Fin City Game Room** and a **5 o'Clock Somewhere Swim-Up Bar**. Additionally, the resort village will have pickleball courts, a Parakeets Kids Club and a Barkaritaville Dog Park.

Inspired by the historic rustic cabins found in the area, **Tiny Homes Bungalows** will exude a cabin-like feel and feature stone fire pits and country patios. Townhomes, within walking distance of the hotel, will provide amenities for guests on an extended stay. Additionally, there will be approximately 1,000 "build for rent" cottages in the village.

Winter attractions including the **LandShark Tube Slide Runs** and **License to Chill Ice Pond**, with an ice bar and coffee and hot chocolate stand, will be ideal for families. A **Winter Market** will feature stands and shops with gifts, baked goods and crafts.



Instant Pot Creamy Tortellini with Ham and Peas

This Instant Pot Creamy Tortellini with Ham and Peas is an easy recipe you can make for your family in under 20 minutes. All you need is a few pantry ingredients and an Instant Pot or electric pressure cooker. This dish is creamy, cheesy, and has a flavor that will satisfy everyone's taste buds!

Ingredients

- 2 cups water
- 2 cups chicken stock
- 12 ounces dried tortellini
- 1 10 ounce bag frozen peas
- 1/2 cup diced ham
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 2 cloves minced garlic
- 1 teaspoon Italian seasoning
- 1 cup mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 cup grated parmesan cheese
- 1/4 cup whole milk or heavy cream

Instructions

1. In the inner pot, combine the water, chicken stock, tortellini, peas, diced ham, olive oil, garlic, and Italian seasoning. Stir and make sure that the pasta is completely submerged in the liquid. Pour more water over the pasta if you need more for the pasta to be submerged.
2. Secure the lid and pressure cook on high pressure for 5 minutes, then quick-release the pressure and remove the lid. Press cancel to stop additional cooking.
3. Stir in Mozzarella and parmesan cheeses while the pasta is still piping hot. Add milk or heavy cream and stir in last.
4. Serve while the pasta is still warm

You will love the way the mozzarella and parmesan cheeses melt into the perfect sauce for this pasta! You can use any kind of tortellini you like, but my kids prefer cheese tortellini. The total time for this meal is less than 20 minutes, very little prep time is needed. This is a true dump-and-go recipe that kids love! I highly recommend making this for dinner tonight! You can make a quick side salad for this easy one-pot meal!