



Destination Update as on 28 June 2022

BHUTAN

Breaking News!!

Bhutan Government has introduced a new Tourism Levy Bill 2022 that was passed in the National Assembly on 20th June. There is a substantial increase in the Sustainable Development Fee, from USD 65 to USD 200 per person per night with effect from June 20th 2022. Children under the age of 5 would not be required pay a royalty, while children between ages of 5 to 12 years would be charged fifty percent of the fee. The royalty would be charged over and above the cost of the tour (hotels, meals, transport, guides, entrance fees etc.) The hike, which has been put in place after almost two decades, will address the issue of raising carbon footprints and improve the quality of country's infrastructure and medical services. With the introduction of the new fee structure, Bhutan hopes to become a high value, low volume, and exclusive tourism destination for discerning travellers.

Official notification is still awaited on how this will eventually work, however, our understanding so far is that visas will be applied to and approved by the Department of Immigration, proof of hotel and guide confirmation maybe required. Tourists may book other services directly (hotels, guide, transport, meals etc) and are not required to book a packaged tour through a tour operator like in the past. The new Act allows for bookings to operate at old tariff if payment was made before June 20th. New bookings will have to pay the new Royalty of USD 200 per person per night. The Association of Bhutanese Tour Operators is going to approach The Tourism Council of Bhutan to clarify and ask to allow bookings that have made payments (full or partial). We are waiting to receive more details and clarity from Tourism Council of Bhutan on the way forward.

Bhutan is set to open for international travellers from 01st July 2022 onwards, with 1-day quarantine in a hotel facility. The full restoration of tourism without quarantine may happen by September 2022. We will update you on this as soon as we have further information on this.

Please [click here](#) for the detailed updates.

INDIA

India is fully open to tourists since March 2022 and we can slowly see travellers from across the world coming back. July and August is seeing the Europeans coming back for their summer holidays. Hotels are busy and bustling with travellers.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare last updated the [guidelines](#) for international travellers arriving in India on February 10, 2022. As per the latest guidelines, [countries](#) which exempt Indian citizens fully vaccinated with nationally recognised or WHO recognised vaccines are allowed for relaxation under certificate of completing 'full primary vaccination' schedule of COVID-19 vaccination. It is required of all international travellers to "self-monitor their health" for 14 days after their arrival. The wearing of masks and upholding social distance rules, however, will continue as before.

With additional routes being added by airlines like Indigo, SpiceJet, and Vistara to encourage regional connectivity, more cities are now accessible. As a result, domestic travel has recovered to 98 percent of its pre-COVID levels.

For latest updates on vaccination and number of cases, please [click here](#).

[click here](#) to view – The COVID 19 Tracker for India.

[click here](#) to view - The Monument Re-Opening Status across India.

SRI LANKA

Sri Lanka continues to struggle with its economic crises as its people continue to endure acute food, medicine, fuel and gas shortages, as well as soaring prices and power outages.

Despite these challenging times, Sri Lankans need Tourism as it is a major part of their economy.

All hotels and resorts are fully functional, and the tourism transportation sector does not have any fuel supply issues. Our office in Sri Lanka is geared to provide uninterrupted services to our incoming guests. With the recently appointed emergency cabinet and the required financial assistance from international donor organisations and friendly nations, we see light at the end of the tunnel.

For latest statistics on new reported cases and vaccination status, please [click here](#).

NEPAL

Nepal is now completely open to foreign travellers with no longer requiring COVID testing for those who are fully vaccinated.

A second international airport has opened in the Himalayan country, Gautam Buddha International Airport. This is half-an-hour's drive from Lumbini, the location of Lord Buddha's birth. The airport would considerably increase traffic within the country and make it simpler to access the pilgrimage site of Lumbini, without having to travel via Kathmandu.

For latest figures and detailed statistics, please [click here](#).