

Before You Fly - Important Information



Passports & Visas

It is your responsibility to ensure that your documents are in order when travelling to the U.S.A. Each member of your party (including children) must have their own **machine-readable** full & valid British passport. It must be valid for at least 90 days from your arrival date if you intend using the U.S. Visa Waiver Scheme. If your passport does not show that you are a British Citizen (for example British Subject), you will need a visa for entry into the U.S.A. Before making your reservation please see the 'Passport & Visas' section of our booking conditions. Should you need the U.K. Agency to issue new passports, we recommend you allow a minimum of 6 weeks for this process.

At the time of going to press the US Government has stated that visitors with valid machine-readable passports issued prior to October 26th 2005, may continue to travel without a visa under the Visa Waiver Program. Passports issued on or after October 26th 2005 require the digital photo. Visitors who are issued a passport after the October 26th 2005 deadline that does not meet these requirements will be required to obtain a visa to travel to the United States. Visitors can tell whether their passport meets these requirements if it contains a digital photograph that is printed on the page, not glued or laminated into the document. Passports issued on or after October 26th 2006 must include an integrated circuit chip capable of storing biometric information from the data page, a digitized photograph & any other biometric information that may become standard in travel documents. NOTE: This requirement will only apply to new passports issued after the dates above and will only apply to current passports with expiry dates after that date, when they are ready for renewal.

The UK Passport Service suggests that 'if you are 16 or over and haven't yet got a passport, their recommendation is that you should apply for one at least six weeks before your holiday. The UK passport service has to confirm your identity before issuing your first passport and from October 2006 will ask you to attend an interview in order to do this.'

For up-to-date information, please contact the British Passport Office on 0870 521 0410 or www.ukpa.gov.uk or the US Embassy on 09042 450 100 or www.usembassy.org.uk

ESTA & APIS - important NEW information

All visitors arriving on or after 12th January 2009 (regardless of when airline tickets were booked or purchased) **MUST** supply certain information online through the Electronic System for Travel Authorisation (ESTA) if they wish to enter the USA using the current Visa Waiver Program (the alternative is to obtain a Visa from the US Embassy). ESTA is operated free of charge by the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and a link to the ESAT website can be found on www.usairtours.co.uk

One benefit of ESTA is that you will no longer have to complete the current I-94 form every time you enter the US. We strongly recommend that you complete the online ESTA process as soon as you have booked (and at least minimum of 72 hours before departure) because in the unlikely event that you do not receive an ESTA approval for travel, you will need to apply directly to the US Embassy for a Visa.

In addition, The United States Customs and Border Protection require all airlines collect and transmit certain passenger information prior to departure, using their Advanced Passenger Information Systems (APIS). The information required includes your country of residence, the full address (including the zip/postal code) for your first night's accommodation in the US. Please ensure that you enter this information via your airlines website before leaving for the airport to ensure that you do not encounter any unnecessary delays.

Travel Insurance

Your holiday price does not include travel insurance and it is vital that you purchase a policy that has sufficient cover for both medical expenses and costs relating to bad weather. Travel insurance provided by most credit card companies does NOT offer sufficient cover. USAirtours travel insurance policy is specifically designed for travel to the U.S.A. and in particular covers the matters relating to interruption or cancellation caused by bad weather (hurricanes etc). Alternative insurance policies may not offer sufficient cover in this area. If you travel abroad regularly, consider saving money with an annual policy.

Expectant Mothers

Travellers who are more than 26 weeks pregnant on the date of their return flight should check with their doctor as to the advisability of flying, the airline carrier as to their eligibility to fly and their travel insurance provider to ensure that the policy is valid.

Check-In Times (Flights)

With the increase in pre-flight security screening you are advised to be at the check-in desk at least 2 hours before the scheduled departure time. As the scheduled departure may be brought forward for operational reasons you must re-check your departure time either by using the 'View your booking' facility on our website www.usairtours.co.uk or calling the airline directly, 24 hours before departure. Please also allow sufficient time to get from the check-in desk to your departure gate at least 30 minutes before your departure time.

Name Changes

Name changes (including minor spelling) are not permitted by the airlines and will usually incur a cancellation penalty.

In-Flight and Special Meal Requests

Airlines are constantly introducing new ways of ensuring that your journey with them is as comfortable as possible and consequently now offer more in-flight special request options than ever before. When dealing with your special requests, airlines prefer to speak to you directly in order to ensure that they are met correctly and efficiently. Simply call your airline direct but please give them as much notice as possible and a minimum of 72 hours. Please note that even when confirmed by airlines, specific seat requests can never be guaranteed.

Seat Pitch

The space that each airline allocates for passengers seated in the economy cabin is designed to accommodate the majority of individuals comfortably. However, any passenger over 1.83m (6 feet) tall or above average width may find standard seats restrictive and you may wish to call us to enquire about seats in a higher travelling class.

Children Under 18 yrs Travelling Alone

Please inform the airline directly, quoting your booking number, if you have made a booking for an unaccompanied child under the age of 18 yrs. They will arrange for a member of staff to meet children at the check-in desk, accompany them through passport control, keep an eye on them during the flight and ensure that they are not left unattended at their destination. To enable the process to run smoothly the airline will need to be supplied with answers to a number of questions and may levy a charge for this administrative service. Some hotels do not allow under 21s in a room by themselves – please check at the time of booking for details.



Reconfirming Flights

Unavoidable changes to scheduled flight times can occur, so we recommend that you reconfirm every flight with the relevant airline 72 hours prior to departure. If your itinerary consists of several different flights and you do not intend to use any one of them you must contact the airline in advance. Not using them in the correct sequence will result in the balance of the itinerary being cancelled.

Luggage

For each individual airline carrier baggage allowance policy when flying to the U.S. differs between 20kg-32kgs. Please refer to our website www.usairtours.co.uk/important_information or call the airline direct for specific details. Please be advised that these allowances are not guaranteed and should they vary, the airline has the right to charge a supplement at check-in for excess luggage.

Travel Documentation

Please ensure that when you receive your travel documentation, you check that you have all necessary tickets and ticket confirmation, car rental confirmation numbers, accommodation/tour vouchers, insurance certificate and itinerary, and take them with you when leaving home. If you believe them to be incorrect or you have queries, contact us immediately. It's a good idea to photocopy your passport and other documents, keeping them separate from the originals, in case of loss.

Check-In / Out Times (Accommodation)

These times vary but generally you will be expected to check-out between 10am and noon and check in no earlier than 3pm. You may be able to request a 'late check-out' with the hotel front desk on the day of departure but some hotels make a charge for this, which must be settled locally.

Triple & Quadruple Rooms

A third or fourth person in a room will either share existing beds or an extra bed (which might be a camp bed style) will be placed in the room. Charges for extra beds and baby cots (cribs) are payable locally, direct to the hotel.

Hotel Resort Fees

Many U.S. hotels are now introducing optional 'resort fees' to cover items such as newspaper

delivery, in-room safe, the use of a gym etc. As not everyone wants to use these facilities, resort fees are not included in our rates unless we stipulate otherwise. A number of hotels assume that all guests will be happy with the resort fees and will automatically add it to your reservation. Please discuss this with hotel staff at check-in to ensure that there are no unwanted additional charges on your bill when checking-out.

Brochure Accuracy & Hotel Reviews

Every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of description, information and prices. However it is possible that an advertised facility may be withdrawn or changed: whenever practical, we will advise of such changes. The hotel reviews in this brochure are subjective and all reasonable effort has been made whilst preparing material, however no warranty is given that the information displayed is complete or accurate. USAirtours' do not assume and hereby disclaim all liability to any person for any loss or damage caused by errors or omissions in the information displayed, whether they result from negligence, accident or any other cause.

Villa, Home and Apartment Rental

An increasing number of customers are now enjoying additional space by renting their own home, villa or apartment compared to a hotel room. It is important to note that these properties are privately owned and furnishings and decorations are replaced far less frequently than in a hotel. Consequently you would expect to find signs of reasonable wear and tear throughout the property, particularly in our 3-diamond 'value' homes. Maintenance is the responsibility of the property owner who has arranged this through a local company but at busy times they can take up to 24 hours to respond to a call-out. An inventory is taken and the property is cleaned after each guest has checked out.

Car Rental

Driving in America is both easy and convenient, however it is vital that you, your passengers and vehicle are adequately insured. You will need a full national driver's licence and be a minimum of 21 years of age before being allowed to rent a car. Rental companies surcharge under 25 year old drivers, payable locally in the U.S. You should be aware that frequently there are local taxes to pay in addition to any pre-payment made in the UK, however it is now possible to pre-pay almost everything before you go, so please check your

arrangements (ensure you read your rental agreement carefully). When collecting your vehicle, please ensure that additional items are fully understood and agreed before initialling and signing the rental agreement and avoid additional rental charges by returning the car by the specified time and date.

24 hr Customer Care Line

Should you have any problems whilst you are away, your first actions must be to take up the matter with the on site or local office. The phone number will be either on your voucher or within your ticket wallet. If you are unable to resolve this matter then please call our Freephone number 1 866 359 3412 that will be answered by our UK office during normal office hours. At other times you should leave details of the problem and a contact number on our answer phone for a response on the next business day.

Credit Cards / Sales Tax

Credit cards are widely accepted throughout the U.S.A. although we have found that establishments accepting American Express Cards are more limited. Dollars can be obtained through cash point machines but there is often both a fixed and percentage charge for this.

Hazardous Sports

If you are going to take part in potentially hazardous activities such as skiing, canoeing and diving (sky or sea), follow all the relevant safety guidance and check that your medical insurance covers you fully in the event of an accident.

Care in the Water

Do not swim when warning flags show. Take care at all times. Never dive into water without checking that it's deep enough. An adult who can swim well should always supervise children. Young children should never be left unattended near any stretch of water – not even a paddling pool.

Bugs and Insects

Cleanliness and health is generally of a high standard throughout the U.S.A, however at certain times of the year, particularly in humid climates it is likely that you will see certain harmless insects inside your living accommodation. If you feel this is a problem for you, please inform the local site manager to address it for you.