

Carte Blanche

Important Information

1. General Information.

Credit Cards. Most credit cards are widely accepted around the world, but please note that fees charged for their use vary dramatically from country to country. Fees in excess of 10% are not uncommon and exchange rates can be poor. Please check before using your credit card. Services paid for by credit card will be subject to the applicable rate of exchange at the time the voucher is presented to the credit card company, and may differ from the rate prevailing on the date that the service was provided.

Currency & Exchange. Some countries have restrictions on the importation and exportation of local currency. Please check with the relevant Embassy or High Commission. Never exchange money on the black market. Certain local banks may levy an additional charge for services.

Children On Holiday. Offers are subject to availability of triple or quad rooms. Any charge for a baby cot in the room and food are paid by the guest direct to the hotel. International airline regulations allow only one infant per adult on flights. Some destinations, owing to their lack of special child or medical facilities are also not suitable for very young children but we would be happy to advise which hotels or resorts we think suit your requirements best.

Holiday Seasons. Most of the destinations we offer are available all year round. Some do have quieter 'off peak' periods when you can take advantage of un-crowded beaches and more personal attention from hotel staff at excellent prices. At this time it may be necessary for hotels to scale down the size of some of their facilities, such as restaurants, to match demand. Similarly, during peak periods hotels experience full occupancy which may result in a livelier atmosphere and slower service in busier facilities.

Representative Services. Please note we do not have representative services available and therefore you will not be met on arrival. Please ensure that you refer to your itinerary which will provide the appropriate contact details should you need assistance whilst on holiday.

Smoking. The majority of airlines have introduced a total smoking ban on most or all of their flights and many hotels also now have a non-smoking policy in hotel rooms and public areas. Please ask at the time of booking if this information is important to you.

Weather. World weather is becoming more erratic and unpredictable and we cannot be held responsible for disruption to your holiday due to bad or unusual weather conditions.

Building And Development Work. Many hotels and resorts are continuing to develop, sometimes rapidly and intensively and often with little or no advance warning. Whilst we have no control over such work, as a responsible tour operator, it is important to us that you are aware of any significant building/refurbishment work that may be going on during your stay. General refurbishment at hotels is necessary to maintain standards but if we are informed of such work, we will endeavour to notify you of any activity as soon as possible, however near to your departure this may be.

Excursions. Any excursions booked and paid for at your resort are operated by the local handling company and subject to their booking conditions/cancellation charges. We strongly advise our clients only to book excursions from reputable and licensed local tour operators. Others may not be able to offer the same level of safety and security, and are often not adequately insured, or licensed. It should also be noted that some types of travel insurance do not cover claims arising from excursions/tours purchased in resort (in particular cancellation of such tours/excursions and losses suffered as a result of partaking in hazardous activities for which an additional premium was not paid).

Health, Safety & Security Abroad. Whilst we only contract with reputable suppliers abroad, it is important to note that some countries and/or suppliers do not conform to British health and safety standards. The applicable safety standards and regulations which apply overseas are those of the country concerned and as a result, general standards of safety, hygiene, fire precautions etc. can be different to those in the UK and may often be lower.

Minimum/insufficient Numbers. Tours may be subject to minimum numbers, and may be cancelled in the event that these are not met. You will then have the choice of booking an alternative holiday with us, though if the alternative is at additional cost the difference will be payable by you, or have a refund of monies paid.

Such cancellations will be advised in writing a minimum of 8 weeks before departure.

Public And Religious Holidays. Please note that services may be curtailed or limited during public holidays, and during certain religious holidays. Please also note that such public or religious holidays can be called at very little or no prior notice.

Swimming. Swimming along many coasts can be dangerous due to strong undercurrents and other elements. Please seek the advice of the local representative before venturing into the sea and avoid swimming in deserted areas. Do not jump or dive into a swimming pool without first checking the depth markings and any diving restrictions.

Travel Advice. Before you travel, we recommend that you visit the FCO website at www.fco.gov.uk/knowbeforeyougo for up-to-date travel advice. FCO advice can also be found on BBC2 Ceefax page 470 onwards. Alternatively, telephone the advice unit on 0845 850 2829.

Health And Vaccinations. Please note that some countries require certificates for mandatory vaccinations. In addition, the World Health Organisation and UK authorities have their own recommendations. As a tour operator we are not qualified to provide recommendations on health or vaccinations beyond advising the mandatory requirements of the countries that you will be visiting. Therefore please contact your doctor or the Medical Advisory Service for Travellers Abroad (MASTA 09068 224 100 or www.masta.org) who provide a very detailed report on each country you may visit, but they do charge for this service. Please note that some vaccinations and prophylaxis courses must be started up to 6 weeks before travel, so familiarise yourselves well before departure with the precautions recommended by health authorities.

Insurance. It is a booking requirement that adequate travel insurance cover is obtained prior to booking. Please ensure that annual travel policies or credit card policies provide adequate cover for cancellation, missed departure and unused accommodation. You should ensure that activities considered hazardous (diving, rafting, trekking, skiing, horse-riding etc) and travel in light or single-engine aircraft are covered by your policy. Virtually all insurance policies will exclude any undisclosed pre-existing conditions, medical or otherwise, if in doubt always check with the insurance company prior to departure. We do not sell travel insurance, but on request we would be happy to provide contact details and leaflets for suitable companies that provide specialist single trip policies.

Visas And Passports. The visa information we provide is provided for British passport holders who are citizens and residents of the United Kingdom. Non-UK passport holders should consult the relevant Embassy, High Commission or Consulate for visa details. It is the responsibility of all passengers to ensure that they hold the correct and valid travel documents, including visas for all countries to be visited. Failure to do so may result in your intended travel being curtailed or terminated, and we will not accept liability for your loss in such circumstances. If you are travelling to more than one country on your holiday you may be required to hold multiple entry visas. The time taken to process a visa varies tremendously, however, you should allow at least four weeks by post and two weeks if using a visa service. Personal callers normally obtain their visas on a 'next-working-day' basis, however, during busy periods such as Christmas, Easter and school holidays, considerable delays may occur in processing your visa.

Please note that 'false declarations' on your visa form may result in you being denied entry to the country you intend visiting.

All UK passport holders travelling to any country we feature as part of our arrangements require a 10-year passport, valid for at least 6 months on the date of your intended return to the United Kingdom.

All passengers must carry their own travel documentation. All children travelling must be in possession of their own passport. Generally, three passport-sized photographs are required.

Please note that the passport/visa requirements are for guidance only and are subject to change.

Please also check that your passport contains sufficient blank pages to allow for immigration stamps. If you are going on your honeymoon, we suggest you carry your Marriage Certificate. This is essential if the name on the passport does not correspond with your new name on your ticket.

2. About Your Flights.

Flight Seats. We strongly recommend (particularly if you are flying economy class), that you check in early if you have particular seat requests. We have no control over the allocation of seats by the airline and even if a request has been made with the airline to pre-book seats, no guarantee can be made that they will still be available on departure.

Disabled and less mobile passengers and children, for safety reasons, will not be allocated emergency exit seats.

Most airlines now operate 'non-smoking' flights.

Check In. Check-in times for your international and internal flights will be clearly outlined in your final itinerary. It is important you adhere to these times, since, should you fail to check in on time, despite having a confirmed seat, all airlines reserve the right to release your seat to other passengers.

Please note that check-in desks close well before the scheduled departure time for your flight, and the carrier reserves the right to deny boarding to passengers not checking-in by the time specified. If you fail to check-in on time and miss your flight, we have no liability to you.

Direct Flights. The flight routings used in connection with our holidays may be used on special fares which do not necessarily take the most direct route. Some itineraries require a change of aircraft en route. A flight that is described as direct is one where there is no need to change aircraft during the journey. However stops may be made en route for re-fuelling or to let passengers on and/ or off. Details of any stops will be given on your itinerary wherever possible.

'No Frills' Carriers. We provide a choice of scheduled and 'no frills' carriers to take advantage of the flexibility and pricing available. You should note that 'no frills' flights do not include in flight meals. Any changes to destination / routing will be subject to availability and may incur charges of up to the full cost of the flight.

Behaviour. The Captain in command of your aircraft by law retains all rights pertaining to the carriage of passengers, cargo, flight routing, etc. Should the Captain of the aircraft refuse to carry you, or your baggage, we will not be liable for any inconvenience suffered, costs incurred or loss of enjoyment but would assist wherever possible in such circumstances.

Airlines. The airlines used as part of your arrangements will be stated on your quotation. We reserve the right to substitute alternative airlines. Many airlines featured by us operate a code-share system, whereby partner airlines may operate flights on the stated airlines behalf.

Flight Delays. Whilst these are regrettable, delays unfortunately may occur through technical problems, inclement weather or air-traffic control delays. Where long flight delays result in lost holiday time, no refunds are given by hotels/suppliers for unused accommodation/ services, as these are held for delayed arrivals. If your flight is cancelled, delayed or boarding is denied by the airline, you must claim compensation under the Denied Boarding Regulations 2004 from the airline itself. Any payments received constitute your only rights of compensation arising from the cancellation, delay or denied boarding. Consequently we are not liable for any inconvenience suffered, costs incurred or loss of enjoyment suffered as a result of any such delay. We will, however, endeavour to assist in these circumstances.

During any flight delay, the airline concerned may, at their entire discretion, be able to provide refreshments and other services and, in extreme conditions, overnight hotel accommodation. Recompense for such delays may be claimed through certain types of holiday insurance (please check to make sure your holiday insurance policy covers such losses).

Airport Taxes. UK Air Passenger Duty and all UK Airport departure taxes are included in your holiday price which will be detailed on your quotation. Foreign departure/airport taxes vary and may be payable locally, in cash, for each departure. If you are travelling to more than one destination on your holiday, you may be required to pay a departure tax at each point. Foreign currency is often not accepted so it's a good idea to put the required amount of money away at the beginning of your holiday to ensure that you are not caught out on departure and find yourself having to go and change money unnecessarily.

Baggage And Luggage Allowance. Your personal effects and baggage are the responsibility of the airline from check-in to baggage recovery at your destination airport. In accordance with the International Conventions that apply to the air travel industry.

Compensation for delay, loss of, or damage to baggage, from the airline (on international, or on domestic sectors ticketed as part of an international journey), is limited. However, if you have travel insurance, the actual value of any loss (subject to any deductibles, limitations or exclusions in the policy) is normally payable. In order to obtain any compensation, you must complete a 'Property Irregularity Report' before you leave the airport, with a representative of the airline within the time limits specified on your air ticket.

The free luggage allowance system is complex and varies from airline to airline, country to country and aircraft to aircraft. Specific baggage allowances will be shown on your air tickets. Please note that infants do not get a baggage allowance. Excess baggage is carried at the airline's discretion and may incur charges, payable directly to the airline.

For economy-class passengers, the majority of airlines have a strict limit of 20kg baggage allowance, plus 3kg for hand luggage.

Please note that on some internal flights (for example in relation to safaris), using light aircraft, a strict luggage restriction of 10-15kg per person plus hand luggage is imposed and that large rigid suitcases cannot be accommodated. In such cases excess baggage will need to be stored.

Tickets & Timings. You will be sent your tickets and other documentation approximately two weeks prior to departure. Check all details including names and initials carefully.

Please note that flight timings may have been adjusted since your confirmation invoice was issued.

Your itinerary will be sent with your tickets. Once issued, tickets are non-transferable, non-changeable and non-refundable. Depending upon the airline, routing and party make up you will be issued either a machine readable ATB card ticket or a 'paperless' e-ticket. E-tickets are an electronic ticketing solution and do not comprise any paper ticket coupons.

Pregnancy. Most airlines will refuse permission for women to fly who will be 28 or more weeks pregnant on the date of return travel. Failure to comply with airline regulations may result in cancellation and denial of boarding, and we cannot be held liable for any such occurrence.

Airline Re confirmation. It is an IATA (International Air Transport Association) requirement that all flights be re-confirmed at least 72 hours before departure. Although many international airlines, including British Airways waive this requirement, we recommend that for peace of mind you personally check that all your flights have been re confirmed. Please be particularly aware of this issue when travelling on smaller regional airlines and during peak season.

If for whatever reason you do not use your outbound flight, the in bound sector will automatically be cancelled. This process is automated and standard airline procedure. If you need your return flight to be re-protected please contact the airline staff.

3. About Your Accommodation.

Rooms. Unless otherwise stated on your quotation, accommodation is in standard twin/ double rooms, though double beds cannot be guaranteed.

Specific room requirements cannot be guaranteed. Rooms are generally available between noon and 3pm, and are to be vacated between 10am and noon, irrespective of your flight arrival or departure times.

The standard and location of single rooms is not always as good as twin/double rooms (even if a twin/double room is booked for sole occupancy). A single supplement is payable whether the room allocated is a single or a twin room.

Superior and deluxe rooms may have the same facilities and be the same size, it may only be the view or position of the room that is different.

Accommodation In The Tropics. In many hotels, especially beach resorts, insects in rooms are unfortunately inevitable. Presence of insects should not be taken as a sign that rooms are dirty. They are simply a fact of life in these destinations.

Views from some hotel rooms may be partly obscured by palm trees and other vegetation that can grow very quickly in tropical climates.

Hotel Gradings. Standards can vary between hotels of the same official classification in different countries, and even in the same country. It is therefore important to carefully read the individual hotel descriptions.

All Inclusive. All Inclusive does not necessarily mean that unlimited food and beverages are available 24-hours a day. Individual hotels operate different policies and full details will be provided locally.

Hotels For Couples. Some hotels specified 'for couples' cater for mixed sex couples only. Hotels often place restrictions on restaurants and meal arrangements.

Hotel Facilities. Please note that charges may be made for the use of hotel facilities such as golf, tennis, watersports, spa, children's clubs, etc. Please check locally.

Meals. Meals if included, are based on table d'hôte menus, or a meal voucher system unless specified otherwise in your quotation. Holidays which include main meals generally commence with dinner on the day of arrival at your hotel and terminate with breakfast (on half board) or lunch (on full board or All-Inclusive) on the day of departure.

No refunds on meals not taken can be given.

Special diets of any kind (including vegetarian) can seldom be catered for adequately within the constraints of a table d'hôte menu and cannot be guaranteed. If you have special dietary requirements, we would therefore recommend that you choose a holiday where no meals (or only breakfast) are included and instead use the à la carte menu available locally.

Electricity And Water Supplies. At times, the demands of tourists on the local supplies of electricity and water may exceed the supply, with resultant power cuts, water shortages and/or problems with plumbing and drainage.

Please note that occasionally these problems may be for extended periods and may be distributed unevenly throughout the hotel/resort. Power and water rationing imposed by the local authorities may also take place.

Whilst electrical wiring standards do always meet local safety standards, on occasion they may be lower than those applicable in the UK.

Tented accommodation on safari may utilise gas lighting and have basic bathrooms.

4. Privacy Statement.

For the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998, we Carte Blanche Ltd are a data controller. In order to process your booking, we need to collect certain personal details from you. These details will include, where applicable, the names and contact details of party members, credit /debit card or other payment details and special requirements such as those relating to any disability or medical condition which may affect the chosen holiday arrangements and any dietary restrictions which may disclose your religious beliefs. If we need any other personal details, we will tell you before we obtain them from you.

We need to pass on your personal details to the companies and organisations who need to know them so that your holiday can be provided (for example your airline, hotel, other supplier, credit/debit card company or bank). Such companies and organisations may be outside the European Union, Norway, Iceland or Liechtenstein if your holiday is to take place or to involve suppliers outside these countries.

We would also like to store and use your personal details for future marketing purposes (for example, sending you a brochure or details of a promotion including by email). All details you give us in connection with your booking (including those relating to any disability or medical condition or your religious beliefs) will be kept but we will use only names and contact details for marketing purposes (unless you have indicated you would / would not be happy for us to do so (as applicable).

We may need to disclose our customer database, including any personal data relating to you contained therein, to a third party who acquires or attempts to acquire all or substantially all of the assets or stocks in our company or our website service whether by merger, acquisition, reorganisation or otherwise.

If you do not want us to do any or all of these things, please let us know as soon as possible. We are entitled to assume you do not object to our doing any of the things mentioned in this statement unless you tell us otherwise in writing.

Except where expressly permitted by the Data Protection Act, we will only deal with the personal details you give us as set out above unless you agree otherwise. We have appropriate security measures in place to protect this information.

You are generally entitled to ask us (by letter or e-mail) what details of yours are being held or processed, for what purpose and to whom they may be or have been disclosed. We will charge a fee to respond to such a request. We promise to respond to your request within 40 days of receiving your written request and fee. In certain limited circumstances we are entitled to refuse your request.

If you believe that any of your personal details which we are processing are inaccurate or incorrect please contact us immediately.

As our privacy statement may change due to developments in the law, we would encourage you to reread our privacy statement from time to time so that you are aware of any changes in how we gather and use personal information.

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