

# GOLDEN EAGLE TRAVEL & TOURS

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Dear 2021 Israel Pilgrims,

As we have said to many through the years, there is a process to this pilgrimage thing that is much greater than just getting to the airport for a departure. You are already in it, perhaps have been for years as God has prepared you to visit His Holy Land.

We have never needed to cancel a tour to Israel- until this year. Always before it was concerns about events in the Middle East that raised cancellation questions, not a plague!

We know you are listening to any news about travel with heightened awareness. You have questions & concerns- Will the plans to travel to Israel in January 2021 actually happen?

Know we are committed to these tours, although we anticipate we may have fewer pilgrims than in recent years. We plan to be in Israel with as many of you as want to join us.

Below are the answers to what we anticipate to be your main questions regarding the progression towards the final decision to travel or cancel.

**What happens if you sign up & then the tour is cancelled?** It is unfortunately not an easy thing to fully answer, what the process would be, as it is greatly affected by the timing of a decision to cancel a tour.

The best case we can present is how we handled the cancellation of the June 2020 VISION tour. In that case we cancelled the tour about 2 months before we would have departed, before ticketing. All client payments were still in hand because we had delayed ticketing. The airlines allowed group ticket deposits to be refunded or forwarded to later tours. We refunded all passenger payments except the cost of travel insurance policies & credit card fees if passenger had chosen that form of payment. (Note: A travel coverage policy is able to be transferred to any other trip at a later date within about a year. It does not have to be an Israel tour or even purchased through GETT.) Incidentally, quite a few did forward their payments to the 2021 tours.

**What if a ticket (domestic or international) is purchased by a passenger, not GETT?** Any air tickets individually purchased by land only tour members or for the domestic portion had to be handled by the tour member directly with the airlines or agent from whom they purchased the tickets. We could not help there.

**What would cause a cancellation before ticketing?** In general, the one certain reason for tour cancellation would be if the US State Department forbids US citizens to travel to Israel or Israel is not permitting US citizens to enter without being quarantined. If that is the case about 6-8 weeks before departure, the tour would be cancelled with the same full refunds other than insurance policies & credit card fees, as we did for the June 2020 tour.

**What if Israel is open & then, after ticketing, something changes preventing travel?** The land portion would not be a problem, but air tickets are subject to the airline rules. We have seen various options offered to individual passengers who had to cancel tickets in the last few months, so we cannot give a firm answer. As tickets will be issued at least 5 weeks before departure, airline ticket rules will apply. That could be the greater challenge, especially if the flights are still operating. Hopefully the airlines would provide a full refund, but worst case would be the option to use the ticket value for travel on the same airline within a year from the date of issue less the

penalty. (The airlines have waived the penalty for most tickets cancelled due to COVID-19.) The rules could vary depending on the airline & it is always a case by case consideration, as it has been in recent months. If it is a case where we are not permitted to travel to Israel, we would like to assume a full refund would be their only consideration. However, it will be up to the airlines & we cannot guarantee that. Your refund would then be what you paid less the insurance cost, any credit card fee & the cost of the airfare which would retain its value for future use.

**So how does the trip cancellation portion of the group travel coverage affect this question, COVID-19?** The insurance company has confirmed that although COVID-19 is exempted as a covered reason for a group cancellation, you are still covered if you cannot travel because you have contracted COVID-19 under the medical exclusion. It would also apply if a family member was seriously ill with COVID-19 causing you to cancel your travel plans.

At this time, the insurance company has an exclusion in the case of the group cancelling due to COVID-19 travel restrictions because it is currently affecting travel & is considered a known risk. However, that is why we would be making any decisions about cancellation so that we are managing the financial risks.

**What if the group is traveling but you as an individual do not want to go because of concerns?** In that case, the tour penalties as stated in the Terms & Conditions will apply. You would only be covered if you have purchased trip cancellation coverage & have a reason to cancel that is covered by the group policy. Fear of a condition or situation is not a covered reason for cancellation.

**So why buy trip cancellation coverage?** You buy trip cancellation coverage to protect yourself in the event that normal life gets in the way of being able to travel, such as a medical reason, jury duty, any of the other covered reasons in the policy. We have had tour members make claims for last minute medical needs of family members, Jersey snow storm delays, jury duty, airline mechanical delays, etc., etc., etc... As is noted in the tour Terms & Conditions, if you cancel without coverage & the tour travels, the penalties will apply no matter how unfortunate your situation may be. That is why we offer the option to purchase the trip cancellation coverage.

We know you may have other questions. We are happy to discuss this or any other concern. Please call.

At this time, we pray for the end of this worldwide pandemic. We pray together as you each consider traveling to Israel with us.

May we add:

“Blessed are those whose strength is in You, who have set their hearts on pilgrimage.”  
Psalms 84:5 NIV

Now to get our feet there.

Shalom,

Bonnie & Tricia

Bonnie Lovett Lane, CTC, MCC President

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