
SHORT NEWS

As per 11 March 2020

Coronavirus: Special cancellation regulations in travel law

In principle, the traveller can only cancel the trip free of charge if exceptional, unavoidable circumstances at the destination or in its immediate vicinity significantly affect the performance of the trip. Please find some information on this at the end of this document. In the following we have prepared an overview of the special cancellation regulations undertaken by tour operators and shipowning companies as well as airlines to make up for the current decline in bookings in the tourism sector. As soon as we have new information regarding these special cancellation regulations we will respectively update this overview.

Special cancellation regulations

1. Tour Operators

Alltours: Alltours offers free cancellations and rebookings for all new bookings in the travel period between 15 March and 31 October 2020 up until 14 days before departure. This regulation applies for all bookings made until 30 April 2020 and only for Alltours air travels. Bookings with Alltours-X and Byebye as well as bookings of scheduled flights are excluded hereby.

Anex Tour, Bucher Reisen, Öger Tours: They offer free rebookings and cancellations for all new bookings up until 18 April 2020. Any booking may be cancelled free of charge up until 14 days before departure until 30 April 2020 at the latest. Dynamic products are excluded from this regulation.

Attika Reisen: The operator offers free cancellations until 15 April 2020 for all new bookings made until 31 March 2020 (package tours and individual services like "hotel only") with a departure until 31 October 2020. In case of near-term departure, cancellations must to be received by the operator specialising in Greece and Cyprus two

weeks before departure at the latest. However, the regulations does not apply for "PACK" tours (dynamic packaging) as well as travels with scheduled flights and group travels.

Bentour: The Swiss operator offers its customers early bird booking conditions without risk until the end of March 2020, i.e. customers are granted a free cancellation option for new bookings during this period. However, bookings have to meet some conditions: The offer is only applicable for package tours and the travel date has to lie between 1 April and 31 October 2020. Bookings via BENX as well as bookings with dynamically packaged flights are excluded. Any booking meeting the conditions may be cancelled free of charge until 30 April 2020, however only 14 days before departure at the latest. After cancellation in the reservation system, the confirmation of cancellations has to be sent to storno@bentour.ch.

Berge & Meer: The operator offers free cancellations and rebookings for all travels with self-arranged journey booked until 31 March 2020 until 14 days before departure. This does not apply for city trips including visits to a musical. For air travels and round trips, free cancellations and rebookings are available until 30 days before departure for all travels commencing until 31 August 2020. Until 15 June 2020, free cancellation and rebooking is available for all arrivals between 01 September 2020 and 31 May 2021. The "Berge & Meer-Hotelschätze" in the Mediterranean region may be cancelled or rebooked free of charge until 14 days before departure. Cruises, active & boat trips as well as group travels are excluded from this regulation.

Chamäleon: From now on the operator offers the right to free rebookings for all new bookings until 30 April 2020 until two months before departure. Another regulation: With respect to all existing bookings to China and Iran, the operator grants a right to free rebooking – independent of the travel date.

DER Touristik: DER Touristik with its brands DERTOUR, ITS, Jahn Reisen, Meiers Weltreisen, and ADAC Reisen offers free cancellation and rebooking for all new bookings until 30 April 2020 for the travel period until 31 October 2020. The cancellation or rebooking has to be made 14 days before departure at the latest.

Eberhardt Travel: For all new bookings with Eberhardt-Busreisen with departure until 31 May 2020 the operator offers a non-binding reservation until the 22nd calendar day before departure; for all new bookings with Eberhardt-Busreisen

with departure as of 1 June 2020 the operator offers a non-binding reservation until 30 April 2020.

Emirates Holidays: The operator of Emirates Airline offers free rebooking for all travels booked with departure until 30 June 2020 independent of the holiday destination until 30 days before departure. Respective travellers may change travel destination and period at their discretion. Above that, the operator at the moment calculates with travel price advances in the amount of EUR 100 per person for travels with Emirates flights in the Economy Class. In case of flights in the Business Class an amount of EUR 500 per person is payable in advance.

ETI: The operator has extended optional bookings until 31 March 2020. This means that bookings can be reserved optionally for a period of seven days. The possibility for a one time extension for three days via the systems remains in force. Thus, there is a total of ten days for a free option. As before, this is applicable to all bookings until 21 days before departure.

Fit Reisen: Initial bookings (hotel only) until 31 March 2020 for the travel period until 30 September 2020 may be postponed until 14 days before departure free of charge. At the moment, this regulation is effective for the tour operator brands Fit Reisen, SpaDreams, Aytour, Lotus Travel, and Yoga Escapes. In case of package tours including flights, the hotel may be rebooked free of charge.

FTI Group: With FTI Group the regulation is effective for new bookings until 18 April 2020 and the travel period until including 31 October 2020. Any booking may be cancelled free of charge up until 14 days before departure until 30 April 2020 at the latest. Managing Director Ralph Schiller says: "We like to support our sales partners in the current situation and in this way help guests make their travel decisions. The regulation is applicable for journeys with the tour operator brands FTI Touristik, 5vorFlug, and BigXtra. This excludes Datamixx travels, package tours combined with scheduled or dynamic flights, hotel bookings via bed banks as well as bookings with admission tickets. The right to cancellation up until 14 days before departure is generally obligatory with many hotels from the sectors city trips and self-arranged journey with FTI.

Gebeco: Independent of the travel destination, Gebeco suspends the current cancellation terms for all new bookings made between 5 March and 30 April 2020 with departure in the year 2020 up until 60 days before departure. This means, that custom-

ers are able to cancel or rebook their trip up until 60 days before departure. The loosened cancellation and rebooking terms are applicable to all Gebeco travels with the exception of adventure cruises and flight subject to special conditions.

Hauser Exkursionen: Customer are entitled to cancel or rebook their journeys free of charge up until 65 days before departure. This shall be effective worldwide as of now for all new bookings for the year 2020. Any further specifying of reasons by the customers is expressly not required.

Lernidee Erlebnisreisen: For new bookings between 5 March and 30 April 2020 Lernidee Erlebnisreisen offers the right to free cancellation for all travels with departure until 31 October 2020 up until two months before departure. This applies to all catalogue journeys in the sectors train, boat and small group travels with the exception of trips by the brands Belvelo and Slow Down Travel. For already made bookings to China and Italy, the cancellation fees are limited to 15 percent until 30 April 2020 for the moment and Lernidee offers free rebooking to an equivalent Lernidee trip with departure until 31 March 2021. For all other destinations the regular cancellations fees are applicable for the moment; there will be no travels to Iran, South Korea, and Japan until the end of April.

Olimar: The regular GTCs are further applicable for all new and existing bookings. At the moment, Italy is an exception: Olimar will actively approach guests / travel agents (with departure until 3 April) and then either postpone / rebook such trips or withdraw from the agreement – mainly at the customer's discretion. The Portugal specialist points out that loosened cancellation terms could lead to more insurances and cancellations as necessary if free of charge. In particular with Olimar, more than 50 percent of all bookings are not package tours but individual, flexible and elaborately composed modular travels. Such bookings (and also options) are regularly made via telephone after consultation with the travel agents and customers. Of course, the operator also offers typical package tours of one or two weeks. However, these package tours are also booked with various scheduled flights and up to date flights where such cancellation options are unrealistic.

Rhomberg: The Austrian operator offers the possibility to cancel trips to Corsica until 14 days before departure free of charge. This is applicable for package tours to Corsica (in selected holiday homes) and Rhomberg charter flights from Memmingen, Salzburg, Vienna, Zurich and Bern.

Schauinsland-Reisen: The operator offers free cancellations for all package tours and "hotel only" bookings with departure until 31 October 2020 booked between now and 31 March 2020 – such cancellations are possible until 15 April 2020 and up until 14 days before departure. The special regulations are not applicable for dynamic products by Schauinsland and bookings including schedule flights. In case of free cancellations there is no commission entitlement states the operator.

Studiosus: After "careful consideration" the operator has decided to cancel all travel to Israel and the Mideast with stays in Israel with departure until including 15 April 2020. "Irrespective of the short-term entry ban, all our Israel guests this year will be entitled to rebook free of charge up to four weeks before departure," says Studiosus manager Guido Wiegand. Still, there is no right of free rebooking or cancellation for trips to Italy. For the next trip to Italy on 25 April 2020, it will be verified by 25 March 2020 whether the trip can be carried out. Studiosus offers guests from South Korea with departures between the beginning of May and the end of June the right to rebook or cancel free of charge. The same applies to departures to China until 31 May 2020. In Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan as well as in Iran, the situation is being closely monitored and a decision on measures will be taken at least one or two months in advance.

TUI Deutschland: Should holiday-makers not wish to travel due to the coronavirus, they can rebook or cancel their booking with TUI Deutschland free of charge up to 14 days before departure by 30 April 2020. This applies to all new bookings up to and including 18 April 2020, the operator has announced.

Wikinger Reisen: The operator has generally announced that it will react "fairly" to cancellation requests. "In our opinion, special arrangements of two months or 65 days have no real benefit", says Daniel Kraus, managing partner of the tour operator. Therefore, despite the coronavirus, the usual cancellation policy is being deliberately adhered to.

2. Airlines

Air Baltic: The Latvian airline offers passengers a free change of travel date for all new bookings made between 10 and 31 March 2020. Only one change is permitted. The regulation applies to flights within the calendar year. In addition, Air Baltic offers the possibility to change the travel date until 31 December free of charge for all book-

ings made up to and including 9 March 2020 with travel dates up to 31 March 2020. The change must be made before the original departure date. If the booked fare class is no longer available, the fare difference must be paid.

Air France and KLM: Both airlines grant a free rebooking option for all tickets with departure by 31 May 2020 that are issued or have already been issued by 31 March 2020. Rebooking and issuing of new tickets must be made prior to 31 May 2020. Rebooking to a higher booking class may also incur additional costs. Customers wishing to take a new flight after 31 May 2020 will receive a voucher valid for one year and which can be redeemed on Air France and KLM flights. This voucher is non-refundable according to the airline group.

American Airlines: The airline will not charge any fees for changes to flight bookings for all routes from now until Monday, 16 March 2020, if the customer wishes to rebook. American Airlines allows rebooking to any other date within the next twelve months if requested.

Aegean: All Aegean passengers who already have a ticket for any destination with a departure date up to 30 April 2020 can rebook their flight to a later date - up to 20 October 2020 - according to the airline's offer. The rebooking is possible without additional rebooking fees, Aegean emphasizes in a press release. However, Aegean intends to maintain the flight schedule itself - including flights to and from Italy - for the time being.

Air Europa: Passengers can obtain discounts of up to 40 percent on routes throughout the route network and rebook free of charge. The fare offers are valid for tickets purchased by 16 March 2020 to any Spanish, European or international destination. The flexible rebooking conditions will apply to all tickets until the end of the month, allowing passengers to make any changes to dates free of charge.

British Airways: BA will waive the usual rebooking fees for new bookings made by 16 March 2020 and has adjusted its fare policy accordingly.

Condor: Condor is the first German airline to approach customers and offer them the option of rebooking free of charge for new bookings in times of corona. For new bookings from 6 March 2020 and for the time being until 20 March 2020, the airline allows

rebookings on all flights to all destinations and in all classes without the rebooking fee that would otherwise be due. Exceptions are flights at the lowest fare Economy Light.

El Al Israel Airlines: Passengers who have booked a ticket with the Israeli airline with a departure date up to 30 April 2020 can rebook to flights until 28 February 2021 free of charge. Such rebooking must be made, however, prior to the original departure date. At the same time, El Al is also rescheduling the planned maiden flight on the new Duesseldorf route to 3 July 2020. The airline will now be flying to Tokyo for the first time on 29 August 2020.

Emirates: Until recently, Emirates guests could change their travel dates for bookings made until 31 March 2020 without additional rebooking fees. Now the rule applies to all bookings made before 31 March 2020.

Etihad: grants a free change for all flights booked by 7 April 2020. This applies to travel from 22 March 2020 onwards. The rule applies to all fares.

Lufthansa: LH Group is granting a one-off free rebooking option to all passengers who have been booked on flights not cancelled between 5 March 2020 and 30 April 2020 up to 5 March 2020 and to all new bookings up to 31 March 2020. The regulation also applies to all new bookings until 31 March 2020 with departures between 6 March 2020 and 25 March 2021. The fair dealing regulation applies to world-wide destinations and to all airlines in the Group: Austrian Airlines, Lufthansa, Swiss, Brussels and Eurowings as well as Edelweiss, Germanwings and Air Dolomiti. If passengers choose a new booking class when rebooking, a surcharge may have to be paid. The new travel date must be scheduled before 31 December 2020.

KLM: For all bookings made by 31 March 2020 with departures by 31 May 2020, KLM currently allows rebookings free of charge. However, the airline does point out that a charge for a fare difference may be incurred when rebooking. According to KLM, passengers who wish to fly after 31 May 2020 will receive a voucher that may be redeemed with KLM, Air France or Delta Air Lines.

Sun Express: The holiday airline will grant new rebooking regulations for new bookings until 30 April 2020 for flights until 30 June 2020 inclusive. According to the airline, these flights can be rebooked once free of charge. The rebooking must be made at least seven days before the original departure. According to the current status, the last time a rebooking is possible free of charge is on 31 May 2020.

3. Shipping Companies

Carnival Cruise Line: Passengers who maintain their reservations for departures until 31 May 2020 will receive the following on-board credits: USD 100 per cabin for cruises of three and four nights, USD 150 per cabin for cruises of five nights, USD 200 per cabin for cruises of six nights and longer. For guests booked on Carnival Radiance's European cruises from 29 April 2020 onwards, the shipping company is planning changes to the itinerary and a special compensation offer, which will be announced in the next few days. Passengers who have booked trips before 6 March 2020 with departures until 31 May 2020 and wish to change their holiday plans may cancel their booking and will receive a Future Cruise Credit (FCC) equal to the non-refundable cancellation fee. For guests with departures up to 31 March 2020 this is possible up to 3 days before departure, for departures between 1 April and 31 May 2020 this is possible until 31 March 2020 at the latest. The FCC can be used to book a new cruise with departure no later than 31 March 2021.

Costa: A new Costa cancellation policy for German customers will apply to all new bookings from 5 March to 30 April 2020. They can be cancelled free of charge up to one day before departure, regardless of the price class.

MSC: Guests who have booked a Mediterranean cruise in March 2020 can rebook to a date up to February 2021 in the same destination area without any fees. Guests who have already booked a Mediterranean or Northern Europe cruise in April, May or June 2020 are only required to pay the deposit until 21 days prior to departure. For new bookings of Northern Europe and Mediterranean cruises departing before 30 June 2020, a reduced deposit of EUR 50 per person applies until further notice. In the event of cancellation up to 21 days prior to departure, only this deposit will be charged.

Norwegian Cruise Line: Cruises can now be rebooked or cancelled free of charge up to 48 hours before departure. This regulation is initially valid for cruises until

30 September 2020. In the event of cancellation, all payments already made will be refunded in the form of a credit note which can be redeemed for future cruises until 31 December 2022. The offer is valid from 10 March 2020 for all new bookings as well as reservations and bookings already made.

Oceania Cruises: Effective immediately, the following applies to all existing and new bookings made by 30 April for cruises with departures from 10 March to 30 September 2020: guests can cancel free of charge up to 48 hours before departure and will receive a credit of 100 percent of the cruise price paid. In addition, customers and sales partners can take advantage of all other price and service benefits that Oceania publishes up to the day of departure.

Princess Cruises: The US shipping company has adjusted the cancellation conditions for cruises with departure by 30 June 2020. For additional services such as flights, hotel accommodation, etc., the previous regular conditions apply.

Departures until 3 April 2020 or earlier: For cancellations up to 72 hours prior to departure, guests will receive a Future Cruise Credit (FCC) for the amount of the cancellation fees for the next cruise with Princess Cruises for departures until 31 December 2021.

From 4 April to 31 May 2020: For cancellations received by 31 March, guests will receive a Future Cruise Credit (FCC) for the amount of the cancellation fees for the next cruise on Princess Cruises with departure by 31 December 2021.

From 1 June to 30 June 2020 the following applies: Cancellation free of charge is possible up to 61 days before departure. For Crown Princess' upcoming Mediterranean cruises, the company is working on route adjustments and will announce details shortly. All guests who embark on their cruise between 9 March and 31 May 2020 will receive up to USD 200 per cabin, depending on the duration of the cruise.

Royal Caribbean: The US shipping company allows guests of Royal Caribbean International, Celebrity Cruises and Azamara to cancel cruises up to 48 hours prior to departure. Guests will receive a credit for the full fare which can be redeemed on cruises in 2020 or 2021. The policy applies to both new and existing cruise bookings. The new regulation applies to all cruises with a departure date on or before 31 July 2020.

Sea Cloud Cruises: Cruises definitely booked for 2020 up to 31 May can be cancelled free of charge up to one month before the date of travel "if the virus still gives cause for concern".

Silversea: The luxury cruise line follows the initiative of the Royal Caribbean Group (see above) and offers guests travelling until 31 July 2020 a cancellation option with credit for a future cruise until two days before departure. Guests whose cruise departs between 31 July and 31 December 2020 will receive a refund if they cancel up to 30 days before departure. Passengers who have booked cruises between 1 June and 31 July 2020 can choose from several cancellation options.

4. Other

Aerticket: The airline ticket wholesaler Aerticket has reduced its service fees due to the corona crisis. Flight partners are also easing their rebooking regulations.

Holiday Extras: At the service provider, parking spaces (except best price rate) can be cancelled free of charge up to two days before arrival. Airport lounges can also be cancelled up to two 2 days before arrival. For hotel bookings with or without parking, a deadline of up to eight days prior to arrival applies.

Sunny Cars: The car rental broker offers a cost-free cancellation protection for bookings made by 30 April for rentals until the end of 2020 and beyond.

Source: FVW

Cancellations due to unavoidable, exceptional circumstances

The traveller may withdraw from the contract free of charge if unavoidable, exceptional circumstances occur at or in the immediate vicinity of the place of destination which significantly affect the performance of the package tour or the transport of persons to the place of destination. The tour operator, for his part, may also cancel the package tour before commencement of the journey without any claim for compensation by the customer if it is prevented from fulfilling the contract due to unavoidable, extraordinary circumstances.

[Travel warnings issued by the Federal Foreign Office](#) are a clear indication of the places where such circumstances exist. Unavoidable, exceptional circumstances also exist if entry

is not possible or a compulsory quarantine has been ordered. In such cases, both the tour operator and the customer may withdraw from the journey. The traveller will then be refunded the full price of the journey.