

COVID-19 Tourism Impact Update



Falkland Islands Tourism Sector Information and Guidance Concerning the Impact of COVID-19

No. 23

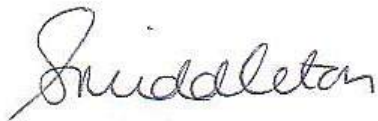
February 8th 2022

INTRODUCTION

This edition of COVID-19 Tourism Impact Update will be our last one. When we started out in April 2020, we published on a fortnightly basis such was the changing pace of events at that time. The whole tourism sector worldwide was thrown into uncertainty and it was a testing time for all of us. Although recovery is certainly underway, there are still likely to be some lumps and bumps on the road ahead, and of course for us here in the Falklands we still need to restore air connectivity with South America and address the quarantine situation which does not encourage leisure tourism.

In this issue we look at the global situation with regards to travel restrictions and how they have changed over the last six-months. We also look at some of the trends we've noticed here following our visits around the Islands to serviced and self-catering accommodation. We hope that so many improvements in the accommodation sector can be enjoyed by international tourists in 2022-2023.

As always, please don't hesitate to contact the Falkland Islands Tourist Board for more details or any further assistance.



Stephanie Middleton
Executive Director
8th February 2022

OPENING UP FOR TOURISM

Globally, there is a gradual easing of restrictions by most destinations with regards to COVID-19. This trend is expected to continue throughout 2022 unless a variant that proves to be more dangerous emerges.

In December 2021, **46 destinations (21% of all destinations worldwide) had their borders completely closed** to tourists. Of these, 26 destinations have had their borders completely closed since at least the end of April 2020. A further 55 (25% of all global destinations) continue to have their borders partially closed to international tourism, and 112 destinations (52% of all destinations) require international tourists to present a PCR or antigen test upon arrival.

The trend towards destinations taking evidence-based approaches to restrictions reflects the evolving nature of the pandemic will also help restore confidence in travel while helping keep both tourists and tourism workers safe.



There is a clear trend regarding how destinations are opening up, in particular easing restrictions on vaccinated international tourists: 85 destinations (39% of all destinations worldwide) have eased restrictions for fully vaccinated international tourists, while 20 destinations (9% of all destinations worldwide) have made a **full COVID-19 vaccination mandatory** for entering a destination for tourism purposes. However, just four destinations have so far lifted all COVID-19-related restrictions completely (Colombia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Mexico).

Latest data as of 7th February 2022 shows that full restrictions are now just being applied by 4% of countries worldwide, however most countries (92%) still have some form of restriction in place.

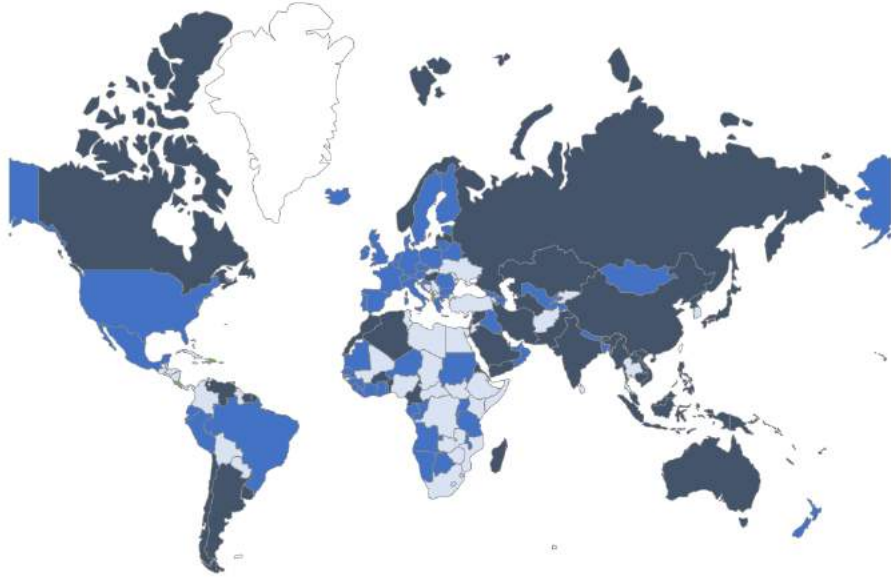


The easing of restrictions over the last six months can be visually seen on the two maps shown overleaf.

June 2021

COVID - 19 RELATED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

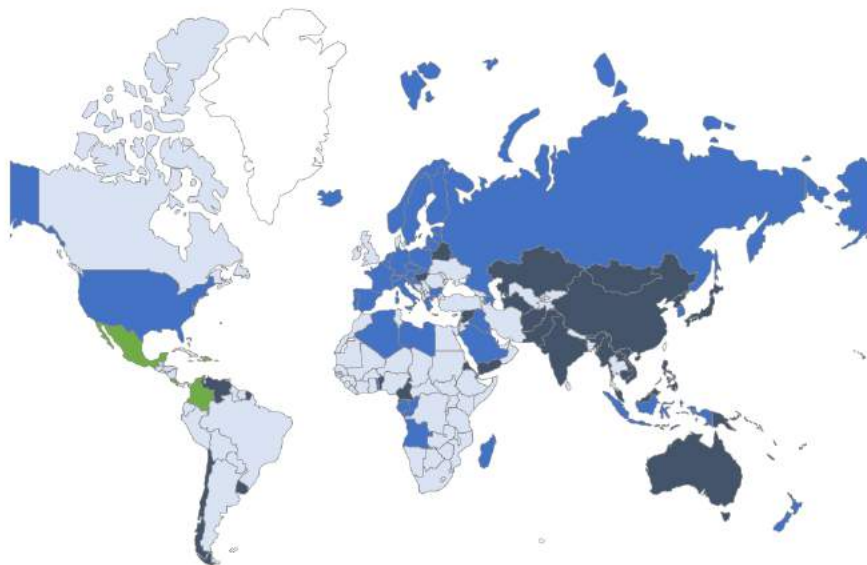
● Complete Closure ● Lifted ● Partial Closure ● Testing/Quarantine



December 2021

COVID - 19 RELATED TRAVEL RESTRICTIONS

● Complete Closure ● Lifted ● Partial Closure ● Testing/Quarantine



TRENDS IN THE FALKLAND ISLANDS

So what about changes closer to home. Well, following our visits to most serviced and self-catering accommodation in the Islands in January, a number of clear trends seem to be emerging, some of them a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The most significant are:

- The overall quality of accommodation is improving. In 2014 the average grade of accommodation was 2.3 stars, today it is 3.0 stars.
- There has been a significant growth in the number of self-catering beds in recent years, and quality of self-catering accommodation.
- The TRIP scheme has clearly stimulated interest in domestic travel in the Falklands, and the lasting legacy of this is likely to be continued interest in self-catering accommodation (with it being more difficult to book serviced accommodation once international tourism returns).
- The opportunity for serviced accommodation is attracting domestic visitors by operating in the months before (September) or after (April) the main season when demand from international visitors drops off.
- International tourism is expected to bounce back rapidly once LATAM flights resume and quarantine is reduced to 24 hours (test and release) or less, with significant bookings being rolled forward from previous years.
- Tourism businesses in the Falklands are showing increasing interest in sustainability and reducing their carbon footprint. Items such as plastic water bottles are rarely offered by businesses now.
- There is a very strong desire within the tourism sector to open up for international visitors and get going again.



To keep up with international trends and expectations, there is room in the Falklands for:

- Accommodation establishments that are more up-market, to provide for the luxury end of the market.
- A broader choice of food and drink and more flexibility in eating times in camp.
- Businesses being more online, both in terms of websites and social media.



FURTHER INFORMATION

Flights Update

At present, commercial airlines with both Chile and Brazil will remain suspended until further notice.

Tourism Recovery Incentive Programme

TRIP is in operation for the 2021-2022 season (1st October 2021-30th April 2022). More details about how this scheme will be operated be found at:

<https://www.fig.gov.fk/covid-19/tourismscheme/trip-scheme>

FIG Guidance and Information

For guidance and information for individual businesses operating in a COVID-19 environment, including restaurants, public houses and retail, as well as frequently asked questions see:

<https://fig.gov.fk/covid-19/>

<https://fig.gov.fk/covid-19/information/general-information>

<https://fig.gov.fk/covid-19/faq>