

Notes and Comments on COVID19



COVID 2020

Panterra has been offering expeditions to our guests for over 30 years and believe that it would be irresponsible of us to ignore the pandemic and carry on business as usual. With liveaboards it is even more difficult to suggest guests would be safe. Even if we were to implement safety protocols such as testing prior to departure, daily temperature checks, sanitizing the interior of the boat multiple times a day, etc. What happens if a guest becomes symptomatic 4 days into an 8 day trip? It would risk infecting the crew, guests and any communities we visited on the trip. The fall out would be devastating and we will not jeopardize the health and well being of the Mexican people we have come to hold dear to our hearts.

2021 Expeditions Postponed to 2022

As of Feb. 2021, we have rescheduled all 2021 expeditions to 2022. We are publishing our 2022 expeditions with the understanding that, at the time of the scheduled expedition, the COVID19 virus is contained, guests, crew and staff are vaccinated, and it is safe for the world to return to leisure travel. In saying this no one can predict when this will be. We can only move forward with the hope that this terrible global pandemic will be behind us when we resume our expeditions in 2022.

Please exercise care and stay safe through this surreal moment in time.

Lela Sankeralli
Executive Director

March 13, 2021

I received the following email to which I responded. In the leadership role of Panterra I had to stop and look at the whole picture. After thinking through the email I concluded the safety of the Mexican people we love were more important.

Leeah H – Calgary, Alberta

I seriously hope you look at your policy to require vaccinations in the future for guests! DISCRIMINATION.

Hi Leeah,

Thank you for bringing this up. You are absolutely right.

When I posted it, I was thinking of all the safety protocols I would need to put into place to safeguard my staff and crew in Mexico and the remote communities we visit. That is why I postponed all trips until 2022. It was a huge loss of revenue. Not as much for my pocket, but for the beautiful Mexican crew and staff that unlike Canadians, have no means of financial support while they wait for post COVID.

Honestly, thank you for bringing this to my attention. I know there are people out there that for many reasons will or cannot receive the vaccine. So my question is, how do I protect the innocent communities? The crew and staff have all agreed to get vaccinated and I did pose the question, if anyone did not want to get it we would discuss. But everyone was in agreement.

My biggest concern is how do I keep the members of the remote communities we visit, safe? What is the trade off? Their possible lives or negative impact on the community, or our entitled right of decision to travel where we want, how we want and at whatever the cost may be.

I will definitely review my policy and please know I thank you kindly for feeling that you could address this and have it responded in the same honest concern of what is right and wrong as we all navigate our way through the pandemic.

Differences in opinions are healthy, it gives us the opportunity to possibly learn from a different perspective.

Kindest Regards,
Lela Sankeralli
Executive Director

On May 3, 2021

I received the following email from a guest rescheduling their 2019 trip due to COVID.

Diane wrote:

Regarding vaccines: I understand being concerned for the local Mexican families when you bring guests to their island... Just because your guests are vaccinated does not mean they cannot be contagious. The vaccine is helpful for reducing the viral load and the symptoms for the vaccinated person.

In response to Diane's email. Diane is absolutely right and it was my intention not to visit any communities until I know it is safe. In returning to business, we must all keep in mind that the very essence of our love for Mexico comes from the people, their culture and their kindness. We have to protect their vulnerability and Diane is simply correct. Just because guests, staff and crew are vaccinated it doesn't mean we should overlook those who may not have received the vaccine yet.

Just because we are safe doesn't mean everyone else is too. Especially the remote communities.

Still navigating the ramifications of COVID and return to safe, responsible travel!

Lela Sankeralli

