

How to have a safe and healthy holiday in the snow

Going on holiday is exciting – new surroundings, places and experiences. To help you have a great time, we have put together a checklist to highlight certain areas where we recommend you take extra care. Please read the following information and ensure that the other members in your party are also informed.



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OUT AND ABOUT

ON THE PISTE

- Always check the weather forecast and snow conditions at the lift company or tourist office prior to hitting the slopes.
- Familiarise yourself with the area piste map and always carry a copy with you.
- Physical exertion can leave you dehydrated. Ensure you drink plenty of water throughout the day.
- Never ski on roads.
- Do not ski alone.
- Do not ski when tired – a high proportion of accidents happen at the end of the day.

RULES FOR THE CONDUCT OF SKIERS AND SNOWBOARDERS – FIS (INTERNATIONAL SKI FEDERATION)

- 1. Respect:** Do not endanger others.
- 2. Control:** Adapt the manner and speed of your skiing to your ability and to the general conditions on the mountain.
- 3. Choice of route:** The skier/snowboarder in front has priority – leave enough space.
- 4. Overtaking:** Leave plenty of space when overtaking a slower skier/snowboarder.
- 5. Entering and starting:** Look up and down the mountain each time before starting or entering a marked run.
- 6. Stopping:** Only stop at the edge of the piste or where you can easily be seen.
- 7. Climbing:** When climbing up or down, always keep to the side of the piste.
- 8. Signs:** Obey all signs and markings – they are there for your safety.
- 9. Assistance:** In case of accidents provide help and alert the rescue service.
- 10. Identification:** All those involved in an accident, including witnesses, should exchange names and addresses.

CARE IN THE SUN

- The sun is extremely strong and bright at altitude, especially reflecting off snow. Wear sun block or high factor sunscreen at all times and re-apply frequently. Take extra care with children in the sun.
- Always protect your lips using lip balm or sun block for lips.
- Always wear sunglasses or goggles to protect your eyes from snow blindness.

GOING OUT IN RESORT

- If you are not sure where you are going and need directions, please ask your representative or reception for advice.
- Whilst out and about in resort, keep an eye open for potential snow and large icicles falling from gables and the top of buildings.
- Do not walk across frozen lakes, ponds or streams.
- Wear a sturdy pair of shoes or boots, preferably watertight with good tread.
- Wear appropriate clothing for the weather conditions. Layering clothing is recommended.
- If you are out as part of a group, look out for one another.
- At night avoid poorly lit areas.
- Where possible, do not walk home alone.
- Never take shortcuts when walking back to your accommodation and stick to well-lit roads.
- Be vigilant at all times. Familiarise yourself with the direction of traffic.
- Be aware that in some countries traffic is not required to stop at pedestrian crossings.

DRIVING ON HOLIDAY

- Weather conditions in mountainous areas can change quickly. Ensure your vehicle is equipped with snow chains and that you know how to fit them.
- If you leave the resort area, leave details of where you are going with other guests or at reception.
- Drive cautiously in winter conditions. Even where snow has been cleared, the road surface may still be covered by a film of ice.
- Keep well clear of snow-clearing machines, as the operator may not be able to see you clearly in snowy conditions.
- If you do not feel comfortable driving in the snow, leave the car behind.
- Always wear a seat belt.
- Check the vehicle is roadworthy and familiarise yourself with all controls before use as they may differ to cars in the UK and Ireland.
- Check that the car hire insurance cover you take out provides adequate cover for the driver and all passengers.
- Familiarise yourself with local traffic laws.
- Pay particular attention at junctions and roundabouts.
- Always carry emergency/breakdown telephone numbers with you.
- Always carry a spare set of spectacles (required by law in Spain).
- Never drink and drive.
- Stick to well-travelled and well-lit roads.

ACCOMMODATION

BALCONY

- Children should never be left unsupervised on balconies.
- Do not climb or stand on balcony furniture. Keep all furniture away from the balcony wall/railings.
- Never lean over, sit or climb on the balcony wall/railings.
- Beware of snow and ice on balconies.

BATHROOM

- Take care in bathrooms as condensation and water spray can make surfaces slippery and bath or floor mats may not be provided.
- Do not use mains electrical appliances near to water.

COOKING

- Never leave cookers unattended whilst in use.
- Ensure all cooking appliances are switched off when leaving your apartment or when retiring at night.
- Never place any shopping, clothes or other items on the cooker.

LIFTS

- Children should not use any lift unaccompanied.
- Not all lifts have internal doors. When using this type of lift, stand well back from the exposed wall as there is no protection from the lift shaft when the car is in motion.

IN THE EVENT OF A FIRE, USE THE STAIRCASES NOT THE LIFT.

GLASS DOORS AND WINDOWS

- Be aware that glass doors and windows may not necessarily be equipped with toughened glass. Caution should be taken at all times.
- Take extra care in bright sunlight as it may not be obvious whether the window/door is open or closed.

FUEL AND ENERGY SAFETY

- Familiarise yourself with how the appliances work, if you are unsure please ask for assistance.
- Never dry clothes by placing them directly onto gas appliances or near open fires.

- IF YOU SMELL GAS within your accommodation:
 - Extinguish all naked flames and do not use matches or lighters.
 - Do not switch lights or any other electrical appliance on or off.
 - If possible isolate the gas supply and turn it off using the tap on the bottle.
 - Open all doors and windows to aid ventilation.
 - Inform reception, the agent or the owner that you can smell gas.
 - Leave the building and allow time for the gas to disperse.
 - Never attempt to locate a gas leak yourself or tamper with the gas supply.

If you spot any defects or hazards in your property during your holiday please ensure that you bring them to your representative's or agent's attention.



FIRE SAFETY

ON ARRIVAL AT YOUR ACCOMMODATION

- Familiarise yourself with all escape routes and locate the nearest fire exit to your room.
- Walk the nearest escape route from your room and familiarise yourself with any other means of escape that may be available.
- Study the fire instruction notice displayed in your room.
- Identify the method of raising the alarm on discovering a fire.

- Always keep your key by your bed when sleeping or leave in the inside of the door whilst locked.

IF A FIRE OCCURS

- Evacuate the room/area immediately – do not stop to collect personal belongings.
- Close any doors behind you.
- Raise the alarm.
- Proceed to an assembly point outside and well clear of

the building.

- If you cannot leave your room, close all doors, put wet towels or clothes around the door seals and shout for help from the window or telephone reception.

ALWAYS ENSURE THAT ALL SMOKING MATERIALS ARE SAFELY EXTINGUISHED AND NEVER SMOKE IN BED.

SWIMMING POOLS AND SAUNAS

SWIMMING POOLS

- Every pool is different. Most hotels and apartments do not employ life guards so please ensure children are supervised by an adult at all times.
- Familiarise yourself with the layout of the pool to identify the deep and shallow areas before use.
- Pool sides can be very slippery, do not run around them.
- Shower before entering the pool.
- Do not swim (or allow children to swim) if suffering from an upset stomach.

- Ensure that children use the toilet before entering the pool. In the event of a faecal accident in or around the pool, please report it immediately; this will assist the hotel management in ensuring the highest levels of pool hygiene.
- Do not swim immediately after a meal and never swim when you have been drinking alcohol.
- Observe all pool rules.
- In the event of an emergency, know how to summon help.
- Dress codes for swimming pools differ from country to country. In some countries it may be compulsory to wear swimming trunks or swimming hats for example.

SAUNAS

- Observe instructions and safety signage for use of the sauna and spa pool facilities.
- Do not use the sauna or spa pool if you are pregnant or suffer from high blood pressure, or heart conditions.
- Ensure you drink plenty of water and take adequate rest following the use of the sauna to ensure you do not become dehydrated.
- Based on local health regulations, in some resorts such as Austria, it is quite common for people not to wear bathing costumes in spa's and saunas.

PERSONAL SAFETY

MONEY AND PERSONAL BELONGINGS

- Where available, place all valuables, such as your passport, money and jewellery in a safety deposit box.
- Avoid carrying too much money or wearing excess jewellery when you are out and about.
- Keep all valuables close to you at all times. Ensure wallets and purses are not easily accessible and avoid leaving mobile devices on display.
- Do not invite strangers to your room.
- Never leave your key where someone can note your room number.

SECURITY

- Do not leave your window open, especially if your room is on the ground floor or has a balcony.
- Remember to lock your room door even when you are inside the room. Ensure your room is left secure when going out.

DRINKS

- Be aware that alcohol and drugs can lead to you being less alert, less in control and less aware of your environment.
- Never accept drinks from strangers or from anyone you do not completely trust.
- Do not share or exchange drinks.
- Keep your drink with you at all times or nominate a member of your group to watch your drink if you're going to the toilet.
- Be aware of how much you have had to drink and remember alcohol will dehydrate you.
- Remember the effects of drinking alcohol increases with altitude. Your judgement, coordination and reaction times may be affected.
- Consider very carefully whether you should leave the bar, club or event with someone you have just met.

IF YOU FEEL THREATENED

- Stay calm, and try to be firm and direct.
- Remember that you always have the right to say 'no' at any point. Never feel that you have to go further than you feel comfortable with.
- If you feel uncomfortable or in danger, do not be afraid to draw attention to yourself. Shout, make a fuss and make people aware that you feel threatened.

USING A TAXI OR MINICAB

- Never accept a lift from an unlicensed taxi, a stranger or someone you do not completely trust.
- Try to share a taxi with a friend.
- When calling a taxi from a public place, try not to let people overhear your name or details of where you are staying.
- Always sit in the back of the car, and if you chat to the driver do not give them any personal details.

FOOD AND DRINK

Food and drink is an integral part of the holiday experience however everything in moderation is the key, particularly at the beginning of your holiday when the local cuisine may be unfamiliar to you.

DRINK

- It is advisable to always drink bottled water and to use it for brushing your teeth. Ensure that the seal on the bottle is intact.
- Where appropriate, avoid ice in drinks.

FOOD SAFETY

- Make sure your food has been thoroughly cooked and is still hot when served.
- Make sure that any food that is re-heated is piping hot all the way through.
- Avoid any uncooked food (apart from fruits and vegetables, food that can be peeled or shelled).

YOUR INSURANCE

- Before undertaking any activity whilst on holiday, please ensure that you are adequately covered by the terms and conditions of your insurance policy.
- You should be aware that many insurance policies do not cover off-piste skiing.
- Drinking alcohol may invalidate your insurance policy in the event of an accident.

YOUR JOURNEY

- Do not place matches or lighters in your suitcase. These items may ignite by friction.
- Do not place flammable liquids, gasses or aerosols in your suitcase.
- Keep your passport safe.
- Carry essential medication in your hand luggage.
- Pay attention to all safety information given on the flight and/or coach.
- Drink plenty of water during your flight to avoid dehydration.