

Booking Your Self-Guided Trip

Itinerary and Dates: After we discuss your timeframe and abilities, we draft an itinerary for your approval. Once the dates and itinerary are confirmed, we ask for a *non-refundable* deposit of \$500 per person.

Deposit: To reserve your spot(s), please go to www.distantjourneys.com/reservation/self-guided. We accept MasterCard, AMEX, and VISA. We are happy to take your deposit over the phone to confirm your reservation and answer any questions you might have. Together, we will carefully double-check your dates and itinerary to make sure it is correct and just as you want it. All self-guided itineraries are custom.

Registrations Forms: We also require the completed Registration Forms from each participant over 18. We will email the forms to you. Our Registration Forms include: *Terms and Conditions, Registration, Risk Release Agreement, Medical Questionnaire, and COVID-19 Risk Release Agreement.*

- **Please note:** We cannot consider your trip confirmed until we have received your deposit(s) and completed Registration Forms for all participants.

Confirmed Dates and Itinerary: Once you have confirmed the dates and itinerary for your trip and have given us the **final OK** we move *very quickly* to secure reservations; therefore, *it is essential you are certain about your dates and itinerary.* Any subsequent changes to the confirmed itinerary will result in a cancellation and/or rebooking fee of \$500 or more per person; and we cannot guarantee we will be able to make your desired changes due to availability in the hotels or refuges.

Pre-Trip Packet: After we begin working on the details of your trip, we will prepare and mail you a packet that includes confirmation of receipt of deposit(s), your itinerary, invoice, travel information, packing list, and other information that will help you plan your trip. When you receive the Pre-Trip Packet please review it.

Booking Accommodations: Normally, we can confirm all overnight accommodations as needed; however, there are times when hotels, inns, or refuges are already fully booked. If this is the case, we may need to make substitutions or alter the itinerary. We will make appropriate changes then reconfirm with you before we proceed. Though very unlikely, it might be that we just cannot get the needed reservations. If this happens, we will refund your deposit(s) in full.

Last-Minute Trips: We recommend you book your self-guided trip early; however, we can also handle late bookings and will do our best to confirm your itinerary in a matter of days. Last-minute bookings or late registrations may result in **additional costs** to cover expedited arrangements and express mailings.

Final Payment and Cancellation Policies

Final Payment: You can make additional payments and your **final payment** on our website at www.distantjourneys.com/remittance. While this page asks for your invoice number, it is not needed to complete the transaction.

When we receive your final payment and all the completed forms, we mail the **Final Packet** of information which includes trail notes, accommodation vouchers, travel details, highlighted maps and other important information regarding your trip.

Final Packets will be mailed between 60 – 30 days prior to the start of your trip. Once you receive it, we ask that you review it carefully and contact us with any questions. Normally, we will contact you about 2 weeks prior to your departure to make sure you are all set, however we are happy to answer your questions at any time, so please don't hesitate to contact us.

- While most of our hikers make their final payment near the payment date, some like to receive their final information as soon as possible.
- If you choose to make your final payment earlier than required, we are happy to mail your **Final Packet** of information. However, please note that once we place your Final Packet in the mail, any cancellations or changes made until 45 days prior to your trip start will result in a cancellation fee of 50% of your Land Cost. For any cancellations or changes made less than 45 days from your trip start, there are no refunds. This is an **exception** to our Terms and Conditions cancellation timeline.

Cancellation Policy: 75 days prior to your trip start we ask for final payment – Land Cost less deposit. For some self-guided trips, we ask for final payment 90 days in advance of your trip start. If this is the case, it will be clearly noted in your specific itinerary and invoice. Should you find it necessary to cancel, a cancellation fee will be charged based on the date we receive written notice from you of the cancellation.

- For final payments due **75 days** prior to the start of your trip:
 - Over 75 days prior to departure – forfeit of deposit
 - 75 – 45 days prior to departure – 50% of Land Cost
 - Less than 45 days prior to departure or failure to show – no refund
- For final payments due **90 days** prior to the start of your trip, note these special terms:
 - Over 90 days prior to trip start - forfeit of deposit
 - 90 – 45 days prior to your trip start – 50% of Land Cost
 - Less than 45 days prior to your trip start or failure to show – no refunds

There will be no refunds or credits for unused portions or uncompleted trips for any reason.

Mailing Documents: For US addresses, we mail trip packets USPS Priority at no charge. For international addresses *including Canada* we use Fed Ex or UPS. **Note:** There is an **extra charge for international mailings**. The extra charge will depend on the destination.

- **Important:** Once you *begin* your trip, we cannot make any changes, substitutions, give any refunds or credits for unused or changed parts of your trip. Should you make any changes to your itinerary, any extra costs incurred, including changes to taxis and/or hotel overnights etc., are at your expense and are your responsibility.

Travel Insurance

We strongly urge all participants to purchase travel insurance to help protect you and your investment in the trip and help recover any *non-refundable payments* in the event you find it necessary to cancel either prior to or during the trip.

Travel insurance typically covers the unexpected (i.e. trip cancelation or interruption due to personal/family injury, illness, or emergency) and can also cover travel delays, lost baggage, medical evacuations, etc.

Insurance: We suggest you do some comparison shopping to find the company and policy that best suits your needs. There are sites that will help you compare plans. **Insure My Trip:** www.insuremytrip.com allows you to choose the types of coverage you would like your policy to include, and then generates a list of providers from which to compare and choose.

Whichever company and policy you choose, it is important to read the policy and coverages carefully. You should have a clear understanding of the extent and parameters of coverage and have a firm understanding of the exclusions and exemptions of coverage, for example, inclusions or exclusions for any COVID-19-related health or travel issues.

Many of our hikers have been very pleased with the following companies:

- **Travel Guard:** www.travelguard.com
- **CSA Travel Protection**, now partnering with Generali Global Assistance: www.csatravelpro.com or www.generalitravelinsurance.com

We have worked with **CSA Travel Protection** over the years and have an agency code with them which is 71774669. We receive a small commission, but it is completely up to you which company you choose to work with. You can link to CSA at www.csatravelpro.com/71774669 - be sure to refresh your browser so our agency code updates.

Important Note: For additional fees, some companies offer policies that cover *pre-existing conditions*, as well as cancellations *for any reason*. However, these coverages, depending on the company, can require purchase of the policy anywhere from **within 24 hours** to 15 days of having **made your deposit**. Again, make sure you fully understand your policy and what it does and does not cover.