

# HOLIDAY BOOKING GUIDE

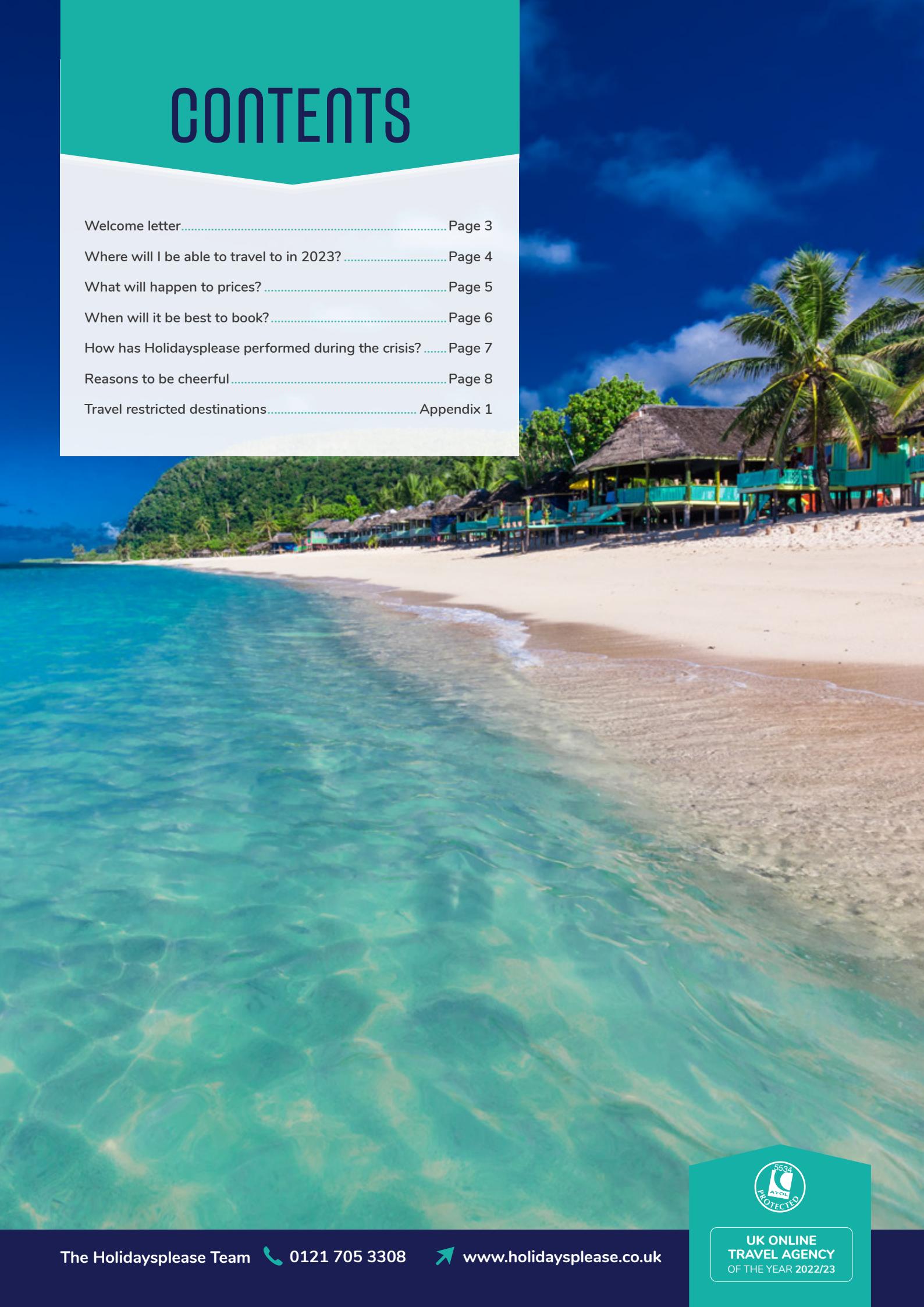
# 2023



holidaysplease

# CONTENTS

Welcome letter .....	Page 3
Where will I be able to travel to in 2023? .....	Page 4
What will happen to prices? .....	Page 5
When will it be best to book? .....	Page 6
How has Holidaysplease performed during the crisis? .....	Page 7
Reasons to be cheerful .....	Page 8
Travel restricted destinations .....	Appendix 1



## Dear Holidaysplease customer,

We are being asked lots of questions about travel such as, where will I be able to go on holiday? When should I book? What will happen to prices? What formalities will I need to comply with? Should I take Covid travel insurance? How can I book safely?

So to help you plan we have prepared this Holiday Booking Guide.  
We hope you find it useful as I think we all need a holiday right now!

Before you dive in, I would just like to say that despite being battered and bruised during Covid I have been very proud of everyone here at Holidaysplease. Here are some of the things that I would like to give our team credit for:-



- ✓ **We didn't receive a single negative review in 2020 or 2021:** We received 5 star (97.8%) and 4 star (2.1%) reviews on Trust Pilot without a single 1 or 2 star review during 2020 or 2021. This is hard enough to do in good times, let alone during a global pandemic when the wheels are falling off at every turn!
- ✓ **We made no redundancies:-** We are quite a cautious company and after the demise of Thomas Cook in Sept 2019, we decided to store a bit of cash just in case it hurt our supply chain. This lucky judgement proved to be very useful!
- ✓ **We hired people during Covid:-** There were a lot of talented people being made redundant elsewhere and so we were delighted to offer jobs to some of these people.
- ✓ **We were awarded Online Travel Agency of the Year 2022/23:-** As voted for by the travel trade press.
- ✓ **We stood up for our customers like never before:-** Some tour operators and airlines acted very badly during Covid with slow refunds, inflexible booking conditions and poor customer service. So we stepped up in many ways including taking (and paying for) legal action against one operator on behalf of 27 customers. We won and even got interest for the customers in question.

Finally, I would like to thank you and all of our customers who have been so supportive and patient during this year. Without you we would not have survived and we look forward to helping you have a much more enjoyable 2023.

With best wishes,

*Charles Duncombe*

Charles Duncombe  
Director | Holidaysplease.co.uk – Online Travel Agency of the year 2022/23

# WHERE WILL I BE ABLE TO TRAVEL TO IN 2023?

The UK government has removed all Covid related travel restrictions for both vaccinated and unvaccinated passengers. So there is no need for Covid tests, no passenger locator forms, no quarantine, nothing.

The only formalities that you will need to comply with are those set by the destination country that you are travelling to. These restrictions are being relaxed all the time and so please check the up to date position with your travel adviser.

Please see Appendix 1 for a list of the most popular holiday destinations that currently have the more restrictive travel restrictions for UK visitors.



UK ONLINE  
TRAVEL AGENCY  
OF THE YEAR 2022/23

# AVAILABILITY AND PRICES IN 2023

Prices were low for most of 2021/22 as hotels and airlines tried to fill their decimated forward order book.

However, this will change in 2023 for a variety of reasons:-

## STRONG DEMAND

- ✈ Many people will not have had a foreign holiday since 2019 and so they will be desperate to get away. Some people might even look to book more than one holiday in 2023 in order to make up for "lost time".
- ✈ Some sectors of the economy did very well in 2021/22 (e-commerce, essential retail, procurement/logistics and parts of the public sector) and so there will be a number of customers with "money to burn"
- ✈ With more limited opportunities to spend on leisure activities during lockdown, the UK's household savings ratio has increased to record levels. There is an estimated £125bn in extra savings that people have available to spend on discretionary purchases (like holidays).

However the cost of living crisis will subdue demand and so holiday companies may be reluctant to raise prices too quickly, as they know demand will be fragile.

## RESTRICTED SUPPLY

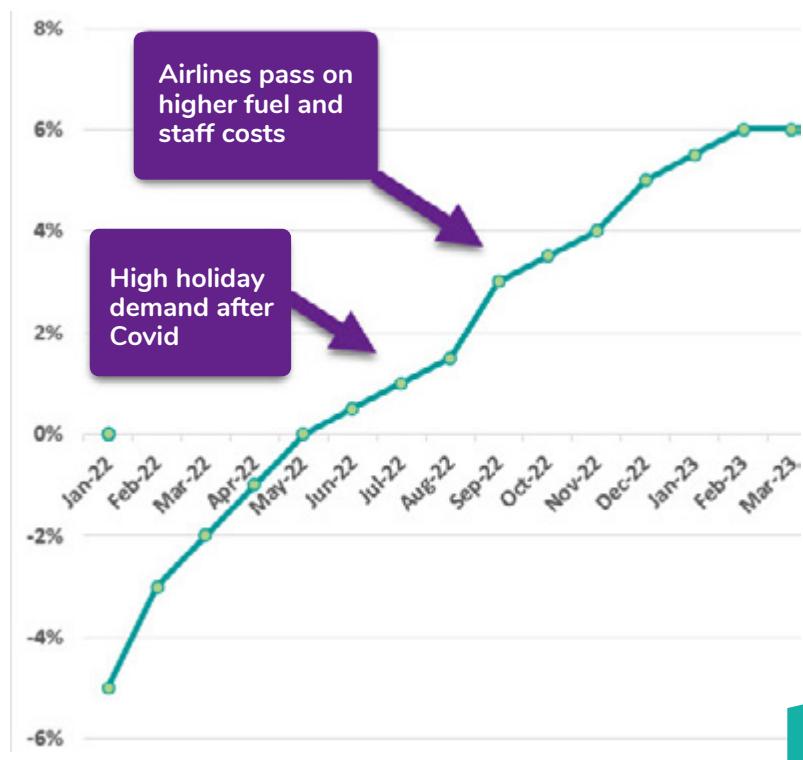
- ✈ Tour operators gave a lot of credit notes during Covid instead of refunds and these credit notes are now being used by customers and are taking up a lot of airline and hotel availability.

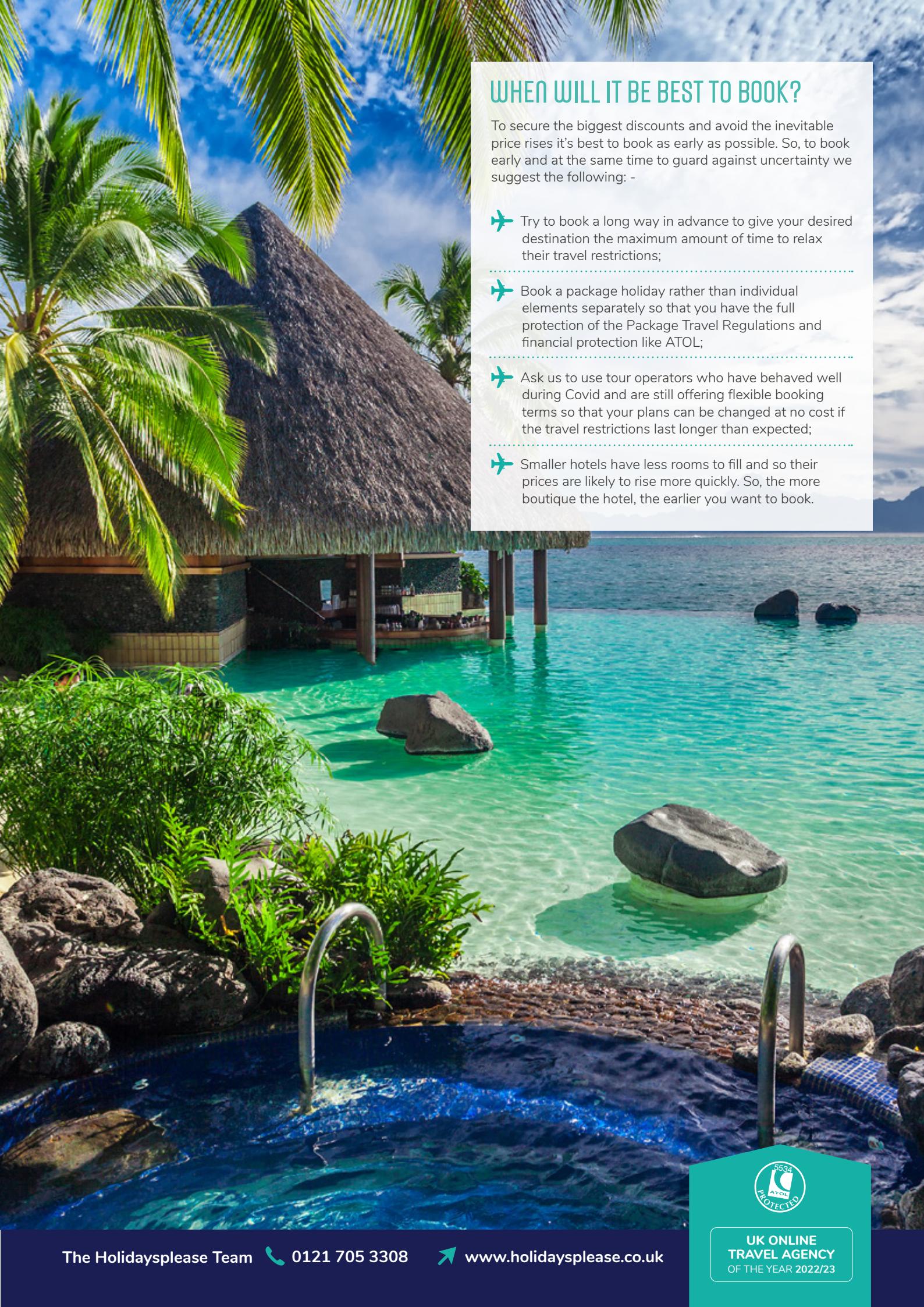
✈ Airlines have cut back on their schedules like no other time in living memory. They have mothballed planes, surrendered landing slots, cancelled aircraft orders and made staff redundant. These measures cannot be reversed overnight and so it will take some time for capacity to recover to pre-Covid levels. They are also going to be very cautious about bringing back supply until they can see a pathway to a sustained recovery.

Some hotel capacity may also be lost with hotel failures/closures but the loss of capacity is nowhere near as significant as the loss of airline capacity. It will be the loss of airline capacity and the fact that they have billions of pounds' worth of losses to recover and heavy debt to service, that means flight price rises are likely to cause a significant increase in holiday costs. Airlines have also experienced a massive rise in the cost of jet fuel because of the crisis in Ukraine and so will be passing this cost on to customers, through higher air fares, as well.

The cost of living crisis is going to reduce demand and prices somewhat but there are going to be unavoidable costs that holiday companies are going to have to pass on such as fuel costs, increasing staff wages and the weak pound.

## PREDICTED HOLIDAY PRICE CHANGE VS PREVIOUS YEAR





## WHEN WILL IT BE BEST TO BOOK?

To secure the biggest discounts and avoid the inevitable price rises it's best to book as early as possible. So, to book early and at the same time to guard against uncertainty we suggest the following: -

- ✈ Try to book a long way in advance to give your desired destination the maximum amount of time to relax their travel restrictions;
- ✈ Book a package holiday rather than individual elements separately so that you have the full protection of the Package Travel Regulations and financial protection like ATOL;
- ✈ Ask us to use tour operators who have behaved well during Covid and are still offering flexible booking terms so that your plans can be changed at no cost if the travel restrictions last longer than expected;
- ✈ Smaller hotels have less rooms to fill and so their prices are likely to rise more quickly. So, the more boutique the hotel, the earlier you want to book.



# FINANCIAL PROTECTION AND TRUST

Prior to the Covid pandemic virtually all travel companies touted their trust and financial protection credentials. Unfortunately, during Covid a number of these promises have been broken by some operators and airlines. These are some of the poor practices we have witnessed during Covid:-

- ✓ Airlines offering to give refunds only after 12 months has elapsed since cancellation;
- ✓ Airlines not offering refunds at all when their passengers are unable to travel to the airport due to Covid restrictions and instead running empty flights just to keep the money;
- ✓ Tour operators only offering to refund money when they have received refunds from their suppliers;
- ✓ Travel agencies resigning their ABTA membership because of an unwillingness to provide refunds to customers.
- ✓ Travel agents and operators furloughing their customer service staff at a time when those staff were at their busiest and letting customers hang on for hours trying to get information.
- ✓ Tour operators being forced to give refund timescales when "named and shamed" by the Competitions and Markets Authority.

We have resisted the temptation to act in the ways above and during the year 2020/21 we received over 1200 reviews from customers on Trust Pilot. They are broken down as follows:-



We hope that customers will have "long memories" and will continue to book with a company like ourselves who are professional, trustworthy, ABTA regulated and reliable. When you book with us, we can help ensure that you are booking with operators who have:-



To help give further peace of mind we have sourced a number of travel insurance policies that can cover holidays disrupted by Covid.

## REASONS TO BE CHEERFUL

While we are facing the hangover from Covid and now a cost of living crisis, this should only last a finite amount of time. Hopefully the situation in Ukraine will be resolved positively and when it does the cost of fuel, food and other materials in the supply chain will drop.

What we can say though is that because of the current situation and the fact that many people haven't been on holiday for a long time, we think your next holiday could be the best ever. The sun will feel warmer, the sand softer and that first beach cocktail may be the best you have ever tasted!

So, hopefully you find this guide useful and we look forward to helping you as soon as you are ready.



# APPENDIX 1

## COUNTRIES WITH RESTRICTIVE COVID ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:-

There are still a few popular holiday destinations that have restrictive Covid entry requirements (such as having to produce a negative PCR test).

These include:-

China

Hong Kong

