

[vc_row type="in_container" full_screen_row_position="middle" scene_position="center" text_color="dark" text_align="left" overlay_strength="0.3" shape_divider_position="bottom"] [vc_column column_padding="no-extra-padding" column_padding_position="all" background_color_opacity="1" background_hover_color_opacity="1" column_shadow="none" column_border_radius="none" width="1/1" tablet_text_alignment="default" phone_text_alignment="default" column_border_width="none" column_border_style="solid"] [vc_column_text] This is a difficult time for travelers with many seeing their travel plans canceled by COVID-19. Traveling is a dangerous proposition as the virus hits in a global pandemic. Very few, if any destinations are unaffected and quite simply this is the wrong time to travel. Those of you with travel plans canceled by COVID, please do not panic. Many, if not all reputable companies are offering full refunds due to this "Force Majeure" situation. You may have to push a bit, so know your rights. Refunds usually take time to process, and some companies will offer travel credits for future travel needs. One way or another you should be made relatively whole. [/vc_column_text] [/vc_column] [/vc_row] [vc_row type="in_container" full_screen_row_position="middle" scene_position="center" text_color="dark" text_align="left" overlay_strength="0.3" shape_divider_position="bottom"] [vc_column column_padding="no-extra-padding" column_padding_position="all" background_color_opacity="1" background_hover_color_opacity="1" column_shadow="none" column_border_radius="none" width="1/1" tablet_text_alignment="default" phone_text_alignment="default" column_border_width="none" column_border_style="solid"] [vc_column_text] Unfortunately, we found ourselves in this very situation. Our Berlin to Budapest travel plans canceled by COVID-19. We were scheduled to depart April 28 with our return May 19th. Our European gateway was Prague, The Czech Republic. We used a combination of hotels as well as Airbnb, traveling between cities by train. The one exception being a low cost, no frills flight from Berlin to Budapest on Ryanair. Our excursions were booked individually in advance. Make no mistake, this is a fluid situation and cancellation policies are changing daily. Therefore, it is important to know your rights and fight for every prepaid dollar you have invested in travel. Some will say this is the reason you should have travel insurance, but personally that is a moot point. If you have been forced to cancel your travel plans due to COVID fight for the return of every dollar!

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SLOW THE SPREAD

CDC 15-DAY PLAN

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Force Majeure: A force majeure clause is a contractual provision which excuses one or both parties' performance obligations when circumstances arise which are beyond the parties' control and make performance of the contract impractical or impossible. [Which includes acts of God, such as severe acts of nature or weather events including floods, fires, earthquakes, hurricanes, or explosions; war, acts of terrorism, and epidemics; This definition is thoroughly described by Akerman, a client-driven global enterprise, recognized by *Financial Times* as among the most forward thinking law firms in the industry.](#) Travel plans canceled by COVID-19 are covered under this Force Majeure clause.

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Travel Agents: If your travel plans were booked through a travel agent your agent will go to bat for you. Most travel agents do not charge additional booking fees, their compensation comes directly from the travel arrangements provided. Because of this strong working relationship your agent can usually solve your travel problems much easier than you can on your own. Play Harder Tours, is happy to be work with you to restore your hard earned dollars when these types of situations arise, please read our publication ["Why use a Travel Agent"](#)

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Expedia: Just like most travel booking engines Expedia has been overwhelmed with cancellations. [They have an active COVID policy in place that protects their customers.](#) Calling is probably impractical so please use the contact form available through their website for any travel plans canceled by COVID. Expedia is one of our primary booking engines and would be happy to offer assistance should you need it.

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Airbnb: Airbnb has been a personal favorite; they have always proved to be very cooperative. [Airbnb has a COVID cancellation policy but unfortunately is not universally recognized.](#) The host has ultimate authority on a refund being issued or not. In our case we booked 3 Airbnb stays on our trip, Budapest, Bratislava and Berlin. Ironically Budapest and Bratislava offered quick refunds while our host in Berlin did not. Budapest and Bratislava have had limited exposure to COVID while Berlin is on lockdown. This uneven policy and lack of consideration will cause me to scrutinize any future booking through Airbnb. [The host, Stefan was so uncooperative he tried tricking me](#)

[into changing the reservation which would have created a full charge on the spot.](#) He had the nerve to say I should understand why, and should be happy with a 50% refund even though our travel plans canceled by COVID lockdown.

4/2/20 I have been notified by Airbnb that a full refund has been awarded on all three of my bookings due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

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canceled.[/vc_column_text][/vc_column][/vc_row][vc_row type="in_container" full_screen_row_position="middle" scene_position="center" text_color="dark" text_align="left" overlay_strength="0.3" shape_divider_position="bottom"][vc_column column_padding="no-extra-padding" column_padding_position="all" background_color_opacity="1" background_hover_color_opacity="1" column_shadow="none" column_border_radius="none" width="1/1" tablet_text_alignment="default" phone_text_alignment="default" column_border_width="none" column_border_style="solid"][vc_column_text]**Airlines:** Airline booking cancellation policies are not uniform. Some airlines will offer full cancellations with refunds while others will issue travel credits. Beware of travel credits that stipulate travel must be completed within one year of the original purchase. This will probably not help unless you are a last-minute traveler. Unfortunately, customers who buy airline tickets well in advance may have trouble recovering should this COVID situation last into the Summer. [If like me, you booked travel on a low-cost carrier like Ryanair you will be subject their interpretation of their individual COVID policy.](#) Remember, the old saying, "you get what you pay for".

Update from **Ryanair** 4/3/2020: We're cancelling the majority of our April and May flights.

Rest assured you will receive an email with a full refund/free move link once that flight is cancelled. We've waived the flight change fee for flights due in April, so you can move the dates to later in the year if you wish. Just go the MyBooking section of <http://ryanair.com>

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Systems: Our experience with Deutsche-Bahn has always been great. [DB allows cancellation on advance purchased tickets but please keep in mind it takes time for the refund to be processed.](#) The request is submitted online, and a confirmation is sent to your email address. The credit card used for purchase will be

credited.[/vc_column_text][vc_column][vc_row][vc_row type="in_container" full_screen_row_position="middle" scene_position="center" text_color="dark" text_align="left" overlay_strength="0.3" shape_divider_position="bottom"][vc_column column_padding="no-extra-padding" column_padding_position="all" background_color_opacity="1" background_hover_color_opacity="1" column_shadow="none" column_border_radius="none" width="1/1" tablet_text_alignment="default" phone_text_alignment="default" column_border_width="none" column_border_style="solid"][vc_column_text]**Excursions:**

[We use Viator as our primary source for booking excursions.](#) Viator offers free cancellation up to the day before the booked excursion. In fact, my booked excursions were canceled and confirmed the same day then credited 2 days afterwards. Our local guides work the same way and are always flexible in cancellation policies, no matter the

reason.[/vc_column_text][vc_column][vc_row][vc_row type="in_container" full_screen_row_position="middle" scene_position="center" text_color="dark" text_align="left" overlay_strength="0.3" shape_divider_position="bottom"][vc_column column_padding="no-extra-padding" column_padding_position="all" background_color_opacity="1" background_hover_color_opacity="1" column_shadow="none" column_border_radius="none" width="1/1" tablet_text_alignment="default" phone_text_alignment="default" column_border_width="none" column_border_style="solid"][vc_column_text]

I hope this article has been helpful. Please know you have rights as a traveler! If your travel plans canceled by COVID-19 you should be entitled to a refund or credit under the Force Majeure

clause. If you need help, please let me know. Please remember www.playhardertours.com with you future travel needs.

The Beer-Centric Traveler writes for Play Harder Tours... Please email Bill@playhardertours.com and start your travel planning today! For a complete list of recommendations please email with "COVID-19" on the subject line. We'd love to hear your suggestions too.

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