URTRAVELPRO DEMO

TRAVEL INSURANCE

Travel insurance 101: the questions we answer most

Every client asks the same 15 questions about travel insurance. Here's a living document so you can send the link instead of re-typing.

Prepared by Demo Advisor · April 20, 2026

ADVISOR TIP

Demo content — illustrative only. This is a showcase of Compass features, not travel advice. Verify anything you'd actually act on.

Travel insurance is a line item that confuses almost every client. Instead of re-explaining it on every call, here are the questions we get most — with straight answers. Nothing here replaces reading your actual policy, but it'll get you oriented.

The basics

Do I actually need travel insurance?

For trips under $500 where everything is refundable, probably not. For anything longer, more expensive, or internationally, yes — and for cruises specifically, it's close to mandatory in our opinion. Most US health insurance doesn't cover you abroad, and medical evacuation from a cruise ship can run $50k+.

What does "comprehensive" travel insurance usually cover?

Trip cancellation (for covered reasons), trip interruption, emergency medical + evacuation, baggage delay and loss, and travel delay. The exact numbers vary wildly between policies — dollar limits and "covered reasons" are what to compare, not just the headline price.

How much should I expect to pay?

4-10% of your total trip cost is typical for comprehensive coverage. Older travelers, longer trips, and pricier destinations push this up. Cancel For Any Reason (CFAR) upgrades add another 40-50% on top.

When should I buy it?

Ideally within 14-21 days of your initial trip deposit — that window is when most policies offer the best benefits (pre-existing condition waivers, CFAR eligibility). Buying later still works but you lose some benefits.

What it actually covers (and doesn't)

If I get sick and have to cancel, am I covered?

If you bought comprehensive coverage and your illness is documented by a physician, yes. If you're just "not feeling up to it" without a medical event, no — unless you bought Cancel For Any Reason.

What about if my work schedule changes?

Standard "job-loss" coverage requires involuntary termination and typically 12+ months of continuous employment. A schedule conflict or voluntary quit doesn't qualify. CFAR is the only reliable way to cancel for work reasons.

Weather / hurricanes?

If the airline or cruise line officially cancels due to weather, they'll offer a refund or rebook — and your insurance covers any non-refundable additional costs. If you just decide to cancel because of a storm forecast, that's not covered by standard insurance. CFAR again.

Pre-existing conditions?

Most policies exclude pre-existing conditions UNLESS you buy within the initial coverage window (usually 14-21 days of first deposit) AND the policy has a pre-existing condition waiver. Ask specifically for this waiver when quoting.

Pandemic / COVID?

Most standard policies now cover COVID as any other illness — if you test positive and have documentation, cancellation and medical claims are covered. BUT "fear of COVID" or "a travel advisory" is not a covered reason without CFAR.

Cancel For Any Reason (CFAR)

What is CFAR?

An upgrade that lets you cancel for literally any reason — work, cold feet, a better offer — and get a partial refund. Usually 50-75% of your trip cost back, depending on the policy.

When is CFAR worth it?

High-value trips (over $5k), trips booked far in advance where circumstances may change, business travelers whose schedules are unpredictable, or anyone with family health concerns.

What's the catch?

You have to buy within 14-21 days of initial deposit, insure 100% of your trip cost, cancel 48+ hours before departure, and accept only 50-75% back (not 100%). It's a real product, not a scam, but it's not free flexibility either.

Claims

If something goes wrong, how do I file a claim?

Document EVERYTHING — receipts, medical records, airline emails, hotel invoices, anything with dates. Contact the insurer within 20 days of the incident (most policies require this). File online via the insurer's portal. Expect 2-6 weeks for payout, longer if documentation is incomplete.

What if I booked through a credit card travel portal?

Your card may include travel insurance (Chase Sapphire Reserve, Amex Platinum, some premium Capital One cards). BUT these are typically secondary coverage — only pay for what your primary insurance won't cover. Good for trip delay and baggage; not enough for serious medical or CFAR scenarios.

What about my health insurance?

Most US health plans (including Medicare) don't cover you internationally. Blue Cross PPOs are an exception — some do. If you're traveling internationally for more than a long weekend, dedicated travel medical insurance is a much better bet.

Buying the right policy

Should I buy from the cruise line or a third party?

Third-party (Travel Insured, Allianz, AIG, Travelex, Generali, etc.) is almost always cheaper and offers broader "covered reasons" than supplier-sold insurance. The supplier version's only advantage is simplicity.

Where do you recommend shopping?

InsureMyTrip.com, Squaremouth.com, and TripInsurance.com all let you compare multiple carriers side by side. We're happy to help you make sense of the options for your specific trip — that's part of what we do.

Can I add insurance after I've already booked?

Yes, but some benefits expire with time — specifically pre-existing condition waivers and CFAR eligibility usually require purchase within 14-21 days of the FIRST payment on the trip. Call your insurer to confirm.

Still have questions? Travel insurance is confusing by design. We'd rather you spend 10 minutes on the phone with us than pick the wrong policy — reply to your booking confirmation or give us a call.
