



## 2020 Travel Tips & Important Travel Information

Please, **Read the Following & See Your Enclosed Bus Itinerary for Times, Check-In Location & Roommates Names**

- ✓ You must check-in a minimum of 30-minutes before your designated departure time on your itinerary. For boarding procedures and travel process, please refer to the COVID-19 insert.
- ✓ You must have a valid Photo ID, in order to check-in with GradWeek Staff and board the bus (*\*If you still have a balance due on your account, you will be DENIED boarding*).
- ✓ **Make sure that you have the MANDATORY Release Waiver and Parent Sign-off Notice about Student Drivers to give to GradWeek Staff, or you will be denied check-in.** (form included in this packet).
- ✓ You must board the bus number listed on your itinerary. NO exceptions.
- ✓ **Baggage Allowance:** 1 suitcase to check-in and 1 very small carry-on, per traveler.

**Bus Companies – Restrictions & Expectations** - Everyone is on the GradWeek trip to have a great time, but please be respectful of those around you. Especially the people of the city that you are visiting and the resort condos that you are staying at. Every year several travelers never make it to their destination due to their behavior prior to or during their trip. Misbehaving at the bus pick-up location could lead to being denied boarding. Poor behavior during the bus trip may necessitate removal from the program. Your parents will be notified and will be responsible for your return home. **Bus companies will NOT tolerate bad behavior. NO eating of sunflower seeds, gummy snacks or gum chewing on the bus. NO smoking of any kind including vapes, e-cigarettes or any other product. In addition, NO coolers/ice chests are permitted on the bus. ONLY resealable twist top drinks are allowed.** Travelers must stay seated unless moving to/from the bathroom. **Violating any of the bus rules will result in termination of the bus portion of your trip and it will be the travelers' responsibility to find their own transportation. For additional boarding and travel procedures, please refer to the COVID-19 insert.**

If you need assistance while on the bus or the resort property, please be patient with both GradWeek and Hotel Staff. Rude behavior will not be tolerated. Travelers who lose all or a portion of their vacation due to their poor behavior or damaging hotel property will not be entitled to a refund.

**Spending Money** - We recommend using debit cards and to also take a small amount of cash. It is always advisable to let your bank know in advance prior to travel that you will be traveling, when and where. You can walk to many locations but if you want to take Uber, Lyft, or a Taxi you will need to have cash on hand for that. Traveling in groups is the safest and most economical way to go. How much money you take is up to you, but typically travelers take \$350 to \$500 for souvenirs, Action Pac, transportation, tours, and meals.

**Day of Departure!** - **Do not be late! You are responsible for your own transportation to your bus pick-up location and must arrive at the location a minimum of 30-minutes prior to your scheduled departure time to check-in with GradWeek Staff.** We recommend checking the directions to your pick-up location online in advance, to ensure you arrive with plenty of time. When you arrive at your destination, make sure to retrieve your luggage from the bus, and look for GradWeek Staff members wearing GradWeek shirts & ID Badges that will direct you to the hotel and inform you of what you need to do.

**GradWeek Staff** - While our Staff is available at your destination 24/7, the **Hotel Staff** can help you with daily requests, like more towels, more pillows and any questions about the hotel and nearby shopping, etc. The GradWeek Staff is there to ensure the program is running smoothly, coordinate transfers for all the arrivals and departures, present the Welcome Orientation, provide a Destination Guide with area map, 24-hour Staff contact information, rules, as well as information that will assist you with any serious emergencies or roommate situations.

**At Your Hotel** - Once you arrive at your hotel, you will be given a full Welcome Orientation by a GradWeek Staff member. They will explain the events that will be held during your stay, go over some basic guidelines and rules to make your trip awesome and worry free. There may be an Action Pac flyer enclosed in your Departure Packet that lists the various activities and price options. This Action Pac will be available to purchase **on-site only**. Also, during check-in the hotel will issue each registered traveler a wristband for the property. If you lose your wristband or if it goes missing for any reason, you will be subject to a replacement fee of \$200.00 per the hotel's policy.

**In-room Security** - Once you check in to your room, we strongly recommend you use your in-room safety deposit box to store your documents (passport), cash and valuables including cell phones, cameras, etc. This will ensure that the items are always securely locked when not being used. This will ensure that the items are always securely locked when not being used. Take a few minutes to check that everything in your room is in good shape and in good working order. Please **contact** the GradWeek Staff **or** the Hotel's Front Desk

personnel **immediately** if you see anything broken, damaged or not working properly, to ensure you will not be held responsible for preexisting damaged items. If the hotel reports any room or property damage from your room, all travelers in the room will be responsible for paying for those damages regardless of who in the room was at fault. **Room doors should NOT be left open and unsecured**. Please be aware that travel insurance **DOES NOT** cover you for loss of personal items such as Cell Phones. If **ANY** incidences of theft occur on-site, it **MUST be reported to the hotel first!** While GradWeek will assist you with any local authorities if theft or loss occurs, we are not responsible for the cost of any cell phone replacements or other personal items.

**Calling Home** - Parents want to know you have arrived ok. So, a quick call, text, or e-mail home to say you have arrived and to provide them with your room number is highly recommended. It is very expensive to make calls from your hotel room. If you do not want to take your cell phone, the next best thing is to buy a long-distance calling card that can be accessed by any public phone.

**Ahhh...Paradise!** This is your time to relax and have a good time. **This does not mean you can do anything you want**. All local laws are strictly enforced in and outside of the hotel. They will not tolerate disorderly conduct or any property damage. You will be required to pay for any damages (i.e. - loss of hotel security deposit and paying for any overages) and risk being evicted from your hotel at your own expense, no exceptions! GradWeek is not responsible for travelers that lose all or a portion of their vacation due to their behavior issues or damages and will not be entitled to a refund. Be smart, behave appropriately and stay safe by traveling in a group whenever leaving your hotel. We highly recommend using the buddy system! Please go out in groups, especially when going back to your hotel at night. Always remember that there is safety in numbers. It does not hurt to always tell a friend if you are leaving the hotel or event before everyone else.

**Returning Home** – GradWeek staff will post the time you need to be ready to board the bus for your return home in the lobby of the hotel. Prior to checking out of your room take a quick look around to make sure you have all your belongings. Check with the front desk to make sure you have paid for any incidental charges not included in your package price. Before leaving the hotel, your condo must be cleaned and cleared of all trash. All registered guests in that condo must wait until GradWeek Staff or Shores of Panama Staff have inspected the condo for damage. Once this is done you will be given a permission slip to board the bus. Should there be any hotel/condo damage, you and your roommates will need to proceed to the hotel front desk to take care of the damage costs. Once damages are paid, you will be given a permission slip to board the bus. **IMPORTANT - Have your Photo ID, mask, and gloves in hand for bus check-in. YOU WILL NOT be allowed to enter and ride the bus if you are not wearing a mask and gloves. You must wear them while traveling on the bus back to (your home city).** Make sure your luggage always gets loaded on your bus and always keep your valuables with you. GradWeek is not responsible for any items left behind. Double check that you have all your belongings before deboarding.

**How to use the Emergency Medical Coverage** - Even though over 95% of our travelers never encounter any sickness or injury, it still may occur. If sickness or injury occurs that requires medical attention, GradWeek or hotel staff will immediately assist you in receiving medical attention at your destination. The travel insurance plan through Travel Insured International helps provide coverage for medical emergencies, sickness and emergency medical evacuation. **To receive assistance, you must call (toll-free from the U.S.) (800) 494-9907**. The agent will guide you through the process of how to get reimbursed for your approved medical costs up to the limits of the plan. **For COVID-19 related information, please refer to the COVID-19 insert.**

**Policy on Alcohol** - **The legal drinking age in Florida is 21!** GradWeek does not promote or condone the use of alcohol to its tour participants! All local and federal laws are strictly enforced, and you will be held responsible if caught violating those laws. Students caught drinking on the hotel premises will be evicted by the hotel immediately with **no refund** and your parents will be notified!

**Money Wire Transfers** - Should you run out of money at your destination, GradWeek provides a money wire transfer service for those students who may need additional funds on-site. This service is **only available Monday through Friday from 8:30 am-3:00 pm PST**. If you need this service, have someone back home go to our website at [www.gradweek.com](http://www.gradweek.com) and print out the Wire Transfer Authorization form located under ABOUT US, then click on RESOURCES (Brochures & Forms) on our website. Please print and fill out the form completely and **EMAIL** it to [info@istours.com](mailto:info@istours.com) **BEFORE 3:00 PM** Pacific Standard Time, **Monday through Friday**.

The traveler receiving the money can pick up the cash with a photo ID from our 24-hour GradWeek staff at their hotel after 7:00 pm (Florida local time). The limit is \$300 and there is a \$25 service charge per wire transfer.

**Parents wishing to Contact their Son/Daughter - PLEASE READ HIGH IMPORTANCE INSERT!**



**Informational Documents** - Please visit our website at [www.gradweek.com](http://www.gradweek.com) under ABOUT US, then click on Resources (Brochures & Forms) to view all the valuable travel information and forms we provide including “Preparing for Travel” letter, Travel Tips, Destination Guides, any offered Action Pac and Travel Protection Insurance.

**Hotel:**

Shores of Panama  
9900 S Thomas Dr.  
Panama City Beach, FL 32408

**Phone Number and Web Site**

(888) 402-5155, press 3  
[www.shoresofpanama.com](http://www.shoresofpanama.com)

## PARENTS & TRAVELERS – PLEASE READ – HIGH IMPORTANCE!

**If your son or daughter are having an issue while at the destination, please do not call the corporate office – there are GradWeek Staff Members and a GradWeek Manager at the hotel to handle any on-site problems/issues that may arise.**

### **Parents wishing to Contact their Son/Daughter –**

If a parent needs to contact their son/daughter, the hotel phone numbers are listed on your Travel Tips. The hotels do not always list everyone in the room, so please make sure you know your student's roommate first & last names (listed on your trip itinerary and traveler's online account) before you call so you can be connected to the correct room.

**The corporate office cannot call the hotel on yours or anyone's behalf.** However, the Customer Service agents are available to answer general questions Monday through Friday from 8:30AM to 5:00 PM PST at (800) 448-4444. During our GradWeek program, there is an after-hours EMERGENCY line **ONLY in case of a medical or family emergency!** Calls NOT deemed an emergency will be returned during normal business hours.



## 2020 Coronavirus (COVID-19) Travel Information

### **PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION**

We are excited that you are traveling with us! Our goal during this time is that you not only have a great travel experience, but you do it safely and responsibly in the fight against spreading COVID-19. Following the guidelines and good practices will help reduce your chances of either contracting COVID-19 or spreading COVID-19.

#### **Bus Transportation:**

- The bus company may take each passenger's temperature prior to boarding to and from the destination.
- Passengers are required to wear protective masks for the entire time they are inside the bus.
- Coach Operators will be wearing protective masks for the entire duration of the trip.
- It is recommended that all passengers wear protective gloves for the entire time they are inside the bus.
- Buses will be thoroughly cleaned with disinfectants inside and out between charters, including all touch surfaces and air vents and filters.
- Buses will maintain alcohol-based hand sanitizer in motorcoach lavatories and passenger compartments.
- Buses will also maintain sanitizing wipes, disposable tissues, and disinfecting spray in every motorcoach.
- Bus coach operators are trained to screen passengers for symptoms during travel and to follow a strict protocol for isolating and separating any person exhibiting symptoms, from other passengers.

#### **General Practices during your trip:**

- Wash your hands OFTEN, for at least 20 seconds!
- When soap and water are not available, use a hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.
- Stay at least 6 feet away from others when possible! Space out those beach chairs!
- Wear your mask whenever you are in public!
- Cover coughs & sneezes - If you do not have a tissue, cough, or sneeze into your elbow & immediately wash your hands!
- Avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth!
- If you have a fever, cough or difficulty breathing, seek medical attention, and/or inform a GradWeek staff member IMMEDIATELY!
- Regularly clean hard surfaces.
- This means keep your condo clean!
- Drink only from your OWN cup – DO NOT share drinks!
- Relax, be safe, and get ready for the best week of your life!

#### **Hotel/Condominiums**

- Your condominium will be cleaned before your check-in.
- You are responsible for the cleaning of your condominium throughout your stay.
- GradWeek will have the buses go to Walmart for individual supplies on day 2 of your stay. You will have to check with GradWeek Staff once you arrive for Walmart's departure time. However, given the high demand for cleaning supplies during this time, we recommend bringing your own with you. Coordinate with your roommates – Clorox wipes, disinfectants, etc.
- Daily cleaning of your condominium is recommended!

#### **Release & Waiver**

- ***Travelers will be required to sign a Release and Waiver before boarding the Buses (or checking into the hotel if a hotel only traveler)!*** This is obviously a unique situation in our world's history. However, if we all do our part, act responsibly, and follow the guidelines, we can help reduce the spread of COVID-19 and keep us all healthy and safe!

*GradWeek*

*International Student Tours, Inc.*