

At Arkadaslik Yachting, our primary goal has always been the health and safety of our guests and crew. For this reason, we are implementing a few new policies and procedures due to the recent emergence of Covid-19. These will likely change over time, as we learn more about effectively managing the virus at sea.

Safety and Prevention

Our cleaning protocols have always been above standard – including frequent cleaning and sanitizing of common areas, daily cleaning and disinfection of all bathrooms, floor to ceiling wash down of cabins and common areas between trips, daily laundering of beach towels, use of a commercial laundry service for bed and bath linens, and following restaurant-level guidelines for food preparation and kitchen hygiene – and do not require revision.

Sadly, we are reverting to the use of single-use plastic water bottles during the 2020 season. While not as environmentally friendly as the re-useable polycarbonate bottles introduced last year, single use bottles reduce the possibility of viral exposure to both guests and crew.

We will continue to serve meals “family style” (i.e. everyone fills their plates from platters on the dining table) unless plated meals are requested.

While it is likely that crew will choose to wear masks and gloves when guests first arrive at the boat, healthy guests and crew are not required to wear masks or gloves, or observe social distancing while onboard. Crew will remind guests and each other to wash their hands frequently – including every time they board or disembark from the boat. Hand soap is provided in guest bathrooms and at sinks in the salon and kitchen area, and kolonya (alcohol-based disinfectant) is readily available in common areas.

To reduce possible contamination on the boat, our current “no shoes on deck” rule will be strictly enforced and guests will be asked to remove shoes at the bottom of the pasarella (gangway) before coming aboard. Guests with sensitive feet are reminded to bring clean, soft soled slippers or flip-flops for use on deck. (The teak gets hot!)

Outside visitors are not typically allowed on the boat during cruises. However, there are times when it is unavoidable (e.g. emergency repairs). In the event that a visitor is required to come aboard, health monitoring will be conducted and social distancing will be observed as much as practical. The visitor will be required to wear a mask and asked to wash / disinfect hands upon arrival and periodically for the duration of their stay.

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Personal Protective Equipment

Masks and gloves are provided by Arkadaslik Yachting for crew use, but guests are asked to bring their own masks and gloves for personal use – including transit to and from the boat and land excursions. A small supply of masks, gloves, face shields, disposable aprons and shoe covers are available on board for emergency use by anyone who needs them.

Monitoring for Public Health and Safety

In addition to the Transit Log currently required by the Harbour Master and Coast Guard, we will maintain a daily log recording the temperature and self-reported health status of each person on board the boat, including outside visitors. (A member of the crew will take temperatures of everyone on board with an infrared temperature gun each day.) This log will be shared with relevant authorities if requested.

The Captain will consult with authorities and/or personal contacts to assess the risk at each port of call in advance of arrival. If pandemic conditions occur which prevent safe travel on the planned route, possible options will be discussed with guests before altering course. However, as the Captain is ultimately responsible for the safety of the boat and crew, his decision regarding the itinerary is final.

International Travel

Travel between Turkey and Greece is currently suspended. Cruises to the Greek islands will only resume after both countries achieve normalization and the risk of quarantine or denial of entry to recreational yachts is negligible.

Action Plan if Illness is Suspected

Guests and crew are responsible for notifying the captain if they suspect exposure to the virus, or are experiencing any symptoms (sudden onset of illness, fever, coughing, or shortness of breath) that could put themselves, other guests, or the crew at risk.

In the event of suspected Covid-19 illness, the following steps will be implemented immediately:

1. The Captain will alert the Coast Guard and/or Emergency Sea Responders by telephone or VHS radio and proceed to harbour under their direction.

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2. The individual displaying symptoms will be quarantined in a guest cabin and asked to don a mask to minimize further spread of the virus. The cabin door will be closed, but windows will be opened to maximize ventilation in the cabin.
3. All other guests and crew will be required to don masks to minimize further potential exposure. (Guests are asked to bring masks for personal use, but Arkadaslik Yachting will have a few extra on hand for emergency use.)
4. Anyone entering the cabin with the isolated individual will be required to wear a mask, gloves, face shield, disposable apron, and shoe covers. Upon leaving the cabin, he/she will remove the protective equipment, double bag for disposal, and thoroughly wash hands with soap and warm water.
5. Upon arriving in harbour, the individual displaying symptoms of illness will be transferred to the relevant health authority for testing, care, and treatment. (Please note that valid health insurance is required for anyone visiting Turkey.)
6. The cabin used for isolation will then undergo complete disinfection / sanitization identical to the process used between trips, even if the cruise is on-going. The crew member(s) responsible for cleaning the cabin will wear and dispose of protective equipment as described above.
7. The on-going status of the cruise will be determined based on consultation between the Captain, relevant authorities and guests.

We hope that these new policies are completely unnecessary and that guests and crew enjoy a healthy and happy cruise season. However, we feel it is in everyone's best interests to be proactive in our approach. After all, in this matter, we are all in the same boat!

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