Google 3 Features: Help Travelers Plan Trips During Pandemic

(Courtesy Victoria Walker, The Points Guy)

With nearly 90 million Americans fully vaccinated against COVID-19, many people are beginning to plan their first trips since the onset of the pandemic.

Google says that searches for hotels reached a 10-year high this April, 2021 spurred by eager vacationers and the rapid reopening of major tourist destinations all over the world.

Searches for terms such as "where can I travel" and "travel restrictions by country" have also been popular.

To meet this demand, Google is launching several new tools to help travelers track restrictions, plan road trips and get inspired.

When you Google travel information like hotels or flights, you can already see travel advisories by destination. Google says it has updated this tool with even more information on travel restrictions, such as whether the destination requires a quarantine, a negative COVID-19 test result or proof of vaccination.

Google will also show you more than just flights. You can now filter destinations to find the best places for skiing, for instance, or see the ultimate beach getaway. And you can select the "flights only" feature in Travel Mode if you only want to see cities with an airport. Some Google Flights results, for example, will show you locations without access to an airport, or where one is farther away, so Google is making it easier to search for destinations with airports only.

But not everyone is ready to fly or hop on a train, of course, so road trips have become extremely popular during the pandemic. Google will now show you places, such as parks or rest stops, that you can add as a stop on your itinerary. You can then send the directions to your phone via text, email, or the Google Maps app.

These tools will likely prove helpful for travelers who are preparing to venture out for the first time and discovering a very unfamiliar travel landscape.

For instance, the European Union is reportedly planning to reopen to fully vaccinated American tourists this summer. If you're eager to fly abroad and return to one of your favorite countries in Europe, Google's new features can help you track important entry requirements, find flights to the right city and help you plot a road trip upon arrival.