



U.S. Lifts Travel Restrictions for 33 Countries ... But Not Canada?

Description

It's been 18 months since the Canadian-U.S. border closed, and, by the looks of it, it will be at least 19 before it opens.

On Monday, the U.S. announced it would keep its borders to Canada and Mexico closed until at least October 21. For many Canadians, that was a major shock, especially since Canada reopened its border to the U.S. on August 9. You'd think reciprocation would be in order, and, in fact, for 33 countries (excluding Canada), it was. On the same day it announced extended border restrictions, the U.S. said it would lift travel restriction from the European Schengen region, Brazil, China, Iran, India, South Africa, Britain, and Ireland.

So, what the heck, America? What gives? Before we get too emotional over this (and trust me — I feel the frustration), let's take a look at the facts.

Travel restrictions will be lifted in November

First off, keep in mind, the U.S. hasn't lifted air restrictions for the 33 countries just yet. They only *announced* they would lift restrictions in November. It's quite possible the White House released this news strategically, given that Biden made his first U.N. Assembly General speech the day after.

For Canadians, I think this could give us a sliver of hope. The White House extended its border closure to October 21. That means if the U.S. is easing air restrictions in November (in theory, at least), they could still very well ease border restrictions for Canada around the same time. And with the heavy outburst from Canadians, as well as from many American politicians, it's very possible we'll see the U.S. border opening in November or at least by the end of the year.

Can you travel to the U.S.?

Of course you can. Canadians have long been able to travel to the U.S., so long as they fly into a U.S. city and provide evidence of a negative COVID-19 test (or medical documentation stating that they've

recovered). The problem is with land travel.

For Canadians who live at the border, air travel isn't convenient. After all, if you live in Hamilton, and you want to visit family in Buffalo, you have to drive to Toronto, take a flight to Buffalo, then rent a car or hope your relatives will pick you up. That turns what could be an hour drive into a four- to five-hour fiasco. That's not exactly ideal, right?

How to make the most of it

First off, if you live at the border, and you're negatively affected by the U.S.'s decision, the best thing you can do is make your voice heard. One plausible reason the U.S. has yet to open its land border is simply that they haven't created guidelines on how to open it properly. The U.S. has a lot on its plate right now (not surprising, right?), and unless we voice our frustrations to our politicians, the White House may not sit down and write out that procedure.

Secondly, from a financial standpoint, if you're forced to buy plane tickets, you might as well earn mounds and mounds of miles off of them.

In fact, if you see buying plane tickets in the future, now might be the right time to take out a [travel rewards card](#) or [cash-back card](#), especially one that has a hefty welcome bonus. By spending a certain amount of money within a few months, you could easily snag a few hundred dollars (possibly more) in airline miles. That can, at the very least, help you pay for future airfare, especially if the border stays closed past November.

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