

IS MY HOT AIR BALLOON RIDE GOING AHEAD?



HINTS AND TIPS

For calling your flight information line



BOOKED A MORNING FLIGHT?

You will need to call your flight information line at 11pm the night before your flight.

Throughout the evening, our pilots receive periodic updates from various specialist meteorological forecasters, giving them the most up to date forecast for the following morning.

The more up to date the weather forecast, the more accurate it is.

If a balloon pilot confirms the flight too early, the forecast is less accurate and it will increase the chance of you being cancelled when you get to the launch site.

AN 11PM CALL ON TOP OF AN EARLY START? ...BUT I REALLY LOVE MY SLEEP

We do too!

But ensuring you have a wonderful, unforgettable and safe balloon ride is even more important to us.

If you really do need your eight hours a night, going to bed early and setting an alarm to wake you up just before 11pm to check the flight line works for a lot of passengers.

(Just make sure you **DO** set the alarm - and maybe set more than one if you need to so you don't miss the update!)

Always make sure you **listen to the entire message** from your pilot.

If your flight is cancelled, enjoy the rest of the night's sleep.

If it is called on, your pilot will give you all the information you need, including the location and time you need to be there in the morning.

...I'M ACTUALLY A BIT OF A NIGHT OWL

If you're still usually awake by 11pm anyway, then of course just give the flight line a call before you head to bed.

Our only tip here is if your flight is going ahead and you usually enjoy a morning lie-in, make sure you set sufficient alarms to **wake up in time**.

BOOKED AN EVENING FLIGHT?

Please call your flight information line at **2pm on the day** of your balloon ride.

Our pilots again receive regular weather forecast updates throughout the morning on which they will make their decision.

Again, always listen to the entire message from your pilot.

If your flight is cancelled, then the afternoon is yours to do what you want.

If it is called on, listen carefully to the instructions from your pilot, including where and when to meet that evening.

! WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW? !

ALWAYS PLAN AHEAD!

- Always listen to the **full message** our pilot leaves on the flight information line - if you hang up half-way through, you may miss important information such as a possible moving of the flight or the time to meet.
- Whether you have booked a morning or an evening balloon ride, always **plan your journey** to the launch site well in advance.
- Do this for both the launch site you have booked for and for each of the back-up launch sites also listed on your booking confirmation.
- Make sure you know how you will get there and how long it will take to ensure you leave in plenty of time.
- We recommend you allow at least **3-4 hours** for the entire experience from when you arrive at the launch site.
- There's more about our back-up sites and why we use them below.

WHY MIGHT I FLY FROM A BACK-UP SITE - I DIDN'T BOOK FROM THERE

We use back-up sites because having them as an option to fly from increases the chance of your balloon ride going ahead.

Sometimes the weather overall is safe for a balloon flight but factors such as the wind direction on the day means you would head over an area with few (if any!) safe landing options. In this instance, we would move it to a back-up site rather than cancelling.

If there is restricted airspace in a particular direction, for example an airport or military base, or a particularly sensitive area such as some nature reserves, we would also look to avoid flying over those areas if possible.

Or the wind direction and speed on that particular day from your original booked launch site might mean your balloon would head towards the coast and risk heading out to sea - not something any of us want to happen. Our pilots might be the best in the world at flying balloons, but they're not ship captains in their spare time!

Having the option to move a flight to one of our back up sites when the weather is flyable, but not from your original booked site, really does increase the chances of your balloon ride going ahead.

Please do also note that if your flight is moved to a back-up site, you **MUST** still attend or your flight vouchers will become void.

WHY CAN'T WE CONFIRM OR CANCEL FLIGHTS ANY EARLIER?

Safe hot air ballooning is fully dependent on the weather on the day you have booked.

If weather conditions are not safe to fly our balloons, we won't fly.

For our pilots to make their decision on whether or not it is safe for them to fly, they need to have the most accurate, specialist forecasted weather reports.

That means forecasts as close to the time they want to fly as possible.

For a morning flight, a final specialist forecast is released late at night.

So while the earlier forecasts that evening will give our pilot an idea whether he or she will be able to fly the next morning, they still need that final report in order to make their decision, as forecasts can and do change between updates.

I STILL HAVE QUESTIONS...

CHECK OUT OUR FAQ SECTION HERE - www.virginballoonflights.co.uk/faq

SEE YOU IN THE SKIES! #TAKELIFEHIGHER