

verbierfestival

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academy safety faq

Visit verbierfestival.com/en/academy/safety-faq for updates related to the Covid-19 pandemic and Verbier Festival Academy programmes.



TRAVEL & TESTING

Do I need to be vaccinated to come to Switzerland?

No, it is not mandatory. But we recommend that you be vaccinated if at all possible.

What official documents do I need to complete before travelling to Switzerland?

Complete the electronic entry form at swissplf.admin.ch on a computer or smartphone before or during travel. Once you've filled out the form you'll be emailed a QR code as confirmation. Have this code ready for inspection when you enter Switzerland. If you are controlled you can show the QR code on your smartphone or produce a printed confirmation. The entry form must be completed by all persons before entry into Switzerland.

Exception: If you're entering from a region on the border with Switzerland you don't need to fill out the entry form.

What testing is required before and upon arrival in Switzerland by air?

As of 7 April, if you enter Switzerland by air, you must be able to show proof of a negative test at two different times: Upon boarding your flight and at the Swiss border. The requirements for the two controls are different.

1. Boarding control: The airlines systematically check your negative coronavirus test result prior to boarding. The results of the following tests are permissible for this control:

- A PCR test carried out within 72 hours prior to departure
- A rapid antigen test carried out within 24 hours prior to departure

If you are unable to show proof of a negative test result during the control, you are, generally speaking, not permitted to board the aircraft.

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2. Swiss border control: Customs in the airport's transit zone check the negative test result on a random basis. For this control, a result brought from the following test is permissible:

- A PCR test carried out within 72 hours prior to departure

If you are checked and are unable to show proof of a negative PCR test result because you took a rapid antigen test for boarding, you must take a PCR or rapid antigen test again in Switzerland as quickly as possible. In such a case you will receive instructions from the border patrol.

If I'm already vaccinated or if I have a certificate of immunity, do I need to be tested upon arrival in Switzerland by air (or upon arrival directly in Verbier by car, bus, or train)?

All Festival badgeholders (artists, speakers, volunteers, staff) will be tested upon arrival, regardless of whether they have been vaccinated or hold a certificate of immunity.

- **Arrival in Geneva by air:** you will be tested upon arrival by the Verbier Festival Covid Safety team at the Geneva Airport.
- **Arrival in Zurich by air:** you will need to make your way to Verbier by train (closest station is Le Châble (via Martigny)) and then on to Verbier by bus or 'télécabine' (cable car), where you will be tested.
- **Arrival in Verbier directly by car, bus, train or télécabine:** you will be tested upon your arrival in Verbier.

If you test negative: you may carry on with your activities. All those aged 18 and older who arrive in Geneva will travel by train to Le Châble (via Martigny), where they will transfer to a bus or télécabine to head up the mountain to Verbier. All those under age 18 will travel to Verbier by a bus chartered by the Festival.

If you test positive: You will be transported alone with a driver to Verbier, where you will be isolated for ten days in the Festival's Covid Chalet. Costs for accommodation will be covered by the Festival. Any medical costs will be your responsibility. All visitors to Switzerland must obtain health and accident insurance prior to their arrival in the country, which is valid for the duration of their stay.

What about additional or ongoing testing?

If you have not been vaccinated against Covid-19, you will be tested a second time, three days after your arrival in Verbier. After that, you will be tested once a week or more during your stay in Verbier.

If you have been vaccinated, you will only be tested again during your stay if you show symptoms of Covid.

Who pays for testing?

While you are in Switzerland, all testing will be undertaken at no cost to you. Academy students are responsible for all costs exceeding CHF 50 for testing prior to your arrival in Switzerland. Present proof of payment upon arrival in Verbier for reimbursement.



QUARANTINE

Will there be a quarantine period upon my arrival in Switzerland? And if so, what dates should I plan to travel?

It is still too soon to tell. The list of countries or areas with an increased risk of infection is regularly updated: www.covid19.admin.ch/en/international/quarantine?mapZoom=world

By summer, we are optimistic that the number of countries/regions on this list will decrease even further. For now, however, unless there are no penalties charged by an airline for changes to flight reservations, the Festival has decided not to book any travel until mid to late-May (this applies to VFO musicians for which the Festival makes all reservations). For musicians of the VFJO, Soloist & Ensembles Programme and Atelier Lyrique, who make their own flight bookings, we recommend you also wait until mid to late-May to make your reservations. We recommend you investigate what Covid-cancellation insurance is available with your airline.

If you are coming from a country or region deemed 'at-risk', we recommend you keep your schedule clear for the ten days prior the start of your Academy programme in case you are required to quarantine.

How long is the quarantine period?

For those entering Switzerland from a country or region 'at-risk', there is presently a quarantine of ten days. People who do not observe the quarantine requirement face heavy fines (up to CHF 10,000).

If there is quarantine period, will associated costs (accommodation and meals) be covered by the Festival?

Yes.

If I arrive from a country or region 'at-risk' but I am already vaccinated or hold a certificate of immunity, will I need to quarantine?

We expect more information soon from the Swiss government about quarantine requirements for those who arrive from a country or region 'at-risk' but who are already vaccinated. It is unlikely that these individuals will be required to quarantine.

What if I've been in close contact with someone who tests positive for Covid?

In this case, you would be tested and put in quarantine for five to seven days, at which point you would be tested a second time. If this test is negative, you would be able to leave quarantine.



HOUSING

In all housing situations, it is important to use common sense! Wash your hands, maintain physical distance, wear a mask, keep windows open and rooms well-ventilated.

VFA Soloists, Ensembles, Singers, VFO Conducting Fellows

These students are housed in single rooms in apartments, chalets, or bedrooms in homes of host families. Students under age 18 may come to Verbier with a parent, in which case, housing will be provided for both student and parent (where possible).

Should you be living with host family, your host(s) will be subject to the Festival's regular testing measures (i.e. one test upon arrival in Verbier, a second test three days later, and then once per week thereafter unless they have been vaccinated).

VFO

VFO musicians are normally housed two people per room.

VFJO, VFJO Conducting Fellow

VFJO musicians are housed in chalets of 8-10 people with two students per room. The group is supervised by Altitude Summer Camps.



DINING & CANTEEN

The rules applicable to hotels, restaurants and/or canteens in Switzerland will apply, this includes physical distancing restrictions, room capacities as well as limits to the number people seated together at a dining table. These rules are evolving.

VFA Soloists, Ensembles, Singers

VFA musicians are on their own for breakfasts and dinners. The entire group comes together for daily lunches at a restaurant in the center of town in order that daily announcements can be made. Multiple seating times may need to be implemented. Box lunches and picnics are likely.

VFO, VFO Conducting Fellows

Normally the VFO operates a canteen at Hotel Montpellier for lunches and dinners. Capacity restrictions may require multiple seating times.

VFJO, VFJO Conducting Fellow

Breakfasts and dinners are served at the VFJO chalets; lunches are provided at the Collège de Bagnes where training/rehearsals take place each day.



AT WORK

Performances, Masterclasses, Open-Rehearsals

Capacities have been reduced by 1/3 in Festival venues and physical distancing measures put into place. All public events (performances, open-rehearsals, masterclasses, talks, etc.) require a reservation with ticket for traceability purposes. Concerts have been shortened and will be presented without intermission. Venues will be well ventilated and disinfected between each concert, rehearsal and masterclass. Festivalgoers will be required to wear masks inside all Festival venues.

Musicians should wear masks whenever possible during open-rehearsals and masterclasses (within the limits of allowing them to practice/perform their craft). The choice of wearing a mask during performances is left to each musician.

When distancing rules cannot be observed, additional protective measures will be taken (plexiglass barriers). Adequate ventilation will be provided during rehearsals and masterclasses to allow air renewal.

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Hand sanitizer will be easily accessible and musicians will be asked to regularly disinfect surfaces around them.

Closed Orchestra Rehearsals, Masterclasses, Workshops, Talks

Access to 'closed' rehearsals, classes, workshops and talks is reserved exclusively for those scheduled for attendance or participation. Physical distancing (1.5 metres / 5 feet) must be respected and masks worn whenever possible (within in the limits of allowing the musician to practice/perform his/her craft).

When distancing rules cannot be observed, additional protective measures will be taken (plexiglass barriers). Adequate ventilation will be provided during rehearsals and masterclasses to allow air renewal.

Hand sanitizer will be easily accessible and musicians will be asked to regularly disinfect surfaces around them.

Musician Positions On-Stage

Directions for movement on stage and 'spikes' for musician seating/location will be clearly marked on stage with physical distancing measures taken wherever possible.

Wind and brass players (especially flautists) will be placed at a distance from other musicians where acoustically possible; acrylic or plexiglass panels may be installed.

Singers will be positioned downstage for their performances; the first row in the auditorium will be removed in order to allow a distance of five (5) metres between the stage and the audience. Singers will also be positioned at a safe distance from other musicians on stage whenever possible.

Backstage at Performances

Safety measures related to backstage capacity and access are still in development.



AT PLAY

How can I have fun in Verbier with all these safety measures in place?

You can have loads of fun in Verbier this summer and still act responsibly. We all need to do our part to protect ourselves and those around us. Wear your mask, wash your hands, keep your distance ... but also enjoy the amazing nature that Verbier has to offer by getting out into the fresh mountain air!



OTHER

What if I require medical care in Switzerland?

Medical services are available in the town of Verbier. There are two hospitals in the region (Martigny and Sion). Medical expenses are not covered by the Festival. All visitors to Switzerland must obtain health and accident insurance prior to their arrival in the country, which is valid for the duration of their stay.

I want to spend time with a family member or friend who will be visiting the Festival. Do they also need to be tested?

Any external guests with whom you will have close or prolonged contact during your stay will need to register as an Official Festival 'Visitor' and obtain a Festival badge. All badgeholders are required to be tested upon arrival at Geneva airport (or in Verbier) and will be subject to the same testing rules as all other Festival badgeholders. The protocol for registering your guest will be communicated at a later date.