

Italy reduces quarantine for UK travellers

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Italy will allow passengers from the United Kingdom, Austria and Israel to undergo a shorter, five-day quarantine on entering the country under new regulations that take effect on Tuesday.

From April 7-30, these travellers can forgo a two-week quarantine to

enter Italy.

The three countries have been included in a list of over 30 countries, most in the European Union, in which the mandatory quarantine is shortened to five days from 14.

The new rules take effect Tuesday reflect, in part, the progress of vaccination campaigns in Israel and Britain.

In Austria, however, the two-week quarantine is still in effect for those from the Tyrol, where the South African coronavirus variant has been circulating.

People from countries on the list with fewer restrictions still have to submit a negative test taken within 48 hours of arrival in Italy, and take a second test following their five-day quarantine.

In January, Italy banned travellers who had stayed in, or passed through the UK as the new, more infectious British variant of coronavirus gained traction.

Arrivals from EU countries were still allowed, but on March 30, Rome initiated the five-day quarantine rule for these countries too.

Italians spent Easter under lockdown as all of the country was made a restricted "red" zone.

As of Tuesday, some regions will return to "orange", with slightly loosened restrictions on movement, but bars and restaurants remain shut, with only take-away service allowed.

The first country in Europe to face the full force of the coronavirus pandemic, Italy has so far reported more than 111,000 COVID-19

related deaths.

Britain has set a tentative date of May 17 to relaunch foreign travel as it cautiously emerges from lockdown.

Israel reopened bars, restaurants, gyms and movie theatres last month, using a green pass system as more than half of the population received jabs.

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