

Americans and Europeans soak up the sun amid new rules

May 24 2020, by Geir Moulson



Sunbathers catch the last rays of evening light, amid the coronavirus pandemic, Saturday, May 23, 2020, in Myrtle Beach, S.C. (Jason Lee/The Sun News via AP)

Europeans and Americans soaked up the sun where they could Sunday,

taking advantage of the first holiday weekend since coronavirus restrictions were eased, while European governments grappled with how and when to let in foreign travelers in hopes of salvaging the summer tourist season.

Beach patrols and police watched to make sure people abided by the social-distancing rules and spread out on the sand and at parks.

The U.S. is on track to surpass 100,000 coronavirus deaths in the next few days, while Europe has seen over 169,000 dead, according to a tally by Johns Hopkins University.

The New York Times marked the horror by devoting Sunday's entire front page to a long list of names of those who have died in the U.S. The headline: "An Incalculable Loss."

President Donald Trump played golf at one of his courses during the Memorial Day weekend—the unofficial start of summer—as he urged states to ease their lockdowns.

Across Europe, a mishmash of travel restrictions appears to be on the horizon, often depending on what passports visitors carry. Germany, France and other European countries aim to open their borders for European travel in mid-June. But it isn't clear when intercontinental travel will resume.

Spain, one of the hardest-hit countries and also one of the world's top destinations for international travelers, says it won't reopen for foreign tourists until July. To boost the economy, the country's leader has encouraged Spaniards to start planning their vacations for late June inside Spain.



Cocoa Beach, Fla., is packed with Memorial Day beachgoers on Saturday, May 23, 2021. The beaches are open for business again during the coronavirus epidemic. (Stephen M. Dowell/Orlando Sentinel via AP)

"Come July, we will allow the arrival of foreign tourists to Spain under safe conditions," Prime Minister Pedro Sánchez said. "We will guarantee that tourists are not at risk and that they don't represent a risk" to Spain.

In Germany, domestic tourists will be allowed to return Monday to the country's Baltic Sea coast and to hotels in Berlin.

But tourism campaigns will require a new approach.

"We don't think people want closely packed big-city bustle at the moment," Burkhard Kieker, the chief of visitBerlin, told RBB Inforadio. His agency has launched a campaign showing "how much green space

and how much water there is" in Berlin.

In France, families flocked to the beach at La Grande Motte on the Mediterranean, swimming and sunbathing with 8-square-meter (86-square-foot) spaces marked off with ropes and wooden stakes to keep people apart. Reservations were required, and there was already a two-day waiting list.



Darien Foxx, of Virginia, sun bathes on the back of his car while he waits on the rest of his party to check into a hotel amid the coronavirus pandemic, Saturday, May 23, 2020, in Myrtle Beach, S.C. (Jason Lee/The Sun News via AP)

Other beaches in France have also reopened, but only for exercise, with

visitors not allowed to sit or lie down.

In Paris, where all city parks remain closed, locals soaked up the sun along the embankments of the Seine River and lounged on ledges outside the Tuileries Gardens. In some spots, people sat safely spaced apart. Elsewhere, groups of maskless teens crowded together, shrugging off the rules.

Beginning Monday, France is relaxing its border restrictions, allowing in migrant workers and family visitors from other European countries. But is calling for a voluntary 14-day quarantine for people arriving from Britain and Spain, because those countries imposed a similar requirement on the French.

Italy, which plans to open regional and international borders on June 3 in a bid to boost tourism, is only now allowing locals back to beaches in their own regions—with restrictions.



Chairs stand with the prescribed safety distance on a beach of G'hren on the island of R'gen, Mecklenburg-Western, Germany, Friday, May 22, 2020. After the shutdown as a coronavirus protection measure in mid-March, the tourism industry in Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania is starting again step by step. From May 25, 2020 guests from other federal states will again be allowed to travel to the north-east. (Jens B'ttner/dpa via AP)

In the northwestern Liguria region, people were allowed a dip in the sea and a walk along the shore, but no sunbathing. In Savona, a dozen people were fined for violating sunbathing bans. Rimini, on Italy's east coast, attracted beach-goers beginning at dawn, and many sat in widely spaced groups. Still, authorities had to work at enforcing distancing on a popular beach in Palermo.

"We cannot forget that the virus exists and is circulating," Deputy Health Minister Pierpaolo Sileri told Sky TG24. "Even if the numbers of new cases are low, we must respect the rules."

For the first time in months, the faithful gathered in the Vatican's St. Peter's Square for the traditional Sunday papal blessing, but they kept their distance from one another. Some 2,000 Muslims gathered for Eid al-Fitr prayers at a sports complex in the Paris suburb of Levallois-Perret, spaced 1 meter apart and wearing masks.



People gather at Echo Park Lake, Saturday, May 23, 2020, in Los Angeles during the coronavirus pandemic. California Gov. Gavin Newsom has approved 45 of California's 58 counties to reopen some businesses since May 8 when he loosened his original mid-March stay-at-home order. (AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill)



People utilize the Echo Park Lake recreation area Saturday, May 23, 2020, in Los Angeles during the coronavirus pandemic. California Gov. Gavin Newsom has approved 45 of California's 58 counties to reopen some businesses since May 8 when he loosened his original mid-March stay-at-home order. (AP Photo/Mark J. Terrill)



People practice physical distancing as they enjoy the warm weather at Mooney's Bay Beach in Ottawa, Ontario, Saturday, May 23, 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic. (Justin Tang/The Canadian Press via AP)



People visit Pensacola Beach in Pensacola, Fla., Saturday, May 23, 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic. (David Grunfeld/The Advocate via AP)



Kevin Heine relaxes on a mostly empty beach Saturday, May 23, 2020, in Belmar, N.J., during the coronavirus pandemic. (AP Photo/John Minchillo)



Lifeguards keep watch at a mostly empty beach Saturday, May 23, 2020, in Belmar, N.J., during the coronavirus pandemic. (AP Photo/John Minchillo)



A runner passes along a mostly empty beach, Saturday, May 23, 2020, in Belmar, N.J. (AP Photo/John Minchillo)



People gather on the beach for the Memorial Day weekend in Port Aransas, Texas, Saturday, May 23, 2020. Beachgoers are being urged to practice social distancing to guard against COVID-19. (AP Photo/Eric Gay)



Pope Francis delivers his blessing from the window of his studio overlooking St. Peter's Square, at the Vatican, Sunday, May 24, 2020. For the first time in months, well-spaced faithful gathered in St. Peter's Square for the traditional Sunday papal blessing, casting their gaze at the window where the pope normally addresses the faithful, since the square had been closed due to anti-coronavirus lockdown measures. (AP Photo/Andrew Medichini)



Muslim women perform during an Eid al Fitr prayer despite concerns of the new coronavirus outbreak, at a mosque in Lhokseumawe in the deeply conservative Aceh province, Indonesia, Sunday, May 24, 2020. Millions of people in the world's largest Muslim nation are marking a muted and gloomy religious festival of Eid al-Fitr, the end of the fasting month of Ramadan - a usually joyous three-day celebration that has been significantly toned down as coronavirus cases soar. (AP Photo/Zik Maulana)



People enjoy Pensacola Beach in Pensacola, Fla., Saturday, May 23, 2020, during the coronavirus pandemic. (David Grunfeld/The Advocate via AP)



This photo taken with drone shows Kashmiri Muslims offer Eid prayers in the premises of a residential building in Srinagar, Indian controlled Kashmir, Sunday, May 24, 2020. The holiday of Eid al-Fitr, the end of the fasting month of Ramadan, a usually joyous three-day celebration has been significantly toned down as coronavirus cases soar. (AP Photo/Dar Yasin)



Muslims offer the Eid al Fitr prayer despite concerns of the coronavirus outbreak at Al Mashun Grand Mosque in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia, Sunday, May 24, 2020. Millions of people in the world's largest Muslim nation are marking a muted and gloomy religious festival of Eid al-Fitr, the end of the fasting month of Ramadan—a usually joyous three-day celebration that has been significantly toned down as coronavirus cases soar. (AP Photo/Binsar Bakkara)



A health worker in a protective suit checks the temperature of worshippers prior to entering Al Mashun Grand Mosque's compound to attend an Eid al Fitr prayer amid concerns of coronavirus outbreak in Medan, North Sumatra, Indonesia, Sunday, May 24, 2020. Millions of people in the world's largest Muslim nation are marking a muted and gloomy religious festival of Eid al-Fitr, the end of the fasting month of Ramadan - a usually joyous three-day celebration that has been significantly toned down as coronavirus cases soar. (AP Photo/Binsar Bakkara)



This aerial photo shows Muslims performing during an Eid al-Fitr prayer despite concerns of the new coronavirus outbreak, at Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in Banda Aceh in the deeply conservative Aceh province, Indonesia, Sunday, May 24, 2020. Millions of people in the world's largest Muslim nation are marking a muted and gloomy religious festival of Eid al-Fitr, the end of the fasting month of Ramadan - a usually joyous three-day celebration that has been significantly toned down as coronavirus cases soar. (AP Photo/Heri Juanda)



Muslims wearing face masks attend the Eid al-Fitr prayers outside a mosque in Gaza City, Sunday, May. 24, 2020. Millions of people in the world's largest Muslim nation are marking a muted and gloomy religious festival of Eid al-Fitr, the end of the fasting month of Ramadan—a usually joyous three-day celebration that has been significantly toned down as coronavirus cases soar. (AP Photo/Khalil Hamra)

Beachside communities in England urged Londoners and others to stay away after rules were eased to allow people to drive any distance for exercise or recreation. The southern coastal city of Brighton said: "Wish you were here—but not just yet." Wales kept up its "Later" tourism campaign, reminding people that its hotels, restaurants and tourist sites are still closed.

In the U.S., restrictions have been eased state by state, though hundreds

of people are still dying from COVID-19 every day. New Orleans stirred back to life as some of its famed restaurants and businesses opened for the first time in over two months. In California, where many businesses and recreational activities are reopening, officials in Los Angeles County said they will maintain tight restrictions until July 4.

New York state on Sunday reported its lowest number of daily [coronavirus](#) deaths—84—in many weeks in what Gov. Andrew Cuomo described as a critical benchmark.

Worldwide, more than 5.3 million people have been infected and 342,000 have died, according to the Johns Hopkins tally that experts say undercounts the true toll.

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