



# Rocky Mountain Balloon Adventures

## Passenger Awareness Form Including Release of Liability

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Welcome to the wonderful world of ballooning! It is a world filled with beauty, excitement and adventure. Please read this form so you can learn more about this sport. We hope your experience will be a most pleasurable one.

With any form of aviation, there is certain risk - as there has been from the time man first conquered gravity and left the ground. It is important that each passenger understand the critical aspect of flight, including the chance of personal injury or loss of property.

In each flight, there are three key elements of safety as follows:

**1. Weather:** Ballooning is strictly a fair-weather sport. Assuming good visibility, the key consideration is wind speed. Generally, a launch is not feasible when the winds exceed six (6) knots. Since the winds are lighter and more stable during the morning hours and tend to gradually increase, we prefer to launch soon after sunrise before they become too strong for a safe landing. If weather conditions cause a cancellation, we'll be happy to refund or reschedule flights.

**2. Equipment:** The important considerations here are the structural integrity of the balloon and heat system, which gives the balloon its lift. The balloon in which we fly is maintained in accordance with FAA standards. In addition, before every flight, we take all reasonable precautions to ensure that the entire system is functioning properly.

**3. Pilot Judgment and Control:** Your pilot is fully certified by the FAA as a commercial pilot and qualifies to carry passengers in hot air balloons. Because of the absence of any directional control in a hot air balloon, landing sites are limited to locations in the direct path of the balloon. Actual contact with the ground may be hazardous if a rapid decent is required due to a small landing area. Upon making contact with the ground at moderate wind speeds, the wind's natural effect on the balloon may cause the basket to tip over horizontally and drag to a stop. It is during such a landing that risk is the

greatest, and it is important that you hold on tightly to avoid bumping into objects in the basket or other passengers. Normally, however; we can gently glide into the landing site at moderate decent and come to an upright stop with only a few, if any, light bumps. You are welcome to bring camera equipment along on the flight, but because of the possibility of a bumpy landing, you do so at your own risk. We can't be responsible for damage to your personal property.

**How should we dress for the balloon flight?** In the spring and summer, the days start cool but warm considerably by mid-morning. Therefore, you should dress in layers that can be easily removed as the day warms up. Please wear sturdy walking shoes but no high heels, sandals or shorts as you never know where we might land.

In the fall and winter months, dress in layers like you are going to play outside for several hours. Hats, gloves, and warm footwear are very important. The heat given off from the balloon will help to keep you warm. If there is snow on the ground, you will want to dress accordingly.

**Is the pilot required to have a license?** Yes. We are commercially licensed by the FAA, and the balloon is a Federally Registered Aircraft.

**Where, does the balloon go? How far does It travel?** Each day is different. Balloons can only go in the direction of the wind. However, in Pagosa Springs, we often have "Box Winds," meaning all 4 directions are present at different altitudes. Some days we may travel 10-15 miles, some days only 2-3 miles.

**Isn't It cold or windy in the balloon?** Not at all. In fact, the balloon moves at wind speed instead of being an obstacle to it, therefore; we feel no wind whatsoever. The burners used to fly the balloon radiate quite a bit of heat, so it is not cold at all.

**How high does the balloon fly?** Anywhere from treetop height to 3000 feet depending upon the direction and speed of the upper-level winds.

**How do you know where the balloon will land?** A few minutes prior to landing, the pilot will radio the anticipated landing site to the chase crew.

**How do you get back?** Since the winds seldom allow us to fly back to the exact launch site, the chase crew follows behind. They assist in our landing and help to pack up.

**What is the balloon made of?** The envelope fabric is ripstop nylon, like a parachute. The gondola is marine plywood floor with wicker sides. The support system is Kevlar cable.

**What kind of fuel is used?** Good ol' stinky propane.

**Who can go ballooning?** We do ask that our passengers be at least 5 years of age. So far, our most senior passenger was 96 years of age, but there is no upper age limit. We have been able to accommodate several passengers in wheel chairs and others with limited mobility. Please call us if you need more details.

**How long will we be out?** You will need to allow 3 to 3 1/2 hours total time for the adventure. If you schedule a half-hour flight, you will fly 30 minutes and be part of the chase crew for 30 minutes. Our mornings conclude with a unique talk on the history of ballooning, presentation of a personalized flight certificate, a 200-year old champagne ceremony carried over from the earliest days of ballooning, and muffins.

**Where do we meet and when?** We meet at 538 Village Drive beside the tennis courts. All flights are early morning flights. Exact time will be emailed to you.

**Other suggestions:** If you are bringing a camera, check your batteries. Ballooning is a participation sport! We love to show how the system is assembled. We encourage everyone to get as much "hands-on" experience as possible. However, please leave the flying to the pilot. If you have health problems, leave the lifting, pulling, etc. to the pilot and crew. If you have any additional questions, please call your pilot, Mike Marchand, 970-946-2549.

We hope this information is helpful to you and that it provides an understanding of the potential risk involved. Since it is impossible to guarantee against adverse weather conditions, mechanical failure or landing conditions, we must ask that you accept such risks, which are inherent in all flights. While it is important that you understand what is involved in a flight, it is our sincere

hope that this does not discourage you from flying in a hot air balloon. Rather, we believe that by having a greater understanding of the sport, it will enhance your enjoyment and appreciation of the unique adventure. We look forward to meeting with you and to having an exciting ballooning experience. So that we may be sure you understand and assume these risks, we ask you to indicate so by completing and signing this form.

PRINT NAME

Age/Weight

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact \_\_\_\_\_

I have read this form and understand the risk in a balloon flight. I accept such risk and hereby release Rocky Mountain Balloon Adventures, LLC and their pilots and crew from any liability arising out of such flight or any activities directly or indirectly related to it.

Sign/Date

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Rocky Mountain Balloon Adventures, LLC is owned and operated by Mike Marchand.