

# What Your Travel Agent Wants You to Know

## **1) Our careers are based on knowing things, places and people you don't know.**

We have spent most of our careers establishing and building relationships with our supplier and destination counterparts, so that our clients can enjoy exclusive access, VIP treatment and special amenities wherever and whenever they travel. In some cases these benefits are complementary to the traveler – just one more way travel advisors provide superior value.

## **2) We know the value of your vacation time and how to protect it.**

If you can't afford to lose everything you've paid for your trip – for example, if you fall and break your leg two weeks before you are supposed to travel - you need to buy travel insurance. Being young and healthy doesn't mean you don't need insurance. Your U.S. health insurance may not offer medical coverage outside the U.S. Travel insurance for unexpected emergencies regardless of your age or health.

## **3) We will be honest if you ask our opinion on a resort, destination, hotel or cruise ship.**

We rely on our personal experience, not reviews on Web sites from people we don't know. If we haven't been there - we usually have a colleague in our travel networks who has and can provide first-hand feedback.

## **4) It's all about YOU!**

The more information you can give us about your preferences and interests, the better. We can tailor tours towards your interests.

For example, we have created a Black American history tour of Paris that chronicles African American life in Paris since the dawn of the Jazz Age that is rarely found in the regular guidebooks to Paris. It is a fascinating look at the influence of Paris on African American music, literature, and culture and the contributions of African Americans to Parisian life. Alongside Ernest Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, and Henry Miller there was an avant-garde and highly knit community of African Americans who found in Paris the artistic, racial and emotional freedom denied them back home. The writers James Baldwin, Richard Wright, and Langston Hughes; the jazz musicians Miles Davis, Charlie Parker, and Sidney Bechet; the artists Henry Ossawa Tanner, and Lois Mailou Jones; and entertainers like the legendary performer, Josephine Baker and the meeting grounds such as Bricktop's jazzy nightclub. We even venture out of Paris by train to visit Josephine Baker's former castle.

## **5) When it comes to logistics, we have your best interest at heart.**

Sometimes there are "cheaper" options but if we don't mention them to you there is a reason and the price saved is truly not worth it. The cheaper option might not be the best value for the travel experience you desire.

**6) We can make magic happen, but don't ask us to beg to my reps for help when you need to make changes to the "advanced pay/no changes" reservation that you insisted we book.**

Most of the time clients don't need to make changes to bookings once an itinerary is set. However, we never recommend or advertise an advanced/pre-pay rate to a client; it's always that one time the client insists on a prepay rate that changes need to be made.

**7) When we travel, it is always a working vacation - even on personal vacations.**

With each trip, we are doing research for our clients to match them with the right fit and to be sure we are providing the correct information at all times so that we can pass on this knowledge to our clients. While our social media accounts may look like a permanent vacation, it is hard work. Travel consulting is a profession that requires ongoing training just like any other profession and our personal vacations are part of our training.

**8) Please do not base your hotel choices on Web reviews.**

You have no idea who those reviewers are, what their expectations are and what their perception of "great" is. We make choices based on your needs and expectations. Just because a vacation was great for someone else, doesn't mean the same vacation will be great for you. Getting to know and understand my clients' needs and wishes are my top priorities, so we can advise you on the best choices for your vacation.

**9) You are leaving money on the table when you book hotels directly instead of with us.**

We can add value to your reservations with complimentary breakfast daily, possible upgrades, and a special amenity like a spa or food and beverage credit.

**10) We provide more than just an airline ticket - we provide support before, during and after your trip.**

Did you know that we can help you coordinate your air travel providing the best logical routing, connecting times, and baggage restrictions? We can also assist with canceled flights, missed connections and schedule changes.

**11) We practice what we preach.**

We are very well-traveled, having been to dozens of countries and we share our first-hand insights with clients. Chances are we have been where you are going!

**12) Book as soon as you can.**

The cruise, tour or resort, dining reservations, shore excursions, etc. should be booked early to secure the best pricing and selection.

**13) We work for you; we do not work for the travel supplier.**

I am your advocate and have every reason to get you the best value possible.

**14) Your travel agent is the expert.**

We will ask the right questions, listen to your answers and offer expert advice to guide you in making the right decision regarding your vacation time. We take a critical look at the moving parts of your trip to make sure that each component fits like a giant jigsaw puzzle.

**15) If time is money, think of us as asset managers.**

You can't hit re-do on a vacation, and your time is your most precious asset. Let us take the stress out of planning - or if you like planning - let's do it together.