

TOP 5 REASONS TO BOOK WITH A TRAVEL AGENT

I'm often asked, "Why would I book with a travel agent when I can do it myself?" or "What is the difference between booking with you versus online?"

Both are great questions. My funny answer to this is, "I do not cut my own hair; I leave it up to my stylist." Yes, I could probably cut it myself, but it's not worth the risk. I want a professional who is trained to do it.

Top 5 Reasons to Use a Travel Agent

1. Saves time **The internet is great for research but poses a TMI issue (too much information)**

Did you know that over 20% of travelers that book online put over 5 hours into planning? With that statistic, I find myself wondering if they got the full vacation experience they were looking for? We all have busy lives; why not leave it up to the experts to plan your vacation and then you can enjoy your weekend or free time.

2. Expertise and knowledge **Example: Passport expirations, necessary notarized forms needed!!!!**

I understand that it's fun to look at all the vacation options at first, then reality may sink in that you have never been to that certain resort nor have you even heard of it before. Most travel agents have the opportunity to travel through the year learning about the destinations and resorts as well as attending trade shows and training. It's such a great feeling when I can tell a client a personal tip from experience about their vacation plan.

3. Real person **ASTA's motto: "Without a Travel Agent you are on your own" But – best part A real person comes with vendor relationships – worth a ton.**

Oftentimes when calling the mass travel websites, you'll get an automated answering system or get passed from person to person. We know what a great feeling it is to get a person on the phone and, better yet, they make you feel important and that you're just not another caller.

Also, if you should have any problems with your travels, then it's all the more important to speak directly to a person.

4. They think of the whole package **Advantage of Bulk/contracted air, free upgrades and value adds**

A "great" travel agent will start to think about how to make your trip more of an experience for you from the moment you called to discuss your vacation. For most of us, this is so important and it's what makes it not just a transaction. These key points of interaction are where you build that relationship and trust. It makes you proud to have a travel agent on your side. Remember: it's not just about the plane tickets you need.

5. Saves you money **Statistic say: Foreign Independent Travel costs 40% more than a tour and you see 40% less of sites (with knowledge). A good travel consultant is worth a Plan to go Fee in the least where the cost is applied to a final payment especially when planning an independent tour.**

Many travel agents do not charge a fee to do the research and even book your vacation. Our knowledge to help plan your vacation is free! What a bonus.

If you're thinking about a vacation, consider using a travel agent—one that is excited and honored to help you plan your experience