

# **HOW TO CHOOSE THE RIGHT TRAVEL AGENT**



**A Travelers Guide**

**by**

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Planning a vacation or any kind of travel should be a stress-free experience so it's best to find a travel agent to guide you from start to finish.

Whether you are traveling internationally or staying in the good ole United States of America, it's always best to speak to those who are familiar with various modes of transportation, accommodations, and costs, with access to hundreds of vendors that service every corner of the world.

If you have never worked with a travel agent but are considering working with one to assist with your future travel plans, the 6 tips outlined below will help you choose the right travel agent for your needs.

### **1. Consider choosing a home-based travel agent**

Due to our obsession with the World Wide Web, there are very few brick and mortar travel agencies left. However, travel agents are still very much in business and a large number of them are working from home, booking tons of travel for clients both near and far. Travel vendors have turned to the cyber world making it easy for travel agents to book every imaginable travel itinerary with just a few clicks of a mouse. So, travel agents are still a great resource for information and can provide you with an entire range of services, which will make your trip run smoothly, as well as save you time, problems, and money whether they are in an office or on their couch in their PJ's.

### **2. What you need to write down before you talk to a travel agent**

- Date, Place, and price range for your trip
- List of questions

### **3. Ask the right questions**

#### **Sample questions:**

- What kind of travel do you specialize in?
- Can I contact you 24 hours a day?
- Which services if any do you charge for and how much will they cost?

### **4. A good quality travel agent will ask you to outline your trip**

They will (or at least they should) ask the following:

- Where you're going and why
- How you wish to travel (air, land or sea)
- How long you plan to stay
- What your travel budget is

\*\* Remember to be open and honest with your answers. A good agent will gladly put together a couple of options that outline transportation, accommodations, and estimated costs that fit your budget.

## **5. A good travel agent will always take your needs into consideration**

While an agent will typically ask questions to get this type of information from you (and you should take it as a bad sign if the agent doesn't), you will also need to do your part by speaking your mind and effectively communicating your needs.

### **Tips to follow:**

- Clarify the main purpose of your trip
- Decide where you want to go and when, making sure the trip will fit into everyone's plan
- Choose your mode of transportation, whether it's airline, cruise, rental car, or something else
- Try to determine a realistic budget for your trip based on all your other considerations

## **6. Before agreeing to purchase travel through a travel agent keep these guidelines in mind**

- Do not rely on verbal agreements alone. Get the details in writing
- Do your research! If you are not familiar with a certain hotel, resort, airline, cruise line, or other mode of transportation the travel agent is suggesting, do a quick google search to check it out
- Always READ all the paperwork CAREFULLY before you sign it, especially when it comes to package deals
- If you book early enough and are able to take advantage of a vendor that offers a payment plan, make sure you FULLY understand when the payments are due, and any penalties imposed for late payments and cancellations. Your travel agent should have no problem explaining any of the financial responsibilities associated with your vacation in detail
- It is customary for a travel agent to request that you fill out and sign a credit card authorization form, a copy of the front and back of your credit/debit card, as well as copy of your driver's license. This is for your protection and the travel agent's protection and you should run the other way if they bypass this step. We live in an identity theft society so this ensures that you are not only the person authorizing payment for this purchase but the person named on the credit/debit card.

Now get out there and find yourself an AWESOME travel agent and let's get traveling!