

## TRAVEL AGENCY

Your vacation time is coming up. Most of us get just one lengthy vacation each year. You want to get the most out of your time and hard-earned money. Getting a good price on airfare and accommodations leaves more money for sightseeing and shopping. Unless you're an expert researcher - who enjoys doing the research - you'll do well to consult a travel agency to help you make your arrangements. Using a travel agency frees up your valuable time and assures a smoothly coordinated trip. This is particularly true with the new restrictions in etiquette and luggage contents now imposed on travelers.

How do you know the travel agency you choose is reputable? There are two excellent signatures. Recommendations from seasoned travelers who use the same travel agency again and again are highly credible. Another earmark of a reputable travel agency is membership in ASTA, the American Society of Travel Agents. ASTA agents are provided education through seminars and industry events which keep them on the cutting edge of the latest travel requirements and resources with which to best serve their customers. Now, let's take a look at some of the other advantages of the travel agency.

Whether you're taking a short trip or traveling overseas, the reputable travel agency is equipped to organize your trip to your maximum advantage. They've got the inside scoop on the snarly details of travel which might have a significant impact on your trip. For example, were you aware that you might run into serious trouble with authorities if you are traveling out of country with your own child? A good travel agency will advise a letter of consent from the other parent be packed along with your passport. Just imagine the other problems you can avoid with the expertise of a knowledgeable agent.

Although there are online airfare bookings that can save you money, you can also go crazy trying to find the best deal. When you do finally book, it's entirely possible you'll see a much better fare tomorrow. A good travel agency has all of those databases down, with the latest promotions at their fingertips.

Another super benefit of the travel agency is that they get feedback and excellent tidbits from the customers they talk with every day. They can give you tips on transportation, activities and etiquette in foreign countries that you may not find on your own in a shelf full of travel books.

A travel agency provides personal service. Let the agent know what you're looking to get out of your travel experience. The agent can tailor your trip arrangements to your style and pocketbook in an unbiased, professional way for the results you want. They are there to please you.

Finally, should you encounter problems on your trip, your travel agent is your professional back-up and will step in to iron out the wrinkles and get you back on track.

When you're going on vacation, don't leave home without the services of a travel agency!