

Top New Reasons to Use a Real Travel Agent

1 YOU WERE PRETTY SMART when you asked that nice travel agent to give you price quotes for three different cruises. When she handed over all her information, you went and booked everything on your own, thinking you might save yourself some money. You didn't realize until you got on the ship, however, that you weren't getting all the amenities and shipboard credits she listed because those are available only to her through her agency network. Foiled again.

2 YOU BOOKED AN ENTIRE HOUSE in San Francisco on Airbnb during one of the city's busiest travel periods. You didn't know, though, that Airbnb hosts can cancel reservations close in to your arrival for any reason – and they did. It was too late to get a hotel room in the city, so you ended up at a roadside motel 30 miles out of town. Did someone say bed bugs?

3 YOU ARRANGED YOUR FAMILY'S VACATION all by yourself and didn't think twice when your daughter decided she didn't want to go with you. She can get a little testy sometimes. So you asked your niece to take her place and just assumed she could use your daughter's airplane ticket. Not so fast, auntie. The security agent at the gate was super nice when she explained what the airline ticketing rules are, but that didn't help when you had to call your sister to tell her to come pick up her daughter. Thanks-giving dinner conversation might be a little edgy this year.

4 THE HOTEL YOU BOOKED ONLINE said that your room was located in the villa section of the resort, so you thought you were getting an actual villa to stay in. Turns out yours was one of 16 rooms in stand-alone "villa" accommodations and what you actually had was just a regular guestroom. Bummer. Who knew it would be so difficult to navigate all of this travel industry lingo?

5 YOU ASSUMED THE REMOTE CITY you flew to late at night had Uber service. After all, why wouldn't it? So you didn't arrange for a hotel transfer and ended up sleeping at the airport because you had to wait for cab service to begin again in the morning.

6 YOU ARE DONE TALKING TO PEOPLE and just want to communicate over your phone, so when you reserved your annual vacation online, you did it with just five clicks of the mouse. Voila! You really



Vice President—Content/
Editorial Director,
Ruthanne Terrero

Join the Conversation!

facebook

Facebook.com/
travelagentmagazine

twitter

www.twitter.com/
travelagentmag

are smart. You were so proud of yourself you didn't take time to read the small print on your small phone and didn't see that your trip was completely nonrefundable, no matter what. And that was painful to learn when the new owners of the corporation you work for called a mandatory meeting for the very day you were going to depart.

7 THINGS WERE GOING REALLY WELL at the airport on your way home from your trip until you heard there was a blizzard back in New York. When "cancelled" signs went up for every flight listed on the departure board, your fellow passengers got on the phone with their travel agents to rebook them. But you didn't use a travel agent, did you? You sent an e-mail to the "info@" address listed on the website you booked your trip on, but didn't hear back from them until the following Monday. By then you'd already rented a car on your own and driven 2,000 miles to get back home.

8 YOU WERE SO EXCITED about that getaway with a group of your best friends. All of them booked through a travel agent but you, ever the independent soul, did it on your own because you know you are smarter than most people. What a horror it was on your first morning when you were the only one to get a bill for your first big meal together. Turns out their travel agent had been able to get all of them the valuable perk of a free breakfast, every day! The website you booked on didn't provide that. Who knew a breakfast buffet could cost \$49 anyway? This was turning into the most expensive trip, ever.

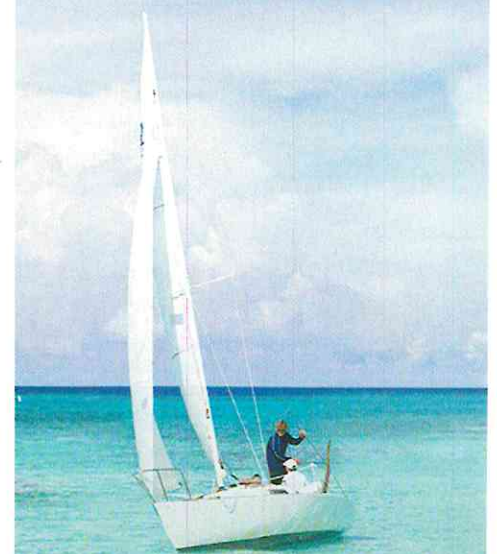
9 ON THAT SAME GETAWAY, all of your friends got upgraded to suites – again, because of their amazing travel agent. They each joyfully received the news when you all checked in together. But when you got to the front desk, the attendant silently handed you a keycard to a double guestroom overlooking the parking lot. When you tried to get yourself a suite, he told you your reservation was not available for upgrades, but if you wanted to, you could rebook for \$450 a night. Later that evening, all your friends came to marvel at your tiny, tiny room.

10 THAT WOMAN AT THE PTA MEETING said she was a travel agent and even showed you her agent license in her wallet. So you trusted her to book your family reunion, unaware that she was part of a scheme until she tried to get you to become a travel agent, too. She promised you lots of free airline and hotel benefits if you joined her network and told you it would only cost \$100 to get a license, too. To boot, she still hasn't made your vacation reservations and when you checked her Facebook page, you saw she was vacationing in Cabo San Lucas. Should have used a travel agent in a recognized network. Next time.

RUTHANNE TERRERO, CTC
VICE PRESIDENT-CONTENT/EDITORIAL DIRECTOR



SHOW YOUR
CLIENTS
WHAT THE
CARIBBEAN
CAN BE.



Your clients can find it along every inch of warm sand on Grand Cayman. They can find it in the nooks and crannies of a sunken ship off Cayman Brac. And they can find it watching rare birds brush the waters of Little Cayman. With a little help from you, your clients can find their Caymankind.

For more information contact:
caymansalesrep@caymanislands.ky

CAYMAN ISLANDS

visitcaymanislands.com