



10 Myths About Travel Agents

1. Myth: All Travel Agents and Agencies are the Same

Fact: Every travel agent is different and has a different area that they specialize in. So, depending on what type of trip you are looking to take one travel agent will suit you better than another. That's why it is important when planning a trip to find a travel agent that specializes in where you want to go.

2. Myth: No One Uses Travel Agents Anymore

Fact: Travel agents still sell 51 percent of all airline tickets, 87 percent of all cruises, 81 percent of all tours and packages, 45 percent of all car rentals and about 47 percent of all hotels.*

3. Myth: Travel Agents are Trying to Cheat Me if They Don't Quote Me the Cheapest Price

Fact: Travel agents know the ins and outs of different itineraries. While you might find one that is a little bit cheaper, that cheaper itinerary might involve a whole slew of headaches. For example, longer waits at the airport and odd travel times. A travel agent will be looking to get you the best value for your money spent which should include the most direct and time-friendly itinerary they can find. Unless you have told them you would prefer to have the cheaper options presented as well, expect value to be a factor included in the trip they plan.

4. Myth: It is Expensive to Use a Travel Agent

Fact: The fee a travel agent charges really depends upon the agent. While some of the more luxury agencies have higher fees, the average fee is quite marginal. Some travel agents will even drop the fee or offer a discount once you have finalized your trip with them. Plus, you can always ask an agent upfront what their fees are and decide for yourself if it's worth it. Also, it is important to remember that a lot of online booking sites, such as Orbitz and Expedia, charge a booking fee as well.

5. Myth: I Can Easily Book the Same Trip on My Own Without Using a Travel Agent.

Fact: Although travel agents have access to all of the same outlets you would use when looking to book travel, they also have access to exclusive pricing and package deals that are most times not available to the public. Your travel agent also has more

leverage in helping out in situations such as hotels claiming to be booked, when in fact they may still have rooms available that are on hold for travel agents reservations. So when everyone else is telling you No your travel agent can help turn that to a Yes.

6. Myth: Travel Agents Dont Have Information as Updated as the Internet

Fact: Travel agents obtain some of their information from the same sources as online booking sites such as Orbitz and Travelocity. They also receive daily emails and faxes with new specials from resorts and hotels that may not be published on the internet. Travel agents can also call a place directly to see if they can work out other kinds of special deals for you, something an online site cant do.

7. Myth: Travel Agents Are a Waste of Time

Fact: Although you can find much of the same information that the travel agent provides for you on your own, you are going to spend a lot of valuable time doing so. A travel agent can actually save you from hours of painful research and price comparison shopping. They have up to date prices, hotel conditions, and interesting new activities. Their prior knowledge and experience gives them the upper hand in trip planning.

8. Myth: Travel Agents Have Lost Their Clout

Fact: Travel agents book hotels, cruises, and activities every day. The companies that provide these services know that and want their business and will work to keep that business coming back. So while a place might be telling you Sorry we are booked, for your one time trip, they are more likely to make an acceptance for the travel agent to insure that the agent sends them more business in the future.

9. Myth: Good Travel Agents are Hard to Find

Fact: While there are some below par travel agents out there, there are great outlets to go to find reliable specialized travel agents that will match your needs.

10. Myth: Travel Agents Can Only Book My Flight and Hotel

Fact: Travel agents can arrange car service, personalized tours and activities, in addition to all the basic travel services they provide. They are also excellent sources of information concerning good restaurants, good sites to see, and tips on what to pack.

*Source: American Society of Travel Agents