

Secret Strategies for the Pampered Traveler & 5 Exceptional Trips that you'll never forget

Love to be pampered AND want to get the best value for your dollar without breaking the bank or going into debt?

Yearn to visit the trendiest hot spots for living the good life or experience a once-in-a-lifetime milestone journey?

Seek exceptional service, 5-star treatment, and/or the opportunity or assistance to fulfill all your worldwide bucket list dreams?

Want to learn about unique, high-quality accommodations, experiences and activities that will meet all your luxury specifications?

A quality luxury vacation experience begins with careful planning upfront and can mean quite varied and different expectations for what you seek. Luxury may be all about the trendiness or exclusivity of a destination, the quality and reputation of accommodations, the uniqueness of a mode of transportation, the top-of-the line amenities provided, the variety of dining experiences offered, the wow factor of activities offered, attention to detail, the high level of service received—or all of these combined.



Travel agents can advise and match you with the unique experience you may be seeking.

1) Luxury destinations can be found many places in the world, but some especially focus on attracting the well-heeled by promoting exclusivity. For the Caribbean, you may want to

take a look at Barbados, Aruba, St. Lucia, Anguilla, the Cayman Islands, or St. Bart's. For the South Pacific, you may want to take in the stunning beauty of Tahiti/French Polynesia, island-hop in Fiji or sail the Whitsunday Islands in Australia. For Asia, cultural exploration trips to Japan, Hong Kong, and Singapore come to mind, or you can play like a maharajah and visit a UNESCO World Heritage site such as the Taj Mahal in India. For Africa, consider a luxury safari with daily game drives, a visit to Victoria Falls, sailing the Nile River in Egypt, or a trip to South Africa to experience the wineries and swimming with sharks. South America hot spots include exploring Machu Picchu in Peru, viewing Iguassu Falls, dancing a tango in Buenos Aires, watching the action on Copacabana Beach in Rio de Janeiro, viewing the scenery of Patagonia, soaking in volcano-heated spa waters in Costa Rica, or meeting the wildlife up close in the Galapagos Islands.



North America offers all-inclusive resorts throughout Mexico, while the USA and Canada both offer plenty of 5-star hotels and guest ranch stays. Europe highlights can include being serenaded in a gondola while in Venice, soaring in a hot air balloon in Cappadocia (Turkey), or visiting the famous palaces and museums in St. Petersburg, Paris or London. In the Middle East, newly popular destinations include Dubai and Abu Dhabi in the UAE, or visiting Petra in Jordan. For the adventurous, cruising to the Antarctic or viewing the northern lights in Iceland or Scandinavia is a must-do.

- 2) You have many choices for unique modes of transportation. You can sail away on a luxury cruise or private yacht, jet off in first-class aboard a commercial airliner or chartered jet, take a one-of-a-kind rail journey, embark on a luxury guided tour where all you need to do is show up since all the itinerary details are handled, or even rent a Harley Davidson motorcycle or luxury car to explore back-country roads.

3) Unique dining experiences could include trying the local cuisine in restaurants with famous chefs, attending food tastings and wine pairings, having a romantic candlelight dinner for two on a beach, and trying dine-around options if offered. If having a variety of fine dining choices are important to you while on vacation, ask about your options such as how many a la carte choices you'll have if staying at an all-inclusive resort, if room service is included or if a special meal may be set up.

4) For activities, consider requesting a local treatment at a world-class spa, golf on a championship golf course with a private instructor, hire a local guide/chauffeur for a private tour, and/or simply have an adventure doing whatever the local culture offers—elephant trekking, horseback or camel riding, zip lining, parasailing, river rafting, Jeep rides, Bedouin desert tours, etc. Ask your travel agent to book activities in advance that are very important to you in order to secure the time/date slot you want and avoid disappointment of something being sold out.



5) One-of-a kind accommodations experiences could include staying in a castle in Ireland, a overnighting in a wigwam in Arizona, residing with a local family in a Tibetan yurt, watching the fish swim from your overwater bungalow in Tahiti/French Polynesia, living like a local in a thatched cottage in England, and/or enjoying your own private staff in a Caribbean villa. Many all-inclusive resorts have remodeled and invested money into their properties so guests will have a more luxurious experience.

6) Upgraded perks can often include having concierge and butler service, high linen-thread counts, sitting areas in junior suites, en-suite Jacuzzi tubs, upgraded bath amenities,

more a la carte dining choices, included tours and activities, use of robes in room, stocked mini-bars, etc. Find out what your options are in advance if possible.

- 7) Always ask about the possibility of receiving value-added options such as complimentary



upgrades, free breakfast, included Wi-Fi, or other perks. Sometimes, if you stay 5 or 7 nights at a resort, you may receive a free night or other benefits. Be sure to state if the reason for travel is a special occasion, such as a birthday, honeymoon or anniversary as you may receive a

special amenity like a complimentary bottle of wine or fruit basket.

- 8) Some tour operators like Tauck, Globus, Ker & Downey, Abercrombie & Kent, Butterfield & Robinson, and Cox & Kings specialize in luxury package tours, have a quality reputation and offer exclusive, unique tour options and ideas. Always compare itineraries apples-to-apples as to what exactly you are receiving in a tour package price.
- 9) Milestone birthday celebrations, bucket list trips and multi-family generational trips have become more popular. Be sure to allow longer planning time for these types of trips so you have time to explore various options. Why not celebrate these special occasions in your life with a travel experience that you will never forget?
- 10) Receiving exceptional customer service has become one of the most important aspects of luxury travel. Private butlers, 24-hour room service, and attention to detail like remembering your name and preferences are important for feeling pampered. Please let your travel agent know if this level of service is important to you so they can focus on destinations and properties that offer this.

11) Consider if traveling peak season to experience the best weather and longest opening hours of attractions and tours is important enough for you to pay higher prices, or if you might be able to travel during shoulder or off-season to save money. In Scottsdale, for example, resort stays during the hot summer months are at a fraction of what they cost during the winter or peak-season months. Fall and spring travel dates are often shoulder season, and can offer a compromise between the high prices of peak season, and the poor weather/short hours of off-season.

12) Cruising has become a great way to see the world, with many new exciting itineraries being revised every year. You unpack once and experience multiple destinations, while relaxing onboard, having fine dining experiences, and sleeping while you travel to the



next destination. Some cruise lines like Silverseas, Seabourne, Oceania and Crystal specialize in the luxury experience, while others like Cunard, Holland America, Princess, Celebrity and Azamara offer an upscale experience. European River Cruising has become very popular due to the

all-inclusive nature of the experience, which includes wine with dinner and shore excursions. Private yacht charters should also be considered for freedom and flexibility if the budget allows.

Five exceptional journeys to consider

A: **World cruise** – many cruise lines offer world cruises with multiple destination stops and you can compare itineraries, prices and inclusions. You can sail just a segment or two to try it out, or do the whole world cruise.

B: **Seychelles**—vacation where Prince William and Princess Kate honeymooned. The Seychelles is an exclusive, picture-perfect island chain in the Indian Ocean, which can also easily be combined with nearby destinations including Dubai or India.

C: **Bhutan** – This country in South Asia only recently opened its doors for tourism but now welcomes visitors with open arms. Be unique!

D: **New Zealand** – New Zealand offers visitors a friendly, familiar, yet exotic choice as a destination that is easy to drive, promotes stunning natural scenery, has a native culture to learn more about, and offers value for the \$.

E: **Luxury Rail Journey**: If you ever wanted to experience a rail journey while being pampered in true style, then consider riding Rovos Rail or the Blue Train in Africa, the Venice Simplon Orient-Express in Europe, or the Rocky Mountaineer in Canada.

What's Next: Ready to start planning your own luxury vacation? Our agency offers a complimentary strategy session, where we can discuss possible destinations, dates and preferences, and go over what we can both expect from working with each other.

There's no charge or obligation for this session, and it will give you some good ideas to move forward. You can request an appointment on our website, via e-mail or phone call.

We look forward to working with you to help plan an exceptional lifetime journey that you'll never forget.