

Benefits of Traveling with Friends



- *How to benefit from traveling with your friends*
- *Learn how to travel at deep discounts by traveling with friends*
- *Insider tips on being a successful group travel leader*



Did you know that you can travel at a HUGE discount by traveling with friends or family? Traveling in groups offers many benefits for everyone, and best of all, if you are the group leader, you can travel for nearly free.

Not sure who to travel with? You could organize a family reunion, or corporate trip or how about a trip with your book club, or church, or start your own travel club!

Here are some tips to get you started on planning your trip and my best advice for getting deep, deep discounts.

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#1 Be a Leader

The first step is to be the leader. Every group needs a leader, even a travel group. Someone needs to be in charge of making decisions, organizing details, communicating with vendors, etc. Some of these tasks can be delegated to others in the group, but ultimately, someone has to be in charge.

Being a leader can be a lot of work, but very rewarding, and even fun if organizing and coordinating are things you are good at and enjoy doing. One of the best rewards is that if you plan correctly you can enjoy deep discounts on your trip.



#2 Choose a location

... everyone has agreed on

Just asking 10 people: “Where do you want to go” is likely going to get you at least 10 different answers, if not more. You need to be a little more strategic with your questioning...

Ask probing, follow-up questions. For instance, one member of your group might say New York, and another Paris and another Tokyo, but if you dig deeper into why, it might be because they all dream of visiting a big city. So even though they sound very different at first, the underlying reasons will help you come to a Big City adventure that will make them all happy. You might even drill down further and ask them what it is they like about big cities so that you can be sure that the city you choose fits all their criteria.

When faced with unlimited choices, most people get paralyzed in the decision making process. Start by coming up with a list of 5 - 10 possible destinations and then ask people to rank their favorites from 1 - 5 (or 10, or whatever). Fewer options will make it much easier for people to offer their opinion. Also, maybe some people aren't going to get their first choice, but maybe they will be just as happy with their second or third choice - ranking will help you narrow this down.

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#3 Choose a Theme

....for the group so that everyone shares the same interest for the trip

One of your first steps in planning a group trip is to decide on a basic theme for your group. Is this a relaxing family reunion with plenty of time for connecting and spending time with each other? Or an adventure trip, active and busy and full of adrenaline? Or a group of art lovers looking for lots of opportunity to explore museums and art studios?



You can probably already guess how choosing a theme can help you narrow down your choice of a destination and activities and make the trip enjoyable for everyone involved.

#4 Plan a year out

.... and offer a solid payment deadline

Planning travel for groups is often much more complicated than planning travel for one or two people. You will want to start the planning process about a year ahead of time and give people firm deadlines for making payments. Let people know ahead of time that you will hold them to the deadlines, and then do it. You don't want to miss out on all the advantages of your hard work because other group members didn't hold up their end of the deal.

#5 Keep everyone motivated

....by communicating details frequently

A big part of the fun of travel is the anticipation. Group travel takes a lot of pre-planning that can seem to drag on and on, and sometimes people lose their enthusiasm. Consider taking advantage of technology and create a private group on Facebook to share information before you trip, and then you can use it to share stories and pictures during and after your trip. You could also create your own hashtag for the event to share images on Twitter and Instagram. #awesometravelclubparis2015

(This is also a great tool to encourage people to make their payments on time!)

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#6 Make sure you understand



....how many rooms you need to occupy before the group leader can get theirs for free

All destinations are different, all trips are different. Make sure that you very clearly understand what you need to do to take advantage of great offers - like free rooms for group leaders!

Read the fine print and don't be afraid to reach out and ask for clarity where it's needed. Sometimes these offers aren't as black and white as they first appear.

#7 Establish a goal

... for number of rooms booked above the number of required in order to accommodate last minute cancellations

Unfortunately, cancellations are a fact of (travel) life. Emergency come up, people get sick, people just change their minds.

Once you know how many rooms you need to occupy in order to qualify for a free room for yourself (the group leader), set a goal a few rooms above that so you are covered in case there are any cancellations.



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#8 Highlight the inclusions

... and special events planned when sharing the trip details with your friends

Make sure everyone going on the trip understands what's included and what's not included in the price. Share details about budget and how much more money they should plan to have available for what's not included.

You will also want to let them know about special events so that they can be prepared with appropriate wardrobes and anything else they might need to bring along.



#9 Enlist the help of a professional



As I said at the beginning, planning group travel is a lot of work. The best part is that you don't have to do it alone. As your Travel Agent it's my job to help you organize and coordinate your group travels - and you still get to take advantage of the great perks that come along with being a group leader.

If you want to learn more about group travel, or you're ready to start planning a trip now - give me a call and let's get started!

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