



CONTACT: Sarah Kennedy
 skennedy@cruising.org
 202-759-9313

Five Reasons to Book Your Next Cruise Vacation with a Travel Agent
Travel Agents Offer Expertise, the Best Deals and a Stress-Free Experience

(WASHINGTON, DC)— It’s National Plan a Cruise Month and the cruise industry has come together to help everyone fall in love with cruising by highlighting the growing variety of cruise vacation experiences and destinations as well as offering the best cruise deals and promotions. To navigate the waters of cruise vacation options, even experienced cruise travelers turn to the experts – travel agents. In fact, according Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) 2015 State of the Cruise Industry Report, seven out of ten cruise travelers (**70 percent**) use a travel agent to plan and book cruise vacations.

HOW TO PLAN AN Incredible CRUISE VACATION

1 PICK YOUR DESTINATION
 OVER **1,000** PORTS OF CALL TO CHOOSE FROM RANGING FROM BEACHES IN THE CARIBBEAN TO GLACIERS IN ALASKA, HISTORIC EUROPE OR THE MYSTERIES OF THE FAR EAST.

2 WHO'S GOING?
 CONSIDER WHETHER YOUR TRIP IS A ROMANTIC GETAWAY OR A FAMILY AFFAIR. DO YOU NEED A CRUISE THAT OFFERS PROGRAMS FOR TEENS OR PROVIDES CHILDCARE, OR WOULD YOU PREFER A SHIP THAT CATERES TO ADULTS OR SENIORS?

3 CHECK THE CALENDAR
 28% 3-NIGHT CRUISE, 53% 2-WEEK CRUISE, 19% 3-NIGHT CRUISE IN SEPTEMBER
 WHETHER YOU WANT TO TAKE A 3-NIGHT CRUISE IN SEPTEMBER OR SPEND TWO WEEKS CRUISING TO AUSTRALIA IN MAY, KNOWING YOUR TIMEFRAME WILL HELP NARROW YOUR CHOICES.

4 CREATE A BUDGET
 FROM BUDGET-FRIENDLY TO LUXURY TRIPS, CRUISING FITS EVERY VACATION BUDGET AND STYLE. CRUISES ARE GREAT FOR BUDGETING, AS MEALS AND ONBOARD ACTIVITIES ARE OFTEN INCLUDED.
 How Much Cruisers' Spend? < \$1,000 \$1,001-\$4,999 + \$5,000

5 FIND A CRUISE EXPERT! CLIA
 THE BEST WAY TO BOOK YOUR TRIP IS TO USE A CLIA TRAVEL AGENT WHO CAN FIND YOUR PERFECT CRUISE. TRAVEL AGENTS PROVIDE FIRST-HAND CRUISE EXPERISE, ACCESS TO UN-ADVERTISED DEALS AND PERKS, AS WELL AS A STRESS-FREE PLANNING EXPERIENCE. FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT BOOKING A CRUISE WITH A CLIA-CERTIFIED CRUISE SPECIALIST, PLEASE VISIT WWW.CRUISEMILE.ORG

WIN 31 CRUISES! ONE OF
 FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT WWW.CRUISEMILE.ORG

GET ON BOARD

“Travel agents that specialize in cruise vacations can help both first-time and veteran cruise travelers find the best cruise options for their travel style as well as help them take advantage of the best deals and promotions available,” said Cindy D’Aoust, Acting CEO of CLIA. “In addition to providing travelers with a nearly hands-free, stress-free vacation planning experience, there is no cost to a traveler who uses a travel agent.”

The Top Five Reasons to Book Your Next Cruise Vacation with a Travel Agent:

1. **A Trip Tailored to YOU:** Travel agents not only handle booking travel, but can help find the best cruise for every traveler. A travel agent can create a perfect travel experience based on preferences, tastes and

travel hopes. A great agent can also help find unexpected activities and destinations that fit travel styles to create a once-in-a-lifetime cruise experience. For example, are you a Francophile with a penchant for finding the best local cuisines wherever you go? Your agent can help book a perfect Parisian cruise and maybe even provide tips for finding the best crepes and macaroons during shore excursions.

2. **An Expert at the Ready:** Travel agents are a wealth of travel information with plenty of real-world travel experience. Cruise-focused agents go through extensive training as well as visit ships regularly to provide incredible travel advice. Agents work with a variety a cruise lines so they make a great resource for any questions regarding differences in cruise ships or destinations. Agents can also provide counsel to travelers thinking about everything from travel insurance to dining times to cabin location.
3. **Discounts & Deals:** In most cases, travel agents have access to deals and discounts that aren't available to consumers booking directly. Agents sometimes have the ability to book-in-bulk so clients are privy to lower pricing for booking through an agent. As a bonus, the majority of agents are paid through commission so there isn't an out-of-pocket expense for their services.
4. **Perks & Personalized Travel:** Travel agents want travelers to be happy and what is one way to make that happen? Perks! Most agents can offer clients incredible perks, like complimentary bottles of wine, prepaid gratuities and onboard spending money. In addition to fun extras, agents can also arrange personalized travel details for your cruise like gluten-free dining or post-cruise transportation home.
5. **A Stress-Free Travel Experience:** For a stress-free travel experience, identify a credentialed cruise specialist. Many agents become accredited cruise counselors through CLIA's Seascape Academy or take courses through the different cruise lines to elevate their expertise in cruise vacation experiences. These travel agents are committed to providing the best travel experience for every client every time. This leaves the logistics to a professional, giving travelers someone in their corner if things go wrong. If a flight is missed or excursion is cancelled, an agent can handle refunds and logistics to take the stress out of traveling.

For more information about booking a cruise with a CLIA-certified cruise specialist, please visit <http://cruising.org/cruise-vacationer/plan-a-cruise/cliagent-finder>.

About Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) – One Industry, One Voice

Celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 2015, Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) is the unified voice and leading authority of the global cruise community. As the largest cruise industry trade association with 15 offices globally, CLIA has representation in North and South America, Europe, Asia and Australasia. CLIA's mission is to support policies and practices that foster a safe, secure and healthy cruise ship environment for the more than 23 million passengers who cruise annually, as well as to promote the value, desirability and affordability of the cruise vacation experience. Members are comprised of the world's most prestigious ocean, river and specialty cruise lines; a highly trained and certified travel agent community; and cruise line suppliers and partners, including ports & destinations, ship development, suppliers and business services, committed to the sustained success of the cruise industry. For more information on CLIA, the cruise industry, and CLIA-member cruise lines and travel agencies, visit www.cruising.org or follow Cruise Lines International Association's on the CLIA [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) fan pages.