

# Land Vacation Packages



## Land Vacation Packages

- Why book a land vacation package?
- Which vendor do I use?
- What types of land packages are there?
- What are some ideas for niche specialty travel?
- How do I qualify my client?
- What are the advantages of offering a pre or post vacation hotel package?
- Are special room requests required?
- Are there additional fees charged directly to the client by a resort?
- Does the client have the proper documentation for traveling?
- What are the rules of cancellation?

## Why Book a Land Vacation Package?

Valuable time can be lost by booking each component of a vacation individually.

For Example:

1. Book the airline tickets direct with the airline
2. Book the hotel reservation directly with the hotel
3. Make a car reservation with a car rental company

If you make a booking in this manner, there are several drawbacks:

1. It is A LOT more work!
2. When making a reservation directly with a hotel the commission rate can be as low 5% and the maximum is usually 10%.
3. Car rental companies pay 3% to 10% per rental.
4. Hotel and Car companies usually pay commission 3 to 6 months after guest's departure.

But.... if you book through a tour company....ONE CALL DOES IT ALL!

You will earn MORE commission and be paid faster. GoGo, VAX Vacation Access and World Agent Direct Vacations pay commission on almost ALL components. Typically, you will receive 5% on the airline tickets and 14-15% on the land portion.

In most cases, booking a package online through the travel advisor portal vs over the phone adds additional commission.

**NOTE: Some vendors (i.e. Southwest Vacations) will not pay any commission if you make the reservation or package over the phone.**

## Which Vendor Do I Use?

The best practice is to book with one of Travel Leaders Preferred Suppliers and here's why:

- Higher commissions paid expeditiously
- Dedicated phone numbers to call
- Closer relationships with the Business Development Managers
- Support from Travel Leaders HQ if assistance is needed with a booking

## Land Vacation Package Descriptions

There are different types of land vacation packages available to destinations worldwide.

- **Independent Travel** – Consists of flight reservations, hotel, airport transfers or a rental car (or any combination of these).
- **All Inclusive Travel** – These consist of packages to All Inclusive resorts mostly located in the Caribbean and Mexico. This type of vacation package includes airfare, hotel accommodations, round trip airport transfers, meals, beverages (including beer, wine and spirits), non-motorized sports and activities located at the resort. Inclusions can vary from resort to resort, however, a list of amenities is available in the description of the resort.
- **Escorted Travel** – These vacations are guided organized tours. This type of tour can encompass 1 city, multiple cities or countries. They include sightseeing tours, motorcoach touring, hotels, a tour director for the duration of the tour, local "hop-on" guides and some meals. Airline tickets can be arranged through these vendors for an additional cost.

**SPECIAL NOTE** – In many destinations hotels may charge a resort fee to be paid directly to the hotel. This information is available in the description of the hotel. Be sure to advise your client if there is a fee and how much it is per day. Also verify if the fee is per person OR per room.

Visit the Vendors/Password section of the Outside Agent Link website for a list of vacation vendors and contact phone numbers, websites, registration information and destinations.

## Niche Specialty Travel

Niche travel is becoming more important to clients. Millennials especially do not want a “packaged” vacation. They prefer specific, dedicated and unique experiences. Some examples of Specialty Travel are:

- Religious/Spiritual Travel
- Dude Ranches
- Safaris
- Girlfriend Getaways
- Spas
- Destination Weddings
- Wedding-Moons
- Baby-Moons
- Medical Tourism
- Ancestry Tours
- Hunting Trips

## Qualifying the Client

- What type of vacation package interests you? (All-Inclusive, Escorted or Independent)
- What are your dates of travel or how many nights do you want to vacation? Keep in mind the day of arrival and departure are not really “vacation” they are primarily travel dates.
- What is your preferred type of hotel room? (hotel rating, bedding, smoking, view)
- Are you aware of the benefits of travel protection to cover unforeseen circumstances?
- Are there special activities that interest you?
- What is your budget?
- Verify the client is aware of the proper proof of citizenship required when traveling outside of the U.S.  
**A passport must be valid for 6 months AFTER their return date.**
- Are you celebrating a special occasion?

## The Client

- If your client is undecided about their destination ask about previous vacations and travel experiences. What region (the Caribbean, Europe, U.S.) would be their dream vacation?
- Narrow down options by encouraging your client to be as specific as possible. This is when your advice, knowledge and recommendations are invaluable.
- The answer to the ‘budget’ question will help you determine the type of package (budget, mid-range, or high end) that would best suit your client. **Never sell from your own wallet.**

## Pre/Post Tour Hotel for Escorted Vacations

- Present your client with the option of a pre or post tour hotel that you can arrange for as many nights as they desire. The client may be interested in a day prior to the tour to get adjusted to a time zone change or may want to visit an attraction that is not offered on their tour.
- The possibility of a travel delay is another reason to consider booking a pre-tour hotel. If the first day of the tour is missed there is a high potential for a ruined vacation.

## Hotel Accommodations

- Preferred bedding? 1 King or 2 Queens/Doubles
- What type of view? Garden, Pool, City, Ocean etc.  
Don't provide only the lowest price, offer a few different categories with your quote. A pool view may be a minimal difference than a garden view. Point the advantages to a little higher category (i.e. better location or room amenities). Be cautious of offering too many options and overwhelming the client.
- Escorted tours usually have a block of rooms set aside for their tours but you can still make a special request.

- Special requests at a hotel are exactly that – REQUESTS! No hotel will ever guarantee a type of bedding or exact room location.
- Be aware that most countries outside of the U.S. do not have ADA requirements.
- If your client is traveling overseas you should explain the differences between hotels in foreign destinations vs. U.S. hotels. For example, a 3-star hotel in the U.S. would be similar to a Hampton Inn, a 3-star hotel in Europe would be similar to a Days Inn.

**Verify what is NOT included**

- Once you make a reservation make sure your client is aware of what is and what is not included in their package. Stating this information several times may be redundant but it is crucial your client understands. Resorts and escorted tours are very specific on their inclusions; some offer more (or less) than others.
- Resort Fees – this must be repeated to the client multiple times because a fully informed client is a happy client.
- Certain islands in the Caribbean charge a departure tax that must be paid locally, sometimes in local currency, at the time of departure.

**Proof of Citizenship**

- A valid passport is mandatory when departing the U.S. for a foreign country. **The passport must not expire within 6 months of their return date.** Currently a passport is not required to travel to Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa and Guam.
- A travel Visa may be required for entry to some countries and this could change from the last time you sent a customer to the same destination. Always double check.
- [www.state.gov](http://www.state.gov) is the official website for travel documentation requirements for U.S. citizens. Non-US citizens need to contact the consulate of their home country and the consulate(s) for the countries they are visiting.
- Effective 2023 U.S. citizens may be required to obtain a Visa to go to Europe.

**Vaccination Requirements**

Since the onset of COVID, it is extremely important you advise your clients of the requirements related to traveling. This could include but not limited to:

- Vaccination requirements
- Face mask mandates
- Social distancing

In addition, it is imperative you monitor their reservation closely up to their departure date with the nature of the changes evolving from the pandemic.

**Cancellation Policies**

- It is critical to review the vendor’s cancellation or change policies and advise your client on them. Penalties change from vendor to vendor.
- Always remember to offer travel protection!

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