
How to get a perfect holiday every time!

1. Only use an independent travel agent that's bonded to ABTA and ATOL. If in doubt, look up their ABTA number on the ABTA website.
2. Remember brochure prices are not always indicative of real prices. Almost all brochures are out of date within a few weeks as the laws of supply and demand take over. The travel agents "Live" systems have more accurate prices and sometimes Tour Operators want to sell their holidays quickly to recover their investment. For cheap holidays and late deals you've got to go to the independent travel agents.
3. Identify two or three holiday options that you are considering within the next 6-9 months. Usually, there are lots of advantages to book early, with Tour Operators giving away room upgrades, free childrens' places and cheaper flights. Give the travel agent as much information as you can about your real budget, your groups' likes and dislikes and let them loose! They're paid to do the work so why waste your time? If you have medical or dietary requirements ask them to find out what's available locally.
4. If you want the best holiday late deal, ask your travel agent to put you on their mailing list for specific offers and they call or email you when they have something that meets your requirements. Don't be shy about asking for a deal on a low cost package holiday. A good agent is your friend - they love a challenge and are always keen to beat High Street holiday prices. They may even ask you to book online at their website to get great savings! Ask what charges are included in the price and with [Trailblazer Travel](http://www.trailblazertravel.co.uk), don't be afraid to ask for any other extras that might be available.
6. It may sound regimented, but plan an overview of your itinerary so you know what you'd like to do. If you have others in your group, find out what they'd like to do and plan accordingly. It saves time, money and arguments!
7. Very important but little known fact – independent travel agents have more choice and better prices than standard travel agents such as Thomson, Thomas Cook and First Choice. Why? Multiples have their own stock of flights, hotels, villas and also higher marketing costs which they need to pass onto customers. You're paying for that dreamy, sexy TV holiday advertisement!
8. On some types of holiday, the websites ARE cheaper. For example, if you don't really care where you stay as long as you get sunshine, you can get a holiday for as little as £99 for a week. On the more reputable online agencies, there are excellent savings if you book early. But some of these internet businesses aren't interested in you as a long term customer and their pitifully low margins don't allow them to invest in training, customer support or service. As a consequence, many fold after a few years and customers are left stranded.
9. When you're on holiday, really take that break! Forget your Blackberry and Facebook updates. The holiday is only memorable if you completely switch off. Read that book you've always wanted to read, make plans, dream and really unwind.
10. But your perfect holiday isn't in the destination you choose. It's in your mind. You choose how much you want to explore, relax, dance, experiment and celebrate the freedom of being away from it all! It just happens to be that you're in Bora Bora. Or Gran Canaria.....