

What gives travel agents an edge over the internet?

Airlines, hotels, and travel service providers have made it easy for clients to plan and book their travels online. With a bit of research and a few clicks of a button, travellers can make their travel arrangements from the comfort of their own homes. Why should you still use a travel agent then?



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Time and stress

When was the last time you actually sat down to plan a trip? Yes, it's true that you can do almost all of it by yourself, but do you really want to? Research alone can easily consume hours upon hours of time, and that's assuming you're the one calling the shots. As soon as you add another participant into the mix things quickly start to get tricky.

After research, it's time for comparisons, and following that you can begin thinking about actually booking. And all that was just for the flights, you've still got to arrange transfers, accommodation, excursions and more. With a travel agent all that stress disappears. All it takes is a quick, informal chat to let them know what you're looking for, what your budget is, and when you want to depart, and they take it from there. Imagine what you could do with the hours they'll save you.

Expertise

Even the most well-travelled individual will struggle to hold his or her own against an experienced travel agent. It is after all their profession. They have unique insights into the market and the combined knowledge of an entire company's trip-planning history, not to mention their own experience in booking countless trips for clients.

They know about niche markets many people have never even heard of, and are adept at planning complex trips with multiple stops across various destinations. What's more, they save you from the virtual onslaught of adverts, advice, and suggestions of "where to go next" and "what to do in..." Trips can be tailored to meet specific needs, and whether you're travelling for the first time or you're a veteran of the industry, they'll ensure you get the trip you're after.

Deals and pricing

Despite what some sources may have you believe, more often than not a travel agent will not cost more than booking a trip yourself and, in some cases, you could even save money. One of the main reasons that this happens is because they are

trying to find the best deal for you. With access to industry-only platforms, exclusive deals, and promotional offers, their pool of choices is far bigger than anything the average traveller can hope to find. Even in cases where a nominal fee is added, when you consider the time and effort they've saved you it far outweighs the financial cost.

Peace of mind

Lastly, but certainly not least, once you hand over your trip to a travel agent, they take care of everything. Worried you might miss a flight? Their planning will ensure you don't, and if you do, they'll sort it out. Need a last minute change? They'll take care of it. Want to add a few more stops to your trip? All in a day's work for a travel agent. Ask your travel agent if they are a member of the Association of Southern African Travel Agents. These accredited agencies are required to comply with a strict code of conduct and by entrusting your travel in their hands you can travel with peace of mind.

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