



Springdale Traveler

Dear Springdale Traveler,

We have all read sound off comments about airline ticket prices from Mobile versus those from surrounding airports. It's even likely that you have been subject to many personal opinions on this topic, including my own on occasion. It seems that we all have our opinions on this issue.

Consequently, I decided to do a little digging and see what the airlines themselves have to say. As a result, I found a presentation that Dr. Rob Britton presented to a group of American Airline Executives in early 2009. At the time, Dr. Britton was the advisor to the Chairman of American Airlines. If you thought managing and pricing airline inventory was a complicated business, you were right. If you travel frequently or are involved in managing travel purchases for your company, I would suggest that this is a must read.

<http://www.airlearn.net/images/UVa-Pricing-Jan09.pdf>

In addition to this presentation I also came across an editorial written for The Math Association of America titled "The Crazy Math of Airline Ticket Pricing". This article, written by Mathematician Keith Devlin*, deals with the complexity of the many airfare search engines. The following is a quote from the last paragraph.

You can get a sense of just how complicated the real situation is when you consider that with airlines offering thousands of different fares, with different sets of rules governing the different legs on each trip, if two people take a round trip together, with three flights in each direction, there can be as many as $1,000^{12}$, or around 10^{36} , fare combinations. If you printed out a ticket for each possible fare, the pile would stretch all the way to the nearest star, Proxima Centauri, four light years away.

Happy Travels!

*Mathematician Keith Devlin is the Executive Director of the Center for the Study of Language and Information at Stanford University and "The Math Guy" on NPR's Weekend Edition.

Why is my American Express Card Important?



Travel
Representative

Aside from the fabulous benefits of booking with any travel agency, there are countless reasons to book with your regional American Express Representative Office, particularly if you hold an American Express Card.

American Express Cardmembers can receive exclusive benefits and amenities when booking travel with an eligible Card.

From Paying with Points for your travel to exclusive amenities and events on Mariner Club sailings, as a Springdale Travel client you have exclusive access to a variety of benefits. All you have to do is pay for all or part of your travel with your eligible American Express Card.

[Learn more about the travel benefits of your Card](#) and always be sure to let your agent know that you are a Cardmember. Even if this trip doesn't earn you a single benefit, we'll be sure to keep you in the loop on new and upcoming offers.

Escorted Tours Aren't Just for the Young At Heart



When many of us think of an escorted tour through Europe, we envision a crowded and noisy bus full of fanny-packed and floral shirted 70-somethings chatting endlessly as they are tugged from one "tourist-spot" to the next with no end in sight.

But this does not do justice to a long-celebrated way of travel. In fact, most American's mental image probably stems more from mass media's poor portrayal of these tours than any real testimonials. Check out this article by Travel Weekly about "[The Farce That Framed Escorted Tours](#)".

In reality, escorted tours can be a leisurely and relaxing way to see the amazing sites of Europe. The average traveler age is dropping, closer to 40 than 70, and many tour operators are building in more and more free time throughout the tour. This means that you can just enjoy the ride and let someone else do the work but also see some of the sites that are a little bit farther from the beaten path.

The Springdale Traveler will always provide you with the latest news, specials and Springdale Travel exclusive vacation packages. It's your go to spot for the latest and greatest in the world of travel! Visit www.springdaletravel.com or call 251-476-5095 for more information.



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River Cruising, A Better Way to Explore



Nothing compares to the river. Where else but on the river can you journey into the heart of the world's greatest cities and towns, and discover the true nature of the land?

Comfortable and convenient, it offers a greater variety of destinations than you could encounter any other way. Spend less time getting there and more time being there. Little wonder that river cruising is the fastest-growing segment of the travel industry.

- See the World's Great Cities
 - Sail directly to the heart of many destinations and walk right off the ship into the center of town.
- Travel With Ease
 - After boarding the ship, unpack—just once—in your spacious river-view stateroom, and then relax
- A More Intimate Experience
 - Most ships hold between 120 – 260 passengers
- New Scenery—All Day, Every Day
- Culture & History Everywhere
- Travel Your Way
 - Join the guided walks and in-depth excursions planned for you in each destination—or sightsee on your own if you prefer.

Spend Christmas At Sea



Do you ever tire of the hustle and bustle of the holiday season? Do you wish that you could just enjoy each other's company and forgo expensive gifts and lavish parties?

If so, why not plan to spend your family Christmas at sea?

In lieu of or in addition to traditional gifts, you book a cruise for the family and just spend the holiday enjoying each other's company.

The ships are decorated marvelously for the holidays and the festive spirit is all around. It's an amazing way to get back to the basics of the holidays and just enjoy each other's company.

An Exclusive Benefit for Delta SkyMiles American Express Cardmembers



An Exclusive Benefit for Gold and Platinum Delta SkyMiles and Delta Reserve Credit Cardmembers:

Book a flight now and you can be the boss of your miles and let them work for you. With a whole new way to use your miles, you can choose when and how you want to use them. In addition to saving up for Award tickets you can now redeem your miles towards all or part of the price of your Delta tickets.

- Pay with Miles is an exclusive benefit for SkyMiles® members with a Gold, Platinum, or Reserve Delta SkyMiles Credit Card from American Express.
- There are no blackout dates or inventory restrictions, just look for flights marked as Pay with Miles eligible when shopping at delta.com.
- Pay with Miles is flexible. Pay for all or part of the fare with miles - it's up to you. Now you don't have to wait as long to enjoy your Travel Awards.

The US Opens Travel To Cuba



For nearly 50 years, Cuba has been off-limits to most U.S. Citizens; beginning in September all that will change.

Due to recent policy changes by President Obama, the Treasury Department is once again granting what they are calling "people-to-people" licenses.

While it is still illegal to just hop on a plane bound for Cuba, you can visit this amazing destination via one of the authorized programs, like the one hosted by Insight Cuba.

When traveling with Insight Cuba the main focus will be on authentic cultural immersion. You will be able to dine with and talk with the locals and see many of Cuba's most fascinating destinations and landmarks.

Don't miss this chance to visit one of the world's most alluring - and misunderstood - destinations with a company that knows it inside and out.



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Say I Do in Idyllic Caribbean Splendor



Begin your life together in one of the most heavenly settings in the world. And on that special day, leave the stress to someone else who will make sure that everything is absolutely perfect.

From vibrant bridal bouquets to gourmet menus to thrilling live entertainment—a destination weddings means meticulous attention to every detail to create an unforgettable occasion. A dedicated wedding planner will make all the arrangements according to your specific instructions—leaving you free to enjoy the moment with your loved ones.

Catering to a range of styles and budgets, there are a number of exceptional wedding packages offering fabulous choices. Whether exchanging vows on the white sand beach or on your own private island, hosting intimate outdoor dinners or memorable receptions with sumptuous buffets, you will find everything you ever dreamed of with your beautiful destination wedding.

Take A Tour By Private Plane



Trade the road for the sky as you spend 2 nights in New York City followed by stops in Niagara Falls, Toronto, Hershey, Amish Country, Washington DC and Mt. Vernon on a 6-day tour from New York City - by private plane!

You'll stay in 4-star hotels and tour the sites in each destination via deluxe, modern coach with a knowledgeable, experienced tour guide. Enjoy breakfast and dinner nearly every day, included in the price!

All travel is done via private plane through private airports. This means less hassle for you and more time actually enjoying the sites.

For more information on this exciting new style of travel, contact one of our New York City experts, Carolyn Utsey or Todd Dubose at 251-476-5095.

Why Not Take Your Princess To Disney World?



Every little Princess loves Walt Disney World. Whether it's an afternoon carriage ride like Cinderella or lunch with Minnie Mouse herself, your little Princess will feel right at home around the castles and fantasy lands of Walt Disney World.

Since we strongly believe that every child should experience the wonder and magic of Walt Disney World at some point in their young life, we also know that there are so many ways that we can help make it that much more special.

The experience is not complete until you have dined among your favorite Disney characters or made a trip to the Fairy-Godmother owned, [Bibbidi Bobbidi Boutique](#) for the royal treatment. There is even something for the little Knights and Princes in attendance.

Or if your little Prince is more of a Pirate, it's most definitely [The Pirates League](#) for him! Ahoy, matey!

Our Resident Koala Goes Home for a Visit



Our native Australian, Rebecca Lytle, recently was able to make it home for a visit along with her husband and 2 children. In addition to catching up with her relatives she was able to take her American born family for a bit of sightseeing.

She took them down the Great Ocean Road along the coast of Victoria to see the [12 Apostles](#) in Port Campbell. Unfortunately, while they are still called the 12 Apostles, there are only about 7 of them left standing.

Then, they spent a day at the [Melbourne Aquarium](#) where her husband, Corey, was able to dive with the sharks!

And finally, they spent one morning at [Jirrahlinga Animal Sanctuary](#) where they saw baby dingoes, wombats, kangaroos and koalas (just be sure not to call them koala bears!).

The trip was a long awaited reward for Rebecca who hasn't been home in many years.



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Visiting China with Friends



The Bay Minette Group (mostly from the First Baptist Church) started traveling with Ann Meredith and Springdale Travel in 2003 with a trip to Australia and New Zealand. After that fabulous trip they have tried a few cruises in Europe both on large ships and river cruises. One of their favorites was the Russian River Cruise from St. Petersburg to Moscow. Another favorite was the tour of the Canadian Rockies visiting Lake Louise and Banff Springs. Along the way a bus trip or two took them to Branson, Nashville, Callaway Gardens and Natchez.

You might say they are a "traveling bunch". Where ever they go, they enjoy the fellowship and joy of seeing the world with good friends and always come back with that "proud to be an American" feeling.

Our China trip was an experience of a life time. The weather was ideal (we went the latter part of April); the food was good; had experienced tour guides; and our hotels were excellent. The highlights of our trip were the Terra Cotta Warriors; the Great Wall of China; the Three Gorges on the Yangtze River; and our two meals in the homes of Chinese families. Thanks Ann Meredith and Springdale Travel for our China experience.
 – Don Robinson, Bay Minette Group Leader

Join Our Facebook Family



Did you know that Springdale Travel is on Facebook?

The best part is, it's like having a small piece of our newsletter a few times a week. Our Facebook page is where we post great travel articles, outstanding special offers and the latest news in the travel industry.

It's a great way to stay current with what is going on in the world of travel and ensure that you are never out of the loop on great discounts and offers that pop up along the way.

Like Springdale Travel on Facebook at www.facebook.com/springdaletravel to have access to a world of great information that will help you plan your dream vacation getaway.

Have a Great Travel Photo? Win \$100!



Have your travels given you the opportunity to take some really great photographs? If so, we want to see them!

Take your very best travel photo to Calagaz Photo & Digital Imaging for printing between September 6 and October 8 and you will be entered to win \$100! Other prizes include an 11"x14" canvas print from Calagaz Photo and much more! Plus, just for entering you will receive a free 5x7" print of your entry! *Prizes will be awarded in each category.

Winners will be announced at the end of National Cruise Vacation Week on Saturday, October 22.

Limit one entry per person. [Official rules and details can be found here.](#)

Why We Love Our Jobs



On occasion we get letters from our clients after they return home from a great vacation. We are able to most appreciate our jobs when we hear that someone had a perfect vacation experience and they come home with rave reviews. We recently received such comments from the Wilson family who sailed on the [Carnival Elation](#) in July 2011.

Hi Galyna!

Thanks for everything! The cruise was awesome. The cake was a great surprise and a nice welcome when we got to our cabin. We were glad we had the ocean view room and got to look outside.

We thoroughly enjoyed the cruise activities. My daughter and I did all the dance classes and won a couple of competitions. We even got to lead one of the dance competitions! The entertainment shows were great. The kids enjoyed their club activities and meeting new friends. They also enjoyed the endless pizza and ice cream.

The excursions were fantastic. We were pleased to see the ancient Mayan Indian ruins and had good tour guides. But riding the dolphin was perhaps the most thrilling thing I have ever done. That was one of my husband's favorites too.

We have great pictures to remember the trip of a lifetime! We will definitely call you for our future travels. Again, thanks for everything!

*Sincerely,
 Felicia, Anthony, Kaylin and Charlie Wilson*