

CRUISE VACATIONER

ABOUT THE INDUSTRY

TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL



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Describe your career as a travel agent.

Fun, lots of fun, and more fun. I advise my clients to start with a short cruise (I recommend a Catalina/Ensenada cruise before investing in longer cruises. I take a short cruise, every year. It gives my clients the c

How long have you been in the business? What attracted you to it?

I have been a travel agent for just over 11 years. I love people and love to travel (and to be the merrier).

What is your approach to serving clients?

I believe in always giving the client what they want, and more than what they are asking for. When I see pricing online by myself, I educate them on how I take care of all the little information. I even get their boarding passes and luggage tags for them. I go with them and how could I make their vacation better. My three main goals are:

1. Educate.
2. Sell.
3. Sell.

What is your biggest challenge when selling cruises and how do you overcome it?

The biggest challenge is when someone says "I would never go on a cruise because of a bad experience. Or, they hear on the news about something that happened on a specific cruise line is not one they want to be on. I explain that every cruise line has its own personality and I highlight the best things about the cruise I'm recommending and assure them that I will take care of them.

What has been a career highlight, thus far?

Taking a group of Shriners (Shriners Hospital for Children Northern California) through the Panama Canal. It was not my first time through the canal, but this group and I happened to be the first time that ship and crew went through the canal. It made the experience even more fun. It was like seeing the canal for the very first time. Things I didn't see the first time.

How has your CLIA membership and certification helped you as a cruise agent?

Just having my Master Cruise Counsellor (MCC) certification makes me feel confident. It shows my clients I am serious about my work as a travel agent. It also helps with ship inspections quicker. I have also enjoyed reduced rates from hotels as a result of my membership also keeps me up to date on the latest cruising news. Additionally, I have been able to book more cruises from Princess Cruises and Norwegian Cruise Line. I plan to take more CLIA Elite Cruise Counselor (ECC) certification.

What cruising trends are you seeing?

I see more and more people wanting a cruise because they are mostly "all-inclusive" and all activities are within reach. More and more people are booking family cruises and younger. Many young adults are cruising and taking their whole family.

What is your fondest personal cruise memory?

It's hard to choose just one. On one of my group cruises, I opted to host a party where everyone wore their best 50s outfit. The last couple that came into the party—he was wearing a white shirt and red carnation, and she was wearing the exact outfit that his mother wore to his party and it truly was a great sock hop.

Another fond memory was when my sister purchased cabins for her and her spouses and children. Of course, I had to go, too. Then more family members joined. It was a great family experience. There was something for everyone to do. Our dinners were all at the table together.

Any last thoughts?

When I started in the business, I took all the classes I could get with Goldr. I didn't think I would ever have enough cabins to constitute a group. I booked everyone I knew. The response was overwhelming. I had more than 50 people at the point, I had to ask for help. Now I am a group cruise specialist.
