

## 800 Number Directory Brings Travel Bargains

Travel has changed substantially over the last ten to fifteen years. Remember the days of flight travel when you were able to park, run through the security checkpoint quickly, and get to your gate twenty minutes before takeoff? Days of meals with plastic knives are gone. Now we have sandwiches and chips, available, but you get to purchase them in addition to your fare, which has also increased. Boarding cruises hasn't changed as dramatically, but the cost increase has affected who travels and how frequently.

Booking travel, though, has changed more than any other part of travel itself. Remember the days when airlines paid fees to travel agents to sell their tickets? When that went away, so did our friendly neighborhood travel agent. It was almost impossible for them to make a decent living. Then came the internet, which also changed how we saw travel reservations. Now one booked travel by going onto a website, first to get the airline's 800 number to call, and then to see a few scheduled fares, and now you can see quite a few, but you can never see the availability, or get a chance to take advantage of any hidden fare breaks.

There are sites now that claim to be able to book all travel together, flight, car rental, hotel, everything from soup to nuts, but if you've ever tried booking through them, you know first hand that it's better to book each one separately. I've even had the misfortune to have the flight booked fine, taken the car rental to the hotel, only to find that the hotel reservation had not been booked properly. So at that point, where are you to go in a town that is completely booked, and your reservation is not available? Where is your toll free number to call? Non existent. There is not only no one to call to be able to verify that you indeed did book the reservation, but all you have is a piece of paper telling them that you did book the reservation. Unfortunately for you, without someone to help you navigate through, you might as well fly home.

Booking travel is always the first challenge. Sometimes you don't even know which flight might take you to your destination. How many stop overs, which airport is better to fly out of, you know, who would know that, except someone who is in the industry. Ideally, you wouldn't want to incur the cost of calling several different providers, without the security of a toll free number, especially if you're bargain hunting. Remember, each airline or cruise line, or other travel provider has their own mark downs, some advertised and some not, so the best thing to do is to reach out and call them to find out how best to find those bargains.

One of the best solutions when traveling is to be able to reach out and call someone. Being able to run down a toll free directory to call not only your airline, car rental, and hotel or even a day tour reservation is the most secure way of booking your travel, not only because it saves you time when you book your travel, but also because you are able to then have someone to call if in fact you do find that there is a question about a reservation, location, or timing. No search engine or website is going to be able answer your phone call, tell you about fare restrictions, potential problems at a destination you're traveling to, or offer up a bargain.

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### About the Author

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