



The Canadian Institute of Travel Counsellors lists all the Certified Travel Counsellors and Managers in Canada on the National Directory of Certified Travel Professionals

www.citc.ca/en/directory

Top Reasons to use the services of a real, live, travel professional

Members of CITC were asked why travellers should book with a CTC, rather than on the Internet. Here's what they said...

- With so many airlines declaring bankruptcy and ceasing operations, a Certified Travel Counsellor will advise you of your options if you booked your flights with them. However if you booked online, then you may not be covered at all and have no options available to you.
- A travel agent's knowledge, care and attention helps the clients create lasting, irreplaceable memories.
- Who ya gonna call when things go wrong—that computer screen just isn't going to respond.
- Travel counsellors have all the airline fare rules and regulations at their fingertips.
- Accountable, professional, certified, dependable, educated, financially secured through the Travel Fund (in Ontario), has the latest information, has been there, is working for you, juggles your business travel schedules, knows what you want, manages your trip, notifies you of changes, omits all the extra foot work, prepares your documents, questions ads that are too good to be true, returns your calls promptly, selects the right package for you, trust in him/her, understands your needs, will build a relationship with you and your family, works with you to really find that special holiday.
- Pay the service fee and let the travel professional take care of all your travel arrangements. They have the the resources available to make your travel planning stress-free. By the way, those Internet booking sites charge service fees—but aside from 'allowing' you to book with them, what 'services' are they providing?
- One of the primary reasons would be their ability and willingness to assist the traveller when things don't go as planned. Many travel counsellors will work over-time effecting refunds, registering complaints and working with the client and suppliers after the client's trip is over.
- Deal with a travel counsellor for competitive pricing and peace of mind
- Travel counselors have access to consolidators and suppliers to search for better pricing; we can advise re proper documentation (passports/visas); we save our clients 'time'; we are there for them and a contact, if they need us regarding delays, cancellations, supplier failure, baggage problems, and more.
- The beauty of being a travel counsellor is that we experience all types of travel first hand. We love traveling and sharing our experiences, which enables us to give accurate, reliable advice. We follow through with our clients' holiday (or business trip) from the pre-arranging to the follow-up on their return. The Internet is a great source of information however, it can not read the personality of the client, like a travel professional can. We get to know our clients (what happened on the last trip, what they liked and didn't like). As travel professionals, we take pride in our profession and align ourselves with great partners & educators.

- Experience - counsellors know where to look to get the best for their clients - this does not necessarily mean the best deal - what it refers to is the best, based on the needs and information that the counsellor gets from the client
 - Relationship Building - Most Travel Counsellors enjoy many years of repeat business with their customers and build upon a basis of trust...something you can't find on the internet
 - Creativity - many travel counsellors build independent group, incentive and non-affinity programs using a combination of products and suppliers. In many cases, these items or contacts are not readily available to the average individual.
- We help where ever in the world you happen to be. Time is money and we can save you money
- It's always easy to book on line, but not so easy to get help when things go wrong.
- A good travel professional will be pro-active to keep you up to date on the latest deals.
- A travel counsellor can give you the destination airport code so when checking in at the counter, you can check that the correct destination code is printed on their luggage tag.
- One of my colleagues had a person call her in a panic. He lives in Northern Alberta and booked, on the internet, what he thought was an all inclusive package to the Dominican Republic. Two days before he was to leave he realized the all inclusive package did not include the air!!
- There's nothing like unbiased information from a travel professional who's interested in creating an experience just for you ...and it's good to speak to a destination or lifestyle travel specialist
- We are there when you need us; Personalized service; Knowledgeable, professional, service; Provide extra information on related products and services; Research Assistance
- Someone you can trust. Remember, without a travel agent, you are on your own!
- A travel agent, even if they don't know the answers to your questions, will find out for you...unless you would rather spend an hour or two trying to find the answer yourself.
- We accept collect calls!
- We tell it like it is - too many stairs, too close to the highway, construction at the resort, travel advisories....if we don't know, we'll find out for you.
- You will get real live answers to your questions and will actually hear and feel someone get excited for you while planning your travel experiences
- The internet might look like a sure thing for a 'cheap fare' but have you considered what else you need to know about the country to which you would like to travel...for instance...do you need a visa.....how long should your passport be valid.....do you need any shots? Are there local offers for travellers that must be purchased in Canada (e.g London Visitors card.) A travel agent will have all of this information available.
- How many times have you heard: I booked online and changed planes 3 times to Chicago or my ticket or all inclusive pkg. was not waiting for me at the airport? Can you help me get my money back??
Grrr
- Maximize Choice - I use consolidators mostly, they offer a wide variety of suppliers, but also at very competitive prices.
 - Real live person = Real live inventory... at my fingertips; I can provide all travel information immediately and with all aspects of travel.
 - No Pressure Sales - I am a home based agent, so I can take the time to qualify my clients and to match them with the right product. (I make house calls).
- Advice on what to do, and what NOT to do at the destination. A travel professional is able to get through the "legaleese" and tell you what you need to know. They also provide comparison shopping the easy way, as they have all the travel options in their computer—in front of them
- A Travel Counsellor can usually spot a potential problem in a booking prior to travel and correct it.
- With everyone being inundated with 'online' and 'self service' options it is refreshing to talk to a real live person.
- Personal experience and advice is beyond comparison to online reviews.
- Effortless, let someone else do the work, source the deals.
- Develop a rapport with someone you trust, and you will be amazed at what they might come up with out of the blue.
- You only have a limited amount of time in your destination and the advice you receive can be priceless

- A travel counsellor can steer you away from “cheap holidays” that do not provide good value
- Rail passes, car rentals, accommodation can frequently be cheaper if from pre-purchased packages from your travel agency prior to leaving Canada
- A travel counsellor will provide you with inside tips regarding the destination that they picked up from their own travels as well as from clients who recently returned home
- Contrary to popular myth, travel counsellors don't charge fees for everything. Ask...you might be surprised!
- Travellers who book their own travel arrangements frequently mess up when they arrange for connections. They do not consider that the arrival destination may have multiple terminals—and they may arrive in one and have to get their bags to another one. They don't understand the timing to leave one mode of transportation, collect your belongings, leave the area, line up to check in for the next leg of the journey etc.
- A travel professional will advise the client that conditions and standards of service at the destination may be different from those that they are familiar with in Canada. This helps to set realistic expectations for the traveller. They will know what kind of toilets to expect (squat, western, open, bush, tree etc), what kind of banking hours the country keeps, whether there are dress codes to visit some sites, whether a national holiday will dictate that all the museums will be closed on a specific day....and more.
- A travel counsellor will ‘counsel’ you about a holiday that you will be able to enjoy according to your ability, and not because it was recommended by someone you have nothing in common with. 45 year old person with arthritis should not go on the recommendation of a healthy, young teenager, who can party all night and get up early in the morning and go sailing. If the teenager had fun you may not.
- It is a travel counsellor's job to give unbiased expertise and advise regarding tour operators, airlines, hotels etc. to their clients in helping them choose their next Travel Experience. Not their next trip, but their next Travel Experience.
- No one is more interested in how your trip went than your travel counsellor. Anyone else who listens is simply being gracious.

The Canadian Institute of Travel Counsellors
 505 Consumers Road, Ste 406, Toronto, ON, Canada M2J 4V8
 Tel: 416-484-4450 1-800-589-5776 info@citc.ca www.citc.ca

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 In the Subject area type in “Traveller Mailing List”