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MAUPIN EXPRESS

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MAUPIN TRAVEL CRACKS TOP 40 LISTING FOR THIRD YEAR IN A ROW

INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

Maupin in Top 40 Again
Pg. 1

Top cost saving tips
Pg. 1

Agents still finding best fares
Pg. 2

“Secure Flight”
Implementation
P. 2

Lower hotel rates forecast
Pg. 3

Travelers pay more for bags checked at airport
Pg. 3

RDU Airport News
Pg. 3

Maupin has new 24/7 Vendor
Pg. 4



Following two successive years of achieving the “Top 40 agencies” listing, Maupin Travel was ranked as the 38th largest agency by Business Travel News in its’ annual business travel survey released in June. With over 37,000 transactions recorded through the Airline Reporting Council (ARC) in 2008, Maupin once again has established itself as one of the leading travel companies in North America. Given the fact that many companies have scaled back their travel and many agencies on the list have seen their ARC transactions drop by as much as 50%, we are humbled by this recent award and are grateful to our loyal clients who continue to help us grow as we enter our fourth decade of doing business in the Triangle.

TOP COST-SAVING TIPS FOR BUSINESS TRAVELERS IN THESE RECESSIONARY TIMES

- Review travel policy guidelines and mandate all travel be booked through a managed travel process/designated agency or customized online booking portal
- Consider second-level or senior-level approvals for all corporate travel
- Require staff to plan meetings around travel, rather than travel around meetings
- Avoid high rate hotel stays by attempting to schedule travel to cities during off-peak times and avoid high-end, luxury hotels when business conditions do not warrant it. Consider booking hotels that offer free amenities like breakfast, high speed internet, parking and fitness facilities that might otherwise cost you.
- Consider alternate airports when flying to major cities. For example, Washington Dulles or Baltimore instead of Reagan Airport. Or Newark or JFK instead of LaGuardia and Chicago Midway instead of O’Hare.
- Expand your travel window wherever possible to give you a greater amount of flight and airfare options
- Reconsider your corporate policy if your travelers are permitted to fly in the business and first class cabins on extended flights or widen the parameters to a minimum 6 hour flight.



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- Consider carriers that price flights as one-way segments or consider two one-way fares on different carriers to maximize your savings.
- Timing is everything. According to a Topaz International study, flying domestically in the USA yields the greatest savings by buying as early as possible. You can save up to 51% of the cost of airfare by purchasing your tickets at least 21 days in advance. Booking airfares early when flying internationally will save you up to 24% on the cost of your ticket. In most cases, having a Saturday night stay for domestic trips could cost you more but for international travel, there is a clear trend for cheaper fares when using advance purchase options with a Saturday night stay.

TOPAZ STUDY REVEALS AGENTS STILL TOPS IN FINDING BEST FARES

During the past eight years, Topaz International (an independent auditing firm) has conducted a study that compares the cost of booking travel both through a “bricks & mortar” agency and through the Internet.

In each of the eight years, the results consistently show that agents are better at finding lower fares, and the 2009 study released in May is no different. For 2008, the study showed that agencies were able to obtain an equal or lower fare 91.56% of the time, while the agency fare was higher just 8.44% of the time. The average fare savings difference in 2008 was \$61 per ticket. This is better than the \$56 savings in 2007 but significantly less than the \$80 savings in 2004.

DETAILS STILL UNFOLDING ON “SECURE FLIGHT” IMPLEMENTATION

On April 27, Maupin Travel shared the details of the upcoming changes to specific data we will be required to gather for the airlines as part of a new Transportation Security Administration (TSA) initiative known as “Secure Flight”.

Since May 15, we have been asked to request and collect the passenger’s full name as it appears on the government-issued document they’ll present at the airport, as well as a middle name or initial if it appears on such document. We will also be asked to request and collect the persons gender, date of birth and, if applicable, a redress number they might have obtained from TSA to minimize the chance of a “false positive” match to a watch list.

TSA’s stated goal is to vet 100 percent of all domestic commercial flights by early 2010 and 100 percent of all international commercial flights by the end of 2010. Specific instructions from the carriers and TSA on transmitting such data to them will be forthcoming over the next several months.

For the near future, small differences between the passenger’s ID and the passenger’s reservation information (such as the use of a middle name versus an initial versus no middle name) should not cause a problem for the passenger. But over time, passengers should strive to ensure there is consistency between the name on their ID’s and on their travel information and to continue to cooperate in providing such information to us.

SMITH TRAVEL RESEARCH STUDY FORECASTS LOWER U.S. HOTEL ROOM RATES

In a July study of U.S. Hotel room rates, Smith Travel Research said moderate declines in room rates could be anticipated through 2010.

The research company to the travel industry projected that average daily rates will drop by 9.7 percent in 2009. Similarly, occupancy rates will decline to an average of 55.4 percent, meaning more rooms are available for rent, resulting in reduced average room rates. The forecast calls for room rates to remain low through 2010 and may not return to 2007 levels for another six years. And that is great news for the corporate and leisure traveler.

US AIRWAYS FIRST AIRLINE TO CHARGE MORE FOR BAGS CHECKED AT AIRPORT



US Airways said economy customers traveling on or after July 9 would have to pay an additional \$5 if they elect to settle checked-bag charges at the airport. The carrier, like all domestic legacy carrier competitors, already levies a \$15 fee for the first bag and \$25 for the second. Effective July 9, those charges are increased for US Air travelers to \$20 and \$30, respectively if they check their bags at the airport. Travelers currently have the option to prepay first and second bag fees via the US Airways website at www.usairways.com

LOCAL NEWS FROM RDU INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

Work on the second phase of Terminal 2 that began last fall is producing good results. Over the past eight months, the frame of what will be the south concourse has taken shape. Construction of the buildings' steel frame is nearly completed and the trusses for the concourse are currently being installed. On June 11, a temporary walkway was installed to allow pedestrians easy access between the parking garage and Terminal 2 while a large canopy and mast are built over the upper level roadway. This canopy will protect pedestrians from the elements as they walk from the parking garage into Terminal 2. When the Terminal 2 south concourse is completed, there will be an additional 17 gates, 15 shops and restaurants and three more works of art to showcase.

On another note, the rate for parking in the daily section of RDU Airport's garage changed effective July 1. The hourly rate increased from \$1 to \$2 per hour up to the \$10 maximum which will remain unchanged. The new rate structure for RDU's park and ride lots also went into effect July 1. The new rate will be a flat fee of \$6 per day.

MAUPIN TRAVEL CONTRACTS WITH NEW 24/7 EMERGENCY SERVICE VENDOR

Maupin Travel is proud to announce that they have established a partnership with a new 24/7 emergency travel service vendor, effective May 1.

The new vendor is called “The Reservation Center” with virtual agents located throughout the country and its headquarters in Agoura Hills, CA. They currently handle the after-hours travel services needs of a multitude of the Top 100 travel agencies in America and provide a personalized level of service far beyond that of an “answering service” that other agencies may use. And with travel as their only specialty, you can be assured they have the level of experience to help you when you are in need of emergency services outside our normal business hours.

Please note that this service is to be used for EMERGENCY purposes only and additional fees will apply for non-emergency calls.



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