

Fall Can Mean Great Value

It's that time of year again. The days are getting shorter and the kids have gone back to school, the holidays are on the horizon. What else do we see this time of year you ask? This is the time of year that we see the savvy traveler come out of his long summer hibernation and begin looking over the vast buffet of travel opportunities that are waiting to be devoured. The window of opportunity is short, mind you, probably much shorter this year, because many of the savvy travelers have come out of hibernation earlier than usual.

If you're asking yourself what I'm getting at here, the answer is that fall brings us some excellent travel values that just aren't available at other times of the year. If you are flexible in when you can travel, and can stay away from holidays and school breaks, there are plenty of great trips out there for you at prices 30% or more off those paid during peak travel seasons. Of course, there are some trade offs, but then life is all about tough choices, isn't it?

So, if you've got some time this fall, here are a few ideas that you may want to take a look at:

- Cruises - You've heard me say it before, and you'll probably hear me say it again. Cruising continues to gain in popularity as more and more of the population becomes exposed to it. Consumers are also learning to book further in advance to get exactly what they want. Many of you may have gotten burned by waiting too long to book your summer vacation cruise for 2005. Because of this, I'm seeing cruises heavily booked into next summer already, yet there are gaps in the fall that you can still take advantage of, if you act quickly. For example, both the Bermuda and Mediterranean seasons come to an end by mid-October. The weather is starting to get cooler, but on the other hand, prices are more attractive and the crowds are half of what they were last month. Caribbean cruises are great value right now because we're in the midst of hurricane season. However, those great prices usually last until the holidays; long after the hurricanes are gone. The first three weeks in December are especially attractive for Caribbean Cruising. Looking for the best values on Alaska and Europe, now's the time to be looking at 2006. The books have been open since July for most cruise lines for their 2006 Alaska & Europe products.
- Europe - Europe in the off-season can save you up to 50% on both your airfare and your hotel costs. Off-season does not have to mean "lousy weather season". Remember, when it's winter here, it's winter there also. However, if you think of October, November, March & early April, you've got a full third of a year when the weather is better, the crowds are lighter, and the pricing is attractive enough that you can still afford some nice souvenirs when you get there.
- The Caribbean & Mexico - Airfare to Cancun is still running half of what it costs to get you to most of the islands in the Caribbean and with the building boom continuing, there are plenty of great resorts that are battling to win your vacation dollars. Great competition means great value for the consumer in Cancun this fall, however prices go up considerably for Christmas and New Years and then stay high through the winter and spring break. Jamaica and the Dominican Republic also offer great value in the fall season and Bermuda, though technically not part of the Caribbean, is a fraction of the normal cost from November through March.

There are many other destinations that also offer great value in the fall. So, if you've got the time and you're ready to go, call or visit your travel agent today and become one of the growing number of savvy travelers out there who knows how to maximize his vacation dollars.

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