



For Immediate Release

October 19, 2006

USTOA Survey Shows Consumers Underestimate Packaged Travel Savings

A recent poll conducted by The U.S. Tour Operators Association (USTOA) reveals that only 17% of U.S. adults know that buying packaged travel can save them 20 - 30% over making the same arrangements themselves.

Among 65% who believed that packaged travel could save them money, few knew the actual savings. At the same time, more than 60% of adults surveyed said they would be more likely to take a tour or package if they knew that they could save money.

Package Savings Average 30%

When survey respondents were asked to estimate the savings of purchasing a tour or package, slightly a quarter selected 10 – 19% savings. Only 17% thought they could save 20 – 29%.

“In reality,” says Bob Whitley, USTOA president, the average savings are 30%, and can range from 10% to 40%, depending on time of year and destination. This is something travelers should know.”

Older and Single People Less Likely to Know Savings

Baby Boomers and those with incomes between \$50,000 and \$99,000 were more aware that tours and packages could save them money. On the other hand respondents 65 and older and those living alone were more likely to say they didn't know if tours and packages saved them money.

“Package travel -- whether tours or vacation packages -- offers plenty of freedom and choice for all kinds of travelers” says Whitley. He suggests travelers check out the USTOA web site – www.ustoa.com – for information, useful tips and quizzes that will help them select the best vacation experience for their needs. The web site also contains a database to help travelers find USTOA member companies based on a number of criteria including destination, activity and personality preferences.

TNS Research conducted the telephone survey of 1,000 participants on behalf of USTOA in late May, 2006. Vacation packages were defined as buying hotel and airfare or other arrangements together.

USTOA members are responsible for the vacations of 10.7 million people yearly. The organization's 130 brands have met the travel industry's highest standards, including participation in the USTOA Travelers Assistance Program. This program requires, among other things, that each USTOA member set aside \$1 Million in security to reimburse consumer payments in case the company goes out of business. USTOA is the only travel industry organization with this requirement.

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