

What are FAM Trips?

Short for Familiarization Trip, FAMs are provided by travel suppliers like hotels, cruise lines, resorts, vacation and tour companies, tourism boards...

- Exclusively for Travel Advisors (spouse/companion usually welcome at same rate or a modest supplement)
- To "familiarize" you with their travel offerings
- To encourage your recommendations and sales
- Deep discounts - often up to 80%! - to help you travel more
- NOT commissionable to IntelTravel.com or you

IMPORTANT: Any Advisor who intends to make use of FAM Trips or other professional privileges is required to read this excerpt from the IntelTravel.com Training Manual:

How To Travel Like A Pro: Do's and Don'ts of FAM Trip Travel

Have a good time but remember what you're there for. Advisor rates and FAM trips are meant to educate but think about what you could gain by making the extra effort to learn on any trip. Ask for a property tour or any other special information that may be available for Travel Advisors Go the extra mile ...ask to meet the sales manager and/or leave your business card. Of course, if you are invited to meet a manager or attend a pre-planned Advisor seminar, your attendance as a professional is not optional.

Act like a pro. Make requests in a respectful manner that recognizes you are asking for a favor. If it's possible, you will be accommodated. If it's not, you should be gracious and understanding. Be mindful of the fact that other passengers can overhear and be affected by your behavior...which reflects positively or negatively on IntelTravel.com.

Know as much as possible about the product ahead of time. That way, it will make more sense and mean more when you experience it. Plus, you'll be able to get additional information that could be valuable to you or your customers in the future.

Dress appropriately. That starts with the flight and continues throughout the end of the trip until you arrive back home. The reality is, you're more likely to be treated professionally if you're dressed that way. Separate business from pleasure, and don't be too casual for meetings or seminars. Also, set a good example by following protocol for formal nights and other activities.

Be a little early for everything. Punctuality is the mark of a professional, so arrive early for seminars and airport check-in. Know preconditions regarding seating arrangements, upgrades, and other accommodations. If your luggage is temporarily lost, follow the advice we give our own clients: Carry essential items (like medications) in a carry-on bag in case there's a problem. And be patient with the vendor's advisors while they locate your bags. In your room, requests or complaints about air conditioning, plumbing, etc., should be directed to the appropriate personnel in a diplomatic way, respecting the partnership between you and the vendor's employees.

Use good sense with the people you meet. You can tell people that you're a Travel Advisor -- but don't proclaim to other passengers that you're on a discounted FAM trip. Be sociable but use discretion and act like a professional. Above all, avoid soliciting travel or recruiting Advisors while on your trip, as your fellow passengers are likely to be there thanks to another Travel Advisor. Not only is stealing customers bad form, but vendors cannot risk the backlash from other agencies. Such actions can bring about stern repercussions for you and IntelTravel.com.

Ask about a vendor's Advisor qualifications and room-sharing policy. Some trips are "for Advisors only," so check ahead before sharing your cabin or hotel room with a spouse or companion. Some are reserved for full-time agency employees (not Independent Travel Advisors) or have minimum sales requirements. There's no reason to feel awkward if you have the facts you need.

Engage in the kind of travel experience that your clients will. Get an education, but think from the standpoint of your family members, friends, and associates. What part of the trip should you explore further or find out more about so you'll be ready to close a sale? Take notes and be a part of activities that will develop your skills as an Advisor.

Offer criticism through IntelTravel.com. If you have suggestions or criticisms about your trip, keep them constructive and e-mail or write them in a letter to IntelTravel.com. We want to know for the sake of other Advisors and customers. Our Advisor & Customer Service representatives can provide perspective and detailed knowledge about the vendor in question and will advise you of any further action taken by the agency. Don't write directly to the vendor, unless you are writing as a regular customer, and not as an Independent Travel Advisor with IntelTravel.com.

Finally, take the time to say "thank you". Everyone appreciates gratitude when they've gone out of their way. Rarely will things be 100% to your liking, but it has still been a new travel experience for you. Remember to acknowledge the vendor's generosity through a verbal "thank you" to staff and crew who have served you well. Don't forget to thank maids and stewards with tips. And when you return home, send a thank you note to the appropriate representative on your IntelTravel.com stationery. With these simple tips, you will do IntelTravel.com proud and promote our image as the most professional agency. At the same time, you'll enrich your experience, have a better time, see more, sell more and gain a better understanding of the world of travel.