

Understanding the Language of Tourism

Glossary 2

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The mission of the Oregon Tour & Travel Alliance in cooperation and partnership with the Oregon Tourism Commission is to increase the packaged travel business throughout the state. OTTA will be a leader in providing educational opportunities for Oregon members statewide about the packaged travel industry.

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UNDERSTANDING THE LANGUAGE OF TOURISM – GLOSSARY

Add-on: any component of a package tour not included in the package price

adventure tour: a tour designed around a new or active experience; an adventurous activity such as rafting or hiking fitted to the skill level of the participant

activation: To activate a promotion with a target audience, e.g.: consumer activation or trade activation.

affinity group: a group sharing a common interest, usually from an organization. See also pre-formed group.

after-departure charge: expenses such as telephone charges that do not appear on a guest's account at check out

agent: one who acts or has the power to act as the representative of another. Most frequently in travel anyone other than a principal, such as a retail travel agent, receiving agent, ticket agent, local operator or wholesaler (usage uncommon in No. America)

agritourism: A tour is has the main focus as agriculture or related subjects such as landscaping, farm tours.

air sea: a cruise/travel program which includes both air/sea arrangements. Often combined with local hotel arrangements for pre/post stays

airline classes of service: variety of terms used to express a particular type of aircraft cabin service. Classes vary with types of compartments, seating comfort, and amenities, with variation between domestic and international flights, denoted by a fare code on the ticket.

airline fare: price charged for an airline ticket. Some categories are as follows:

- **advance purchase excursion (APEX)** – heavily discounted excursion fare available on many international routes. Reservations and payment will be required well in advance of departure, with varying penalties for cancellation.
- **excursion** – individual fares that require a round-trip within time limits, discounted from coach fare, limited availability
- **group** – discounts from regular fares for groups
- **regular or normal** – any unrestricted fare, generally good for one year such as coach, business class or first class, round trip not required

airline reporting conference (ARC): a consortium of airline companies, who by agreement, provide a method of approving authorized agency locations for the sale of transportation and cost-effective procedures for processing records and funds to carriers. Not all airlines are ARC companies.

American plan: type of rate that includes the price of a hotel room, breakfast, lunch and dinner. AP is the common abbreviation. See also room rates.

associations: a group of individuals or companies that come together to solve a common problem or solution for the good of the group

association executive: a full-time professional administrator who is employed by an association and is responsible for planning and promoting annual conventions and association business meetings.

attraction: a natural or man-made facility, location or activity which offers items of specific interest to tourists.

average daily rate - ADR: room revenue divided by rooms sold. See average room rate below.

average room rate: the total guest room revenue for a given period divided by the number of rooms occupied for the same period. Since it can be related to investment, this statistic is frequently used as a measure of economic feasibility.

back to back: term used to describe tours operating on a consistent, continuing basis, usually without time between, consecutive

Best Available Rate - BAR: the lowest non-restricted rate bookable by all guests. This rate can change several times a week up to several times a day. Also called Best Flexible Rate (BFR).

bias: preferential display on a reservations computer of a host carrier flight schedule

block: a number of rooms, seats, or space reserved in advance, usually by wholesalers, tour operators, or receptive operators who intend to sell them as components of tour packages.

booking form: a document which tour purchasers must complete and gives the operator full particulars about who is buying the tour. It states exactly what is being purchased, (including options) and must be signed as acknowledgment that the liability clause has been read and understood.

bonding: the guarantee of protection or insurance for a supplier or consumer. In the travel industry, certain bonding programs are mandatory. The ARC insists that travel agents be bonded to protect the airlines against defaults. Professional operators and agents buy bonds voluntarily to protect their clients.

Brand USA: the DMO (destination marketing organization (see DMO) for the United States

bulk fare: fare available only to tour organizers or operators who purchase a specified block of seats from a carrier at a low, non-commissionable price and then has the responsibility of selling the seats, including a commission in their marked-up price.

carrier: transportation company such as an airline, motorcoach, cruise line, or railroad which carries passengers and/or cargo. It is also used as a term for the amount a tourism destination can handle.

Certified Tour Professional – CTP: a designation conferred upon tour professionals who have completed a prescribed course of academic study, professional service, tour employment and evaluation requirements. It is administered by the National Tour Association.

Certified Travel Counselor – CTC: certified travel agent designation

Certified Travel Industry Executive - CTIE: credential geared toward agents in upper-level management and indicates a higher-level understanding of business relations.

Certified Meeting Planner - CMP: certified meeting planner designation

charter: to hire the exclusive use of any aircraft, motorcoach, or other vehicle

charter operations: (1) term referring to the transportation of pre-formed groups which have exclusive use of a vehicle (2) an operator authorized to arrange transportation, however, is not limited to dealing with pre-formed groups, and can itself form a tour group

circle trip: a journey with stopovers that returns to the point of departure

city guide: a person who has a specialty of guiding the city only

closeout: finalization of a tour, cruise, or similar group travel project after which time no further clients are accepted. Any unsold air or hotel space is released, and final payments are sent to all suppliers.

commercial rate: a special rate agreed upon by a company and a hotel. Usually the hotel agrees to supply rooms of a specified quality or better at a flat rate to corporate clients

commercial recreation system: recreational products, services, and facilities created and operated by privately owned businesses or corporations as opposed to public facilities

commission: the percentage of a selling price paid to a retailer by a supplier. In the travel industry, travel agents (retailer) receive commissions for selling tour packages or other services

complimentary room: (comp) a guest room for which no charge is made. Complimentary rooms are usually given when a group books a number of rooms and is occupied by the tour manager or driver.

concessionaire: a firm which, under contract rights, operates for another party (in many cases, a government agency) food and beverage services, lodging facilities, and other services on-site at an attraction.

concierge: a hotel employee who handles restaurant and tour reservations, travel arrangements, and other details for hotel guests

conditions: the section or clause of a transportation/tour contract which specifies what is not included and which may spell out the circumstances under which the contract may be invalidated

confidential tariff: a schedule of wholesale rates distributed in confidence to travel wholesalers and agents./ Better known as a net rate.

configuration: the interior arrangement of a vehicle, particularly an airplane. The same airplane for example, may be configured for 190 coach-class passengers, or it may hold 12 first-class passengers and 170 coach passengers. Configuration is also used in conjunction with how the plane is arranged such as three seats on each side or in larger planes, two seats on each side with four middle seats.

confirmed reservation: an oral or written agreement by a supplier that he has received and will honor a reservation. Oral confirmations have no legal weight, even written or telegraphed confirmations have specified or implied limitations eg: a hotel not honoring a reservation after 6 pm, unless late arrival has been guaranteed in some manner.

consolidator: a person or company which forms groups to travel on air charters or a group rates on scheduled flights to increase sales, earn override commissions or reduce the possibility of tour cancellations.

consolidation: cancellation by a charter tour operator of one or more tours/flights associated with a specific charter departure or departure period, with the transfer of passengers to another charter tour/flight to depart on or near the same day.

consortium: a loosely knit group of independently owned and managed companies such as travel agencies, tour operators, hotels, or other suppliers, with a joint marketing distribution process

continental plan: a hotel rate which includes a continental breakfast with the overnight room stay

contract: a legally enforceable agreement between two or more parties

contractor: an operator who provides services to wholesalers, tour operators and travel agents

convention and visitors bureau/association: (CVB, CVA) - a non-profit local organization supported by transient room taxes, government budget allocations, private memberships, or a combination of any of these funding mechanisms. A CVB typically encourages groups to hold meetings, conventions, and trade shows in its area. Also referred to as a DMO. See DMO.

Co-op tour: a tour which is sold through a number of wholesalers, cooperatives, or other outlets in order to increase sales and reduce the possibility of tour cancellations; also used in the context of partnering

Costing: the process of itemizing and calculating all costs the tour operator will pay on a given tour. Costing is usually the function of the operations manager.

Coupon, tour: a voucher that can be exchanged for a travel product

Courier: a European definition for tour manager/guide

crisis management policy: a written set of rules/policies set in place by management to insure a proper and smooth-running operation in crisis. In travel it is now demanded by the insurance companies

culinary tourism: the development and promotion of prepared food/drink as an attraction for visitors. It includes all *unique* and *memorable* eating and drinking experiences, not just those that have earned at least four stars or a favorable review from a journalist.

cultural tourism: is the subset of [tourism](#) concerned with a country or region's [culture](#), specifically the lifestyle of the people in those geographical areas, the history of those peoples, their art, architecture, religion(s), and other elements that helped shape their way of life.

customized tour: a tour designed to fit the specific needs of a particular target market

customs: the common term for a government agency charged with collecting duty on specified items imported into a country. The agency also restricts the entry of persons and forbidden items without legal travel documents

cut-off date: designated day when the buyer must release or add commitments to their event or tour

day rate: a reduced rate granted for the use of a guest room during the daytime, not overnight occupancy. Often used when someone needs a display room, office, or is in-transit due to odd airline schedules

deluxe tour: in travel usage, presumably of the highest standard

departure tax: fee collected from the traveler by the host country at the time of departure

deposit: an advance good-faith payment required to obtain confirmed space

deposit policy: a specified amount or a percentage of the total bill due on a specified date prior to arrival

deregulation: the act of removing regulations from an industry. In travel, the Airline Deregulation Act of 1978, which amended the Federal Aviation Act of 1958, provided for the end of the Civil Aeronautics Board which regulated authority over domestic airlines. On January 1, 1985, it removed travel agent exclusivity, thus paving the way for carriers to appoint and pay commissions to non-travel agents, and for the removal of antitrust immunity for travel agents. The motorcoach industry was deregulated in 1982.

destination: the place to which a traveler is going. In the travel industry, any city, area, or country which can be marketed as a single entity for tourists

DMC - destination management company: a company that provides on-the-scene meetings assistance for corporations and associations

DMO – destination marketing (or management) organization: an organization promoting the destination for the purpose of economic development from tourism.

dine-around plan: a plan that permits tourists to dine at a variety of restaurants using vouchers and coupons on a tour

director, tour: a person, usually employed or subcontracted by the tour operator, who accompanies a tour from departure to return, acting as a guide and troubleshooter and performing all functions to make the tour operate. Also see tour manager or escort

direct spending: money that goes directly from a tourist into the economy of the destination

domestic escorted tour: a packaged, pre-planned itinerary, including the services of a tour manager within a traveler's own country

domestic independent tour (DIT): a custom-made tour of a part of the USA planned exclusively for a client by a travel agent or operator

double-occupancy rate: the price per person for a room to be shared with another person; abbreviated ppdo and most often quoted in the industry

double-room rate: the full price of a room for two people (twice the double-occupancy rate)

downgrade: to move to a lesser level of accommodations or a lower class of service

ecotour: a tour designed to focus on preserving the environment of environmentally sensitive areas. Also known as a responsibility touring or sustainability travel

economy fares or services: in US domestic airline operations, passenger carriage at a level below coach service; in international operations, carriage at a level below first class

educational tours: tour designed around an educational activity, eg; studying art

e-mail: The written communications received through a computer such as a memo, letter, greeting or contract

errors and omissions insurance: Insurance coverage equivalent to malpractice insurance, protecting an agent or operator staff if an act of negligence, an error, or an omission occurs which causes a client great hardship or expense

escort: term no longer used much. A person usually employed or subcontracted by the tour operator who accompanies a tour from departure to return, acting as a liaison or trouble shooter. This term is often incorrectly interchanged with courier, conductor, host, manager, director, or leader, since the term designates different duties although performing an escort function.

escorted tour: a pre-arranged travel program, usually for a group, escorted by a tour manager or leader. In a fully conducted tour, the escort will also provide guide service throughout.

escrow accounts: funds placed in the custody of licensed financial institutions for safekeeping. Many contracts in travel require that agents and tour operators maintain customers deposits and prepayments in escrow accounts until the time of service.

ethnic tour: tour designed for people usually of the same heritage traveling to their native origin, or to a destination with ethnic relevance

European plan: a type of rate that consists of the price of the room only, no included meals

excursion: journey where the traveler returns to the original point of departure

executive coach: a luxury motorcoach with seating of 25 or fewer with upscale amenities

experiential tour: a tour designed to have the passengers participate in the activities to experience it for themselves hands-on eg: cooking or building something

extensions: an arranged sub-tour offered optionally before or after a tour or cruise at an extra charge

extreme travel: a tour that has adventures beyond the norm and has a high fitness/skill level such as white-water rafting at a five level

FAM tour: an abbreviation for familiarization tour which is often a complimentary or reduced-rate travel program for travel agents, tour operators, travel writers or others to acquaint them with a specific destination or attraction, thereby helping to stimulate sales. Also known as a research tour.

fixed expense: an expense related to the tour as a whole, which does not vary with the number of passengers such as a meal or a per person entrance fee

flexible tours: tours designed with an all-included price for options that occur when you reach a destination. It allows the passenger to choose an individual activity rather than an entire group doing the activity together eg: going on a raft excursion or choosing a helicopter flight

folio: an itemized record of a guest's charges and credits, maintained in the front office till departure, and can be referred to as guest bill or guest statement

food cover: a unit of food service provided to a customer. The term is not synonymous with meal because a food cover may comprise only a cup of coffee or bowl of soup.

foreign flag: any carrier not registered in the USA (applies to air/sea transport)

franchise: the right to market a product or service, often exclusively for a specified area by a manufacturer, developer, or distributor in return for a fee

FIT - Frequent Independent Traveler: custom designed, pre-paid tour with many individualized arrangements. Also used as foreign independent traveler

fly/drive itinerary: a pre-arranged tour sold by tour operators that includes air and ground transportation components. Mostly FIT and by rental cars.

front office: office situated in the lobby of a hotel, the main functions of which are (1) control/sale of guest rooms, (2) providing keys, mail and information (3) keeping guest accounts, rendering bills/payments, and (4) providing information to other departments.

full house: a hotel with all guest rooms occupied

full-service restaurant: a food-service establishment with several menu selections and table service

function: a pre-arranged, catered group activity, usually held in private room/area

function room: room used for functions, also called banquet room

gateway: city, airport, or area from which a flight or tour departs

gateway city: city with an international airport

ground operator: a company or individual providing such services as hotel, sightseeing, transfers, and all other related services for groups. See receptive operator and inbound operator

group leader: an individual, acting as liaison to a tour operator, acts as escort

group tour: a pre-arranged, pre-paid travel program for a group usually including all components. Also see packaged tour.

guaranteed tour: a tour guaranteed to operate, no minimums

guest account: an itemized record of a guest's charges and credits

guide: (1) a person qualified to conduct tours of specific localities or attractions (many reliable guides are licensed), (2) an airline, bus, railroad, or ship manual of schedules and fares, usually printed seasonally

guided tour: a local sightseeing trip conducted by a guide

high season: the period of the year when occupancy/usage of a hotel or attraction is normally the highest. High usage invariably means higher prices for rooms or admission. Also referred to as on-season or peak season

Homeland Security: The government agency that was developed after 9/11/01 that regulates security for the US, especially in the fields of transportation and tourist visas. Oversees customs and other departments having to do with foreign visitors, plus other aspects of security

host: (1) a representative of the group (organizer) that may arrange optional excursions and answer questions but does not have manager authority, (2) liaison to the tour operator or tour manager, or (3) a representative who provides only information or greeting services or who assists at the destination with ground arrangements without actually accompanying the tour.

hotel classification: there is no official classification or accepted rating system for US hotels, but the following definitions are generally understood.

- **budget or tourist** – budget hotels/motels are reasonably priced accommodations and are the fastest growing segment of the US lodging industry. In general, they provide a room with a bed and bath, TV set, and telephone, as well as free parking. They usually do not have room service or a restaurant.
- **moderate:** accounts for nearly 75 per cent of available US hotel rooms. Offer on-site restaurants, bars, and perhaps a conference room, as well as other basic services.
- **deluxe:** a top-grade hotel with all rooms usually having a private bath. The public rooms and services are provided and a high standard of décor and services maintained
- **first class and luxury:** Many first class/luxury hotels in the US exist in large cities, offering a number of special services to the business/leisure travelers. They offer first-rate restaurants, banquet and conference rooms, valet service, room service cable TV and complimentary morning news.

hotel meals:

- **American Plan:** rate includes three full meals and the room (AP)
- **Bermuda Plan:** rate includes a full American-style breakfast and the room (BP)
- **European Plan** – No meals included with the room rate (EP)
- **Modified American Plan:** rate includes breakfast and lunch OR dinner with the room (MP)

house: a synonym for hotel commonly used within the industry. Examples of usage include full house, house count, house income, house bank, and house charge

hub and spoke tours: tours which utilize a central location with side trips of varying length to nearby destinations

immigration: the process by which a government official verifies a person's passport, visa or origin of citizenship

inbound tour: group of travelers whose trip originated in another city or country

inbound tour operator: company specializing in domestic tours for foreign visitors in the strictest sense. Can also be used interchangeably with receptive operator or ground operator

incentive or incentive commission: See override

incentive tour: (1) a trip offered as a prize, particularly to stimulate the productivity of employees or sales agents, or (2) the business of operating such travel programs

incidentals: charges incurred by participants of a tour, not included in the tour price

inclusive tour: tour in which all specific elements – transportation, airfare, hotels, transfers and other costs are offered for a flat rate. An inclusive tour does not necessarily cover all costs such as personal items and telephone.

independent contractor: a person contractually retained by another to perform certain specific tasks. The company or person has no control over the independent contractor other than as provided in the contract. In the context of group travel, a tour manager is often retained by the tour operator, or tour brochure designer/writer might be hired in this capacity.

independent tour: an unescorted tour sold through agents to individuals. For one price, the client is guaranteed air travel, hotel room, attraction admissions and (typically) a car rental.

IT number: a registration number that is assigned to a tour package

Intermodal tour: tour using several forms of transportation such as airplanes, motorcoaches, cruise ships, and trains to create a diversified and efficient tour package

itinerary: the travel schedule provided by a travel agent or tour operator for the client. A proposed or preliminary itinerary may be rather vague or very specific. A final itinerary spells out all details, including flight numbers, departure times, and similar data, as well as describing planned activities.

land operator: a company that provides local services, also see ground/receptive operator

lead time: advance time between initiating a tour and its departure date

leg: portion on a journey between two scheduled stops

letter of agreement: a letter from the buyer to the supplier accepting the terms of the proposal. This may also be the suppliers initial proposal that has been initialed by the buyer

liability: the responsibility that rests on the operator (or supplier) when contracting with the passengers. Tour operators are liable for all aspects of tour components that are listed in the brochure and must be insured.

load factor: average number of seats occupied, eg. motorcoach or air

low season: the time of the year at any given destination when tourist traffic, and often rates, are at their lowest, Also referred to as off-peak or off-season

manifest: final official listing of all passengers and/or cargo aboard a transportation vehicle or vessel

market segment: the concept of dividing a market in parts

markup: (1) difference between the cost and the selling price of a given product; (2) difference between the net rate charged by a tour operator, hotel, or other supplier and the retail selling price of the service

master account: the guest account for a particular group or function that will be paid by the sponsoring organization

master bill: all items contracted by the operator and supplier that will be paid by the operator

mature traveler: otherwise known as Seniors, usually over 65

meet and greet: pre-purchased service for meeting and greeting a client/group upon arrival in a city, usually at an airport, pier, or rail station. Service may include assisting the client/group with entrance formalities, collecting baggage, and obtaining transportation to the hotel.

menu: (1) in a restaurant, the listing of the food items and services; (2) a listing in a computer of the programs or files that it holds

MICE: short for Meeting Incentive Conventions and Events. A market segment.

minimum charge: the amount that each customer must pay no matter what is consumed. For example: a two-drink minimum in a club

minimum land package: the minimum tour expressed terms of cost and ingredients that must be purchased to qualify for an airline inclusive tour, or contract bulk inclusive tour fare. Such packages usually include a certain number of nights lodging, other specified ingredients such as sightseeing tours and/or entertainment and/or car rental. The minimum rate for the combined air fares and ground package is often expressed as a percentage (often 100% or 110%) of the lowest regular fare for the air travel scheduled.

motorcoach: a large, comfortable, well-powered bus that can transport groups and their luggage over long distances.

motorcoach tour operator: a company that creates tours in which group members are transported via motorcoach on a planned itinerary of stops

mystery tour: a tour to an unpublished destination – passengers get a surprise!

nationwide tour: sold to people throughout the nation

net net rate: see net wholesale rate

net wholesale rate: a rate usually slightly lower than the wholesale rate, applicable to groups when components are specifically mentioned in a tour brochure. The rate is marked up by wholesale sellers to cover tour costs. Also called a net net rate

niche market: a market segment in which individuals possess homogeneous needs and characteristics, formed by a) needs to meet b) unmet needs to wake up and/or c) communication.

no show: guest with confirmed reservations who does not arrive and has not cancelled.

occupancy: the percentage of available rooms occupied for a given period. It is computed by dividing the number of rooms occupied for a period by the number of rooms available for the same period.

on-demand public transportation: transportation services, such as taxicabs that do not have regular schedules

on-line: the act of looking or buying from a website on a computer

off-peak: a period in which a hotel or attraction is not in its busiest season

open jaw: an arrangement, route, or fare, authorized in a tariff, granting the traveling public the privilege of purchasing round-trip transportation from the point of origin to one destination, at which another form of transportation is used to reach a second destination, where a passenger resumes the initial form of transportation to return to the point of origin. Used for airline travel mainly

operations: performing the practical work of operating a tour or travel program. Operation usually involves the in-house control and handling of all phases of the tour, with both suppliers and clients.

option: tour feature extension or side trip offered at extra cost

option date: the date agreed upon when a tentative agreement is to become a definite commitment by the buyer

optional tour/ tour option: any component of a package tour that is not included in the package price, but may be purchased as an added feature to extend the length of the package or enhance the trip

ORLA: Oregon Restaurant and Lodging Association

OTA: online travel agent

OTTA: Oregon Tour and Travel Alliance

outbound operator: a company which takes groups from a given city or country to another city or country

outbound tour: any tour that takes groups outside a given city or country of origin, opposite of inbound

outfitter: a business that provides services or equipment at a recreational facility, considered a sightseeing operator

overbook: accepting reservations for more space than is available

override: a commission over and above the normal base commission percentage

package: (1) pre-arranged combination of elements such as air, hotel, sightseeing, and social events put together and sold at an all-inclusive package price; (2) to package, meaning to combine elements as above into an all-inclusive package product

packager: an individual or organization that coordinates and promotes the package tours and establishes operating guidelines for the tour

pricing: the scheduling of activities within an itinerary to make for a realistic operation and give a certain balance of travel time, sightseeing, events and free time

partnering: a joining together to cooperate in producing a travel package such as a hotel that partners with an attraction or rental car; also known as a co-op

pax: industry abbreviation for passengers

peak fare, rate, or season: highest level of charges assessed during a year

port of entry: point at which persons/cargo enters a country where customs and immigration services exist

pre- and post-trip tours: optional extension packages before or after a meeting, tour or convention

preformed group: a tour group in existence prior to the tour, the members of which share a common destination and purpose. eg: church or school group

pricing: decision-making process of ascertaining what price to charge for a given tour, once total costs are known. Pricing involves determining the markup, studying the competition, and evaluating the tour value for the price to be charged; function performed by the operations manager

rack rate: regular published rate of a hotel or other travel service

receptive operator: also known as an inbound or ground operator. Performs local services, specialist

release: (1) signed form giving the tour operator permission to use a persons name, picture or statement in an advertisement; (2) to give up space, as in returning unsold airline reservations

resort: a hotel, motel or condominium complex located in an area associated with recreation and leisure, such as the mountains/seashore. Normally offers facilities for sports and recreational activities and longer stays than a hotel

responsibility clause: that section of a brochure that spells out the conditions under which a tour is sold. The clause should name the part responsible for the tour financially, also known as liability clause

retailer: (1) travel agents or (2) one who sells directly to the consumer

risk monies: funds that an agency would not recoup should a tour not take place, such as nonrefundable deposits, promotional expenses, and printing costs

room rates:

- **day rate:** usually one-half the regular rate for a room during the day up to 5 pm
- **flat rate:** a specific room rate for a group agreed upon by the hotel/group in advance and usually referring to single or double same rate
- **group rate:** discounted rate based on an agreed amount upon minimum number of rooms used, also called a flat rate
- **net group rate:** a whole rate for group business (usually a minimum of 10-15 people) to which an operator may add a markup if desired
- **net wholesale rate:** a rate usually lower than the group rate, applicable to groups or individuals when a hotel is specifically mentioned in a tour folder, often used in partnering/coop
- **published rate:** a rate available advertised to the public. The rate can change, depending on the season. Also known as rack rate.

rooming list: the list of names or passengers on a tour or other group travel program, submitted to a hotel/motel. The names are not alphabetized as on a flight manifest, but rather room by room indicating who is rooming with whom and

the type of room desired. Twin-bedded rooms, singles and triples are usually listed in separate categories.

run-of-the-house rate: flat rate for which a hotel or motel agrees to offer any of its available rooms to a group. Final assignment of the rooms is the discretion of the hotel.

series operator: a travel agent, wholesaler, tour operator, or broker who blocks space in advance for a series of movements over a given period of time, not necessarily on a back-to-back basis

service: non-physical, intangible attributes that management controls, including friendliness, efficiency, attitude, professionalism, and responsiveness

service charge: (1) a specified percentage of a hotel's daily rate (usually 15%) charged to the guest, who in return is relieved of the responsibility for tipping; (2) a fee charged to a client by a travel agent in addition to the commissions paid to him or her by the principals

shore excursion: a land tour, usually available at ports of call and sold by cruise lines or tour operators to cruise passengers

shoulder season: period when there is neither a high or low demand for a destination

single supplement: an extra charge assessed to a tour purchased for single accommodations

site destination selection company: company that investigates and suggests potential meeting sites to suit corporate or association needs

soft adventure: excursions prepared for passengers according to level of proficiency such as a float river trip or light hike

special event tour: a tour designed around a particular event; eg. Rose Festival

special interest tour: a tour designed to appeal to clients with a curiosity of concern about a specific subject. Most special interest tours provide an expert tour leader and usually visit places and/or events only relevant to that interest

special market: a foreign country with high potential for US inbound travel such as China

speed dating: a system designed to bring together operators and suppliers (in the travel business) on a fast basis, allowing each a short amount of selling time and seeing if they are compatible for their markets

state travel office: an official government agency or privately run, non-profit organization responsible for travel development and promotion of a state/province. Also called a state DMO. See DMO

step-on guide: an independent guide who comes aboard a motorcoach to give an informed overview of the city or attraction to be toured

supplier: the actual producer of a unit of travel merchandise or service such as a hotel or restaurant

surety bond: insurance to guarantee that the insured will carry out the specific work he or she was hired to do such as in a travel agency

table d'hote: a menu that limits an individual/group to two or three choices

tariff: (1) fare or rate from a supplier; (2) class or type of a fare or rate; (3) published list of fares or rates from a supplier; (4) official publication compiling rates or fares and conditions of service

themed tour: a tour designed around a specific theme such as fall foliage, also a special interest tour such as an art or architecture tour

TID: Tourism Improvement District. Refers to additional funding generated via hotel rooms to fund destination marketing.

tour: any pre-arranged journey to one or more destinations for a prescribed amount of time

tour basing fare: a reduced-rate excursion fare available only to those who buy pre-paid tours or packages. Tour basing fares include inclusive tours, group inclusive tours, incentive tours, contract bulk inclusive tours, and group round-trip inclusive tours

tour catalog: a publication, print or online, by tour wholesalers listing their tour offerings

tour departure: the date of the start by any individual or group of a tour program, also used in referral to the entire operation of that single tour

tour escort: no longer in use much. The tour company staff member or independent contractor who conducts the tour. Often called group director. It is technically a person that only escorts the group and does not have charge of the commentary portion.

tour leader: usually a group leader, also see escort

tour manager: a person employed as the escort for a group of tourists, usually for the duration of the entire trip, perhaps supplemented by local guides. The terms tour director, leader, escort, conductor, and (in Europe) courier have roughly the same meaning and are used interchangeably. A person with this title is usually at a professional well-trained level.

tour manual: (1) a summary of facts about a company's rules, regulations, and official procedures; (2) a compendium of facts about a destination, including its attractions, accommodations, geography, and special events, used by destination marketing organizations to attract tour operators and visitors to an area

tour menu: a menu that limits group clients to two or three choices at a special price, also known as table d'hote

tour operator: a person or company which creates and/or markets inclusive tours and subcontracts with suppliers to create a package. Most tour operators sell through travel agents and/or directly to clients.

tour option/optional tour: any component of a package tour that is not included in the package price, but may be purchased as an added feature to extend the length of the package or enhance the trip

tour order: a coupon given to the purchaser of a tour package, identifying the tour, the seller, and the fact that the tour is pre-paid. It is used as a form of proof of payment and receives vouchers for meals, portorage, transfers, entrance fees, and other expenses. Also see tour vouchers.

tour organizer: person who locates and creates groups for preformed tours. The tour organizer is often compensated only with a free trip

tour vouchers: documents issued by tour operators to be exchanged for tour components, also called coupons

tourism: the business of providing and marketing services and facilities for leisure travelers. Thus, the concept of tourism is of direct concern to governments, carriers, and lodging, restaurant, and entertainment industries, and of indirect concern to virtually every industry and business in the world

transit visa: visa allowing the holder to stop over in a country to make a travel connection or brief visit (usually, not longer than 3 days)

travel agent/agency: a person/qualified to arrange all travel components at retail rates and on a commission

trip director: an escort for an incentive company. Larger companies reserve this title for the person who directs all personnel and activities for a trip. Can be used interchangeably with tour manager.

TRT: Transient Room Tax. Sometimes referred to as TOT - Transient Occupancy Tax. The room tax charged by local governments on lodging/overnight accommodations.

upgrade: to move to a better accommodation or class of service

value season: a time of year when prices are lower than peak, also called low or off-season

variable cost: a cost that changes according to how many people take a tour, such as motorcoach expenses

VATG/TVA/MWS/GST: acronyms for value-added tax. A tax system which adds a fixed percentage of taxation on products and services at each step of production or service delivery. Common in Europe and Canada.

visa waiver: a program to eliminate the visa requirement for selected countries

volume incentive: see override

voluntourism: a type of tour that is eco-friendly that allow the passenger to get involved as a volunteer for community service eg: Habitat for Humanity

wholesaler: a company that usually creates and markets inclusive tours and FITs for sale through travel agents. Although the term is used as a synonym for tour operators, there are several distinctions: (1) presumably sells nothing at retail while a tour operator often does both; (2) does not always create his/her own products, while a tour operator always does; (3) is less inclined than a tour operator to perform local services

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