



The Ultimate Guide to Instagram

Tips and tools for travel planners, tour operators, and concierges.

THE POWER OF MARKETING ON INSTAGRAM

Instagram holds endless possibilities for your travel business. Much like all other social media channels, Instagram has a huge (and we mean huge) demographic of loyal users. Instagram is the sixth largest social network worldwide, with **1 billion** users. That's over **20% of all internet users** using Instagram!

The intriguing thing about Instagram is how it's used. It's not just a way to keep your followers informed on what's going on in your life via a photo, but also an avenue for inspiration. Travel being one of them.

Why is Instagram perfect for travel businesses?

In the travel industry, you can use Instagram to connect with new and current clients, inspire a vacation, promote your business or contest, and so much more.

We'll show you how you can leverage the powerful tool of Instagram for your business. All by knowing how to make your photos engaging, how to promote, grow, and maintain your Instagram account.

THE ANATOMY OF A GREAT INSTAGRAM ACCOUNT

Step 1: Create a Theme

You might notice great Instagram accounts following a design, pattern, or consistent layout. You can easily do this by deciding what impression you want to give your viewers. Do you want fun, bright, and colorful photos that pop out to a user or do you want modest black and white photos for simplicity and elegance?

Don't worry if it takes you some time to figure out what your "theme" is. You will begin to see a pattern with the images you edit and post.

Here are a couple ideas of accounts using a theme:



Oneika Raymond has bright and colorful photos that really pop! You can get this effect by brightening your photos and of course, choosing images with lots of color.



Nazaret shows a great example of keeping it simple with black and white colors while engaging in epic travel photos.



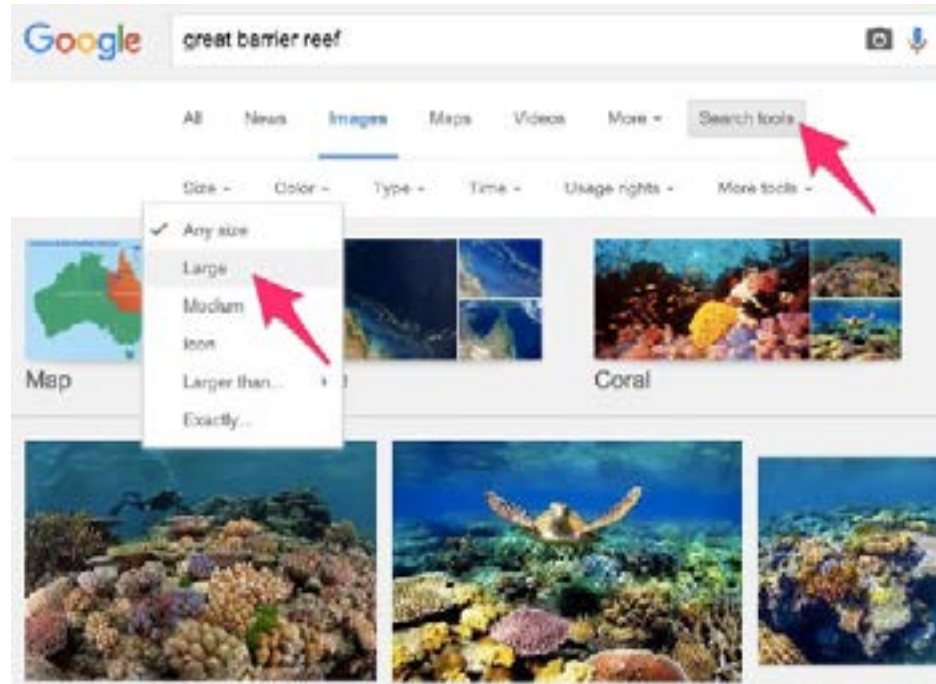
You'll find a consistent earthy theme to this account, along with bright colors mixed in! If your business does outdoor trips and excursions, this is a great account to get ideas from!

Step 2: Choosing the Right Image

Now time for the most exciting part– finding your images! If you don't have your own image to use, you can always search for the perfect image on the internet. Just be sure to choose an image that is high quality. We suggest that when searching on Google, be sure to define the search to **Size > Large**.

Important:

When searching Google Images, be sure to choose **Advanced Search** and then choose **“Free to use or share, even commercially”** to search photos that offer Creative Commons Licensing.

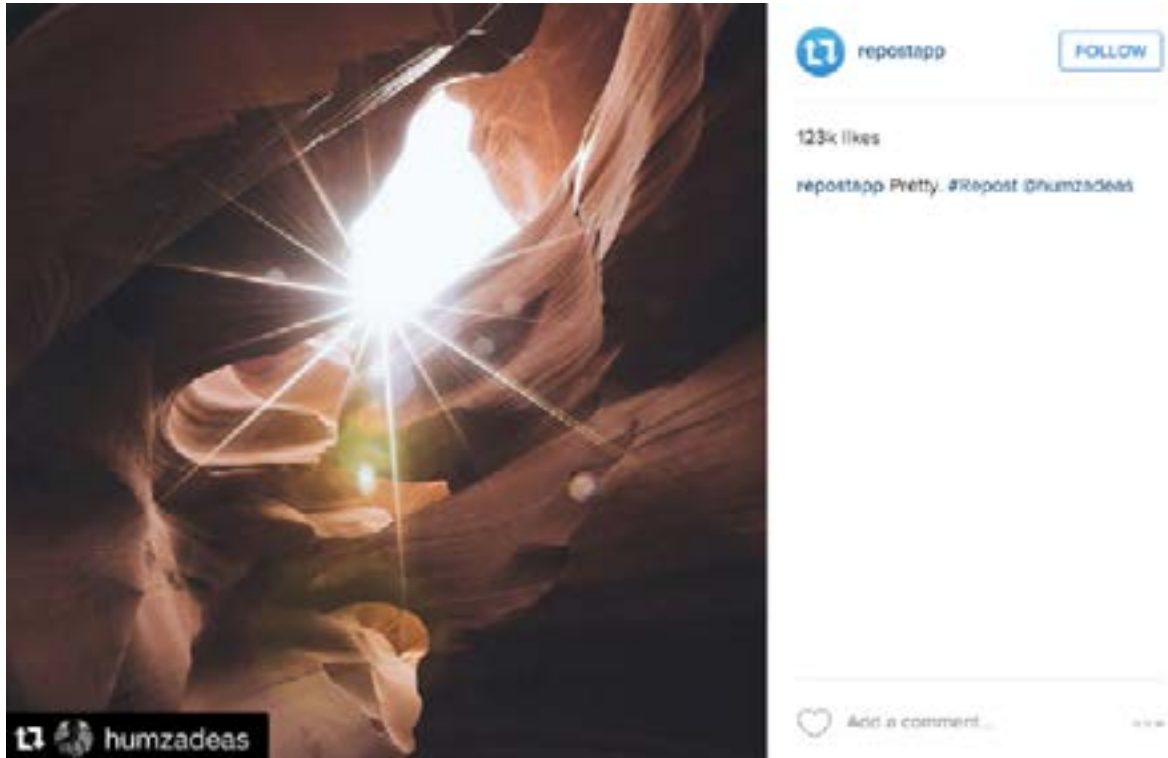


Even though you are posting these on Instagram, **copyrights** are still in full effect. If you can find the owner of the photo on Instagram, it is best practice to ask permission to use or share a photo before doing so.



Step 2: Choosing the Right Image

Another option is to just “regram” someone else’s photo. If someone else posted a photo you want to add to your account, whether it relates to your business, a client, or a user you’ve never met before – you can simply regram (similar to Twitter’s retweet). You can’t do this from your Instagram account, you will need to get an app to help you. We like the free app, [Repost for Instagram](#).



DOWNLOAD THE REPOST APP

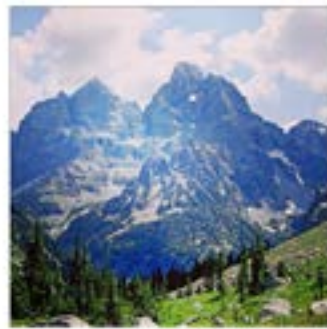


Step 3: Filters 101

The best part of Instagram is the editing and filters. Instagram makes it easy to post a professional looking photo without the hassle of using programs like Photoshop. (Note: Lots of Instagrammers use Adobe's **Photoshop** and **Lightroom** then put them on Instagram, so feel free to edit elsewhere!) At Travefy, we love using the editing tools that Instagram provides instead of using a filter. We make our photos bright by kicking up the brightness and toying with the shadows, sharpness, and contrast.

We use filters when needed to amp up the photo, and according to science, it's not a bad idea. **Research has found that that filtered photos have significantly more engagement than un-doctored images.** Filters that increase warmth, exposure, and contrast up engage the most.

Filters such as Mayfair, Rise, Valencia, Hefe, and Nashville are awesome choices to maximize engagement.



MAYFAIR



RISE



VALENCIA



HEFE



NASHVILLE

DID YOU KNOW?

Your chances of being viewed become **21%** more likely and the number of comments can jump **45%** when you apply a filter!

PRO TIP

Remember to keep your filters somewhat consistent to attract new users who visit your account page.

HOW TO JUMP INTO INSTAGRAM!

So you've decided to take the plunge into Instagram or step up your current Instagram game? Great choice! Here are **five ideas** to get the posts flowing and the engagements increasing!

1. Share pictures of your clients on their trips

Ask your clients for photos during or after their trips and if you can share them on your Instagram account. It's an awesome way to engage current clients and show future travelers where they can if they work with you to plan their trip. Plus, come of your clients might be flattered to be featured on your feed!

2. Go behind-the-scenes and share your work culture

Show off your office and team that helps make the business run. This is an awesome way to engage your followers and remind them that you're human too! Feature photos on any family trips you do to show your customers you've experienced these destinations first hand and showcase your expertise. You can also highlight cultural scenes or meals during your trips. The more, the better, on Instagram.



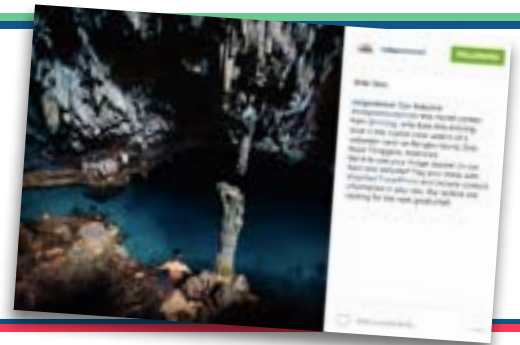
3. Host a contest or giveaway

Find a tool that works best for you to host the giveaway or contest on your Instagram account. Applications like **Rafflecopter**, **Wishpond** or **Woobox** can help you keep track of your contest and fairly choose a winner. Keep in mind that prizes don't have to be outrageous, start with something small.

Hint: Themed contests also tend to do better.

4. Ask for photos and feature them

This is a great way to engage with users and helps you provide endless content! You can have users email you their pictures or create a hashtag to use. Remember to mention the user when sharing their photo!



5. "Photo of the Day" Post and learn

An easy way to consistently engage with current and new followers is to post a photo each day of somewhere in the world. Include a story about that photo or a big of information about the place.

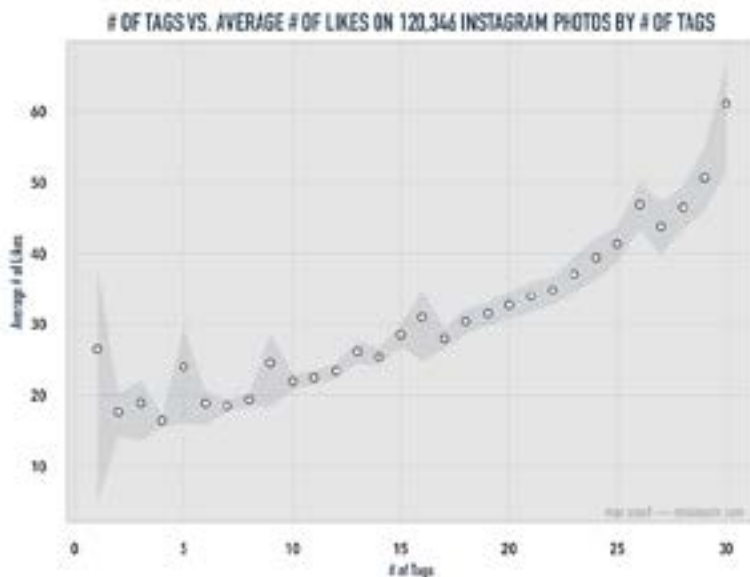
HOW TO GET FOLLOWERS

Having an Instagram is great, that is, if you have followers to see your amazing photos! Luckily, there are numerous ways to increase your follower count...

1. Smart Hashtags

A hashtag is your best friend on Instagram. Using hashtags will help a broader audience find you. Did you know that **over 545 million photos have been hashtagged with #travel** alone? That's a lot of viewing potential. Be creative with hashtags but stay relevant. Don't use a hashtag for the sake of its popularity, you can tarnish your account's credibility. Now the question "How many hashtags should I use?" Well, [a study by Max Woolf](#) has shown that the more hashtags, the more likes.

Find what works for you though. A lot of users will use around 5-10 hashtags.



PRO TIP

Share hashtags in a comment on the photo instead of with the picture caption, that way it doesn't look overtaken with hashtags when a user first sees a photo.

Here is a perfect example of use of hashtags in the comment section of a post.



2. Follow Other Users

One of the best ways to increase your follower count is to follow others who would enjoy your content. Search through **related hashtags** and find photos to like and/or comment on. This can be a tedious job, but consistently taking around 10-15 minutes each day can go a long way on your follower count. Don't forget to engage with them!

3. Find the Best Times to Share

Similar to any other social media channels, sharing at the right time will be crucial for engagement and being seen.

According to [Later](#), the best times to post is at **9 a.m. and 11 a.m. EST**.



While these findings are great to go off of, it's important to find your personal best times based on your audience. You can determine this by keeping track of your analytics and using tools like **Later**, **Buffer**, and **Hootsuite** to schedule Instagram posts and see which posts are

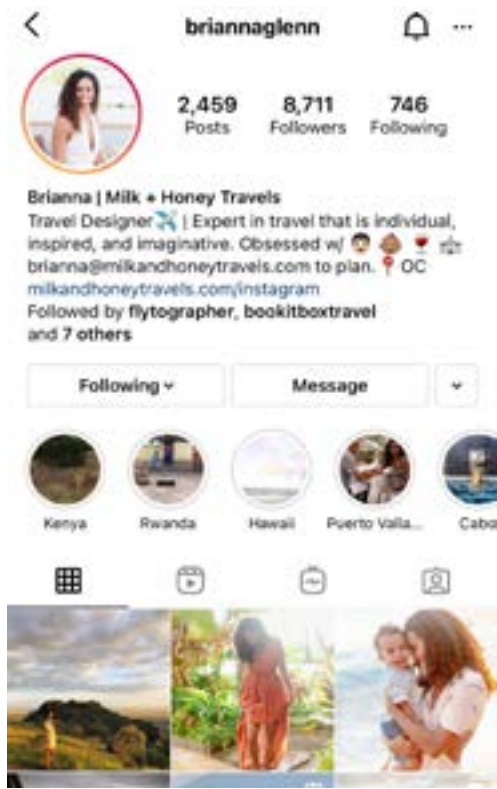
HOW TO SUCCEED AT INSTAGRAM

Gaining thousands, hundreds of thousands, and even a million followers won't happen overnight. It takes time and consistency to start seeing new followers reeling in. But the good news is there's a golden ticket to Instagram success and it's by using the tips you learned in this guide and always trying new things.

5 GOLDEN RULES OF INSTAGRAM

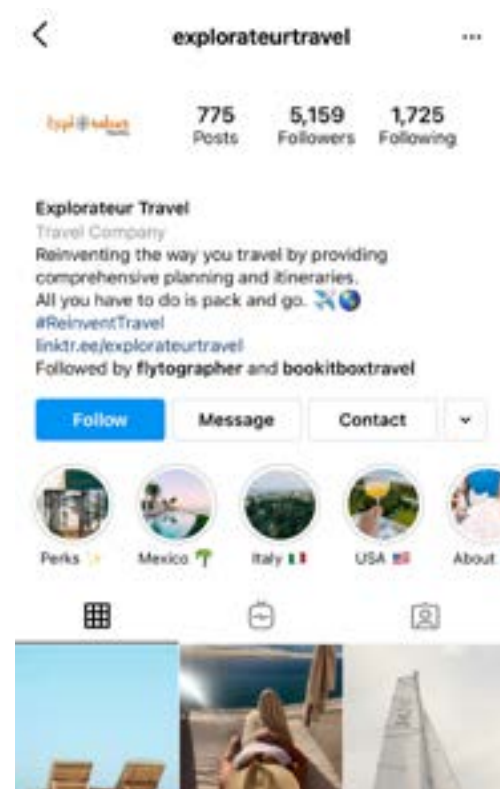
- 1. Stay consistent**
- 2. Create content schedules**
- 3. Work the holidays and special events**
- 4. Create engaging, high quality content**
- 5. Interact with current and new followers**

INSTAGRAM INSPIRATION TO FOLLOW



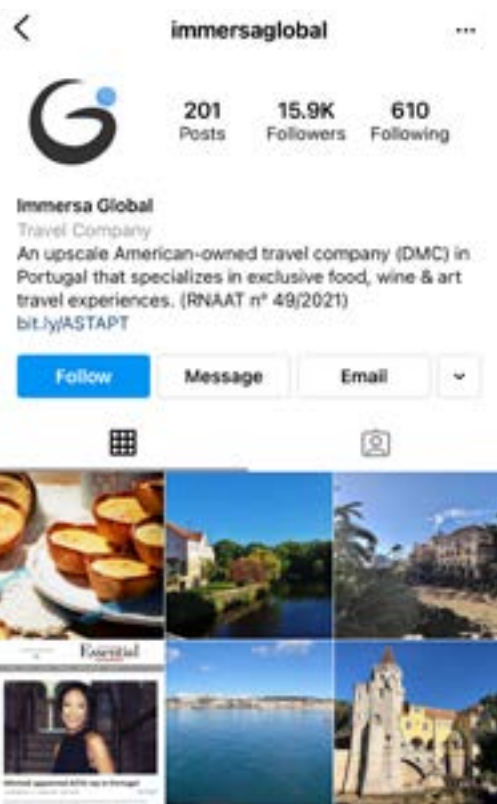
Brianna Glenn

Travel Designer and owner of Milk + Honey Travels



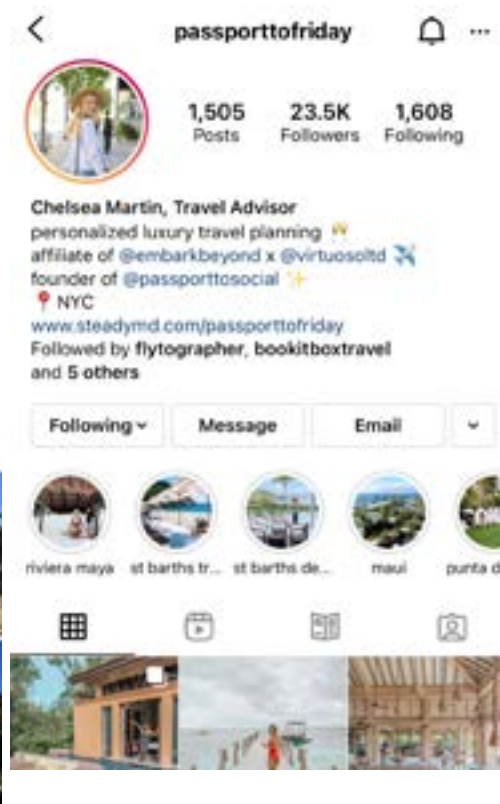
Explorateur Travel

Travel Agency



Immersa Global

Portugal DMC



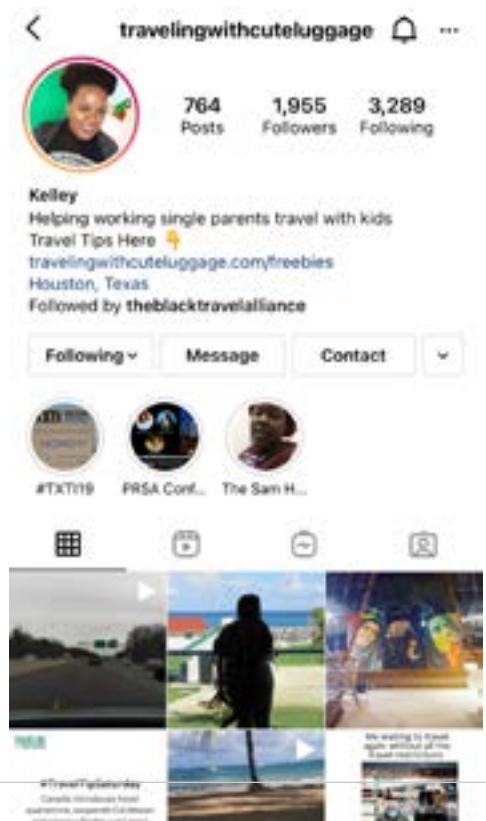
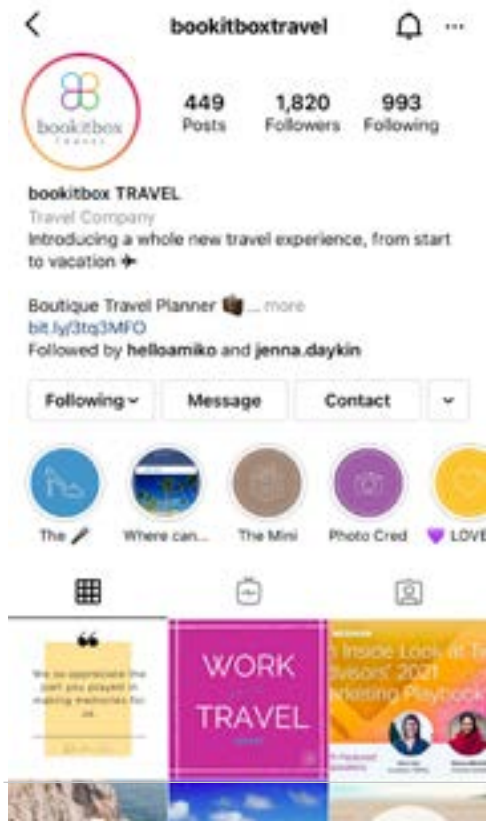
Chelsea Martin

Travel Advisor and founder of Passport to Social

INSTAGRAM INSPIRATION TO FOLLOW

bookitbox TRAVEL

Travel Agency



Kelley Woods

Travel Advisor and Owner of Traveling with Cute Luggage Travel Agency

Passported

Travel Agency



Italian Fix

Travel Company

FREE TOOLS TO YOU CAN USE FOR INSTAGRAM

Who doesn't love free things that will help grow your business? We put together a list of our favorite Instagram tools you can download—everything to scheduling a post, editing photos, and getting more followers. Most apps can be found both in the App Store and Google Play Store.

REPOST



The easiest way to “regram” other photos on Instagram. Just log into Repost and scroll through Instagram on the app and repost when you want to share a post with your followers.

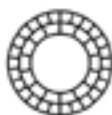
LAYOUT

Created by Instagram. Layout allows you to create fun, one-of-a-kind layouts by remixing your own photos and sharing them directly to Instagram.



VSCO CAM

Available for iPhone and iPod Touch, this app is like your pocket Photoshop that allows you to edit photos and simply enhance images to their best quality.



LATER

Later allows you to upload and schedule your Instagram posts from your computer or mobile phone. Perfect for timing your photos to gain the best engagements and likes.



CANVA

With Canva, you can add typography over your photos to share on Instagram. Great for contests and images that wants to tell a story.



FOLLOWERS

Followers app is simple - it lets track your lost and gained followers. Checking your new followers is a great because you can return the favor and follow back.





Visit the Travefy Instagram at [instagram.com/Travefy](https://www.instagram.com/Travefy) for more travel inspiration.

