



# GROUP LEADER'S GUIDE

*How To Plan And Operate A Successful Group Tour*



## Dear Group Leader,

Congratulations! You have now in your hands a great guide that will help you plan the trip, orient your group, and prepare everything and everyone for their Group Journey, all while traveling for free! With this guide, we're making your group vacation planning easy. Our experts are always here to help you with even the smallest details, so your group has more time to enjoy the destination.

We've invested time and effort to create this guide. To provide you with an unforgettable experience, anticipate your needs, and exceed your expectations. With this guide, you'll learn how the Indus Group Leader program benefits you and your members, and the best tips for Group Leaders that will make you want to lead time and time again.

If this is your first introduction to Indus Travels, we're excited to have you on board and to help you plan and successfully operate your Group Tour. Our Group Leaders are our best supporters! Whether you're a new client or an old friend - you can rest assured that Indus Travels will continue to offer you the best possible group experiences.

We're here to help with any further questions.

Website: [Group Leader Program](#)

Toll-free number: (866) 978-2667


Email: [groups@indus.travel](mailto:groups@indus.travel)

Sincerely,  
Indus Travels



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# Why Indus Travels?

## Volume Leverage with Suppliers

Indus Travels is big enough to secure volume discounted pricing for your tour and at the same time give you all the personal attention you need to lead your group. We service over 8,000 guest every year to over 50 destinations worldwide.

## Customized Tours

While our website ([www.indus.travel](http://www.indus.travel)) lists many itineraries, we offer the opportunity to create a 100% customized itinerary that exactly suits the needs of your group. Few tour companies can offer you this personalized service. Is yours a special interest group? Indus Travels can customize a group travel experiences for example - Wildlife, Photography, Yoga, Health & Wellness, Women Only, Adventure, Active, Culinary, Bird Watching, Diving, Snorkeling, and much more.

## Marketing and Financial Assistance

We offer you a variety of tools to help you promote your group tour: a custom web link with a detailed itinerary and full trip details, with an option for tour participants to book and pay for their tour online. We can also produce full-colour flyers and registration forms for you to mail or distribute at events. Indus will also help you with the creation of custom ads and co-op for advertising. Talk to your Indus Business Development Manager to get more details. We also handle all the invoicing and collecting of funds from the tour participants, this way you can focus on recruiting the group members and we'll take care of the rest.

## Knowledge

Since our founding in 2001, we've created customized group tours for many affinity groups & organizations. We'll gladly share this knowledge with you to help you create your perfect trip.

## Reputation and Experience

More than 80% of our clients/group leaders have worked with us before or are referred to us by our 'family' of repeat group leaders. Some have led more than 5 different tours with us. Clients are loyal to Indus Travels because they trust our team, know they receive good value on their investment of time and money, and we simply can't be beat!

## Reliability

Our moniker, 'The Most Trusted Name in Group Travel' - has been well-earned over the years as we deliver what we promise.



# Who is Indus Travels?

## Our Mission:

To provide you and your guest with a customized group travel experience that is professionally organized and at the same time, highly responsive to the intentions of your journey, so that you and your guests return home deeply enriched in mind, body and soul.

## What We Do for Group Leaders

When you choose Indus Travels, you can be confident you're receiving only the best. Exceptional service, value for money and promotional support—everything you need to make your trip an extraordinary success!

### Customize Your Itinerary - One of Our Strengths:

You'll work closely with our team to custom-design a daily itinerary that meets your needs. When buying a 'cookie cutter' or 'package' tour you often pay for parts of the tour you don't want or need. By customizing, you pay only for what you really need to fulfill your pilgrimage goals. Further more, once we know your group's interests, we can even suggest little known sites for you to visit, making your trip truly one-of-a-kind. And, we have the ability to plan your trip to anywhere in the world!

### Custom Website and Online Registration / Payment:

We'll produce a custom website for your group tour which you can use to promote the trip among your community. Your guests can view all the details like the day to day itinerary, hotels, inclusions etc. and also book and pay for the trip online so you don't have to play accountant.

### Print an Attractive Promotional Brochure and Registration:

We design and produce an attractive brochure to assist you in promoting your tour, free of cost!

### Indus also takes care of every aspect of your group's travels:

- Confirm all your flights
  - Book all your hotels, and handle all your luggage
  - Schedule private coach transportation for all your sightseeing & transfers
  - Arrange local guides to make the sights come alive (and we even pay the entrance fees)
- Full service- that's the Indus Travels way!

### Provide travel accessories to make your trip easier:

Everyone in your group receives a complete e-travel package:

- Travel documents showing flight schedules and hotel contact info.

Your guests can also download a mobile app on their phone and access these while on the tour as well.



## Benefits of a Customized Tour

Your group is unique. Your interests are unique. You have your own set of expectations for a tour. At Indus Travels, we believe your group's daily itinerary should respect your uniqueness. That's why we offer you a '100% customized tour.' While we offer a variety of sample tours on our website we encourage you to customize your trip in a way that will make the experience the most meaningful for all members of your group.

## Perks for your Group Tour Participants

- **100% TRAVEL PROTECTION** - For your peace of mind, Indus Travels belongs to the best consumer protection plan. In Canada we contribute to the British Columbia Government regulated compensation fund. All monies are held in a trust account until your travel is complete.
- **FIRST CLASS, BUSINESS CLASS, AND OTHER FLIGHT SERVICES** - Your members can purchase First Class and Business Class seating at unbeatable prices. We can also arrange customized routing, early arrival, longer stays, and more.
- **EARLY PAY DISCOUNT PLAN** - Indus offers the flexibility of paying for your group vacation by credit card or check. Choose check payment & pay a minimum 9 months before departure to save 5% off your remaining balance.
- **FINANCE AND PAY IN EASY INSTALLMENTS** - Your tour participants can finance the group trip costs with Uplift Payments & pay for their trip over the next 11 months in easy installments.
- **ZERO AND REDUCED SINGLE SUPPLEMENTS** - Solo travelers in your group can count on the best value in travel. We also offer opportunities to save with NO single supplement on our Solo Tours.

## Choosing Your Itinerary: Where to go?

Indus Travels operates tours to many countries, encompassing virtually every major site of interest anywhere in Africa, South America, Europe, the Middle East, South Pacific, Asia and beyond.

You will find a fully updated list of our itineraries on our tour website. Click on Itineraries by country. Here you will find trips ranging from 7 to 16 days, visiting a variety of sites around the world.



# Choosing Your Dates: When is the Best Time to Travel?

You've decided to lead a group tour but you're not sure when to go. Here are some factors to consider when choosing your group's travel dates.

## Price

Two factors go in to constructing the price of your tour: the price of the airfare, and the price for services on the ground, including the hotels.

In general, airfares fall into 3 seasons:

1. November 1 to February 28 is low season (except Christmas and New Year)
2. March 1 to May 30 and September 1 to October 30 is middle season.
3. June 1 to August 30 is high season.

Hotels tend to fall into similar categories, but with some exceptions which we will be glad to discuss with you when we plan your tour. Just remember: the price of a 10-day tour in high season can be 50% higher than the price for the same trip in low season. Few groups travel in July, August & December, mostly because airfares are at their peak during this period.

## Weather

Destinations can be hot, cold, rainy, dry and everything in between and each season brings a different type of beauty to each place. Depending on the activities you want to do, you should choose the time of the year to travel to that destination accordingly. Don't book an outdoorsy trip during rainy season.

## Availability

If most of your group is still employed and not of retirement age, then try to maximize the number of weekends in your itinerary so people can minimize the number of vacation days they have to use to go on your trip. The more people join your group, the better the savings!

## Days of the Week

Airfares are higher if your group flies on Friday, Saturday or Sunday. So if you can schedule your trip to depart on a Monday and return on a Thursday, you will save money.



# Timeline for Planning your Successful Group Tour

You will find the following timeline useful in planning your tour promotion. It has been well-tested by our many satisfied group leaders.

## 14 to 11 Months Before Departure: Initial Planning Period

- Plan your daily itinerary with your Indus Travels specialist. You might consult a core of interested persons in your group/community to identify the most popular destinations to find out where people are interested in travelling.
- Indus Travels will produce your promotional brochure and registration form free of charge (at the earliest, 11-months prior to departure).
- Place advertisements about the trip and about your information meetings.
- Host a general information meeting featuring a video on your destination.
- Distribute your custom web link & colour flyer and registration form.

## 10 to 3 Months Before Departure: Orientation Period

- Host monthly meetings with your group like cultural themed meetings with potluck meals featuring typical foods of the country you are visiting or any activity that can relate to the trip you will all be sharing.
- Distribute articles on particular sites you will be visiting.
- Answer any questions that your group might have.
- Encourage early registration for your trip. By 6-months prior to departure, your trip should be 75% subscribed; by 3 months prior, your trip should be SOLD OUT.
- Remember, final payment is due to Indus at 90 days before departure, so registrations should be mailed into Indus at the absolute latest, 3 months prior to departure.

## 3 Months up to your Day of Departure: Final Preparations

- Finalize rooming list with Indus Travels.
- Select leaders for various tasks (head counter, luggage leader, etc.).
- 2 Weeks Prior to Departure: Hold a FINAL GENERAL INFORMATION MEETING to distribute airline tickets, flight bags, luggage tags, and travel documents (which will include your final itinerary, hotel contacts, rooming list, and insurance information).

## Day of Departure:

- Go to the airport with plenty of time for check-in. Have a great trip!

## After You Return from Your Group Tour:

- Call us immediately to start planning your next Group Tour!





# How to Book: 8 Easy Steps to Booking Your Group Tour

“Steps to Take You From Here to Booking Your Group Tour”

## Step 1: Establish your goals

What kinds of experiences do you want your group to have? Thinking about these things will help you design a tour with a purpose. With that in mind, we can then work with you to build an itinerary to meet your goals and expectations.

## Step 2: Decide on your itinerary

Do you want to go with one of our itineraries, or do you want to customize something different? Just email us the specs you want, or call us toll free at (866)978-2667 to discuss what you need in your tour.

## Step 3: Decide on class of accommodations

Do you want to stay in superior, deluxe hotels (5-star), superior hotels (4-star) or superior tourist class (3-star)? Please think through this and remember, we are here to help you decide. All the places we work with have private bathrooms, so it really comes down to the comfort level you want.

## Step 4: Decide on your meal plan

Most groups enjoy breakfast and dinner daily. Do you want dinner included every night or do you want to give the group a few nights free to explore restaurants on their own?

## Step 5: Decide on group size

How many people do you plan to bring? Most coaches hold about 48 people. We can base your price on a minimum of 40, 30, or 20 paying passengers. Remember, a smaller group yields a higher 'per person' cost.

## Step 6: Decide on the number of “free trips” you need

You probably want 'free' tickets for your group leader and potentially other guests. Free tickets are pro-rated among fully paying members of your group. We quote you only on the number of free trips you really need. We normally calculate 1 'free' trip per 19 fully paying travelers. However, we would be glad to price your trip at 1-for-15 or 1-for-10. You can give the 'free' trips to other travellers who help you promote your tour by getting more guests—or 'sell' the 'free' trip(s) as fund raising. Ask us how.

## Step 7: Decide when you want to go

Tours in the autumn tend to sell best, followed by spring tours. Summer is the most expensive time to travel; many groups prefer to travel in the off-season (Nov-March) when prices are lower.

## Step 8: Please Contact Us

Once you have worked through the above steps, we're ready to start planning! Please contact Indus Travels by email, phone, fax or mail:

EMAIL: [mail@indus.travel](mailto:mail@indus.travel)

TOLL-FREE: (866) 978 2667

## What we do next

We will create an itinerary and quotation based on your specifications. We will then submit a formal quotation proposal, including a contract for you to sign. Once you complete the contract and make an initial deposit, we will create and print your promotional brochure. Remember—we can take care of all the collection of funds and invoicing!



# Seven Factors Affecting Your Price

## 1. Time of year you wish to travel:

The season in which you travel can affect your cost. Airfare and hotel prices can vary up to \$500 for the same itinerary in August versus November. We will help you choose the best season for your group's travel.

## 2. Size of your group

Costs for the buses are pro-rated among the group. Prices for 20 people can be up to \$200 higher than the same itinerary priced for 40. Most motor coaches in Europe and the Middle East hold about 48 travellers. Some double-decker motor coaches are available and take up to 72 guests.

## 3. Number of FREE trips you need

We normally calculate 1 'free' trip per 19 fully-paying travelers. However, we would be glad to price your trip at 1-for-15 or 1-for-10. Your 'free' tickets can be granted to a group leader or other invited members of your group. Or, they can be a great fund-raising vehicle for your organization.

## 4. Hotels: Class and Location

Accommodations can range from superior 4 star hotel up to deluxe (5-star hotels). Most groups use 4-star (classified as superior) hotels.

## 5. Meal plan:

Many groups will choose breakfast and dinner daily. Breakfast is usually buffet. A trip with only breakfast included will be less expensive and allow people to choose where they would like to eat. Some budget-minded groups will include dinner the first night in each city only, requiring group members to buy their own dinners other nights.

## 6. Number of days in your itinerary

This is a logical but oft-forgotten factor that affects your price. Most of our groups trips are 10-12 days in average length. A more leisurely pace is more expensive.

## 7. Departure city

We can depart from any airport in North America. For guest connecting from a small city/town Indus can make domestic flight arrangements for your tour group often at a lower rate than published fares.



# How to Earn a Free Trip and More!

## How many free trips can I get?

Normally, tours are priced to include one free trip per 19 fully-paying passengers. If you need more free trips, such as 1-for-15 or 1-for-10, just let us know and we'll calculate your quotation accordingly. You can give the 'free' trips to the travellers who help you promote your tour by getting more guests– or 'sell' the free trip(s) as fundraising efforts. Ask us how.

## Does anyone know I am travelling for free?

No. The terms of your arrangement with Indus are confidential.

## What's the minimum number needed to make the trip possible?

Most groups require a minimum of 19 paying passengers for a customized, private tour, with your own bus and your own guide. Price varies according to group size, so the larger the group, the lower your per person price.

## What is my primary responsibility as a 'Group Leader'?

As a group leader, your responsibility is to gather the guests who will go on your tour. By gathering the people and serving as their group leader, you earn your free trip(s). All other travel arrangements are taken care of by Indus Travels.

## How do I find the audience?

Indus Travels Business Development Managers can help you put together a custom promotional plan for your group tour including helping you with: custom web link, promotional flyers, presentations, art work for custom Facebook/Instagram ads and the web.

## How much lead time do I need to plan a trip?

We recommend 11 months minimum from the time you announce your trip until the date of your departure. Guests will need that much time to plan their calendars and their budgets. That means you need to start planning with us about 1 year before your proposed departure date, so we can have your brochure ready for you 11 months prior to your departure.

## What is the average length of a trip?

Our average trip length is 10 to 12 days, though trips can range anywhere from 7 days to 2 weeks for multi-country itineraries.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## How does registration & invoicing work?

We offer a custom website where your guests can book & pay online and their invoice is sent directly by email. This service saves you from having to collect any monies for your trip.

All registrations must be done online or sent by mail. We cannot accept phone or e-mail reservations. Also, we cannot simply 'hold' a space open for guest who are anticipating to register. To avoid the possibility of any errors, we require a valid registration form for each participant, accompanied by the initial deposit. The name on the registration form must match their travel document (passport).

## Do the 'Free Trips' need to fill out a Registration Form?

We require a completed registration form from any person travelling as one of your earned 'free' trips. Airport taxes and tips are not included for the free trips. Optional travel protection insurance is not included for the 'free' trips and must be purchased separately. Please contact our accounting department with any questions on the insurance program.

Once the invoice is sent; passengers are responsible for making final payment per the date stated on the invoice. A reminder statement is sent out 90 days prior to departure. For questions regarding invoices, please contact our office. The final payment deadline is shown on your registration form, normally 75 days prior to departure (per the terms in your brochure). A penalty fee of \$100 may apply to each late payment.

## What is Indus Travels Travel Insurance Program?

The Travel Protection Program is an optional item, but about 90% of our registrants accept the coverage. (Please note, the coverage will be invoiced to each person, and if they do not want to accept the optional coverage, they only need to decline the coverage and adjust their balance due accordingly.)

The program offers Trip Cancellation, Trip Interruption, Emergency Medical, and Excess Baggage Protection. Please refer to the protection plan brochure for the terms and conditions of the policy. Please note that this program coverage cannot be purchased after an individual has submitted full payment for their tour.

## How do cancellations work?

Cancellation terms and penalties apply according to the terms listed in the brochure.

All cancellations must be sent to our office in writing, via certified mail or fax. Verbal cancellations cannot be accepted. Since cancellation penalties levied by the airlines and other suppliers are quite strict, we strongly encourage all your participants to purchase the Passenger Travel Protection Program.

## How about airlines, seating requests, and special meal requests?

Indus Travels has made an airline reservation for your group. Since this reservation is made far in advance, the schedule is subject to change. Therefore, we prefer not to release flight information to the passengers prior to the time of ticketing. We can tell you, as the group leader, but we ask that you do not share this information as schedules change and could cause confusion.

For seating, the airlines will normally assign a block of seats to your group, and the passengers can shift seats within the group after check-in. We give the rooming list to the airlines and ask that they place roommates together within the block of seats, but we cannot guarantee this. We regret that we cannot accommodate specific seat requests on the plane, nor can we process frequent flyer numbers (these can be given to the airlines on check-in). For special meal requests on the plane, guests can call the airlines directly about one week prior to departure.

The menus at the hotels and restaurants are table d'hôtel, meaning that one menu is served for the entire group. Any special dietary needs must be addressed on the spot at each hotel or restaurant, and your local guide will be available to assist.

## How does the group operate on the ground overseas?

Your group will have its own local tour escort/guide. You will also have a private motor coach available according to the sightseeing in your itinerary. The guide will be responsible for all entrance fees for all the sites on your itinerary, so you need not be concerned with carrying any monies for this purpose.

## How does the group size affect the price of our tour?

Your group quotation is based on a minimum number of full-paying passengers. A full-paying passenger is a passenger who purchases the entire tour package (the flight and the tour portion).

If your group fails to reach the minimum number of full-paying passengers contracted in your quotation, then your price will increase. Why? Because portions of the trip are pro-rated according to the number of passengers, and fewer passengers means a higher per-person pro-rate (such as the cost of the motor coach, guide, etc).

The only other items that could affect the final cost of your tour (besides a smaller group size) are a drop in the exchange rate for the US/Canadian dollar or fuel surcharges applied by the airlines. Indus Travels reserves the right to collect such charges prior to departure.

### What do we do about changing money overseas?

Your group members will need to convert their money into local currency (except if you are travelling to Israel, where US currency is often accepted). In most countries, ATM machines are widely available. You also may use credit cards such as VISA, MASTERCARD, or American Express. A withdrawal at an ATM will debit your home bank account and provide you with local currency.

### Can People deviate from the group's schedule?

A deviation refers to a person who wants to tour with your group, but wants to make some alteration in their travel plans (such as returning a week later than the group returns or going overseas early and meeting up with the group).

Such persons are welcome to make their own airline arrangements and to purchase the 'land only' portion of the itinerary. Persons deviating are responsible for their own transfers from/to the airports. Ask our office for the 'land only' price for your tour. Certain exceptions can be made for the group leader who wishes to deviate.

### What is the 'Land Only' price?

Some members of your group may prefer to make their own airline arrangements. For these passengers, we make available what is called a LAND ONLY price. They make their own airline arrangements and are responsible for meeting the group at the first hotel for the group's first night stay. They are responsible for their own transportation to and from the airport.



# Repeating the Group Leader Experience

We want you to keep traveling and we want you to see the world. We believe that, being a Group Leader is one of the most rewarding ways to enrich a travel experience, bringing together like-minded people and having an unforgettable trip. If this is not enough, we also offer the following benefits:

## Free Travel

Bring 19 full-paying passengers on your group tour, and you'll travel FREE as the Group Leader.

## Free Trip Extensions

Receive one FREE trip extension for every 19 members of your group tour who books a pre or post-trip extension.

## Marketing Co-op

Dedicated funds to promote and advertise your group. Ask us how we can help!

## Earn more with referrals

Provide us the contact of someone who you think would like to become a group leader. If your referral results in a new group tour booking of 10 or more, we'll pay you \$1,000!





Please contact Indus Travels to Organize your own Group Tour!



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