

Thursday, June 17, 1982 O&E

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Looking for a quick trip? You can save big bucks in a late booking travel club

IF YOU can fly to warm weather destinations on less than a week's notice, you can take advantage of terrific bargains being offered by a new kind of travel organization: late booking clubs.

These clubs alert you to empty seats available on tours that have sold most of their seats at regular prices to other people.

Two late booking clubs are available to travelers in the Detroit area: Standby's Ltd. of Southfield and Allied Travel of Windsor, Ontario.

In both cases, you must pay an annual membership fee to be eligible for late booking information.

Standby's Ltd., a subsidiary of Great Way Promotions, which also owns Sampson Tours, charges \$35 per household and claims 14,000 members.

Their reservation desk is open from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Monday to Friday, by calling 352-4876. An unpublished number, available only to members, can be dialed 24 hours a day from cities nationwide.

Standbys regularly offers trips to Las Vegas, the Caribbean, Mexico, Florida and sometimes Europe.

Allied Travel Service, 154 Pitt St. W., Windsor, answers its Detroit number (963-3033) during regular office hours. They offer seats to the same destinations, often out of Toronto.

BOTH CLUBS WORK in the same way. Paid subscribers call and ask either for a specific destination or for the list of available trips.

Some people don't care where they go as long as it is a bargain. Others take a chance on last minute booking because they are willing to bet that their destination will be available.

Allied usually knows by Tuesday afternoon what it can offer for the following weekend. Sometimes it knows two weeks in advance, but usually you have less than a week to take advantage of the offer.



Iris Jones
contributing
travel editor

one-of-a-kind traveler

Last week, all of Allied's trips originated in Toronto. Rates were \$225 Canadian (\$175 U.S.) for seven nights, including air fare and hotel in either Orlando or St. Petersburg; \$329 (\$250 U.S.) for air and hotel to Barbados; \$300 (\$230 U.S.) to Jamaica.

Air only was available to Bermuda for \$175 (\$130 U.S.), with return flights available in either one or two weeks. A 13-night trip to Antigua, including airfare, hotel and two meals a day, was offered for \$700 (\$540 U.S.).

ALL OF THE rates quoted above in American money are approximate, since the rate of exchange varies slightly each day. Travel agent Bev Reid of Allied says that many such discount flights are also usually available from either Windsor or Detroit.

The membership fee per family is \$36 (\$30 U.S.) per year. Allied will usually allow potential new subscribers to choose a first trip and then pay a membership fee when the ticket is paid.

Standbys Ltd. had seven trips listed on its hotline this week, two of them from Detroit and the rest from other cities throughout the country. The Detroit-based trips were Cancun, including air fare and hotel for seven days, for \$385 or \$469, depending on the hotel chosen; and Atlantic City for five days, no meals, for \$339.

Other discounted trips were "air only" from New York to London and back for \$239; and to Paris and back for \$270. Trips were offered to Freeport, Bahamas, from Chicago, Boston or New York for \$159, \$234 and \$275 respectively.

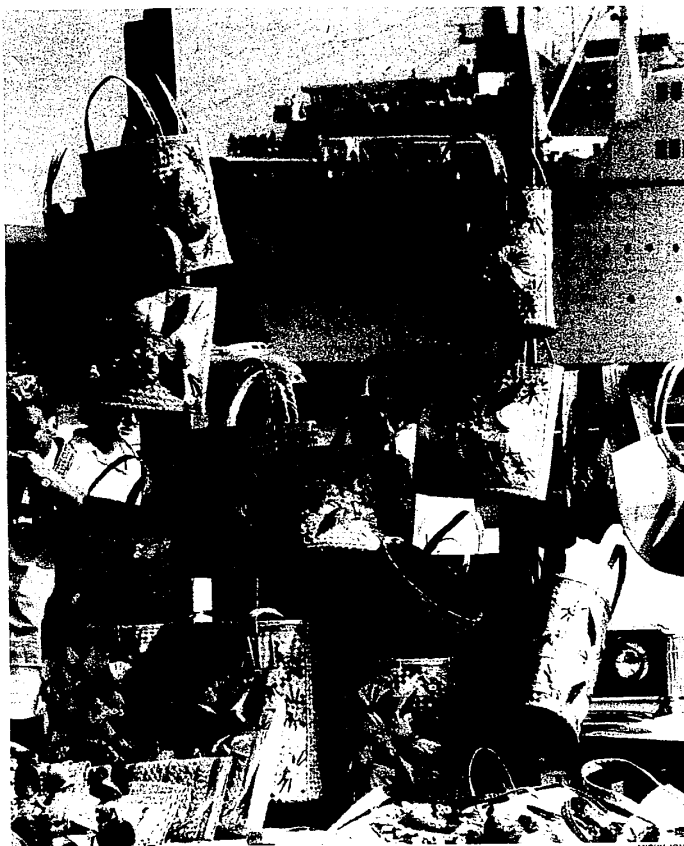
HOW DO THEY offer these bargain prices? Bev Reid of Allied started calling wholesalers last spring when things were pretty bad in the travel business.

"They were willing to deal, because it's better to give a discount the week before a flight than it is to fly with an empty seat. We made deals for companies flying out of both Detroit and Canada."

"Our American subscribers save 60 to 70 percent on a tour because they get a great discount on the fare, and they save 25 percent when they change their U.S. dollars to Canadian money."

Allied has recently offered trips for two to Las Vegas for a total of \$349.95 U.S., including air fare, hotels, but no meals. Here's another one: Two people pay \$235 each for air fare and a condo for a week in Florida.

Destinations and prices vary from week to week, and from season to season, but they are usually very good buys for any traveler who can take advantage of a last minute booking.



The straw market and the cruise ships at Nassau are a favorite stop for tours. Last minute trips were available this week to Freeport, also in the Bahamas, for \$159 from Chicago.

MICKY JONES

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