

Visiting a restricted archaeological dig in southern Turkey. Tracking snow leopards in Mongolia. Taking a private tour of the Kremlin's collection of Fabergé eggs. Some of the most extraordinary experiences can be had only with the help of a well-connected travel advisor. In *Travel + Leisure*'s 16th annual A-List, we showcase the 139 best agents and tour operators in the business—the destination experts, wedding planners, family-reunion organizers, and cruise specialists who can help devise your next trip of a lifetime.

Edited by CHRISTOPHER TKACZYK Reported by STIRLING KELSO Illustrations by MIKEY BURTON

# TRAVEL ADVISORY BOARD

The Travel + Leisure TAB is a select group of owners and operators of the country's most important agencies. They share with T+L their expert opinions on the latest developments in the travel industry and their read on ever-evolving consumer trends.

They are the ultimate travel planners (typically for high spenders only) and can refer you to one of the many top-notch specialists they've trained.

# **Marcus Barlow**

Vice president for American Express Travel & Lifestyle Services, Barlow has a team of some 1,500 counselors who provide bespoke concierge services and help card members get the most out of their points.

602-537-4245; marcus.c. barlow@aexp.com

#### **Betsy Donley**

This 22-year industry veteran's agency, Camelback Odyssey Travel, specializes in exotic adventures such as fishing in the Seychelles and space travel with Virgin Galactic.

602-889-5909; betsyd@camelbacktravel.com

## Julia P. Douglas

Douglas, who founded Jet Set World Travel in 2005, has road tested countless hotels, resorts, and villas with her two children in tow. Her agency excels at planning honeymoons and experiential family travel.

312-574-1181; julia@ jetsetworldtravel.com

#### **Jack Ezon**

Ezon has an eye for new talent, which has helped his company, Ovation Vacations, meet the demands of younger travelers for destination celebrations and group trips.

212-329-7350; jezon@ ovationtravel.com

#### **Gail Grimmett**

As president of the Elite Travel Division of the Travel Leaders Group, Grimmett leads a team known for having deep relationships with hotels, airlines, and cruise lines.

212-651-2103; ggrimmett@ travelleaders.com

## Marc Kazlauskas

Kazlauskas, the president of Frosch's leisure division and U.S. branch operations, fosters ties to airlines, cruise lines, and railways to craft seamless business and leisure trips.

212-404-6300; marc. kazlauskas@frosch.com

## **David Lowy**

Those with sky-high budgets trust Lowy and his team at Renshaw Travel to deliver extraordinary experiences, like private jets and hard-to-get tee times at the world's finest golf courses.

604-733-1010; dlowy@ renshawtravel.com

## Jani Miller

The golf-loving president of Central Travel has firsthand knowledge of the best golf courses, resorts, and fitness activities around the world.

419-897-2070; jani@ centraltravel.com

## **Steve Orens**

Because Orens has more than 25 years of experience and serves on the boards of some of the biggest luxury hotel brands, he and his agency, Plaza Travel, can get their business, leisure, and entertainment clients special treatment anytime.

818-990-4053; steve@ plazatravel.com

#### Shawna Huffman Owen

Owen, the president and CEO of Huffman Travel, manages offices in Dayton and Chicago. She shines at planning educational family vacations, romantic getaways, and celebrations.

312-257-2988; shawna@ huffmantravel.com

## **Edward C. Phillips**

As regional director, USA West, at Worldview Travel, this veteran A-Lister oversees seven offices, 18 affiliates, and more than 200 travel agents. Phillips is also an expert on Hawaii.

650-678-0105; ephillips@ worldviewtravel.com

## **Mary Ann Ramsey**

Cruising and safaris are among the many specialties of the president and owner of Betty Maclean Travel, which treats clients like lifetime partners.

800-865-8111; maryann@ bettymacleantravel.com

## Sandy Schadler

Schadler is the VP of marketing for Travelink, an American Express Travel representative agency, with a network of advisors who can provide the best rates and packages for clients.

615-367-4900; sandy. schadler@travelink.com

## Wido L. Schaefer

The employee-owned TravelStore, founded by Schaefer in 1975, is California's largest independent travel agency. Schaefer also sits on the advisory boards of brands like Belmond and Four Seasons.

310-575-5540; wido.s@ travelstore.com

## Anne Morgan Scully

Scully, the president of McCabe World Travel and an advisor to Ritz-Carlton and Regent Seven Seas, is an expert in hotels and cruise lines. Her team excels at creating one-of-akind itineraries for clients.

703-762-5055; anne@ mccabeworld.com

# Jim Strong

Accessibility, attention to detail, and an unabashed penchant for luxury drive Strong, who, together with his mother, Nancy Strong, customizes trips that focus on cruising and five-star stays.

214-361-0027; jim@ strongtravel.com

# **Kathy Sudeikis**

Voted one of the "100 Most Powerful Women in Travel" by *Travel Agent* magazine, Sudeikis oversees a team at Acendas that is skilled at organizing large family reunions.

913-671-7700, ext. 3250; kathy.sudeikis@ acendas.com

#### Liz Sadie Sutton

This cruising expert, the president of Alabama World Travel and an advisor to Crystal Cruises, knows the details—from the comfort of the beds to the best excursions.

334-279-8720; liz@awtinc.com

## Kimberly Wilson Wetty

The copresident of Valerie Wilson Travel, one of the largest full-service travel consulting firms in the U.S., Wetty puts a heavy focus on families and top-shelf hotels.

212-592-1218; kimberlyww@vwti.com

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For extended profiles of the A-List agents, visit tandl.me/a-list.