 whenever I tell someone I own a travel agency or that I’m a travel professional, I often get the same response: “Oh, I didn’t know there were travel agents anymore.” Well, I’m here to tell you that not only are there still many travel agents in the United States, but those of us who are still here have survived airlines eliminating our commissions, the growth of the internet and online travel sites. We’re not only still here, we’re thriving and growing our businesses.

Clients still want to deal with travel consultants for many of their travel arrangements. When things happen (and believe me, they do happen), people want an actual person who cares about THEM to speak with. Whether it’s a flight cancellation or delay, our clients can reach us 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Often, by the time they get to the front of that long line or wait on hold with the airline desk, we have fixed the problem. When we book your hotel room, we can reach out to our connections to see that (at a minimum) you have the best room in the category you choose, secure a possible upgrade, or have a special amenity in your room. For many of our preferred hotels, complimentary breakfasts are the norm, along with early check-in and late check-out whenever possible.

Brentwood Travel has worked hard to maintain personal connections with the top tour operators and cruise lines, which makes us capable of often fixing the seemingly unfixable. Our consultants carefully vet our preferred companies that we know will do the best job. We’ve traveled the world and know how to best arrange your vacation, especially around your budget and what’s most important to you. Our valued clients have learned we really can put together the best vacation you could ask for. As my client Jim Bahlinger said in his email to me while still traveling, “The trip has been amazing thanks to you!”

The next time you’re thinking about planning it yourself, just email or call Brentwood Travel. Yes, even for “just” a hotel night in Chicago. We have great access to so many resources at our fingertips and we can fix almost any problem – we have the connections.
The best way to immerse yourself in a new culture is to explore the world by river,” as stated by the “small ship experts” VIKING RIVER CRUISES. Glide along historic waterways to visit some of the world’s most profound cities and awe-inspiring landscapes with the luxury of only unpacking once. Instead of visiting just one location, you’ll be able to encounter multiple places during your journey through the heart of Europe. Viking River Cruises has been the most awarded cruise line worldwide, and it all starts with their incredible service. Brentwood Travel Consultants Ann Fendelman and Dagmar Morrison sailed together with Viking and noted their customer service was superb. “Starting from when you get on the ship to when you get off, the staff is fabulous,” stated Fendelman. Morrison also added, “The staff is so accessible, from the captain to the cooks, that it makes everything more personal.”

While onboard, listen to lectures about history and art, relish in local wine and beer tastings, indulge in region-specific (and all-inclusive) cuisine, relax in hotel-style beds, and be entertained with folkloric performances. Onshore, feel as if you’re a local while expert guides take you to must-see cultural and historical highlights, especially on the eight-day “Romantic Danube” itinerary.

Start your three-country sailing in Hungary’s capital, Budapest, with tours through the Andrássy Avenue to the Parliament Building, Chain Bridge and the National Opera House. In Austria, you’ll stop in Vienna to see the Stadtpark and Hofburg Theater or to enjoy time in a Viennese coffeehouse, followed by a UNESCO visit at the Wachau Valley in Krems, and a special concert at St. Stephen’s Cathedral in Passau. While sailing in Germany, explore the medieval town of Regensburg and complete your trip in Nuremberg as you ride through the Main-Danube Canal locks.

President and CEO of Brentwood Travel, Stephanie Turner, says “The Danube is a beautiful and scenic river. Every town you stop in is interesting, charming and historic.”

DISCOVER A LIVING MUSEUM ON A CRUISE TO THE GALAPAGOS ISLANDS

In 1859, scientist Charles Darwin published the revolutionary book “On the Origin of Species,” which details his Theory of Evolution explaining the process of organisms changing over time due to physical and behavioral traits. One of the famed locations that helped him develop his theory was the Galapagos Islands. Here he noted differences of mockingbirds and tortoises on various islands, as the animals had adapted to each specific environment. Today, people from all around the world visit the Galapagos Islands to witness what Darwin himself saw – wildlife.

CELEBRITY CRUISES invites you to step aboard Celebrity Xpedition, Xperience or Xploration that can take you to more than 30 ports of call in the Galapagos. This isn’t like the mega Celebrity ships you’re used to seeing – these three options hold a maximum of 16 to 100 people, which will allow you to have a more personalized one-on-one trip. One of the benefits of traveling on a smaller ship is you’ll get to know the naturalists that will be guiding you around the islands, who are all certified by the Galapagos National Park.

Stephanie Turner, President and CEO of Brentwood Travel, sailed on Celebrity Xpedition to the Galapagos and fell in love. “You can literally walk among the animals. They’re not afraid of humans and you can see the earliest forms of life on each island,” said Turner. She witnessed land and sea iguanas, albatrosses, sea lions, tortoises, red and blue footed boobies and various birds. Turner also added, “The naturalists were excellent and they gave different information on each species.”

So what should you expect on your Galapagos journey? “It was nice that you could sit out and then go to another island. Generally you spend the middle of the day on the ship and you have morning and late afternoon tours you can choose from,” noted Turner. A Galapagos cruise is all-inclusive, which means that all gratuities, food and drinks, shore excursions, the use of snorkeling equipment, wet suits and more are included in the upfront price. Depending on the length of your trip you can also add pre- and post-stays in Ecuador and Peru.

Brentwood Travel is ready to make you the next Charles Darwin, so call one of our consultants today.
AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BY LAND

Australians and New Zealanders are dream destinations that encompass many "wow" moments that every traveler should experience. For such a grand adventure, it pays to have the extensive touring expertise of Collette Tours.

A Collette tour begins in style with a private jet service. Available on all air-inclusive reservations, a private car will pick up guests from their home for roundtrip service to the airport. This personalized service is a convenient start to your adventure to the "Land Down Under."

Part tour guide, part concierge, your tour manager is with you throughout your travel experience. Tours include "must-see" sites and also places you might not be able to see on your own. These immersive experiences include boarding a catamaran for a tour of the Great Barrier Reef, discovering the origins of the Aboriginal people on a "Dreamtime Tour," and many other adventures to help travelers truly get to know this destination.

With so much to experience, a Collette tour offers choices during your tour to tailor your journey. This VIP treatment is where inclusiveness meets choice. You will be able to choose from an assortment of included activities and you decide what to do on select days.

Sharing and enjoying local cuisine is often the best window to understanding a new culture. With the freedom of choice, you can find the right spot from a list of the area’s great restaurants. In addition to offering many meals at restaurants rather than a hotel, a Collette tour to Australia and New Zealand provides foodie experiences such as dinners at the homes of locals, a dinner cruise in the Sydney Harbor, and exploring vineyards in the world famous Barossa Valley.

Much like Brentwood Travel, Collette is a family-owned company founded in 1918 and will soon celebrate 100 years as a travel expert. Their blend of inclusive touring and first-class service takes guests to all seven continents for small group explorations, single-hotel spotlights, and river cruises. And regular guests love their loyalty program, which offers up to $150 in travel credits for their next adventure with Collette.

Let the combined experience of Brentwood Travel and Collette Tours bring you the best of Australia and New Zealand.

AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND BY SEA

Elegance. Serenity. Repose. Luxury. This is Regent Seven Seas Cruises, the most luxurious and all-inclusive cruise on the seven seas. From unlimited shore excursions, impeccable restaurants and enriching activities to all-suite accommodations, you’ll be guaranteed the highest level of distinction. Spend 18 nights sleeping everything for yourself on a “Pristine Australian Peaks” cruise from Auckland to Bali.

Begin your journey on the New Zealand coastline by visiting Auckland and Bay of Islands. In Auckland, watch boats sail by as you relax on a black sand beach or stand on Mount Eden, the city’s highest point, for a panoramic view. While in Bay of Islands, fish or go for a boat ride around one of its 144 islands.

You’ll know you’re in Australia once you see the sails of the Sydney Opera House. Go on a daring journey as you climb the Sydney Bridge, or go on a ride through the Blue Mountains on the world’s steepest pedestrian railway. The third largest city in Australia is Brisbane, also known as one of the Top 5 International Music Hotspots by Billboard magazine. Take a taste of Brisbane while traveling on a guided car tour or river cruise.

What would a visit to Australia be without diving or snorkeling the Great Barrier Reef? Discover what lies beneath the coast of Townsville and Cairns, followed by a stop in Cooktown with its dramatic mountains, eucalyptus, mangroves and rainforests. The last port in Australia is Darwin, which is isolated by the vast Australian desert. Come up close to animals at the Territory Wildlife Park, or watch crocodiles jump out of the water on a cruise down the Adelaide River!

Indonesia is the final country on your cruise as you visit Komodo and Bali. Go back in time in Komodo as you see the prehistoric Komodo dragon, found only at Komodo National Park. In Bali, discover rice terraces, volcanoes and more than 20,000 temples. Diane Lieberman, Brentwood Travel’s Assistant Controller, sailed with Regent and had penthouse accommodations and a personal butler, which is standard in penthouse suites. Lieberman said, “It really is luxury cruising, that’s for sure.”

Our travel consultants are excited to tell you more, so contact Brentwood Travel as you get ready to go Down Under.

Australia and New Zealand are bucket-list destinations for many travelers. There are two different ways to experience its wonders — by land and by sea. Collette Tours and Regent Seven Seas Cruises offer the ability to travel these different paths and discover the Land Down Under.
More adventures await you as you tour the coast of Cozumel in an ATV. Discover what lies beneath the waves during a snorkeling trip in Cozumel. Immerse yourself in the mysteries of Mayan ruins in Belize. Explore island after island, culture after culture with Royal Caribbean. All along the way you can enjoy a journey just as exciting as the destinations onboard Liberty of the Seas®, Vision of the Seas®, or Enchantment of the Seas®. These ships are designed for adventurers and relaxation seekers as well as cruisers young and old. Kids love to try to touch the sky on the bungee trampolines and play all day at the interactive Splash Deck. There are also plenty of spaces that sooth, like the Vitality™ Spa, fitness center and the adults-only Solarium pool.

“There was a variety of all ages on the Royal Caribbean cruise I took this past November,” states Travel Consultant Dawn Ryan. “I was also really impressed with the quality of the evening shows. They were a lot of fun, especially the AquaTheater, and there was plenty of time afterwards to explore other onboard activities.”

The Lone Star state is the perfect place to start your Western Caribbean adventure with Royal Caribbean. Contact Brentwood Travel today to learn more!

A Japanese proverb says “A day of traveling will bring a basketful of learning.” This is clearly true when traveling throughout Asia with PRINCESS CRUISES – voted the #1 cruise line to Japan.

Cruising around Japan is a perfect option, as the country is an archipelago consisting of 6,852 islands. Gliding past tranquil landscapes, striking temples and countless cultures is a mesmerizing travel experience. Having the sixth largest coastline in the world, top excursions are easily reached by many ports throughout the country. Japan is also home to 20 UNESCO cultural and natural sites, including the wonder of Mount Fuji. Every part of Japan feels like an immersive experience and a juxtaposition of old and new. Japan is especially dynamic during the summer festival season. Many cruises are timed to make the most of these unique celebrations. Late night calls will give you the opportunity to experience the fire flower season or “hanabi” as the night sky is illuminated with dazzling fireworks shows.

Japan truly comes to life when you pair your cruise with a land tour to experience traditional markets and generations-old eateries. Princess Cruises offers two unforgettable cruise tour options which will take you to popular cities such as Kyoto, Kanazawa and Tokyo for multiple day and night stays.

Travel consultant Emily Medina took a journey with Princess Cruises this spring and was impressed with the array of onboard activities. “There were so many fun activities on the ship, such as movies under the stars, different music venues, shows and fun activities like miniature golf for the whole family to enjoy – we had a great time checking out all the entertainment options.”

Majestic Princess is the newest ship to take you to one of 18 gateways to Japan. Majestic is a perfect mix of Western and Asian entertainment and includes unique features not found on other Princess ships. A must-see is the SeaWalk, a glass-encased walkway extending 28 feet beyond the edge of the ship. Asian flavors are crafted by two-star Michelin chefs at specialty restaurants including Harmony (Cantonese cuisine), Chopsticks Noodle Bar, and the Lobster & Dim Sum Bar.

Contact Brentwood Travel to begin an unforgettable experience to Japan with Princess Cruises.
Do you wish you could travel back in time? It’s hard to believe, but this idea has become a reality. Be among some of the first to explore a destination untouched by time in Havana, Cuba. For years Americans were unable to visit this exciting country, but now the doors are open and it’s just waiting to be seen.

NORWEGIAN CRUISE LINE is eager to go back in time with you aboard Norwegian Sky.

Picture yourself riding in a vehicle with the top down as you explore Cuba. This isn’t a motor coach tour, but instead a vintage car. Chevys, Fords, Cadillacs: Typically these vehicles can be found in museums back home, but they look brand new in Cuba. Drive through the most iconic sites in Cuba, like the former seat of the Cuban Congress; taste food in Chinatown; or you wish you could travel back in time. For years Americans were unable to visit this exciting country, but now the doors are open and it’s just waiting to be seen.

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INTRODUCING U BY UNIWORLD, a modern makeover to river cruising. This experimental take on travel brings together the experienced service of a Uniworld cruise with authentic adventures travelers will want to share.

Think of U by Uniworld as a boutique hotel that moves. The brand new ships are decked out with a sleek design, contemporary flair, and tons of exciting elements and extras onboard.

Every room has a view and the small ship size allows docking in city centers, taking you right to the middle of the action. A coffee bar is available to help keep you caffeinated for exploring, as well as a gym to keep your fitness routine going strong.

Want to make your fellow foodies a little bit jealous? Each ship features two venues for dining, a full-service restaurant and a casual rooftop eatery complete with Instagram-worthy meals. If you are looking for the ultimate in immersive food experiences, the VizEat partnership will give you the opportunity to taste the city and share a meal in the home of a U Host.

U Time Excursions provide plenty of options for unique experiences that are tailored to your passions. In France you can kayak along the Seine River with an expert guide. In Vienna be one of the first of your Facebook friends to try Operatic Cooking – an interactive Viennese cooking class and intro to opera music. And make the most of a magical night in Budapest with an old-town bar crawl… and a later excursion start time scheduled for the next day.

U by Uniworld is cruising along in 6 countries, 4 rivers with 27 ports of call. Trips are easy to fit in your social calendar and bring you the best of Europe with 8- to 10-day itineraries. And since timing is everything, several cruises are planned around major cultural events, world festivals and other exciting happenings.

Fill your social feeds and with wanderlust pictures tagged with #allaboutu. Change the way you see the world and contact Brentwood Travel to book a U by Uniworld adventure.
It’s no secret that every “once upon a time” story ends with “happily ever after.” Now, WALT DISNEY WORLD® RESORT guests can discover just how magical and emotional that fairy-tale ending can be with the newest, most breathtaking fireworks show in the history of Magic Kingdom Park – “Happily Ever After.”

In addition to fireworks, the stunning new nighttime extravaganza features more lasers, lights and projections than any show at Magic Kingdom Park before it. “Happily Ever After” is also an entirely new kind of Disney storytelling; one that takes guests on an inspiring journey filled with heart, humor and emotion. Guests become part of the journey themselves as they follow favorite Disney characters on an adventure to seek out their destiny, face adversity and ultimately fulfill their dreams on the road to their happily ever after.

The 18-minute spectacle features moments from classic Disney films such as “The Little Mermaid” and “Aladdin” to modern blockbusters “Moana” and “Zootopia.” Cinderella Castle becomes part of the story itself, with dazzling projections bringing heartfelt Disney stories to life and around the iconic 18-story-tall castle. Quasimodo from “Hunchback of Notre Dame” swings from the turrets. Woody and his pals from Disney•Pixar’s “Toy Story” recreate the castle entirely out of toys. And Maleficent from “Sleeping Beauty” envelops the castle in her signature green flames.

The story begins with scenes of fantastic dreams full of hope, wonder, magic and light. Disney villains soon become part of the story, attempting to quash those beautiful dreams and forcing the heroes to fight for what they believe in. Overcoming their fears, the heroes triumph and are celebrated with spectacular fireworks. Because no Magic Kingdom Park fireworks display is complete without this little bit of magic, Tinker Bell flies across the night sky, reminding guests that with a little faith, trust and pixie dust, everyone can find their own happily ever after.

Characters and scenes from more than 25 Disney films are featured through state-of-the-art projections, enhanced by more than 50 choreographed spotlights, brilliant lasers and plenty of awe-inspiring fireworks. Paired with an emotional score, the new spectacular drives the message home that anyone can grab hold of their dreams and make them come true as long as they are brave enough to listen to what guides them and bold enough to pursue their destiny.

Call Brentwood Travel so you can find your “Happily Ever After.”

As to Disney artwork, logos, and properties: ©Disney

To book your magical vacation, contact us today.

Find your “Happily Ever After” by calling
Brentwood Travel at 314-439-5700

Travel to Tahiti with Oceania Cruises

From $3,649* (Oceanview) – $4,349* (Veranda)
Depart March 7, 2018 aboard Marina

Visit Moorea, Bora Bora, Nuku Hiva, Fakarava, Rangiroa, Huahine

As the finest at sea, but also rivals the best restaurants ashore.

Whatever corner of the globe beckons you to explore, Oceania Cruises will take you there in comfort and style. These culinary delights are a hallmark that distinguishes the Oceania Cruises experience from any other.

Contact Brentwood Travel to book a trip with Oceania Cruises and savor exquisite cuisine that not only is renowned as the finest at sea, but also rivals the best restaurants ashore.
Delight in a Caribbean Paradise

Right on the shore of Bávaro Beach, where the Caribbean Sea meets the Atlantic Ocean, discover the popular Grand Palladium Punta Cana Resort & Spa. In addition to its idyllic setting, you will experience exceptional service and value, which earned the resort the treasured Golden Apple Award from Apple Vacations.

Enjoy your vacation under the warm Caribbean sun walking along the beach with fine white sand. Whether you travel as a couple or with your family, choose from a wide variety of cuisines and activities both active and relaxing at this all-inclusive resort.

Guests can choose from the great selection of drinks available at any of the 13 bars and six beach bars. This complex features eight delicious a la carte-themed restaurants, including Asian, Tex Mex, Italian, Mediterranean, Spanish, and Japanese cuisine in addition to five buffet-style restaurants. And opening this October 2017 you can be one of the first to enjoy Rodizio, a new Brazilian a la carte restaurant.

How do you keep young people between 13 and 19 years of age entertained? With a club exclusively designed to their tastes and offers a full program such as video games and sports activities. The new Castillo del Pirata is for kiddos aged 1-12 and is the largest kid’s club in the Caribbean with a mini water park, a private dining room, and quiet places to rest between activities.

...and while the kids are having the trip of a lifetime, parents can relax at the Zentropía Palladium Spa. This wellness center is one of the most complete spas in the area and offers unique opportunities to unwind, with an offering of exclusive and personalized services.

Is there Wi-Fi? Why yes there is, and the basic FREE package is available throughout the resort.

For 48 years Apple Vacations has provided affordable, top-quality vacation packages nationwide to popular vacation destinations.

The Three I’s – Iceland, Italy and Ireland

There are so many ways to explore Europe, but the top three countries you need to visit next are Iceland, Italy and Ireland. Each country has its own unique touch – from the landscapes in Iceland, cobblestone streets in Italy and the pubs in Ireland, they’ll each leave you wanting more.

Iceland can be considered the land of extremes with its mountains, volcanoes, waterfalls, lagoons, and of course, the Northern Lights. Travel consultant Stacey Hoehne visited Iceland and discovered the “landscapes and scenery” were huge highlights. “For me, Seljalandsfoss, Skogafoss and Gullfoss had the most beautiful and impressive waterfalls I’ve ever seen.”

Other wonders await you in Iceland, like the infamous Blue Lagoon in Reykjavik, the rift valley in Thingvellir that separates North America and European tectonic plates, the largest glacier in Europe, Vatnajökull, and more.

While touring through Italy, it’ll feel as if you’re being “transported back in time with history coming to life,” said Stacey Acree, Senior Vice-President of Brentwood Travel. Italy is full of impressive masterpieces, exquisite food, plus charming boutiques and historic cities. Learn to make Manfricolo pasta in Narni, walk through St. Clare’s Church and St. Francis’ Basilica in Assisi, stop in beautiful Tuscany to taste Italian wine, or even visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site Pienza. Acree added, “Italy is simply magical.”

Shamrocks, leprechauns and shillelaghs usually come to mind when thinking about Ireland, but it’s so much more than that. Experience the Cliffs of Moher in Ennis, cross the Shannon estuary by ferry, walk through the House of Waterford Crystal or even see Ireland’s oldest hand-weaving mill at Avoca.

American and European tectonic plates, the largest glacier in Europe, Vatnajökull, and more.

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Other wonders await you in Iceland, like the infamous Blue Lagoon in Reykjavik, the rift valley in Thingvellir that separates North America and European tectonic plates, the largest glacier in Europe, Vatnajökull, and more.

While touring through Italy, it’ll feel as if you’re being “transported back in time with history coming to life,” said Stacey Acree, Senior Vice-President of Brentwood Travel. Italy is full of impressive masterpieces, exquisite food, plus charming boutiques and historic cities. Learn to make Manfricolo pasta in Narni, walk through St. Clare’s Church and St. Francis’ Basilica in Assisi, stop in beautiful Tuscany to taste Italian wine, or even visit the UNESCO World Heritage Site Pienza. Acree added, “Italy is simply magical.”

Shamrocks, leprechauns and shillelaghs usually come to mind when thinking about Ireland, but it’s so much more than that. Experience the Cliffs of Moher in Ennis, cross the Shannon estuary by ferry, walk through the House of Waterford Crystal or even see Ireland’s oldest hand-weaving mill at Avoca.

American and European tectonic plates, the largest glacier in Europe, Vatnajökull, and more.

How do you keep young people between 13 and 19 years of age entertained? With a club exclusively designed to their tastes and offers a full program such as video games and sports activities. The new Castillo del Pirata is for kiddos aged 1-12 and is the largest kid’s club in the Caribbean with a mini water park, a private dining room, and quiet places to rest between activities.

...and while the kids are having the trip of a lifetime, parents can relax at the Zentropía Palladium Spa. This wellness center is one of the most complete spas in the area and offers unique opportunities to unwind, with an offering of exclusive and personalized services.

Is there Wi-Fi? Why yes there is, and the basic FREE package is available throughout the resort.

For 48 years Apple Vacations has provided affordable, top-quality vacation packages nationwide to popular vacation destinations.