

## **Bella Charlie Client FAQ**

### ***When will I be charged for bookings?***

- a. **Flights** – paid at the time of booking
- b. **Hotels:** Most hotels you will pay upon checkout. If one requires a deposit or any payment ahead of time, this information will be disclosed in the hotel quote
- c. **Tours/Activities:** Paid at the time of booking
- d. **Transportation/car rental:** paid at the time of booking
- e. **Cruises:** each have their own payment schedule, typically you will pay an initial deposit and the remaining balance will be due between 30-120 days prior to the trip start date
- f. **Tour Packages:** each have their own payment schedule, typically you will pay an initial deposit and the remaining balance will be due between 30-120 days prior to the trip start date
- g. **Dining (when applicable):** Some restaurants require deposit – will contact you for confirmation before processing
- h. The only money we collect from clients directly is for our planning fees. All other funds are paid directly to the hotel or service provider.

### ***How do I view my proposal and itinerary?***

We use an app called “Axus Travel App” for proposals and your final itinerary. During the planning process you can access this via a weblink we will send via email. For your final draft we will publish the itinerary to the app where you will receive an email instructing you on how to download the app and login. While you can print a PDF or use the weblink, we highly recommend downloading the app before travel as it is a great tool to communicate with our team, and see everything live (with or without internet). The app also contains everything you will need to be ready to travel:

- a. Trip plan details
- b. Documents (I.e. hotel confirmations, receipts)
- c. Confirmation numbers
- d. Cancellation policies
- e. Restaurant reservation details (booked by us)
- f. Tour confirmations and meeting points (booked by us)
- g. Flight information (provided by you, or booked by us)
- h. Suggested tours, activities, restaurants (not officially booked by us)

### ***What do you book and what do I need to book on my own?***

A standard planning fee will include consulting and booking of premium economy/business class/first class flights, hotels, tours, and transportation. Typically, we do not book trains, entry tickets (unless it is part of a tour), or restaurants. Economy air, trains and entry tickets we can absolutely book, but the system we use for these charges an additional service fee, so the cost is not always competitive for us to do this vs you booking these directly with our guidance. We can reserve restaurants on request, but find it is easier for our clients to have these reservations themselves as this tends to be the most

frequently changed part of the itinerary once you are traveling- it can cause a headache if you are waiting for us, on an alternate time zone, to adjust your restaurant reservation.

***Is there a difference in the planning process if we use a tour operator?***

Yes! There are some destinations that we will not book without using a full-service tour operator (vs. “ala carte planning as we use throughout Europe, the US, the Caribbean, etc.). The reasons for this vary but usually it is to provide you with a trip and service level that is consistent with our brand. Destinations/Trips we plan only through a tour operator include but are not limited to: Israel, Peru, Chile, Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Most of Asia (some exceptions apply), Most of Africa (some exceptions apply)

Tour operators operate on “package” pricing and wholesale rates, which means you will pay for the entire trip directly through the tour operator. We still have the same level of customization in these trips, but typically, you will receive the entire itinerary with the whole price at once. Tour operators do not typically provide a line-item breakdown of activities and hotels as their rates are contracted and confidential.

Typically, when working with a tour operator, you and your advisor will go over priorities. We will provide a first draft of the trip, including hotel prices and recommended activities. We do this because hotel cost is often the biggest driver of price in these packages, so by choosing these in advance of including a tour operator, we can get a better first draft from the tour operator within the budget you are comfortable with. Once we have decided on hotels and general activities, we send this to the tour operator to iron out the best logistics and provide final pricing. Your trip will not be booked without a deposit to the tour operator, and this amount varies by company and by how much time there is before your trip start date.

***What does it mean that we are a Virtuoso travel agency?***

Hotels in the Virtuoso network extend extra amenities to our clients, such as free breakfast, food and beverage or spa credits, upgrades upon availability, and early check-in/late check-out upon availability. We will advise you if any recommended hotels are part of Virtuoso and what amenities may be available.

***Can I use my points to book hotels and flights?***

We may be able to source accommodations to be booked using points, but we cannot book those rooms and flights for you.

***Can you book tours and activities for me?***

Yes, we can book guides and structured activities for clients. We also make recommendations for self-guided activities and can advise on how to make reservations for self-guided activities, but do not book these for clients. For example, we advise how to see the Eiffel Tower without a guided tour, but we do not reserve tickets to the Eiffel Tower for an unguided visit.

***Can you book transportation for me?***

- a. We can book rental cars.
- b. We advise clients to book their own train and ferry tickets.
- c. We don't typically book coach airfare unless it is included in a package. We have access to excellent premium economy and business class and can book that for our clients.

***Do you offer travel insurance?***

We strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance. We have relationships with highly rated travel insurance companies and can facilitate a non-binding quote on request. To maximize the protection that travel insurance offers, it is recommended that clients purchase travel insurance within 14 days of first payment related to the trip.

***Do you offer 24/7 support while traveling?***

- a. No, but if 24-hour support is communicated as a trip requirement, we will source the trip through a partner who can provide this service. The itinerary is the final deliverable in our program.
- b. Only in the event of a true emergency or necessary escalation will you be in contact with your travel advisor while traveling (but you can always send us pictures of you having fun- this MAKES our day!)
- c. If your trip has started and you need to adjust any booked service or reservation that is time sensitive, you are responsible for contacting the hotel, tour company, airline, etc. to make changes. We can make adjustments during normal business hours, with at least 24-hour notice. Any non-emergent adjustments while traveling are subject to an incremental hourly administrative fee.

***Will I pay more to work with you?***

Depending on the trip needs we will quote a planning fee for the trip design, but you never pay more for hotels, tours, activities, etc. than you would if trying to book on your own. And in fact, we can usually find you a better deal or with more amenities than if you booked on your own. The time it takes to research, put together the itinerary, and process bookings is a savings to you and the reason for the planning fee. Not all things booked by us pay a commission, so this fee also covers our time in that case. Sometimes, wholesalers will offer discounted rates without amenities that don't always have as much value as the rates we picked (for example, you can find a nonrefundable fare on Expedia without breakfast for \$20 less than the flexible cancel we quoted with breakfast). Usually we can book these rates but will typically originally offer flexible cancellation rates with breakfast included where offered. If you find a rate that is truly less than what we can offer- we will direct, you to complete the booking yourself if preferred.