

AAA Unveils First Online Travel Agency for Motorists

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New AAA.com Includes Trip Planning Features Available Nowhere Else on the Internet

AAA unveiled a new and expanded online travel agency designed to meet the specific needs of drive travelers, who account for 88 percent of all leisure travel in the United States. The Web site, AAA.com, also provides exclusive services and information for travelers planning worldwide journeys by air, sea, and land.

Motorists will find the new AAA.com preferable to other travel Web sites whether they need quick maps and local driving directions or complete planning tools and destination information for cross-country road trips and fly/drive vacations.

Just last month, AAA was the first to enhance its online travel planning tool, the TripTik(R) travel planner on AAA.com, with location and fuel pricing information for more than 100,000 U.S. gas stations. This new feature serves as an easy fuel locator for motorists, in addition to AAA's popular Fuel Cost Calculator (www.fuelcostcalculator.com), which helps travelers budget driving costs based on distance, fuel prices, and vehicle make and model.

One feature that distinguishes the AAA.com TripTik travel planner from all other online trip planners is direct access to AAA's proprietary travel information. While planning a trip, driving en route, or exploring a destination, travelers can use the TripTik travel planner to find travel ideas and information by location. Area descriptions provide helpful visitor details, and colorful icons display specific categories of information such as sightseeing options to break up the drive, dining ideas for places you'll pass through at meal times, and quality hotels for overnight stays.

One click on the handy map icons opens the AAA listings, many with photos, from AAA's database of 60,000 AAA Approved and Diamond rated hotels and restaurants, 17,000 attractions, 22,000 events, and 8,000 destinations. Many hotel listings include easy bookings at the best online rates. Travelers can also display locations and information for some 110,000 Show Your Card & Save(R) member discount locations, 8,000 AAA Approved Auto Repair facilities, and 1,100 AAA/CAA club offices. And AAA.com is now the only travel Web site to provide complete Diamond rating information.

'We are taking the benefits that have been available for years to air travelers and bringing them to motorists in new and more sophisticated ways that will take online travel planning in a new direction,' said AAA President and CEO Robert L. Darbelnet. 'For more than a century AAA has been the leader in meeting the needs of North America's largest travel segment, drive vacationers, so it is only fitting that we create the most effective online travel resource for motorists.' Darbelnet also noted that the new AAA.com comes at important milestone in AAA's history: this month AAA will reach its 50 million member mark.

In addition to serving motorists, AAA.com offers complete travel agency services. Travelers can book hotels, car rentals, cruises, tours, airline tickets, and vacation packages. As a counterpart to the North America destination information from the AAA TourBook guides, AAA.com provides information on 24 international countries and 41 international cities from AAA's retail travel publications. In some areas of AAA.com, AAA's 50 million members enjoy the added benefit of discounts and exclusive extras.

Since its founding, AAA has been the leader in mapping and cartographic services. Now, with continuous developments in content, ability, and quality, AAA's TripTik routings are also the gold standard in online mapping and travel planning. AAA generated 17 million personalized TripTik travel routings last year, of which 14 million were created on AAA.com by travelers and AAA travel professionals.

Interesting Features of the TripTik(R) Travel Planner on AAA.com

- * Users can access maps and driving directions without an address by selecting from hundreds of routable locations in categories such as lodgings, national parks, airports, cruise ports, golf courses, colleges and universities, and pro sports venues.
- * The TripTik planning tool also identifies road construction, traffic congestion, and AAA Scenic Byways information.
- * The exclusive 'Modify Route' feature enables users to customize their trips using roads they prefer to travel. Take a AAA Scenic Byway, return home via a different route, or avoid major construction.
- * The TripTik travel planner is backed by a team of AAA and CAA travel professionals at 1,000+ locations across North America who can provide personalized service and expert travel assistance.
- * The TripTik travel planner also provides advisories for winter road closures at major destinations and provides alternate route information.

As North America's largest motoring and leisure travel organization, AAA provides 50 million members with travel, insurance, financial, and automotive-related services. Since its founding in 1902, the not-for-profit, fully tax-paying AAA has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. AAA clubs can be visited on the Internet at www.AAA.com.

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