

Fishing for That

Perfect Summer Travel Experience

When I was asked to write an article with something about ‘fish’ in the title, I agreed to do it (just for the halibut) but found it to be a challenge. Then I remembered the quintessential summer lyric, dreamily sung by Ella Fitzgerald and many others. The 7th word in the classic “Summertime” is ‘fish’: *Summertime, and the livin’ is easy, Fish are jumpin’ and the cotton is high.* There are lessons in fishing that relate to travellers and their secret summer desires, much like a horoscope that reveals their travel personality.

Let me begin by suggesting that I am NOT a fishing fanatic. In fact the last time I went fishing was on a sunset cruise in the Maldives 8 years ago and I don’t believe anyone on the boat caught anything... but the scenery was pretty. The time before that was when I was a kid and we went fishing just north of Toronto. After 5 hours of listening to my transistor radio, as well as coaxing, hoping, wishing, spotting and cursing, not one fish took the bait.

Now I haven’t given up on fish altogether. When I embraced the three graces of travel, photography and writing, I discovered the joy of visiting seafood markets. The vendors were hard working but almost always friendly when asked about their products. And then there was the fresh smell of the seafood (which admittedly some people can’t stand, but I happen to love), and the colourful displays, especially in Asian markets, where the produce is arranged with artistic symmetry and pride.

I think about the fish market in Kota Kinabalu, Malaysia. I was there on a travel agent “Fam” trip and was told that the market opened at 5:30 am—cool, pitch dark, and a 15-20 minute walk from the hotel. But I was there to discover and

experience so the first morning I wandered there alone. The vendors were friendly, smiling, posing for photos, explaining their catches, working hard in footgear that ranged from thigh-high rubber boots to simple broken plastic thong-sandals. But this was their livelihood and as the sun rose and the crowds of locals grew, there were times when I just had to put away the camera and appreciate the ‘spirit’ of the market.

And I can say that the same holds true in Tokyo’s famous Tsukiji fish market or Shimonoseki’s ‘fugu’ (poisonous blow fish) market or various fish markets in Thailand, Turkey, Sri Lanka, Colombia, Panama, Chile or Ireland. And this is not to forget markets closer to home: Granville Island market in Vancouver, and the Market in Seattle, Washington where tossing large slippery fish from one end of the market stall to the other end has become one of those legendary fish market ‘must sees’.

Not that we want to classify travellers...but with some imagination, humour and the prospect of summer getaways, we can enjoy a bit of psychographic (the study of why people do things) license.

Summer Traveller Types mixed with a bit of aqueous humour...

The Halibut

Travel Theme: Summer Time and Living is Easy...

Travel Image: Lazily fishing by the creek on a hot summer day, wearing a straw hat tilted over the eyes, chewing on a piece of straw, dipping the fishing rod into the creek and waiting for a bite.

Travel Type: Laissez-faire, let everything unwind as it will. Traveller does not want to be scheduled to death. Needs lots of free time.

Travel Communication: This is your text/twitter-communicating client who will decide this afternoon that he/she needs a travel add-on tomorrow and will want you to arrange it. This client is long term; wants you to take care of details but only as requested.

Travel Accommodation: Prefers small intimate hotels.

The Marlin

Travel Theme: Summer Time and the Fish are Jumping...

Travel Image: Deep sea fishing adventures with the wind blowing in his/her face, strapped into the 'fighting chair' with rod bent over and reel spinning as a blue-fin Tuna flies out of the water.

Travel Type: Adventure, independent, DIY, throw caution to the wind, do it for the bragging rights.

Travel Communication: This client prefers email—the less contact, the better. When something goes wrong he/she will just 'fix' it and tell you about it later. Once you interview the client and create their CRM profile, don't ask the same questions again.

Travel Accommodation: Prefers small hotels, will not tolerate mass tourism but ensure that the hotel bar is fully stocked.

The Flounder

Travel Theme: Summer Time and the Sounds of Silence.

Travel Image: Standing hip-deep in a river, wearing waders, and casting your fly fishing line into the water again and again. The emphasis is on peace, quiet, fresh air, the ripple of the water, the sounds of nature.

Travel Type: Outdoors, walker, hiker, trekker. The person who appreciates at least one day on a holiday that is off the beaten track—communing with nature—and recording their peace and quiet with photographs and even writing.

Travel

Communication: This is your Blog of Facebook client who likes to record and relate things in detail. They are likely to book a customized package tour where at least one day can include a get-away-from-it-all activity.

Travel Accommodation: Hotels/ Resorts/ B & B's are not really an issue as long as there are people to meet.

The Grouper

Travel Theme: Summer Time with So Much to do and So Little Time to Do It.

Travel Image: Fish markets, temples, attractions, restaurants, shopping, beaches & tours. This is a busy itinerary for a busy person who likes to do and see.

Travel Type: Likes to have fun, prefers to have someone else do the

organizing and scheduling. Has no issue with group tours as long as the itinerary takes in everything and the coach or waterway cruise allows plenty of time to see and do.

Travel Communication:

This is your selfie-photo person. He/she is on Instagram, Pinterest and Flickr. Probably also on Facebook and Twitter, as communicating everything possible to everyone at every possible moment is very important.

Travel

Accommodation: All-inclusives are great, as you can have choice, try different foods, eat quickly and get back to your activities.

The Sardine

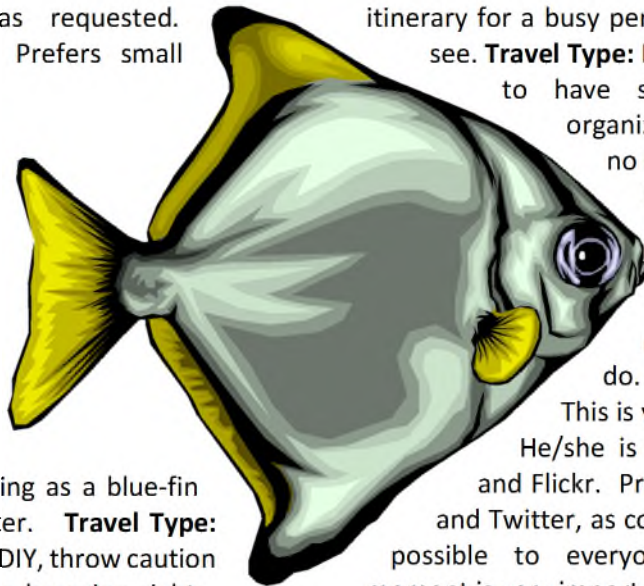
Travel Theme: Summer Time and I Hate Fishing aka Those Lazy, Hazy, Crazy Days of Summer

Travel Image: Slathered in sun protection, lying on a beach, lazing under a beach umbrella, sipping sweet summer drinks from a straw (paper umbrella in drink, of course).

Travel Type: All-inclusives, package holiday veteran. Wakes up early, reserves 5 lounge chairs with towels, then goes back to sleep and eventually returns to pool or beach after breakfast, 3 hours later. Enjoys watching hotel activities, the buzz of talkative hotel patrons and the evening entertainment.

Travel Communication: Telephone and in-person. Attitude is 'show me what's available at my price point and send me there'. Thank you. That's All.

Travel Accommodation: All-inclusive but great



potential for upselling—appreciate the value of spending more to experience enhanced convenience—and also cross-selling—willing to try new destinations and new resorts as long as quality and value are not compromised.

The Angel Fish

Travel Theme: Three Little Fishies in an Itty Bitty Pool (in the summer time). **Travel Image:** Parent(s) and Kids(s) loaded down with luggage, wearing sunglasses, shorts and sandals in the departing airport and talking incessantly about what activities they will sign up for. **Travel**

Type: Family Traveller. Everything is for the kids. Hotel staff better be kid-friendly and show it.

Travel Communication: Before the trip: in-person and telephone. During the trip: Emails, texting and collect phone Calls. After the Trip: Letters. **Travel**

Accommodation: Family-oriented all-inclusives are perfect but will accept other ideas as long as there are tons of kid-oriented activities available (and some for the adults too). Menu choices have to be kid-friendly. There's no such thing as too many hamburgers and fish and chips.

The Carp

Travel Theme: Summer Time and "I Want it My Way". **Travel Image:** Arguing on arrival with customs, lecturing the taxi driver, fighting for a

better room at the resort, complaining about the air conditioning, grumbling about the temperature of the pool, criticizing the food, whining about the wine selection....you get the idea. **Travel Type:** Professional Anger Management Candidate. Mouth is almost always open wide, permanent frown on face, eyes say "go away", but absolutely loves to travel as often as possible. **Travel Communication:** Everything that gets the message across. Letters to the manager, letters to the airline president, letters to you and your supervisor, letters to the tourist board, blogs, trip advisor review. **Travel Accommodation:** Mostly all-inclusives but will try anything once.

The attitude is that everything is fair game for a complaint so why not experience it to add to the inventory of 'don't like this'

The advent of summertime travel brings out all sorts of travel types and this is just one fun way to appreciate them.

Segmenting your market and understanding that each and every person has their own travel wants and desires is very important...as is maintaining a sense of dedication to responding to your client's needs, and maintaining a sense of compassion mixed with humour in working with those clients. →

