

***Cruise Lines International Association:
Master Cruise Counsellor Certification Program***

CASE STUDY 8

THE DOCTOR AND HER HUSBAND

Dr. Lee Granger, 40, and her husband Jake, 43, are new clients to your agency and new to town. Lee was recently named head of the physical therapy unit at a large area hospital, and Jake is a regional correspondent for an environmental magazine. The Grangers are bright, active and adventurous. They love to try new things, to meet interesting and intelligent people, and to visit out-of-the-ordinary places.

During an initial phone conversation, you learned how their travel ambitions and dreams have grown over the years. Their cruise chronology tells the story: They celebrated Lee's graduation from medical school by taking an inexpensive 4-day Caribbean cruise, which introduced them to cruising and whetted their appetite for more. A few years later, there followed a 7-day Canada cruise on a more upscale ship. They were hooked on the cruise experience, especially the satisfaction that accompanies pampering and elegance. They soon returned to the Caribbean on a luxury cruise line, and sailed for one week to the area's more exotic parts. Finally, two years ago, they capped a 2-week European land tour with a 5-day Mediterranean cruise on one of the industry's top-of-the-line ships.

The Europe trip was something of a break-through for the Grangers. The cultural diversity, the history, and the legendary sites impressed them. They excitedly explain to you how they want their next journey to even further expand on the theme of cultural exploration.

They did, however, mention to you some misgivings they had with the Europe trip. You check your notes from your first discussion with the couple: 1) Both Grangers are very diet conscious, and had some difficulty finding restaurants that served more healthy (low-salt, low-cholesterol, etc.) meals. 2) They're sports fanatics, and in addition to being fitness club regulars, they enjoy hiking, tennis, and all watersports. Because they spent so much time "touring," and packing and traveling from city to city, they rarely had time to enjoy these physical outdoor activities. 3) Though they soaked up the varied cultural experiences, they sometimes felt overwhelmed by it all – the language barriers, differences in customs, occasional hotel or transportation hassles, and in a few places, crime and poverty.

A few weeks ago, the Grangers contacted you to say they were ready to begin planning their next trip. Because they don't have children, they do have the time and money to dedicate to their travels. They told you they want to visit a more exotic destination with natural beauty, centuries-old flavor, but also a modern local flair. They have three weeks off from work, and would like to see several areas, but without being rushed. They hope to take their trip in the late Spring.

You invite Lee and Jake to your office to hopefully finalize your proposed vacation: a 14-day cruise aboard one of the industry's more unique vessels. The itinerary choices are exactly the kind of exotic, off-the-beaten-path alternatives the Grangers are seeking. Although the trip would be the most expensive Granger vacation to date, you believe the cost isn't excessive relative to their aspirations and pocketbook.

With the couple seated before you, you lead them through a presentation of the features and benefits of your designed trip. They appear thrilled by your ideas, but as you prepare to close the sale, the discussion suddenly stalls. Jake notes that the cost is higher than they were thinking of spending. Lee questions the duration of the cruise, saying that two weeks is a long time to be on a ship. Finally they retreat with the classic line, "We need some time to think it over."

In your essay, answer the following questions based on the scenario described above:

- ☐ What five things would you do to help close the sale?
- ☐ What might you have done to better prepare these clients for your closing meeting so that the "stall" could have been avoided?
- ☐ How would you respond to the Grangers' concerns about cost? About the cruise duration?
- ☐ Which cruise line would you recommend? Why? What would be your second choice? Why?
- ☐ Which itinerary and destination would you first recommend to them? Why? If they don't like your first idea, what back-up place and itinerary might you offer?
- ☐ What features and benefits would you have stressed to promote your cruise and destination choice?