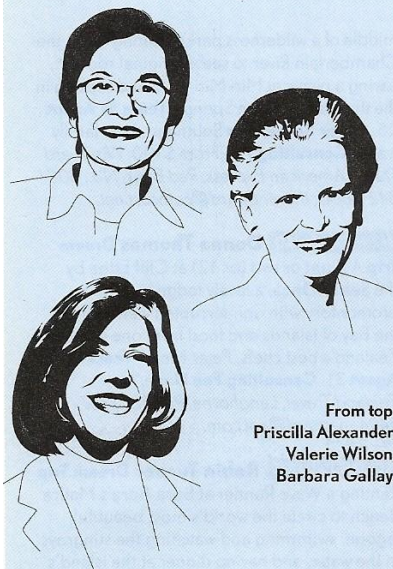


THE A-LIST



From top:
Priscilla Alexander,
Valerie Wilson,
Barbara Gallay.

A-List All-Stars

Don't Call Them—They'll Call You Shrewd businesswomen who run some of the industry's most powerful agencies, these agents generally work only with celebrities and Fortune 500 CEO's. Look for their employees throughout the A-List, or call the numbers below and ask to speak with one of the many qualified agents they've trained.

Priscilla Alexander Alexander's 19-year-old business, Protravel, is today one of the nation's largest agencies specializing in high-end trips. One key to the company's success: Alexander's own vast travel experience and keen intelligence. Among her recent projects is Distinctive Honeymoons, a registry program that allows couples to plan their trip with a Protravel agent and have friends and family buy elements of it. (Alexander is a member of T+L's Travel Agent Advisory Board.) *Protravel International, New York, N.Y.; 800/227-1059; priscilla@protravelinc.com.*

Barbara Gallay Celebrating three decades as head of New York-based Linden Travel this year, Gallay doesn't just run her business—she is also one of the most active advisers to hotels, cruise lines, and airlines on how to better serve travelers. With a handful of employees in New York and the mid-Atlantic region, she has established Linden as one of the best and most exclusive agencies around. (Gallay is a member of T+L's Travel Agent Advisory Board.) *Linden Travel Bureau, New York, N.Y.; 800/846-3226; barbara@lindentravel.com.*

Valerie Wilson While raising her family in the United Kingdom in the late seventies, Wilson found herself underwhelmed by the

quality of travel advice out there. After returning to the States, she opened her own agency in New York; together with her two daughters, she has overseen its expansion to 12 offices from Maine to Florida. Looking for a special hotel? Wilson has even chronicled her favorites in a book, *Valerie Wilson's World. Valerie Wilson Travel, Inc., New York, N.Y.; 800/776-1116; valeriew@vwti.com.*

You Get What You Pay For These agents are accessible—for a price. Most A-List agents charge clients for trip planning, but members of this group command an especially high premium.

John Clifford In his nearly two decades in the business, Clifford has made a name for himself by designing trips that emphasize a high return on money spent, rather than low cost. Equally at ease creating cultural tours of Chile (including meetings with government officials, museum curators, and winemakers) and style-driven journeys through Scandinavia (staying at the hippest new hotels), Clifford is one of the most versatile agents we know. For two people, his trip-planning services begin at \$500. *International Travel Management.com, La Jolla, Calif.; 800/908-6788; john@internationaltravelmanagement.com.*

Diane Hilliard Hilliard founded her own agency with a partner in 1983, and today, with a few employees, she is committed to keeping it small, in order to deliver a high level of service to a select group. She is that rare breed of agent who is not only impossible to stump but also eager to think with clients about the ways in which their travels can give them new perspectives on the world. An initial consultation with her costs \$500. (Hilliard is a member of T+L's Travel Agent Advisory Board.) *Hilliard & Olander, Stillwater, Minn.; 800/229-8407; diane@hilliardolander.com.*

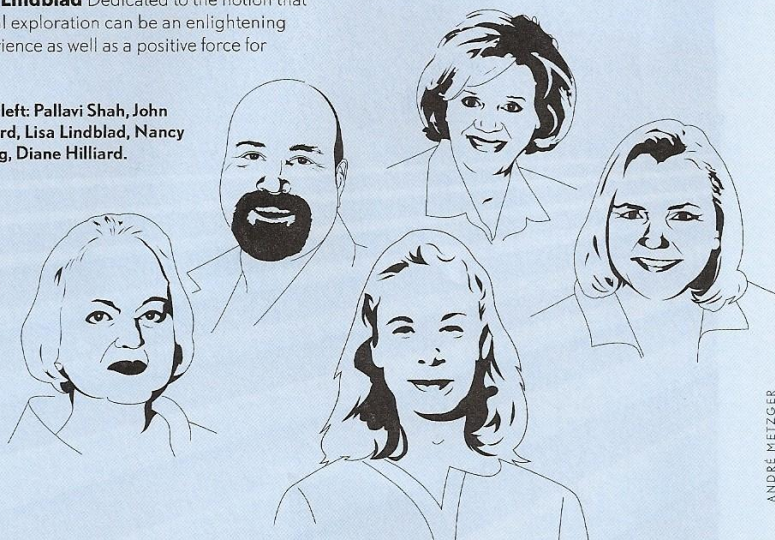
Lisa Lindblad Dedicated to the notion that global exploration can be an enlightening experience as well as a positive force for

change, Lindblad is known for an enviable roster of contacts around the world (but especially in East Africa, India, and Europe), who give her clients unparalleled access to the places they visit. As a board member of Aid to Artisans, she also plans special trips that bring travelers together with local artists and craftspeople for the benefit of both. Her services are among the industry's most expensive: a \$1,500 consulting fee, plus a 20 percent "design fee." *Lisa Lindblad Travel Design, New York, N.Y.; 212/876-2554; lisa@lisalindblad.com.*

Pallavi Shah A former special-events coordinator for Air India, Shah and her small team of agents specialize in elaborate itineraries that focus on "authentic experiences." Each client receives a comprehensive, personalized book with pertinent background information before departure. Shah doesn't disclose her fee—it's bundled into the total quoted cost of a trip—but having someone track the tidal currents of the Ganges to maximize your temple-viewing boat trip certainly doesn't come cheap. *Our Personal Guest, Inc., New York, N.Y.; 212/319-1354; nyoffice@ourpersonalguest.com.*

Nancy Strong From humble beginnings as a ticket-delivery messenger in the seventies, Strong has built her business into one of the country's top small agencies. She still works with new clients who seek out her undisputed knowledge of hotels and "right time, right place" trip planning. Want to hear the Declaration of Independence read in colonial Williamsburg on the Fourth of July, followed by a special dinner at the Williamsburg Inn and VIP seats to watch the fireworks? Piece of cake. Her consulting fee begins at \$500. (Strong is a member of T+L's Travel Agent Advisory Board.) *Strong Travel Services, Dallas; 800/747-5670; nancy@strongtravel.com. >>*

From left: Pallavi Shah, John Clifford, Lisa Lindblad, Nancy Strong, Diane Hilliard.



ANDRE METZGER