

‘Group tours’ being rebranded as ‘guided vacations’

By Catharine Hamm, Los Angeles Times

My first group tour was a four-city trip to China in 2001. We breezed by the highlights in Beijing, Shanghai, Suzhou and Hangzhou, had abominable buffet food and got herded to lots of silk and jewelry stores.

Sometime during those nine days, I decided it was My. Last. Group. Tour. Ever.

That may have been a bit premature.

Thanks to the emphasis on authentic and cultural experiences, the group tour has experienced a rebirth, starting with its name. They’re now called “escorted tours” or “guided vacations,” thank you very much.

Look for the upgraded group – er, escorted tour, said Colleen Clark, managing editor of JetSetter.com, a travel website that offers curated selections of hotels and travel deals.

Enter the reinventors.

Read the whole story