CBW advanced: Using Inventory

ClientBase® Windows Inventory Manager provides an effective and efficient tool for the agency to internally manage blocked and group space. Sharing the details and selling from this easy to access area increases the success of selling into agency blocked space. Class covers an in-depth review of the key features:

- Review benefits and advantages of tracking Inventory
- Setting up Inventory Records including details
- Query blocked space and create saved query folders for easy detail access
- Creating Res Cards and importing details from Inventory
- Use of Inventory Manager reports

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Benefits and Advantages of Using Inventory Manager

The ClientBase ***Inventory Manager*** helps agencies more effectively manage group space by:

- Easily keeping track of what space the agency has blocked
- Knowing who's booked into the blocked space
- Quickly creating res card reservations from inventory
- Printing reports such as traveler manifests and payment reports

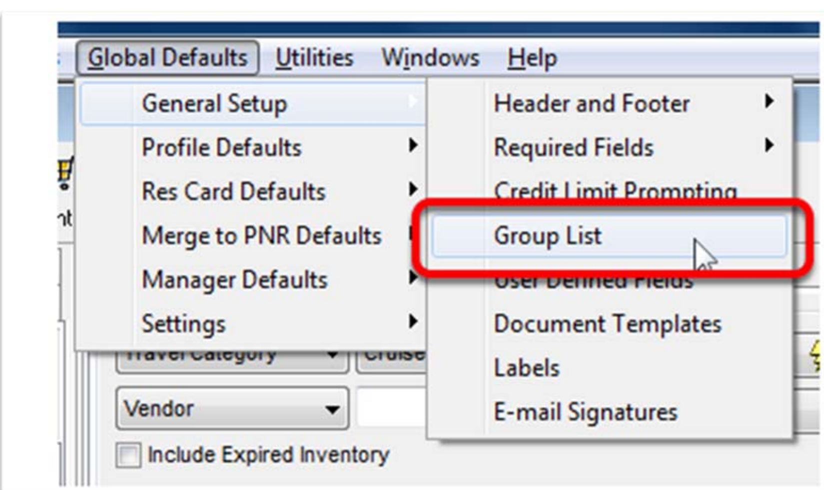
1. Setting Up Group Inventory

There are two steps to create inventory. The first is to create a group name and the second is to create the inventory record.

Creating Group Name

The first step to setting up group inventory is to create a unique group name for each group you'll be tracking. Group names are used throughout ClientBase and Trams Back Office to link all transactions (res cards, invoices, payments and vouchers) together for easy reporting.

Group names can be created in ClientBase Windows or Trams Back Office. To create a group in ClientBase, click on ***Global Defaults* | *General Setup* | *Group List***.



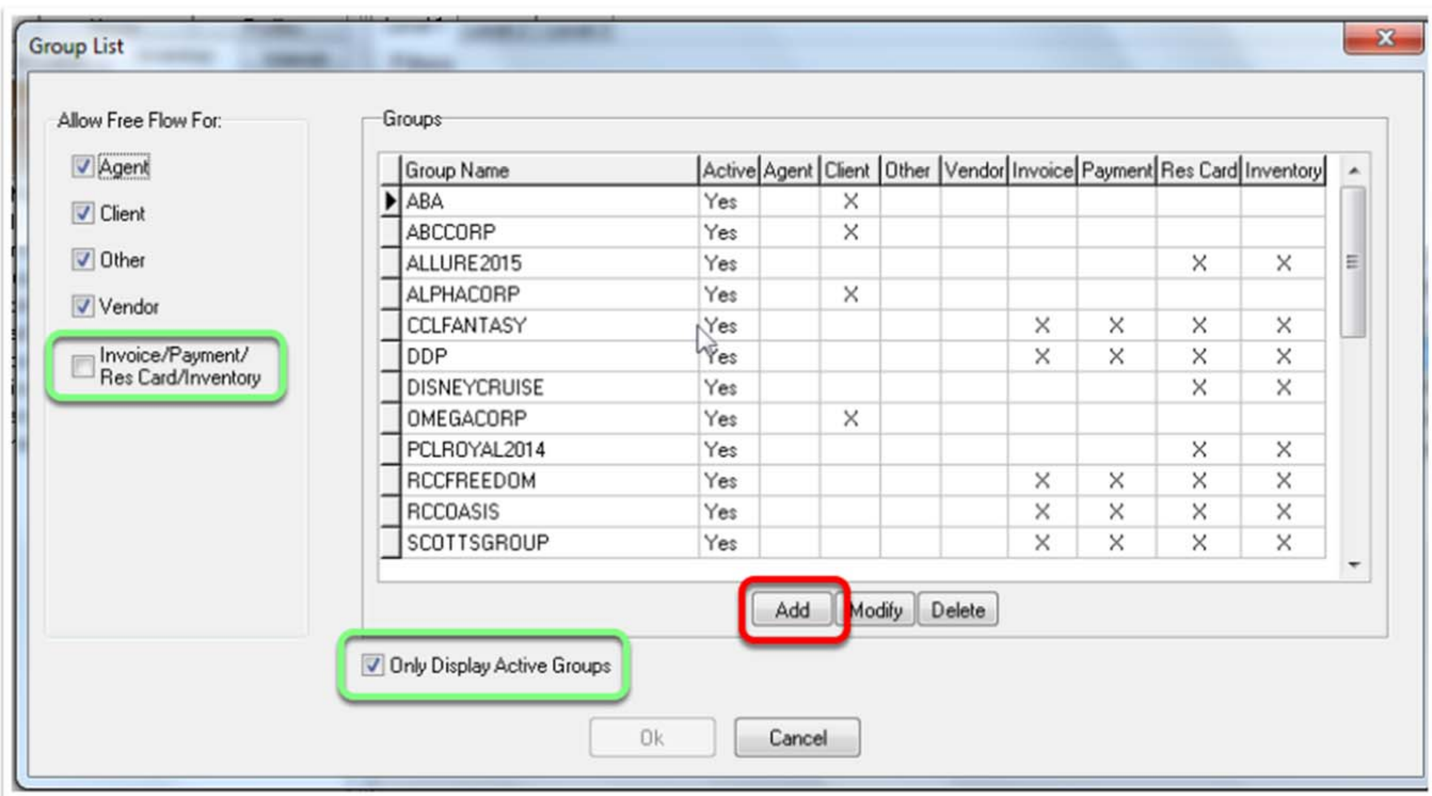
Reviewing Group List and Group Name Settings

From the Group List, users can add new groups, modify existing group names, and change free flow settings.

We highly recommend ***unchecking*** the box "Allow Free Flow For: Invoice/Payment/Res Card/Inventory." By unchecking this box, agents will be forced to choose a valid group name.

Also from this screen, users can choose to display only active group names or to include those that have been marked inactive as well.

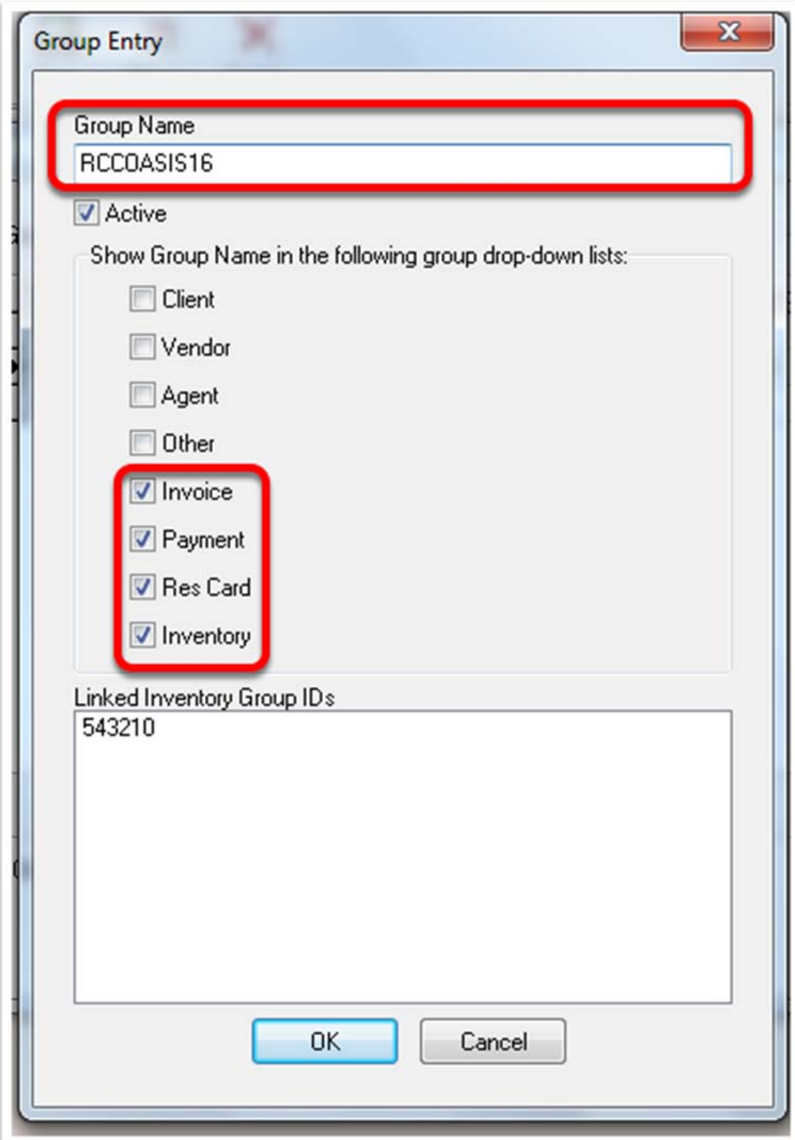
To add a new group name, click on "Add"



Adding a Group Name

Each group that you'll be tracking in ClientBase must have a unique name. The name can be any combination of letters and numbers, but we recommend keeping short yet descriptive. Users will be including this information on each res card that is associated with this group and for agencies using TBO, the bookkeeper will include the name on each payment and voucher.

At a minimum, the group name should be assigned as an ***Invoice***, ***Payment***, ***Res Card*** and ***Inventory Group***. This setting controls in which group drop-down lists the name appears. Group names can be set up in both ClientBase and Trams Back Office and some agencies prefer that the bookkeeper create group names.



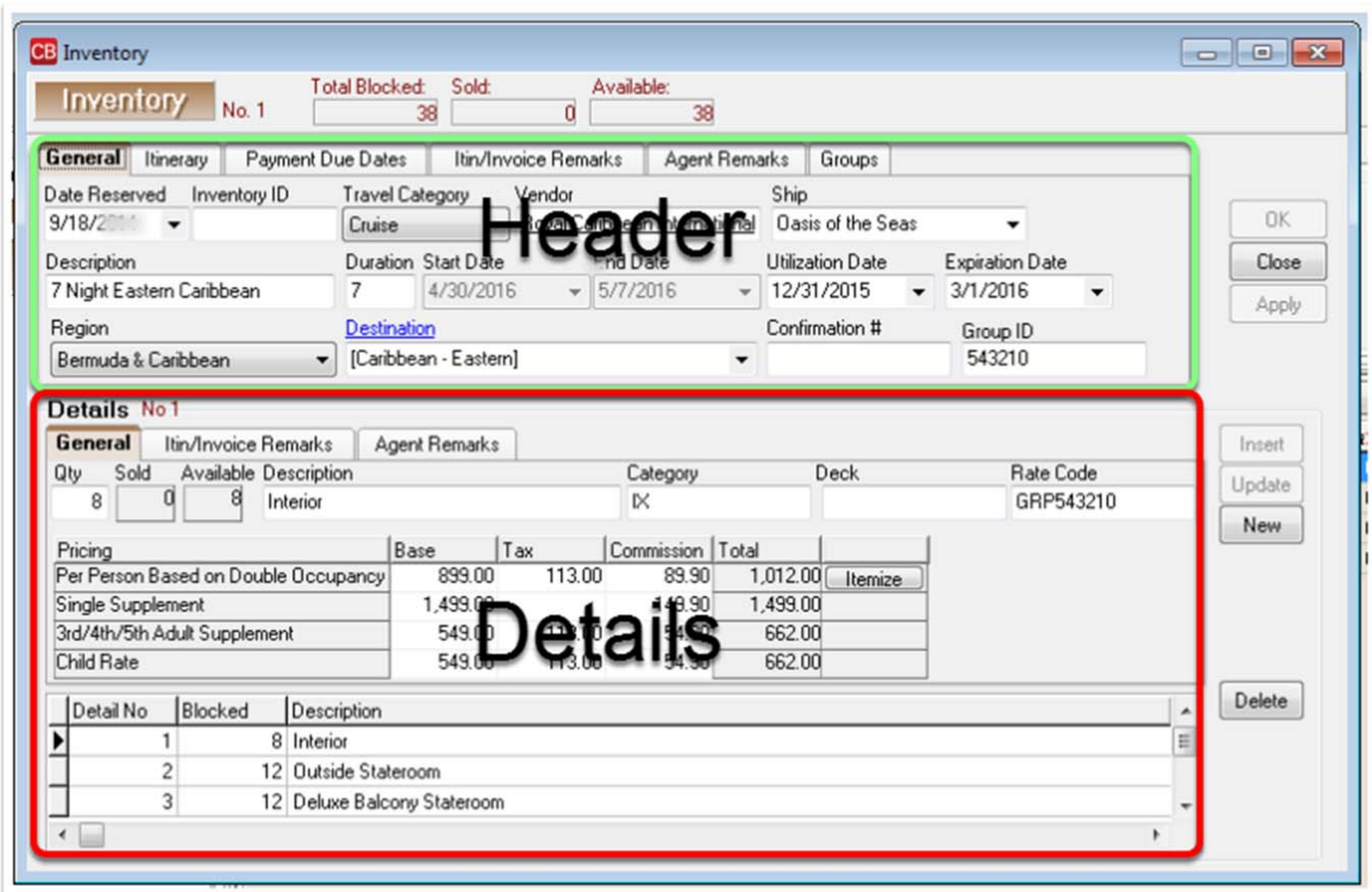
2. Overview of the Inventory Record

Once the group name is added, we can add inventory records. Each inventory record holds the details for specific block of space. For example, a Cruise inventory records will hold the details about a particular sailing (vendor, ship name, itinerary, etc.) along with each component (such as cabins on a cruise ship, rooms at a hotel, or openings on a tour) that is blocked.

An inventory record consists of two sections: the ***header*** and the ***details***. The header consists of basic information about the blocked space. For example, a cruise would include details such as the ship name, itinerary, and payment due dates. For a hotel, the property location would be tracked.

The details consists of the individual blocked units and their related pricing. For a cruise, ClientBase would track a detail line for each category of cabin available. Each inventory record can have an unlimited number of detail records attached.

It is possible to have multiple inventory records linked to the same group name, and to have more than one group name linked to inventory record. That way, users can track all of the components (such as cruise, transfers and pre-stay hotel) together, or use a single block of space to book multiple groups (such as both a Kiwanis and a Lion's Club on the same sailing).



2.1 The Header

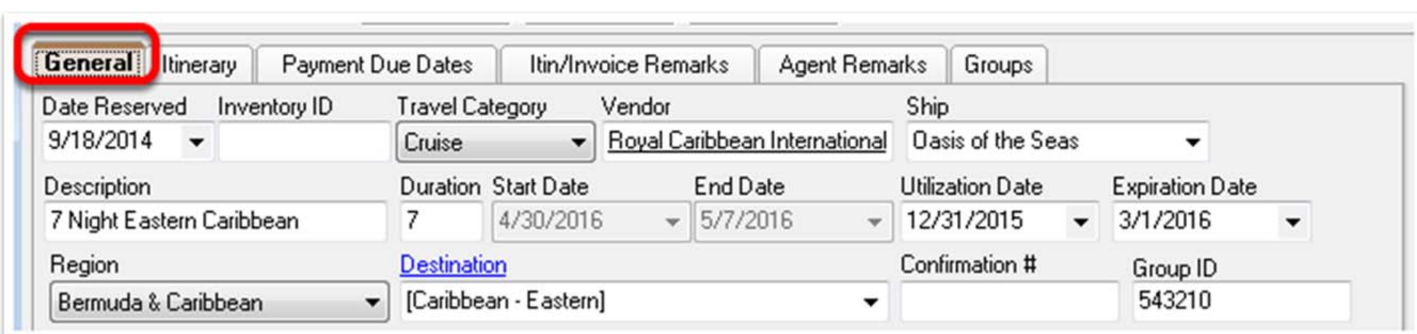
The header includes details for travel. Much like a res card reservation, it is divided into separate tabs:

1. **General:** Include the basics for the inventory, such as travel category, service provider name, and dates of travel.
2. **Itinerary:** For cruises and tours, agencies can enter segment-by-segment details. Entering this information makes it possible to search by port-of-call, and it populates the information in res cards.
3. **Payment Due Date:** Entering information here will automatically add due date information to each res card reservation.
4. **Itin/Invoice Remarks:** Remarks entered here will print by default on the trip documents for anything booked into this space.
5. **Agent Remarks:** These are notes for internal use and do not print on trip documents.
6. **Groups:** After the ***General*** tab, this is the most important piece of information. It's where the group names created earlier are linked to the group space.

General

The general tab holds the basic information about the sailing, hotel, tour, etc. The fields are similar to those in res cards and carry over to the res cards when booked.

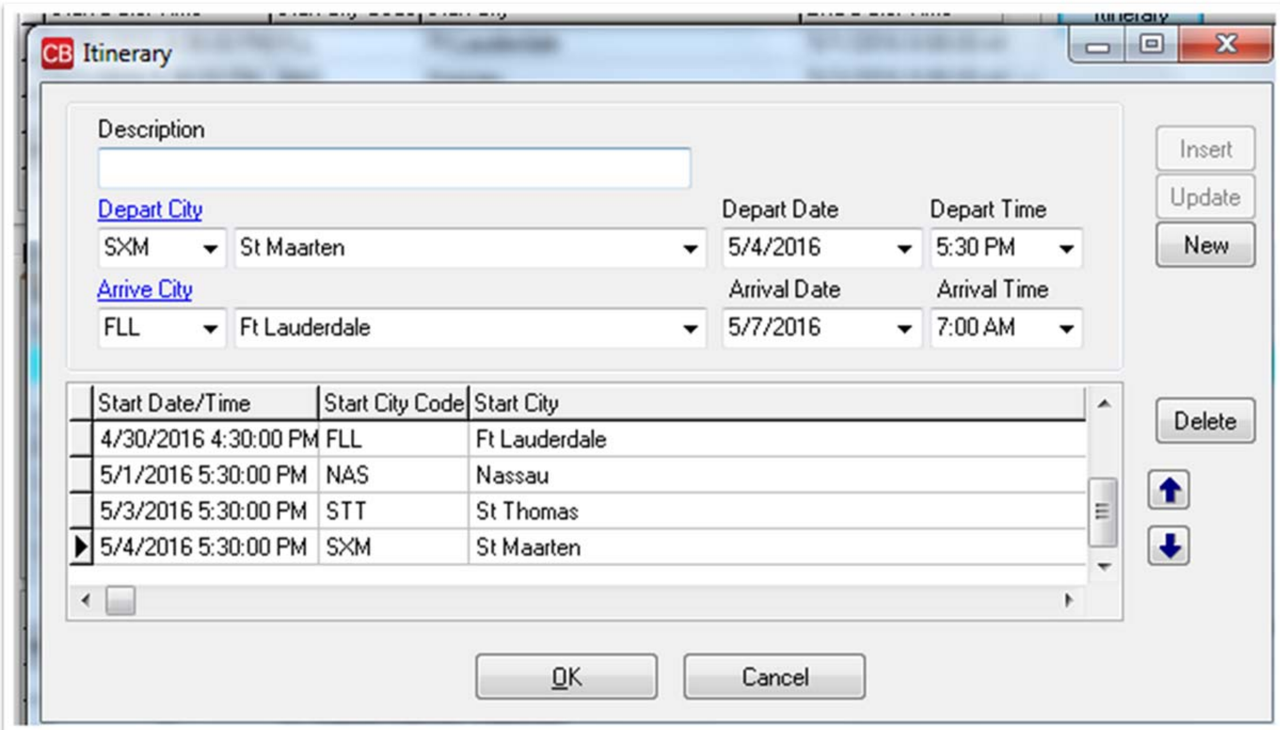
- Date Reserved: Date inventory space was blocked or contracted. Defaults to the current date.
- Inventory ID: A user-definable field. It can be used for any purpose the agency decides. It does not affect ClientBase other than offering another way to search for inventory.
- Travel Category: The category that the inventory falls into. Available options are Air, Cruise, Hotel, Miscellaneous, Rail and Tour. Choosing a category alters the rest of the screen. For example, a cruise will prompt for the name of the ship, while an air inventory record will prompt for airline information.
- Vendor: The vendor profile associated with the inventory. The vendor profile must exist in ClientBase before it can be used.
- Service Provider ("Ship" in illustration): The service provider is the name of the ship, property, airline, etc.
- Description: A free-flow description for the inventory.
- Duration: Number of days or nights.
- Start Date/End Date: The beginning and ending dates for the trip. Can be manually entered unless detailed itinerary is used (see below). If itinerary details are tracked, the dates are greyed out.
- Utilization Date: Another user-defined field. Agencies can use this to track any date that is helpful, such as the date the inventory is up for review or release.
- Expiration Date: The date after which the inventory will no longer be active. By default, expired inventory is hidden from queries and agents will not be able to book into it.
- Region/Destination: Tracks the region and destination for travel.
- Confirmation Number: If each individual reservation shares a confirmation number, enter it here. It will carry over as the confirmation in each res card reservations.
- Group ID: The vendor's group ID or contract number.



Itinerary/Address

- For air reservations, this section holds the flight details, such as departure and arrival cities and flight number.
- For cruises and tours, details for each port or stop along the way can be entered.
- For other travel types, the service provider address can be added.

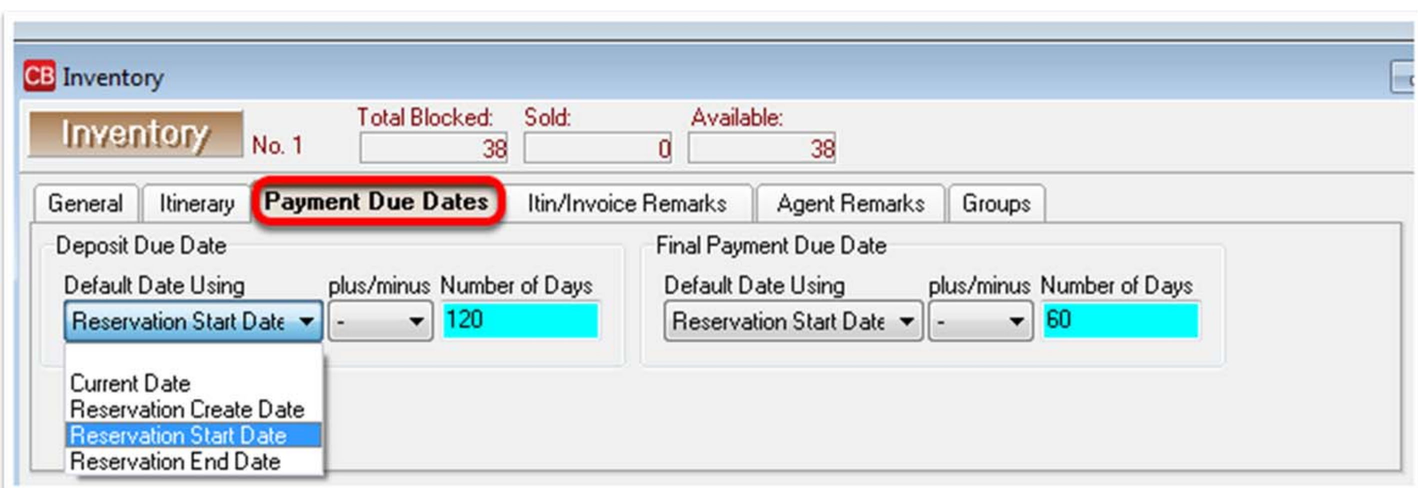
When the information is added to inventory, it carries over the each res card. Spending a little time entering the details here will save a lot of time in the long run and ensure travelers have all of the details of their trip.



Payment Due Dates

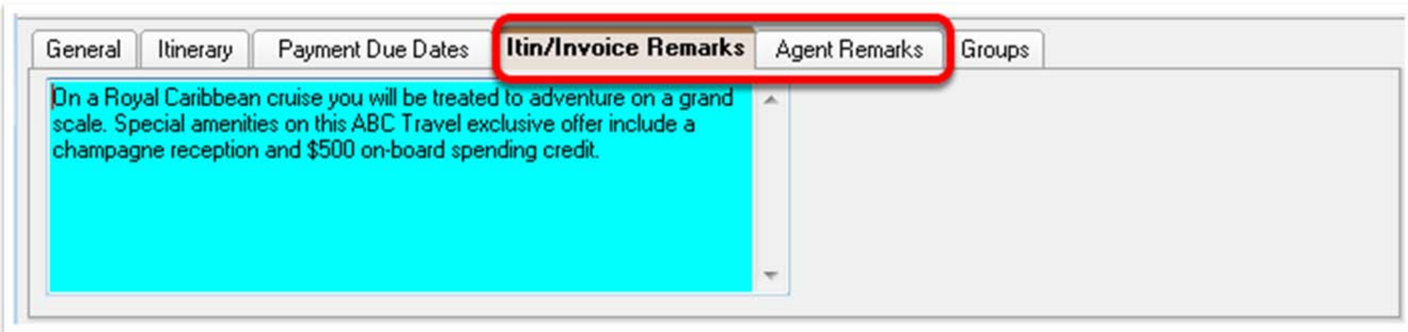
The dates entered here will carry over as defaults to each res card reservation. Instead of hard-coding dates, users are prompted to enter a formula. Due dates can be based on the current date, the date the reservation is created, or either the date travel begins or ends. In this example, a deposit is due 120 days before departure. Alternatively, users can add a number of days using the plus/minus option.

If one or both due dates are unneeded, leave the drop-down blank.



Itin/Invoice Remarks and Agent Remarks

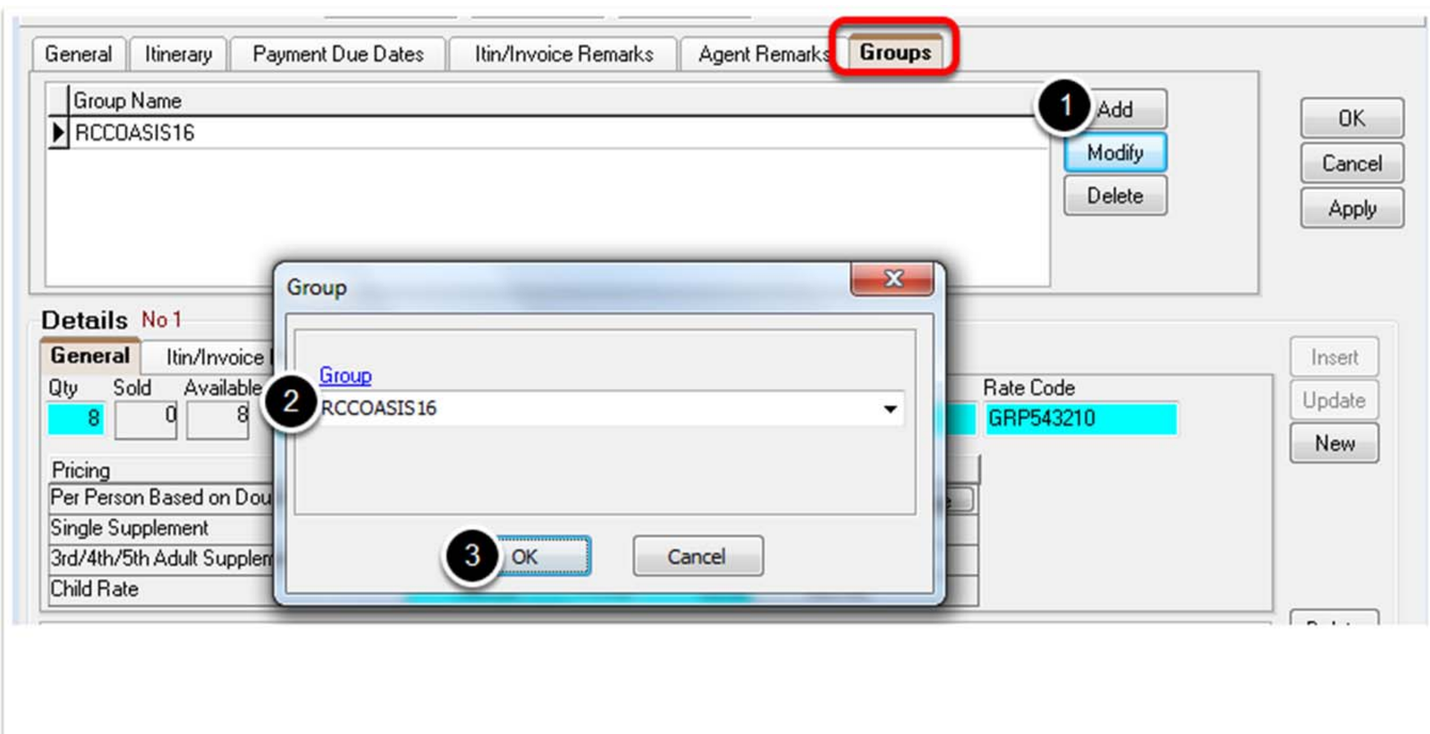
Both tabs are used to track remarks associated with the inventory record. These remarks carry over the respective remarks tabs in the res card reservation.



Groups

This is one of the most important pieces of information. On this tab, users attach each group name associated with this blocked space. The group names were created in an earlier step.

To associate a group name, click on ***Add*** and select the group name from the drop-down list.



2.2 Inventory Details

The inventory details track the quantity, description and pricing details. Each inventory record will have at least one details line, but may include an unlimited number of categories.

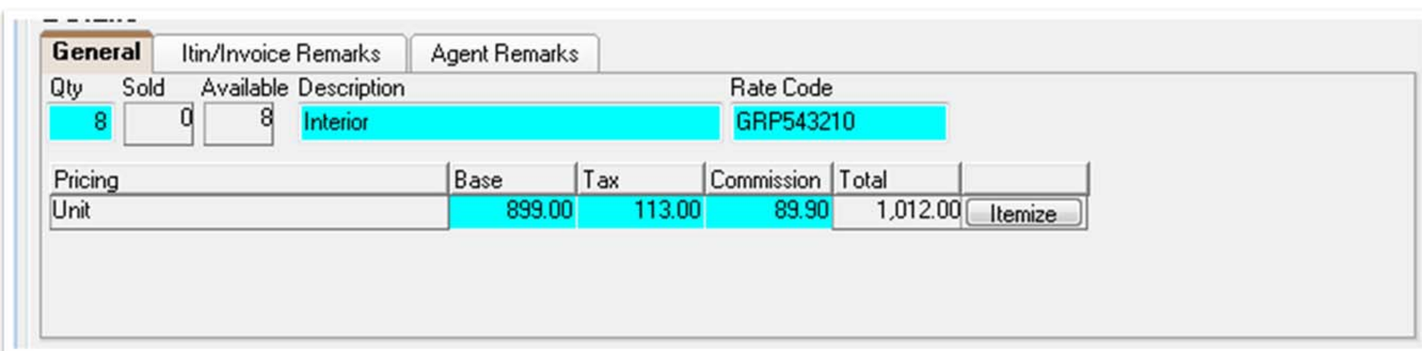
The details screen is divided into three tabs:

1. **General:** The basic information, such as the number of units blocked, their description and pricing
2. **Itin/Invoice Remarks and Agent Remarks:** Much like the remarks at the inventory header, these carry over to each res card reservation, but only when the particular category is sold.

Details

The general tab for air, rail and miscellaneous categories tracks the quantity of units blocked, their description and price. These categories of inventory are based on the number of people booked. Each traveler counts as one unit of inventory.

- **Quantity:** The number of rooms or cabins blocked with the supplier. This number can be modified if additional inventory is made available or if it has been recalled. The ***Sold*** and ***Available*** fields are calculated automatically based on the number blocked.
- **Description/Category/Deck/Room Type, Etc.:** The caption for these fields changes based on travel category, but the information is used to describe the inventory.
- **Rate Code:** For cruises, a cruise line-assigned rate code can be entered. This is important if using Live Connect to book into group space.
- **Pricing:** The pricing information is recorded here. For air, rail and miscellaneous, there is one price available for each category and pricing is calculated a a per person basis. Pricing can be itemized if desired.
- Cruise, tour and hotel inventory has more advanced pricing options.



Additional Pricing Options for Cruises, Tours and Hotels

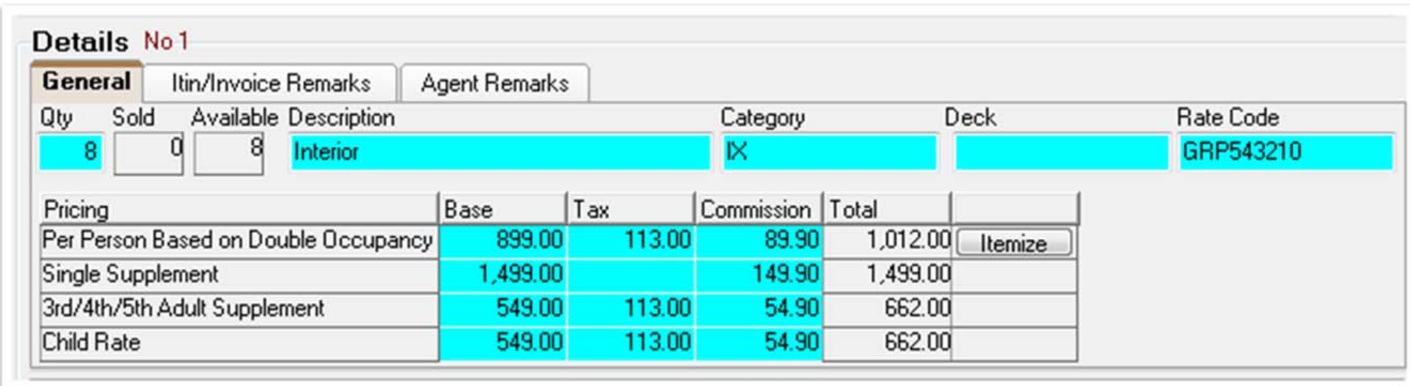
Inventory for cruises, tours and hotels is based on each room or cabin booked. If three travelers are booked on a single reservation, only one cabin will be deducted from inventory. To account for varied pricing based on number of travelers, ClientBase uses the formulas shown.

- **Qty:** Is the number of rooms or cabins of a particular category and price blocked. The ***Sold*** and ***Available*** quantities are based on this number.
- **Description, Category, and Deck (cruise only):** Used to describe the inventory. Fill in whatever applies. Details that are not blocked, such as deck number, can be left blank.
- **Rate Code:** Enter the vendor-supplied rate code if applicable. This code is used during Live Connect with Sabre Cruises and informational for other bookings.

When selling into inventory, ClientBase counts the number of adults, children and infants included on the reservation. The first line of pricing is ***Per Person Based on Double Occupancy***. If there are two or more travelers, ClientBase will take this figure and multiply it by two. Enter the base fare, taxes and the agency's commission. Optionally, use the itemize button to create more detailed pricing. The total fare is displayed based on base fare and taxes.

If only one one adult is on the reservation, ClientBase adds together the amounts in ***Per Person Based on Double Occupancy*** and ***Single Supplement***. In the illustration, the cruise line charges a considerably higher fare for singles, but there no additional taxes.

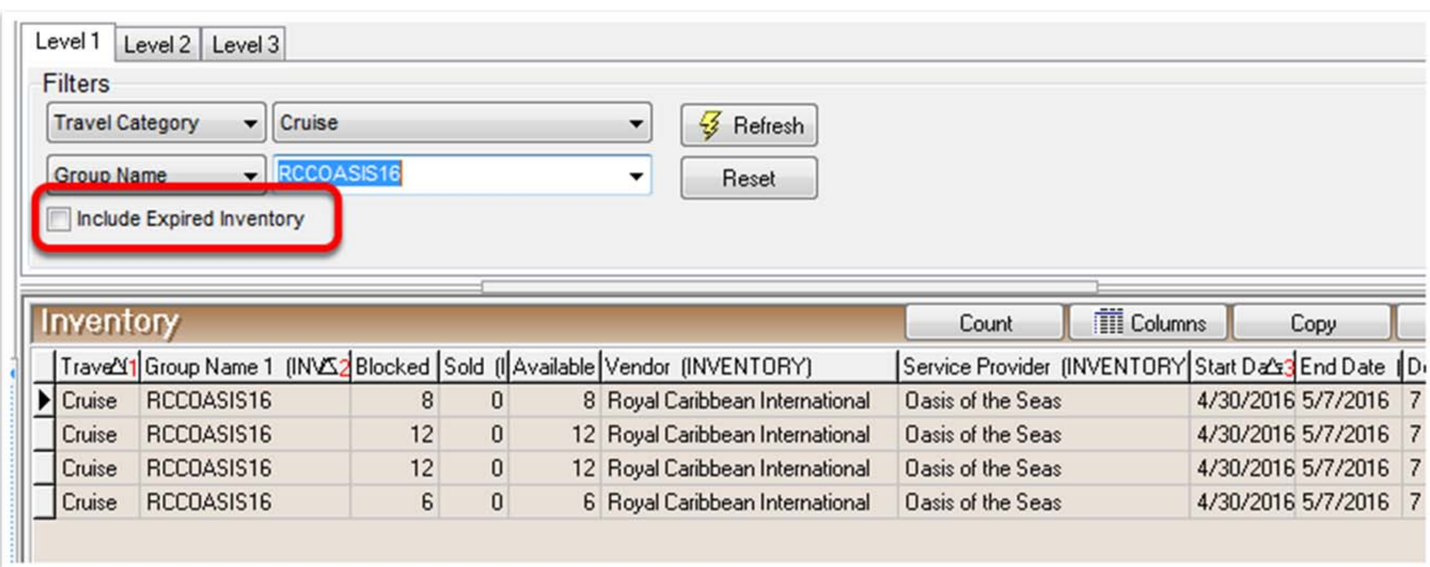
For each additional adult after the first two, ClientBase adds the amount in the ***3rd/4th/5th*** adult supplement. If any of the travelers are marked as children in the reservation, the amounts in ***Child Rate*** are used.



3. Finding Inventory Using Queries

Inventory Manager makes it easy to find and manage space your agency has blocked. Advanced queries can be saved for future use. The more information that is stored in an inventory record, the more ways that agencies can search. For example, if detailed itinerary information is stored in the inventory record, users can search by specific departure, return or stops.

As with all queries in ClientBase, the more criteria that are entered, the more refined results will be. As mentioned earlier, expired inventory is not included in the results of most queries. If expired inventory is desired, check the box ***Include Expired Inventory***.



Searching for Inventory by Utilization Date

As mentioned earlier, the ***Utilization Date*** is an unidentified field to ClientBase. It doesn't have any specific meaning and can be used for any reason the agency finds helpful. Many agencies use it to keep track of the date they need to release unused inventory. If that's the case, it's helpful to create a saved query for inventory that is coming upon that date.

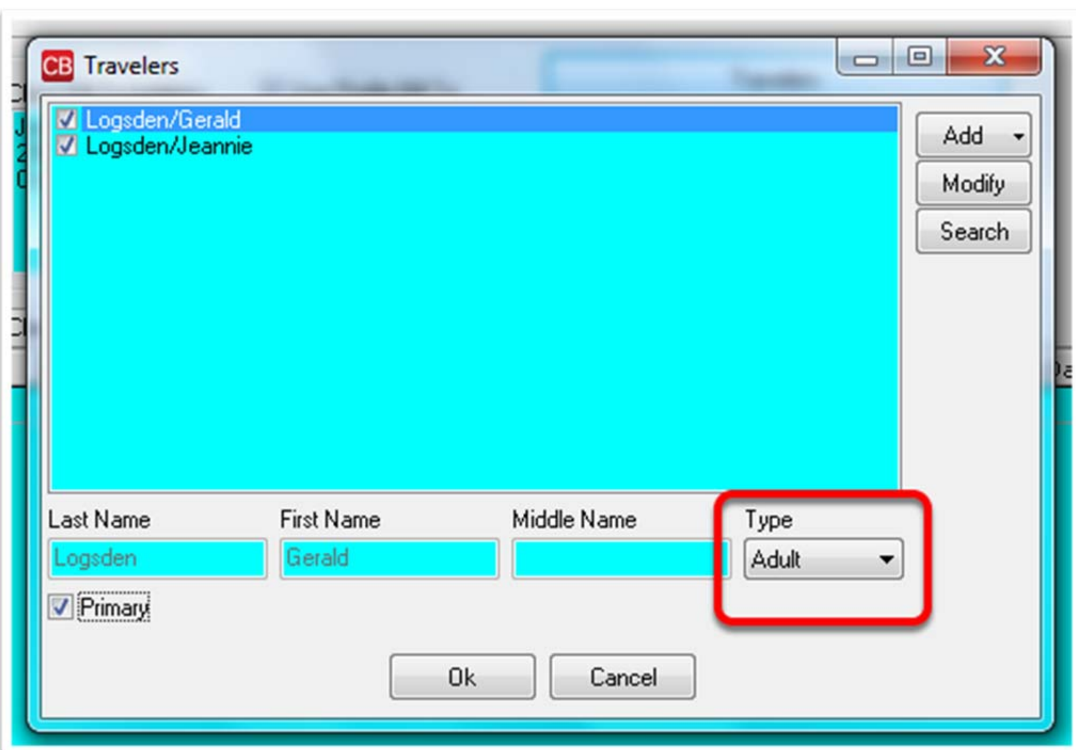
```
** Inventory ---------------------
Travel Category = Cruise
Utilization Date Is From "=" [4/8/2015]  to "=+30" [5/8/2015]
```

Using a level two query, enter the following criteria. Using a date formula ensures that date is always relative to the current date. More details on date formulas and savings queries is in the help file and user's manual.

4. Creating Res Card Reservations from Inventory

Inventory reservations start as any other reservation in ClientBase. There must already be a client profile and res card. Be sure to include all of the travelers who are booking and to note whether they are adults, children or infants.

Once in the res card, the next steps vary slightly based on the circumstances.



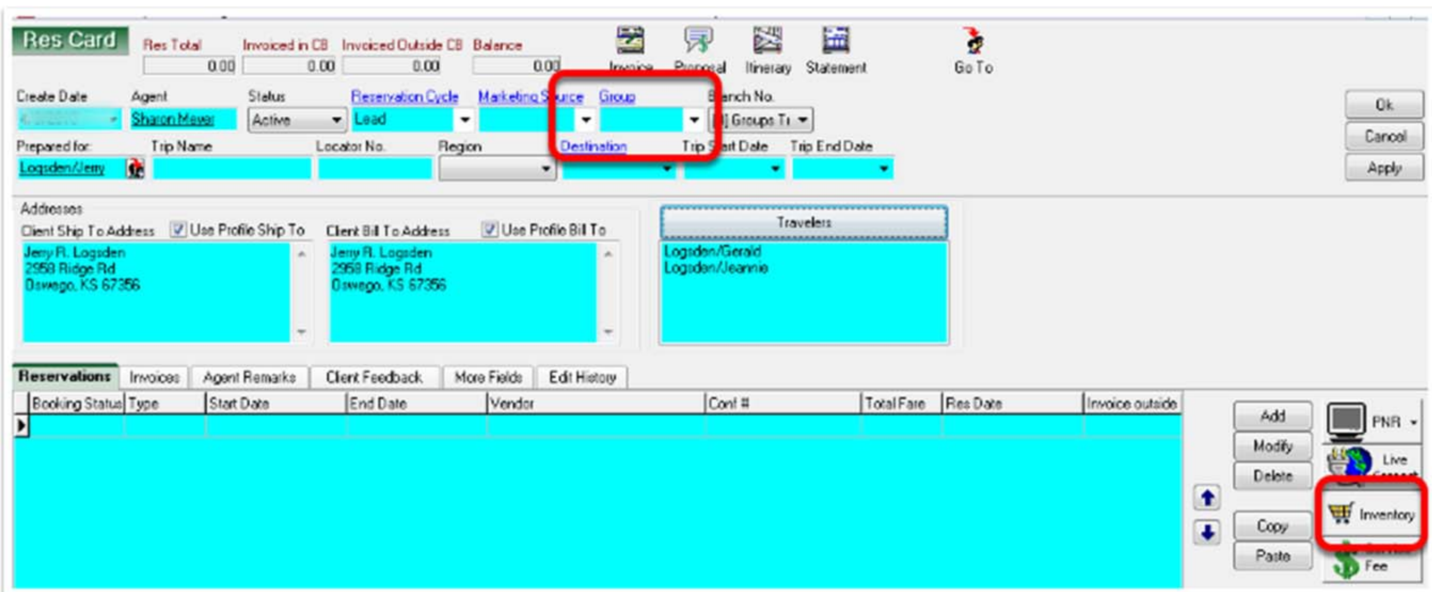
4.1 Searching for Inventory While Booking

Sometimes an agent may try to book a client into an existing group. There are benefits to both the client and agency to do this whenever possible: the client will likely receive some sort of perk (such as lower fare or on-board credit) and the agency earns the additional group bonus.

The inventory manager makes it easy to search existing group space to find appropriate options. To search, click on the ***Inventory*** (shopping card) button. An inventory query screen appears where users can narrow down by travel category, destination, dates and so on. If the inventory record has detailed itinerary, users can search by departure, return or stop.

Often, clients will request to book into a specific group. If the group is known beforehand, users can skip the step of querying for group space by enter the group name in the res card header. Then, when the inventory button is clicked, ClientBase will automatically display inventory related to that group.

A benefit to searching this is that ClientBase will display all categories of inventory, so agents can sell a cruise cabin, pre-stay hotel and transfers in just a few clicks.

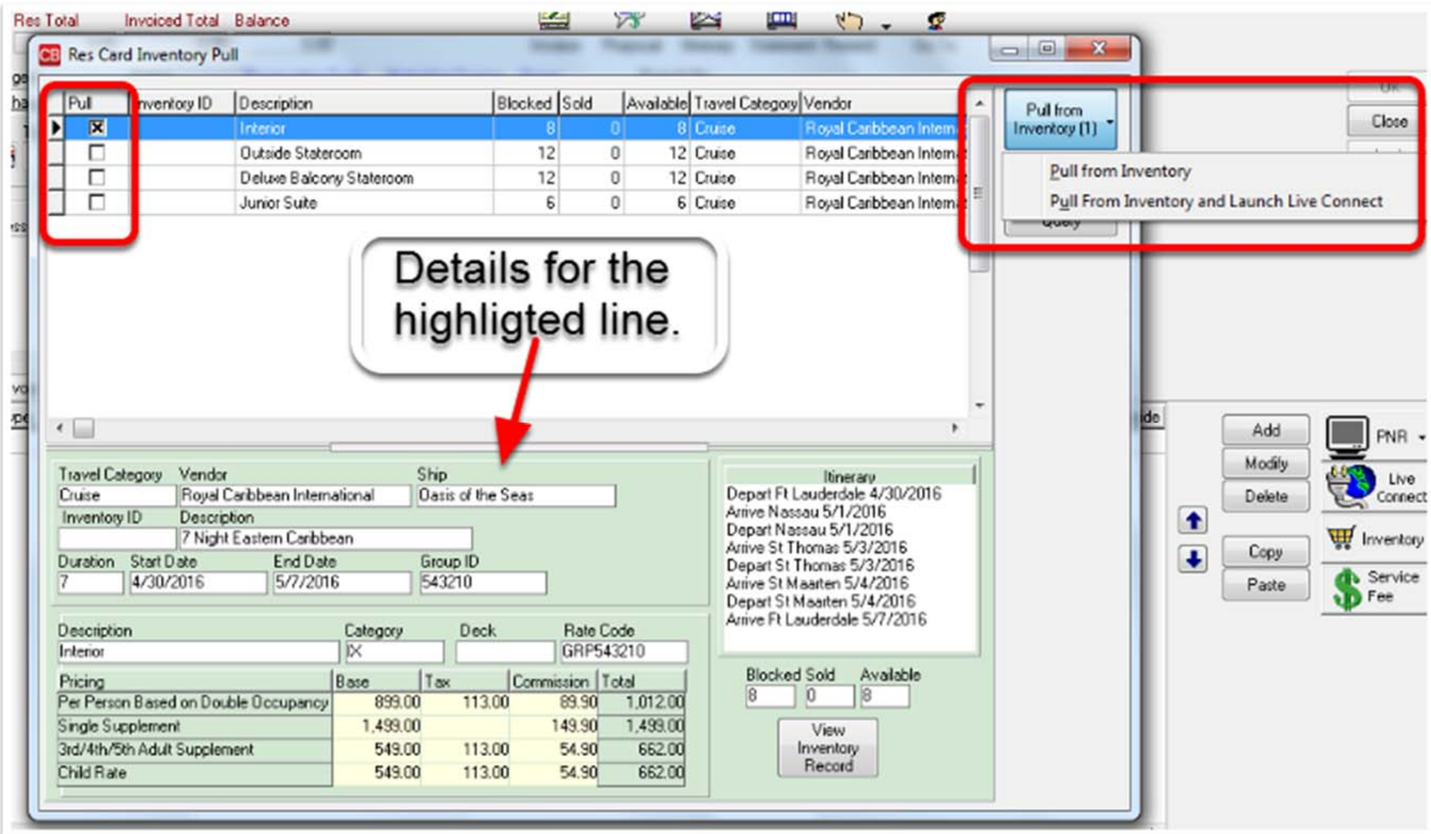


4.2 Choosing and Pulling Inventory Space

Once the inventory has been found, agents can review the details and choose which option(s) to pull from inventory. As each line is highlighted, the details are shown below. To choose an inventory item, check the box next to it, then click ***Pull From Inventory***.

When booking cruises, two options are available, ***Pull From Inventory***, or ***Pull From Inventory and Launch Live Connect***. Pulling from inventory will create a ClientBase reservation and attach it to the inventory record, but it does not create a reservation with the vendor. The agent would need to do that by calling the vendor, booking online, or using whatever other method that would be typically used.

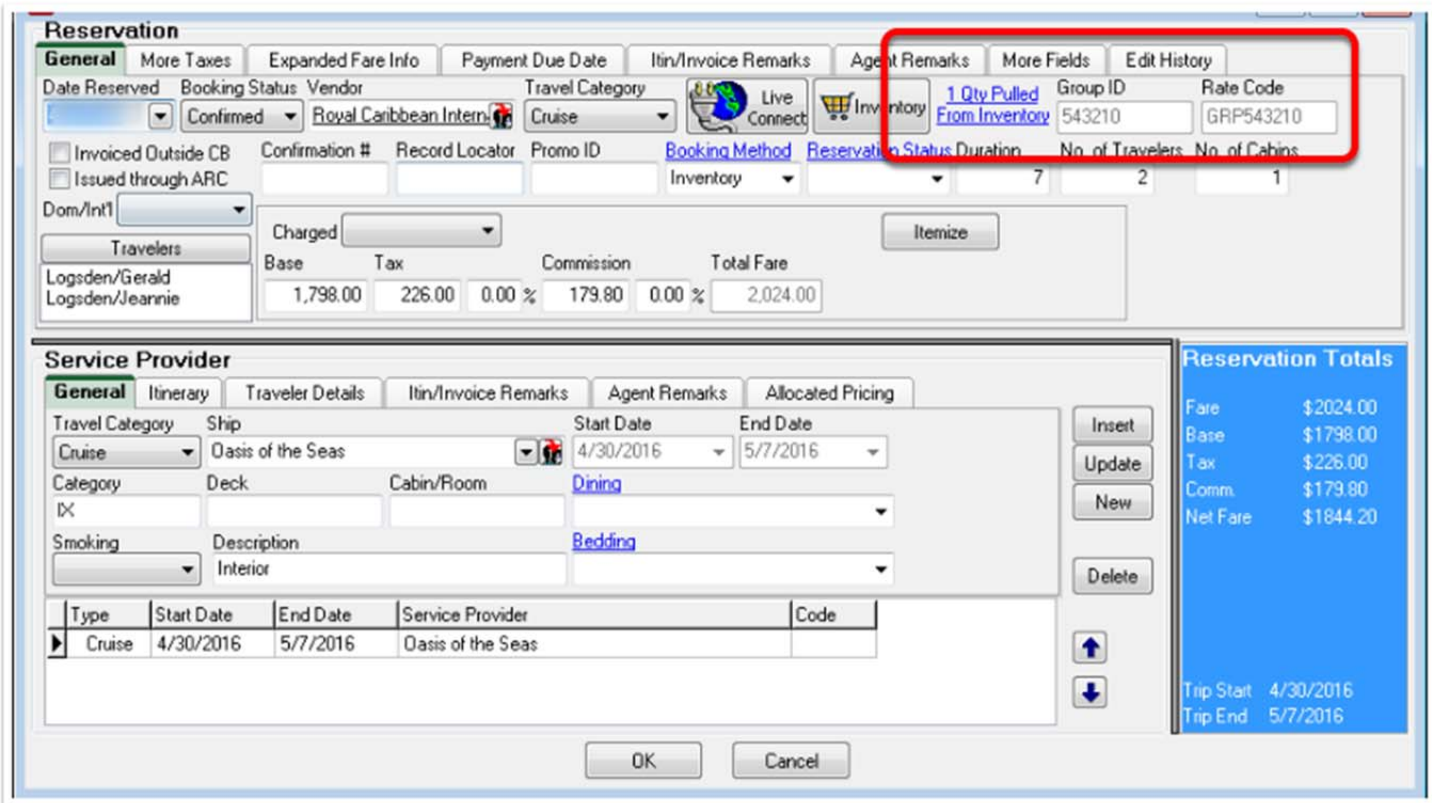
Some cruise lines are integrated with Sabre Cruises so that the live booking can be made using Live Connect. If the the ***Rate Code*** is specified in the inventory record, ClientBase will attempt to launch Sabre Cruises and take agents directly to the booking for that specific space.



4.3 Working with Inventory Reservations

A reservation booked through the inventory manager retains a link to the inventory record. A user can easily tell which reservations are pulled from inventory by the message at the top of the screen. Clicking on the message will display a read-only view of the inventory record details. Further, if the reservation is marked canceled or deleted, the user is warned that it is an inventory reservation. If the reservation is canceled or deleted, the quantity is returned to inventory.

The details entered in the inventory record are copied to the new reservation, and the fare is computed based on the information entered in inventory. The information can be updated at the reservation level. Note that any changes made are reflected on the particular reservation and do not affect other group bookings.



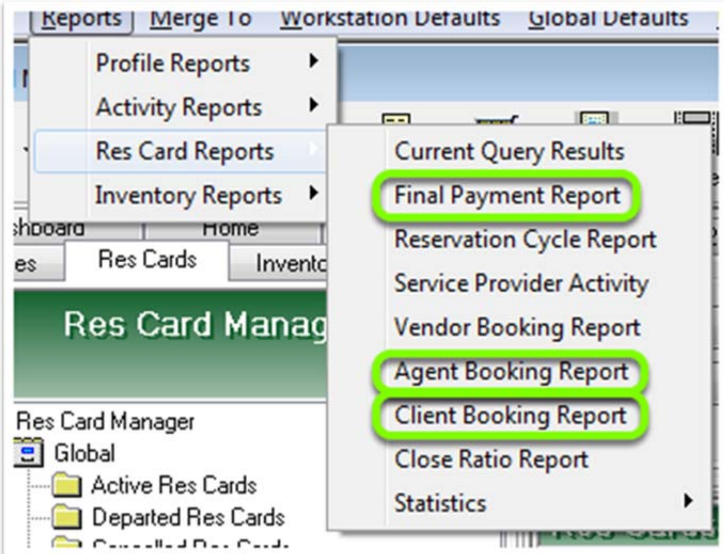
Important Note about Group Names

Once the reservation is pulled into the res card, it acts as any other reservation. Trip documents can be printed, invoices generated and so on.

Important Note: If the res card group was not completed earlier in the booking process, it must be entered <u>before invoices are generated</u>. This ensures that the invoice and payment group information is passed onto Trams Back Office and makes it easier to run groups reports in ClientBase.

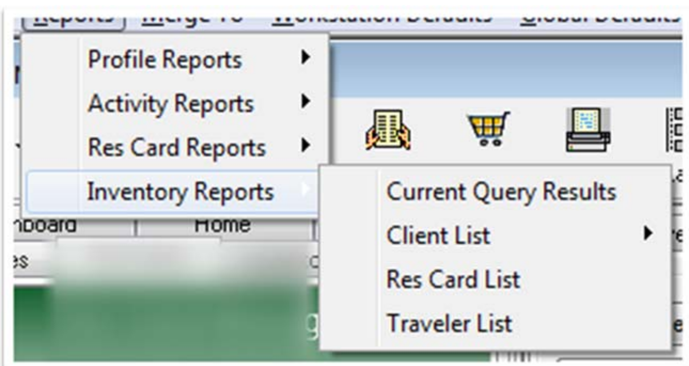
5. Inventory Reports

ClientBase offers several reports that are of particular use for managing groups. By tracking the group name on each res card, group res cards can be queried and reports generated for all of those trips. Particularly useful for groups management are the final payment report, client booking report and agent booking report.



5.1 Inventory Manager Reports

Several reports are available specifically for inventory bookings. To run the reports, first query for the inventory. Once you've found the inventory on which to report, use the ***Reports | Inventory Reports*** to generate the individual reports.



5.2 Trams Crystal Reports (TCR)

Trams Crystal Reports (TCR) is a free add-on to ClientBase. By default, it's installed at the same time as ClientBase Windows. Thought it is installed automatically, there is some configuration that needs to be made. Details on setting up and using TCR are on our web site, www.sabretravelnetwork.com/trams. Click on the ***Products and Services*** tab, then ***Trams Crystal Reports (TCR)***.

Once TCR is fully set up on your computer, you can download an run any of the reports available on our web site. There are a series manifests available. To find them, visit our web site, ***www.sabretravelnetwork.com/trams***. Click on:

Products and Services | Trams Crystal Reports (TCR) | Click here to access our Library of download-able ClientBase Windows Crystal Reports

On that page, click on the "+" sign next to ***ClientBase Group Reports***

ClientBase Crystal Reports		
- ClientBase Group Reports		
Group Hotel Rooming List	View Sample	Download
Group Miscellaneous Passenger List	View Sample	Download
Group Passenger Cruise Manifest	View Sample	Download
Group Passenger Cruise Manifest - Short Form	View Sample	Download
Group Tour Passenger List	View Sample	Download
Group - Birthday List for Selected Profile Groups	View Sample	Download
Group - Birthday List for Selected Res Card Groups	View Sample	Download