

*Cathay Pacific's All-Asia Pass available again ... see p.19*

# Travel Scoop

*The Newsmagazine  
for Members of  
The Travel Society*

Vol. 20, No. 6 July/August 2002

## Planning to visit Southeast Asia? Whatever you do ... don't miss Angkor Wat!

*by George Wright*

**D**uring our most recent trip to southeast Asia, we discovered and visited the most amazing region. Angkor, near Siem Reap in northern Cambodia, is largely unknown to the majority of North Americans and Europeans. It contains a wonderful collection of various temple complexes. The best known of these, Angkor Wat, is just one of the hundred or so monuments scattered over an area of about 300 sq. km.

These temples were built by a succession of kings from around the 7<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> centuries AD. At this time Cambodia was perhaps the leading civilisation in the world. A vast irrigation system provided the potential for enormous rice production which sustained the people and their extraordinary culture.



*Temple complex at Angkor Wat (Wright)*

In its dimensions, Angkor is best compared to the Egyptian Pyramids, but Angkor is far more than merely a collection of huge geometrical structures. Despite its enormous constructional dimensions, it has tremen-

*Continued on page 8*

<b>Angkor Wat</b>	1	<b>Sketches of Vietnam</b>	11
<b>Winning Scoop - Best Deals</b>	3	<b>Alsace and the Mosel Valley</b>	13
<b>Your Scoops</b>	4	<b>Danish Delights</b>	14
<b>Autumn in Cape Cod</b>	6	<b>Travel Digest</b>	16
<b>More on Cambodia</b>	9	<b>The Travel Society</b>	21

# TravelScoop

The Newsmagazine for Members of  
The Travel Society

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**TravelScoop** (ISSN#0822-9228) is an independent, subscriber-funded consumer newsletter published in Canada ten times a year. (monthly, with combined issues in February/March & July/August). Although extreme care is taken to ensure the accuracy of material herein,

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### Membership rates for CANADA (inc GST):

1 year - \$ 49.00

2 years - \$ 95.00

3 years - \$ 140.00

USA: 1 year - \$ 80.00 (inc. postage)

World: 1 year - \$ 80.00 (inc. postage)

### Back issues:

1 issue - \$ 5.00    3 issues - \$ 10.00

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**Postmaster:** Send address corrections to the above address; we do not pay return postage ... we pay enough already! *Thanks!*

Printed In Canada. GST Reg # R135785962  
Publications Mail Registration # 9925

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July/August 2002

Vol. 20, No. 6

## From your Editor's desk...



As summer at last feels settled here in Toronto it's time to pen a line to you for our joint July/August issue. It's hard to believe that when I write to you again in less than two months we will be thinking of fall. But let's not think about that yet ... let's enjoy our days of summer.

Actually I'm still remembering a remarkable spring, when I took my first trip with our Travel Society. Yes, I was with a group of our members who took off for China on 20<sup>th</sup> April accompanied by my twenty-something daughter, Chloé. Chloé lowered the average age a little, but we had a great group and a very good time was had by us all as we enjoyed the highlights of China: the great cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Chongqing; the misty gardens of Suzhou; a fascinating cruise up the Yangtze River; the Great Wall; lots of delicious banquets and so much more. No wonder it's been the most popular trip in our history.

Now I'm in a position to answer the many questions we receive about this trip, and I've also written a lengthy day-by-day illustrated account (see p. 21) which will replace the excellent Pat Davey report which is now out-of-date because of itinerary changes. Some excerpts from my account will also appear in *TravelScoop* in the Fall.

Before Autumn rolls around, however, I'm looking forward to a beautiful summer spent mostly in Canada. So until I write again, I'll wish you all *bon voyage* in your travels, wherever they may take you.

Take care!

## coming in *September*

- *Glimpses of China*

- *Autumn in Kentucky*

... and much more

## Update Items

A few years ago *TravelScoop* mentioned a new Toronto company that was taking to the skies – it was the **Helicopter Company** with Julia Henderson as President and, as a qualified commercial helicopter pilot, often at the controls too. The company became a success and Julia didn't forget the part the media had played in her success in the early days. So a month or so ago I was delighted to be invited for a heli-tour ... an exciting new experience for me and, although brief, a great way to get a bird's eye view of Toronto, whether you're a local or a visitor. And what a treat for the (grand)kids! For details call 416 203 3280 or visit [www.HeliTours.ca](http://www.HeliTours.ca)

News just in that **Air Transat** is to fly from Toronto and Montreal to Lisbon and Oporto, Portugal. The airline will offer daily scheduled flights through the summer and one or two flights per week during the winter.

And more recently-announced airline news: **British Airways** and **British Midland** are greatly reducing prices on many UK domestic and European flights ... good news if you're planning to fly on from a UK airport. New news, too, from **WestJet**, who have just announced that its eighth Boeing will be delivered in September, bringing increased service between Toronto, Calgary, Vancouver and Prince George.

Lots of US RiverBarge Excursions being planned for the remainder of 2002: the Ohio River, Kentucky for fall foliage and horseracing, the 'wild and woolly' Missouri River from Kansas City to Sioux City and more. For full details see your agent, call 1 888 GOBARGE or visit [www.riverbarge.com](http://www.riverbarge.com)

## This Month's Winning Scoop

### Last Minute Deals from the U.K.

by Peter Brook, presently in England

**H**aving recently retired, we were able to plan a longer-than-usual vacation this year. We usually head to the UK, so we allowed a couple of extra weeks to take a "last minute special" from there and we hope other readers may be able to take advantage of these specials too.

We knew about these good deals, as our UK relatives take advantage of them. If you can go within a few days of booking, and particularly if it is low or shoulder season (high season for the European sun belt seems to be July and August) the prices are exceptionally good.

One can go to a travel agent almost anywhere in the UK – some of them in London and elsewhere have last-minute deals posted in their windows – or look at TeleTex on TV which has pages of deals listed together with contact phone numbers. The best deals are to the "short haul" destinations, which include Turkey, Italy, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Malta, Canary Islands etc. Prices range from £56 for a week (about C\$127 at the moment). The very cheapest prices are for unassigned accommodation; they decide which hotel to put you in on arrival at your destination. Prices vary widely depending on season. The lowest mid-May prices of £56 had risen to about £150 by the end of May for the British mid-term break!

We booked using an agent our relatives were satisfied with. We had decided on Crete and wanted to stay in a self-catering apartment near the centre of the island. We phoned Instant Holidays, told Maureen what we wanted and she found what she

### ***Members are Rewarded for Sharing!***

**TS** rewards members for all submissions published.

**The Winning Scoop** receives a 1-year membership extension.

**Your Scoops** receive a 3-issue membership extension.

**Favourite Places** receive a 3-issue membership extension.

**Reader Reports** receive extensions depending on length.

**Submission Guidelines:** TS welcomes reader submissions but cannot guarantee they will be used. We reserve the right to edit submissions should they be used. It is very important to include specific travel details: costs, discounts, addresses, telephone and fax numbers, etc., for the benefit of other readers. Submissions can be sent by mail, e-mail: [brit@interlog.com](mailto:brit@interlog.com) or on diskettes.


considered the best value, as opposed to the lowest price. We paid by credit card and picked up our tickets at Gatwick upon departure two days later. The trips also leave from many other UK airports. The advantage of using someone recommended like Maureen is that you are less likely to end up with sub-standard accommodation, or construction next door etc., as she takes the time to check.

So what did we get? For £116 per person (about C\$264) we had return airfare from Gatwick, transfers on Crete and two weeks in a very nice ('A' Class) self-catering apartment with a sea view at the Golden Bay Hotel in Gournes, the location we had requested. The Golden Bay has a pool, shop, taverna and bar and is located across a quiet road from the sea. Incidentally, the full price for this package was £350, so ours was discounted about 66%. There were other people at the Golden Bay who paid the same as us – even another Canadian couple!

The vacation was an offering of First Choice Holidays (*the parent company of Canada's Signature Vacations – Ed*), a large package-tour operator, who were well organized and efficient and have representatives at all the destinations. They had an orientation meeting after arrival and at that time one can book local tours etc. if desired.

The other Canadians we met at the Golden Bay had also booked last-minute trips to Poland and to Luxor, Egypt. Their Egypt trip, including air fare from London and half board at the Luxor Hilton, cost them £245 each for one week.

Should you wish to contact

Maureen Murphy at Instant Holidays, she can be reached at 011 44 990 33 0990. They have a web site at [www.instant-holidays.com](http://www.instant-holidays.com) 

## Your Scoops

*This letter is also from Peter Brook. It gives details of how to get around if, as he did, you choose a vacation on the island of Crete.*

### Crete Car Rentals and Other Options

There has been lots of information on the Greek Islands in *TravelScoop* recently, which I hope has inspired readers to visit the islands. If you choose Crete, I hope you find this information helpful.

Crete is a large island, and some form of transport is necessary if you want to see very much, and there is a lot to see. We visited quaint villages, nice beaches, ancient fortresses and tourist strips.

The bus system is very good and buses go just about everywhere. If you get on at a bus stop, board through the rear door and the bus conductor will sell you a ticket. In larger towns there will be a ticket office and your ticket will show the number of the bus you should board. If not, ask the ticket seller. But if you plan to take longer journeys, for example from Iraklio to Chania, and there are two or more of you, it will probably be cheaper to rent a car.

Many people rent one- or two-

person scooters, which are cheaper than a car but probably less safe. Prices are negotiable and depend on supply and demand. In shoulder season there is low demand and the smallest scooters start at about 5 euros per day (about C\$7) up to about 13 euros (C\$19) for the 125 cc ones. Motorcycles are also available but seemed more expensive than a small car.

We opted for a car, and were glad that we had decided on an air-conditioned one. We were close to Iraklio and wandered around talking to various small local rental agencies, which we were told have the best rates. It seemed some effort is needed to establish the "real" price, and as there are hundreds of rental agencies on the island, we presumed some of them are much better to deal with than others. So it was a very present surprise when we walked into Travel Line and were quoted a reasonable price straight away. It seemed so fair to us that further negotiation was unnecessary.

We got a late model Hyundai Atos with air conditioning for 160 euros (C\$236) for 10 days, full insurance (with a 300 euro deductible for any damage we caused), no deposit, charge paid in advance, unlimited mileage. They were willing to drop off the car and pick it up at our hotel, although we ended up collecting it when we were in town the next day. This price will of course change depending on the season etc. Perhaps we could have got a cheaper price, but we feel better dealing with someone we like.

The woman who helped us, Dimitra Gika, was very straightforward and helpful. She gave us an island map and spent time showing us the best places to visit and suggesting routes. She suggested we stay overnight if we drove to the

west end of the island. We were pleased with the whole transaction – undoubtedly the most pleasant time we have ever had renting a car anywhere, and are happy to recommend Travel Line.

Travel Line specializes in Greece and can arrange all internal travel and accommodation, and they also change money. They are located at 90, 25 August Street, 712 02 Iraklio, Crete, tel: 011 30 810 22942 or 240053, fax 011 30 810 229422, e-mail [travel-line@her.forthnet.gr](mailto:travel-line@her.forthnet.gr) 25 August Street runs up from the Iraklio harbour and is home to many car rental agencies. ■

## A Short Stop-over in Bangkok

It was wonderful to get off the plane, tired and immediately hot, and be met by a driver and air-conditioned car. We had arranged the transfer to the hotel in advance from Canada. There he was, standing with a placard with our name on, and it was well worth the US\$15 we paid directly to the driver in cash on arrival at the hotel half an hour later.

The hotel was the Asia Hotel Bangkok where we enjoyed a super-special twin room, and the price was inclusive of service, tax, breakfast (a wonderful all-you-can-eat buffet) and fresh fruit delivered daily to the room. The staff was friendly and happy to answer all our questions. We think the location was ideal as it was in the centre of shopping, business and entertainment. You can get the latest rates and a view of the rooms on their website. We had an interesting view of the city from our air-conditioned room.

The five restaurants in the hotel were excellent and varied. We especially enjoyed the dim sum Chinese buffet, all we could eat for 445 Baht each (about C\$16). On a hot day it was nice to know there are two swimming pools as well as a sauna and a health club.

From this location we could easily walk to many of the interesting spots and we enjoyed the narrow alleys and surprises awaiting us around each corner. One of our first missions was to get to the river and learn how to get on and off the water craft everyone uses. The express boats stop if someone is waiting on the pier or if someone wants to get off – but not necessarily! Had we been spending more time in Bangkok, we would have mastered this mode of travel as it looked like a lot of fun and more interesting than getting caught in the road traffic.

Walking the tiny alleys took us through most interesting areas. The only thing that caused some concern were the wild, uncared-for dogs that often snarled at our heels. We appreciated the considerate women who came out of their stalls with brooms to shoo them away.

We took a taxi from the hotel to the Grand Palace (about C\$3.60) because it was air-conditioned and we therefore could avoid the intense heat and fumes of the heavy traffic. Riding the *tuk-tuks* in central Bangkok is not for the faint-hearted, and cost-wise there is no savings over a metered cab.

The Grand Palace is a wonderful complex of exquisitely ornate buildings that take time to absorb and enjoy. In all, it covers an area of 218,000 square metres and is surrounded by walls. Guides are available at the gate and offer their services, however we preferred to wander on our own, reading information

as we saw the need. The entrance fee of 200 Baht (about C\$7) included tickets to the Palace and the royal teak mansion Vimanmek, now a museum, together with a map of the whole area. As this is royal property, visitors wearing shorts or sleeveless shirts will be refused entry.

A trip to the Chatuchak Weekend Market is quite an experience. Since we were there on the weekend we decided that this would be our other major sightseeing choice and a means to see more of the city and the locals. It really is a market to end all markets! Over 8000 stalls sell everything to the 200,000 buyers who crowd the narrow passages. We can't believe that we survived for over four hours and still only saw a very small part of it. We decided we had had enough after we explored the huge pet area, certain that we were looking at endangered species of every kind and new-born animals, birds and reptiles, too young to be without mothers. It is however the place to find whatever it is you can't live without but be sure to get a map showing the layout. To get there, we took the Skytrain from the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of our hotel for about a dollar each. The view of the city from this air-conditioned, fast moving, easy-to-use train, was worth the trip alone.

Asia Hotel Bangkok, 296 Phayathai Road, Bangkok 10400 Thailand, tel: 011 66 2 150 808, fax: 011 66 2 154 360, e-mail: [techaru@m Mozart.intet.co.th](mailto:techaru@m Mozart.intet.co.th) or visit [www.asiahotel.com/hotel/AsiaBangkokHotel.htm](http://www.asiahotel.com/hotel/AsiaBangkokHotel.htm) ■

Ray & Randi Nielsen  
Dryden, ON

## Autumn in Cape Cod

by Ted and Judy van der Veen

The end of September/beginning of October is an ideal time for a Cape Cod getaway. The crowds are gone but the water is still reasonably warm. Accommodation is easy to find, the restaurants no longer have queues and fresh seafood is as plentiful as ever. Access to the beach is easy, without the usual parking fees, and the chances of finding a deserted area to yourself are good. There are still ranger-led tours in the parks with no need to sign up in advance. The migratory birds are passing through. Visits to historic attractions are leisurely; you may well have the guide to yourself, and whatever the interest you may show – history, furniture, architecture, and so on – the explanations will be detailed. We found that we got involved in the most illuminating conversations wherever we went because there were so few people around, and everyone spared us so much time whenever we expressed an interest of some kind. While some of the attractions have already closed for the season, most are open (perhaps with restricted hours) until mid or late October. Inveterate shoppers will find “sales” just about everywhere.

We spent the first week of October in a last-minute timeshare exchange in South Yarmouth, mid-Cape, and couldn't help but notice that there were “Vacancy” signs almost everywhere: hotels, motels, cottages, cabins, B&Bs. One could easily arrive without a reservation and look for the perfect spot. If you prefer a reservation for the first night or two to give you time to find your dream

spot, the Pine Knot Motel, 890 Route 28, South Yarmouth, MA (tel: 508 398 3315) looked delightful, set back from the road, with luxuriant gardens. They were advertising a “Seniors Special” of US\$24.95 per person, double occupancy.

If this is your first visit to the Cape, as it was for us, the Yarmouth area is ideal. It is about an hour's drive to Provincetown (still a very busy town with its old, narrow streets) and to the extreme end of the National Seashore, less than that to Falmouth and the upper Cape regions, or to Plimoth Plantation, the historic re-creation of the Pilgrim settlement of the 1620s (where each of the staff plays the role of one of the first colonists), the reproduction *Mayflower II* and Plymouth Rock across the bay at Plymouth. The ticket for the Plantation is valid for two days, and with your CAA card there is a \$3 reduction (\$19 for combined Plimoth Plantation-*Mayflower II*). The Heritage Plantation at Sandwich has fabulous gardens, a collection of antique cars, a military museum, a museum of American Art and a 1913 carousel (merry-go-round) that you can ride. Again there is a CAA reduction to \$8. Both of these sites have lunch facilities. There is no admission charge to any of the National Seashore sites (but in summer, parking at the beaches costs \$7). The Massachusetts Audubon Society property has several miles of trails; admission is \$3, \$2 if over 65. As these are all rather remote, we took along a sandwich and a thermos of coffee. Although we did not do so, whale watching is still an option. While we arrived and left the Cape with very strong

winds, we experienced no rain, and during the week had warm, sunny, calm days - we were very glad we had packed shorts “just in case.” And as we were driving via Montreal, we had the added bonus of seeing the fall colours at their best in Vermont en route.

### For more information ...

For general information, the Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce can be reached at 508 362 3225. Useful websites for this area are [www.capecodtravel.com](http://www.capecodtravel.com) and also [www.capecodguide.com](http://www.capecodguide.com). The Yarmouth Area Chamber of Commerce has a toll-free number, 1 800 732 1008 or locally 508 778 1008. Their website is [www.yarmouthcapecod.com](http://www.yarmouthcapecod.com) ■

### Reader to Reader

We will be spending two and a half days, between flights, in the vicinity of Narita, Japan, (the location of the airport serving Toyko) at the end of December this year.

We hope not to have to mortgage our home in order to do so, but would like to have a taste of Japan and see as much as possible while we are there.

Any information anyone can give us about places to stay, eat, and visit will be very much appreciated.

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## Bed & Breakfast on the Oregon Coast

The Oregon Coast, often referred to as "the longest beach in the United States", offers visitors some of the most stunning scenery imaginable and we found that staying in bed and breakfasts provided a wonderful way to enjoy a visit. Two, in particular, were memorable in that we were lulled to sleep by the sound of the ocean. So we would like to share them with others.

Tyee Lodge, located in Newport, is about mid-point on the coast. Mark and Cindy McConnell have enlarged their small home perched on a cliff overlooking the beach and ocean into a modern B&B with five comfortable rooms. Each features queen beds, comfortable chairs and private bath. There is a large guest lounge with a complimentary, well-stocked beverage bar and the breakfasts are innovative and delicious. One morning, for example, we enjoyed baked grapefruit, cheese blintzes and fresh fruit cocktail, all prepared by Mark. Access to miles of beach is through the private garden and down a private walkway. The McConnells are very knowledgeable about their area - local highlights, dining and shopping - and went out of their way to make our four-day stay enjoyable. Rates range from US\$90 to US\$140 per night, with reductions offered for stays of more than two nights. Credit cards accepted. The Lodge can be 'visited' on their website [www.tyeelodge.com](http://www.tyeelodge.com) or contacted at Tyee Lodge, 4925 NW Woody Way, Newport, OR 97365, tel: 1 888 553 8933. One site not to be missed in Newport is the Oregon Coast Aquarium, with its jellyfish,

local sea creatures and fish and staffed by knowledgeable volunteers.

The Rogue Reef Inn B&B is located near Gold Beach on the southern Coast. Wally and Jeri Honeycutt built a large extension onto their home after they married to accommodate their combined families of 11 children and many grandchildren. With the children now dispersed, they have turned the addition into a B&B, containing four large, comfortable, well-furnished king-bedded rooms, all with private bath and balconies. One room is handicapped accessible. The public rooms invite one for reading, games or TV watching. One of the memorable breakfasts included cantaloupe, sausages and French toast stuffed with cheese.

The Honeycutts have lived in the area for many years, know it well and can give helpful advice on touring and dining. And, being right on the beach, access from the Inn is easy. Their rate is US\$90 per night; no credit cards. Contact the Rogue River Inn B&B, 30530 Old Coast Road, Gold Beach, OR. 97444, tel: 1 877 234 7333, [www.roguereef.com](http://www.roguereef.com) The Rogue River is a well-known location for sportfishing, especially for salmon. 📧

*Hugh & Pat Gaudet  
Calgary, AB*

## A Place in Sint Maarten

For those of you who would like to spend some time on the Dutch/French island of Sint Maarten/St. Martin I would like to share an address. My wife and I recently returned from two weeks on the island where we stayed at the Balcons d'Oyster Pond on the east side. The suite we had was simple but adequately furnished and was

located high above the marina at Oyster Pond with a magnificent view over the marina and beyond. Norm and Jessie Dysart have three units in the complex and they are all in fine locations. I think that Oyster Pond is the most attractive part of the island and there are several good restaurants and beach bars in the vicinity.

Norm and Jessie, who had arranged a rental car for us, met us at the airport and were kind enough to escort us to the supermarket to stock up on a few things. They then led us to Oyster Pond. Nothing was too much for them to do for us, and the same goes for the resident managers, David and Carine Poret.

We highly recommend the Balcons d'Oyster Pond to any visiting St. Maarten. Norm Dysart can be contacted by phone at 705 741 2508 or e-mail: [norm@stmaartenholidays.com](mailto:norm@stmaartenholidays.com) 📧

*Geoff Walsh  
Guelph, ON*

## Reader to Reader

I am planning to go to South America next May and as I am travelling on Air Canada points I must book my flights soon.

My plans are to go to Peru, Ecuador, Galapagos Islands and Brazil. Has anyone done this trip recently who can give me a few tips? I have heard that the boats to the Galapagos are cheaper to book when you arrive in Ecuador. Any suggestions would be much appreciated. Please call 902 462 2651 or e-mail [acgraham@gov.ns.ca](mailto:acgraham@gov.ns.ca)

Thank you!

*Ann Graham  
Dartmouth, Nova Scotia*

*continued from page 1*

dous ornamental detail, telling of its ancient histories, its mythology, its battles and its civilisation. There are kilometres of finely-sculptured walls detailing all this.

Angkor was once the ancient capital of Cambodia, but its location near the Thai border, then Siam, left it open to attack. In 1432, after the Siamese again captured Angkor, it was abandoned as the capital, and it was left for the jungle to do its work. In the 1800's when Cambodia became a French protectorate and then a French colony, the temples of Angkor were re-discovered.

Angkor Wat, the best known of the Angkor sites, was built in the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century over a period of about 30 years. It was built as an architectural tribute to the Hindu religion. The central tower stands for Mount Meru, according to Hindu mythology the centre of the universe and home of the gods. The complex is surrounded by a wall and wide moat. To give an idea of the scope of this temple complex,



*Entrance to Angkor Thom (Wright)*

the main entry way is about half a kilometre in length, ornamented with balustrades and surrounded by lakes or *barays*. The entryway is designed to resemble the Hindu rainbow bridge – the link between heaven and earth, or between the realms of the gods and that of mortals. Angkor Wat was converted to a Buddhist temple before the Siamese capture in the mid 1400's, resulting in a mixture of Hindu and Buddhist temples.

An even larger complex is the Angkor Thom. There are many other temples complexes some of which have been pretty well taken over by the jungle with huge banyan trees growing on the roof tops with their roots almost completely enveloping the structures. Much information – both historical and of a practical nature: tours, accommodation, etc. – can be obtained by searching “Angkor” on the Internet.

A visit to Angkor is a fairly strenuous undertaking. The temperatures are generally in the upper 30's with


close to 100% humidity. The “cool” season is November to March. There are many stairs to climb if one is to explore a complex in depth.

Modern Cambodia was ravished by the Khymer Rouge 25 years ago, when most of the intellectuals and educated people were marched to the “Killing Fields” and shot. One of these tragic areas is located on the outskirts of Siem Reap.

Tourism is just getting started with some 180,000 visiting the sites in 2000. We had the feeling that as tourism grows, access will have to be restricted in some of the sites, as some of the walkways and stairways are rather precarious. It would be well to visit before the hordes arrive. At present Thais make up the majority of visitors to Cambodia.

Angkor may be accessed from a number of South East Asia destinations. We flew to Siem Reap from Bangkok via Bangkok Airways. Our visit was arranged by AIT Travel of Bangkok

([www.asia-intl.com](http://www.asia-intl.com)) and included a private guide and driver. Presently the hotel choice is rather limited, but several large hotels are under construction. Present choices range from the Nokor Phnom, where we stayed, listed at US\$39 on the internet ([www.planetholiday.com](http://www.planetholiday.com), then click on Siem Reap) to the Grand Hotel D'Angkor listed at US\$350 and included in Condé Nast's 10 best hotels in southeast Asia. (*The Ankor Village Resort ... No. 14 on the Angkok website, with rooms from US\$55, also looks very nice – Ed.*) The currency for tourists is strictly US dollars. The pass to visit all the Angkor complexes is US\$40 per person for three days.

This is an outstanding place to visit. Please try to add it to your travel itineraries soon. 

*George Wright is a TravelScoop subscriber who lives in Charlottetown, PEI*

Randi and Ray Nielsen, TravelScoop members from Dryden, Ontario, have also visited Angkor recently and they have some additional information to add to the previous article. And we'd like to remind readers who would welcome an organized tour to this unique location from Canada that The Travel Society offers a visit to Angkor as a pre-trip to their Kingdom of Thailand tour ... details on p.22

# Exploring the Temples of Angkor at Siem Reap, Cambodia

by Randi & Ray Nielsen

Exploring the temples of Angkor had long been a wish of ours and in February this became a side trip on our travels to Myanmar and Vietnam. We flew from Bangkok on a one-hour flight to Siem Reap. There we were met by our guide for three days of exploring. It is a good idea to have a plan for arrival and transportation to your hotel as taxis are limited. Most passengers were whisked away on the back of a motorcycle or in a moto (motorcycle taxi with seat for two attached) for the 7 km ride into the city. We saw one woman "of a certain age" hanging on for dear life as her motorcycle zipped by us. Where her luggage was is a mystery. It is also possible to travel by cyclo, which is a bicycle with a two-seat trailer attached for about 500 riel (about 20 Canadian cents).

After checking into our hotel – the Salina, (rooms from US\$45-80) we had time for our first glimpse of the magnificent temples and a leisurely drive around the nearby archaeological site of Angkor. The sun setting behind the towers of Angkor Wat was just as we had dreamed. The Salina Hotel was friendly, clean and quiet though certainly not as luxurious as some of the resort hotels we saw throughout the city. These were huge and fancy, but juxtaposed with rubble, shanties, makeshift market stalls and dirt roads they were an unpleasant reminder of the gap between rich and poor.

Our first full day, which we chose to start very early, included the South Gate of Angkor Thom, Bayon, Royal Enclosure, Phimeanakas, the Elephants Terrace and Terrace of the Leper King in the morning.

After lunch we could not bear to rest and like "mad dogs and Englishmen" went on to Angkor Wat and Phnom Bakeng Hill and much more. It was truly exciting and exhilarating. Having an air-conditioned car at our disposal meant that we could recover from the extreme heat and humidity while seeing even more. The area is so huge that although there were the hordes of tour groups, we could easily stay clear of them and enjoy the tranquility of the jungle with all its sounds. There were many like us who were travelling on their own. We continued exploring more sites until sunset and were most satisfied that we had made the best use of our short time.

Our guide was excellent, knowing when to give us information and when to leave us to our own thoughts.

We were prepared to see limbless victims of landmines but not the wonderful surprise we found down a jungle path. Actually we were drawn to the eerie

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*... all were playing traditional instruments and all were smiling*

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music we could hear through the dense growth and to our delight came upon a small orchestra of men. All were badly maimed, either by landmines or the war, all were playing traditional instruments and all were smiling. We stopped to enjoy their performance and were rewarded with explanations of the instruments and more demonstrations of their skills. As we made our donation we saw the tape they were selling as a fundraiser and bought one to bring back these memories at home. We were also prepared to help out the many limbless beggars we had read about, but in fact we were only approached by a few.

The following day, we wandered through the very

large market. One section sells beautiful handcrafted items of every description and the other is full of produce, meat and fish as well as household items and clothing. We were fascinated watching the women who were squatting on the high platforms amongst piles of the meat that they butchered on request. Shoppers watched and directed vigorously until they were satisfied with the cut. The fresh fish section was equally as amazing and extensive. Live fish wriggled from one bin to another and again the vendors squatted amidst it all, sorting, beheading, gutting, and selling. Shoppers and vendors were so busy that we were not of any interest even though we were the only tourists. We stopped and stared openly, loving every minute. There were also food stalls here, offering delicious-looking meals cooked over open flames. The smells, sounds and sights of this market shouldn't be missed.

We requested an opportunity to see artisans at work, not a set-up for tourists, but a real working area and were taken to see Les Artisans d'Angkor. Both of us being retired teachers (art, vocational) we were excited by this programme, ably outlined by one of the students as we went from classrooms to workrooms. The aim of this school is to train and integrate into the workforce young people with little or no schooling who come from poor rural families and who run the risk of being left out of the development of the country. Siem Reap is desperately poor and destroyed by decades of horrendous war. These young men and women are being taught practical skills ranging from all of the construction trades to furniture making, arts, crafts and the silk trades.

After an apprenticeship many are hired by the private sector and many are relocated back into their villages, often with the equipment they made themselves at the school, which allows them to be self-supporting. We were most impressed with the high quality of work and the excellent conditions for learning. This school is one of three centres in the Siem Reap area called Chantiers-Ecoles, a Cambodian State establishment begun in 1992.

Having a car at our disposal meant we could direct our tour around the city and we enjoyed one more visit to the Angkor site before being transferred back to the airport. We had prearranged for a car, driver and guide for the duration, a luxury for us but more than worth it. All arrangements for the above, plus hotel, were made by Diethelm Travel. These arrangements also included all meals, entrance fees and departure tax which we

prepaid in Canada through Gillian Thompson of Carp Travel. Breakfast was included and each morning there was a good buffet. Other meals were eaten in a variety of places. Our last dinner, a huge buffet of all things Cambodian, included a wonderful dance performance, reminding us once more of the beauty of the friezes on the walls of Angkor Wat.

It was a thrill to finally be there and we would like to return in a few years when travel throughout the rest of the country is more reliable.

### Some More Tips:

- Realizing that we would be experiencing high temperatures and humidity, we opted to see only Siem Reap and avoid the difficult internal travel. We learned however, that it is now possible to travel by boat from Ho Chi Minh to Phnom Penh and Siem Reap.
- We had not taken a malaria treatment, and although we were not aware of insects, we kept ourselves smeared with repellent (we use pure citronella oil) and burned a mosquito coil in the room.
- We both wore Aussie "cobbers" around our necks ... a cloth tube filled with crystals that expand on soaking and cool the neck and head as the water evaporates. I also took a fan.
- Bottled water is easily obtained, and our guide kept us supplied with cold bottles each time we returned to the car. We use a PUR system which allows us to pump a day's supply of clean water and has kept us healthy through many third-world countries.
- People and animals are still being hurt by landmines in this area and we were careful to walk only where millions have trod before us.

**Some contacts:** e-mail: [Salina@camintel.com](mailto:Salina@camintel.com)  
[www.carptravel.com](http://www.carptravel.com) [Gilliant@justvac.com](mailto:Gilliant@justvac.com)  
 Websites: [www.diethelm-travel.com/cambodia](http://www.diethelm-travel.com/cambodia)  
[dte@dte.com.kh](mailto:dtc@dte.com.kh) [www.cambodia-online.com](http://www.cambodia-online.com)  
[www.travel.state.gov/cambodia.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/cambodia.html) [www.direct-rooms-cambodia.com](http://www.direct-rooms-cambodia.com) [www.cambodian.com/angkor](http://www.cambodian.com/angkor) ☐

[www.thetravelsociety.com](http://www.thetravelsociety.com)

**Any day now our website will be up and fully operational. To access the site the password will be up-dated monthly and will appear on the back page within your address box.**

In our April 2002 issue of TravelScoop we featured a story about travelling to Japan with an organization called Women Welcome Women World Wide (5W). We followed that story with a reminder of another friendship organization – the Friendship Force – that has 12 clubs throughout Canada. But it's always been Shirley Twerdun of the Manitoba Force who has kept us up-to-date with news of the Force. Now here's the report we promised to bring you of her trip to Vietnam.

## SKETCHES OF VIETNAM

by Shirley Twerdun

We arrived in Hanoi around 11:30 am to be greeted at the airport by members of the Vietnam-USA-Canada Society, who had planned our tour of Vietnam. They presented us with a red rose each as a welcome. That was the beginning of an 85-member Friendship Force tour in which I was privileged to be the only Canadian.

Following an impressive welcome at Hanoi Cultural Palace by Vietnamese officials and the General Secretary of the Vietnam-USA-Canadian Society, my roommate and I were introduced to our hosts, Ha and Khuong, a young couple in their 30's with sons Hia, 8 and Koa, 11. We spent three wonderful days living in this family's home in a very nice part of Hanoi, one block from a lovely lake. Our hosts had a small convenience-type store in the front of their home (which was a four-storey house but only about eight feet wide!), and they were also jewellery engravers. As a gift to each of us they made up a ring with our initials on it. My roommate and I in fact had separate bedrooms with our own baths and our hostess was a great cook!

Our three days in Hanoi were filled with tours of local temples, museums, a Water Puppet Show and the Old Quarter. In the Old Quarter narrow streets contain shops bustling with activity. Here you can purchase good (and inexpensive) leather goods, get a suit or dress made in 24 hours or less, buy groceries from

open-air booths and find many other things, including ornate funeral caskets should you be searching for one! This busy area offers a contrast to other parts of the city, many of which have wide avenues lined with colonial-era villas and overhung with trees. The French influence is seen everywhere in Vietnam as the French occupied the country until 1945, and many Vietnamese speak French fluently.

While touring the Ho Chi Minh House and Museum I was advised that the Canadian Embassy was right across the street. I was able to spend a short time with an assistant to the Ambassador and learned that the Terry Fox Run was being held in a couple of weeks. This is an annual event in Hanoi arranged by the Canadian Embassy and I have since heard that they raised US\$10,000 for Cancer Research.

From Hanoi we flew to Da Nang, where we spent three days. From there we took a bus trip through picturesque Hai Van

Pass to Hue and visited the Marble Mountain where I purchased a small statue of a mother and baby. Many people climbed to the top of the mountain, which is gradually being sliced away as its marble is in demand for both huge marble statues and smaller souvenir items. A stop at China Beach (where we all got our feet wet in the China Sea) was followed by a visit to the ancient town of Hoi An, which was one of the major trading centres in South East Asia in the 16<sup>th</sup> to



FFI members board their riverboats in the Mekong Delta (Twerdun)

19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Our next stop was Ho Chi Minh City (formerly Saigon) in South Vietnam. This great metropolis is teeming with life. Large avenues are not only lined with immense trees but also with motorcycles, scooters and bicycles.

A visit to the Cu Chi Tunnels provided an insight into how the Vietnamese were able to mount surprise attacks on the Americans during the war by actually digging tunnels beneath their headquarters. During the war the tunnel system stretched from near Saigon to the Cambodian border. The tunnel network, part of which was several storeys deep, included innumerable trapdoors, specially constructed living areas, storage facilities, weapon factories, field hospitals, command centres and kitchens. Visitors were able to go down into some of the tunnels and to see some of the traps that were laid for the soldiers by the Viet Cong – not a pretty sight!

A highlight of my tour of Vietnam was the Mekong Delta where we took a boat ride on the Mekong River to a lovely orchard island where different fruits are grown. We were treated to a variety of wonderful fruits, then entertained by a local musical group. Following lunch we were taken on a tour of the island and then taken by small boats through the jungle back to our larger boat.

The countryside is beautiful, mainly flat but there are hills and low mountains in some areas. Many rivers and canals traverse the land, which is quite red. Halong Bay in Northern Vietnam is a fairy tale landscape of thousands of rocky islets, almost black against the still water. In the countryside you often see women in narrow boats herding ducks or geese along the canals, water buffalo tilling the rice fields, men and women working knee-deep in the paddies, and different types of fishing nets being used to catch fish. The scenes you may have in your mind of Vietnam in the past are still a part of the scenery today. There is a great deal

of entrepreneurship throughout the cities where everybody seems to be selling something. Young people come in from the countryside to sell postcards, souvenirs and T-shirts to tourists so they can send money home to their families on the farm.

In the cities traffic – mostly bicycles and motorbikes – is horrendous and you have to be extremely careful in crossing any street. There are very few cars there, and the bus drivers are continually honking their horns to get people on bikes to move over, usually to no avail. It's not unusual to see up to five people on one

motorcycle and three or four on a bicycle, all without helmets!

No matter where we went we had wonderful food. Our lunches and dinners were held at excellent hotels or restaurants where we were usually entertained by musicians and dancers. There were three farewell parties during our stay (one at each location), but the final banquet was special. We were sad to say farewell to the people who had been our friends and guides throughout the eleven days we were in Vietnam, but also to the many new Friendship Force friends we had made from around the world.

I loved Vietnam! I found it to be one of the most interesting countries I have ever visited. The people are warm and friendly, most of them appear to bear no malice to the

Americans for the war, a conflict that we call the Vietnam War but that they call the American War. Yes, I would definitely recommend a trip to Vietnam before it gets too spoilt by increasing tourism. ☐

*The general website of the Friendship Force is [www.friendshipforce.org](http://www.friendshipforce.org), while the Manitoba branch has a new site of its own: [www.friendshipforcemanitoba.org](http://www.friendshipforcemanitoba.org) Shirley Twerdun is also happy to correspond with people who are interested in knowing more about the organization. She can be contacted at [stwerdun@shaw.ca](mailto:stwerdun@shaw.ca) Thank you, Shirley, for helping spread friendship throughout the world. - Ed.*



*Shirley Twerdun and Ha Van An, Secretary, The Vietnam-Canada Friendship Association and the gentleman who co-ordinated the Terry Fox Run.*

# Explorations in Alsace and the Mosel Valley

by Ron Paterson, Ottawa

Last September we spent over two weeks in the Alsace and Mosel Valley regions of France and Germany, followed by a three-day cruise on the Rhine. The highlight was a five-night stay in Alsace, where we stayed at the Hotel Arnold in Itterswiller, a lovely little village about 40 km southwest of Strasbourg. (Hotel Arnold, 98 route des vins, 67140 Itterswiller, France, tel: 011 33 388 855058, fax: 011 33 388 85 55 54, [www.hotel-arnold.com/](http://www.hotel-arnold.com/) Rooms around FF630, or 96 euros, approx. C\$134.00)

The hotel is a fine old timbered building with an excellent dining room and boutique. All the staff members were very friendly and helpful. Most of the guest rooms are in a separate building across the street, as is the pleasant breakfast room. We had a very nice room with a wonderful view across the vineyards. Itterswiller is small, is home to a number of wineries and is an excellent base from which to tour the area.

Alsace is dominated by vineyards all along the lower slopes of the Vosges Mountains. The many medieval villages are virtually unspoiled and flowers are to be seen everywhere. In fact, villages and towns are awarded a floral rating by an independent organization based in Paris. The rating is posted at the boundary and can be seen as you drive in. Many ruined castles stand on prominent sites along the hills with good walking trails up to most and fine views when you get there.

Colmar is an attractive town in the centre of the

region. Here, the Musée d'Unterlinder is well worth a visit. Housed in an old convent it contains paintings by artists such as Hans Holbein and Martin Schongauer, a local artist who was, at one time, quite famous. There is also a wonderful 14<sup>th</sup> century altarpiece here this is beautifully displayed and comprehensively explained. Colmar is renowned as the home of Frédéric-Auguste Bartholdi, the sculptor who designed the Statue of Liberty. Several of his (smaller!) works can be seen around the town.

The Petite Venise area along the river Lauch in Colmar is most attractive, with different coloured

houses along the banks, all festooned with flowers. The day we were there a boatman's festival was being celebrated with food and wine stalls, bands playing and dancing in the market hall by the river. We took a ride along the river in a small boat that was most enjoyable.

Other attractions in the area include Mont Ste. Odile, a convent situated

on a high strategic spot with panoramic views. The chapels contain fine mosaics and are well worth a visit. The castle of Haut-Koenigsberg, a massive medieval fortress beautifully restored early in the last century, also offers lots to see and again the views are stunning from its high location. The small towns of Obernai, Bar and Dambach-la-Ville are particularly attractive, as are Ribeauville and Riquewihr. The last two are beautifully preserved, but are quite busy with tourists. Most of Alsace we found to be peaceful and



Hotel Arnold, Itterswiller, Alsace (Paterson)

# Danish Delights

by Ruth Dibbs, Ottawa

A few years ago my husband I enjoyed a few days in Copenhagen and left wishing we had more time to see the city and other parts of Denmark. So last year, we took advantage of an Air Canada seat sale in January to buy tickets for a direct flight from Toronto to Copenhagen in May. A few weeks later, when we tried to book a hotel via the Internet and e-mail we found there was nothing available in Copenhagen or environs on the day of our arrival because the finals of the Eurovision Song Contest were being held there that weekend.

As our air tickets couldn't be changed, our fall-back position was to go to Odense, the birth place of Hans Christian Anderson, for the first two days of our trip. We made reservations at the centrally located City Hotel by e-mail and also found that there was a direct rail connection from Copenhagen airport to Odense which we took on our arrival. In fact, you can now go directly from the new station in the airport to anywhere in Denmark. At the Copenhagen Central station the train filled up with families, cyclists and hikers and we discovered it was a national holiday. The train had spaces to put prams and bikes and had modern rolling stock with a monitor in each car telling the name and time of arrival at the next station. The trip to Odense took less than two hours. As we passed through the towns en route we noticed that bicycle parking lots at the stations were jammed, and in some places there were vertical double racks to accommodate even more.

We were interested also to see many wind turbines scattered around farms, often in groups of three, with the electricity fed into the national grid. Between 15-20% of Denmark's electricity is now obtained from wind power.

The central part of Odense is very attractive, with lovely parks and gardens, cobbled streets and small brick houses with steeply pitched roofs. There was a lot of public sculpture around the city - both very modern and more traditional. We enjoyed the displays in the Hans Christian Andersen House which is located in the old section of the city backing on an attractive little park and lagoon. We were fortunate to have wonderful spring weather and the city and parks were looking their best.



*Fredericksborg Castle (Dibbs)*

On our return to Copenhagen we stayed at the Mayfair hotel of the Best Western chain (reserved in advance in Canada) which offered a seniors'

discount and included an excellent buffet breakfast. It was within very easy walking distance of the Central Station, the main tourist information office, the Tivoli Gardens and many other attractions.

As Denmark was once a major European power there are many castles, museums and buildings of interest in Copenhagen. It is worth buying a tourist card that covers public transportation and free or reduced admission to many museums and places of interest. A 50-minute boat sight-seeing tour was a very pleasant way to see the highlights of the city. We had visited some of the castles and museums on our

previous trip and this time went to the National Gallery of Art which had recently reopened after a stunning modern addition had been added to the back of a classical art gallery. We ate lunch in the cafeteria whose decor and accoutrements were all of the best modern Danish design. We also went to the Tivoli which we had not visited before and found it was very attractive, with spring flowers and shrubs around the several small lakes or lagoons. There were many family groups and there was entertainment for all ages with rides for children, cafés, a casino and a free pop concert in an amphitheatre. When that concert was over there was a ballet/mime in front of the Chinese peacock theatre.

One day we bought day tickets for the S-train which gave us access anywhere in North Zealand. We first went to Hillerod, an attractive town about a 20-minute ride from the Central Station. Its main attraction is Frederiksborg castle built in 1625 on three islands and containing a museum, an outstanding chapel, and a knights' banqueting hall with the bright coats of arms of notable Danish families. In 1996 the extensive gardens had been restored to their 18<sup>th</sup> century symmetrical knot garden designs with stepped water cascades.

Continuing on the S-train, we went north through woodlands and small farms to Helsingor (Elsinore) and took a 10-minute walk to Kronberg (Hamlet's) castle facing Sweden. As it was early in the season and late in the day, there were few people there and it seemed a suitably bleak setting for Shakespeare's tragedy. After Elsinore we completed the circle back to Copenhagen along the "Danish Riviera" coast which was lined with expensive-looking houses.

The next day we decided to take the train to Malmo in Sweden so we would have the chance to see and cross over the 16 km link for rail and road traffic between the two countries over the Oresund strait. The link, which was opened in September 2000, consists of a tunnel, an artificial island and a bridge that had to be carefully constructed so ships could still get to the port of Copenhagen and fish migration patterns were not disturbed. It took about 20 minutes to get to Malmo, which has an attractive central park with a 16<sup>th</sup> century castle and interesting old buildings near the waterfront. There are plans to build housing developments

on the waterfront area that was created during building approaches for the new bridge.

On our final morning in Copenhagen we walked to the main central shopping area. Stores were expensive with elegant Danish and international merchandise but window shopping was fun. In the early afternoon we took a train to Esbjerg, a port on the west coast of Denmark, to catch a DFDS Seaways ferry that goes overnight to Harwich, England three nights a week. We had made reservations for this lap of the trip through DFDS Seaways (USA) Inc. in Florida (1 800 533 3755). At the ferry terminal there was no trouble exchanging our reservation vouchers for ferry tickets. The ferry had nine decks, including car decks, two decks with cabins, another with eating and sitting areas, cinemas etc. We had a cabin with two lower berths which was quite roomy and had excellent evening and breakfast buffets. It was interesting talking to some of the other passengers who were taking

mini-vacations at amazingly low prices that included two nights on the ferry and a quick sight-seeing trip in Esbjerg and a local fishing village while

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*... there were few people there and it seemed a suitably bleak setting for Shakespeare's tragedy.*

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the ferry was docked. One couple we met was continuing on a different ferry for a mini-vacation to Hamburg as soon as they landed in Harwich. Unfortunately these specials can't be booked from North America. When the ferry docked the next morning we boarded a boat train that was waiting to take passengers to London where we were spending the second half of our vacation.

We were very pleased with our second experience of Denmark. It is an expensive country but it is clean, efficient and safe and with a great range of things to do and see. We were very impressed with the investment in infrastructure such as bridges, the encouragement of public transit with frequent trains, bicycle racks and bicycle lanes everywhere, and a real concern for the environment. ■

City Hotel, Hans Mules gade 5, DK-5000, Odense C, Denmark, tel: 011 45 661 21258, fax: 011 45 661 29364, e-mail: [reception@city-hotel-odense.dk](mailto:reception@city-hotel-odense.dk), [www.city-hotel-odense.dk/](http://www.city-hotel-odense.dk/) Double rooms approximately C\$130.00 Best Western Hotels: 1 800 528 1234, [www.bestwestern.com](http://www.bestwestern.com)

## Travel Digest

### Barbados 'On Special'

It's no secret that many destinations are devising special offers to lure travellers after the tourism downturn following the events of last September. We've seen many in our office, but it seems as though Barbados is making the best offer yet! And what a great getaway to look forward to ... perhaps with the family during the summer or perhaps when November casts its gloom over our land.

If you book a package for a Barbados vacation to be taken between now and 14 December you will:

- save up to 50% off the airfare (reflected as a \$300 air credit per person)
- receive a free night's accommodation on a 7-night stay
- enjoy a free full breakfast daily
- have a free day of car rental with a minimum 4-day rental
- receive 2-for-1 admissions at a variety of activities (an island tour, a submarine ride, golf, a tour of Mount Gay Rum, etc)
- choose from accommodation at more than 40 participating hotels
- receive a room up-grade if your hotel is an all-inclusive

The participating properties cover a range of accommodations to suit any traveller's preference or budget. Choose from beach resorts, all-inclusives, the "Gems of Barbados" portfolio, boutique hotels and apartment-style accommodations with kitchenettes.

Best of Barbados packages start at C\$699 from Toronto, Ottawa and Montreal (with connections across Canada available, of course) and are available through Air Canada Vacations, Alio, Holiday Network, Intair Transit, Red Seal, Resort to the Best and Signature Vacations. Your travel agent will have all the information. And for additional information to tempt you, contact the Barbados Tourism authority at 1 888 BARBADOS, e-mail [Canada@barbados.org](mailto:Canada@barbados.org) or visit [www.barbados.org](http://www.barbados.org)

Barbados was featured in the November 1997 edition of *TravelScoop*. If you do not have this edition and would like a copy of this article please e-mail Editor Ann at [ann@thetravelsociety.com](mailto:ann@thetravelsociety.com) or call 416 926 0111 x 22 and we will be delighted to send you a copy.

### Bermuda

How about having a little jazz on the beach to look forward to as Canada's summer draws to a close? The Seventh Annual Bermuda Jazz Festival is due to be held 4 – 7 September at Bermuda's historic Royal Naval Dockyard (not far from Willowbank, a property that's been mentioned in *TravelScoop* many times ... call 1 800 463 8444 or visit

[www.willowbank.bm](http://www.willowbank.bm)). For details of the festival, as well as Bermuda information in general, call 1 800 BERMUDA or visit [www.bermudajazz.com](http://www.bermudajazz.com)

### Canada

**Randonnée Tours** has a new offering this summer and fall. It's a self-guided multi-sport getaway in eastern **Manitoba** that retraces the steps of early explorers and voyageurs and allows

travellers to experience cycling, hiking and canoeing in the Manitoba wilderness. Randonnée organizes the activities, sets up the itineraries and arranges accommodation in charming B&B's. The 6-day adventure runs from 1 July to 1 October and costs C\$1,195 per person. For more information or a brochure of Randonnée's other tours call 1 800 465 6488 or visit [www.randoneetours.com](http://www.randoneetours.com) There are lots of treats awaiting garden lovers in **Montréal** this

summer. It seems every year new gardens are added to the **Montréal Botanical Gardens**. Last year it was a First Nations Garden, this year (opening in August) a new tea garden will be added to the Japanese Pavilion. And in the Chinese Garden – with its rocks, lake, pavilions and bridges it's the largest of its kind outside Asia – there will be tea presentations throughout the summer and fall. There are 30 specialized gardens here, as well as 10 themed greenhouses and the renowned **Montréal**

**Insectarium**. For a detailed programme call 514 872 1400 or visit

[www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin](http://www.ville.montreal.qc.ca/jardin)

And for full details on visiting Montréal, including special deals and all grades of accommodation visit [www.tourism-montreal.org/can](http://www.tourism-montreal.org/can) or call 1866 666 7001.

### **The Theatre in Ontario**

**Alliance** has announced the launch of the *2002 Just The Ticket* campaign, a collection of theatre getaway packages that includes interesting accommodation, fine dining, great theatres and lots of extras. Seventeen different theatres – from downtown Toronto to the Lighthouse Festival Theatre in Port Dover or the beautifully-located Thousand Islands Playhouse at Gananoque – are featured in the attractive *Just The Ticket* brochure. For your copy call 1 800 ONTARIO or visit [www.ontariotravel.net/experiences](http://www.ontariotravel.net/experiences)

**Doors Open** events started in Glasgow, Scotland, in 1990 and spread throughout Europe during the following years. Today, Heritage Open Days are held in 47 countries throughout the

world. In Canada, Toronto was the first community to launch this programme where, since 2000, **Doors Open Toronto** has welcomed thousands of people through the doors of such heritage sites as the Don Jail, the beautiful Elgin and Winter Garden Theatres Centres (the last operating double-decker theatre in the world) and much more. And now the **Ontario Heritage Foundation** is bringing the concept to the whole province with **Doors Open Ontario**, and it is hoped the initiative will soon spread to other provinces. Details of historic and architecturally-significant buildings, many of which are normally closed to visitors and which are to be open to the public throughout the summer and fall, are detailed in the booklet *Doors Open Ontario*.

Copies are available by calling 1 800 ONTARIO or visit the website at [www.doorsopenontario.on.ca](http://www.doorsopenontario.on.ca) where listings of events occurring in communities across the province can be found as well as all the 'doors open' locations.

If you're a visitor to Ontario (or even if you're a resident), you might like to join a small group to hike and explore for a day, a few days or a week. If so, **Something's Afoot – Hiking Adventures in Ontario** looks as though it will fit the bill. This company offers adventures (from Toronto and Ottawa) to Niagara, in the Rideau Canal area and in the Bay of Quinte. Tours include transportation, guided walks or hikes, local attractions, luxury accommodation in small inns and the best of local cuisine. Trips are conducted all summer and into October. For details tel/fax: 416 695 1838 or visit [www.hikingontario.com](http://www.hikingontario.com)

## **Korea**

Seems the eyes of the world have been on Korea for weeks as the World Cup reaches its finale. And now Korea hopes more travellers will visit its shores. To make a visit easier, there is now a Korea Pass Card available exclusively for tourists. It's a pre-paid card in a variety of denominations that can be used for shopping and travel (with discount offers), public transportation, telephone services and a customer service hotline in case of emergencies. The Pass is available at Incheon airport, Seoul, at a variety of hotels, or in Canada by calling 416 695 8815 or visit [www.koreapasscard.com](http://www.koreapasscard.com)

## **Switzerland**

If you're travelling in Europe this summer or fall, perhaps you'd like to consider adding a land package in Switzerland to your itinerary. The Lake Geneva and Matterhorn Region Tourist Offices are offering a new "Grand Tour" package that offers visitors the best of Switzerland. Starting at C\$584 for 5 days and 4 nights the package, which is available until 20 December, includes accommodation in 3- or 4-star hotels (1 night in Geneva, 1 night along the lake in either Lausanne or Montreux, 2 nights in an Alpine resort: Crans-Montana, Leukerbad, Saas-Fee or Zermat); Swiss breakfast daily, a Lake Geneva & Matterhorn Region Swiss Card for the four 2<sup>nd</sup> class rail transfers (1<sup>st</sup> class available at a C\$63 supplement) and a 50% discount on any additional transportation tickets, includ-

ing rail, boat, bus and cable car. Well-priced additional nights are available. To book The Grand Tour Package” contact Rail Europe at 1 800 4 EURAIL or visit [www.raileurope.com](http://www.raileurope.com) Quite the deal for Switzerland and for some of Europe’s most spectacular scenery. Other well-priced packages are available throughout the region, such as “Weekends in Geneva”, “Wellness Week” in Leukerbad and a variety of golf, hiking and snow-sports deals. For more information call 1 800 794 7795 or visit [www.Myswitzerland.com](http://www.Myswitzerland.com) Information and reservations in the Lake Geneva & Matterhorn Region also available online at [www.geneva-tourism.ch](http://www.geneva-tourism.ch), [www.lake-geneva-region.ch](http://www.lake-geneva-region.ch) and [www.matterhornregion.com](http://www.matterhornregion.com) (*I once lived in Geneva for over two years and travelled extensively throughout the region. It is, quite simply, wonderful – Ed.*)

### Help for Disabled Travellers Bound for the U.K.

Holiday Care is a charitable organization that is Britain’s central source of holiday and travel information for disabled and older people. Since its inception over 20 years ago, the organization has handled over 400,000 enquiries about accessible facilities and has undertaken more than 1,000 inspections of premises. It operates an accommodation reservations service which books suitable rooms throughout the UK. For details call 011 44 1293 771 500 or visit [www.holidaycare.org.uk](http://www.holidaycare.org.uk)

## Sri Lanka

As a result of recent peace initiatives normalcy is now said to be returning to Sri Lanka after years of internal strife. And now the Tourism Department of the High Commission of Sri Lanka in Ottawa is disseminating information on tours, hotels, spas and other tourism initiatives. If you’ve always wanted to visit the island of Sri Lanka maybe now is the time to start planning. Lots of information is available at <http://infoweb.magi.com/~lankacom>, or contact the High Commission at 613 238 8448. (*Editor’s note: my husband’s niece is to have a honeymoon in Sri Lanka after her wedding in Europe next month. I’m looking forward to hearing about it.*)

## U.S.A.

The friendly folk from the state of **New Mexico** were in Canada recently, talking to travel media people and encouraging Canadians to visit their “Land of Enchantment”. With its 20 distinct pueblos and tribes, its bird-watching, its historic towns and its many unique hot-air balloon events it certainly sounds as though New Mexico offers some unique adventures. If you’d like to plan to include this State in your forthcoming travels in the U.S. call 1 800 545 2070 for a Visitors’ Guide or visit [www.newmexico.org](http://www.newmexico.org)

The Boston Symphony Orchestra and the Boston Pops move from their urban home in summer to the **Massachusetts** town of **Lenox** in the beautiful Berkshires for the **Tanglewood Festival**.

Lenox certainly is a cultural centre, for in addition to all that music it was once home to authors Edith Wharton and Nathaniel Hawthorne. And located as it is in the extreme west of the State, it’s easy to reach from major eastern Canadian centres. For details of Tanglewood’s summer programme call 1 888 266 1200 or visit [www.bso.org](http://www.bso.org) and for a very comprehensive *Official Visitors’ Guide to the Berkshires* (for B&B’s, inns, restaurants, etc.) call the Berkshire Visitors Bureau at 1 800 237 5747 or log on to [www.berkshires.org](http://www.berkshires.org)

**New York City** is offering summer savings packages for 1-, 2- or 3-night stays. The 1-night package (double occupancy), priced from C\$185 includes accommodation, attractions pass, a US\$25 dinner voucher for a good restaurant, discounted parking, all taxes and a special savings card. Longer packages include a Broadway show. And don’t forget there are lots of free events in NY in the summer. Call 1 800 NYC GUIDE or visit [www.nycvisit.com](http://www.nycvisit.com) for information and an official *To Do: NYC Summer ’02* guide. ■

## Tour Talk

Toronto-based **Active Journeys** has a new walking tour in the Italian Lake region. This area offers some of the most beautiful scenery in Europe, with calm lakes surrounded by high mountains and shores dotted with pretty villages and beautiful villas. Described as a moderate, self-guided walking tour, this vacation lasts a week and is based in Bellagio, often described as the prettiest village in Europe. The land price is C\$1,295 double which includes 6 nights’

accommodation, breakfasts, route notes and maps. For information and a brochure contact Active Journeys at 416 236 5011 or 1 800 597 5594, fax: 416 236 4790, e-mail: [info@activejourneys.com](mailto:info@activejourneys.com), [www.activejourneys.com](http://www.activejourneys.com)

**Great Explorations** of Vancouver offer small-group cycling and walking holidays in a variety of destinations: Spain, France (including Corsica), Italy, Morocco, Ireland, Turkey (which includes some *gulet* sailing), Oregon, BC and more. Their great little brochure lists both 2002 and 2003 departures, ideal for those who like to plan well ahead (call 604 730 1247 or 1 800 242 1825 for a copy) or visit [www.great-explorations.com](http://www.great-explorations.com) for complete itineraries.

And if you do like to plan ahead, now might be the time to think about fall or winter tours to London, Edinburgh or Paris. **DH Tours** of Guelph, Ontario, specialize in these off-season tours at very good prices. From C\$1,098 – plus air taxes of \$112 – will bring you return Toronto-Heathrow flights on **British Airways**, transfers, 6 nights' accommodation, all breakfasts, one dinner, choice of a show, a 7-day London Travel Card for unlimited travel in all zones and all taxes and service charges apart from the air tax surcharge. Hotel up-grades are available, as are extensions and trips on to Edinburgh or Paris. For details call DH at 905 639 9954 or 1 888 597 3519, fax: 905 639 9120, e-mail: [dhtour@interlynx.net](mailto:dhtour@interlynx.net), [www.dhgrouptours.com](http://www.dhgrouptours.com) ■

## Airline News

**Air New Zealand** has a "South Pacific on Sale" promotion for Canadians travelling to Auckland, NZ, or to Sydney, Brisbane or Melbourne, Australia this summer. Prices start from C\$1,549, the maximum stay is one month and travel must be completed by 30 October. Your agent will have details.

For those of you who are beginning to think of Hawaii next winter there's good news. The Hawaiian carrier **Aloha Airlines** has begun non-stop service between Honolulu and Vancouver and will operate on a year-round basis. Service to Maui will be introduced in the fall. Your agent will have details, or visit [www.alohaairlines.com](http://www.alohaairlines.com) or call 1 800 367 5250. (*TravelScoop will be featuring the islands of Maui, Molokai and Kauai in some of its fall editions.*)

**Cathay Pacific** is offering its All-Asia Pass again this year, on sale until 4 December. Priced from C\$1,599 the pass offers unlimited travel from Vancouver or Toronto to Hong Kong and then to any, or all, 16 other Southeast Asian cities. Departures from Canada must occur Sunday through Thursday and travel must be completed within 21 days of arrival in Asia. Extensions of up to 90 days are available for a fee. Members of Cathay CyberTravelers programme can purchase the All Asia Pass at a further price reduction of \$200. To join this free programme visit [www.cathay.ca](http://www.cathay.ca) Passes must be booked through a travel agent.

And there's another deal from Cathay, aimed at AmEx Platinum Card members who may be considering flying to Hong Kong or to a selection of other Asian destination business class. If you do, you will receive a free companion ticket. The offer is available year-round and there are no limits on the number of times Platinum Card members can take advantage of this offer. Contact your agent or visit [www.americanexpress.ca/platinum](http://www.americanexpress.ca/platinum)

Canada's newest low-cost airline, **Jetsgo**, took off on 12 June with inaugural flights from Toronto and Montreal. Good business was reported in the first two weeks of operation with lots of bookings for future flights. Over half of the early tickets were purchased online at [www.jetsgo.net](http://www.jetsgo.net), or passengers can call 1 866 440 0441 or reserve through their agent. Online bookings bring a \$10 discount on all return flights. Snacks and drinks are available for a charge (a turkey sandwich, for example, for \$4 and soft drinks, coffee etc., for \$1) or you can bring-your-own food. The airline serves Toronto, Montréal, Halifax, Winnipeg and Vancouver. One-way fare samples: Toronto/Montréal from \$89, Montréal/Vancouver from \$244, Toronto/Vancouver from \$234 and Toronto/Winnipeg from \$104. The airline operates three Boeing MD-83s and hopes to add a fourth to their fleet in the fall.

Three more airlines are to join the Star Alliance over the coming year: Asiana (Korea's second largest airline), LOT Polish (Poland's flag carrier) and Spanair (a Majorca-based subsidiary of SAS).

*Continued from page 13 ... Explorations in Alsace and the Mosel Valley*

relatively undiscovered by tourists; it was only in Riquewihr and Haut-Koenigsberg did we see a number of tour buses.

The whole area offers many excellent places to dine. The food is exceptionally good, as is the wonderful Alsatian wine that accompanies it. We had two fine dinners at the Hotel Arnold and on other occasions went to restaurants in nearby villages. I would particularly recommend the Winstub Gilg in Mittelburgheim and the Boeuf Rouge in Andlau, each within a 10-15 minute drive of the hotel.

We spent only a brief time in Strasbourg, a city that clearly deserved a longer visit. We were, however, most impressed by the wonderful cathedral and by the museum in the Palais Rohan.

To sum up, Alsace is a lovely unspoilt area not plagued by tourists. It is ideal if you enjoy a holiday exploring gorgeous villages and towns and walking on hilly slopes, ending your days with delicious food and great wines at very reasonable prices. For us, five nights was not long enough and we are determined to go back and see more.

Much as we loved Alsace, we also enjoyed the other section of our vacation: a four-night stay in Trier, a lovely old city with Roman origins situated on the Mosel River in Germany. Trier is an excellent base for touring the scenic Mosel valley and it is only a short drive to Luxembourg City and Echternach, which are both worth a visit. Trier itself deserves a full two or three days of sightseeing.

We stayed at the Hotel Villa Hügel, an attractive small hotel on the outskirts of town about a ten-minute walk to the walls of the old city. Our room was comfortable and the staff was extremely pleasant and helpful. An excellent buffet breakfast was included. Dinners are served and there is an attractive patio area with a fine view across the valley. There's even a small indoor swimming pool. Unfortunately it was cool and damp when we were there. I would highly recommend the Villa Hügel and feel it offers excellent value. (Hotel Villa Hügel, Bernhardstrasse 14, 54295 Trier, Germany, tel: 011 49 651 33066, fax: 011 49 651 37958, rooms cost DM225 – 245, from 115 euros, approximately C\$160.)

We flew from Ottawa to Amsterdam and then on to Cologne with KLM and then picked up a rental car in Cologne. Apart from our tours of the Mosel Valley and Alsace we spend a couple of nights in Heidelberg, took the 3-night Rhine cruise and spent a night each end of the trip at Hotel Viktoria, Worringer Strasse 23, Cologne, tel: 011 49 221 97 31 720 (English is spoken), fax: 01149 221 72 70 67, e-mail [hotel@hotelviktoria.de](mailto:hotel@hotelviktoria.de) or visit the comprehensive (and tempting!) website [www.hotelviktoria.com](http://www.hotelviktoria.com) This property is historic, old and quiet (it was once a music museum), located half a block from the Rhine and one can walk along the river into the town centre. ☑

*Rod Paterson is a TravelScoop subscriber who lives in Ottawa*

*The Travel Society*

## *Travelling companions wanted!*

At The Travel Society we frequently receive requests from single members wishing to share accommodation on our tours. If you would like to travel on any of these dates, want to avoid the single supplement and are willing to share accommodation with fellow members, please call Nigel at 416 926 2500 x24 or 1 877 926 2500 x24 as soon as possible.

- A gentleman wants to share on China Yangtze tour 5 October 2002.
- A lady wants to share on China Yangtze tour 12 October 2002.
- A lady wants to share on China Yangtze tour 8 October 2002.
- A gentleman wants to share on China Yangtze tour 8 October 2002.

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from \$3,716 for 17 days

Reserve now for 2003

## China ... Yangtze Spectacular ~ 17 days!

*Come with us on our most popular tour and spend 17 days in China for an amazingly low price. Reserve now for departures on*

**8 October 2002**

**21 March, 16 April, 5 September, 10 October 2003**

It is vast, fascinating and mysterious and it has beckoned travellers from the west for centuries. Mention it to avid travellers and they are sure to say, "Yes, I hope to visit China one day." And what would they choose to experience? **A cruise on the mighty Yangtze River (soon to be changed for ever);** a look at the work-in-progress on the massive **Three Gorges Dam;** a walk on the ancient **Great Wall;** views of charming villages, lush terraced hillsides and magnificent mountain peaks; visits to the great cities of **Shanghai** and **Beijing;** a trip to view one of the world's greatest archaeological finds ... the 6,000 terra-cotta warriors at **Xi'an;** scenes of palaces, pagodas, pavilions and pandas; tastes of Peking duck and Chinese banquets and so much more. So how do you choose? When you decide on The Travel Society's tour there's no need to choose because all these highlights are included. Yes, in these remarkable 17 days you'll stay in Shanghai, you'll fly to the beautiful city of Hangzhou, you'll take a 5-day first-class cruise on the Yangtze, you'll fly to see those centuries-old terra-cotta warriors and you'll have plenty of time to explore Beijing. Throughout the trip you'll see magnificent architecture, you'll be entertained at cultural events, you'll join your hosts at a variety of banquets, you'll have time to shop, and you'll marvel at some of the most wonderful scenery on earth, all in the company of English-speaking guides. You'll travel by train and plane; by bus, cruise ship, boat and river raft. Many of our members have told us it's an experience of a lifetime ... and all at an amazing price!

### Your tour costs includes:

- Round-trip transpacific air fares on Japan Airlines
- Chinese domestic airfares
- Canadian domestic airfares
- First-class hotel accommodation
- First-class five days/4 nights Yangtze River cruise aboard a deluxe cruise ship
- All transfers
- Daily sightseeing
- Three meals daily
- Special banquets in Hangzhou, Xi'an and Beijing
- Evening cultural shows
- Fully escorted by English/Chinese-speaking tour guide
- English-speaking local guides
- Free day and evening in Beijing or Shanghai
- Western-style dinner in Hangzhou

### AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing from:

Vancouver	\$3,716 pp/dbl
Victoria	\$3,836 pp/dbl
Calgary/Edmonton	\$3,986 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$4,112 pp/dbl
Toronto	\$4,046 pp/dbl
Ottawa & Montreal	\$4,112 pp/dbl
Halifax	\$4,216 pp/dbl

Single supplement \$1,040 (Sharing can be arranged.)

Taxes and visas extra.

Prices are subject to change

### GREAT ADD-ONS:

Hong Kong	4 days/3 nights	\$965
Tokyo	4 days/3 nights	\$892

We are already taking reservations for these tours in 2003, and don't forget tours on the Yangtze River will be restricted next year. Please call now to ensure your reservations for this amazing tour this fall and next year.

**Reserve 2003 departures NOW!**

Our editor, Ann Wallace, has taken her first Travel Society Tour ... the April 2002 China Yangtze trip and her 14-page, illustrated (and honest) account is now available from our office. If you would like a copy please send us \$5 together with your address.

Please call The Travel Society 877 926 2500 or 416 926 2500 for the full details. All our tours are specially priced for Travel Society members and are only available at these prices through our office.  reg #01280649

# The Travel Society ~ tours designed for TravelScoop members.

## The Best of Australia, New Zealand & Fiji ... Ancient Cultures, Modern Cities and Timeless Beauty with 2-days in Fiji 29 days departing 21 September 2002

High on the "wish list" of most travellers are those oh-so-different lands "downunder". How would you like to come with The Travel Society as we visit vast Australia with its Outback, stunning cities, unique animals, aboriginal history, Alice Springs, Ayers Rock and the Great Barrier Reef? Even the island of Tasmania is included! And yes, then we go on to New Zealand, with its scenic beauty, its mountains and farm lands and not-to-be-missed Milford Sound. And while we're going all that way we don't want you to miss the magic of Fiji. If you think all this is impossible in one reasonably-priced trip, now is the time to think again, for The Travel Society has organized such a tour. Call us for a copy of this amazing itinerary. **29 days, most meals and great guides!**

### AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing from: Taxes included.

Victoria	\$10,590 pp/dbl
Vancouver, Edmonton & Calgary	\$10,530 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$10,710 pp/dbl
Toronto, Ottawa & Montreal	\$10,750 pp/dbl
Halifax	\$11,030 pp/dbl

### Your tour includes:

- Round-trip transpacific air on Qantas
- All domestic and Australia to New Zealand flights
- Canadian domestic air fares
- All fully escorted by knowledgeable tour guides
- All transfers
- Daily breakfast
- 17 dinners and 2 lunches
- 4 nights in the Outback
- 7 nights of planned evening activities
- All sightseeing tours, boat trips and fees to parks & sites
- A performance at the Sidney Opera House
- Departure taxes

## The Kingdom of Thailand, with optional Angkor Wat (Cambodia) pre-tour and Pattaya post-tour extensions 17 Days departing April and October 2003

"Thailand is magical." So say the increasing number of travellers who journey to this exotic land, a land of majestic palaces, ornate temples, quaint cities, beautiful landscapes and charming, gentle people. Come with The Travel Society and over 14 memorable days we'll show you bustling Bangkok, the floating market and legendary canals of Damnoen Saduak, the Bridge on the River Kwai at Kanchanaburi, Ayutthaya – Thailand's ancient capital, the cool hills and forests of Chiang Mai with their Hill Tribes and working elephants and so much more. You'll shop for unique items, enjoy a Thai cooking class, witness cultural shows, take river trips, visit museums AND still have plenty of time at leisure to follow your own interests.

However, before your arrival in Thailand, you may like to enjoy a unique experience in Cambodia where you'll visit fascinating Angkor Wat. You'll view the Wats and Terraces at sunset and spend a day among the fascinating temple structures that formed the former capital and religious centre of the Khmer Empire.

And an optional post-tour will take you to relax at Pattaya – known as the Riviera of Thailand, where you can enjoy exquisite tropical gardens, a visit to the Mini Siam miniature display of Thai heritage and a catamaran cruise as well as the inviting beach. This trip is scheduled for Spring and Fall, 2003. Give us a call ... we'll add you to the list of those interested and send a full itinerary and applicable prices.

### Your tour includes:

- Round-trip transpacific air
- All domestic flights
- Canadian domestic air fares
- Fully escorted by knowledgeable tour guides
- All transfers
- All sightseeing tours, boat trips and fees to parks & sites

### PRICES INCLUDE AIR AND TAXES departing from:

Toronto, Winnipeg, Montreal,	
Vancouver & Calgary	- \$3,045 pp dbl.
Ottawa	- \$3,100 pp dbl.
Victoria	- \$3,145 pp dbl.
Edmonton	- \$3,560 pp dbl.
Halifax	- \$4,095 pp dbl.

## Copper Canyon Adventure

10 Days departing 26 September and 17 October 2002

We are offering a new 10-day tour to Mexico's spectacular Copper Canyon, four times larger than the Grand Canyon, where you'll enjoy a journey that is considered by many to be the world's most exciting train trip. You'll visit the area's ancient towns and missions and see the habitat of the Tarahumara Indians, considered one of the most fascinating tribes in North America. Folkloric and tribal shows are included on the itinerary, together with time to relax on the shores of the Sea of Cortez where you'll enjoy a sunset cruise.

**\$2,899 pp dbl**

**INCLUDING AIR & TAXES.**

**ONE PRICE departing from  
Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton,  
Winnipeg Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal  
& Halifax**

Single supplement \$600

## Costa Rica – "Nature's Museum"

10 Days departing 30 January 2003

Costa Rica is known as Nature's Museum and with good reason. Come for a visit and you'll be impressed by this country that is dedicated to preserving its delicate ecology for all to enjoy and by its warm friendly people who are waiting to show it to you. During your 10-day tour you'll visit historic San Jose, stay in a tropical rain forest at a thermal spa resort; visit a vast jungle preserve; take a river boat trip to watch and photograph the wildlife; soak in the thermal pools of Arenal Paraiso and visit the Monteverde Cloud Forest Reserve. And after all this you'll relax or play on the beach at Guanacaste Also available is a 3-night jungle odyssey post tour extension, an exciting soft-adventure to Tortuguero, the Amazon of Costa Rica.

### PRICES INCLUDE AIR AND TAXES departing from:

Toronto	- \$3,567 pp dbl.
Ottawa & Montreal	- \$3,597 pp dbl.
Vancouver & Calgary	- \$3,817 pp dbl.
Halifax	- \$4,017 pp dbl.
Edmonton	- \$3,967 pp dbl.
Winnipeg	- \$3,897 pp dbl.
Victoria	- \$4,147 pp dbl.

Single supplement \$600

# The Travel Society ~ tours designed for TravelScoop members.

from \$5,269 for 16 days

## HIGHLIGHTS OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND

Departing 4 November 2002 & 10 February 2003 with optional Fiji extension

Perhaps your time is limited and our 29-day tour of Australia and New Zealand is not possible for you. Then how about considering our 16-day adventure that covers the "downunder" highlights? On this tour you'll discover the highlights of Melbourne and take a tour along the Great Ocean Road. You'll spend over three days in spectacular Sydney, where you'll cruise in the harbour and visit the koalas. And in Sydney you can choose from a variety of side trips ... perhaps a tour of the stunning Blue Mountain wilderness or the Hunter Valley wine region? Christchurch in New Zealand is next on the itinerary and from there it's on to Queenstown, your base for trips to the Milford Sound, Mount Cook National Parks and lots more! This is the ideal trip to give you a taste of some of the highlights of Australia and New Zealand.

### AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing from:

Vancouver, Edmonton & Calgary	\$5,269 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$5,449 pp/dbl
Toronto	\$5,298 pp/dbl
Ottawa & Montreal	\$5,498 pp/dbl
Halifax	\$5,799 pp/dbl
Single supplement \$780 (Sharing can be arranged.)	<b>Taxes included</b>
Fiji add on	\$1,104 pp/dbl
Los Angeles add on	\$ 120 pp/dbl

### Your tour includes:

- Round-trip transpacific air on Qantas
- All domestic and Australia to New Zealand flights
- Canadian domestic air fares
- All fully escorted by knowledgeable tour guides
- All transfers
- Daily breakfast
- 6 dinners
- 4 nights in the Outback
- All sightseeing tours, boat trips and fees to parks & sites
- Departure taxes

## Tours for 2003 ... please call for itineraries and further details

- China Yangtze Spectacular – departing March, April, September & October 2003
- China, Hong Kong & Vietnam – departing March, April, September & October 2003 (see p.21)
- The Highlights of Australia, New Zealand & Fiji – departing 11 January & 25 October 2003
- The Best of Australia & New Zealand – departing 10 February & 20 October 2003
- Exotic Thailand – departing April & October 2003
- Costa Rica, Nature's Wonderland – departing February & March 2003
- Galapagos & Peru – departing February & March 2003
- The Heart of Eastern Europe – departing June & July 2003
- Antarctica, Argentina & Brazil – departing January & February 2003
- Chile – departing January & February 2003
- Panama – departing various dates in 2003

... please call 1 877 926 2500 or 416 926 2500 for itineraries and further details

## Long-stays for 2003 ... please call for further details

- The Many Faces of Portugal ... Portugal and Madeira tours combined with Long-Stays in the Algarve and Estoril – departing January & February 2003
- Mexico Long-stays in Manzanillo – January & February 2003
- Spain Long-Stays in Malaga – departing January & February 2003

Please call  877 926 2500 or 416 926 2500 for the full details. All our tours are specially priced for Travel Society members and are only available at these prices through our office.  reg #01280649

# The Travel Society ~ tours for TravelScoop members and their friends.

## from \$4,498 for 17 days Vietnam, China & Hong Kong

Departing 31 October 2002 & 3 April 2003

Marvel at the contrasts of Asia on our unique three-country tour covering some fabled highlights of Vietnam, China and Hong Kong. Come with The Travel Society on a very unusual tour: visit Ho Chi Minh City (still called Saigon by many locals) and visit the Reunification Hall, the former presidential palace; the moving War Crimes Museum; Thien Hau Pagoda, home of the Sea Goddess; bustling Chinatown and a fascinating lacquer ware workshop. The following day you'll take a cruise along the Mekong River, stopping at an orchard island to sample delicious tropical fruits and enjoy traditional music in a typical farmhouse. A stay in the Da Lat region, 280 km from Ho Chi Minh City comes next. It's a cool land of pine woods, green hills and valleys, quiet lakes, beautiful waterfalls and exotic gardens. In Da Lat itself you'll visit pagodas, summer palaces and the city's flower, fruit and vegetable market ... one of the most beautiful in Vietnam. A stay in Nha Trang is next on the itinerary, a superb coastal resort famous for strange rock formations and the Oceanographic Institute. We then revisit Ho Chi Minh City, with time to explore aspects of the city you may have missed earlier.

Then it's on to China ... first stop Guilin, a very special destination with scenery like none other on earth. Here you'll enjoy a full day Li River Cruise, passing through breathtaking scenery to the market town of Yangshu. The pleasures of Shanghai come next with high-light tours, that famous acrobatic show and time to shop in this shopper's paradise.

The pleasures and excitement of Hong Kong are well known. We'll show you the highlights of Hong Kong Island on a morning tour, leaving you time to explore on your own later ... it's very easy to get around! Next day promises an in-depth tour of the New Territories known as the Land Between Tour. Situated between the Kowloon Hills and the border with China you'll enjoy scenic views, markets, monasteries, a Hakka village, a fishing site and much more.

### AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing from:

Vancouver	\$4,548 pp/dbl
Edmonton & Calgary	\$4,798 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$4,798 pp/dbl
Toronto	\$4,798 pp/dbl
Ottawa & Montreal	\$4,929 pp/dbl
Halifax	\$5,159 pp/dbl

Single supplement \$290 (Sharing can be arranged.) Taxes and visas extra.

### Your tour includes:

- Round-trip transpacific air on Cathy Pacific
- All domestic and inter connecting flights
- Canadian domestic air fares
- Fully escorted by knowledgeable tour guides
- All transfers
- Three meals daily except in Hong Kong
- One day Li River Cruise
- All sightseeing tours, boat trips and fees to parks & sites

Please call **The Travel Society** 877 926 2500 or 416 926 2500 for the full details. All our tours are specially priced for **Travel Society members** and are only available at these prices through our office. **TICO** reg #01280649

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