



The Travel Society Magazine  
[www.thetravelsociety.com](http://www.thetravelsociety.com)

# Travel Scoop

Vol. 22, No. 5 June 2004

**London Notes**

**Diary of a Voyage to Antarctica**

**Ontario Getaways**

# TravelScoop

The Travel Society Magazine

## Editor

Ann Wallace  
ann@thetravelsociety.com

## Contributors

Barbara Bagnell  
H. A. Sherman  
Barbara Redlich  
Carrie Toomey &  
Pat Toomey

## Publisher

Nigel D Raincock  
nigel@thetravelsociety.com

## Administrator

Debbie Philip  
debbie@thetravelsociety.com

## Graphic Design & Production

Yong Park  
yong@thetravelsociety.com

**TravelScoop** (ISSN#0822-9228) is an independent, consumer magazine published in Canada ten times a year. Although extreme care is taken to ensure the accuracy of material herein,

**TravelScoop** does not assume any liability for errors or omissions, for changes in fares or schedules, or for readers' decisions based on the opinions of the editor or writers. Readers are advised to confirm all information prior to booking.

### Rates for CANADA (incl. GST):

1 year - \$ 49.00

2 years - \$ 95.00

3 years - \$ 140.00

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

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

### Back issues:

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

Copyright 2004 by **Travel Scoop Inc.**

Contents may not be reproduced in whole or part without written permission from the publisher.

### Travel Scoop Inc.

218 - 1033 Bay Street,

Toronto, Ontario, Canada. M5S 3A5

Tel: 416 926 0111 Fax: 416 926 0222

e-mail: [brit@thetravelsociety.com](mailto:brit@thetravelsociety.com)

web-site: [www.thetravelsociety.com](http://www.thetravelsociety.com)

**Postmaster:** Please send address corrections to the above address.

Printed in Canada. GST Reg # R135785962

Publications Mail Agreement:

# 40063904 & # 09925

Customer # 2289997

Mail preference: From time to time, we make our membership list available to specific reputable companies and organizations whose products and/or services we believe will be of interest to you. If you do not want your name to be made available, please enclose your mailing label and initial here \_\_\_\_\_

**We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada, through the Publications Assistance Program (PAP), toward our mailing costs.**

June 2004

Vol. 22, No. 5

## contents

### Readers' Letters

River Cruising in France	3
Madeira Revisited	3
Another Tip for Rhodes	4
Don't Miss Canberra	5
Stop Mid-Way!	5

### Destinations

London Notes	6
Diary of a Voyage to Antarctica	11
Editor's Getaways	15

Where is this?  
Find out next month!



### News

Travel Digest	17
Riding the Rails	19
Airline News	19
Tour Talk	20
Websites	20



Cover: *The Imperial War Museum, London, England*

## editor's letter ...

I am sure many of you are aware that there's a World Tourism Organization, a specialized agency of the United Nations vested by the UN with a central and decisive role in promoting the development of responsible and sustainable tourism. It aims to contribute to economic development, international understanding, peace, prosperity and universal respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms through tourism, while at the same time providing incentives for protecting the environment and cultural heritages. In 2003 its membership reached 141 countries (including Canada), seven territories and some 350 Affiliate Members representing the private sector, educational institutions, tourism associations and local tourism authorities. They have an interesting website: [www.world-tourism.org](http://www.world-tourism.org)

I mention WTO this month because the Organization's annual Ulysses Prize for Research and Dissemination of Knowledge in Tourism has just been awarded to a Canadian: Professor J.R. Brent Ritchie, who holds the Professorship of Tourism Management in the Haskayne School of business at the University of Calgary. The prize was awarded to him for "his scientific contribution to the theory and practice of tourism policy as well as his leadership over the past 30 years in the area of tourism education and research".

Described by WTO as a distinguished academic leader, Professor Ritchie has made a substantial intellectual contribution to tourism since the early 1970s and is the author of numerous books and extensive publications on tourism and related topics. Click on the 'Newsroom' link at the above website to read more about Professor Ritchie and the Ulysses Prize.



## River Cruising in France

Last September, we spent six days travelling a mere 216 km. We weren't biking, hiking or riding a mule – we were on a riverboat called the *Chardonnay* on France's Saone River. Its parent company, Continental Waterways, was formed by a barge-loving Brit in 1966. With a head office in Dijon, the company now has 17 boats all over France's 1,900 miles of waterways and in 2004 and 2005 is scheduled to cruise rivers in South America, Cambodia, New York State, Belgium, Holland and Germany.

Because of its British roots these cruises tend to cater to an English-speaking clientele. On ours we had Canadians, Americans, British and Brazilians. The *Chardonnay* could accommodate 50 but we sailed with only 22 on board. The cost of the cruise does not put it in a budget category (2004's brochure has prices starting at US\$1,690 pp per week), but from the time we met our fellow travellers in a hotel lobby in Dijon, we spent not a penny. Transfers, bus excursions to wineries and historic sites, wine at lunch and dinner, entry to galleries and museums in the small sleepy towns of Burgundy were all included. The young chef and his helper produced wonderful meals, presented with artistry. In the six days we tasted 26 varieties of French cheese and to help counteract these calories there were 10 bicycles on board which could be used along the river bank during unhurried stops.

The company does have specials, e.g. in November the price includes airfare from U.S. and Canadian cities and this Spring there was an introductory 5-night Bike and Barge cruise through the Loire for US\$995 pp. 2004's itineraries in Normandy will have special rates for WWII veterans and on some cruises, singles' supplements are waived. Check the website for details and last minute specials: [www.continentalwaterways.com](http://www.continentalwaterways.com) or [www.bargespecials.com](http://www.bargespecials.com) or call 1 800 676 6613.

A few more notes if you're heading to France or considering one of these cruises. TS travellers who used to take a shuttle bus to the RER rail station at CDG (Paris) Airport will be glad to know that rail now meets air arrivals – all within the airport. We walked a short distance indoors following signs to "Gare", validated our Eurail passes and made a reservation for the next TGV to Dijon leaving from Gare de Lyon. The passes include the RER train to Gare du Nord, and on to Gare de Lyon making an efficient connection with our TGV. And who wants to drive when you can, as we did that afternoon, cover 321 km in 98 minutes? For more information call 1 866 9EURAIL.

As for hotels during the above trip, we checked Best Western's website ([www.bestwestern.com](http://www.bestwestern.com)) and found Hostellerie du Chapeau Rouge, in the heart of Dijon. Owned by a young local couple, the Frachots, who spent three years in Montreal in the late 90's, the hotel's charming name carried through to the sunny room we located after one elevator, a long winding hallway and an ancient flight of stairs. The building is about 600 years old. The owner-chef was awarded a Michelin star early in 2003, having, he says, learned to cook mostly in Montreal.

When our cruise ended in Lyon, we took a very budget room at Hotel Bayard, located on the side of Lyon's main square, Place Bellecour, and across from the Tourist Information office. (Buy your funicular tickets at this office for a ride up to the cathedral.) With a cluttered lobby and friendly staff, the Bayard has double-bedded rooms and light breakfast for €82 (€1 = C\$1.65) [www.hotelbayard.com](http://www.hotelbayard.com).

When our time in France neared its end, we spent one last night in Paris at Hotel Lindbergh, on the Left Bank. [www.hotellindbergh.com](http://www.hotellindbergh.com). I'd communicated by e-mail and was told, "We have one room left for that night. It overlooks our courtyard." Sounded charming, but when we arrived we discovered our room overlooked a very busy street and a construction site. With windows closed we slept fine, but TS

travellers finding this €89 a night hotel suiting their budget, should ask for a confirmed room at the back!

Barbara Bagnell  
Toronto, ON

## Madeira Revisited

Five years ago I spent a most enjoyable week in Madeira (and wrote about my experiences in *TravelScoop* July/August 1999). I'd enjoyed it all so much that I decided it was time for a revisit in March this year.

To recapitulate, Madeira is part of Portugal. It is an island of volcanic origin lying about 900 km southwest of Lisbon and 500 km off the coast of Morocco. It has long been a popular holiday destination for Europeans, especially British, German and Scandinavian tourists.

I flew from Calgary to London, Heathrow, took the shuttle bus to Gatwick Airport and an Air Portugal direct flight from there to Funchal, the capital of Madeira. Since my last visit, there have been significant improvements in Madeira's infrastructure, particularly the remodeling of the airport and major improvements to the roads, some of which are now tunnelled through the mountains and there are many more cars on the roads. It is still a great place for an inexpensive vacation, with excellent weather for those, like me, who do not like it too hot. In Funchal, days were in the 20°C range and night temperatures did not fall below 15°C. It

### *Writers are rewarded for sharing!*

*TravelScoop* rewards readers with subscription extensions of varying lengths for all submissions published. So whether you have a letter with a travel tip or a destination to share, please write to us!

is cooler in the mountains.

There is lots to see and do on the island: beautiful gardens, museums and other tourist sites. And Madeira is one of the better places for long walks in the mountains.

Wandering the streets, I noticed that there seemed to be more German than English spoken. This was confirmed by someone who told me that last year German tourists exceeded those from the U.K.

I stayed at the same hotel I had enjoyed last time – Residência Santa Clara, an old villa about five minutes walk (downhill) to the centre of Funchal. I paid a little less in Canadian dollar terms than five years ago - €27.50 a night (about C\$46) including breakfast – a real bargain. I had a comfortable room on the second floor with a private terrace. The hotel is family owned and the service is outstanding. The hotel has a small swimming pool.

Since my last visit, Portugal has switched to the Euro. As in most other European countries, the change seems to have resulted in a noticeable rounding up of prices. However, restaurant meals are still very reasonable on Madeira if one avoids the major hotels and those establishments which the guidebooks describe as “expensive”. Excellent food, especially locally caught fish, is found in moderately-priced restaurants.

A new cable car has been installed from the Old Town of Funchal up to Monte, an historic

small town with beautiful gardens, overlooking the Funchal Bay. The cable car ride (about 15 minutes each way) provides a spectacular view, including interesting bird’s eye views of people’s homes! The round trip costs €14 (about \$23) and is well worth it!

Hotel prices go up a little in the summer season, but Madeira remains an excellent choice for a low-cost vacation, especially during shoulder-season.

Residência Santa Clara, Calçada do Pico 168, 9000 Funchal, Madeira, tel: [code: 011 351] 291 742 194, fax: 291 743 280 or 291 741 338. (*If you enter ‘Residência Santa Clara, Funchal, Madeira’ in Google and click on the first site followed by ‘pictures’ you can view some charming photographs of this property – Ed.*)

*H. A. Sherman  
Calgary, AB*

For Portuguese Tourism information tel: 416 921 7376 or visit website: [www.madeiratourism.com](http://www.madeiratourism.com)

Here at TS we have just heard that the Port of Funchal has been awarded the prize for the ‘Best Destination Experience’ by *Dream World Cruise Destinations* magazine. The award was determined after a survey of cruise operators and ships’ captains in ports all over the world and was mainly due to the quality of its land services and the culture and beauty of Madeira. – Ed.

## Another Tip for Rhodes

In the Feb/March 2002 edition of TS there was a Greek story that included information on Rhodes. This article gave details of a hotel located outside the Old Town on the beach. But in my opinion the Old Town is so fascinating that it is worthwhile staying in the centre.

On my visit I stayed at the Marco Polo Mansions, an Ottoman-style inn in the heart of the twisted lanes of the Turkish quarter. If you visit [www.marcopolomansion.web.com](http://www.marcopolomansion.web.com) and click on one of the drawings and then scroll down, the excellent photos will show you what to expect.

It made all the difference to my stay being in the heart of things. The history and comfort of the place were memorable and I enjoyed the directions given by the capable owner each night as to which of the twisty paths I should take to discover yet another delightful restaurant tucked into a hidden square. Just one little tip: the lanes leading to the property are too narrow for a taxi to approach and the cobblestone surface makes wheeling luggage a little difficult. Travel as light as you can.

The Marco Polo Mansion B&B is located at Ag. Fanourious 40 – 42, Rhodes, Greece, tel/fax: 011 30 22410 25562, e-mail: [marcopolomansion@hotmail.com](mailto:marcopolomansion@hotmail.com)

*James Coulter  
Victoria, BC*

# The Travel Society

**We have a file listing several single travellers who wish to take a Travel Society tour and wish to share. Destinations include: China, Australia, Turkey and the Galapagos.**

**If you would like to share with another member please contact us. We will put you in touch with each other so that you can chat on the telephone - or meet if convenient - to see if you would like to share.**

**Call 416 926 2500, ex. 24 or 1 877 926 2500, ex. 24**

## Don't Miss Canberra

On a "down under" cruise our ship docked for three days in Sydney. As my companion and I had been to Sydney before we saw this as a marvellous opportunity to visit Canberra. Research revealed that by far the best way of getting there was by bus.

The Sydney bus station is centrally located, just a few steps off George Street, Sydney's major thoroughfare. The journey takes under 3½ hours, the bus was very comfortable and the scenery en route was varied and picturesque. It was dotted with signs with such names as Liverpool, Guildford, Farnham and Chipping Norton, all of which made us think that we were in England. The bus station in Canberra is also centrally located and upon arrival it took just a few minutes to find a taxi driver who was prepared to take us on a sightseeing tour at a reasonable hourly rate.

Canberra is a most impressive city. Two landmarks dominate the skyline. The Telstra Tower, not as high but very similar to the CN Tower, is aptly named the "Hypodermic Needle". The other is the flagpole on the Parliament Buildings, which sits on a specially designed structure, with the flag flying dramatically 81 meters above ground. The Parliament Buildings are deemed to be the finest in the world. It is truly an architectural masterpiece with an imaginative and harmonious blend of Western and Aboriginal designs. The forecourt is decorated with an Aboriginal dot paint-

ing. This art form was already flourishing when European explorers arrived in Australia. One could almost believe that this type of painting may have served as inspiration for Seurat and other pointillists.

Grey-green marble clad columns decorate the foyer, suggesting eucalyptus trees. Within the building there are 23 miles of walkways. Interior decorations include carvings, paintings, sculptures and decorative art. In 1988 the Queen attended the inauguration of the building and Canada sent a much-appreciated Inuit soapstone carving of a dancing walrus. It is displayed in a very prominent spot and Canadian visitors here receive a warm welcome.

Embassy Row is a fascinating road. The architecture of each building is characteristic of the country represented. It lends itself to a wonderful guessing game as to whose embassy it might be. Many can be very readily identified. The U.S. embassy is built with red bricks like a colonial New England home, South Africa is in the Cape Dutch style while China's building looks like the temple at the entrance to the Forbidden City.

The Australian War Memorial is not to be missed. It pays tribute to the 110,000 Australian men and women who gave their lives in nine wars over the past 120 years. The dioramas are incredibly realistic, particularly the one depicting the battle of Gallipoli. Here the realism is such that it makes you want to jump to safety into the nearest trench. It proves without a shadow of a doubt that whenever democracy, liberty and freedom are threatened the Aussies and New Zealanders are there to defend and protect such values.

We stayed at the NOVOTEL, 65 Northbourn Avenue about 100 metres from the bus stop. The rate for a twin room was C\$143 and included a delicious breakfast. More information can be obtained by calling 1 800 NOVOTEL, [www.novotel.com](http://www.novotel.com) There is a great choice of good restaurants in the

city. We enjoyed the The Charcoal Grill on London Circuit that serves traditional Australian food. It has a inviting décor and main courses are in the C\$18.00 range.

On the return journey to Sydney the bus took a slightly different route and thus we were able to enjoy different views of the magnificent countryside. It had been a most rewarding side trip. The bus trip costs A\$32 (about C\$30.50) one way. Tickets can be pre-booked (in our case the ship's travel representative reserved the tickets for us) but both in Sydney and Canberra we saw passengers buying tickets before boarding the bus. There's more information at [www.canberratourism.com.au](http://www.canberratourism.com.au)

*Barbara Redlich  
North York, ON*

## Stop Mid-Way!

For those planning to drive across Canada this year I'd like to report there's a great-value motel in Brandon, Manitoba – right in the centre of the country.

It's the Mid Way Motel, and their motto is "We sell sleep." We stayed in a very comfortable, air-conditioned room with two double beds, a coffee pot, microwave and refrigerator, for \$54 per night. After 6 p.m., long-distance telephone calls anywhere in Canada are free and free Internet service is also available. The continental breakfast, included in the room rate, offers more variety than most hotels: fresh fruit as well as juices, a choice of cold cereals, toast, jams, a variety of pastries, and milk, coffee, and tea. Rates are between \$43 and \$69.

This property is located at 1860, First Street North, Brandon, MB R7C 1A9, tel: 204 725 1560 or toll free 1 888 523 9184, fax: 204 727 6150. Drive safely!

*Lorna Olson,  
Thunder Bay, ON*

### How to visit The Travel Society website [www.travelsociety.com](http://www.travelsociety.com)

Our website is fully operational. We will constantly endeavour to improve it and welcome your input. To access the site the password will be up-dated monthly and will appear on the back page of your *TravelScoop* within the address box. You can renew your subscription on-line too!

# London

## Notes

story and photos by Ann Wallace



*A Dali creation looks over the Thames towards Westminster*

*The myriad delights of London, England could fill many volumes, so I can think of no title more appropriate for a short article of things recently enjoyed than mere 'London Notes', though I admit it's a rather uninspired heading for such a wonderful destination!*

*I'm sure most of our readers have visited London at least once and 'done' the highlights: the Tower of London, Buckingham Palace, the National Gallery and Trafalgar Square, Harrods, Parliament and so on. They are all wonderful, of course. But I find that it is on subsequent visits, when I search out new experiences and exhibitions, that the riches of this fabled capital impress themselves upon me even more.*

*I recently spent a week in London enjoying some museums and exhibitions that were new to me, or long-forgotten. So here are my "notes".*

### Three Museums South of the River

If you alight from your train or subway at Waterloo station there are three very different museums within walking distance of each other that can be enjoyed in a day ... although true war buffs could easily spend several days in the outstanding **Imperial War Museum**. Greatly expanded since I visited this museum as a child, this is now far more fascinating than any non-war buff could imagine. Here in this stately 1815 building, originally the Bethlem Royal Hospital for the insane (popularly known as 'Bedlam'), are vast halls containing tanks, guns and fighter planes and smaller galleries devoted to the conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century with art, artefacts, photography and film footage. There's a fascinating section on espionage and two "experiences" that will appeal to older children: realis-

tic walks through a WWI trench and a sojourn in a London air-raid shelter during the Blitz ... complete with gunfire noises and falling dust. (Speaking of children, this is a popular destination for school groups, but you won't encounter them if you go during the summer holidays.) The art gallery contains the fine London Blitz drawings by Henry Moore, the official war artist, and the works of many other artists, some of them commissioned for propaganda purposes. The top floor is home to the important and harrowing Holocaust Exhibition, the largest outside Israel and the U.S. (no children under 13 admitted here) for which you should allow yourself an hour, probably to be followed by a comforting cup of tea in the rather plain cafeteria or a reflective walk in the Peace Garden in the museum's grounds.

For those with a specific interest in one of the world

wars, the staff welcome independent research in the library, but a place in the reading room must be booked two weeks in advance. The museum holds the world's oldest film archive dating from 1917 (120 million feet of film), the world's largest sound archive totaling 32,000 hours, over 6 million photographs and thousands of posters. If the items that interest you are not on display you can arrange to have access to the archives by appointment.

War is the major theme of another, much smaller, museum in this area that will also interest those involved in the medical profession, especially nurses. It's the **Florence Nightingale Museum**, located in St. Thomas' Hospital, beside Westminster Bridge and within walking distance of the war museum. There's a 20-minute film of Nightingale's early life and many interesting documents – including newspaper cuttings from *The Times* – regarding her work during the Crimean War. As I say, very interesting, especially for experienced and 'want-to-be' nurses.

That's probably enough for one day, but if you haven't lingered too long in the above you may also find time for one of the galleries in County Hall, adjacent to Waterloo. The bizarre offerings in the new, much publicized Saatchi Gallery, with its depictions of bullet holes in the head, dead animals, unmade beds, perspex heads filled with blood, tortured sculptures and paintings of murderers, etc., may not appeal (no ... not my cup of tea) but the modern black-walled, spot-lit rooms of the **Dalí Universe** hold some beautiful – and challenging – things and I enjoyed my visit there very much.

### A Gallery a Little Further Away

If you feel like venturing a short way out of the centre of town, art lovers will enjoy an excursion to Dulwich Village, location of the **Dulwich Picture Gallery**, England's oldest public picture gallery. Here in an elegant Neo-classical building you will discover over 300 works, including works by Rembrandt, Rubens, Van Dyck, Gainsborough and Murillo. My only complaint is that some of the works are placed too high on the walls to enjoy. Take the train from Victoria Station to West Dulwich, turn right out of the station and left along College Road ... it's a 15-minute walk. There's a small, but rather expensive, restaurant in the gallery's modern extension with a terrace overlooking the pretty garden, or you can explore 18<sup>th</sup> century Dulwich Village which is just a few minutes' walk from the gallery. A nice out-of-town trip.

### Back in Town

I know London's famed National Gallery, that graces the north side of Trafalgar Square, well, but until this spring I had never set foot inside the National Portrait Gallery located right behind it. Hearing this, an art-loving friend urged me to go and we arranged to meet. "It's so interesting," she said "and not at all just a collection

of portraits." But first I was in for another treat. My friend had arrived at our meeting place before me and had noticed that there was a free lunchtime concert due to start at famous **St Martin-in-the-Fields**, one of London's best-loved churches that stands in the corner of Trafalgar Square, just across the street from the museums. Of course the Academy of St Martin-in-the-Fields, founded by Sir Neville Marriner, is well known to music lovers ... barely a day goes by without those names being heard on classical music stations across Canada and around the world. So ... if you are in London on a Monday, Tuesday or Friday at 1 p.m. treat yourself to a free lunchtime concert, a programme that has been running for over 50 years and that is one of the most popular free concert series in Britain. Even better, I am sure, would be a candle-lit evening concert. The acoustics are very fine, the programmes are varied and the 'ghosts' are famous: Handel once played the church's organ and it is said Mozart also gave a concert here. Full details of forthcoming concerts can be found on their excellent website (details below), where seats for the evening per-



*Life-size models in the Florence Nightingale Museum*



*Another Dalí sculpture stands beside British Airways' London Eye*



formances can be reserved. And for a meal before or after you enjoy the performance, descend the ancient steps to the licensed Café-in-the-Crypt for a wide selection of home-made style dishes. There's also an excellent music, book and gift shop located there.

After enjoying our concert we crossed the road again and entered the **National Portrait Gallery**. "Wow!" was all I could say. Why had I not been before? Here, of course, you will find familiar faces from British history – Henry VIII, Richard III, Elizabeth I, Shakespeare – all of whom you will recognize. Then there are the faces of the Brontë sisters staring from their creased canvas, the sketch of Jane Austen by her sister (in all cases the only known likenesses), the young Charles Dickens, elderly Charles Darwin, Queen Elizabeth II by Andy Warhol, Germaine Greer and many, many more. The paintings are not all portraits. Among the 10,000 works are family and court groups, depictions of famous conferences, allegories, self-portraits of famous artists such as Hogarth and Reynolds, cartoons and caricatures and an enormous canvas that you may already be familiar with if you have seen the reproduction in the

Florence Nightingale Museum. It's the original of *The Mission of Mercy: Florence Nightingale Receiving the Wounded at Scutari*, by Jerry Barrett (1857). Another highlight for me was the soaring canvas by Sir James Guthrie entitled *Statesmen of World War I* (painted between 1924 and 1930); remarkable, I thought, in the way it bathed Sir Winston Churchill in light and made him the central focus of the piece many years before his achievements in the Second World War.

The gallery is an extremely popular and active one, with almost constant special exhibitions, including many devoted to photographers from around the world and cutting-edge-technology video portraits.

This gallery has enjoyed much publicity since 2000, when it became the beneficiary of donations from the Heritage Lottery Fund and from a few private donors, particularly Dr Christopher Ondaatje. This has enabled the gallery to modernize, to add new spaces and many other public facilities, including a very 'cool' roof-top restaurant with stunning views over Nelson's Column and Trafalgar Square (complete with Canada's flag flying over Canada

House) and down Whitehall to Westminster. Having missed lunch before of the church concert, my friend and I decided to enjoy an early 'high tea' in this restaurant. I rolled my eyes at the £10 (approx. C\$24) price tag for this treat, but my friend already knew that, even without lunch, it was fine for sharing: four dainty sandwiches, a large scone with cream and preserves and a slice of chocolate gâteau. (Yes, I know, roll out those calories!)

## At the Victoria & Albert this Summer

**F**ashionistas of 'a certain age', who would enjoy looking back over nearly half a century of changing fashions, should hurry over to London before 11 July, which is the closing date for the blockbuster *Vivienne Westwood* exhibition at the renowned Victoria & Albert Museum. If you can take along a teen or twenty-something daughter, so much the better! From early crude t-shirts to sumptuous beadwork, corsets, crinolines, those towering shoes and fabulous evening gowns for Britain's aristocracy, Ms Westwood has done it all – and more – in the fashion world. Of course you don't need to have an interest in 20<sup>th</sup> century fashion to enjoy a visit to the V&A ... it's a vast and wonderful museum with something for every taste and an excellent gift store. And its location in gracious South Kensington means it's a pleasant summer stroll from the hurly-burly of neighbouring Knightsbridge.

## Getting There

**F**or this trip I used Air Transat and checked out their Montcalm Hotel package (see *Air Transat Holidays* brochure available from your travel agent). I treated myself to an up-grade to Club Class (\$220) and must report that this must represent the best trans-Atlantic fare in the business. With a small dedicated cabin, wide comfortable leather seats with plenty of leg room, good meals, free bar service, separate check-in

counters and efficient priority baggage service, Air Transat's up-graded service compares pretty well to other airlines' business class at a fraction of the cost. Add to this their European, go-as-you-please packages with lots of extras (including airport transfers), and you have the makings of a fine vacation, not only in Britain but also in France, Germany, Ireland, the Netherlands and Poland. Air Transat operate with an 'open jaws' policy so you can combine several countries in your itinerary. Short or long-term car rentals are also available through AT.

## Accommodation

**T**he Montcalm Hotel is one of your choices listed in the *Air Transat Holidays* brochure. (Yes, it's the Montcalm of Canadian fame ... the street adjacent to the hotel is even called Quebec Street, though I was unable to discover the connection.) This is no plain, basic hotel on the fringes of London. Quite the contrary. It's a luxurious, gracious five-storey Georgian property located in a quiet, elegant tree-lined crescent – Great Cumberland Place – just minutes from Oxford Street, Selfridges, Marble Arch, Hyde Park and Park Lane. Everything about this 120-room hotel sparkles, from its beautiful furnishings to its attentive staff. There's lots of natural light in the public rooms here, including the welcoming bar where a fire was burning on a chilly April day and a there's a very pretty restaurant – The Crescent – whose hours accommodate theatre-goers. The rooms are not large, but they are beautifully decorated, air-conditioned, with fax, modem,



*Exhibits at the Vivienne Westwood exhibition, V&A Museum*



photocopier and colour printer, voicemail and satellite TV, safe, trouser press, minibar, bathrobes and more, making it an ideal property for the business traveller as well as the London tourist. There's also a low-allergen room available for asthma and allergy sufferers. If I tell you the rack rate for this property is "from £165 (over C\$400) per night" you will understand what a great deal the Air Transat packages represent. I cannot recommend too highly. The AT packages listed in their brochure are available until March 2005, so plan to treat yourself in the season you prefer.

## London Walks

**T**here's no such thing as 'a spare half day' in London ... there's always so much to do and see. But if you like to walk and explore an area in depth or with a theme you *must* treat yourself to a guided walk with the company known as **Original London Walks**, many of whose wonderful guides are actors or authors. Whatever your interest in the capital – hidden or haunted London, Charles Dickens, Thames pubs, Jack the Ripper, the Beatles, Oscar Wilde, Notting Hill and Portobello Market, Shakespeare, tours of top museums and dozens more – you'll find a walk to interest you. I try to enjoy a different one every time I'm in London. The company also offers day trips out of the city: Bath, Brighton, Canterbury, Stonehenge, Windsor Castle and many more. Look for London Walks' distinctive black-and-white brochure around London or use the contacts below.

## Guidebooks

**I**nsight Guides always cover city sights and sites very well, with illustrations and very clear maps. Of course there is one simply entitled **London**. They also offer a more specialized guide **Museums and Galleries of London** which is both interesting and informa-

tive and makes me realize many more visits to London should be in my plans! Priced at about C\$32 and \$28 respectively, these books are not only helpful they provide travellers with a good souvenir of their visits.

### Some details...

**Imperial War Museum**, tel: (011 44) 20 7416 5320, [www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk), admission free.

**Florence Nightingale Museum**, tel: 20 7620 0374, [www.florence-nightingale.co.uk](http://www.florence-nightingale.co.uk), admission £5.80 or less.

**Dalí Universe**, tel 20 7620 2720, [www.daliuniverse.com](http://www.daliuniverse.com), admission £8.50 or less.


**Dulwich Picture Gallery**, tel: 20 8693 5254, [www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk](http://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk), admission £4 or less, closed Mondays.

**St Martin-in-the-Fields**, box office: 20 7839 8362, [www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org](http://www.stmartin-in-the-fields.org), lunchtime concerts are free, evening performances from £6 - £18.

**National Portrait Gallery**, tel: 20 7306 0055 or 20 7312 2463 for recorded information, [www.npg.org.uk](http://www.npg.org.uk), admission free.

**The Victoria and Albert Museum**, tel: 20 7942 2000, [www.vam.ac.uk](http://www.vam.ac.uk), general admission to the museum is free but there is an £8 (less for seniors and students) charge for the Westwood exhibition. Most London museums are open daily from 10 a.m. with various holiday closures (Christmas, etc.) All are wheelchair accessible.

**Air Transat** details from your travel agent or visit [www.airtransat.com](http://www.airtransat.com)

**Original London Walks**, tel: 20 7624 3978, e-mail: [London@walks.com](mailto:London@walks.com), [www.walks.com](http://www.walks.com) There's no need to reserve a London Walk, the brochure tells where the group will meet – usually just outside an Underground Station. The walks take about two hours, rain or shine and cost £5.50 per adult or £4.50 for what they call 'super-adults' (65+) or students. 



London's elegant Montcalm Hotel

# Diary of a Voyage to Antarctica

story by Carrie Toomey, photos by Carrie and Pat Toomey



**I**n December 2003 I was able to accompany my husband on a three-week trip on Holland-America's m.s. *Amsterdam*. My husband, Pat, had been employed by Holland-America for this voyage as a Lecturer and Ice Pilot for the Antarctic. The cruise started in Valparaiso, Chile, going south to the Antarctic peninsula, then on to the Falklands, Argentina, Uruguay and Brazil – a total of three cruise segments. Here are excerpts from the diary I always keep when travelling, but to sum up before I even begin I'd like to say it was a wonderful trip and Holland-America don't stint on anything. There always seemed to be plenty of space on board and it never felt crowded as other ships sometimes do. The Antarctic section was the highlight and all passengers were amazed and fascinated with the landscape (or sea and icescape) and the bird and marine life. There was an enormous amount of positive feedback from the passengers.

There are, of course, smaller expedition ships that go to the Antarctic and, if they are small enough with not too many passengers, then they can land people under strict rules. Holland-America do not do this for a variety of reasons, but one certainly gets a good taste of what this region is like on their cruise and the scenery is spectacular.

The side trips we took in South America were lovely too. Yes, they were a bit expensive but at least we knew the ship wouldn't sail without us, while some passengers who arranged side trips independently reported they were worried whether their tour would be back in time!

For prices and information on these trips consult your travel agent or visit Holland-America's website: [www.hollandamerica.com](http://www.hollandamerica.com).

## **Day 1 – 17 December – getting there**

First, a one-hour flight from Kingston to Toronto, then joined a huge number of people trying to get through U.S. Immigration. Because of the crowd and the officious manner of the agent, we nearly missed our Air Canada flight to Miami. Then it was on to an overnight American Airlines plane bound for Santiago, Chile. (Note: if we can avoid it, we will not go through Miami or take AA again. For anyone flying to Chile, I would strongly recommend taking Air Canada direct from Toronto to Santiago to avoid the frustrations of border crossing and of Miami.)

## Day 2 – still getting there, and boat familiarization

Canadian passport holders are required to pay a \$55 fee to enter Chile. (If you also hold a British passport make sure you take it with you as this fee is not applicable to U.K. citizens.) We then encountered several hitches – lost luggage and my name not on the cruise list held by the bus transfer company – before we finally boarded the bus for the two-hour drive to Valparaiso with a short stop for coffee. But finally we were aboard.

Our cabin was on the Lower Promenade deck (level 3) which is my favourite as the outside promenade is easily accessible on both sides of the ship. It was a nice room with a big, tinted window looking out onto the promenade, comfortable beds, desk and settee and a full bathroom with a somewhat shortened bath but very adequate. Once we were settled we took a wander around the ship finding where everything was, attending the boat drill, giving a charge card imprint at the front desk



*Orsono Volcano from the falls at Saltos del Rio Petrohue*

and generally familiarizing ourselves with the vessel and its amenities. Most of the public spaces are on the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> decks (promenade and upper promenade) with lounges, bars, Internet café, Java coffee bar, photographer, Wajang theatre, front desk, tour desk and small stores. There is also a doctor, dentist and pharmacy on board, Braille signs on the elevators and room number plaques and a resident minister, priest and rabbi.

## Day 3 – a day at sea

We signed up for several tours as we know these can fill up quickly. The Cruise Director gave an art tour of the ship pointing out some very interesting exhibits including paintings, models, ceramics and a large tapestry depicting the artist's impression of South American peoples made especially for this ship. There were about 1,070 passengers on

board – almost full. The ship seems to be remarkably spacious and it is always possible to find a quiet corner. Later I attended a lecture by the Port Lecturer – Graham Sunderland – about Puerto Montt, our first stop. There was always to be a talk about each port and the tour possibilities in each a few days before arrival. This evening we cancelled our dining room table, having decided to try the buffet-style Lido restaurant on the 8<sup>th</sup> deck.

## Day 4 – day trip from Puerto Montt

We arrived at Puerto Montt and took the Photo Safari Trip to the Orsono Volcano (US\$109 each). This was an eight-hour tour. We were anchored off and had to take tenders to the dock, where our buses were waiting. We had a very good guide with excellent English. Our first stop was at Puerto Varas, beside a large lake, where salmon are farmed. Milk and honey are also local specialities. Here there are roses planted down in the



streets and in the gardens and wooden shingles made from alerce wood are a feature of the district. Soon we were setting off for the volcano, through the Ensenada Forest Reserve and up a dirt track to the bottom of a ski tow where we parked and then walked, enjoying the spectacular views. The volcano has the typical cone and snow on the upper levels – absolutely beautiful and perfect for photographs. Lunch was served at Restaurant Las Tranqueras, not too far away, and included the area's famous pisco sour, empanadas, local salmon and sopapilla bread followed by South American-style expresso coffee. The tour finished with a visit to the waterfalls at Saltos del Rio Petrohue, where rushing white water falls over black volcanic rock with the picture-perfect volcano in the background.

To cap a perfect day, when we returned to our cabin we discovered our missing suitcase had arrived.

## Day 5 – through the fjords and on the Northern Patagonia/Coyhaique City tour

Through the Chilean fjords and the Moraldo Channel this morning, past heavily-wooded islands with waterfalls, down to Puerto Chacabuco in an inlet with fish farms close by. We again had to take the tenders for the short ride to the dock. We had decided to take the Northern Patagonia and Coyhaique City tour (US\$79 each) which left at midday. The bus took us up the beautiful Simpson River valley with high mountains on both sides and, as the scene unfolded, forests of Patagonian beech. Later the lush green valley opened up to reveal pastoral scenes of cows in fields and swathes of brilliant blue lupins, sometimes with their colour enhanced by the yellow flowers of broom bushes and delicate wild red fuchsias. Coyhaique City did not seem to be very interesting, but it did have a small handicraft market. On the return



*Islands in the Lemaire Channel*

journey we stopped at a pretty waterfall called Virgin Falls, where there was a grotto dedicated to the Virgin Mary.

## Day 6 – at sea

Today is 22 December. There have been Christmas decorations up since we arrived on board, with decorated trees in various locations including a huge one in the Queen's Lounge where most of the lectures and evening entertainment take place. Little wreaths on all the cabin doors also remind us of the season.

Today I went to Dr David Campbell's lecture on whales, penguins and seals and afterwards bought an illustrated book on Patagonian and Antarctic wildlife and plants. We have been sailing through fjords, past heavily treed island trailing veils of clouds with waterfalls tumbling from the glaciated summits. All very beautiful.

This evening the Captain's cocktail party in the Crows

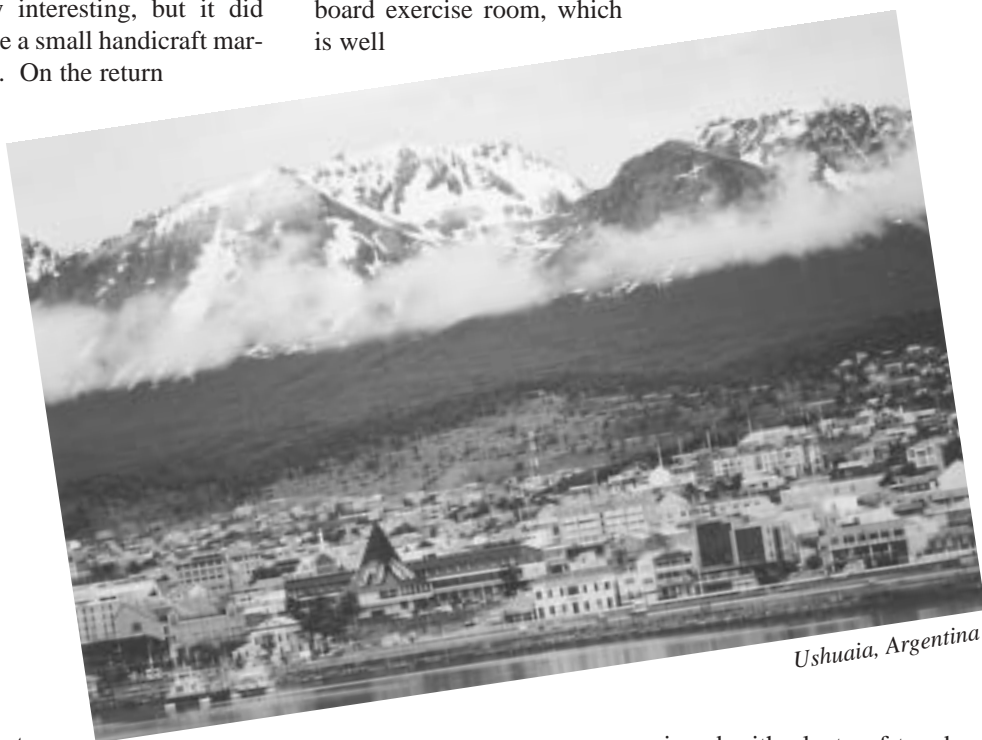
Nest on the 9<sup>th</sup> deck gave us the opportunity to meet some of the less-visible crew members.

## Day 7 – at sea

Another day at sea visiting the Pope Pius XI glacier and gazing at the beautiful blue ice floating in the bay. And, for me, lecture day! There was my husband Pat's lecture on the polar itinerary and Antarctic navigation; Graham Sunderland's talk on the port of Ushuaia and John Spletstoeser's presentation on the Antarctic as a destination and why we go there.

## Day 8 – Christmas Eve and a Penguin Colony Tour

Yes, Christmas Eve, though it didn't feel like it at all! During the morning I took advantage of the on-board exercise room, which is well



*Ushuaia, Argentina*

equipped with plenty of treadmills, rowing machines, weights and various other pieces of equipment.

We arrived in Punta Arenas which, like Ushuaia, was originally a penal colony, where we took the afternoon tour to the Otway Penguin Colony (US\$59). We had another good guide for the outing to see the Magellanic penguins, which are a smallish burrowing bird with a distinctive stripe across their chests. The young penguins in their grey coats were big enough to be outside the burrows waiting for their parents to return from the sea. The interesting drive to the site took about an hour, across fairly flat countryside with the Magellan Strait and Tierra del Fuego visible. The flora consists mainly of creamy white tufts of grass, low white flowering shrubs and various wildflowers. Our list of fauna spotted included sheep at estancias (ranches), a pair of Patagonian foxes, some foraging skunks and several species of birds including caracaras and groups of rheas.

During the evening the crew presented a concert with songs and carols in English, Indonesian, Malaysian and Dutch. The 600-strong crew come from 36 countries, while passengers were about half American and the rest a mix of Canadians, Europeans, Australians, South Americans and Mexicans. After the concert a huge feast of desserts and cakes awaited us out in the foyer.

### **Day 9 – Christmas Day**

Today we travelled through the Beagle Channel, past several glaciers and into Ushuaia, Argentina, where the ship tied up at a dock right downtown. Several tourist shops were open. The distinctive Provincial Legislature building is close to the harbour with the yellow Hotel Canal Beagle beside it. Huge red oriental poppies were just starting to bloom. Ushuaia is fairly sizeable with an airport, stores, hotels and restaurants (but is not wheelchair friendly). We departed during the afternoon, watching porpoises playing around the pilot boat as it returned the pilot to town. Dinner was festive and Dr Justin Miller gave a guitar concert in the evening (and he was later to give several interesting talks on different types of music).

### **Day 10 – Cape Horn, destination Antarctica**

Up early today to see Cape Horn and be rewarded by a rainbow briefly highlighting the rocky headland. Another lecture by Dr David Campbell about mosses, lichens and mites as wildlife in Antarctica, then Graham Sunderland talked about the birds we were seeing. He was often on deck identifying them. Minke whales seen close by, the most common whale we saw. Comedian Yacov Noy tonight. Calm seas.

### **Day 11 – the first of our Antarctic days**

I am glad of my heavy Canadian coat, gloves and hat! Early it was briefly foggy, but then cleared to a glorious day of sunshine with calm waters. There has been plenty of wildlife to see: lots of birds, a leopard seal on an icefloe, Gentoo penguins on the rocks and a chunky sheathbill landed on the ship's rail and sat there for 20 minutes. Later there were more penguins swimming in the water, a beaked whale, icebergs, more bright sun and deep blue water, black rocks and pure white snow. Hot cider was served on deck (other days it was to be hot soup). We passed into the spectacular, narrow Lemaire Channel which was one of the most exciting experiences of our adventure. We had to turn around at the end and return, passing by Palmer Station, the U.S. base on Anvers Island. Then, as time allowed and it was close to the solstice, we proceeded overnight down to the Antarctic Circle to see the midnight sun. We had been outside almost the whole day, afraid of missing something!

### **Day 12**

Whales were blowing nearby as we had breakfast in the Lido Restaurant – humpback this time – framed by more icebergs, a navy-blue sea and cerulean sky. Into the Neumayer Channel and past Anvers Island again, gazing at the black peaks of the Fief Mountain range and into the Gerlache Strait

with more spectacular icebergs floating in the water with turquoise blue showing below the waterline and a paler colour in the hollows above. We passed the Chilean base of Gonzalez Videla, saw more penguins and seals and an expedition ship heading south. One iceberg that particularly held our interest had a blue pool scooped out of one side full of penguins jumping and frolicking in the water, possibly chasing fish trapped in the pool. Later, heading north towards Deception Island, we saw more Minke whales with Orcas and humpbacks further away.

### **Day 13**

There was a lot of ice about and we were not able to get into Hope Bay as planned, so we headed on up the Bransfield Strait, past King George Island where we saw more whales and watched the aerial gymnastics of a mixed flock of cape petrels and fulmars. Some of the icebergs were huge tabular ones broken off from the iceshelf, quite different to those deposited by the glaciers. The smaller icebergs had chin-strap penguins on them. We saw strings of frazil ice and bergy bits and small pieces in strings often surrounding a huge bluish tabular iceberg. We passed fairly close to the desolate and inhospitable Elephant Island where the men of Sir Ernest Shackleton's expedition managed to survive until he returned to rescue them ... black pinnacles of rock and white snow and ice. Our final adventure of the day was watching our un-ice-strengthened ship manoeuvre through the strings of ice barring our way to the open water. With skill and expertise no damage done and soon we were heading north east towards the Falklands.

### **Day 14 – at sea**

There was snow on the decks this morning, to the delight of some of the crew who made time for a snowball fight! This was a day at sea and another lecture day. There are always all sorts of activities going on: bridge, bingo, wine tastings, movies, aerobics, trivia games and demonstrations of various sorts, so choices have to be made. Major-General Neville Smethurst lectured on the Falklands War, then Graham Sunderland told us about Stanley, the capital of the Falklands. There was also a talk about Baltic amber given by the on-board jewellery group from Brazil. I then listened to Dr Campbell's talk on the Southern Ocean and Dr Miller lecturing on the big bands of the 40s and 50s. Amazing all there is to choose from! In the evening we went to a concert given by an accomplished singer from Australia named Darren Williams. Tomorrow we'll be arriving at the Falklands! 🇧🇪

*Carrie Toomey is a TravelScoop subscriber who lives in Kingston, ON. The second installment of her cruise diary will appear in the July issue.*



# Editor's Getaways

by Ann Wallace

*I am often asked if, after travelling so much, I choose to stay at home when I have time to relax. Well, yes, home is good and I also enjoy much Toronto has to offer. But I also enjoy the occasional getaway fairly close to Toronto. So, with summer approaching I thought I'd share with you a few notes from 'close to my own backyard'.*

## Prince Edward County

**K**nown by locals merely as “the county”, this lovely “almost-an-island” is one of Ontario’s best-kept secrets. It’s actually a large peninsula, virtually cut to island status by the Murray Canal which allows boats access to the beautiful Bay of Quinte and protected passage on up to Kingston. Less than two hours’ drive east from Toronto, turn off the 401 to Trenton, Belleville or Desoronto and the clearly sign-posted bridges will take you there; or drive to Adolphustown on the Loyalist Parkway and take the free Glenora ferry (every half hour from 6 a.m. to 2 a.m.) across. Once on “the county” you’ll discover a quiet, unspoiled area offering airy, pastoral vistas and historic Loyalist towns and villages. Here there’s 800 km of spectacular shoreline with craggy cliffs, smooth limestone ledges and almost-deserted sand and pebble beaches (including the wonderful Sandbanks Provincial Park, which contains the largest freshwater sand dunes in the world). Add to this a wide selection of antique and craft stores, bird-watching, wonderful food and dozens of B&B’s and inns (with nary a cookie-cutter hotel amongst them) and you have one of my favourite places.

The *grande dame* of inns on the island is **The Waring House**, just a short drive from the island’s major town – Picton. Here in this gracious inn visitors can enjoy a variety of charming rooms in the inn itself, in the annex known as The House Next Door or in the Vineyard View Cottage. Here there’s an English-style pub (with toe-tapping music on Wednesdays and Saturdays) and a very pretty restaurant,

both of which serve superb food and are very popular both with visitors and locals.

Another of my favourite properties here is the **Devonshire Inn** in Wellington. Even if you don’t stay, do stop here for a meal on their beach-side restaurant patio while listening to Lake Ontario’s waves on the pebble beach. And nearby, also in Wellington, is the gracious **Ganders B&B**, a lovely property offering three delightful en suite rooms and all the comforts of home.

Once in “the county” you’ll discover a multitude of pamphlets detailing all the area has to offer: guides to the antique stores, studio tours, winery visits, sheep dog trials, jazz festivals, cycling routes, food fairs and markets and much more. It wouldn’t be accurate to describe it as “undiscovered” because many people love the area and the communities are active, but I can assure you it is quiet and unspoiled and a great place for a vacation of any length.

**The Waring House**, Box 20024, Picton, ON K0K 3V0, tel: 613 476 7492 or 1 800 621 4956, e-mail: [waringshouse@sympatico.ca](mailto:waringshouse@sympatico.ca), [www.waringshouse.com](http://www.waringshouse.com), week-day rates from \$115, weekends from \$130.

**The Devonshire Inn**, 24 Wharf Street, Wellington, ON K0K 3L0, tel: 613 399 1851 or 1 800 544 9937, e-mail: [getaway@devonshire-inn.com](mailto:getaway@devonshire-inn.com), [www.devonshire-inn.com](http://www.devonshire-inn.com), rates from \$135.

**The Ganders B&B**, 22 Beach Street, P.O. Box 175, Wellington, ON K0K 3L0, tel: 613 399 1987, e-mail: [jcgander@reach.net](mailto:jcgander@reach.net), [www.gandersbb.com](http://www.gandersbb.com), rates from \$100.

**Prince Edward County** information from 613 393 2796 or visit [www.thecounty.ca](http://www.thecounty.ca) or [www.pec.on.ca](http://www.pec.on.ca)

## Heading East

I have good friends in Montreal and from time to time I love leaving the office early and hitting the 401 to spend a week-end with them. But the drive takes about five hours and is tedious, so what we like to do is break the journey half way to enjoy a relaxing evening. Our choice is the Calico Cat B&B in Brockville where hosts Dixie and John Logie always give us a warm welcome. Their property is just a minute off the highway, yet it seems a world away. Their home sits high above the St. Lawrence River, with a beautiful terraced garden that drops to their boathouse, dock and, of course, the water, while picture windows in the house bring the view indoors. Early risers enjoy sitting on the dock with a pot of tea or coffee watching the sun rise while, all day long, the passing boats offer an ever-changing scene. This property is not an inn, but a real home-away-from-home, which guests invariably have to themselves, though with just two bedrooms – a queen and a twin with a shared bathroom (your hosts stay in the converted boathouse) – it is also ideal for a travelling family or four friends. My husband and I often take family and friends from England there and they get such a thrill staying right on the famous river. And, of course, the area is a traveller's delight. Here you are close to the Thousand Islands and their popular boat tours, the charming theatres of Brockville and Gananoque, quaint towns and villages and some of Canada's most beautiful scenery. On a fine day or evening we can never resist covering part of our journey on the spectacular 1000 Islands Parkway. The historic town of Brockville is just a short drive away and Dixie and John know all the restaurants there.

Prices at The Calico Cat are \$95 double, \$75 single which includes lots of tea and coffee and an elegant multi-course breakfast which can be enjoyed on the patio or dock-side. Although we know our Montreal friends are awaiting us, it's always hard to leave! Visitors to this part of Ontario can spend a delightful vacation in this area, while the property is a great address to have for those who frequently do that journey between Toronto and Montreal.

**The Calico Cat** is located at 193 Brockmere Cliff Road, Brockville, ON K6V 5T3, tel: 613 342 0363, e-mail: [TheCalicoCat@ripnet.com](mailto:TheCalicoCat@ripnet.com), [www.bbcanada.com/350.html](http://www.bbcanada.com/350.html)

## The Shaw Festival, Niagara-on-the-Lake

No need to mention, I'm sure, that Ontario's two great theatre festivals – Stratford and Shaw – offer outstanding theatrical experiences. I go whenever I can. Although the pretty town of Stratford offers wonderful restaurants, inns and B&Bs, I usually drive back to Toronto after a theatre outing there. But when I go round to the Shaw Festival theatres at Niagara-on-the-Lake I usually like to stay overnight and enjoy a morning walk beside the lake and, perhaps, a winery visit on the journey home.

Niagara-on-the-Lake offers a selection of up-scale and expensive hotels (Queen's Landing and The Prince of Wales in particular come to mind) that are located in town and close to the theatres. Last year, in searching for something less expensive, but still in town and within walking distance

of the theatres, I found the Charles Inn (previously known as the Kiely Inn). This gracious 1832 property isn't as fancy and flower-laden as its expensive competitors further up in town, but in my opinion it's the more charming for that. The relaxed English-style bar is a favourite with locals as well as visitors, the bar staff are knowledgeable about local wines and the little country dining room serves good food in a

friendly atmosphere. It always seems to be full. The property stands right beside a lake-side golf course and park which contains the remnants of an old fort and there are pleasant walks in all directions: the park, the lakeshore or through the residential areas of this prosperous town. With prices from \$106 Charles Inn is a bargain for this town that is so popular with tourists. But a stay at the Charles and a couple of theatre performances make for a memorable getaway ... go during the week, when the village is not so crowded, if you can. Visitors to Ontario may like to consider renting a car to explore this area further. It's full of history, wineries, fine restaurants and all the attractions of nearby Niagara Falls just a short, spectacular drive away.

**Stratford Festival:** 1 800 567 1600 or [www.stratford-festival.on.ca](http://www.stratford-festival.on.ca)

**Shaw Festival:** 1 800 511 7429 or [www.shawfest.com](http://www.shawfest.com)

**The Charles Inn**, 209 Queen Street, P.O. Box 642, Niagara-on-the-Lake, ON L0S 1J0, tel: 905 468 4588 or 1 866 556 8883, [www.uppercanadahotel.com](http://www.uppercanadahotel.com) 



*The Charles Inn, Niagara-on-the-Lake (Wallace)*

## BRITAIN

For those of you planning on travelling independently in Britain (or elsewhere in Europe) with your trusty lap-top, make a note of [www.luxuryweekendbreaks.com](http://www.luxuryweekendbreaks.com), a site that lists about 1,600 week-end *and* mid-week breaks through the UK and on the continent. The site lists accommodation bargains such as low prices, up-grades, free champagne, free extra nights, late check-outs and more. Breaks are available in cities, in the countryside and seaside as well as sports and special interest experiences (wine, music, etc.) as well as short vacations, including flights with British Airways, to cities in mainland Europe with stays in some famous hotels. Check it out before you leave ... there are discounts on London hotels to be found too.

Another website that visitors to London may like to investigate is [www.londonelite.com](http://www.londonelite.com), a site which provides insider information on enjoying the city without spending a fortune, a section of special offers and a variety of self-conducted day trips with prices for every facet of your day. While much of the website is free, the 'Special Offers' and 'Concierge' sections (which the site claims can save a great deal of money) are accessible only to 'Friends of London Elite'. Becoming a 'Friend' costs US\$20 per year and members will also receive a monthly newsletter. *If any readers use either of these sites, feedback to TS would be appreciated ... thanks! – Ed.* Still in London, some of you may be more confident visiting the city if you know there is a publication available from London Underground called *Access to the Underground: a step by step guide to each station for elderly and disabled people*. Other pamphlets are also available, such as details on low-floor and 'mobility' bus routes and 'Freedom passes' for elderly and disabled people. For more information on these publications e-mail: [access&mobility@tfl.gov.co.uk](mailto:access&mobility@tfl.gov.co.uk) or call (011 44) 20 7941 4600.

## GERMANY

There's a new travel guide available from the German National Tourist Office entitled *Great Holidays on a Small Budget*. Within 200, full-colour pages the guide presents 16 regions and 52 cities, each with reference maps and e-mail/web addresses for general tourism details and each followed by information about small hotels, pensions, guest houses, self-catering units and hostels. All accommodations give an accurate price range for rooms and indicate such things as proximity to public transportation, credit card acceptance and even whether they have bikes for visitors' use. From Berlin to the Black Forest, every destination is covered. For your free copy of the guide call 1 877 315 6237, e-mail: [gntonyc@d-z-t.com](mailto:gntonyc@d-z-t.com) or visit [www.come-to-germany.com](http://www.come-to-germany.com)

## GRENADA

Do you love to tap your feet or dance to the rhythm of calypso and steel bands? Or perhaps vibrant photography is your interest? If so, taking part in the island of Grenada's Carnival is sure to appeal. Due to take place from 24 July – 10 August (with the highlights occurring on 9 & 10 August) in St. George's, this festival includes calypso and steel band competitions, costume parades and street "jump-ups". Rather than being the traditional pre-Lenten festival, Grenada's carnival grew out of the festive, quasi-religious celebrations that travelled to the Caribbean in the 17<sup>th</sup> century via the French aristocracy, who used to throw magnificent masked dances at their plantations. The slaves began mimicking and parodying their elaborate dresses and courtly manners and thus a different style of celebration – know as "Spice Mas" – was born. For details of this and travel to Grenada in general, visit [www.grenada-grenadines.com](http://www.grenada-grenadines.com), click on My Regional Guide (lower left) for information for Canadians, or call the Grenada Board of Tourism in Toronto at 416 595 1339.

## IRELAND

When travelling to Ireland, a stay in Dublin usually tops the list of most visitors. Now Dublin Tourism has launched a Dublin Pass, a passport to over 30 of Dublin's most popular attractions with a "go to the front of the line" facility. The Pass may be purchased for 1, 2, 3 or 6 days at prices ranging from €29 – about C\$45 – to €89 (or \$155). The price not only covers entrance to attractions, but also gives access to special offers and preferential rates at shops, theatres, tours and a selection of restaurants. When the attraction is normally free to the public, the Dublin Pass provides special offers such as museum guidebooks and complimentary refreshments. The Dublin Pass also includes coach transfer from Dublin airport (though travellers should remember that this journey will activate the pass and thus may not be a good idea for a 1-day pass). The pass can be purchased via [www.dublinpass.com](http://www.dublinpass.com) or [www.visitdublin.com](http://www.visitdublin.com) or in Dublin itself from tourist information centres, hotels, etc. For telephone enquiries in Canada call 1 800 223 6470. Those with Ireland in their plans may also like to call for the 68-page *2004 Holiday & Vacation Planner* (which includes maps and suggested touring routes) as well as a variety of new accommodation brochures: from self-catering cottages and castles to luxury hotels. They are yours for the asking!

## MEXICO

For the 15<sup>th</sup> year, Canadian Gundi Jeffrey (who's a frequent contributor of Mexican tips to TS) is busy planning her forthcoming Mushroom Tours. These tours, for groups of 20 or less, involve interesting walks, stays in welcoming

and unusual properties (historic haciendas, rustic mountain lodges, fine town hotels, coffee and citrus plantations), fabulous cuisine and more. Details of these unusual experiences in the Copper Canyon, Tlaxcala/Puebla and Veracruz (due to take place in August, September and October) can be found at [www.mexmush.com](http://www.mexmush.com).

## NEW ZEALAND

We have no book column this month, so we'll just pop this recommendation in here as summer in New Zealand (December to March) may be in your plans. It's a book entitled *RV in NZ: How to Spend your Winter Freedom Camping in New Zealand* by Carolyn Harris. The book contains instructions on how to rent or buy a motor caravan and spend three or four months exploring the country in depth at a bargain price. Sounds tempting! Available from your bookstore or from [www.rvinnz.com](http://www.rvinnz.com) at US\$17.

## ST. MAARTEN

Summer is "off-season" in the Caribbean islands, but that doesn't mean that they don't attract visitors. Those who love the weather hot, water-sports enthusiasts and families all visit the Caribbean in the summer. And rates are lower then, of course. An example is the dual-nation island of St. Maarten, which has a summer travel promotion until 14 December. Called the *St. Maarten Bucks*, travellers can save up to 35% on accommodations and receive special offers, including US\$50 or \$100 that can be redeemed at more than 30 companies, including stores, rental cars, boat excursions, water sports and restaurants. The programme offers a fourth night accommodation free, a fourth day car rental free and \$50 'St. Maarten Bucks' (same as US dollars) or \$100 for those staying 7 nights. Over a dozen hotels and resorts are participating in the programme, while Canadian tour operators offering the promotion are Alio, Hillcrest Vacations, Holiday House, Intair and others. For information on St. Maarten call the Tourist Office at 416 622 4300 or visit [www.st-maarten.com](http://www.st-maarten.com)

## U.S.A.

Alaska Sea Adventures, one of **Alaska's** premier small-ship cruise companies, has announced 50% discounts on all remaining available slots on its 2004 cruises. "These deals are incredible," says Captain Dennis Rogers, "and when you combine the huge savings with the amazing cruise offerings available, you won't find a better travel value anywhere." The cruises have a variety of themes: nature photography, whale or bird watching, archaeology, fishing, sea kayaking, etc. For details visit [www.yachtalaska.com](http://www.yachtalaska.com) or call 1 888 772 8588.

**Arizona** has a variety of summer promotions for visitors, including some designed especially for Canadians. These include a special rate of US\$46 per room until 30 September at Days Inn Scottsdale, where a stay includes a coupon book for US\$500-worth of coupons for adjacent

Scottsdale Fashion Square Mall; Canadian dollars at par at the CopperWynd Resort and special packages for Canadians, including a golf package, at the historic Hotel Vendome in Prescott. Also on offer are a variety of day trips and longer adventures. For full details of all that's on offer in the Grand Canyon State visit [www.ArizonaVacationValues.com](http://www.ArizonaVacationValues.com) or call 416 861 1240.

Heading to **New York City**? Take advantage of a free walking tour of Greenwich village offered by the Big Apple Visitors Center. Due to take place on 10 & 17 July, 7 & 21 August, 11 & 18 September and 2 October these popular tours, led by Greenwich resident Arthur Marks, weave together the highlights of the area's history with delicious inside stories and gossip. Tours depart from the northeast corner of Second Avenue and St Mark's Place at 11:30 a.m. on the above dates. Rather sit in the park than walk? How about a free performance by The Public Theater of Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing* in Central Park's Delacorte Theater on a selection of evenings through July and August? For details of these and other free offerings in New York City through the summer visit [www.BigAppleVisitorsCenter.com](http://www.BigAppleVisitorsCenter.com) or, for the theatre, 212 539 8750, [www.publictheater.org](http://www.publictheater.org)

The state of **Utah** doesn't appear in our pages very often, so when we received a welcoming letter from the 8,000 acre Zion Ponderosa Resort, set at 6,500 ft on the East Rim of Zion National Park, we thought we'd mention it. Apparently this desert resort specializes in family vacations by offering a wide range of activities at an all-inclusive price not only for accommodation and meals, but also for activities. Accommodations range from multi-bedroom mountain homes to rustic cabin suites and you can check it all out at [www.zionponderosa.com](http://www.zionponderosa.com) or by calling 1 800 293 5444. Zion National Park is 229 square miles of dramatic sculptured canyons and soaring cliffs located at the junction of the Colorado Plateau, the Great Basin and the Mojave Desert provinces. For a glimpse of all that the Park has to offer visit the official website of the National Park Service of the U.S. at [www.nps.gov](http://www.nps.gov).

Here's an idea for a getaway that's sure to make you popular with the younger generation! Plan to visit **Cleveland, Ohio** – the home of the Rock 'n Roll Hall of Fame – for this summer's Beatles tribute festival *Abbey Road on the River*. Due to take place over three days (6 - 8 August), the festival will offer a variety of experiences: performances by the world's best "FabFour" tribute bands, the Penny Lane Art Festival, the Magical Mystery Film Festival, Sing-a-long and Candlelight Tributes and more. The website – [www.abbeyroadontheriver.com](http://www.abbeyroadontheriver.com) – is full of details about this event, together with hotel packages. Tickets range in price from US\$19.64 for a 2-day general admission to \$79.64 for reserved Gold Circle admission. An example of the hotel packages: 2 nights' accommodation at the Sheraton Cleveland, 3-day festival admission, a private VIP concert, reserved Gold Circle seating and more for US\$219.95 for two.

Now in its fifth year, **VIA Rail Canada's** seasonal service to Cape Breton Island – **the Bras d'Or Excursion Train** – is back. The Bras d'Or operates one round-trip per week between Halifax and Sydney from June to mid-October, offering tourists a 10-hour land cruise through the heart of Northern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton Island. Complete with on-board tour guides, live entertainment and fine local cuisine, the train delivers a unique experience through Canada's historic "highlands". VIA developed the Bras d'Or service in partnership with the tourism boards of Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. And there's great news for seniors 60 or better: the route is part of the 'companions (of any age) 75% off' promotion. For details visit [www.viarail.com](http://www.viarail.com), see your agent or call 1 888 VIA RAIL.

Other news from VIA Rail is the fact that they have updated their fabulous **Skeena** service between Jasper, Prince George and Prince Rupert, a 1160 km journey during daylight hours. Passengers can now choose from one of three classes of service, including the Totem Deluxe Class that allows passengers to reserve a seat in the Panorama Dome Cars for the duration of their trip at a cost of \$50. Passengers in this car enjoy meals served in their seat, exclusive access to the Park Car and use of the Mural and Bullet Lounges. From Prince Rupert passengers can travel south to Vancouver Island with BC Ferries and north to Alaska with the Alaska Marine Highway. **Note for seniors:** all VIA Rail trains with Comfort Class are offering 2-for-1 deals in addition to the regular 10% discount that seniors ordinarily receive. This offer is applicable until 28 February 2005. In addition, until the same date next year, seniors travelling in

Sleeper Class will receive a 75% discount for their companion. For details of these and VIA's many other offers for seniors, see your agent or visit [www.viarail.ca/offers](http://www.viarail.ca/offers). Seniors are also encouraged to subscribe to VIA Rail's free e-newsletter, which keeps subscribers posted on all special offers, including contests to win week-end get-aways and more. That site is [www.viarail.ca/seniors](http://www.viarail.ca/seniors). And remember, companions can be of any age.

Over in **Europe**, first-class one-way tickets on the high-speed **Thalys** train connecting Paris-Brussels-Amsterdam-Cologne are now on sale at 30% off the full price. A couple of examples: Paris to Brussels first-class, normally C\$188, will cost C\$132, while between Paris and Amsterdam the fare is reduced to C\$177 from C\$253. Tickets must be booked before 15 August for travel between 14 June – 31 August. For more information call 1 800 361 7245 or visit [www.raileurope.com](http://www.raileurope.com)

Many former East Bloc countries joined the European Union on 1 May. Now these countries can be explored using a variety of new rail passes. And travellers in most of these destinations are sure to find many prices far less than in Western Europe, not to mention fewer tourists. There's the **European East Pass** (for the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Austria) for C\$217 for 5 days of travel within a month; the **Balkan Flexipass** valid for Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, Macedonia, Greece and Turkey available for 5, 10 or 15 rail travel days within a month from C\$259 (first-class) and many other options. There are discounts available for seniors (60 and over) and young people (under 26). For details contact RailEurope at 1 800 361 7245 or [www.raileurope.com](http://www.raileurope.com)

## airline news

**American Eagle** will begin a regional **JFK-Halifax** service on 10 June with three flights a day. Details at [www.americaneagle.com](http://www.americaneagle.com).

**CanJet Airlines** has joined the AIR MILES Program. **Finnair** flights from **Toronto** to **Helsinki** (every Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday) will commence 17 June and continue until 7 September. These Helsinki flights offer convenient connections to Baltic cities (**Riga**, **Tallinn** and **Vilnius**), to **Moscow** and **St. Petersburg**, Russia, as well as all major **Scandinavian** destinations. Information at 1 800 461 8651 or [www.finnair.com](http://www.finnair.com).

**HMY Airways**, who describe themselves as "**Vancouver's** own full service airline" has changed its name to **Harmony Airways**. They now have a third jet in service and new destinations – including a service to **Hawaii (Honolulu and Maui)** starting in June – planned. In spite of being a low-fare airline, Harmony

Airways promise non-stop flights, hot food service, comfortable leg room with 30 few seats per aircraft of equivalent size and free in-flight movies. For information visit [www.harmonyairways.com](http://www.harmonyairways.com)

Since 19 April, **Jetsgo** has been offering an hourly shuttle between Toronto and **Montreal** (on the hour, from 7 a.m. – 7 p.m.) with fares starting at \$74 one way and guaranteed not to be higher than \$150. Commencing 25 June, Jetsgo is introducing daily service between **Quebec City** and **Toronto**. Fares for these afternoon flights start at \$129 each way (plus taxes and surcharges). Additional news from Jetsgo is the launch of a year-round service from **Toronto** to **Los Angeles**, due to commence on 30 July with one-way fares from \$219. Upgrades to ComfortPlus (no middle seats and 36% extra legroom) are available on all these flights. [www.jetsgo.com](http://www.jetsgo.com)

Looking ahead to winter (sorry ... but these savings are worth it!), **Signature Vacations** has already launched its winter brochure featuring 10 destinations in the sun and early booking bonuses of up to \$2,080 per couple. There is one *Sunbook* for departures from Ontario and Atlantic Canada, and another edition for departures from Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon and Thunder Bay. Ask your agent for the brochure, or visit [www.signaturevacations.com](http://www.signaturevacations.com) (The website already has details of the winter vacations and also lists a September deal from Toronto: 50% off the second reservation.)

And for summer travellers who depart from Toronto, Signature are offering an overnight at the Delta Toronto Airport West Hotel any Friday, Saturday or Sunday night until 6 September for just \$95 which includes up to three weeks free parking in a covered lot and use of the hotels round-the-clock shuttle to the airport.

It's a tiny brochure for some great-sounding cycling and walking trips organized by **Great Explorations** of Vancouver. Explore Burma by bicycle for 9 days or stay here in Canada and explore British Columbia's Gulf Islands for a week or choose from lots more options around the world. For your copy of the brochure call 604 730 1247 or 1 800 242 1825 or visit [www.great-explorations.com](http://www.great-explorations.com)

**G.A.P. Traveller** has launched a new Exploratory Adventure called 'Trail of the Buddha' (Bangkok to Delhi) which will take 12 travellers on an epic journey through 5 countries in 35 days. From Bangkok participants will traverse Laos and travel into the valleys of southern China. Then, proceeding east, the group will continue along the Buddhist path across Tibet to the realm of the mighty Himalayan ranges before turning south into Nepal and, finally, the heartland of northern India. This journey promises spectacular landscapes, remote monasteries, World Heritage sites, Buddhist treasures, royal palaces, Lhasa, Mount Everest, Varanasi and the Ganges. This journey, designed for just 12 participants, will depart 11 September for a land price of only US\$2,320. For full details, request a brochure by calling 416 977 0043 or 1 866 732 5885 or check out all this company's adventures at [www.gapadventures.com](http://www.gapadventures.com)

**Idyll Ltd** are offering last-minute deals on their Untour European vacation rentals which translate to a saving of up to US\$300 per person. These 'Untours' offer rentals for 2 weeks or more with cars or rail passes, transfers and on-site English-speaking support. Destination possibilities include Paris, Portugal, Austria, Holland, Spain, Germany, Italy (Tuscany) and Switzerland. For more information call 1 888 868 6871 or [www.untours.com](http://www.untours.com)

## websites

Here's news of some travel websites that readers may like to check out. Here at TS we haven't used these sites to make travel plans, so any feedback – positive or negative – would be greatly appreciated ... we'll pass your messages on to all readers.

◆ [www.Go-today.com](http://www.Go-today.com) claims to be "the leader in value vacations to Europe". They have just announced their winter packages to such destinations as Paris, Madrid, London, Vienna and more.

◆ For general travel information visit [www.travelconsumer.com](http://www.travelconsumer.com) which features every country in the world as well as every State. This site "... does not sell anything or provide travel services. All it does is provide information about the links to the top level companies that do provide travel services."

◆ [www.BedandBreakfast.com](http://www.BedandBreakfast.com) claims to be the largest online directory of B&Bs, representing 27,000 establish-

ments worldwide. 'Hot deals' (usually at least 20% off) in the areas of your choice can be e-mailed to you every Wednesday.

◆ There are some very amusing independent reviews to be found at [www.bnbshark.com](http://www.bnbshark.com), a site that "collects, summarizes and publishes real guests' reviews of bed and breakfast inns." Also on line is [www.hotelshark.com](http://www.hotelshark.com), a site that was voted one of the 'Five Best Travel Websites of 2002' by *National Geographic Traveler* magazine. Most, but not all, of properties are in the U.S.

◆ [www.wotif.com](http://www.wotif.com) claims to offer significant savings on accommodation in major hotel groups around the world. A worthwhile point about this site is that taxes are included in the listed price and, for those who do not wish to book online, reservations can be made 24/7 through a call centre at 1 888 394 0616.

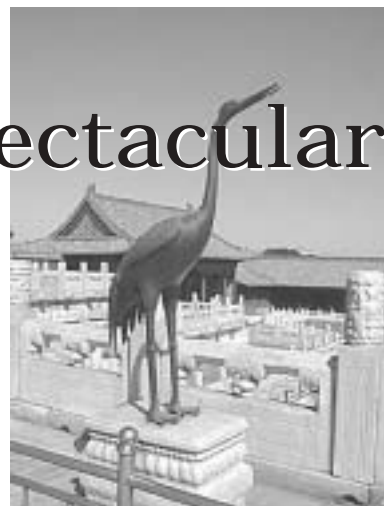
◆ And for visitors to Britain, don't forget to check the sites mentioned on p.17.

FROM \$3,942 FOR 18 DAYS

# China ... Yangtze Spectacular

**FULLY ESCORTED**

**Departures: 26 September & 17 October 2004**



**I**t 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 (now in the process of changing 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 18 days you'll stay in Beijing; you'll take a 4-day first-class cruise on the Yangtze with many shore excursions; you'll fly

to see those centuries-old terra-cotta warriors in Xi'an; you'll visit bustling Chongquin and see its pandas; stay in Hangzhou and travel into the hills covered with tea plantations; explore the exquisite gardens of Suzhou, and visit Nanjing and Wuzhen.

And you'll have time to explore spectacular Shanghai. 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 plane, by luxury bus, cruise ship and river boat. Many of our members have told us it's an experience of a lifetime ... and all at an amazing price!

**Please call 1 877 926 2500 or  
416 926 2500 for the  
complete itinerary**

## AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing from:

<b>Vancouver</b>	<b>\$3,942 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Victoria/Nanaimo/Kamloops</b>	<b>\$4,089 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Calgary/Edmonton</b>	<b>\$4,188 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Saskatoon/Regina</b>	<b>\$4,434 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Winnipeg</b>	<b>\$4,372 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Toronto</b>	<b>\$4,298 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Ottawa &amp; Montreal</b>	<b>\$4,372 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Halifax/Quebec City/London</b>	<b>\$4,495 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Thunder Bay/St. John's</b>	<b>\$4,643 pp/dbl</b>

Single supplement \$1,200 (Sharing can be arranged.)

Taxes and visas extra.

## GREAT ADD-ONS:

<b>Hong Kong</b>	<b>4 days/3 nights</b>	<b>\$1,188.00</b>
<b>Tokyo</b>	<b>4 days/3 nights</b>	<b>\$892.00</b>

Prices are subject to confirmation

Editor Ann Wallace took the China Yangtze trip and her 14-page, illustrated account is available. For your copy please send \$5 with your address.

## Your tour costs includes:

- Round-trip transpacific air fares on **Japan Airlines**
- Chinese domestic airfares
- Canadian domestic airfares
- First-class hotel accommodation
- First-class 4 days/3 nights Yangtze River cruise aboard a deluxe cruise ship
- All transfers
- Daily sightseeing
- Three meals daily
- 2 Western style dinners.
- Special banquets in Hangzhou, Xi'an and Beijing
- Evening cultural shows
- Fully escorted by English/Chinese-speaking tour guide
- English-speaking local guides
- Free time in Beijing & Shanghai

Please call **The Travel Society** 1 877 926 2500 x24 or 416 926 2500 x24 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

NEW

28 days, prices include all airfares

Space limited to 20 people

## Turkey - An Anatolian Adventure *Departing: 28 August 2004*

If you can travel with us for 28 days, you might like to consider our longer tour of Turkey. In addition to all the destinations in 'A Traveller's Turkey' detailed above, this tour also includes a trip to legendary Troy, a tour of the historic battlefields of Gallipoli, a visit to the walled city of Iznik, a drive to Gordion (the home of Alexander's famous knot) and to many other historic sites such as Catal Hoyuk, Xanthus and mysterious Termessos, one of Turkey's most beautiful ruins. The extra time here also means more time on the beautiful coast, where you will enjoy boat trips, picnics and beach time or you may decide to take an overnight *gulet* cruise from Antalya to Kas. This truly is a superlative tour that covers all the highlights of this wonderful land.

### AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES (subject to confirmation) departing from:

Toronto	\$6,750.00 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$6,850.00 pp/dbl
Montreal	\$6,850.00 pp/dbl	Vancouver	\$7,150.00 pp/dbl
Edmonton	\$7,000.00 pp/dbl	Calgary	\$7,000.00 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$6,950.00 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$6,900.00 pp/dbl

Single supplement \$670 (Sharing can be arranged.) **Taxes included, visa extra.**

### Your tour includes:

- Round trip transatlantic flights with Air Canada
- All domestic flights
- Return airfare to Turkey
- 27 nights' hotel accommodation
- All meals as per itinerary
- 40 seat air-conditioned luxury bus
- Admission to all sites
- An English-speaking guide and a Travel Society host

21 days, prices include all airfares

Space limited to 20 people

## A Traveller's Turkey *Departing: 18 September 2004*

It is one of the cradles of civilization and one of the most wonderful countries on the planet. Here are fabled cities, unique landscapes, incomparable historic sites and calm, friendly people who are eager to show that their land is, indeed, both historic and modern.

Ann Wallace, our editor, has travelled extensively in Turkey and always returns claiming it is one of her favourite destinations. So now we have organized a luxurious tour of Turkey exclusively for Travel Society members. It is due to take place in September 2003 for a maximum of 20 people.

We have combined our extensive knowledge with careful research to ensure you see the very best that Turkey has to offer. You'll stay in first-class historic or very specialized hotels, travel in a 40-seat air-conditioned luxury bus, enjoy cruises on private boats, sample fine food and be entertained by cultural performances. And the itinerary? Magical Istanbul (plenty of time there); Ankara, home of one of the world's finest museums; the unique 'geological poem' called Kapatokya (or Cappadocia); mysterious and lovely ruins such as Aphrodisias, Pergamum and, of course, Ephesus; the fabled and beautiful Aegean coast; the peaceful Princes Isles in the Sea of Marmara and so much more.

Ann says, "This is the most perfect tour of Turkey imaginable; you will have an unforgettable time ... and such a small group, too! Sign up now!"

### AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES (subject to confirmation) departing from:

Toronto	\$4,950.00 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$4,950.00 pp/dbl
Montreal	\$4,950.00 pp/dbl	Vancouver	\$5,195.00 pp/dbl
Edmonton	\$5,195.00 pp/dbl	Calgary	\$5,195.00 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$5,125.00 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$5,125.00 pp/dbl

Single supplement \$455 (Sharing can be arranged.) **Taxes included, visa extra.**

### Your tour includes:

- Round trip transatlantic flights with Air Canada
- All domestic flights
- 20 nights' accommodation
- All meals as per itinerary
- All domestic transportation
- 40 seat air conditioned luxury bus
- Admission to all sites
- An English-speaking guide/director and a Travel Society host

NEW

## Vineyard Walking through Piedmonte

*Daily departures from July to September (travel independently or with a group)*

Set out to discover the magical hills and breathtaking scenery of the Langhe and Roero regions of Piedmonte ... a beautiful region of Italy that is still virtually undiscovered and untouched by major tourism. Discover a land of nature, art, medieval architecture, famous wines and delicious food. Stroll through vineyards between ancient hill-top towns, stop for a picnic in the shade of a hazelnut tree, explore ancient castles, visit the cellars of famous wineries and enjoy one of the world's finest cuisines. Our 'Hiking without Luggage' trips allow you to explore this region at your own pace. You'll stay in quaint small hotels and farmhouses (always with private facilities), you'll enjoy memorable breakfasts and dinners each day and be provided with a picnic lunch to enjoy in the countryside while we'll take care of your luggage.

Before or after your trip you can extend your exploration of this region with an add-on to Turin and with an additional 3-night Wine and Gourmet, self-drive tour with all meals and car rental for 4 days included.

### LAND-ONLY PRICES

Vineyard Walking \$2,255 pp.dbl.

Turin add-on from \$286 pp. per night

Wine and Gourmet self-drive adventure \$1,253 pp.dbl

Taxes extra. Prices are subject to confirmation

All your domestic and international flights can be arranged by The Travel Society. Please call for complete quotations.

### Your tour includes:

- Transfers from Milan
- 7 nights' accommodation
- Breakfast, dinner and picnic lunch daily
- Local tours of castles, villages and wineries
- Walking map with detailed instruction
- Daily luggage transportation from hotel to hotel
- Hotel service and taxes

## Down Under in Australia & New Zealand Cultures, Trains & Wineries 28 Days.

With optional 3-day Fiji extension Departure: 13 November 2004

NEW PRICES  
from  
**\$9,899**

### Highlights...

Cairns, Great Barrier Reef, Ayers Rock, Alice Springs, The Ghan, Adelaide, Barossa Wine Valley, Great Ocean Road, Melbourne, Sydney Opera House, Hunter Valley, Queenstown, Milford Sound, Mt. Cook, Christchurch, Tranz-Alpine Express, Wellington, Overland Express Train, Rotorua

Imagine spending almost a month of your life being pampered as you are shown two of the world's very special – and unique – destinations. Come with The Travel Society to Australia and New Zealand and, yes, you will enjoy a luxurious trip and be shown most of the highlights of 'downunder', all at an exceptional price. What would be on your list of highlights for these two countries? Cairns and the Great Barrier Reef in a glass-bottomed boat or with a snorkel; a ride on the spectacular Kuranda Railway; a trip to the Outback, Alice Springs and Ayers Rock; a trip on the legendary Ghan train; wine tasting in the Barossa Valley and Coonawarra; a trip on the Great Ocean Road – one of the world's most famous drives; Melbourne and Canberra; Sydney, with dinner and a performance at the Sydney Opera House; penguins, koalas and kangaroos; New Zealand's handsome city of Queenstown; a cruise on Milford Sound; Mt Cook; New Zealand wine tastings; Christchurch; the Tranz-Alpine Express train ride; the ferry ride to Wellington on the North Island; the Overland Express train to Rotorua; Auckland; the glowworm-lit Waitomo Caves; Maori villages, songs and dances; kiwi birds and other unique wildlife? Those are the highlights our trip covers, but of course there's lots more to tell you: excellent hotels, gourmet dinners, visits with local families, flightseeing tours, time for shopping and museums ... in fact 28 days filled with new sights, sounds and friends. It's the Travel Society's 28-day Cultures, Trains and Wineries tour of Australia and New Zealand. And while you're over in that part of the world, why don't you also enjoy a 3-night extension to Fiji where you can take an island tour, explore South Pacific Island culture and relax for a while on the island's sandy beaches beside clear ocean waters.

### PRICES INCLUDING AIR AND TAXES departing from:

Toronto	\$9,999 pp/dbl	Calgary	\$ 9,949 pp/dbl
Ottawa	\$9,999 pp/dbl	Edmonton	\$ 9,949 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$10,099 pp/dbl	Victoria	\$10,019pp/dbl
Montreal	\$9,999 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$10,099 pp/dbl
Vancouver	\$9,899 pp/dbl		Single supplement \$1,750

Optional add-on 3-night Fiji \$895 pp/dbl

Prices are subject to confirmation

### Your tour includes:

- Return trans-Pacific airfare with Qantas
- Domestic air from your gateway
- First-class hotels accommodation throughout
- Luxury a/c touring coaches
- All tain fares
- An experienced tour escort
- Special Travel Society experiences
- Meals as per itinerary
- Fully comprehensive insurance
- All transfers with full luggage service
- All sightseeing (with no hidden extras)
- Hotel taxes and Australian and NZ GST.

## Galapagos Islands and Ecuador

with options to Kapawi Lodge in the Amazon and Machu Picchu, Peru

14 days departing 14 September & 12 October 2004

Each tour is limited to 20 people

The Travel Society is proud to be able to offer its members an outstanding trip to some of the world's most spectacular destinations. Who hasn't dreamed of cruising to the Galapagos Islands and seeing wildlife as Darwin witnessed it? Think of the unique adventure you will enjoy, of the stories you will have to tell and the photographs you will take! You will spend a week aboard your first-class 20-passenger ship, taking daily shore excursions to a variety of the islands with experienced naturalists in groups of no more than 10 people per guide.

You'll also visit other destinations in Ecuador, and then you can choose to enjoy the exciting optional extensions: to Kapawi - a ecological lodge in the Amazon and/or a visit Machu Picchu in Peru. We'll take care of all the travel details. All you have to do is enjoy!

### PRICES INCLUDE AIR AND TAXES departing from:

Toronto	\$7,476.00 pp/dbl
Ottawa & Montreal	\$7,476.00 pp/dbl
Vancouver	\$7,797.00 pp/dbl
Calgary	\$7,797.00 pp/dbl
Halifax	\$7,394.00 pp/dbl

### GREAT ADD-ONS, INCLUDING AIR:

Kapawi - from all departure points	\$1,680.00 pp/dbl
Machu Picchu -	
: Toronto	\$1,642.00 pp/dbl
: Ottawa, Montreal	\$1,642.00 pp/dbl
: Vancouver, Calgary	\$1,547.00 pp/dbl
: Halifax	\$1,694.00 pp/dbl

Prices are subject to confirmation

### Your tour includes:

- Round-trip air transportation
- All domestic air transportation
- All accommodation
- First class Galapagos cruise
- All meals as per the itinerary
- Admissions to all sites
- Expert Galapagos guides
- Transfers & baggage handling
- Islands Park Entrance Fee (US\$100)

Please call The Travel Society 1 877 926 2500 x24 or 416 926 2500 x24 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

# India's Golden Triangle

FULLY ESCORTED

20 days departing 11 October 2004

from  
**\$4,496**

India is one of the world's greatest travel destinations. But unless you're a young backpacker, a tour is the way to go! And The Travel Society is offering the ultimate tour of India's fabled northwestern region, known as The Golden Triangle. This tour will show you the highlights of this fascinating region. You'll spend time in the economic powerhouse of India - Mumbai (once known as Bombay) where you'll drive along Marine Drive, visit the Hanging Gardens, enjoy the Prince of Wales Museum and stroll through Neru Park. On another day you visit St. Thomas Cathedral, the Jain Temple and see the memorial to Mahatma Gandhi as well as take an optional tour to Elephanta caves. Then it's on to Udaipur, the most romantic city in all of Rajasthan, known as the city of lakes. Here there are palaces and temples to visit as well as beautiful gardens with pools, fountains, pagodas and carvings. Mt. Abu-Ranakpur is next on the itinerary, famous for its 15th century temples, before you proceed to the famous medieval city of Jodhpur, home of the massive Mehrangharh Fort and many exquisite palaces. Then how about a camel safari ... sure to bring lots of laughs and some great photographs! Khimsar and Nagaur are next on the itinerary, where there's more sightseeing and lots of leisure time for relaxing, shopping or wandering alone with your camera. Bikaner is next - a royal walled city with a wealth of architectural heritage - where you'll visit Lalgah Palace Museum, a combination of European luxury and Oriental fantasy and Junagarh Fort, which was started in 1587 and houses 37 palaces, pavilions and temples. You'll then travel on to Mandawa, known for its exquisite frescoes where you'll stay in Castle Mandawa, a unique desert resort. Jaipur - the pink city - is next; a city of beauty famous for its bazaar full of wonderful gifts. Here you can take an elephant-ride excursion to Amer Fort and also see the Palace of the Winds and the stone Observatory. Of course Agra is on the itinerary, for that never-to-be forgotten dawn visit to the Taj Mahal, before you travel on to famous Delhi, the capital of India. Throughout this trip you will stay in first-class hotels, travel in deluxe a/c, fully-equipped coaches and enjoy wonderful meals, banquets and entertainment. Many days will be full, but there's plenty of free time too. Haven't you always wanted to visit India? Make this the year and come with The Travel Society this fall.



**PRICES INCLUDING AIR departing from:**

Vancouver	\$4,696 pp/dbl	Toronto	\$4,496 pp/dbl
Victoria	\$4,896 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$4,496 pp/dbl
Edmonton	\$4,696 pp/dbl	Montreal	\$4,496 pp/dbl
Calgary	\$4,696 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$4,696 pp/dbl
Saskatoon	\$4,696 pp/dbl	St. John's	\$4,896 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$4,696 pp/dbl	Single supplement	\$794

Prices are subject to confirmation Taxes extra

**Your tour includes:**

- All international & domestic flights
- Deluxe a/c coach transportation
- State transport taxes
- All meals
- English-speaking guide
- All entrance fees
- Elephant ride
- Village safari in Jodhpur

**YOUR DISCOUNT VOUCHER FOR RENEWALS, GIFTS AND NEW SUBSCRIPTIONS**

Don't let my subscription run out ...

- please: **RENEW MY SUBSCRIPTION** \_\_\_\_\_  
 or **START A NEW SUBSCRIPTION** \_\_\_\_\_  
 or **SEND A GIFT SUBSCRIPTION** \_\_\_\_\_

check your discount choice, we will extend your subscription from the expiry date:

- \_\_\_ **3 years for \$110.00**  
 (a 21% saving off the regular \$140.00)  
 \_\_\_ **2 years for \$79.50**  
 (a 16% saving off the regular \$95.00)  
 \_\_\_ **1 year for \$44.00**  
 (a 10% saving off the regular \$49.00)

All prices include GST.  
 \_\_\_ my cheque is enclosed, or charge my:  
 \_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_ Mastercard \_\_\_ AmEx  
 card #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 expiry: \_\_\_\_\_ tel: \_\_\_\_\_  
 signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to pay TravelScoop the above amount in accordance with the card issuer agreement.

Address for **NEW** or **GIFT** subscription only

name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 town: \_\_\_\_\_ prov: \_\_\_\_\_  
 postal code: \_\_\_\_\_ tel: \_\_\_\_\_  
 gift message: \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: *TravelScoop*

218-1033 Bay St Toronto ON Canada M5S 3A5  
 Fax: 416 926 0222 e-mail: brit@thetravelsociety.com  
 Publications Mail Agreement: # 40063904 & # 09925

your subscription expires on:  
 (month - year)

**Password:  
stormy**