

# The Travel Society

Vol. 24, No. 4 May 2006

Magazine



**Explorations in France**  
**“Teaching” in Valdelavilla, Spain**  
**Some Places to Stay in England**  
**A Week on Vancouver Island**

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

## Editor

Ann Wallace  
ann@thetravelsociety.com

## Contributors

Carrie Toomey  
Thelma Sampson  
Martin Davies  
Linda Reid

## Publisher

Nigel D Raincock  
nigel@thetravelsociety.com

## Administrator

Debbie Philip  
debbie@thetravelsociety.com

## Graphic Design & Production

Yong Park  
yong@thetravelsociety.com

**The Travel Society Magazine** (ISSN#1717-242X) is an independent, consumer magazine published in Canada ten times a year. Although extreme care is taken to ensure the accuracy of material herein, **The Travel Society** 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 2006 by The Travel Society Inc.

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

### The Travel Society Inc.

218 - 1033 Bay Street,  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada. M5S 3A5  
Tel: 416 926 0111 Fax: 416 926 0222

e-mail: brit@thetravelsociety.com

web-site: 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) and the Canadian Magazine Fund of the Department of Canada Heritage toward our mailing and project costs.

May 2006

Vol. 24, No. 4

## contents

### Readers' Letters

South Georgia Island and Tristan da Cunha	3
Out of London	5
London Transit Alert	5

### Destinations

Explorations in France	6
"Teaching" in Valdelavilla, Spain	9
Stay in England	11
A Week on Vancouver Island	12
Port Perry, Ontario	15

### News

Travel Digest	16
Cruise News	18
Airline News	19



The sign says it all!  
(L. Reid)

## editor's letter ...

I hope spring has well and truly sprung in your part of the world. It's raining today in Toronto, but that will freshen the streets and, I hope, turn the grass green.

We have lots of short stories for you this month, again focusing, as we usually do in the Spring, on Canada and Europe (apart, that is, from a story on two of the world's most remote destinations ... see page 3). But for your summer reading, planning and/or dreaming we venture further afield, with stories on several South American destinations, as well as on Dubai and even Libya.

News on travel between Canada and the U.S., including the confusion over passports etc., continues to crop up in daily news reports. A press release received in our offices from Statistics Canada reports that *same-day* car travel from the U.S. fell to its lowest monthly level on record (below 1.2 million) in February, while the estimated 1.1 million *overnight* trips taken by U.S. residents to Canada in February was the lowest monthly level in almost nine years.

Well, Americans may be staying home, but apparently a record number of Canadians - about 547,000 - travelled to overseas countries during that month, up 1.5% from January and the third straight monthly increase. Canadian travel to the United States dropped in February, however, with fewer than 3.2 million trips, down 7.1% from January's tally. Interesting times.

I hope you enjoy the merry month of May, that your gardens are a joy and that you'll enjoy some excursions near or far very soon.



*Here's a story about two destinations that are very difficult to reach. However, if you see them on a cruise itinerary or an expedition voyage, and the weather co-operates, you may be lucky!*

## South Georgia Island and Tristan da Cunha

Early in 2006 we were off travelling once more, when my husband was working as the ice pilot again for Holland America. He had already done two trips to the Antarctic on the *Rotterdam* when I joined him in Buenos Aires to change ships and board the *Prinsendam* as it headed south as part of its world cruise.

This trip would be different because once we had visited the Antarctic and were headed for South Africa, the ship was to attempt to stop at both South Georgia Island and Tristan da Cunha. As South Georgia Island is outside the Antarctic Treaty

area, we were told it might be possible to land there, weather permitting. This would be a first for Holland America and also the largest passenger ship to attempt the stop. As it turned out, we were unbelievably lucky. We arrived at Grytviken, South Georgia, on an overcast but calm day to drop anchor in Cumberland Bay. If the weather had been foggy or windy the stop would have been cancelled. Later the clouds rolled away and the sun came out to reveal a gloriously spectacular landscape of white topped mountains and glaciers. Absolutely gorgeous! From the ship we could see a green area with mountains rising behind, partially hidden by clouds; some long white buildings with reddish roofs; the remains of an old whaling station; a little white church and, to our right, a white memorial cross dedicated to Sir Ernest Shackleton. With binoculars we could see seals and penguins on the beach and the remains of a crashed Argentinean helicopter from an attempt to take over the island in 1982.

walked past some rusting whale factory equipment to a small but interesting museum documenting the whaling industry, wildlife, and Shackleton's historic arrival on the island on his rescue mission. There is a small shop attached to the museum with stamps, cards and souvenirs. We continued on to the little white church which had been brought to Grytviken from Norway by a Captain Carl Anton Larsen, the founder and first manager of the whaling station in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The less mobile passengers did not take the walk up to the little cemetery but we walked along the pebble beach, through the tussock grass and peat moss and across little streams, avoiding the elephant seals wallowing in mud holes and the more active fur seals, some of whom were agitated by our proximity to their pups. A few moulting king penguins were standing around looking somewhat gloomy but still providing colourful photo opportunities. There are still whale bones to be seen on the beach reminding us of the original purpose of this site, thankfully now a thing of the past.

There are only 13 people permanently based in Grytviken, one of whom, a scientist, came aboard to talk about the work being done here, especially with regard to the fishing industry.

As we left Grytviken, the sea was

full of penguins and later, from the comfort of the ship, we paused at Gold Bay to view a multitude of king penguins on the beaches and a hanging glacier.

The stop at the island was fascinating from a wildlife point of view as well as historically, but we realized how lucky we had been with the weather. At another time a visit might

*bottom: Little Norwegian church at Grytviken, South Georgia Island. right: Edinburgh, Tristan da Cunha with volcanic outcrop visible on left.*



It was a little cool in the boats going ashore but we were lucky to find it dry underfoot. I am told it can be very wet and slippery walking through the tussock grass trying to avoid the fur seals and elephant seals on the way to the little cemetery where Shackleton is buried. We

be completely impossible.

Whereas South Georgia Island is closer to the Antarctic, Tristan da Cunha could be called a neighbour of South Africa. This round volcanic island is known as the "remotest island" and is certainly a long way from everywhere with no airport and only a tiny man-made harbour too small to even take our ship's tenders. Supply ships arrive from South Africa two or three times a month and occasionally there's one from England.

The whole town of Edinburgh was evacuated in the early 1960s when a volcanic fissure opened close to the town and lava poured out, obliterating the fish plant. However, two years later the inhabitants were back in residence with a new view of a black lava hill to one side of the town.

Fishing and stamps constitute the main sources of income but there are sheep and cattle grazing on the narrow green plain above the high cliffs and further along there are the vital potato fields. The centre of the island is mountainous and mostly inaccessible. Fishing is carried out in small motorized boats which also carry families to the nearby Nightingale Island for a change of scene in the

summer.

The Captain had arranged for two local Zodiacs to transfer our ship's passengers ashore. Like South Georgia Island, the terrain is unsuitable for anyone with a mobility problem as one must step nimbly ashore from the rocking Zodiac onto concrete steps. We did this, to be greeted by a sign saying that 2006 was the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the discovery of Tristan da Cunha, before walking up the hill to the town.

The town of 300 people has everything in miniature: a small police station, café, pub, Catholic Church and a hospital with a small ambulance. There is a grocery store stocking just about everything, including locally-caught and freshly cooked lobster tails for US\$2 each. It was fun to see all the tourists walking around town enjoying this delicious treat! Little low, white-walled houses with red or green roofs, many of them utilizing black lava blocks as garden or field walls, and gardens with flowers, make up the rest of the little town. There is also a small museum dedicated to the history of the island and the six families who make up most of the population.

People were very friendly and happy to talk about the island and their lives or transport visitors out to the potato fields to see the views.

There are very few similarities between the two islands, although both have a wealth of bird life, but they are fascinating in their different ways. However the chances of being able to land on either of them from a large passenger ship are not very good as the weather has to be perfect and we were told that some people had sailed past both islands 14 times and never been able to land! The weather goddess certainly smiled on us this trip. However, smaller expedition ships with their own smaller zodiacs would certainly be able to make landings at both islands and this would be very worthwhile. The contrasts are very noticeable, with South Georgia Island almost uninhabited except for scientists, but with wildlife almost underfoot, whereas Tristan da Cunha is a civilization in miniature. If your travels take you in their direction, I hope you get to enjoy the islands as much as we did.

*Carrie Toomey  
Kingston, ON*

---

## The *Travel Society* website

**Visit *The Travel Society* website [www.thetravelsociety.com](http://www.thetravelsociety.com)**

Our website is fully operational. We always want 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 *Travel Society Magazine* within the address box.**

**You can renew your subscription on-line too!**

## Out of London

I agree with Editor Ann, although London is full of interest – and green spaces – it's good to get out of town during a visit. Nearby places with an 'out-of-town' feel include the Hampstead she wrote about last month, Dulwich (home of a famous boys' school and the Dulwich Picture Gallery) and Richmond, Kew and Hampton Court (all on the River Thames). But to really get into countryside one must go a little farther. Last year I picked up a publication from The National Trust at a tourism centre. It was entitled "*Inspiring and relaxing days out in Surrey ... Beautiful houses, glorious gardens and stunning countryside for you to enjoy.*" It led me to the beautiful Surrey hills and a couple of outstanding heritage houses: Polesden Lacey (Great Bookham, Dorking) and Clandon Park (near Guildford) as well as to a spectacular walk on Box Hill. Residents commute from these towns (and from farther afield) to London daily, so taking a day trip there is not a big excursion. The Surrey towns are regularly served from London's Victoria Station with journeys of 40 minutes on average, and from your destination station the booklet details bus routes (or taxis will be available as the distances involved are not great). For more information visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/southeast](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/southeast).

Unfortunately while in London I was not free on a Saturday or Sunday. Had I been, I would have taken advantage of the service detailed in the above booklet: The Surrey Hills Explorer Bus (and which I've now investigated further on line for my next visit). This 'leisure' bus winds its way through the Surrey Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty ("beautiful countryside and picturesque villages") with a Blue Badge guide providing on-board commentary. Riders can hop on and off the bus throughout the day. The bus has two routes: **The Saturday route - 'Villages & Vistas'** follows a scenic route with stops at

Dorking South Street, Dorking Station, Denbies, Burford Bridge, Bookham Dorking Road, Polesden Lacey, Hatchlands Park, Newlands Corner, Shere, Abinger, Leith Hill (Broadmoor Lane), Westcott, and back to Dorking. Passengers who enjoy walking can take the opportunity to get off en route and explore the Surrey Hills countryside. **The Sunday route – 'Discovering our Heritage'** calls at three of the great historic houses in this area, travelling from Dorking to Polesden Lacey as above, and then calls at East Horsley (Duke of Wellington Pub), Clandon Park, Hatchlands Park, West Horsley (Pumping Station) and East Horsley (Station) before returning to Dorking via Ranmore Common.

The Explorer bus runs at weekends and Bank Holidays from April to October. The cost of a one-day unlimited travel ticket is £4.00 for adults (about C\$8), and £2.00 for children aged 5-17. The bus is also wheelchair accessible but I see the website states "please telephone in advance to make us aware of your needs". For a free leaflet and timetable call [011 44] 1372 452 048 or visit <http://www.surrey-hills.org/explorerbus.asp>. All you need do is find your way from Victoria to Dorking Station and then the rest of the day is taken care of. It's a wonderful part of England.

Audrey Barnes  
Toronto, ON

*(I can vouch for that! Although I was born in London, I spent many happy teenage years living in just this area. I know all the lovely places mentioned ... including the famous Duke of Wellington pub in East Horsley! – Ed.)*

---

## London Transit Alert

Believing that, as in the past, London Transit Passes are cheaper when purchased in Canada, I phoned their North American number – 1 877 677 1066 –

and was quoted US\$27 or C\$36 (an inaccurate rate of exchange (yes ... as we go to print US\$27 is just under C\$31 – Ed) for a 3-day, 2-zone pass with no senior discount available. AND ... they wanted C\$17 just for sending it to me, if you please! I immediately phoned London Transport who quoted me £15.40 (about C\$30.80) for the same ticket. So ... it's cheaper to purchase the pass at Heathrow upon arrival.

Ralph Carder  
West Vancouver, BC

## Members are rewarded for sharing!

The TravelSociety rewards members 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!

[ann@thetravelsociety.com](mailto:ann@thetravelsociety.com)

or

218 - 1033 Bay Street  
Toronto, ON M5S 3A5

*Note: If it is possible to include wheelchair-accessible information in your letters and stories I know that would be appreciated by many. Thanks! - Ed.*



# Explorations in

*Le Grand Maison at Le Banquet*

# France

*story and photos by Thelma Sampson*

**L**ast fall we spent a few days in Paris followed by three weeks in three different rural areas of France: the Dordogne, Provence and the Côte d'Azur. We rented a car in Paris and with three other couples made our way down to the Dordogne and Lot valley areas of France. It was the end of September, the leaves were turning and the drive down and the whole area was really lovely. We travelled the N20 to the medieval town of Sarlat and then 20 km to the prehistoric town of Les Eyzies, where we had rented a restored farmhouse – Le Grand Maison – that sleeps eight adults and four children. There are three houses to rent on this property and a fourth soon to be added. All have been recently restored, there is an outdoor swimming pool and a small river runs through the grounds so fishing is also possible. The houses are just off the main road, well treed and very private. The grounds are well kept with abundant flowers and apple trees and we even gathered and enjoyed the walnuts from the trees bordering the small parking lot. The house was well equipped with a large kitchen with eating area, a spacious sitting room and an outdoor eating area with a barbeque. This unit has two family bedrooms and two twin oak-beamed bedrooms, all en suite.

The homes, called Le Banquet, are owned and run by Karen and Rob Harrison and can be viewed



La Roque Gageac

under [www.holiday-rentals.com](http://www.holiday-rentals.com) (property number 7326) where there are photos and current rates. Karen and Rob were living on the property when we were there and were great hosts.

The entire Dordogne, Lot and Vezere River areas have many places to explore. The Vezere river valley area is noted for prehistoric caves and cave art. The most famous, at Lascaux, are closed to the public now but there are many others to visit including Font de Guame, just a few blocks from Le Banquet, and the Combarelles

The area also has many UNESCO sites such as the troglodytic site at Roque St. Christophe, with its huge natural caves that have housed people for over 55,000 years and later became a fort. The strange formations and overhanging cliffs in this kilometre-long area have been restored to show what life was like in the past and there is a museum as well.

The small town of Les Eyzies is also well worth a visit. It was in Les Eyzies in 1868 that five skeletons, soon to be known as Cro Magnon men, were found in a rock shelter.

The Natural Prehistory Museum there contains the most comprehensive collection of prehistoric objects in the world. Les Eyzies itself has many houses still built into the high walls of limestone surrounding the town. The town of La Roque Gageac on the Dordogne is also built into the cliff and is the place to rent kayaks, canoes or take a boat

trip down the river in a flat bottomed *gabarre* to view the magnificent châteaux and countryside.

There are many châteaux overlooking all three rivers and many articles written about them. Most are open to the public and each is different. Two of the more famous are Beynac and Castelnaud (with its war museum) across the river from each other. We also visited the château of Hautefort with its lovely manicured French gardens and the gardens of Marqueyssac with its 150,000 hand-pruned box wood trees ... really quite remarkable. Both these castles have large grounds for walking or picnics and all have marvellous views of the countryside.

The Lot valley, although not as well known, also has many interesting villages along the Lot River. The village of St. Cirq La Popie, perched high on a cliff, is recognized as one of the most beautiful villages in France. It is very quaint, with its ancient streets and great views of the valley, but is always busy. Rocamadour, also high on a cliff, is the second most visited pilgrimage site in France as its church (again high on a cliff) houses a Black Madonna.

As we prepared most of our own meals we frequented the local markets, and discovered there is at least one every day. As well as the local wine and great fruit and vegetables, this is *fois gras* country. The vendors in the market are very liberal with their tastings, and after purchasing different types of the famous pâté we did visit a farm and saw the



The garden at Hautefort

production and had yet more tastings. Another speciality of the area is the walnuts. They are used in many recipes, the walnut cakes and candy being the most famous.

Our week here went by very quickly and certainly more time could have been spent there. The little villages and the beautiful countryside especially at that time of year, with the leaves all turning, made for a great visit.

Our other property of note was Les Chenes near the small towns of Peymeinade and Montauroux, high in the hills above the Côte d'Azur and close to the perfumeries of Grasse. This property slept 11 on three levels and was very comfortable. The pool is just outside the entrance, and the grounds are well treed and very pretty. The home itself is large, with four bedrooms and a loft bedroom, a well-equipped kitchen, a large dining room and living room as well as a sun porch with eating facilities and an outside eating area. The lower level also had a small kitchen and the two bedrooms on this level opened on to

the garden. This property can also be viewed on [www.holiday-rentals.com](http://www.holiday-rentals.com) (No. 6350). The towns of Vence, Valbonne and Biot as well as the bigger cities on the coast – Nice, Monaco and Cannes – are all worth at least a day's visit each.

The town of Grasse higher up in the hills was also a fun place to visit. It has three large perfumeries, as well as several smaller ones. The more famous ones are Fragonard, Molinard and Galimard. All are open to the public and all are very generous in letting you try out the scents. The tours were interesting and there is a

workshop you can attend and make your own perfume. We found the town of Grasse itself a nice size for walking, with

many interesting shops, restaurants and museums. The roads hereabouts are good, and the hills and countryside lovely, but it did always seem to take longer to get anywhere than we had estimated, as the roads are very winding.

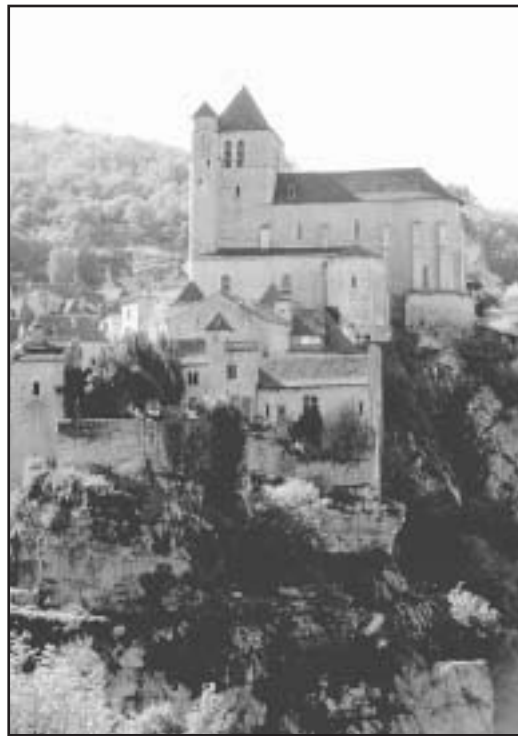
The prices for the three properties we rented varied and all had different prices for different seasons and different requests for payment. Current prices are clearly shown on the website. Generally the end of September is low season. We paid on arrival at Le Banquet in Les Eyzies and the charge included linen, towels etc. They did not want a deposit and waived the damage fee. Les Chenes near Grasse requested a £150 (about C\$300) booking fee and a refundable damage deposit fee of £150 on arrival. Their charge also included linens etc., and heat if needed. We thought all the costs, when divided among the four couples, were very reasonable.

There are, however, some things to beware of when renting. Read the fine print as some properties don't include linens or towels,

charge extra for heat and electricity and some even add extra tax on arrival! We did not find this with this holiday-

rental site but have with some others in the past. The website gives lots of information and direct addresses for the people who own or rent these properties. You can e-mail for any information you need and many of the people you deal with you will meet during your stay. Any concerns we had were looked after very promptly and we

thoroughly enjoyed – and can recommend – this form of vacationing in France. 🇫🇷



*St. Cirq La Popie*



*At the Fragonard Perfumerie*

# “Teaching” in Valdelavilla, Spain

story and photos by Martin Davies

**E**arly last year, my wife Cynthia and I noticed something we thought interesting in *The Travel Society Magazine*. It was an invitation to readers to check out [www.vaughanvillage.com](http://www.vaughanvillage.com) ... which is exactly what we did. The more we read about this site, now called Pueblo Inglés, the more excited we became about the possibility of being part of this adventure. This article is to inform you how we got there, what happened when we were there, and how we felt about the experience afterwards.

The website, run by a company based in Madrid called Vaughan Systems, offers a chance for English speaking people (Anglos) to work with Spanish business people to help the latter improve their understanding of conversational English. This happens at several centres in Spain, one of which is called Valdelavilla, a tiny village rebuilt from ruins and located in the mountains, about a four hour bus ride north of Madrid. All we had to do was get ourselves to Madrid; once there, the company would take care of everything and we would not have to pay for a thing.

After a little thought, we decided we would give this venture a go, and started to make plans to include a week at the centre as part of a longer trip to see family and friends in Wales, England and Portugal. We filled out the application online and began to correspond with a marvellous young woman named Maria Goyanes, who works as a trip coordinator at the head office of Vaughan Systems in Madrid. As it fit with our travel plans, we applied for a course which ran 23 – 30 September at the Valdelavilla centre. In addition to this centre, courses run at La Alberca, in the province of Salamanca (also close to Madrid) and in Tuscany, Italy.

Eventually our applications were accepted and we finalized things like our return flights from Vancouver to Gatwick. We used Zoom Airlines (C\$699 pp round-trip) for the transatlantic flight. Our round-trip flights Madrid/Gatwick were booked on Easyjet for about C\$102 each. Via e-mail we received good maps and itineraries



*We gather at Valdelavilla*

from Vaughan Systems. They sent us maps of the Madrid metro, of the location of the *tapas* party they would host for the Anglos to meet and greet before the departure to the centre and of the location of the bus departure point. Overall, the communication with Vaughan Systems during the planning stages of our visit to Spain was most helpful.

Eventually we arrived in Madrid from Gatwick and took the metro from Barajas Airport downtown. It was quick, clean, efficient and cheap, costing

€1 each for the entire trip (at the time of our visit €1 = C\$1.40). We quickly found our hostel which we had booked on-line from Canada. It was Hostal Nuria, ([http://www.bookassist.com/conduit/details3.jsp?ch=35&guide\\_id=100&hotel\\_id=140](http://www.bookassist.com/conduit/details3.jsp?ch=35&guide_id=100&hotel_id=140)) located about 200 metres from the Tribunal stop on the metro. We spent two nights there which we found to be very clean and comfortable. We had a shower and washbasin in our room and two comfy single beds. Two toilets were located across the hall from our room. We paid €80 for the two nights. The nightlife of Madrid buzzed around outside until all hours. It was noisy but we had come to Madrid expecting nothing less from this bustling, exciting city.

The first full day we were in Madrid we explored. Part of that exploration was done with Madrid Vision, a tour bus company which uses double deck buses. Each seat on the bus had a head-set which played commentaries about the city in eight languages. The cost was €3 each for the day, entitling us to take three tours, hopping on and off buses when we liked.

That evening we headed for the *tapas* party organized by Vaughan Systems. Once again we used the wonderful metro. We arrived at Broker's café, located near the Real Madrid soccer stadium, and met the other Anglos who were going to the two different language centres. The evening was a warm and friendly affair. It was good to meet Maria Goyanes after many weeks of writing to her and receiving her help. Maria and the other staff members gave us name

tags and general introductions were made. Each Anglo told a little about him/herself and where they/he/she came from. We found that in our particular group going to Valdelavilla we had Americans, Irish, Canadians, an Aussie, and a South African now working in London

Next morning, Cynthia and I walked the short distance from our hostel to the departure point for the buses. We met all the people we had seen the previous night and there was an air of excitement about the trip and the week ahead. Some of the Spaniards going to the centres had also arrived and we spent some time meeting and greeting them. The loaded buses took off on time and after a four-hour trip north, broken by one pit stop and coffee break, we arrived at the tiny village of Valdelavilla, a location you won't find on many maps. Here is a description of the village from the Vaughan site:

*“Abandoned in the sixties as a result of demographic change, Valdelavilla is a tiny village of only five acres (two hectares) located in the northeast of the province of Soria. It’s very near the border with the famous wine region of La Rioja, three hours from Madrid and five hours from Barcelona. It is a relatively mountainous area, located at approximately 3,000 feet and characterized by the low, scrub forest typical of the entire Mediterranean basin. The village is nestled in a valley and, even in its heyday, its population probably never surpassed 30 families. It holds 12 charming stone houses, with a maximum capacity of 73 people who will walk the cobble streets. Inside, the houses are rustic but comfortable, with lots of wooden beams. There are 41 rooms.”*

Cynthia and I were immediately charmed by the village with its dry stone wall construction. It reminded us of the farm buildings in Wales, where we were born and raised. We were shown to our rooms and then later our daily schedule was explained by our two coordinators from Vaughan Systems. The daily routine went something like this:

08:15 Telephone wake-up call.

09:00 Breakfast at a table shared with two Spaniards. (We changed groups at each meal).

10:00 Four one-hour one-on-one sessions, each with a different Spanish partner. At these times, we could hike together, sit and talk, or play a board game as long as we were conversing in English.

14:00 Lunch had two courses with two choices for each course, vegetarian also if needed. We had wine with every meal, all complimentary.

15:30 With lunch over, siesta began ... free time to spend as we liked until 5 o'clock.

17:00 Group session. Three Anglos and three Spaniards discussed a prepared scenario. Once we role played a hospital board given a budget for operations to be done. We prioritised the cases and said how the money should be spent. There were other business-related scenarios such as this one.

18:00 One-on-one session.

19:00 One-on-one session.

20:00 Entertainment. We provided our own entertainment from within the group. Some played guitar and sang, some prepared skits, and some took part in scenes from plays directed by one of our coordinators. Everyone entered into the spirit and we had great fun.

21:00 Dinner - Spaniards eat late! Our chef Augustin produced beautiful food including a paella for 40! After dinner the time was ours to mix and mingle. The bar closed at 01:00 if we chose to stay up. If you did, the wake-up call still came at 08:15!

Yes, the seven days we spent at Valdelavilla were all highly structured but it was not all work without play. One night a dance was planned and music was brought in from the closest village of San Pedro Manrique which is just north-east of the town of Soria. The following morning a walk was planned to the nearby village of Vallejo which was in its original state after being abandoned in 1968. One evening we were invited to observe a Queimada, a dramatic storytelling event performed over a bowl of flaming liquor, a ritual said to go back to Celtic times. Yet another evening, Augustin our chef invited us to nibble goodies and taste the wonderful wine of the Rioja region as we watched him make the paella for dinner for the 40+ people in our group.

Our room at Valdelavilla was one in a house of five bedrooms. It was quite charming! We had a door through which Cynthia had to stoop to gain entrance ... she is 5ft. 3ins! Once in the room, there was plenty of headroom even for me. The room had a double bed and a wardrobe for our clothes, side tables with bedside-lights, and a chair. There was a modern en-suite bathroom with a shower, toilet and a washbasin. Soaps, shampoos, towelling and a hair dryer were provided. We were very comfortable. We also had our own phone, as did all the rooms, and the maids came in every day. There was a suggestion, as in other hotels, that we hang up our towels if we were prepared to use them again, but in spite of us hanging them up the maids changed them every day! They were a seemingly happy group and cared well for us. We had no view to speak of as the two windows were very small as the restorers had kept them in the original fashion and location. That didn't bother us one bit as we were rarely in the room.

Breakfast was sliced cold meats and cheeses, cereals, fresh fruit and yogurt with a Spanish offering of toasted French bread, drizzled with olive-oil and spread with chopped, seasoned tomatoes with which bacon was available on some mornings. I thoroughly enjoyed this Spanish treat! Lunch was three courses: a salad or vegetable starter, a meat or fish main course and a small dessert. Red or white wine was plentiful and always available. Dinner followed much the same pattern. We tasted all the main courses and they were excellent. There was always something available for vegetarians too, though Spain is not famous for catering to them.

On the Friday morning we were due to leave

... continued on page 20

# SOME MORE SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR STAY IN ENGLAND

(yet not far from London)

*story and photo by Ann Wallace*

**L**ast month, after recommending Hampstead for your London visit, I promised a few more ideas for your stay in England. I've written about Windsor, west of London, and about five miles from Heathrow before. Chances are Royal Windsor, with its fabled castle, is already on your itinerary, but I'll bet that most people who find their way there for a castle visit wish they'd planned to stay longer. It's a tourist town, of course, complete with carriage rides but it has a unique charm, snazzy shops and some beautiful walks. Once, leaving the bustling town behind, I instructed my daughter to close her eyes for the last few yards' walk beneath the castle ramparts. As I expected, when I spun her round to reveal the view of Windsor Great Park stretched out before her, she let out an astonished gasp and an "Oh wow!" Ascot, Hampton Court, Henley and Legoland are also close. And then there's the swan-laden River Thames here that swirls past Eton College and its playing grounds and fields on the opposite bank before passing under the old bridges of Windsor. Restaurants and river-side pubs abound, as do a variety of small hotels from ritzy to rustic.

In the ritzy category is the Sir Christopher Wren's House Hotel, riverside home of the famous architect (among many other 'professions') of St. Paul's Cathedral (1675-1710) and 51 other city churches. But Wren designed far more than churches. He was responsible for Tom Tower at Christ's Church, Oxford; the library at Trinity College and the Royal Hospital at Chelsea. He also enlarged and remodeled Kensington



*A riverside view in Windsor*

Palace, Hampton Court Palace, and the Naval Hospital at Greenwich. He is rightly regarded as the most influential British architect of all time. So ... it is a treat indeed for lovers of history and architecture to spend a night or two the Windsor home he designed for himself. Week-ends are the best time for a stay, for that's when the property offers packages of two-nights, B&B and one dinner (on Friday or Sunday

night) from £152.50 pp. (approx. C\$305.00). Lots of details on line at [www.sirchristopherwren.co.uk](http://www.sirchristopherwren.co.uk) or contact Sir Christopher Wren's House Hotel & Spa at Thames Street, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 1PX, tel: [code 011 44] 1753 861 354, fax: 1753 860 172.

If you don't wish to dip so deeply into your pockets, the nearby 10-room Fairlight Lodge may fit the bill. This very nice Victorian property stands in a quiet road close to the park but is nonetheless close to the centre of town. It also has a history, in that it was the home of the Mayor of Windsor for many years early in the last century. The hotel offers a pretty garden, parking, a typically-English lounge and bar and a restaurant. On my brief visit to Windsor I didn't have time to stay or eat there, but I was shown around most graciously and would judge that the double room prices from £65 are a bargain for this prosperous town. The property is located on Frances Road, Windsor, Berkshire SL4 3AQ, tel: 1753 861 207, fax: 1753 865 963.

There is a great deal of information about Windsor on line, including driving and public transportation details at [www.thamesweb.co.uk/windsor/info/traveltowindsor.html](http://www.thamesweb.co.uk/windsor/info/traveltowindsor.html) with links to other sites, including information on visiting the Castle and other Windsor attractions.

*... continued on page 20*

# A Week on Vancouver Island

*story and photos by Linda L. Reid*

**W**hen my husband and I were invited to a July wedding in Vancouver, we planned a short holiday on “the island” afterward. We had visited Victoria before so we looked for something different this time. There is lots to see and do and we had such an enjoyable week.

We knew that we would be arriving on Vancouver Island in the early evening so we booked a motel in Parksville for the first night, about 30 km north from the ferry landing at Nanaimo. The motel we chose, Paradise Sea Shell Motel, is on a strip between the highway and the beach. It is functional and includes breakfast.

The next day we set off to the west coast and Pacific Rim National Park. We stopped on the way at Cathedral Grove in MacMillan Provincial Park east of Port Alberni. There are short trails on both sides of the highway (cross carefully) through a magnificent grove of Douglas fir. We were early in the day and had no difficulty getting parking space but I understand that it can get very busy with big campers. The road is good to Sproat Lake, west of Port Alberni, but after that it is very hilly and winding with no gas stations or other services.

Our first stop on the west coast was Ucluelet, before the entrance to the Long Beach unit of the Pacific Rim National Park. We walked the Lighthouse Trail and stopped at a bench for a picnic lunch. A particular delight was the small aquarium in town. The philosophy is catch and release and everything will be returned to the ocean at the end of the summer season. There are touch tanks where visitors can feel the sea creatures.

The Pacific Rim National Park is composed of three



*Deck with hot-tub at Jensen's Bay B&B, Tofino*

separate sections: the West Coast Trail, the Long Beach unit and the Broken Group Islands. We only visited the Long Beach unit which is located between Ucluelet in Barkley Sound and Tofino in Clayoquot Sound.

We stopped briefly at the park information centre at the entrance and then drove through the park to our accommodation in Tofino, beyond the park. Tofino is at the end of the road and, as expected, prices

are high. An internet café charged \$3 for fifteen minutes computer time. Don't go to Tofino without a reservation. We booked a very comfortable bed and breakfast in the rainforest south of the main townsite, a short walk to the south end of Chesterman's Beach. Jensen's Bay B&B has two ensuite guest rooms that are in an addition to the modern home. There is a guest entrance next to the parking and another door from the room out to the deck at the back. The rooms include a bar fridge, a microwave, kettle and coffee maker (with tea and coffee supplies).

A cold breakfast is brought on a cart and left outside the room at 8 a.m. The food is on an ice pack so you can eat anytime. There are tables and chairs in each room and on the deck. We ate outside both days. Breakfast included juice, and cut-up fresh fruit both days. One day we had smoked salmon and cream cheese on a bagel and the other day a quiche (which we heated in the microwave). This cost \$125 per night, reasonable by Tofino standards. There are bicycles and helmets free for guest use and the bike path into Tofino is adjacent. There is a hot tub on the deck. It was great for easing tired leg muscles after long beach walks!

The beaches are magnificent. The first afternoon we walked Chesterman's Beach from one end to the other and



*Floating cottage seen from the m.v. Lady Rose*

back again (2 ½ km each way). A few children and their parents splashed in the shallow water but it was too cold for me to venture in beyond my ankles. It was fun to watch the surfers in their wet suits. At the northwest end of the beach we climbed up to look at the Wickaininnish Inn. It would be a lovely spot to stay for those with deep pockets.

For dinner the first night we went to SoBo, a restaurant in the Botanical Gardens south of town. The name stands for Sophisticated Bohemian, which epitomizes the quirky atmosphere of Tofino. It is closed Tuesdays and Wednesdays and doesn't take reservations. We got a table right away on a Monday evening. SoBo has a variety of interesting small dishes on the menu (appetizer size) that weren't expensive.

Generally speaking, you have to make dinner reservations early in Tofino, perhaps even the day before. When I went into the Schooner restaurant at noon the next day the only dinner reservation I could get for that evening was at 5:30 or 8:30. Neither time matched our schedule of attending an 8 p.m. talk at the Raincoast Interpretive Centre. I called the Shelter and got a reservation at an appropriate time there. We enjoyed our meal on their patio. Most entrees were around \$30 at both restaurants. The other couple at our B&B were visiting Tofino for the third time. They said that they had never had a bad meal in Tofino, but the service in restaurants tended to be a little lax. Our experience confirmed this.

Tofino is touristy but the craft shops are tasteful. We enjoyed the Eagle Aerie Gallery with the works of Native artist Roy Henry Vickers. You can see his art in the picture book, *The Elders are Watching* and on his web site [www.royhenryvickers.com/theartist/biography.php](http://www.royhenryvickers.com/theartist/biography.php).

There are many commercial tours from Tofino but we didn't take any. We did enjoy two free guided walks from the Wickaininnish Interpretive Centre in the middle of the National Park (not to be confused with the Wickaininnish Inn, a commercial property on Chesterman Beach). One was a beach walk and the other through the woods while a Native guide spoke about Nuu-chah-nulth (formerly called Nootka) culture. Long Beach is perfect for those who enjoy long

walks, both along the beach and on trails through the rain forest. There are parking lots at different points on the road. You have to buy a park pass for \$10 per day. It's per day, not per 24-hour period.

We had a lunch in the Wickaininnish Restaurant in the interpretive centre. The mid-day view of the beach was good, and it would be fantastic at sunset.

We left the park in late afternoon to go to Port Alberni. Tofino is well-known as a tourist destination, but Port Alberni was a pleasant surprise. Glancing at a map you wonder why a city in the middle of the island has the name "Port". It is in fact situated at the head of a very long inlet to the Pacific Ocean and was damaged by a tsunami in 1964. The former mill town has been cleaned up and there is no longer any odour from the remaining mills. It is becoming a retirement centre (after real estate in Victoria and then Nanaimo became very pricey). Tourism is expanding but prices are still reasonable. Some people stay at Port Alberni and visit the coast on a long day trip. I wouldn't recommend this, but it would be reasonable to limit your time at Tofino to the two nights that most places require during the peak season. You could expand your days on the coast at less cost by staying at Port Alberni before and after.

Our accommodation at Port Alberni was at Alpine Springs Farm and B&B outside of town. It's run by an interesting couple: Jacinthe Deschambault is a French-speaking native of Quebec and Elmar Langle is originally from Austria. They are both very friendly and talking with them was one of the highlights of our trip. They have two ensuite rooms, each with a private entrance. We stayed three nights at the rate of \$79 a night. We had a choice of cooked breakfast each morning: eggs various styles, pancakes, French toast, cooked oatmeal in addition to juice, fruit and cold cereal. Jacinthe is extremely accommodating, serving breakfast anytime between 6 a.m. and 9 a.m.

They have a trout farm on their property and offer their guests the opportunity to have a trout dinner one night of their stay. We had a delicious salad made with organic lettuces from their garden, trout, vegetables and a dessert of berries and whipped cream. All this was expertly prepared and served with wine for \$25 each.

Jacinthe encourages guests to stay by putting together some day packages. One day we went on the coastal steamer, the *m.v. Lady Rose*, from Port Alberni down to Bamfield at the mouth of the inlet. We specified what day we wanted to go and she had the tickets ready for us. This was an all-day trip (8 a.m. to late afternoon - it depends on the stops) at \$50 per person. We had an hour and a half to stretch our legs and explore the fishing village of Bamfield (one end of the West Coast Trail) before the return trip. The *Lady Rose* carries supplies to fishing cabins, many built on log rafts. The one scheduled stop on each trip is at the Kildonan post office, described as Canada's only floating post office. We stopped at several huge log rafts to which people came on speed boats from their nearby fishing cabins. One speed boat

delivered a passenger and his bag to the ship in mid-channel. The cafeteria served breakfast until eleven and then freshly prepared burgers and sandwiches at reasonable prices. It was a relaxed day and we enjoyed chatting with our fellow passengers. On the return trip we were joined by a party who had completed a kayaking expedition. The company has a sister ship that travels through the Broken Group Islands to Ucluelet. Details are on their web site listed below.

Another day Jacinthe provided us with a picnic lunch (which included smoked trout) and gave us a map and directions to local attractions. In the morning we visited the Alberni Valley Museum and the Maritime Discovery Centre (admission to both by donation). The modern Alberni Valley Museum is adjacent to the Public Library where we checked our e-mail (\$1 per half-hour for non-residents). The museum has many exhibits including native artifacts and crafts, survival suits that you can try on and an interesting account of the 1964 tsunami (in which no one died). In the afternoon we took the restored steam train of the Alberni Pacific Railway to the McLean Mill National Historic Site. There were rumours that the Beaufort Gang often robs the train on the Saturdays of holiday weekends! The sawmill has hired drama students to put on a brief review on the site and to guide visitors around. The sawmill staff demonstrated the steam-operated sawmill. The mill/theatre/train costs \$26 per adult if purchased directly.

In the early evening we walked a section of an old logging trail adjacent to the farm. I highly recommend both Port Alberni and Alpine Springs Farm. Jacinthe and Elmar are planning to add three self-catering cottages on the property.

Our final destination was Salt Spring Island. On our drive down the east coast of Vancouver Island we stopped at Chemainus, south of Nanaimo. Its distinctive feature is the collection of large professionally-painted murals on building walls throughout the town. They depict the history of the area.

We crossed by a short twenty-minute ferry ride from Cromford to Vesuvius on Salt Spring Island (no reservation). Our B&B was outside Ganges, and part way up Mount Maxwell. Ann and Hubert King have fixed up the lower level of their home as a guest suite (800 square feet) which they rent when it isn't used by visiting children and grandchildren. As their home is on the hillside, the lower level has a ground floor entrance (and a view). It has a large living room, kitchen, bathroom and bedroom. It would be ideal for a family as the bedroom has a double and a single bed and the living room has a pull-out couch. Ann stocks the fridge and visitors prepare their own breakfasts. This worked very well for us as we had an early start on our last morning to catch the ferry.

There are lots of craft shops and studios on the island but we spent much of our time exploring Ruckle Park. Here we went on a forest walk led by the park naturalist.

If you should be there on the August holiday weekend as we were, don't miss the salmon barbecue at the Anglican church in Ganges. It was \$12 for salmon and

small servings of potato salad, cole slaw and fruit salad for dessert. They served on Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights. Church suppers are an opportunity to meet interesting people: the couple next to us had come from Seattle on their boat and had walked across from the marina.

There are three different ferry routes to Salt Spring Island. Although we had arrived from "the big island", we left from Long Harbour for Tswwassen on the mainland and our flight home.

#### **Accommodation**

**Paradise Sea Shell Motel**, 411 West Island Parkway, Parksville, BC V9P 1A1, tel: 1 877 337 3529, e-mail: [info@paradiseseashellmotel.com](mailto:info@paradiseseashellmotel.com), [www.paradiseseashellmotel.com](http://www.paradiseseashellmotel.com) \$69.95 per couple.

**Jensen's Bay B&B**, 902 Jensen's Bay Rd., Tofino, B.C. V0R 2Z0, tel: 1 877 725 1264, fax: 250 725 1289, e-mail: [info@jensensbay.com](mailto:info@jensensbay.com), [www.jensensbay.com](http://www.jensensbay.com), \$125 dbl.

**Wickaninnish Inn** (we didn't stay there, but it looks lovely), Osprey Lane, Tofino, BC, tel: 1 800 333 4604, e-mail: [info@wickinn.com](mailto:info@wickinn.com), [www.wickinn.com](http://www.wickinn.com). Rates start at \$400.


**Alpine Springs Farm and B&B**, 6860 Desmond Rd., Port Alberni, BC, V9Y 8T5, e-mail: [info@alpinespringsfarm.ca](mailto:info@alpinespringsfarm.ca), [www.alpinespringsfarm.ca](http://www.alpinespringsfarm.ca), tel: 250 724 6841, fax: 250 724 6840, \$79 per couple per night. Highly recommended.

**Ann and Hubert King, Belvedere Place**, 51 Devine Drive, Salt Spring Island, BC V8K 2H5, tel: 250 537 2615, fax: 250 537 2655, e-mail: [annking@island.net](mailto:annking@island.net), [www.belvedereplace.ca](http://www.belvedereplace.ca), \$95 per night, \$550 per week.

#### **Attractions**

**Pacific Rim National Park**, [www.pc.gc.ca/pacificrim](http://www.pc.gc.ca/pacificrim)

**Alberni Valley Heritage Network**: [www.alberniheritage.com](http://www.alberniheritage.com)

**Lady Rose Marine**, 1 April – 30 September, call 1 800 663 7192 (toll-free), or 250 723 8313 (year round) [www.ladyrosemarine.com](http://www.ladyrosemarine.com) 



*One of the murals in Chemainus*

# PREPARE TO BE SURPRISED IN PORT PERRY

story and photo by Ann Wallace

**H**ow about getting some of your Christmas shopping done in the middle of summer? Not really your style? I didn't think it was mine either, until I was persuaded to join a friend on a day trip out of Toronto to pretty Port Perry last summer. She'd read about this unusual town somewhere; about its cruise on Lake Scugog, the nearby winery, the restaurants, the local ghost stories and all the great shops on the historic streets. In fact Port Perry's Victorian streetscape is so attractive it has been used in dozens of Hollywood and Canadian film and television productions, including *Welcome to Moose Port*, *Fly Away Home* and an episode of *West Wing*. So off we went and had a great day, so good that I decided there and then to write about it and, while my friend finished her shopping, I even set off and found a lake-side B&B to recommend.

Port Perry, located less than an hour's drive northeast of Toronto, was founded by Peter Perry, a Whitby businessman who, in 1844, had the vision of a 'perfect town' where camaraderie amongst the inhabitants was to be the moving force. Two fires set his plans back seriously but, on the other hand, reinforced the solidarity of the people who had come to live there as they set about rebuilding and working together to create the town. Today over 300 merchants make up the downtown district with nary a chain store in sight. Here are gift stores, unusual fashion studios and shops, home décor offerings, books, art, chocolates, antiques, jewels and more. I'm not an avid shopper but wandering these streets was a pleasure and I did indeed purchase a number of gifts, which made me happy on that summer's day and even happier in mid December!

Before heading into 'downtown' Port Perry we stopped at Ocala Orchards Farm Winery, on the outskirts of



*The entrance to the Coach House B&B*

town, for a tour and to browse in the boutique here, enjoying the views of the surrounding orchards and Oak Ridges Moraine countryside. As well as award-winning wine from grapes, this winery produces unusual wines from fruits and berries ... unusual gifts for those 'foodies' on our lists as well as for our own pantries.

Lake Scugog can be seen sparkling at the end of many of Port Perry's streets, so if you'd like to relax on a calm mini-cruise you need to know about Scugog Island Cruises Ltd who offer a variety of lake outings aboard the *m.v. Woodman*. These pleasant excursions include two-hour sightseeing trips or evening dinner/live music/jazz cruises in the sunset.

And that B&B? You can be sure of a warm welcome from

artist/art teacher Nancy Gardham at her Coach House Gallery B&B, located just 15 minutes' walk from downtown. This pretty house, full of Nancy's art (which is for sale), is located beside the lake and if the weather co-operates you can enjoy your full breakfast out on the terrace here. Such a lovely and relaxing spot, and a stay here, combined with gentle excursions in and around Port Perry, make a lovely getaway. And you may even get your Christmas shopping done by the middle of summer, just as you always promised yourself you'd do!

There's lots of information on line at: [www.discoverportperry.ca](http://www.discoverportperry.ca), [www.ocalawinery.com](http://www.ocalawinery.com) and [www.scugogcruises.com](http://www.scugogcruises.com). And Nancy at the Coach House B&B can be contacted at 425 Lakeshore Drive, Port Perry, ON L9L 1N7, tel: 905 985 8082. B&B rates in the 3-room property are \$80, \$90 and \$100 and if Nancy is booked she can refer you to other B&B(s) in the Port Perry and surrounding area B&B network ... there are about a dozen properties in the area. 🏠

## BRITAIN

- We've mentioned **budget accommodation in academic venues** in these pages before. Now an on-line system for checking availability and reservations has been created by a company called Venuemasters. Locations range from Edinburgh to London, with single rooms costing from £14 (£1 = C\$2.00) per night. Log on to [www.venuemasters.co.uk/holiday\\_travelstay.asp](http://www.venuemasters.co.uk/holiday_travelstay.asp)
- For alternative budget accommodation in Britain, the **Travelodge** chain is offering millions of pounds' worth of price cuts this year for those who reserve on line. Thousands of rooms will be sold at £10 per night, thousands more at £26. Rooms can be booked up to 12 months in advance. New locations for Travelodge include the City of London, Aberdeen and Manchester airports and Nottingham and Norwich city centres. Rooms are en-suite and sleep up to a family of four. [www.travelodge.co.uk](http://www.travelodge.co.uk)
- Or how about some **rural retreats in England's Lake District**, home to some of Britain's most beautiful scenery? A new website – [www.luxuryinafarm.co.uk](http://www.luxuryinafarm.co.uk) – showcases some of the best farm-based accommodation in Cumbria, including both serviced and self-catering properties. Choose from cottages, converted granaries, barns and coach houses and more.
- And for yet more options, there's the 2006 edition of the official **Enjoy England** accommodation guide listing hotels, B&Bs, self-catering, camping places and so on ... 24,000 places to stay in all, with colour photographs, maps and local tips. Available from British bookshops or on-line at [www.enjoyengland.com](http://www.enjoyengland.com)
- News of some new attractions for your **London** visit: the **Medieval Palace** of King Henry III and Edward I has been restored to its former glory at the **Tower of London**. Visitors can discover what it was like to be a medieval king in a new permanent display which recreates the royal residence with replica furniture and traditional textiles as well as the smells and sound effects of medieval London. A specially commissioned film will recreate the lost buildings which would have formed a vital part of the life of the Tower in the Middle Ages but were partly demolished and partly transformed over a 200-year-period. The Tower of London was used by kings and queens until the reign of Elizabeth I in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and this display examines how Henry III and Edward I influenced this Royal Palace and what it reveals about medieval society. The Tower is open daily, admission adults £15, tel: [011 44] 870 756 6060, [www.hrp.org.uk](http://www.hrp.org.uk).
- Are you a tennis fan? **Wimbledon**, the British home of lawn tennis, has opened a museum featuring exhibits and artefacts never seen before, from memorabilia from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to rackets and tennis outfits belonging to to-day's 'greats'. As well as hundreds of items, the museum gives visitors a chance to recapture great moments from the sport's history with touch-screens which bring to life historic archive film of exciting tournament matches, and

other interactive exhibits, telling the story of the game's evolution from garden party passtime to multi-million dollar professional sport. Visitors will also be able to take a tour of the grounds, Centre Court, the Water Gardens, the press interview room and the BBC television studio. Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum at the All England Lawn Tennis and Croquet Club, London SW19 is open daily (tournament ticket holders only during the Championships) and admission is £7.50 or less. There is also a shop and a café. Tel: 20 8946 6131 or visit [www.wimbledon.org/museum](http://www.wimbledon.org/museum) for more details.

- Visitors to **Scotland** this summer have a rare opportunity to come face to face with basking sharks in a holiday aboard a survey yacht. The Wildlife Trust is offering 5-night breaks working alongside scientists to help observe the animals, record data and even steer the sailing boat *Forever Changes* or make the tea! Participants will also come across a wide range of marine life including whales, dolphins and turtles. The boat departs every Saturday (29 April – 9 Sept.) from Arisaig in Western Scotland. The cost is £500 pp, per week which includes all food. For information tel: [011 44] 870 036 7711, <http://baskingsharks.wildlifetrusts.org>

## CANADA

- Thinking of exploring in western Canada this summer, but don't know where to start planning an itinerary? Let the 568 km **Coast Mountain Circle Tour** come to your aid. This route offers travellers some of the best travel experiences in the province of B.C., with magnificent vistas, guided educational and historical trips and arts and cultural experiences. You can customize the trip to suit your own interest and time available. The route – which starts and ends in Vancouver – is detailed on the website shown below, with links to all kinds of accommodation along the route as well as RV sites etc. Visit [www.vcmcbc.com/page.cfm/931](http://www.vcmcbc.com/page.cfm/931) to start making plans.
- Another self-drive tour in B.C. is the **Purple Banner Route** on the **Sunshine Coast**, which winds up this spectacular coastline to reveal a multitude of art and cultural talents. There is a high concentration of artists on the Sunshine Coast, and participating artists display purple banners that identify art studios, galleries and artisan workshops that are open for visitors. These studios and galleries offer works of every discipline – from clay to weaving, watercolours to organic gardens, musical instruments to forged metal bells. These creative elements combined with a rich First Nations heritage, is responsible for numerous country fairs, art and craft events, and widely acclaimed writing and music festivals that draw visitors from all over the world. For more information visit [www.suncoastarts.com](http://www.suncoastarts.com) or call 604 740 8288. Again there are numerous B&Bs along the route, many offering en-suite kitchens for a little self-catering.
- How about immersing yourself in a unique Canadian

experience (take some kids if you can)? It's a nature adventure called "Spend the Night with the Caribous", offered by the Centre de Conservation de la Biodiversité Boreale (CCBB) in the **Saguenay/Lac-Saint-Jean** region of **Québec**. This day-and-a-half trip of Boreal discovery includes trekking through the woods, canoeing, a night under canvas in prospectors' tents and close encounters with, of course, caribous. For details of this and many other summer adventures call CCBB at 1 800 667 LOUP or visit [www.borealie.org](http://www.borealie.org)

● **Toronto** in your plans? Learn more about the city's architecture and history on one (or more) of the **Royal Ontario Museum's** series of 40 free guided walking tours. These one-to-two hour walks take place on most Sundays at 2 p.m. and Wednesdays at 6 p.m. For more information call 416 586 8000 or visit [www.rom.on.ca](http://www.rom.on.ca).

● For your summer visit to **Ottawa**, make a note of **Petra: Lost City of Stone** at Canadian Museum of Civilization, on show until 2 January 2007. This striking exhibition (*I saw it in Calgary - Ed.*) includes over 170 artefacts from museums in Jordan, Europe and the U.S. It includes a one-tonne colossal stone carving of a god's head known as the Bust of Dushara, which was lowered from its cliff-side perch via an elaborate engineer-designed system of

scaffolds and pulleys. And if skating is your interest, the CMC also has an exhibition entitled **Lace Up: Canada's Passion for Skating** on now until 4 March 2007. The exhibition includes historic skates, Dutch and Flemish skating scenes and many other artworks, together with sections that vividly convey the excitement of 19<sup>th</sup> century speed skating competitions, the rapid rise in popularity of the sport of hockey (officially born in 1875), the spectacle of elaborate masked balls on ice patronized by the social elite of Toronto, Montréal and Ottawa and also pays homage to our champions and Olympic medal winners over the years. For more details of both exhibitions visit [www.civilization.ca](http://www.civilization.ca) or call 1 800 555 5621.

● Also this summer, coming to the National Gallery of Canada between 2 June and 4 September is an **Emily Carr New Perspectives** exhibition ... a chance for Canadians to celebrate our National Gallery, Ottawa and our most famous west-coast artist. Details at 1 800 319 ARTS,

[www.national-gallery.ca](http://www.national-gallery.ca). (After Ottawa, throughout 2007, the exhibition will travel to Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Calgary. We'll be bringing you details.)

## DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

Well not really ... but if you are close to or visiting **Ottawa** soon and love Caribbean art you may like to catch an exhibition of the works of Jaime Colson at the **Embassy of the Dominican Republic**. Staged by the Embassy and the City Hall Art Gallery of Ottawa in collaboration with Air Transat, the exhibition runs until June 18, 2006. Jaime Colson is acclaimed as the most important painter of the Dominican Republic and one of the leading artists of the Caribbean. The embassy is located at 111 Sussex Drive, Ottawa. For more information call 613 569 9893.



*A work by Dominican artist Jaime Colson*

## MEXICO

It's hard not to spend money in Mexico, with all their wonderful pottery, silver jewellery and so on. But you will save a little when you spend from 1 July this year, the date the tourists will be reimbursed for taxes paid on purchases, though your receipts (to be presented at time of departure) must be worth at least 1,200 Mexican pesos. There's also an ominous-sounding caveat on the press release: "Reimbursement to

tourists will be contingent upon any added costs a possible return may generate." Well ... you can try!

## U.S.A

● The friendly folk from the state of Ohio's Appalachian Region were in Toronto recently, hosting the travel media to an interesting evening to promote their arts and cultural attractions. Some of their artisans were in attendance: quilt and music makers; painters and wood carvers. Looks as though it would be an interesting region to tour.

Information can be found at [www.discoverOhio.com](http://www.discoverOhio.com)

● How about a luxurious getaway to Chicago to see the **Tutankhamen and the Gold Age of the Pharaohs** at the famous Field Museum (on now until 1 January 2007)? The Hyatt Regency McCormick Place hotel is offering a Friday or Saturday night luxury stay that includes two tickets to the exhibition for US\$229. Details at [www.hyatt.com](http://www.hyatt.com) or by calling 312 567 1234.

In our "From the Bookshelf" column in last month's edition we carried a review of Douglas Ward's *Berlitz Complete Guide to Cruising and Cruise Ships 2006*. When the publishers sent me this review copy, they invited my questions to Mr Ward on any aspects of cruising. As, at the time, I was compiling my article 'Cruises ... the not-so-good-news', I asked if Mr Ward would comment on environmental issues and employment rights as they applied to cruise lines. Here is his response:

### Environmental Issues

I am involved with more than 70 cruise lines with ocean-going ships in my job (I have also spent several years working aboard cruise ships in the past). The IMO/MARPOL regulations for these ocean-going cruise ships are now extremely well established (and followed to the letter by signatories of all United Nations countries), that no cruise line would allow pollution or contravention of the regulations knowingly. Many of the major cruise lines have hot-line telephone numbers for passengers to report anything they think equals unauthorized dumping of garbage. In my view, the garbage handling facilities and sewage treatment plants and equipment aboard the large new ships is extremely sophisticated (better than many small towns in the USA), and it is unlikely that unauthorized dumping of plastic garbage bags over the side of cruise ships would take place today.

Having said that, where I would be more concerned is with some of the smaller cruise lines whose training is perhaps less than it should be, typically due to financial constraints. Some cruise operators charter their ships and, in turn, sub-charter them to third parties. Although these ships may be operated under management contracts, inexperienced labour could perhaps result in less effective onboard controls.

### Employment Rights

There is a long waiting list of people wanting jobs aboard the large resort-style cruise ships today. The reason is 'guaranteed tipping' whereby gratuities are automatically charged to passengers' onboard accounts daily. These are collected by the cruise line's onboard management and distributed automatically among the crew. Men and women from the Philippines, for example, often go home rich after working for just one contract (about nine months, due to the cost of flights and work visas).

Although we still hear cries from people outside the cruise industry stating that a waiter earns only \$52 per month (for example), with the guaranteed tipping now common to almost all the seven major cruise lines (Carnival Cruise Line, Costa Cruises, Celebrity Cruises, Holland America Line, Norwegian Cruise Line, Princess Cruises and Royal Caribbean International), that waiter could easily earn \$800-\$1,000 *per week* (tax-free)! No wonder there's such a waiting list. Sadly, it is often the media who do not get their facts right, and don't bother to learn about the facts of life at sea.

*By Douglas Ward*  
author *Berlitz Complete Guide to Cruising and*  
*Cruise Ships 2006*  
President: *The Maritime Evaluations Group Ltd*

**However ... please read on. (It would be interesting to sit in on a conversation between Douglas Ward and Dr Klein!)**

Dear TS,

I enjoyed the article "Cruises ... the not-so-good news" in the February edition and spent quite a lot of time following the internet links mentioned. Then I came across [www.cruisejunkie.com](http://www.cruisejunkie.com) ("your resource for the other information about the cruise industry" declares its home page) and I'd like to urge all to visit this site.

The 'Cruise Junkie' is Canadian Ross Klein, a Professor at Memorial University of Newfoundland in St. John's. The site states that his academic training is in sociology and his interests include conflict resolution, nonviolent alternatives to war and, of course, the cruise industry. First thing I learned on the site was that Professor Klein is the author of published essays and books on cruising, including *Cruise Ship Blues* and, his most recent volume, *Cruise Ship Squeeze: The New Pirates of the Seven Seas* which "... brilliantly lays bare an industry that has for too long escaped the glare of public scrutiny."

[CruiseJunkie.com](http://CruiseJunkie.com) is full of news and facts, from crime victims' stories to disturbing lists of onboard illnesses, crew exploitation and environmental violations. It all makes for fascinating reading ... just make sure you're not too busy before you log on!

*Alex Jones*  
*Toronto, ON*

## Important News from British Airways

The biggest piece of airline news for consumers this month is that **British Airways** has launched a massive shake-up of its short-haul **UK** and **European** air fares to combat rising competition from budget European air carriers. They have cut the fares on some routes by as much as 50%. One-way flights on certain routes will be as low as £29 (about C\$60). And that's not all. In addition, all those pesky non-changeable tickets will be discontinued. Travellers will be able to change their flights, no matter what they paid, up to midnight the day before departure. If the UK and/or Europe is in your plans these fares – and flexible itineraries – will be worth investigating. Talk to your agent or visit [www.ba.com](http://www.ba.com)

## more on the census

Dear Ann,

I am pleased that you reminded readers about the forthcoming census in May. As a genealogist, I wish that you had gone further and urged people to answer “yes” to the question requesting permission to release their data to researchers in another 92 years.

This is the first time that Canadians have been asked to give informed consent. We have traditionally had access to historic census records after 92 years but Access to Information and Privacy Acts have now made the government nervous. Historians and genealogists fought a seven-year battle with government authorities to get access to the 1906 census of the prairie provinces and to the 1911 census to all of Canada. Now the government is insisting that future census data will be destroyed after the compilation of statistics unless Canadians give specific permission to retain their data for release in another 92 years.

The question will be worded as follow:

**53. The Statistics Act guarantees the confidentiality of your census information. Only if you mark “YES” to this question will your personal information be made public, 92 years after the 2006 Census. If you mark “NO” or leave the answer blank, your personal information will never be made publicly available. Does this person agree to make his/her 2006 Census information available for public release in 2098 (92 years after the census)?**

Complete census information is important to future Canadians researching their family history and to historians studying what Canada was like in 2006. I urge all readers (and their families) to make sure

that their place in history is recorded by answering “YES” to question 53. If you would like to read more about the issue of access to the historic census go to <http://globalgenealogy.com/globalgazette/gazgw/gazgw-0084.htm>

Some historic Canadian census data is available on the web. For a complete index and transcription of the 1881 census go to [www.familysearch.org](http://www.familysearch.org) (no charge). The 1911 data (and index) is available on a paid site [www.ancestry.com](http://www.ancestry.com). Many large public libraries have subscriptions to Ancestry Library Edition. The librarians will be able to tell you about some other sites with census data. Incidentally, the Ancestry site has the U.S. census data right up to 1930!

Linda Reid  
Toronto, Ontario

*Thank you for this letter, Linda. Yes, after publishing the Census information for travellers last month I read an article by Bill Waiser, a professor of history at the University of Saskatchewan, in The Globe and Mail. Professor Waiser also urged Canadians to make their information available in 92 years, stating that “It [question 53] is the most important question that Statistics Canada has ever asked in a census. Indeed, the future integrity and usefulness of the census as a research tool is riding on each individual response.” Professor Waiser goes on to urge Canadians to say “yes” to genealogy, to history, to their sense of identity and belonging as Canadians and to their grandchildren and great-grandchildren who will want to know this information.*

*Spain ... continued from page 10*

Valdelavilla for Madrid, an informal ceremony was held on the village green. Certificates of appreciation were presented to the Anglos and certificates of merit were handed over to the Spaniards. We were all sad to be leaving. We had gone to Valdelavilla as 20 Anglos and 18 Spaniards but were leaving feeling like members of a huge family. Cynthia and I had gone to Valdelavilla feeling that it would be a new experience for us and we might be able to help the Spaniards in some small way. That experience certainly happened for us but what we gained from being with the Spaniards and others from around the world was more valuable than anything we had given.

We plan to go back again in a year or two, perhaps not to Valdelavilla (though it was a beautiful setting) but to another of the Vaughan System sites. I would highly recommend this experience to anyone who enjoys meeting people and chatting with them. No expertise in English or Spanish is needed; one just has to enjoy being with others, to listen to them and share with them.

The programmes run all year round and last seven days, always beginning and ending on a Friday. Recently posted on the company's website was the following notice: "Please note Pueblo Ingles has decided to no longer hold programs in Gredos. Due to numerous complaints and the hotel's unsatisfactory service, we have been obliged to terminate our contract with Puerta de Gredos. We apologize for the inconvenience this may cause, but will gladly extend an invitation in either Valdelavilla or La Alberca." The schedules can be seen at: [www.vaughanvillage.com/webfinal/dates.htm](http://www.vaughanvillage.com/webfinal/dates.htm).

We left the village, rented a car in Madrid, and saw other places in Spain and Portugal. We also rented a car at Gatwick to get us to Wales and back. Prior to going to Spain, we had stayed with relatives at The Old Dairy Cottage on Newell's farm near Horsham in England. If anyone wishes to know more of the places we stayed, the rentals we made and the associated costs, I'd be happy to help in any way I can. I can be contacted at [mdaviesret@hotmail.com](mailto:mdaviesret@hotmail.com). Best wishes to all. 📧

---

*England ... continued from page 11*

Adjacent to Berkshire is the pretty and varied county of Surrey; urban in the north where it is, in effect, a part of London, but wooded and oh-so-pretty in the south (see the letter on p.5) with many stately homes and pretty towns to visit. And as this area is most definitely commuter country, it is well served by fast and efficient trains from Victoria and Waterloo Stations in central London. One of Surrey's most famous places is Epsom, a bustling market town that is home to the renowned racecourse, home of the original Derby. A walk over Epsom Downs on a clear day gives one of the finest views of London as well as glimpses of fine horses and hearty locals striding out with their dogs. Drive or walk down the narrow and winding lane west of the racecourse and you'll come to Chalk Lane Hotel that can well be described as a hidden gem. They have an excellent website at [www.chalklanehotel.com](http://www.chalklanehotel.com) which lists the many London and to-the-south attractions that can be explored from this property via public transportation, returning in the evening to your 'country home' to relax or walk up over the Downs or through busy Epsom itself. The frequent train trip from Epsom to Central London takes about half an hour. Prices here are from £130 double with full English breakfast, and again there are week-end packages offering two nights, dinner and more. The Chalk Lane Hotel, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 7BB, tel : 1372 721 179, fax: 1372 727 878.

Would you *really* like to 'get away from it all' for a few days while in England? How about staying in a 16<sup>th</sup> century inn in a village that is so unspoiled it looks like a movie set? You may have friends who have travelled extensively

in Britain, but I bet none of them has visited Mickleham! This gem of an inn is called The Running Horses (after nearby Epsom races) and it offers five en-suite rooms, each named for a famous English racecourse as a continuation of its equestrian theme. You'd like a four poster bed? They have one! You'd like a friendly pub with an inglenook fireplace (or a flower-bedecked terrace overlooking the ancient church) that serves fine ales and wines from around the world? It's here. In addition, the food in the pretty restaurant is very fine with excellent service by young people from all over Europe. The Running Horses is everyone's idea of an English inn, with a 400-year history of attracting merchants, coachmen, pedlars and highwaymen. And Mickleham itself is about as quaint as English villages get, yet it's close to the busy town of Dorking, 25 miles from London and a 20-30 minute drive from Gatwick or Heathrow, just 5 minutes off the M25 at junction 9. The property is set amidst beautiful National Trust countryside with unspoiled Box Hill (who remembers Jane Austen's *Emma*?) just half a mile away and many other beautiful walks close by. You can see more at [www.therunninghorses.co.uk](http://www.therunninghorses.co.uk) or by contacting the inn at Old London Road, Mickleham, Surrey RH5 6DU, tel: 1372 372 279, fax: 1372 363 004. Double rooms, B&B, are £95 per night, £130 for the four-poster Ascot room. I haven't stayed at this inn, but I have been shown their atmosphere-laden rooms and, when I visit family and friends in Surrey, this is one of our favourite pubs and restaurants. It's open for lunch and dinner. Enjoy ... and please let me know what you think! Who knows, I may even be lurking in the bar there! 📧

**A New  
Tour**

## India's Golden Triangle

21 days departing 9 October 2006, Spring & Fall 2007

No charge  
London  
stopover

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 all the highlights and more, including camel and elephant rides ... guaranteed to give wonderful photographs! You'll start your tour in Mumbai (once known as Bombay) where you'll visit Dhobi Ghat, the Gateway of India, Marine Drive, the Hanging Gardens, Jain Temple and the Prince of Wales Museum. There will be free time also, perhaps for a little shopping, before you fly to Udaipur, home of the Maharna City Palace, the Jagdish Temple, Garden of Maidens and so many other sites. And here you'll dine in the spectacular 250-year-old Lake Palace that seems to float on an island on Lake Pichola.

A drive to Mount Abu, a beautiful hill resort, comes next, followed by fabled Ranakpur, home of the beautiful Ranakpur Temples. Ancient Jodhpur is next on the itinerary, then it's on to the pilgrimage city of Pushkar with its temple dedicated to Lord Brahma. It's in Pushkar that, if you wish, you will take a camel ride into the sand dunes. The famous Pink City - Jaipur - the capital of Rajasthan comes next and you will spend two nights there, with days full of exciting sightseeing and an excursion to the Amber Fort by elephant. Jaipur is also famous for its bazaar full of wonderful gifts ... and of course you'll spend time there.

Agra is the home of the Taj Mahal and so, of course, it's on our itinerary too. You'll have an early night and leave before dawn to watch the beautiful Taj revealed by the rising

sun. Then it's on to Jhansi by the famous Shatabdi Express train - an incredible excursion. You'll be met by your bus there and driven on to Khajuraho, site of the World Heritage Temples - the eternal images of love. Varansi has been requested by many of our members and we've arranged for this destination to come next. You'll never forget your early-morning boat ride on the River Ganges here, nor the narrow by-lanes of this, one of the most ancient living cities. Your last destination is Delhi, reached by air to allow for plenty of time to see the sights and do some last-minute shopping.

Throughout this trip you will stay in first-class hotels; travel in de luxe 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! Twenty-one days! A life-time time of memories! Come with The Travel Society and enjoy the best of Rajasthan with fellow members!



**Fully  
Escorted**

### Your tour includes:

- All international flights with British Airways
- Domestic flights
- Deluxe a/c coach transportation
- Shatabdi Train Fare
- State transport taxes
- All taxes
- All meals
- English-speaking guides and escort
- All entrance fees
- Elephant ride and Camel safari
- Baggage handling

### AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES: 22 Days

<b>Toronto</b>	<b>\$6,055.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Ottawa</b>	<b>\$6,154.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Montreal</b>	<b>\$6,154.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Vancouver</b>	<b>\$6,296.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Calgary</b>	<b>\$6,296.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Winnipeg</b>	<b>\$6,296.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Halifax</b>	<b>\$6,296.00 pp/dbl</b>		

Single supplement \$1,480 (Sharing can be arranged.) Prices are subject to confirmation

Please call 1 877 926 2500 or 416 926 2500 for the complete itineraries

## Copper Canyon and Mexico City

Departing: May, September, October, November & December

New  
itinerary!

We are offering a new 9-day tour to Mexico City and the Copper Canyon. The Copper Canyon is four times larger than the Grand Canyon, and you'll enjoy a journey that is considered by many to be the world's most exciting train trip, with its 87 tunnels, 39 bridges and uncountable spectacular views. You'll meet the people, stay in unique accommodations and explore the present and the past in this astonishing region.

### Air-inclusive prices:

<b>Toronto, Ottawa &amp; Montreal</b>	<b>\$3,760 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Vancouver, Calgary, Halifax, Winnipeg</b>	<b>\$3,994 pp/dbl</b>

Single supplement \$748 (Sharing can be arranged.)  
Prices are subject to confirmation

### Your tour includes:

- All air on Mexicana/Air Canada
- Canadian domestic air
- Bilingual guides
- 8 nights first class accommodation
- All transfers, baggage handling & tips
- Meals as per the itinerary
- All train trips and tours as per the itinerary
- All taxes

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 ACTA

New  
lower prices

Small Ship

# Galapagos Islands Cruise & Ecuador

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

14 days departing May, September, October, November & December 2006,

January, February, March, April 2007

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: Toronto \$5,895.00 pp/dbl

prices are available from all major cities

GREAT ADD-ONS, INCLUDING AIR:

Kapawi - from all departure points \$1,680.00 pp/dbl

Machu Picchu from \$1,996.00 pp/dbl

Prices are subject to confirmation

### Your tour includes:

- Round-trip international air
- All domestic air transportation
- All accommodation
- First class Galapagos small ship cruise
- All meals as per the itinerary
- Admissions to all sites
- Expert Galapagos guides
- Transfers & baggage handling
- All taxes

Please call 1 877 926 2500 or 416 926 2500 for the complete itineraries

22 days from \$5,995

Limited to 20 Members  
A few places left!

## A Traveller's Turkey

Departing: 12 September 2006, Spring & Fall 2007

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. 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 Kapadokya (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: 22 Days

Toronto	\$5,995.00 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$6,175.00 pp/dbl
Montreal	\$6,175.00 pp/dbl	Vancouver	\$6,395.00 pp/dbl
Edmonton	\$6,275.00 pp/dbl	Calgary	\$6,245.00 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$6,275.00 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$6,295.00 pp/dbl

Single supplement \$455 (Sharing can be arranged.) Prices are subject to confirmation

### Your tour includes:

- Round trip transatlantic flights with Air Canada/Lufthansa/British Airways
- 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
- All Taxes

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 ACTA

New itinerary  
for 2006 & 2007

# China ... Yangtze Spectacular

## \$4,145 FOR 18 DAYS!

Departing: 6 September, 4 October 2006,  
Spring & Fall 2007



### Please call for the full itinerary

**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!

#### AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES:

<b>Departing:</b>	
Vancouver	\$4,145 pp/dbl
Victoria/Nanaimo/Kamloops	\$4,195 pp/dbl
Calgary/Edmonton	\$4,420 pp/dbl
Saskatoon/Regina	\$4,420 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$4,590 pp/dbl
Toronto	\$4,590 pp/dbl
Ottawa & Montreal	\$4,490 pp/dbl
Halifax/Quebec City/London	\$4,850 pp/dbl
St. John's	\$4,850 pp/dbl
Single supplement \$1,195 (Sharing can be arranged.)	
Taxes and visas extra.	

#### ADD-ON HONG KONG

4 days/3 nights	\$1,288 pp/dbl
Single supplement	\$544

#### ADD-ON BANGKOK

4 days/3 nights	\$1,185 pp/dbl
Single supplement	\$350

#### ADD-ON TOKYO

4 days/3 nights	\$1,375 pp/dbl
Single supplement	\$299

#### ADD-ON KYOTO

4 days/3 nights	\$1,450 pp/dbl
Single supplement	\$325

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 or Air Canada**
- 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.  

a 19-day tour with Cyril Payle at an incredible price ...

# Spectacular South Africa

*No charge  
London stopover*

**Departure: 21 September 2006 & 1 March & 11 October 2007**

Come with The Travel Society to a land of wonder ... on a South African trip unlike any other. Designed especially for our members, this trip takes in all the highlights: Kruger National Park for game watching, the famous Garden Route, the beautiful wine region of Stellenbosch and the sights of incomparable Cape Town, including Cape Point, Chapman's Peak Drive and Robben Island. But on our trip you will do far more. You will tour the Great Escarpment of Eastern Transvaal – a place so beautiful writers run out of adjectives – where you will visit God's Window, the Blyde River Canyon and historical towns like Pilgrims Rest. You'll see Johannesburg and be escorted to Soweto for lunch in a Township house and jazz in a famous nightspot. You'll enter the Kingdom of Swaziland to meet the people and enjoy more game watching. Zululand is also on the itinerary, with its historical sites and unique entertainment traditions. You'll be driven through the Valley of a Thousand Hills to East London and

take the famous Outeniqua Choo-Toe train from Knysna to George. You'll visit the Addo Elephant National Park and traverse the Little Karoo Desert – flanked by great mountain ranges – to see the Cango Caves. You'll travel in a luxury air-conditioned coach, you'll stay in lovely properties ranging from good hotels to charming chalets, you'll enjoy a wide variety of entertainment and you'll enjoy South Africa's delicious cuisine and wines and you'll be escorted all the way by Satour-accredited guides. Here at The Travel Society we know South Africa well ... and we can't imagine a more comprehensive, in-depth and fascinating tour of South Africa.

**PRICES INCLUDING AIR AND TAXES departing from:**

Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa **\$7,315 pp/dbl**  
 Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg, Halifax **\$7,675 pp/dbl**

Single supplement **\$790.00** (sharing can be arranged)  
 Prices are subject to confirmation

**Your tour includes:**

- Return international airfare on British Airways
- First-class accommodation throughout
- Luxury a/c coach
- Experienced Satour-accredited tour guides
- Special Travel Society experiences
- All meals breakfast, light lunch and dinner
- All transfers with full luggage service
- All sightseeing fees (with no hidden extras)
- All taxes

**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

card #: \_\_\_\_\_  
 expiry: \_\_\_\_\_ tel: \_\_\_\_\_  
 signature: \_\_\_\_\_

I agree to pay The Travel Society 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: *The Travel Society*  
 218-1033 Bay St Toronto ON Canada M5S 3A5  
 Fax: 416 926 0222 e-mail: brit@thetravelsociety.com  
 Publications Mail Agreement: # 40063904 & # 09925

**Password: donna**