

# The Travel Society

Vol. 25, No. 2 February/March 2007

Magazine

**Liechtenstein ... tiny but great!**  
**A Visit to Poland to Explore Warsaw and Cracow**  
**Ukrainian River Cruising**

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February/March 2007 Vol. 25, No. 2

## contents

### Readers' Letters

Cruising in Ontario	3
Genealogy Cruises	4
Getting to Windsor	4
Two London Hotels	5
A Stay in England's Beautiful County of Hampshire	5

### Destinations

Liechtenstein ... tiny but great!	6
A Visit to Poland to Explore Warsaw and Cracow	11
Ukrainian River Cruising	14

### News

Travel Digest	17
Cruise News	19
Airline News	20
"Context"	20



Gutenberg Castle in Balzers, Liechtenstein (Wallace)

## editor's letter ...

Some more destinations in Europe for this double edition. Then, in the coming months, we have stories on Canada, Viet Nam, India and some countries in Africa for you. I hope you enjoy them all.

Now a little news from the 'wire' out of the US, but nonetheless interesting to all, I hope. It's about incidents relating to detentions and arrests at airports. Across the States, high-profile airport detainees include people from all walks of life, including a congressman as well as a rap music artist; a 19-year-old carrying a pellet gun and wearing body armour and another student arrested for "disorderly conduct". Seizure of illicit drugs continues to be an everyday occurrence, with cases involving drug paraphernalia, cocaine, Ecstasy, marijuana and unlawful possession of medication without a prescription. ("Borrowed pants" was a creative explanation given by one traveller!)

Weapons and prohibited items continue to cause problems, more often than not because these items are not necessarily illegal in other settings (pellet guns, certain razors, stick-shaped souvenirs, an overlooked knife, etc.). However, law enforcement reacts to possession of these items at the airport as a serious event.

Also taken seriously are false reports of explosives and potential crimes (usually just a lapse of good judgment) and disturbing the peace, usually not unruly youngsters but citizens who, in a stressful situation created by travel, lose their tempers and choose the wrong moment to vent their frustrations.

Airport officials these days rightly will not stand for *anything*. Returning from a trip recently our party experienced a misdirected suitcase. As my husband was explaining the situation to the patient clerk they were rudely interrupted by another, agitated passenger. "Excuse me, but this gentleman is dealing with me at the moment," said my husband calmly. At which, in modern parlance, the third guy "lost it". The clerk picked up his phone, reported a disturbance and Security personnel were there in seconds.

So ... remember to take your prescription documents with you, check what's in your bags, don't shout a greeting to your pal Jack and keep calm at all times.



## Cruising in Ontario

For many of us, cruising is an ideal way to travel and experience different sights and sounds. Of course, there are many cruises in distant places, but they often require hours of air travel to access. They are enjoyable and interesting, but turn out to be expensive in both money and time. But several cruises are closer to home for many of us, which not only reduces the overall cost, but means that out-of-country health insurance is not necessary. One such cruise (a calm one) is on Lake Ontario/St. Lawrence River through the superb scenery of the Thousand Islands. These cruises are operated by Heritage Cruise Lines Ltd., of Kingston, Ontario.

The trip we enjoyed last year was five nights aboard the *Georgian Clipper* – a vessel of three decks, just nine cabins (maximum number of cruisers 18) and a crew of six. The cabins are on the lowest deck, the next contains the lounge, dining room, galley and wheel house and then there's a sun deck atop all. The crew of six is friendly, helpful and efficient.

The trip is simple. The ship departs Kingston in the afternoon, travelling west to Picton in Prince Edward County. Two nights are spent in Picton Harbour with tours to a local winery and "cidery" plus a visit to Lake on the Mountain and free time to wander around the village of Bloomfield.

On day three we sailed leisurely east, passing Kingston and then through the American side of the Thousand Islands to Brockville. En route we viewed properties ranging from cottages to mansions, including Boldt and Singer Castles. We then spent two nights in Brockville Harbour with a day trip to Ottawa on the intervening day. The Ottawa trip included a visit to Parliament Buildings, lunch in the Byward Market area and tea in Laurier House, the residence of Prime Ministers

Laurier and King.

Day five was a leisurely trip through the Canadian side of the Thousand Islands with a stop in pretty Rockport for a visit to the observation tower on Hill Island (which affords a great view of the islands) and an overnight in Gananoque with time to visit the museum there.

The voyage ended the next morning after a short sail back to Kingston for disembarkation at around 9:30 a.m. The Kingston-to-Kingston round trip makes it possible to drive to Kingston and park in the Holiday Inn parking lot adjacent to the harbour (for a nominal charge) or, for those coming from farther afield, to travel there by train or bus. The times of departure and return fit in well with train and bus schedules.

The *Georgian Clipper* is no luxury liner, but the accommodations are comfortable with adequate luggage space and en suite facilities in each cabin. As mentioned, the crew members are pleasant and the captain (ours was Captain Macleod) is always pleased to have passengers visit the wheelhouse where there are several pairs of binoculars for general use. As with all cruises, it's almost impossible not to gain weight. On our trip, Chef Michelle tempted us with delicious and beautifully-presented meals.

All tours and admission charges are included in the cruise price. Ours were escorted by Ted, who also took orders for dinner, looked after the bar, got newspapers in the morning and saw to the overall comfort of the passengers.

All in all it was a very good cruise ... and all in our own country! Prices in 2007 are C\$1,385 + 6% GST pp. dbl. Singles pay an additional 50%. Heritage Cruise Lines are located at 126 Wellington Street, Kingston, ON K7L 3C8, tel: 1 888 271 2628 or visit [www.heritagecruises.com](http://www.heritagecruises.com) which has photographs, menus, itineraries and all the information you'll need.

Gordon Main  
Richmond Hill, ON

## Editor's note on St. Lawrence Cruises ...

In addition to this cruise offering from **Heritage Cruise Lines**, there are other cruises out of Kingston offered by **St. Lawrence Cruise Lines Inc.** The latter company's vessel – *Canadian Empress* – carries 66 passengers (compared to *Georgian Clipper's* 18) and the itineraries are different. *Canadian Empress* does not head west to Prince Edward County, but instead offers cruises from Montréal to Québec City to Kingston, a round-trip within 1000 Islands out of Kingston, and a Kingston/Montréal/Ottawa voyage. I haven't been on any of these cruises, but I've heard excellent reports of both companies. What I can vouch for are the destinations. The scenery along the St. Lawrence River, especially in the 1000 Islands area, is superb and a voyage here should be high on every Canadian's travel list. Especially lovely would be the fall voyages. Brochures from St. Lawrence Cruise Lines available by calling 1 800 267 7868 or from your travel agent or online at [www.StLawrenceCruiseLines.com](http://www.StLawrenceCruiseLines.com).

I also urge you to spend a few days in Kingston before or after your cruise. As one of Canada's first communities it is an historic and fascinating destination (maybe it's time I wrote a story!) with its impressive Fort Henry, gracious limestone buildings, Bellevue House National Historic Site (the residence of Canada's first prime minister, Sir John A. Macdonald), the eerie Corrections Canada Museum, a wide selection of inns and B&Bs, good shopping and great restaurants. It's also one of Canada's primary sailing locations, with the adjacent lake and river full all summer of sails of all kinds. For a glimpse of all Kingston has to offer log on to [www.tourism.kingstoncanada.com](http://www.tourism.kingstoncanada.com) or call 1 888 855 4555.

## **Genealogy Cruises**

Many genealogists like to vacation in their ancestral haunts so that they can see where their forebears lived. They research in local libraries and archives and sometimes attend conferences of a local genealogical society so that they can meet other researchers with ancestry in the same area.

But a recent trend among family historians is the genealogy cruise. These don't usually have a geographic focus, but a technological one. Most genealogists record their data in computer database programmes. These are becoming complex and have an increasing learning curve if one wishes to use many of the features of the programmes. Some of the database companies offer instruction in the context of a genealogy cruise.

In November 2005 we attended our first genealogy cruise. It was sponsored by Wholly Genes, the company that produces *The Master Genealogist*. We sailed for one week from Tampa to Grand Cayman, Belize and Costa Maya. About 400 of the passengers were part of the Wholly Genes group, genealogists and accompanying family members. All our lectures were while the ship was at sea and we participated in shore excursions with the other pas-

sengers.

In November 2006 we participated in the second Wholly Genes cruise on the *Diamond Princess* sailing from Los Angeles to Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan and Cabo San Lucas. There were 21 lectures, all on days the ship was at sea. Nine hours were devoted to *The Master Genealogist* and related software to produce Web pages etc. The other lectures were by prominent American genealogists including Dick Eastman (compiler of Eastman's Online Genealogical Newsletter) and Megan Smolenyak (an expert in using DNA data for genealogical research). The presenters also offered 15-minute individual consultations and hosted breakfasts to chat informally.

We were never attracted before to large ship cruising, but we really enjoyed the mixture of genealogy lectures, sightseeing and meeting other people with similar interests. If you love both genealogy and travel, a genealogy cruise makes a great vacation.

Three genealogy database companies are sponsoring cruises in 2007:  
\* Legacy, Hawaii cruise from Vancouver, 19 September – 1 October. Includes 10 hours of classroom instruction on Legacy. [http://legacy-familytree.com/CruiseInfo\\_2007.asp](http://legacy-familytree.com/CruiseInfo_2007.asp)  
\* Roots Magic, November 11-18, on

Royal Caribbean Mariner of the Seas.  
<http://www.rootsmagiccruise.com>

\* Wholly Genes (The Master Genealogist) Their third annual cruise will be in the Eastern Caribbean in late October/early November 2007.  
[www.whollygenes.com](http://www.whollygenes.com)

Linda L. Reid  
Toronto, ON

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*In May 1999, we recommended the Rainworth Guest House in Windsor as a place to stay during a lay-over at Heathrow or for longer if you'd like to explore historic Windsor. At that time we recommended taking the bus from Heathrow to Windsor town and then a taxi on to Rainworth. However, TTS member Gillian Kisman and her husband, recently discovered there are special Windsor taxis available at Heathrow. Here's her letter to us ...*

### **Getting to Windsor**

Dear TTS, Thank you for the Rainworth House address. Our stay in Windsor in December worked out well. We stayed two nights there with Doreen Barclay. Our bedroom and ensuite were both enormous, with the ensuite resembling a bath showroom! Not only was the accommodation won-

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# 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!**

derful, but we also enjoyed our breakfast in the comfortable and pleasant dining room which overlooks a garden and fields. And the price here, by U.K. standards, is excellent.

Here are a couple of comments which I hope will be helpful to others contemplating a stay there. One can take a bus from Heathrow to central Windsor and then a taxi on to Rainworth for about £7 (£1 = approx. C\$2.30). (We tried the Windsor bus service but this meant a walk of about half a mile along a very busy local road with no sidewalk. At night this would be suicidal; and not pleasant in the rain either.) But the most convenient way, of course, is to take a taxi all the way from Heathrow. Using Windsor Radio Cabs (NOT the expensive city cabs waiting at the airport) this costs £22 from Terminal 4 and £18 from terminals 1, 2 and 3. They provide an excellent service and with over a hundred cabs in their fleet, and using GPS, one waits only minutes before a taxi arrives. Call them upon arrival at 0175 367 7677. Even with the luxury of this taxi service, one saves a great deal by staying at Rainworth compared with the exorbitant rates charged at Heathrow hotels. If self-driving, there is ample car parking available at Rainworth.

Rainworth Guest House, double B&B rates from £65, tel: [011 44] 1753 856 749, e-mail: [doreenbarclay@yahoo.com](mailto:doreenbarclay@yahoo.com), [www.rainworth-house.com](http://www.rainworth-house.com)

*Gillian Kisman  
Toronto, ON*

## Two London Hotels

London hotels are SO expensive, but we have found two in Bloomsbury, run by the same family, that are great value. We have stayed at both a number of times. The Celtic Hotel is located at 61-63 Guilford Street, London WC1N 1DD, tel: [011 44] 20 7837 6737, double rates £57 (but note with shared bathrooms). And the St. Margaret's Hotel is at 26 Bedford Place, London WC1B 5JL, tel: 20

7636 4277, double rates £63. The St. Margaret's is nicer as it has been renovated and some rooms have their own bathroom, hence the higher price. In the spring, summer and early fall their garden is lovely. Both hotels are close to Russell Square and are near the Piccadilly Underground Line. This makes them easily accessible from Heathrow. Both hotels have very careful security. I hope some of you can use this tip.

*Elizabeth Richards,  
Edmonton, AB*

## A Stay in England's Beautiful County of Hampshire

I can't recall reading anything about England's lovely county of Hampshire and the town of Winchester in TTS, so thought I'd drop you a few words. Our hotel was expensive (we were attending a family wedding there) but it was wonderful and certainly made for a memorable week-end. It was the Lainston House Hotel near the village of Sparsholt, about ten minutes' drive from Winchester (and about an hour from Heathrow or 30 minutes from Southampton). No property could be more English, with its glorious gardens and unspoiled views over the gentle Hampshire countryside. It was like staying in an English stately home!

Fortunately we had time to visit ancient Winchester too. Please do try to put this gracious town on your English itinerary! It was once an ancient capital of England; its Cathedral is one of the oldest in Europe and its nave is said to be the longest! Work on this great building was started in 1079. We wandered around the grounds, looking way, way up and muttering "Imagine, nearly a thousand years old!" The only adjective I can think of to describe it is 'magnificent'. It's open every day and has a Visitors' Centre, Café and Shop. Of additional interest is the fact that it holds the grave of Jane Austen. You can read all about it at [www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk](http://www.winchester-cathedral.org.uk).

Winchester is full of atmospheric pubs and some wonderful boutiques. Obviously the folk of Hampshire are a prosperous lot as we noticed many of the items on sale were expensive (though unusual too). On our return I discovered the tourism website for the city is [www.visitwinchester.co.uk](http://www.visitwinchester.co.uk) and there's a link for a wide variety of accommodation in the area.

If, however, you decide to treat yourself to Lainston House Hotel, their address is Sparsholt, Winchester, Hampshire SO21 2LT, tel: [011 44] 1962 776 672, [www.exclusivehotels.co.uk](http://www.exclusivehotels.co.uk). A stay here is memorable and I only wish we'd had time to explore the surrounding countryside more. Next time!

*Susan Gilbert  
Toronto, ON*

## 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  
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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.*



Malbun

# Liechtenstein ... tiny but great!

*story and photos by Ann Wallace*

“Among the micro-states of Europe, Liechtenstein is most people’s favourite. Andorra is too remote, and Monaco is too expensive. Liechtenstein is just right.” So begins the short article on this tiny principality in my copy of the Reader’s Digest *Guide to Places of the World*, a book I turn to when I need some details of things like area and population. So, while the page is open, I will tell you that the area of Liechtenstein is 160 km<sup>2</sup> (or 61 sq miles, if you prefer) and the population is around 34,000. Of that popu-

lation, 90 people are police officers, a figure I find surprisingly high. Surely all those quiet, prosperous, cultured inhabitants are law abiding? Why, even if you speed on the main road here, almost the whole country will see you! And while you may need to flash your passport if you cross the border into Austria, there is no border post on the road that brings the traveller from Switzerland, merely a small sign with a regal crest announces your arrival in a new country as you cross the Rhine. Blink and you’d miss it.

So there I was early last September enjoying travelling around Switzerland on trains and buses with my Swiss Pass.

Now, as my train approaches Sargans, a small town on Switzerland's eastern border 115 km from Zurich, I retrieve my pass from my bag once more. Because I know I can use this pass on the bus that will take me from Sargans to the capital of Liechtenstein – Vaduz – and on all the public buses that serve every community in this tiny country. And there it is ... just steps from the platform in Sargans railway station yet another bright yellow PostBus is waiting. 'Liechtenstein bus – Vaduz' says its sign. Nothing could be easier.

Soon we are on our way for the 16 km journey through the Rhine Valley, with many stops to pick up and set down locals. The surrounding gentle countryside is dotted with farms, alpine-style chalets and a castle or two, all framed by snow-capped distant mountains. We pass through a few tidy villages with flower-bedecked homes and some neat low-rise apartments. As we approach Vaduz I look out for the sheer glass wall of the ultra-modern Kunstmuseum where, my hotel has instructed me, I'm to alight. As I do so, I spy Vaduz Castle – home of Prince Hans-Adam II of Liechtenstein and his family – high on a rocky terrace above the town. Pulling my small suitcase I turn right and enter the street called Städtle, a pedestrian-only thoroughfare that is the heart of Vaduz. My hotel, the Real, is on this street and soon I'm making my way past the plants, tables and umbrellas of the pretty front patio to check in. My room is neat and pretty, with everything I could wish for, including windows that overlook that Städtle. Everything is just perfect, including the weather, and soon I'm setting out for an afternoon of sightseeing in town.

It soon becomes apparent that the people of Liechtenstein are an art-loving group. Not only do museums dominate the Städtle, but the street is also lined with dozens of sculptures, most of them modern and most of them stunning. The most dominant of these is Colombian artist Fernando Botero's enormous bronze of a reclining woman who lies outside the Kunstmuseum. She

is a favourite with photographers and climbing children! Set amidst so many traditional buildings, this museum itself is an architectural surprise ... it's a huge black glass cube that reflects its surroundings in a muted tone. Inside, waiting to be discovered, are the institution's permanent collection and constantly-changing exhibitions, including rotating exhibitions of world-famous paintings from the collections of the Prince of Liechtenstein himself. There's also a popular sushi bar on the ground floor.

A little farther up the road is a museum that everyone, but especially philatelists, will love. It's the extensive Postage Stamp Museum that celebrates everything to do with those tiny pieces of paper. The history of postal services is demonstrated with lots of fascinating artifacts and dozens of pull-out panels hold Liechtenstein's famous stamps through the ages of international postal service.

And then comes the Liechtenstein National Museum (or Landesmuseum) which is where I recommend you start your explorations as this treasure holds a voyage through Liechtenstein's history. The beautiful old building and its modern addition reopened in 2003 after being closed for over eleven years for renovations and building. It's a gem. Instead of the artifacts being displayed chronologically, they are arranged in separate galleries thematically. These themes are 'Settling' with emphasis on pre- and early history, 'Protecting' covers the Middle Ages and early Modern Times, while 'Ruling' presents early Modern Times to the present. Then there's 'Celebrating' with its 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century artifacts revealing folk customs, 'Doing' with his emphasis on the world of work and communications in the past and today and, finally, a natural history gallery disturbingly called 'Exploiting'. Within the galleries lie evidence of human settlement in the region that are at least 8,000, perhaps 12,000 years old, when farms and hamlets arose on the fertile valley slopes here above the Rhine. Bones, ancient ceramics, clothing and



*Whether walking, hiking or taking the bus, getting around Liechtenstein is easy!*



jewellery, religious objects, coins and armour, documents, paintings and photographs all have a story to tell. Don't miss the nine exquisite figurines called the *Gutenberger votivfiguren*, dated between the 4<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> centuries B.C. that are thought to be votive offerings to the Celtic gods. The upper galleries contain preserved birds and mammals indigenous to the region and details of the regulation of the Rhine here and future environmental plans.

After my museum day alone, I only had one full day left to explore beyond Vaduz. Fortunately my previous hosts at Switzerland Tourism had told the good folks at Liechtenstein Tourism of my arrival, and the latter had kindly arranged a guide for me for the day so that I could cover as much ground as possible (although, as already mentioned, the more leisurely visitor can get around the Principality by PostBus). Thus it was that after my pleasant breakfast at the Real Hotel I met Sheila Seger, who many years ago hailed from England, as do I. We set out exchanging some details of our lives interspersed with my questions about Liechtenstein and Sheila's illuminating answers. First we climbed the steep and winding road up past Vaduz Castle to the charming hillside village of Triesenberg, with its spectacular views over the valley and to the mountains beyond. We paused to appreciate St. Joseph's Parish Church with its onion dome and then I was given a warm welcome at the local hotel and restaurant – Hotel Kulm – with its wonderful views from dining room and balconies (details at end, and see photo).

Soon we're driving on, with Sheila navigating the tun-

nel and winding road that takes us into the sunny Samina valley and on to Liechtenstein's highest village – Malbun – which lies at 1,602 m.

The village is full of small hotels, guest houses and chalets and this is a popular spot for families in all seasons. This is the country's ski resort in winter and major hiking centre in the other seasons and once again, as in Switzerland, hikers are evident setting out in every direction. Feeling rather lazy, we settle down on the deck of the Yurna Hotel for lunch. We breathe in our fill of fresh mountain air and take in our fill of hearty food.

Back on the main road later, we drive almost to Liechtenstein's northern border with Austria, passing a variety of small factories that, Sheila tells me, are active in very specialized market niches such as dental technology and the manufacturing of precision instruments. The road is quite busy, but as soon as we turn off it we return to quiet villages boasting alpine architecture, vineyards and farms, a restaurant or two and, perhaps, a small hotel or guest house. Early in September the gardens are ablaze with golden sunflowers and marigolds, while pink and red creeping geraniums spill from balconies and window boxes everywhere. It's all very charming.

We pass imposing Gutenberg Castle in Balzers, which Sheila tells me dates from the 13<sup>th</sup> century and was owned by the Hapsbergs for 600 years. Apparently in modern times it was bought by a Liechtenstein woman who was married to a wealthy Mexican film producer. The couple are

now dead and the castle is owned by the State, with the local people hoping that one day it will be renovated and open to



*The yellow PostBus from Switzerland makes a stop in Vaduz.*



*Ancient and modern: Vaduz Castle towers over the town and its art gallery.*

the public. But in the meantime the people of Liechtenstein must be content with visits to the courtyard, which is used for summer concerts.

As we draw near to Vaduz once again Sheila points out the vineyards and castle-like winery of the Prince of Liechtenstein, where visitors are welcome for tastings and wine shopping. We park and are warmly greeted and enjoy a visit here before taking a walk through the surrounding lanes, admiring the pretty homes that, yes, Sheila assures me, are very expensive.

And so my brief visit to the fourth smallest country in Europe draws to a close and, by bus and train, I must head back to Zurich where a friend awaits me for a late dinner. Tiny though Liechtenstein is, I'm sure you can pass many days here and not see it all. In fact, their unofficial motto is 'great things in a small space'. It is home to eleven delightful villages, all served by bus, and dozens of accommodation choices in all categories: from luxurious to mountain huts. Food is of great interest to the people here and you can be sure of great meals in every category of restaurant. The residents are especially proud of their trout and venison. There are over 400 km of marked hiking trails and as this country is divided broadly into 'lowlands' and 'uplands' you are sure of finding trails that suit you; of course the high and rocky routes will give you some spectacular views. Hiking trails are clearly marked with frequent signposts giving distances, towns and, where appropriate, the existence of a PostBus stop. I was told that the theatre in Schaan, near

Vaduz, stages some fine productions and musical offerings from famous companies throughout Europe such as the

Berlin Ensemble and the London Philharmonic, while during the summer months Liechtenstein is home to a Guitar Days festival and, throughout July, a Jazz Festival. And I've seen with my own eyes the country's splendid scenery and enjoyed the museums, art and architecture of the capital. I hope one day I will return to tackle some of those hiking trails!

### Some details ...

#### Currency:

The Swiss Franc (CHF) is the currency

used in Liechtenstein. CHF1 = approx. C\$.93.

#### Transportation:

\* Via frequent and exceptionally efficient **train and bus services** you can be in Liechtenstein just a couple of hours or so after landing at Zurich Airport. Within the Principality itself PostBuses serve all the villages, but Avis car rentals are available if you wish. As mentioned, if you hold one of the Swiss Travel System passes, these are valid in Liechtenstein too. For information and purchases of these passes see your travel agent, call 1800 361 7245 or visit [www.raileurope.ca](http://www.raileurope.ca). Other useful websites are [www.swisstravel-system.ch](http://www.swisstravel-system.ch) and [www.PostBus.ch](http://www.PostBus.ch), while [www.rail.ch](http://www.rail.ch) gives clear and accurate timetables.

\* **SWISS International Air Lines** fly from Montreal to Zurich. As you might expect

they are as punctual as humanly possible and the service is smooth and pleasant with tasty food. SWISS is a member



*The Städtle in Vaduz with the Real Hotel centre right.*



*View from the Hotel Kulm in Triesenberg.*

of the Star Alliance and reservations can be made through you agent or at [www.swiss.com](http://www.swiss.com)

#### Accommodation:

\*I stayed in the heart of Vaduz at **Hotel Restaurant Real**, Städtle 21, 9490 Vaduz, tel. [code 011 423] 232 22 22, fax 232 08 91, e-mail: [real@hotels.li](mailto:real@hotels.li), [www.hotel-real.li](http://www.hotel-real.li). Double rooms here are from CHF240 b&b and single rooms are available at CHF185. Their two dining rooms are well-known and I enjoyed an excellent dinner here in their casual bistro. A variety of hotel/dining packages are offered on the website of **L i e c h t e n s t e i n**

Tourism (see below) and the Hotel Real is included in one of them.

\* For somewhere less expensive, the pretty **Landhaus am Giessen**, close to the heart of Vaduz, would be a good choice. There's a small swimming pool, sauna and Jacuzzi here and a warm welcome from Hanni Sele. Double b&b rates from CHF140.

\*If, on the other hand, your pockets are very deep, you may decide to stay at Liechtenstein's Relais & Chateau property – **P a r k - H o t e l Sonnenhof** – on the outskirts of Vaduz. I popped in and saw their pretty gardens, courtyard and dining room and was shown with pride the sumptuous swimming pool area. Prices from CHF380 dbl. up to CHF660 for a suite, although there are some mid-week 'third night free' packages and half-board offers. Details at [www.sonnenhof.li](http://www.sonnenhof.li)

\* Up in Triesenberg stands the **Hotel Kulm**, tel: 423 237 7979, fax: 237 7978, e-mail: [info@hotelkulm.li](mailto:info@hotelkulm.li), [www.hotelkulm.com](http://www.hotelkulm.com).

Website descriptions are in German only, although rate details are given in French and English too and I was greeted in the hotel in English. Those valley-view, double rooms are CHF83.50.

#### Museums:

\* Details of the **Kunstmuseum** and the special exhibitions planned for this year can be found at [www.kunstmuseum.li](http://www.kunstmuseum.li). The gallery is closed Mondays, admission CHF8 or less. \* The website of the **Landesmuseum** is [www.landesmuseum.li](http://www.landesmuseum.li). It is only in German, but there are some nice

images. The museum is closed Mondays. This museum has a small gift/book shop but no restaurant. Admission CHF8 or less.

#### For more information:

The busy office of **Liechtenstein Tourismus** is located at Städtle 37, 9490 Vaduz (close to the museums) for maps and, of course, lots of information. Tel: 239 63 00, fax 239 63 01, e-mail: [info@tourismus.li](mailto:info@tourismus.li) or visit [www.tourismus.li](http://www.tourismus.li). Also visit [www.leichtenstein.li](http://www.leichtenstein.li). In addition to the website the tourist office produces a variety of brochures listing accommodations and giving general information. The maps are relief-style and show the country at a glance with walking and hiking trails, picnic areas, hostels and so on clearly marked. And, finally, there's an attractive



*That's me on the left, reflected in the glass walls of the Kunstmuseum, taking a photo of the Fernando Botero sculpture!*



*The Städtle is Vaduz's pedestrian (and cycling!) main street*

photo essay on line at [www.travel-images.com/liechtenstein.html](http://www.travel-images.com/liechtenstein.html) 

# A Visit to Poland to Explore Warsaw and Cracow

*story and photos by Hugh Gaudet*



*Zygmunt's Column in front of Warsaw's Royal Castle*

**W**e were planning a one-week visit to Poland to see the cities of Warsaw and Cracow. Many people with whom we spoke advised us to concentrate on Cracow and they were right.

## **WARSAW**

Only about 20% of Warsaw, the current capital of Poland, was not totally destroyed during the Second World War, so much of what there is to see is a city rebuilt to Soviet standards. However, much of the Old Town – including the main square, old market square and the Royal Castle – have been reconstructed at great cost to their former picturesque and magnificent stature.

The Royal Castle is the main attraction of the city. We saw photos of its total, purposeful destruction by the Nazis and its reconstruction is a tribute to the generosity and loving labour of the citizens of Warsaw and all Poland. Over many centuries the castle has been both the seat of parliament and a royal residence and its interior reflects those roles. The ballroom with its gilt columns, the princes' apartments and the Marble Room are reminders of the opulent lifestyles of its royal residents, while the Senate Chamber and the Audience Room harken back to both royal and governmental functions. A particularly interesting chamber is the Canaletto Room with its fine exhibition of paintings by Bernardo Bellotto, a nephew of Giovanni Antonio Canal, known to all as 'Canaletto'. These paintings depict 18<sup>th</sup> century Warsaw and were used as historical references in the reconstruction of the city. Before the building was destroyed, many original artifacts and works of art were spirited out and have now been restored to their original

places in the various rooms. Also of special note are the beautiful parquet floors throughout which are amazing.

At the centre of Castle Square stands a 22-metre high memorial to King Zygmunt which was the first non-religious memorial monument in Warsaw. While the column has been destroyed and repaired many times, the bronze figure of the king is original.

Visitors pass the Castle on the way to the Town Square and the Old Town Market. The buildings surrounding Market Square are beautifully reconstructed in every detail. The houses were built by wealthy merchants in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and bear the names of the original inhabitants. Today the square is home to many cafés crowded with locals and visitors and the interesting side streets off the square are lined with shops and cafes too. Above the entrance to No. 6 Pinwa Street (also called 'beer street' because of the many taverns than lined it in earlier times) is a sculpture of pigeons commemorating a woman who fed the birds from her home here during the reconstruction.

The barbican and remnants of the double ring defensive walls surround a portion of the Old Town and are in the process of being reconstructed.

The tallest building in Poland is the vast and towering Palace of Culture and Science, a 'gift' from Stalin to the people of Poland. Since the end of the Soviet era, the building has served as an office building, but back in the 50s and 60s it was a centre of culture with a large congress hall, museums, theatres, sculptures and dramatic interior architecture.

The Jewish ghetto and sites of the Polish people's resistance to foreign conquerors are gone now, but many monuments recall the bravery of those people, including ones to the heroes of the ghetto and to the Warsaw Uprising of 1944.

At the opposite end of the city from the Old Town lies Lazienki Park, a romantic place that includes a botanical garden, two orangeries, museums, an observatory, an outdoor theatre, a former home of aristocrats and presidents – Belweder Palace – and a magnificent monument to Frederick Chopin that was erected after WWII. (During the war, the Nazis forbade the playing of Chopin's music and tried to downplay his place in Poland's history – but to no avail. Chopin has, and always will be, identified with Warsaw.) The streets surrounding this park are home to many government buildings, including Parliament, and the embassies of several countries.

## CRACOW

Cracow is an interesting and walkable city. For our touring we divided it into sections: the Old Quarter, Wawal Hill, the Kazimierz (Jewish) Quarter and churches.

We started in the Old Quarter, in the centre of which is the largest market square in Europe – a perfect square first laid out in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Each side of the square is lined with buildings constructed and decorated in various eras. For instance, Margrave House on the north side is a former Mint and the façade features a splendid Rococco portal; Christopher Palace on the west side houses the Museum of Cracow with a gilded plaque made in 1609; Madonna House on the south side features a painting of the Madonna dated 1718 while No. 4 Market Square, Boner House and Potocki Palace on the east and south sides feature beautiful parapets and portals.

In the centre of the square stand the Cloth Halls, the original covered market, which now houses many stalls primarily selling souvenirs of varying quality. Even though the Market Square has been thus called since its early days, the setting up of shops and the selling of goods was restricted to the Cloth Halls. The arcades surrounding these Halls and the exterior of the building are lavishly decorated with para-

pets, paintings and sculptures. Picturesque horse-drawn carriages stand in the square, offering visitors tours of the Old Town.

Medieval walls and an original, handsome barbican surround the Old Quarter. Between the walls and the tram route which runs around this Quarter is the Planty ... a peaceful, landscaped park offering an escape from city streets. Here one can sit on the grass or stroll around enjoying the trees, birds and an occasional busker.

Wawal Hill sits on the banks of the Vistula River at the southern end of the old enclosed city. Atop the hill is a magnificent collection of buildings, all surrounded by its own fortification walls and towers. The present cathedral, originally built to house the relics of Saint Stanislaw, the patron saint of Poland, is the third to stand on this site. Although



*Old Town Market Square, Warsaw*

its interior nave, towers, chapels and canopies date from several periods (it seems that each king or bishop felt obligated to add his own stamp to the building), the overall appearance of the cathedral is one of the most beautiful in Europe. King Ztgmunt is again honoured here with a chapel in his name. It is the mausoleum of the rulers of the Jagiellonian dynasty and the largest bell in Poland rings from the tower here. In the interior, splendidly decorated marble and silver tombs in

Renaissance and Gothic styles honour a number of Polish kings.

Other than the cathedral, which does not require a ticket, each section of the other buildings on Wawal Hill requires a separate ticket and admission times are strictly controlled. We visited only the State Apartments, which was a wise choice. Each large room there is named after its use or its decoration. For example, the Hall of Deputies was the place where parliament met and audiences were held, while another room tells the story of Noah through six large tapestries, from the building of the ark to the family's thanksgiving on surviving the flood. Most of the paintings in the building are Italian, the tapestries are Belgian and the furniture Polish, but a small but interesting room called the Dutch Study is covered from floor to ceiling with works by Dutch and Flemish masters.

The Jewish history of Cracow is remembered in several synagogues (only two of which are actively used today), in cemeteries and in the streets of the Kazimierz Quarter, just across the river from Wawal Hill. Chief among the synagogues open to visitors is the Remu'h Synagogue, dedicated to the Rabbi Remu'h, reputed to be a miracle worker. His

grave in the adjoining cemetery is still visited and venerated by Jewish pilgrims. The cemetery was used during the filming of *Schindler's List* and walking among the tombs and viewing the Wailing Wall marking the tragic fate of the Jews of Cracow during World War II gives one a feeling of reverence for the people who once lived here.

As Chopin is undoubtedly the patron of Warsaw, Pope John Paul II is the favourite son of Cracow, the city where he attended university and was archbishop before becoming pope. The courtyard of the Episcopal Palace has a photographic exhibition of many important events in his life, including a photo taken during his visit to Canada's north. And the Franciscan Church is the home church of the Archbishop of Cracow and a silver marker on the second pew from the back marks the place where John Paul always knelt to pray. Art Nouveau stained glass windows (1900) by Stanley Wyspianski are awe-inspiring additions to this Romanesque/Gothic church.

But our favourite was St. Anne's church, where much of its statuary is very plain and white, in stark contrast to the ornate Baroque decorations, especially the gold angels supporting the pulpit.

The church which most tourists head to is the two-towered Romanesque and Gothic Basilica of St. Mary which dominates the Old Market Square. The north tower, topped with a spire with a gilt crown and bristling with turrets, is called the Bugle Tower. Each day here a bugler from the Cracow Fire Department, following a 700-year-old tradition, commemorates a valiant watchman who died protecting the city from Tartar invaders.

Many religious orders such as the Dominicans, Franciscans and Jesuits have churches within the Old Town too and all are worth visits. In the Church of Saints Peter and Paul we enjoyed a concert by a string quartet.

## SOME GENERAL COMMENTS

### Transportation

Even the locals do not recommend travel on the highways of Poland. We took a day tour out of Warsaw and can vouch for their wretched condition. We travelled from Warsaw to Cracow by train. Based on our 2½ hour experience we recommend a first-class ticket (but even in the first-class coach a visit to the toilet was a harrowing experience).

### Hotels

In **Warsaw** most of the large chain hotels are in the central part of town. We stayed at the Sofitel Victoria and found it a first class, 5-star property. A short walk to the Old Town, the location was ideal. The rooms were large, the breakfast

buffet huge, the concierge helpful and most of the employees spoke English. We paid €105 (about C\$158) per night for a superior room with king bed, breakfast included. We found accessing the hotel's own website rather than the chain's website produced better rates (try [www.sofitel.com/sofitel/fichehotel/gb/sof/3378/fiche\\_hotel.shtml](http://www.sofitel.com/sofitel/fichehotel/gb/sof/3378/fiche_hotel.shtml)) or call [code 011 48] 22 657 8011, fax: 22 657 8057.

In **Cracow** the large chain hotels are outside the old city walls and are thus not too convenient. Those inside are mostly 3-star at best. We found it difficult to find any accommodation in the Old Town and phoned or e-mailed more than a dozen before we found the historic Hotel Polski, which is right next to St. Florian's Gate and the barbican. This 3-star hotel was adequate, clean, well-located and had

helpful staff. We paid 374 Zlotys (about C\$146) per night for a large room with breakfast. Request a room at the back of the hotel. Tel: 12 422 1144, fax: 12 429 1810 or visit [www.podorlem.com.pl](http://www.podorlem.com.pl).

When booking or arriving at any hotel in Poland, ask for a discount, since most reception clerks seem willing to offer one.

### Some miscellany

\* We found **restaurants** to be plentiful in both Warsaw and Cracow. Most are open from noon throughout the day and most have an English menu (or there is someone on staff who speaks English). We found the meals were, for the most part, excellent and good value.


\* There are **money changers** – called Kantor – on the streets in both cities, displaying exchange rates for just about every currency imaginable.

We changed Euros for Zlotys.

\* We felt safe in both cities and the Polish people we met were friendly and helpful.

\* We had hoped to attend some **concerts**, but were there in the Fall, between the summer and winter schedules. But there are regular Chopin concerts advertised in both cities.

\* We took a **tour in the countryside** outside Warsaw, but were not impressed. Included was a visit to Chopin's birthplace at Zelazowa where we expected a piano recital, but were disappointed. We were told that, if there is a concert, the pianist is in the house and the listeners are seated outside!

In spite of these couple of caveats we had a great week in Poland. We would recommend visits to both of these cities, especially Cracow, and especially if you are interested in European history, art and architecture. 

*Hugh Gaudet lives in Calgary and is a frequent contributor to The Travel Society magazine.*



*Chopin's birthplace, Zelazowa*

*Cossacks kick up their heels for us!*



# Ukrainian River Cruising

*story and photos by Marg and Bill Lynn*

**K**iev, the vibrant, capital city of Ukraine, borders both banks of the Dnieper River, waiting to be admired, and on a fine morning last September morning Lot Airlines deposited us safely at the teaming airport so we could do just that. Another adventure under the guidance of Craig Travel was about to begin.

With Craig representative Colin Wright and our Ukrainian guide Nila we were soon at dockside ready to board the *General Vatutin*, our floating hotel for the next 16 days. As is the custom, costumed musicians serenaded us

and we were offered bread and salt as a good luck gesture prior to going aboard and settling in.

River cruises are a delightful way to see a country. The cabins are compact and life is easy as one moves from the common rooms, dining rooms, library or lounges at will. Relaxed meal times allow for group seating in designated areas rather than individual seating arrangements. A lovely way to effortlessly become acquainted with our travelling companions! Food choices are usually not given but the varied menu usually pleased us.

And here we were with Kiev at our feet, and with an ATM conveniently located at a bank across the corner so we could get local funds for our souvenir shopping.

This city is awash with onion domed churches, elegant turn-of-the-century buildings, imposing statuary and historic sights at every turn. We visited St Michael's Monastery, a golden domed blue and white collection of towers and arches; gilded St Sophia's cathedral; green and golden St Andrew's church, beside which were craft stalls and souvenirs all vying for our attention. In fact, those stalls of wonderful surprises continued right down to the river level where an artistic section of the city called Podol lay in wait for another day. St Vladimir's golden and deep blue star-studded domes were simply stunning too. Gradually as our city tour progressed we were able to get our bearings and feel the excitement of being in such a unique city and country. We chose also to tour the Pechery-Lavra Monastery complex, one of the city's holiest religious sites. There we saw many beautiful frescoes, the largest, most decorated dome of the Refectory Church, and the Great Lavra Bell Tower, followed by a visit to ancient caves where monks' mummified bodies are venerated. It was an amazing complex of impressive sights.

What a relaxing travel choice cruising is. We moved through the many locks (a special fascination for the men onboard), and enjoyed the passing scenery. Often wide sandy beaches tried to lure us! Sometimes a campsite tucked among the trees or a small dacha could be seen. And the sun shone and river traffic flowed by, keeping an eye on us as we watched them ply their trade.



The Pechery-Lavra Monastery

Part of each day usually included stops at villages or cities. Our stop at Cherkassy was particularly interesting as we visited a school where the older arts students presented a lovely musical programme for us.

Later we saw a kindergarten/day-care using familiar toys and a room with individual beds, each one displaying plump pillows so that students could be accommodated for their very long days. A nearby clinic and hospital was also on our itinerary, but



School girls give us a warm welcome

their long-term senior care was a sobering experience. This visit ended with a delicious meal at a nearby farm. Copious traditional Ukrainian dishes were washed down by potent moonshine made with home-grown farm products prepared by the farmer's wife and her daughters. Later we were able to purchase any of these delicacies.

Industrial cities such as Kremenchuk and Zaporozhye gave us the opportunity to see the typical Russian post-war architecture which sprung up after the cities had been leveled. Statues, especially of Lenin and military heroes, were always present, as were wide streets, green boulevards to offset pollution from refineries, and lovely flower gardens. We also went to a Cossack village and were delighted by their amazing horseback riding skills and colourful performance. Again tasty food and powerful moonshine was presented for our pleasure. Usually local crafts are available for purchase too, and we tourists were always eager to oblige.

Odessa was particularly fascinating. Our first surprise at dockside was the bevy of bridal parties milling around the area. Apparently fall is 'wedding time' because the harvest is safely in. Brides like to visit and leave their bouquets at a favorite statue as a tribute. There are statues at every turn in this beautiful city so brides have many venues from which to choose. Perhaps the statue of a mother holding her child aloft over the harbour was the drawing card here. It was a poignant wish for good harvest and safe return from the sea.

Then the impressive Potemkin Steps loomed before us. These steps had remained in my mind for decades after seeing the black and white film *The Battleship Potemkin* and

the amazing scene of a baby in a pram, bouncing and tumbling down the steps after the baby's mother had been shot to death at the top of the stairs. This graphic depiction shocked the world, and projected Sergei Eisenstein, the director, into the annals of film history. (And gave rise to many copycat scenes ... remember *The Untouchables?* - Ed.) The 192 famous steps rise from the sea front, taking you up to the charming city of Odessa, that Catherine the Great hoped would become the capital city of Ukraine although that wish did not materialize. It is still beautiful with impressive, formal buildings; a not-quite-finished opera house; winding, cobbled streets and, again, lovely statues and gardens.

Then across the rolling Black Sea we sailed, dropping anchor at the resort city of Sevastopol in the Crimea for the next few days. Having the Black Sea Fleet Orchestra serenade us on arrival was a delightful glimpse of a later evening concert.

From this location we travelled by bus to several fascinating locations: the Swallow's Nest, a storybook castle hanging high on a precipice over the sea; the harbour of Yalta with its carnival atmosphere – fountains that spewed soap suds, many interesting, bobbing seacraft and children driving electric cars around proud parents and somewhat surprised tourists. We also visited Livadia Palace, the elegant palace where former Czar Nicholas and

Princess Alexandra spent many holidays with their family before they were assassinated. This was the site of the 1945 Yalta Conference, the official meeting grounds where Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill agreed on government protocol following the Second World War. Such sumptuousness in which to formulate significant historical decisions!

Before leaving this area we visited Balaklava, the location of the infamous "Charge of the Light Brigade" where hordes of soldiers were slaughtered due to a series of poor judgment calls. Only 193 men of the 600 who rode into battle survived. There, an amazing 360° Panorama depicts this blight on the history books in amazing three-dimensional realism. In addition, an interesting visit to Bakhchisarai, the 16<sup>th</sup> century palace of the Khans, allowed us to glimpse a lifestyle long gone. Luxurious carpets,

architectural splendor and opulent fountains and gardens defined the confined lives of the wives of the harem.

These few days in Crimea allowed us to view craggy cliffs rising from the azure sea, chalky hillsides guarding verdant vineyards, and the lush tropical vegetation found in this fascinating area. Progress is announcing itself in the many high-rise condos being constructed to lure tourists to her shores.

We headed back across the Black Sea in a heavy roll, to begin our return up the Dnieper, and to a fishing village near Kherson. We reached this inland area by tender, and as we cruised by we enjoyed seeing the villages among the reeds, some on stilts or on small coves carved by the river. Many beautiful embroidered tablecloths, attractive needlework, crafts and paintings awaited us. One imagines that the long cold winter months afford good opportunities for creating works of art in front of a warm fire. Our cruise was the last

of the season so they were anxious vendors and we needed little encouragement to spend our excess funds.

Aboard ship we had frequent informative lectures about customs, geography and historical events as well as regular concerts and other entertainment. The historical pull between Eastern and Western factions, and some graphic accounts of the Orange Rebellion were especially worthwhile. Such eye openers for those of us who take our freedom and democracy for granted!



*Taking a photo of the Potemkin Steps needs a focal point!*

How fortunate we were to have had the opportunity to experience some of the complexities of these colourful, creative people. This rich experience is one that we can heartily recommend.

#### **The details ...**

Craig Travel is located at 1092 Mount Pleasant Road, Toronto, ON M4P 2M6, tel: 416 484 0926 or 1 800 387 8890, [www.craigtravel.com](http://www.craigtravel.com) This year's Ukrainian River Cruise is scheduled to depart on 25 September for 13 days aboard the m.s. *Marshal Koshevoi*. Cruise-only price is C\$3,095 and the website shows air-inclusive prices from major Canadian cities. 📄

*Marg and Bill Lynn are TTS members who live in Lachine, PQ.*

## BAHAMAS

Eighteen years have passed since the Bahamian Ministry of Tourism introduced its People-to-People programme, one of the first of its kind in the world and one of the most popular. So, if these islands are in your plans this winter, perhaps you'd like to investigate how you can complement your Bahamian vacation by meeting some locals. The programme matches guests with more than 1,500 Bahamian volunteers of similar ages and interests for a day or evening activity which could include boating, fishing, shopping at the local outdoor market, attending a local school or church service, enjoying back street tours or, more often, visiting Bahamians in their homes for a traditional meal of peas n' rice, fried fish and guava duff. Since the start of the programme, the idea has expanded, moving beyond Nassau and Grand Bahama Island to the Out Islands of Eleuthra, Exuma, San Salvador, Bimini and Abaco. The success of the programme is due to the many volunteers who participate. Philip Archer, for example, has been a volunteer since the inception of the programme and loves the role. "Bahamians love to extend their hospitality to visitors and share their food and their culture with guests," he said. For more details visit [www.geographia.com/bahamas/thepeople.htm](http://www.geographia.com/bahamas/thepeople.htm)

## BRITAIN

• If **Wales** is in your plans here's a place you won't want to miss. The Bell at Skenfrith is the recipient of the "British Pub of the Year for 2007" award from Michelin. The Bell beat hundreds of other British pubs to win the title and is the first in Wales to do so. In choosing The Bell for Pub of the Year 2007 Michelin noted the establishment's "wonderful small touches, including the daily changing menu with most of the vegetables and herbs coming from the pub's own kitchen garden and a black board that proudly displays the names of all the local suppliers. The setting is sublime and the stunning Welsh scenery comes with the meal free of charge." The pub is a former 17<sup>th</sup> century Welsh coaching inn with eight guest rooms full of little luxuries and an award-winning restaurant. The property is "tucked away on the banks of the river Monnow in the gentle countryside of Monmouthshire. The Inn overlooks one of the Marches' castles – Skenfrith – an important Norman stronghold during the 13<sup>th</sup> century." The Bell is 45 minutes'



drive from **Cardiff** and near the book town of **Hay-on-Wye** and the lively market town of **Abergavenny**, known for its annual food festival. Serious foodies may want to book The Bell now for 15-16 September 2007, the dates for the next Abergavenny Food Festival. And for those who want to "walk off" their meal, Offa's Dike hiking path is right nearby. For more information about The Bell visit [www.skenfrith.co.uk](http://www.skenfrith.co.uk) and for more information about Wales visit [www.visitwales.com](http://www.visitwales.com).

• And some good news for **Northern Island**, which has been tipped as a 2007 "Top Travel Spot", by the people who bring us the Lonely Planet Guides. And getting to Northern Ireland from Canada gets easier and easier: Air Transat has flights from Toronto to Belfast from May to October, Zoom has year-round service from Toronto and a May – October service from Vancouver, while Flyglobepesan will begin a new weekly service from Hamilton to Belfast on 1 May. Some **Belfast** news: the city has launched the world's first interactive multi-media digital tourism trail based around their most famous export – **The Titanic**. The new tour takes visitors "back to the future," leading them on explorations of sites associated with the Titanic story. From the grounds of City Hall to Queen's Island, the tour finishes by presenting a vision of how the Titanic Quarter will look in the future. The Titanic trail will work in tandem with the new "Belfast Titanic Heritage Guide," taking visitors on a journey through the history of shipbuilding in Belfast, and in particular a visit to Harland and Wolff, the firm that built the *Titanic*. Details at [www.gotobelfast.com](http://www.gotobelfast.com). For more information on including Northern Ireland in your travel plans call Tourism Ireland at 1 800 223 6570 or visit [www.discoverireland.com](http://www.discoverireland.com).

• We are all familiar with learning opportunities when we travel such as photography, painting and, of course, cooking. But how about spending a day or more taking a flower arranging course in elegant **Knightsbridge** in **London**? Editor Ann recently met the owner of the Judith Blacklock Flower School (Judith was here to attend an event at Burlington's Royal Botanical Gardens and to launch her latest, and beautiful, flower arranging book) and was interested in learning more about the school. It's tucked away in a quiet, secluded, cobbled mews street a short walk from Harrods and all the other fine shops of Knightsbridge and Sloane Street. There are one-day introductory

courses and three-day general courses that promise a thorough grounding in floral design that can then be put to good use in the home, church, for parties, fundraising events or other special occasions. There's also a three-day wedding-flowers course, evening classes and longer, diploma courses both in flower arranging and in the business of floristry for those interested in taking their skills further. Almost every course includes a visit to New Covent Garden Flower Market. For out-of-town students discounts are offered at a range of hotels, serviced apartments and B&Bs nearby. Grab a mother, daughter, friend or bride-to-be (though guys are welcome too, of course) and plan a London visit with this unusual focus. (Wouldn't a trip and a course make a great wedding gift?) Contact details are 4/5 Kinnerton Place South, London SW1X 8EH, tel: [011 44] 20 7235 6235, fax: 20 7235 6335, e-mail: [school@judithblacklock.com](mailto:school@judithblacklock.com), [www.judithblacklock.com](http://www.judithblacklock.com)

## CANADA

- The winter issue of *Ontario Travel Discoveries* magazine features many winter holiday and short break ideas, both indoors and out, to enjoy in **Ontario**. For your copy of the free 74-page magazine call 1 800 ONTARIO or request a copy online at [www.ontariotravel.net](http://www.ontariotravel.net).

- Looking for a completely different winter adventure? How about a road trip on an ice highway in **Northern Alberta**? The ice road that runs between Fort McMurray and Fort Chipewyan is now open for another winter season, and will stay open for about another three months. It stretches 280 km in length, using frozen lakes and rivers for much of its foundation. The road's starting point of Fort McMurray is well known as one of the world's best places to watch the northern lights, or auroa borealis, which leap into the sky in multi-coloured flares of light. Fort Chipewyan, at the northern end of the ice road, is located near Wood Buffalo National Park, a UNESCO world heritage site and the Fort Chipewyan Bicentennial Museum traces the history of fur trading in the area. For help in planning this truly Canadian trip visit [www.TravelAlberta.com](http://www.TravelAlberta.com).

- And here's an idea for those who really like to get into the spirit of winter and/or have always wondered what it's like to live in an igloo! The **Kootenay Rockies** Backcountry eco-retreat is inviting guests to enjoy a taste of the region amid one of their coolly crafted, and remotely-located igloos. Entirely hand-made, these sturdy structures are modelled after those which have been constructed by the Inuit for centuries. And what's on the menu? A traditional salmon spread with all the trimmings, including hot 'Igloo drinks'. Come dinner hour, guests can congregate next to a roaring fire or snuggle within their cozy refuge. Following the evening's repast, toboggans will tempt the lively to take a run or two on the nearby slopes, while storytelling by the bonfire will engage those who prefer to relax. Should enthusiasts wish to prolong the

adventure, an overnight amid their crispy confines promises to be an experience not soon forgotten. Come morning, guests will savour a tasty breakfast and even a warm shower. Hosts Martina Danzer and Charlie Sims lead the way during these excursions. Martina is a former teacher and skilled backcountry cook while Charlie honed his skills as a backcountry guide and animated storyteller. If igloos aren't your style but a winter getaway appeals, you can also choose to stay in the retreat's 3-bedroom lodge. Details at [www.spirittrails.com](http://www.spirittrails.com) or call 250 427 6456.

- If igloos aren't your thing, perhaps tents are? No, don't panic, this is not a traditional camping vacation! If you're looking ahead to something unusual when the warmer weather arrives, check out the Tenthouse Suites at Rockwater Secret Cove Resort on **BC's Sunshine Coast**, close to Vancouver. The owners say: "You will fall in love with tents all over again! Imagine sipping sparkling wine, basking in the enchanting silence of the treetops, letting your toes tingle on the heated slate floor, your muscles melting in the hydro-therapy tub, and everything warming around the fireplace." In fact the resort offers a variety of accommodation: lodge rooms from \$99, 1-bedroom cabins \$119, 2-bedroom cabins \$139 and the tent suites from \$199. This is a pet-friendly property. Visit [www.rockwatersecretcoveresort.com](http://www.rockwatersecretcoveresort.com) or call 1 877 296 4593 for details.

## DOMINICA (not the Dominican Republic)

Dominica's National Development Corporation has unveiled a new web site, [www.discoverdominica.com](http://www.discoverdominica.com). The site is dedicated to providing comprehensive information about Dominica as a premier eco-tourism and adventure travel destination. As well, the site features a live webcam from the north coast of the island. There's also a full range of information about the island including what to see and do, where to stay, places to eat, a calendar of events, and a new features section that highlights packages and the island's latest news.

## HOLLAND

Those famous bulbs will soon be blooming in Holland's **Keukenhof Gardens**. If you've always promised yourself a visit, why not make it this year? The dates are 22 March to 20 May and full details can be found at [www.keukenhof.com](http://www.keukenhof.com) and comprehensive travel information at [www.holland.com](http://www.holland.com)

## ICELAND

When Icelandair once again takes off from Halifax International Airport, with its new flight schedule in May 2007, Scott Walking Adventures will be making the most of the direct air link. Scott Walking Adventures of Hubbards, Nova Scotia, offers popular hiking adventures in Iceland but has, for two years, had to send their Canadian

participants via Icelandair's North American portals in the United States. "Guests that have already booked tours for Iceland in 2007 are delighted", says Scott Walking Adventures' president, Angela Chisholm, "and many are looking forward to spending some time in Halifax before travelling abroad." Scott Walking Adventures will be celebrating its 15th anniversary in 2007 by expanding its adventure experiences to include new destinations in Canada's west as well as trips to Australia, Bermuda, Ireland and Scotland. The company also offers short walking adventures in its native Nova Scotia for locals and visitors to the province. Full details at 1 800 262 8644 or [www.scottwalking.com](http://www.scottwalking.com)

## KOREA

If a long lay-over in **Seoul's** Incheon International Airport is on your itinerary, you may like to take advantage of one of the two tours offered by the Korean Tourism Organization. The two city tours each take about five hours, one showing Seoul's modern side, another its past. These glimpses of this interesting city may prompt you to return for a longer visit. For information on these and other Seoul city tours visit [www.tour2korea.com](http://www.tour2korea.com) and [www.visitseoul.net/english\\_new](http://www.visitseoul.net/english_new).

## U.S.A.

- Historic **Philadelphia** is a great destination for a city getaway and an additional lure this year is the Franklin

- Travellers interested in taking a niche cruise can now learn about the variety of such products available and also locate a travel agent who specializes in niche cruises through a new web site. The Niche Cruise Marketing Alliance has unveiled a new, user-friendly website at [www.nichecruise.com](http://www.nichecruise.com) that not only provides information about the unique cruise products offered by the organization's 14 member lines but assists consumers in locating a travel agent that specializes in such cruises. NCMA member lines include American Cruise Lines, American West Steamboat Company, Antarctic Dream Expeditions, Cruise West, Discovery World Cruises, Fred. Olsen Cruise Lines, Imperial Majesty Cruises, Imperial River Cruise Lines, Norwegian Coastal Voyage, Orion Expedition Cruises, Peter Deilmann Cruises, RiverBarge Excursion Lines and Star Clippers. The NCMA office is in Bellevue, Washington, e-mail: [NicheCruise@msn.com](mailto:NicheCruise@msn.com).

- We featured a story on Libya a few months ago. If you were thinking about incorporating a visit to that country within a cruise, you'll be interested to learn that Seabourn Cruise Line has cancelled calls in Libya scheduled for the *Seabourn Spirit* and *Seabourn Legend* in 2007, due to the country's refusal to permit entry for guests travelling on

Institute's major exhibition: *Tutankhamum and the Golden Age of the Pharaohs* from 3 February to 30 September. The city has an excellent website at [www.gophila.com](http://www.gophila.com) where you can learn more about the exhibition (and buy tickets at US\$24), see special hotel packages and even find a list of the restaurants in Philly where you can take your own drinks and not be charged corkage. If you caught the King Tut exhibition in Canada many years ago, you may like to know that the new exhibition is about three times the size and includes some artifacts that have never before left Egypt.

- Here at TTS we've heard of a new website that details over a thousand accommodation options in **Hawaii** for \$99 or less, as well as low-cost inter-island air fares and low car rental rates. Take a look at [www.gladtravel.com](http://www.gladtravel.com). The site is rather confused, but it may be worth a browse if a low-key vacation in these islands appeals.

- We've had some **California** stories in TTS recently. If you are off to **Monterey County** and are a literature/film lover, you may like to have a copy of Monterey Visitors Bureau's "*Scenes for your Senses*" *Literary and Film Map* with you. Names and titles you'll recognize include Robert Louis Stevenson, John Steinbeck, Jack Kerouac, *Vertigo*, *Basic Instinct*, *National Velvet*, *Rebecca* and many more. Throughout the year the region holds a variety of film, literature and arts events. For your map, events calendar and general tourism information visit [www.montereyinfo.org](http://www.montereyinfo.org) or call 1 888 221 1010.

## c r u i s e n e w s

US passports. The change affects two cruises (and, perhaps, those of some other cruise companies), the first of which is a 12-day voyage aboard *Seabourn Spirit* from Alexandria, Egypt to Rome, departing 7 May. On that cruise, instead of two days at Tripoli and one day at Derna, Libya, the ship will call at Kusadasi, Turkey (for a trip to Ephesus), the Greek Isle of Mykonos, will make a transit of the Corinth Canal and a call at Itea, Greece, near the ancient ruins of Delphi. At Kusadasi, all guests will be invited to a complimentary "Exclusively Seabourn" evening, including a private candlelight reception with classical music amid the ruins of Ephesus, after the grounds are closed to the public. The second affected cruise is an 11-day voyage aboard *Seabourn Legend*, sailing between Rome and Lisbon on 27 October. On that voyage, visits to Naples, Italy, Palermo, Sicily and Valletta, Malta, will replace a scheduled two-day call at Tripoli. Other scheduled ports on the cruise include Sousse, Tunisia; Cagliari, Sardinia and Malaga, Spain. At Sousse, guests will be invited to an "Exclusively Seabourn" experience, including traditional Tunisian music in one of the old city's historic Moorish houses. Full details at [www.seabourn.com](http://www.seabourn.com) or consult your travel agent.

- **Air Canada** has launched new, non-stop scheduled flights from **Toronto** to **Ixtapa-Zihuatanejo**, on Mexico's Pacific coast. This seasonal service will operate every Saturday until 14 April departing Toronto at 8:15 a.m., arriving in Ixtapa at 12:40 p.m. and departing Ixtapa at 1:30 p.m., arriving back in Toronto at 7:15 p.m.
- If you live in the west and fly frequently between five key cities in Alberta and BC (**Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Victoria** and **Abbotsford**) **Air Canada** has introduced a special "Western Commuter Pass" which offers frequent flyers reduced fares and the opportunity to earn automatic Air Canada Elite status for 2007. All customers who purchase a Western Commuter Pass by 17 February will also receive a complimentary two-credit Flight Pass good for one return trip between any one of the above cities, plus **Las Vegas, Los Angeles, San Francisco** or **San Diego**. The commuter pass is offered in several versions. Options include passes with 10 or 20 credits for a fixed number of pre-purchased flights, or an unlimited flat fee subscription pass to fly as much as you want for three or six months. The carrier is offering automatic Air Canada Elite status for 2007 to customers who purchase a six-month, fly-as-much-as-you-want, unlimited Western Commuter Pass subscription at the Latitude level. Prices start at \$129 per one way trip, including all airport fees and charges. [www.aircanada.com](http://www.aircanada.com)
- **Belair** is a Swiss-based charter airline that has, we have learned, been operating a programme of flights from **Switzerland (Zurich)** to **Vancouver** and **Calgary** for the past nine years. This year the service starts on 24 June and runs until 9 September. The airline used Boeing 767-

- 300ER aircraft which offers "one of the roomiest charter cabins available". Details at [www.prime-travel.com](http://www.prime-travel.com)
- If **Scandinavia** is in your thoughts for the coming summer you may be interested to know that **Finnair** will operate non-stop flights from **Toronto** to **Helsinki** between June and September. Details at [www.finnair.com](http://www.finnair.com) or 1 800 461 8651.
  - From 17 May until 3 September **Icelandair** will once again be taking off from **Halifax, NS**. There will be three flights per week to Iceland with onwards connections to Icelandair's other destinations in Scandinavia, Continental Europe and the United Kingdom. For details visit [www.iceland-experience.com](http://www.iceland-experience.com) or call 1 800 661 3830. (And see Travel Digest for news of a Canadian company's Iceland walking tours.)
  - **WestJet** has announced the introduction of seasonal non-stop service to three new destinations in Eastern Canada: **Kitchener-Waterloo-Cambridge** in Ontario, Newfoundland's **Deer Lake** and **Saint John, N.B.**, commencing on or soon after 14 May. These new destinations are part of WestJet's enhanced summer schedule that also includes new non-stop flights from Calgary, Toronto, Edmonton, Vancouver, Ottawa, St. John's, Charlottetown and Montréal as well as increases in frequency in its existing network.
  - News of yet another website showing "the best place to sit on your next airline flight". It's [www.SeatScorecard.com](http://www.SeatScorecard.com), which identifies best and worst seat locations on the aircraft of over 50 major airlines including Air Canada, British Airways, American, Virgin, etc.

## No big tour buses here ...

There's a company in Europe that may be of interest if Paris, Rome, Florence or Naples are in your plans. Called **Context**, the company describes itself as a "walking tour company that takes trendsetting strides to save the environment of cities". The company acknowledges that, over time, mass tourism can negatively impact the environment, local economies and socio-cultural fabric of the places where they operate. They state this is obvious in popular European tourist cities where the presence of huge crowds diminishes the experience of monuments; tour buses emit huge amounts of air pollution and small businesses often lose out to large, tourist-friendly chains.

**Context** tries to counter these effects of mass tourism by leading small-group walking tours or semi-

nars, as they call them, with no more than eight people. It also encourages its guests to use public transportation and, as a company, participates in a carbon-offset programme and donates a portion of its profits to cultural preservation initiatives in each of its operating cities.

Scholars in art, history, archaeology and/or architecture lead the tours, which promise to reveal aspects of the cities not normally discovered by those tourists who are intent upon seeing only the busy "highlights". The company's website also has lists of accommodations and restaurants that they recommend. It's an interesting website to browse, so if any of those European cities are in your plans take a look at <http://paris.contexttravel.com> with click-throughs to the other destinations.

# China ... Yangtze Spectacular

New itinerary  
for 2007

FROM \$4,145 FOR 18 DAYS! Departing: 4 April & 26 September 2007



**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 hill-sides 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 Chongquing 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!

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.

## AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing:

Vancouver	\$4,145 pp/dbl	Victoria	\$4,195 pp/dbl
Calgary	\$4,420 pp/dbl	Edmonton	\$4,420 pp/dbl
Saskatoon/Regina	\$4,590 pp/dbl	Winnipeg	\$4,590 pp/dbl
Toronto	\$4,490 pp/dbl	Ottawa	\$4,490 pp/dbl
Montreal	\$4,490 pp/dbl	St. John's	\$4,850 pp/dbl
Halifax/Quebec	\$4,850 pp/dbl	London	\$4,850 pp/dbl

Single supplement \$1,195 (Sharing can be arranged.)  
Taxes and visas extra. Prices are subject to confirmation

### 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

## 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

A new tour

# CHINA SILK ROAD

Departing: 10 September 2007

Perhaps you are one of the many people who have come with The Travel Society on our China Yangtze Spectacular tour of China? Or perhaps you have always been fascinated by tales of the Silk Road? Whichever the case, we hope you will be thrilled to hear about our new, 20-day Silk Road tour. Come with us from Canada to Beijing, Urumqi, Kashgar, Turpan, Jiayuguan, Dunhuang and Xi'an before ending your tour in Shanghai. Lakes at sunset and mountains at dawn; lush vineyards and spectacular deserts; exotic walled cities and ancient ruins; colourful ethnic minorities, nomads, imams, merchants and saints; Great Bazaars

selling camels and donkeys, carpets and spices; caravansaries, gardens and pagodas; train trips and cultural shows and, would you believe, the 492 Mogao grottoes known as the Cave of the One-Thousand-Buddhas. All this and more you'll experience on this trip. Call us now for the detailed itinerary and start dreaming of discovering part of the fabled Silk Road of China.

## AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES departing:

Victoria	\$5,490 pp/dbl	Vancouver	\$5,370 pp/dbl
Edmonton	\$5,500 pp/dbl	Calgary	\$5,500 pp/dbl
Winnipeg	\$5,620 pp/dbl	Halifax	\$6,100 pp/dbl
Toronto, Montreal & Ottawa	\$5,670 pp/dbl		

Single supplement \$1,290 Prices are subject to confirmation

## Your tour costs includes:

- Round trip transpacific air on Air Canada
- All domestic air and coach transportation
- All transfers and baggage handling
- 4-star accommodations
- 1 sleeper on overnight train
- 3 meals (except on free days in Beijing & Shanghai)
- Daily sightseeing
- Local English-speaking guides

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

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

# Spectacular South Africa

No charge  
London stopover

Departures: 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 scarpment of Eastern Transvaal – a place so beautiful writers run out of adjectives – where you will visit God's Window, the Blyde 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-Ttoe 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.

### 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

**PRICES INCLUDING AIR AND TAXES departing from:**  
**Toronto, Montreal** \$7,680 pp/dbl  
**Ottawa** \$7,940 pp/dbl  
**Vancouver, Calgary, Winnipeg** \$7,940 pp/dbl  
**Halifax** \$8,040 pp/dbl  
 Single supplement \$790.00 (sharing can be arranged)  
 Prices are subject to confirmation

**Pre-tour - Victoria Falls, Zimbabwe ~ 3 days** \$1,245 including Air

**Pre-tour - Victoria Falls and Chobe National Park, Botswana ~ 5 days** \$2,456 including Air

**Post-tour - Namibia & Etosha - Desert Wildlife Experience ~ 4 days** \$1,185 including Air

# New Tours for 2007

- *Peru - including Machu Picchu*
- *Chile, Patagonia & Easter Island*
- *Costa Rica - à la carte*
- *Africa - train tours*
- *Namibia and the Shongololo Express*

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.  

**22 days from \$5,995**

# A Traveller's Turkey

*Limited to 20 Members*

*Departing: 24 April & 11 September 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**

<b>Toronto</b>	<b>\$5,995.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Ottawa</b>	<b>\$6,275.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Montreal</b>	<b>\$6,275.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Vancouver</b>	<b>\$6,495.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Edmonton</b>	<b>\$6,395.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Calgary</b>	<b>\$6,395.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Winnipeg</b>	<b>\$6,395.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Halifax</b>	<b>\$6,395.00 pp/dbl</b>

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

*Small Ship*

## Galapagos Islands Cruise & Ecuador with options to Kapawi Lodge in the Amazon and Machu Picchu, Peru

*14 days departing 8 March & 5 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 \$5,995.00 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

## Copper Canyon and Mexico City

*Departing: 9 February, 9 March, 6 April & 4 May 2007*

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</b>	<b>\$3,760 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Ottawa</b>	<b>\$3,830 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Montreal</b>	<b>\$3,760 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Vancouver</b>	<b>\$3,994 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Calgary</b>	<b>\$3,994 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Halifax</b>	<b>\$4,196 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Winnipeg</b>	<b>\$3,994 pp/dbl</b>		

Single supplement \$798 (Sharing can be arranged.) Prices are subject to confirmation

*New itinerary!*

**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**

**Now 23 days**

# India's Golden Triangle

*No charge London stopover*

**23 days departing 23 April & 24 September 2007**

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!



**Your tour includes:**

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

**AIR-INCLUSIVE PRICES: 23 Days**

<b>Toronto</b>	<b>\$6,275.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Ottawa</b>	<b>\$6,375.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Montreal</b>	<b>\$6,375.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Vancouver</b>	<b>\$6,548.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Calgary</b>	<b>\$6,548.00 pp/dbl</b>	<b>Winnipeg</b>	<b>\$6,650.00 pp/dbl</b>
<b>Halifax</b>	<b>\$6,650.00 pp/dbl</b>		

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



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