

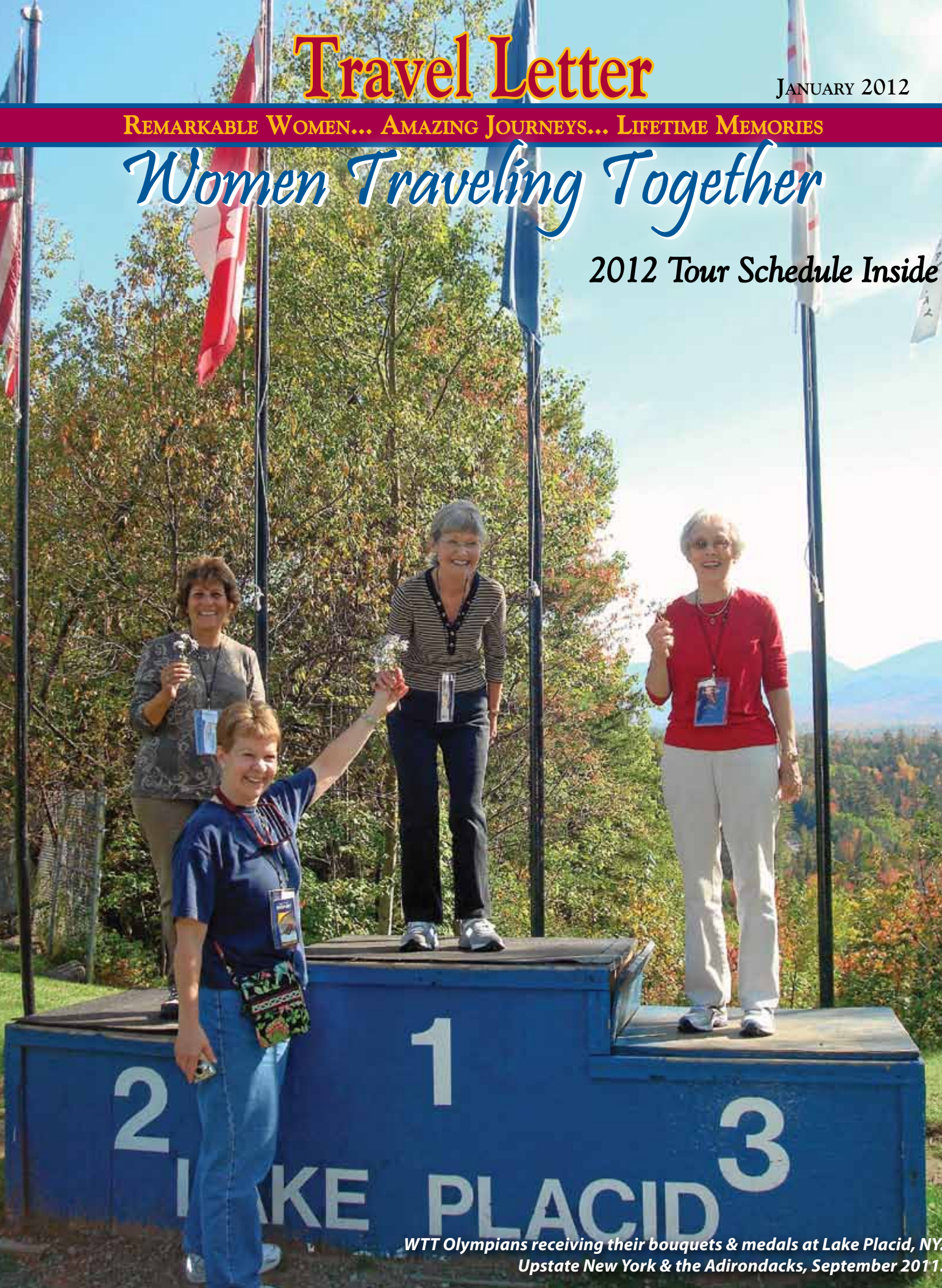
Travel Letter

JANUARY 2012

REMARKABLE WOMEN... AMAZING JOURNEYS... LIFETIME MEMORIES

Women Traveling Together

2012 Tour Schedule Inside



WTT Olympians receiving their bouquets & medals at Lake Placid, NY. Upstate New York & the Adirondacks, September 2011.

FOR LUCK... AND MORE.



Brightly the Burro: Visitors to the Grand Canyon rub the nose for luck.



Statue of St. Peter, St. Peter's Basilica, Rome: For hundreds of years the faithful have touched or kissed the foot of this 13th century statue so it remains brightly polished.



Wishing Bell, Church of the Assumption, Bled Island, Solovenia: Ringing the bell will fulfill one of your wishes.



Stone carins, Cathedral Rock, Sedona, AZ: Originally used to mark trails by American Indians in this scared area, there are now hundreds marking the healing, energy vortexes of Cathedral Rock.

Women Traveling Together®

JANUARY 2012



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Our Favorite Memories

Upstate New York & the Adirondacks

inside back cover

The fantastic hoodoo rock formations of Bryce National Park were a wonder to see but it was a Cowboy dinner followed by a Grand Canyon “monsoon” that helped make this summer’s trip to Utah’s National Parks even more memorable. *see page 20*



Tear down the Eiffel Tower?!? Yes, that was the original plan. Learn the interesting history of one of the world’s most iconic landmarks. *page 16*



Move Over San Francisco. Charleston, SC has become the favorite city destination in the U.S. for many reasons... *see page 24*



Female Friendships are not only enjoyable but there is scientific evidence female friends are important for your health and well-being. *more on page 19*



Our quest for the best gelato failed (too many fabulous choices!) but we found the best way to explore Italy was with new friends. *page 22*

A Note from the President

Meeting New People & Discovering New Ideas for WTT



Hazel Cannon, WTT's Director of Membership & Travel Reservations (above) and WTT President & Founder Debra (below) with the CBS Evening News' Steve Hartman at the National Tour Association Conference in Las Vegas.



THE WEEK OF DECEMBER 5-9 was an exciting one for Hazel (WTT's Director of Membership & Travel Reservations) and me—and not just because we were in Las Vegas! Attending the National Tour Association's Annual Convention we learned about new destinations, activities, attractions and ideas we can use for *Women Traveling Together*. We had not attended the conference in some time, instead electing to keep up with industry changes electronically but this year we felt it was important to attend in person. Attending gave us an opportunity to meet representatives from other counties face to face. There were representations from over 30 other countries in attendance excluding the US, Canada and Mexico!

Steve Hartman, who does a feature story every Friday on the CBS *Evening News*, was Master of Ceremonies for the convention. Hazel and I had the opportunity to meet him early one morning. He provided just the right balance of serious and soft news stories and comic entertainment throughout the week. Steve also led two panel discussions relevant to the business of travel to and from the US.

Each day was filled with meetings, exchange of ideas, and promises to follow up after we returned home. So many attendees wanted to meet with us! More than half of the delegates to the convention were women and we regularly heard "what a great service you offer." Of course we felt the same about the services these women represented. Some things we came away from the convention included:

- Discovering new wonderful U.S. destinations to visit
- New activities and attractions women would especially enjoy
- Updates on hotels that would be good a match for WTT
- Recent archeological discoveries made in Mexico
- Ideas for new international destinations
- Ideas for expanding our social networking reach
- Ideas for "telling our story" better
- And so much more!

Returning from a 3,000 person, week-long conference meant there was a lot to absorb, but with Hazel's help I was able to organize all of the literature and ideas we found most applicable to WTT. The plan is to immediately start working on reaping benefits from the connections we made and information we gathered. We came away with a renewed commitment to continue to deliver quality travel opportunities to our members and to re-dedicate our efforts to give you first class service before, during and after every tour you take with us.

May 2012 bring you one step closer to fulfilling your travel dreams!

Debra

THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A PRE-RESERVATION AND A RESERVATION: *Interest vs. Action*

We map out and plan our tour schedule two to three years in advance. *Women Traveling Together* does this in order to ensure our travelers will be able to enjoy certain activities, attend events and/or stay in certain locations. Not every detail can be nailed down this far in advance which means we can't publish a final itinerary or set a final price for some months after we've decided to offer a tour. Still, we want our travelers to be able to know what we have planned so they can look at their calendars and make their plans. This is one of the reasons we set up the option of making a pre-reservation for our tours—so our travelers can know what's coming.

Another reason we began giving travelers the option to make a pre-reservation is to give those who are really interested in a particular trip the opportunity to be the first to know when a trip's details are finalized. This can be important because with our small group size and an email list approaching 10,000, our tours can sell out fast—sometimes within hours of posting on the web!

Making a pre-reservation places you on a special list that means you'll be notified when a tour is finalized with price, itinerary and exact dates. A pre-reservation costs you nothing and places you under no obligation. Our pre-reservation lists can be upwards of 150 women or more for certain trips—but making a pre-reservation still allows you to be notified ahead of the 10,000 or so on our email list.

Once you're notified a trip's details and pricing have been finalized, you need to decide if the trip is right for you. If the answer is yes, you must make a space reservation and trip deposit. It's important to note that while a pre-reservation places you at the head of the line in being able to choose whether or not to go on a trip, it is NOT a space reservation.

If you want to take a trip you must fill out a space reservation and put down deposit money regardless of whether or not you made a pre-reservation. A pre-reservation is an indication of interest in a trip but making a space reservation and trip deposit is the action necessary to actually go on a WTT tour. ♦

TRAVEL INSURANCE:

We Strongly Recommend It

Travel, especially international, is a substantial investment. Unfortunately, no matter how well you plan, life happens. You receive a promotion at work or get sick—either situation could force you to cancel a trip. Besides missing the trip, you could be out hundreds, even thousands of dollars—unless you have travel insurance.

You should also consider your health insurance may not provide coverage when you travel (ask your provider). No one expects an emergency room visit while traveling but it does happen and uncovered medical expenses will just add to your pain—unless you have travel insurance.

These are reasons why we strongly recommend our travelers purchase travel insurance. Depending on the coverage, travel insurance costs pennies on the dollar and can cover cancellation fees, airline tickets, overseas medical expenses and more. Your travel experience should always be a positive one. Travel insurance guarantees at the very least you won't lose any money.

Women Traveling Together includes information about travel insurance from Travel Guard and CSA Travel, companies we know and trust, in every traveler's confirmation package. You can also compare a variety of travel insurance companies online at squaremouth.com. Protect your hard-earned money with travel insurance... because life happens. ♦



Posted on Facebook...

"I am so happy that I found your website today! Exactly what I am looking for! I love traveling but my husband does not, I can never find anyone to go with me. I felt like my life was going to pass by before I had a chance to see all of the places I've wanted to see. I have thought about traveling alone but it just didn't sound like fun!! I am deciding which WTT trip will be my first!!! YAY!!

- Beverly M.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?



| Pick a Trip & Sign Up! | Trip Deposit | Confirmation Package | Emergency Contact Info | Make Your Air Reservations | Special Preparations |
|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| Yippee! You've found a trip you want to take. Fill out a space reservation form and submit it. | We process your credit card for the deposit; WTT emails you to confirm you are officially signed up for the trip. | WTT sends you a confirmation package via U.S. Mail. It contains your deposit receipt, two travel insurance forms, and the Confidential Form to fill out. | Fill out the Confidential Form with your emergency point of contact, medications you are taking, allergies, dietary requests, etc. and return the completed form to WTT. | When there are enough travelers to confirm the trip departure, WTT advises you to make your air reservation at your convenience. In the same email you will get a secure link to view a list of everyone on the trip. | Should any special preparations for your trip be necessary, you will be contacted via email and given detailed instructions for what must be done, and by when. |

FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions About:
 Making a Trip Reservation
 Payments
 "Final Travel Instructions"

How much money is due when I make my reservation?

For a Continental U.S. trip: \$250. For an International trip, Hawaii or Alaska: \$500.

What if I make a late reservation?

Any reservation received 90 days (3 months) or less before the trip starts, the total amount of the tour is due at the time of the reservation.

How can I pay?

Online using Master Card or Visa or by mail using a check. All pricing is in U.S. dollars.

Will I get something in writing after I send in my reservation?

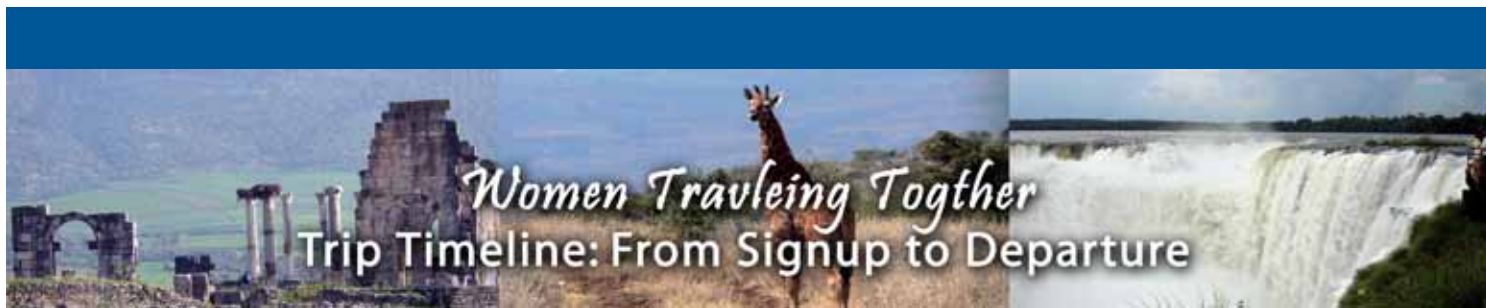
Yes, you will get an email from WTT after your credit card is processed. Then you will be mailed a confirmation package. It will show how much you have paid, and what your balance is. It will contain two travel insurance brochures and a copy of WTT's travel and cancellation policies.

Should I buy travel insurance?

It's your personal decision; however, we feel it's wise to insure your travel investment. The cost of travel insurance is minimal compared to the money you'd lose should something unforeseen prevent you from taking the trip.

How many people does WTT need to run a tour?

It's varies for every trip, but as soon as WTT has enough reservations to run your trip, we notify you by email. In the unlikely event we don't fill the trip by the reservation deadline, we will email you and all of your deposit will be immediately refunded.



| Making Payments | Final Payment Due | Final Travel Instructions | Welcome Email | TRAVEL DAY! | Meeting the Group |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|
| <p>You can choose to make partial payments at any time, or wait until you receive your final invoice to pay your balance.</p> | <p>About 3 months before travel you will receive a final invoice via U.S. mail. The invoice will have a due date. You can make your final payment via a secure online form or mail the payment coupon with payment back to WTT.</p> | <p>“Final Travel Instructions” are mailed to you about 3 weeks before departure. They will tell you everything you need to prepare for the trip, including packing information, room sharing assignments, and what to do if your flight is delayed etc.</p> | <p>Shortly after receipt of your Final Travel Instructions your Tour Leader will email the group. She can answer any last minute questions and will remind everyone to contact their roommate to get acquainted before the trip begins,</p> | <p>Your Final Travel Instructions will tell you how to get from the airport to the hotel and where to meet the other group members. Have the Tour Leader’s phone number close at hand in case you need assistance.</p> | <p>You’ve arrived at the hotel and it’s time for the group meeting. Introductions are made and in no time at all you feel like you’ve known the other women forever. It’s going to be a great trip!</p> |

When can I find out who else is going on my trip?

As soon as WTT has enough reservations to run your trip, you will be given access to a secure online list of your fellow travelers. As new women sign up for the trip, their names will be added to the online list.

Can I tell WTT who I want to room with?

Yes, at any time before the travel documents are finalized (45 days before travel) WTT will honor roommate requests.

When should I make my airline reservations?

We recommend you wait until you are notified by WTT that there are enough reservations to run your trip; however, you may make your airline reservations at any time.

Can I change my mind about arriving a day early or sharing room?

Yes, you can change your mind as many times as you want up until the final payment due date. After that date we cannot accept any changes.

When will I owe more money?

About three months before the trip departs, WTT will mail you an invoice. The invoice state the amount due and final payment due date.

Can I make payments?

Yes, make as many payments as you want, as often as you want, however, all you must be paid in full by the final payment due date.

What happens if I have to cancel?

We must have your cancellation in writing—by email, fax or letter. The date on the cancellation correspondence will determine how many days before travel the cancellation was received, and consequently, how much money will be refunded.

What clothes should I pack?

What’s the weather? Where and at what time do I meet the group? How many suitcases can I bring? Who is my roommate? etc. WTT mails you detailed “Final Travel Instructions” approximately three weeks before your trip departs—giving you plenty of time to prepare for your trip.

What if I have more questions after I get my Final Travel Instructions?

Shortly after receiving the Final Travel Instructions, you will receive an email from your Tour Leader who will be happy to answer any additional questions you may have.

TOUR SCHEDULE

For full itineraries & current information on space availability, visit our website.

If there is a discrepancy between this publication and the website, the website takes precedence.

EVERY WTT TOURS INCLUDES:

- Guaranteed room sharing for the solo traveler
- Small group no larger than 18 (no larger than 14 on most domestic trips)
- WTT Tour Leader to handle all logistics and to enhance the individual & group experience
- Organized activities during free time led by the WTT Tour Leader
- ALL Tipping of local guides & drivers

TRANSPORTATION DURING DOMESTIC TRIPS

WTT's own Mercedes mini-coach featuring climate control, leather seating, large picture windows and separate luggage storage compartment.



FEBRUARY 2012

Caribbean Sailing: British Virgin Islands & French West Indies

February 4-11, 2012

Member Price: \$3,113

Single room: Not available

Escape the wintertime blues with a trip to the Caribbean exploring the idyllic British Virgin Islands. Located nearby are the French West Indies with their distinctive French (and Dutch) flare. We will visit both sets of Islands in high style on the *WindSurf* operated by Windstar

Cruises, the premier provider of luxury sailing excursions. Experience luxury and soft adventure as you sail the Caribbean and participate in whatever level of activities suits you.

PRICE INCLUDES: 7 nights aboard the SV *Windsurf* / Category A cabins: Large cabin square footage with flat screen TV, DVD Player, I-Pod docking station, dressing area, in-room safe & more / ALL tipping for group activities, including crew gratuities / 3 shore excursions / ALL MEALS while onboard ship Five star dining or more casual dining



MORE THAN
1/2 FULL



MORE THAN
1/2 FULL

Peru & Machu Picchu

February 24-March 2, 2012

Member Price: \$3,275 *Single Room:* \$4,027

Peru is the archeological, cultural and ecological jewel of Latin America—from the Inca splendor of Machu Picchu, to the rich artistic expressions of its people. In addition to visiting the mysterious and magnificent Machu Picchu, this trip also includes a visit to Lima, Peru's Capital, The Sacred Valley of the Incas and Cusco, capital of the Inca Dynasty.

PRICE INCLUDES: All internal flights while in Peru / All park entrance fees / Local guides to enhance your understanding & experience / Airport arrival & departure transfers / Machu Picchu with guided tour / City tours of Lima & Cusco / 4 & 5 Star Accommodations / Breakfast daily, 3 lunches & 6 dinners at a combination of local & hotel restaurants

Florida Everglades & Key West

Feb. 25-March 2, 2012

Member Price: \$2,482 *Single room: \$3,456*

Visit one of the most unique and fascinating American National Parks and indulge in the Caribbean atmosphere of Key West. Experience a place that transports you to the primitive



and prehistoric as we look for alligators and manatees in the Everglades, and then slip into a whole new latitude and attitude as we travel through the Keys. Bring your curiosity, your sunscreen, and your sense of adventure!

PRICE INCLUDES: *Tour of Everglades Park / Airboat Ride / Fairchild Botanical Gardens / Tour of Key West & Hemingway's Home / Time to explore Key West / Accommodations: Miami-Hampton Inn Coral Gables; Key West-Almond Tree Inn / Breakfast daily, Welcome Reception, 1 lunch, 2 dinners at restaurants where you order off the menu.*

MARCH 2012

Australia & New Zealand

March 1-17, 2012

Member Price: \$5,592 *Single room: \$6,847*



TRIP FULL-PLACE YOURSELF ON STANDBY

New Orleans

March 11-16, 2012

Member Price: \$1,782
Single room: \$2,369



TRIP FULL-PLACE YOURSELF ON STANDBY



Savannah & Charleston

March 18-24, 2012

Member Price: \$2,089 *Single room: \$2,837*

Site of the first conflict of the Civil War, Charleston lies on a peninsula between two rivers and has more historic homes on the National Registry than any other US city. Recently voted the best US destination city by readers of *Conte Nast Traveler* magazine, Charleston offers much in the way of history, sightseeing, shopping and cuisine. Savannah is truly a unique city, famous for its pocket parks and squares laid out in the early 1700s. These two cities and other locations we will visit represent the quintessential essence of southern-ness. We will see beautiful homes and plantations, visit the summer cottages of the rich of the late 19th century and enjoy wonderful southern cuisine.

PRICE INCLUDES: *City tours of Savannah, Charleston & Beaufort / Jekyll Island Cottage tour / Magnolia Plantation & Gardens / Accommodations: Savannah-Marshall House, Charleston-Kings Courtyard / Breakfast daily, 1 lunch & 3 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu*

TRIP FULL-PLACE YOURSELF ON STANDBY



Hawaii: Island Cruise: Oahu, Maui, Hilo, Kona & Kauai

March 24-31, 2012

Member Price: \$2,982 *Single cabin: \$4,736*

PLACING YOURSELF ON STANDBY

Generally speaking, the further out the departure date the better your chances of a space opening up. There is no obligation to be placed on standby *but* if a space does open up, you will be required to pay either the deposit or the full amount of the trip depending on the departure date.

APRIL 2012

TRIP FULL-PLACE
YOURSELF ON STANDBY

China Exploration

April 14-28, 2012

Member Price: \$3,892

Single room: \$4,579

MAY 2012

National Parks
of the Southwest
with two nights in Santa Fe

May 12-19, 2012

Member Price: \$2,283

Single room: \$3,196

Join us for a unique road trip to see some of the country's more remote National Parks in Utah, Colorado and New Mexico.

For seven days we meander our way in the comfort of the WTT mini-coach through places that define the Southwest's beauty and diverse landscape. We'll visit Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park, Four Corners, Mesa Verde National Park, Bandelier National Monument and take a first class train trip through the San Juan Mountains. We'll also spend two nights in Santa Fe before concluding our trip in Albuquerque.

PRICE INCLUDES: Arches & Canyonlands National Parks / 4 Corners Monument & Mesa Verde National Park / Durango Narrow Gauge Train (1st Class) / Bandelier National Monument / Santa Fe Walking Tour / Accommodations: Grand Junction-Hampton Inn, Moab-Best Western Canyonlands, Durango-Hampton Inn, Santa Fe-Inn on the Alameda / Breakfast daily & 4 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu



Santa Fe & Taos, NM

May 14-19, 2012

Member Price: \$1,681

Single room: \$2,287

During this trip we will enjoy Santa Fe's scenic beauty and extraordinary concentration of arts, music and fine dining, as well as explore the surrounding areas. We'll venture to Taos, a lovely small artist's town in the mountains and explore the well-preserved Bandelier National Monument; an extensive complex of cliff dwellings. We

conclude our trip in Albuquerque to enjoy the 300-year-old 'Old Towne' and visit the Indian Pueblo Cultural Center. Our base in Santa Fe is the beautiful Inn at the Alameda where all the sights and art galleries of Santa Fe are in easy walking distance.

PRICE INCLUDES: Georgia O'Keeffe Museum / Indian Pueblo Cultural Center / Bandelier National Monument / Airport Transfers / Accommodations; Santa Fe-Inn on the Alameda, Albuquerque-Hampton Inn & Suites / Breakfast daily, 2 lunches & 2 dinners



MORE THAN 1/2 FULL

Famous Gardens of Europe:
The Netherlands' Floriade 2012,
Paris & Chelsea Flower Show

May 14-23, 2012

Member Price: \$4,682 Single room: \$5,826

This special Gardens of Europe Tour includes Floriade 2012. Held only once every ten years in the Netherlands, Floriade is a World Horticultural Expo that presents the opportunity to enjoy the world's most exquisite and exceptional flowers and plants. In addition to other lovely gardens, we will visit Giverny, Claude Monet's Garden outside Paris, and the world renown Chelsea Flower Show in London. This tour also highlights three of Europe's great cities: Amsterdam, Paris, and London. If you love gardens, flowers, scenery, history, good food and fun travel companions, join us!

PRICE INCLUDES: Admission to all gardens & flower shows as noted in the itinerary / Sightseeing in Amsterdam, Paris & London / Seine River Cruise in Paris / Eurostar Train from Paris to London / Accommodations: 3 or 4 Star centrally located hotels / Breakfast daily, 1 lunch & 5 dinners at local restaurants & the hotels

Italy: Florence & Tuscany

May 18-26, 2012

Member Price: \$3,954 Single room: \$4,708



The Tuscany region of Italy is known for its picturesque scenery, but also for its famous wines and superb culinary treats. This trip will give you the opportunity to experience it all, and come away with an in-depth understanding and knowledge of this region, its food and its wines. This trip includes sightseeing, an introduction to Tuscan cooking, visits to wineries,

a cooking class, olive oil tastings and more. In Florence you can shop for gold and leather, or if shopping is not your thing, explore this marvelous city where art, history and the culture abounds.

PRICE INCLUDES: *Cooking-lesson in a Tuscan country house / Wine & olive oil tastings / Guided city tours in Siena, San Gimignano & Florence / Airport transfers and transportation throughout the tour / Accommodations: 3 Star or better / Breakfast daily, 2 lunches & 3 dinners at local restaurants / Additional activities as described in the itinerary*

Grand Canyon & Sedona, AZ

May 20-26, 2012

Member Price: \$2,289 Single room: \$3,026

Grand Canyon National Park covers more than 1.2 million acres of forests, streams, waterfalls, deserts, canyons, and plateaus. Five of North America's seven life zones and three of its four deserts are found within and around the Canyon



making this a truly unique destination. Included in this wonderful trip will be three nights at the Grand Canyon, South Rim, a flightseeing excursion over the canyon, and a visit to Sedona, known for the spectacular red rock formations.

PRICE INCLUDES: *Flightseeing tour over the Grand Canyon / Heard Museum of Indian Art / Montezuma's Castle / Guided tour of the Grand Canyon / Pink Jeep Tour / Airport Transfers / Accommodations: Phoenix- Airport Embassy Suites or similar, Grand Canyon-Maswick North Lodge, near the rim of the canyon, Sedona-Arroyo Roble Hotel or similar / Breakfast daily, 1 lunch & 3 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu*

JUNE 2012

Colorado Rockies & Trains

with 2 nights at the famous Broadmoor Resort

June 2-8, 2012

Member Price: \$2,395

Single room: \$3,331

Trains and Colorado—an incredible combination! We'll ride through the Grand Canyon of the Arkansas River on the Royal Gorge Scenic Railway and a climb of 7,539 feet on the



Pikes Peak Cog Railway. We'll take in the beauty of the Rockies, spend time in Denver, see the Garden of the Gods, the Air Force Academy, spend a full day in Vail, visit with the wolves and more. Relax and indulge with our two nights at the 5 star Broadmoor Resort in Colorado Springs.

PRICE INCLUDES: *2 nights at the Broadmoor Resort & Spa / Scenic train rides following historic routes of the Old West / Garden of the Gods Park & Denver City Tour / Rocky Mountain National Park / Air Force Academy Colorado Wolf & Wildlife Center / Accommodations: Denver-Comfort Inn Downtown, Colorado Springs-The Broadmoor Resort & Spa, Vail-Tivoli Lodge / Breakfast daily, 2 lunches (one on the train) & 3 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu*

Arches, Bryce & Zion National Parks

June 9-16, 2012

Member Price: \$1,993

Single room: \$2,669



Utah has some of the most diverse National Parks that offer breathtaking overviews, brilliant red rock sunsets and adventure-filled hiking trails. We will visit three of them on this trip: Arches, Bryce, and Zion. The diversity of these parks provide an opportunity

to discover classic sights like Delicate Arch in Arches, the hoodoos in Bryce and the multi-colored sandstone cliffs at Zion. We conclude our trip in Salt Lake City with a visit to the Great Salt Lake and time to explore the city.

PRICE INCLUDES: *Arches, Bryce and Zion National Parks / Visit to the Great Salt Lake / Tour of Salt Lake City / Accommodations: Grand Junction-Hampton Inn, Moab-Best Western Canyonlands, Bryce-Bryce Canyon Lodge, Zion-Best Western Zion, Salt Lake City-Hilton Garden Inn / Breakfast daily & 4 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu*



Alaskan Adventure The Kenai Peninsula, Denali & Talkeetna

June 13-22, 2012

Member Price: \$4,366 Single room: \$5,925

We begin our trip with three days on the beautiful Kenai Peninsula to experience the majesty of the sea and glaciers. We'll then venture north by first class rail for a visit to Denali National Park where we will get our first glimpse of Mt. McKinley, the highest peak in North America. In Talkeetna, where we will be the closest to Mt. McKinley we'll take a flightseeing tour, approaching within 6 miles of the mountain! We'll view wildlife and glaciers, plus we will travel by train. With almost 24 hours of daylight in Alaska at this time of year, we'll be able to see it all!

PRICE INCLUDES: Flightseeing Excursion to Mt. McKinley / Alaska Wildlife Conservation Center & Float trip / Wildlife & glacier cruise / Natural History Tour in Denali National Park / Dome Car Train trip to Denali / Accommodations: Anchorage-Clarion Suites, Seward-Holiday Inn Express Waterfront, Denali-McKinley Chalet Resort, Talkeetna-Talkeetna Alaska Lodge
Meals: Breakfast daily, 3 lunches, 3 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu & 1 dinner Theater

Yellowstone & Teton National Parks

June 17-23, 2012

Member Price: \$2,283 Single room: \$3,079

Not only is Yellowstone one of the oldest National Parks but its rich geological history is as active today as it was in 1872 when it was created by President Ulysses S. Grant. Grant set apart the 2.2 million acres of wilderness as "a public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment of the people." How right he was! Nearby is the more recently established Teton National Park with its pristine lakes and



jagged snowcapped mountains. This week we will explore both of these parks and you will be hard pressed to choose a favorite.

PRICE INCLUDES: Gentle float trip on the Snake River inside Teton National Park / Private touring of Yellowstone National Park with a park guide / Airport transfers / Accommodations: Jackson, WY-Trapper Inn & Suites, Grand Teton-Jackson Lake Lodge, Yellowstone-hotel near the park entrance / 2 breakfasts, 1 lunch, 1 picnic lunch & 2 dinners where you order off the menu



Iceland: Active Adventure

June 23-29, 2012

Member Price: \$3,251 Single room: \$3,748

Wild beauty, glaciers, hot springs, volcanoes, and much more await you. In a place where the sun sets after 10pm and dusk lingers for hours, we will have long days to enjoy Iceland. This is an active sightseeing trip, with activities such as easy hiking, glacier walk, kayaking, horseback riding, exploring on ATVs and more—none of which require any experience. On our final full day in Iceland we visit the famous Blue Lagoon Spa for a soak in the healing mineral waters.

PRICE INCLUDES: 1 hour Kayaking tour in Stokkseyri / Entrance fee to Skogarsafn museum / 1.5 Mile, 3 hour glacier walk tour / 1 hour ATV tour (2 pass. per bike) / Entrance fee to Blue Lagoon / 1 hour horseback riding / Coach & guide city sightseeing tour / Coach & guide 4 days in countryside / Airport Transfers / 3 or 4 Star hotels throughout trip / Breakfast daily, 3 dinners in countryside & Farewell Dinner at a local restaurant

ICELAND FUN FACTS:

- Iceland boasts the world's oldest functioning legislative assembly and was the first country in the world to have a female president.
- With only 300,000 inhabitants, Iceland has a larger sheep population than human.
- 60% of Iceland's population lives in the capital, Reykjavík.
- Iceland has the cleanest water in the world.



Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse Monument & Badlands Nat'l Park

June 26-July 1, 2012

Member Price: \$1,775

Single room: \$2,294

Seeing Mount Rushmore is something many of us would like to do, but let's face it... it's in the middle of nowhere. Turns out the area has a lot to offer besides Mt. Rushmore. We'll see Crazy Horse Monument (a mountain carving still in the making), Wind Cave National

Park, Badlands National Park, and a visit a Mammoth dig site. At Sylvan Lake Resort at Custer State Park enjoy a Buffalo jeep safari, a hike around the lake, horseback riding, paddleboat or just relaxing. This trip is a slice of Americana not to be missed!

PRICE INCLUDES: Tours of Crazy Horse Memorial & Mt. Rushmore / Badlands National Park / Custer State Park / Buffalo Safari Jeep Tour / Wind Cave National Park Tour / Tour of Mammoth Dig Site / Accommodations: Rapid City-Hampton Inn, Hill City-Holiday Inn Express, Custer State Park-Sylvan Lake Lodge / Breakfast daily, 1 lunch & 3 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu

Costa Rica: Active Adventure

June 28-July 7, 2012

Member Price: \$3,587 Single room: \$4,326

Costa Rica is small but packed with an amazing variety of flora and fauna in an equally impressive array of landscapes—cool mountain valleys, sultry mangrove forests, and massive volcanoes draped with lush forests. This trip incorporates a variety of adventure activities such as ATVs, river rafting and more as we explore from Costa Rica's capital, San Jose, to Guanacaste on the Pacific Ocean. Beautiful accommodations in lush settings make this trip even more special. No previous experience is necessary for any of the activities.



PRICE INCLUDES: White-water rafting with gear & instruction / Volcano hike / ATV Tour / Zip lining and more / Cocoa Plantation Tour / Airport transfers and air-conditioned transportation throughout the tour / Accommodations: San Jose Double Tree Cariari Hotel, Pacuare River-Los Tropicales Lodge, Saraquiqui-LaQuinta Saraquiqui, Arenal Hotel Magic Mountain, Guanacaste-Westin Playa Conchal / Breakfast daily, 4 lunches & 7 dinners

Galapagos Islands Including Quito & the Otavalo Market

June 29-July 7, 2012

Member Price: \$5,383

Single Room: \$6,927

Many islands make up the Galapagos and each has its own unique ecosystem, its own unique scenery, and its own unique species. Our home and transportation in the Galapagos is the beautiful *Isabel II*, a yacht specifically designed to cruise the islands in first-class style. If the Galapagos is on your do-visit list we highly recommend you do it this year. It will be at least three years before we offer this trip again.

PRICE INCLUDES: Roundtrip Domestic flights Quito to Galapagos to Guayaquil / Services of Cruise Director & Galapagos Island Naturalists while aboard / Half day Center of the World Tour / Full Day Otavalo Market tour with Lunch / Airport transfers / Other inclusions as noted in the itinerary / Accommodations: Quito-Hilton Colon, Galapagos Cruise-M/Y Isabela II, Guayaquil-Hilton Colon / Breakfast daily, 1 Lunch while in Quito, restaurant dinner in Quito, All meals aboard ship & Farewell dinner in Guayaquil



MORE THAN 1/2 FULL

JULY 2012

Glacier National Park & Canada's Waterton Lakes Park

July 3-8, 2012

Member Price: \$2,008 Single room: \$2,752

One of the best-kept secrets in North America is also one of the most beautiful with awe-inspiring natural wonders including an impressive array of



glaciers, hundreds of lakes, waterfalls, trout streams, cliffs, forests, wildflowers, animals and mountains. We're talking about Glacier National Park and Waterton Lakes National Park across the border in Canada. Encompassing over 1.4 million acres of wilderness, the parks have some of the most spectacular mountain scenery in North America.

PRICE INCLUDES: Glacier National Park / Waterton Lakes National Park / Going to the Sun Road Tour / Two Medicine Lake Boat tour / Transportation in WTT's own Mercedes mini-coach / Accommodations: Glacier Park Lodge, Prince of Wales Hotel, Hampton Inn Kalispell / Breakfast daily, 1 lunch & 4 Dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu



MORE THAN 1/2 FULL

Ireland: Galway to Dublin

July 4-July 13, 2012 7 More than 1/2 Full

Member Price: \$3,664 Single room: \$4,207

Ireland: the landscape is breathtaking, the people charming, and English is spoken by most. You'll learn about Ireland's history and culture with visits to ancient monastic sites and medieval castles. See breathtaking scenery from Connemara to the Cliffs of Moher. We end in Dublin where you can immerse yourself in the vibrant culture and rich history of the Ireland's capital city.

PRICE INCLUDES: All activities & entrance fees as detailed in the itinerary including Galway Walking Tour, Ferry to Inishmore, Aran Island, Kylemore Abby, Burren Nat'l Park, Dublin City Tour & Newgrange / Airport Transfers in Ireland / Free day to explore Dublin further / Local guides to enhance your understanding / Accommodations: 3 or 4 Star hotels / Breakfast daily, 2 lunches & 5 dinners at pubs, restaurants & hotel dining.

Snake River Rafting: Idaho

July 10-16, 2012

Member Price: \$2,447

Single room: \$2,447

The Snake River was first explored by the Lewis and Clark expedition (1803-1806) and was of major importance in U.S. expansion into the Pacific Northwest. Today, whitewater rafting has become a premier way to explore and experience the beauty and isolation of Idaho. Where the Snake River forms the border between Idaho and Oregon, it flows through Hell's Canyon, the deepest Canyon in North America. Nature's grandeur is on full display as you turn off your cell phone and have some of the most exciting and soul-nourishing experiences of your life. This is a private departure for WTT of no more than 14 travelers.

PRICE INCLUDES: All Forest Service fees & taxes / Guided rafts with a guide to traveler ration of 1 guide to 4 travelers / 1



night in Cambridge, ID before rafting and 1 night in Spokane, WA after rafting / WTT Tour Leader with extensive white water rafting experience / Accommodations: Cambridge-Frontier Hotel or similar, While rafting-Tents with cots and sleeping bags, Spokane-Hilton Garden Inn / Breakfast prior to rafting start, all meals while rafting & Farewell Dinner



Denmark, Sweden & Norway

July 11-21, 2012

Member Price: \$5,477 Single room: \$6,520

Scandinavia, land of the midnight sun, is made up of Denmark, Sweden and Norway. The people of Scandinavia share common bonds through their Nordic geography, culture and history. This tour gives you an excellent overview of the three counties. You'll walk historic streets in Copenhagen, visit the fish market in Bergen, explore the capital city of Stockholm, tour Danish castles and palaces and have fun at Tivoli Gardens, take an overnight cruise up the fjords from Copenhagen to Oslo, Norway, and much more. Four star hotels throughout the tour with included breakfast daily and dinner at our hotels on all but one night. This will be a spectacular trip—don't miss it!

PRICE INCLUDES: Sightseeing tours in Stockholm, Copenhagen, Oslo & Bergen / Visits to castles, towns, gardens, & other sights along the way/ Airport Transfers & transportation in air conditioned mini-coach / Overnight cruise from Copenhagen to Oslo (outside cabins) / 4 star hotels throughout the trip with a special stay at Toftaholm Herrgard / Breakfast daily, 8 dinners at the hotels & Farewell dinner at a local restaurant in Bergen



Living among the rocks and caves trolls, loom large in Norse folklore. We've hoped to spot at least one during our travels to Scandinavia—a character with a long crooked nose, and a bushy tail—but this is as close as we've come.

Seattle & the San Juan Islands
with a trip to Mt. Rainier National Park

July 21-27, 2012

Member Price: \$2,584 Single room: \$3,580



Strikingly different from the east coast, the Pacific Northwest sparkles in the setting sun and is green everywhere. Our trip begins in Seattle, where we will experience the city, go to the famous Pike Place Market, and

take a day trip to Mount Rainier National Park. Famous for their sea life including pods of orca whales and sea lions, the San Juan Islands are a unique ecosystem we'll explore by water and on foot. People who visit the San Juan Islands have been known to go home, sell everything and move there—they're that spectacular.

PRICE INCLUDES: Seattle City Tour / Mt Rainier National Park / Victoria Clipper to San Juan Islands Kayaking & Whale Watching Tours / Accommodations: Seattle: Mayflower Park Hotel, Friday Harbor-Friday Harbor Suites, Seattle Airport-Hampton Inn / Breakfast daily, 2 lunches, 2 dinners in restaurants where you order off the menu

Portland & Oregon Coast

Including Mt. Hood & Crater Nat'l Park

July 28-Aug. 3, 2012 More than 1/2 Full

Member Price: \$2,119 Single room: \$2,732

Portland is known as the City of Roses where you will find not only roses, but fabulous dining, flourishing culture and, oh yes—the nation's



largest variety of local microbrews. We'll explore the coastline of Oregon—one of the most spectacular in the country. We will visit the Columbia River Gorge, Mount Hood and Crater Lake National Park.

PRICE INCLUDES: Portland City Tour / Crater Lake National Park Tour / Columbia River Gorge / Mt. Hood / Accommodations: Portland-Portland Paramount Hotel or similar, Bend Hilton Garden Inn (or similar) Roseburg-Holiday Inn Express (or similar) / Breakfast daily, 2 lunches (1 picnic) & 3 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu

AUGUST 2012

**Canadian Rockies by Train:
Vancouver to Calgary**

August 4-11, 2012

Member Price: \$3,681 Single room: \$4,671

Our starting point is Vancouver, tucked in between the mountains and the sea. Famous for its stunning beauty, Vancouver will steal your



heart. But that's just the beginning of this fabulous trip. From Vancouver we board the Rocky Mountaineer train and travel across the mountains to our rail destination of Banff. Nestled in a valley surrounded by mountains, Banff is a charming town with much to offer in natural beauty. We will explore Banff and the surrounding area including a trip to Lake Louise and a day at the Columbia Ice fields before concluding in Calgary. If stunning natural beauty is your thing, then this is the trip for you!

PRICE INCLUDES: Van Vancouver city tour / 2 Day Rail travel through beautiful British Columbia (Vancouver to Banff) via the Rocky Mountaineer / Banff walking tour / Columbia Ice Field tour / Time to explore on your own in Vancouver and Banff / Transportation in WTT's Mercedes mini-coach / Accommodations: Vancouver-Best Western Sands, Kamloops-Provided by Rocky Mountaineer, Banff-Banff International Hotel, Lake Louise-Fairmont Chateau Lake Louise, Calgary-Delta Calgary Airport Hotel / Breakfast daily / 2 lunches during the train trip / 3 dinners where you order off the menu

Coming Soon

**Michigan Circle Tour
August 2012**

**Preliminary
2013 Tour List**

SEPTEMBER 2012

**France: Chateaux & Castles***Paris, Loire Valley & Dordogne Valley***Sept. 7-16, 2012****Member Price: \$4,058** Single room: \$4,661

We begin our journey in Paris where we see the sights and soak up the culture. From Paris we travel on to the area known as the Dordogne Region-famous for champagne, foie gras, truffles, and everything medieval. The Dordogne region is divided by the river Dordogne, which formed the historic frontier between France and England during the Hundred Years War. Along its banks are a thousand and one castles, and towns dating to the 11th century. Returning to Paris we travel through the Loire Valley visiting two chateaux. This trip combines the excitement of Paris, the beauty of the French countryside, chateaux, a historical center full of castles and medieval towns.

PRICE INCLUDES: Paris city tour & free time / Loire Valley chateaux visits / Town walking tours & castle visits in the Dordogne Valley / Cooking demonstration / Sarlat Farmers Market / Air conditioned transportation throughout the tour / Arrival & Departure transfers / Accommodations: Paris-Carlton's Hotel, Dordogne-Hotel le Renoir in Sarlat / Loire Valley-Chateau Rochecotte, Paris DeGaulle Airport-The Metropolitan / Breakfast daily & 6 dinners

Newport, Cape Cod & Boston*Plus Nantucket & Martha's Vineyard***Sept. 9-15, 2012****Member Price: \$1,966** Single room: \$2,587

We begin with the summer mansions of well-known families of the early 1900s in Newport, RI. Our favorite is *The Breakers*, a modest 70 room "summer cottage" built by the Vanderbilts. Staying in Hyannis we'll visit both Nantucket and Martha's



Vineyard, giving you a chance to compare these very different islands. On our way to Boston we will visit Plymouth and the John F Kennedy Presidential Library. A full day in Boston includes a city tour as well as time to explore the Freedom Trail.

PRICE INCLUDES: Tour of *The Breakers* & time in Newport / Visit to Nantucket & Martha's Vineyard via high-speed ferry / Visit to John F. Kennedy Presidential Library / City tour of Boston / Airport transfers / Accommodations: Providence-Hampton Inn Airport, Hyannis-Anchor Inn, Boston-Doubletree Club Bayside / Breakfast daily & 3 dinners at local restaurants where you order off the menu

England, Scotland & Wales**Sept. 15-29, 2012 2 Spaces Remaining****Member Price: \$5,253** Single room: \$6,387

This trip lets you see England, Scotland & Wales at a leisurely pace in 15 fun-filled days of castles, spectacular scenery and picturesque villages. We begin in London, visit Shakespeare's Stratford-upon-Avon, experience mysterious Stonehenge, drive through the Cotswolds, and explore the Roman city of Bath. We then have two days

to take in the fascinating region (and former country) of Wales. Next we journey north to Scotland's capital, Edinburgh, a city of extraordinary heritage. Then we travel to Fort William and surrounding areas in the Scottish Highlands. Our tour concludes in Glasgow.

PRICE INCLUDES: Activities & sightseeing in England, Wales & Scotland / City Tours in London & Edinburgh / Train to Edinburgh & transportation throughout the tour / Local guided tours in Bath, Oxford & other locations / Plus additional activities as described in the itinerary Accommodations: 3 & 4 Star Hotels / Breakfast Daily, 2 lunches & 9 dinners a combination of restaurants at the hotel and in town.



Mediterranean Cruise: Rome to Barcelona

Sept. 23-Oct. 6, 2012

Member Price: \$5,863 Single room: Not available



Cruise the coastline of Italy, France and Spain! Our trip begins in Rome with two nights and three days to explore the city and visit the Vatican before board our ship for 11 days of amazing ports of call. Walk

amongst world-renowned paintings and sculptures in Florence, visit the tiny principality of Monaco and Monte Carlo, explore Provence, France and finish up in Barcelona, Spain. The price includes all crew gratuities, three shore excursions, and the WTT tour leader to help organize activities. We travel on Azumara Quest, a small cruise ship offering informal, upscale travel.

PRICE INCLUDES: Category 6 Outside Cabins with large picture window / All meals & snacks on the ship / 2 nights in Rome prior to the cruise start / Rome City & Vatican Tour / Group transfer from Rome to the ship / Shore excursions in Florence, Provence (Marseilles) and Barcelona (Note: 2012 excursions are subject to change) / Accommodations: Rome: 2 nights Alpi Hotel or similar, Azumara Quest: 11 nights aboard in Category 6 ocean view cabins / 2 Breakfasts in Rome, 1 Dinner in Rome at a local restaurant & ALL Meals while aboard the ship

New England Fall Sampler: New Hampshire, Vermont, Maine

Sept. 23-29, 2012

Member Price: \$2,269 Single room: \$3,137



From rural Vermont to the White Mountains in New Hampshire to the rugged coast in Maine, these three states have a lot of sights packed into a small space. We begin in Vermont and make our way east, stopping to enjoy the scenery, the maple syrup, the mountains, the quaint villages, the water and the seafood.

We spend two nights at Mount Washington Resort in New Hampshire and explore the coast of Maine. Plus, we'll enjoy the foliage as fall settles into the region.

PRICE INCLUDES: Tour of Montpelier State House / Portland Lighthouse / White Mountains fall foliage including a tram ride up Cannon Mountain / Woodstock, Vermont & the Vermont Country Store / Maple Farm Tour / Kennebunkport / Accommodations: Manchester-Radisson Hotel, Montpelier-Capitol Plaza Hotel, Bretton Woods-Mount Washington Resort, Ogunquit-Meadowmere / Breakfast daily, 1 lunch & 3 dinners where you order off the menu

OCTOBER 2012

Albuquerque Balloon Fiesta with a Day-trip to Santa Fe

October 5-9, 2012

Member Price: \$1,738

Single room: \$2,331

Each day a mass ascension at dawn fills the skies over Albuquerque with hundreds of balloons of all shapes and sizes, while the evening showcases the balloons in the light of their own fires. We will also visit Santa Fe and there is time one morning so those interested can experience the thrill of riding in a hot air balloon.

PRICE INCLUDES: Balloon Fiesta Admission / Sandia Tramway / Pueblo Indian Cultural Center / Trip to Santa Fe / Time to explore on your own / Accommodations: Albuquerque: Nativo Lodge / Breakfast daily, Wine Reception, 1 lunch & 2 dinners



NOVEMBER 2012

New York City Holiday Magic

including the Rockettes

Nov. 29-Dec.2, 2012

Member Price: \$1,430 Single room: \$2,132



New York City becomes magical during the holidays: skaters in Central Park, the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall, the Christmas tree at Rockefeller Center, the Nutcracker at Lincoln Center, the fabulous holiday window

displays and more. Our four days in NYC include a Rockettes show, a walking tour of the holiday decorations and time to explore the city.

PRICE INCLUDES: Botanical Gardens Holiday Train Show / New York City Rockettes Christmas Show / Christmas Walking Tour / Additional activities as described in the itinerary / Accommodations: Wellington Hotel / Breakfast daily, Welcome Reception & 1 dinner where you order off the menu

JANUARY 2013

Antarctica: Exploring the Polar Region

January 9-20, 2013

Member Price: \$8,692

Single room: Not available

**TRIP FULL -
PLACE YOURSELF ON STANDBY**



TEAR DOWN THE EIFFEL TOWER?

That Was the Original Plan



The Eiffel Tower... probably the world's single most familiar man-made object and the quintessential symbol of Paris wasn't actually intended to be a permanent structure—not even by its builder Gustave Eiffel. The story of the Eiffel Tower is one based in national pride and sheer determination.

Despite it being the symbol of Paris, the Eiffel Tower is really a newbie in the long history of the city. Human presence in the Paris area is ancient; archeologists believe this fertile and productive land along the Seine River was settled not long after the first humans migrated into Europe from Africa. A pre-Celtic tribe called the Parisii eventually gave their name to the settlement. Over the centuries, Paris became a major trading hub and the cultural and political center for the country later to be known as France. By the late middle ages, Paris was recognized as one of the world's major cities.

During the nineteenth century, France and indeed the western world, was being transformed by major advances in technology—the Industrial Revolution. In 1851, the Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of All Nations (or simply The Great Exhibition) was held in Hyde Park, London. Organized by Henry Cole and Queen Victoria's husband Prince Albert, The Great Exhibition was a showcase for the marvelous inventions of the Industrial Revolution. The Great Exhibition became the first in a series of World's Fair exhibitions of culture and technology that were to become a popular 19th century feature. Not to be

The contract also granted Eiffel a 20 year permit for the tower after which ownership would revert to the City of Paris in 1909 and the tower would be dismantled.

outdone by the English, the French had their first World's Fair, Exposition Universelle in 1855 showcasing France's achievements in the arts and technology.

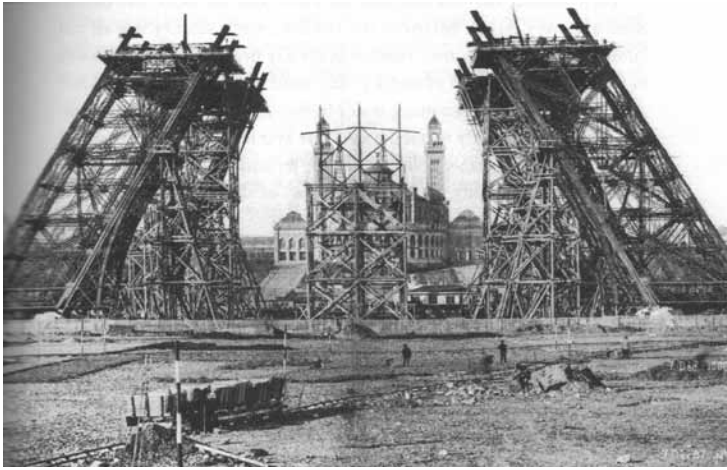
In the following decades, France went through enormous political and societal upheaval. Despite ongoing political turmoil, many Frenchmen felt the nation badly needed to restore its prestige among western nations. For the 100th anniversary of the storming of the Bastille, France decided to host another Exposition Universelle (or World's Fair) in 1889 to show France's prominence in art, industry and science. Republican France invited every nation of the world to participate but European monarchs viewed an Exposition celebrating the French Revolution (and by implication the beheading of kings) in very poor taste. Many European countries refused to participate. This



Gustave Eiffel

strengthened France's determination to put on a truly spectacular event, and in late 1884 the government announced a contest for a spectacular centerpiece for the fair. One of the stipulations was that the attraction be easily torn down.

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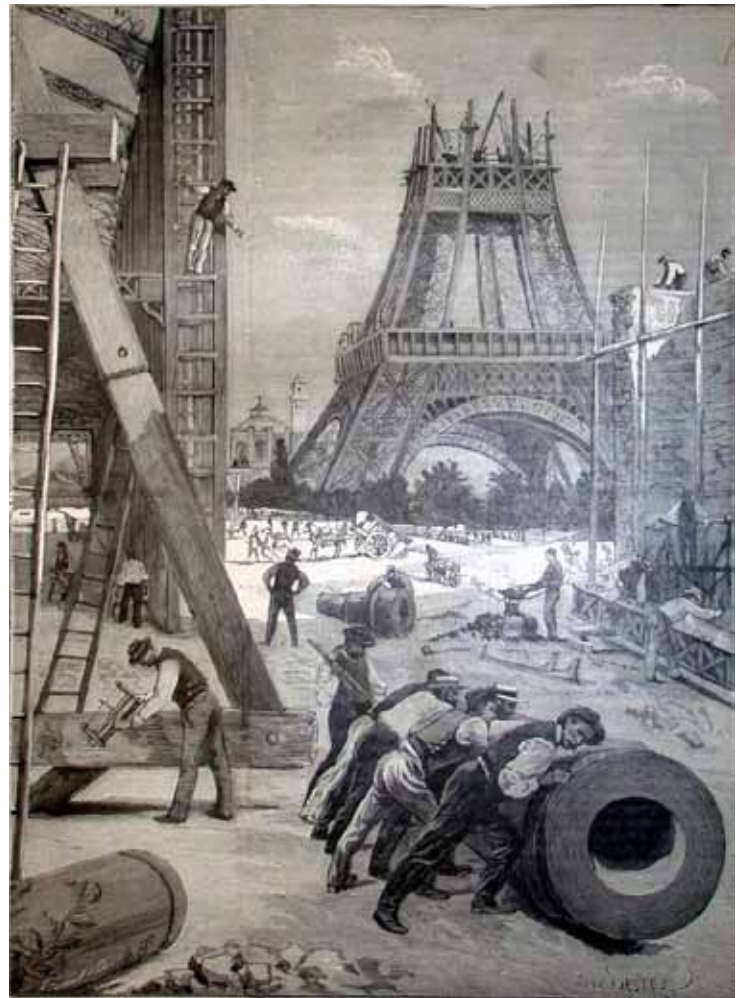


Less than a year after groundbreaking, the four angled 92 foot tall "feet" of the tower were complete. Eiffel was convinced of the historic importance of his tower and hired a photographer to document the process of construction.

At this time, Gustave Eiffel was in his working prime as an engineer. As one of France's wealthiest self-made men, Eiffel was celebrated for his construction of the world's highest railway bridge, projects in France's then colony Vietnam and for being the engineer who made France's gift of the Statue of Liberty possible by solving the issue of the statue's interior skeleton. Two young engineers in Eiffel's firm proposed an iron tower as the centerpiece for the Paris World Fair. At 1,000 feet, the tower would rise almost twice as high as the world's tallest building, at that time the recently completed Washington Monument. Eiffel loved the idea, making further refinements and improvements. He began promoting his tower as the Fair's centerpiece before the contest had been officially decided.

Eiffel did indeed win the contest to create the Paris World Fair's centerpiece in 1886 tower but jealousy, lawsuits and liability issues held up construction for two another years. Parisian architects, outraged a mere engineer and bridge builder would win the contest, argued that building the tower was impossible and unsafe. There was debate about exactly where the tower was to be located on the fairgrounds and the point of a tower seemed to have no practical purpose. Then the Comtesse de Poix filed a lawsuit arguing the tower was a danger to her stately home on the Champ de Mars not only because it might collapse but it would act as a giant lighting rod. The lawsuit brought up liability issues the government didn't want to assume and funding dried up for construction. French workers and tradesmen insisted that only French labor, materials and technology be used to construct the tower.

After two years of wrangling, Eiffel decided to gamble his personal fortune and signed a contract with the French



The sheer size of the tower's construction was news around the world as shown in this illustration in an 1888 American magazine.

government and the City of Paris assuming liability for the tower and construction costs beyond those earmarked by the government. The contract required Eiffel to use only French materials and labor. The contract also granted Eiffel a 20 year permit for the tower after which ownership would revert to the City of Paris in 1909 and the tower would be dismantled.

When ground was finally broken in January 1887, many were certain the tower would never be ready for the Fair's opening in May 1889. Situated near the banks of Seine, each of the four gigantic feet of the tower marked one of the cardinal points of the compass. The foundations for the massive iron structure were sunk deep in riverbank clay with teams of laborers bringing out dirt and debris for loading into large horse-drawn wooden wagons, a process that took six months. The wrought-iron pieces for the tower were prepared offsite and brought in three ton sections by rail. As the tower rose, steam-powered cranes hoisted sections up for the small army of riveters

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EIFFEL TOWER, *cont'd.*

to bolt and weld. By any standards, the construction process was impressive but by 19th standards it was awe inspiring.

As it became apparent the Eiffel Tower would be ready for the Fair's opening, it began to capture the world's attention and imagination. Months before the fair opened, countless imagines of the tower were made and replicated on everything from chocolates, cigar cases, clocks and umbrellas. Countries that had previous declined to participate in the Paris World's Fair including America now began to request space to exhibit.

Eiffel did face another serious issue—elevators. Plans for the finished tower included a series of restaurants for fairgoers on the tower's first platform 92 feet off the ground with the second platform an observation deck. The very top of the tower was reserved for scientific experiments with a lavish apartment for Eiffel complete with piano and room for entertaining. The tower had built-in staircases but for it to be a successful attraction elevators were a must and no French firm was capable of constructing them. Eiffel worked around the construction contract's restriction on using only French technology and hired the American Otis Elevator Company to build the elevator system for the tower.

The tower opened to the public only nine days after the Fair's official opening and despite the elevators not yet fully operational, thousands lined up to climb the stairs to the first platform. Over the course of the next few months, the Eiffel Tower became a world-wide sensation. Famous people and dignitaries from Buffalo Bill Cody to the Prince of Wales to the Shah of Iran visited the tower. Thomas Edison, the famous American inventor, whose company had a large exhibit at the fair worked with Eiffel to string the tower with electric light. The tower's popularity exceeded even Eiffel's expectations with two million visitors and the revenues brought in covered all Eiffel's personal money he gambled to create it.

During the Fair and the years that followed, scientists from around the world came to conduct experiments on wind, weather, radio waves and more atop the tower. Eiffel himself conducted numerous experiments into the nature of wind which later lead to advances in aviation. Although it was due to be dismantled in 1909 according to the contract, the French Military was by then convinced of the usefulness of the tower. The tower has never been in serious danger of being torn down, as least by the French nation, since then. Today, numerous mega-skyscrapers have surpassed its height but the tower's elegant yet practical engineering remains a draw to six million visitors a year.



For Gustave Eiffel, the triumph of his tower at the 1889 Paris World's Fair proved to be the high water mark of his engineering career. Shortly before the World's Fair, Eiffel had become involved in France's efforts to construct a sea-level canal in Panama connecting the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans (a project was later completed by the U.S. under urging by President Theodore Roosevelt). Unfortunately for Eiffel, the canal plans had been flawed from the start and corruption with investor and government money was rampant. As the scandal unfolded, Eiffel became a scapegoat for the disaster despite his nominal involvement. He was sentenced to two years in prison most of which he did not end up serving but his reputation was forever tarnished. Gustave Eiffel never undertook a major engineering project again but did live to the ripe old age of 91 knowing his tower had proved its worth and would never be torn down. ❖

SOURCES:

Hussey, Andrew *Paris: The Secret History*, Bloomsbury, NY (2006), Jonnes, Jill. *Eiffel's Tower*. Viking, NY, NY (2009). Wikipedia

FEMALE FRIENDSHIPS: More Valuable Than Gold & Essential to Your Health

The health risks of isolation for humans have been proven in study after study. In one study, researchers found that people who had no friends increased their risk of death over a 6-month period. In another study, those who had the most friends over a 9-year period cut their risk of death by more than 60%. We're all going to die, but later rather than sooner is usually preferred.

For women, the famed Nurses' Health Study from Harvard Medical School found the more friends a woman had, the less likely they were to develop physical impairments as they aged, and the more likely they were to lead a joyful life. In fact, the results were so significant the researchers concluded that not having a close friend and confidante was as detrimental to your health as smoking or carrying extra weight. There's more: when the researchers looked at how well the women functioned after the death of their spouse, they found that even in the face of this huge stressor, those women who had a close friend and confidante were more likely to survive the experience without any new physical impairment or permanent loss of vitality. Those without friends were not as fortunate.

A landmark 2000 UCLA study suggests friendships between women are special. They can shape who we are and who we are yet to be. They soothe our tumultuous inner world, fill emotional gaps in our marriage, and help us remember who we really are. The study indicates that women respond to stress with a cascade of brain chemicals that cause them to make and maintain friendships with other women.

Until this study was published, scientists generally believed when people experience stress, it triggers a hormonal cascade that revs the body into a "fight or flight" response—an ancient survival mechanism left over from when humans faced predators daily. The UCLA study seems to indicate that women have a larger behavioral repertoire than just "fight or flight" says Dr. Laura Cousin Klein, one of the UCLA study's authors. When the hormone oxytocin is released as part of the stress response in a woman, it buffers the "fight or flight" response and encourages her to tend children and gather with other women instead. When she actually engages in this tending or befriending, studies suggest even more oxytocin is released, which further counters stress and produces a calming effect. This calming response does not occur in men, says Dr. Klein, because testosterone—which men produce in high levels when they're under stress—seems to reduce the effects of oxytocin. Estrogen, she adds, seems to enhance it.

It will take time for new studies to reveal all the ways oxytocin encourages women to care for children and hang out with other women, but the "tend and befriend" notion



developed by Drs. Klein may help explain why women consistently outlive men.

If friends counter the stress that seems to swallow up so much of our life, if they keep us healthy and even add years to our life, why is it so hard to find time to be with them? That's a question which troubles researcher Ruthellen Josselson, PhD, coauthor of *Best Friends: The Pleasures and Perils of Girls' and Women's Friendships* (Three Rivers Press, 1998). "Every time we get overly busy with work and family, the first thing we do is let go of friendships with other women," says Dr. Josselson. "We push them right to the back burner. That's really a mistake, because women are such a source of strength to each other."

So, when the speed of everyday life causes you to think "I'll catch up with her later" when a friend calls, you should reconsider. In the words of an old song, "Make new friends but keep the old; one is silver and the other's gold." ♦

UPDATE: Since this article was first published in the September 2005 *Travel Letter* more has been learned about female friendships. A study published in 2006 in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology* found that among a group of nearly 3,000 nurses diagnosed with breast cancer, those with a female social support system had a 66 percent better survival rate than those who were more isolated. While more research needs to be done on the relationships between friendship, stress and health and well-being (most research has been done on men), it's clear that keeping up with your friends and making new ones is not only enjoyable but good for you.

Our Favorite Memories

Grand Canyon, Bryce & Zion National Parks

July 3-9, 2011

By Tour Leader Christina Smith

I am a National Park Junkie! The mission of the National Park Service (NPS) is to maintain, promote and interpret the natural, historical and cultural elements of the NPS sites for our generation and all generations to follow. After this trip, I'm thinking National Parks are not such a bad thing to be addicted to!

The National Parks of Utah have been on my "to visit" list for as long as I can remember. All the reading and research I did for Bryce Canyon, Grand Canyon North Rim and Zion National Parks before leading this tour did not prepare me for the magnificence and grandeur I came to experience. The Hoodoos at Bryce, the great vistas of Grand Canyon and the switchbacks and tunnels in Zion are now imprinted on my brain and in my heart.

Park Ranger Jan at Bryce Canyon conducted an hour walk and talk along the canyon rim telling us how erosive forces thousands of years ago created the park's unusual and fascinating rock formations—Hoodoos. Grand Canyon Park Ranger Karen told us the story of "Brighty the Brave Burro" and his contributions in the Grand Canyon in the early 1900s. We all made a point to rub the nose of the bronze statue of Brighty for good luck. Park Ranger Gary at Zion presented lots of information during a two hour bus ride through Zion. This "Ride with the Ranger" experience was a unique and intimate way to learn about the park. These ranger programs were just a sampling of the interpretive talks and experiences we had an opportunity to participate in during our tour.

The three parks offered stunning scenery giving us all a renewed respect for the magnificence of nature. Each of the parks offered hiking opportunities, from relatively easy ranger-led hikes to intensive, as strenuous as you like, hikes. In addition to hiking and indoor learning opportunities, we found a special way to spend an evening.



Traveling to the different parks also gave us opportunities to stop for photo ops along the way. Here we are entering the Dixie National Forest, Utah's largest forest preserve.



Learning about the geological history of the Grand Canyon from one of the several awesome National Park Rangers we encountered during our travels.

The Grand Canyon Cookout Experience is about as fun as fun gets. We boarded the G.C.C.E. tram in front of the lodge for the short ride to a huge tent for our exciting evening filled with food and entertainment. The tram engine car resembled an old 1800s locomotive engine, which helped set the stage for what was to come. Upon arrival we were graciously greeted by cowboy costumed staff who served us and insured a fun and memorable evening.

We started with an all you can eat cowboy buffet dinner—delicious—from barbeque with two sauces to baked beans reminiscent of childhood picnics to succulent chicken and mac n' cheese just like mom used to make. There were a variety of salads plus a good selection of breads, condiments and side dishes. Our red enamel plates and bowls were overflowing with goodness!

Shortly after we started to eat, the entertainment commenced. Woody and Ms. Cleda Jane spent the next hour providing cheesy, corny, wholesome humor, classic musical duets and original songs. It was a delightful show. They had our

Women Traveling Together will be visiting Bryce & Zion National Parks again in June 2012.

undivided attention and we had belly laugh after belly laugh.

The entertainment ended too quickly but the laughs continued. Somehow we were oblivious to the notorious monsoon that had started outside—yes, monsoon! This area of America is subject to monsoon-like conditions at times and we experienced it firsthand.

Fortunately the staff was prepared and handed out plastic ponchos (after our dessert of cookies and watermelon) for our tram ride home. The raindrops and wind were going in all different directions. We laughed all the way back to the Lodge.

Fortunately this was the only time we experienced any real rain during our week of exploration. I'll certainly remember bits and pieces of the natural, historical and cultural stories I learned while visiting these great parks but the evening at the Grand Canyon Cookout Experience is at the top of the memory list.

This trip feed my addiction for visiting National Parks and made even it stronger than ever! I know it rubbed off on some of the 13 women I was lucky enough to travel with and share this memorable trip. ❖



On an interpretive hike with a park ranger.



On the rim of the Grand Canyon.



"Chowing down" on our Cowboy dinner.

Our Favorite Memories

Highlights of Italy ~ September 28-October 8,, 2011

By Tour Leader Becky Clinton

Was it the moment we saw Michelangelo's *David* or when we tasted the shaved truffle atop the handmade pasta? Or maybe it was seeing the Sistine Chapel or listening to the orchestra on Campo San Marco. If you ask the sixteen women on our trip to name their favorite memory you will probably get sixteen different answers. Some might even say, "I can't choose. There were so many special moments."

Our guide in Florence, Susanna, prepared us for seeing the famous *David*. As Susanna led us to the Accademia, she told us of the history of Florence and the sculpture and how, after guiding tours there for years, she was still overcome with emotion every time she saw it. As we approached the room, she said, "We will enter in silence." We did and the sight took our breath away. Pictures can never fully reveal the power of this magnificent work of art, but the way we felt when we saw it will be with us forever.

In complete contrast, there was the night in the pizza restaurant in Naples when we laughed until it hurt. The details would only suffer in the retelling, so I'll just say we all got pretty silly and it felt good. There was also the ongoing quest for the world's best gelato... so gelato had to be eaten at least once a day, maybe twice! We loved all the gelato flavors we tried, but hazelnut and pistachio were favorites.

Imagine riding in a gondola on the Grand Canal in Venice when you hear someone call your name. You look around and see a fellow traveler waving from the back of a water taxi. What could be more fun than traveling with new friends!

We were awed by the incomparable beauty of Venice, the art of Florence, the history of Rome. The Tuscan hill towns captured our hearts and made us want to return soon. The view from a hill town wall over the rolling hills, perfectly sectioned at odd angles and planted with grapevines and sunflowers was an unforgettable sight. The groves of olive trees with their subtle silvery sage color added beauty to the view. The delectable lunch we were served at the organic farm made us understand that simple food is best. Organically grown, simply prepared and proudly served. Eggplant like we've never tasted it before. What an unforgettable meal!



The real deal. Pizza in Naples.



On the island Burano in the Venice lagoon. The island has been known for centuries for its small colorfully painted houses and lace making.

On the road from Positano to Sorrento, our guide Augustino, got out and walked down the narrow road clogged by a seemingly impossible traffic jam. The road seemed too narrow for two lanes, but after much arm waving and high volume Italian, he got it cleared and we were moving again. We cheered when he got back on the bus! Breakfast on rooftop terraces and those narrow hairpin turns on Amalfi Coast roads took our breath away with their stunning views.

A visit to Pompeii, where we saw ancient evidence of how fragile life is, made us appreciate the present moment even more. We walked over stones and into houses, temples and public buildings that were part of a town's everyday life over 2000 years ago. We filled our water bottles at fountains that have been pumping pure water for centuries. We left with the realization the residents of Pompeii were in many ways, very much like us.

Perhaps the most memorable part of our trip was the group itself. For weeks before departure, they were in touch by email and the bonding began. When they arrived in Venice, they felt as though they already knew each other. From the first day of the trip these 16 ladies showed mutual care and

WTT will be visiting Italy again in May 2012.

concern. If someone needed a hand up a hill, a listening ear or a walking companion, a new friend was there. It was wonderful to observe relationships developing and the sharing of life experiences. There were significant birthdays celebrated, lifelong dreams realized and life affirming choices made by taking this trip. Each of us feels privileged to have been a part of this special bonding and sharing.

New friendships, beautiful images and memories that make us smile—these are the treasured souvenirs we brought home from Italy. ♦



Photo op above Positano on the Amalfi Coast.



Lunch on a Tuscany farm—organic no less!

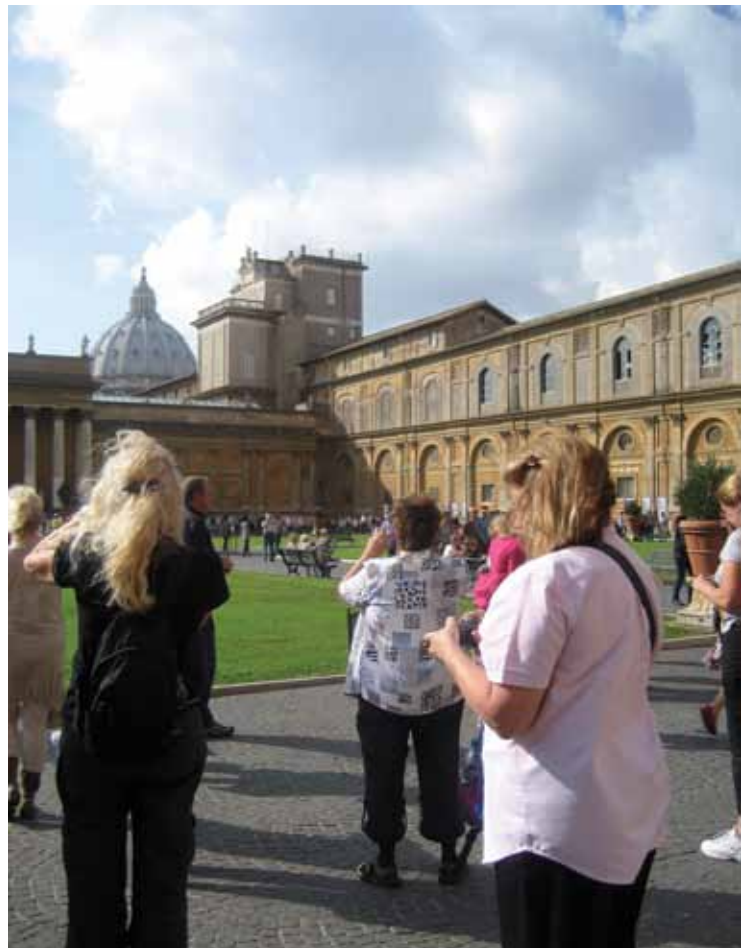


Photo op at the Vatican in Rome.

Move Over San Francisco: Charleston, SC is Now the #1 Destination City

Recently Charleston, South Carolina was named the top American travel destination by the readers of Conde Nast Traveler Magazine. Making the top ten for several years behind such favorites as San Francisco, 2011 marks the first time Charleston took the top spot. Why? To begin with, Charleston is home to Fort Sumter, making it a living museum for Civil War buffs but the city has many other charms.

Founded in 1670 as “Charles Town”, Charleston has a rich history as a port and cultural center for the American South. Before the Revolutionary War, Charleston was a bustling port, the largest and wealthiest city south of Philadelphia. During the Revolution, Charleston was captured by the British twice. Numerous historic buildings and houses of worship from the Colonial and Antebellum eras remain including the famous waterfront “Battery” with its southern mansions, cannons, oaks, palmettos and incredible views of the harbor and Fort Sumter. A leisurely carriage ride through the historic area is a favorite way to explore.

Extensive retail therapy is readily available on Broad Street or in the Charleston City Market housed in an 1841 Greek-Revival building. And a new generation of chefs is shaking up the traditional shrimp-and-grits scene making Charleston a great place to eat. Historic sites, beautiful scenery, fabulous food and shopping—Charleston has long been one WTT’s favorite destinations.

There are numerous attractions nearby Charleston including:

- **Magnolia Plantation:** Established along the Ashley River in 1679, Magnolia Plantation has survived over 300 years. The plantation and gardens have evolved and grown into one of the greatest public gardens in America with a rich history.
- **Beauford, SC:** Established further inland from Charleston in 1711, Beauford is renowned for its scenic location and for maintaining a historic character through its impressive antebellum architecture. The city has been featured in the *New York Times*, named “Best Small Southern Town” by *Southern Living* and a “Top 50 Adventure Town” by *National Geographic Adventure*.
- **Jekyll Island:** Off the coast of Georgia, Jekyll Island has a long and rich history being first claimed by the Spanish in 1510. It gained fame in the 19th century as the home of the Jekyll Island Club, a resort for the likes of the Rockefellers and Vanderbilts. ❖



Charleston's famous Battery.



Magnolia Plantation.



Jekyll Island.

WTT will be visiting Charleston and that other grand dame of the Old South, Savannah in March 2012.

Our Favorite Memories
Upstate New York & the Adirondacks
September 24-30, 2011

The weather was good, the views spectacular and the company great! Our trip included a visit to Lake Placid, site of the 1980 Winter Olympics, time atop Whiteface Mountains, numerous lakes, the beginnings of some fabulous fall foliage and much more. Truly an enchanting and delightful trip. ❖



Relaxing in Adirondack chairs in the Adirondacks—sounds so cliché but it was nice!



Above: With a really unusual scarecrow in Shelburne.
Below: Photo op on Whiteface Mountain. Right: Saranac Lake.





Look my shirt matches!
Costa Rica ~ July 2010



Trying on carnival masks in Venice.
Italy ~ September 2011



Soaking in the view.
Upstate New York
September 2011

“Travel is more than
the seeing of sights; it is a change
that goes on, deep and permanent,
in the ideas of living.”

– Miriam Beard