

# INTERLACHEN



FALL 2008

T R A V E L E R

*Let your travels lead you to the excitement of adventure and discovery*



Dear Traveler

2008 has been a year of unexpected and wonderful new travel opportunities! As you make your 2009 travel plans consider some of the destinations we share in this issue of the Interlachen Traveler.

Two countries that are growing in popularity with travelers are Jordan and Egypt. Both are relative bargains compared to Europe and Great Britain, in part due to the exchange rate with the Euro and Pound. If your “must see” list of destinations include the New Seven Wonders of the World and the only remaining Wonder of the Ancient World, you’ll want to be sure to see Petra in Jordan and the Great Pyramids in Egypt. Read about Ann and Lynn’s recent trip to Egypt and Jordan on page 2.

The Riviera Nayarit is Mexico’s newest vacation destination. Just north of Puerto Vallarta, Nayarit has 100 miles of beaches and quaint towns which offer something for everyone—from golfing on world class courses to swimming with dolphins, exploring the jungle or colorful marketplace shopping. Be sure to consider the Riviera Nayarit for your holiday, winter getaway or spring break. See page 4 for more information.

In addition to visiting Jordan and Egypt, Interlachen agents have recently traveled to the Riviera Maya, Walt Disney World, Venice and to Rome, checking out hotels and resorts for you. Agents will soon be traveling to Costa Rica, Botswana, and Las Vegas.

Travel today can be complicated. With pending airline mergers, security restrictions, and added fees, it can be frustrating and confusing. We at Interlachen Travel can bring value to you. Not only do our own travel experiences provide you with insight about the best travel spots, but we can demystify the changes occurring in the travel industry.

Please call us with your questions, your ideas for the perfect vacation, and to make travel arrangements. With airlines downsizing, fewer seats will be available. Book your vacation early! We hope you enjoy this issue of the Interlachen Traveler.

Ann Gray, CTC  
Sis Mishou, CTC  
Mary Franson  
Lynn Schaefer  
Renee Wiley

*“Petra on its own was  
worth crossing the Atlantic.*

*It is truly a ‘Wow!’”*

Ann Gray,  
on her recent trip  
to Jordan and Egypt.

See page 2 to learn more.

## Do You Know the New Seven Wonders of the World?

### Chichen Itza in Mexico

Chichen Itza was the center of Mayan civilization in its day and is still visible in several structures.

### Christ the Redeemer in Brazil

This 125-foot tall statue stands high above Rio on the Corcovado Mountain and was carried up the mountain in pieces and reassembled.

### Great Wall of China

Built to protect China from invading Huns, Mongols and other tribes, this 4,160-mile wall was begun in the 7th century B.C.

### Machu Picchu in Peru

In 1911 this city built 8,000 feet above sea level was rediscovered. Known as the "city in the clouds," Machu Picchu was built in the 15th century by Incan emperor Pachacutec.

### Petra in Jordan

Built around 9 B.C., this ancient city flourished during the Roman Empire. Its pink stone ruins and carved façade are still visible today.

### Roman Colosseum in Italy

Still influencing design of sports stadiums around the world, this colosseum is in the center of Rome. It was built 2,000 years ago and has 50,000 seats.

### Taj Mahal in India

Emperor Shah Jahan built this structure in 1630 in memory of his favorite wife. It is considered one of the finest examples of Mughal architecture.

(Ann and Lynn have just one "wonder" yet to see. Expect a report next year from Brazil!)

The Seven Wonders of the Ancient World were the Pyramids of Egypt, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon, the Statue of Zeus at Olympia, the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus, the Mausoleum at Halicarnassus, the Colossus at Rhodes, and the Pharos of Alexandria. Only the Pyramids still exist.



## Jordan and Egypt Growing in Popularity; Petra is Amazing

Jordan and Egypt possess mysteries few other destinations can boast: the Sphinx and Great Pyramids, the River Nile, and Petra. On their quest to see Petra, one of the New Seven Wonders of the World, Ann, Lynn and two friends took in the sights and sounds of Jordan and Egypt this past spring. Both countries are growing in popularity with travelers and are relative bargains compared to Europe and Great Britain, in part due to the exchange rate with the Euro and Pound.

Jordan is bordered by Syria, Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Israel, and the West Bank. Bible stories and Lawrence of Arabia come to mind upon hearing its name. Tourism in Jordan is growing and the people are very welcoming to visitors. English is widely spoken and locals really want to help tourists enjoy their country. It's a politically stable country and has a relatively high literacy rate and standard of living. Jordan is also home to

Petra, one of the New Seven Wonders of the World.

Anyone who has seen Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade will recognize the Treasury, which is the signature monument in Petra. According to Ann and Lynn, "one cannot help but gasp in amazement upon seeing the Treasury. This is a true 'wow!'" The entire city is carved out of rose-red sandstone and is accessible by a mile-long path through a narrow gorge. Riding in on horseback is available, but most people walk.

Unknown to the Western World until 1812, Petra has over 800 individual monuments including buildings, tombs, temples, arched gateways, baths, and colonnaded streets. Early morning and late afternoon are the best times to visit as the lower sun emphasizes the multicolored sandstone. "Petra on its own was worth crossing the Atlantic, It is truly a 'Wow!'" according to Ann.



Friends Mary Jo Bunnell and Judiann "Pete" Johnson with Lynn and Ann on camels in front of The Pyramids.

## Jordan and Egypt, continued

Egypt is mainly flat desert, devoid of vegetation. Ninety-five (95) percent of the population lives in the Nile Valley. Others live along the coasts of the Mediterranean and the African Red Sea. Cairo is considered the greatest city in the Islamic world and is home to many ancient monuments. “Egypt is like an open-air museum with its wondrous antiquities,” according to Lynn.

Cairo is most famous for the Great Pyramids and Sphinx, which are actually located near the outskirts of the city of Giza. The largest pyramid is 449 feet tall and contains nearly three million blocks of stone. Although the Sphinx, with the head of a woman and body of a lion, appears very large in photos its height reaches only 66 feet.

The Museum of Egyptian Antiquities is a must see. It has over 130,000 exhibits including Pharaonic and Byzantine art and sculpture, the Mummy Room and the Tutankhamun exhibition. The River Nile is a relaxing way to observe life in Egypt.



The Treasury at Petra.  
(photo by Cristiano Galbiati)

Ann suggests spending additional time in Luxor, where the Karnak Temple covers 100 acres filled with colossal statues, pillars and the Avenue of the Sphinxes. Smaller in scale, the Luxor Temple also has columns, statues and sphinxes as well as the Luxor Museum. On the West Bank of the Nile is Theban Necropolis, where you will find tombs



Visitors walk or ride camels through a gorge to get to Petra.  
(photo by Brehn Garcia)

including the Valley of the Kings and Tombs of the Nobels.

In addition to the great monuments, an Egyptian itinerary could include a Nile cruise, diving and water sports in the Red Sea, a desert trek to remote oases, or a visit to the Sinai Peninsula where you'll find Catherine's Monastery and the resort town of Sharm el-Sheikh.

Egypt is more than an immersion into history. It has many hotels, restaurants and souvenir shops. There are villages with mud-brick houses sprouting television antennae and stone and glass high rises towering over ancient monuments. Radios blare popular music and horns honk incessantly while five times daily there is the mesmerizing call to prayer.

Jordan and Egypt aren't for everyone. It can be very hot and few places are handicapped-accessible. Cairo is dense with people and smog. Both destinations felt safe and armed guards are everywhere. There are many local restaurants in both Jordan and Egypt that do not serve alcohol but it can be found in international hotels.

Ann and Lynn recommend both Egypt and Jordan but understand why Jordan is becoming such a popular destination. “It stands firmly in its heritage while welcoming the world. We found it an ideal bridge between the American and the Middle Eastern worlds.”

To learn more about traveling to Jordan and Egypt—or any of the Wonders of the World—contact Ann, Lynn or the other Interlachen travel experts. Let us arrange your next “must see” destination. 🌀

**Q:** Will I have to pay a fee to check my luggage?

**A:** Frequently yes. Airlines are adding fees for checked bags. Some charge for the first bag and most charge for the second and all additional checked bags per traveler. Fees for domestic economy class travel range from \$15 to over \$100 depending on the weight and size of the bag. Exceptions to these fees do exist.

Please contact your Interlachen Travel agent for further information or clarification regarding your questions about travel.

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## Riviera Nayarit: Mexico's Newest Destination

Just 10 minutes north of Puerto Vallarta International Airport, Riviera Nayarit stretches from Jarretaderas to Lo de Marcos and offers 100 miles of Pacific Ocean coastline with beaches of all styles. There is something for everyone here!

A golfer's paradise, Riviera Nayarit has seven world class golf courses. Deep sea fishing, whale watching, snorkeling, sailing, swimming with dolphins, and diving let you enjoy the ocean. Spend a day at the new aquatic park, Sea Life Park or take a canopy tour, go horseback riding, or learn about reptile conservation and research in the area. Get a front row seat to incredible nature like bird watching, jungle hiking and swamp boat rides.

Throughout Nayarit are beachfront towns such as Bucerias, Sayulita, San



Blas, and San Panchoeach. Some are quaint, others bustling, each with their own charm and traditions. Imagine watching fishermen deliver their fresh catch from their nets or visiting the marketplace to see vibrant artwork and crafts made by local villagers.

Hundreds of restaurants and entertainment venues from which to choose are available. Plus the Riviera Nayarit is close to Puerto Vallarta with its famous river walk, clubs and cobblestone streets. Hotels range from quaint to modern all-inclusive accommodations. Book your winter vacation at the Riviera Nayarit. Call Ann or any of the Interlachen travel agents to learn more! ☺

## INTERLACHEN TRAVEL SERVICES

Interlachen Travel thanks you for making your travel arrangements with us. Whether your travel is for business or pleasure, we can accommodate your needs. Each of our agents has over 25 years of experience in the travel industry. Let us help you with the following services:

- Certified Travel Expertise
- Complete Vacation Planning
- Group Travel
- Specialty Tours
- Foreign Travel
- Corporate and Incentive Travel
- Cruises
- Airline Reservations
- Consolidator Airfares
- Hotels
- Car Rentals
- Rail Passes
- Passport/Visa Services
- Travel Insurance