

INTERLACHEN

T R A V E L E R



FALL 2004

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



Dear Traveler

Greetings! We hope your summer was as fun and vacation-filled as ours. Throughout the year, Interlachen Travel agents visit various vacation destinations to evaluate and see firsthand what makes them unique, special, and worth the trip.

This summer Interlachen president Ann Gray experienced the wonders of Ixtapan Spa and Golf Resort. In her words, "Ixtapan is a Mexican nirvana!" See page 4 to learn more about this Mexican paradise. Consider joining an Interlachen trip leaving on **October 17!**

Agent Mary Franson cruised to Alaska on one of Holland America's ships. More individuals and families are cruising to Alaska. Cruises fill quickly! If you and your family are interested, make your reservations early to ensure you get specific dates and cabin locations. See page 2 for the full story.

A cruise vacation no longer fits the stereotype of sedentary activity and food, food and more food!! Read *Cruising: It's Not What It Used to Be* on page 2 to learn more.

Interlachen travelers Jennifer and Thor Anderson were among the first passengers to board the Queen Mary 2 (QM2), the newest ocean liner in the Cunard fleet of elegant ships as it cruised the Caribbean and South America. They share their experience on Interlachen's website (www.interlachentravel.com). Consider joining Interlachen on the QM2 leaving Fort Lauderdale on **February 12, 2005.**

Other great land and cruise tours are available for your winter and spring getaways! There is a new nonstop flight to Aruba to consider. Club Med has wonderful villages—see page 2 to learn about the fun options for adults and families at Club Med Sandpiper in Florida.

As always...please call us with your questions, ideas for the perfect destination, and to make travel arrangements. We hope you enjoy this issue of the *Interlachen Traveler*.

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



Pamper yourself!
Join Interlachen Travel
on October 17 for a trip to
Ixtapan Spa & Golf Resort—
a Mexican Paradise!

Cruising: It's Not What It Used to Be

Cruises today have changed. You can find a cruise to meet just about any vacation: family cruises, singles cruises, adventure cruises, big band cruises, cooking cruises, spa cruises and many others.

The median age of cruisers has declined drastically during the past decade. People of all ages and family makeup can be found: grandparents vacationing with their grandchildren, parents with teenagers or younger kids, entire extended families; couples vacationing with friends, and others.

Ships today have spas, workout gyms, climbing walls, pools, shops, casinos, movie theaters and more. And, many of the cruise lines have complimentary youth programs to keep children entertained. One of the world's newest ships, the Queen Mary 2, offers everything you may need while cruising: a walking track, pools, golf, a library and sitting room, a spa with a therapeutic aqua pool, a Maritime museum, an art gallery, daily lectures, special activities for children, a planetarium, and High Tea every afternoon! (Read more about the Queen Mary 2 at our website at www.interlachentravel.com).

Food on ships has changed too. Designated seating times for dinner in the main dining room can still be found. But so can alternative restaurants, where you can make reservations for when you want to dine. Lighter fare and vegetarian meals are also available. Though most cruise lines still have "formal" nights where travelers can dress in formal attire, more casual dress is accepted at meals.

In addition, cruises don't have to be expensive. Interlachen Travel president Ann Gray said, "Cruises vary in price depending on many components: the length of the cruise, the itinerary, the age and size of the ship, what amenities are included, and the overall quality of the cruise line. Accommodation costs are based on the size and location; whether it is a suite, has an ocean view, or is an inside cabin. The various cruise lines each have their own personality."

For any of your cruise or travel questions, feel free to call Interlachen Travel at 952-925-2940. ☎



Club Med Sandpiper—Made for Families

Looking for a family vacation full of discovery, energy, and wellness? Club Med Sandpiper, an all-inclusive resort located north of West Palm Beach in Florida may just be the spot for you. This Club Med village immerses you in a friendly, comfortable atmosphere from the moment you arrive.

Rooms are very large and comfortable with private balconies, large bathrooms and walk-in closets. You may want to try one of the new Marina Family Suites with DVD player, fully stocked refrigerator and more. Meals at the village are offered buffet style in the main dining room and ala carte in the Riverview Restaurant.

Daytime activities are many. Some people relax by one of the four pools—one pool is exclusively for adults and one pool is for children. Adults and children have many "play" choices from golf to waterskiing and much more. You can even fly on a trapeze!

While the adults play, the children have fun at their own clubs. All clubs are age appropriate, starting for children four months old and up, and offer an array of activities from arts and crafts to Club Med's famed circus school.

Tour excursions are available at an additional cost. Spend time at the nearby 25-mile stretch of beach on the Atlantic Ocean, on a riverboat on the St. Lucie River, or in Miami—the choice is yours.

Evenings are active too. Socialize with friends over a cocktail, enjoy music or a show at Sandpiper's own theatre, or a performance at the circus tent.

Even if you have only a few days to spend at Club Med's Sandpiper village, you and your family will emerge relaxed and energized. To learn more about Club Med Sandpiper, call Interlachen Travel today at 952-925-2940. ☎

Visit Alaska in the Summer—A Great Time to Cruise

Alaska stretches across more than 570,000 square miles—about two times the size of Texas—and is home to about 640,000 people. But perhaps what most attracts travelers to Alaska can be found along its breathtaking western coast: whale watching, eagle sightings, dog sledging, glaciers, salmon fishing, and more.

Mary Franson, one of our own travel agents, took in the gems of Alaska on a Holland America Cruise last May. Travelers interested in taking a cruise to Alaska



Looking from the ship toward land along the Inside Passage.

have many choices. The Holland America ships are smaller than many ships, which allow better access to sites such as the glaciers, and hold about 1,200 passengers.

Alaska, continued

Mary and her husband boarded the ship in Vancouver and cruised north along the inside passage to Ketchikan, Juneau, Skagway, Glacier Bay, Hubbard Bay, and on to Seward. This seven-day cruise sails between ports during the night and stays in port during the day so travelers can experience the wonderful excursion opportunities available.

Depending on your level of interest and activity, the ship has a variety of options available on board. From quaint shops to an on-ship library, young and old travelers have nearly everything they need close by. Lectures about the coming day's sites are offered throughout the day and travelers can stay occupied on the sport deck; at the casino, movie theater, or computer center; in the pools, spa and workout room, or the many available lounges. The ship even holds art auctions on board.

The first destination was Ketchikan—also known as Alaska's Sport Fishing Capital. Ketchikan is the fourth largest city in Alaska and has the largest collection of totem poles in the world. While Mary explored the shops and galleries of this colorful city, her husband chose to go salmon fishing.

The next port was Juneau, the capital of Alaska. This landlocked city is smaller than Ketchikan and offers incredible natural excursions. The Fransons took a tram 1800 feet up Mount Roberts to an overlook with a magnificent view. Mary and her husband also headed just outside of Juneau to whale watch. They saw humpback whales, sea lions, seals and incredible scenery.

After whale watching, you might think anything else would pale in comparison. But Alaska has even more to offer. Following Juneau, the ship docked in Skagway, a small town rich in Gold Rush

history. The Fransons set out on a jeep tour excursion into the Yukon Territory to see wildlife and emerald green glacial lakes. Other excursions in Skagway include helicopter tours, dog sledding (on wheels of course!), a journey aboard the White Pass and Yukon Route Railroad, biking, canoeing, and much more.



Gazing down from a tram 1,800 feet up Mount Roberts in Juneau.

When the Holland America cruise ship approached Glacier Bay, passengers were delighted the ship could easily maneuver close to the glaciers. Park rangers boarded the ship to share information about the wildlife and glacier types. "The time on deck viewing the glaciers was simply majestic," said Mary. "I can understand why this trip is one travelers come back to again and again."

The cruise came to an end at Seward. There the Fransons boarded a train to Anchorage to fly home. Some travelers chose to stay on the ship as it headed back to Vancouver, which gave them time to see the sights again or to enjoy all that the ship had to offer. Some extended their stay in Anchorage and combined their cruise with a land tour to Denali and Fairbanks.

Since Alaskan cruises are very popular, Mary recommends, "Travelers should reserve space at least six months in advance of a cruise. This better guarantees that you will be able to travel on the dates you desire and that you have a choice of cabins."

Perhaps what adds most to a traveler's experience on this cruise are the excursions. "Excursions really make an Alaska cruise richer," advises Mary. "There are many to choose from and Interlachen can help travelers decide what is right for them." Call Mary at 952-925-2940 to learn more! 🌀

Q. How can I speed up my check-in time at the airport?

A. Remember to allow enough time to pass through security and consider these recommendations to speed up your check-in time at the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport:

- Check in online as early as 24 hours before your departure time. You can print your electronic ticket right from home!
- Check in using one of the available self-service check-in kiosks to print your electronic ticket and to check your luggage. E-Ticket passengers can check in and obtain a boarding pass up to at least 45 minutes before departure.
- Use curbside luggage check-in. The Minneapolis/St. Paul International Airport also has a "left lane" check-in for Northwest Airlines.

Please contact your Interlachen Travel agent about your travel questions.

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Ixtapan Spa and Golf Resort— A Mexican Paradise

When Interlachen Travel president Ann Gray, her daughter and two friends recall their trip to Ixtapan Spa and Golf Resort in Mexico, they all agree a spa vacation is the ultimate. And this spa is particularly wonderful! Days filled with massages, facials, fango and reflexiology, yoga and aerobics, golf and tennis lessons, superb food, and lovely flora and fauna can all be found at Ixtapan Spa and Golf Resort for one incredibly low price.

“Ixtapan is a Mexican nirvana,” said Ann. “This spa is an amazing value for such high quality.” Rates range from \$150 to \$175 per day double occupancy complete with three or four beauty treatments plus lessons, activities and sports. “No wonder the travel guide Frommer lists Ixtapan as the #1 spa in Mexico,” says Ann.



Men are welcome too and have their own spa facilities. Everyone can enjoy the two pools, outdoor whirlpool, fitness center and new 18-hole Don Sechrest ecologically designed golf course.

In the foothills of the Sierra Madre, guests can enjoy the little white-washed town of Ixtapan de la Sal. The town is known for its warm thermal waters with purported curative powers to heal arthritic and rheumatic conditions.

Interlachen Travel can arrange a four-day or seven-day stay for you. Call Ann at 952-925-2940 to get more information for Interlachen special group trips October 17, 2004, and April 17, 2005!

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 16 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