

INTERLACHEN

T R A V E L E R



FALL 2003

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



Dear Traveler

Greetings! Summer in Minnesota certainly doesn't seem long enough. Before we know it, cold winter winds and snow will be upon us. With that in mind, now is the time to begin planning your winter and spring break vacation plans.

Great land and cruise tours are already available to many warm getaways. The Riviera Maya south of Cancun is the "hottest" vacation spot in Mexico for families and adults with its white sand beaches, scuba diving, Mayan ruins, golf courses, and much more. Interlachen Travel agents Sis Mishou, CTC, and Mary Franson traveled to Riviera Maya last month to evaluate resort options. On page 2 *From Ann* describes why we do this and what you can expect from our agents.

Perhaps one of the most exotic destinations today is South Africa. And no matter what time of year you travel there it offers intriguing history, diverse people, wonderful beaches, and spectacular safari treks. Read more in *South Africa – A "Must See" Destination* on page 2.

If you're looking for the opportunity to dive into an area's culture, consider staying in an apartment instead of a hotel when traveling in Europe. Many countries offer apartment, bed-and-breakfast, and stand-alone homes as lodging options. Find out more in *Holiday Homes Offer Families Cultural Travel Experiences* on page 4.

We all know that security at airports is heightened. On page 2 read *Security Reminders When Traveling by Air* for some helpful reminders to make passing through security checkpoints easier.

Women!! A recent trend gaining attention is the "Girls' Getaway." A number of spas and hotels throughout the country offer packages catering to women vacationing with other women. Some even go as far as to provide all the basics for a good old fashioned slumber party!

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
Dana Ross-Arlt
Deane Bassin



Visit the Riviera Maya this winter!

See our website at

www.interlachentravel.com

to read about a recent Interlachen traveler's trip to Xpu Ha Palace Resort south of Cancun.

One of Interlachen Travel’s greatest strengths is its experienced travel agents. As a course of business, Interlachen Travel agents stay abreast of the best destinations, hotels, restaurants, and attractions—often traveling to specific destinations themselves.

With winter travel and spring break plans on the minds of many travelers in September and October, Interlachen Travel agents Sis Mishou, CTC, and Mary Franson recently traveled to Cancun to evaluate resort options. While Cancun itself remains the number one spot for college students, the area south of Cancun, known as the Riviera Maya, has become the “hottest” destination in Mexico for families and adults. It offers white sand beaches, scuba diving, Mayan ruins, golf courses, and much more.

Sis and Mary’s goal was to conduct site inspections of 17 different resorts. They evaluated each resort’s overall appearance, proximity to beaches and other attractions, and the various hotels, restaurants, lounges, pools, and rooms within each resort. From such a trip our agents bring back firsthand information about the accommodations available including features and benefits. They learned of several properties that emphasize adult relaxation such as the Royal Hideaway and the Adventura Spa Palace. One resort even had swim-up suites available. As expected, they found many wonderful accommodations for families.

Based on Sis and Mary’s evaluations, Interlachen Travel is able to bring informed, objective, and personalized travel knowledge to each and every traveler request. Sis and Mary would be happy to talk with anyone interested in traveling to Riviera Maya. Call us to learn more for your winter getaway!

On another note...Interlachen Travel is proud to announce that Sis Mishou, CTC, has added Scotland to her list of certifications and that Mary Franson is a Walt Disney World Specialist. All of Interlachen Travel’s agents are well-traveled. We have Certified Travel Counselors (CTC) as well as Board-Certified Specialists in Spain, Ireland, Europe, Asia, Hawaii, Africa, and the Caribbean in addition to Scotland and Walt Disney World. ☺

Travelers today know that the Transit Security Administration (TSA) is taking heightened security precautions with air travelers. Knowing what to expect will allow you to pass through security with the least amount of inconvenience.

- **Removing shoes may be necessary.** While the TSA does not require that passengers remove their shoes prior to proceeding through the security checkpoint, anyone who alarms the metal detector will be subject to a secondary screening. TSA screeners have been trained to spot suspicious footwear and may require secondary screening anyway.
- **Do not check your film.** Equipment used for screen-

ing checked baggage will damage your undeveloped film. You should place all film in your carry-on baggage. You may ask for a hand inspection of all film and cameras with film at the passenger checkpoint.

- **Keep your bags unlocked.** If your baggage is locked and a TSA screener needs to open it during the screening process, the locks may have to be broken. The TSA is not liable for damage caused to locked bags that are opened for security purposes.

If you have questions about security measures being taken by the TSA, please call Interlachen Travel at 952- 925-2940 for more information. ☺

South Africa – A “Must See” Destination

Travelers throughout the world are visiting South Africa. In April 2003 the *New York Times* reported, “Overseas tourism to South Africa grew by 20% last year, with 6.4 million visitors.” As recent visitors themselves, Interlachen Travelers Mary Lou and Roger Jensen would agree—they rank South Africa as one of their top three travel destinations.



Cape of Good Hope Bay

South Africa is a relatively safe and inexpensive destination that offers a unique blend of dramatic landscapes, a wealth of animal and plant life, and a mixture of cultures. Surrounded by ocean on three sides, South Africa is three times larger than the state of Texas and occupies the southernmost part of the African continent.

Some conveniences not necessarily associated with South Africa include the ability to

drink water in major cities and eat salads or unpeeled fresh fruits and vegetables. Major credit cards and traveler’s checks are accepted and cities and larger towns provide ATMs for obtaining local currency.

In early summer 2003 the Jensens visited Cape Town and Kruger National Park, taking in the well-known Robben Island, Tasle Mountain, botanical gardens, wineries, and a safari trek in the African bush.

South Africa, continued

Cape Town

One of the first things the Jensens noticed upon flying into Cape Town was the Cape of Good Hope Bay. Cape Town has wonderful beaches, quaint marketplaces, strolling musicians, colonial architecture, colorful and flamboyant artwork, and trendy restaurants. But perhaps more important to the culture and history of South Africa are sites such as Robben Island.

For nearly 400 years Robben Island was a place of imprisonment and exile for people that rulers considered political troublemakers and social outcasts especially during apartheid. Today Robben Island is a symbol of the human spirit to overcome incredible hardship.

The Jensens' guide was a former political prisoner who told stories of imprisonment as well as of the leadership of humanitarian Nelson Mandela. Mary Lou noted that even within confinement there was a racial pecking order for food and clothes.

Diverse People

One of South Africa's greatest assets is the diversity of people who live there. The latest population statistics put South Africa at about 44 million people including those who classify themselves as African, white, colored, and Indian/Asian. Eleven different languages are spoken including English.

In addition to visiting the sites, the Jensens experienced a traditional meal with a South African family arranged in advance by Interlachen. African women prepare all of the food including cheese and bread. The meal was exceptional and the Jensens enjoyed being treated to a taste of authentic South African life.

On Safari in Kruger National Park

When Mary Lou first contacted Ann Gray at Interlachen Travel, she had read about Cape Town and was intrigued by it as a destination. Knowing the various tours

available, Ann encouraged the Jensens to include a safari trek at Ngala Lodge adjacent to Kruger National Park as part of their visit—an experience that the Jensens remember as “out of this world!”

Kruger National Park is world-renowned and ranks as one of the best wildlife experiences in Africa. There are over 140 mammals including the Big Five—buffalo,

elephant, leopard, lion and rhino—which are named such because they are the most difficult to hunt on foot.

Mary Lou and Roger arrived in South Africa during its winter (June), an excellent time to see wildlife because the Bush is less leafy and the animals tend to come out more. Guided by a track-

er and a ranger in open-air land rovers, the Jensens saw all of the Big Five animals as well as zebras, wild boars, giraffes, birds, a hippopotamus, and others.

The Bush provides a natural backdrop to the Ngala Lodge and from its secluded location overlooking the Mapone riverbed guests can watch elephants, birds, and other wildlife from their rooms.

Much to See and Do

South Africa has such a variety of sites and activities that it will interest the tourist as well as the adventurous traveler. For the Jensens the safari and dining with a South African family topped their list of unique sites, thanks to the arrangements made by Interlachen Travel. Based on their experience, the Jensens' trip to South Africa exceeded their expectations—and knowing what they know now, Mary Lou and Roger would definitely return to South Africa again.

To learn more about traveling in South Africa and its most wonderful sites or to plan your trip to South Africa, please contact CTC and Board-Certified South African Specialist Ann Gray or any of our agents at 952-925-2940. ☎



Lions in Kruger National Park

Q. I am flying with my 10-year-old granddaughter on a vacation to the Caribbean. Do I need special documents?

A. Yes. When traveling most places outside of the U.S., minors under the age of 18 must travel with the consent of both parents. If a minor is traveling with someone other than his or her legal parents, a notarized letter of consent signed by both legal parents must be submitted. Even when a minor is traveling with only one parent, that parent must hold a notarized letter of consent from the absent legal parent or in the case of a deceased parent, a copy of the death certificate.

Also all children, including infants, must have a birth certificate when traveling out of the U.S. Children under 18 do not need a photo ID with their birth certificate if they are traveling with a legal guardian.

Please contact your Interlachen Travel agent about your travel questions.

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Holiday Homes Offer Families Cultural Travel Experiences

For the family traveling to international destinations, finding the right accommodations and the right experience for children can be challenging. Interlachen Travel agents have helped many families meet their needs with accommodations called "holiday homes." They are available throughout Europe and are stand-alone homes, apartments, or bed-and-breakfasts. Staying in a holiday home truly offers a different travel experience compared to staying in a hotel. Imagine exploring Tuscany, Denmark, Paris, or any of the numerous destinations from the perspective of a native!

An Interlachen Traveler family of eight has opted for such accommodations for their summer and spring break vacations. While visiting London, they stayed in an apartment in the Kensington Area. In this mainly residential area they experienced the culture of London



Shaw/Curme Family

firsthand. They've also stayed in a bed-and-breakfast on the Dingle Peninsula in Ireland. Overlooking Dingtletown, their quaint lodging allowed them to take day trips and maintain flexibility with the entire family. Most recently they stayed in an apartment in the 7th District on the Left Bank in Paris. Here they were close to bakeries, great cafés, and the outdoor market.

Interlachen Travel agents have the knowledge and experience to assist you with any travel accommodations. Call us with your questions or to make your next travel destination and lodging worth remembering!

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 20 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