

INTERLACHEN



FALL 2005

T R A V E L E R

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



Dear Traveler

Summer goes by faster when you have fun vacations planned! We hope your summer was as fun and vacation-filled as ours. Ann Gray and Lynn Schaefer joined an Abercrombie and Kent (A&K) tour in August and were thrilled with what they found in China. See why China might be the perfect destination for your next vacation (see page 2).

Ann also traveled to the regions of Extremadura and Andalusia in Spain. With incredible beauty, handsome and charming people and traditions, and wonderful Roman ruins, Ann prefers to call it “the new Italy.” Learn more on page 4.

Sis Mishou cruised from Barcelona to Athens this summer and discovered a new tourist area opening in Barcelona near the Ramblas. It is filled with new hotels, restaurants, and a great food market. Sis also cruised on Star Princess to the Caribbean from Fort Lauderdale. She enjoyed specialty dining—a “dining experience” of an authentic meal at the Italian trattoria—which is now popular on many cruise ships. Contact Sis to learn more about Barcelona or a Star Princess cruise.

Mary Franson traveled to Hawaii last year to spend some time on the island of Oahu and found just how much it has to offer travelers. Although most people stop in Oahu to visit Pearl Harbor, rarely do they spend enough time to see the whole island. Oahu, not unlike the outer islands, has great beaches, beautiful sunsets and some of the best surfing in the world. Call Mary to learn more.

Now is the time to plan your winter and spring trips. There will be nonstop service to St. Maarten this year from the Twin Cities—it’s been several years since this has been an option. Consider sunny St. Maarten with its wide beaches, quiet country roads, small towns and nightlife for your next destination. Contact us to learn more.

Your cruise travel options are endless with Interlachen Special Rates. Check out these dates and destinations—then call us to book your cruise (see page 2)!

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

China, one of the most ancient civilizations of the world, is also one of today’s best travel destinations. With reasonable prices, friendly service, and the Chinese eager for tourists, now is the time to visit China.



With Much to Offer, China is a “Must See” Destination

Special Interlachen Cruise Dates and Destinations

- Travel from St. Paul to St. Louis to view the fall foliage on the American Queen, **October 15-22, 2006.**
- Visit the Hawaiian islands on a 7-night cruise on the Pride of America, **March 4-11, 2006.**
- Cruise northbound to Alaska on this 7-night experience on the Island Princess, **June 12-19 2006.**
- Relax on a 14-night Norwegian cruise on the QE 2, **June 16-30, 2006.**



Did you know that in Spain it is prohibited to add hormones to food and wine?

China, one of the most ancient civilizations of the world, is also one of today’s best travel destinations. The economy is booming and travel to and in China is brisk! Only 30% of China’s tourists are from outside the country, while 70% of those traveling in China are Chinese—many of them being the Chinese equivalent to “baby boomers” in the United States.

Interlachen Travel’s Ann Gray and Lynn Schaefer joined an Abercrombie and Kent (A&K) tour in August and were thrilled with what they found in China. “It was an absolutely wonderful destination, and it was very comfortable being a guest from the U.S.,” said Ann. “We felt totally safe and welcome. Many Chinese speak English and signage is often in English too.”

With reasonable prices, friendly service, and the Chinese eager for tourists, now is the time to

visit China. The sights are a fascinating blend of the old and the new!

China’s capital Beijing, which is the host city for the 2008 Olympics, is gearing up for a scheduled opening on 08/08/08 at 8pm! (The Chinese consider the number eight to be the most fortuitous of numbers.) Factories are being relocated outside of Beijing, the water is expected to be drinkable, and new hotels and buildings are popping up everywhere. Old Chinese-style houses and markets exist in the few remaining alley neighborhoods, though they will most likely be found behind new multi-story buildings. A beautiful city filled with public parks and gardens, Beijing also offers historical sites such as the Tiananmen Square and The Palace Museum, which for visiting is referred to as the Forbidden City. And the most popular destination, the Great



Interlachen’s Lynn Schaefer and Ann Gray visit the Great Wall of China

China, continued

Wall of China, is just outside of Beijing.

Shanghai, referred to as the “New York City of China,” is a bustling city located at the mouth of the Yangtze River. It is filled with skyscrapers of all kinds as well as the futuristic Pearl TV Tower, which is the world’s third tallest TV Tower. There are opera houses, museums, and theaters. The Old City section of town consists of buildings from the 1920s and ‘30s. In the Old City lies the Yuyuan Garden, built during the Ming Dynasty. A shopping highlight is Nanjing Road—perhaps the best known shopping street in China. Busy river traffic is reminiscent of Hong Kong’s. And there’s a train from the city to the airport that goes over 400 MPH. Quite the modern city!

From Shanghai, Lynn and Ann cruised for three nights on the Yangtze River, which is the world’s third largest and third longest river. The beauty of the river reminded Ann of the Norwegian fjords.

Forced flooding of the Yangtze River over the past couple of years has destroyed old towns and displaced people who have relocated to new apartment buildings

higher on the hillside. To help control flooding and meet the increased demand for electricity, the controversial Three Gorges Dam is being built with a completion date of 2009.

Seeing thousands of terracotta soldiers in Xian was also a highlight for Ann and Lynn. This statue army of warriors, horses and chariots was built over 2,000 years ago from local clay and is a remarkable archaeological find. The statues were uncovered by chance in 1974 by local farmers trying to sink a new well. Most recently an area where miniature soldiers are located has been discovered and will be featured in a future *National Geographic*.

One word of caution: Cars and bicycles claim priority, leaving pedestrians to fend for themselves crossing China’s streets. Also, China is not designed for the physically challenged as there is little handicapped access anywhere.

China has much to offer. Call Interlachen now to begin your exploration of this must see country. 🌀

China Fun Facts

- All of China is the same time zone.
- Though the Chinese have various spoken languages, there is only one written language in China.
- The Yangtze River flooding forced 1.3 million people to relocate to other housing.
- Kiwi originated as Chinese gooseberry.
- The government owns the land in China but leases it to farmers for 50 years. It can be left to their children in their estate. Farmers must produce a certain amount of an item for the government but then can grow the rest as they choose.
- There are 300,000 millionaires in China and 1,000,000 billionaires. To get rich is glorious!
- In Beijing it can take about 3 hours in normal traffic to go from North to South.
- The longest street in Beijing is about 27 miles long.

Q. How long is my passport valid?

A. Passports are valid for 10 years for travelers 16 years old or older. Some countries require that your passport be valid for 3-6 months beyond the dates of your trip. If your passport expires before the required validity, you must apply for a new one. Even though a country might accept a notarized birth certificate, a valid U.S. passport is the best documentation available and unquestionably proves your U.S. citizenship. For first-time passport applications, you must apply in person. Numerous locations are available in the Twin Cities to do this. You may renew your passport by mail.

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

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Spain. Could it be the New Italy?

With the revolution in wine making and cooking, the *New York Times and Wine Spectator* have called Spain "the new France." With incredible beauty, handsome and charming people and traditions, and wonderful Roman ruins, Interlachen Travel President Ann Gray prefers to call it "the new Italy."

Ann spent part of May in the Extremadura (Cacares and Merida) and Andalusia (Seville, Cordoba and Ronda) areas of Spain enjoying the advantage of custom travel. Cacares has a beautiful old quarter, enclosed by Moorish town walls with huge watch towers. Merida has outstanding Roman monuments as well as the Museum of Roman Art. Seville is the capital of Andalusia and is known for its beauty and romantic aura including orange trees, patios filled with flowers, and architectural monuments. Cordoba is home to the world-famous mosque, Mezquita, and the narrow

streets and whitewashed houses. The small mountain town of Ronda is near the Guadelevín River, where houses are set on the cliffs of a huge gorge.

Ann found once again that lasting value comes from matching guides to one's interests and tastes, offering a stimulating and enjoyable journey to meet the sophisticated travelers' expectations. The guides offered a glimpse of Spain's history, politics and cuisine another as well as encounters with wine makers, chefs, flamenco teachers, dancers and guitar makers to provide a close up look at another side of the country's culture.

"Spain exudes a feeling of life and energy. The country is taking care of its old things but it's not stuck there," says Ann.

Call Ann Gray, a tourist board certified Spain Specialist, to plan a custom adventure for you.

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