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A Publication of

Bringing You Informed, Personalized and Objective Travel Knowledge

WAYFARER TRAVEL TAKES THE STRESS OUT OF TRAVEL PLANNING



Ice trekking in New Zealand.



Sharing a pomegranate on a Kibbutz in the Golan, Israel near the Syrian border.



OWNER'S COLUMN

In this new year, you and your family and friends may be thinking about possibilities for your next vacation. It is almost too easy to search the Internet. How will you know that all the information you need is accessible, and how do you know the information you find is reliable and reputable? Even more important, is this the right destination or experience for you? The world is changing rapidly, and so are your travel options. A good travel counselor is your personal, knowledgeable guide to the best experiences and values.

YOUR TIME IS VALUABLE

You should be excited about your next trip, not stressed trying to plan it! Reading and compiling options for flights, schedules, tours, and hotels can be time consuming. You can check reviews, but do you know if they are accurate? What if that great hotel you find is fully booked for your travel dates? Travel agents are part of a network of travel companies,

hotels and cruise lines. They've done the research and background checks so you can relax. Travel agents have powerful research tools and booking engines to combine with professional expertise. Let your agent do the hard work for you!

GAIN THE INSIDER'S EDGE

Asking Google a question is easy, but how do you make the right choice for you with all those websites clamoring for your attention? You shouldn't have to wonder! Our well-traveled agents have the first hand experience to craft the perfect itinerary: flights, lodging, touring, and even knowing the best restaurants in the area.

Experience building is our profession. We open a world of possibilities you might never know were available. Our agents start by getting to know you, your interests and preferences. We know reliable and credible companies around the world that help us plan unique experiences and get VIP treatment. That allows us to find the best match every time.

OUR WELL-TRAVELED AGENTS HAVE THE FIRST HAND EXPERIENCE TO CRAFT THE PERFECT ITINERARY: FLIGHTS, LODGING, TOURING, AND EVEN KNOWING THE BEST RESTAURANTS IN THE AREA.

Continued on page 4



Specialty arranged tour in Kyoto, Japan.

TRAVEL TRENDS



CRYSTAL RIVER CRUISES DEBUTS ITS NEWEST SHIP, CRYSTAL MAHLER

Crystal River Cruises officially welcomed its newest ship, the Rhine Class *Crystal Mahler*, with a christening ceremony held September 2017 in Germany.

The 106-guest, all-suite, all-balcony *Crystal Mahler* sails on seven-, 11- and 16-day itineraries along the Rhine and Danube rivers, calling in medieval towns and modern hubs in Austria, Germany, Slovakia, Netherlands and Hungary.

Crystal River Cruises, which claims the highest crew-to-guest ratio in the cruise industry, was recently named “World’s Best River Cruise Line” by the readers of *Travel + Leisure*.



UNIVERSAL ORLANDO RESORT’S NEWEST ATTRACTION: FAST & FURIOUS – Supercharged

Universal Orlando has just released a behind-the-scenes look at its newest attraction: *Fast & Furious – Supercharged*, scheduled to open in spring 2018.

Live the excitement of the hit film “Fast & Furious” in a high-octane ride experience with the film’s popular *Fast* characters – Dom (Vin Diesel), Letty (Michelle Rodriguez), Hobbs (Dwayne Johnson), and many others. Inside the attraction, park-goers will soon become immersed in the ultimate *Fast & Furious* experience. Hit songs from the films’ soundtracks fill the rooms as memorable scenes from the series play.

Fast & Furious – Supercharged will also be the only place where you can see, and even take photos with, 15 supercharged *Fast & Furious* cars. Each vehicle has been crafted by Dennis McCarthy, the man behind the cars for the “Fast & Furious” films.



MSC CRUISES’ MEGA SHIP MSC MERAVIGLIA TO SAIL FROM NEW YORK

New York City will soon be home to one of the world’s biggest cruise ships, MSC Cruises’ *MSC Meraviglia*. MSC Cruises, a Europe-based cruise line, announced in December that the mega-smart ship *MS Meraviglia* will kick off its inaugural season in North America with a maiden call in New York on October 7, 2019, offering three sailings departing from New York before heading to Miami for an inaugural season of Caribbean cruises.

The first of the two 10-night sailings from The Big Apple will take guests to Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island, Canada, with an overnight stay in Quebec City, Quebec. The second 10-night sailing from the city will explore Canada, as well as the New England region. A 13-night sailing departing from New York on October 28, 2019 will feature several Caribbean ports of call, completing the journey in Miami.



COLLETTE INTRODUCES ‘THE NORTHERN LIGHTS OF FINLAND’ TOUR

Collette, a global tour operator, has announced an extensive list of 21 new tours for its 2018-2019 season, including a unique eight-day trip, “The Northern Lights of Finland.”

The new tour is highlighted by a three-night stay in Lapland in northern Finland. Guests will enjoy a variety of experiences, including a search for the Aurora Borealis (Northern Lights), an overnight stay in a wilderness glass igloo, and a reindeer safari with a local farmer. There will even be opportunity to lead a dog sled team in a Finnish sleigh. In Helsinki, an introduction to the city’s culture and history will be provided by a local expert.

Tours will be offered from October 2 to December 8, 2018.



CELEBRATE SPRING AT THE EPCOT INTERNATIONAL FLOWER & GARDEN FESTIVAL

In celebration of its 35th anniversary, Epcot will host the 25th International Flower & Garden Festival at *Walt Disney World*® Resort this spring. This 90-day event featuring Disney-style gardens and topiaries will begin February 28 and continue through May 28, 2018.

Visitors of all ages are sure to enjoy the extravagant display of colorful blossoms, Disney topiary stars, interactive play gardens, fine cuisine served at 15 outdoor kitchens, and live musical acts performed during the Garden Rocks Concert Series.

FAMILY ADVENTURES WITH ALL THE RIGHT LUXURIES

Luxury travel company Abercrombie & Kent, known for its unique, exploratory itineraries, will host 13 small-group Luxury Family Journeys in 2018.

Tour destinations include Switzerland, Spain, Italy, London and Paris. Each journey features exclusive, locally inspired moments and unexpected amenities designed just for A&K guests, including new Family Foodie Experiences offering an authentic taste of local cuisine.

A & K also offers a family Galapagos Islands yacht adventure aboard the *La Pinta*. On twice-daily excursions that are limited to just 12 people, guests will have the opportunity to explore alongside naturalist guides and can choose from many activities, including kayaking, snorkeling and light trekking.

TRAVELING TIMES
MAKING IDEAS TRAVEL EASIER
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BALTIC SEA VOYAGES OF DISCOVERY



Stockholm, Sweden



Copenhagen, Denmark

By Judie Karhan

Sailing in the paths of vikings, czars and kings, travelers venturing through the Baltic Sea to Europe's northernmost cities discover a fascinating world of contrasts. At the northeastern tip of the Baltic Sea, St. Petersburg, with its grand palaces, gilded domes and statues, reflects the czarist opulence of the east. While in Copenhagen, whimsical amusements, as seen in famous Tivoli Gardens, speak of the lighthearted spiritedness of Western civilization.

Copenhagen, Denmark, which lies at the southwestern arm of the Baltic Sea, welcomes voyagers entering its harbor with such delightful scenes as the royal Amalienborg Palace and half-timbered houses, which line Christianshavn Canal. At the harbor's edge, staring out to sea for her beloved sailor's return, sits the bronze statue of The Little Mermaid, a timeless Hans Christian Andersen fairy-tale figure, which has become a symbol of Copenhagen.

Helsinki, Finland

Venturing into the city and beyond, it becomes clear what inspired Hans Christian Andersen to write his fairy tales. With its quaint cottages, tiny hamlets, castles and ancient forts, its sea-wrapped landscape lush and lovely, Denmark is truly a fabled land. While historically and architecturally impressive, the capital of Copenhagen is also a modern, fashionable city. Indeed, it is considered to be one of the liveliest in all of Europe.

North of Copenhagen, the Swedish capital of Stockholm lies scattered over an archipelago of 14 islands, linked by bridges and canals. Once the center of Europe's largest empire, Stockholm is

today a place of living history. This lovely, bustling metropolis is filled with contrasting charms and delightful memories of the Old World entwined with the new, cast among verdant park lands.

To the northeast of Stockholm lies Helsinki, Finland's capital and cultural center. Known also by its moniker "Daughter of the Baltic," Helsinki indeed seems born of the sea. Founded in the 1500s and built on a peninsula surrounded by hundreds of islands, this city provides a stunning example of modern

architecture and design. Present-day Helsinki reflects the genius of architect Carl Ludvig Engels, whose neo-classical buildings stand proudly next to contemporary designs.

Tallinn, Estonia, situated to the south of Helsinki, is an especially charming port of call to visit. This is Europe's oldest capital, dating back to the 12th century, and it is also one of its best preserved. There's much to explore in Tallinn, whose Old Town

is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site. Atop Toompea, "Cathedral Hill," sits an impressive castle and the 19th-century Alexander Nevsky cathedral. In the lower section, stroll through streets lined with ancient churches and merchants' homes. Also of interest is the Seaplane Harbour of Estonian Maritime Museum and the Estonian Open Air Museum.



Sailing toward the far eastern side of the Gulf of Finland, voyagers disembarking in St. Petersburg, Russia discover a historically fascinating city. Founded in 1702 by Peter the Great, St. Petersburg was the capital of imperial Russia for nearly 200 years, though its name has been changed over time (Petrograd/Leningrad). Visitors to this Russian cultural center marvel at the architectural splendor of its cathedrals, churches and palaces, including the czar's Winter and Summer Palaces.

In St. Petersburg, museums often become the focal point of interest. One of the most notable, the Hermitage Museum, contains a stunning collection of three million paintings, sculptures and artifacts representing nearly every period in art from the late Stone Age to contemporary time.

Culturally and historically remarkable – even mysterious in some ways – the cities that have risen along the shores of the Baltic Sea, though not vastly distant from each other, have developed quite differently. This is perhaps what makes the journey through this sea, a briny crossroad between east and west, so intriguing.



Copenhagen, Denmark



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No-Stress Travel Planning

Continued from page 1

COORDINATING FRIENDS' TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS BECOMES A BREEZE

Traveling with friends, arranging travel for a group, or planning a destination wedding can be complicated. Travel agents are experts in coordinating every detail, from air and hotel reservations to activities and events.

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Travel agents know about promotions offered exclusively by our travel partners that maximize the value you receive from your vacation budget. Your agent will pinpoint the right deal for you from offers not available anywhere else.

EXPECTING THE UNEXPECTED

Our world can be busy and hectic, and things don't always go as planned. Weather

delays, flight cancellations or health emergencies can threaten to derail even the most carefully planned trip. When things go wrong, a travel agent can provide assistance, easing the burden in a stressful situation. In an emergency, local contacts can often be provided. It's great to know you aren't alone.

PERSONAL SERVICE FROM PLANNING TO HOMECOMING

When it is time to plan your next vacation, trust your travel professional to recommend destinations and special experiences you might not find on your own. Your agent will handle all the details, provide support while you are traveling, and follow up when you return. You can rely on us for peace of mind, and to help you create an extraordinary vacation with memories that will last a lifetime.

*Happy Traveling,
Laura*



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GREEK ISLE EXPLORATION

By Dorothy Crouch

Lying between the Ionian and Aegean Seas, Greece expands from borders on the Balkan Peninsula out into the water, dotting the region with more than 1,400 islands. Greece boasts beauty and a fascinating human history that links to 12,000 B.C. Tracing the region's history during a journey to Greece naturally becomes part of a visitor's adventure, as ubiquitous ancient ruins, such as the Acropolis and Parthenon appear throughout the country.

SEEING THE CYCLADES

Surrounding Delos, a sacred Greek island, the Cyclades boast everything a traveler envisions when thinking about Greece. Mykonos is home to hills filled with whitewashed buildings and marble streets, while fishing boats fill the surrounding sea. According to legend, the island is the namesake of Apollo's grandson.

Walking through the town of Chora, visit Panayia Paraportiani, a group of churches that were completed over the course of approximately 200 years, during the 15th through 17th centuries. The expansive white buildings are set atop a hill, making the location ideal for watching the setting sun. Also impressive around the time of sunset is Kato Myli, the familiar site that features six windmills, each of which are covered with thatched roofs. The view from Kato Myli affords views of the town below, with its winding streets and lively atmosphere.

Mykonos' dining options are plentiful, as there are restaurants that offer many types of international cuisine, yet many travelers seek authentic dining experiences during journeys to Greece. Katerina's is a waterfront restaurant that serves traditional fare, such as moussaka, feta, taramosalata, tzatziki and seafood. Find a table on the balcony to watch the sunset for an extraordinary dinner experience.

DIVERSE RHODES' CULTURE

On the island of Dodcanese, Rhodes sits as a capital that is uniquely Greek, yet also a blend of the many cultures that have been brought to the region. Whether its roots from 407 B.C., the influences of 16th-century

Ottoman-Turkish and 20th-century Italian invasions, the city of Rhodes has been influenced by many cultures. It wasn't until 1948 that Rhodes was officially recognized as part of Greece. Today, the city is a UNESCO World Heritage site, a title that it has held for nearly 30 years.

While the Old Town reveals an array of the influences from the city's invaders, the sense of history and glimpses into specific time periods are part of the city's charm. The medieval influences are apparent in the architecture that includes bastions, minarets, alleys and soaring walls. Touring the city's history is seamless, making a journey through different centuries extremely easy. The Street of the Knights leads travelers among medieval inns and churches. In the Turkish District, visitors will find the Mustafa Pasha Mosque and can also indulge in the baths at Yeni Hamam. While the region has been home to many visiting cultures, the city's roots in Greek influences remain throughout the area. Find the Temple of Venus ruins, whose soaring arches and carefully placed stones have stood since the structures beginnings in the 3rd century BC.



Santorini

Santorini's main island, Thira, was settled in 9 B.C. Many of its ruins and artifacts date back to the Hellenic period. The Sanctuary of Apollo Karneios traces its roots to the 6th century B.C. This site, a testament to the faith and craftsmanship of the island's inhabitants, includes a temple, cistern, and smaller building, which locals believe might have been a sacristy.

Depending on personal taste, the different seasons afford a variety of Greek-Isle experiences. Travelers who revel in coastal summer fun in the sun should wait until the months between June and August, but, beware, as tourists

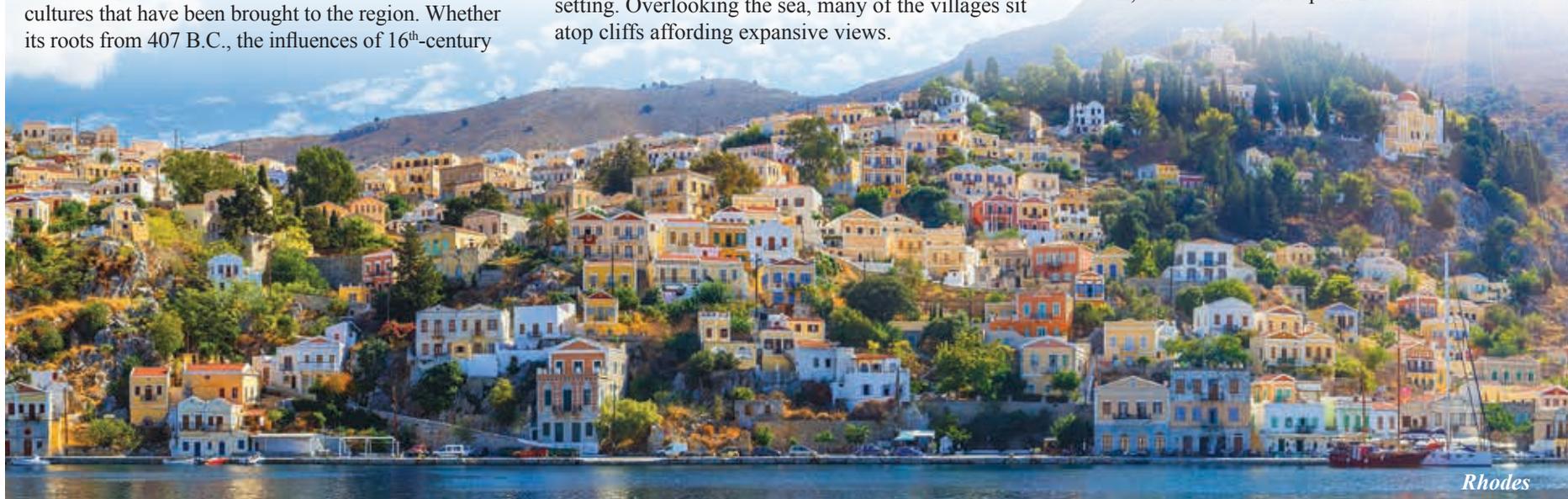
from around the world descend upon the area in search of the perfect Greek holiday. During the spring, the region will experience more temperate weather and fewer tourists, which affords a calmer, more relaxing atmosphere. While many cruise operators, such as Celebrity and Viking, provide the luxury of sailing, with the convenience of island hopping, travelers who prefer alternate options will enjoy traveling with Trafalgar or Tauck, which afford more personalized service.



Mykonos

SANTORINI'S NATURAL HISTORY

The archipelago of Santorini comprises Thira, Thirassia, Aspronissi, Palea and Nea Kaméni – islands that are still part of the active Hellenic Volcanic Arc. Despite the violent volcanic activity that created Santorini, the destination is renowned for its romantic setting. Overlooking the sea, many of the villages sit atop cliffs affording expansive views.



Rhodes

CELEBRATING NOLA'S 300-YEAR HISTORY

By Dorothy Crouch

Often thought of as the epicenter of Mardi Gras indulgence, New Orleans offers much more than beads, brews and debauchery. While the city is a magnet for history enthusiasts, 2018 marks 300 years since New Orleans' founding by Jean-Baptiste Le Moyne, Sieur de Bienville in 1718. Though the city has experienced its share of growth and rebirth over the last 300 years, the excitement found in this town is bigger and easier to find than ever, and with more to celebrate this year, New Orleans — or NOLA — is sure to sate the travel palate of all visitors.

As the oldest neighborhood in New Orleans, the French Quarter serves as the heart of the city's cultural and historic scene. Also known as *Vieux Carré*, the French Quarter is home to the city's most unique shopping, popular dining, and impressive architecture. While strolling through this neighborhood, visitors can admire the famous building designs that blend Spanish, French, Creole and American styles.

Once a center of trade for Native Americans, the French Market has served as a place of commerce



along the Mississippi River since 1791. Now an open-air market, it spans five blocks, from the famed Café du Monde to Esplanade Avenue. In addition to the Farmer's Market Pavilion and Dutch Alley, visitors will find clothing, local art and crafts.

Within the French Quarter, lies one of New Orleans' most infamous attractions — Bourbon Street. Though this strip has been known to

be the site of wild behavior,

there is more to Bourbon Street's bars than Mardi Gras. The Royal Sonesta New Orleans is housed on a property whose existence can be traced back to 1721. Inside the hotel that opened in 1969, visitors will find an extensive art collection and dining options — including Restaurant R'evolution, and Le Booze to enjoy a well-deserved

nightcap. Another NOLA staple, Lafitte's Blacksmith Shop Bar traces its roots back to the 1720s, enjoying the title of



French Quarter

“...the oldest structure to be used as a bar in the United States.” At the Old Absinthe House, visitors will find a 200-year-old bar that survived war and Prohibition, allowing guests to enjoy its signature cocktail, The Absinthe House Frappe, which dates back to 1874.

Though New Orleans' reputation is based in revelry, this notoriety has grown from a strong history that has provided stories of resilience and tales of local life that live on through the city's culture. Look beyond the mystique of NOLA in 2018, as the region's history comes to life during its 300th anniversary.

WARMING UP WITH WINTER IN MIAMI

By Dorothy Crouch

As temperatures dip toward freezing temperatures, warm-weather destinations become more enticing for anyone who must bundle up in winter layers. Miami's tropical setting and cosmopolitan atmosphere set the perfect mood that allows visitors to experience local culture, such as Little Havana, the Design District, Ocean Drive's vibrant nightlife and Art Deco architecture. Choosing a Miami journey during the winter is rewarded with lovely, cooler temperatures without lazy summer heat and humidity.



Miami Beach

Set along the oceanfront strip of Collins Avenue on Miami Beach, The Confidante Miami Beach provides guests with the respite, comfort, and simple luxury sought by travelers to the city. This pet-friendly Unbound Collection by Hyatt property boasts three restaurants — Bird & Bone, TALDE Miami Beach, Nina's House; two heated pools with cabanas and poolside dining

at The Backyard; a fitness center with V Art of Wellness classes; and a secluded garden and direct beach access.

Inside The Confidante Miami Beach, guests choose from 363 rooms, 16 of which are suites. Blending accommodations that are designed with a nod to Miami's ocean metropolis culture, yet unpretentious and warm, rooms at The



Confidante Miami Beach provide bright, inviting comfort. Following a relaxing rainfall shower, guests unwind on SFERRA bedding while wrapped in Frette terrycloth bathrobes and slippers after a busy day — and recharge before heading out for a fantastic night.

Its spa and salon occupies the hotel's rooftop space in an open-air setting, which allows guests to fully relax while they are pampered by trained stylists, massage therapists and aestheticians, whose goal is to create a

completely blissful environment. After entering Warren-Tricomi Studio, or one of the private air-conditioned cabanas in The Spa, guests will enjoy services from a comprehensive menu.

While Miami's calendar always includes extraordinary events, some months are much busier as enthusiasts from around the world descend upon the area for productions such as spring's Winter Music Conference, Ultra Music Festival and Miami Music Week. Finding a warm, tropical retreat during the winter doesn't require heading down to the Caribbean, or Mexico. The ultimate luxurious indulgence can be found in Miami's culture, community, and ideal climate.

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