

NEWS FROM THE FIELD

Rewarding Journeys & Journeys With Heart

What we've been doing and what's new!

Our first-ever invitational trip to Vietnam and Cambodia hosted by Travel Concepts' partners, Cindy Horton and Ellie Hender, was a memorable experience for all participants. The weather was kind (not too hot!), the trip was extraordinary and the group of 54 travellers was intrepid, full of fun but most of all generous!

We travelled through a difficult part of the world, to countries with tragic histories. Some of you may have seen an article in the North Shore News about how our group built 22 wells in a Cambodian village near Siem Reap and supported a high school on the Mekong River by buying much needed white boards for the classrooms and completing a solar battery system for the school computers. It was indeed a generous group!



Travellers today often want to make a difference while they travel and to that end, we have a new associate program called **Journeys With Heart** led by Jenny Karmali, the newest addition to the Travel Concepts team. Journeys With Heart is a non-profit organization based in Vancouver that creates unique opportunities to “travel with a purpose.” (See page 3)

TRAVEL TECH TIPS

Best Travel Apps

For mobile devices & tablets!

XE Currency – Easily convert currency from over 180 countries into Canadian dollars at live rates. It is slick and easy to use.

TripIt – Organizes all your electronic confirmations, rail, car and hotel reservations.

Localeats – Dining suggestions based on your preferences in over 50 international cities as well as across the US.

TripAdvisor City Guides – Get instant city attractions, restaurants & reviews.

SUMMER FUN

Salsa by the Sea

Travel Concepts is pleased to sponsor a fun event every Thursday night through July and August – weather permitting, of course! Between 6:30 and 8:30 pm, the Ferry Building Gallery presents Salsa by the Sea led by Doris Angela Maria of LatinDanceForYou.com.

If you love the music, rhythms and dance of Latin America, bring your water bottle, a \$6 drop in fee and join us outside the Ferry Building at 1414 Argyle Ave., WVan. Whether you are single or with a friend, all are welcome!

Digital or Paper?

We'd like to know!

Going Green...

Some of you have been receiving a printed copy of this newsletter 3 times a year for nearly 15 years. Is it time for a change? As you can see, we think so and have adopted a new design.

If you would you prefer to receive future issues of Currents by email instead of paper, let us know: currents@trvlconcepts.com
604-926-8511

INTRODUCING...



Jenny Karmali

Team leader for Journeys With Heart & Women With Wings

Jenny brings us a wealth of travel & group design experience, so we are excited to have her join us! Jenny has travelled extensively, but most recently to India, Turkey, Morocco, Spain, Malaysia, Egypt and on a Danube River Cruise.

Jenny is the founder of Journeys With Heart – an organization which combines philanthropy and the opportunity to travel with purpose. Her tours feature local celebrities such as John Bishop, Jane Mortifee, Vicky Gabereau and now Fanny Kiefer as tour hosts. The next Journey With Heart is headed to Chicago!

(see insert)



RAVE REVIEWS!

River Cruising on the Mekong

Join David and Linda Powell for the voyage of a lifetime -
JANUARY 19 to FEBRUARY 2, 2014

If you missed out on travelling to Indo-China with Travel Concepts in 2013, all is not lost! David and Linda Powell will escort a departure early next year on Uniworld's *Timeless Treasures of Vietnam, Cambodia & the Mekong*. The program features 7 days staying in hotels in Hanoi, Siem Reap & Ho Chi Minh City as well as a 7 night cruise on the Mekong River. The land trip is priced from \$5,299 US per person and includes excellent



hotels, all your sightseeing and most meals. January is a great time to go as the trip falls over Vietnam's New Year celebrations, so please call David for details.

Truly All-Inclusive Cruising

Our clients rave about Regent Seven Seas fully all-inclusive pricing.

Sticker shock may originally occur, but in fact, when compared with the price of veranda or mini-suite accommodation on popular cruise lines like Holland America or Princess in Europe, Regent offers extraordinary value. Consider that *everything* is included – your airfare, transfers, an overnight pre-cruise hotel package, unlimited shore excursions and drinks on board, as well as prepaid gratuities. Please ask us for a comparison sheet – you'll be pleasantly surprised.

A 7-night Baltic cruise from Stockholm to Copenhagen in June, 2014 starts at \$6,999 US each in a balcony suite.

Share the Experience

Crystal Cruise aficionados are never disappointed when they return to *Symphony* or *Serenity*. With Crystal's "Share The Experience" referral program, both returning guests and their first-timer friends can benefit from shipboard credit offers of up to \$400 US per cabin on selected sailings. So why not talk to some friends and consider Crystal's *New England Classic* sailing from Montreal to New York October 23 to Nov. 2, 2013.

The 10-day itinerary starts with an overnight on board in Montreal and takes in Quebec City, Saguenay, Halifax, Bar Harbor, Boston and Newport en route to New York City. From \$4,160 US per person.

SOMETHING NEW!

Shore Trips' Shared Tours

If you are seeking an alternative to big bus excursions offered by your cruise line in Europe, ask about Shore Trips. They offer both private and now "Select Shared Tours" – economical, semi-private trips in some of Europe's world class cities. You'll travel in a comfortable van with no more than 7 other passengers and avoid waiting in long lines.

IDEAS...IDEAS...



Commemorate the 70th Anniversary of D-Day with a **Uniworld River Cruise** in the Normandy region. Sail round trip on *River Baroness* from Paris for 8 days. The cruises depart every week from March to October 2014 and are priced from \$3,299 US including all your shore excursions, meals, beverages on board and gratuities. Please ask us about early booking savings.

For something different, why not look at **Oceania's** 12-day Black Sea Treasures sailing from Athens to Istanbul May 29 – June 10, 2014? Travel Concepts is offering prepaid gratuities and an on board spending credit of \$100 US per cabin on this sailing that visits 4 Turkish ports including Ephesus as well as Sochi (Russia), Yalta, Sevastopol, Odessa (Ukraine), Constanta (Romania) & Nessebur (Bulgaria). Prices start at \$4,299 US + \$294 tax per person sharing including economy air from Vancouver.

SOMETHING NEW FOR 2014

Cruising in Canada

We are very excited about a new cruise line that will start service next July. **Pearl Seas Cruises** will launch their first ship, *Pearl Mist*, and she is scheduled to cruise the St. Lawrence Seaway & Thousand Islands, the Great Lakes & Georgia Bay throughout the summer. All staterooms have private balconies and range in size from 302 to 580 sq. ft. *Pearl Mist* will accommodate just 210 guests and even offers cabins designed for solo travellers. Prices for a 7-night cruise start at \$3,955 US per person sharing twin and \$5,795 US single.



LADIES ONLY!

Women With Wings

is returning to **India** in 2014 with our own Pamela Such in the lead. Trip dates are October 24 to November 9, 2014 and the highlight will certainly be the joyous Camel Fair in Pushkar. Of course the itinerary will also include Delhi, Agra and the Taj Mahal, Jaipur, Udaipur and the funeral ghats of Varanasi – all the northern India must-sees. Stay in 4-star hotels with many meals included along with game drives in Ranthambore National Park, a cooking class, a sunset boat cruise past the lake palaces of Udaipur and yoga with a Master in Pushkar. *The trip is priced at \$4,499 US per person sharing.*

By popular demand

photographer and intrepid traveler, Colleen Wood will once again lead a small group of women on an adventure through **Vietnam and Cambodia** in February 2014. The trip features magical destinations in Vietnam including Halong Bay by sailing junk, Hanoi's old town, Hoi An and Ho Chi Minh City before flying on to Siem Reap where the group will spend 3 nights exploring Angkor Wat and environs. This year, an added option will be available for those who wish to visit the hill tribes of Sapa in Northern Vietnam. *The main trip is priced at \$3,999 US per person sharing a twin with an add-on of \$850 for the Sapa extension, staying at the lovely Victoria Sapa Hotel.*

Other exciting WWW departures

Our 2014 tour calendar includes Chicago (again!), English Gardens, Peru & The Galapagos and Hiking on the Amalfi Coast. Please watch our website or contact Pamela or Jenny for details.

A FLAVOUR OF SPAIN

Art Workshops in Andalucia

With Lari & Mike Powell

 May will once again be a busy month for artists and painters in Spain.

Workshops are currently planned with popular instructors Alfonso Tejada, Rick McDiarmid and Leslie Redhead and Leona Brown. These 8-night programs feature local excursions hosted by Lari and Mike's amazing culinary talents at meals and cooking demonstrations.

Your level of expertise as a painter is not a consideration here, rather a keen appetite to learn and discover the delights of Andalucia. *Workshops are priced at \$3,390 Cnd. per person sharing twin.*

JOURNEYS WITH HEART

Our 2014 line-up

Details are still being worked out but we are excited about the philanthropic trips we will be offering next year. Barbara-Jo Macintosh of Books To Cooks fame will host a small group touring San Francisco in the Spring. In both April and September, John Bishop, will lead trips to Santa Barbara, CA and Ireland respectively. We know that lots of our clients love to travel with John, so call Jenny today to put your name on the list to receive details as they come available.

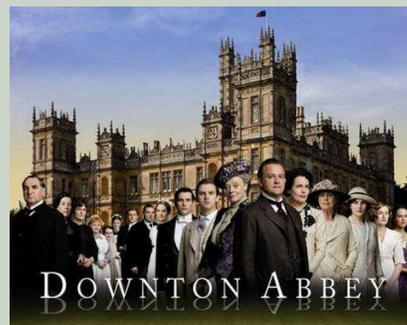
Other planned Journeys With Heart include a trip for Zumba lovers to Cuba in May and for adventure-seekers to Zimbabwe, Botswana and Namibia in October.

FOR EVERYONE

Private tours for couples or singles

We have some very exciting ideas for 2014! Join Lucila Planas on an extraordinary wine and culinary adventure through Chile and Argentina in March 2014. Elegant, boutique hotels, winery tours, cooking classes and our lovely host make this trip very special. Pam Rose has details.

In May, Ruth Payne of the Ferry Building Gallery, will once again host a group of art lovers in Santa Fe. Our 2013 trip sold out in just a few days, so call us today to register.



Ellie & Byron Hender will host a trip to Downton Abbey and beyond, July 19 – August 2, 2014. Spend 4 nights in London before boarding a 10-night Oceania cruise to circumnavigate Britain. The London package is priced at \$1,699 and the cruise from \$4,299 US per person including airfare. Call or email Ellie for details.

Julia Guest & Ron Rule, Program Director for the UBC Certificate of Garden Design, will explore the Gardens of Provence in September 2014. Please contact Julia for a detailed itinerary.



CONNECTIONS

Small Group Journeys Redefined...

Known for being the ultimate in luxury travel, Abercrombie & Kent have introduced a new approach to group travel. If you're an explorer at heart but refuse to skimp on inspiration and enrichment, then Connections is your chance to discover the world in the company of local experts at unbeatable prices.

Trips are limited to between 24 and 28 guests and are offered around the world. No matter what is at the head of your "bucket list" Abercrombie & Kent can take you there. *Here are some options:*

Morocco: Kasbahs & Medinas

8 days from \$3,395*

East Africa: Kenya & Tanzania

11 days from \$6,895*

Peru: Land of the Incas

9 days from \$4,195*

Croatia: Jewel of the coast

9 days from \$3,675*

Italy: South to North

13 days from \$7,270*

* Prices shown are in US dollars and are per person based on double occupancy.

What our Clients are saying!



Robert P., West Van

"I cannot think of any more that you could have done to ensure we had a wonderful travel experience."



I N F I N I T Y

Travel Concepts

1716 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, BC V7V 1J3
604 926 8511 Toll-Free 1 800 661 7176
info@trvlconcepts.com www.trvlconcepts.com
www.womenwithwings.ca www.journeyswithheart.com

RECOMMENDATIONS

World Class Walking Holidays

A Cultural and Active Vacation Experience

Walking holidays are extremely popular these days and no one provides better value or expert planning than our British partner, HF Holidays. Their list of Worldwide Journeys continues to lengthen with trips offered in Australia, Africa, Asia, the Caribbean and South/Central America as well as Europe, the Middle East and North America.

A recent addition to the HF Holidays line-up is their Bhutan Adventure – a 13 night, culturally weighted sightseeing holiday with moderate walks in the Himalayan foothills. Trips depart in the



months of March & October/November. In 2013 there were only 4 departures planned and they filled very quickly, so we encourage you to let us know if you are interested and we will watch for 2014 dates. *The trip is currently priced from \$2,550 GBP per person sharing twin including all meals.*

Live Like a Local

Shared Villa Vacations in Europe

G Adventures' *Local Living* options in Europe allow singles or couples to share a rental property at a very low cost while experiencing the local food, hikes and village life. You'll stay in a charming, traditional house, share the kitchen and living areas with other like-minded travellers and benefit from a leader who can recommend local favourites. *Prices start from \$999 per week in France, \$1,649 on Italy's Amalfi Coast, \$1,029 in Rome, \$1,169 on Krk Island, Croatia and \$1,239 in Barcelona.* Similar opportunities exist in many other places around the world such as Morocco, Thailand, Costa Rica, Cuba, southern Iceland and Guatemala. Our specialty is putting together trips tailored to your interests & these villa stays make a nice addition after a busy biking, walking or touring holiday.

EXOTIC DESTINATIONS

The Middle Kingdom

This two-week adventure in China and Tibet will take you back in time to reconnect with ancient ways long forgotten by the modern world.

This cultural journey starts in Beijing and ends in Shanghai and features the Terracotta Warriors of Xi'an, a cruise on the Yangtze River and a 3-day stay in Lhasa. *From \$4,119 pp/twin land only.*

Experience Columbia

Shannon Hope recently left our employ to travel the world. Her blog has inspired us to take another look at in-depth trips in South America. Shannon fell in love with the cobblestone streets of historic Cartagena and the stunning beaches near Medellin. *G Adventures' 12-day Colombia Experience* trip offers an out-of-the-box adventure using comfortable hotels and transportation. *From \$2,579 each sharing twin.*