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ROYAL TOURS

# TRAVEL TALK

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## When Mother Nature Blazes Into View

As autumn approaches each year, residents of the northeastern United States turn a watchful eye toward Mother Nature, waiting for the first sign of fall in the leaves of the trees. Then almost at once, the verdant green birch, oak and spruce, maple and aspen blaze in brilliant shades of electric yellows, subtle russets and fiery crimsons.

Generally, the best time to view fall foliage in New England is the last two weeks of September and the month of October. And, although fall color is the unifying factor on any foliage tour, each state offers a unique beauty, a beauty that can be seen in person when you join any of AAA's exclusive foliage tours.

### NEW ENGLAND GRAND AUTUMN

This 12-day tour of the northeast combines the scenic highlights of New York, Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts.

More often than not, people think first of the teeming streets of Manhattan when they think of New York, rather than the thousands of square miles of countryside that shows its most beautiful face during the fall. And certainly one of the best places to view fall foliage in New York is Lake Placid.

In nearby Vermont, the fall season is especially spectacular. The Green Mountains, part of the Appalachian system, runs the length of the state, and the forest-covered slopes provide the canvas for vibrant splashes of autumn colors. Vermont also offers a plethora of visual pleasures such as covered bridges, dairy

farms and delightful towns and museums. In the Green Mountains' Shelburne Museum, 37 separate exhibition buildings house a priceless collection of 18th and 19th century folk art, artifacts and architecture.

Neighboring New Hampshire boasts some of the most photographed and painted scenes in New England, including the famed Appalachian Trail which wends its way past covered bridges through the White Mountain "notches" to the heart of New Hampshire's lake country. At the very middle of the White Mountains lies the scenic wonder of Franconia Notch, an eight-mile mountain pass which extends from the Flume at the south end of the park to Echo Lake in the north.

Farther east, the Northeast's and the White Mountains' highest peak, Mount Washington, soars toward the skies. One of the most rewarding things to do at Mount Washington is to take a coal-fired, steam-powered cog railway to the summit where you'll gaze down upon New Hampshire's colorful cloak of leaves.

Farther south, Massachusetts offers a strong mixture of history with the stunning beauty of autumn's changing colors. Attractions in this state include the Salem Witch Museum, the Old North Church where Paul Revere got the signal to start



Massachusetts Division of Tourism

his famous ride and Beacon and Bunker hills.

### AUTUMN ALONG THE HUDSON

On this seven-day tour, we'll view another facet of New York's fall foliage along the Hudson River. Slicing through the hills of Pennsylvania, we'll cross into New York and visit West Point and its renowned museum before arriving in the Hudson River Valley.

Discovered by Henry Hudson in 1609 when he was searching for a shortcut to China, the Hudson River Valley presents visitors in search of vivid fall colors with a tantalizing blend of the past and present in a beautiful setting. The scenic Hudson River Valley was not only the home of some of the best-loved children's story characters like Rip Van Winkle and Ichabod Crane, but the home of George Washington and Franklin and Eleanor Roosevelt.

### GREAT LAKES AUTUMN

Certainly most travelers associate fall foliage tours with the New England area, but this 12-day Royal Tour winds through Michigan's Upper Peninsula and Wisconsin's Apostle Islands for intimate views of resplendent fall colors along the south shore of Lake Superior and blazes through the evergreens of the Ottawa National Forest and Porcupine Mountains.

One of the more memorable sights in Michigan is Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lake Shore. The large, shifting dunes which rise 480 feet above the lake contain chunks of beached trees and an enormous quantity of rock. Along Lake Superior's south shores on the Upper Peninsula are countless views of some of the most breathtaking fall foliage in North America, New England notwithstanding.

One of Lake Superior's favorite destinations is Madeline Island, easily reached via a short ferry ride, where fascinating relics of the past are displayed in a museum housed in several log buildings slung along the island, and quaint shops beckon visitors with unique souvenirs.

Turning southward toward Milwaukee, our path leads us to Green Bay, gateway to Door County Peninsula where the waters of Green Bay and Lake Michigan have etched the shoreline into caves, arches and cliffs overlooked by picturesque towns.

Viewing fall foliage is a popular seasonal event, so travelers who want to witness Mother Nature's splendid fall show should make their reservations *now*. ★

## It's Pure Chemistry

Fall transforms the verdant green display of birch trees, oak and spruce, maples and aspens into a rainbow of golden and red hues through a complex biochemical process.

The seemingly simple process of photosynthesis begins when a leaf's chlorophyll cells transform solar energy into essential food for a tree.

As temperatures drop and days short-

en the chlorophyll receives less sunlight, which decreases the amount of food available and signals the tree to enter its dormant stage. Subsequently, the tree seals the connection between the wood and leaf stem, blocking the passage of food and rendering the chlorophyll cells useless.

As the chlorophyll cells die off, other pigments in the leaf, which have been overpowered by the chlorophyll pigments for months,

surface. These yellow to orange colors are usually carotenoids, the same pigment found in carrots, bananas and daffodils.

Fall coloring takes place virtually anywhere there are deciduous trees, those that drop their leaves at the end of the growing season. In colder regions, however, the leaf hues tend to be more crimson than in the warmer regions where the foliage turns shades of yellow. ★

# Great Fall Getaways

## Enjoy Some of Our Most Colorful Tours

Although summer is the time that most people choose to take their vacations, autumn is, in the minds of many, the *perfect* time of year to travel. The crowds have all headed back to work or school, the weather is cooler and the ambience is more conducive to a leisurely stroll through the woods or along the shore.

But the best thing about traveling in the fall is the chance to enjoy the spectacular colors worn by Mother Nature when she gets dressed for autumn. Blazing reds, glowing ambers, rich browns—conflagrations of color everywhere you turn—add an extra dimension to sightseeing journeys.

AAA Royal Tours is again offering special autumn getaways—four-day “mini-vacations” that let you sample the best that a place has to offer. And although of shorter duration, the tours are of the same high quality you have come to expect from AAA Royal Tours.

Following are a few of AAA Royal Tours’ most popular fall getaways—exciting sightseeing, excursions and events all played out against the backdrop of changing leaves.

The four-day **Michigan Foliage** tour, departing **Sept. 27**, heads to the picturesque resort of Traverse Bay. Known as the “Great Lakes Paradise,” Traverse Bay is famed for its tremendous natural beauty—and for the four-star Grand Traverse Resort, our headquarters for exploring the area. The resort boasts several restaurants, two indoor pools, tennis courts, putting green and numerous boutiques.

We’ll visit Traverse Bay to tour its famous cherry orchards, which produce almost *one-third* of the world’s cherry harvest, and Sleeping Bear Dunes National Lake Shore, where shifting dunes rise 480 feet above the lake. We’ll also stop at the Music House, a private collection of musical instruments, and browse through the area’s boutiques. A day trip to Charlevoix, a resort just north of Traverse between Lake Michigan and Lake Charlevoix, and a stop at the historic Bay View Resort, round out the itinerary.

AAA Royal Tours’ **Charleston, West Virginia Autumn Adventure** is an action-packed escape from the daily doldrums. The tour arrives early in the afternoon, and kicks off with a tour of the state capital, and completes the first night with a delicious included dinner at the Tri-State Greyhound Park where you can cheer your favorite dogs on to victory.

Next we head to Pipestem State Park, a rugged, mountainous area of broad plateaus and rushing rivers. Take plenty of film along—you’ll want to capture every view! The following day’s event is one of the tour’s highlights: A day-long sail aboard the lovely *West Virginia Belle*, a brand-new 1,200-passenger paddle wheeler sailing the Kanawa River. A visit to one of West Virginia’s famous glass factories, the Fenton Glass Company in Williams-



Michigan Travel Bureau

*The changing leaves will serve as a colorful backdrop for our exploration of Michigan's Upper Peninsula.*

town, rounds out the tour, which arrives home by 6 p.m. With 10 included meals, this tour is a real vacation value!

Our four-day **Smokies Fall Foliage Tour**, departing **Oct. 25**, offers an enticing variety of experiences that take you from the mountains to the valley and everywhere in between.

The tour begins in Gatlinburg with an early afternoon arrival. You’re free for the rest of the day and evening to relax at our home base, the River Terrace Inn, or stroll the picturesque streets of Gatlinburg and browse through the many boutiques brimming with souvenirs.

The next day features sightseeing on a grand scale. First we’ll travel through the Smokies, rich in full autumn color, then it’s all aboard the Great Smoky Mountains Railway. This scenic journey winds through passes and down river gorges to Dillsboro, a charming mountain town of pristine white houses and rustic buildings,

where we’ll enjoy an included lunch.

The next day is free for you to follow your fancy. The Gatlinburg area is rich in attractions; or, you might choose to visit Dollywood, located in nearby Pigeon Forge. Created by Dolly Parton, Dollywood celebrates the fun and folklore of the Smoky Mountains, through music, shows and rides. (Round-trip transfers are provided for those who wish to see Dollywood; admission is additional.)

We top off the day with a dinner at Pioneer’s Inn Restaurant and a hilarious musical melodrama performed at Sweet Fanny Adams Theatre. The next day we depart for home and one last glimpse of the Smokies. Talk about “color-ful” tours!

With this kind of variety available, the only question is which one to choose. Stumped? Just ask your AAA Royal Tours travel counselor—you’ll be reveling in autumn’s big show in no time! ☆

## Join Us For Peoria Plus

Oct. 7-10

Peoria, Ill., is a graceful city that will surprise you with its progressive flair and charm you with its hospitality. Add to this the rural beauty of harvest time in the Hoosier countryside and you’re in for a great Midwest fun-fest!

We begin by traversing the rolling Indiana farmland. Just across the state line is the town of Danville, Ill., where we break for an included lunch. Motoring through the land of Lincoln we find a home in the pretty city of Peoria, where for two nights we’ll be pampered at Jumer’s elegant Castle Lodge.

The next morning unfolds with an extended tour of Peoria’s Wildlife Prairies Park, where we view the state’s wildlife in its natural habitat. That evening, we’ll sample what this riverfront playground has to offer when we board the *Pair-A-Dice*, an action packed cruising casino, for blackjack, keno and slot machine play.

We’ll then move on to Rockville, Ind., and Billie Creek Village, a recreated turn-of-the-century village with a general store, blacksmith shop and other familiar structures from our not-too-distant past. Rockville is also the headquarters for the annual Covered Bridge Festival, and we’ll have plenty of time to browse among the more than 80 booths featuring arts and crafts, foods, demonstrations and entertainment.

Park County, Ind., boasts 37 covered bridges, more than any other area in the country and we’ll board a special bus to view some of these structures, nestled in the backwoods. Later, we return to Rockville for more festivities before late afternoon departure for Cincinnati.

Four days, four meals, just for fun! Discover why Peoria Plus may be the tour discovery of the season! ☆

# Arizona's Coolest Hot Spot

BY MARIA FRANK

There is really no right or wrong time to visit Scottsdale, Ariz., where, Indian legend has it, the sun god resides. Indeed, just about any time of the year, Scottsdale's desert-perfect weather lures visitors.

Located in the middle of the lush Sonoran Desert—one of the greenest deserts in the world—this Arizona jewel stands apart from any other with its pervasive relaxed paced that rules practically every aspect of life. Clearly, if you want to unwind, rejuvenate and restore your body and mind, you should head for this resort mecca, a desirable U.S. destination for vacationers.

Surrounded by characteristic mountainous slopes, Scottsdale—a mixture of the rugged Old West and the sophisticated New West—lives and works in harmony with the desert: No buildings rise above three stories, no garish neon signs intrude on the saguaro (sue-whar-oh) cacti, palm and citrus trees that form a natural part of the cityscape.

Recently, Scottsdale has emerged as a celebrated center for the arts in the Southwest, boasting more than 85 galleries that offer a wide variety of fine art—from the works of the Cowboy Artists of America to contemporary paintings and sculptures, including Indian arts and crafts of

the Hopi, Navajo and Zuni tribes.

Old West aficionados will appreciate Scottsdale's bucking broncos and bulls, and its rodeo parades. Real cowboys work cattle on ranges nearby, and a variety of night spots provide the best of Western music.

Tee-time is never more than minutes away as Scottsdale boasts a seemingly endless number of golf courses. Tennis courts abound, and horseback riding and hot-air ballooning are some of the other activities available to visitors.

Founded in 1888 and incorporated in 1951, Scottsdale has burgeoned into a resort center laden with luxurious, plush hotel complexes that cater to practically every visitor's whim and desire—everyone from golfers and hikers to artists will find an appealing aspect here.

Nestled on 130 acres at the base of Camelback Mountain, the Phoenician's elegant accommodations, world-class recreation facilities and gripping surroundings have established this complex as a favorite among visitors. Its walls flaunt an extensive art collection, while marble floors and walls, crystal chandeliers and exquisite furnishings blend harmoniously with lush gardens, sparkling fountains and waterfalls.

The Phoenician complements its vacation packages with fine cuisine, a mixture of sport activities and a state-of-the-art spa fully

equipped with massage therapies, facials and body treatments that suggest European, Southwestern and Far East influences.

Away from downtown crowds, the Scottsdale Princess, located in the middle of an open expanse of desert punctuated with cholla, barrel cactus, saguaro and an occasional roadrunner, qualifies as a city in and of itself. On the property there are shops, restaurants, bars and lounges, three pools, tennis courts and a full-service health club and spa. The Scottsdale Princess is also the site for the Phoenix Open, an Arizona tradition since 1932 that has drawn such golf greats as Jack Nicklaus, Lee Trevino and Arnold Palmer.

Ensclosed in Paradise Valley, surrounded by Camelback and Mummy mountains, overlooking the colorful desert floor, the Marriott's Camelback Inn epitomizes Southwestern style and charm.

Other resorts that you should consider when planning your escape to the land of rose-purple sunsets, sundrenched days and refreshing cool desert evenings include the Red Lion's Posada Resort, Hyatt Regency and Wyndham Paradise Valley Resort.

The elegant, prosperous resort of Scottsdale restores and rejuvenates the mind and body of those who visit. So what are you waiting for? Call us, your travel agent, today for your R&R time in the Valley of the Sun.



Tom Johnson/Scottsdale Chamber of Commerce

Scottsdale's lush Sonoran Desert.

## Kyoto: Quintessential Japan



Japan National Tourist Office

Chion-in Temple, Kyoto, enveloped in a cloud of cherry blossoms.

BY MARIELLA COLE

At first glance, the ancient capital of Kyoto did not take my breath away. I can only blame it on the characterless modernity around the railroad station—my arrival point in this city. But no sooner did I venture through Kyoto's tiny back streets enveloped in wisps of incense, exploring temples and old quarters, that an indelible feeling began to sink in: a sudden realization that a great slice of history has taken place in this city.

For Kyoto, considered the epicenter of Japan's art and the nucleus of history, is where practically all for which Japan is famed exists—modern rush and high technology, fine restaurants, elegant inns, exquisite gardens, the most esteemed masters of the various arts of tea ceremonies, flower arranging, kabuki and the geisha—in short, just about everything can be found in Kyoto, a city that exudes the splendor and glory of Japan's history and culture.

Delicately wrapped around these arts is the mantle of religion: Shinto, Christianity and, above all, Buddhism. This godly devotion is expressed in the most glorious examples of architecture and the most delicate of contemplative icons, in temples, shrines, gardens and lakes.

As a city rich in history, religion and culture, Kyoto boasts myriad architectural treasures as vibrant today as they were when they were first built. Kyoto's magnificent assemblage includes two old imperial

villas, about 1,650 Buddhist temples and 400 Shinto shrines inlaid in the patchwork design of streets and avenues dating back 1,000 years.

Among the major monuments to see is Nijo Castle, a harmonious blend of art, history and mystery. Representative of the time in which it was built and for whom—a shogun—are the "nightingale floors," designed to creak and thereby foil a potential coup d'état.

Also built for a shogun, the Kinkakuji Temple, or Gold Pavilion, vies for attention with its own reflection in the surrounding pond. The gold-leaf-covered pavilion, completed in 1955, is an exact replica of the original building that stood for more than 550 years until it was destroyed by fire in 1950.

Worthy of a visit is the Silver Pavilion, or Ginkakuji, on the northeast side of Kyoto. The Silver Pavilion, a jewel of medieval villa design and garden art, was also built for a shogun and transformed into a temple after his death, as was the Gold Pavilion.

Leading from the Silver Pavilion to Nanzenji—classed as the most important of the "five great temples" of Kyoto—following an old canal lined with cherry trees is Tetsugakuno-Michi, or Philosopher's Walk. Named after Nishida Kitaro of Kyoto University, Japan's most famous contemporary philosopher, Tetsugakuno-Michi winds through an attractive residential area, with occasional imperial tombs and temples, where several houses display Mondrian windows and potted bonsai trees—an inspiring path, indeed.

In addition to its distinct buildings, Kyoto is punctuated with gardens, often attached to a temple or shrine, that use nature to convey the devotion that the Japanese have for their gods.

For the ultimate in spiritual symbolism, represented in a rock arrangement, the Ryoanji Temple Garden is world famous for its simplicity and its subtlety. This plain yet undeniably remarkable Zen garden differs dramatically from the sumptuous gardens constructed in the Middle Ages by court nobility. No trees are part of the design: only 15 rocks and white gravel are used in the composition.

Flanked by mountains, Kyoto benefits from the beautiful changes that take place in nature throughout the seasons; although Kyoto is particularly pretty in the early part of April when it is dressed in multicolored cherry blossoms. But no matter when you visit, Kyoto, which touches the heart of Japanese people as no other part of Japan does, exemplifies Nippon's most spectacular aspects at just about any time of the year.

And despite the fires and occasional earthquakes that have ravaged the city over the centuries, Kyoto still remains a near-perfect model of Asian urban order and precision. Within its tidy geometry, Kyoto is the quintessential Japanese city, where culture, religion and history are seamlessly woven into the fabric of 20th century life.

# We Recommend

## Vacations That Give You More For Your Money

Through the pages of this publication we've been able to share with you the wonderful world of travel—exotic destinations abroad as well as the stunning beauty of our own United States. And in this edition, we are able to offer you something more than information—something that can make a difference in your vacation plans.

We have negotiated on your behalf with some of the world's top cruise lines to bring you features and prices that no one else in town can match. Features like complimentary pre-cruise hotel accommodations and sightseeing tours,

complimentary shore excursions, and \$200 per passenger shipboard credit.

The companies you see highlighted on this page and page 7—Diamond Cruise, Holland America Line, Princess Cruises, Royal Caribbean Cruise Line, and Norwegian Cruise Line—are known throughout the industry for the high quality of their cruises—both shipboard experiences and itineraries. These pages will introduce you to the service and destinations that keep them at the top.

Then, after you've acquainted yourself with these cruise lines,



take a look at the eight-page brochure inside this edition for the special value-added features and big savings that let you get more for your hard-earned dollar.

We've put these extras together to let you know that we don't take you for granted. This travel agency is a part of a select group of 37 agencies recognized nationwide for service and professionalism. We're part of this group because we have an agency-wide commitment to put you and your travel needs first. We know that once you experience our service and skill in arranging your travel, we'll see you again.

## Celebrate the Holidays with Holland America Line

For 120 years, Holland America has been perfecting the art of cruising, and never are they more delighted to share their traditions than at Christmas and New Year's.

Hard as it may be to believe, their superb cuisine becomes even more dazzling with the holidays: superbly prepared turkey, pheasant, venison, quail and goose; Old

English-style plum pudding alight with flaming brandy; glasses brimming with eggnog and bubbly champagne.

Of course, there's non-stop merriment, including Santa's spectacular arrival by sea, and a New Year's Eve party with all the trimmings.

And along the way, there is the

magic of the Caribbean: blue sky, warm sun, palm trees swaying on inspired breezes, and a potpourri of exotic island cultures.

A holiday cruise is even more enjoyable when it is a great value as well—another tradition of Holland America Line. This year, the value is even better as our clients are eligible for a 30 percent discount on four special holiday sailings ranging in length from seven to 11 days.

Readers interested in a Christmas cruise may prefer the M.S. *Nieuw Amsterdam*, sailing from Tampa on Sunday, Dec. 18, for 10 days of cruising and island-hopping to Key West, Playa del Carmen/Cozumel, the San Blas Islands, Cartagena and Grand Cayman before returning to Tampa.

Or the M.S. *Noordam*, sailing on Sunday, Dec. 19, from Fort Lauderdale, seven days to Nassau, San Juan and St. Thomas, and back to Fort Lauderdale.

New Year's cruises include the



Holland America Line

*Nieuw Amsterdam's* 11-day sailing on Dec. 28 from Tampa to Grand Cayman, Dominica, St. Maarten, St. Thomas, San Juan and returning to Tampa. And the M.S. *Westerdam's* special eight-day cruise, departing New Year's Eve, sails round-trip from Fort Lauderdale and calls on San Juan, Tortola, St. Maarten, St. Thomas and Nassau.

In addition to the 30 percent discount, our clients will also receive a shipboard credit of \$100 per cabin on the seven- and eight-day cruises, and \$200 per cabin on the 10- and 11-day cruises, based on double occupancy. Shipboard credits can be used for bar, shop, shore excursion, and other shipboard purchases.



Holland America Line

## Discover the Voyage of Your Dreams On the Radisson Diamond

Towering above the waves like an ocean-going sculpture, the SSC *Radisson Diamond* cruises with majesty and grace in fitting tribute to her guests. Journey to alluring ports of call on a ship crafted into being by Nordic masters, famous for skill and precision.

You'll travel in unprecedented luxury, comfort and stability as you stroll through the *Diamond's* magnificent interior. The solid stance of twin hulls beneath you provides five times the stability of single hull ships. At sea, motion is reduced so that you can relax and unwind in complete comfort.

Aboard the *Diamond*, you'll discover rich culinary treasures and a standard of service that is beyond compare. Exquisitely prepared delicacies await you in the Grand Din-

ing Room, with its open seating and sweeping panoramic views. The Grill gives you the experience of dining in a family style ristorante in Northern Italy, with delectable cuisine served in a charming, casual ambience. And, for your further dining convenience, 24-hour room service is available.

Rooms are lavishly appointed, and soothing hues grace elegant furnishings in the spacious sitting area or private balcony. Your stateroom offers all the sophisticated comforts you are accustomed to, and personal attention from your stewardess always ensures that your beautiful stateroom will be thoughtfully prepared for you whenever you choose to be "at home."

While onboard the SSC *Radisson Diamond*, your time brims

with exciting activity or restful solace. Jog on the open-air track or soak in the pool, enjoy windsurfing and other water sports at the self-contained Marina (weather permitting), shopping in the boutique or getting a French facial in the Diamond Spa. Whether your choice is relaxation or active play, you'll find it easy to indulge your every whim.

At night the *Radisson Diamond* really begins to sparkle. Enjoy cozy conversation at the Club while the grand piano sets the mood. Dance and romance the night away at Windows Lounge, or thrill to the exciting games of

chance in the Chips Casino. Whatever you choose, you'll find that evenings awaken the rhapsody in your soul.

We invite you to discover the voyages of your imagination aboard the SSC *Radisson Diamond*.



Radisson Diamond Cruises

# We Recommend

## Royal Caribbean Offers Great Giveaways on Three-Night Bahamas Getaways



Royal Caribbean Cruise Line

As if dreamy islands, award-winning service and super-low Breakthrough Rates aren't enough, Royal Caribbean has added even more allure to three-night Bahamas cruises aboard *Nordic Empress*. With this special offer, passengers booking three-night cruises from Miami to the Bahamas and back will enjoy the extra added value of a free two-category cabin upgrade, as well as a complimentary bottle of wine as a welcome aboard gift.

All-inclusive three-night getaways have gained tremendous popularity in recent years, as more and more people who are pressed

for time try to squeeze in a break from everyday routines. Sound familiar? *Nordic Empress* was designed specifically for you.

From her nine-story Centrum Lobby, it's easy to make your way to the nearby boutiques, cozy pubs, dining room and spectacular two-story Casino Royale. On Sun Deck, there's a kids' playroom and ShipShape fitness center inside, and outdoors, two swimming pools, three whirlpools and a lively bar.

Besides all there is to do onboard, *Nordic Empress* calls at two tropical gems.

In colonial Nassau, you can stroll the open-air market, play

baccarat in the casinos of neighboring Paradise Island and snorkel the crystal-clear waters of Thunderball Reef.

You won't have to exaggerate about CocoCay, your next port of call, either. This balmy, breezy, sun-drenched isle is so exclusive, it's reserved only for Royal Caribbean passengers. For landlubbers, there's limbo dancing, volleyball, beachcombing, and shopping at a native straw market. And everyone will love the island barbecue.

So get away to the Bahamas today and take advantage of Royal Caribbean's great giveaway. Don't forget to book early for the best rates.

## Europe: The 1994 Cruise Collection



Holland America Line

The ship? Breathtaking. The itinerary? Fascinating. And the selection? Incredible. It's the *Statendam's* second European season, and it features an expanded collection of itineraries in this rich and varied land.

Among the new 12-day offerings is the **British Isles** cruise, a glorious tour of England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland. Sailing July 21, 1994, this cruise begins in the pristine Norwegian Sea, continuing on to bonny Scotland, where a trip to Loch Ness will find you searching for "Nessie," the lake's fabled monster.

You'll see castles in Wales, clover in Dublin and Crystal in

Waterford. To celebrate the maiden port call at Waterford, a drawing will be held on the *Statendam* during the British Isles cruise where one lucky guest will win a 108-piece set of Waterford crystal. Join us and you may be the winner!

If your tastes are more Nordic, the fjords of Norway provide a backdrop for another new cruise, the 12-day **Northern Highlights** cruise. Sailing June 27, 1994, this itinerary shows you majestic Sognefjord, the longest and deepest fjord in the world; the Seven Sisters waterfall, which cascades 5,000 feet; and the Shetland Islands, where ponies graze in verdant fields. Edinburgh, London, Paris and Brussels are also on the agenda.

To experience *la dolce vita*, sail

aboard the *M.S. Statendam* on Sept. 20, 1994, as she embarks on a 12-day **Western Mediterranean** cruise. Live the magic of the Mediterranean as you join the jet-setters at the gaming tables of Monaco; view Mount Etna on the sunbaked Italian island of Sicily; shop for famous pearls in Mallorca; and stand in awe at the view from the Montserrat Monastery overlooking

Barcelona. Florence and Rome round out this exciting cruise.

Exclusively for our clients, we have arranged a terrific opportunity for you to enjoy a 25 percent savings and \$300 shipboard credit per person on these spectacular European odysseys if you book by March 1, 1994. Reserve your place *now* and see Europe as you've never seen it before.



Diamond Cruise, Inc.

## Cruise Alaska With Holland America

Alaska-bound vacationers will travel with the experts when they take a luxury cruise with Holland America Line-Westours, Inc., the Alaska tourism leader since 1947.

Holland America Line has the only five-star Alaska cruise fleet, as rated by the World Ocean and Cruise Liner Society.

Holland America Line offers an expanded slate of 96 sailings to Alaska in 1994, including 36 Glacier Route cruises onboard the 1,214-passenger sister ships *M.S. Nieuw Amsterdam* and *M.S. Noordam*.

The two ships sail across the Gulf of Alaska while cruising between Vancouver, British Columbia, and Seward, Alaska. The ships visit Ketchikan, Juneau, Sitka and Valdez, as well as Hubbard Glacier, giant Columbia Glacier and College Fjord.

Our clients can save up to \$2,000 per couple with Holland America Westours' Special Savings Program when they book a Glacier Route cruise by March 15, 1994. With these savings, fares for the Glacier Route cruise start at just \$945 per person, double occupancy.

In addition, all our clients taking advantage of this special offer will receive two free shore excursions: the Totem Heritage and Rain Forest tour in Ketchikan, visiting the world's foremost stand of authentic native totems, and the Mendenhall Glacier and Hatchery Tour in Juneau, visiting the capital city's "drive-in" glacier, as well as a working salmon hatchery.



Holland America Line

Holland America Line's Alaska cruises offer a "Tradition of Excellence," including spacious staterooms, superb dining, renowned service, casino, first-rate entertainment, an onboard naturalist, the free "Passport to Fitness" activity program, and complete fitness center, coupled with the popular "tipping not required" and "cashless" ship policies.

## Diamond Cruise Sails Into '94

Now in the midst of its second successful winter Caribbean season, the *SSC Radisson Diamond* returns to the Mediterranean on May 30 with an 11-night Trans-Atlantic crossing from San Juan, Puerto Rico, to Lisbon, Portugal.

Experience idyllic days at sea with ample opportunity for luxurious solitude or delightful activities—or both. An afternoon with an informative lecturer or a good book can be followed by an invigorating visit to the Diamond Spa to prepare for an exciting evening under the stars.

Once in the Mediterranean, the *SSC Radisson Diamond* will again offer an attractive array of seven-, 14- and 21-night cruises. Embarkation/debarkation ports include Barcelona, Cannes, Rome, Athens and Istanbul. Visit such interesting destinations as Kusadasi, Turkey, and see the ruins at Ephesus, one of the Seven Wonders of the World; Santorini, Greece,

where narrow streets and serene antiquity speak to you of the island's past; the neighboring villages of Naxos and Taormina, Sicily, with their romantic ambience and spectacular views of the Ionian Sea and Mount Etna, an active volcano.

Summer 1994 will also include the *Radisson Diamond's* first-ever sailing to the Holy Land. The eight-night cruise departing Istanbul on July 8 will offer a stop in Ashdod, Israel, the ancient port city that serves as a gateway to the Judean Desert region where the Dead Sea Scrolls were found, and the holy city of Jerusalem. Other new destinations that will be offered as part of Diamond's 1994 Mediterranean program include Dikili, Turkey, with an opportunity to visit Pergamum and the Acropolis, and Nafplion, Greece, with its historical churches and museums amidst the quaintness of this seaside fishing port.

# Bewitched by Belize

BY SUZANNE FINNE

At first glance, Belize appears much like any other Caribbean Sea-side country—blanketed with lush vegetation, embraced by clear turquoise waters and caressed by a warm sun. A closer inspection, however, reveals not just your average tropical scene but a cornucopia of natural wonders above and below the water's surface.

Formerly British Honduras, a tiny Central American country wedged below Mexico's Yucatan Peninsula, Belize was put on the map by scuba divers: The country anchors the southern end of the longest, most spectacular unbroken barrier reef in the Western Hemisphere.

Curving its way down from Cancun, the reef offers divers an unparalleled experience along its sheer cliffs and coral gardens teeming with Technicolor tropical fish, graceful marine turtles and eerie stingrays. What really excites divers about Belize, though, is the pristine, unspoiled and (as yet) uncrowded condition of the reef.

Lighthouse Reef, about 50 miles southeast of Belize City, has the reputation for being the best diving site in all of Belize. In the center of the large atoll lies the Great Blue Hole, a nearly perfect circular area washed in a kaleidoscope of blues, 1,000 feet in diameter, plunging 480 feet into the deep.

Also within the barrier reef are crystal-clear lagoons for snorkel-

ing, and hundreds of offshore islands called "cays" (pronounced keys). While most of the smaller cays are inhabited by fishermen and their families, Ambergris Cay's surface is dotted with hotels

Those who know about Belize are already aware of the country's rich Mayan heritage: There are approximately 600 significant Mayan sites, many of them yet to be excavated.

tacular discoveries of Mayan civilization yet unearthed was discovered here—the ornately carved head of Kinich Ahau, the Mayan sun god. Weighing in at nine and three-quarters pounds

and 6,000-year-old Tikal (actually located just over the Belize border in Guatemala) whose very construction took one million people 1,000 years to complete.

In addition to their rich cultural heritage, Belizeans have a close relationship with the land. Their stand on ecotourism is strong and unwavering, and supported by respected conservation societies such as the Belize Audubon Society and the World Wildlife Fund.

The Belizeans' unwavering stance in the protection of their environmental treasures is manifested by the number of wildlife preserves found in the tiny country. In the thick rain forests of Belize lies the unique Cockscorn Basin Jaguar Preserve which is home to the world's highest density of jaguars.

Belize's commitment to wildlife can also be seen at the Bird Sanctuary at Crooked Tree Lagoon, the Community Baboon Sanctuary for the rare Black Howler Monkey, Guanacaste National Park and the Half Moon Caye National Monument, sanctuary for the red-footed booby.

Tapirs, ocelots, deer and brilliantly hued macaws reside in and around the rain and tropical forests, savannahs, rivers, mangrove swamps and cool mountains.

Belize City lies only a two-hour flight away from Miami, New Orleans or Houston, making it an ideal destination for North Americans searching for someplace unique, exotic and relatively undiscovered, yet close to home.



Belize Tourist Board

The rare tapir resides in the rain forests of Belize.

ranging from simple accommodations to pricey resort properties. The waters surrounding the cays are also breeding grounds for endangered species such as the American crocodile and the gentle cow of the sea, the manatee.

The most extensively excavated of all Belize's Mayan centers, Altun Ahau (Water of the Rock), lies approximately 30 miles north of Belize City. Archaeologists believe it was first settled more than 2,000 years ago. One of the most spec-

and measuring nearly six inches from base to crown, it is believed to be the largest Mayan jade carving in existence.

Other nearby Mayan sites include 1,400-year-old Xunantunich, 3,000-year-old Lamani

## Lazy Days at Land's End

BY AMY GRENDALL

If you're looking for a place to vacation in Mexico, where peaceful days ease into tranquil nights undisturbed by raucous crowds, forget the overblown Pacific Coast resort cities of Acapulco and Puerto Vallarta where round-the-clock action greets frenetic crowds and glitzy shopping malls all but obliterate Mexico's beauty. Instead, discover quiet Los Cabos at the tip of the Baja California peninsula.

The Los Cabos (the Capes) resort area actually consists of fraternal twin towns—Cabo San Lucas and San Jose del Cabo—perched on the southernmost tip of the Baja California peninsula where the Pacific meets the Sea of Cortez. Here, where reddish-orange mountains rise from the desert, where only cacti thrive in the arid soil and mounds of jagged rocks line the craggy-smooth coastline, travelers find a unique mixture of the past and the present.

The cobalt waters surrounding Cabo San Lucas, the larger of the two towns, have for years been a powerful lure for wealthy fishermen—the only way in was via chartered jet or private yacht. Now a modern airport and slick mari-

na, capable of accommodating large cruise ships, bring vacationers trolling for a change of pace as well as avid anglers who want to fish Marlin Alley, where more than 650 species of fish congregate.

For visitors who aren't fishing or talking about the one that got away, abundant sports await; horseback riding, golf, waterskiing, parasailing, swimming and wind surfing are all available in Cabo.

More ambitious scuba and snorkeling enthusiasts will enjoy the waters of Chileno Bay, Santa Maria Bay and Shipwreck Beach. Playa de Amor (Lovers' Beach), a popular snorkeling and sunbathing site, can be reached only by a long swim or short boat ride. This two-sided beach at Land's End offers a fish-eye view of the turbulent surf of the Pacific on one side and the gentle waters of the Gulf on the other, as well as a great view of Los Arcos, a striking rock arch formed by centuries of pounding waves and wind.

If these activities sound too taxing, do what comes naturally in Cabo: Kick back on the white sand beaches, watch for passing whales and wait for the sunset.

A short scenic drive along the Corridor—the road that links the two towns and the location of the

majority of the resort hotels—brings you to San Jose del Cabo, a Spanish mission-style town, tranquil and loaded with Old World charm.

This 250-year-old village-cum-resort city has been slower to develop than Cabo San Lucas, but that enhances, rather than diminishes, its appeal. There are myriad things to do in and around the town's charming courtyard, which is lined with restaurants and shops housed in renovated colonial buildings.

During peak season (November through March), visit downtown San Jose for San Jose de Fiesta, a weekly celebration with folkloric dancers, music and regional cuisine, or walk just east of downtown where you'll find a placid freshwater lagoon where more than 200 species of birds make their homes. On the estuary's opposite shore lies La Playita, a rustic fishing village slated to become Mexico's next mega-resort.

The last 10 years have wrought quite a change in these sleepy little towns at Land's End. From its beginnings as a quiet hideaway for well-to-do fishermen, Los Cabos has evolved into a first-class resort where vacationers in pursuit of some serious R&R don't have to struggle through thick crowds to find what they seek.



Nik Wheeler

Visitors to Los Cabos who aren't fishing can choose from a wide variety of watersports.