

# Journeys of the Spirit



Top 10  
Life-Changing  
Travel Destinations  
for 2017





We believe that  
experiential travel

is awe-inspiring, soul-stirring,  
heart-opening, fun, and above  
of all, life-changing. It's our  
passion here at Journeys of the  
Spirit - Luxury Travel® to design  
itineraries that allow us to touch  
the hearts of others, interact,  
learn, expand our consciousness,  
and grow from our connections  
with other cultures and people.  
For us, this is the only way we  
can truly understand and have  
compassion for others, and in the  
end, create a peace-filled world.

*Perhaps you feel  
the same way too...*

# Slovenia

## One of Europe's Best Kept Secrets!

**TAKE A LITTLE BIT OF BAVARIA**, a sliver of the Mediterranean Riviera, a stretch of the Danube, a touch of Venice and a slice of the Balkans—and you have Slovenia, one of Europe's best-kept secrets. This charming little country, which declared independence from Yugoslavia in 1991,



the rest of the region. It took along with it some of everything that travelers enjoy in this part of the world: mountains and lakes, castles and alpine forests, vineyards and meadows, beaches and island resorts.

Slovenia is the perfect destination for those who have already been to Europe once or twice and are ready to get off the beaten track and see a fascinating part of Europe. The scenery is lovely, varied and especially great for outdoor enthusiasts.

Lying at a natural hub of European routes at the eastern tip of the Alps, Slovenia's lovely baroque capital, Ljubljana, is just a two-hour drive from Venice and a three-and-a-half-hour drive from Vienna.

Places that are an absolute must see while in Slovenia are the fairytale like Lake Bled, the beautiful coastal town of Piran and the breathtaking Postojna caves. While visiting Lake Bled take one of the boats to the only island in Slovenia and walk up the 99 stairs to a beautiful old church. Legend has it that if you ring the church bell 3 times and make a wish, your wish will come

walked  
away  
relatively  
unscathed  
from the  
turmoil that  
engulfed



true. Piran is a beautiful little town on the coast where you'll find some great restaurants serving fresh seafood and the perfect place for a little stroll through its picturesque narrow streets. The impressive grottoes at the Postojna caves make up one of the largest cave systems in the world – 15 miles long and are filled with impressive rock formations, halls, stalagmites and stalactites.

Although the country may not be as large as Austria, Italy or Greece, it is certainly less crowded. With a culture that is both modern and traditional and with the country as part of the European Union, a trip to Slovenia is worth your while, especially since it's both easy and pleasurable to travel around the country.

Slovenia's natural health resorts, thermal spas and wellness centers are pillars of what Slovenia has to offer people for whom health and wellness are important. They combine centuries of tradition, experience of thermal baths and modern findings of experts dedicated to healthy minds and bodies. They are also a highlight of Slovenian tourist destinations, offering exceptional opportunities for sporting activities, fun, culinary pleasures and quality accommodation.



*Options for a visit to this gem in Europe are endless and arrangements can be made for a completely customized journey, which could include a visit to one of the neighboring countries, or an escorted tour to share your experience with like minded travelers.*



# Galapagos Islands

## Home of Amazing Wildlife

**PENGUINS AND DOLPHINS, SEA LIONS AND IGUANAS**, tropical birds and giant tortoises—this unique collection of species comes together in a single destination on the equator—the Galapagos Islands. There aren't many places in the world where you can swim alongside a family of sea lions and experience such an array of different species. The Galapagos Islands' remoteness from other landmasses, 600 miles off the coast of Ecuador and the absence of human settlements until the past century allowed their animal inhabitants to live with little fear of predators. As a result, the islands have an abundance of animals, birds and reptiles that make it a paradise for nature lovers.

The Galapagos Islands are best known as the home of giant tortoises that can weigh as much as 600 lb and live 150 years. But you'll also see marine iguanas (they resemble small dragons and are the only seagoing lizards in the world), scarlet-breasted frigate birds; blue-footed, red-footed, masked and Nazca boobies; tiny penguins at home in the tropics; and giant, graceful albatrosses. About half of the species are endemic to the islands, found nowhere else on Earth.



Volcanic in origin, the archipelago has 13 large (and scores of lesser) islands whose terrain is mostly stark and barren, consisting primarily of a lava rock- and cacti-filled landscape hosted by an arid climate. However, the highlands of the larger islands are dominated by cloud forests, with lush vegetation and cooler temperatures.

These days, most visitors see the islands as part of a cruise tour. Small boats drop travelers off on individual islands, where knowledgeable naturalists introduce the lifestyles and mating rituals of the native species. Two of our favorite vessels are the M/V Evolution which carries 32 guests in comfort and offers world class service, and the Celebrity Xpedition, slightly bigger and more luxurious. Both offer an unforgettable



experience of these amazing islands.

If you prefer a land based experience we recommend the Finch Bay Eco Resort from where you can take daily yacht excursions which will expose you to a variety of unique islands and curious wildlife.

Swimming and snorkeling are possible at most sites, often accompanied by curious sea lions, sea turtles, an occasional penguin and scores of tropical fish. The marine environment of the Galapagos is also a protected area; it is the largest marine reserve in the Western Hemisphere, and the second largest in the world after the Great Barrier Reef.

As most itineraries to the Galapagos Islands begin in either Ecuador or Peru, we highly recommend combining them with a visit to Quito or an unforgettable journey to Machu Picchu.

*The Galapagos Islands are an experience that will inspire even the most discerning traveler.*

# Myanmar

## Spiritual, Mysterious and Stunning!

**MYANMAR, BETTER KNOWN AS BURMA,** has been off most folks travel radar for quite a number of years due to the political struggles of their military-dominated government. But thankfully, Nobel Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, the nation's first democratically elected Prime Minister, was freed in 2010 after spending much of the past two decades under house arrest and is now ready to reenter the country's politics amid signs of political and economic reform. This is exciting and has re-opened the idea of travel to this beautiful country.

That said, there are several wonderful ways to explore Myanmar's cultural, spiritual and scenic gifts. Top on our list is cruising the Irrawaddy River on the Road to Mandalay - the fabulous 5 star river boat owned by Orient-Express Hotels. The food, care, staff and experience upon the boat is amazing. You won't find a more relaxing way to see the country - after all, the river runs the length of the country from north to south and all of the more important places to visit lie along its path.

A country of thousands of Buddhist temples - now is the time to see this country before it becomes as commercialized as Thailand. One of the most stunning examples of this is the site of Bagan which many folks are already familiar with as it is a World Heritage site (with some 5000 monuments). You'll also visit the Bogyoke Aung San Market in Yangon for some of Myanmar's most beautiful crafts (especially lacquerware and textiles!) and experience the wonderful food which is a mixture of Chinese and Indian influences.

*Pricing on the Road to Mandalay varies from \$3280.00 to \$8010.00 for the 8 day cruise per person double occupancy and is worth every penny!*



**ANOTHER OPTION IS AN OVER-LAND TRIP** with one of our favorite luxury operators - Remote Lands. This would allow you to visit a few more out-of-the-way places and give you a little more time for a few unusual cultural experiences. For example, you might have dinner with a prominent local family in their home, and learn from them about Burma's rich culture and history. Or even go to the home of a famous Burmese chef, who will give a fascinating cooking demonstration and tasting during cocktails. Afterwards, sit down with the chef and her family and feast on local delicacies including various hin(curries), thouq (spicy salads), mohinga (fish soup with noodles) and of course the staple food - rice. Yum!



Or cruise from Mrauk U by local motorboat to visit a village of the Laytu minority people, distinguished by their spider-net tattoos on their faces. Meet local residents and learn about their ways of life through your expert guide and interpreter. Continue on to villages of Cheik and Sinke famed for their hand-weaving, where the villagers will give you a hands-on demonstration.

There are so many unique and unforgettable opportunities all while staying in the best local hotels. Since Remote Lands is a bespoke travel designer pricing is unique to each journey and is available on request. Another wonderful operator we love working with is Artisans of Leisure as they consistently win awards year after year for their marvelous service.

*Let us know if any of these experiences is what you have been dreaming of!*

# The Maldives - Sexy, Chic & Breathtaking

## THE MALDIVES ARE A NATURAL WONDER

lying in two rows of atolls in the Indian Ocean southwest of Sri Lanka, just across the equator. The country is made up of 1,190 coral islands formed around 26 natural ring-like atolls, spread over 90,000 square kilometers. The reefs of the islands are alive with countless types of underwater creatures and vibrant corals and protect the islands from wind and wave action of the surrounding vast oceans. As a result the waters are turquoise blue and crystal clear.

If you are looking for a romantic paradise - your search ends here. This is one of the most stunning places in the world. Endangered marine species like the whale shark, turtles, dolphins as well as corals are protected by law. Hanifaru, a bay-like lagoon in Baa atoll of Maldives is home to rays that gather here to feast on the masses of planktons brought into the lagoon by water currents. There are so many incredible resorts, depending on our clients' needs we can narrow down the myriad of choices to one that will simply make your heart sing.

First up is Baros Resort on a coral fringed bijou island in the heart of the crystal clear waters of the Maldives. Stay by the beach or in an exclusive overwater villa and feel your stress melt and the spirit of Baros slowly seducing your senses. They offer a full selection of wonderfully relaxing massages; stretch massages, ayurvedic massages, foot massages, cleansing scrubs; nourishing wraps; rejuvenating facials; manicures and pedicures. Their specialist acupuncturist assists in healing all manner of tense and painful muscles, and between dining, diving, windsurfing, see-through canoes, waterskiing and catamarans, you won't be bored!

Next is Cocoa Island, a small, private island resort designed for an easygoing, feet-in-the-sand experience. The rich, warm waters and



bountiful coral promise some of the world's best beaches, snorkeling and diving. Wake up to an empty horizon from your over-water bungalow. Cocoa Island offers indulgent spa therapies, regular yoga classes, diving, gourmet cuisine and exciting excursions. At their COMO Shambhala Retreat center, Asian-inspired treatments include massage, emotionally rebalancing holistic techniques, restorative skincare facials and authentic Ayurvedic therapies. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian tradition of healing, helps restore the body to its natural equilibrium by rebalancing the three doshas – vata, pitta, and kapha – which make up our constitution. This is the perfect place for the health or spiritually-minded traveler.



Last on my list: The Soneva Fushi and Gilli resorts are committed to offer luxuries of the highest standard in an environment that nurtures the indigenous feel in design, architecture and service. Cuisine is a fusion of international influences with the freshest ingredients from the resort's own organic gardens. At the Soneva they subscribe to a "No News, No Shoes" chilled out vibe, perfect for your honeymoon or get-away-from-it-all vacation.

*Truly it doesn't matter where you go in the Maldives – it is beautiful and if you are looking for a romantic getaway we would love to help you plan a special adventure here (even your destination wedding).*

# Namibia - Not Your Typical African Adventure!



**NAMIBIA'S AWE-INSPIRING AND UNUSUAL GEOGRAPHY** will surely leave an impact on you won't likely forget. Why? Well, part of the allure of Namibia is that it's almost like four countries in one since it contains four different landscapes, each with its own characteristics and attractions.

The most definitive is the Namib, a long coastal desert that runs the length of the country and is highlighted with migrating dune belts, dry riverbeds and canyons. The central plateau is home the majority of Namibia towns and villages and is divided between rugged mountain ranges and sand-filled valleys. Next is the vast Kalahari Desert with its ancient red sand and sparse vegetation. And finally, Kavango and Caprivi, which are blessed with generous amounts of rain and typified by tropical forests, perennial rivers and woodland savannahs.

Rather than fighting herds of tourists (most unpleasant) in the most commonly visited parts of Africa, consider Namibia as it's the perfect destination if you enjoy traveling off the beaten path – in style. One of our favorite luxury lodges is the Serra Cafema, which lies in Namibia's Hartmann Valley and is one of the most remote and beautiful areas on the African continent. The area, also known as the Kunene Region of the Kaokoveld is completely untouched and offers its visitors a pristine land of wonders and complete solitude.

If you would like to experience the Namib Desert we highly recommend the Sossusvlei

Desert Lodge which has its own lodge planetarium for those clear nights where you can gaze into the endless universe for hours. From your luxurious lodge in the Namib Desert, you'll be able to venture onto little known trails in search of lions, elephants, the gemsbok and many other of Namibia's fascinating wildlife.

Swakopmund along the coast is Namibia's playground. The city itself resembles a small German town and manages to create a feeling of timelessness with its palm-lined streets, seaside promenades, restaurants, cafes, art galleries and museums. And while there's plenty to do within city limits, the real action happens in the desert surrounding Swakopmund. Quad-biking, sandboarding, sand-skiing, and parasailing. At Walvis Bay, visitors can join a dolphin cruise or explore the lagoon on a kayak tour.

The options are endless and a journey to Namibia will leave you in awe for



years to come. For example, I bet you didn't know that Namibia has the world's highest Cheetah population roughly estimated between 2,500 to 3,000 cats. No visit is complete without meeting the proud San Bushmen in the Kalahari desert. There you can learn about their traditions, origins and knowledge of living in the bushveld. In some cases you can still listen to their unique use of 'click' language, a wonderful experience in itself.

*Whether you join a resident astronomer at a specially designed observatory for a presentation on the constellation of the Southern skies or get a different perspective of this amazing country from the air by flying in your private plane over dunes (on your way to search for shipwrecks along the Skeleton Coast), Namibia will be the trip of a lifetime.*

# New Zealand - A Nature Lover's Paradise

**A VISIT TO NEW ZEALAND** is an experience like no other. There's a purity that simply cannot be described, only felt. Some 25% of New Zealand is protected and the land is criss-crossed with a network of walking tracks and twelve national parks including world heritage sites: Westland, Fiordland, Mt Cook and Mt Aspiring National Parks in the South Island and Tongariro National Park in the North Island.

There are three main islands in New Zealand: North Island, South Island and Stewart Islands. Many of the country's exciting outdoor activities can be found on the South Island. The North Island is home to Rotorua – the volcanic heart of New Zealand – as well as the largest city of Auckland. Home to many galleries, museums, restaurants and theaters, Auckland serves as the cosmopolitan center of the region. It boasts three harbors and is surrounded by more than fifty islands which can be reached by ferry and are a perfect place to unwind on their beaches or take a walk through the world's largest forest, the Pohutukawa Forest.



New Zealand boasts an unrivalled variety of landscapes. In a single trip, you will see more natural wonders in just one country than anywhere else in the world. Imagine snowcapped mountains, sandy beaches, lush rainforests, vast plains, picturesque hillsides, spectacular glaciers and active volcanoes with spouting geysers. These environments lend themselves to an array of activities including skiing, diving, hiking, kayaking, horseback riding and sailing.

In the heart of a forest in the middle of New Zealand's incomparable Volcanic Plateau (North Island), Treetops Lodge and Wilderness



Experience is one of the world's most exclusive lodges. Onsite activities include hiking, wine tasting, golf, fishing, hunting and so much more. It's a great place to come with children as they have a fabulous activities program for them. In addition, a visit to meet the Maori people will not be forgotten.

Also on the North Island, Lake Okareka Lodge is a stylish 7,072-square-foot lake house with three luxury suites, including an executive suite featuring a lounge, spa, private office and walk-in wardrobe. The lodge is booked to only one couple, family or group at a time.

Considering a honeymoon in New Zealand? Allow us to introduce you to Solitaire Lodge set on a private peninsular overlooking historic Lake Tarawera. It offers ten luxurious suites, all with spectacular lake views, and renowned fine dining serving mouth-watering modern New Zealand cuisine. Minutes from your doorstep you will discover secluded private bays, hot water beaches, majestic forest waterfalls and natural thermal hot springs beckoning you to soak in. Feeling adventurous? Embark on a scenic helicopter ride over volcanic peaks, skim across the lake in a kayak, set sail on a boat charter, or enjoy world-class trout-fishing.

On the South Island it would be hard to imagine a more perfect view than the one from Azur Lodge. This luxury accommodation offers amazing uninterrupted views of Lake Wakatipu & the surrounding mountains. Azur offers nine identical free standing villas and a main lodge that houses the lobby, breakfast dining room & stunning guest lounge.

*No matter what you choose, it will be beautiful - and we are ready to create the perfect exploration of this special country for you.*

# Chile – Long In Latitude, Not Short In Luxury



**CHILE IS SIMPLY STUNNING.** It has so much natural untouched awe-inspiring beauty – the itinerary options are endless. Due to its extensive length, Chile features a variety of climates. Whether you are visiting the picture perfect Lake District with its hundreds of lakes and lagoons or embark on an adventure through the most famous region of Chile, Patagonia – you'll be inspired by this unworldly destination filled with peace and beauty. In Patagonia the South American continent falls away in a dazzling explosion of islands, glaciers, icebergs and mountains.

What better way to discover it all than from an expedition cruise ship? You'll be able to access regions that humans rarely see, sailing the passage between Punta Arenas and Ushuaia which includes Cape Horn. While in Cape Horn, you'll be one of the southernmost humans in the Americas surrounded by pristine nature that may not last much longer on this earth. As you cruise along glaciers, fjords and through icy passages you'll experience the purity of nature, and as you make landfall you'll go ashore on a zodiac boat (small inflatable boat) – a rare experience.

There are wonderful ways to discover this remote area both by sea and on land. Enjoy world class accommodations like the Hotel Salto Chico, the only lodge located right at the heart of the extraordinary Torres del Paine National Park or the Hotel de Larache located on the Ayllu de Larache plain, once inhabited by an ancient Atacamenno community.

Activities range from spending a few days fly-fishing in the Lake District or if you would like to experience this wondrous land on horseback – there are tailor-made, guided horse riding tours into the Andes of Chile. And after a few days of adventures there are many rejuvenating spas where you can recharge and contemplate the life changing experiences you've had.

But Patagonia and the Lake District is not all of Chile! San Pedro for example, is without a doubt one of the top destinations for cosmopolitan tourism in the north. With its impressive landscapes, it's also the best place from which to explore the altiplano. According to The New York Times, Santiago de Chile was the number one destination for travelers in 2011. The city's first-rate dining and hotel offerings, bohemian neighborhoods and business and cultural districts make it a year-round destination.

Wine is a delight and Chile knows a thing or two about this particular source of pleasure as the central part of the country is home to eight major wine-growing valleys. You might not know that southern Chile is also home to the greatest concentration of hot springs in South America. A 50-kilometer circuit links places where naturally warm waters can help alleviate rheumatism, arthritis and stress.

And not to be forgotten, it's hard to think of another Chilean destination where beauty and mystery come together so intensely as Easter Island with its 600-plus Moai statues, enigmatic history, charming people and landscapes laden with volcanoes.

*Chile contains some of the most remote wilderness on the planet and to this day still very untouched, guaranteeing a unique and once in life time experience. So whether you decide to explore it by land or by sea – let us know if we can help.*

# Cambodia - A Country of Mystery, Magic & Marvels

**THERE'S A MAGIC ABOUT CAMBODIA** that casts a spell on many who visit this charming yet confounding kingdom. Its temples represent one of humankind's most astonishing and enduring artistic and architectural achievements. The city of Siem Reap, is a 'must-visit' destination for all visitors to Cambodia. This is where the glorious 12th century Angkor Wat temple, the largest religious building in the world, is located. Situated on the northern bank of the Tonle Sap Great Lake, this UNESCO World Heritage Site and mesmerizing eighth wonder of the world can be easily accessed by plane, land, and boat. Apart from the legacy of the vast Angkor temple complex, Siem Reap has a lot more to offer to tourists, from the spectacular floating village on the Tonle Sap Lake to the heritage site of the Kulen Mountain, to the recently discovered Koh Ker ruins.

For a taste of Cambodian history and royal life, don't miss Phnom Penh the country's capital where you can tour the Royal Palace and the Silver Pagoda located just next to the palace grounds. A short walk away, the National Museum beckons with room after room of Khmer sculpture, ceramics, and bronzes. A sunset cruise down the Tonle Sap River is perfect for catching the soft river breezes!

Cambodia is wonderful for marveling at stone sanctuaries and the breathtaking views of the ultimate mountain temple, Prasat Preah Vihear, or for discovering architectural clues from eras long forgotten, cycling to nearby hilltop temples, and experiencing the norry - Cambodia's homemade bamboo train. You will find hidden treasures everywhere, but make sure you visit the quiet countryside where you'll experience the rhythm of rural life and timeless landscapes of dazzling



rice paddies and swaying sugar palms. Spend some time in the srok (provinces), as Cambodians call them, enjoying a dar leng (walkabout) for the true flavor of the country.

The south coast is fringed by tropical islands, with barely a beach hut in sight. Visitors can play Robinson Crusoe at Ko Samui or Gili Trawangan. Inland from the coast lie the Cardamom Mountains, part of a vast tropical wilderness that provides a home to elusive wildlife and is the gateway to emerging ecotourism adventures. The islands of Koh Koun, Koh Rung Samloem, Koh Tang, Koh Domlong, just to name a few, are surrounded by clear emerald green water. These rain forested islands set in the azure tropical waters off the Bay of Sihanouk Ville have also some of the best beaches in the world; pristine white sand and not over-crowded.

The mighty Mekong River cuts through the country and is home to some of the region's last remaining freshwater dolphins. The northeast is a world unto itself, its wild and mountainous landscapes a home for Cambodia's ethnic minorities and an abundance of natural attractions, including thundering waterfalls and crater lakes. A river cruise on the Mekong is one of our favorite ways to see the country! (Viking, Avalon, and Pandaw have excellent itineraries.)

Some of the most luscious luxury resorts like the stunning Amansara Hotel or the La Residence d'Angkor by Orient-Express in Siem Reap will have you wanting to stay in Cambodia forever.

*We love designing the perfect trip for our clients to this warm and welcoming country – so please give us a ring today!*

# ROVOS - Romance on the African Continent



**WHEN I THINK OF AFRICA,** I think of wide open spaces dotted with acacia trees, magnificent animals roaming the Serengeti, peaceful evenings with beautiful sunsets and the sound of the wild in the distance.

One of the best ways to experience this amazing and still untouched continent is on the luxurious Rovos Train which journeys every week between Pretoria and Cape Town. There simply is no finer way to travel between these two cities and no other mode of travel will guarantee the kind of views you'll have from this train.

This 1 600-kilometre journey is a perfect illustration of South Africa as a world in one country. Travel the grasslands of the gold-rich Highveld to the haunting barrenness of the Great Karoo; trundle through the spectacular mountain ranges and scenic wine lands of the Cape. Journey's end is Cape Town, the Mother City of South Africa, cradled by the imposing bulk of Table Mountain, Devil's Peak and Lion's Head.

Highlights of the north- and southbound routes include a visit to the historic village of Matjiesfontein; this authentic perfectly preserved Victorian Village, which was founded by Mr. Logan as a refreshment stop in 1890, also boasts an impressive museum on the platform. Another stop is made in Kimberley providing an opportunity to enjoy a city tour and a visit to the Diamond Mine Museum and

the world's largest man-made excavation, the Big Hole.

Besides this popular route there are numerous other options throughout the year giving you the opportunity to travel beyond Pretoria and Cape Town. Take a 9 day journey to Dar es Salaam where some of the highlights will be a visit to the majestic Victoria Falls, a Zambezi River sunset cruise or if you are a golf enthusiast take the 9 day "African Golf Collage," which will take you from Pretoria to Cape Town with stops in Krueger National Park and some renowned golf courses along the way.



While you are traveling on the Rovos Train all your meals will be carefully prepared giving you a 5 star dining experience. When the time has come to retire to your private compartment, your bed will be prepared, allowing the train to cradle you into a good night's sleep. When you awake, another magical day in Africa will be waiting for you.

The Rovos train exudes luxury, elegance, quality and attentive service. It's romantic atmosphere will take you back in time, allowing you to experience a by-gone era in style and comfort. It is truly an unforgettable way to see South Africa.

*For a one way between Pretoria and Cape Town and vice versa (2 nights) - US\$ 1,750.00 per person sharing a Pullman Suite. Deluxe Suite US\$ 2,570.00, Royal Suite is US\$ 3,500.00 per person double occupancy.*



## River Cruises – The Perfect Cruise For Those Who Hate Cruising!

### I CAN'T REMEMBER A DAY THAT'S GONE

**BY** that someone tells me how much they dislike cruising. I know there are a lot of objections, but let me share with you why river cruises are the best thing next to sliced bread. First of all you are moving slow down a river with the ability to SEE the beauty of the countryside you are moving through. Rivers are narrow so you are upfront and personal with stunning scenery and architecture. In addition, the rooms all face outwards with large sliding glass doors (for the most of the ships). Around 90% of the ships now have balconies you can go out onto. The rooms are also larger than you're used to on a large cruise ship making it feel more like a luxury hotel room than a dark closet. You can even get a suite with a bathtub on most ships.

Relax as you watch European castles float by while having a glass of wine and hanging out with a few of your new friends. And because these ships are small with only around 100-200 people the most – you will actually get to make friends, have intimate conversations and not feel rushed. Think slow – not hectic.

Next, you pull right up to the dock - you can walk on and off the boat as you please – no lines for tenders. Ahhh...that in itself is fabulous. The local tours are wonderful, immersive and included. If you add up all you spend in off-shore tours you will find that a river cruise is not as costly as you think. In fact, when you add in the fact that many boats include wine and beer at dinner –river cruises end up being more economical in the end.

Now, what about the food? The quality of food is better when you are not feeding 4000 people. This allows the kitchen to put out more gourmet menus sensitive to the areas you are traveling to. River cruises are not about eating large quantities of food 12 times a day – it's about having a refined experience. I'm not



saying they skimp on food – on the contrary, but I rather have creative exciting meals than tons of lesser quality food. In addition the ratio of staff to guests is much better, often 3 to 1!

Truly river cruising is a totally unique experience. If you want an immersive cultural experience you can really get that here without having to pack and unpack each time you go from town to town. Considering Europe has an amazing river system you can see a good part of it right from your boat. But Europe is not the only place with rivers – consider Vietnam, Myanmar and even Russia and China! There are even smaller luxury river cruise lines that you can find on the Amazon and in France for example in Burgundy on an exquisite barge cruise.

*Each of the luxury river cruise lines has its own wonderful attributes, so give us a call and we would be happy to make suggestions for your next trip.*

# Sheri's Story

**MY PERSONAL ADVENTURE BEGAN** in 1998 when I was going through a challenging time in my life. I realized on some level that I had never been truly happy.

Although I changed: husbands (twice), cities (five moves), podiatric practices (three different offices) and friends (should we go there?), I still had no real joy in my life.

A leap of faith was the last resort – I sold my practice, boy-friend (only kidding), and home – and closed the surgical residency program I was director of (yes, that was a pretty big deal – and yes, the medical community thought I was nuts).

During this time I received a copy of don Miguel Ruiz's NYTimes best-selling book "The Four Agreements®" and decided to go on one of his spiritual journeys to the sacred site of Teotihuacán. The journey was profound – I discovered there wasn't anything outside of myself that needed changing at all – instead it was what I believed about myself and my world that needed work.

As a result of that journey, I became a student of don Miguel Ruiz for 8 years and later a teacher of this enlightening work that even



Oprah was fond of. Learning from don Miguel inspired me to write several books: The Complete Idiot's Guide to Toltec Wisdom, Banish Mind Spam! and to co-create the WITH Forgiveness – Are You Ready? online program with my dear friend Susyn Reeve.

From 2000 to 2002 I had the privilege to design and run don Miguel Ruiz's journeys and retreats. It was a fantastic opportunity to wander around the world and learn the travel business at the same time inspiring me to give birth to Journeys of the Spirit® in 2003 (and JOTS® Luxury Travel in 2011).

As a journey leader for many years now, I have watched people travel to the ends of the earth only to realize that the most profound part of their journey was the internal one – a mysterious adventure of self-discovery that would change their perspective and life forever, and open their heart deeply.



# Ales' Story

## I HAVE BEEN PASSIONATE ABOUT

**TRAVEL** ever since I was a child. I still remember with vivid detail my very first time on an airplane. I was about 8 years old, and flying all by myself from Germany to Slovenia to spend the summer with my grandmother. I even had my own personal stewardess who looked after me until I had safely reached my relatives upon arrival.

The excitement I felt while boarding the aircraft and taking off for another country was overwhelming. It felt like we were going off to another world. After that experience, I was hooked. I made every effort to save up my money and took the opportunity to travel whenever I could.

When I finished high school, it was clear to me what I would do. I wanted to serve in the travel industry, so I immediately took an apprenticeship as a travel consultant in Germany.



Since then, I have lived in a wide variety of places ranging from the Hawaiian Islands and Alaska, to cosmopolitan cities like Frankfurt and London. My travels have taken me all across the globe to the most fascinating regions, and my immersion in so many different cultures has forever changed the way I look at life.

Ultimately, it is my greatest desire to enrich peoples lives in a profound way by creating unforgettable journeys for them, and show to them all the wonders this world has to offer.

I look forward to sharing my love of world travel with you and designing the perfect itinerary that you will never forget. I look forward to speaking with you!





Thank you  
for your interest  
in our Journeys!

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