

Connecting...

solo travel news

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China is one of the most popular tourist destinations these days, but few travelers attempt this vast, exotic country independently. Hafeez Malik did just that recently and got along just fine – with a little Chinese assistance each step of the way.
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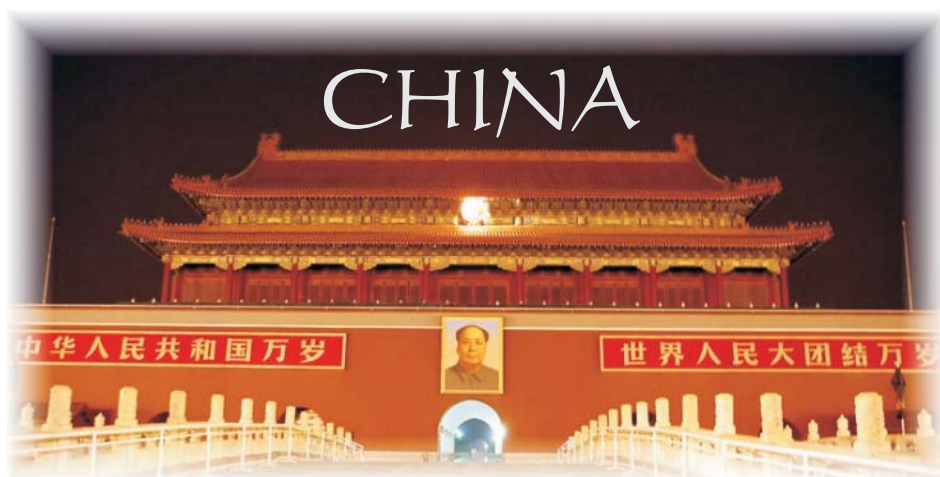
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CURRENCY WATCH

\$1 Cdn or \$1 US buys the following sums in world currencies: November 1, 2007.

	\$1 Cdn	\$1 U S
Australia: Dollar	1.15	1.09
China: CNY	7.87	7.46
Denmark: Kroner	5.44	5.16
Euro	.73	.69
Hong Kong: Dollar	8.18	7.76
Japan: Yen	121	115
Mexico: Peso	11.24	10.67
Switzerland: Franc	1.22	1.16
Turkey: New Lira	1.24	1.17
UK: Pound	.51	.48
US / Cdn: Dollar	1.06	.95



Gate to Forbidden City, Tian'anmen Beijing at night. Photo credit: Robert McConnell

You Can Do It Yourself – On a Budget

Text & Photos By Hafeez Malik

I want to see as much of the planet as I can before age, health, and political concerns discourage my enthusiasm for travel. If I'm careful with my money I can afford to spend a month or so abroad each year. This year I set my mind on China.

Initially, my grand plan included Tibet, and Chengdu, the place to visit pandas. I do like a busy (some say crazy) itinerary, but I was forced to admit that China is too huge and distances too formidable even for my keep-on-the-move habits. The must-see destinations of eastern China were quite enough to have me hopping for 30 days.

Mine is a no frills, do-it-myself approach. I research places to stay and plan a basic itinerary before departure then work out daily details as I go, using, as much as possible, public transport and my own two feet for sightseeing.

In China, I elected to stay in hostels that are popular with Westerners. Although many still use the old-fashioned term "youth hostel," these days most welcome travelers like myself who are youthful in spirit if not in age. They were all clean, well-maintained and offered basic private rooms.

I got around pretty much on my own with the friendly guidance of hostel staff and Chinese acquaintances I met en route. Ongoing travel could easily be arranged at hostel tour desks.

Communication barriers diminished by using body language: one can dash in a kitchen and point out what one wants to eat. There was no concept of tipping. Everyone seemed to perform their duties with heart. Every day went smoothly and, I am glad to say, I managed everything within a budget of \$40 a day plus the cost of international airfare.

Continued . . . 2-5

Mission Statement

The **First** purpose of *Connecting* is to encourage hospitality and networking, internationally, among people who travel without a partner.

The **Second** purpose of *Connecting* is to report without bias about going solo vacation alternatives or any holiday option that can be designated sensitive towards the needs of people who travel alone.

Examples

Going Solo Trips: Any journey that might comfortably, safely and cost effectively be undertaken alone.

Lodging: Intimate, friendly, establishments, close to public transport, dining and entertainment facilities.

Resorts: Beach, ski, spa, golf, tennis or any activity-oriented vacation premise, providing its pricing policy helps avoid single supplement* surcharges.

Tours & Cruises: Any packaged holiday arrangements priced to avoid single supplement* surcharges.

Clubs & Organizations: Social, sports, adventure, arts, crafts, or any group that includes travel in its activities and welcomes single participants.

Explanation of Terms

* **Single Supplement:** Most packaged holidays are priced so that each of two people pays a per-person rate for shared accommodation. A single participant who either cannot find a roommate or wants to occupy a room alone normally must pay a "single supplement" surcharge.

Guarantee Share Option: Some tour organizers and cruise lines pair-up individuals and guarantee that a single who is willing to share accommodation pays no more than the per person, double occupancy rate, even if no roommate can be found.

Any travel or vacation company that offers "guarantee share" options or otherwise avoids single surcharges is considered Single-Friendly and qualifies to have its holidays publicized in *Connecting*.

The **Third** purpose of *Connecting* is to foster the above concepts within the ideals of responsible tourism.

Travel Alone Not Lonely



Beijing for Five Days

Here's a brief account of my journey with just a few highlights featured.

Immigration formalities were brief at Beijing Capital International Airport. Outside the terminal building I boarded a bus bound for Beijing Railway Station. The ticket cost 16 yuan, about \$2. I held a print-out of the hostel reservation I had booked online, which included getting-there tips. I showed the paper to the driver who nodded in approval.

The weather was bright and sunny as the bus moved away from the terminal and hit the Airport Expressway at full blast. We slowed a bit on entering the city limits and a boggling array of flyovers and underpasses came at us one after another. In about sixty minutes we arrived at the rail station. The driver advised me to take a taxi from that point as it would be difficult to find my way on my own.

Beijing Hutongs

I knew that the hostel was located in one of the Beijing *Hutongs* – centuries-old areas known for narrow, twisting streets.

Despite misgivings that I might be taken for a costly roundabout ride, I got in one of the waiting taxis and placed a slip of paper on the dashboard that had the hotel address written in Chinese script. The driver took a look and put the taxi in motion while I tried to relax and watch Beijing pass by in a blurry stream of buildings, plazas, and malls thronging with people.

About 10 minutes later modern buildings gave way to small, grey-tiled houses. Roads became narrower and narrower. Aged residents, dressed for the heat in boxer shorts, played cards in the street. The taxi stopped in front of a two-storey building. I paid around \$3 for the ride and, with a sigh of relief, let worries of being ripped off fade away. Here I was at The Far East Youth Hostel, home for the next 5 days. I paid \$30 a day for a clean, private room with bath, equipped with TV, fridge, and kettle. It provided western as well as Chinese foods and free Internet access.

Satisfied, I slept well that night, and the next day, I braced myself for a day-long walk. The friendly hostel staff sent me off to Tian'anmen Square with a map and directions that included names of places written in Chinese characters – always a comforting precaution in countries where you can neither speak nor write the local language.

Tian'anmen Square

After about a 20-minute walk, I faced an enormous open area said to be "the largest square in the world." In 1966, upwards of a million Chinese rallied in Tian'anmen Square in support of the Cultural Revolution. Then, in 1989, the next generation rallied there in support of democratic reforms. These days, it seems that more tourists than citizens occupy this vast space. I had to muscle my way through many groups wearing identically colored shirts and led by guides flying flags of matching colors.

In the middle of the square stands a large obelisk known as the Monument to the Peoples' Hero – Mao ZeDong. His mausoleum is in the same vicinity, and I wish I could have seen the great leader lying in his glass coffin, but, sadly, it was closed for repairs.

Chairman Mao's portrait still hangs from Tian'an Men (Gate of Heavenly Peace), a large, red, 15th century structure where, in October 1949, Mao proclaimed the People's Republic. At the south end of the square, the beautiful Qian Men (Front Gate), dating from 1419, survives in its restored archery tower and gatehouse.

Other important public buildings on the square include the Great Hall of the People (Chinese Parliament) to the west, and the National Museum of China to the east.



Hafeez at the Forbidden City



Lining up at Badaling, Great Wall of China

On the north side of Tian'anmen Square, I came across the Imperial Palace Museum, commonly known as the Forbidden City (*Zijin Cheng*), so called because it was once off-limits, on pain of death, to all but the royal family and their attendants. Reputed to be the world's largest palace compound, the Forbidden City was originally built between 1406 and 1420 but was sacked and restored many times over the centuries. Today, the magnificent complex consists of 980 buildings covering 183 acres surrounded by gardens, walls, gates, and a 52-meter-wide moat. The site opened to the public some years after the last emperor, Puyi, abdicated in 1912.

I sat down on a raised spot to enjoy the view by fading daylight. Luckily, I sat in the right place at the right time to watch as a group of soldiers marched out of the Forbidden City and performed their daily flag-lowering ritual – a memorable spectacle to complete the day.

The Great Wall – Badaling

The most visited section of the Great Wall of China is at Badaling, approximately 70 kilometers (50 miles) northwest of Beijing city. I walked to Qianmen Square and bought a return bus ticket at Beijing Sightseeing Tour Center for 90 yuan, which included my entry fee.

At the base of the staircase approach to the wall, I began by inhaling deeply. Scaling that 35-degree incline struck me as quite a breathtaking feat by itself.

The Badaling section stretches for 4.8 kilometers along rolling mountains. At every 200 meters, a tower rose above the wall, overlooking awesome valley views.

Knowing that this massive structure is said to be the only man-made object on the earth visible from outer space, I was still unprepared for the astonishment I felt at the first sight of it snaking uphill and down. When I thought I had reached the highest point I could see tourists moving like ants through the mountains far away in the distance. Now I know why the Great Wall has been chosen as one of the “New Seven Wonders.”

Pingyao for Two Days

No doubt I could have spent much more time exploring Beijing, but my plan called for a move on to Pingyao, about 715 kilometers to the southwest.

For a small fee, around four dollars, the hostel staff got me a sleeper on a night train (160 yuan) and a confirmed hotel booking with a pickup service. As I was arriving in the pre-dawn hours I was skeptical about the “pickup” part of this plan, so you may imagine my relief on arrival to catch sight of a young lady waving my name card. She led me to the Yarman Hostel.



Pingyao Market Tower

After a good rest, I went out and was immediately struck by a feeling of being back in ancient times. In fact, Pingyao has been designated one of the Chinese Historic and Cultural Cities, and it became a World Heritage Site in 1997.

I saw no modern buildings at all, only narrow stone-paved streets lined on both sides with souvenir shops and cafés, food stalls offering noodles, dumplings, fish, snakes, quails, and all sorts of things to goggle the eyes.

Xi'an for Two Days

In 1974, farmers digging a well in the vicinity of the city of Xi'an accidentally uncovered parts of a figurine. Archaeologists subsequently excavated an amazing find of ancient imperial power: over 8,000 life-sized terra-cotta figures of warriors, horses, and chariots, all arranged in battle formation according to rank. Experts agreed that these sculptures had been commissioned by China's first Emperor, Qin Shi Huang, who died in 210 BC, and this army was buried near the emperor's tomb to serve him in the afterlife.



Hafeez with terra-cotta warriors.

The Museum of Terra-Cotta Warriors and Horses was built to house the excavations. I paid about \$20 for a packaged tour that included a visit to the huge complex.

The terra-cotta figures are marvelously life-like with varying facial features, uniform, and hairstyle. Thousands of finely crafted weapons have also been recovered that testify to the skills and knowledge available at the time.

Xi'an is renowned as one of the “Four Great Ancient Capitals of China” and also as the eastern terminus of the Silk Road. A walk downtown revealed a veritable trove of Tang Dynasty, pagoda-style buildings, even the local KFC. I was pleased to run across the city's Muslim Quarter and get a good beef kebab for my dinner.

Yangtze River Cruise

While in Xi'an, I asked the staff at Han Tang Inn to help with the next part of my journey, which they did for a small fee of about \$5.



Cruising the Yangtze River

I got a discounted flight (351 yuan) to Chongqing and left a deposit of 100 yuan for a 3-day cruise on the *Yangtze Dragon*, a 3-star “budget” category ship.

A young man from China Odyssey Tours met me at Chongqing and drove me to the company’s office to complete arrangements. In total I paid 1,110 yuan (about \$150) to share a twin cabin equipped with a hot-water shower. The price included entrance to the Three-Gorge Dam and a tour to the lesser three gorges along the Daning River, the chief tributary of the Yangtze.

Meals and other optional side tours were not included, and I had to pay 20 yuan to use the sun-deck.

Most of the passengers were Chinese. My roommate was a nice guy who brought along dried food, milk, and fruits for his meals. I used the ship’s restaurant, which offered tolerable Chinese-style food: noodles, chicken, fish, and free green tea. The on-board shop sold everything that could be bought from local markets at either the same rates or less. For entertainment there was a karaoke bar.

Meandering over 6,380 kilometers to the East China Sea, the Yangtze is the longest river in China. The ship plied between steep, luxuriously green cliffs through the spectacular Qutang, Wu, and Xiling gorges. Once, we shifted to small boats to enjoy a sail in shallow water. We stopped at many points, so one could get off to buy fresh fruit or tour nearby attractions like the 12-storey, red pavilion at Shibaozhai, or the legendary Ghost City of Fengdu.

On the last day, the ship stopped at a place called Moaping where we switched to overland travel to go to Yichang City, gateway to the Three-Gorge Dam. Free buses were provided for visiting the massive project. Eventually, the dam will produce 18,200 megawatts of electricity and will transform the upstream river to a huge lake.



Rice paddies at Longji

Wuhan, Guilin and Yangshou

China Odyssey Tours had already taken care of my plan after the cruise, saving me from going around like a lost cow seeking ways and means to continue traveling. I had a booking for a bus to Wuhan (120 yuan) with a hotel reservation for a night’s stay (125 yuan) and a sleeping bus ticket (260 yuan) for the next day’s travel to Guilin, and later to Yangshuo.

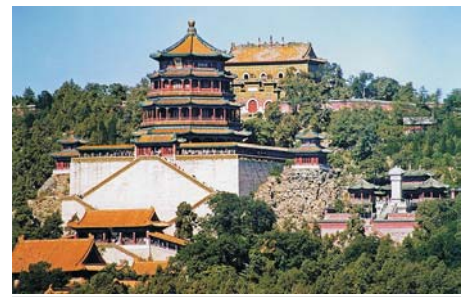
Truly a backpacker’s paradise, this area was not only cheap but also stunningly beautiful, especially because of its picturesque limestone formations. For just \$15 at the Sihai Hotel in Yangshuo, I got a clean room with bath, computer, Internet, tea kettle, and refrigerator. Here, I spent memorable and relaxing days exploring the Yulong River Valley by bike, by bamboo raft, and on foot. I scaled Moon Hill, so called because of the natural stone arch cut into the mountainside near the summit. I had another good day at Longji where the large number of terraced rice paddies create an intricate pattern on the hills.

Shanghai for Five Days

Though it was peak season, the hostel at Yongshou managed to get me a ticket on the sleeping bus (750 yuan) for the 20-hour trip to Shanghai, the commercial and industrial hub of China. Accordingly, the city has its share of attractions old and new: Jade Buddha Temple, Yu Yuan Garden, French Concession area, People’s Square pedestrian mall, and the Shanghai Museum of Science & Technology where one could play ping pong with a robot. The highlight for me was strolling the Bund, a boardwalk along the river lined with a mix of German and British architecture as well as Chinese.

Hangzhou

One day I made a day-trip to Hangzhou 180 kilometers from Shanghai, a two-hour



Summer Palace, Beijing.
Photo credit: André Holdrinet
[GNU Free Documentation License](#)

train-ride (45 yuan). Hangzhou had numerous historical sites to see as well as the National Silk Museum and a Tea Museum. I was in the mood to leave history for other tourists and go instead to West Lake where I just sat for hours on a wooden bench watching the daffodils waving. Then, for a brief diversion, I took a short cruise on a dragon boat, several of which operate from different wharfs around the lake (25 to 45 yuan).

Beijing – Summer Palace

Now, with time running out, I returned to Beijing on a fast train (220 yuan), a 10-hour trip. Settled once again at the Far East hostel, I felt the comfort of being in familiar surroundings, and I had one more day to fill. Often, with so many national treasures and glorious scenes to choose from, the hardest part of do-it-yourself sightseeing is deciding which historic, cultural, man-made or natural wonder will win your attention. On my last day in China, I was wooed away from central Beijing to the Summer Palace, about a 90-minute journey by bus.

Recognized as the quintessential Chinese garden, the Summer Palace was listed, in 1998, as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Construction first began in the Jin Dynasty (1115-1234) and expansion continued over time to contain a complex of classical pavilions, towers, bridges, gardens, and an enormous man-made lake – Kunming Lake.

The Summer Palace is gorgeous, though having to experience it with about 50,000 other tourists did, I must say, diminish the innate serenity of the place. Crowds are something you do have to get used to on China’s tourist trail.

On day thirty, I boarded my homebound flight feeling completely satisfied that my time and money had been well spent.

If You Go to China on Your Own

Information: China is the third largest country in the world after Russia and Canada. It has a total area of 9.6 million square kilometers with a population of 1.2 billion. China shares its borders with Afghanistan, Bhutan, India, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, North Korea, Laos, Mongolia, Myanmar, Nepal, Pakistan, Russia, Tajikistan, and Vietnam.

- China National Tourist Office.
www.cnto.org
www.tourismchina-ca.com

Climate: With latitudes spanning nearly 50 degrees, China's climate ranges from tropical and subtropical zones in the south to frigid in its northern regions. The Beijing region has four distinct seasons with temperate weather in spring and autumn. Autumn months tend to be clear, and summers tend to be hot, humid, and rainy. Snow can be expected in winter. In the Guilin/Yangshuo region weather ranges from mild to hot and moist. Tibet's high tundra zone is dry and cold year round.

Documents: A visa along with a valid passport is required by most visitors to China. Apply at nearest Chinese embassy or consulate. Or ask your personal travel agent to help.

Departure Tax: Payable in Chinese currency at special airport tax desk before check-in. **International flight:** 90 yuan (C\$11; US\$12). **Domestic flight:** 50 yuan (C\$6; US\$7).

Money: China Yuan Renminbi (RMB/CNY); C\$1 = 7.862; US\$1 = 7.46

Foreign currency and travelers checks can be exchanged at hotels, airports, Friendship Stores, and other shopping areas. Major credit cards are accepted at most hotels and state-run shops in large cities. Smaller shops, hotels, and restaurants likely expect payment in yuan. Currently, acceptance of foreign ATM (Automated Teller Machine) cash cards cannot be depended upon.

Safety: Use normal caution in crowded areas: handbags with straps slung across shoulder and chest; secure, hidden money pouch preferable to wallets. Carry only small amounts of cash. Have locals write addresses of destination points in Chinese characters.

Yangtze Cruise, and Bus Travel: www.chinaodysseytours.com.



Lodging Notes

Hostels were clean and well maintained. There was a daily change of bed cover, pillows, and towels. They served western as well as Chinese foods. Breakfast cost \$4 to \$5 and a little more for lunch and dinner. Chinese meals were much cheaper (\$1 to \$2).

- Far East International Youth Hostel, 90 Tieshu Xiejie, Xuanwu District, Beijing. Tel. 010-51958811. **Rates:** RMB 45-280 (\$5-\$35). www.fareastyh.com.
- Yamen Hostel (Utels), 69 YanMen Street, Pingyao. Free pick-up. **Rates:** RMB 160 (\$20) www.chinayha.com.
- Han Tang Inn Youth Hostel (Utels) No 211, West Street, Xi'an, Shannxi. **Rates:** RMB 40-140 (\$5-\$18). www.chinayha.com.

- Guilin Flowers Youth Hostel, 6 Shang Zhi Lane, Block 2, South ZhongShan Road, Guilin. **Rates:** RMB 55-120 (\$7-\$15) single room, share bath, good food, restaurant. www.yhaquilin.com.

- Sihai Hotel, 73 West Street, Yangshuo. Tel. 0773-882-2013. **Rates:** RMB 20-150 (\$3-\$18). Best of all places I stayed at. Computer and Internet in the room. www.sihaihotel.com.

- Shanghai Blue Mountain Youth Hostel, Building #1, 1072 Nong, QuXi Road, Shanghai, 200023, China. **Rates:** RMB 35-140 (\$5-\$18). Hostel is located in an area with good fast food shops and restaurants. www.bmhostel.com.

Sightseeing Notes

Beijing: Tourist trains run from Beijing Railway Station, Beijing North Railway Station, and Beijing South Railway Station to suburban attractions. Tickets can be booked from any ticket office, travel service, or purchased aboard trains. Conveniently, the site admission fee can be included in the purchase price.

Forbidden City: Open daily, 8:30am-5pm. Admission: RMB 60 (\$8). Special No 1 bus and get off at Zhongshan Phongshan Park or Tian'anmen.

Great Wall: Open daily. Take bus 919 from Deshengmen (a little east of JiShuiTan subway station). **Fare:** 12 yuan one way. Return from the same bus stop as arrival. The last return journey is about 4:30pm. **Admission:** RMB 80 (\$10). **Information:** www.kinabaloo.com.

Summer Palace: Open daily, 7am-5pm. Bus 907, 375, 801, 808, 732, 394, 718. **Admission:** RMB 20-50 (\$3-\$7).



Dec 23-30/07. *Christmas Getaway Cruise*. Sail on board *Costa Fortuna* round-trip from Fort Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: San Juan Puerto Rico, St Maarten, Tortola, Grand Turks. From US\$998, sharing. **Contact: Meet Market Adventures**. Tel. 1-800-239-0542, www.meetmarketadventures.com.

Dec 24-28/07. *Christmas Singles Group Cruise Caribbean*. Sail aboard *Carnival Fascination* round-trip from Miami Florida. Ports of call: Key West Florida, Cozumel Mexico. From US\$522.46, sharing, including government fees and taxes. **Contact: Cruising for Love**. Tel. 1-866-451-5027, 1-561-204-5481.

Dec 25/07-Jan 6/08. *Antarctica and Argentina Cruise*. Itinerary: 1 night Ushuaia Argentina with tour of Tierra Del Fuego National Park. 10-day cruising Beagle Channel, Drake Passage, South Shetlands, Antarctic Peninsula, Ushuaia. From \$3,999 plus US\$160 tax, and airfare. **Contact: All Singles Travel**. Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.

Dec 25/07. *15 Days. Mekong River Cruise – Vietnam and Cambodia*. Cities and ports visited: Ho Chi Minh, Cai Be, Chau Doc, Kampong Cham, Phnom Penh, Kampong Chhnang, Siem Reap. From US\$2,600 includes airfare from Los Angeles, shared accommodations, most meals, port charges, and visa fees. Airfare from other cities arranged. **Contact: Travelin' Singles, Inc.** Tel. 1-800-748-6662, +1-949-454-8333.

Dec 29-Jan 5/08. *New Year's Eve Caribbean Cruise*. Sail on board Royal Caribbean's *Liberty of the Seas* round-trip from Miami Florida. Visit Labadee Haiti, Montego Bay Jamaica, Georgetown Grand Cayman, Cozumel Mexico. From US\$1,799, sharing. **Contact: Singles Travel International**. Tel. 1-877-765-6874. www.singlestravelintl.com.

Dec 30/07. *7 Nights. Mexican Riviera New Year's Eve Singles Cruise*. Sail from Long Beach on the *Carnival Pride*, visiting Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, and Cabo San Lucas. From US\$1,053, sharing. **Contact: Vacations To Go**. Tel. 1-800-419-5179, +1-832-252-2265.

Dec 31/07-Jan 5/08. *New Year's Singles Cruise Caribbean*. Sail on board *Carnival Imagination* round-trip from Miami Florida. Ports of call: Grand Cayman Cayman Islands, Ocho Rios Jamaica. From US\$685.23, sharing, including government fees and taxes. **Contact: Cruising for Love**. Tel. 1-866-451-5027, 1-561-204-5481.

Jan 6-13/08. *Eastern Caribbean Cruise for 50s and 60s. MATURE SINGLES*. Sail on board Royal Caribbean's *Mariner of the Seas* round-trip from Port Canaveral Florida. Ports of call: San Juan Puerto Rico, Philipsburg St Maarten, Charlotte Amalie St Thomas. From US\$625, sharing. **Contact: Singles Travel International**. Tel. 1-877-765-6874, www.singlestravelintl.com.

Jan 7/08. *14 Days. Amazon River Cruise Plus 3-Day Land Option*. Cruise from Ft Lauderdale to Manaus Brazil on board the new *Royal Princess*. From C\$3,047 plus C\$60.13 taxes, cruise only, includes shared accommodation. Airfare from any city may be arranged. Optional 3-day land package in Manaus. **Contact: Travel Buddies Singles Travel Club**. Tel. 1-800-998-9099, +1-604-534-5602. www.travelbuddiesworldwide.com.

Jan 10/08. *4 Nights. Western Caribbean Singles Cruise*. Sail from Tampa Florida to Cozumel Mexico on Carnival Cruise Line's *Inspiration*. From US\$318, sharing, includes port charges and government fees. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com**. Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.

Jan 13-20/08. *Eastern Caribbean "Baby Boomer" Singles Cruise. MATURE SINGLES*. Sail on board Royal Caribbean's *Freedom of the Seas* round-trip from San Juan Puerto Rico. Ports of call: St Thomas, St Maarten. From US\$871, sharing, including port charges, government fees and taxes. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com**. Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.

Jan 24-28/08. *Mexico Getaway Cruise for 30s and 40s*. Sail on board Royal Caribbean's *Navigator of the Seas* round-trip from Fort Lauderdale Florida to Cozumel Mexico. From US\$366 including tax, sharing. **Contact: Singles Travel International**. Tel. 1-877-765-6874. www.singlestravelintl.com.

Jan 26/08. *10 Nights. Panama Canal Singles Cruise*. Sail on board *Coral Princess* round-trip from Fort Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: Aruba, Cartagena Columbia, Cristobel Panama, Limon Costa Rica, Ocho Rios Jamaica. Cost: TBA. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com**. Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.

Jan 27-Feb 3/08. *Singles Cruise From Texas*. Sail on board *Carnival Conquest* round-trip from Galveston Texas. Ports of call: Montego Bay Jamaica, Grand Cayman Cayman Island, Cozumel Mexico. From US\$859, sharing, including port charges, taxes, and insurance. **Contact: Singles Travel Service**. Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.

Jan 28/08. *4 Days. Baja Singles Cruise*. Sail on board *Carnival Paradise* round-trip from Long Beach California to Catalina Island and Ensenada Mexico. From US\$296, sharing. **Contact: Singles in Paradise**. Tel. 1-800-954-5453, +1-808-662-1212. www.singlesinparadise.com.

Jan 28/08. *7/10 Nights. Nile Cruise with Cairo Option. LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT*. Sail on board *MS Soleil*. From £865, sharing, including airfare from the UK, transfers, meals, excursions. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd.** Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.

Feb 1/08. *3 Nights. Bahamas Super Bowl Getaway Singles Cruise*. Sail from Miami Florida to Nassau on *Carnival Fascination*. From US\$320, sharing, includes port charges, government fees and taxes. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com**. Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.

Feb 2-7/08. *Super Bowl Caribbean Cruise*. Sail from Tampa Florida to Grand Cayman Island and Merida Mexico on *Carnival Inspiration*. From US\$299 plus US\$162 taxes, sharing. Open bar Super Bowl Party also included. **Contact: All Singles Travel**. Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.

Feb 2-9/08. *Singles R and R Caribbean Cruise*. Sail with Costa Cruise Line round-trip from Fort Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: San Juan Puerto Rico, St Thomas Virgin Islands, Catalina Island/Casa de Campo, Grand Turk. From US\$799, sharing, including port charges and taxes. **Contact: Meet Market Adventures**. Tel. 1-800-239-0542, www.meetmarketadventures.com.

Feb 10-17/08. *Caribbean Cruise. Ages 20s, 30s, 40s. JEWISH SINGLES*. Sail on board *Freedom of the Seas*. Information: TBA. **Contact: Amazing Journeys**. Tel. 1-800-734-0493, 1-412-571-0220.

Feb 10-17/08. *Singles Sports and Adventure Caribbean Cruise*. Information: TBA. **Contact: Club Getaway**. Tel. 1-800-6-GETAWAY, +1-860-927-3664.

Feb 11, 18/08. *7/10 Nights. Nile Cruise with Cairo Option. LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT*. Sail on board *MS Soleil*. From £865, sharing, including airfare from the UK, transfers, meals, excursions. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd.** Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.

Feb 11-16/08. *Singles "Follow the Sun" Valentine Cruise*. Itinerary: Fort Lauderdale Florida, Cozumel Mexico, Belize City Belize, Fort Lauderdale. From US\$310, sharing **Contact: Travel Time for Singles**. Tel. 1-800-469-0091, +1-678-574-4006.

Feb 13-23/08. *Singles Cruise, Hawaii*. Sail on board Norwegian Cruise Line's *Pride of Aloha*. 2 days Maui, 2 days Kauai, 2 days Honolulu, 1 day Kona and 1 day Hilo Hawaii. From US\$769, sharing, plus tax. **Contact: All Singles Travel**. Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.

GUARANTEE SHARE: TOUR PARTICIPANTS WILLING TO SHARE ROOM PAY NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT. TOUR OPERATOR FINDS ROOM MATE AND ABSORBS SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IF A PARTNER CAN'T BE FOUND.

Singles Group Cruises Continued . . .

- Feb 16-23/08. Southern Caribbean Cruise for Jewish Singles.** Sail aboard *Crown Princess* round-trip from San Juan Puerto Rico. Ports of call: St Thomas USVI, St Kitts, Grenada, Bonaire, Aruba. From US\$1,249, sharing, including port charges, taxes, and gratuities. **Contact: Brentwood Travel.** Tel. 1-800-628-3941, +1-314-439-5700.
- Feb 16-24/08. Western Caribbean Getaway Singles Cruise.** Sail from Fort Lauderdale Florida on *Carnival Liberty* to Costa Maya Mexico, Limon Costa Rica, and Colon Panama. From US\$919, sharing, includes port charges and government fees. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com.** Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.
- Feb 24/08. 7 Nights. Caribbean Cruise for 40+ Singles. MATURE SINGLES.** Sail from Fort Lauderdale Florida on the *Holland America Westerdam*, visiting Half Moon Cay, Aruba and Curacao. From US\$919, sharing. **Contact: Vacations To Go.** Tel. 1-800-419-5179, +1-832-252-2265.
- Feb 29-Mar 3/08. Mexico Getaway Cruise for 30s and 40s.** Sail on board *Royal Caribbean's Monarch of the Seas* from Los Angeles to Ensenada California. From US\$319 including tax, sharing. **Contact: Singles Travel International.** Tel. 1-877-765-6874. www.singlestravelintl.com.
- Feb 29-Mar 3/08. Sampler Singles Cruise, Ages 30s and 40s.** Sail on board *Royal Caribbean's Monarch of the Seas* round-trip from Los Angeles California to Ensenada Mexico. From US\$518, sharing, includes transfers, gratuities, taxes, port charges, insurance. **Contact: Singles Travel Service.** Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.
- Mar 1-6/08. Police, Firefighter and Friends Singles Cruise.** Sail on board *Carnival Freedom* from Miami, Florida. Ports of call: Cozumel, Grand Cayman, and Ocho Rios. From US\$674, sharing, including port charges, government fees and taxes. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com.** Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.
- Mar 2-8/08. Western Caribbean Cruise, All Ages.** Sail on board *Royal Caribbean's Jewel of the Seas* round-trip from Ft Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: Key West Florida, Cozumel Mexico, Costa Maya Mexico, Belize City Belize. From US\$439, sharing, plus tax. **Contact: Singles Travel International.** Tel. 1-877-765-6874, www.singlestravelintl.com.
- Mar 8-15/08. March Break Cruise Group, Caribbean.** Sail with Costa Cruise Line round-trip from Fort Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: Key West Florida, Cozumel Mexico, Roatan Honduras, Grand Cayman Cayman Islands. From US\$1,350, sharing, including flights from Toronto, transfers, charges and fees. **Contact: Meet Market Adventures.** Tel. 1-800-239-0542, www.meetmarketadventures.com.
- Mar 24/08. 7/10 Nights. Nile Cruise with Cairo Option LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT.** Sail on board *MS Soleil*. From £889, sharing, including airfare from the UK, transfers, meals, excursions. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd.** Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.
- Mar 29-Apr 6/08. Single Group Cruise Mexico, Ages 55+. MATURE SINGLES.** Sail on board *Carnival Spirit* round-trip from San Diego California. Ports of call: Acapulco, Zihuatanejo, Manzanillo. From US\$826.31, sharing, including government fees, taxes and gratuities. **Contact: Cruising for Love.** Tel. 1-866-451-5027, 1-561-204-5481.
- Mar 29-Apr 6/08. Spring Fling Singles Cruise, Caribbean.** Sail on board *Carnival Liberty* round-trip from Fort Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: San Juan Puerto Rico, St Thomas USVI, Antigua, Tortola BVI, Nassau Bahamas. From US\$949. **Contact: Singles in Paradise.** Tel. 1-800-954-5453, +1-808-662-1212. www.singlesinparadise.com.
- Mar 29/08. 8 Nights. Caribbean Spring Fling Cruise.** Sail on the *Carnival Liberty* from San Juan Puerto Rico to St Thomas Virgin Islands, Dominica, Antigua, Tortola, and Nassau. From US\$890, sharing, includes port charges, fees and taxes. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com.** Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.
- Mar 29/08. 8 Nights. Mexican Riviera Singles Cruise.** Sail from San Diego on the *Carnival Spirit*, visiting Acapulco, Zihuatanejo, and Manzanillo. From US\$786, sharing. **Contact: Vacations To Go.** Tel. 1-800-419-5179, +1-832-252-2265.
- Apr 6-12/08. Spring Break Cruise, Ages 20s and 30s.** Sail on board *Carnival Liberty* round-trip from Fort Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: Key West Florida, Grand Cayman Cayman Islands, Ocho Rios Jamaica, Barbados, Aruba. From US\$779, sharing, including travel insurance. Single occupancy cabin, add from US\$402. **Contact: Singles Travel Service.** Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.
- Apr 6/08. 6 Nights. 20s and 30s Singles Cruise, Western Caribbean.** Sail on board *Carnival Liberty* from Fort Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: Key West Florida, Grand Cayman Cayman Islands, Ocho Rios Jamaica. From US\$557, sharing, includes port charges, fees and taxes. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com.** Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.
- Apr 12-20/08. Western Caribbean Singles Cruise.** Sail on board *Carnival Liberty* round-trip from Fort Lauderdale Florida. Ports of call: Costa Maya Mexico, Limon Costa Rica, Colon Panama. From US\$758.56, sharing, including government fees and taxes. **Contact: Cruising for Love.** Tel. 1-866-451-5027, 1-561-204-5481.
- Apr 20/08. 7 Nights. Caribbean Singles Cruise.** Sail from Fort Lauderdale Florida on the *Caribbean Princess*, visiting St Maarten, St Thomas, and Princess Cays. From US\$798, sharing. **Contact: Vacations To Go.** Tel. 1-800-419-5179, +1-832-252-2265.
- April 24, 2008. 4 Nights. Cozumel Break Singles Cruise from New Orleans.** Sail on board *Carnival Fantasy* from New Orleans to Cozumel Mexico. From US\$793 includes shared cabin, port charges and taxes. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com.** Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.
- Apr 26/08. 12 Nights. Mediterranean Empires Cruise.** Sail on board *Holland America's Zuiderdam* round-trip from Venice Italy. Ports of call: Split Croatia, Piraeus Greece (Athens), Istanbul Turkey, Mykonos Greece, Kusadasi Turkey, Santorini Greece, Katakolon Greece. From US\$1,849 plus US \$127.76 taxes, sharing. **Contact: Aim Higher Travel.** Tel. 1-877-752-1858, +1-630-752-1858.
- May 1/08. 8 Nights. Exotic Isle Caribbean Singles Cruise from New York.** Sail from New York on *Carnival Miracle*. Ports of call: San Juan Puerto Rico and St Thomas USVI. From US\$834, sharing, includes port charges, government fees and taxes. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com.** Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.
- May 9-16/08. Alaska Cruise. All Ages. JEWISH SINGLES.** Sail on board *Celebrity Infinity* round-trip from Seattle Washington. Ports of call: Ketchikan, Juneau Alaska, Victoria British Columbia. From US\$1,599, sharing. **Contact: Amazing Journeys.** Tel. 1-800-734-0493, 1-412-571-0220.
- May 11/08. 7 Nights. Mexican Riviera Singles Cruise.** Sail on board *Carnival Pride* round-trip from Long Beach California. Ports of call: Puerto Vallarta, Mazatlan, Cabo San Lucas Mexico. From US\$774, sharing, including port charges and government fees. Single occupancy add-ons available. **Contact: SinglesCruise.com.** Tel. 1-800-393-5000, 1-954-489-3200. www.singlescruise.com.
- May 16/08. 16 Days. Legendary Waterways of Europe, River Cruise.** Limited space. \$4,329, sharing, plus airfare, includes all shore tours, meals on board *Amadeus Princess* sailing from Amsterdam to Budapest. Airfare can be quoted from any city. **Contact: Travel Buddies Singles Travel Club.** Tel. 1-800-998-9099, +1-604-534-5602. www.travelbuddiesworldwide.com.
- May 17-22/08. Bermuda Cruise, All Ages.** Sail on board *Royal Caribbean's Explorer of the Seas* from Bayonne New Jersey and destined for King's Wharf in Bermuda. From US\$530, sharing, plus tax. **Contact: Singles Travel International.** Tel. 1-877-765-6874. www.singlestravelintl.com.

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Singles & Solos — Group Tours, Getaways

Unless otherwise specified prices are based on sharing accommodations.

Dec 19, 25, 30/07. 6 Nights. *Thailand Biking*. The Golden Triangle. Easy to challenging options. Meet in Chiang Mai. From US\$2,698 (US\$3,598 premiere) includes shared casual or premiere inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.



Dec 23/07. 7 Nights. *Skiing Courmayeur Italy*. **LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £735 includes airfare from the UK, shared lodging, transfers, half-board. Ski pass, ski hire, lessons optional. Single occupancy room, add £60. **Contact: Friendship Travel**. Tel. +44-(0)289-446-2211.

Dec 26-31/07. *Hawaii Big Island Biking*. From coast to crater on the Big Island. Meet in Kailua-Kona Hawaii. Easy to challenging options. US\$3,198 includes shared inn/luxury accommodation, bike rental, most meals, guides. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

Dec 27/07-Jan 1/08. *Baja Singles Multi-sport*. Biking, kayaking, scuba diving. US\$2,275 includes shared inn lodging, most meals, activities, equipment, van. Single room, add US\$425. **Contact: Singles Travel Service**. Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com

Dec 27-Jan 2/08. *Paris over New Year's*. Five nights in the 'City of Light.' Take in the seasonal ambience along with cultural activities, sightseeing, and shopping. From US\$1,199, sharing, land only. **Contact: Singles Travel Company**. Tel. 1-888-286-8687, 1-408-354-6531.

Jan 4/08. 7 Nights. *Turkey, Cesme for Singles 50+*. **MATURE SINGLES. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £479 includes airfare from London, airport fees, transfers, private room, meals, excursions. **Contact: Saga Holidays**. Tel. 0800-0960078, +44-(0)1303-771190.

Jan 6, 13/08. 7 Nights. *Skiing and Snowboarding France*. **LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. From £585 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, shared lodging, half-board. Ski pass, ski hire, lessons optional. Single occupancy room add £80. **Contact: Friendship Travel**. Tel. +44-(0)289-446-2211.

Jan 7-15/08. *Tunisia, Gammarth for Singles 50+*. **MATURE SINGLES. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £629 includes airfare from London, transfers, meals, single occupancy room at the 5-star Corinthia Khamsa Hotel, excursions, portage, insurance. **Contact: Saga Holidays**. Tel. 0800-0960078, +44-(0)1303-771190.

Jan 13-21/08. *Vietnam Multisport*. Biking, walking, sailing, and sea-kayaking. Easy to challenging options. Meet in Hanoi. US\$3,998 includes shared casual inn lodgings, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

Jan 19-Feb 8/08. *Discover the Real India*. Information: TBA. **Contact: TGIF Travel Club**. Tel. 1-800-661-7151, +1-604-988-5231. www.tgifcanada.com

Jan 20-26/08. *Singles Beach Week, Club Med Turks and Caicos*. All-inclusive holiday. From US\$1,625 includes meals, drinks, activities, sports galore with instruction, Latin dance classes, cooking demonstrations, entertainment, tips, travel insurance. **Contact: Singles Travel Service**. Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com

Jan 20-26/08. *Jackson Hole Singles Ski Week*. From US\$980, land only, includes shared accommodations, some meals, party, 4-day lift tickets, mountain tour, taxes, gratuities, on-site staff, travel insurance. **Contact: Singles Travel Service**. Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com

Jan 23/08. 7 Nights. *Spain, Denia for Singles 50+*. **MATURE SINGLES. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. Stay at 3-star, all inclusive Hotel Port Denia, near beach, Denia Spain. £499 includes airfare from London, airport fees, transfers, private room, meals, excursions. **Contact: Saga Holidays**. Tel. 0800-0960078, +44-(0)1303-771190.

Jan 27-Feb 1/08. *Hawaii's Big Island Multisport*. Bike, walk, and sea kayak on the Big Island. Meet in Hamakua. Rated easy to challenging. US\$2,898 includes shared inn/luxury accommodation, meals, guides. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

Jan 27/08. 7 Nights. *Tunisia Golf (Non-Handicap)*. **NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £659 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, single occupancy room, activities. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd**. Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.

Jan 27-Feb 3/08. *National Jewish Singles Ski Week, Big Sky Montana*. JEWISH SINGLES. Annual ski holiday. From US\$1,699 includes transfers from Bozeman Montana, shared lodging, 5-day lift ticket, some meals, parties, gratuities. Single occupancy room, add US\$575. **Contact: National Jewish Singles / Beyond Boundaries Travel**. Tel. 1-800-487-1136.

Jan 31-Feb 7/08. *Rio de Janeiro for Carnival*. Sixth annual trip to Rio for Carnival. Samba parade, theme parties, city tour, shopping, beaches. Price: US\$2,029 (plus US\$190 tax and US\$100 visa fee) includes airfare from Los Angeles, transfers, shared accommodations at the 4-star Vilamar Hotel in Copacabana, breakfast daily, city tour, hotel taxes. Single occupancy room, add US\$499. **Contact: Singles in Paradise**. Tel. 1-800-954-5453, +1-808-662-1212. www.singlesinparadise.com

Feb 4/08. 7 Nights. *St Julian's Malta, All-Inclusive for Singles 50+*. **MATURE SINGLES. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. Hotel Cavalieri is a 4-star, water-side hotel, close to a promenade. From £549 includes airfare from London, transfers, some excursions, meals, single accommodation. **Contact: Saga Holidays**. Tel. 0800-0960078, +44-(0)1303-771190.

Feb 5/08. 4 Nights. *Tunisia Golf (Learn to Play)*. **NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £569 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, golf club carriage, single occupancy room, half-board, 3 days of tuition. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd**. Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.

Feb 9/08. 7 Nights. *Classic Walking for Solos, Silves Portugal*. **LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £625 includes half-board, guided walks, entertainment, taxes. Premium single occupancy room, add £35. **Contact: HF Holidays Ltd**. Tel. Canada Contact: Teachers Travel Service. Tel. 1-800-268-7229. UK Contact: +44-(0)208-905-9558.

Feb 9-16/08. *Ecuador Explorer & Multi-Sport*. Hike, bike, trek, raft, horseback ride Ecuador. Cost US\$1,965 includes, shared lodging, some meals, excursions, transport, taxes, gratuities, travel insurance. Single occupancy room, add US\$600. **Contact: Singles Travel Service**. Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com

Feb 9/08. 7 Nights. *Atalaya Park Golf (Handicap), Spain*. **NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £869 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, single occupancy room, activities. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd**. Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.

Look!
Over 400 trips listed in the
Singles Cruises and Singles Tours
online calendars: [Look!](#)

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TOUR OPERATOR FINDS ROOM MATE AND ABSORBS SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IF A PARTNER CAN'T BE FOUND.**

Singles Group Tours & Getaways Continued . . .

- Feb 10, 24/08. 5 Nights. Costa Rica Multisport.** Bike, walk, raft, and kayak the sunny Pacific Coast. Meet in San Jose. Easy to moderate options. US\$2,808 includes shared inn lodging, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Feb 10-16/08. Winter Park Snowboard Weekend.** Snowboarders of all ages and abilities meet in Winter Park Colorado. US\$735 includes shared accommodations, 3-day lift ticket, breakfast daily, receptions, taxes and gratuities, travel insurance. Single occupancy room, add US\$300. **Contact: Singles Travel Service.** Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.
- Feb 11-17/08. Thailand Biking.** The Golden Triangle. Easy to challenging options. Meet in Chiang Mai. US\$2,898 includes shared casual inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Feb 17-23/08 Belize Caribbean Multi-Sport.** Hike, bike, sea kayak or canoe, cave, snorkel. Rated moderately easy. Meet in Belize City. US\$2,398 includes shared accommodation, most meals, guides, van support, entrance fees. **Contact: The World Outdoors.** Tel. 1-800-488-8483, +1-303-413-0938.
- Feb 17-24/08. South America, Brazil to Argentina, All Ages.** Itinerary: Rio de Janeiro, Iguassu Falls, Buenos Aires. From US\$2,229 includes transfers, shared 4-star accommodations, most meals, inter-South America flights, special events and excursions, sightseeing. **Contact: Singles Travel International.** Tel. 1-877-765-6874. www.singlestravelintl.com.
- Feb 20/08. 7 Nights. Solo Amigos Puerto Plata Dominican Republic.** C\$1,569, sharing, plus taxes, all-inclusive from Winnipeg Manitoba. **Contact: Funseekers.ca.** Tel. 1-866-833-6496, +1-204-663-9974.
- Feb 23-27/08. Ski Party Park City. JEWISH SINGLES.** US\$1,029 includes transfers, shared accommodations, breakfast daily, 5-day lift pass, group dinners, baggage handling. **Contact: Amazing Journeys.** Tel. 1-800-734-0493, 1-412-571-0220.
- Feb 24/08. 7 Nights. Skiing and Snowboarding France.** £775 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, shared lodging, half-board. Ski pass, ski hire, lessons optional. Single occupancy room, add £120. **Contact: Friendship Travel.** Tel. +44-(0)289-446-2211.
- Feb 24/08. 7 Nights. Skiing Austria.** Ski St Anton. £775 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, shared lodging, half-board. Single occupancy room, add £120. **Contact: Friendship Travel.** Tel. +44-(0)289-446-2211.
- Feb 27-Mar 7/08. Vietnam and Angkor Wat Biking.** Echoes of history from Hanoi to the Cambodian countryside. Meet in Hanoi. US\$4,698 includes shared premiere inn accommodations, most meals, guides, equipment, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Feb 27/08. 7 Nights. Italy, Sorrento for Singles 50+.** **MATURE SINGLES. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT.** £569 includes airfare from London, transfers, single occupancy room, half-board. **Contact: Saga Holidays.** Tel. 0800-0960078, +44-(0)1303-771190.
- Feb 28/08. 7 Nights. Lanzarote Canary Islands. SINGLE OCCUPANCY.** £545 includes single occupancy room, half-board, wine at dinner, transfers. **Contact: Friendship Travel.** Tel. +44-(0)289-446-2211.
- Mar 3/08. 7 Nights. Walking, Portugal. All Ages. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT.** From £749 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, single occupancy room, most meals, walks. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd.** Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.
- Mar 7-16/08. Belize and Tikal Guatemala.** Itinerary: Guatemala City, Tikal, Chaa Creek Spa Resort in Belize, Placencia. US\$1,998 includes transfers, ground transport, airfare Guatemala City/Flores/Tikal; Belize City/Placencia, shared lodging, some meals, sightseeing, guided excursions, entrance fees, room taxes and service charges. Single occupancy room, add US\$989. **Contact: All Singles Travel.** Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.
- Mar 8-15/08. Singles Skiing in Zell am See, Austria.** C\$1,818 includes transfers from Munich Airport, 7 nights' shared accommodation, breakfast and dinner daily, hotel taxes. **Contact: Meet Market Adventures.** Tel. 1-800-239-0542. www.meetmarketadventures.com.
- Mar 8-15/08. Singles Skiing in Europe – Sölden.** C\$1,800 includes transfers from Munich Airport, 7 nights' shared accommodation, breakfast and dinner daily, hotel taxes and gratuities, 6-day area ski pass. **Contact: Meet Market Adventures.** Tel. 1-800-239-0542. www.meetmarketadventures.com.
- Mar 9-16/08. Big Sky Ski Adventure for Singles.** From US\$1,525 includes shared lodging, daily breakfast, 2 dinners, parties, 5-day lift ticket (3 Big Sky and 2 Moonlight), travel and medical insurance. **Contact: Singles Travel Service.** Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.
- Mar 10/08. 7 Nights. Funchal Madeira. SINGLE OCCUPANCY.** From £539 includes airfare from the UK, single occupancy room, half-board. **Contact: Travel One Limited.** Tel. +44(0)207-392-8988.
- Mar 15/08. 7 Nights. Classic Walking for Solos, Sintra Portugal. LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT.** £599 includes half-board, guided walks, entertainment, taxes. Premium single occupancy room, add £35. **Contact: HF Holidays Ltd.** Tel. Canada Contact: Teachers Travel Service. Tel. 1-800-268-7229. UK Contact: +44-(0)208-905-9558.
- Mar 20, 27/08. 7/14 Nights. Lanzarote Canary Islands. SINGLE OCCUPANCY.** From £465 including single occupancy room, half-board, wine at dinner, transfers. **Contact: Friendship Travel.** Tel. +44-(0)289-446-2211.
- Mar 20-27/08. Japan for Singles.** Itinerary: Tokyo, Hakone, Kyoto. US\$1,899 includes round-trip airfare from Los Angeles California, shared accommodations, transfers, touring. Single occupancy room, add US\$400. Airfare from other cities may be arranged. **Contact: Travel Time for Singles.** Tel. 1-800-469-0091, +1-678-574-4006.
- Mar 20-31/08. Awesome Australia.** Itinerary: 3 nights Sydney, 2 nights Ayers Rock, 4 nights Cairns. US\$3,999 includes shared accommodations, transfers, most meals, touring, excursions, baggage handling, Australian visa. Private single US\$4,975. **Contact: O Solo Mio Tours.** Tel. 1-800-959-8568, +1-650-917-0817 ex 117. www.osolomio.com.
- Mar 22-31/08. New Zealand Biking.** A grand journey along the South Island's west coast. Moderate to challenging options. Meet in Nelson. US\$3,998 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Mar 24-Apr 3/08. Upscale Australia Adventure Tour for Singles.** Itinerary: Cairns, Alice Springs, Ayers Rock, Sydney. US\$4,032 includes ground transport, shared accommodations, some meals, sightseeing, entrance fees, travel insurance. **Contact: Singles Travel Service.** Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.
- Mar 24-Apr 4/08. Highlights of Australia.** Itinerary: Cairns, Alice Springs, Ayers Rock, Sydney. From US\$3,999 includes shared deluxe accommodations, most meals, special dinners, entertainment, ground transport, sightseeing, luggage handling, admissions, airfare within Australia. **Contact: Singles Travel International.** Tel. 1-877-765-6874, www.singlestravelintl.com.
- Mar 29/08. 7 Nights. Atalaya Golf (Handicap), Spain. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT.** £869 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, single occupancy room, half-board, 5 days' golf tuition, clubs and balls. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd.** Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.

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Singles Group Tours & Getaways *Continued . . .*

Mar 31-Apr 5/08. *Costa Rica Biking*. Arenal volcano and the Pacific coast. Meet in San Jose. Easy to moderate options. US\$2,798 includes shared casual inn lodging, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

Mar 31-Apr 4/08. *Beginner Camper and Mojave Multi-Sport*. Meet in Las Vegas Nevada. Itinerary: Death Valley National Park, Red Rocks NCA, Mojave National Preserve, Mitchell Caverns, and Joshua Tree. US\$845 includes shared tent and bus camping, park fees, transport, travel insurance. **Contact: Singles Travel Service**. Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.

Apr 1/08. *7 Nights. Walking Portugal, All Ages*. **NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £749 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, single occupancy room, some meals, tour manager. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd**. Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.

Apr 5-16/08. *Amazing Ecuador and Galapagos Islands, Ages 30s, 40s, 50s*. **JEWISH SINGLES**. Information: TBA. **Contact: Amazing Journeys**. Tel. 1-800-734-0493, 1-412-571-0220.

Apr 6-13/08. *Spa and Rainforest Week*. Information: TBA. **Contact: All Singles Travel**. Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.

Apr 6/08. *7 Nights. Skiing Courmayeur Italy*. **SINGLE OCCUPANCY**. £535 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, single occupancy room, half-board. Ski pass, ski hire, lessons optional. **Contact: Friendship Travel**. Tel. +44-(0)289-446-2211.

Apr 7/08. *7 Nights. St Julian's Malta, All-Inclusive for Singles 50+*. **MATURE SINGLES. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. Hotel Cavalieri is a 4-star, water-side hotel, close to a promenade. From £549 includes airfare from London, transfers, some excursions, meals, single accommodation. **Contact: Saga Holidays**. Tel. 0800-0960078, +44-(0)1303-771190.

Apr 9-14/08. *Costa Rica Multi-Sport*. Bike, walk, raft, and kayak the sunny Pacific Coast. Meet in San Jose. Easy to moderate options. US\$3,298 includes shared premiere inn lodging, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

Apr 12-20/08. *Costa Rica Multi-Sport, All Ages*. Hiking, white water rafting, canopy touring, mountain biking, horseback riding, snorkeling. US\$2,519 includes transfers, shared accommodations, meals, snacks, guided activities, equipment, van support. **Contact: Singles Travel International**. Tel. 1-877-765-6874. www.singlestravelintl.com.

Apr 12-20/08. *Costa Rica Multi-Sport*. Hike, bike, raft, horseback ride, canoe, snorkel, canopy tour. Meet in San Jose. Rated easy to moderately easy. US\$2,395 includes shared accommodation, most meals, guides, van support, entrance fees. Single occupancy room, add US\$495. **Contact: The World Outdoors**. Tel. 1-800-488-8483, +1-303-413-0938.

Apr 20-25/08. *Hawaii Big Island Multisport*. Hike, bike, and snorkel on the Big Island. Meet in Kailua-Kona Hawaii. Easy to challenging options. US\$2,798 includes shared inn/luxury accommodation, bike rental, most meals, guides. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

Apr 20-25/08. *Hawaii Big Island Biking*. From coast to crater on the Big Island. Meet in Hamakua. Easy to challenging options. US\$2,898 includes shared inn/luxury accommodation, bike rental, most meals, guides. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

Apr 20/08. *7 Nights. Tunisia Golf (Handicap)*. **NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £799 includes airfare from the UK, transfers, single occupancy room, activities. **Contact: Solo's Holidays Ltd**. Tel. +44(0)208-951-2800.

Apr 25-May 5/08. *Annual Greek Islands Odyssey*. Information: TBA. **Contact: All Singles Travel**. Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.

Apr 26-May 4/08. *Treasures of Egypt and Optional Israel Add-on*. Information: TBA. **Contact: All Singles Travel**. Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.

Apr 30/08. *10 Days. Greek Island Hopping*. Itinerary: 3 nights Mykonos, a 3-night cruise to include Patmos, Rhodes, Crete, and Turkey, then 2 nights in Santorini. Cost approximately US\$2,300 including airfare, transfers, shared accommodations, cruise, some meals. **Contact: Singles in Paradise**. Tel. 1-800-954-5453, +1-808-662-1212. www.singlesinparadise.com.

May 4-9/08. *Tuscany Biking*. A taste of Tuscany north of Siena. Meet in Siena Italy. Moderate to challenging options. US\$2,998 includes shared luxury lodging, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

May 4-14/08. *Best of Spain*. Itinerary: Madrid, Toledo, Escorial, Seville, Costa del Sol, Torremolines, Granada, Cordoba, Madrid. Cost: US\$2,975, sharing **Contact: O Solo Mio Tours**. Tel. 1-800-959-8568, +1-650-917-0817 ex 117. www.osolomio.com.

May 9/08. *14 Nights. Borneo Rainforest Adventure for Singles 50+*. **MATURE SINGLES. NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £1,469 includes airfare from London, single occupancy room, most meals, sightseeing, portage, insurance. **Contact: Saga Holidays**. Tel. 0800-0960078, +44-(0)1303-771190.

May 10/08. *7 Nights. Classic Walking for Solos, Isle of Guernsey*. **LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT**. £699 includes half-board, guided walks, entertainment, taxes. Premium single occupancy room, add £35. **Contact: HF Holidays Ltd**. Tel. Canada Contact: Teachers Travel Service. Tel. 1-800-268-7229. UK Contact: +44-(0)208-905-9558.

May 11-16/08. *California Wine Country Biking*. Classic pedaling from wine to waves. Meet in Healdsburg. Easy to moderately challenging options. US\$1,998 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

May 11-16/08. *Puglia Biking, Italy*. The Mediterranean flavors of southern Italy. Meet in Bari Italy. Rated with easy and epic options. US\$2,998 includes shared casual inns, most meals. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

May 11-16/08. *Cinque Terre and Tuscany Walking, Italy*. From The Ligurian Coast to Timeless Tuscany. Meet in Santa Margherita. Rated with easy and epic options. US\$2,998 includes shared accommodations, most meals, van support. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

May 11-16/08. *Grand Canyon Hiker*. Hike the Grand Canyon and Havasu Canyons. Rated moderate. Rendezvous in Flagstaff Arizona. US\$2,098 includes shared inn lodging, most meals, guides, van support. Single occupancy room, add US\$450. **Contact: The World Outdoors**. Tel. 1-800-488-8483, +1-303-413-0938.

May 14-25/08. *Amsterdam, Belgium, and Ireland Vacation*. Itinerary: Dublin, Amsterdam, Brussels, Dublin. US\$2,450 includes airfare from Los Angeles, shared accommodations, ground transport, daily breakfast, sightseeing. **Contact: Singles in Paradise**. Tel. 1-800-954-5453, +1-808-662-1212. www.singlesinparadise.com.

May 16-22/08. *Dalmatian Coast Biking*. Bike around Croatia's islands in the Adriatic Sea. Meet in Dubrovnik. Moderate to challenging. US\$3,998 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

May 18-23/08. *Provence Biking*. Meet in Avignon. Rated moderate with challenging options. US\$2,998 includes shared casual lodging, most meals, guides. **Contact: Backroads**. Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

May 23-Jun 1/08. *Best of Northern Italy and Switzerland*. Information: TBA. **Contact: All Singles Travel**. Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.

GUARANTEE SHARE: TOUR PARTICIPANTS WILLING TO SHARE ROOM PAY NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT. TOUR OPERATOR FINDS ROOM MATE AND ABSORBS SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IF A PARTNER CAN'T BE FOUND.

Singles Group Tours & Getaways Continued . . .

- May 24-31/08. Grand Canyon Camper and Multi-Sport.** Hike, bike, canoe, explore national parks: Grand Canyon, Zion, Arches, Bryce, Monument Valley Navajo Tribal Park. US\$1,290 includes shared accommodations, most meals, transport, entrance and camping fees, travel insurance. **Contact: Singles Travel Service.** Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.
- May 25-30/08 Ireland Biking.** Counties Cork and Kerry in the rural southwest. Easy to challenging options. Meet in Cork. US\$2,898 includes shared casual inn lodging, most meals, guides. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- May 25-30/08. Tuscany Biking.** A taste of Tuscany north of Siena. Meet in Siena Italy. Moderate to challenging options. US\$2,998 includes shared luxury lodging, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- May 25-30/08. Canyonlands-Arches Multi-Sport.** Hike, mountain bike, raft, ride horseback, rock-climb, and go canyoneering in Utah's Canyonlands. Meet in Moab Utah. Rated moderately easy with moderate options. US\$1,598 includes shared camp accommodation, meals, guides, entrance fees. **Contact: The World Outdoors.** Tel. 1-800-488-8483, +1-303-413-0938.
- May 26-Jun 3/08. Argentina Biking.** Mountain-biking the Andean northwest. Meet in Salta. Rated moderate to challenging. US\$4,498 includes shared premiere inn lodging, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- May 27-Jun 7/08. Luxury South Africa Tour.** Assemble in Cape Town South Africa. US\$6,970 includes international and domestic flights, ground transport, shared lodging, some meals, sightseeing, excursions, travel insurance. Single occupancy room, add US\$1085. **Contact: Singles Travel Service.** Tel. 1-212-752-2429. www.singlestravelservice.com.
- May 28-Jun 7/08. South African Adventure, All Ages.** Visit Johannesburg, Victoria Falls, Capetown, and 3 night Safari. US \$4,519 includes shared deluxe accommodations, most meals, special dinners, entertainment, ground transport, sightseeing, luggage handling, tax and admissions to game park. **Contact: Singles Travel International.** Tel. 1-877-765-6874. www.singlestravelintl.com.
- May 31-Jun 5/08. Czech Republic and Austria Biking.** From Prague to Vienna. Meet in Prague Czech Republic. Easy to moderately challenging options. US\$2,998 includes shared casual inn lodging, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- May 31/08. 6 or 9 Days. Peru Machu Picchu Multi-sport or Hiker.** Bike, hike, and raft from the Andes to the Amazon. Rated moderate. Meet in Cusco, Peru. US\$1,898 (6 days); US\$2,498 (9 days) includes shared inn and camping accommodation, meals, guides, van support. Single occupancy room, add US\$475 (6 days); US\$550 (9 days). **Contact: The World Outdoors.** Tel. 1-800-488-8483, +1-303-413-0938.
- Jun 3-9/08. Bryce/Grand Canyon/Zion Multisport.** Tour southwest National Parks by foot and bike. Meet in St George Utah. Easy to moderate. US\$2,398 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 7-15/08. Turkey Biking.** Bike and sail along the Mediterranean Coast. Meet in Bodrum. US\$4,998 includes premiere accommodations, most meals. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 8-13/08. California Wine Country Biking.** Classic pedaling from wine to waves. Meet in Healdsburg. Easy to moderately challenging options. US\$1,998 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 8-13/08. Tuscany Walking and Hiking.** Exploring ancient footpaths north of Siena. Meet in Florence Italy. Rated moderately easy with challenging options. US\$2,898 includes shared casual inn lodging, some meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 8-13/08. Tuscany and Maremma Biking.** From Val di Chiana to the Tyrrhenian Sea. Meet in Chiusi Italy. US\$2,998 includes shared casual inn lodging, most meals. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 15-20/08. Tuscany Biking.** A taste of Tuscany south of Siena. Meet in Siena Italy. Easy to challenging options. US\$3,798 includes shared premiere inns, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 15-20/08. Spain and Portugal Biking.** Meet in Santiago de Compostela. Moderate to challenging. US\$2,998 includes shared casual inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 15-20/08. Yosemite Sierra Multi-Sport.** Hike, bike, raft, rock climb, horseback ride. Meet in Fresno. Rated moderately easy with moderate options. US\$1,898 includes shared inn and camping lodging, most meals, guides, van support, entrance fees. Single occupancy room, add US\$125. **Contact: The World Outdoors.** Tel. 1-800-488-8483, +1-303-413-0938.
- Jun 15-28/08. Iceland, England, Holland and Belgium.** Information: TBA. **Contact: All Singles Travel.** Tel. 1-800-717-3231, +1-770-664-7437.
- Jun 21-27/08. Dalmatian Coast Biking.** Bike around Croatia's islands in the Adriatic Sea. Meet in Dubrovnik. Moderate to challenging. US\$3,998 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 21/08. 7 Nights. Classic Walking for Solos, French Alps. LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT.** £669 includes half-board, guided walks, entertainment, taxes. Premium single occupancy room, add £35. **Contact: HF Holidays Ltd.** Tel. Canada Contact: Teachers Travel Service. Tel. 1-800-268-7229. UK Contact: +44-(0)208-905-9558.
- Jun 21/08. 7 Nights. Classic Walking for Solos, Sölden Austria/ LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT.** £669 includes half-board, guided walks, entertainment, taxes. Premium single occupancy room, add £35. **Contact: HF Holidays Ltd.** Tel. Canada Contact: Teachers Travel Service. Tel. 1-800-268-7229. UK Contact: +44-(0)208-905-9558.
- Jun 22-26/08. San Juan Island Biking.** Explore Lopez, Orcas and San Juan islands on a bike. Moderate to challenging. US\$1,998 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 22-27/08. Tuscany Biking.** A taste of Tuscany north of Siena. Meet in Siena Italy. Easy to challenging options. US\$2,998 includes shared luxury lodging, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 25-30/08. Canadian Rockies Multisport.** Bike, hike and raft in Banff and Jasper National Parks. Meet in Banff. Easy to moderate. US\$1,798 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 29-Jul 4/08. California Wine Country Biking.** Classic pedaling from wine to waves. Meet in Healdsburg. Easy to moderately challenging options. US\$1,998 includes shared inn lodging, bike rental, most meals, guides, van support. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.
- Jun 29-Jul 4/08. Ireland Biking.** Counties Cork and Kerry in the rural southwest. Easy to challenging options. Meet in Cork. US\$2,898 includes shared casual inn lodging, most meals, guides. **Contact: Backroads.** Tel. 1-800-462-2848, +1-510-527-1555.

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News for Single and Solo Travel

House Party Walking Holidays NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

London, England. Invigorating walks, good food and lodging, sociable companions and country-house amusements, those are the defining features of an HF Holiday.

Year round, in country houses all across Britain, solos share a house with other Classic Walking Holiday guests. Each holiday includes between 12 and 40 other single participants. This creates a convivial mix of singles, friends, and couples enjoying the daily walks and social evenings together.

HF Holidays also arranges numerous walking programs in other European countries, with some trips designated specifically for singles.

Details: HF Holidays.

www.hfholidays.co.uk.

Walking and Birding in Spain

SAVE! 2008 Holidays at 2007 Prices
NO OR LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Alicante, Spain. Having accidentally discovered their dream property while on holidays in 1988, Patricia and Brian Fagg started work on their "long planned new life." They settled in the mountain village of Quatretondeta in the northwest of Spain's Alicante province, about one hour's drive from Costa Blanca. Their dream included developing a small, 15-room inn and restaurant, which they called Els Frares. Each room has views of surrounding almond and olive terraces against a mountain backdrop. With their hotel as base, the Faggs also offer guided walking and birding excursions.

Prices for the packaged holidays vary, depending on date and plan, and usually include a modest single supplement charge of between 80 and 100 euros per week. But the single supplement will be waived on their standard walking holiday if you hurry up and book before January 31, 2008, and you'll also get 2007 prices. For example, the single occupancy price is 585 euros (C\$800; US\$850) instead of the 2008 price of 625 euros (C\$856; US\$905) for a stay of



7 nights, including daily breakfast and dinner, guided walks, and transfers to and from walks. Standard airport transfers from Alicante airport are also included.

Details: Els Frares Mountain Walks.

Tel. +34-96-551-1234;

www.mountainwalks.com.

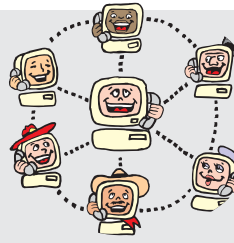
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✓ 365 Active

✓ Join Us!

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Voluntourism Feel-Good Vacations

Hampshire, England. Different Travel's "voluntourism" trips offer an opportunity to share hands-on experiences with like-minded others as well as the feel-good factor gained by benefitting local communities and development projects. Recognizing the discrimination factor in forced single supplement charges, Different Travel claims to be negotiating with hotels for more equitable treatment of travelers on their own. The result is a selection of departures without single supplement add-ons.

➤ Discover Nepal, Apr 5-19/08. £1,699 (C\$3,330; US\$3,540).

➤ Thailand Community, May 10-24/08. £1,420 (C\$2,784; US\$2,958).

➤ Nepal & Tibet, Aug 20-Sep 5/08. £1,999 (C\$3,920; US\$4,165).

➤ Goa India, Sep 28-Oct 11/08. £1,300 (C\$2,549; US\$2,708).

➤ Sri Lanka, Oct 18-Nov 1/08. £1,395 (C\$2,735; US\$2,906).

Prices quoted include single accommodation in a 3-star hotel, most meals, guides, local transport, and flights from the UK.

Land only prices are available for those who want to arrange their own flights.

Details: Different Travel

Tel. +44 (0)2380-669903;

www.different-travel.com.

Temptation Resort & Spa

From US\$219 per day, All-inclusive

Cancun, Mexico. The Blue Bay Getaway hotel in Cancun is an all-inclusive hotel known to be popular with singles. Recently, it has been undergoing refurbishment and transformation. On December 21, the Blue Bay Getaway is scheduled to reopen as the Temptation Resort & Spa in Cancun. The new 384-room resort invites singles and couples to experience a "contemporary take on the all-inclusive holiday." January 2008 prices start at US\$219 per day per room.

Details: Travel agents.

Rural Holidays in Southwest England

NO OR LOW SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

Exeter, England. Cartwheel is a non-profit company run by farmers in southwest England, with members in Cornwall, Devon, Somerset, and Dorset. After realizing that many of its members either charge no single supplement at all or only apply them during peak holiday months, the organization decided to launch a dedicated "No Single Supplement" section on the Cartwheel website.

"Visitors think single supplements are a disagreeable fact of life, but they don't have to be," says Gina Woodcraft, chief executive of Cartwheel. "As independent, small businesses, our members use their discretion about charging single supplements – much of the time choosing not to. The farm tourism industry needs to be sustainable all year round, so initiatives like this will help highlight a warm welcome no matter what visitors' travel choices are."

It is expected that this initiative will be an incentive for even more Cartwheel members to limit or remove the charging of single supplements. Well, amen to that.

Details: Cartwheel Farm Tourism Ltd,

Tel. +44-(0)1392-877842;

www.cartwheelholidays.co.uk.

GUARANTEE SHARE: TOUR PARTICIPANTS WILLING TO SHARE ROOM PAY NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT. TOUR OPERATOR FINDS ROOM MATE AND ABSORBS SINGLE SUPPLEMENT IF A PARTNER CAN'T BE FOUND.

News for Single and Solo Travel *Continued*

Divers Meet-up in Bonaire

Feb 16-23, 2008

Diver: US\$875; Non-Diver: US\$755

Chicago, IL. A scuba diving club with over 250 members in the Chicago area is organizing a diving holiday in Bonaire. The group has booked three 3-bedroom condos to be shared by 5 or 6 people per condo. All units have air-conditioning, a water view, equipped kitchen, cable TV, in-room safe, a balcony or patio, 2 bedrooms with 2 twin beds and 1 bedroom with a queen bed. Each room has its own bathroom. The queen beds are expected to go quickly. Property facilities include lighted tennis courts, pool, restaurant, spa, a grocery store, gift shop, and bank. The 7-night package includes accommodations, free Nitrox, 6 days of unlimited shore diving, and 1 truck per condo. Not included in the price are airfare, marine park fees, CDW insurance, and additional driver charges for the truck.

Details: Chicago Scuba Meetup.

www.scubameetup.com.

SWT Tours For Men and Women 50+

NO SINGLE SUPPLEMENT

New York, NY. Mary Ann Zimmerman founded Senior Women's Travel several years ago because she knew that many older women have the means and the desire to keep on traveling even though they haven't a partner with whom to share the experience and the expense. She also knew that mature travelers want the companionship of the group while touring but need the privacy of their own room at night. Now, she has taken the same concept a step forward with the creation of SWT Tours.

SWT Tours caters to men and women of all ages with an expanded list of destinations. Designed for arts-inclined travelers, the tours focus on culturally oriented activities available in major cities, such as Literary Venice, New York Lifestyle, Proust in Paris, London Theater, Art & Wine San Francisco. Berlin, Boston, Buenos Aires, Toronto, Montreal, and Vancouver are all

scheduled for visits, and all tours are priced with single occupancy rooms.

Details: SWT Tours.

Tel. 1-917-880-6732;

www.poshnosh.com.

The Oxford Experience Save Up to \$200 Before Dec 1

Oxford, England. England's oldest university has a program called The Oxford Experience, which provides a choice of about a dozen courses each week over a period of five weeks between June 29 and August 2, 2008.

The Oxford Experience is open to anyone who wants to "audit" such courses as A History of the English Language, An Introduction to Opera, Enjoying the Cotswolds, The Roman Imperial Army, Romantic Jane Austen, Creative Writing, The Play's the Thing, Castles in Britain and The Garden in Art. There are no tests, no papers, just a lot of lively discussion.

The program takes place at the most prestigious and beautiful of all Oxford colleges, Christ Church, which was founded by Cardinal Wolsey almost five centuries ago. Students stay in buildings that date from the 18th to the 20th centuries, although rooms with private bath are available at extra cost.

The price of a one-week course is £980 (C\$1,922; US\$2,040), including tuition, accommodations, most meals, excursions and special events. Registration deadline is April 1, 2008, but anyone booking before December 1, 2007 can get a discount of \$100 (£50) per week on weeks 1 to 4 and \$200 (£100) on week 5.

Details: The Oxford Experience.

www.conted.ox.ac.uk/courses/international/oxfordexperience.asp.

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Travel with a Challenge is Aging Gracefully

This month *Travel with a Challenge* web magazine celebrates its sixth birthday, a milestone offering a clear indication that its annual readership of nearly one million in 157 countries has enthusiastically embraced the message of active, meaningful travel by older people.

"When I launched *Travel with a Challenge* in 2001," says publisher and editor, Alison Gardner, "I had been writing for mature travelers in Canada and the United States for nearly a decade. That was enough time to sense a mighty hunger in the 45 to 80-year-old age bracket for a whole lot more than conventional travel stories. The problem then was that most people didn't know how to research anything besides mainstream travel. The Internet has changed all that."

Enter *Travel with a Challenge* featuring articles and news about authentic, reliable alternative travel; that is, educational, cultural, historical, and volunteer vacation opportunities worldwide.

Among recent trends noted by the magazine is a dramatic increase in reader demand for stories about volunteer and wellness travel, both of which, says Gardner, "must be delivered with programming depth, not just as a superficial 'feel good' sample."

Interestingly, the most reader feedback and requests for information come from seniors wanting to walk a part or the whole 750 kilometers (460 miles) of northern Spain's famous Camino de Santiago. Readers are also excited by the magazine's unique, eleven-article collection exploring five Hawaiian Islands, going way beyond Waikiki and Honolulu's mainstream tourism. These articles are in the magazine's Travel Article Library together with equally tempting features covering a growing list of destinations and themes.

"Alternative travel experiences and older vacationers," notes Gardner, "are no longer perceived as unlikely or even unusual partners."

Details: Travel with a Challenge.

www.travelwithachallenge.com.

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Reader Report



By Daniel Otero
Assisted by Gladeline Lergier

Bon Bini Bonaire! That cheerful greeting, in the local *papiamentu* language, comes from Bonaire's mixed heritage. One of the Netherlands Antilles group near the coast of Venezuela, Bonaire has a long and storied past rooted in Spanish, Portuguese, French, English, and Dutch influences, not to forget the original Arawak inhabitants, and the Africans who were forced to work the island's salt mines. Bonaire's allure is in this vibrant mix of cultures alongside its relaxing lifestyle, tropical climate, sandy beaches, and exotic bird life. But its real treasure lies underwater. Bonaire is the place for great scuba diving action.

The quality and quantity of its coral reefs and sunken wrecks consistently rate Bonaire among the top dive destinations in the world. There are over 80 sites to explore with drop-offs from 6 to 37 meters (20 to 120 feet). Easy to tough, day or night, from shore or boat, there are ample options and choices for divers of all ability levels.

During three past trips I have only completed 36 sites. I think diving should be savored slowly, time and again, like red wine or any of life's pleasures, so I revisit certain sites at different times in the day merely to experience the beauty in a new light. I expect to make at least four more trips to see all of Bonaire's diving wonders.

Diving Buddy Needed

Of course, for safety's sake, diving should be done with a partner, but when alone, any sociable human being can easily hook-up with other divers. How? Simply arrive at any dive site, look about, and just ask. Usually people willing to form a group are hanging around in the vicinity.

One thing is always guaranteed, the build-up of excitement as you get ready then drop-off into an amazing underwater world. The coral walls come to life in colors of red, brown, and black highlighted with sponges of yellow. You find yourself swimming among schools of tropical fishes



just as if you were a member of the group. You have front seat tickets as

angelfish, barracudas, parrot fish, trumpets, and so many other brilliant characters dart and dance about the fantastically shaped corals.



Top secret: *sergeant majors* enjoy bananas. If you have one in your BC pocket you'll get some great pictures.

Over 80 Popular Dive Sites

A popular dive site to the south of the island is **Hilma Hooker**. Here, a cargo ship that was originally sunk in 27 to 37 meters of water, incredibly, was moved by hurricane Lenny in 2003. Now, it lies draped against the colorful reef between 18 and 27 meters. With snappers, jacks, and tarpon flitting about, it looks as if a decorative painting has come to life.

Several other wrecks are close by, including **La Machaca** or **Front Porch**, but it would be silly to focus on sunken vessels and windjammers. Dozens of splendid opportunities await the sport diver between Washington Slagbaai National Park in the north to Willemstoren Lighthouse in the south. Then, the small off-island of Klein Bonaire is a diver's paradise in itself with more than 20 sites to explore.

Red Slave comes with painted huts dotting the beach as a reminder of the island's less than pleasant past.

Andrea I and II are good for beginners, even offering a wreck, but I think their rocky and murky entrances suck.

Oh so clear **Oil Slick Leap** is definitely one of my favorites. But the surprise is getting up that damn slippery ladder. Just when one feels exhausted, along comes old Blue Angel begging for food and feeling playful. That's enough inspiration to keep me hanging around a bit longer. Less than 15 meters away is a buoy with a drop-off that is easy for first timers as well as those who have been practicing the sport for years.

The hardest dives are on the southern portion of the island where the currents are stronger. Currents can create problems, so it's common sense to start a dive against them, and be sure to leave air in the tank for those long swims.

The Lake is a great dive, but you can end up on Punt Vierkant when the currents are strong. However, the place is worth the effort to see the richly formed brain coral and schools of fish that feed on it.



Eighteen Palms, located right in front of the Lieutenant Governor's house, is an easy dive to repeat at night with a main flashlight and back-up. Here, there is a double reef with one part running along the bottom and the other near the shore at the Plaza Resort.

Finally, I must share a cautionary word learned from my own recent experience. On two occasions my dive buddy had a mild form of the "chokes," nothing grave enough for a decompression chamber, but it was a painful lesson needing a rest-out, which adversely impacted our dive time. Scuba diving can be enchanting to a dangerous degree. In a deepwater environment we must keep within our limitations. We must pay close attention to tables that indicate stops required to avoid decompression sickness, or an even better idea is to wear a dive computer. It's also very smart to learn when to say enough is enough for one day.

~DO & GL

If You Go:

Tourism Bonaire. Lodging, dive guides, sightseeing. www.tourismbonaire.com.

Travel Tips



Customary in Beijing

street, accompanied or *a capella*, the frequency and variety of public singing is surprising and entertaining.

Toilets

Be warned! Attitudes to the use of lavatories in China may differ from your own. Public toilets abound but not all homes, shops or cafés have their own. So they send you across the road instead. But the quality of the loos varies wildly and many westerners have returned from a trip to the facilities a little pale and possibly traumatized. Curiously enough, the public lavs tend to be better kept than some private ones as they are usually maintained by an attendant. Oh! and don't be surprised if fellow users see no need to close their cubicle door.

Bicycles

Cycling is surprisingly easy and enjoyable in Beijing. Every major road has bicycle lanes and drivers are uber-aware of the hundreds of thousands of cyclists. Beijing is pancake-flat, so it takes no effort at all. This is not to say riding through Beijing traffic is without its perils, but common sense and a little gumption is all that is needed to feel like a local in this city.

Food

Where do you start and how do you finish? Eating is the very fabric of Beijing life with an endless choice of imaginative and exotic foods. There is one rule: leave your phobias and hang-ups at home and come to Beijing with your chopsticks poised.

Something to try is a street food called *Jianbing*. This onion-egg pancake is cooked to order on a circular hotplate and flavored with black sesame seeds, spring onion, chilli paste, and at times coriander

or sunflower seeds. This is folded over a crunchy rectangle of puffy, fried dough called *youbing*, and served piping hot. At about 2 yuan (35 cents) a serving it is an unbeatable bargain.

Expectorating

Reports of a spitting culture in China have not been greatly exaggerated. Sport in Beijing consists of side-stepping spittle on the street. The noise of snorting, hawking and spitting is ceaseless and widely practiced by men and women who regularly expectorate onto the pavement, on buses and trains, even in restaurants.

People

Beijing is a sprawling city lacking a clear center, but a slice of local color can be found at the nearest lake. As in the time of the imperial Chinese court, modern day Beijingers love walking beside the lakes designed and formerly enjoyed only by the various ruling dynasties.

Beihai Lake and Qianhai Lake are the settings for locals who wander through centuries-old temples, or indulge in sweet corn ice-cream, or play Chinese chess and mahjong in boisterous groups.

My favorites:

- the old men who swim across Qianhai Lake as soon as the water thaws.

- the gentleman who writes Chinese characters on the pavement in an elegant calligraphy using water from the lake. His work evaporates almost as soon as it is written, but he doesn't seem to mind.

Chinglish

Signs in Chinglish are a sometimes baffling sometimes hilarious attempt to translate Chinese phrases into English. For example, I recently read a menu offering crackling puberty dove. Before laughing too hard at their efforts, imagine yourself translating the other way.

Beijingers are a friendly lot. Language is generally a barrier anywhere outside a recognized tourist area, but the locals will fall all over themselves to help. All other things aside, it is the Beijingers who make their city a great place to visit.

By Erez Gordon

Beijing lacks the frantic quality of a New York or a Tokyo, but it has its own exciting pace – as is quite apparent when standing on a street corner watching the world go by. Take your time in gaining a sense of how to move in this city of 13 million people. Then, with a deep breath, plunge headlong into the flow. As you stride along in the company of those who count the Ming among their ancestors, chances are you will encounter charming customs, or maybe not always so charming, but certainly always interesting.

Dancing

In the early evening, crowds of Beijing denizens gather in public spaces to dance. Although these areas are often poorly lit and the music scratchy, enthusiasts are not deterred from line dancing, slow dancing, or just grooving about to western and Chinese music.

The sight of dozens of Chinese, from toddlers to the elderly, moving in unison outside the gates to the Forbidden City is quite uplifting.

Singing

Beijingers love to sing, solo or in groups, humming along or in full voice, although the sounds are not immediately melodious to western ears. In parks, on the

Ads & Ends – In the Mail

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Comments



Keeping in Travel Mode

From Lisa T, Columbia, SC. Thanks Diane. I enjoy your website. As a new member, it's thrilling to read everything. I used to travel a good bit, but two back surgeries in the last few years has slowed that down some. But, I still love to read about it, and may actually get to go somewhere again in the next few years!

Questions

Hotel in Victoria BC

From Joan G, website visitor. I am interested in knowing if you have any opportunities to stay in a hotel in Victoria for three weeks this coming winter.

Diane: You are welcome to browse pages in the public viewing areas of my website and contact directly any travel agent or other resource you find that is of interest. You might want to start with the link to "Recommended Accommodations."

➤ I have just returned from a visit to Victoria and will certainly be adding to the list the Royal Scot Suite Hotel for its inner-harbor location, service, cleanliness, and good winter prices for kitchen-equipped studios. I got a discount winter rate for C\$109 and was really impressed with the friendliness of the staff, the little extras such as a free newspaper, and the hotel's proximity to all downtown attractions.

Details: Royal Scot Suite Hotel,
425 Quebec Street, Victoria BC
V8V 1W7. Tel. 1-250-388-5463;
www.royalscot.com.

New Single-Friendly Contacts

From Sheryl Weinberger. Please let me know how I would go about adding my company (Best Single Travel) to your website and [Single-Friendly Travel] Directory. Also, how I would add my 2008 trips to the calendar. The website is www.bestsingletravel.com.

Diane: Readers, you may be interested to know that every week or so I get this

request from a previously unknown company. I'm always glad to learn of and pass the word about any travel company working for singles. But first, I need to satisfy myself that an untried source is both reputable and credible. I thought it would be useful to share with you my reply to Best Single Travel, which shows the preliminary steps I take with new contacts.

"Hello Sheryl. Every company mentioned in my publications and on my website qualifies as 'single-friendly' by providing 'guaranteed' share prices, or – even better – no, or very low (under \$30 per day), single-supplement options.

"Additionally, I look for trip organizers who demonstrate a keen interest in consumer protection, with established travel industry contacts and credentials prominently displayed on promotional literature, including on their websites.

"After visiting your website, questions come to mind:

"(1) What is your policy in the event you are unable to find a roommate for the odd male or female participant?

"(2) What are the contact details (street and web address, telephone) for your parent company Tours Are Us?

"(3) Where are you located and have you a walk-in address?

"(4) What travel industry background and affiliations have you, such as CTC, ACTA, or some other pertinent professional association?

"(5) What measures have you in place to protect the money clients leave in your care?"

Readers, I'll be following the progress of Best Singles Travel for a while to discern whether or not we have a serious travel friend or just another loose player who comes and goes without any real attempt to serve the needs of single travelers, especially when it comes to getting rid of nasty single supplement charges.

CSTN Friends Discussions

Galapagos Advice

From CSTN Friend Elizabeth: I've always wanted to go to the Galapagos. I had a look at the company WorldWideQuest.com and called them twice but they never called me back. They have a trip (pricey) that makes use of a boat called the *Beluga*. Unfortunately, I read a poor review of this boat on TripAdvisor.com. So, the combination of a poor review and the fact that they never returned my call scratches Quest off my list.

Can anyone recommend a travel company?

Posted: Sep 13, 2007.

Search Words: Galapagos.

CSTN Friends

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- ✓ 365 Active
- ✓ Join Us!

[CSTN Friends](#)



TrekAmerica Anyone?

From CSTN Friend Joanna: I am considering a TrekAmerica or Footloose tour to South America. Is anyone familiar with these groups who could provide some feedback?

Posted: Oct 19/07.

Search Words: TrekAmerica, Footloose, South America.

Road Scholar Tours

From CSTN Friend Wendy: I'm interested in going on a Road Scholar Tour to Rome in the fall of 2008. Has anyone been on one of their tours, or could anyone suggest a tour that would be single-friendly? I'd be interested in people's experiences.

Posted: Oct 5/07.

Search Words: Road Scholar.



Ads & Ends – Mail

Education for Baby Boomers

From [CSTN Friend](#) Wendy. I'm turning 60 in September and am looking for an educational tour that caters to single baby boomers. Does anyone have any recommendations?

Posted: Sep 28/07.

Search Words: educational, baby boomer.

India Tour

From [CSTN Friend](#) Balu. Any one know of a good tour organizer for a trip to India?

Posted: Sep 17/07.

Search Words: Balu, India.

Egypt Tour

From [CSTN Friend](#) VS. I'm planning a trip to Egypt in early 2008. I would appreciate any advice and insights into the best company to use.

Posted: Sep 12/07.

Search Words: Egypt 2008.

Cuba for Singles

From [CSTN Friend](#) Bill. Does anyone know of solo travel packages to Cuba?

Posted: Sep 15/07.

Search Word: Cuba.

Paris Hotels

From [CSTN Friend](#) Dale. I stayed at: Hotel de l'Europe Paris
98, Boulevard de Magenta,
Paris 75010

From [CSTN Friend](#) Wander. Thank you to everyone for helping me find hotels in Paris . . .

Posted: Aug 27/07.

Search Words: Paris Hotel.

Recommendations

Go Ahead Vacations

From [Lakisha](#), website visitor. I just took a trip with Go Ahead Tours to Tuscany, and the single supplement was under \$200 for a 9-day trip. They often offer discounts for couples, but if you travel alone they apply half of the savings.

Details: Go Ahead Vacations.

www.goaheadtours.com.

TIP!

A Guide to Rome

Rome is a potent combination of ruins, art, and romance that makes Italy one of the top three western European destinations. Anthony Capozzoli fell in love with Italy at a young age, and that passion subsequently turned into a book and CD audio guide called *Unabellavista Rome: How To Tour Italy*.

"I think Rome is a spellbinding city that woos you with a magical elixir of breathtaking art and architecture," says Capozzoli, "but you don't have to be an art aficionado to marvel at the gifted work of masters such as Michelangelo."

Capozzoli thinks that you need to travel independently to really explore a city and get beyond the tourist traps. For example, he says, "Find a restaurant that looks and smells wonderful then defer to your server's expertise. That's how you get the best authentic dishes. The same applies for your entire experience. Just embrace the culture and they'll want to guide you."

To truly enjoy Italy, says Capozzoli, you need to plan accordingly to avoid the common aggravations that can dampen a visit to the eternal city. Here are some basic tips for making the most of your visit:

- ✓ Buy train tickets/rail passes online (this helps you to understand the rail system).
- ✓ Book museum reservations online so you don't waste time standing in line.
- ✓ Call your credit card company to inform them of your trip ahead of time so they don't think overseas charges are fraudulent.
- ✓ When packing, less is more.
- ✓ Bring an empty duffel bag to carry souvenirs home.
- ✓ Bring extra digital camera memory cards and/or film and batteries for your camera; they're expensive in Italy.
- ✓ Rent a mobile phone if you want to be reached.
- ✓ Be respectful and try to speak some Italian; it will inspire locals to guide you.
- ✓ Grab your hotel's card with the phone number and address to help you find your way back; remember to add the major sight or piazza the hotel is near to aid in directions.
- ✓ Bring electrical adaptors for your hair dryer, iPod, camera, or anything that needs electricity.
- ✓ Keep a color copy of your passport picture page in your money belt; hide your passports in your hotel room or hotel safe.
- ✓ Consider renting an apartment instead of booking a four star hotel.
- ✓ Don't flash your cash and *never* leave your camera or purse unattended.

Unabellavista Rome: How to Tour Italy, Guidebook and CD by Anthony Capozzoli (Bella Industries Publishing 2007, \$18.95). www.unabellavista.com.

Ads & Ends — Travel Companions

Travel Companions, Room Shares, Lodging Exchanges

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Commonly Used Abbreviations:

N/S (non-smoker); S/D (social drinker); M, F, M/F (male or female); SWF, DWM, WWM (single, divorced, widowed, white male/female). P (professional). Other designations such as Asian, Aboriginal, African, Hispanic, Oriental, Jewish, when used, are spelled in full to avoid confusion.

➤ **Deadline** *Connecting: Solo Travel News*: December 15, 2007.

IMPORTANT: Travel Companion Ads and Lodging Exchange ads are accepted or refused based on conventional standards of good taste and on the understanding that every response of proper intent will, in turn, receive a prompt and courteous reply. Neither *Connecting: Solo Travel Network* nor its director, Diane Redfern, can accept responsibility or liability for the outcome of ads placed in *Solo Travel News*, or online at www.cstn.org.

Africa/Asia: Would like to find a female companion to do volunteer work in a 3rd world country, either Kenya, Tanzania, Vietnam or China for 2 months starting either in November 2007 or February 2008. The work can be with orphanages or with teaching ESL. Community work would also be interesting. Time can be divided into volunteering and traveling afterwards. There are some organizations that are quite reasonable in cost to hook up with. I am 70 but am fit and still have lots to offer. I have volunteered before and found it to be very rewarding. It is more enjoyable sharing the experience with another person and my husband is not interested in going.
Contact: DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Asia: I am a retired teacher (59) living in British Columbia and my travel plans for 2008 include India (travel but also stay in an Ashram for yoga/meditation – at least a month). Budget is a factor for me but not to compromise safety or reasonable "comfort." Is there someone out there who would find either of these adventures appealing?
Contact: CSTN Friend [Kere](#). Posted Aug 20/07. Search Words: India and the Maritimes.

Caribbean: 62-year-old male seeks F travel companion. I am flexible as to mode of travel, destinations, length of time, activities. We should plan together. I like meeting local people and trying local foods. Open to other activities. Timing flexible. **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Central America: 62-year-old male seeks F travel companion. I am flexible as to mode of travel, destinations and length of time. We should plan together. I like meeting local people and trying local foods.

Open to other activities. Timing flexible.
Contact: DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Central America: Mexico. I want to rent a *casita* in Lake Chapala for the month of January 2008 and would like to find a female companion to share. I am an attractive, outgoing, fit, and slim person who likes to play tennis, golf, going out for dinners, and I also like to cook. I am fun and considerate. Anyone interested in pursuing this? If so, I shall be happy to tell you more about myself. **Contact:** CSTN Friend [Trish](#). Posted Sep 11/087. Search Words: Lake Chapala.

Cruise: I am planning to go on a cruise with Holland America from Sydney Australia, around New Zealand, to Auckland from Feb 16-Mar 1, 2008. Fly to Sydney on Feb 14, fly out of Auckland on Mar 2. I am looking for a pleasant F companion, age 55-70, who will also enjoy the cruise and down under countries. **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Cruise: I'm looking for someone to share a cabin with on a two-week cruise, New York to Caribbean over Christmas, 2007. I'm a 51-year-old female. **Contact:** CSTN Friend [Cbreze](#). Posted Sep 24/07. Search Words: New York, cruise, Christmas.

Europe: I'm a single retired man age 57, and I'm planning to walk the Camino de Santiago – Way of Saint James – in the spring of 2008. Looking for companions, male or female, any age, to walk with me for all or part of the way from St-Jean-Pied-De-Port in southwestern France to Santiago de Compostela in northwestern Spain, a distance of approximately 800 km. I will be staying at *refugios* wherever possible, which cost from a donation to 10 euros a night, so the trip will be very low budget.

From my reading, most people walk at their own pace, meeting up with acquaintances here and there along the way. **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Europe: N/S, WPF, divorced, 60, young minded, conservative yet adventurous. Too accustomed to traveling alone; looking for spur of the moment like-minded F travel partner. Apologies for short notice -- just found this site. I've decided to spend the Christmas and New Year holidays exploring Vienna, Budapest, and Warsaw. I enjoy Christmas markets, reasonable-priced aesthetic hotels, and fine restaurants, museums, parks, antiquing, music, movies, ballet, theater etc. Have researched hotels and am thinking 12/15/07 through 1/2/08. Travel over by air, hopefully open jaw, then train or bus as needed. **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Europe: I have signed up with Grand Circle Travel for their "Old World Prague & the Blue Danube" holiday, with both the pre and post trips, traveling from Jul 18-Aug 4/08, and am looking for a male travel companion to save the single supplement. GCT has a match service where you pay half the single supplement, and if you get a match they give you a refund after the trip is finished. I am a male (62) and retired. I don't smoke or snore (so I'm told) and drink sociably. I've had two matching partners with GCT and we got along fine. I'm kind of an early to bed, early to rise, see and do everything person. If anyone is interested, I can give you my reservation number and name. GCT will set up a conference call to make sure all parties agree. **Contact:** CSTN Friend [Howard](#). Posted Sep 8/07. Search Words: Europe Trip, Howard.

Europe: Greece. I'm looking for a male traveling companion to save the single supplement for a Greece trip (and Islands/Turkey) in late

Continued . . . 19

Ads & Ends — Travel Companions

Sep or Oct/08. I'm thinking about freegatetours.com and their "Best of the Aegean" trip but would consider other companies that give the biggest bang for the buck. I'm male, 62, N/S, S/D, retired and interested in just about everything. **Contact:** CSTN Friend [Howard](#). Posted Sep 8/07. Search Words: Greece Trip.

Europe: I am really interested in Spain and Portugal. I love art (especially the impressionist period), good food and wine, good friends, shopping, antiquing, museums, beautiful beaches. I read at least two books a week, and, my grandsons seem to enjoy my company as does my daughter. However, I don't have anyone to travel with. **Contact:** CSTN Friend [G](#). Posted Jul 10/07. Search Words: Spain, Portugal.

N America: Maritimes. I would like to do a bike/hike adventure to the Maritimes. I am a retired teacher (59) living in British Columbia. Budget is a factor but not to compromise safety or reasonable comfort. **Contact:** CSTN Friend [Kere](#). Posted Aug 20/07. Search Words: India and the Maritimes.

N America: I'm looking for a travel companion for trips in Alberta, British Columbia or the Western US. Though I no longer have a car, I would share expenses and do some non-city driving. I'm a 65-year-old female non-smoker. I'm well-traveled overseas but now would like to see the Western US. **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

N America, USA: N/S F (early 40s), seeking companion(s) to experience Grand Teton and Yellowstone National Parks in winter (snow-coach tours, possible cross-country skiing), plus downhill ski at Grand Targhee for several days. Depart around Feb 19, 2008. Come play in the snow! **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

N America, USA: Christmas is coming sooner than you think. Any ideas how to meet with a group in a snowy, cozy and idyllic place? Colorado sounds exciting. It doesn't have to be over the holidays, just close. **Contact:** CSTN Friend [Karin](#). Posted Jul 15/07. Search Words: Christmas, Colorado.

N America, USA: Alaska. I'm getting a new AWD vehicle next May/08 and plan to leave sometime in early July for at least six weeks. I like to overnight in B&Bs, or inns, motels. I'll drive straight up on I5 then take car ferries where appropriate and small tour boats, and drive to such destinations as Denali. I'll return through British Columbia to Vancouver (with maybe a side jaunt in northwestern Alberta), then down those spectacular roads on the US west coast to San Diego. I'm hoping to find a senior lady or gent who is independent and competent in mind, body, spirit, and bank account, interestingly talkative;

thoroughly engaged with life, and avid for new experiences. **Contact:** CSTN Friend [Richard](#). Posted Oct 6/08. Search Words: Alaska, AWD, Denali.

S America: I'm looking for a M/F traveling companion in the winter of 2009, leaving after the new year. I'd like to spend 3 months in South America and visit 5 or 6 countries, just ride the bus and wing the sights and sounds. It would be nice if this person could speak Spanish. I'm a young 68-year-old, very healthy, N/S, French accent. I've done a bit of traveling: 3 months Aussie land, 3 months southern Africa. I'm a backpacker; I stay at hostels, eat at fast food places. My funds are limited, but can fly from A to B if need be.

Contact: DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Variable: I'm a retired woman (61) who lives in Chicago. I would like to communicate with other women wanting to share travel experiences and not pay the single supplement. I'm specifically planning to go someplace warm this winter, and on an escorted trip to Italy in the spring. But I am open to other ideas.

Contact: CSTN Friend [Marifran](#). Posted Oct 8/07. Search Words: marifran, Chicago, Italy

Variable: Widowed WM, 60, active, N/S, good looking, semi-retired, seeks F companion for local and/or world travel and sightseeing. Plane, bus, train possible car rental. Moderate budget, stay with relatives in Germany. Flexible tastes: cultural activities, museums, beaches. Winter months best for extended duration. **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Variable: I am a 63-year-old SWF seeking a companion to experience classical music or culture-oriented events or festivals, with an emphasis on European destinations. Would be interested in wine or culinary vacations as well. Flexible departure. **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

Variable: Active, N/S, SWPF, 61, seeks M/F traveling companion and the opportunity to meet and make new friends via traveling. I enjoy sightseeing, antiquities, museums, theater, culture and shopping. Some places I'd like to visit include Moscow and St Petersburg, the Italian lakes and Swiss Alps region, Belgium and Luxembourg. I'd enjoy returning to see more of Austria and the Czech Republic. I'm open to suggestions and compromise. I live in the NY metro area and can coordinate to meet for flights. **Contact:** DETAILS AVAILABLE TO CSTN MEMBERS.

TIP!

Russia Trip

From CSTN Friend

[Howard](#). I just returned

from a trip to Russia with

Grand Circle Travel. October was a rainy, cold month in Russia, but otherwise it was a good trip.

The biggest challenge, according to what I had read on the Internet, is in changing money because the Russians, except for street vendors, are not allowed to conduct business with American currency.

Traditional exchange places and banks will not take bills in poor shape or with pencil or pen markings. Gently used bills will be accepted.

Many of the ATM machines are also bill exchange machines. In other words, you put in an American bill and it will exchange it. Most of the ATM machines offer multiple languages for the exchange.

Russians are really into tips. It seems that every bus driver and local guide has a hand out. Tips of one or two dollars seem to be expected.

You must check your coats, umbrellas, and large bags at all museums. This is a free service, but some of our trip members were solicited for tips.

Most large supermarkets are open 24 hours, so you can buy your beer, snacks, and drinks there and avoid the outrageous prices in hotels and bars. For example, a beer in the store will cost you \$1.00, and at the hotel bar you will pay \$5.00.

All in all Russia is a great place to visit.

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