



Discover Europe Ltd.
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Our Fall Trips

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Into the HEART of EUROPE

THE NEWSLETTER OF DISCOVER EUROPE LTD.



POSTCARD FROM THE HOME FRONT

I apologize in advance. This newsletter article is going to be devoted to shameless self-promotion. The fact of the matter is that, apart from having a wide variety of wonderful trips still available for this fall that I want to talk about, I have been so busy here in the office that I haven't been anywhere since the last newsletter. We're returning "en famille" to the Languedoc this summer though, so the fall edition should have some stories to tell.

To the business at hand! The thing is, we have so many great trips coming up that I don't know where to start - the trip to Greece? The three we have going down to the southwest of France? How about the new trip to Scotland? I know, the Part II of our *Stately Homes* tour. A great place to start.

I wonder if any of you caught a piece in the New York Times recently? Here's the link: <http://nyti.ms/1m51TaK>, if you missed it. A lovely piece on Alexandra Messervey's etiquette school - many thanks to Dana Ivey for sending it along. For those who are not yet familiar with her, Alexandra is our partner on the *Stately Homes* tours that visit Highclere Castle (aka Downton Abbey). Alexandra used to work in the Royal Household and her network of aristocratic connections is truly astounding. This unparalleled access provides us with "behind the ropes" tours of many homes, public and private, and many meetings with the owners. Part I of the tour ran in May and was so successful that three people who went on it have already signed up for Part II this fall.

As regular readers will know, Greece is very dear to my heart, so I cannot resist a quick plug for our *Glory of Greece* trip this October. This is the perfect time to visit; the weather is still lovely and the crowds are departed. As my wife will find out when she reads this, I am also going to try and persuade my mother, Anne, to come along on this one. For nearly 40 years she went to Greece every fall for about a month, but doesn't feel comfortable travelling alone any more (she is 86!). As this trip happens to coincide with her birthday, I think it would be a wonderful present for her.

Now about that new trip to Scotland I mentioned. Credit where credit is due - the idea

is not mine, but came from a regular traveller, Lynda Van Kirk. I have often heard it said that wisdom is learning from your mistakes, but genius is learning from other people's (I have often heard it said probably because I often say it - I may even have made it up, because I don't actually remember hearing anyone else say it). Anyway, I would now like to extend the aphorism to add that having good ideas is important, but probably more important is being able to recognise other people's good ideas. So thank you Lynda. If we have left it



Our Group at Highclere this May

Still Available for Autumn:

Treasures of SW France, Sept 13 – 25
Stays at the Chateau de Camon and the Relais des 3 Mas in Collioure highlight this trip. An optional extension to Paris.

Treasure Houses of N England, Sept 18 – 27
Visiting stately homes from Yorkshire to the Lake District.

The Scottish Lowlands, Sept 26 – Oct 5
Glasgow to Robbie Burns' country, through the borders and up to Edinburgh.

Stately Homes, Part II, Sept 30 – Oct 8
We still visit Highclere Castle, but we focus on houses in the south of England.

Linger in the Languedoc, Oct 3 – 11
An extended stay at the Abbaye Chateau de Camon with day trips exploring the region from Carcassonne to the Pyrenees.

Autumn in Tuscany, Oct 17 – 25
From our base in Montecatini Terme, we take trips into the Tuscan countryside.

The Glory of Greece, Oct 23 – Nov 4
Athens, Corinth, Mycenae and Delphi - the highlights of mainland Greece.

A Mystery Tour?, November 8 – 16
A celebration of the great English Mystery writers & a day trip on the Orient Express.

Group Travel for Individuals

At **Discover Europe** we strive to create rich travel experiences with a difference. Each unique tour is limited to 5 – 15 people and guided by an expert with a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm. But don't just take our word for it; here's a sample of what some recent travelers had to say about their tours and/or tour guides:

The small group and personal touch and wonderful guides made this an exceptional trip, and especially all the private tours- very special!

Dana Ivey, *The Stately Homes of England*

Another great trip with Discover Europe. I think this is my 15th and the 16th is coming up next month. We love travelling with Gavin!

Fran Plunkett, *Barcelona & Mallorca*

The scheduled itinerary was just what we wanted. We chose Discover Europe because you took us outside of the London area so we could see more of the country. Adding on private gardens was a treat. It was a trip of a lifetime!

Sherry Wilson, *The Best of English Gardens*

Discover Europe offers a wide selection of well-crafted itineraries, but we will also customize a trip to your specifications. Whether it's a family reunion, a business trip, a school vacation, or simply a celebration, we can help you plan the ultimate escape to Europe.

For more information, contact **Discover Europe** toll-free at 866-563-7077; contact us via e-mail at discovereurope@earthlink.net; or visit our web site at www.discovereuropeltd.com.



Gardens . . .

So with another bumper spring season behind us, it is time to gird up our loins (I've always wondered what that means exactly?) and prepare for the fall. We are literally spanning the continent this autumn with tours visiting Scotland in the NW, Crete in the SE, Stockholm in the NE, and Portugal in the SW.

And if we can't tempt you with a last minute trip in the fall, we also have the first installment of 2015 trips ready to go. Hope to see you in Europe.

Michael Induni, President

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too late for you to join us on *The Scottish Lowlands* this year, we will definitely be offering it again next.

We do also still have room on our November trip *A Mystery Tour*. This is one for fans of that classic genre, the English Murder Mystery. We focus on two of its greatest exponents - Agatha Christie and Sir Arthur Conan Doyle - and visit both the scenes of the crimes and the actual places where they lived. The photo above is of the Devon Coast beloved by Agatha. (Thanks to Dennis Thompson who took it while on a Discover Europe trip this summer - and also my apologies to Dennis for not having room to include a larger version). Possibly the highlight of the tour, perhaps I should say the "denouement," comes with a day trip on the Orient Express featuring the enactment of a murder mystery on board the train (and also a fabulous 5 course lunch). Come and find out whodunnit.

On the subject of food, one of the best meals that I had in France last summer, was created by chef Tom at the Chateau de Camon. We are very much looking forward to repeating the experience when we go back this summer. But don't take my word for it - you can experience it for yourself on this October's *Linger in the Languedoc*.

Of course if you prefer Italian food to French - then why not join us on *Autumn in Tuscany*?

A brief mention is also due to our holiday trips: *Thanksgiving in Mallorca* and *Christmas in Scotland*. If your relatives drive you crazy, here is the perfect excuse to spend the holidays without them. And if you love them, bring them along too.

Michael

A New Puzzle: George Bernard Shaw once famously said that "England and America are two countries separated by a common language." I thought of this the other day when I came across the following piece of eloquent prose. *I hopped on the tube to see my mate in the nick. He was banged up for pinching some dosh from the till at work. He said "it's 'orrible - no chips, no football on the telly and I aven't ad a fag in a fortnight." I told him "don't panic and keep your pecker up."*

Your job is to provide a translation, and the first solution, drawn at random from all the correct entries submitted, will receive a \$200 discount off any trip listed in red in the next newsletter.

News & Notes

Fair fa' your honest sonesie face, Great chieftain o' the puddin'-race. But it's still bad news for Haggis lovers.

Despite recent high-level lobbying attempts by UK environment secretary Owen Paterson with USDA secretary Tom Vilsack, the USDA is going to continue to enforce its outdated ban on the consumption on lungs from livestock animals. This includes sheep's lungs which make up around 10-12% of the contents of traditional Haggis.

To protect the innocent we won't go into the details of all the ingredients of a Haggis here, but suffice it to say that the many Burns Clubs of the USA (there are over 400 worldwide) will have to make do with imitation Haggis when they celebrate the birthday of the poet on January 25th next year. And it has been announced that 2014 is the "year of the Haggis."

We have a solution: sign up for our tour in September to the *Lowlands of Scotland*. This tour is really an in-depth study of the region known as Burns' Country.



Robert Burns

Amongst other things, we visit his birthplace, several memorials, two houses that he lived in, and the church where he was married. And there will be plenty of opportunity to eat real Haggis.

Beautiful Plumage. Visitors to London recently got quite a shock when strolling along the south bank of the Thames - a 50-foot fibreglass parrot hanging upside down from a crane! *Gold TV* (a UK cable TV company) sponsored the construction of the bird - the mythical Norwegian Blue - to advertise the "final"

And a Solution: The 6 countries that formed the original EEC were Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, Luxembourg, and the Netherlands. Take away the three largest and you are left with B, L and N.

The next three to join were Denmark, Ireland and the UK. So we add D, I, and U. Rearrange all 6 letters and you end up with DUBLIN. The solution to the puzzle and the town where Discover Europe is based. Capital punishment indeed.

The first correct answer to be drawn at random was from Matt Parker of Milford, CT and so he gets to deduct \$200 from the cost of any tour listed in red in this newsletter.

reunion show by the Monty Python team at an enormous stadium in north London.

The Parrot Sketch first made its debut on the BBC in 1969. Hard to believe that it was 45 years ago - I must be getting old.

A Reunion. Bev Trost from Waterloo, IA was very excited about taking our *Best of English Gardens* tour this May. She had taken a very similar trip 20 years ago with a company that I used to work with back then (some of you may remember Lord Addison Travel), and was anxious to see how things had changed.

One of the highlights of her trip in 1994 had been a tour of Christopher Lloyd's garden at Great Dixter, with the young, and very entertaining, head gardener, Fergus Garrett. Fergus had ended the tour by giving Beverly an iris from the garden. Simple acts of kindness are seldom forgotten.

Fast forward 20 years. Christopher Lloyd is sadly no longer with us and Fergus has moved up to running the whole place and is much too busy to give tours any more. He has his head gardener do it now. But that doesn't stop our Bev. She finds out that he is indeed in his office, taking care of business, and asks if he has a moment. He has several and Bev gets to treasure another memory.

After the tour Bev went to Oxford where she looked up another contact from many



It's resting . . .



Bev, Fergus & Another Iris

years ago - but that's another story. And they say you can never go back!

Charge It. The TSA has just announced new regulations that everybody travelling internationally needs to be aware of. You must be able to turn on any electronic devices that you are carrying on board the plane. This means that they must be charged up and ready to go before you pass through the security screening.

Parents travelling with teenage children should take particular note of this and make sure that all phones, i-pads, computers are charged up before getting to the airport. On a related note, I am expecting any day, the announcement of a new web site run by the TSA offering second hand electronic goods for sale!

Charge It Again. But this time be careful charging it - to your credit card that is. Credit and debit cards do provide very convenient ways of dealing with foreign currencies in strange lands, but increasingly the issuers are finding ways of making you pay for that convenience.

Different banks charge different amounts for the so-called Foreign Transaction Fees and these range from zero to 3% of the amount charged. You should check with your particular card issuer what fees apply to your card and perhaps even think about getting a new one with a zero rate.

OUR FAVORITE HOTELS The Phoenicia Malta Valletta, Malta

This 5 star hotel in the center of Valletta is the only place to stay in Malta! The hotel embodies old world charm and luxury, complete with modern conveniences. And as they say in real estate: location, location, location. Those are the old city walls in the photo below. They form the boundary of the hotel's gardens.



The Phoenicia Malta Pool

Itineraries 2015

Please note that there are two types of tour shown here. If the tour name is in **Red**, then it is a regular Discover Europe tour with between 5 and 15 participants.

If the tour name is in **Blue**, then it means that the tour is being sponsored by an organization. These tours may well also be available, but as the circumstances vary from trip to trip, please call us first.

Thanksgiving in Mallorca, Nov 21 - 29, 2014
A week in paradise - with no cooking and cleaning. Find out why Gavin lives here.

Christmas in Scotland, Dec 21 - 29, 2014
Stays in Glasgow and Edinburgh, then Christmas in a Scottish castle.

Iceland: the Northern Lights, Various
Our long weekend Iceland trips are so popular now that we have departures on Jan 28, Feb 12 and 13, Mar 18 and 26.

Sicily: Island Crossroads, Mar 20 - 28
This ancient island has been home to the many civilizations of the Mediterranean. Now with an optional extension to Malta.



Valletta, Malta

London On Stage, April 7 - 15
London theatre and so much more.

Barcelona & Mallorca, April 9 - 17
The vibrant city of Barcelona and an island paradise - and then stay on for:

Spanish Panorama, April 16 - 25
From Madrid to Andalucia with visits to Toledo, Cordoba, Granada and Seville.

A Greek Easter, April 10 - 19
Greek Orthodox Easter in the village of Tolo and then visit Delphi and Athens.

The Dalmatian Coast, Apr 23 - May 3
From Dubrovnik, up the coast of Croatia to Ljubljana, capital of Slovenia.

Wales & Welsh Borders, Apr 30 - May 9
A circular tour of Wales - from Snowdonia in the north to Cardiff and St Davids.

Under the Tuscan Sun, May 1 - 8
From our base in Montecatini Terme, we take trips into the Tuscan countryside.

Barcelona to Valencia, May 5 - 14
A new trip for BCS to Barcelona and down the Costa Blanca. Mallorca option.

Stately Homes, Part II, May 7 - 15
Part II of our tribute to *Downton Abbey* in partnership with The English Manner.



Great Dixter

The Best of English Gardens, May 12 - 21
Our annual homage to the Chelsea Flower Show and gardens of southern England.

Turin & the Piedmont, May 14 - 23
Northwest Italy - the Shroud of Turin, the Langhe, and the Last Supper in Milan.

Paris, Normandy & the Loire, May 21 - 30
A circuit in northwest France: Giverny, Mt. St. Michel, Chateaux and Paris too.

Achilles to Alexander, May 25 - Jun 9
An in-depth exploration of ancient Greece with Vassar professor Barbara Olsen.

Jewels of Eastern Europe, May 28 - Jun 6
Exploring this historic region from stays in Budapest, Vienna & Prague.

Royal Scotland, June 4 - 13
A new collaboration with The English Manner north of the border.

Along the Pyrenees, June 5 - 14
Exploring Cathar country and the Basque region from Carcassonne to Bilbao.

The Pilgrim's Way, June 11 - 20
Following on from the Pyrenees tour, we trace the Way of St. James to Santiago.

A Cotswold Spring, June 11 - 20
An extended stay in lovely Stow-on-the-Wold. Quintessential English countryside.

The Channel Islands, Jun 18 - 27
A short stay in London and then on to Jersey & Guernsey. Potato Peel Pie anyone?

Island of Saints & Scholars, Jun 25 - Jul 3
Dublin to the west coast in the footsteps of the Irish literary giants.

Britain in Bloom, Jun 29 - Jul 7
The Hampton Court Flower Show and breathtaking private garden visits.

Discovering East Anglia, July 10 - 18
Experience life in a country house hotel with Gavin Miller in his home region.

Skye & the Highlands, Jul 23 - Aug 2
Edinburgh to Inverness, across to Skye and back down the west coast to Stirling.

For detailed itineraries, contact **Discover Europe** toll-free at 866-563-7077; e-mail at discovereurope@earthlink.net; or our web site at www.discovereuropeltd.com.