

Home Town Travel News

A Newsletter for Friends and Clients of Home Town Travel
128 Bartlett Avenue • West Creek, NJ 08092 • (609) 597-5100

Winter/Spring 2016



We've Moved!

128 Bartlett Avenue
Route 9 South
Bartlett Commons
West Creek, NJ 08092
(2 blocks south of State Police)



Nancy's Notes

I would like to thank everyone for their notes and get well cards. I was on an AMA Christmas Markets cruise and preparing to go to Prague when I ended up in the hospital in Nuremberg with unexpected kidney stone surgery and additional one when I returned. I am always going to recommend travel insurance. The hospital required a €5,200 deposit to admit and proceed with my care. You never know what can happen. That, along with some additional issues had me in the hospital here a few times in January but I am happy to report all is well. Thank you Tara for holding down the fort!

I have to tell you that the staff of AMA Waterways went above and beyond anything I could possibly expect. Abel, the Cruise Director got us a taxi at 2 AM and lent us euros to get to the hospital and have my cabin mate, Renee get back to the ship. Even though my little group was not part of AMA, while in Prague, Abel took wonderful care of them in my absence. AMA checked on me while I was in the hospital and even sent flowers along with one of their staff who helped interpret German with the hospital personnel. It's a lot less stressful when you understand what is happening.

We are finally settled in our new office. Moving from a house to two and a half rooms was an amazing feat. It's unbelievable what you can accumulate in twelve years. We could not have done it without my clients, who are my friends who were there to help. Special thanks to Mary Ann Rees, Gina Groeling, Marie O'Hara, Kathy Capron and Bernadette Park. I think they all need a vacation! As far as our new location, you can come in the front door, come in and ring the bell or go to the side door (next to our flag) and come right up the stairs and make a right. I look forward to seeing you here.

It's time for Rotary's "Night of Cash" event on May 13th at Cal-loway's (2 1/2 miles south of Route 72). For those of you who are not aware, this is our club's major fundraiser which enables us to give out more than \$10,000 in local scholarships. We sell 300 tickets at \$100 each. The purchase of the ticket entitles you to dinner and two drinks and a fun night where you can walk away with the grand prize of \$10,000. We also do a 50/50 and a Chinese Auction. Please contact me if you would like to buy a ticket. Friday the 13th could be your lucky day!

Looking forward to a wonderful summer...

Regards,
Nancy

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An official travel agent for Olivia.
For more information visit their website
www.olivia.com

International Phone Usage

Verizon Wireless
Turning Data Services On/Off

Devices automatically search for updates that incur data usage even if you're not using the Internet or an app that requires data. If you don't want to incur any data charges, you can turn off data services completely. Check your user manual for specific instructions, but in general, follow these guidelines:

Android™

- Navigate to Settings.
- Tap Wireless and Networks.
- Tap Mobile Networks.
- Select the Mobile Network check box to turn data connection on or off.

iPhone®

- Navigate to Settings.
- Tap Cellular.
- Tap Roaming.
- Select Voice Roaming, Data Roaming and/or International CDMA.

BlackBerry®

- Go to Options.
- Choose Mobile Networks.
- Select Manage Connections.
- Select Mobile Network Options.
- To turn data services on or off, change the Data Services field.

BlackBerry Touch Screens

- Tap the Network icon on the Status bar.
- Tap Networks and Connections.
- Tap Mobile Networks.
- To turn data services on or off, change the Data Services field.

Windows® 7

- Navigate to Settings.
- Select Cellular.
- Tap the Data Connection On/Off switch.

Remember, non-Global (CDMA only) devices can also use data and incur data charges in countries with CDMA data networks. Our Trip Planner will tell you if your current phone will work in specific countries and what the rates will be.

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Come And Be Inspired By Iceland – Where The Unexpected Happens Everyday

A country of sharp contrasts, Iceland is not easily defined. Home of the largest glacier in Europe as well as some of the world's most active volcanoes, it is widely known as "The Land of Fire and Ice".

Iceland is also the land of darkness and light. Its location just below the Arctic Circle makes for long summer days with near 24-hours of sunlight, offset by short winter days with little sunlight at all. Fortunately, while winters are somewhat dark, they are relatively mild and play host to one of nature's most spectacular exhibitions of beauty: the Aurora Borealis. On a dark clear night, the Northern Lights can often be seen dancing across the sky overhead in all their green glory. You should move fast to catch them though, as they often disappear just as quickly as they appear, behaving much like Iceland's weather which shifts in mysterious ways.

Given how unpredictable the elements are, it is not strange that Icelanders have a rich tradition for folklore rife with sorcerers, ghosts, elves, trolls, hidden people and other mystical beings. Many stories are influenced by the long dark nights of winter, while others are related to long summer nights.

Iceland is a curious mix of old traditions in new settings. Iceland is both, the youngest landmass in Europe; and home to the continent's oldest parliament, formed in 930 AD. The parliament's original location, Thingvellir, is designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site, located at the juncture between the North American and Eurasian tectonic plates, which are drifting apart by a few centimeters every year.

Icelanders also enjoy natural hot springs and geothermal lagoons, such as the famous Blue Lagoon and the Myvatn Nature Baths, whose high levels of silicates and other minerals have an especially rejuvenating effect on the skin.

When it comes to food, one of the best things Iceland has going for it is location. Surrounded by some of the world's finest fishing grounds and clean and natural environment, Icelandic restaurants enjoy some of the purest materials available.

Iceland on the silver screen – interested visitors can travel around the country visiting familiar scenes including HBO's Game of Thrones along with Interstellar (2014) and Star Trek: Into the Darkness which were also shot in Iceland. See www.filmniceland.com

VISIT ICELAND – **IT IS** NOT A DESTINATION – IT IS **AN ADVENTURE**



Jim & April Sutter at Karisma El Dorado Casitas :) Our excursion on the camels LOL!
You guys are the best!



Jack & Ellen Keosseian at the Grand Canyon

This is a must do for everyone. Caravan was absolutely fantastic: professional, courteous, friendly, helpful, concerned, safe, etc. I could go on and on, but I'd eventually run out of appropriate adjectives in the English language.

The tour guide was excellent, knowledgeable, and all those other adjectives I've already mentioned. Ellen and I wanted to adopt her by the end of the tour, even though she was probably in her thirties. The bus driver was no less fantastic. He kept us hydrated, was always on time, and added useful information to stops as well as the tour guide.

We have tons more pictures and videos I could share with you if you ever find you have some free time. Thanks SO much for YOUR expertise; we look forward to working with you again on our next trip.



Don and Mimi Stilwell took a fabulous Mediterranean Cruise and stopped off in Ephesus, Turkey to visit the ancient ruins of the library.

We also stayed at Nancy's favorite hotel in Venice, The Columbina.

The gondola picked us up at the front door, just next to the Bridge of Sighs.

"Traveling with Hometown travel is great. Nancy does all the work we have all the fun!"



Carl & Virginia Paola celebrate their "60th" Anniversary in Aruba



Visiting Itlay to experience the passion play of Sordevolo with Central Holidays.



Prague to Budapest Cruise

What more can we say Nancy, "you're the best"! We had such a great vacation! Avalon Riverboat was simply so cozy, relaxing & everything was perfect. We cruised by all of the countries, scenery was impeccable.

Our parents/grandparents were born in Austria-Hungary & the Czech Republic. For us to experience their "Old World" culture & tradition is beyond words. We toured where the "Sound of Music" was filmed, awesome, we're still singing the songs. Germany...gosh, had so much fun there. Beer & sausages..uummm. Visiting all the breathtaking Castles, Abbeys, Mozart's birth place, living all the history, priceless!

Thank you again for your input and helping us along with our plans. Your flight arrangements were flawless. We can't thank you enough! So glad we found you!

Sincerely,
Diane & Maryann



Grotto Bay in Bermuda

20th anniversary trip was everything we wanted. We are 'foodies' and for an all inclusive, the food was outstanding! Even got to tour the kitchen-very fun!

John & Gale Van Waalwijk



Dave and Sue McIndoe at the Eiffel Tower in Paris, France.



"Can't do another winter without a cruise." Eight year old Isaih Armstrong of LEHT is looking forward to his 4th cruise on Carnival this February.

FYI-GERMANY



Located in the heart of Europe, Germany is a prime destination for experiencing culture, history, art, hospitality and so much more. You can discover colorful festivals and street markets, amazing shopping and, of course, great food.

Delicious regional cuisine awaits all over Germany, or visitors can choose from over 250 Michelin-starred restaurants for a special treat. Iconic German cars are just as much a part of the journey as fairytale castles, bucolic landscapes and bustling cities. You can shop for designer clothes and handmade Christmas ornaments, or dive into the country's fascinating history at one of 40 UNESCO World Heritage sites or Germany's world-class museums. And you can do this all with the advantage of a superb infrastructure, great hotels in all price ranges and a favorable exchange rate.

Toward the end of November, city centers all over Germany are transformed into beautiful Christmas markets. Decorated booths offer handcrafted gifts and regional specialties, and visitors can lose themselves in the great atmosphere of these magical wonderlands while sipping Ghuhwein and tasting gingerbread or stolen cakes.

The 500th anniversary of the Reformation in 2017 is yet another reason to pay Luther's birth country a visit. Events and exhibitions all over German will give you the chance to follow in Luther's footsteps. Come by and we can assist in getting ideas for these exciting itineraries.



Cruising Europe on Princess with cousins from England.
Al & Marlene Cox



Caravan tour of the Canadian Rockies and Glacier Park.
Arlene Berriel, Marie O'Hara, Rosemary Graziano and Eileen Dolan



Honeymoon in Paradise

Our stay at the Valentin Imperial Maya in Riviera Maya Mexico was so romantic. We felt so welcomed from the minute we walked in. On our daily handout our names were published under the Honeymoon group which made us feel so special. The food was absolutely amazing, never a bad meal at any of the restaurants. The pool was gorgeous, surrounded by the cabanas and endless chaise lounges we never had a problem finding a place to keep our stuff. We always had a short swim to one of the pools swim up bars, or we would wait for the poolside waiters to bring our drinks. The beaches were also gorgeous with plenty of lounge areas and soft white sand to dig our toes in. Overall we would highly recommend everyone to stay here at least once in your life. It was simply wonderful!

-Lori & Alex Scherer

Crystal Cruises Is Bringing The SS United States Back Into Service

Luxury operator Crystal Cruises has entered an agreement with the SS United States Conservancy on a plan to return the classic ocean liner to service. In a press briefing in New York, Crystal president and CEO Edie Rodriguez said Crystal will cover all costs associated with preserving the ship, which has been moored in Philadelphia since 1996, while launching a feasibility study she expects to be completed by the end of the year.

Rodriguez said returning the ship to service is expected to cost "in excess of \$700 million." If successful, the ship's re-launch will occur in 2018, she added. The plan will transform the ship into an 800-passenger luxury ship, retaining original features ranging from the ship's classic liner profile to facilities including the Promenade and Navajo Lounge.

"As an American and someone in this maritime industry for 35 years, I think we would be remiss to pass up the opportunity to restore such an image of luxury travel and a bygone era of America and Americana," said Rodriguez. "It is our ultimate goal that the SS United States re-emerges as a modern luxury vessel."

Originally launched in 1952, the SS United States was considered a hallmark of post-war industrial design and innovation, setting a transatlantic speed record, which still stands, on its maiden voyage. The ship remains the largest passenger vessel ever built and designed in the U.S., transporting four U.S. presidents, international royalty and Hollywood celebrities prior to its 1969 retirement.

Home Town Travel's Groups

www.hometowntravelinc.com

THE BLACK HILLS AND BADLANDS SOUTH DAKOTA Sep 30 to Oct 6, 2016

Base yourself in one hotel for six nights and enjoy highlights like Mt. Rushmore, Crazy Horse Memorial, Black Hills Gold, Needles Highway, Custer State Park, Deadwood, Badlands National Park, Wall Drug Store and Hot Springs. Included in your price is round trip airfare from Philadelphia, air taxes, fees and surcharges, hotel transfers, cancellation waiver and insurance, six breakfasts and three dinners.

Rates: \$2,639.00 per person double (singles and triples are available). Includes all taxes.

ROSE BOWL PARADE CALIFORNIA (optional Las Vegas extension) Dec 30, 2016 to Jan 3, 2017

California New Year's Getaway featuring the Tournament of Roses Parade.

Highlights include float viewing, Bandfest, New Year's Eve Party and the Tournament of Roses Parade. Included in your price is round trip airfare from Philadelphia, air taxes, fees and service charges, cancellation waiver and insurance, round trip hotel transfers, three breakfasts and three dinners.

Rates: \$2,829.00 per person double (singles and triples are available) Includes all taxes.

SOUTHERN IRELAND AND THE ARAN ISLANDS April 27 to May 6, 2017

Experience Ireland on this spectacular tour. Spend one night at Dunboyne Castle, just outside Dublin and two nights each in Kilkenny, Killarney and Galway and a final night in Dublin. Highlights include Taylor's Three Rock Irish evening, pub dinner in Dingle, Waterford walk and Crystal Factory, Blarney Castle and Blarney Woolen Mills, Dingle Peninsula, Cliffs of Moher, sheepherding at Rathburn Farm, ferry to the Aran Islands and the South Sole Pub. Tour includes accommodations, full breakfast daily (except on day of arrival), two lunches and six dinners, round trip air from Newark, all local taxes, hotel service charges & portage for one suitcase in included. Insurance is recommended. Price \$2,929.00 per person based on double.

ALPINE LAKES AND SCENIC TRAINS

May 8 to May 17, 2017

Scenic trains in Switzerland and Italy along with cruises on Lake Como & Lake Maggiore.

Stay in Lucerne, Zermatt and St. Moritz. Highlights include GoldenPass Train, Matterhorn Museum, Glacier Express Train, Bernina Pass Train, ferry ride on Lake Como, Lake Maggiore cruise, farm

visit with wine and cheese pairings and an Island dinner. Included in your price is round trip airfare from Philadelphia including all taxes, fees and surcharges, cancellation waiver and insurance, round trip hotel transfers, eight breakfasts and four dinners.

Rates: \$4,999.00 per person double and \$5,499 per person single

LEARN MORE ABOUT SOUTH DAKOTA, ROSE BOWL PARADE OR SWITZERLAND TRIPS OF- FERED BY COLLETTE TOURS AT OUR INFORMATION NIGHT ON MARCH 30TH AT 600PM AT ST. FRANCIS ON LBI. PLEASE RSVP TO ATTEND.

ALASKAN CRUISE TOUR ANCHORAGE TO VANCOUVER May 30 to June 9, 2017

Join Home Town Travel and Celebrity Cruise Lines to Alaska on a three night land and a seven southbound cruise from Anchorage into Vancouver on May 30, 2017 to June 9, 2017. Fly into Anchorage spend one night. Experience Denali for one night, a domed train ride, one night in Talkeetna and a Natural History tour. Board Celebrity Millennium in Seward for a seven night cruise to Vancouver. Ports of call are: cruise Hubbard Glacier, Juneau, Skagway, Icy Strait Point, Ketchikan and cruise the inside passage.

Included in this package: all land accommodations and transportation (no meals), Natural history tour, cruise accommodations as selected, all current port taxes and government fees, all on board meals (except in specialty restaurants), adult beverage package, and a \$200.00 on board room credit per cabin.

Ocean view rooms start at \$2760.00 per person based on double occupancy.

Balcony cabins start at \$3360.00 per person double occupancy. Not included is airfare (which we should have rates for by June of this year) and optional travel insurance. Transfers to the airport will be provided for a nominal fee.

A valid US passport is required. A deposit of \$250.00 per person is due by July 15, 2016. Additional cabin categories are available as well as third and fourth rates based on availability.

For additional information please contact Tara.

BERMUDA CRUISE NORWEGIAN BREAKAWAY October 23-30, 2016

THINK PINK – Aboard the Norwegian Breakaway (sailing from New York) you'll have three full days to explore the perfect little paradise called Bermuda. Relax and play at the world-famous Horseshoe Bay Beach. Enroute, enjoy Freestyle cruising. Dress up or dress down. Head to the Aqua Park and whoosh down thrilling waterslides. Dine at a choice of seven complimentary restaurants and head off to see the spectacular 'Rock of Ages'. Many other specialty dining venues are available at a nominal charge. Our special rate includes balcony accommodations, port and government taxes and the ultimate beverage package along with a \$50 per cabin on board credit. \$1,299.00 per person double. MUST BOOK BY APRIL 8, 2016 TO QUALIFY FOR THE INCLUDED BEVERAGE PACKAGE. Insurance is recommended.

WINTER AND SUMMER IN ICELAND

We had such a good response on this year's Iceland trip that we will be doing it again next year. Winter dates will be January 12-16, 2017 and summer will be June 22-27, 2017. Winter package price will be available in early April and summer package in July. Please call if you would like to receive the information. Don't be disappointed; sign up soon. Call Tara.



Iceland Group 2016



My mother and I had the most wonderful vacation this past June on a cruise to Alaska. My father had recently passed away and we wanted a special mother-daughter time together. Nancy made all of the arrangements for us and countless recommendations for a really spectacular vacation.

My mother had traveled extensively but had never visited Alaska. Many people told me that Alaska was the best cruise they had ever taken so we decided that this was our destination. Nancy had already traveled there and knew everything we should do and see at every port. She also selected the best cruise ship for our needs, the cabin, and the many excursions that we should take. There were no details overlooked.

I highly recommend the Princess cruise line for visiting Alaska. Princess has the ability to tour Glacier National Park with a park ranger onboard to tell us everything about glaciers as well as see the glaciers close up. We were also thrilled with a seaplane ride over the glaciers in Juneau and a train ride through the glaciers in Skagway. I was surprised to learn so much about American history on this trip. The history of Alaska is filled with stories about Native Americans and the Gold Rush era. Additionally, the scenery was quite spectacular both from the ship and on land.

Princess cruise line had wonderful food, entertainment, activities and hospitality. They anticipated our every need. If I cruise again, I would definitely choose Princess. Most of all, my travel needs in the future will all be with Nancy's guidance. She enabled my mother and me to have one of the most memorable experiences of our lives.

Lauren Scharf-Snyder and Arlene Scharf



Jablonski family enjoy Bermuda while on Norwegian Cruise Line's Breakaway.

CRUISE NEWS

Norwegian Cruise Line has picked the world-famous musician Pitbull to be the godfather of its new ship, *Norwegian Escape*.

This holiday season, passengers on **Royal Caribbean** ships will enjoy new amenities and activities like classic movie screenings, guest and crew caroling, family arts and crafts, cookie decorating, special holiday-themed Adventure Ocean youth program, upgraded stateroom experiences—themed and adorned towel animals—plus a commemorative seasonal souvenir cup from Coca-Cola. Some ships will even offer ice skating. Guests on ships with the DreamWorks Experience will enjoy holiday photos with characters from Kung Fu Panda, Shrek, and Madagascar as well as a special holiday character breakfast.

Royal Caribbean has begun broadcasting **The Autism Channel** in late October 2015 with Autism Friendly programming to both inform and entertain guests and those with developmental disabilities. In February 2014 Royal Caribbean began the first cruise line certified as Autism Friendly by Autism on the Seas.

Royal Caribbean was honored by the editors of **Cruise Critic**, the largest cruise community in the world in the categories Best for Families, Best Entertainment, and Best Suites.

Celebrity Cruises announced seven new shore excursions as part of its **Take Care of Yourself** program, created by *New York Times* Best-Selling Author Randi Zuckerberg. The new programs include unique experiences like Stand-Up Paddle Yoga, hydrobiking, cycling, and canoeing in the Caribbean, Europe, and Australia.

Amber Cove in the Dominican Republic received its first call by the **Carnival Victory**. The area boasts a shopping village, bars, restaurants, a pool, ziplines, and more. Two of Carnival's largest vessels can dock at once, and Amber Cove will serve as a base of operations for Fathom, which will begin sailing in April 2016.

Disney Cruise Line revealed its ports and itineraries for the early **2017 season**. Whether sailing from Port Canaveral, Miami, San Juan, or even Galveston, most cruises will stop on Disney's private island, Castaway Cay.



The Sea Oaks group enjoy dinner while on their caravan tour to the Canadian Rockies.



Home Town Travel
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