

## **ALPINE TRIP 2012**

### **FENELON FALLS CURLING CLUB**

#### **APRIL 25 TO MAY 12**

**April 25 (Wednesday)** We depart Pearson Airport on Air Canada flight AC846 at 8 pm and we arrive in Munich at 10:05. You will have full inflight services including dinner, drinks and breakfast before landing.

**April 26 (Thursday)** Upon clearing customs and picking up our luggage we will be met by our Bavarian bus driver, Heinz Daniel, in the arrival lounge. He is always a welcome sight waving his Canadian flag to get our attention. You will have a little exposure to Germany's famous autobahns as we circle the city of Munich to reach our lunch destination. There are speed limits on autobahns around major cities. Nevertheless, the cars are impressive. Enroute to lunch we will make a brief stop at the very touching Durnbach Allied War Cemetery. There are mainly allied flight crews buried here from WW II. You can't help but be moved by the messages from the surviving family members. Please consider signing the Visitors' Register.

Our complimentary lunch and beer will be at the bustling Tegernsee Braustuberl (Tay gern zay brow stew burl). This is a truly authentic Bavarian beer hall and the service is efficient but brusque. Tegernsee is Bavaria's most popular Alpine Lake and after lunch we will stop for a "photo op" at Achensee (aw ken zay), our favourite Alpine lake. You will have slipped quite silently into Austria because all of the old border crossings are now derelict. We will soon begin the descent into the Inn River Valley on the way to \*\*\*\*Hotel Jaegerhof (yea ger hofe) in the tiny village of Kolsassberg. You will be amazed by the beautiful panoramic mountain views. There are several signed trails near the hotel but it might help to possess some mountain goat genes. Don't worry - the church bells are shut off after 6 pm. Dinner is at the hotel. A sparkling wine toast to our trip's success precedes dinner. Casual clothing is acceptable.

**April 27 (Friday)** After a leisurely buffet breakfast we will drive a short distance to the Grassmayr (grass myer) Bell Foundry in Innsbruck. Frau (frow) Elizabeth Grassmayr will be our tour guide as she tells about the rich history of this 14 generation business. This foundry ships bells all over the world. She is the matriarch and she is one physically fit and inspiring senior citizen. The tour is really interesting and they do have a lovely gift shop available at the END of the tour. Frau Grassmayr will then lead us into Innsbruck's charming downtown for an informal tour of this historic Hapsburg town. There will be limited free time for lunch and a walkabout before we set out for Swarovski (sh war ov ski) Crystal World. We will arrange a tour of the fascinating, high-tech museum for those interested. The retail section will be available for everyone. Dinner is at the hotel.

**April 28 (Saturday)** We cross back into the German state of Bavaria today enroute to the beautiful town of Mittenwald and some of the Tyrol's loveliest Luftmalerei. This is the art of decorative painting, often of a religious theme, on private homes and public buildings. The beautiful pink Baroque church of Saints Peter and Paul is a must see, both outside and inside. The town is surrounded by stunning Alpine peaks. Later we will take the gondola ride to the top of the Karwendal (kar ven dull) range and, weather permitting, you will see a spectacular array of Alpine peaks as far as the eye can see. A new museum featuring displays on the local flora and fauna is really well done. We will likely stop for a lunch break at the beautiful Groebl Alm at the foot of the mountain.

Tonight is very special. After dinner we will be treated to a Tyroler Abend with music, dancing and schuhplatteln (shoe plawt el en). This is the famous "slap dancing" performed by men in lederhosen (lay der hose en). You will see the Woodcutters' Dance, The Miners' Dance and be prepared to join in. You will be able to watch the locals and their distinctive style of "ballroom dancing".

**April 29 (Sunday)** Today we set out for Switzerland and Italy via the famous San Bernadino Pass. We have to hope for good weather because the scenery is spectacular. We will be spending the next three nights in Stresa (stray sa) in the beautiful \*\*\*\*Hotel La Palma on the shore of Lago Maggiore (law go mah jor ay). There is a stunning view of the Swiss Alps on the other side of the lake. Dinner is at the hotel. We have arranged for a salad buffet and a dessert buffet in addition to dinner. Dressy casual clothing is recommended in the beautiful dining room. Please, no jeans, no muscle shirts and, especially, no baseball caps. "Mother" will be watching. "Mother" will not be amused.

**April 30 (Monday)** After breakfast we will take a private launch from the hotel's dock to Isola Bella (Beautiful Island) and see the palace and gardens of the wealthy Borromeo banking family from Milan. We will have two tour guides take our group through the fully furnished palace and later tour the terraced gardens on our own. They are considered by many to be the most beautiful Italianate gardens in the world. There is a quality gift shop on the grounds. We will allow time on the island for lunch and a chance to visit the outdoor market stalls of the island before returning to Stresa. Dinner is at the hotel and we have hired musicians for the evening.

**May 1 (Tuesday)** Today we drive along the north shore of the lake to a unique mountain village in the Swiss canton of Ticino. We will meet our tour guide, Regula Siegrist (Ray goo la) in Locarno before heading deep into the rugged Verzasca Valley and our ultimate destination - the village of Sonogno. We will stop at a massive hydro electric dam and a rebuilt Roman bridge. You will marvel at the massive boulders and the swirling turquoise water of this dangerous

river. We have arranged for a complimentary picnic lunch in the village. After leaving Sonogno you will have the opportunity to do a rigorous 90 minute hike along the rocky river shore. No sandals are allowed. We will meet up with Heinz and all of those who prefer not to hike at a point further down the valley. Dinner is at the hotel.

**May 2 (Wednesday)** This morning we leave Stresa and head for The Veneto (ven et toe) region of Italy. We will stop in historic Verona for lunch and you will have enough free time to search out Juliet's balcony or tour the well preserved Roman Coliseum. The coliseum serves as one of Italy's most popular opera venues. In fact, if you are an ardent opera fan you might want to give up one of your days in Stresa to take the train to Milan and tour La Scala. Our final stop is the spa town of Montegrotto Terme (tare may) and the \*\*\*\*Hotel Augustus Terme. This would be a good time to book spa appointments for Thursday morning or Saturday if you are interested. Dinner is at the hotel. Dressy casual clothing is once again recommended.

**May 3 (Thursday)** The morning is free to enjoy the hotel's varied pool facilities. The outdoor 6<sup>th</sup> floor pool setting is spectacular. Late morning we will depart for our light lunch and heavy wine tasting in the nearby Eugenic Hills (Ewe gain ee en). The same volcanic conditions that allow the hotels and pools to be totally heated by local hot springs also provide excellent soils and minerals for the production of high quality Colli Eugeni DOC wines. You will have the opportunity to sample several varieties at the Bacco and Arianna Winery. You may also purchase quality balsamic vinegar or olive oil. This family farm operation is known for the high quality of their meats and cheeses and wine. Their Asiago cheese is wonderful.

**May 4 (Friday)** Today will feature a train ride into Venice and we will meet Ivano Valentii, our tour guide, at the train station and he will lead us on a two hour "Hidden Secrets of Venice" tour. The afternoon will be free for you to explore Venice on your own and you can make your way back to Montegrotto Terme by train at your convenience. Anyone too nervous to do that on their own can meet us at an appointed time and we will lead you back. Dinner is at the hotel for those returning early. Evenings in Venice are wonderful once the hordes of day tourists have left. You could hit the bars or take in a Vivaldi concert. A ride on a public vaporetto from the Rialto Bridge to the train station along the Grand Canal after dark is breathtaking.

**May 5 (Saturday)** This is our last full day in the Veneto. You can plan a spa treatment, explore Montegrotto Terme or take a 15 km train ride into the historic city of Padua (pad ooh aw). The Giotto frescoes in the Scrovegni Chapel are world class. The University of Padua, Galileo's "Alma Mater", has the famous anatomy lab where Michelangelo, despite a strict ban by the Vatican, learned about the wonders of the human body and created his breathtaking sculptures and paintings. The Saturday market will be in full swing. Dinner is at the hotel.

**May 6 (Sunday)** Today we have a long but beautiful drive through the Italian and Austrian Alps as we make our way to the Salzkammergut region of Austria. We will be staying in Nussdorf on the shores of Austria's largest lake, Attersee (Otter zay). Our next four nights will be at the \*\*\*\*Hotel Ragginger, a traditional family-run inn. Herr Ragginger is a master butcher and the entire family run the hotel and a quality butcher shop. They also have a traditional outdoor beer garden where we hope to have a Grill Abend(evening) one night, weather permitting. If we are lucky, they will serve Kaiser Schmarren for dessert. Stroll along the shore of this pretty Alpine lake before having dinner in the hotel.

**May 7 (Monday)** The breakfast buffet at Hotel Ragginger is wonderful. After a leisurely breakfast we will depart for the prehistoric Alpine town of Hallstatt (hall stawt) on the shore of beautiful, swan- filled Hallstattersee . Bronze Age people were mining salt from these mountains long before Rome or Christ. We have planned for a boat cruise on the lake. A stop at the 'bone chapel' of the local church is a must. You will have a wonderful view of the Dachstein Peaks in this part of the Alps. Dinner is at the hotel.

**May 8 (Tuesday)** We will spend the day in the beautiful, historic city of Salzburg . Our tour guide will give us an orientation tour and then you will have free time to explore on your own. Consider taking a funicular ride to the massive fortress overlooking the entire valley. Leaving town we will stop for a walk to the lake used for the boat scene in The Sound of Music. Dinner is at our hotel.

**May 9 (Wednesday)** This morning we will drive back into Bavaria and tour a famous salt mine in Berchtesgaden . We are planning a complimentary picnic lunch on the shores of Hintersee, a hidden, ice-cold, Alpine Lake on the edge of The Maerchenwald (mare ken vawld). This was apparently the inspiration for the Enchanted Forest in the tales of the Brothers Grimm. We will have a "photo op stop" in beautiful Ramsau with its iconic church before heading for a tour of the Nazi Documentation Centre near the infamous Eagle's Nest. Dinner is at the hotel.

**May 10 (Thursday)** Today marks the last stage of our trip. We will head for our final destination of Ingolstadt in the state of Bavaria in Germany. Along the way we will stop for a complimentary lunch at the Seiser Alm overlooking Bavaria's largest lake, Chiemsee (Keem zay) The next two nights will be spent at The Altstadt (awlt stawt) Hotel in the heart of this old baroque city. Dinner is at the hotel.

**May 11 (Friday)** This morning we will tour the amazing Audi facility in Ingolstadt. We will have a two hour guided walking tour through the plant followed by free time in the car museum. The afternoon is free for shopping or touring some of the historical sites in Ingolstadt. Another alternative is for you to easily and quickly take a train from Ingolstadt to either Nuremberg or Munich. Dinner is at the hotel.

**May 12 (Saturday)** Today we head for home. After a one hour drive to Munich we will check in at Munich Airport for our return flight via Air Canada at 11:50 am . We will allow enough time for anyone to claim their tax refund for purchases that have a VAT(value added tax) certificate. We arrive home in Toronto at 2:20 pm .

**PRICE \$4050 PER PERSON**

**SINGLE SUPPLEMENT \$339 CDN**

**Includes:**

**Air Canada flight and all inflight services**

**Luxury bus service**

**All hotels and taxes**

**All breakfasts, all dinners, some lunches**

**All admissions, guided tours, boat rides, mountain lifts, etc.**

**Wine tastings**

**Train ride to Venice**

**Tip for Heinz, our bus driver**