Mediterranean Morocco

By Janet Robertson

Morocco has been populated since early prehistoric times and has been an independent state since 788 A.D. This exotic little-known Kingdom, a bridge between Europe and Africa, is steeped in history and offers incredible adventures to its visitors.

The Atlas Mountains with cascading waterfalls, offer exceptional walking and hiking opportunities with several summits soaring over 4000 meters high. On foot in the Sirwa, Sarhoo and the Rif, on skis in the cedar forests of the mid Atlas, or using a combination of mule and skis in the high Atlas, every season reveals a different special beauty. Several ski resorts are located in the High Atlas at Oukaimeden, only 70 km from Marrakesh, or Mischliffen on the doorstep of Meknes and Fez. Or if you’re up for something a little more strenuous the Desert Marathon takes place in April each year and lasts a week covering 150 miles of desert sand and the elements. Horse-riding is also a favorite pass-time. Relax and enjoy riding past the fabulous scenery of white sandy beaches to forests of century old Oak.

Visit the sophisticated cities of Marrakech, Rabat, Meknes and…Fez – the world’s best example of a living medieval city. Its labyrinth of streets and crumbling grandeur adds to its air of intrigue. Within the old city, visit the theological college of Medersa Bou Inania, built in1350; or stop at the nearby henna souq (market) specializing in the

Editor’s Note:
After 11 years, this is the final “paper” version of our newsletter. And… the last newsletter for this semester! From January 2004, please check online at www.centram.org for all future Bon Voyager e-letters! Email us at voyagers@losmedanos.edu if you would like to be placed on our email list to receive the monthly newsletter reminder and other Voyagers updates and news.

The featured country this month is Morocco! As promised... we have included a niche marketing success story from Georgie Pryal! We hope you also enjoy a small feature article on the Royal Scotsman. Don’t forget to check the calendar of upcoming events. And… we have also included a list of Travel classes for Spring 2004. Hurry and register early to avoid disappointment!

Wishing you success in this semester’s endeavors, and a wonderful holiday season! See you online in January!

Janet

Hey, Folks, it’s Basket Time!

What does that mean? The Voyagers are putting together 3 wonderful baskets with seasonal themes – Sports; Entertainment; and Spa/Relaxation.

The baskets will be ready and go on display in the windows on Level 3 of the college on November 7th. Tickets will go on sale between November 7 and 17th. You can buy your tickets from any Voyager member or at the sale table outside the cafeteria between November 7 and 15. The drawing will be on November 17 at 6:30 pm in Room 228.

How can you help this major Club fundraiser for Travel student scholarships?

$ Contribute any item to any basket
$ Buy tickets or sell tickets for the club
$ Volunteer your time at the ticket sale table
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Saying “Thank You” with Memorable Keep-Sakes

By Georgie Pryal, CTA, DS

Few could have predicted that a cruise-loving, jewelry designer and a backpacking, adventure traveler would find a common niche in the travel industry!

Toni Mattingly and I, approaching travel from two very different interests, eagerly jumped into careers as travel consultants, while still students in the Travel Marketing program at LMC. Toni focused on selling the travel she knew and liked best - cruises and tropical destinations. I focused on adventure travel and Africa. Although we sold very different travel experiences, we soon shared a common frustration – finding distinctive and unique client appreciation gifts. For both of us and many of our colleagues, no travel sale was truly complete without a ‘thank you’ gift to our clients, and we wanted each “thank you” to be memorable and have a personal touch.

We are all aware that the travel industry has changed significantly over the years. The internet has given information and avenues for travel purchase. However, for travel consultants, maintain a loyal client base. It is not only more effective to have clients, rather than clients month after month, and their referrals are important. Consultants must find ways to reconnect with their clients from time to time, so that the travel consultant becomes the first thought, not an after-thought, or an “I forgot” when clients are planning their travels.

Client appreciation gifts can enhance the professional image and the bond that travel consultants develop with their clients. The right gift can subtly stimulate that “reconnect” and serve as a reminder of the value that a travel consultant can bring to travel planning. Unfortunately, traditional travel gifts (e.g. a bottle of wine, bouquet of flowers, fruit basket, etc.), are often unimaginative, sometimes inappropriate, and generally rather predictable. The wine, the flowers and the food are all perishable and offer minimal sustainable value relative to their high purchase price. At the end of a vacation, these gifts end up in the trash or are left behind on the vacation, and not long thereafter, their message has been forgotten. The traditional cruise and vacation albums also seem similarly uninspired and inappropriate for repeat gifting to repeat travel clients.

For more than a year, Toni and I struggled to find distinctive, affordable client appreciation gifts for our travel clients. We wanted our gifts to be memorable, and to be proudly displayed or used for months, if not years, after the travel had been completed. We wanted clients to recall the excitement and pleasure of their travel and connect that excitement with us, every time they saw or used the gifts we had given. We wanted gifts which had personal appeal and a high perceived-value. Our surveys of other travel consultants and travel agencies told us that many of our colleagues were similarly challenged and frustrated by the high cost in time and money spent on “Thank You” gifts that often left an impersonal seal on an otherwise personal interaction of arranging travel.

Consequently, in 2002, Toni and I formed a partnership focused on the needs of the travel industry for unique and affordable client appreciation gifts. We founded Gifts of Travel and soon expanded into Travel Professionals’ Gift Collection, LLC, the ultimate online resource for distinctive, quality, travel-
themed gifts and accessories for travel professionals. We offer a wide variety of choices in photo albums, photo frames, stationery, apparel, jewelry, and more, so that choosing a client gift can be as personal and selective as the choice of the vacation.

Since Toni and I continue to work as travel consultants, we are also able to "field-test" our products. We know first hand, that clients are impressed and appreciative, not only of the personal attention given from the first phase of travel planning to the actual purchase, but also by the presentation of a unique, memorable “Bon Voyage” or “Welcome Home” gift. We know from our …Gift Collection clients that this approach is working for other travel consultants too. The right gift, for the right client, at the right time underscores the travel consultant’s professionalism and thoughtfulness, and stimulates repeat and referral business.

Toni and I promote our gift business at travel industry trade shows and through direct sales to travel agencies, travel consultants, suppliers, associations, and partners in the travel industry. We were exhibitors at the Travel Age West show in June and will be exhibitors at the Luxury Travel Expo in Las Vegas in December, 2003.

Toni and I believe Travel Professionals’ Gift Collection has a very bright future as we partner with the travel industry. We recognize that our success is built on past, present and future alliances and acknowledge that we would not be moving forward without the support and encouragement we have received from CENTRAM, Vacation Discounters, Inc., East Bay Women in Travel, Princess Cruise Lines, Business Graphics Group, Kiran Kamath and Chris McGill, Joanie Dragon, Neal and Nancy Vinson, and many, many others.

We invite you to visit us online at www.travelprogifts.com, stop by our booth at the Luxury Travel Expo in Las Vegas December 3-5, 2003 or call us for the latest in travel themed gifts and apparel.

Travel Professionals’ Gift Collection, LLC
712 Bancroft Road, #201, Walnut Creek, CA 94598
925-952-9744 / Toll Free: 877-282-3669 Fax: 925-274-0939

IT’S NOT JUST ANY TRAIN!
by Valerie Ottofaro

The Royal Scotsman is quite simply the most luxurious train in the world. It's your ticket to an exclusive world of grand hospitality and great entertainment as you journey through the majestic landscape of Scotland. The ‘training’ season runs from April to October. The train carries 36 passengers with a crew of 14 in attendance. This "hotel on wheels" caters to groups and charters, and welcomes individual travelers as well. The Royal Scotsman is known for its gastronomic delights and fine wines, complemented by impeccable service. The inclusive rates offer twin and single state accommodations, table d'hote meals, wines and other alcoholic beverages, excursions, and taxes. The tours range from one to seven nights.

US/Canada (800)922-8625 or
e-mail: bookings@royalscotsman.co.uk
www.royalscotsman.com
Travel Marketing Classes
in Spring 2004

REGISTRATION FOR CONTINUING STUDENTS BEGINS ON 1 DEC, 03.

Travel 71-2472  ORIENTATION TO CAREERS IN TRAVEL  (.3 unit)
This one-day Saturday class on January 10, 2004 from 9 am to 3:20 pm gives you an overview of the travel industry and our certificates. Enjoy the speakers too.

Travel 72-7044  INTRODUCTION TO TRAVEL  (3 units)
Excellent first semester course on Monday evenings 7-10 pm. Required course for all certificates in the Travel Program.

Travel 74-0384  NORTH AMERICAN TRAVEL DESTINATIONS  (3 units)
Thu 9:30 am – 12:20 pm  Wilson
One of our day classes on Thursday mornings 9:30 am – 12:20 pm. Includes an optional Destination Specialist certification exam from The Travel Institute. 3-units of a DS-type class is required for most of the travel certificates.

Travel 76-2471  TRAVEL SALES AND MARKETING  (3 units)
Knowing how to sell and market is essential in the travel industry, so this course is a "required" course for all certificates in the Travel Program. Meets on Tuesday mornings from 9:30 am – 12:20 pm.

Travel 77-2478  CUSTOMIZED VACATION PLANNING  (2 units)
This short-term Tuesday evening class begins on January 20th and ends on March 16, 2004 and meets from 6 pm to 9:50 pm. Take it along with Travel 76 and 82, you can become a Cruise Specialist in the Spring 2004 semester!

Travel 82-7047  ALL ABOUT CRUISING  (4 units)
Selling cruises can be fun AND lucrative! Take it along with Travel 76 and 77 and to become a Cruise Specialist in 4 months! The class meets on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons from 1:30 pm to 3:30 pm.

Travel 85-7048  SOUTH PACIFIC DESTINATION SPECIALIST  (1.5 units)
Tue 7 pm – 9:50pm  McGill
If you are looking for an evening destination class, this is it! Learn about Australia, New Zealand, Tahiti etc and take the optional Destination Specialist certification exam from The Travel Institute. It is a 9 week class on Thursday evenings from 7 pm to 9:50 pm, soon after Travel 77 ends from March 23 to May 25, 2004.

Travel 89-3443  CYBER TRAVEL  (.5 unit)
This is an excellent one-day Saturday class on February 22, 2004 from 9 am to 6 pm. Knowledge of travel information on the Internet is important for you, so this course is “required” for many certificates. It also gives you 9 CEUs from The Travel Institute to maintain your CTA/CTC designation.

Travel 90-7049  INTRODUCTION TO APOLLO  (2 units)
This is the foundation course in Apollo computer reservations. Complete Travel 91 and 92 this semester too and apply for your Certificate of Proficiency in Apollo Computer Reservations! This 9 week class is on Thursday evening from 6 pm to 9:50 pm from January 22 to March 18, 2004.
Travel 91-7050  AIR FARES ON APOLLO  (1 unit)
After you complete Travel 90, take this course on 4 Saturday mornings from April 24 to May 15, 2004, from 9 am to 1:30 pm. Complete Travel 92 too and you can get certified as Apollo Proficient by CENTRAM!

Travel 92-7051  ADVANCED APOLLO  (2 units)
This course begins on March 25, after Travel 90 is completed, and ends on May 20, 2004. The class meets from 6 pm to 9:50 pm. Complete Travel 90, 91 and 92, and get certified as Apollo Proficient in just one semester. This course is offered only 1 or 2 in a two year period.

Travel 94-7043  CYBER RESERVATIONS FOR TRAVEL PROFESSIONALS  (.5 unit)
This one-day Saturday class on March 13, 2004 from 9 am to 6 pm shows you many sites that only travel professionals have access to. This is a great class for all travel professionals, especially for home-based travel professionals. The course is “required” for many of our certificates.

Travel 104-0388  RESOURCES FOR THE HOME-BASED TRAVEL PROFESSIONAL
We have developed a series of 6 one-day Saturday classes on Home-Based Travel and offer 3 in Fall and 3 in Spring, generally on the first working Saturday of each month. Each class is independent of the other classes in the series so you can take them in any order. This class is on February 14, 2004 from 9 am to 6 pm.

Travel 105-0391  BUSINESS AND FIN. PLANS FOR HOME-BASED TRAVEL
This is the second class in Spring 2004 of the Home-Based Travel classes on March 6, 2004 from 9 am to 6 pm.

Travel 106-0392  HOME-BASED TRAVEL AND THE LAW  (.5 unit)
This is the third and last class in Spring 2004 of the Home-Based Travel classes on April 3, 2004 from 9 am to 6 pm. If you have completed Travel 101-106 and the other requirements, you are ready to apply for your Home-Based Travel Specialist Certificate now!

Travel 110-7052  INTRODUCTION TO SPECIAL INTEREST TRAVEL (1.5 units)
This is a brand new course and is the foundation course for the new Niche Travel Specialist Certificate. This 9-week class meets on Wednesdays from 7 pm to 10 pm from January 21 to March 17, 2004.

Travel 111-7053  MARKETING AND PROMOTING YOUR SPECIALTY(1.5 units)
After Travel 110 is completed, this course begins on Wednesday, March 24 and ends on May 26, 2004 from 7 pm to 10 pm. Along with Travel 110 and 112, these 3 courses form the core of the Niche Travel Specialist Certificate. You can get this certificate this semester, if you have all your other requirements!

Travel 112-7054  PROFITING FROM EXCELLENT VENDOR RELATIONS  (.5 unit)
This one-day Saturday on March 20, 2004 from 9 am to 6 pm is the last of the 3 core courses required for certification as a Niche Travel Specialist.

Travel 988-0394  CERTIFIED TRAVEL ASSOCIATE ONLINE  (3 units)
This is a fully online course. It is a course that prepares you for the CTA certification exam developed by The Travel Institute (formerly ICTA). Before you begin this course, you must apply directly to The Travel Institute to purchase your books and pay for the certification process with them. The fee for both together is $345. Register at LMC to take our course. The online course will begin on January 20, 2004. You must log on and visit the online class on January 20 www.centram.org or www.losmedanos.edu and take the online orientation and email the instructor from the online class to say that you are “present”. It is NOT a self-paced course so you are expected to keep up every week.
NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2003 CALENDAR

Nov. 15  Travel 94 - Cyber Reservations for Travel Professionals – Saturday Class, 9 am – 6 pm

Nov. 17  General Meeting and elections 5:30 pm – 6:45 pm. Light refreshments will be served. Room 228 (NOTE: THIS IS A DATE CHANGE).

Dec. 6  TAP Test from 9.45 a.m. – 12.00 noon in the Travel lab (room 229)

Dec. 6  Travel 71 - Orientation to Careers in Travel from 9 am to 3 pm (room 228)

Dec. 7  Moroccan holiday lunch & belly-dancing. Guaranteed to be fun! At El Morocco in Pleasant Hill. Details will be provided in class. (Alumni, please email Gina Pepe at gnaxoxo@comcast.com to RSVP)

Dec. 18  Next OSSN Meeting on Thursday at 7:00 pm, 599 Valmore Pl., Brentwood $6.00 per person to cover cost of refreshments. RSVP Chris McGill at 925-516-5929

A TASTE OF THE BRITISH ISLES NIGHT – REMEMBERED!

We had so much fun and learned a lot about Scotland at our September Voyager’s event, thanks to our hard working and very creative organizer, Janet, and her fabulous guest, blue-badge guide, Sarah McQueen. Thanks so much for putting together such a great outing, Janet!

And now for an encore: Join us for a Moroccan Christmas Luncheon – complete with Belly Dancer. (Not your normal Christmas fare, I admit, but a nice change of pace and quite exotic, don’t you think?). The cost is $25 approximately per person. Email Gina Pepe at gnaxoxo@comcast.net. immediately if you are interested. She will give you more information about location, time and price when you email her.
November Word Jumble

There will be no November word jumble. Instead, become a winner by sending us your personal special travel destination trips within the greater Bay Area. Your suggestions will be published in our newsletter in Spring 2004. Let us all benefit from your “secret bests!” Details below:

Answers to October’s Word Jumble

1. Hamburg
2. Berlin
3. Dresden
4. Frankfurt
5. Rhine River
6. Trier
7. Heidelberg
8. Black Forest
9. Romantic
10. Munich

And we have a Winner!
Winner of October’s jumble is Annette Jones.

Congratulations, Annette!

We will be in touch!

Enter to win a $10 gift card for Barnes and Noble Bookstore. One lucky winner will be drawn from all the correct entries. Send us your entry by November 23rd, 2003. You can: (1) Mail your entry to the Voyagers Club, Los Medanos College, 2700 E. Leland Road, Pittsburg, CA 94565; (2) drop off your entry in the Jumble Box in room 228; (3) respond by e-mail to the Editor, Janet Robertson at janet.robertson@usa.net. Please always include your name, phone number and complete address.

CONGRATULATIONS SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS!

Voyagers Club Honor Scholarship was proudly awarded to Allison Ramirez. Voyagers Club New Student Scholarship is well deserved by Marie Burns.

Eileen Burke has taken ASTA by storm. She applied for 3 ASTA scholarships – George Reinke Scholarship, Stan and Leon Pollard Scholarship; and the Northern California Chapter/Richard Epping Scholarship – and won all three!!!!!!!!!! Way to go Eileen! We are so proud of you!

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE HAWAII DESTINATION SPECIALISTS!

Marie Burns, Barbara Butler, Candie Lally, Debbie Larsen, LaVerne Milton, John Riley, Sandra Holt-Smith, Kaori Yamato and Inge Yarborough successfully completed their Destination Specialist certification from The Travel Institute this semester.

Election of Voyagers Club Officers for Spring 2004

Nominations are now being accepted for all positions for the Spring Semester. Please complete a nomination form and hand it in to any travel instructor by November 13th, 2003. Elections will be held at the November 17th meeting of the Voyagers Club.

At the October 6th meeting, several interim officers were voted in: Gina Pepe as President, Sandra Holt-Smith as Secretary, Tony Miller as ICC Rep. Thank you very much for stepping in to these positions.

At the Congratulations to our new President Gina Pepe, who was formally voted in at the October 6th meeting.

CLUB OFFICERS FOR FALL 2003

President: Gina Pepe Schedule: Special needs
Vice President: Danielle Brown
Secretary: Sandra Holt-Smith Treasurer: Cynthia Bauer
Newsletter Editor: Janet Robertson Newsletter Publisher: Inge Yarborough
ICC Representative: Tony Miller

ANY QUESTIONS YOU HAVE FOR THE VOYAGER’S BOARD MAY BE ADDRESSED VIA EMAIL TO GINA PEPE AT gnaxoxo@comcast.net