

DESTINATIONS e-Newsletter

from Group Travel Directors - Your International Group Tour Specialists

Providing the latest travel news to group leaders

July 2008

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GTD Travel Trivia

Did you know that the majority of GTD's group travelers are women? Yet, 56% of our group leaders are men.

The majority of GTD travelers are in their 50s.

[Join Our Opt-in Group Leader e-Newsletter](#)

Join our opt-in e-newsletter and receive valuable information, exclusive discovery tour invites, and the latest news every group leader needs to know.

Planning a Performing or Arts-Related Group Tour?

Click here to learn more about how to organize a flawless international performance tour.

Group Leader Discovery Tour to

Oberammergau 2010 - Start Your Planning NOW

It's not too late to begin planning your Oberammergau Passion Play tour for 2010.

Beginning in and continuing since the 15th century, the villagers in the picturesque village of Oberammergau perform the Passion Play. This world-famous performance takes place every ten years and is a do-not-miss event. Christians from around the world come to witness this spiritual re-enactment of the Passion of Christ.

Traveling in a group is still considered one of the best and most economical ways to travel through Europe and this is especially true for those wanting to attend the Oberammergau Passion Play. Over the past four Oberammergau seasons (since 1984) Group Travel Directors has helped hundreds of group leader's plan their Oberammergau tour experience.

Having a depth of experience and strong European knowledge, GTD's staff can help you arrange a tour to include special evening dinners, fascinating speakers, little-known treasures, behind the scene tours, and spectacular sites not normally seen by the ordinary traveler. Oberammergau tours can encompass a variety of countries, special experiences, and beautiful scenery.

Traveling with your congregation and friends on a spiritual-based tour builds community, faith, and relationships. If you'd like to learn more about the Oberammergau Passion Play, contact GTD. It's not too late to start your Oberammergau tour planning, but don't wait too long. The tickets usually sell-out quickly, so acting now will reserve performance tickets.

Click here to view sample [Oberammergau itineraries](#).

JOIN OUR NEXT GROUP LEADER TELESEMINAR

Group Travel Directors will be hosting a FREE teleseminar focusing on the **Passion Play - Ins & Outs on Thursday, August 21 at 10am Central.**

To participate all you need to do is email GTD at jweiss@gtd.org with PASSION PLAY SEMINAR in the Subject line. GTD will then email you the call specifics for this FREE teleseminar. You won't want to miss it.

Tour Price Sticker Shock...

Do you long for the days of gas under \$2, a stable Dollar, and international tours priced under \$3000? If you do you're not alone.

For those of us who have been traveling internationally over the last decade, we've seen a lot of changes: tighter airport security, reduced flight options, an ever-weakening Dollar, color-coded security alerts, earthquakes, SARS, Mad Cow

Poland

Have you ever considered or dreamt of leading a tour to Poland? Here's your chance to do a preview in person. Group Travel Directors is hosting a spectacular Discovery Tour to Poland in January 2009 designed exclusively for group leaders.

If you'd like to join us or view the itinerary, email: tgrzesiak@gtd.org.

Teleseminars for Group Leaders

Because there's so much to learn and know about international group travel, GTD has begun offering FREE teleseminars for group leaders.

In August we will be hosting a teleseminar titled: **The Passion Play - Ins & Outs.**

If you're interested in registering or receiving future teleseminar invitations, please email jwells@gtd.org.

Send us your suggestions for future teleseminars.

Disease, and Avian Bird Flu to name a few.

These events and trends have all had their affects on international travel, but only temporarily or marginally because PEOPLE ARE STILL TRAVELING and willing to pay for it. Americans are becoming used to hiccups in the world and realize that they probably won't go away.

At Group Travel Directors we have seen the average tour price increase over 25% within the last two years. We can attribute this to two main factors, the declining Dollar and rising fuel costs.

We've uncovered an interesting fact about how travelers are reacting to these higher priced tours vs. their group leaders.

When we design a tour for a group leader, we often hear from the group leader, "My people won't pay a dime over \$3500," so we work diligently to soften the affects of higher priced EVERYTHING. However, the type of tour the group leader wants to do will in all reality cost \$4500 no matter what creative solutions we deploy to reduce the tour price.

But here's the interesting thing; when we float the \$4500 price past the travelers, they are not nearly as shocked by the price as their group leader is, and they DO enroll on the tour. We do not give the travelers enough credit in understanding that travel costs more today than it used to. In other words, people do not want to miss out on the experience of traveling with friends and they are willing to pay the higher price.

Keep these points in mind when planning your next tour:

1. **Give travelers credit for understanding that travel costs more than it used to.** Don't automatically assume your travelers won't pay the higher price.
2. **Be careful cutting your tour to the bone in the name of a 'cheaper tour.'** You may compromise the essence of your tour resulting in disappointed travelers.
3. **Travel prices may never go down.** Don't delay traveling now in hopes that prices will be cheaper. Remember, your travelers are definitely not getting any younger.
4. **Traveling in a group often provides great value.** Even if the price tag seems high, keep in mind that traveling independently and doing the same itinerary would cost the traveler substantially more.

If you've been delaying planning your next tour, start planning it today. There's no better time to travel than NOW.



HOT Travel Tip From GTD

We all know how the declining Dollar has eroded Americans' buying power abroad, but did you know there are a few destinations where the Dollar can still buy more than you think?

It takes about 7.65 South African Rand to equal one US Dollar. This makes the Dollar relatively strong and stretches your traveling buying power.

Group Travel Directors keeps a pulse on what's happening throughout the world. If you're wondering where your group can benefit from a strong Dollar, the experts at GTD can answer your questions.

Noted Egyptologist and GTD Tour Guide Visits U.S.

Mahmoud Khodier, Group Travel Director's preferred guide for groups visiting Egypt, teamed with GTD for visits to Denver, CO and Minneapolis, MN to give workshops on traveling to Egypt. In Denver more than 60 Egypt enthusiasts heard Mahmoud speak on the theme "Unlocking Egypt: Focus on Faith and Culture." GTD staffers enjoyed a rigorous workshop on new, and tried-and-true tour concepts in Egypt.

Mr. Khodier has appeared on The History Channel (Egypt Engineering an Empire) and has guided groups for Harvard University, Houston Museum of Natural History, Overseas Adventures, and is Group Travel Directors' preferred guide for groups touring in Egypt.

Contact your GTD Group Tour Specialist for information on planning a tour to Egypt with Mahmoud Khodier as your guide.

Group Travel Directors - *International Group Tour Specialists*

Group Travel Directors (GTD) is internationally renowned for custom designing purposeful tours for churches, schools, families, organizations and other special interest groups to destinations worldwide. Each tour is filled with unique experiences because enriching lives through travel are the words we live by.

1-800-747-2255

www.GTD.org
info@gtd.org