

Final itinerary - Classic European Interlude 2010

29 August – 4 October 2010

Economy air travel with Thai International ▪ Pre tour get-together ▪ All breakfasts and 17 dinners as per itinerary ▪ European airport/hotel transfers ▪ Porterage one piece per person where service available ▪ Local guides as per itinerary ▪ Overnight ferry cruise Italy to Croatia ▪ Ground transportation in luxury new air conditioned eight seater vehicles ▪ Guided city tours as per itinerary ▪ Tour escort from Sydney International airport.

B – Breakfast L – Lunch D – Dinner

2010 Day 1 29 Aug	Sydney – Bangkok 15.25 – Depart Sydney TG472 21.45 – Arrive Bangkok		
Day 2 30 Aug	Bangkok – Rome Italy 00.20 – Depart Bangkok TG 944 06.50 – Arrive Rome Fiumicino Airport Due to our early arrival in Rome we have arranged to have a half-day guided tour of the city en route to our hotel. Rome is a chaotic, sensuous, and addictive place. Travellers are often overwhelmed and enchanted at the same time by the exuberance and friendliness of the locals, by the weight of the history and by the sheer beauty of the city. Our hotel is located in the heart of ancient Rome just 3 minutes from the Colosseum near Cavour metro stop.	2 nights	
Day 3 31 Aug	Rome Italy Free day - The expression " <i>Roma, non basta una vita</i> " ("Rome, a lifetime is not enough") pretty much sums it up. The list of 'must sees' is endless including the Roman Forum, Capitoline Hill - one of the seven hills of Rome, Trevi Fountain, Spanish Steps, Pantheon Colosseum, Castel Sant'Angelo , St. Peter's Basilica. Whether you have a passion for mosaics, paintings, sculptures, or martyrs' bones and relics, there are world-class examples of each inside almost every church in the historical centre. Every church in Rome is free. Suggestion – The 4 hour escorted bike tour is a great way to see Rome. www.italycruizerbiketours.com		
Day 4 1 Sept	Rome to Cortona Tuscany. (204 km) 08.00 – We will transfer to pick up our luxury mini buses for our scenic drive through to Cortona. Weather permitting we will have a picnic lunch somewhere in Tuscany. Cortona is an appealing medieval town perched on a steep Tuscan hillside and made more famous in the 1990's by Francis Mayes' book, Under the Tuscan Sun . Our home for the next two nights is a small hotel in the centre of Cortona. Tonight - our first group dinner will be at Fuflluns Restaurant/pizzeria, next door to our hotel.	2 nights	D

<p>Day 5 2 Sept</p>	<p>Cortona is located in the central Italian region of Tuscany (<i>Toscana</i>), in the Province of Arezzo. The town isn't far from the border with Umbria, and its magnificent views extend over the green plains and hills of Tuscany and Umbria, extending beyond the lovely Lake Trasimeno. Gorgeous Cortona has a long history dating back to before its time as an important Etruscan centre. Top attractions include the Duomo (Cathedral), the small Museo Diocesano across the piazza with its superb art collection, and the fascinating Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca with its assembly of Etruscan and Roman era items. Cortona is also bursting with splendid churches spanning many periods. Recommended restaurant for delicious Tuscan fare – <i>La Buccacia</i>.</p>	
<p>Day 6 3 Sept</p>	<p>Cortona – Ancona – (184 km) overnight ferry to Split We will board the overnight car-ferry at Ancona around ~19.00 to cruise on the Adriatic Sea to Split. Take cabin luggage only on board. Dinner on board the ferry.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Day 7 4 Sept</p>	<p>Split to Plitvicki Lakes – Croatia (245 km) 2 nights We disembark early in beautiful Split. From here we travel north along the coast then inland to the Plitvicki National Park. Our hotel is situated in this stunning national Park.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Day 8 5 Sept</p>	<p>Plitvicki Lakes Have plenty of spare film for your camera today. This beautiful world heritage national park is utterly unspoilt and in a valley situated between high forested mountains in which lie, one below another, a string of sixteen beautiful lakes of crystal blue-green colour. They are fed by many small streams and brooks and spill into each other in foaming cascades and thundering waterfalls. The park is home to many bears, deer and other wildlife. The lakes are crammed with trout and the waters are the purest in this part of the world. You may take one of the excellent specially built buses to explore the lakes or you may prefer to wander the many trails and boardwalks. Whichever way you go, the rich plant and animal life, contrasting colours, forests and pure mountain air makes this a nature lover's paradise.</p>	
<p>Day 9 6 Sept</p>	<p>Plitvice Lakes – Keszthely – Hungary (335 km) 1 night We overnight in this small town located on the edge of Lake Balaton and the sloping hills of the Keszthely region. Our hotel is situated directly on the shore of Europe's largest freshwater lake.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Day 10 7 Sept</p>	<p>Keszthely – Budapest – Hungary (185 km) 3 nights We will meander through some small villages on our way to 'Buda-Pest' (Hungarian pronunciation is closer to boo-dah-PEHSHT The city of Budapest is situated astride the Danube River. It is the political, administrative, industrial and commercial centre of Hungary. The two most prominent buildings of the period, the new Parliament in Pest and the rebuilt Buda Castle, stand face-to-face over the Danube. Budapest is now home to about one-fifth of the country's population. Our home for the next 3 nights is Hungary's first boutique hotel, situated very near the famous market hall on the Pest side. Because there is a Jewish holiday for the next 3 days, we have rescheduled our visit to the magnificent Synagogue and Jewish museum and tree to 2pm today.</p>	<p>D</p>

Day 11 8 Sept	Budapest A free morning and a great opportunity to visit the fascinating city Market hall. In the afternoon, we have our exclusive narrated coach city sightseeing tour of Pest – walk around Heroes’s Square, pass St Stephen’s Basilica and an interior visit to the National Opera house.	
Day 12 9 Sept	Budapest This morning we cross the Danube through the Margaret-Bridge and begin our exclusive half day walking tour of the Castle district on the Buda side with our local English – speaking guide. We will visit the Fishermen’s Bastion (Promenade) and the Matthias Church and National Gallery. Remainder of the afternoon free. * Tonight it’s time to don your glad-rags for a very special treat. Dinner at the famous Gundel Restaurant. Founded in 1894 by Janos Gundel, this restaurant is often named the best in Europe and some say the best in the world. The dining hall recalls the opulence of Budapest at the beginning of the twentieth century. NB: Jacket required for men. www.gundel.hu	* D
Day 13 10 Sept	Budapest – Vienna – Austria (242km) 3 nights Today we say goodbye to Hungary and venture into the stunning scenery of Austria where Vienna will be home for the next 3 nights. Our hotel is in the heart of the historic city centre overlooking the Ringstrasse. Very close to Nestroyplatz U Bahn station and the tram is just across the bridge.	
Day 14 11 Sept	Vienna 9.30 – we will be picked up at our hotel for a guided tour of this grand city visiting some of the most important sights including the famous ‘Ringstrasse’ – Vienna’s main boulevard, Schönbrunn Palace, State Opera House, Museums of Fine Arts and Natural History. Afternoon free	
Day 15 12 Sept	Vienna Free day for personal exploration of Vienna. Dominating the inner city is St Stephen’s Cathedral with its Romanesque façade. For those with a head for heights climb the Gothic tower for a truly wonderful birds eye view of Vienna. Visits are possible to The Spanish Riding School. Vienna is music; so consider taking in one of the many concerts tonight. The Johann Strauss Concert, The Vienna Mozart concert or you may be able to see the enchanting Vienna Boys’ Choir which regularly performs Strauss works and folksongs from all parts of the world at Vienna’s Musilverein, (where the New Year’s concert given by the Vienna Philharmonic is televised internationally from the Golden Hall). Of course there is also ballet and opera performances at the internationally acclaimed Vienna Opera House .	
Day 16 13 Sept	Vienna to Prague (340km) 3 nights To the Czech Republic today. This pretty farmland country has seen many invaders, though none has damaged the beauty of her capital. Prague’s former history goes back to about 870AD where Prague Castle became the main seat of the State of Bohemia and the Premyslid Princes. The new town of Prague was built in 1348. With 40,000 inhabitants, Prague was one of the largest towns in Europe at that time. In Oct 1918 the city became the capital of Czechoslovak Republic. Prague became the capital of the new Czech Republic in 1993 after the split up of Czechoslovakia. Dinner tonight will be in the hotel’s restaurant.	D

Day 17 14 Sept	Prague We have arranged for a ½ day morning guided walking tour of Prague. As we stroll along the wide thoroughfares it becomes evident that this is truly a beautiful unspoilt historic city.	
Day 18 15 Sept	Prague Today is a free day to further discover more of Prague. There is a wide range of sights to see and places to visit. Some of the more structured are The Velvet Revolution Walk – This conducted tour departs from the Old Town Square in front of the Astronomical Clock at 2.30 every day. The guide will explain and show you the recent history of Prague focusing on the Communist era and the unbearable restriction that were applied in those days. The Old Town Through the Centuries tour departs at 2.45 from the Astronomical clock. This is a fascinating visit to the Jewish Quarter. Jews have always featured in Prague's history. This tour shows something of their style of living and culture. Finally there is the Ghost Tour which departs from the same location at 8.10pm.	
Day 19 16 Sept	Prague – Acharting Salzburg Austria (388 km) Today we travel to Austria to the village of Acharting and our small family run hotel nestled in the midst of the forest just 9 km north of Salzburg. This will be our tranquil home for the next 3 nights. Here we will feast on delicious regional cuisine featuring produce from local farms.	3 nights D
Day 20 17 Sept	Acharting Salzburg The next two days are flexible and activities and free time may be swapped depending on the weather. If we have clear skies we will drive through this picturesque countryside to Berchtesgaden and Hitler's Eagles Nest with a local guide. Wherever we go you can be sure to see breathtaking scenery, delightful villages and learn many interesting facts about this historic area. Hopefully, we will visit the historic salt mine – believe me this visit is much more thrilling than one may envisage!	D
Day 21 18Sept	Acharting Salzburg We will visit the intriguing and magnificent city of Salzburg. This is a perfect city to walk and explore the many city highlights including Salzburg's Cathedral, St Peter's Abbey and Benedictine monastery, St Peter's cemetery and catacombs, Mozart Square, and the beautiful Getreidegasse, Austria's most famous shopping lane. It is worth taking the funicular to the imposing Hohensalzburg Fortress, the largest fully preserved fortress in central Europe, for the wonderful view over Mozart's city; Salzburg. You may wish to take a tour to visit some of the locales filmed in 'The Sound of Music'.	D
Day 22 19 Sept	Salzburg to Bled – Slovenia (256 km) A small Slovenian lakeside village favoured by the medieval kings of Slovenia. With immense natural beauty, Bled, together with its surroundings, ranks among the most beautiful alpine resorts, renowned for its mild, healing climate and thermal lake water. The beauty of the mountains reflected on the lake, the sun, the serenity and the fresh air is an ideal setting for a romantic walk or a carriage ride around the lake, a traditional pletna-boat ride to the idyllic church on Bled Island or a visit to the imposing castle that towers on a sheer cliff above the lake. Out hotel is lakeside.	1 night D

<p>Day 23 20 Sept</p>	<p>Bled to Mestre – Venice – Italy (291 km) 2 nights We stay in a refined historic hotel set in large park and charming garden with age-old trees just ten minutes drive from Venice. There is an excellent public bus service outside the hotel, which passes every 7 – 10 minutes, to easily reach Venice in 15 – 20 minutes.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Day 24 21 Sept</p>	<p>Mestre – Venice For those taking the bus or train and visiting Venice, the Piazza San Marco is still the heartbeat of Venice. There are so many attractions in and around this Piazza - the Ducal Palace, Doge’s Place, St Mark’s Basilica, Bridge of Sighs and within the Piazza is the famed Bell Tower. With your city map you will easily find the nearby Rialto Bridge and from there you can explore the less crowded streets and canals which add the essential colour to the historic tapestry of Venice. The alternative is a day trip by train to historic Padova.</p>	
<p>Day 25 22 Sept</p>	<p>Mestre to Verona – Italy (113 kms) 1 night We will arrive in the magnificent city of Verona in time to meet our local guide at 2pm. He will take us on an escorted tour of the old city.</p>	
<p>Day 26 23 Sept</p>	<p>Stresa on Lake Maggiore (240 km) 1 night Our overnight stay is in a family run hotel in the charming lakeside village of Stresa in the Lake Maggiore district of Italy.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Day 27 24 Sept</p>	<p>Stresa to Zermatt – Switzerland (152 km) 2 nights Zermatt was launched as a resort in 1855 by the Seilers, a family of hotel keepers. Zermatt is a car-free resort. Access for private transport is only allowed as far as Täsch (5 km from Zermatt). The local tourist office will give you plenty of advice and maps. There are also many pleasant short strolls that will reward you with some really photogenic scenes. The Alpine Museum graphically explains the first conquests of the Matterhorn. In the 1860’s Edward Whymper, a young British illustrator and mountain climber returned to the village for the purpose of conquering the Matterhorn. After 8 attempts he finally succeeded in 1865. We are in the driest part of Switzerland and if this idiom holds true we will see some of the best mountain scenery in the world. There is an amazing railway in Zermatt called the Gornergrot. It operates by a cogged mechanism to the lower slopes of the Matterhorn. It is a breathtaking trip that you will never forget. Dinner tonight is traditional fare at a restaurant recommended by our hotel.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Day 28 25 Sept</p>	<p>Zermatt – Switzerland We suggest that today should be a picnic day. Purchase whatever you need from the village and catch the Gornergrot to the top station. After being simply overwhelmed with spectacular views of the Matterhorn you can then decide how you are to return. You can take the walking trail part way back to Zermatt. Enjoy your picnic along the way and if you tire there is always the Gornergrot to get you to Zermatt. The village has much to offer those of us who like to shop and every conceivable watch is available here.</p>	

<p>Day 29 26 Sept</p>	<p>Zermatt - Colmar – France (278km) 2 nights</p> <p>Onto Colmar on the Alsace Wine Route and on the German border, where churches, cloisters, half-timbered houses, balconies, facades with ornate wood sculptures, paintings, gables and edifices from the Renaissance give Colmar a very special and charming city center. The colors and atmosphere of streets and alley-ways have been well preserved since the Middle Ages, the ancient houses are reflected in the water which passes through the city and it is often called ‘the Small Venice’.</p> <p>The Musée de’Unterlinden, formerly a convent, houses the 16th century Isenheim Altarpiece, the master work of the German religious painter Matthias Grünewald.</p> <p>The old town is very much a place to discover personally by wandering around the medieval streets and alleys. There is a tourist train that takes visitors through the historic part of the town with a commentary on the most notable buildings.</p> <p>Colmar is surrounded by many prominent vineyards.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Day 30 27 Sept</p>	<p>Colmar</p> <p>Today you have a choice. A free day to further discover more of the historic centre of Colmar or come on the excursion to Mulhouse and overdose on all things automotive with a visit to car enthusiasts heaven, the famous Schlumpf collection at the Mulhouse National Motor Car Museum. Classic, vintage and old car enthusiasts will be well aware of this amazing private car collection started by the Schlumpf brothers, Hans and Fritz. The collection was classified as an ‘historic monument’ and given Museum status when it was finally secured by the Association du Musée in 1981. This fascinating museum now houses in excess of 500 exhibits, plus cinemas showing the development history of the motor car from a blacksmith’s forge, leading up to today, with the latest in robotics and CAD/CAM techniques.</p>	
<p>Day 31 28 Sept</p>	<p>Colmar to Reims – France (388 kms) 1 night</p> <p>We overnight in the heart of the champagne area of France.</p>	<p>D</p>
<p>Day 32 29 Sept</p>	<p>Reims Via Epernay to Péronne (156km) 2 nights</p> <p>En route to Péronne, we will stop in Epernay for a Champagne cellar tour of the House of Moët & Chandon. The Moët & Chandon cellar features over 28 kilometers of historic tunnels. At the end of the tour, enjoy a glass of Champagne with one of Moët's master sommeliers.</p> <p>On arrival in Péronne you may like to visit the Historic de la Grande Guerre or WW1 war museum. This is a must for anyone interested in WW1 memorabilia. We have a request to visit the “Y” Farm Military Cemetery at Bois Grenier which is further north. This visit depends on time so we will decide on the day.</p>	
<p>Day 33 30 Sept</p>	<p>Péronne</p> <p>This morning meander through the now peaceful and scenic countryside to visit the magnificent Australian National War Memorial and war graves in the Somme. This memorial is dedicated to the Australian men and women of WW1. We will visit the local primary school in Villers-Bretonneux which was a gift to the children of the town from the children of Victoria as proof of their good will towards France. Attached to the school is a truly wonderful and moving museum set up in the memory of the brave Australians who gave their lives to rescue the town from invaders in 1918.</p> <p>Tonight will be our final group dinner.</p>	<p>D</p>

<p>Day 34 1 Oct</p>	<p>Péronne to Paris (140 km) 2 nights</p> <p>We expect to arrive at our hotel by noon giving you extra time in Paris to discover more of this beautiful city's charms. Our hotel is only a very short walk from The Tower Eiffel.</p>	
<p>Day 35 2 Oct</p>	<p>Paris</p> <p>A free day for further private exploration of the City of light. The best panoramic views of the city are from Montmartre and the basilica Sacre-Coeur. Here you can also watch the painters work at their easels. Why not have your face immortalized by one of the portrait artists! You may decide to take a day excursion to Monet's Garden or the wonderful Chateau de Versailles.</p>	
<p>Day 36 3 Oct</p>	<p>Paris(In flight)</p> <p>10.00 – Depart our hotel in our transfer coach for Charles de Gaulle Airport. 13.40 – Depart France - Flight TG931</p> <p>Or continue on with personal arrangements.</p>	
<p>4 Oct</p>	<p>05.55 – Arrive Bangkok Thailand</p> <p>07.55 – Depart Bangkok Flight # TG471</p> <p>21.00 – Arrive Sydney International Airport</p>	