

Vacation Guide



Travel... the world is waiting

In one short vacation, if you so desire, you can make forays into any number of different worlds, enjoy history and nature, the exotic and the familiar, the serious and the whimsical.

The travel bug is a virulent one. Once you set off, you will never want to stop traveling. One gateway leads inexorably to another; each adventure has its sequel which brings with it promises of unrivaled enjoyment.

Like the archetypal pilgrim, once you've been bitten by the travel bug, you will be forever searching, forever on the move. Like Robert Louis Stevenson, you will be able to claim: "For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go... I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move."

And, if your vacation is restricted to two or three weeks out of the year, you will treasure those weeks, plan for them carefully so as to make the most of them, pack into them a slew of experiences and adventures and afterward, remember them fondly, as the living entities they will have become.

Wherever you go, go with an open mind. Observe and learn! Every spot on the globe has much to offer those who come in search of knowledge, and the rewards of traveling with an eye peeled, receptive to whatever may happen to come along, are manifold.

Let your imagination play among the Great Smoky Mountains or the ruins of the Roman Forum; let everything you see, be it a snake charmer in the Casbah or a crocodile wallowing in mud in the Florida Keys, rebound off an unjaded mental palate, and prepare for experiences and adventures that are truly incomparable, even unique.

Wherever you venture, try to communicate with the people who live there. Learn

as much of their language as you can and don't be afraid of trying to say unfamiliar words and phrases; even if the syllables roll off your tongue in a way that sounds nothing like the original, and even if you wouldn't know the difference between the preterite and the imperfect in French or Spanish or whatever if you fell over them both in a sidewalk cafe.

There are few things more exciting than making friends in a strange place, possibly even visiting them in their home.

Suddenly, a new way of viewing Athens or Caracas or Boston is possible, from the inside, as it were. You get to visit restaurants, night clubs, curious little sights of which you would never have become aware on your own.

And, don't be afraid to try foreign cuisine! There are few experiences as educational and as enjoyable as that of dining in a new and varied fashion. Try *couscous* in Morocco, raw fish in Japan, *gnou chi* in Italy.

If the desire to travel has come over you, why wait?

If you haven't already made a start, begin planning for your next vacation, now! Read articles and study maps, until you locate the place or places you most want to visit, then get ready to go!

Whether your journey is to be long or short, whether your destination is here or abroad, whether your suitcase will be small or large, empty when you start or filled from the very beginning, make sure you take with you two important things: a mind and an imagination that are receptive to the "infinite variety" of experiences available to the traveler, wherever he or she may roam. Thus equipped, learning and enjoyment may well become synonymous.



A KALEIDOSCOPE of shining copper, brightly colored rugs and multi-hued pottery, the bustling Monastiraki flea market in Athens is a shopper's paradise, its stalls overflowing with antiques, handicrafts and every sort of bric-a-brac imaginable. Photo courtesy: European Travel Commission.

Flea markets are fabulous spots for browsing

If shopping while traveling is your peculiar pleasure, or even if you prefer merely browsing, there's no better

place to indulge than at any of the many markets on the continent of Europe.

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specialize in antiques, handicrafts, birds, flowers, produce... whatever you're interested in, it's there for the looking!

Paris boasts a slew of markets. Brilliantly colored flowers go on sale at the market in the Place Louis-Lepine on the Ile de la Cité (virtually in the shadow of that magnificent Gothic confection, Notre Dame) every day except Sunday, when their place is taken by brightly plumed birds of every variety.

The Stamp Market, a Paris institution, is in full swing all day Sunday, plus Thursday afternoon, at the corner of the Avenue Gabriel and the Avenue Marigny.

The most famous of all Parisian markets, however, is the Marche aux Pucees, a veritable jumble of valuable antiques of every description and items that can lay claim to just being old. More than 3,000 dealers set up stalls for this extravaganza every Saturday, Sunday and Monday, near the Porte de Clignancourt in the northern reaches of the city.

London has two world-famous markets. Portobello Road, on Saturdays, and Petticoat Lane, on Sundays.

The former is a virtual treasure trove for antiques: jewelry, furniture, bric-a-brac and clothing, all sold off pushcarts.

The latter, located in a fascinating, historic district near the Tower of London, was originally the old clothes market of London, hence its name, but today is a repository for just about anything new or used you might wish to buy.

The Flea Market in Athens is open, to all intents and purposes all week, but moves out onto the streets with a flourish on Sundays. It is located at the foot of the Agora, virtually under the shadow of the Acropolis and its magnificent Parthenon, near the square called Monastiraki.

On the ground, antiques of all sorts are for sale. Particularly in evidence are objects of hammered copper and brass, both ancient and modern.

The shops boast colorful displays of woven rugs and bags, racks laden with worry beads in a rainbow of hues, backgammon sets in lacquered, hand-inlaid wood, plus a myriad of other items, an enumeration of which would require a catalogue similar in length to Homer's Catalogue of Ships.

Interspersed among the merchandise are a handful of *voulaki* shops, where you can stop for an inexpensive and filling lunch of lamb slices and vegetables tucked into crisp rounds of *pita* bread.

Rome's weekly flea market, at Porta Portese in Trastevere, is a compendium of odds and ends, a fascinating miscellany. Record stands are very much in evidence—music, usually Italian love ballads, is constantly playing wherever you turn.

If you have come to buy, you are certain not to leave empty-handed. If you have come to look, a visit to a European flea market is a true education, unlike anything you have ever experienced before.

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58 Main St. E. Unit C
L7J 2M2
P.O. Box 102