

Travel

Holiday packages make great gifts

By VINCENT EGAN
Travel Columnist

Gift-giving time is quickly approaching. If there's a frequent traveller on your gift list, you will find that the choices are numerous and the price range is almost unlimited.

Feeling lavish? You could choose to give a package holiday. In some families, the siblings jointly present an inclusive winter-holiday - Florida in January, for instance - to their parents.

At the other end of the scale, an up-to-date guidebook would fill the bill, if you happen to know what destination the lucky recipient is planning to visit next.

A passport case, which can double as a wallet in countries with oversized bank notes, is almost indispensable. For a few dollars extra, it can be embossed with the holder's name.

A fundamental principle, in choosing gifts for the traveller, is to look for items that serve two or more purposes, and for articles that take up a minimum of luggage space yet provide a maximum of utility.



Vince Egan
Travel

imum of utility.

MULTIPLE USES

A calculator, for example is fine. But much better is one with multiple functions - such as alarm clock, stop watch, calendar and metric converter.

Sure to be welcomed is an emergency raincoat or poncho - of some quick-drying material - that folds down neatly and can be taken along conveniently on sightseeing trips.

But if plastic rainwear might be regarded as too unfashionable,

an alternative would be a mini-umbrella. When folded down, it fits easily into a briefcase or a bag.

Luggage is an always-useful gift. Choose between hard-sided (strong but heavy) and soft-sided (lighter, more vulnerable), and between suitcase-type and hang-up garment bag.

A less expensive accessory would be a collapsible luggage cart. These can be a much appreciated convenience at big airports - as well as a bit of a nuisance to carry when not in use.

A fold-down, zip-up bag will take up an insignificant amount of luggage space, but will prove invaluable on the homeward journey, when extra carrying capacity is needed for the "loot" acquired on the trip.

FOR SAFE TRAVEL

With safety and security an increasing concern among travellers, the familiar moneybelt could be an ideal gift. They are normally worn around the waist, although other designs are also available.

Why Glasgow? — Why not?

By DONNA McCLURE
Herald Special

Why Glasgow? Why Not?

I returned from a holiday in Glasgow recently, and the general response to my choice of a place to visit was: 'Yuk! Why Glasgow?' Well, everyone is entitled to his or her opinion but I have found that being open-minded has its own rewards. I admit that Glasgow has never been a mecca for tourists and is usually compared to Edinburgh which, since the mid-eighteenth century has been the cultural capital of Scotland; however, things do change. 1990 has been designated the 'Year of Culture' as Glasgow celebrates its 800th birthday and the city appears to be having a re-birth.

I found there was an informal, friendly atmosphere in the city which was both refreshing and relaxing. There is something special about a Glasgow crowd that a Canadian can identify with. Perhaps it comes from a common history of struggling to survive geographical and economic disadvantages.

To experience the flavor of Glasgow, you must really see it 'on foot.' In a city roughly the size of London, Ontario, walking offers the best opportunity to see the wonderful Georgian and Victorian structures that have survived along its tree-lined streets, hear the beautiful Glaswegian Scots and discover the intimate tea rooms, a satisfying alternative to the North American fast food custom.

A good place to begin a walk is in the west end at the University of Glasgow, founded in 1451. Within the massive, granite quadrangle of the university is the Hunterian Museum which has an outstanding geological and archaeological collection.

Across the venue, in the Hunterian Art Gallery, one can see a large number of paintings by the landscapist, Whistler. The architectural models and Art

Nouveau designs of Glasgow's Charles Rennie Mackintosh should not be missed since they represent the uniqueness of his style.

Adjacent to the university is Hillhead, a rather Bohemian neighborhood crossed by Byers Road which leads to the Royal Botanical Gardens with its greenhouses, shrubs, trees and plants including a herb garden.

Byers Road intersects Great Western Road which leads through constantly changing neighborhoods with shops, restaurants and boutiques. Along Great Western to Sauchiehall Street is a pleasant walk and a side trip to the Mitchell Library to see the Robert Burns' manuscripts is worthwhile.

Sauchiehall Street leads to Buchanan Street and the city centre. Glasgow Cathedral, St. George Square, the business and financial centre, Strathclyde University and the Tourist Information Office can be found close by. Like many European cities, Glasgow has historical structures, narrow, interconnected streets that make sight-seeing and browsing irresistible.

Of the more than 35 museums in Glasgow, there are two which I recommend. The Burrell Collection is housed in a specially designed award winning building and surrounded by 350 acres of parkland. It's collection of tapestries includes exquisite examples of Flemish, German and Dutch. The Egyptian and Ming Dynasty collections are memorable. Public transportation is needed since this gallery is located close to the periphery of Glasgow.

The Museum of Transport located closest to Glasgow University in Kelvingrove Park is fascinating for visitors of all ages. It's displays of horse drawn carriages, trains, ships and cars trace the history of Glasgow and give one a feel for the social and

working activities of the community of Glasgow through the years.

As I walked in Glasgow, I found that I wanted to study the skyline with its towering church spires and varied rooftops that can be viewed from bridges and prominences around the city.

High rises have not intruded on the city scape to the extent found in North America. Planners and developers have learned from experience that the high density living is not an acceptable alternative to the tenements; it simply replaces one set of problems with another.

Glasgow's days as a great industrial city are over but it now faces the challenge of becoming a great post-industrial city. Its unique character formed by its history made more formidable by the adversities, provides the determiner.

In this European City of Culture, Glaswegians have decided to let creativity flourish. With the tenacity of the Scots, they show evidence of succeeding.

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A portable smoke-detector is a reassuring item for the traveller staying in strange surroundings. So, too, is a travel-size first-aid kit with emergency supplies such as iodine and stick-on bandages.

A flashlight, with fresh long-life batteries, is another essential travel item. Even a small one will help travellers to find their way around darkened hotel rooms, to look for items that have fallen under the bed, or to brighten night-time streets. A larger version, costing about \$20, attaches to the top of a car to serve as an emergency blinker.

Binoculars are a necessity for viewing glaciers on an Alaska cruise, or wildlife on an African safari. The small, fold-down type is useful for theatre evenings as well.

Even people who never take pictures will usually want to capture their big trip in film. So-called "automatic everything" cameras are ideal for such travellers, and are close to being fool-proof.

OTHER IDEAS

If none of these gift ideas has quite hit the target, here are some other possibilities:

- A wilderness survival kit, fitted with a miniature butane torch, compass on a wrist strap, thermometer and multi-purpose survival tool.

- A tool kit for emergency repairs, with recessed spaces for screwdrivers, pliers, hammer, chisel and so on.

- A boxed set of small packets of laundry detergent, moistened towels, stain remover, etc.

- An elasticized clothesline or an inflatable coathanger, for drying laundry overnight in hotel bathrooms.

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