



TRAVEL ESSENTIALS NEWS

ASHLAND, OREGON

www.travelessentials.com

Fine Dining in Provence

by Steve Frazier-Rice

My wife Tara and I just returned from a relaxing one-week vacation without children in Provence. Food was our focus and as such our intent was to find a flat or house in a sunny Mediterranean locale, within walking distance of a vibrant community that we could use as a home base for culinary jaunts.

After consulting with two Ashland-based businesses, *At Home In France* and *Drawbridge To Europe*, both of whom rent accommodations in Europe, we found ourselves with the choice of a couple of towns in France and Italy. Somehow the town of Menton, France kept coming up on our radar. Although a bit bigger than we had originally desired, it has a great walkable old town center and is just a few kilometers from Italy. The pictures of the flat that Bruce and Allyn from *At Home In*

continued on page 6

Cruising the Jungles of Costa Rica

by Nancy Bestor

On our boat ride out of Tortuguero, a sleepy village on the north Caribbean coast of Costa Rica, our nine-year old daughter Sarah said, "This is just like the Jungle Cruise in Disneyland." Her sister Emily, age 11, replied, "Yes Sarah, but

TRAVEL FIRST PERSON

everything here is real." I'm not certain I could have described this three-day trip any better.

Bob and I

knew that Tortuguero was not the easiest place to get to, but with three weeks to spend in Costa Rica this past March, we wanted to see as much of the country as possible. Most tourists choose to book a package tour to Tortuguero, paying more than \$600 (for two people) to be bussed, boated and hand-held to a high-end lodge across the canal from the village itself. The package deal includes transportation, two nights accommodation, and meals at the lodge. As budget travelers on the

lookout for a little adventure, we decided that creating our own trip to Tortuguero would save us money and get us closer to the locals by staying in one of the small, locally-run hotels in the village proper.

After consulting both our guidebooks (*Lonely Planet Costa Rica* and *Rough Guide to Costa Rica*) we booked a hotel sight unseen via telephone from San Jose and prepared for an early wake-up the next day.

A taxi dropped us off at the Caribe bus station in San Jose at 8 am. There we purchased tickets (\$2 each) for the first leg of our journey—a one and a half hour bus ride to the town of Cariari. In Cariari we bought tickets (\$10 each) for another bus and then a boat that would deliver us to our final destination of Tortuguero. Both buses were filled with locals, who got on and off at many stops along the way. We drove through banana plantations, past ranches and farms, and more. The last 30 minutes of the second bus ride

continued on page 2

Travel Essentials News • June 2006

IN THIS ISSUE

- The Joys of Independent Travel Page 3
- Sixth Annual Travel Photo Contest Page 7
- Free Packing Workshop Details Page 8

TRAVEL ESSENTIALS

ASHLAND, OREGON

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Here Comes The Sun?!?— Sun Protective Gear

by Bob Bestor

Few of us look forward to rain and cloudy days. That's why some of the most popular vacation spots are the sun drenched beaches of Hawaii, Thailand, Mexico and the Caribbean. Unfortunately, as medical science advances, so does the realization that not just too much sun, but even just a little bit of sun can be harmful to your skin.

Under the time honored tradition of find a need and fill it, many companies are introducing an array of products designed

specifically to protect you from the harmful rays of the sun. This story features a few offerings from our sun protective department. We'll also give you the lowdown on sun protective clothing.

The Tilley Hat

What has a 50+ UPF rating, is available in three fabrics and six styles, has a secret pocket, offers a hidden and adjustable wind cord, floats, is made in Canada, provides blissful comfort, is

continued on page 4

Cruising the Jungles of Costa Rica...

continued from page 1

(about an hour total) were on a very bumpy and rocky road. We'd later learn that gravel roads are the norm in Costa Rica, and this one was not bad compared to others we would travel. We arrived at our "boat station," and I use the term "station" loosely, and boarded our lancha (small boat) for the final leg—down the river and into Tortuguero.

This part of our journey (a two hour ride) may have been worth the entire trip all by itself as we sped down the narrow winding river shooting past downed trees, large rocks and small rapids. Local families fished and lived on the banks, turtles sunned themselves, birds whizzed by and howler monkeys bellowed from unseen positions within the jungle.

Tortuguero is entirely surrounded by protected forest and water, and is only accessible by boat or plane. The population lies somewhere around 700, and the village's claim to fame is the green sea turtles that hatch on its sandy beaches July through September. Our boat dropped us directly at our hotel, Miss Junie's, in Tortuguero village. The village sits with the canal on one side and the roaring ocean on the other. Only a handful of budget rooms are available in the village, while the more expensive and more touristed lodges lie across the canal. Miss Junie's was clean and friendly, with fans in each room, a lovely garden, porches looking right out onto the canal and a relaxed Caribbean feel. Our two rooms were \$30 each per night with a large breakfast included.

There's not much to see in Tortuguero village itself, just one dirt walkway through town, a handful of restaurants and a couple of stores. And while the rest of Costa Rica is working hard to clean up it's beaches, the effort has unfortunately not seen much cooperation in Tortuguero, as little bits of paper, plastic and such are just about everywhere.

But the main attraction here is Parque Nacional Tortuguero, a pristine coastal park made up of many canals, dense jungle and a stunning array of wildlife. We booked a sunrise guided canoe tour with local legend Castor Hunter Thomas. Castor has led canal



tours for 17 years and before that assisted his father who was the first licensed guide in Tortuguero. We met Castor at 6 am, the best time, he said, to see the most wildlife. Castor did the majority of the paddling on our three-hour tour and thanks to his amazing and experienced eyes and ears we were treated to a morning full of wonderful jungle wildlife. He pointed out howler and spider monkeys, blue herons, caimans, toucans, parrots, iguanas, river otters, osprey, turkey vultures, and more. We canoed silently through the jungle, hearing only the calls of the wild animals. As we returned to the village, several motorized boats from the expensive lodges sped across the canal and entered the jungle. We all wondered just how much they would see with their rumbling motors and relatively inexperienced guides. Our tour was outstanding, and very much worth the price (\$15 each for Bob and I, the girls were free, plus \$16 total for entrance into the National Park), and waking up at 5:30!

Tortuguero is unlike any other place we visited in Costa Rica. In many ways it

felt more like an island in the Caribbean. It was VERY humid, there were lots of mosquitoes, and people were not in much of a hurry. The food was different from the rest of Costa Rica as well, spiced with Caribbean flavors. In fact Miss Miriam's in Tortuguero produced the most memorable meal of the trip. We feasted on large plates of cabbage salad with vinegar, french fries, rice with vegetables, and gallo pinto (rice and beans) with coconut. These side dishes all went very well with our main courses, Caribbean spiced chicken, fried filet of white fish and steak. The \$26 price also included three sodas and two beers. Great food at an excellent price.

The total price of our independent trip to Tortuguero was \$325, more than \$300 less than the cost of a package trip. Would we have seen as much wildlife, eaten as good food, and got as good a feel for local Tortuguero living if we had booked a package deal? I doubt it. And we're \$300 richer as well. On top of that, taking the trip local style made the journey itself an incredible experience.

The next day we returned to San Jose by lancha and two buses again. Along the waterway, in the small boat, we saw a 12-



foot long crocodile sunning on the shore, then silently slipping into the water as we slowed down to watch. The only things missing from our Jungle Cruise were the corny Disneyland jokes. END

—Nancy Bestor is the co-owner of *Travel Essentials*. She once dreamed of working in *Disneyland*, either on the *Jungle Cruise* or the *Pirates of the Caribbean*.



"I don't think of all the misery, but of all the beauty that still remains."— ANNE FRANK

Strange Advice From the Guru

by Bob Bestor, Jr.

For the last 20 years, in my newsletter on travel to Europe (*Gemütlichkeit*, The Travel Letter for Germany, Austria & Switzerland, www.gemut.com), I've preached the gospel of unstructured European travel, as opposed to adherence to a tight, pre-planned itinerary. With its abundance of clean, attractive overnight accommodations, and its vast rail and highway networks, Europe is nirvana for the footloose traveler.

But now comes a dissenting opinion from a surprising source; none other than the reigning monarch of European travel, Rick Steves. In a recent newspaper column, Steves opines that the "free spirit, without much planning, no real itinerary" will return home with a "backpack full of complaints about how expensive and stressful it all was." On the other hand, he says, the traveler with a "detailed day-to-day plan" will come home with "rich stories of spontaneous European adventures."

This is a bit of a head-scratcher. Isn't this the same Rick Steves who 20 years ago advocated traveling around Europe as mood dictated with a rail pass, a backpack, and one or two of his books?

Steves says that with his guidebook research and TV filming commitments, he has "one of the most tightly-wound itineraries of any traveler."

No doubt that is the case, but it doesn't mean it's the best way for the rest of us. My wife, Liz and I, have traveled Europe both ways, with an hour-by-hour itinerary, and simply making it up as we went along. In more than 50 trips over the last 30 years, we've found winging it to be far more relaxing and rewarding.

Careful planning, Steves says, gives him "the luxury of two hours of absolutely relaxed, focused-on-the-moment spontaneity." But how about those of us looking for two weeks of spontaneity? The mature vacation traveler to Europe doesn't achieve that with a spreadsheet that accounts for every 15-minute segment of the trip. Where is the spontaneity if you can't spend an extra day in a town that has unexpectedly charmed you? Where is

it if you can't, on the spur of the moment, decide to stay overnight at the intriguing little country hotel you discovered when you stopped there for lunch? Where is it when you have to drive like a bat out of hell to get to your scheduled hotel on time because you became immersed in exploring a castle, a museum, or an interesting town. Sorry, Rick, but rigid schedules are stress inducers and spontaneity killers.

I'm the first to admit that planning a trip is one of the joys of travel. It's fun to get out maps and guidebooks, surf the Net, and create an overall plan. And, by all means, make reservations in cities where they are necessary (not as many as you might think), but leave a few days open.

More than once have we arrived in Europe with no reservations and no plans—only a car rental reservation and appropriate Michelin Green and Red guides.

Admittedly, many travelers are not wired that way. Still, I would urge everyone to at least leave a few days open for in-Europe decision-making.

One must, of course, be properly prepared—not itinerary-ized—to successfully travel in footloose fashion. That preparation involves being able, each day in Europe, to answer three basic questions: Where do I sleep? What do I see? How do I get where I'm going?

Where they lay their heads each night is for many travelers the most critical travel issue. To successfully "wing it," one has to be able to find suitable accommodations on short notice. The Michelin Red Guide series, with its depth of coverage and variety of useful tools, is always our first line of defense. (Note: Michelin Red Guide hotels and restaurant listings can be accessed free at www.ViaMichelin.com Web site.)

There are many useful guide features, but one in particular is invaluable to the flexible traveler. Spotted on a series of maps at the front or back of the book—depending on the edition—are all the hotels and restaurants Michelin thinks are especially pleasant or offer particularly good value. Let's say, for example, it's 3pm and your rental car is headed toward

Toulouse from Bordeaux, and it's time to find a hotel for the night. Pull out your Michelin Red Guide for France and quickly locate all the special hotels and restaurants nearby. It's been our experience to find several within a 20 to 60-minute drive. Fire up the cell phone and make a booking.

Tourist offices are another reliable source. Even small towns have them and most are equipped to assist visitors find a wide range of same-day overnight accommodations.

As to what to see, the best reference for European sights, history, and culture is Michelin's Green Guide series encompassing more than 40 books, and covering most countries and major cities. Leading towns and sights are starred according to importance, and there are suggested walking and driving tours with descriptions and ratings of the sights along the way, maps of the most important cities, and a few pictures.

Traveling without an itinerary is tailor-made for the auto traveler. Successfully getting around Europe's backroads requires the right maps (yeah, I know, those GPS devices are amazing technology, but good maps are still indispensable). A scale of 1:200,000 (1 cm=2 km) or 1:150,000 (1 cm=1.5 km) is best. That map of France you got free from AAA or the tourist office is OK for an overall perspective but will be useless on backroads.

The advice Rick Steves gives in his books, on his Web site, and in his PBS programs is trustworthy. He's shown millions how to "do" Europe responsibly and without taking out a second mortgage. But this time he's forgotten what it was like to travel for fun instead of business.

If you want a tightly-wound itinerary, try a Globus Tour—or maybe one of the 300-plus tours that Steves' company operates. END

—Bob Bestor, Jr. is the co-owner of *Travel Essentials*, and the publisher of *Gemütlichkeit*, the travel letter for Germany, Austria, and Switzerland.



"Fish don't applaud."—BOB HOPE (COMMENTING ON WHY HE CUT HIS CRUISE VACATION SHORT)

Here Comes the Sun!?!—Sun Protective Gear

continued from page 1

insured against loss or grievous damage and is guaranteed for life not to wear out? Why a Tilley Hat of course.

Twenty-five years ago Canadian Alex Tilley set out to make the World's Greatest Outdoor Hat. Whether you choose cotton, nylon or hemp we know you'll agree, like millions of others, that Mr. Tilley has succeeded fabulously. All Tilley Hats feature broad brims that offer excellent sun protection for often exposed areas like the neck, ears and face. Tilley Hats will cover you up from \$65-\$75.



Sol Sunscreen

For many of us sunscreen is our first line of sun protection. While we here at Travel Essentials urge you think of UPF protective clothing and hats as your primary defense, no sun protection plan is complete without sunscreen. Even with long sleeve shirts, wide brimmed hats and sunglasses, you'll still have exposed skin on your face, ears, hands and maybe more.

Sol Sanguard uses pharmaceutical grade Zinc Oxide to provide a high level of UVA and UVB protection. Formulated without potentially irritating fragrances, alcohol, PABA or Benzophenones Sol's gentle, moisturizing protection is available as a lotion, lip balm and a face stick and is priced between \$4 and \$13.

Sunglasses

Sunglasses are an integral part of any sun protection program. Studies have shown that in addition to skin damage, there is a strong link between UV exposure and eye diseases like cataracts and macular degeneration.

Both Native and Costa Del Mar block 100% of UVA and UVB rays in every single pair of sunglasses they produce.

Both companies offer an array of designs that provide the finest in eye protection,



durability and style. With a few dozen frame and lens combinations you'll have plenty of classic and fashion forward looks to choose from, starting at \$99⁹⁵.

Ex Officio Air Strip Shirt

In keeping with our sun protection theme the Air Strip long sleeve shirt (\$84⁹⁵) from Ex Officio provides 30+



UPF sun protection in a great looking and well-appointed travel shirt. The Air Strip goes the extra mile with you by adding a three-panel collar that keeps the sun off the back of your neck. Perfectly designed for the hottest summer climates, this lightweight garment offers a classic button-down look and a buttery soft feel while remaining very wrinkle resistant. On the technical side the Air Strip hides comfy mesh ventilation panels both across the back and down the sides while offering superior moisture wicking to both keep you cool and allow the shirt to dry quickly even in humid climates. Roll up sleeve tabs, deep roomy pockets and even a hidden security pocket round out this favorite. Yes, all that and the sun protection too!

Sunday Afternoons Hat

Ashland's own Sunday Afternoons provides us with the Kauai Hat, our number one selling women's hat. Lightweight and comfortable, the Kauai Hat (\$34⁹⁵) offers a classic look that evokes long weekends, umbrella drinks and warm tropical breezes. Yet it's sun

battling UPF rating of 50 makes it an excellent everyday hat too. A 3.5-inch brim offers excellent coverage for the face and the back of the neck. But best of all its richly woven, travel friendly and



wrinkle fighting fibers make it rollable, crushable and eminently packable. **END**

—Bob Bestor is the co-owner of Travel Essentials. He'll wear any sun protection items, as long as they won't mess up his golf swing.

But doesn't all clothing provide sun protection? The answer is yes, but the protection provided is often much less than you might think. It's also quite a bit less than recommended by skin care specialists. For example, the Skin Cancer Foundation recommends using a minimum protection rating of 15 every time you go out into the sun, but research shows that a typical cotton shirt provides an Ultra-violet protection factor (SPF) of 6.5. Worse yet, that SPF rating drops in half when the garment gets wet. While some of Travel Essentials' garments are affected by saturation, the ratings listed are the minimum amounts the garments provide. In most cases they'll provide even more protection. The Skin Cancer Foundation (www.skincancer.org) says "The new high-SPF clothing... is an obvious choice for appropriate sun wear".



"You only live once, but if you work it right, once is enough." — JOE E. LEWIS

Packing Light Makes For Happy Travelers

by Steve Frazier-Rice

I live in travel clothing. Having worked and played in the outdoor and travel industries for more than 15 years, I have amassed a sizable collection of clothing that has proven itself durable, lightweight, packable, quick drying and wrinkle resistant. I have shirts that are more than ten years old, have traveled around the world, have well over 200 man-days in them and just as many washings, have never been ironed and are still wrinkle free and look brand spanking new. Sadly, those garments do not grow on trees. Luckily, they do “grow” at Travel Essentials.

Having “scientifically proven” in the Fall of 2005 that you can reduce your packed clothing weight and volume by 50% if you replace all of your “normal” garments with their packable travel counterpart, I would put these types of clothes at the top of the list for every man or woman who wants to travel with good looking and functional clothing while maximizing space and saving weight. This packing paradigm definitely falls into the “Yes, you can have it all!” category.

On my recent trip to Southern France (April 2006), I was fortunate enough to have a couple of new garments that will fit nicely into my everyday wardrobe, one of which is now my favorite “casual dress shirt”—Sunday Afternoon’s Island Breeze Shirt, (\$69⁹⁵). This is the same shirt that Bob reviewed for our last newsletter, and I took two on the basis of his recommendation. Made in Canada and 100% polyester, the Island Breeze is long sleeved, feels more like silk than polyester, has venting built into the back panel and under arm mesh vent panels that actually look as stylish as they are functional. It can be dressed up or down and looks as natural with a pair of zip-leg pants and a fly rod as it does with black slacks and glass of Chateaufeuf Du Pape. When packing they rolled down to the size of a soda can (exceptional for any long-sleeved shirt) yet they saved me the fashion stink-eye from the locals in France because they looked so nice. I figured I would take two, wear them each

once and be happy. As it happened, I wore them every day except one.

Another great packable garment is the Stretch Explorer Pant from Ex Officio, (\$69⁹⁵). The small amount of stretch makes them extremely comfortable on any long flight, and they nicely dressed up my shirts. In fact, whenever I wore these in tandem with the Island Breeze Shirt, I was invariably assumed to be a local by French shop owners because I looked so nice.

To help me save even more space, I put these inside an Eagle Creek Packing Compressor Bag Medium, which sells for \$10, along with several other garments, and was able to compress them all into a one inch “platter” that fit nicely into my Eagle



Creek Tarmac 22, selling for \$235, (still the greatest piece of luggage ever invented in my opinion). Having lined the slots between the handles inside my bag with socks, underwear and a few other things, the “platter” rested nicely on top and I cinched the whole thing down with the Tarmac’s internal compressions straps.

Because I paced with the right travel clothing and hardware, after adding my toiletry kit and an extra pair of shoes, I was able to carry extra stuff like my wife’s Travel Clothes Steamer, \$29⁹⁵, (8 years old and still going strong), her 1200 Watt

Travel Hair Dryer (\$29⁹⁵), and all of the requisite chargers, batteries and folderol for an iPod toting digital shutterbug, including my super-space-and-weight-saving Ultimate Ears Super.Fi 5 Pro Earbuds (\$249⁹⁹). I also took 4 pairs of noise canceling headphones for testing and comparison and I never even used the sizable front pockets of the Tarmac until I stuffed them full of gifts for the trip home.

The proof was in the pudding. The true benefit of packing light? I was able to make this trip with a 3/4 full Tarmac that weighed only 25 pounds and included lots of stuff I couldn’t normally take.

As expected, because I used the compressor bag I found my precious shirts quite

wrinkled upon arrival. But less than ten minutes in the clothes dryer de-wrinkled them nicely. I thought of using the clothes steamer, but I am inherently lazy. While I hesitate to call any garment wrinkle free (even a titanium tank will “wrinkle” if you hit it hard enough), they were presentable enough to go out to nice restaurants and spend the day in them.

Like I said, I live in travel clothing, and I hope I have illuminated why you should too.

END

—When he’s not wowing French shop owners with his great wardrobe, Steve Frazier-Rice is managing Travel Essentials. He’s blessed the TE staff with his witty humor and fab outfits for more than seven years.

**For more information,
or to purchase any of the
products in this newsletter,
go to www.travelessentials.com/summer2006/.**



“It’s funny about water. When I am home, I have to force myself to drink three glasses a day. When it costs \$1.49 a bottle, I am like a sponge.” — ERMA BOMBECK

Fine Dining in Provence...

continued from page 1

France had on their web site (www.athomeinfrance.com), along with some images that a friend emailed us of the annual Menton Lemon Festival, sold us on Menton as the town that best fit our needs.

Of course, having access to great guidebooks helped too. We read the appropriate sections of the *Michelin Green Guide Provence*, *Eyewitness Guide Provence and The Cote D'Azur*, *Lets Go Italy*, and *Frommers Italy* before finally making our decision. We also compiled a list of restaurants (more than we had time for) that we wanted to visit and towns we wanted to see, and then left the final decision-making to our whims on the days we were there.

The flat was exactly what we wanted, and at \$1,000 for the week, the price was quite reasonable. Accessed via rue Longue, one of Menton's oldest "roads" (barely one car wide), and I believe the original "main drag" from medieval times, the apartment is one flight of stairs above street level and offers vaulted, arched and painted ceilings and several sets of windows looking east over the beach and harbor towards Ventimiglia and Bordighera in Italy. We were only 200 yards from the main walking



boulevard, which is replete with shops and restaurants that service both international tourists and locals. In fact, the "tourist area" was thronged with local families—adults shopping and grabbing snacks while their kids scootered and played around the open, sunny plazas.

We tried to keep our days light with lots of walking and small snack-meals. But every night was devoted to eating the best regional food available (within reason—we took the Michelin four-star restaurants off our list for budgetary considerations) and finding a unique bottle of regional wine to go with it. Additionally, we wanted to avoid any restaurant whose 'regional menu' was designed to nab the largest number of non-discerning tourists. Our quest was for what I like to call "Transcendent Cuisine". We were in search of a dining experience that had all the characteristics of regional cuisine—locally grown and produced ingredients, regionally grounded flavors and cooking techniques, and local wines—yet transcended the standard representations of the local dishes that you tend to find along the heavily trafficked tourist boulevards of any French town. And with the restaurants listed below, we succeeded.

For those who don't mind paying a little extra for something special, here is our list of recommended restaurants within southwest Provence. You should expect to spend from 35 to 60 Euros per person, wine and tip included. All are within a 30-minute drive of Nice, and worth the effort. Reservations are recommended.

La Bergerie

La Bergerie was a little hard to find. We expected it to be right in Eze Village (as opposed to Eze sur Mer on the coast, Eze Village is in the hills above the coastal community). A quick question to a gentleman along the road and we were sent up into the hills again, and this

time with his directions found it easily above Eze Village. La Bergerie could be called quaint because of its décor, but its



food is anything but. You can get Une Salade de Chevre Chaude in just about any restaurant in France, but I doubt you will find one better than the one served here. I was compelled by wild desire to eat the whole thing, which was only a disappointment because I had little space for the monstrous pile of fire roasted lamb with black truffle oil that came next. Tara's skewered, fire-roasted shrimp had her drooling and extolling the merits of any food product that hinted at the taste of bacon – quite a stretch for her fishatarian taste buds. We ordered a bottle of Chateauneuf du Pape (I am sorry that I didn't write the name down!) that went splendidly with the whole affair. We finished the evening with a perfect platter of profiteroles, which I would have had for dinner if my doctor would let me.

La Bergerie
Grande Corniche, Eze Village,
Tél: +33 – 04 93 41 03 67

Les Deux Freres

Les Deux Freres was another difficult find due to road construction and signs pointing in too many unlikely directions. We finally located it, and its incredible views, at the end of a cobblestone road next to an old castle in a medieval village perched more than 1,000 feet above

continued on page 7



"The method (of learning Japanese) recommended by experts is to be born as a Japanese baby, and raised by a Japanese family, in Japan. And even then it's not easy." —DAVE BARRY

Fine Dining...

continued from page 6

the Mediterranean. Les Deux Freres is presided over by Willem, a comical and affable Dutchman who worked there as a busboy in his younger days, and then bought it years later after traveling all over our fair planet. Instead of the usual fresh flowers, Willem has decorated every table with not-modestly-priced metalwork from a local artist. The art varies in price from 2,000 to 40,000 Euros! And best of all, according to Willem, they don't die as flowers tend to do. Tara enjoyed an appetizer of local crawfish followed by vegetable risotto. I am pretty sure I ate something else, but can only remember the leg of lamb that was so tender it dripped off the bone. Willem recommended a bottle of wine from the Rhone Valley that although designated as a simple "Country Wine" by the French government, is in fact an excellent Cabernet produced by a British couple who make their home in Provence.

Side note: Willem's wife runs a café next door called Fraises y Chocolat where

we dined the next day for lunch after touring the surrounding shops and castle ruins. Highly recommended for light,



quick bites and the pleasant camaraderie

of its proprietor.

Le Deux Freres
06190 Roquebrune Cap Martin, Village,
Tel: +33 - 04 93 28 99 00
Fax : +33 - 04 93 28 99 10

Auberge Pierrot-Pierrette

Originally we thought we would be walking to this restaurant, but finally learned that it was in the hills above Menton and required a drive. And keeping with our standard operating procedure, we made a few wrong turns in getting there. Much like Les Deux Freres, the view over the Mediterranean was splendid and the meals unique. Tara had a pesto gnocchi that was so tender the pieces melted in your mouth. I enjoyed a crayfish soup and slice of tender beef in a light broth that also seemed to melt in my mouth.

Auberge Pierrot-Pierrette
Place de L'Eglise, Monti
Tel : +33 - 04 93 35 79 76
Fax : +33 - 04 93 35 79 76

END

Start Snapping!— Sixth Annual Travel Photo Contest

Have you secretly dreamed of becoming a photographer for *Condé Nast Traveler*, or *National Geographic*? Do you take great photos while on vacation but worry that a slide show will bore your friends to tears? Well this is your chance to show the world your talents! Print your favorite travel photographs and send them in to us for Travel Essentials' Sixth Annual Amateur Travel Photo Contest! Now through August 31, enter any two of your travel snapshots, and you'll be eligible to win fantastic prizes, and have your photo displayed in large format online and in Travel Essentials' Ashland, Oregon storefront window display! For the month of September, Travel Essentials will display the winners' photos, along with the honorable mentions too (as many as we can fit!). Here are the nitty gritty details:

- Submit any size, color or black and white photograph (no negatives or slides please), in person, by mail or online at www.travelessentials.com to Travel Essentials, 252 E. Main St., Ashland. Include your name, address and telephone number. If entering



Last year's first prize went to this winning photo, "Glacier Express in Mirror," taken by Ralph Walker of Arlington, Virginia.

- online, please put "Travel Photo Contest" in the subject field.
- All photographs will become the property of Travel Essentials. So don't send it if you can't part with it!
- Travel Essentials will be the sole judge of the contest, and reserves the right to display the photographs.
- The contest is open to amateur photographers, and no more than two entries will be accepted per person.

Prizes are as follows:

1st Prize: A Briggs and Riley U21NX Rolling Carry-on Bag, matching 1121 Deluxe Tote, and a \$200 Gift certificate to Travel Essentials.

2nd Prize: A Victorinox Mobilizer 22" Rolling Carry-on and a \$100 Gift Certificate to Travel Essentials.

Five honorable mentions will receive an Eagle Creek Packing Set and a \$25 Gift Certificate to Travel Essentials. So wow us with your most stunning travel images. We look forward to seeing your photos!

END



"The more I traveled the more I realized that fear makes strangers of people who should be friends." — SHIRLEY MACLAINE



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Get Ready to “Pack It Up” at Our Packing Workshop

Travel Essentials is delighted to offer two free packing workshops with America's leading packing expert, Anne McAlpin. The workshops, Thursday, June 1 at 2:00 and 6:00 p.m., will take place in Travel Essentials' Ashland, Oregon store at 252 East Main Street. Anne will teach her inside secrets on packing light, whether for a trip to Paris or a trek in Nepal.

Anne McAlpin is a world traveler, packing expert & author of the popular book & video series, *Pack It Up*. She frequently appears on *The View* with Barbara Walters sharing up-to-the-minute travel tips. She has also been a featured guest on *Oprah*, *The Today Show* & *QVC*. You can also catch Anne on Home & Garden TV's *Smart Solutions*, where she presents a *Traveling Light* series.

Anne's tips include packing smart for airport security, planning your travel wardrobe, safety secrets for women traveling solo, secrets to packing the perfect carry-on bag, and more.

Travel Essentials will also offer a

10% discount on all regularly priced merchandise in the store on Thursday, June 1 only.

Here's a sneak peak of some of Anne's

Travel Essentials' Free Packing Workshops with Anne McAlpin

Thursday, June 1
at 2:00 and 6:00 pm

Call now to reserve
your space!

tips for making traveling easier and more enjoyable, directly from her book, *Pack It Up*:

- Always pack your sense of humor.

- If your luggage has been stored for quite a while, place it open in the sunshine to air it out before packing.
- Keep valuables and medicine together in a plastic bag that you can pull from your carry-on should you have to check it at the last minute for any reason.
- You want to make sure you know which bags are yours while going through security and using bright neon luggage tags are the answer. Always use your business address on your luggage ID tag.
- Don't forget the old trip of hanging wrinkled items in a bathroom full of steam to refresh them.

To learn more about Anne McAlpin, go to www.packitup.com.

Anne's packing workshops always bring in a full house, so reservations are a must! To reserve your spot, call Travel Essentials at (541) 482-7383 today! **END**