

Tour update:

**Peru/Galapagos,
May 2009, 21 days.**

Four places left for Peru , Gala-
pagos extension full.

**China Sept. 2009
24 days.**

Mongolia, train to Llasa,
Shengdu, Shanghai.

Five places left.

**Himalayas/Bhutan,
Oct. 20, 2009. 20 days**

Bhutan, Sikim, Darjeeling
Eight places left

**Antarctica Cruise &
Patagonia, Feb. 2010**

Eight places left.

**Tanzania & Uganda
Featuring the Bwindi
Gorilla Reserve.**

Sept. 2010, 23 days.

Two places left.

RUSSIA (See article)

**Visit www.elantravel.ca for
details**



Russia (and the Baltic States) Here we come!

Many of you have been asking if and when we will be operating a Russia tour? Well, your patience is about to be rewarded. We have put together a tour which combines: four nights in Moscow, three nights in St. Petersburg, one night in Novgorod (Perhaps, Russia's oldest city) with a six day river cruise. Then on by bus to spend two nights in each of the Baltic States: Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, a total of twenty one days in all. Proposed departure date is June 13, 2011. June is probably an ideal time to visit weather wise and as some guests who are travelling with us in 2010 have indicated that they would like to visit Russia with us we are delaying the tour by a year. And who, knows by then perhaps the dismal stock market returns will be history!

As well as the sites you would expect to see, (the Kremlin and Red Square in Moscow, the Peter Paul Fortress and the Winter Palace in St. Petersburg) we have also arranged an evening at the famous Kirov Ballet. Accommodation will be in four star hotels and

the cruise ship is from the Viking Line whose ships are top class.

We will probably limit the size of the group to around twenty six guests and of course the tour will be escorted from Canada by one of our staff, probably me. As is our practice we will only be asking for a \$50.00 refundable registration fee from each person until we can guarantee the price about eleven months prior to departure. Included in the price of \$7,980.00 is a very generous allowance for inflation and currency fluctuations. Who knows we may even be able to lower the price. Hope you can join us.

George Clark

Kizhi Island, one of our cruise stops



Antarctica/Patagonia tour pricing now guaranteed

We are now able to guarantee the price of our Antarctica cruise and Patagonia tour departing February 13, 2010. The cost for the fourteen day tour which includes; Buenos Aires, the eight day cruise and time in Ushuaia will be \$10,505.00, a reduction of \$320.00. The price for the 11 day extension to Patagonia has increased slightly to \$4,188.00. These prices are in Canadian dollars and are based on two persons sharing a room/cabin.

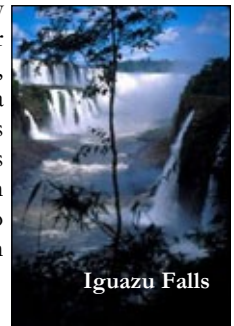
You will be able to watch the opening Olympic ceremonies before leaving for Buenos Aires the next day, but whether missing the Olympics is a good or bad thing I leave entirely to you. I would add though, that a great deal of thought went into

Our cruise ship the, 12,700 tonnes MS Fram



choosing our departure date. February is usually the best month to visit Antarctica as it is toward the end of summer there, when the whale watching is at its peak. Also the adult penguins are ashore molting and their chicks are beginning to fledge. Another bonus is that the volume of water flowing over the Iguazu Falls (For those planning to take the Patagonia extension) peaks from December through March. These falls are higher than Niagara and twice as wide.

Like all Elan tours this trip is fully inclusive of air fares, four star hotels, your cabin, all meals, sightseeing, park admissions, taxes, airline fees and tips. So far we are a little over half full with six out of ten cabins sold. The tour will go regardless of numbers however, I can only justify sending an Elan Travel escort if we sell a minimum of two more cabins. So please book I want to join you!!



Iguazu Falls

"Like all great travellers, I have seen more than I remember, and remember more than I have seen."

Benjamin Disraeli

How things have changed!

While destroying some old files I came across a flyer issued by Terrace Travel, the company I bought in 1975. The flyer advertised a fourteen day air/bus tour from Vancouver to Mexico and featuring Mexico City, Taxco and Acapulco. The total cost of the entire package including hotel accommodation, airfare, taxes and the bus tour was \$439.00 per person!!

The additional fare to fly from Terrace to Vancouver was only \$86.00 return for the husband and \$43.00 return for a wife. Yes, in those days we had "Family Plan" fares the husband paid full fare his wife (Not the other way around!) and children paid half. I wonder what our Supreme Court would have to say about the equality of that?

Up a lazy river.....

Two new Elan clients have introduced me Pandaw Cruises, a company that operates river trips on some of Asia's most evocative rivers; the Ganges, Mekong and Irrawady. These clients will soon be embarking on their fourth cruise.....praise indeed!



This description of the experience is taken from their brochure.

Luxury Pandaw cruising is different from other forms of cruising. The atmosphere on board is informal and relaxed. A Pandaw river cruise is a deeply tranquil vacation experience. Unlike other cruises there are no (nonessential) Tannoy announcements and other irritations normally associated with a cruise ship. Pandaw passengers like to be smart casual at night, but do not dress up. There is no captain's table at dinner or any of the other rituals associated with sea cruising.



Each ship usually has twenty eight cabins, which are large by cruise ship standards (168 sq.ft.) and can hold a maximum of fifty six passengers. The cruises vary in length from ten to twenty two days and offer plenty of opportunities to explore places of interest en route. A nice feature is that all shore excursions are included in the cruise price as are tips; the only items not included in the price are alcoholic drinks and laundry. The food, which I understand is excellent is a mixture of Asian and Western. Prices for a main deck cabin will be approximately \$350.00 US per day per person, upper deck cabins are slightly more. Each cabin has its own air conditioning unit.



Elan Travel has entered into a Wholesaler relationship with Pandaw and as a result is in a position to offer a discount on Pandaw's regular pricing.

In 2007 Elan operated two Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam tours. At the time it struck me that a particularly nice way to see these countries would be from the river. If you are interested in learning more about Pandaw their website is, www.pandaw.com or, of course you can contact me. If you feel that an escorted Elan tour featuring a Pandaw cruise would appeal please let me know, my idea would be to visit Myanmar but, as always, I would welcome your suggestions.

Insurance tips

Baggage insurance:

You probably have coverage under your household policy, check with you broker. It is however important to provide your broker with a list of any valuable items you plan to travel with; an expensive camera for example. It is best to leave expensive jewelry behind. Additional baggage insurance can be purchased but read the fine print, there are quite often exclusions and limitations.

Cancellation insurance:

This type of coverage will return to you any non-refundable amounts you have paid for transportation and accommodations if you have to cancel prior to departure, providing the reason for cancellation was unknown to you and was unforeseeable at the time you purchased the coverage: Unexpected illness or an accident to you or a close relative are examples that are covered. This type of policy will also reimburse you for monies lost if your vacation is cut short by an unexpected reason.

Medical insurance:

Your provincial plan will only reimburse you up to the amount that treatment would have cost in your home province and there are other important limitations. Medical insurance will pay any additional amounts, which in some countries can be very significant. This type of insurance will also cover repatriation expenses if the illness or accident is very serious.

Credit card coverage:

Some premium credit cards offer insurance coverage if used to purchase the trip. BUT read the fine print in your agreement, limitations and deductibles may apply which negate a lot of the benefits.

Elan Travel staff are fully accredited Travel Insurance brokers and can help you with any questions you may have.