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## Section One

# TRAVEL GEOGRAPHY FUNDAMENTALS

### Know The Client

Most new travel agents would rather have their teeth pulled than to have someone walk in the office and ask to go to Djibouti. Don't feel badly, because even those agents who have been in the industry are stumped once in a while. We had a client who came in and asked to go to Polo. Now, we have traveled most of this world for the last 30 years and we have never heard of Polo. After asking him where he heard of Polo that made him want to go there, he said it was on a TV travel show. The people were diving among small, beautiful islands which appeared to be floating. We suggested it was Palau. He said "No, it's Polo." While he was still in the office, we checked the atlases, Worldwide OAG, and every source we could, but to no avail. Finally, we told him, trust us, we are sending you to Palau because it meets every requirement you are expecting to see. When he returned, he said it was Palau. Clients are not always right, so it's a challenge to keep ahead of them.

Determining where and when your clients should go are probably the most important parts of knowing your client and the selling process. As in the above example, clients often don't know where they want to go; they just know they want to go somewhere that is either warm, cold, has great shopping or culture, or for any number of reasons. This feeling or desire is often stimulated by an ad in the paper or a magazine advertising a destination which sounds appealing. Our experience has been that this destination mentioned in the ad is not always the correct destination to send them.

There are many techniques which help determine where and when a client should travel, but as this is a geography text and not a travel-selling text, we do not have time to go into this important stage of knowing your client. Just be aware that knowing your client's needs and getting them to the right destination at the right time of year is one of your most important responsibilities. This text will help you determine what a destination has to offer and when to send your clients there.

### Traveler's Tips

#### Lodging

Literally every type of accommodation can be found throughout the world. Bed and breakfasts, quaint inns, deluxe properties, family-owned hotels, and a wide range of villas and condominiums are available to your clients. It is very critical to place your clients in the type of accommodation that not only best suits their needs (family size, cost, etc.), but that is also near the sights they expect to spend most of their time.

#### Food and Water

Tell your clients to assume it is safe to drink the water and to eat the food in most countries of North America, Europe, and the South Pacific. Assume it is not safe to eat the food and to drink the water (including ice) in developing and third world countries. Most tourist areas are safe, but do advise your clients to use ordinary precautions and be selective where and when they eat and drink.

#### Electrical Current

Nearly everywhere 210/220 volt is the electrical current. Major hotels usually have adapters for guests' use. Be sure to check with the local tourist office for any changes or additions. Most North American countries use 110/120 as the electrical current. Check the individual listing of each country.

#### Dress Standards For Tropical Islands

Tropical islands can be extremely warm and humid. Tell your clients to take lightweight summer, casual clothing that is washable (preferably cotton), comfortable and loose-fitting. Also take some light canvas shoes or sandals, which are great for walking around the area and exploring the coral reefs. Be sure to wear at least modest clothing (no swimsuits, shirtless, short shorts, etc.) in towns. Also be sure to take coat and tie for men and

# HEMISPHERES



Driving across the country is scenic and pleasant. There are multiple other highways serving the country, many branching off from Highway 1.

VIA Rail, the national rail system, and some private rail lines connect most of the major tourist areas. It is important for your client to understand the various types of accommodation available on VIA Rail, as they range from rather cramped to family-size. Only avid rail buffs, and those that want to be able to say they did it, should take the train all the way from Montreal to Vancouver. It is an interesting trip, but as much of the central part of the country reminds one of Kansas, be certain your clients understand what they are purchasing.

Clients should try each form of transportation to truly experience an appreciation of this fabulous country. Escorted tours are a great way to see Canada, because all visitors, even those who would do the driving, will be able to enjoy the scenery. Many cruise lines offer various itineraries, primarily in the summer into fall season, which include Montreal to Boston or New York itineraries. This is a great way to see the Atlantic seaboard region.

Various ferry systems are prominent in coastal provinces such as British Columbia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia. Check with the tourist boards to see if a particular ferry service operates seasonally only.



Alberta is a land of contrasts: massive mountains and level farmlands, forests and plains, and ice fields and lakes. Areas of this province rival that of the Alps, Andes, and Himalayan mountains.

Approximately the size of Texas, Alberta offers the visitor spectacular mountain and glacier scenery, the world's largest indoor shopping mall, fishing, hiking, skiing and wild animals. The famous mountains are located in the western part of the province along the British Columbia border.

The province of Alberta is sandwiched between British Columbia on the west, the Northwest Territories on the north, Saskatchewan on the east, and Montana on the south. Its capital is Edmonton (YEG).

Everyone will love Alberta. The mountainous scenery is impressive, the Calgary Stampede rodeo is fast moving, and outdoor activities abound.

### Touring

It is impossible to see Alberta in less than one week. The best way to get around is either by car

## ALBERTA

or escorted motorcoach tour. Most of the sites are not easily reached by public transportation. Suggest clients drive or take an escorted tour to see the following:

- Day 1 Arrive Calgary (YYC), continue approximately 80 miles/129 km to Banff.
- Day 2 Banff (YYC). Recommend visiting the botanical garden, staying in or visiting the Banff Springs Hotel, walking or rafting along the Bow River, taking the Mt. Norquay chair lift, and visiting some of the shops and restaurants in downtown Banff.
- Day 3-4 Drive to Jasper (YYC). Although it is about 165 miles/266 km away, it will take approximately 5 to 6 hours to drive because your client will enjoy photographing the scenery, waterfalls, and animals, and spending time at the glacier. Take a drive to Maligne Lake.
- Day 5-6 Drive to Lake Louise (YYC). The 142 mile/229 km drive, along the same road on which they came from Banff, will take at least half a day, because they will want to see the scenery again. Many clients will want to stay in Chateau Lake Louise.
- Day 7 Drive approximately 120 miles/193 km back to Calgary for train or air departure.

Nearly everyone wants to stay in Banff Springs Hotel, Chateau Lake Louise, and Jasper Park Lodge, but there are fabulous lodges in the mountains, condos in the tourist areas, and a wide variety of camping, hotels, and RV possibilities. Most first-time visitors do not visit Edmonton (YEG), although it is an interesting city and two nights could be spent there. Suggest a visit to the giant indoor shopping mall complete with roller coaster!



## Unit 2

# UNITED STATES OF AMERICA



Map 2.3a

- Capital: Washington, D. C.  
Area: 3,678,896 sq miles/9,565,130 sq km including Alaska and Hawaii  
Population: 250,000,000  
Religion: Predominantly Christian with a sizable Jewish population and smaller representations of other groups  
Currency: U. S. Dollar (USD)  
Electricity: 110 volts  
Language: English. There are various other languages spoken in ethnic areas.