



Dream Vacations for Baby Boomers

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New York, NY, May 12, 2006 --(PR.com)-- Many adult travelers now explore not just the world, but their interests and hobbies. Like magazines tailored to specific topics, the trend is for trips organized for vacationers to try something new or expand their experience in a specific arena.

The mantra for adults seems to be learning and creativity, according to Edith Isaac-Rose and Bea Kreloff, artists and founders of Art Workshop International (www.artworkshopintl.com). They have directed art and writing classes in Assisi, Italy, for 25 years. "Many of our participants are authors and painters who want to reach the next level," Kreloff says. "They may or may not be professional, but it is always an interesting mix of people from TV producers to college professors and from retirees to graduate students. Our program options have continually expanded with demand. We're offering several new classes this year, ranging from writing children's books to sacred shrines to Italian trompe l'oeil."

Where do baby boomers want to go? The top dream vacation spot (after the United States) is Europe. The ideal trip will include a "beautiful, scenic destination that promotes relaxation, has good weather, and presents no pressure of schedules to meet," according to a recent AARP study.

"One advantage of our program," Isaac-Rose says, "is that our home base is a four-star hotel in the heart of Assisi, a historic hill town. You don't have to pack and move every few days. All of the rooms overlook the Umbrian plateau, like the old movie *A Room with a View*. Of course you're going to be inspired." Art Workshop International offers summer classes for artists and writers, who can spend two weeks to a month being taught by award-winning authors and art professors. "The students are energized by being in a small group with such excellent teachers. Yet the setting is so relaxing, they feel like they're hardly working," according to Isaac-Rose.

"The writing workshop in Assisi was a life-changing trip for me," says Stephen Serwin, an adult student going back for his MFA at New School in New York. "It was both challenging and relaxing. I could focus on my writing without any other distractions. The teacher's exercises made me stretch intellectually with the end result that my writing is at a higher level. At the same time I spent time with my friends as we toured art museums in nearby towns, explored Assisi, and relaxed on the hotel terrace in the evening enjoying a fabulous Italian dinner and spectacular view."

"Many participants want to come with a friend or spouse," Kreloff says. AARP's study documents this. Most baby boomers on their "adventure" vacations were accompanied by their spouse, partner or friend. To meet this need, Art Workshop International has added an Italian immersion language course taught by author Caterina Bertolotto, and an Italian cooking course taught by Hotel Giotto's chef that roams from the kitchen to excursions for truffles, olive oil, wine, and chocolate.



The trend that Art Workshop International has seen is echoed by other programs. Elderhostel has also found that its educational programs are increasingly popular. More than 160,000 people enrolled in over 8,000 programs throughout the world last year, and almost all of them were over 55, according to Adam Hurtubise, Elderhostel's media director. "Boomers typically partake in a number of leisure activities," according to AARP. "Experiential activities expose people to new experiences, cultures, and environments such as wine tasting, cooking classes or visiting historic sites and museums."

"I'm pleased to find that our workshops meet those criteria," Isaac-Rose says, "and am delighted that what we've been doing for 25 years is now even more popular." Based on the travel trends so far, baby boomers can expect to have many memorable times ahead as they discover not just different places, but themselves.

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Contact Information:

Art Workshop International

Bea Kreloff

866-341-2922

bk@artworkshopintl.com

artworkshopintl.com

Chris Spencer

ces1000@earthlink.net

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