



A web magazine to help you plan where to go, what to see in colorful Europe

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I have told only half of what I saw, because no one would have believed me. — Marco Polo



Chicago Travel & Adventure Show Makes a Hit

By Don Heimburger

Where do you want to go for a vacation or a trip? Durango, Colorado, Ft. Myers or Sanibel Island, Florida? How about Anchorage, Alaska or the Grand Canyon? Maybe Indonesia or Austria? Would you like to take a Caribbean or European cruise?

These and many other destinations are on the agenda each year at the growing Chicago Travel & Adventure Show. This year it was held January 21-22 at the Donald E. Stephens Convention Center in Rosemont, Illinois, a western suburb of Chicago.

Even if your travel plans typically include only Europe, the show offers a wealth of information and helpful tips for your next vacation. Besides several hundred featured booths from cities, regions, countries and travel firms, there are a number of top celebrity speakers who can help you plan a trip.

Included in this year's show were well-known author and television personality Rick Steves; Samantha Brown, a Travel Channel host; Pauline Frommer, editorial director of the well-known Frommer Guides; Peter Greenberg, Emmy award-winning investigative reporter and CBS News travel editor; and last year family travel expert Colleen Kelly, whose show can be seen on many television stations in the U.S.

Sessions with these expert travel guides is an excellent way to gain valuable knowledge of destinations and how to get to them by plane, boat or car. These experts explain the ins and outs of booking air tickets, reserving a hotel room or getting the best deal. Their intimate knowledge of the travel business gives them valuable insight into the best places to go and what to see when you get there.

CAN ASK QUESTIONS

Often, these speakers allow the audience to ask questions after their presentations, which makes for a fun and helpful experience.

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Rick Steves and Pauline Frommer were among the celebrity travel writers at the show.



Some of the major cruise lines such as Holland America, AMA, Amadeus, Celebrity, Royal Caribbean, and Uniworld have representatives at the show and pass out up-to-date sailing destinations and dates. Luxury vacation companies from the UK, Rome and Italy, Croatia, the Azores and other countries are there to offer complimentary brochures and information, and some of them can even sign you up for a trip right there at the show.

Other companies/groups there were the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Service, Disney Destinations, Trafalgar Tours, Wyndham Vacation Resorts, River Cruises by Cruise Planners and David McGuffin's Exploring Europe, among many others.

Be sure to allow enough time at the show to register for door prizes such as complimentary trips or lodging and pick up freebies, or to get your photo taken with some exotic locale in the background. For entertainment, you can see dancers on stage, such as the Nordic Folk Dancers of Chicago, or Irish dancers from the McNulty School of Irish Dance.

And at the Taste of Travel Theater, the assistant executive chef of the Hofbräuhaus Chicago gave his recipe for pork Wienerschnitzel. At the Savvy Traveler Theater, Russell Hannon told listeners 99 ways to cut travel costs.

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Two days of fun and travel highlights from experts made me want to plan my next adventure right away. Remember, life's a trip. Make it a good one.

For more information, go to travelshows.com.

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