

A Round up of Canadian News

CANADA TO HOST FIFA WOMENS WORLD CUP JUNE 6TH – JULY 5TH, 2015

The Canadian cities of Moncton, Montreal, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton and Vancouver will play host to the FIFA Womens World Cup in the summer of 2015. With the opening games taking place in Edmonton and the finals in Vancouver, group places will be drawn on December 6th, 2014 in Ottawa: www.fifa.com/womensworldcup/

2016 NORTHWEST PASSAGE EXPEDITION AUGUST 16 – SEPTEMBER 16TH, 2016

2016? Is that a typing error? No. Following in the footsteps of intrepid explorers and rugged expedition vessels, Crystal Serenity becomes the very first luxury ship to ever traverse the Northwest Passage, a mystical Pacific – Atlantic sea route far beyond the Arctic Circle that for centuries captured the imaginations of kings, queens, explorers and adventurers.

Two years of planning has gone into this carefully curated itinerary, balancing days at sea with scheduled ports of call. Intentionally designed to be flexible, the Captain and his extended team of navigation experts will incorporate unplanned expedition days when favourable weather conditions allow – think rare wildlife sightings of polar bears, narwhals, musk oxen and caribou or exciting arctic adventures from Zodiac landings, kayaking in protected bays to trekking on the tundra with a professional guide. Whilst Crystal Serenity is experienced in operating in some of the world's most extreme locations such as Antarctica and Alaska, an escort vessel will accompany the voyage carrying with it 'adventure equipment' including a platform for wilderness landings, a helicopter and more.

Crystal's Northwest Passage heralds the beginning of a new era of exploration for the cruise line. As an inaugural expedition –style cruise, they've gone to great lengths to ensure the integrity of the experience – authentic discovery and pure adventure, as well as the careful respect of the remote communities they will be visiting.

So grand is the voyage and rare the adventure they have created a dedicated webpage detailing all that you need to know to prepare for this incredible journey.

www.crystalcruises.com/NWP-FAQs

WINTER START: KICKSTARTING A NEW FESTIVAL NOVEMBER 8 – DECEMBER 21ST 2014

The ski hills within Banff National Park, Lake Louise, Sunshine and Mount Norquay, have three of the longest ski seasons available anywhere on the planet, starting as early as late October. The new WinterStart Festival is designed to celebrate this early snow and the start of winter. Kicking off on November 8th, when the resorts with their 8,000 acres of skiable terrain are due to open, until December 21st, the grand finale of the much lauded Lake Louise Snowboard Cross World Cup, the Festival promises something for everyone. Visitors can carve some early season curves on champagne powder, catch a glimpse of world class skiers and boarders competing in World Cup events, enjoy family friendly live entertainment such as the Parade of Lights, mouth watering dining experiences and apres ski specials. www.banfflakelouise.com/Area-Events/Festivals/Winter/WinterStart-Festival

POLAR GLAMPING WITH DISCOVER THE WORLD JULY TO AUGUST 2015

Polar specialist, Discover the World, is introducing an alternative to the more traditional style Arctic Expedition cruise, with the addition of two tented safari style camps in the majestic and remote surroundings of the Canadian Arctic. Complementing the company's

extensive Polar voyaging programme, each land based camp is ideally located for observing some of nature's most extraordinary wildlife whilst also enjoying the ultimate in Polar glamping comfort.

DISCOVERY AT ARCTIC WATCH

Located 500 miles north of the Arctic Circle on Somerset Island, Arctic Watch wilderness Lodge is a permanent wilderness camp, featuring 16 private tent style cabins (maximum group size 26 guests), each with marine toilet and sink. Hot showers are located in a main complex whilst unexpected bonuses include internet access, hot water bottles and an excellent menu incorporating local foods. Somerset Island has no permanent residents but attracts as many as 2000 beluga whales each year as they nurse their young and moult their skin in the relatively warm water of the Cunningham River. Muskox and polar bears can also be seen on the island, as well as a wealth of seabirds, delicate Arctic wildflowers and historic sites. A variety of optional activities are available such as sea kayaking with beluga whales , rafting on the river, fishing for arctic char and hiking through the spectacular Arctic landscapes.

Departures: July to August 2015

Duration: 9 nights

Prices: from £5,870 pp based on two sharing including return charter flights between Yellowknife and Arctic Watch Wilderness Lodge (4.5 hrs), 1 night pre and 1 night post expedition hotel accommodation in Yellowknife including breakfast, group transfers for charter flights, tented accommodation (full board) , all activities accompanied by experienced guides, complimentary Wifi. International flights travelling with Air Canada to Edmonton (outbound) and Calgary (inbound) from approx.. £1400.pp

Narwhal and Polar Bear Safari

Accompanied by local Inuit guides and surrounded by wildlife, this 7 night safari offers the unique opportunity to camp on an ice floe and observe pods of tusked narwhal just meters from the floe edge. Set against the backdrop of the rugged mountains of Baffin Island and Bylot Island, the Arctic Safari Camp offers yurt style accommodation for a maximum of 14 guests. The yurts have double walls and lockable doors, twin or king size bed configurations . Large windows give a 360 degree view. Each day you can take optional excursions by snowmobile or qamutik (An Inuit Sled pulled by snowmobile) to the floe edge in search of wildlife and adventure. Hike in the shadow of vivid blue glaciers, marvel at the abundant birdlife of Bylot Island or taken an unforgettable snorkelling expedition in the company of narwhals. Local Inuit guides will share their stories and explain the traditional ways of Inuit life, as you take advantage of 24 hour daylight under the glow of the midnight! sun.

Departures: May/June 2015

Duration: 7 nights

Prices: from £8,734 based on two sharing including return flight from Ottawa to Pond Inlet, airport transfers in Pond Inlet, all transportation for the duration of the trip, 2 nights B & B accommodation in Pond Inlet, 5 nights Arctic Safari Camp (full board) services of Inuit guides and Arctic Kingdom expedition staff and unlimited use of kayaks and snorkelling gear. International flights flying directly with Air Canada from London to Ottawa from £845 pp.

NEW MUSEUM OPENING DECEMBER 2014

The new Philip J. Currie Museum, the renowned Canadian palaeontologist who inspired the character in movie trilogy Jurassic Park, is scheduled to open December 1st, 2014. The Museum, is a \$34.6 million facility opening in Pipestone Creek area in Northern Alberta, which includes one of the best deposits of dinosaur fossils in the world, most of which are still in the ground. Most of the bones are from pachyrhinosaurus dinosaurs and are estimated to be from at least 70 million years ago.

Alberta is rich in dinosaur finds and even has a smaller cousin of the mighty T – Rex named after the Province. Albertasaurus lived in western North America in the late Cretaceous Period. Dino hunters who are anxious to explore Alberta's fossil history before the opening of the new Philip J. Currie Dinosaur Museum can head south and follow the 48 km Dinosaur Trail: a chance to explore Alberta's Badlands, join an authentic dinosaur Dig and wonder at the abundant fossils, unusual wildlife and stunning landscapes of Dinosaur Provincial Park www.curriemuseum.ca

A NEW MUSEUM OPENING 2015

The Audain Art Museum, being built in Whistler, and named after Canadian Philanthropist and Art Collector Michael Audain, is due to open in Fall 2015. Plans are for a 56,000 square foot long, low structure surrounded by a spruce forest on a site that up to now has been used as an impound lot. The "Globe and Mail" reported that only a single tree would need to be felled in order to build the new gallery. The Audain Art Museum will be discreet and embedded in the forest. The Museum is set to house the most expensive Emily Carr painting ever sold – along with 20 of the B.C. artists pieces and is shaping up to be a destination for art lovers. Michael Audain, who is building the museum, to house his private art collection will also include an extensive collection of First Nation art.

For art lovers who are keen to find out more about Emily Carr, in advance of this museum opening need not travel so far. The Dulwich Picture Gallery in London, will be housing a major exhibition of her work from November 2014 through to January 2015.

SUN PEAKS TO OPEN NEW SKI TERRAIN

Already the second largest ski terrain in British Columbia, Sun Peaks Resort will now be the second largest in Canada, growing to over 4,200 acres of inbound ski terrain with the addition of two new areas's for the 2014/15 winter season. Work began this summer on over 500 acres of new, challenging terrain laid out in the resort's longstanding development plan, adding to the vast amount and variety of skiing available for guests while solidifying the Sun Peaks ski experience as one of the top in North America.

New runs in the West Morrissey area will be expert ability level and utilize the same aspect as the popular Static Cling and Agitator ski runs. The second section, Gill's – a popular backcountry ski area at the top of Tod Mountain, will see the area's vertical double with the creation of lower ski out back the main ski runs.

WHISTLER BLACKCOMB INSTALLS TWO NEW GONDOLA CABINS

The \$6 million cabin upgrade will improve the experience for skiers, snowboarders and sightseers, allowing for 8 passengers to ride in comfort with their gear in outside racks. The upgrade will improve the capacity for the Whistler village gondola by 12% through four additional cabins and greater loading efficiency. The new "Diamond" level walk in cabins were built in France by Sigma, a subsidiary of Leitner – POMA, the original manufacturer of the Whistler Village Gondola.

The lift terminals for the Whistler Village Gondola , at the base and the mid Olympic station and at the top Roundhouse Lodge will also see improvements to enhance the functionality of the interior space as well as the terminal appearance.

NEW HOTEL OPENING 2015

The Tidan Hospitality and Real Estate Group, established in 1970 in association with the Montreal architectural and design firm Lemay, unveiled its most ambitious hotel project. The official opening of the Mount Stephen is due for the summer of 2015 and is timed to coincide with the presentation of the Montreal Grand Prix. With 87 prestigious rooms and sky lofts, all featuring floor to ceiling windows, and in some instances a private terrace, as well as three banquet halls capable of accommodating up to 500 guests, the hotel will effectively combine neoclassicism and contemporary lines in a subdued environment. In fact, described as innovative and dynamic by the jury of the 45th edition of the prestigious Canadian Architect Awards of excellence, the projected new hotel complex earned in back in December 2012 a highly coveted Award of Merit, when construction and renovation work had barely started.

New Hiking Holiday in Atlantic Canada With HF Holidays Worldwide

A unique guided itinerary combining the three Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Newfoundland has been introduced into HF Holidays' Worldwide walking programme for 2015.

HF Holidays is the only UK tour operator offering these three provinces together and highlights include an excellent mix of walking amid wild landscapes – taking in icebergs, whales, wild shores and colourful fishing wharfs, whilst experiencing the local culture.

There are walks in stunning national parks in all three provinces – taking in the rugged beauty of the Gros Morne National Park, the natural wonders , spectacular canyons and iconic Skyline trail of Cape Breton Highlands, plus the high tides, forest trails and rugged coastline of the Bay of Fundy. Also included is a superb coastal walk along the Port Joli Head Trail, a walking tour around the UNESCO World Heritage Site of Lunenburg's Old Town, a visit to the colourful waterfront of Halifax as well as walks to Pollys Cove and Peggys Cove to see one of Canada's most well- known lighthouses. Other highlights include a walk along the ocean floor at Hopewell Rocks and the possibility to see icebergs up close on a trip to Twillingate.

Available for three departures in 2015 , the cost is £3159 per person land only or for £3899 inclusive of return Heathrow flights and transfers. These twin share prices also include 15 nights mainly full board accommodation in three and four star hotels, the full holiday programme with a specialist local leader , National Park entrance fees, travel by coach and ferry plus tips.

For more information: 0345 470 7558 www.hfholidays.co.uk

AN “MV SWELL” ADDITION

British Columbia – based Maple Leaf Adventures is adding a new ship to its fleet for 2015; Swell is an 88 foot classic wooden tug boat which has been beautifully restored to offer boutique expedition cruises along the dramatic BC and Alaska coast. Built in 1912 , Swell worked the coast for 92 years as one of the most beloved large tugs and recently underwent a \$3.5 million refit to offer guest accommodation.

Responding to the growing global demand for enriching multi – day journeys aboard small ships, Maple Leaf Adventures has begun selling 2015 packages aboard Swell. No more than 10 passengers at a time will explore the coasts wild fjords and archipelagos with resident experts as guides and crew. These boutique expeditions are very personalized trips.

The introduction of Swell extends the ability to takes this live aboard adventures to people who seek more privacy and space than those trips typically offer. Guests will have unparalleled access to the bears, whales, glaciers, nature and culture of:

The Great Bear Rain Forest

Canada and Alaska's Inside Passage

Haida Gwaii (formerly Queen Charlotte Islands)

Gulf Islands National Park Reserve and Vancouver Island

Swell has five private staterooms – each with its own private ensuite – plus a salon, two deck lounges and a hot tub. All cabins open onto a covered promenade and have natural light and opening windows with views to sea and landscape. Kayaks, rigid – hull inflatable boats, hydrophone and other gear ensure that Swell, as well as the Maple Leaf continue to offer these remote access trips with the spirit of discovery that the company is known for. For more information please go to www.MapleLeafAdventures.com and go to the Swell ship page from there.

Starting with a minimum five day, four night package, trips aboard Swell range from Cdn \$1925 to Cdn\$8000 per person ex. Interntational flights and include all gourmet meals, snacks and beverages , shore excursions, expert local guides , interpretation on natural and cultural history; photography tips, wildlife viewing, taking part in local and nautical customs, wild food foraging, special access permits to off limits areas, and the friendship and camaraderie that develop from full days exploring the natural world together.

New Toronto Hotel Opening 2014

A New Delta Toronto hotel will open in late 2014. The hotel is located in the heart of downtown Toronto's newest financial and entertainment district, South Core. The hotel will offer 567 guest rooms with panoramic views of the City skyline, a 230 seat restaurant with 80-seat outdoor patio and bar and extensive health and wellness facilities. The hotel boasts direct access to Union Station, PATH , Ripley's aquarium, Rogers Centre, Toronto Convention Centre and the Air Canada Centre. www.deltahotels.com

New Toronto Airport Train Link 2015

The Union Pearson Express will serve four key stations; Toronto Pearson, Union Station downtown, Bloor and Weston GO stations, running every 15 minutes and taking 25 minutes from Union Station to the Airport. The new connecting line or 'spur' is currently under construction and is scheduled to be completed in time for the opening of the PANAM Games taking place in Toronto next summer.

THE HOTTEST NEW LIFT IN CANADA WILL ARRIVE AT SUNSHINE VILLAGE FOR 2015/16

In August 2014 Sunshine Village received approval from Parks Canada to construct a new

high speed quad chairlift to replace the existing Tee Pee Town double chair dating back to 1979. The new chair will include heated seats, footrests and orange bubbles for wind and weather protection and will be the first chairlift of its kind in Canada.

“We are thrilled to announce that construction has started on the “hottest chairlift in Canada”, said Dave Riley, Chief Operating Officer for Sunshine Village. “Sunshine is committed to delivering exceptional guest experiences and this addition to the resort will clearly demonstrate our focus on providing comfort and value to our guests”.

Construction is already underway on towers one through to six as well as the lower terminal foundation and had to be finished before the winter snows began. The balance of construction will be completed in Spring 2015, over the snow to protect the fragile high alpine vegetation. The Chairlift will be fully operational for the 2015/2016 season.

October 31st is the anticipated opening ski season at Mt. Norquay and November 7th will see Lake Louise Ski Resort and Sunshine Village re – open for 2014/15 winter operations (weather permitting)

For more information about visiting Canada go to www.travelcanada.ca