

Helpful Hints for Travelers

Italy, Switzerland, and Austria

Led by Ferrell and Elizabeth Jenkins

September 10 – 21, 2009

This publication contains the information you need to know to get ready for the tour. In order for it to be as pleasurable as you wish, it will be necessary for you to make adequate preparation. Read the material carefully. It should answer most of your questions and give you several helpful hints.

More details about much of this information may be found at <http://tours.biblicalstudies.info>. Click on the **Helpful Travel Links**. Check things such as Currency, Weather, World Electric Guide, Keeping in Touch, Internet, etc.

Special Note: This material has been completely updated for the 2009 tour.
Please read it carefully.

- 1. Passport.** Everyone has this under control by now.
- 2. Visas.** No visas are necessary for this tour.
- 3. Airport Taxes and Airline Surcharges.** The total for this was included in your payment.
- 4. Tips.** Throughout the years I have learned that it is necessary to tip the escort, guides, drivers, and waiters in order to have a good tour. My procedure is to collect this in advance. For this tour we are collecting \$120 from each traveler for this purpose. This does not include personal gratuities which you may want to give for some special personal favor shown you.
- 5. Health Regulations.** No shots or vaccinations are required for this tour. A Tetanus booster is suggested every 10 years.
- 6. Meeting in Atlanta.** Plan to be at the Delta Airline gate in Atlanta at least **two to three hours prior to departure** on September 10. The schedule, *which is subject to change*, is as follows:

Departure from Atlanta (ATL) for Zurich (ZRH):

Sept. 10 – DL 66 – 4:35 pm – Ar. ZRH – 7:50 am

Departure from Rome (FCO) for Atlanta (ATL):

Sept. 21 – DL 821 – 10:20 am – Ar. ATL – 3:30 pm

If you are not already a member of the Delta SkyMiles program you should plan to join. This trip will be worth about 9700 miles. Don't take a chance on a close connection with your domestic flight!

7. Domestic Air Travel. Arrangements for this tour have been made through Nawas International Travel, a company we have used for many tours. They are a tour wholesaler and do not make domestic arrangements. Make your arrangements for travel to and from Atlanta through the airline or your travel agent.

8. Cameras. Be sure you have used your camera and know how it operates. If you have a fairly *new, expensive, foreign made* camera it would be a good idea to take a copy of your receipt with you. You want to avoid having to pay duty on the camera when you return to the USA. Ideally you could register your camera, or other electronic equipment, with Customs before you leave the USA. You must have the equipment with you at the time you register it. **Easy approach:** carry your receipts.

Film. I have deleted the section dealing with film cameras. If you still use one you will know how to find the film.

Digital Cameras. If you carry a digital camera or a camcorder be sure you have enough batteries, a charger that will operate on 220 volts, electrical adaptor plug (see tip # 20), and *memory*, memory, memory. **Hidden Hint:** I think that later you will be disappointed with a camera of less than 5 million megapixels.

9. Baggage. Each passenger is allowed to check *one bag* with a maximum weight of 50 pounds and 62 linear inches (total length + width + height). You are allowed 1 carry-on and a personal item (purse, brief case, camera case, laptop computer, or similar item). Check Delta's web site (*delta.com*) for full information. Pack light. It will make your trip more

enjoyable. Delta now has a fee of \$15 on the first checked bag on a domestic flight. I *suspect* if you check your baggage direct from your hometown to Zurich the charge will be waived. There is no charge for the first bag on Delta international flights.

10. Money. I no longer recommend travelers checks, but if you think you need them get them in denominations of \$50 or larger. Most of your travel arrangements are prepaid so there is no reason for you to carry large amounts of currency. You will need money for lunch and whatever shopping you wish to do. Major credit cards (Visa, Master Card, and American Express) are widely accepted. We use ATM's to take money (Euros) from our account. **Be sure you notify your bank** (or issuing institution) that you will be in Switzerland, Austria, and Italy. There is no need to exchange money in advance of the trip. You can change a few dollars at the airport or the first hotel.

W. C. Money. First time travelers wonder about all of the W. C. Signs. It means Water Closet. We use euphemistic terms like *restroom* or *bathroom*, but most of the people of the earth call them toilets or W.C.'s. Most of the W.C.'s have an attendant and require a small coin.

The currency for the entire trip will be the Euro. Today the typical cash rate for one Euro is \$1.46. The Euro is a bit deceptive to Americans. We see the price of 10 Euro. We think \$10. Not so. It is almost \$15.00. Use the web sites I list on the Helpful Travel Links page.

11. Mail. Forget it. Use the Internet and the telephone.

12. Insurance. Luggage insurance is recommended. You can buy it and/or accident insurance for the number of days of the tour. Nawas International has a policy available for this tour. Trip cancellation/interruption insurance is included in their policy and is a good idea in the event of a sickness or emergency in the family. A copy of the application form has been sent to you. Be sure to read the information and then make your decision.

13. Duty Free Purchases. Purchases up to \$800 per person are now allowed back in the U.S. duty free. Additional purchases up to \$1000 are charged a flat 10% duty. You may have certain gifts mailed from a foreign country to the U. S. duty free. We suggest you get the booklet *Know Before You Go*

from U. S. Customs. It may be downloaded from this web site:

<http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/travel/vacation/kbyg/>

14. Pack Light. One of the most typical mistakes for unseasoned travelers is to take too many clothes. If your suitcase is loaded with clothes when you leave, where will the souvenirs go?

15. Washing. Take a clothes line. An elastic one requiring no pins is ideal. Take Woolite or packets of powdered soap. Pack liquids in plastic bags. Drip-dry fabrics dry quickly. Take a washcloth if you need one (few hotels provide them). A few plastic bags may come in handy in the event that some clothes don't get dry in time for hotel departure.

16. Personal Items. Take small sizes of personal items such as deodorant, shampoo, toothpaste and cosmetics. Take a few home remedies. It is a good idea to take along some strong antibiotic capsules for colds, etc. Take a remedy for dysentery with you — just in case. A good prescription remedy is Lomotil. Imodium AD (capsules) seems to be effective. Carry medicines you need with you rather than in your suitcase. A suitcase can get separated from you. Some travelers have suggested taking prescription medications in their original containers. I carry only the amount of various medications that might be needed in a small pill case I bought at a luggage store. Be sure to label everything and take a copy of the prescription information with you.

17. Beauty Shops. Beauty shops will be available in many of the hotels.

18. Weather. For Switzerland in September the average high is 65° and the average low is 52°. For Venice the average high is 74° and the average low is 59°. For Rome the average high is 78° and the average low is 60°. Monthly rain in Zurich is 3.9 inches. In Italy it is around 2.5 inches. You will need a sweater or jacket. Having a small umbrella with you is a good idea for both rain and sun protection.

19. Food. The food should be excellent throughout the tour. We have continental breakfast and dinner daily. I take a few of my favorite snacks. They are especially nice for the coach tours. As you use these, the space will be available for souvenirs, etc.

20. Electrical Appliances. Current varies in different countries. Secure a transformer and a set of adaptor plugs if you plan to carry any electrical ap-

pliances. Many electrical appliances (hair dryers, razors, etc.) can be run on 110 or 220. In this case a transformer is not necessary. I like to carry a short extension cord because the plugs never seem to be in the right position. Be sure the plug will fit in the adaptor you have purchased. Transformers and adaptors are usually available at luggage stores, Wal-Mart, Radio Shack, etc. A good source for adaptor plugs and other travel items is Magellan's. Call for a catalog: 1-800-962-4943 or check the web page at:

<http://www.magellans.com>.

21. Souvenir Bags. Carry some small self-closing plastic bags with a small piece of paper inside each. As you collect small souvenirs you can keep them separate with details of place of origin, etc.

22. Clothing Suggestions. The suggestions below are based on the experience of other travelers. You must give careful thought to your travel wardrobe and make your own decisions. These lists include items you will be wearing when you leave the United States.

For the Ladies: In addition to personal items; one sweater; two pair of sturdy, comfortable walking shoes; one pair folding slippers; pajamas/robe; pant outfits or skirts, blouses and knit tops (Mix and Match is best); Outfit for evening wear (not formal), preferably with jacket or sweater. A crushable hat to protect from the mid-day sun might be nice. Some religious buildings we enter require women to have their shoulders covered. Check the **Weather** (#18).

For the Men: In addition to personal items, one sweater or jacket. Do as you wish about a sport coat. Two pair of trousers (or similar mix and match combination). Comfortable jeans or pants for daily wear. Four shirts; four pair of socks. Four hankies (disposable mansize Kleenex hankies might be better); pajamas; one pair of comfortable walking shoes. I like to have a second pair to wear on the flights and in the hotels. A good hat, like a Tilley, is a great idea. (See the web page for the link to Tilley.) Check the **Weather** (#18).

23. Travel Books. There are many good travel books on Switzerland and Italy. Elizabeth and I order from Amazon and enjoy their selection, ease of ordering, fast delivery, etc. Go to our Travel Book Store Internet page at

<http://tours.biblicalstudies.info>

and click on Travel Book Store for this list of books. Click on one of them and go directly to Amazon.com to complete your order. The discount price is listed following the retail price. Here are two of the better books.

Eyewitness Travel Guide: Italy \$30.00 (\$19.80). The Eyewitness guides are beautiful with lots of photos and diagrams. Enamel paper; therefore heavy.
Eyewitness Travel Guide: Switzerland. \$26.00 (\$16.50).

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Please be mindful of the fact that these *Helpful Hints* are based on our best information at the time of preparation. All items regarding airline schedules, fares, government regulations, taxes, health requirements, currency exchange rates, etc. are subject to change. The weather is subject to change too! We will try to keep you informed of changes through our informational bulletins.

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