



TRAVELCHAT

By Anne Wanstall
Travel Editor

Air costs will take off soon

Just when travellers thought they were going places with lower air fares, there's new speculation that increases are only a few weeks away.

The energy crisis we've speculated about for years finally hit with the political crisis in Iran, and within weeks of the overthrow of the Shah airlines were cancelling underbooked flights to save on fuel.

Although there are bound to be intermediary problems, it is about time airlines communicated with one another about duplicate schedules.

Only two years ago when I returned to Toronto from Zurich, Switzerland, an Air Canada flight checked out of Zurich at noon and my own Swissair flight one hour later. It's possible that the Air Canada flight was busy — I don't know, I wasn't on board — but the Swissair flight had nine economy passengers rattling around a 747!

A bit of "togetherness" could have saved a great deal of jet fuel without inconvenience to passengers.

While we're discussing long flights, the reason so many people get off planes feeling as though they've walked across the ocean is because they've been sitting for so long.

Bantam Books has published the SAS In-The-Chair exercise book by Swedish fitness expert, Dr. Folke Mossfeldt. Buy it, and if you follow it during your flight you should arrive in better health and ready to enjoy your vacation from the first day.

Mary Sutherland Productions of Scarborough is again offering its popular tours to the Shaw Festival Theatre.

The package includes transportation, orchestra seats, luncheon at the Oban Inn, taxes and gratuities for \$35 per person. For information call 264-3261.

Strand Cruises has planned a 22-day special party cruise to South America, the Panama Canal, San Salvador, Mexico and San Francisco aboard the S.S. Veracruz, starting May 4.

The Trans-Panama cruise price includes return air fare to Jamaica (the starting point) from Toronto, cabin accommodation, all meals and entertainment for the three week trip. Prices start at \$1,249 (U.S.). Get information from your travel agent.

See Canada by bus with a Travelways tour. The brochure includes weekend trips to Agawa and Muskoka, an eight-day trip to Northern Ontario, 17 days to western Canada, 12 days to the Yukon and Alaska, and a 12-day trip to the Maritimes. Get their brochure and information from your travel agent.

The old heart of Paris

Marais is still a tourist and historian's dream

By THELMA DICKMAN

PARIS, France — In medieval times the Marais area was the heart of Paris and, although the beat has been allowed to slow over the centuries, today the district makes for a worthwhile day of strolling, looking, sniffing and enjoying.

You're unlikely to encounter many tourists — most Paris visitors have never heard of it. Yet Henry II died here in a tournament with a lance in his eye, it housed such notables as Mozart, Cardinal Richelieu, Victor Hugo and Madame de Sevigne, and in its narrow, crooked, festering streets it helped give birth to the French Revolution.

To get there, take the Metro to the Bastille stop, where the enormous Place de la Bastille contains nothing of the grim fortress prison razed to the ground by revolutionaries. Today it's a terrifying traffic circle with a towering Column of July (a dark 250 steps to the top with only a narrow railing around the small ledge when you get there), and some tracings along the pavement that outline where it used to stand.

Particuliers

Cross the place — no easy matter the way Parisians drive — walk along the rue St. An-

toine a few yards to rue do Birague and turn right. Rubberneck along a block of antique shops and bookstores until you arrive at the Place de Vosges, arguably one of the most beautiful squares in the city. Small and formal, with a fountain splashing quietly, surrounded by severely trimmed plane trees, it's unlike any other city park in the world, and revealing of the character of the French.

The Marais is full of hotels particuliers — private mansions — which were built during the 17th century and largely allowed to go to ruin during the 19th and 20th centuries until after the Second World War. Andre Malraux

Palaces

then minister of culture and also responsible for restoring the blackened buildings of Paris to their original golden stone, put a stop to demolition of the houses and gradually, as garage fronts and warehouse backs were torn away, the magnificently proportioned townhouses of Paris' wealthy citizens began to emerge. Some of these buildings have been completely restored, others only show their former beauty by the turn of a staircase or a timbered gallery.

The palaces of Soubise-Rohan are now the National Archives, and the first floor of

Soubise has the museum of the history of Franch.

The two hotels particulier of Sully and de Sens are the last two private mansions in Paris to survive from the Middle Ages, and the Hotel de Beauvais at 68 rue Francois-Miron shouldn't be missed.

Churches

There are a number of lovely churches in the Marais quarter, among them St. Paul and St. Louis on the rue St. Antoine; a strange little church on the rue de Blanc Monteaux with a German pulpit dated 1789 and elaborately inlaid with ivory and pewter figures; and the Temple de Carmelites, the last existing medieval cloister in Paris.

All these sites, and dozens more, are illuminated at night from June 5 to July 15, when the Festival du Marais is held.

How to get there: Air Canada flies Toronto-Paris five days a week, Monday through Friday; Air France flies Toronto-Paris four days a week, Monday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Advanced Booking Charter (30 days notice, 14-60; \$369 until April 30; \$399 May 1-May 16; \$429 May 17-June 27; \$489 June 28-Aug. 4; \$429 Aug. 5-Sept. 15.

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