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### WestCan explained

Some people contacting us have been unsure of WestCan International Treks' exact aims and functions as travel consultants. I am devoting this editorial to explaining our raison d'être.

We believe in Overland. To be more specific, we believe in the concept of people travelling together and seeing the world through their own eyes (as it really is) and at the same time, getting value for their money. We are dedicated to improving standards, informing the public and furthering the concept of these special experience holidays.

WestCan International runs a comprehensive service on all aspects of overland holidays and expeditions.

We have to be selective. We are concerned that the organizations we represent are the best in the field. They are generally the largest and longest established and that means they carry the guarantee of expertise and stability.

For more than seven years now, WestCan International has been specializing in European camping holidays and long range expeditions and has been active in finding people to form well-equipped groups for journeys into many of the most interesting and remote areas of Asia, Africa and South America. There have been frequent expeditions to India, to Kashmir, and to Nepal; shorter ones to Asia Minor, to the Northern Sahara and to the High Atlas Mountains; special expeditions Trans-Sahara, the first crossings of the Salt and Sand Deserts of Persia and to Nuristan and the Hindu Kush. There have also been expeditions into Southeast Asia including Laos and Cambodia and in 1970 the first Trans-Africa crossing was achieved.

Interest in adventure trekking comes from people in all the English speaking nations eager to see remote and fascinating parts of the world. They are young at heart and all have that spirit of inquiry that puts up with a little discomfort and contributes so much to the success of the expedition. We make every effort to fit the person to the situation that best suits him in regard to time, resources, personnel endurance and interest.

Our organizers are interesting men of broad experience, infantry officers, Himalayan climbers, mechanical engineers and international politicians who combine their expertise and knowledge to mount expeditions which, undertaken with good organization, are sensible and safe.

Equipment is the best. The vehicles are chosen to fit the conditions of each individual: three ton four-wheel drive Bedford trucks, rugged, powerful and dependable; long and short wheel base Safari Land Rovers; and under easier driving conditions, Ford Mini-buses. It is no accident that the company being British uses all British equipment right down to the tents, stoves and other unsophisticated equipment such as shovels.

I must stress that you do not expect an organized tour. You get work, rough roads, mud and rain, annoying delays, heat and sandstorms and there will be times when you wished you have never seen a tent.

If you feel you are not suited for a major expedition of this type, WestCan International Treks carries a wide selection of North African, European and Russian camping holidays adding that extra bit of adventure and freedom to your holiday abroad. Here at home we have a most extensive selection of trail rides, climbing, canoeing and camping holidays through western Canada, Alaska and the Yukon.

WestCan International Treks is proud to represent adventure travel in western Canada to provide a unique travel service that we believe in and know will provide you with that "journey of a lifetime."

# Europe as seen by

by Kim St. Clair

It all boils down to resourcefulness. Ingenuity. Total lack of scruples, if you will.

I suppose a person could beg, borrow, and, yes, steal his way across virtually any country on this green earth if he was so inclined. Poaching pigeons in Parisian parks may not be your idea of 'seeing Europe' but if Ernest Hemingway could stoop to it then so you can.

One need hardly go to such extremes though; it is possible to live cheaply without sacrificing too many fatland principles. Student cafeterias in Germany, street markets in France, two day old bread just about anywhere... food, lodging, transportation — all can be had at reasonable rates to the conscientious traveller.

Here's suggestion to start with: buy a return ticket home before ever setting foot outside your stomping grounds. When times get rough overseas you'll always have an out, even if it is a last resort. At ten dollars, a Hostel Card is a pretty good investment; buy one in Canada and it'll save you many dollar bills in Europe. A Hostel Book should accompany it, as well as an International Student ID Card and an Eurail Pass. All entitle the holder to a number of discounts and special travel rates, and all should be purchased in Canada.

Most of these items can be obtained through Student Travel Centres, the nearest of which is at UBC in Vancouver. (Students' Union Building, UBC, rm 100, Vancouver, BC) The centre also offers special arrangements on student flights, group insurance, and assorted other benefits.

Other than that, a five minute walk from HUB will take you to the Edmonton Youth Hostel at 109 st. and 88 ave., where quality advice is free and easy to get.

Work visas are available in



Canada, but only after a long wait. Six months is not too far ahead to apply for one. Lacking that, scabbing is always an alternative, though usually not a very desirable one. Scabs generally earn scab wages which, in many French vineyards and German farms, may mean food and lodging only. (It's illegal, you know.)

Various Work-In-Europe agencies proffer student work programs. Look elsewhere in this issue for information on these. Here's an easy way to live frugally: travel with a frugal companion. Otherwise you might end up spending faster than you had planned, travelling more expensively than necessary, and even missing out on the (somewhat questionable, perhaps) romantic aspect of seeing the world alongside an extended thumb.

But if a compatible and comparatively cheap companion is not readily available don't be deterred. Travelling from Hostel to Hostel in Europe one is never really alone — there's always someone going your way, either by thumb or by wheel. Hitching is fastest on your own anyway, and you're also more likely to milk mercy offerings out of drivers. Just remember this: smile and talk. Lots. It may get you a free meal and/or lodging for the night.

Travelling with a friend eliminates most of the risk and affords a lot of moral support. More often than not the natives

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## WestCan International Treks

Ten years of overlanding make us uniquely qualified to help you experience the 'overland journey of a lifetime.' On our trips you are a 'traveller' not a tourist, a member of a small international group who all take an active part in the daily organisation from route planning to sightseeing etc. Flexibility is our main aim with our fleet of trucks and minicoaches fully equipped with camping and cooking equipment. Whether you are lured by the excitement of Africa or the culture of Russia - why not take one of our expeditions for a thoroughly rewarding and enjoyable experience? For full details of departure dates and prices please cut it out and return the adjoining coupon.

\* Prices fully inclusive of equipment, food, accomodation and all sight seeing.

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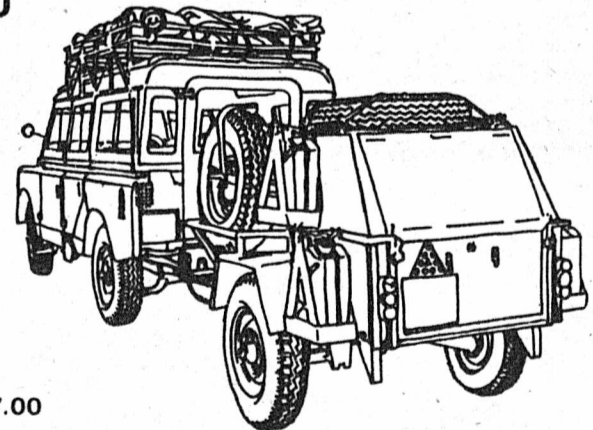
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