

# THE POND HOPPER



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TAILOR-MADE AND PRE-DESIGNED TRAVEL TO THE U.K. & IRELAND FOR INDEPENDENT OR GROUP TRAVELERS

WINTER 2008/09

## We Humans Need to Travel Travel Not Necessarily a Discretionary Expense

It seems these days that the media continues to publish pictures in the news very similar to this...



... the disheartened trader, struggling to come to grips with the "market madness". Let's face it - this economy needs a good therapist! If viewed from a psychological point of view, the nation could be diagnosed with a severe case of financial depression and anxiety; the stock market is experiencing bipolar disorder; and the U.S. government is suffering from a raging case of identity crisis as it prepares for a new administration. To be frank... this year has been hell!

Many have found themselves with a "deer-in-the-headlights" response to this financial turmoil. Folks don't seem to know whether they're coming or going. Should they stay in the market, or pull out and cut their losses?

And yet, despite this, our needs as human beings have not changed. Along with the basics (food, water, shelter and clothing), we need to feel comfort, safety, security, and

love. Our minds still crave excitement and adventure. Particularly in times of difficulty, we have an added need to "get away from it all". Escaping the day to day difficulties and monotony of our everyday lives can bring a most welcome reprieve - one that is sorely needed.

As Spring 2009 approaches and we enter into a state of renewal (both in season and in self), consider doing something truly beneficial for yourself. Travel is not necessarily a discretionary expense - an important fact to keep in mind as you reevaluate your necessities. Travel lifts the spirit and reenergizes both body and soul. It allows us to reconnect with our loved ones. Travel helps us to expand our horizons (and minds). And best of all, it provides the much needed rest, relaxation, and often, the excitement that we so desperately need and deserve - especially now!

Consider this:

- Travel can reconnect you with those you love



- It can take you out of a rut
- Travel gives us rest - both mentally and physically
- It is educational
- You'll meet new and interesting people



- You will create memories that last a lifetime
- Travel expands our minds
- It encourages us to be outdoors and exercise more.

When viewed in this light, with all these benefits taken into consideration, one might ask, "How can I afford *not* to go?"

Across the Pond Vacations is ready to help you rejuvenate and relax! Just let us know how we can help you...

**Tel. 310-791-6101**

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## Exciting New Choices for Travel Across the Pond

Across the Pond Vacations brings you exciting news! We now offer *even greater* choice when planning your United Kingdom or Ireland vacation...

### *Luxury or Classic*

Our tours (available for viewing at [www.atpvacations.com](http://www.atpvacations.com)) now provide you with two options for our Pre-Designed Travel Packages.

Across the Pond Vacations has always operated under the belief that no two travelers were created equally. While all our tours are a great value, we understand that some people prefer vacations that are more traditional, more practical. Others want to indulge themselves in luxury and experience their journey from a first-class point of view, and we value that, as well! Now, you can choose from either option!

And remember, if none of our tours fit your tastes exactly to a tee, we will custom-design a superb itinerary, just for you! Give us a call at 310-791-6101, or e-mail us at :

[info@atpvacations.com](mailto:info@atpvacations.com)

*The choice is yours!*



## The Silver Lining of the Economic Cloud

Whenever I hear someone say, “Every cloud has a silver lining,” I’m reminded of Eric Idle, dressed in a loin cloth, hanging from a crucifix in Monty Python’s “Life of Brian”, singing ‘*Always Look on the Bright Side of Life.*’ (This visual is always good for a giggle when I’m feeling a bit down. If you’ve never seen the clip, you can view it on YouTube.com.)

Despite the current economic cloud, there are still some “bright sides” in this current crisis we’re enduring. I present to you some silver linings of these financially unstable times. (Note: the figures stated here are accurate at the time at which this article is written.)

- The price of oil is down. Locally (Torrance, California), the price for unleaded gasoline as I passed the pumps today was \$2.99/gallon - a welcome sight from \$4.50/gallon we saw just a few months ago.
- We are seeing lower housing prices and lower mortgage rates, at the same time. People are responding favorably to the affordability factor and taking advantage of this unique circumstance, with mortgage rates at under 6% for a 30 year fixed mortgage.
- Savings rates are up! CD’s, money market accounts, and savings accounts are all reflecting good rates - three to four percent and upwards.



(For a search online of good savings rates, go to [www.bankrate.com](http://www.bankrate.com) and have a look.)

- Expect lower prices for holiday shopping. Even luxury retailers, such as Neiman Marcus, Saks Fifth Avenue and Nordstrom’s are responding by offering early sales and bigger discounts.

But the “silver lining” about which we are most excited, here at Across the Pond Vacations, is that *the pound is down!* In fact, the Great British Pound (GBP) has (as of the time this article is written) hit a five-year low! This is fantastic news for anyone interested in traveling to the United Kingdom! The Euro (EUR) has also hit a significant low. Today’s market shows that the pound (£) is at \$1.55 and the Euro (€) is at \$1.29 (the low Euro making travel to Ireland economical, as well!)

I’m no economic expert. But one other “silver lining” to keep in mind is that famous old saying, “What goes up, must come down.” Everything is cyclical, which means if you’re going to travel and take advantage of these favorable exchange rates, *the time is now.* Once the economy improves (and it will), the exchange rate will again most likely rise.

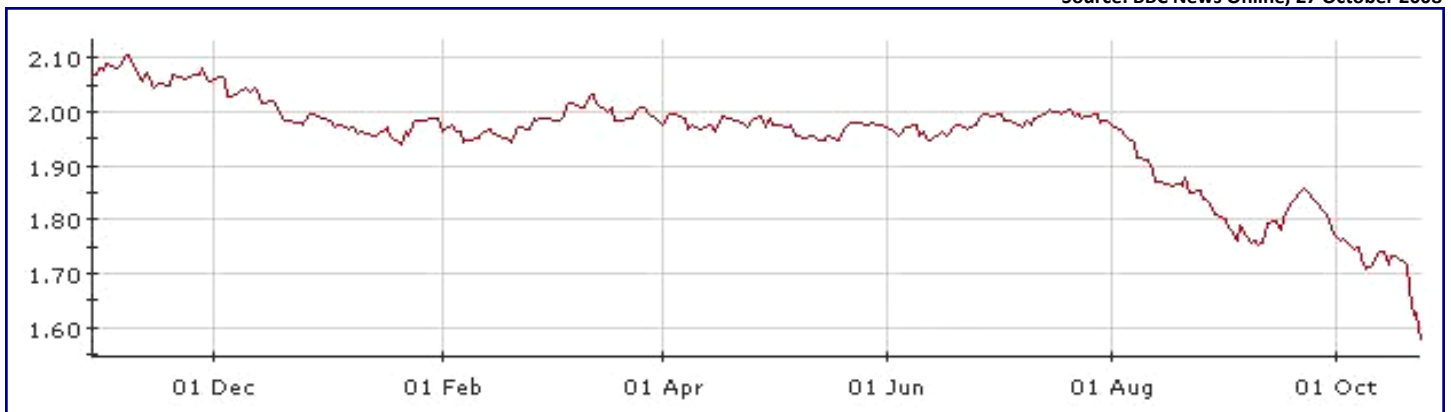
Wishing you every joy on your travels and the happiest of holidays,



*Anne Marie Clarke*

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Source: BBC News Online, 27 October 2008



*The Great British Pound has fallen from \$2.10 to \$1.55 in less than one year - great news for travelers to the UK!*

~ John Cleese, *Monty Python*

## Auntie Mabel's Corner



Greetings, my darling poppets! Auntie Mabel here again with helpful hints and tips for your travels to my lovely homeland, Great Britain.

It has come to your Auntie Mabel's attention that there are some words you Americans find offensive, but we Brits use as part of our every day vocabulary. So, let's sort this all out. (Now, let's behave like ladies and gentlemen. No giggling - let's try to keep straight faces, shall we?) Do keep in mind, however, that many of these terms are considered slang.

**Dicky** - Part of "Cockney Rhyming Slang," dicky rhymes with sicky and means you feel sick. *Example: Jane wasn't in work today. She felt a bit dicky.*

**Fag** - cigarette. *Example: Nigel's stepped outside the pub to smoke a fag.*

**Fagging** - This is the practice of making new boys at boarding schools into "slaves" for the older boys. *Example: Angus is fagging for Simon; Simon's got Angus running his bath and polishing his shoes.*

**Full Monty** - Thanks to the movie of the same name, many Americans have come to believe that the full monty references being naked, or perhaps a striptease. Untrue, my poppets! The full monty simply refers to "the whole thing", or going the full way. *Example: For breakfast, I'll have eggs, fried bread, sausage, bacon, beans... the full monty!*

**Mate** - Friend or chum. *Example: John's off to the pub with his mate, Thomas.*

**Spotted Dick** - This is a very delicious pudding (dessert) that your Auntie Mabel enjoys very much. It is a steamed suet pudding containing dried fruit (usually currants), and is commonly served with custard. *Example: Auntie Mabel enjoys a bit of spotted dick after dinner with her tea.*

I hope you've learned something new and fun today, my darling poppets. Off you go! Be good to your mums... and your auntsies.



## Such a Deal!

# 15% Off a Custom Designed Tour

**Book Any Across the Pond Vacations Custom-Designed Travel Package by December 30, 2008 and receive 15% off the tour price.**

*Applies to parties of 6 to 14 people. 10% discount for parties of 1 to 5 people. Applicable to land portion of custom-designed travel packages, only (airfare and travel insurance not eligible for discount). Non-refundable deposits must be paid in full no later than December 30, 2008. Travel must take place prior to August 1, 2009. Travel Package minimum of \$2,495 per person before discount. Restrictions apply.*

## FUN FIND

*Find the words listed below. (Hint: they read horizontally and vertically, only.)*

S T M I C H A E L S M O U N T Q P W R I P X J E L  
A O X R K L T E A W S T M I L D N F J D U K S L A  
I M R A N W O P M C L I N S G A P L J N B V E O L  
D O D U S B W I N D S O R C A S T L E K G L B T W  
H I N L O V E A D H S L I O Y Z N E S M R A P L S  
F B A N G E R S G O H I K T H A M E S Q U P W O E  
I R U T Y A O S L D K F J S G H S D E R B Y Z B M  
M C A R P A F P U N T M O W X D K S X L M N C G H  
F I F D U B L I N A G M X O H J S T M C H D L P A  
A C L P S X O B H M J L Y L A C O C K A B B E Y S  
O W B S T O N E H E N G E D H V R M K C E P A O C  
W A K C I N D G N E D L F S R Z E S E T Q B E R E  
A L W O H A O T Y A H A K N O T B E A X U S L K P  
A W O U C K N H O U I M E R S E Y S I D E F R C N  
P L I N U X S W A F G I K M H D F J K R E C S G D  
A O S T P A U L S S L S U X J I W J D G N X H N S  
E H A Y N G D U M K L C E C Z N Y P I O A H K T F  
Y R E C A L T E C G K A D C L B I R M I N G H A M  
Q M R O M A N B A T H S S K R U F A B E N R C L I  
M O N R E Y X S J R J T D S I R E S J R E W K N B  
L P Y K I L T N E D H L S I V G Z P T N B S H W T  
W K L X U V E H L D N E M L G H O W L C O A U I E  
W G F D H E H U E P H A D R I A N S W A L L S C Y  
A N D I T S E E M S W G I X J D E M B V E L I K V  
A Y H E E K P M F D C S H J K F W U F D Y J Q J O  
C U Z T H W C H R I S T M A S P U D D I N G Y O B

*Alnwick, Bangers, Birmingham, Christmas Pudding, Cotswolds, County Cork, Derby, Dublin, Edinburgh, Essex, Glamis Castle, Hadrians Wall, Kilt, Lacock Abbey, Leeds, Merseyside, Pub Grub, Queen Anne Boleyn, Roman Baths, St Michael's Mount, St Pauls, Stonehenge, Tea, Thames, Tower of London, Windsor Castle, York*

# SPRING HIGHLIGHT TOUR

## England's South West

### A Luxurious Travel Package Certain to Revive the Senses (and Sensibilities)

London and the South West of England are regions rich in heritage and culture. The South West, in particular, is known for its connections with legendary, literary, religious, and political figures such as King Arthur, Agatha Christie, and Jane Austen to name but a few. It is a region with a magnificent coastline, 2 national parks, & 4 World Heritage sites. This area is particularly ideal for spring travel. Consider our South West England tour...

**Day 1 – Departure** Depart on your overnight transatlantic flight. (Airfare can be added)

**Day 2 – Welcome to London** Luxury airport transfer (including meet and greet) to your 4½ star centrally located London hotel. The remainder of the day is yours to explore, as you like. (London Hotel: Waldorf Hilton hotel or equivalent.)

**Day 3 – Lovely London** Full English breakfast, then some exploring, including a flight on the London Eye. Visit the Tower of London, Kensington Palace, perhaps take a cruise down the River Thames, or shopping at Harrods! In London, there's always plenty of amazing things to do. (London Hotel: Waldorf Hilton hotel or equivalent.)

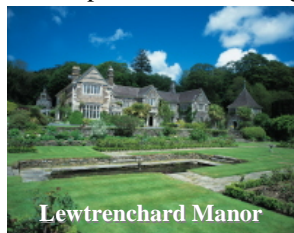
**Day 4 – Bed, Bath and Beyond** Full English breakfast then collect your luxury rental car. Visit Stonehenge, Amesbury, and Salisbury Cathedral. Drive to Bath. Check into your 5-star hotel. (Bath Hotel: Royal Crescent Hotel or equivalent.)

**Day 5 – Bath Spa** Full English breakfast, Visit the Roman Baths, Pump Room and the

Thermae Bath Spa. (Included in your package: 2 hour spa session, including massage.) The evening is yours to enjoy. (Bath Hotel: Royal Crescent Hotel or equivalent.)

**Day 6 - Delightful Devon** Full English breakfast, then drive south west to Glastonbury Abbey (graves of King Arthur and Guinevere and possible resting place of the Holy Grail). Continue on a beautiful drive to the exquisite Jacobean Lewtrenchard Manor. (Devon hotel: Lewtrenchard Manor or equivalent.)

**Day 7 – Dramatic Dartmoor** Full English breakfast, then to Dartmoor National Park, 368 square miles of the largest and wildest area of open country in southern England. Return to the hotel for a glass of sherry by the fireplace. This evening - dinner at The



Lewtrenchard Manor

Purple Carrot at Lewtrenchard Manor hotel. A private dining room provides a birds-eye view of the three rosette, state-of-

the-art kitchen in action. Your dining experience there will include an eight course personalized menu, champagne at the Chef's Kitchen Bar and so much more! (Devon hotel: Lewtrenchard Manor or equivalent.)

**Days 8, 9 and 10 – Cornwall's Coast** Full English breakfast daily. Drive to Cornwall with its stunning scenery. Across the Pond

Vacations will provide you with driving routes, such as a touring trip to Lanhydrock House and Tintagel Castle, the Eden Project (tickets included), Lands End, St. Michael's Mount, and Penzance. Your home for the next 3 nights - the 4½ Fowey Hall which sits in a spectacular location overlooking the sailing and fishing port of Fowey on the South Cornish coast. (Cornwall Hotel: Fowey Hall or equivalent.)

**Day 11 – Return to London** – Full English breakfast, then drive to Plymouth to return your car. First class BritRail back to London. Catch up on your last minute shopping (don't forget that trip to Harrods or Harvey Nichols!). This evening, we thought it might be nice to go out with a bang at a spectacular West End theatrical production (your choice of production) - we'll secure the best seats in the house! Your final night is back at the Waldorf. (London Hotel: Waldorf Hilton hotel or equivalent.)

**Day 12 - Farewell, Charming England** Luxury sedan and chauffeur await at your hotel to return you to the airport.

**12 days from \$5,495/per person  
(Double Occupancy, Land Only)**

**For additional information, please visit:**

**[www.ATPVacations.com](http://www.ATPVacations.com)**



Village in Cornwall



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