

# great adventures

A publication of Zephyr Adventures • Summer '07

## Tuscany & Umbria: Too Good For Just One Adventure!

Past participants of our Italy Biking Adventure have been thrilled with the rolling Tuscan countryside, the flat Umbria valley, the delicious food and wine, and the friendly Italians we meet along the way. We suspect those who experience our Italy trip this coming Fall will feel the same – and we invite you to join us there in September!

Yes, we love all our tours. However, there is something special about Italy. Perhaps it is the incredible scenery we cycle through each day. Perhaps it is the reward of outstanding meals, accompanied by delicious *Brunello* and *Vino Nobile* wines, that awaits us each evening. Perhaps it is the warm people we encounter.

More likely, it is the combination of all the above wrapped into the simple lifestyle of the Italian culture. In short, the Italians seem to simply *get it*. They know how to live life, balancing the stresses of work with the importance of family and the pleasures of a stroll down the main street of town to visit with friends. We love how they live life and that is what makes our Italy Biking Adventure something special.

*Tuscany & Umbria, continued on next page*

## The Adventure You've Been Waiting For All Your Life

by Kris Thomas

Admit it. You've been wanting to take a skating vacation ever since you first discovered the novel idea of *traveling on your skates*. The reason I know this is because I hear it all the time from people who haven't yet traveled with us, and they always have good reasons why they haven't. However, *this* is the year you should do it, and Idaho is where you should go!

It takes many factors to create a great skating trip and this one has them all: scenery (we are surrounded daily by the natural beauty of northern Idaho – Lake Couer d'Alene, the Bitterroot Mountains and acres of National Forest land), easy navigation (no route directions to follow), picturesque towns (historic logging and mining hamlets), and an easy location to reach (we start and end in Spokane, WA). By far the best feature of this trip, however, is the trails. They are simply the greatest collection of trails we've ever encountered! The 73-mile Trail of the Coeur d'Alenes, the 53-mile Centennial Trail, the short-but-sweet Fish Lake Trail – the combination enthralls everyone, from advanced skaters who are looking to bag a lot of miles each day to tentative novices just learning to experience the joy of wheels underfoot.

Don't take only my word for it, though. Read another dozen opinions from some of the people who joined us in Idaho last year: *"This was as close to a perfect trip for us as we have ever been on ... Extra awesome ... The best skating trails of any location I've been to ... Absolutely fantastic ... The trails were great fun ... Excellent. Smooth pavement, flat trails and gorgeous scenery ... The CDA is the most beautiful trail I've ever skated ... An absolutely awesome trip with amazing scenery ... These trails are among the most beautiful and scenic in the U.S. ... Every bend in the trail brought a new sight ... I loved the peace and quiet as I skated along each day ... Beautiful scenery, smooth trails, very good lodging and good food ... I loved it all! Why did the trip have to go so fast?"*

Move "Take A Vacation On Skates" higher on your priority list and make it a reality this year!



Italy Biking Adventure

September 15 - 21, 2007

Email us for a detailed itinerary of any trip!

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

Idaho Skating Adventure

September 10 - 14, 2007  
September 16 - 20, 2007



Zephyr Adventures has been running adventure tours around the globe since 1997. We offer trips as diverse as inline skating in Quebec, trekking in Tibet or self-guided hiking, driving and bicycling adventures in Italy. We look forward to having you join us on an adventure this year.

Trekking Adventures • Skating Adventures • Biking Adventures • Camp Rollerblade • Self-Guided Adventures

[www.ZephyrAdventures.com](http://www.ZephyrAdventures.com) • 888-758-8687 • [info@ZephyrAdventures.com](mailto:info@ZephyrAdventures.com)

*Tuscany & Umbria, continued from previous page*

So special, in fact, that we have used Italy to launch our newest division, **Zephyr Self-Guided Adventures**. In addition to our September 15-21 Biking Adventure, we have created five new Self-Guided Adventures in Italy:

- Terra di Siena Dream: Tuscany Walking
- Terra di Siena Dream: Tuscany Bicycling
- Heart of Umbria Bicycling
- Best of Tuscany & Umbria Bicycling
- Best of Tuscany & Umbria Driving

These adventures all take place in the heart of Italy in our favorite provinces of Tuscany and Umbria. For complete information, see [www.ZephyrAdventures.com](http://www.ZephyrAdventures.com) and click on Self-Guided Adventures. (For information on our Guided Adventure in September, click on Biking Adventures.) Not sure what a Self-Guided Adventure is? See the following article (Self-Guided Adventures). Whichever trip you choose, it is time to visit Italy!



## Self-Guided Adventures

When you come on a guided Zephyr Adventure, you will often find three-fourths of the participants have been with Zephyr before. That is an outstanding indicator of how fun our tours can be. We find our travelers join us for any of a number of reasons:

- They appreciate the groups we organize because they can't find friends or family willing to travel on their schedule and where they wish to go.
- They value our guides and the experience and knowledge we provide.
- They appreciate not having to make arrangements in advance or worry about making decisions during the trip.

Despite these reasons, we realize guided adventure travel is not for everyone. That is why we have created a new division, **Self-Guided Adventures**, starting in Italy this year. On a Self-Guided Adventure, you select your activity and itinerary from one of our established routes, arrange your own travel companions, and select your date of travel. We then book and pay for your accommodations in advance, meet you upon your arrival in Tuscany or Umbria, and

provide you with your detailed itinerary and route directions. You then WALK, CYCLE, or DRIVE through Italy on your own, with our in-country representative available in a pinch.

Honestly, we are not the first company to run self-guided vacations. However, we have taken the concept to a new level in two ways. First, we have replaced the written route directions on our Self-Guided Driving Adventure with *GPS Navigation*. Now you don't have to worry about getting lost while driving in Europe! Second, we have created a sort of *e-guide* by making short videos of our Italian guide Giovanni as he explains the wines, food, and sights you'll encounter on your tour. We place these on a Personal Video Player, loan it to you, and you'll have your own e-Giovanni! All this for less than a guided tour.

Self-Guided Adventures are not for everyone. We expect many of you to prefer the higher service level of our guided adventures, appreciating the guides, van support, and companionship they provide. However, if you are confident traveling in a foreign country on your own and with the activity you choose (driving, biking, or hiking), go to [www.ZephyrAdventures.com](http://www.ZephyrAdventures.com) and click on the Self-Guided Adventures section for a fantastic vacation in Italy.

## Presenting Devon Hiking Spa

We are proud to be working with a new travel company, Devon Hiking Spa, a unique business that combines the luxury of a spa vacation with the active content of adventure travel. Started in 2007 and offering trips in Colorado, Vermont, and Arizona, the vacations are designed to appeal to both active travelers and those looking to jumpstart a healthy life.

Each morning, participants at Devon Hiking Spa wake up to a healthy breakfast and a morning hike. The afternoons are filled with fitness classes, informative lectures, and massages. Travelers are accompanied by professional staff throughout the day and eat together in the evening.

In our humble opinion, Devon Hiking Spa offers much more than a destination spa. For one thing, fixed departure dates (like in adventure travel) mean participants arrive together, depart together,

and become good friends during the week. More importantly, everything at

Devon Hiking Spa is designed to help participants learn the tools to create a healthy lifestyle at home. You won't just show up, have a great week, and go back to old (unhealthy) habits.

If you want to lose weight, get started on a path towards a less stressful lifestyle, or are simply looking for a pampered (but active) experience, visit [www.DevonHikingSpa.com](http://www.DevonHikingSpa.com). The owner of the company, Devon Metz, is not only a Registered Dietitian but also a High Roller with Zephyr Adventures.

We know you will love the experience!





## Peru Trekking Inca Trail to Machu Picchu *by Allan Wright*

I just returned to the United States from one of our new trips launched this year, Trekking in Peru. The lost city of Machu Picchu is by far the most famous travel destination in Peru and the four-day Inca Trail is known worldwide as one of the greatest adventure travel experiences on the globe.

This was an Exploratory Adventure for Zephyr, which means we were contracting with a local outfit and, although we spent many hours researching the destination and working with the local outfitter to create a fantastic trip, I had not actually been on the Inca Trail before myself. I must admit I was a bit leery of the popularity of the Inca Trail and what that would do to the experience. In fact, I had already scheduled to spend extra time after the trip to research a new, alternative trek.

The Peruvians realize they have a tourism gem in Machu Picchu and an adventure travel gem in the Inca Trail. While there are thousands of miles of Incan trails in Peru, to step onto the "Inca Trail" which runs from the Sacred Valley to Machu Picchu requires a permit, limited to 500 per day. 500 per day sounds like a huge number to me and was the chief cause of my concern that the Inca Trail was over-hyped and over-visited. I envisioned massive numbers of people tripping over themselves on the trail, competing for limited camping spots at night, and generally ruining the experience.

It wasn't that way at all...

**To read the rest of this article, visit [www.zephyradventures.blogspot.com](http://www.zephyradventures.blogspot.com)**

**To be emailed each time Allan posts a new blog entry, visit:**

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/zephyrtours>



## Tibet Trekking *by Allan Wright*

Our group of 11 trekkers and three guides were walking through a small nunnery above Lhasa. Although we had seen other tourists at the large, popular monasteries we had visited in the morning, at this nunnery we were the only foreigners around.

Walking into the large prayer room, we saw a young nun who expressed some interest in our group. Talking through our guide and translator, we were able to ask her about her daily chores, when she had come to the nunnery, and even what she thought of her life as

a nun. She took us back to her room for a private tour of a typical nun's quarters, offered us yak butter tea, and showed us forbidden photos of the Dalai Lama.

Our group of trekkers was so impressed with this young woman's dedication to her calling, some of them wanted to give some money to support her in her hard existence.

Our guide said it

was okay to do so, and several of them placed Chinese bank notes on her bed. Despite the poverty nuns know every day and the comparative wealth each of us had (just the cost of getting to Tibet is a year's salary for most Tibetans), the young woman tried to decline the money, saying "You have traveled a long way and must need this money more than I."

This is the true spirit of Tibet. The people are friendly, warm, and caring. The country is ruggedly beautiful and the culture, laced through with Buddhism, is intoxicating.

This was my fourth trip to Tibet and, to be honest, I was not looking forward to going. It has been a crazy summer of travel, and I could have really...



GREG SPENCER

**To read the rest of this article, visit [www.zephyradventures.blogspot.com](http://www.zephyradventures.blogspot.com)**

### Remaining 2007 Zephyr Adventures

Jun 17 - 22	Quebec & Montreal <b>ONE SPOT REMAINING</b>	Skating	\$1,700
Jul 11 - 15	Glacier National Park	Hiking	\$1,600
Jul 14 - 20	Netherlands	Skating	\$2,000
Aug 5 - 10	Colorado <b>WAITING LIST ONLY</b>	Family Multisport	\$1,700
Aug 12 - 17	Quebec & Montreal <b>WAITING LIST ONLY</b>	Skating	\$1,700
Aug 18 - 24	Switzerland	Skating	\$2,000
Aug 19 - 24	Quebec & Montreal <b>ONE SPOT REMAINING</b>	Skating	\$1,700
Sep 8 - 17	China's Great Wall & Tibet	Hiking	\$2,400
Sep 17 - 21	Tibet Trekking (extension)	Trekking	\$800
Sep 10 - 14	Idaho Silver Country	Skating	\$1,550
Sep 15 - 21	Italy: Tuscany & Umbria	Biking	\$2,000
Sep 16 - 20	Idaho Silver Country	Skating	\$1,550
Oct 20 - 24	Hilton Head Island	Camp Rollerblade	\$1,400
Dec 6 - 8	Florida Camp & Mini-Tour	Skating	\$700
Dec 8 - 12	Florida	Skating	\$1,500

**Contact us for details on any of our trips! [info@zephyradventures.com](mailto:info@zephyradventures.com) 888-758-8687**



Because you're never too old to learn a new trick.

# CAMP ROLLERBLADE™

[www.CampRollerblade.com](http://www.CampRollerblade.com)

If you're looking to learn a new lifelong activity, look no further than your own backyard. Chances are, there is a Camp Rollerblade Weekend (for beginners and advanced beginners) offered near you soon!

Camp Rollerblade Weekends take place from approximately 9 AM - 3 PM on both Saturday and Sunday (with a break for lunch) and you'll need to bring skates, safety gear and a helmet. You'll be amazed at how much you can learn with just 10 hours of instruction! Our goal is to give you the skills and confidence to be able to venture out on your own to skate your local trails. Call us (888-758-8687) or visit our website for more details.

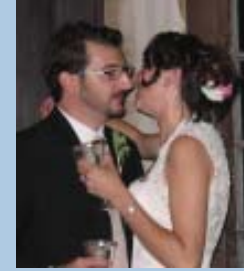
## Remaining 2007 Camp Rollerblade Weekends

Boston	June 2 & 3
Chicago	June 2 & 3
Cleveland	June 2 & 3
Denver	June 2 & 3
Detroit	June 2 & 3
Miami / Ft Laud	Oct 27 & 28
Minneapolis	June 9 & 10
New York	July 14 & 15
San Francisco	June 9 & 10
Tampa / St Pete	Oct 6 & 7
Washington DC	June 2 & 3

## You Never Know What Might Happen On A Zephyr Adventure!

When Rebecca joined our Italy Biking Adventure last May with her friend Susie, she probably didn't dream that she would meet the Man of Her Dreams while she on vacation.

However, after an impromptu post-dinner date with Giovanni, a local *sommelier* in the lovely Umbrian town of Spello, they



*Giovanni & Rebecca, April 2007*

were both smitten. They kept in touch via email after Rebecca went home to Shreveport, LA (fortunately, Giovanni's English is pretty good) and he came to the

States to visit Rebecca and her family. She then went to Italy to meet his. Less than a year after meeting, they were married and plan to make their home together in Louisiana. We love happy endings!

Who knows what will happen on *your* next Zephyr Adventure?



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**Zephyr**  
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