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Contact: Sarah Thies

Tel: 800-200-3887

Email: sarah@classicjourneys.com

Top 10 Moments That Turn Tourists Into Travelers

Adventure Tours From Classic Journeys Focus On Cultural Connections

La Jolla, CA – "Did I ever tell you about the time...?"

For Classic Journeys, creator of award-winning cultural walking adventures, those eight little words epitomize the *why* of travel: to experience those once-in-a-lifetime moments when we magically click with other people and cultures around the world.

Like the chills you feel as you stand beside your camel on the crest of a Saharan dune at sunset. The amateur (and amazing) gnocchi you prepare, then inhale, at a farmhouse in Tuscany. And that interlude on a private island in Nova Scotia when you fantasize about chucking it all to become a lobsterman.

"These are the moments our guests live for, when they realize they're *travelers*, not tourists," notes Edward Piegza, president and founder of Classic Journeys. "It could happen on a country lane or a coastal trail, in a village market or an artist's workshop. Our guests meet the people and fall into the tempo of local life...and that's when the spontaneous, I-can't-believe-this-is-me things inevitably happen."

Moments like these, as experienced firsthand by Classic Journeys guests:

*** Going nomad in Morocco's Sahara**

At the foot of the colossal sand dunes, native tribesmen approach with camels. We climb aboard and ride out and up into the sands just in time to catch the sunset. Later, at our authentic Berber encampment, we gather around the campfire for native food and music, and nod off in our luxury

Named a World's Best Tour Operator by Travel + Leisure Magazine

Classic Journeys • 7855 Ivanhoe Ave., Ste. 220 • La Jolla, CA 92037

800-200-3887 or 858-454-5004 • fax: 858-454-5770

www.classicjourneys.com • moreinfo@classicjourneys.com

tents under the starry desert sky. Amazingly, this is just *one day*. Back home, we'll share even more stories about oasis walks, the Medina of Fès, banquets in private mansions, the snake charmers in Marrakesh...

Price: from \$3795 **Dates:** Mar, Apr, May, Jun, Sep, Nov, Dec **Trip length:** 9 days/8 nights

*** Prowling Costa Rica's cloud forest canopy**

Nothing comes close to the first 30 seconds on a walkway in the forest treetops. All of the teeming, monkey-level action is wonderfully in-your-face. We breathe it. Hear it. Feel it tremble. It's a surreal shift in perspective and – frankly – it's a lot of fun. Of course, so is peering down into an active volcano, walking in a cloud of butterflies, navigating a free-flowing tropical river, and gaping at roseate spoonbills wading among the crocodiles. Costa Rica doesn't have one memorable moment; it has about 600 of them.

With nighttime glowworm safaris, ziplining through the jungle canopy, and boogie-boarding in the Pacific, it's no wonder Costa Rica is our most popular Family Journey. Naturalist guides know instinctively what eye-opening activities will thrill kids and adults alike.

Price: from \$2995 **Dates:** Mar, Apr, Jun, Jul, Aug, Oct, Nov, Dec **Trip length:** 7 days/6 nights

*** Surrendering to the Tuscan sunset**

In an ideal world, a Tuscan day would run in a continuous loop. We'd circle back to taste the honey at the Bocelli family vineyard and relive the instant we glimpsed the first village in the Cinque Terre perched over the Ligurian Sea. And yet, sundown on any day of our Tuscan itineraries is about as perfect as life gets. The air goes golden. The chianti's breathing. An aromatic preview of dinner wafts out to the terrace. And we give ourselves a mental pinch to make sure we're really there...

Price: from \$3695 **Dates:** Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct **Trip length:** 7 days/6 nights

*** Lobstering with Bill off Nova Scotia**

Who wouldn't want to be Bill when they grow up? He owns a lobster boat...lives on his own private island...has a wife who's a Cordon Bleu chef. After juggling his lobster pots to make room for us on deck, he chugs us out to his home for a guided walk and lobster bake. From 400-

year-old towns to piney forests and pods of passing whales, there's plenty to love about Nova Scotia. But that day with Bill – just going along for the ride, getting a feel for the fisherman's life – is truly one for the books.

Price: from \$2595 **Dates:** Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep **Trip length:** 6 days/5 nights

*** Getting totally lost in Croatia**

That's "lost" in the best possible way – as in a rural time warp on Croatia's Dalmatian Coast or Istrian Peninsula. Stepping off the path to let a shepherd pass with his flock, we notice how the meadow bumps into the apricot orchard that wraps around the farmhouse that looks like it slipped down the steep vineyard from a perfect hilltop village. Moments like this – unscripted, untouristed, untouched by time – are incredibly rare in regions this accessible. And we make sure we take advantage of them while it's still possible.

Price: from \$3695 **Dates:** May, Jun, Jul, Sep, Oct **Trip length:** 7 days/6 nights

*** Barging gently through Burgundy**

Ensclosed on the deck of a barge, sipping a flinty blanc, nibbling some gooey Epoisse, it's easy to feel this is the life you were born to live. As we glide along at a stately, make-no-waves pace, why not hop off for a vineyard visit, a bike ride, or a spot of shopping in the markets of Beaune? To up the decadence quotient, there's a 3-night stay at a château in the Loire Valley, with a private farmhouse lunch and a visit to Chenonceau.

Price: from \$4095 **Dates:** Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep, Oct **Trip length:** 7 days/6 nights

*** Descending into Machu Picchu**

Guests approach the legendary ruins via our Inca Trail walk – entering the site from above – for one of the most gasp-inducing views imaginable. Unlike the in-and-out tourists, we spend all or part of three days at the site. It's not the only surprise on tap in Peru. Led by our native Quechua guide, we visit a remote village school, hang out with a llama herder, and explore lesser-seen ruins that aren't on everyone's map.

Price: from \$3595 **Dates:** Mar, Apr, Jun, Jul, Sep, Oct, Nov, Dec **Trip length:** 7 days/6 nights

* Channeling the 17th century in Cesky Krumlov

History buffs take note: In the castle up on the bluff, we might be full-blooded Habsburgs, lordling it over the village at our feet. Down below – in a cottage that tilts out over the ox-bowed Vltava River – we get a taste of the chaos and cramp of medieval life. As 21st-century visitors, we feel some guilty gratitude for the Communist era that stopped progress and saved this perfect microcosm of European culture. It's as close as it comes to living, breathing history, on an itinerary bookended by Prague and Budapest, with Austria's Danube Valley in between.

Price: from \$3695 **Dates:** Jun, Aug, Sep **Trip length:** 8 days/7 nights

* Living on the edge in Amalfi

Throw open the window of a second-story room on the Amalfi Coast and prepare for the pow ...a panoramic fifteenth-story view. Towns like Positano are taller than they are wide, like pastel villages turned on their sides. One day we're exploring Capri. Another it's a gorgeous walk through the "valley of the mills"...a *limoncello* tasting...and the jaw-dropping view from Ravello. All of which make up a glorious, never-to-be-forgotten week in the sun.

Price: from \$3795 **Dates:** Apr, May, Jun, Jul, Sep, Oct, Dec **Trip length:** 7 days/6 nights

* Soaking up our private Stonehenge

Stonehenge is deserted...except for us. A friend of a friend gives us access, early in the morning while the site is closed, to bask in the presence of the mystical stones all by ourselves. In the classic Cotswolds countryside, we explore honey-stoned villages, chat up local cheesemakers, and tour Blenheim Palace. But Stonehenge provides *the* moment. Anyone who's ever been there is shocked that we have such solitary run of the place. We can't picture it any other way.

Price: from \$3795 **Dates:** May, Jun, Jul, Sep **Trip length:** 7 days/6 nights

While each Classic Journey is carefully crafted, it's not carved in stone.

"Spontaneity and flexibility are key," says Piegza. "If a fisherman offers us a boat ride, we take it. If dragging our heels a little on a vineyard path will get us to a hilltop village right at the golden hour, we dawdle."

On a Classic Journey, groups are small – just 10 guests on average – so they can slip into the smallest village without making a ripple. The company's local guides know *everybody*: the

artists, craftsmen, farmers, shepherds, vintners, truffle-hunters, game-trackers, and tribal chieftains who make things happen...and welcome guests with open arms.

Full details on cultural travel with Classic Journeys, including specific itineraries, daily agendas and pricing, is available at www.classicjourneys.com/moments. To speak directly with a Guest Services Coordinator, call (800) 200-3887.

About Classic Journeys:

Classic Journeys offers cultural walking adventures, culinary tours and family journeys in North America, Latin America, Europe, Africa, Asia and the South Pacific. Guests enjoy luxury accommodations and gourmet meals that reflect the best of each region, coupled with soft adventure activities, daily interactions with locals, and native guides who make countries and cultures come alive. Tours are six to 12 days long with two to four hours of easy-going walking per day. Land-only tour prices range from \$2495 to \$7995 per person (with discounts for small groups and children traveling with parents). Average tour size is 10, limited to a maximum of 18 guests per departure. Full details and links to itineraries are available at www.classicjourneys.com.