



Endless

Second Issue, 2006 www.rci-asia.com

Vacation



London Calling

Beautiful sights, historical wonders and
awesome shopping await the visitor

INSIDE: • **Vietnam** at exclusive rates • Live it up in **Seoul** • Winter fun in **Lake Tahoe**

Discover Hong Kong



Photo: Hong Kong Disneyland

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Photo: Hong Kong Disneyland

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 endless fascination
 and excitement, all
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This year, Hong Kong offers many new attractions for the whole family. Experience magical fun at **Hong Kong Disneyland**, get close to nature at **Wetland Park** or go on a journey of enlightenment at **Ngong Ping 360** on Lantau Island.

For insatiable shoppers, Hong Kong offers an unrivalled shopping experience running the full range from international designer brands to hard-won bargains at local open-air markets. Indulge in a shopping extravaganza during **Hong Kong's Shopping Festival** which ends on 31 August.



Photos: Hong Kong Tourism Board



Take time out to enjoy the famous Hong Kong food scene with delicious international cuisine and

tasty local delights. Eat till your

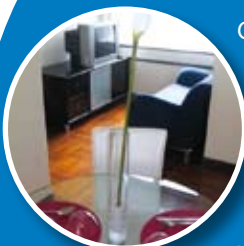
heart's content at **Canton Road Food Festival** in Kowloon, which features a variety of food themes amidst a street carnival atmosphere from 4 to 20 August. Canton Road is a popular shopping and dining district with a good selection of international eateries. To get there, take the underground Mass Transit Railway (MTR) to Tsim Sha Tsui, Exit A1, and walk along Haiphong Road for 5 minutes, or take Star Ferry from Central or Wan Chai to Tsim Sha Tsui.

Hong Kong is compact so visitors are never too far from shopping areas and major sights. Hong Kong also has an excellent transportation system so visitors can travel around easily.

NEW RENTAL PROPERTY

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Grand Blossom House apartment is adjacent to the Kowloon-Canton Railway (KCR) Station, which provides long-distance rail services to China. It is next to the Hong Kong Coliseum where most concerts are held and the Hong Kong History Museum. It is surrounded by shopping centres and restaurants, and is only minutes away from the main business and shopping district of Tsim Sha Tsui. The apartment units are small and cosy, modelling after the real living spaces of the Hong Kong people.

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Cover picture courtesy of www.britainview.com



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Intra-Asia Exchange	S\$175
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Midweek Exchange – 5D/4N (Selected Asia Resorts)	S\$79

Membership Fee*

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Asia Getaway (31 - 365 days in advance)	from S\$109
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Split Week Getaway Specials

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Midweek – 5D/4N (Selected Asia Resorts)	from S\$149
Guest Certificate	S\$70

Find out the latest promotional prices of RCI Getaway Specials. Call RCI and ask our Guides. Alternatively, log on to our website at www.rci-asia.com for updated rates. All prices quoted are correct at the time of printing and are subject to change without prior notice.
*Subject to GST charges for Singapore members

RCI Asia's Member Services Department will be open on the following Public Holidays in 2006

9 Aug 2006	National Day	9am – 6pm
21 Oct 2006	Deepavali	9am – 1pm

Dear Member,

I recently joined RCI as Director of Operations, Asia, and I assumed my role with a great sense of excitement. Being an RCI member since 1991 and having experienced many wonderful holidays through RCI, I am keen to bring forth both perspectives to the business – as a member as well as a representative of RCI.

As promised at the beginning of the year, we've introduced many exciting offers for members and many of you have appreciated the great value-driven rental deals that we've been bringing you. So far, three quarters into the year, we have added popular destinations like Vietnam and Seoul in our RCI Rentals portfolio. RCI's Rental deals offer excellent accommodation at special member-only rates in sought-after urban destinations across the world, including cities in Europe and North America, which complement your timeshare exchange holiday perfectly. For instance, when you go on an RCI Exchange Holiday in Las Vegas, you now have the flexibility to add on a day or two at a centrally located hotel in San Francisco as well.

For the latest list of RCI Rental destinations, visit www.rci-asia.com. Alternatively, call our Holiday Guides for Rental updates and pricing around the globe. Keep a lookout for the latest updates and let us know the places you'd like to visit which are not currently listed. We will continue to bring more attractive Rental offers in locations that you wish to visit.

By the end of 2006, RCI will introduce a host of Cruise Holiday options at exclusive rates that have been negotiated specially for our members. The attractive rates are a result of our exclusive relationship with SKY Auction, a well-known cruise provider. Cruise liners include Royal Caribbean, P&O Cruises, Princess Cruises and more. Our exclusive arrangements with the world's best cruise liners will enable you to go just about anywhere you want, as long as it's accessible by water!

As you turn the pages of this magazine, you'll discover a new look and feel to this edition of Endless Vacation. Our editorial team strives to do that extra bit to improve your experience with each issue, be it in article content, information, design, quality or diversity of locations covered. We are delighted to have been able to make this magazine more interactive and friendly. We hope you like the changes and look forward to receiving your feedback. Email your comments and recommendations to asiamembers@rciap.com.

We are constantly looking at ways to enhance your RCI experience. In order to accomplish this, we have included a member survey in this magazine. Please complete the survey to enable us to understand your needs and serve you better. To thank you for your participation, we have a special gift for you. Please read the survey form inside for details.

Remember to maximise your holiday ownership by utilising your membership benefits with RCI. As a member, you are entitled to Exchange Holidays that have variety and flexibility; GetAway Specials at exclusive member rates that do not require any deposits; Split Week Holiday Options that are ideal for short breaks; access to RCI Rentals in sought-after urban destinations; and 11th Hour Deals that are perfect for quick getaways. Not forgetting the wonderful holiday gift of Guest Certificates which you can give to your family and friends.

Finally, when booking your holiday, ask about the Leisure Plus Travel Insurance that has been specially designed for timeshare members like you.

My team and I wish you many wonderful holidays with RCI!




Adrian Lee
Director of Operations, Asia





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Note:

- Subject to availability at time of booking
- Book by 15 September 2006
- Valid for travel before 31 December 2006
- Accommodation only
- Terms and conditions apply



A pod on the London Eye

London Calling

Once an old-world city, London today is a metropolis of beautiful sights, historical wonders and awesome shopping. Rebecca Chua checks out some of London's top attractions.

Once a city that was considered old-worldly, London today is a constantly morphing landscape where medieval architecture and Victorian classics collide with 1960s modernism and millennial slick. This stimulating blend of old and new has given a fresh buzz to the city, endowing visitors with something different every time.

With the greatest concentration of major attractions in Britain (238, to be exact), London

certainly gives visitors more bang for their buck. A good way to see all the sights at a go is by taking a tour around the city. Do it against the wind on an open top bus, in the comforts of a coach tour, down the river Thames on a cruise, or by participating in a walking tour. Whichever you choose, you won't fail to be impressed by the majestic skylines, architectural wonders and sights you've seen hundreds of times on celluloid, but now in the flesh.



Tower of London

At the Tower of London (Tower Hill. Tel: 0870 7567 070), see the Medieval Palace, the infamous Bloody Tower, and the Beauchamp Tower that bears over 90 inscriptions made by its prisoners. For the less morbid stuff, head to the Martin Tower where the Crowns and Diamonds exhibition is on display, charting the evolution of the Royal Crowns in Britain.

Westminster Abbey

Westminster Abbey (Victoria Street. Tel: 44 20 7222 5152) is an ecclesiastical architectural masterpiece of the 13th century, with its twin towers and magnificent archways. It is the church of the coronation and home to tombs of British monarchs and heroes.



Sightseeing

London Eye

Visiting London without seeing the London Eye (Riverside Building, County Hall, Westminster Bridge Road) is like visiting Paris without seeing the Eiffel Tower. Hop on the world's largest observation wheel and get a bird's eye view of over 55 of London's most famous landmarks in just 30 minutes. For bookings, call 0870 5000 600 or 0870 9908 883.

Buckingham Palace

One of the most captivating experiences in London is the Guard change at Buckingham Palace (Buckingham Palace Rd. Tel: 44 20 7321 2233). From August to September, you can tour the palace as well.



St Paul's Cathedral

The second largest cathedral after St Peter's in Rome, St Paul's Cathedral (St Paul's Churchyard. Tel: 44 20 7236 4128) is a majestic creation that will leave you in awe.

Kensington Palace

This Palace (London, W8. Tel: 44 20 7937 9561) features the Royal Ceremonial Dress collection and beautiful 18-century staterooms throughout which you could wander for hours.

Outdoors

Parks and Gardens

Take a serene stroll through some of London's gorgeous parks. **Hyde Park** is one of the biggest parks in the world, while others like **Green Park**, **Hampstead Heath**, **Regent Park**, **Richmond Park**, and **Kensington Gardens** will offer you a glimpse of real London leisure time. For more information, visit www.royalparks.gov.uk.



Culture

Barbican Theatre

London's theatre scene is second to none. Catch a performance of the Royal Shakespeare Company at Barbican Theatre for a peerless experience. For more details, visit www.rsc.org.uk.

Museums

Some of the top museums in the world are here. Check out the **Tate Modern**, the **British Museum**, **Victoria and Albert Museum**, **Madame Tussauds** and the **National Gallery**. For full details on exhibits, visit www.londonmuseums.org.



National Gallery

Shopping

Napoleon Bonaparte called England a "nation of shopkeepers" and even today, shopping is something of a national pastime. It may be one of the most expensive cities in the world, but its unique culture, history and traditions of fine workmanship mean that you can buy lots of things here that you won't find anywhere else.

Discover the real meaning of "shop till you drop" at London's premier shopping district: the **West End**. **Oxford Street** in **Soho** and the surrounding streets are where you'll find the flagship stores for brands like Top Shop, Next and Nike Town.

Nearby **Carnaby Street** rose to fame in the Swinging Sixties. Today, it's a lot more mainstream, although a few cools shops still remain among the union-jack sequinned bikinis and postcards of Prince William.



Portobello Road is home to three markets, each of which has its own distinct character. The daily fruit and vegetable market is the best place in West London for fresh produce; the weekend street market sells new goods, crafts and fashions; and the pick of the bunch is the world's largest antiques market which takes place only on Saturdays.

You can't go to London and not mooch around their famous department stores. These massive, multi-storey emporiums sell everything you could possibly think of. Don't miss out on **Harrod's** (87-135 Brompton Road, Knightsbridge. Tel: 44 20 7730 1234) legendary Food Halls.

Harvey Nichols (109-125 Knightsbridge. Tel: 44 20 7235 5000) is the younger, hipper cousin of Harrods and is a treasure trove of designer clothes, furnishings and posh nosh. You may even glimpse a celeb or two while shopping.

For more travel information on Britain, log on to www.visitbritain.com.



Beyond London

Trips from London to quaint towns and tranquil sights are easily accessible and should be taken to get a taste of true English life away from the big city.

CORNWALL

Unlike the rest of Anglo Saxon England, Cornwall's roots are Celtic. It is a land of myth and legend as evidenced by standing stones or menhirs, stone circles, and most famously, the legend of King Arthur's birth at **Tintagel**. The 13th century castle is dramatically perched on the coast. Not far away is the waterfall at **St. Nectan's Glen**. The coastal path winds its way through this area amid breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean and Cornish countryside.

Cornwall is also a popular destination for the nation's surfers, who enjoy some of the best conditions in Britain. Families with children shouldn't miss **Dobwalls Family Adventure Park**. Open from April to October, the Park features six steam and four diesel locomotives, a nature trail and woodland play areas. Also on offer are assorted entertainment shows and the Dobwalls Dixie Bears. Phone 01579 320325 for more information.

Getting There

Cornwall is a six-hour drive from London. For trip planning, visit www.viamichelin.com or www.theaa.com. Or fly from Gatwick airport to Newquay from around £30 (single). You will then need to hire a car unless you are going to be based in or around one of the resort towns like Newquay or St. Ives that have a fairly good public transport system in place (www.airsouthwest.com www.easyjet.com). Trains run from London Paddington about nine times a day and take up to six hours terminating at Penzance but also stopping at Truro and Camborne (www.firstgreatwestern.co.uk).

BIRMINGHAM

Known as the "workplace of the world", Birmingham began as a small rural manor. First mentioned in the Domesday Book as being worth 20 shillings, the town was established in 1166. Today, it is a vibrant and



Need To Know

Climate London is cold, damp and wet in the winter. May and June usually offer the best chance of dry, sunny weather. July and August tend to be hot and humid. September and October can be pleasant too, with the added attraction of brilliant autumn colours.

Tipping In restaurants, tip 10 to 15 per cent, unless a service charge has already been added to the bill. Tipping in bars is not expected. Airport porters usually expect £1 per bag, while taxi drivers expect 10 to 15 per cent.

Taxes Value Added Tax (VAT) is 17.5 per cent in London and is almost always included in quoted prices.

Transport London is very congested and thus, not advisable to drive around in. The famous Black Cabs (Hackney Carriages) are plentiful (there are about 22,500 drivers in London), but they can be expensive for longer distances. These taxis are licensed by the police and are the only taxis allowed to legally offer their services just by stopping in the street. Mini Cabs are not licensed and not supposed to stop for you in the street. The law requires that you call them for their services. They are less expensive than Black Cabs.

The cheapest and fastest way to get around London is on the Underground, "the tube". Although it is crowded during rush hours, it is still the way to go.

Northumberland

- Akeld Manor and Country Club
- Breamish Valley Cottages

Staffordshire

- Classic Houseboats at Barton Turns
- Wychnor Park Country Club

South Devon

- Court Barton
- Hope Barton Barns
- The Marine Quay Club

Bedford – CLC at Canaltime Houseboats Bedford

Bournemouth – Carlton Club Apartments

East Sussex – Club Britannia

Gloucestershire – Stouts Hill

Hampshire – Macdonald Elmers Court Resort

Lancaster – Thurnham Hall

Lincolnshire – Kenwich Woods

London – The Allen House Club

North Yorkshire – Langdale

Nottingham – CLC at Canaltime Sawley Marina

Port Erin – Cherry Orchard Timeshare

Rutland – Barnsdale Country Club

Penny-Wise, Pound-Wiser

Here's how to stretch your dollar while in London:

- Use public transport and buy the daily or weekly travelpass.
- Avoid the obvious tourist traps, usually closely associated with pop culture.
- When travelling with family, ask for family discounts. Children under 5 usually get free admission.
- Government-run or supported attractions are usually free or request a voluntary donation.
- If possible, pack your own food bought from supermarkets.
- Pound for pound, Chinese restaurants and pubs usually provide best value for money.
- For theatre or concerts, cheaper tickets may give overall better value. Buy only from the theatre itself, rather than ticket agencies which usually charge a hefty commission.

cosmopolitan city, with scintillating shopping, world-class arts and culture, and the UK's finest concert venue, Symphony Hall. Go on one of the seven walking trails in the city centre that takes you through key attractions, including the **NIA**, **The Mailbox**, **Millennium Point** and the **Bullring**. Each walk guides you around the city, providing interesting nuggets of information on route regarding architecture, public art, history, heritage and quirky facts. The seven walks can be taken separately or linked together to form a comprehensive walking tour of the city. Leaflets of the Gateway Trails are available from the Tourism Centres or by calling 0870 225 0127.

Getting There

The best way to get to Birmingham from London is by train. Located in the city centre, Snow Hill and Moor Street Stations serve routes from London Marylebone (www.chilternrailways.co.uk).

MANCHESTER

Most famous for its soccer team, Manchester United, this city has plenty to offer outside Old Trafford. **The Lowry** is Manchester's latest cultural and architectural offering, with the main exhibition by L S Lowry and lots of other innovative displays by up-and-coming artists that change on a regular basis.

If shopping is what you're after, head to the **Northern Quarter**, where clothes, gifts and records are to be found under the guises of **Afflecks Palace** and **The Coliseum** emporiums.

It's easy to get lost in the maze of stalls within these buildings, but if you're looking for something different or retro, these are a must.

Manchester also has a plethora of theatres to choose from. **The Palace Theatre** tends to show musicals while the **Opera House** does opera and ballet. For the unusual and contemporary, head to the **Royal Exchange** and **Contact Theatre**. For music, the **Bridgewater Hall**, built to house the Hallé Orchestra, is a breathtaking building (built on springs, to boot) with a spacious and modern bar. If you're into rock and pop, the **Manchester Evening News Arena**, **Apollo** or **Manchester Academy** is where you're likely to end up, with the likes of Robbie Williams to entertain you.

Getting There

Getting to Manchester from London involves a three-hour train ride north from London Euston, or a one-hour flight from Heathrow or Gatwick airport. Check out www.britainexpress.com or call your travel agent regarding flights.

RCI Resorts in England

Cornwall

- Cravynick Cottages
- Glendorgal
- Honicombe Manor
- Perran View Holiday Village
- St. Mellion Golf & Country Club
- Treloarwarren
- Tresco
- Trewince Manor

Cumbria

- Chapel Stile Apartments at Langdale
- Elterwater Hall at Langdale
- Windermere Marina Village

Devon

- Devoncourt
- The Osborne Club
- Woodford Bridge Country Club

Kent

- Broome Park
- CC at Hever Hotel & Country Club
- Hever Hotel and Country Club

Norfolk

- Barnham Broom Golf & Country Club
- Blakeney Timeshare
- Cromer Country Club

Memories Of Good Times

lead you to prized moments



2nd

Monkey affections at the Monkey Park outside Haixing Yunlong Bay Resort, China
Chang Chen Shen
3969183



3rd

Yee-ha! Serena kicks up a storm at Kentington Cowboy Resort, Taiwan
Paul Chew Chee Ching
1703419

1st

Shark attack at the Trick Art Museum in Karuizawa, Japan
Tan Chiew Guat
286802993



3rd

"Mum, I did it! I know how to snorkel in the swimming pool and I can see fishes in the sea now," says little Brian in Koh Samui
Andrew Chui Hok Shing
396907723



YOUR PHOTO DETAILS

1st PRIZE

A week's
International Holiday
for 4 people*

2nd PRIZE

Midweek Getaway
– Asia*

3rd PRIZE

RCI Goodie Bag

*Accommodation only

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Home Country: _____

RCI Membership No: _____ Date of Picture: _____

Brief Explanation of Picture: _____

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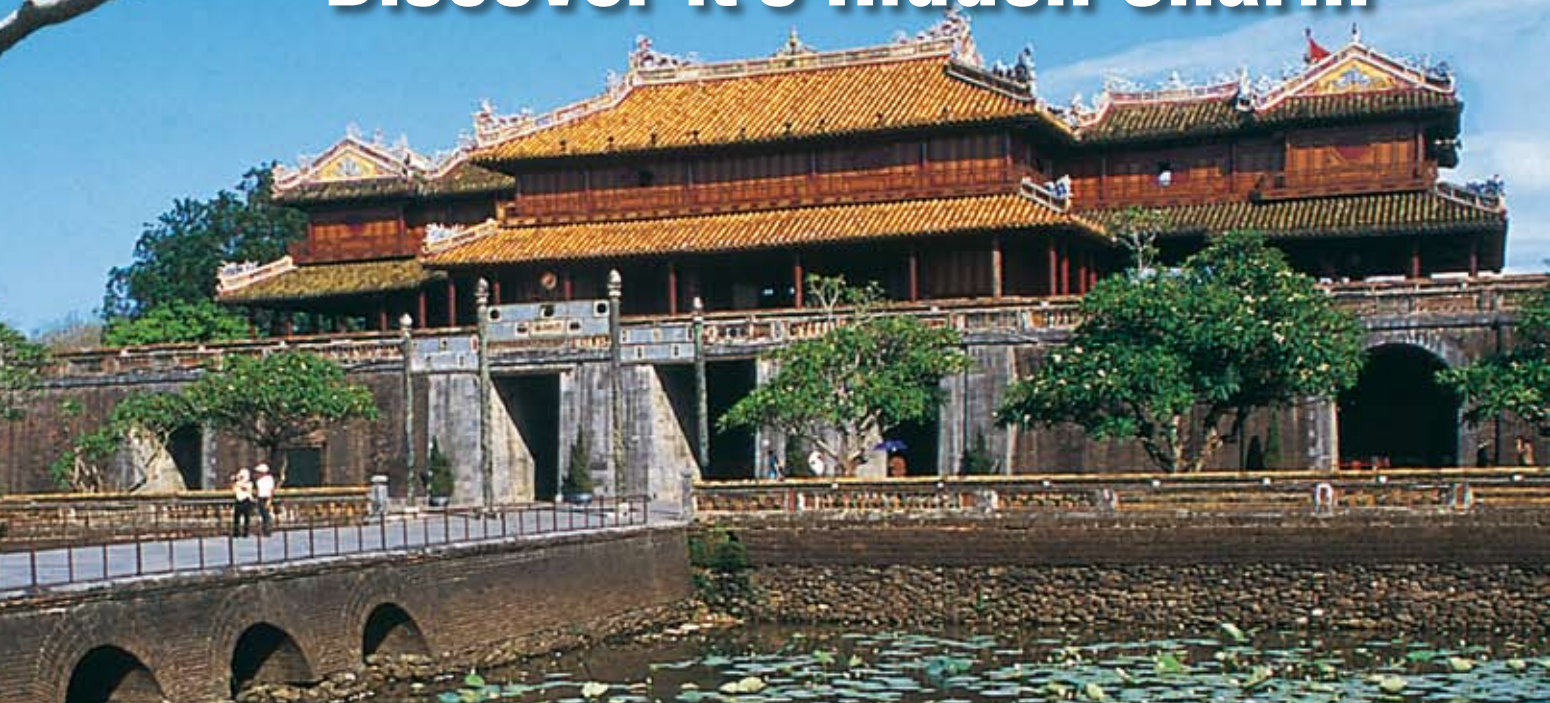
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Please write "RCI Magic Memories" on the envelope and mail your entry before **30 November 2006** to:
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Or email asiamembers@rciap.com



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room night

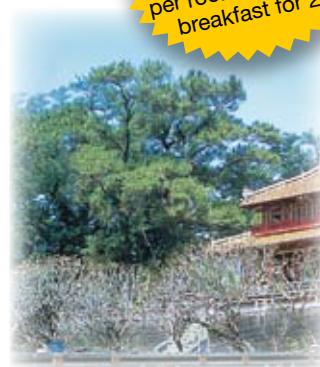


HANOI
Sofitel Plaza
– from S\$175
per room night



HOI AN
Hoi An Pacific
Hotel – from S\$75
per room night (incl.
breakfast for 2)

HUÉ
Abalone Resort &
Spa – from S\$89
per room night (incl.
breakfast for 2)



**Book by 15 November 2006 to take advantage
of this great offer!**

Note:

- Subject to availability at time of booking
- Valid for travel before 31 December 2006
- Accommodation only
- Terms and conditions apply



Vendors on the old streets of Hoi An

Charming Riverside Town

The trading port and ancient town of Hoi An in central Vietnam has become a highlight on any tour of Vietnam. **Rebecca Chua** finds out why.

Blissfully idyllic, Hoi An boasts buildings and a pace of life that hark back to centuries past, when this small Vietnamese town was a major port of call and a springboard to the rest of the country. Intricate carvings and Japanese tiled-roofs adorn its warm buildings that date back to the earlier half of the 19th century and even before. Its narrow streets bring to mind the days of rickshaw carts while ocean-going vessels have given way to skiffs that glide languidly on its waters. In fact, so well preserved is Hoi An, that in 1999, it was declared a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

More than 2,000 years ago, Hoi An was a central port town for the Sa Huynh people. In its heyday — from 16th to late 19th century — Hoi An



The traditional tiled-roofs of Hoi An are said to follow the rule of harmony

was a major port of call, equal to past maritime stalwarts like Malacca and Macau. Today, its waterfront warehouses are a reminder of an era past when Japanese and Chinese traders spent up to four months in Hoi An waiting for the southerly winds to take them home.

At the end of Hoi An's harbour stands an ornate oddity next to the port city's most pragmatic houses. Hoi An's Japanese community built the bridge in 1953, believing that it would stab at the heart of a legendary monster living beneath the earth. The feisty beast was thought to cause earthquakes by lashing its tail when it was upset. On each side of the bridge is an altar of a monkey and a dog to commemorate the bridge's year of initiation and completion.

Seven Things To See And Do

1 Get a new wardrobe. Hoi An is central Vietnam's tailoring mecca. There are countless shops, especially along **Le Loi Street**. It's best to show the tailor a picture of the outfit you want made or bring the clothing that you'd like a copy of. The tailoring is fast (within a few hours) but the quality may not always be great so plan to have a few fittings.



To buy your own cloth, visit **Hoi An Cloth Market** (1 Tran Phu Street) and bargain hard. There are skilled cobblers on **Tran Phu Street** (near the market) who make custom shoes at affordable rates.

2 Shop! The abundance of shopping in this small town is amazing. As Hoi An is also a silk mecca, this is the place to buy quality silk. **Tuoi Goc** (103 Tran Phu Street) sells traditional silk and lanterns. For hand-carved statues made of rock, bone, dentine and wood, check out **Le Ngoc Diep** (91 Nguyen Thai Hoc Street). For traditional-style Vietnamese furniture and artistic handicrafts, visit **Kim Bong Traditional Carpentry** along Tran Phu Street which also has art galleries, pottery and carved-wood vendors. Along the river, there are many places selling blue and white ceramics.

3 Visit **Central Market** early in the morning and see the locals in action. Watch all manner of poultry being sold (alive) and tied to the handles of motorbikes. At the nearby dock, fishermen unload their catch while everyone gathers round to buy it.

4 Learn to make lanterns from a craftsman. Contact **Hoi An Travel** (10 Tran Hung Dao Street) for a half-day or full-day session. Colourful lanterns are a big part of Hoi An culture.

5 Feast on seafood. Hoi An's seafood is reputed to be among the best available and best value in Vietnam. **Hoi An Hai San** (64 Bach Dang Street) is a popular seafood restaurant. If you're not a seafood fan, Hoi An has plenty of eateries serving a wide variety of food. If you have a big appetite for Vietnamese food, visit **Café Des Amis** (52 Bach Dang Street) for big portions. Kick back at **Tam Tam Café** (100 Nguyen Thai Hoc Street), Hoi An's most famous café and the only place in town that opens late (till 1am). Travellers bond here over cocktails and a game of pool, darts or scrabble.

6 Rent a bicycle and ride around the narrow streets of the old city. Wander among historic buildings and temples, and stop by the restaurants on **Trai Phu Street** for a cup of tea and Chinese-style pastries.

7 Kick back and relax on the white sand beaches of **Cua Dai**, about 5km east of Hoi An. Cua Dai beach has cheap restaurants and bars plus more salubrious venues within the



recently developed resorts and hotels. The beach is crowded with hawkers but the sand, surf and setting, with views of nearby Cham Island are worth the trip. A taxi from the town centre to Cua Dai should cost you no more than US\$4.

First-Timer's Guide To Hué

Situated on Vietnam's central coast, between Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, Hué is a charming city with splendid historical sights. **Graham Simmons** soaks in the sights.



Hué, a gracious metropolis of over 1 million people¹ in central Vietnam and the former Imperial capital of the country, is one of the world's finest treasures. Situated 688km from Hanoi and 1,038km from Ho Chi Minh City, Hué makes a perfect stopover for those travelling from north to south through Vietnam. A perfect stop, that is, if you can handle the atrocious weather – Hué has been known to register over 3m of rainfall in one single month.

It is the colours of Hué – that startle and amaze visitors. This gracious city takes its “passion for purple” from the colours of the Purple Forbidden City, the inner sanctum of the landmark Hué Citadel. The streets, full of people in purple plastic raincoats, are offset by houses painted in subtle shades ranging from light purple through to mauve.

The construction of the Hué Citadel took place between 1805 and 1832, after Emperor Gia Long (founder of the Nguyen Dynasty) moved the Vietnamese capital from Hanoi to Hué at the start of the 19th century. Emperor Gia Long was the first to unite the whole of Vietnam. In 1885, the French seized the city, but the Nguyen Dynasty continued as nominal rulers until the abdication of Emperor Bao Dai in 1945.

During the Vietnam-US War in the 1960s and early 70s, much of Hué was sadly destroyed. After the reunification of the country in 1975, the Herculean task of rebuilding Hué began. Reconstruction efforts received a huge boost in 1993, when UNESCO listed Hué as a World Heritage Site. Since then, Hué has become a “must-see” place for any visitor to Vietnam.

Five Ways To Enjoy Huế



The Ta Pavilion, inside the Imperial Citadel

The tomb of Emperor Tu Duc (1848-83), commemorating the longest-reigning Emperor of them all, is the most impressive of the mausoleums.

4 Check out the colourful entrance-way to **Thường Quốc-Hồ High School**

The gate, in vivid shades of maroon, is a landmark of Huế. This is a school for top achievers of Huế Province. Former students include Ho Chi Minh, Pham Van Dong (the former long-ruling Prime Minister of North Vietnam), and veteran military strategist General Vo Nguyen Giap.



Thường Quốc-Hồ High School

1 Visit the Citadel of Huế

The Citadel was designed on ancient feng shui or geomantic principles, and planned around the natural elements in the area north of the Perfume River (Huong Giang). The complex faces south-east, taking Mount Ngu Binh (Royal Screen Mountain) as a sighting point. Two small islands in the Perfume River, Ta Thanh Long (Left Green Dragon) and Huu Bach Ho (Right White Tiger) serve as sentinels for the Citadel. The Emperor's throne room stuns, with layer upon layer of lacquered splendour, in shades of cobalt blue, antique red, light purple and jade green.

2 Take a boat trip along Perfume River

This is cheap, fun and a great way to get a perspective of the sights of Huế. The US\$2 fare covers the whole of the six-hour trip and many of the Imperial tombs. After sight-seeing, chill out with a cup of coffee at one of the cafés on the riverbanks. Some of the world's finest Arabica coffees come from Ban Me Thuot, in the highlands south of Huế.

3 Visit the tombs of Nguyen Dynasty emperors

All of them are set amongst a gardenscape of bridged lakes and ponds covered with lotus blooms, with the sweet fragrances of frangipani and pine trees wafting in the breeze. You can visit the tombs as part of a boat trip (see above), although your time will be very limited.

5 Visit the biennial Festival Huế

The 2006 Huế Festival focuses on reviving royal and folk performance arts, recalling the past glories of Huế. Centrepiece will be the Nam Giao procession, the re-enactment of a march honouring heaven and earth. An International Sculpture Symposium is also on the programme. Also, the spectacular Night in the Royal Palace festival, held in the Citadel, will be accentuated by the recent restoration of a crucial part of the Citadel.

While you may be too late for this year's Festival Huế (June 3-11), mark the Festival in your notebook for May-June 2008. For exact dates, visit www.huefestival.com.

'Refers to the greater metropolitan area of Huế. The city itself has around 350,000 residents.

Need To Know

HOI AN & HUÉ

Visa Citizens of Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand can visit Vietnam as tourists without a visa, for a stay of up to 15 days. Citizens from other countries and those who want to stay longer will need to apply for a visa. Note that there is no such thing as a "visa on arrival" in Vietnam, so get yours from the Embassy of Vietnam in your home country. Visa forms may be downloaded from www.applyentryvisas.com.sg.

Currency The Vietnamese Dong (VND) is accepted everywhere. Banknotes come in denominations of 200, 500, 100, 2000, 5000, 10,000, 20,000, 50,000 and 100,000 dong. Keep a stack of smaller bills handy.

Health Malaria tablets are highly recommended. In particular, take exceptional precaution against mosquito bites. Nearly 8,000 cases of dengue fever were reported from Vietnam in the first quarter of 2006, up more than 20 per cent from the same quarter in 2005. See your health professional for the most up-to-date advice. Also, vaccination against Hepatitis A is recommended.

Drinking Water Don't drink unboiled water. It is also advisable to avoid uncooked food or any cooked food that has been left standing for some time.

HOI AN

Getting There

• **By Air** Major transport connections go through Danang. From there, it's a short bus ride away.

• **By Bus** Hoi An is a major stop on all open-tour café buses. Connection with Danang is about US\$3.

Getting Around Most hotels and guesthouses rent out bicycles for 5,000VND to 7,000VND a day. Motorbikes can be rented for US\$3 to US\$5 per day. Cyclos can get you anywhere within the city for about 10,000VND. For car rental, try Faifoo Travel.

Tourist Services The Hoi An Tourist Guiding Office (www.hoianworldheritage.org) sells entrance ticket to the Hoi An World Cultural Heritage. A one-ticket purchase offers limited admission to all the town's museums, old houses and Chinese assembly halls. To book a tour of the city and surrounding areas, contact Hoi An Tourist Service Company (6 Tran Hung Dao Street).

HUÉ

Weather Even during the dry season (February to June), Huế's weather is likely to be overcast or drizzling. The warmest months are June to August, with an average daily maximum temperature of 34°C. The wet season (September to December) is not the best time to visit Huế as average monthly rainfall is between 45 and 70cm.

What To Pack Bring a raincoat and/or umbrella. Apart from this, light tropical clothing should suffice unless you are planning to visit the nearby Annam Highlands (including Dalat). The nights here can get very chilly in the cooler months (November to February).

Getting There From Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, you can get to Huế either by train or air, or (if you're a masochist) by bus.

• **By Rail** Trains from Hanoi take between 10½ and 15¼ hours, costing US\$23-28 for a sleeper (recommended). From Ho Chi Minh City, the train journey is between 20½ to 24 hours, costing US\$29-39.

• **By Air** Regular air services (three or more flights a day) on Vietnam Airlines link Huế with Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. If you are not flying via Vietnam Airlines, it's best to buy your connecting flight ticket to Huế locally (cost – approximately US\$50). Flight time is about one hour.

Getting Around The railways are comfortable and reliable, particularly the luxury SE series trains. For full details and timetables, visit www.seat61.com/Vietnam.htm or www.vr.com.vn/english/index.html.

RCI Rentals

Hoï An

• Hoi An Pacific Hotel (from \$75 per room night)

Huế

• Abalone Resort and Spa (from \$89 per room night)





Seoul Spectacular

Gyeongbokgung Palace

Agnes Wee recommends 10 fun things to do during spring in South Korea's capital and largest city.

Spring (March to May) is a good time to visit Seoul as beautiful flowers like azaleas, forsythias and cherry blossoms are in bloom, offering lovely sights to behold. This is also the time when major theme parks such as Lotte World and Everland hold several flower festivals.

1 Han River Cruise

Take a leisurely cruise on the **Han River Pleasure Boat** and admire the scenic skyline of Seoul from the **Han River**. The scene is especially breathtaking during sunset. Prices vary for one-way and round trips. You can also have a choice of buffet spread accompanied by "live" music.

2 Palace Visit

If you appreciate historical architecture, a visit to the well-preserved ancient royal palaces is a must. Choose from **Deoksugung Palace**, **Changdeokgung Pal-**

ace, **Changgyeonggung Palace** and **Gyeongbokgung Palace**, Seoul's main royal palace. In spring, the palace grounds, with its blooming flowers, are a beautiful sight to behold. While you are around the palace vicinity, do drop by the present presidential residence, also known as the **Blue House** probably named for its blue-coloured roof.

3 Flower Viewing

One of the best places to have a spectacular view of the spring blossoms is **Seoul Tower**, touted to be the world's third highest tower at 480m above sea level. It's located at the top of **Mount Namsan** and you can choose to walk or take the cable car to reach the top.



Grand Palace



Seoul Land

4 Theme Parks Don't leave Seoul without visiting at least one of its renowned theme parks – **Lotte World, Seoul Land, Everland** and **Caribbean Bay**. In spring, the theme parks will hold their own flower festivals, so get your camera ready. To avoid crowds, visit the theme park on a weekday.



Lotte World



Cherry blossoms are in bloom during spring

5 Shopping Seoul is a shopping paradise as you can shop till past midnight or even till 5am. Large shopping malls like **Doosan Tower** (or Doota), **Migliore** and **Hello A/PM** open till the wee hours, as do the popular night markets like **Dongdaemun** and **Namdaemun Markets** which offer great varieties of wholesale goods at low prices. Also check out **Myeongdong**, the fashion district in Seoul for the latest fashion, and **Itaewon** where most of the retailers and shop owners speak English.

6 Outdoor Sports For those who love the great outdoors, there are sporting tours that include **horse riding, bungee jumping, rafting, hiking** and **trekking**. Check with your hotel or the local travel agencies for details on tours and activity packages.

7 Spa Pamper yourself with an indulgent spa treatment after all that walking while sightseeing and shopping. There is no lack of spa outlets, hot springs and bathhouses in Seoul. Popular tourist areas like **Itaewon** and **Myeongdong** even have bathhouses for women only.

8 Culture Vulture If you are keen to learn more about Korean culture, the **Namsan-gol Hanok Village** offers a peek into the daily life of a Korean during the Joseon Dynasty (1392–1910). Here, you can also catch **traditional cultural performances** and **wedding ceremonies**, as well as learn more about **Korean embroidery work** and **kimchi-making**.

9 Nightlife For a taste of nightlife entertainment Seoul-style, don't miss the

Need To Know

Visa Tourists who are visiting for up to 30 days do not require a visa.

Weather Spring and autumn are the best times to visit Seoul as the temperature is mild, and the natural beauty of cherry blossoms in spring and falling leaves in autumn lend a romantic touch.

Transport The public transport system in Seoul is very efficient and convenient, so travelling free and easy is no sweat. But make sure you are armed with a local map to get from place to place. Don't bother asking for directions unless you speak Korean as you are likely to get replies in Korean.

Currency The Korean currency is won, which comes in 1000, 5000 and 10,000 won notes. Credit cards like Visa, Master Card and American Express are accepted at most major hotels, restaurants, department stores and some big retail outlets.

Tipping This is not customary in Korea, but some high-end restaurants and hotels may add a 10 per cent service charge to your bill.

Language Most Koreans, even the younger people, do not speak English or Mandarin. Communication may be a problem, so arm yourself with maps, a calculator and a trusty travel guide. When ordering food in small, family-run eateries, point your orders on the menu which usually has pictures of the dishes.

Basic Korean Greetings

Hello – *annyeong hasimnikka*
Please – *butak hamnida*
Thank you – *gamsa hamnida*
Excuse me – *sillye hamnida*
How much does this cost – *eolmayeyo*
Too expensive – *neomu bissayo*
Yes – *ye*
No – *anio*



Doosan Tower

Sheraton Walker Hill Show, which features Korean songs and dances, Las Vegas-style. If you prefer more wholesome family entertainment, the **Korea House tour**, which comes with traditional Korean foods and performances, is a good choice.

10 Food

There aren't many restaurants serving international food except for those in big department stores. So eat like the locals and be sure to try these Korean specialities:

- **Bulgogi** A popular Korean beef

dish marinated in a savory sauce and cooked over charcoal on a stone or metal plate till soft and succulent. It is usually served with rice and side dishes like *kimchi* and pickles.

- **Kimchi** An essential side dish that comes with every Korean meal, *kimchi* is actually made of fermented Chinese cabbage, seasoned with red pepper powder, radish and pickled shrimp.

- **Samgyetang** The ultimate healthful ginseng chicken soup where a

whole young chicken is stuffed with rich ingredients such as glutinous rice, garlic, chestnuts and other nutritious herbs, then boiled in a thick broth for many hours.



Bibimbap

- **Bibimbap** A common and colourful Korean dish which comprises rice mixed with different kinds of vegetables, beef strips, eggs with a dose of sesame oil, and a pinch of chili and pepper thrown in for extra flavours.

- **Mandu** Korean-style dumplings that can be eaten as a side dish or main dish with rice. It's made of fresh beancurd, ground beef or shredded pork, and minced mixed vegetables which are sealed in kneaded wheat dumpling skin and then deep fried, steamed or boiled in a soup with vegetables and rice cakes.

Suburb Getaway

If you have more time, take a trip to these two places which offer stunning scenery.

Sorak

On South Korea's east, Sorak is a land of craggy peaks, lush forests, tremendous waterfalls, boulder-strewn white water rivers and ancient temples. Sorak's main attraction is **Soraksan National Park**. For those who prefer a quick fix of nature with a dash of luxury, try the **Onsen Hot Springs** in South Sorak.

If you love conquering heights, you will enjoy the hike up **Mount Sorak**, home to 939 species of plants and 25 different mammals. For a more sedentary experience, catch a cable car ride to the top of **Kwonkum-seong** where you'll find a castle offering a bird's-eye view of the valleys and even a grotto hermitage, where famous Korean monks were said to have stayed and practiced ascetism.



Waterfall at Soraksan National Park

Jeju Island

Just off the southern tip of Korea, Jeju is Korea's largest island and nature's playground. Often called the Island of Gods, Jeju has scenic beaches, waterfalls, cliffs and caves, superior tourist amenities and pleasant weather.

Towering above the landscape is **Mount Hallasan**, South Korea's highest mountain. There

are numerous hiking trails to the summit but be prepared for a long (but not arduous) climb. The crisp, clear air and the sea of flowers along the course are just teasers to the astounding view you get at the top.

The three waterfalls in Jeju (**Jeongbang**, **Cheonjeyeon** and **Cheonjiyeon**) are made of myths – literally. Legend has it that one of them got its name from the seven nymphs who assisted the King of Heaven to bath and play in the waters during nightfall.

RCI Resorts In South Korea

- Daemyung Resort Sorak
- Daemyung Resort Yangpyung
- Hanwha Resort Haeundae
- Hanwha Resort Jeju
- Hanwha Resort Seorak
- Hanwha Resort Phoenixpark
- Hanwha Resort Gyeongju
- Highla Donghae Beach Condominium
- Highla Kyongju Condominium
- Highla Donsan Spa Condominium
- Highla Sorak Valley Condominium
- Ilsung Muju Condominium
- Ilsung Sorak Condominium
- Ilsung Namhangang Condominium
- Jeju Tovice Beach Condominium
- Muju Resort
- Togo Hotspring Tovice Condominium
- Vivaldi Park

RCI Rentals

- Co-Op Residence, Seoul (from S\$95 per room night)

Go Korea!

Book a minimum of two nights in **Co-Op Residence**, Seoul, at **S\$95** per room night to enjoy a **seven-night Korean GetAway** at a special rate of **S\$109**.
(Usual price: Up to S\$319)

Korea GetAway is available at the following locations:

- Sokcho
- Jeju
- Seorak

Call now on (65) 6223 433 or your country's toll-free number to take advantage of this fabulous offer!

Note:

- Subject to availability at time of booking
- Valid for travel before 15 November 2006
- Book by 15 September 2006
- Accommodation only
- Terms and conditions apply



Winter Fun in Lake Tahoe

Photo: Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority

In winter, Lake Tahoe is a fun playground offering plenty of activities and world-class skiing for both beginners and experts. **Mary Ellen Hickey** shares the best places to ski and have fun.

Nestled in the Sierra Nevada Mountains, sapphire blue Lake Tahoe is one of America's favorite places to ski. As the largest alpine lake in North America, it straddles two states – California and Nevada. The majority of its 15 downhill ski resorts reside in California while the Nevada side is known for its high-rise casinos.

The ski areas range from mammoth first-class facilities to smaller, friendly “mom-and-pop” operations with fewer frills that are less overwhelming for beginners. Each small community along its 115km shoreline has a distinct persona, including the two main towns – the north shore’s more modest and historic Tahoe City versus the shopping and entertainment capital of South Lake Tahoe (SLT).

Where To Ski

South Shore

The king of the south Tahoe ski scene, **Heavenly Lake Tahoe**, is one of North America's largest ski areas. Experienced skiers and snowboarders love it for its first-rate facilities, tree skiing, the longest ski run (8.8km) and largest superpipe in Tahoe. Non-skiers enjoy the ride 915m up the aerial tram to soak in spectacular lake views and have lunch on the sprawling outdoor deck. At least 12 RCI resorts including **Lake Tahoe Vacation Resort** are within 3.2km or even walking distance of Heavenly's slopes.

Although a 30- to 50-minute drive from SLT, two other ski areas offer less glitz, better value and plenty of top-notch amenities – **Sierra-at-Tahoe** (snowboarders' favorite) and **Kirkwood** (home to a top-ranked learn-to-ski programme).

North Shore

Squaw Valley, home of the 1960 Winter Olympics, is the premier north shore ski area. Along with world-class skiing, its “High Camp” at the top of the 610m aerial cable car

is a mountain-top retreat loved by non-skiers, complete with a sledding park, a huge heated swimming pool, a 25-person Jacuzzi, an Olympic museum and a cliff-hugging ice skating ring with panoramic lake views.

Within walking distance to the gondola or ski lifts are RCI resorts **Olympic Village Inn** and **Squaw Valley Lodge**. **Diamond Peak** at Incline Village, a relaxed, mid-sized and less crowded family-oriented ski area, hosts innovative programmes for kids aged 4 to 12, plus a unique après-ski wine tasting event called “Last Tracks” every Saturday afternoon. **Incline Village** is home to RCI resorts, **Club Tahoe** and **Tahoe Chaparral**.

If you're staying on the south shore, take the world's only aqua ski shuttle (www.zephyrcove.com) for a day of skiing at Squaw Valley or Northstar, followed by an après-ski party and shuttle back to SLT on board the **Tahoe Queen** paddlewheeler boat.



Photo: Lake Tahoe Visitors Authority



Photo: Tom Zikos

Other Outdoor Activities

Scenic Drive

If the roads and weather are clear, take a scenic drive around the lake, featuring stunning **Emerald Bay**, Tahoe's most photographed natural wonder.

Cruise

Relax on a two-hour cruise to the bay on the **M.S. Dixie** traditional paddlewheel-er boat (www.laketahoe cruises.com), available year-round.

Snow Rides & Hike

Exhilarating **snowmobile tours**, **moonlight snowshoe hikes** and old-fashioned **horse-drawn sleigh rides** are also favorites throughout the area.

Excursions

Virginia City (www.virginiacity-nv.org), a well-preserved, 19th-century "wild west" ghost town, makes a fun half-day excursion, 65km east. If cross-country skiing is more your speed, spend a day at **Royal Gorge** (www.royalgorge.com). This largest and perhaps best cross-country ski area in the US, 48km west of Tahoe City, offers over 90 trails, including "Sesame Street" for children, a ski school, 10 warming huts and moonlight tours.

Events

The **North Lake Tahoe Snow Festival** brings 10 days of parades, ski races

and music events in early March (www.tahoesnowfestival.com). On the "First Friday" of every month, **Tahoe City's** shops and galleries stay open late and celebrate with artists' receptions, wine tastings and music (www.visittahoe city.com). Check with individual ski areas for latest scheduled ski races, Christmas torchlight parades and other special events.



Photos: Tom Zikas/
North Lake Tahoe Resort Association



Need To Know

Ski Season

The core ski season runs from December through March, though most ski areas are open through late April. Given winter driving conditions and distances, plan your accommodations as close as possible to the ski area best suited to your needs. All the major areas include ski schools, ski shops and rentals, high-speed lifts, children's programmes and a variety of restaurants.

Ski Programmes

If you are new to the slopes, nothing will get you started faster than a few days of instruction. Most ski areas offer package deals for beginners that include group lessons, equipment rentals and lift tickets. Most have tailored learn-to-ski programmes for children or snowboarders. Helmets are recommended, especially for children and less experienced skiers, and can be rented. Reduced rates for seniors (aged 60 and above) and youth are standard, plus kids aged 5 and below usually ski free. Look for money-saving multi-day passes, family and group packages, and early

season discounts. Mid-size and smaller ski areas can be significantly less expensive.

Winter Packing

Layers of water-wicking synthetics, like polypropylene and capilene (never cotton) work best for changing temperatures and can be shed easily during winter activities. Jackets, ski pants and gloves should all be of waterproof material with an interior lining for warmth. Ski goggles and sunglasses provide much needed eye protection. Sunscreen is a must, given the 1,980 to 3,048m altitudes at ski areas.

When To Visit

To avoid big crowds, plan your holiday around mid-week, early season (December) or late season (April). Christmas, New Year and March can be busy, as many American students and families are on "spring break" from school.

Weather

On average, the sun shines 300 days a year. The average daytime temperature in winter is 8°C; -1°C at night.

Getting There

Reno/Tahoe International Airport is the closest international airport and is about 45 minutes' drive away. There is a shuttle to South Lake Tahoe from the airport (www.southtahoeexpress.com). If you're driving from San Francisco (about 322km), it takes about four hours, depending on traffic. World famous Yosemite National Park is a four-hour drive to the south.

Getting Around

Most visitors prefer to rent cars, although the local public bus systems (www.bluego.org and www.laketahoe transit.com), taxis and low-cost trolleys are widely available around the lake in winter. Many ski areas offer free shuttle services around town.

Tourist Information

Visit www.skitahoe.com and www.laketahoeskiing.com for an overview of ski areas and links to their websites. For general planning and transportation information, visit www.visitinglaketahoe.com.

RCI Resorts Around The Tahoe Area

Lake Tahoe

- Paradise
- The Ridge Sierra

South Lake Tahoe

- Americana Village
- Heavenly Valley Townhouse
- Stardust – Tahoe
- Lake Tahoe Vacation Resort

Incline Village

- Club Tahoe
- Tahoe Chaparral

Tahoe Vista

- Edgelake Beach Club
- Redwolf Lakeside Lodge
- Tahoe Sands Resort

Olympic Valley

- Olympic Village Inn
- Squaw Valley Lodge

Stateline

- Perennial Vacation Club at Tahoe
- Royal Aloha Tahoe
- Tahoe Summit Village
- Tahoe Village Condominiums
- Taranova Tahoe Summit
- The Ridge Tahoe
- Worldmark Tahoe I/II/III
- Worldwide at Kingsbury

Reno

- Club Lakeridge
- Plaza Resort Club

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toll-free number TODAY!***

Note:

- Subject to availability at time of booking
- Valid for travel before 31 December 2006
- Accommodation only
- Terms and conditions apply



Don't Wait, Deposit Now!

RCI Holiday Guide **Geraldine Tan** highlights the benefits of depositing your week early



Many of you may not know that the timing of your deposit can significantly affect the kind of resort and season that you are able to book.

Did you know that the earlier you deposit your week, the higher trading power you will enjoy? By depositing earlier, you can enjoy the following

benefits when you exchange for your holiday:

1. You gain priority for your week.
2. You are able to exchange into high season easily or into a bigger unit than the one that you own, or even both!
3. You are on priority waitlist if the unit that you want is fully exchanged, unlike members who deposit late.

You can deposit your week as early as 24 months and as late as 30 days before the start date of your week. Of course, the fastest way is to pick up the phone and contact your resort. After you deposit your week, you will receive a SPACEBANK acknowledgement card within 14 days and you may start calling us thereafter to initiate your holiday exchange.

I always recommend that you start planning your holiday at least one year in advance. This way, you are giving yourself and Holiday Guides like us plenty of time to work on your request and to offer you the best units available. Do remember that we also take care of members from other parts of the world who are planning their holiday as well.

You can initiate a request as early as two years before you travel. For example, if you deposit your

2006 week in the SPACEBANK, you can book your holiday in 2008.

If the resort of your choice or destination is not available, always request to be put on waitlist. This way, our dedicated outbound (OB) team will be able to closely monitor your request. If there is a match or if we receive more deposits from our members, our OB team will contact you to offer you the units. What's more, making a request is free of charge and hassle free. All you need to do is ask!

Finally, once we have successfully obtained the unit of your choice, you can pay us over the phone using your credit card.

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- Intra-Asia Exchange – S\$175
- International Exchange – S\$388

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Hanwha Resort Haeundae
From S\$102



Hanwha Resort Jeju
From S\$109



Hanwha Resort Seorak
From S\$98

INDONESIA



Club Risata Bali
From S\$69
(studio)



Ramayana Resort & Spa
From S\$75



Hard Rock Hotel, Bali
From S\$156
(with breakfast for 2)

VIETNAM



Abalone Resort & Spa
From S\$89
(with breakfast for 2)



Hoi An Pacific Hotel
From S\$75
(with breakfast for 2)

THAILAND



Allamanda Phuket
From S\$102
(1 bedroom)



Patong Tower Condominium
From S\$108
(1 bedroom)



Radisson Hotel Bangkok
From S\$85
(with breakfast for 2)



Thara Patong Beach Resort
From S\$95

MALAYSIA



Micasa All Suite Hotel, KL
From S\$116
(studio)



The Legacy Hotel, Malacca
From S\$65



Crown Princess, KL
From S\$85



**Mutiara Burau Bay,
Langkawi**
From S\$89

AUSTRALIA



Sydney
**The Oaks at Goldsbrough
Apartment**
From S\$175
(studio)



The Oaks at Maestri Towers
From S\$175
(studio)



Melbourne
Punt Hill The Stanton
From S\$206
(2 bedrooms)



Punt Hill South Yarra
From S\$150
(1 bedroom)



Punt Hill Manhattan
From S\$190
(1 bedroom)



Punt Hill Little Bourke
From S\$170
(studio)



Queensland
Sunset Island Resort
From S\$96
(1 bedroom)



Chevron Palms, Gold Coast
From S\$98
(1 bedroom)



**Oaks Lexicon Apartment,
Brisbane**
From S\$170
(1 bedroom)



Adelaide
Oaks Embassy
From S\$162
(1 bedroom)



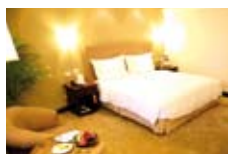
Perth
**The Alderney On Hay
Apartment**
From S\$153
(2 bedrooms)

SINGAPORE



City Bayview Hotel
From S\$109

TAIWAN



**Holiday Inn Asia World
Taipei**
From S\$135

UK/EUROPE



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New Affiliations At Press Time

Resorts Update

EASTERN SPA & RESORT

#8712

527 Lau Chuan Road
Yangmei Town,
Taoyuan County
Taiwan

Expected Availability: Early '07'

✈ Taiwan International Airport: 8km



Check In/Out

Friday after 3pm/before 11am

Unit Amenities

Air Conditioning-A
Fireplace-A
Kitchen-S/F
Microwave-S
Telephone-A

On-Site Amenities

Auto rental, children's pool, conference facilities, exercise equipment, fireplace, games room, grocery store, handicapped unit, health club, laundry, lift, live entertainment, playground area, sauna, spa, swimming pool, tennis

Other Amenities

Beach-15km, cross-country skiing-NB, lake-3km, medical facilities-NB

HANWHA RESORT PHOENIXPARK

#8713

#946-7 Myeonon-Ri
Bongpyeong-Myeon
Pyeongchang-Gun
Kangwon-Do 232-922
South Korea
Tel: (82) 33 3346100

✈ Incheon International Airport: 300km

Pyeongchang has many mountains and forests. Its famous spots include Geumdang Valley with its colourful fall scenery, Palseokjeong Pavilion and Maeji Waterfall. A walk on the fir-tree path leading through Woljeongsa Temple Valley in Mt. Odaesan is a must. Check out local festivals such as Daegwallyeong Snow Flower Festival, Mt. Odaesan Festival and Wild Edible Greens Festival. Places to visit include Odaesan National Park, Woljeongsa Temple, Sangwonsa Temple, Samyang Dagwallyeong Ranch, Herbna Farm and Korea Botanical Garden.



Check In/Out

Friday after 3pm/before 12noon

Unit Amenities

Air Conditioning-A
Kitchen-A/P
Microwave-A
Telephone-A

On-Site Amenities

Childcare, conference facilities, grocery store, lift, restaurant, shopping area, snack bar

Other Amenities

Auto Rental-NB, beach-60km, children's pool-NB, cross-country skiing-NB, downhill skiing-NB, golf-NB, hairdresser-NB, laundry-NB, medical facilities-NB, sauna-NB, ski school-NB, spa-NB, swimming pool-NB

HANWHA RESORT GYEONGJU

#8714

430-3 Bukgun-Dong
Kyungju City
Gyeongsangbuk-Province
Gyeongsangbuk-Do 780-280
South Korea
Tel: (82) 54 7458 0060

✈ Incheon International Airport: 400km

As the capital of Silla Kingdom for almost a thousand years, Gyeongju has a significant and fascinating historical heritage. Along with Bulguksa Temple and Seokguram Grotto, the Gyeongju Historical District has been designated as a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. Its many historical, natural and cultural attractions have made it a major tourist destination in Korea. Places to visit include Seokguram Grotto, Daereung-Won Tumuli Park, Gyeongju National Museum, Chosun Hotel Casino, Underwater Tomb of King Munmu and Seokbinggo (Ice Store House).



Check In/Out

Friday after 3pm/before 12noon

Unit Amenities

Air Conditioning-A
Kitchen-A/P
Microwave-A
Telephone-A

On-Site Amenities

Auto rental, childcare, children's pool, conference facilities, fireplace, games room, grocery store, lift, restaurant, sauna, snack bar, spa, swimming pool

Other Amenities

Beach-2km, golf-NB, hairdresser-NB, laundry-NB, medical facilities-NB, shopping area-NB

QVI@PATONG TOWER CONDOMINIUM

#8672

Patong Tower Condominium
110/184, Moo 4,
Thaweewong Road,
Patong Beach, Kathu 83150
Thailand

✈ Phuket International Airport: 45km

The first and only resort condominium with 32 storeys offering a panoramic view of Patong Beach that cannot be found anywhere else. Its carefully designed building gives it a modern and unique look. Every unit is designed with an open concept which offers panoramic views of the mountain. Surrounded by lush greenery and the blue ocean, Patong Tower allows its residents to be close to nature.



Check In/Out

Saturday after 4pm/before 10am

Unit Amenities

Air Conditioning-A
Kitchen-A/P
Microwave-A
Telephone-A

On-Site Amenities

Laundry, lift, swimming pool

Other Amenities

Auto rental-NB, beach-NB, boating-NB, grocery store-NB, hairdresser-NB, live entertainment-NB, medical facilities-20km, restaurant-NB, shopping area-NB, water skiing-NB, wind surfing-NB

LEGEND

Unit Type: HU: Hotel unit, ST: Studio, 1BR: One-bedroom unit, 2BR: Two-bedroom unit, 3BR: Three-bedroom unit.

Unit Max: Maximum occupancy. Unit Priv: Private occupancy. Unit Amenities: A: In all units, S: In some units, Kitchen: F: Full kitchen, M: Mini kitchen, P: Partial kitchen. Other Amenities: NB: Nearby

Sun, Sea and Adventure in Philippines

The Philippines consists of 7,107 islands. Although most of the islands are very small, many of them, including the bigger ones, have plenty of exciting things in store for tourists. There are many possibilities for typical "sun, sea and beach holidays" and also for specific adventure holidays. You can even see the whale sharks and swim close to them. For those who want to discover interesting landscapes or meet mountain tribes, the Philippines is *the* place to visit.

ACTIVITY HIGHLIGHTS

1. Snorkelling possibilities in coral waters
2. Enjoying Tanduy rum (High quality, very low price, only 45 pesos for a 1-litre bottle)
3. Tasting Tuba (coconut wine)
4. Exploring volcanic landscapes
5. Going on round trips through beautiful landscapes
6. Meeting extremely friendly people
7. Travelling on colourful jeepneys and tricycles

NEWLY-AFFILIATED QUALITY ACCOMMODATION

Tagaytay Dacha Villas

Tagaytay Dacha Villas is your hideaway from the hustle and bustle of Metro Manila. Only an hour's drive from Manila, it is close enough to city comforts yet a comfortable distance away from its hectic pace. Tagaytay Dacha is also close to Asia's finest shopping malls, the international airport, leisure parks, beaches and scenic golfing greens.

"Dacha" means "a place to rest", "a getaway" or "cottage". True to its name, Tagaytay Dacha is where you can relax, unwind and enjoy a peaceful getaway. Offering luxurious and elegant first-class accommodation, Tagaytay Dacha is a five-storey 28-room hotel with eight studio units, 12 one-bedroom units and five three-bedroom villas that are fully furnished and spacious.



About Tagaytay

Tagaytay City, located 2,500ft above sea level, enjoys a cool and invigorating climate characterised by a relatively low temperature, low humidity and abundant rainfall. Its average temperature is 22.7°C. Because of its cool weather, balmy winds and foggy mists, Tagaytay is known as the "second summer capital" after Baguio City.

The highway leading to the resort offers a breathtaking view of the world famous Taal formation – a crater within an island within a lake. Coconut groves dot the ridges of Tagaytay, adding to the relaxing feel of the area and complementing the magnificent view of Taal.

Astoria Plaza Suites

Astoria Plaza Suites Manila is the epitome of grandeur. The 35-storey luxury Pasig Hotel offers spacious well-appointed accommodation to cater to its discriminating clientele. The Zen-inspired setting is perfect for seasoned leisure and business travellers who are looking for the perfect hotel in Pasig.

Located in the Philippines' fastest growing business and commercial hub of Ortigas, Astoria Plaza is your gateway to the hippest urban getaway. This Pasig Hotel's strategic location puts you in the heart of all things exciting. At Astoria Plaza, you are within a comfortable distance to top business establishments, commercial hubs, financial institutions, medical centres and academic bodies in Metro Manila.

You are only minutes away from Metro Manila's finest and most popular places:

- **Malls** – SM Megamall, Starmall, The Shangri-la Mall, Ayala Glorietta, Ayala Greenbelt, Gateway Araneta, Greenhills, The Podium, Eastwood City and Rockwell
- **Business and Financial Districts** – Ortigas Business Centre, Makati Central Business District, Greenhills and Rockwell



- **Hospitals** – Cardinal Santos, The Medical City, Makati Medical Centre
- **Transportation Choices** – Metrorail Transit, taxis, jeepneys
- **Centres of Tourism and Culture** – The Ayala Museum

Puerto Del Sol Beach Resort & Hotel

Located in the picturesque town of Bolinao, Puerto Del Sol Beach Resort & Hotel is an exclusive and uniquely inspired seaside resort. Its world-class accommodation and amenities, plus the warmth and friendliness of its service staff are definitely what make it the ideal resort for major relaxation.



Whether you like a refreshing swim within the resort's outdoor pools, a stroll along stretches of unspoiled sandy beaches, a quite retreat or a serious outdoor adventure, Puerto del Sol offers them all.

Local Attractions

Puerto del Sol gives you easy and convenient access to most of the area's principal tourist attractions:

- **Hundreds Islands** – famous for some 400 coralline islands and tiny islets scattered in a shallow azure area, with more than 2,000 species of marine life
- **Enchanted Cave** – a natural cave nestled in a stunning coral reef mountain
- **Cape Bolinao Beach** – unspoiled white beach with golden, powdery soft sand
- **Patar Lighthouse**
- **Rock Formations**
- **Bolinao Museum**
- **Balinao Marketplace**
- **Balinao Port**
- **Churef of St. James the Great**



Aigle daily. We visited nearby towns through the mountain roads to Leysin, Les Mosses, Gruyeres (to visit a cheese factory) and Nestle Switzerland's chocolate factory.

A highlight of our trip was visiting the Glacier 3000-Les Diablerets in Gstaad Region. Only 90 minutes from Aigle and accessible via a gondola, Glacier 3000 offers impressive views of Europe's most majestic peaks including Mont Blanc, Matterhorn and Jungfrau.

Zermatt, near the Italian border, offers spectacular and picturesque views, with Matterhorn in the background. Montreaux is famous for its September jazz carnivals, but in December, it's buzzing with pre-Christmas festivities and Christmas markets. Don't miss the majestic Chateau de Chillon (renowned to many literature readers) on the shores of Lake Geneva. On Christmas Eve, Geneva was bustling with last-minute shoppers. We

Swiss Winter Wonderland

RCI Member Zaitone Bt Jaafar and her family had a holiday of a lifetime in Switzerland

My two sisters, nephew, niece and I packed our bags for a weeklong stay in snowy Switzerland last Christmas. We weren't sure what was in store for us, but the RCI office in Singapore promised that Switzerland would be "a holiday of a lifetime" and that sounded irresistible!

Next thing we knew, we were off to Torgon, a quaint alpine Swiss village resort. Little did we know that the only accessible road to the resort was a meandering one with hairpin bends that we often see in those Bond movies!

Torgon, a renowned skiing resort is situated near the town of Aigle, about two hours' drive from Geneva. We arrived at Geneva International Airport on an easyJet flight from London Gatwick Airport on a beautiful snowy Sunday afternoon.

Our Avis rented car, a Renault Scenic, which we had booked via the Internet was already waiting for us. Armed with a travel guidebook cum map, we drove cautiously (left-hand drive) on the A1 heading to Lausanne and then on the A9 to Aigle. Along the way, we took in the beautiful scenery of the Lake Geneva region. The ski resort of Torgon, with its timbered chalets, were bedecked with Christmas decorations. The houses along the road up to Torgon were also decorated with Christmas lights! We were enveloped in a bright and warm Christmas spirit.

The vistas at Torgon were spectacular. The resort provides perfect conditions for sporting action and adventure. Winter activities were confined to skiing and hiking along the mountain tracks. There is a grocery store, a rental skiing store, a skiing school, a tourist bureau and an efficient bus service that runs from Torgon to

shopped for Swiss chocolates that were on sale.

Sadly, all good things have to come to an end and it was time to bid adieu to Switzerland. Despite the cold temperatures, we had loads of fun and felt so invigorated, thanks to the fresh mountain air. To this day, memories of our Swiss winter holiday still linger and we often find ourselves longing for the clear starry nights of Torgon!



Top: Picturesque town of Les Diablerets
Right: Zaitone at Zermatt

Congratulations, Zaitone, you have won S\$100 for sharing your travel experience with us. Thank you for contributing your holiday story.

Tell us about your holiday experiences and you could be the winner next time!

Send your story to *Endless Vacation Magazine*, RCI Asia-Pacific Pte Ltd, #09-01/05 PWC Building, 8 Cross Street, Singapore 048424.

Or email it to us at asiamembers@rciap.com. Make sure you include your RCI Membership Number and a selection of pictures, together with details of the names of people in the photographs and where they were taken.

Closing date: **30 November 2006.**

RCI Asia Operational Resorts





CHINA

7525	Beijing Shihao International Hotel
7589	BLG Beijing Longtou Apartment
6785	Weihai Dawu Sea Feeling Hotel
6034	Dianchi Garden Hotel & Spa
6629	Haixing Yunlong Bay Resort
6406	Holiday Inn Tianan Wuhan
6838	 Huizhou Tangquan Golf Club
6834	International Countryside Club of Chongqing
3954	Jiuhua Spa and Resort
6967	Nirvana Resort Hainan
7481	Noble Yacht Club Hainan
4326	Paradise Hill Hotel Zhuhai
6408	Phoenix Resort
4980	Surf Plaza Qingdao
6888	The Silk Road Dunhuang Hotel
6965	TRAC@Hainan Noble Yacht Club
6137	TRAC@Jade Dragon Garden Hotel Lijiang
6622	TRAC@King Wing Hot Spring Hotel
5212	TRAC@Teda International Hotel & Club
6138	TLC Yunnan Good Chance Hotel

HONG KONG

7649	EC@Grand Blossom House
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INDONESIA

7590	Bali Emerald Villas
5459	 Bali Masari Resort
6961	 Bali Shangrila Beach Club
3505	Bali Tropic Resort & Spa
6363	Blue Point Bay Villas & Spa
5372	Club Bali@Java Highlands Resort
3690	Club Bali@Jakarta Bali Residence
5368	Club Oasis@Jimbaran Hills
5933	Club Paradise@Jimbaran Hills
6916	Gili Meno Bird Park Resort
4170	Harris Resort
5458	 Jimbaran Hills Resort
7724	Keraton Jimbaran Resort
3692	Mambuk Quality Resort
6302	 Medewi Bay Retreat

3851	 Nirwana Bali
3691	 Risata Bali Resort & Spa
3968	 Royal Bali Beach Club@Candidasa
5254	 Royal Bali Beach Club@Jimbaran Bay
6920	RVC@Hotel Rama Candidasa
6959	RVC@Rama Garden Hotel
6818	RVC@Ramayana Resort & Spa
6660	Seminyak Suites
5450	 Swiss-BelHotel Bali Aga

KOREA

3889	Daemyung Resort Sorak
3892	Daemyung Resort Yangpyung
7901	Hanwha Resort Haeundae
7902	Hanwha Resort Jeju
7903	Hanwha Resort Seorak
8713	Hanwha Resort Phoenixpark
8714	Hanwha Resort Gyeongju
3049	Highla Donghae Beach Condominium
3697	Highla Donsan Spa Condominium
3048	Highla Kyongju Condominium
3190	Highla Sorak Valley Condominium
4156	Ilseung Muju Condominium
4329	Ilseung Namhangang Condominium
4155	Ilseung Sorak Condominium
5550	Jeju Tovice Beach Condominium
3694	Muju Resort
5551	Togo Hotspring Tovice Condominium
3891	Vivaldi Park


TAIWAN

4325	 Kentington Resort
7663	PVC@Cirrus Spa Village
6277	 PPVC@Hoya Hot Springs Resort & Spa
2345	Victors Hualien Li-Yu Tan Resort
4337	Wing On Golf Country Club
8712	Eastern Spa & Resort



THAILAND

5719	 Chateau Dale Beach Resort
6305	Grand Tower Inn
2861	Hotel Royal Crown
2234	Jomtien Beach Paradise
4926	MTC@Lanna Resort
5456	MTC@The Legacy River Kwai
5962	MTC@Pattaya Hill Resort
6373	MTC Plus@Grand Tower Inn
4344	 Patong Resort Hotel
4341	 Patong Tower Condominium
5556	Pattaya Hill Resort
3974	Quality Suites Airport Bangkok
5731	 QVC@Samui Peninsula*
6432	QVC@The Andaman Beach Suites
6999	QVI@The Elegance Court
5376	 Royal Bella Vista Country Club
4923	 Royal Lighthouse Villas@Boat Lagoon
1300	Sigma Resort Club (South Pattaya)
5216	 Tai-Pan Hotel
4973	 The Allamanda Phuket
5377	 The Resonance Club@State Tower
6625	GVC@Best Western The Elegance Suite
8672	QVI@Patong Tower Condominium

PHILIPPINES

7773	 Astoria Plaza Suite
6781	Casa Del Mar Golf & Dive Resort
3502	Laguna de Boracay Resort






5367	Nipa Beach Resort
1947	 Panoly Town & Beach Club
6030	Pearl of the Pacific Beach Resort*
5369	Sunrise Holiday Mansion
5722	 VCI Holidays@Batangas
5721	VCI Holidays@Mactan – Cebu
6837	VCI Holidays@Makati City
5720	VCI Holidays@Tagaytay
6278	Tagaytay Dacha Villas
7647	Puerto Del Sol Beach Resort & Hotel

MALAYSIA

2860	Aseania Resort Langkawi
4919	Awana Genting HL Golf & Country Resort
4920	Awana Kijal Golf & Beach Resort
3967	Bayu Beach Resort
2864	 Berjaya Tioman Beach Golf & Spa Resort
4166	 Berjaya Tioman Suites
3013	Country Heights WRC
4167	Duta Palms Resort & Anglers' Club
4872	Duta Sands
3012	Duta Village Beach Resort
3010	Duta Vista Executive Suites
1703	Genting View Resort
3196	Greenhill Resort
5257	Heritage Hotel Cameron Highlands
5259	Heritage Hotel Ipoh
2869	KL Plaza Suites
3957	Leisure Cove
7771	 Resort Suites at Sunway Lagoon Resort
6616	 Swiss-Court Holiday Apartment
6613	 Swiss-Garden Hotel Kuala Lumpur
6615	 Swiss-Garden Resort & Spa Damai Laut
6614	 Swiss-Garden Resort & Spa Kuantan
7650	EC@The Legend Water Chalet

LEGEND

-  Gold Crown Award
-  Silver Crown Award
-  Hospitality Award
- * Partially Available

Please note that the resort status is periodically reviewed and is subject to change. The resort status indicated here is current as of July 2006.





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