

TRAVEL

COMING SATURDAY IN
TRAVEL

La Belle Montreal
puts romance back
in city life

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TRAVEL NOTES

Delta Hotel discounts

BRITISH COLUMBIA • If you're B.C. bound Labour Day weekend, Delta Hotels has a number of end of summer packages, some of which are valid until the end of the year. Here's a sampling:

■ Delta Whistler Village is offering a one-night stay in a deluxe suite is \$175 (\$24 savings, minimum two-night stay) during the Jazz on the Mountain event, between Sept. 1 and 4. Minimum two-night stay. Details at deltawhistervillage.com and enter promo cod "PJMw".

■ Delta Victoria Ocean Pointe has a Harbour Ferries package that includes a one-night rate starting at \$171 plus a roundtrip on Harbour Ferries taxi for two adults with pickup and dropoff at the hotel's private dock and free parking. Available until Dec. 31. To book or for more details call 1-800-667-4677 and quote rate code "HFF" or book online at deltavictoria.com and enter promo code "PHFF".

■ Delta Grand Okanagan's family package has one night's accommodation starting at \$223 per night for two adults and two children. Also included in the price is one family pass for H2O Adventure + Fitness Centre, which is good for two adults and up to three children, plus Labour Day weekend family activities at the hotel. Offer valid until Dec. 31. For details or reservations, call 1-800-465-4651 and quote rate code "NFP" or online at deltagrandokanagan.com and enter promo code "PNFP".

More details on Delta Hotel packages at deltahotels.com.

Smithsonian Tours early-bird savings

MEDITERRANEAN • Smithsonian Tours offers savings on some of its 2012 trips if you book early. For example you can save \$1,000 US when you book the Venice and Medieval World luxury cruise of the Eastern Mediterranean trip by Dec. 1.

The trip is April 26 to May 8 aboard the luxury, 114-suite Corinthian II vessel. Tickets for the 13-day voyage start at \$8,595 US. Not included are two nights in hotels, airfare and taxes.

Similar savings are available if you book by Dec. 1 for other trips in 2012, including the Black Sea, Southern Italy and Sicily and the Legendary Cities of the Mediterranean journeys. Check out smithsonianjourneys.org and click on special offers and early-bird discounts for more information, or talk to your travel agent.

— Calgary Herald and News Services



Patrick Hertzog, Herald Archive, AFP-Getty Images
Smithsonian Journeys is offering discounts on its luxury cruises in 2012, which includes stops in southern Italy.



Be a better tourist in your own town. Follow our Calgary blogger Chris Lake at lakeatlarge.com.



Courtesy, Whitefish Convention and Visitors Bureau

A drive to Whitefish, Montana for a late-summer shopping trip is just far enough out that you feel like you're getting away.

Shopping stateside

Families in search of back-to-school bargains and good times head south

JODY ROBBINS
FOR THE CALGARY HERALD

It's that time of year again. Autumn is upon us and the back to school excitement is starting to build. If you're itching for one last getaway, look no further than a quick run south of the border for a late summer shopping trip. With our dollar the strongest it's been in decades, saving money is the only excuse you'll need.

Whitefish

Why here: Calgarians such as Claire Allen love Whitefish for being just far enough out, you feel like you're getting away. Big Mountain has long been a draw for winter enthusiasts and the area offers affordable vacation properties.

Shop: Browse the quaint shops on Central Avenue such as The Toggery for resort wear, Spouts for children's clothing and the The Imagination Station for classic toys. Deals can be found in Herberger's, an upscale department store and Sportsman & Ski Haus for sporting equipment and apparel.

Stay: On the hill, Ptarmigan Village has private access to Whitefish Lake. Further out, North 40 Cabins provide a rustic retreat in log cabins and Big Mountain Lodge offers a comfortable family experience. In town, there's a Best Western and while in a great location, the Downtowner Motel is the location of choice for bus tours.

Play: Whitefish Lake golf memberships are a steal of a deal as are season ski passes at Big Mountain, where you'll find summer trails, a zipline and Alpine slide for kids young and old.

Eat: Three Forks Grill in Columbia Falls was voted the best new restaurant in the Flathead Valley 2010. Open for breakfast and lunch, Lula's, offers a tasty children's menu and for southern comfort, head to Piggyback Barbeque.

Getting there: Whitefish is an easy drive from Calgary in under five hours.

More info: Flathead Valley Tourism: www.fcvb.org
Whitefish Tourism: www.whitefishvisit.com



Tim Thompson, Seattle Tourism

Pike Place Market in downtown Seattle is surrounded by cool shops and good restaurants but head to the outlet malls for school gear.

Mountain activities: www.ski-whitefish.com

Seattle

Why here: With direct flights, a plethora of outlet malls and general coastal cool, the Emerald City is an easy getaway when in need of a bit of green.

Shop: The big draw in the area is the abundance of outlet malls such as Premium Outlets. The outdoor mall at University Village has diverse retailers as well as a play area for kids. Locals hit the burbs at Bellevue Square with its indoor play area and free parking.

Stay: Look to the MarQueen for spacious rooms and kitchenettes near Seattle Center. Both the Four Seasons and Westin hotel offer an upscale experience with welcome bags and activities for the kids. Inn at the Market, in the middle of Pike Place, is a lovely boutique hotel for couples.

Play: No visit would be complete without a stop at Pike Place Market and the Space Needle.

Madison Park Beach, a popular swimming spot, is surrounded by cool shops and restaurants and the recently remodelled playground at Madison Park receives top marks. Seattle Art Museum has monthly family festivals and there's also an Aquarium, Science Centre and fantastic Children's Museum.

Eat: Families can experience Kaiten sushi at Blue C Sushi. Kid Valley serves up hand-mixed shakes and made-to-order burgers. For a seafood fix, try The Walrus and the Carpenter in trendy Ballard and only wild, sustainable fish is served at Costal Kitchen. Ditch the kids and make a beeline for Luc, a trendy new French bistro in Madison Valley.

Getting there: Air Canada and Alaska Airlines have direct service from Calgary to Seattle.

More information: Seattle Tourism: www.visitseattle.org/Home.aspx

Kids Activities: red-tri.com
Family Guide to the Eastside: rubyslipperguide.com



For more on shopping in the U.S. go to calgaryherald.com/travel.

Spokane:

Why Here: According to busy mom of two, Shauna Way, Spokane is like, "stepping back in time while still being really modern." She appreciates that it's easy to drive around, the down to earth people and, of course, the deals. "All my purchases are cheap, like takeout food," she says.

Shop: Torrid and Lane Bryant have fashionable, full-figured women's clothing in North Town Mall. Look out for door crashers at the large department stores and the Vera Wang rack at KOHLS. Burlington Coat Factory sells at 60 per cent off department store prices as does Nordstrom Rack in Spokane Valley Mall.

Mountain Gear boasts an indoor climbing wall and pool as well as outdoor clothing and equipment. Teachers and parents stock up on craft supplies at ShopKo while locals flock to Rocket Market for organic food and wine.

Don't forget to show your Alberta driver's license before paying so you'll avoid Washington's sales tax.

Stay: Red Lion Hotels are family and pet friendly with pools, airport transfers, playpens and high chairs. Within bag-carrying distance, the Davenport Hotel is quite posh and though there's no pool, Hotel Ruby is new and trendy.

Play: Come face to face with lions at Cat Tales Zoological Park. Riverfront Park has lots of attractions including amusement rides and minigolf. Moms might want to take in a Broadway show and the entire family can while away a day at the beach with Coeur d'Alene less than an hour away.

Eat: Voted best restaurant of the year, Luigi's dishes up homestyle Italian plus excellent happy-hour food specials. Chow down on steaks and quality buffet at the Golden Corral or, experience a traditional drive in at Sonic, where carhops deliver food on roller skates.

Getting there: Fly through Seattle on Air Canada, WestJet or Alaskan Airlines. Expect about a seven-hour drive from Calgary.

Spokane Tourism: visitspokane.com

Not all sunsets are created equal.

Book Mazatlan, Mexico today.

Mazatlan

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Luna Palace
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Round-trip air + 7 nights + transfers
• November 12, 19 & 26, 2011

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Pueblo Bonito Mazatlan
★★★★
Round-trip air + 7 nights + transfers
• November 12, 19 & 26, 2011

From **\$729** Plus \$130 taxes
El Cid Granada
★★★★ All inclusive
Round-trip air + 7 nights + transfers
→ \$600 MEGA PASS*
→ Kids stay & eat free**
• November 12, 19 & 26, 2011

To book your vacation package visit westjetvacations.com or call your travel agent. To book your flight visit westjet.com.



For WestJet Vacations packages: *Book by August 30, 2011 (11:59 p.m. MT). Round trip from Calgary. Other departure cities and dates available, and prices may be higher. Price is per guest, based on double occupancy unless otherwise specified. Taxes and fees not included. Fuel surcharge still applies to Air Miles™ redemption bookings. Advance booking required. Non-refundable. Offer limited and subject to availability. Price is accurate at time of printing deadline. New bookings only. Visit westjetvacations.com for details. †Offer valid on minimum five-night air and hotel bookings at El Cid Resorts in Mazatlan. One free Mega Pass (resort credit coupon book) per room per stay. ** Kids 12 and under stay and eat free, when sharing with two paying adults. Maximum of 2 kids. See westjetvacations.com for full offer details.