

# Romance and Travel

By Ellen Sarbone

**Valentines Day brings up thoughts of romance. Traveling single offers many unique opportunities for meeting interesting and even exciting members of the opposite sex. Just because none of your friends want to accompany you, is no reason to stay home.**

Being away from your home stomping grounds, can be an excuse for cutting loose! Possibilities include cruises and tours that specialize in singles as well as those that don't, but also spas, conventions and festivals - all offering great opportunities for meeting new friends.

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Barefoot cruises offers a singles-only cruise on the sailing ship *Polynesia* every third week in the month. Windjammers always has a substantial number of singles as do most of the other cruise lines.

Spas offer a great atmosphere for meeting others. Most people probably thought that everyone at a spa was so into health that little else occurred but then Liz Taylor and Richard Burton courted at a famous spa and now spas are an even more interesting choice. Spas can be found all across southern Europe as well as southern United States with California having perhaps the best choices. In northern California, you should try the International Spa at the Roman Spa Motel in Calistoga. There is also the Calistoga Spa, Nance's, Dr Wilkersons and others. In San Francisco, Senses at the Fillmore Center (415) 928-3061 is an urban oasis with massage, facials detoxification wraps, nonsurgical facelifts etc etc.



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Conventions and festivals are another choice which can add to your trips adventure. Perhaps the classic is the Annual Matchmaking Festival in Lisdoonvarna, Ireland. It runs from September 1 to October 5 and they actually work at making matches. Isle Inn Tours (800-237-9376) has a tour for roughly \$1700 out of Los Angeles.

There are many other convention and festival possibilities. Film festivals are always interesting. The jazz festival in Nice in July is famous. Las Vegas has some kind of convention almost every week. Some of these require that you be associated with the industry running the convention or the press. With some advance planning you can usually work some kind of an arrangement. The American Booksellers Convention, usually in June in even-numbered years (It's in New York during odd-numbered years), is a great choice. For even raunchier parties, the various video producers and sellers associations have several conventions each year in Las Vegas.

Convention listings are available from the city or state's Office of Tourism (California's, 800-862-2543). California will give you a great supply of interesting California travel literature.

For Valentine's Day it can be fun to just get out of town and find a different atmosphere. Driving up to Eureka there are many romantic spots. The Eureka Inn (800-862-4906) is an excellent choice as is Hotel Carter and Victorian Village. There are many other wonderful places to stay, so call Eureka Convention and Visitors Bureau and ask for Lifestyle Specials (800-338-7352).

There are a number of organizations which provide networking opportunities for travelers. For singles there is Single Travelers (Call Dave at 510-420-1381).

If you have some suggestions for single travel ideas please send them to Lifestyle or call us at 510-420-1381.

Reprinted from Lifestyle Magazine