



USTOA Members Offer Curious Travelers Insider Access To Iconic Settings Of Popular Novels and Movies

The Girl With The Dragon Tattoo, Harry Potter, Memoirs of a Geisha and More



(Photo Credit: go-today)

NEW YORK (November 30, 2011) - Hitting theatres this December, the highly anticipated film of *The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo*, based on the first of a trilogy of international best-selling novels by the late Swedish writer Stieg Larsson, is destined to inspire curious travelers who are ardent fans. Members of the United States Tour Operators Association (USTOA) offer travelers insider access to discover the iconic settings of their favorite fictional works, from *Harry Potter* to *Memoirs of a Geisha*, including a firsthand look at the home of Mikael Blomkvist and Lisbeth Salander, with these winter tours to Stockholm.

- *Stockholm (2012)*: Highlights of **Abercrombie and Kent's** four-day guided sightseeing tour include Gamla Stan, the quaint old town set against the harbor, the Island of Djurgården, and the National Museum. When travelers want to warm up, they can plan to stop at Mellqvist Kaffebar café, Blomkvist's regular coffee stop, or Södermalm, the trendy neighborhood where Blomkvist lived. Priced from \$4,450 per person, visit www.abercrombiekent.com for more information.
- *Stockholm Getaway*: Experience Stockholm in the snow with **go-today's** vacation package, which includes airfare, hotel accommodations for three nights, and daily breakfasts. While there, travelers can plan to stop by the Stockholm City Museum for a walking tour based on the Millennium trilogy. Pricing per person and dates vary, for more information visit www.go-today.com.
- *Classic Scandinavia*: Expand your vacation with this seven-day tour of Copenhagen, Stockholm, and Helsinki by **General Tours World Traveler**. Stockholm's leisurely hop-on, hop-off tour allows travelers plenty of time to see the courthouse where Blomkvist was put on trial or stop for a drink at Kvarnen bar, the 100-year-old beer hall where Salander hung out with her friends. Available through April 30, 2012 and priced from \$1,544 per person, this tour includes five nights accommodation in city-center hotels, an outside cabin for an upscale overnight cruise from Stockholm to Helsinki, daily breakfast, hosted sightseeing tours in each city, and high speed rail from Copenhagen to Stockholm. For more information, visit www.generaltours.com.

"Often inspiring travel, best-selling novels and award-winning films have the ability to capture the true character of a destination," said Terry Dale, president of USTOA. "From full *Harry Potter* themed tours to regional vacations that allow visitors a glimpse into fictional life, USTOA member programs offer travelers the opportunity to experience celebrated settings all over the world and bring home a little Hollywood glamour, too."

Other film and novel inspired programs include:

Harry Potter

This series of seven fantasy novels written by J. K. Rowling has captivated audiences worldwide for more than a decade. While the final blockbuster film was released in the theatres this summer, “Potterheads” can still get their fill of this wizardly world with:

- *Mysteries & Muggles*: Harry Potter’s United Kingdom tour by **Explorica**. From Lacock Abbey, the setting for many classroom scenes in the movies, to The Elephant House, the restaurant where J.K. Rowling first started writing the Harry Potter series on a napkin, this tour includes round-trip airfare, daily breakfast and dinner, and a full time tour director. Beyond the focus of Harry Potter scenes, the tour is filled with history and key highlights of the UK. Pricing per person and dates vary, for more information visit www.explorica.com
- *Castles & Kilts*: **Trafalgar’s** 11-day vacation takes families to London, Oxford, Lacock, Bath, Ruthin Castle, Liverpool, Tatton Park, the Lake District, Hadrian’s Wall and Edinburgh, highlighting key Harry Potter locations such as Platform 9 ¾ in Kings Cross Station. Available April 4 through August 15, 2012, prices start at \$2,599 per person. Book by December 1, 2011 and save \$500 per person on an air-inclusive package, plus young travelers (ages 5-17) save an additional 10% off. Visit www.trafalgar.com for more information.
- *Celtic Dream*: Discover the major historic and scenic attractions of Ireland, including the Cliffs of Moher, the natural wonder visited by Harry Potter and Dumbledore on their perilous journey to an isolated cave in the hit film Harry Potter and the Half Blood Prince in this 13-day Premier Escorted Motorcoach Tour by Celtic Tours. Aside from this key Harry Potter location, other highlights include the Guinness Storehouse, Trinity College and the Book of Kells, Dingle Peninsula, Kilkenny Castle, Giants Causeway, and Rathbaun Farm. Available April through September, 2012, and priced from \$1,979 per person for land only, visit www.CelticTours.com for more information.

Lord of the Rings

New Zealand’s mystical landscapes provided the ideal setting to bring J.R.R. Tolkien’s beloved adventures to life, and fans can follow in Frodo’s footsteps with:

- *New Zealand Self Drive*: Lord of the Rings 14-day itinerary by **Goway**. Experience the breathtaking scenery, majestic vistas, and warm hospitality of New Zealand all while visiting the sites where the popular Lord of the Rings movies were filmed. From the open pastures and rolling hills of the Waikato Region that made up The Shire to the volcanic landscapes of Tongariro World Heritage National Park used to portray Mordor, this tour includes a 14 day car rental, 13 nights of accommodations, and a Goway Co-Pilot book. Available year round, priced start at \$1,224 per person. Visit www.goway.com for more information.
- *Explorations the Aussie & Kiwi Experience*: **Collette Vacation’s** 28-day tour takes visitors to Sydney, Fraser Island, The Sunlander Train, the Great Barrier Reef, Ayers Rock, Christchurch, Queenstown, Milford Sound, Franz Josef Glacier Region, Napier, and Tongariro National Park, highlighting New Zealand sites where Middle Earth was created for the blockbuster film. An optional Safari of the Scenes excursion is offered. Available January 8, January 22, February 12, February 19, March 18, April 15, and April 22, 2012, prices start at \$6,699 per person for land only. Visit www.explorationstouring.com for more information.

Memoirs of a Geisha

Arthur Golden’s sensational novel has taught audiences about Japan’s rich cultural history. Step back in time with **General Tours World Traveler’s** *From Japan’s Inland Sea to the Alps*, an 11-day tour of Japan featuring sightseeing with a trip leader, accommodations, daily breakfasts, and on-tour transportation. A special July 15, 2012 departure coincides with Kyoto’s Gion Festival, a colorful celebration with 1,200-year-old traditions honoring the Geisha. Available March through October, 2012, prices start at \$4,799 per person. Book by December 30, 2011 and save \$500 per person off this published price when paying in full at the time of booking. For more information visit www.GeneralTours.com.

Evita

Eva Perón's rise from the lower class to political fame has touched audiences around the world in both Andrew Lloyd Webber's famous musical and the film adaptation starring Madonna and Antonio Banderas. Learn more about this "spiritual leader of a nation" with *South American Escape*, an eight-day leisurely tour through Buenos Aires and Rio de Janeiro by **Globus**. Featuring a prominent stop at Cemetery of the Recoleta, the site where Eva Perón was buried, this tour includes accommodations, daily breakfast, three dinners, and plenty of free time to explore these cultural hotspots. Available January through December, 2012, pricing starts at \$2,089 per person. Visit www.globusjourneys.com for more information.

Couples Retreat

Filmed primarily on the island of Bora Bora, this 2009 American comedy lures in viewers with its pristine white beaches and bright blue skies. Stay at the resort where Vince Vaughn, Kristin Davis, Jason Bateman, and Kristin Bell engaged in therapy with *The St. Regis Resort Bora Bora*, a five-night hotel package at The St. Regis Resort in Bora Bora by **Pleasant Holidays, L.L.C.** This package features roundtrip airfare, one free night, daily breakfast for two, one complimentary dinner for two, and a guaranteed upgrade to a Superior Overwater Villa subject to availability at the time of booking. Priced from \$3,819 per person based on double occupancy for five nights, visit www.PleasantAgent.com for more information.

Saving Private Ryan

Steven Spielberg's award winning film depicts the invasion of Normandy during WWII. See dramatic events in French history come to life with *Treasures of Normandy & the Loire*, **General Tours World Traveler's** nine-day trip that takes visitors to Paris, Bayeux, the beaches of Normandy, Sainte-Mère-Eglise, Caen, Mont-St.-Michel, the Loire Valley, Amboise, and Tours, France. Featuring a specially arranged moving tribute to American Heroes at the American Cemetery in Normandy, this tour includes accommodations in four-star hotels, eight breakfasts and two dinners, escorted comprehensive sightseeing with all entry fees, and on-tour transportation. Available May through October, 2012, priced from \$5,299 per person. Through December 30, 2011, travelers save \$500 per person off this published price when they pay in full at time of booking. Visit www.GeneralTours.com for more information.

Anne of Green Gables

For more than a century, readers have been captivated by the active imagination of Anne Shirley in Lucy Maud Montgomery's bestselling novel *Anne of Green Gables*. Discover the setting that inspired her stories with *Nova Scotia & Prince Edward Island* by **Globus**. Explore the quaint fishing villages, beautiful resorts, and fascinating historical sites of maritime Canada on this eleven-day tour, which includes accommodations, daily breakfasts, six three-course dinners, and guided tours by local guides. A two-day stay in Prince Edward Island includes a visit to the famous Green Gables farmhouse. Available June through September, 2012, priced from \$2,939 per person based on double occupancy. Visit www.globusjourneys.com for more information.

Little Red Riding Hood/Sleeping Beauty

Children all over the world have been forever enchanted by these familiar fairytales. Families can bring these stories to life with *Once Upon a Fairytale*. From Alsfeld Museum, a gingerbread-like house with classic German architecture at which Little Red Riding Hood will tell her story, to Neuschwanstein Castle, the magical snowy-white castle of King Ludwig II that inspired Walt Disney's design of the Sleeping Beauty castle, this nine-day tour from **Adventure by Disney** will delight both children and parents alike. Available June through September, 2012, priced from \$3,509 based on double occupancy. For more information, visit www.abd.disney.go.com.

Walk the Line

This 2005 hit gave audiences a glimpse into the early life and career of one of country music's most well known voices. Learn even more about Johnny Cash with *Sights & Sounds of the South*, a 10-day escorted tour by **Globus**. A must-see for music lovers, this tour takes travelers to Tennessee, Kentucky, and North Carolina. Highlights include Sun Studios in Memphis and the Grand Ole Opry and Ryman Auditorium in Nashville, famous locations frequented by Johnny Cash. Priced from \$2,269 per person and available May through November, 2012, visit www.globusjourneys.com for more information.

The Guernsey Literary and Potato Peel Pie Society

Mary Ann Shaffer and Annie Barrow's 2009 novel has taught countless readers about the German occupation of the Channel Islands during WWII. Visit Guernsey and the Channel Islands, the inspiration behind the novel, to gear up for the 2013 movie premiere with **Insight Vacation's** seven-day tour *Easy Pace Channel Islands*. From the WWII German fortifications in Guernsey to the German underground hospital in Jersey, this vacation includes accommodations, private transfers to/from the airport, a professional tour director, six breakfasts, and two celebratory dinners. Beyond the focus on WWII history, travelers will experience golden beaches, picturesque country lanes, and charming harbors. Available May 12 through October 13, 2012, land only prices start at \$2,235 per person. Visit www.insightvacations.com for more information.

Forrest Gump

From the countryside of Greenbow, Alabama, to political rallies in Washington D.C., ping pong championships in China, and beyond, audiences have followed one man's lifelong journey in this feel-good film. Join Forrest's adventure with *Enchanting Canyonlands*, an 11-day tour by **Globus** that takes travelers to the spellbinding landscapes of the Grand Canyon, Lake Powell, Monument Valley, Arches National Park, Canyonlands National Park, Dead Horse Point State Park, and Bryce Canyon National Park, highlighting the location where Forrest unexpectedly stopped his cross-country run in Monument Valley. Bonus: the opening shots of *Mission Impossible II* were also filmed here. Available May through October, 2012, priced from \$2,429 per person based on double occupancy. This is a GoParks! Tour so Globus will donate a portion of their bookings to the National Park Foundation at no additional cost to travelers. For more information, visit www.globusjourneys.com.

About USTOA:

The member companies of U.S. Tour Operators Association provide tours, packages and custom arrangements that allow travelers unparalleled access, insider knowledge, peace-of-mind, value and freedom to enjoy destinations and experiences across the entire globe. Each member company has met the travel industry's highest standards, including participation in the USTOA's Travelers Assistance Program, which protects consumer payments up to \$1 million if the company goes out of business.

As a voice for the tour operator industry for 40 years, USTOA also provides education and assistance for consumers and travel agents. For more information on USTOA and its member companies, visit www.ustoa.com, or consult your travel agent.

Editor Note: Information was provided by individual companies and was correct at time of writing. All tours/packages subject to availability. International prices may vary from time of writing, based on currency fluctuations.

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