THE TTP PORTUGAL FALL RETREAT

Last January, we learned about the history of Portugal in California in Europe. We also learned that's where the first TTP International Retreat would be, in March.

It was so successful that we ran another in April. Everyone had such a terrific time that there's clamor for a three-peat this Fall.

As before, this is an intimate get-together of no more than a dozen TTPers to discuss the world in depth with me. And I might as well give you a warning up front.

In addition to learning more about the world than you thought possible in under a week, you run the risk of falling head over heels in love with Portugal. I describe it as utterly captivating, and once you are there you'll easily understand why. Every TTPer who was with us last Spring agrees.

Portugal is the authentic Europe, unknown and unspoiled. It's legendary for its weather, wine, and food. And for the friendliness of its people. I hope you'll join us. You'll never forget it.

Here's our schedule, a little different from the last two. In mid-October, the summer crowds are gone, the fall colors are peaking, and the weather beautifully crisp and clear. Enjoy the pictures!

THE TTP PORTUGAL FALL RETREAT
Thursday, October 09 - Wednesday, October 15
$1,950

Thursday, October 09

[Note: Everyone is responsible for being in Lisbon by Friday noon. You can get there however you want, but the United non-stop suggested is the easiest and quickest.]

Suggested: Leave home for Newark airport, connect to United 64, departing Newark at 8:15pm for Lisbon. TAP Portugal (a good airline) has an earlier flight, #104 departing Newark at 6:05pm arriving Lisbon 6am the next morning. US Air 738 leaves from Philly at 8:45pm arriving 8:50am.

For your flights, TTP recommends Spielman World Travel Service: john@spielmantravel.com - 240-423-7708. I've used John for 20 years and wouldn't use anyone else.

Friday, October 10

Arrive Lisbon, via e.g., UA at 8:20am. Be met at airport and transferred to our hotel, the Tivoli Sintra, in the center of the extraordinary World Heritage Site of Sintra, replete with a fairy tale castle, medieval fortress below it, and royal palace (with the twin cone towers):

You'll be welcomed at the Tivoli (right next to the Royal Palace) by Rebel (I'll be writing the Half-Full Report!). Rebel will host you for lunch, after which she'll guide you to explore the marvelous sights of historic Sintra. For the evening, Rebel and I host a Welcome Reception and Dinner at the Tivoli.

Saturday, October 11

We start with a breakfast briefing on the "Map of the Future" by yours truly, aided by Google Earth projections that can zoom into any location on earth. Afterwards, we hop on a train to Lisbon.

Lisbon is the oldest city in Western Europe, founded by the Phoenicians as *Allis Ubbo* (Safe Harbor) over three thousand years ago (1200 BC). There is so much history and charm here it's overwhelming. We'll visit the breathtaking Castelo de São Jorge (Castle of St. George) overlooking the city

Have lunch and a glass of wine at an open air café on the Rua da Prata...

...and while we are, reflect that archaeologists have excavated a 2,000 year-old Roman street

directly underneath us, with shops and cafés just like what we're enjoying right now. I told you Lisbon is old - a thousand years old by the time of Rome.

Then we head to nearby Belém and the World Heritage Site of the Monastery of Jerónimos and the Torre de Belém.

The *Torre* or Tower of Belém is the landmark of Portugal, built in the early 1500s at the height of Portugal's great Age of Exploration.

It's across from the Jerónimos Monastery, one of the most magnificent buildings in Europe and housing the tomb of Portugal's greatest explorer, Vasco da Gama. It is a solemn moment to be in the presence of such epic history.

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The train will take us back to Sintra, where we have dinner at Rebel's and my favorite Sintra restaurant, tucked away hidden from most visitors.

Sunday, October 12

During a sumptuous Sunday Brunch at the Tivoli, we continue our Map of the Future world discussion. After solving at least some of the world's problems - and America's with elections being three weeks away - we're off to the extraordinary medieval fortress town of Obidos.

Less than 60 miles north of Sintra is one of Europe's most completely preserved medieval cities within castle walls. It's renowned for its wine, local firewater, and... chocolate! We'll have a ball wandering through its ancient alleys and sampling its myriad of shops and cafés. It's also a photographic wonderland, as you can see in the link.

After dinner at one of Obidos' utterly charming restaurants, we return to Sintra and the Tivoli.

Monday, October 13

The world is a very big place, and we continue our breakfast briefing discussion of it this

morning. Afterwards, it's time to see why Sintra is so justifiably world famous.

First stop is the Palacio de Monserrate. I'm a fan of it not only because of its incredible architecture and gardens, but that it was created and built by a capitalist with money he earned himself - Francis Cook, a 19th century English businessman - not some king or "royalty" with money stolen from the peasantry.

It is uniquely captivating:

Next is the Quinta de Regaleira. It is just as astounding as Monserrate - and it was also created and built with capitalist money of a Brazilian-Portuguese merchant, Antonio Monteiro. The massive home is fabulous, but it is the gardens that will take your breath away, with its secret grottoes, waterfall lake, and mysterious Initiation Well.

We'll have to tear you away, but you simply have to witness one of Europe's most astonishingly spectacular castles, the magical fairy-tale Pena Palace perched on a peak overlooking an incredible vista.

Just below it is the Castle of the Moors first built in the 8th century and captured by Christian knights in 1147. We'll explore its ramparts (notice Pena Palace in the background) -

And then descend to the famous *Lawrence's Hotel* for afternoon tea. This is where Lord Byron stayed in 1809 to write his poem *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*, in which he praised Sintra as a "glorious Eden... palaces and gardens rising in the midst of rocks, cataracts and precipices; convents on stupendous heights."

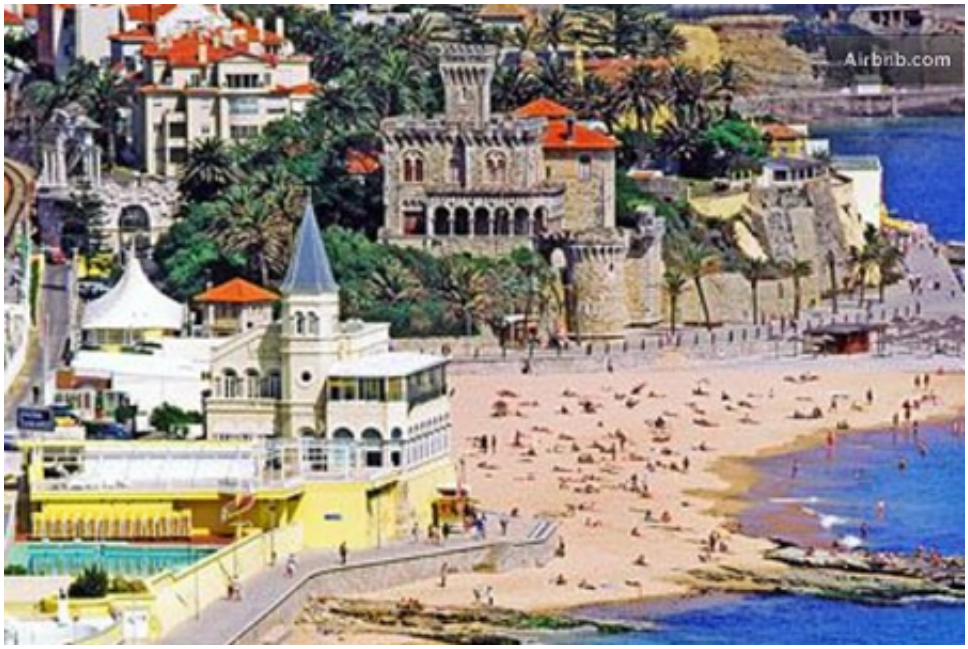
We'll relax at the end of the day at the Tivoli to refresh ourselves, then have dinner at a marvelous local restaurant owned by a friendly Portuguese family.

Tuesday, October 14

We wrap up our Map of the Future briefing at breakfast this morning, then hop over the hill of Sintra to the jewel of the Portuguese Riviera, Cascais. On our way, we first stop at Cabo da Roca, the westernmost point of land in Europe.

Cascais is Portugal at its most charming and captivating, with picture post card scenes everywhere:

It's teeming with cool and quaint little shops and stores the ladies will love. Rebel will take them there, while I'll take the guys to O'Luian's Irish Pub for a pint of Guinness or Kilkenny. Then we'll meet up for a walk past all the pocket beaches along the Cascais-Estoril Promenade:



We'll have our Farewell Dinner at a restaurant perched on the cliffs just above Cascais. I took Rebel there once, and this is the twilight view we had - and you will have:

We'll probably talk into the night, celebrating our incredible time in Portugal, our new-found friendships, and our discovering possibilities for the future.

Wednesday, October 15

We have to say goodbye. We transfer to the airport for the United flight 65 departing at 10:15am, arriving Newark at 1:35pm and connections to home.

Or is it goodbye? For those wishing to linger, we can arrange for you to visit the Shrine of Fatima, the World Heritage Sites of Batalha and Alcobaça, plus that of Coimbra and Tomar. There's also the World Heritage sites of romantic Porto and the world famous wine growing region of the Douro Valley. It's astounding how much there is in little Portugal.

So, as you can see, this is a special and unique experience. If you want to be one of the dozen TTPers to enjoy it, let us know - info@tothepointnews.com or call 202-656-3008. Better do so quickly. If you have any questions, we'll be happy to answer them.

That cost of $1,950 includes just about everything (except adult beverages!) from your arrival in Lisbon on Friday morning October 10 to departure on Tuesday morning October 15 - transfers, accommodation, meals, excursions, and picking my brain as much as you want. Let Miko know if you want to be with us. Soon. Remember, there can only be a dozen of you, max. I hope you'll be among them.

Registering for the TTP Portugal Fall Retreat
October 10-15, 2014

*The per person cost is $1,950. This includes, from arrival in Lisbon on October 10 to departure on October 15, all transfers, double-occupancy accommodation, meals with our group, ground transportation, excursions and entrance fees. It does not include airfare to Portugal, adult beverages (beer, wine, booze), and personal expenditures such as laundry or Internet fees.

*Single-occupancy supplement surcharge (what the hotel charges us) is $260.

*Payment in full is required upon registration. Refund in full only upon acceptance of qualified replacement.

*Payment may be made either by check or by Visa/Mastercard.

Please send check made out to To The Point, Inc. to:

To The Point
5810 Kingstowne Center Drive
Suite 120-333
Alexandria VA 22315

Please call us at 202-656-3008 to register and pay by either check or credit card.

If you have any questions, again, call us at 202-656-3008. See you in Portugal!

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