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*The Church of the Holy Trinity and Mount Kazbegi in Georgia's High Caucasus
(This photo, by Lidia Ilona, and all other illustrations free of copyright c/o Wikimedia Commons)*

“CAUCASUS TRIO”: ARMENIA – GEORGIA - AZERBAIJAN

A 17-day tour, from Thursday, September 6, to Saturday, September 22, 2018.

Explore the three exotic countries in the Caucasus Mountains, between the Black and Caspian Seas: Azerbaijan, featuring fascinating picturesque historical cities such as Baku and Yerevan, archaeological sites such as the Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape, monasteries and churches of high architectural as well as religious significance, including Echmiadzin, Armenia's "Vatican," and the stunning mountain scenery of the High Caucasus, its snow-capped peaks as well as foothills and valleys. Six UNESCO World Heritage Sites are included in our program, and so are excellent hotels and food - and very good wine too! The tour is escorted by Jacques R. Pauwels, PhD, author of 'Beneath the Dust of Time: A History of the Names of Peoples and Places' (London, 2009), who will give background lectures on the history of the region to complement the information dispensed by expert local guides.

**Tour cost from Toronto, including all airport taxes and fees, and based on double occupancy: \$5,795
“Land only” from Baku to Yerevan: \$4,245 - Single room supplement: \$885**

PROPOSED ITINERARY:

(MEALS: L = LUNCH, D = DINNER)

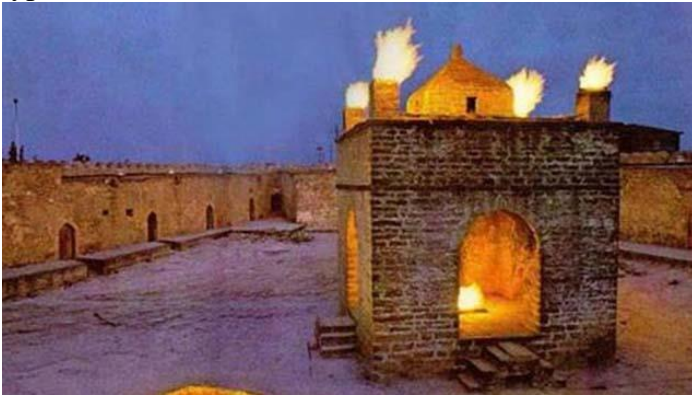
Day 1 – Thursday, September 6: Early evening departure from Toronto to Frankfurt with Lufthansa Airlines. Dinner and a light breakfast will be served on board.

Day 2 – Friday, September 7: (D) Morning arrival in Frankfurt, and connecting flight to Baku, Azerbaijan. Evening arrival in Baku, and transfer to the 4-star Hotel Central Park (www.centralpark.az). Dinner in the hotel.

Day 3 – Saturday, September 8: (D) After breakfast, we explore the historical city centre, known as “Old Baku,” a UNESCO World Heritage Site, with mostly medieval monuments such as the Synyg Gala Minaret, the walls and towers, the Multani and Bukhara Caravanserais, Hajji Gayyib Bathhouse, and the Shirvanshahs Palace and Maiden Tower (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/958>). The more modern parts of the city reflect European

influence introduced by the Russians, who conquered Azerbaijan in the early 1800s and turned it into a “Paris of the East.” We also visit the History Museum of Azerbaijan as well as the Museum of Applied Folk Art. Dinner in the hotel or in a typical restaurant.

Day 4 - Sunday, September 9: (D) Excursion to the Absheron Peninsula, jutting out into the Caspian Sea, the site of the world's first petroleum production, where rusting 19th-century oil derricks still dot the landscape. On to Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape, another UNESCO World Heritage Site, a collection of over 4,000 petroglyphs depicting hunters and dancers, animals, and flowers of pre-historic times (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1076>). In the afternoon we visit the Ateshgah Temple of ancient Zoroastrian fire worshippers and its adjoining museum complex (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ateshgah_of_Baku) as well as the “burning mountain” of Yanar Dag, where natural gas fires blaze continuously; this phenomenon caused the land be known as Azerbaijan, “land of fire” (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yanar_Dag). Dinner in the hotel or in a typical restaurant.



< *Atesgah Fire Temple*

Day 5 – Monday, September 10: (D) Departure from Baku after breakfast. We motor northwest through a stark, arid landscapes dotted with mud volcanoes, to the ancient town of Sheki. En route we will visit sights such as the mysterious Diri Baba Mausoleum; the ancient Silk Road town of Shemakha; Yeddi Gumbaz (“Seven Tombs”), the royal tombs of the last Shirvan Khans. Arrival in Sheki, a city founded almost 3

millennia ago and resembling an amphitheatre surrounded by forests of oak trees and the snow-capped mountains of the Caucasus Mountains. We visit the Khan's Palace, an exquisite example of Islamic architecture, before heading to the 4-star Hotel Issam for dinner and overnight (<http://www.en.issam.az>).

Day 6 – Tuesday, September 11: (D) This morning we enjoy a tour of Sheki’s bazaar, where all sorts of handicrafts, souvenirs, spices, etc. are for sale. Then we travel through the foothills of the Greater Caucasus range to the Georgian border at Lagodekhi. We enter Georgia’s Kakheti Province, the heartland of viticulture in a country that is famous for its wine; in fact, it is here in the Caucasus that wine-making originated some 7,000 years ago. Visits to a winery (with a wine tasting and sampling of delicious local dishes), Gremi Monastery, the Royal Citadel, the Church of the Archangels, and Tsinandali, a beautiful historic estate and former centre of Georgian intellectual life. Dinner and overnight in Hotel Royal Batoni in Kvareli (www.batoni.ge).

Day 7 – Wednesday, September 12: (D) This morning we visit one of the most popular tourist attractions of Georgia, the pretty town of Sighnaghi, famous for wine, carpets, and historical monuments, including ancient fortifications, Georgian Orthodox churches and monasteries. On to David Gareja, a truly unique monastery complex consisting of hundreds of cells, churches, chapels, refectories and living quarters carved out of the rocky slopes of Mount Gareja, dating back to the 6th century and decorated with superb frescoes (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/David_Gareja_monastery_complex). Late afternoon arrival in the Georgian capital, Tbilisi. Dinner and overnight in the 4-star Holiday Inn.

Traditional architecture of Sighnaghi >

Day 8 - Thursday, September 13: (D) Morning sightseeing tour of the Georgian capital, with as



highlights the famous Tbilisi Baths, Rustaveli Avenue with much 19th-century European-style architecture, Metekhi Church and the historic Metekhi Plateau, Narikala Fortress, the Holy Trinity Cathedral, commonly known as Sameba, and Anchiskhati, the city's oldest church. Next door is the city's oldest café, Café Gabriadze, where we enjoy a coffee break. The afternoon is free to shop or explore the city on your own, or perhaps to visit the famous Tbilisi Baths. This evening, dinner and folklore show in a traditional Georgian restaurant!

Day 9 - Friday, September 14: (D) After breakfast we leave Tbilisi and follow Georgia's Military Highway to the country's old capital, Mtskheta, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, famous for its ancient monuments and a UNESCO World Heritage Site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/708>). Visit to Jvari Monastery, dating back to the 6th century, and 11th-century Svetitskhoveli Cathedral, the holiest church of Georgia. After Ananuri fortress and beautiful Zhinvali Lake, we penetrate the Greater Caucasus Mountains and head via the mountain resort of Gudauri to the town of Kazbegi, nestled in a valley surrounded by towering mountains. Dinner and overnight in a very special hotel with a rather pedestrian name, 'Rooms' (<http://roomshotel.ge>).

Day 10 - Saturday, September 15: (L) Morning exploration of the Greater Caucasus by jeep! The absolute highlight will be our visit to the Church of Holy Trinity, featuring what is possibly the most spectacular site in Georgia, with a backdrop of Caucasian peaks such as Mount Kazbegi (5033m). Also visit to a winery renowned for using the ancient grape variety called "Chinuri," and group lunch. Heading south again in the afternoon, we stop in the town of Gori, where Ioseb Jugashvili, better known as Joseph Stalin, was born in 1878, for a visit to the Stalin-Museum to find out how he is remembered in his native country. Arrival at our hotel in Tbilisi, the Ramada, and free evening.

Six UNESCO World Heritage Sites visited on this tour:

Baku's historical city centre, "Old Baku" (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/958>) 2. Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1076>) 3. Mtskheta, one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world, famous for its ancient monuments (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/708>) 4. The Monastery of Haghpat, a perfect example of medieval Armenian architecture (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/777>) 5. Cathedral and Churches of Echmiadsin, Armenia's "Vatican" (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1011>) 6. Eghard Monastery, carved out of a huge monolithic rock, and the surrounding Azat River Gorge (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geghard>).

Day 11 - Sunday, September 16: (L+ D) After breakfast we drive to the Georgian-Armenian border at Sadakhlo and transfer to an Armenian coach and guide. Driving through the picturesque Canyon of the Debed River, we visit the Monastery of Haghpat, a perfect example of medieval Armenian architecture and Armenia's first UNESCO World Heritage Site (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/777>). After a group lunch, continue to Dilijan National Park, a very attractive region of lakes, forests and peaceful villages known as "Armenia's Little Switzerland." Visits to the picturesque town of Dilijan and to the Goshavank, another famous monastery in a beautiful natural setting. Dinner and overnight in a 4-star hotel.

Day 12 - Monday, September 17: (D) After breakfast, tour of Lake Sevan, one of the biggest and most beautiful in Armenia, situated at an altitude lake of nearly 2,000m above sea level, including a visit to 9th-century Sevanavank Monastery. After the lunch break, we drive to Yerevan and enjoy a panoramic tour of the Armenian capital, with sights such as historic Victory Park, featuring a huge monument of Mother Armenia; Republic Square, a fine example of Soviet-era architecture and town planning; Northern Avenue, a popular pedestrian shopping avenue; Freedom Square with the imposing Opera; Sculpture Park; and the Cascade, a complex of water fountains running down a hillside. There will also be an opportunity to explore the Vernissage Arts & Crafts Open Air Market, the biggest in the Caucasus, where all kinds of artifacts, carpets, jewelry and other typical Armenian souvenirs are for sale. Dinner and overnight in the 4-star Historic Yerevan Hotel (<http://www.tufenkianheritage.com/en/accommodation/historic-yerevan-hotel>).



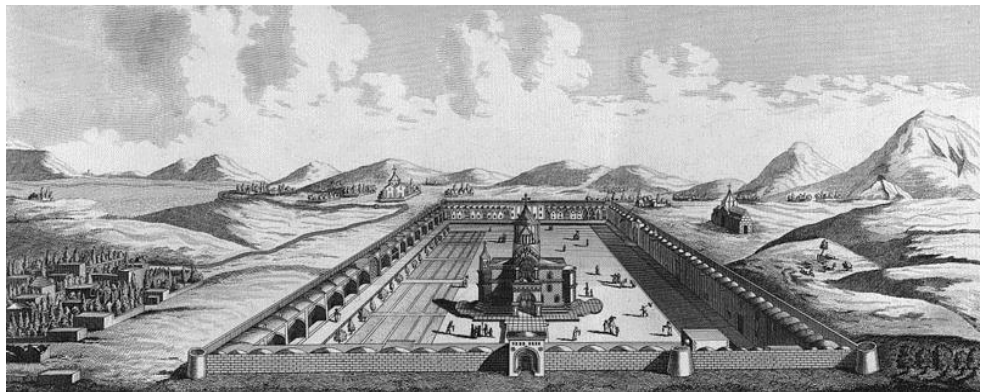
< *Khor Virap Monastery and Mount Ararat*

Day 13 - Tuesday, September 18: (L+D) After breakfast we drive to Khor Virap Monastery, an important pilgrimage site for Armenians situated in the south of Armenia and within view of magnificent, snow-capped Mount Ararat (5,165m), looming just across the border in Turkey. On through the Ararat Plain, the country's agricultural heartland, full of vineyards and apricot orchards, to the Monastery of Noravank, an architectural gem nestled among cliffs overlooking a deep gorge. Group lunch, then on to the village of Areni, in; it was here that viticulture

originated during the Neolithic, at least 6 to 7,000 years ago, and of course we visit a winery and enjoy a wine tasting. Dinner and overnight in the 3-star Hotel Mina in the town of Goris (<http://www.minahotelgoris.com>).

Day 14 - Wednesday, September 19: (L) Morning visit to Tatev Monastery of Tatev, reached via the world's longest aerial tramway (5.7 km), built by the Swiss in 2010. Tatev is the biggest monastery in Armenia, located on a rocky peninsula more than 100 meters above the Vorotan River; according to tradition, the relics of the Apostles Peter and Paul, were placed under the dome's supporting pillars. Group lunch in a local restaurant. In the afternoon we visit Zorats Karer (a.k.a. Karahunj), an enigmatic site known as Armenia's Stonehenge, a 7,500-year old circle of stones that may have been the world's first astronomical observatory. Then we return to Yerevan for overnight in the Imperial Palace Hotel (<http://hotelimperial.am>). No group dinner.

Day 15 - Thursday, September 20: (L+D) Excursion to Armenia's "Vatican," Holy Echmiadzin, a UNESCO World Heritage Site featuring the world's earliest Christian churches, including Echmiadzin Mother Cathedral, i.e. the mother church of the Armenian Church, originally built by Saint Gregory the Illuminator in 301-303AD, when Armenia had just become the first officially Christian state in the world (<http://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1011>). We also visit St. Hripsime Church, built in the 7th century, another masterpiece of early medieval Armenian architecture, and the impressive ruins of Zvartnots Cathedral. Returning to Yerevan after a group lunch in a country restaurant, we visit Erebuni Fortress, the History Museum of Armenia, and, if time permits. Matenadaran, one of the world's richest collections of ancient illuminated manuscripts. This evening, dinner and folklore show.



Artist's impression of "Armenia's Vatican": Echmiadzin Mother Cathedral.

< *The superb Greco-Roman Temple of Garni*

Day 16 - Friday, September 21: (L) Excursion to the ancient Greco-Roman temple of Garni, constructed in the 1st century AD but amazingly well preserved and still featuring a peristyle of Ionic columns. The sanctuary, whose adjoining baths have fine mosaics, was allegedly dedicated to the God of Sun, Mithras. On to Geghard Monastery, carved out of a huge monolithic rock, where the Holy Lance that pierced the body of Christ was said to be kept. The monastery and surrounding Azat River Gorge, one of Armenia's major tourist sites, are classified as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Geghard>). Also visit to a local home, where we will have lunch and enjoy traditional Armenian "lavash" bread being made in a "tonir" oven. Return to Yerevan and free evening, making it possible to go to bed early in view of the very early airport transfer the next morning.

Day 17 - Saturday, September 22: Transfer to Zvartnots Airport in time for the 4:25AM departure of our flight to Toronto, via Vienna, arriving in mid-afternoon.

Tour cost from Toronto, including all airport taxes and fees, based on double occupancy: \$5,795
"Land only" from Baku to Yerevan: \$4,245 - Single room supplement: \$885

Included in the price are:

- Flights from Toronto to Baku and back from Yerevan, with Lufthansa and Austrian Airlines, Aeroplan partners.
- Accommodation in first-class/4-star hotels (except in Goris, where there are only 3-star properties), based on double occupancy (single supplement: \$885).
- Most meals: breakfast daily, all but three dinners, and six lunches, plus in-flight meals on days 1-2 and 7.
- Overland transportation by private coach and occasionally jeeps.
- All visits and sightseeing as outlined in the itinerary, including admission to museums and monuments mentioned.

Not included:

- Beverages such as wine, beer and mineral water with dinners and lunches, and meals other than those outlined above.
- All expenses of a personal nature.
- Gratuities for local drivers and guides, estimated at a total of \$70.
- Visa fees, see below.
- Travel insurance is available on an individual basis, as the insurance companies require personal information (age, health status, etc.) before issuing a policy.

VISAS:

- (1) Azerbaijan: a visa may be obtained upon submission to Pauwels Travel of a high-quality/coloured scanned passport copy and payment of a fee of \$35 US.
- (2) Georgia: no visa is required for Canadians.
- (3) Armenia: visa to be issued upon entering the country, at a fee of \$7 US.



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WONDERFUL FOOD!

Azerbaijan cuisine, similar to Turkish and Iranian cuisine:

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Azerbaijani_cuisine

Georgian cuisine: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgian_cuisine and

<http://www.seriousseats.com/2015/10/introduction-to-georgian-food-must-try-dishes.html>

Georgian wine: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Georgian_wine

Armenian cuisine: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armenian_cuisine

Armenian wine: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Armenian_wine

APPLICATION FORM

Please book _____ seat(s) on the "Caucasus Trio" departing September 6 – 22, 2018.

Enclosed is my/our deposit of _____ (\$750.00 person, *plus* insurance premium if taken.)

Please indicate with an X if you intend to travel on Group flights _____ or Land only _____.

Deposit and insurance premium, if taken, are due with registration. You will be invoiced for an interim payment of \$1000.00 and the balance due 45 days prior to departure.

WE REQUIRE A COPY OF YOUR PASSPORT (INFORMATION PAGES ONLY) VALID 6 MONTHS AFTER TOUR DATE TO BE SENT WITH YOUR APPLICATION FORM.

Name as on Passport. Indicate the appropriate title before each name (Mr., Mrs., Miss, Dr., Ms.)

NAME(S): _____

If applicable, give your commonly used first name as you would like it to appear on your name tag: (e.g. "Liz" for "Mary Elizabeth") _____

ADDRESS: _____

Postal Code: _____ PHONE: _____ (Email) _____

If traveling alone, is a single room required: YES _____ NO _____.

If sharing, what is your bed preference: twin _____ double _____.

SPECIAL REQUESTS: (Dietary, special physical needs, frequent flyer number, etc.) Please list here so we can do our best to assist you. Please be advised that due to airline policies, individual seat selection cannot be guaranteed.

Insurance - Please call the office for premiums then record on application form and add amount to deposit.

I/we would like to purchase (please check and record your rate):

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Name: _____ Date of Birth: _____

All-inclusive Package _____ Non-medical Package _____ Other _____

Decline Insurance _____ (Please sign here if you decline the insurance).

PAYMENT:

Cheque payable to Pauwels Travel Visa Mastercard American Express

Amount Paid: _____ Card Number: _____

Expiry: _____ Security Code: _____ Signature: _____

***I/we agree to the terms and conditions attached to the program, have indicated our insurance choice, indicated any special requests and included payment*.**

Signature(s) _____ Date: _____

Please forward this completed form, copy of passport and payment to:

PAUWELS TRAVEL BUREAU LTD.

95 Dalhousie Street, Brantford, Ontario N3T 2J1

Tel: 519-753-2695 / 519-756-4900 Fax: 519-753-6376

Email: tours@pauwelstravel.com

Terms & Conditions

RESERVATIONS AND DEPOSITS:

Reservations should be made as early as possible to ensure the departure of your choice. A deposit of \$750.00 required at the time of registration. Your reservation is confirmed upon receipt of your deposit and registration form. No reservations will be accepted without a signed application form.

REFUND OF UNUSED ARRANGEMENTS:

Because the rates of Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. are based on group participation, no refund can be made for any tour accommodation or tour service or tour feature not taken. If cancellation occurs while the tour is in progress, no refund can be made for the tour portion not taken. We strongly suggest that to allow for any unexpected contingencies, you purchase the all-inclusive insurance.

CANCELLATION POLICY:

Refund of deposit is made if cancellation is received in writing by Pauwels Travel Bureau Ltd. more than 90 days prior of the departure date of the tour less a \$500.00 non-refundable administrative fee per person. For cancellation received in writing 90 days prior or less the following cancellation charges apply:

90 days to 61 days before departure: 25% of tour cost

60 to 31 days before departure: 50% of tour cost

Within 30 days prior to departure: 100% of tour cost

RESPONSIBILITY:

The acceptance of the initial service to be provided under the tour shall be considered an acceptance by the tour member of those conditions. We also reserve the right to decline, to accept or retain any person as a member of the tour. We reserve the right without notice, to withdraw any part or all of the tour. Factors such as airline schedule changes, hotel overbookings, inclement weather, travel warnings by the Canadian Government etc. may necessitate changes in the itinerary. There may also be other circumstances in which changes become necessary or advisable.

By commencing the tour, I agree to the release and agreement as included below.

RELEASE & AGREEMENT:

By placing my deposit and commencing the tour I understand and agree to the following:

1. That all tours are delivered in conjunction with other service providers, including but not limited to travel agent and booking services, airlines, hotel and accommodation providers, transportation providers including but not limited to coach, train and ferry services, restaurant providers, and local guides. We shall not be held responsible for the failure by any person or company to render any transportation, lodging or other travel service to be provided on the tour. All hotel, transportation and other travel services are provided subject to all the terms and conditions under which they are offered to the public generally.
2. I know that tour programs include walking, and may including hiking and fitness programs that have potential hazardous activities associated with them. I should not participate prior to approval by my physician. I assume any and all other risks associated with these events included but not limited to falls, contact with other participants, the effects of the weather including high heat and/or humidity.
3. To release, indemnify and hold harmless Pauwels Travel Bureau and their affiliates (which term shall include parents, subsidiaries, officers, directors, shareholders, agents and employees of Pauwels Travel Bureau as well as Pauwels Travel themselves) (the "Released Parties") from, and agree not to sue the Released Parties for, any claims that I may have arising from, or in connection with, any personal injury, bodily injury, mental anguish, emotional distress, physical, property or other damage that I may suffer from any cause whatsoever related in any way to my participation in this tour. Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, I release, indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties from, and agree not to sue them for any personal injury, bodily injury, mental anguish, emotional distress, physical, property or other damage that I may suffer from the Released Parties' negligence other than from intentional or reckless acts by such parties. I further agree to release, indemnify and hold harmless the Released Parties from any and all acts of God, war (whether declared or undeclared), terrorist activities, incidents of politically motivated violence, illness or quarantine, strikes or government restrictions or the acts or omissions of any other agents over which the Released Parties have no direct or indirect control,

including, without limitation, airlines, railways, bus companies, hotels, shipping companies, guides and sub-contracted agents or tour operators. This release also includes activities not offered that may be considered risky. I further release any Tour Directors, bus drivers or other individuals involved in my tour.

4. That the air carrier's liability for loss of or damage to baggage or property, or for death or injury to person, is limited by their tariffs, or the Warsaw Convention, or both.
5. That Pauwels Travel Bureau shall have no liability or responsibility for me when I am absent from activities, such as visits to friends or relatives or during stay-ahead/stay-behind option periods if the stay-ahead/stay-behind period does not include the services of a Tour Director.
6. To abide by directions of my Tour Director or other leadership personnel during my tour. Failure to do so may result in my termination from tour immediately. I understand that to disobey such rules or directions is to waive the right to any refund, and that I may be sent home at my own expense. The participant and family undertake full financial responsibility for any damage caused by the participant and agree to pay his/her return home on the first available flight, should his/her behavior be deemed detrimental to the welfare of the group.
7. To abide by all local laws when in Canada and abroad, including those concerning drugs and alcohol. (Minors must have parents' permission to use alcohol even if the local law would otherwise permit them to.) I understand that if I abuse or disobey such laws, even unintentionally, I waive my right to a refund, and Pauwels Travel may send me home at my own expense. I also understand that should local authorities be involved, I will be subject to the laws of the country I am visiting.
8. That if I become ill or incapacitated, Pauwels Travel and its employees, or a designated chaperone may take any action they deem necessary for my safety and well-being, including securing medical treatment (at my own expense) and transporting me home. Pauwels Travel retains the right, in its sole discretion, to contact the traveller's parent(s) and/or guardian or emergency contact with regard to health issues or any matters whatsoever that relates to the traveller's tour. These rights transcend any and all privacy regulations that may apply. In the event of a medical emergency, Pauwels Travel will attempt to cause appropriate treatment to be administered, and the traveller authorizes Pauwels Travel to do so. Pauwels Travel, however, makes no warranty that it will be able to cause effective (or any) emergency treatment to be administered.
9. That Pauwels Travel may use any film likenesses taken of me and any of my comments while on a tour for future publication and also use my contact information for future Pauwels Travel communications.

A WORD ABOUT GROUP AIR:

Please note that when booking one of our air inclusive tours, Pauwels Travel has negotiated reduced rates with the airline that we are able to confirm and lock in up to 359 days before travel. While it is wonderful to share the savings and flexibility this provides with you our valued guests, the privilege does come with some restrictions. In some cases it may not be possible to collect frequent flyer miles, in some cases you may not be able to check in online 24 hours before travel or you may need to try checking in with your ticket number rather than your booking reference and, in **almost ALL cases we are not able to offer advanced seat selection.**

It is the airline that makes the live reservation and has control over the booking so it is their policy not ours that prevents us from assigning you specific seats. I assure you if a request is made it is followed up on by our staff when they submit the names to the airline 30- 60 days prior to departure. Calling us several days before you leave will not change this fact nor will getting upset with our staff.

If the ideal seat is an absolute must for you we suggest you book our tour land only and make your own air arrangements so you can better control the individual booking. Pauwels would be happy to assist you with that reservation at absolutely no additional charge. We will offer you the best fare we can find but note this can only be done once a tour is a guaranteed departure and the rules and booking conditions of the applicable airfare will apply.

We thank you in advance for your kind understanding of the above.

