

FYI Travel: Upgraded Club Med will focus on families

by Tom_Roebuck

In Mexico, Club Med's Ixtapa Pacific is currently undergoing a \$20 million transformation that will upgrade the resort's shared spaces and guest rooms, and suites will be introduced for the first time. Nestled on Mexico's Pacific coast, Club Med was the first resort built in the area in 1982 and spans 30 acres of beachfront property. The resort will open on Dec. 22 as an ideal spot for young families, with programs for infants and toddlers, the only Club Med in Mexico to do so. In March an additional 204 rooms will open for a total of 300 rooms, including 60 family suites.

OCEAN VIEW - Home to some of the best beaches in Mexico, Ixtapa lies within the area known as the Mexican Riviera. Club Med's upgraded resort there will be a family favorite. CNS Photo. Educational programs for kids of all ages offer engaging activities for them to learn about local endangered sea turtles and baby crocodiles, and even see them during certain seasons. Ixtapa Pacific's Baby Club Med program caters to infants from 4 to 23 months with a staff-to-child ratio of one-to-four. Children are divided into two groups, with special programs designed to suit a range of physical abilities. The youngest guests will learn games and watch puppet shows, and they'll even have a personal chef preparing fresh baby food from all-natural ingredients.

Parents with infants may access a 24-hour convenience room equipped with sterilizers, blenders and bottle warmers.

For children 2-3 years old there's Petit Club Med, featuring games, songs, arts and crafts, nap time and sports. There's also Mini-Club Med, catering to children 4-10, and Junior Med, exclusively for teens and 'tweens.

For more information or reservations, call 800-CLUB-MED or visit www.clubmed.com.

WALK THIS WAY

To mark its 25th season as purveyors of walking adventure vacations, The Wayfarers will make its South Africa debut in March and October 2008 with The Wonders of the Western Cape walk in the company of Christopher and Malle Hague, who have spent years planning the multifaceted, 12-day journey. The result is in-depth tours of a colorful, socially progressive country, starting in historic Cape Town. Included are overnight stays at the Bushman Kloof Wilderness Reserve and Madikwe Safari Lodge, open Land Rover game drives, bush walks, tours of the winery estate of Toka, Madikwe Game Reserve and Kirstenbosch Gardens, plus end-to-end exploration of the Western Cape.

Tours are scheduled to begin March 2 and Oct. 26, 2008, as well as March 8 and Nov. 1, 2009. Rates begin at \$7,895 per person.

Also this year, The Wayfarers is offering its Spectacular South Island treks to New Zealand on Feb. 6 and March 5, 2008.

The 12-day itinerary delves deeply into the region's breathtaking landscape with explorations of New Zealand's picturesque glaciers, fjords, rain forests, geysers, great lakes and raging rivers. Walkers will retrace the steps of Capt. Hook's 1770 landing, observe migrating whales at Kaikoura Peninsula, shop for jade at Hokitika and picnic beneath the Rob Roy Glacier. Rates for this walk begin at \$4,495. Dates for 2009 are Feb. 4 and March 4.

FYI: Walks average eight miles a day of moderate walking and climbing. Rates are double occupancy and include first-class accommodations for all nights, meals, all transfers, admissions, gratuities and more. Single supplements are available. Call 800-249-4620 or visit www.thewayfarers.com.

SEE LONDON IN A DIFFERENT LIGHT

The Draycott Hotel, located near Sloane Square in the heart of London, is offering a new package to brighten

up the dreariest of British seasons. The Winter Duck Tour and Ice Skating Package for a family of four includes a most unusual sightseeing experience. Rather than the typical double-decker bus excursion, guests are treated to a unique London Duck Tour around the capital's roads and waters in the amphibious DUKWs used to take the British troops ashore for the D-Day landings in World War II. In addition, guests receive tickets to the ice rink at the Natural History Museum, as well as a Deluxe Double and a single room, with complimentary full English breakfast, afternoon tea, champagne at 6 p.m. and hot chocolate before bed.

FYI: Offered from Nov. 20 through Jan. 6, the package is priced at \$995 per night. For reservations, visit www.draycotthotel.com or call 800-747-4942.

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