



Gary Sorensen
Gary's Travel Tips

Take a cruise for a no-fly vacation

People always ask me where they can go without having to hassle with airports, security lines and flying. A great option is driving to Los Angeles and taking a cruise. In the past, your choice for West Coast cruises was mostly limited to sailing the Mexican Riviera, but that has changed with new itineraries being added each year.

Have you dreamt of visiting the lush tropical islands of the South Pacific? If you have the time, a great cruise is an exotic 28-day Princess cruise from Los Angeles to Hawaii, Tahiti, Bora Bora, Moorea, Samoa and back to Los Angeles. It sails in March and October 2013 and includes stops at four of the Hawaiian Islands. It's a great way to see the South Pacific without the long overnight flights.

A shorter 14- or 15-day cruise will take you to the beautiful Hawaiian Islands with stops at four or five islands. You will spend four days cruising across the Pacific in each direction, but there is so much to do and, of course, so much food on the ship that people rarely get bored.

There are relatively new itineraries that take you from Los Angeles up the coast to Santa Barbara, Calif., where you can enjoy the seaside artistic town. The cruise then sails for San Francisco, sailing under the incredible Golden Gate Bridge. Some cruises spend the night in San Francisco, allowing you to enjoy two days there. Then it is on to San Diego and Ensenada, Mexico. This is known as a coastal cruise, and we have a group that leaves each fall, and we charter a bus to take everyone right from St. George to the port. It is sold out this fall, but you can already reserve a spot for 2013.

There are fewer sailings of the typical Mexican Riviera cruises, but there are still some of the 7-day cruises to Cabo San Lucas and Puerto Vallarta in Mexico. Carnival continues with the 3- and 4-day getaway cruises and Princess will also be starting some of them this winter, sailing to Ensenada, Mexico, and some to Catalina Island. These short cruises are an inexpensive way to experience cruising.

If you are willing to fly one way, that opens up many additional cruise itineraries from Southern California. You can sail to South America, around Cape Horn and back up to Fort Lauderdale. You can either fly home or possibly match up with a cruise back through the Panama Canal. Panama Canal cruises are usually 14 to 15 days and go one way through the canal. There is even a one-way 22-day cruise from Los Angeles to Sydney, stopping in Hawaii, Samoa, Fiji and Auckland, New Zealand. You would then just fly one way home from Sydney.

The port of Los Angeles is a 6- to 7-hour drive from St. George. You can pay to park at the port or go down a day early and stay at a hotel that

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The Irish Memorial on Grosse Ile quarantine island contains the names of more than 7,000 immigrants who died while on the island.
KATHLEEN CURRY / FOR THE SPECTRUM & DAILY NEWS

Discovering our Irish roots in QUEBIC CITY

By Kathleen Curry and Geoff Griffin

For The Spectrum & Daily News

Quebec City is an elegant place that feels like a European city right here in North America. You can see the huge Chateau Frontenac emerging over the cliffs, overhear locals speaking French, walk the cobblestone streets that trace back hundreds of years and feel the hold of a unique and thriving French-Canadian culture. It is also a place that preserves stories of immigrants who saw coming to this place in Canada as a hope, a new life or even a matter of their own survival. They were part of a wave of more than 1 million Irish who migrated to Canada and at one point, comprised nearly a quarter of the Canadian population.

Those immigrants gave us a connection to Quebec City that made it more than just a beautiful and historic place to visit. The city was also a place to learn about our Irish ancestors who had taken passage across the Atlantic to the New World. Here we were, Americans in a French-Canadian city tracing our Irish family history. Being able to follow the footsteps of our ancestors in the city they once called

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FOR INFORMATION

» **Quebec City Tourism:** www.quebecregion.com, (877) 783-1608.

» **Quebec Province Tourism:** www.bonjourquebec.com, 877-BONJOUR.

» **Centre d'archives de Quebec:** www.banq.qc.ca, (418) 643-8904.

» **Grosse Ile and the Irish Memorial National Historic Site:** www.pc.gc.ca, (888) 773-8888.

» **Croisieres (Cruises) Lachance:** www.croisiereslachance.com, 888-GROSSE-ILE.

» **Fairmont Le Chateau-Frontenac:** www.fairmont.com/lfrontenac-quebec, (866) 540-4460.



A 50-foot Celtic cross on Grosse Ile commemorates the Irish immigration to Quebec. PHOTO COURTESY OF GROSSE ILE NATIONAL PARK



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