



What is Gay, Lesbian, Transgender and Bisexual Travel?

Chicago, IL - Gay and Lesbian travel is no different than any other type of specialty travel. It is however, more than making sure you and your partner have a king size bed. It is also more than being near the local hot spots. It is COMFORT! Comfort for you from the moment the travel planning process begins.

The comfort level should begin with the travel professional you use. He or she must know and understand your needs, desires and in all cases budget. You should be comfortable with them, their knowledge of travel products and our lifestyles. There are specific things to consider, do you need to choose a gay friendly airline? One that supports the efforts of the Gay and Lesbian community would be nice. Be sure to choose a rental car company that counts you and your partner as joint drivers, saving you money! Of course, choose accommodations and destinations that are gay and lesbian friendly. Why give your money to a hotel that questions your sleeping arrangements and our lifestyle? Why patronize countries where homosexuality is frowned upon or even illegal?

Many "mainstream" companies are now courting the gay and lesbian dollar. Some are doing a good job at it. Unfortunately most feel that by becoming members of the International Gay and Lesbian Travel Association (IGLTA) this validates them as gay and lesbian friendly. They are slapping the word "pride" on mainstream products and marketing it to us. There are excellent gay owned or gay operated travel companies that cover the world. Cruise Alaska or the Caribbean on a chartered ship where even the entertainment is changed to accommodate our lifestyles. Explore Europe with a group of like-minded individuals! The world has become a small place and the only limit is your imagination.

Traveling with a group isn't your thing? Even more options can be opened up. You will be able to explore a country at your own pace; stopping at will and seeing the things that especially interest you. Is a driving trip to Tuscany more your style? It's very doable. A driving trip to Saudi Arabia, think again! Think, plan and think again! Plan your trip by what you want to do, what you want to explore and most of all by what you want to your memories to be!

Over the next few months I will be featuring a destination each month, please send me a city or country that interests you and I'll try to feature it. I also hope to answer some travel questions from you. Please feel free to e-mail me at travelman03@hotmail.com with any of your question, comments or concerns about the travel industry. I will make every attempt to include them in this column and try to answer your questions via e-mail when inclusions are not possible.

Bon Voyage!

Gary