



International Travel and
Hosting Fellowship



Connections October 2025 ITHF now has 1022 members



Greetings, ITHF Members,

It's hard to believe three months of our new Rotary year have already flown by! Our volunteer teams—Membership, Virtual Travel, Tours, Taiwan Convention, Marketing and Promotions, Board Members, Vice Presidents, and Advisors—have been working diligently to create meaningful ways for us all to connect and grow through our fellowship.

A special thank-you goes to our Tours Committee for their excellent planning of new group travel opportunities. And heartfelt thanks to each of you for your energy and support in making ITHF stronger—whether by volunteering, traveling, hosting, or joining group adventures.

Please remember to visit our website, ITHF.org, share your suggestions, volunteer for a committee, or reach out with any questions about the fellowship.

I am especially excited to continue building friendships and learning about new cultures as I journey with ITHF members from USA, Brazil and Canada, as well as Rotary Exchange students from around the world currently hosted in Brazil. This October, my travels will take me to an adventure guided by Brazilian ITHF VP and board member Alonso Campoi. Galapagos, in Ecuador and Machu Picchu in Peru—experiences I look forward to sharing with you.

I hope to see many of you online, in person, and at next year's Convention in Taipei. And if your travels bring you through South Florida, do contact me—I'd be delighted to meet. "Mi casa es su casa".

With warm regards,

Ligia Corredor

President, ITHF 2025–2027

Together we Unite for Good through the Magic of Rotary.

Important Notices

The tour to Galapagos and Machu Picchu is now sold out.

There is a revised itinerary for the trip to Kerela, India. See below. Deadline for registration is now **NOVEMBER 15**.

Virtual Tour Committee Update

Anyone who would like to be an active volunteer on this Committee should contact Chair Alicia Ruiz-Orbin at rorbina@ptd.net.

The Virtual Tour presentations for the rest of 2025 include:

October 24 and 25 - Tour information on the Jan 2026 Tour to Kerela.

Early December - Holiday Coffee and Connections.

Alicia Ruiz-Orbin, ITHF VTC Chair

Phone # 610-392-5134

ITHF Membership Committee Report for Connections October 2025

ITHF MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE PRODUCES PROMOTIONAL PRESENTATION FOR PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS

-By Olurotimi Samuel Adeleye

The ITHF Membership Committee produced a creative slide presentation for use in enhancing our promotion efforts to ITHF's prospective members.

The presentation, which consists of seventeen slides, includes discussion of the meaning of Rotary fellowships, what ITHF is all about, making ITHF hosting connections, ITHF's group tours, and other ways to get in on the fun with ITHF activities.

The presentation points out that ITHF is one of the largest fellowships of Rotary International with the mission to stimulate connections and cultural sharing through contacts, hosting, and travels.

The slides emphasize that many ITHF members are happy to host visiting ITHF members. It explains that hosts can be found using the searchable ITHF members directory, which is available to all members.

The ITHF presentation also discusses opportunities to join committees, including the Virtual Travel Committee, Membership Committee, and Tour Committee.

The colourful presentation slides have very enticing photos for prospective audiences and readers, which adds aesthetic value to it.

If any ITHF members would like to utilize this presentation to promote our fellowship, please contact Andy Ullman at andyu-co@gmail.com. Any help you can provide to spread the word about ITHF will be greatly appreciated. Also, please consider joining the Membership Committee. We will be very happy to have your ideas and assistance!

PHOTOS AND STORIES ARE NEEDED FOR ITHF FACEBOOK PAGE

KERALA - KANYAKUMARI SOUTH INDIA TOUR

A JOURNEY THROUGH 'GOD'S OWN COUNTRY'

TOUR HIGHLIGHTS

Cultural Immersion:

Visit iconic landmarks including Meenakshi Temple, Vivekananda Rock Memorial, and ancient churches of Kochi.

Backwater Bliss:

Experience a traditional houseboat cruise through the tranquil backwaters of Alleppey.

Hill Stations & Tea Estates:

Breathe in the fresh mountain air of Munnar and explore its lush green tea plantations.

Wildlife Adventure:

Boat safari at Periyar National Park with a chance to spot elephants and more.

Art & Performance:

Witness Kerala's classical arts like Kathakali and Kalaripayattu in their traditional setting.

Spiritual Serenity:

Enjoy sunrise and sunset at Kanyakumari – the confluence of three seas.

Rotary Fellowship:

Interact with local Rotary Clubs and participate in service project visits.

Local Flavours:

Relish traditional Kerala cuisine, including banana leaf meals and a curated cooking session.

Comfortable Stays:

Stay in premium resorts and hotels offering comfort, hospitality, and stunning views.

Comfortable Travel:

Private A/C coach with professional escort from arrival to departure.



Tour Dates: January 19 to January 30, 2026



Minimum Participants: 20 | Maximum Participants: 30



Registration Deadline: October 15, 2025



Accessibility: Transport for disabled individuals available with separate vehicles at extra cost.



Day	Date	Meals	Daytime Activities	Night Stay
1	Mon. January 19, 2026	nan	Arrive Trivandrum Transfer to Hotel	Trivandrum Meet & Greet (Vivanta)
2	Tuesday. January 20	B,L,D	Exploring Thiruvananthapuram (Trivandrum): Discover the highlights of the capital city, including visits related to Rotary projects, showing their community impact	Trivandrum South Rotary Club (Vivanta)
3	Wednesday January 21	B,L	Engaging Experiences: Participate in a special Minister's visit (subject to confirmation) and immerse yourself in the captivating illusions and entertainment of the Magic Planet	Trivandrum (Vivanta)
4	Thursday .Jan.22	B,L	Journey to the Misty Hills of Ponmudi: Embark on a scenic day trip to Ponmudi, a charming hill station known for its winding roads & breathtaking views that capture your heart	Trivandrum (Vivanta)
5	Friday Jan. 23	B,L	Art History and Compassion: Experience the awe-inspiring Jadayu Earth Centre, home to the world's largest bird sculpture, and visit Gandhi Bhavan, a sanctuary where over 1200 individuals have found rehabilitation and hope.	Alleppy (Stirling Lake Palace, Alleppy)
6	Saturday Jan. 24	B,L	Enchanting Backwater Cruise in Alleppey: Glide along the serene backwaters of Alleppy on a traditional houseboat. Witness the unique lifestyle of the region and enjoy views of lush paddy fields stretching along the waterways.	Kochi (Radisson Blu)
7	Sunday . Jan.25,	B,L	Exploring the Historic Charm of Kochi; Discover the cultural tapestry of Kochi with visits to the historic Mattancherry Palace (Dutch Palace), the ancient Jewish Synagogue, the iconic St. Francis church, and conclude your day with captivating Kathakali Performance at a local theatre, showcasing Kerala's vibrant classical dance.	Kochi (Radisson Blu)

8	Monday January 26	B,L	Scenic Drive to Munnar's Tea Hills: Enjoy a picturesque drive from Kochi to Munnar, passing through stunning landscapes, cascading waterfalls at Cheeyapara and Valara, and the scenic beauty of Nariamangalam.	Munnar (Nature Zone Jungle Resort)
9	Tuesday January 27	B,L	Immersed in Munnar's Greenery: Explore the sprawling tea plantations that carpet the hills of Munnar. Visit the Eravikulam National Park, home to the Nilgiri Tahr, and experience the scenic beauty of Mattupetty Dam and its surroundings.	Munnar Nature Reserve Jungle Resort
10	Wednesday January 28	B,L	Adventure and Culinary Delights in Munnar: Embark on a refreshing trekking experience through the hills. Later, delve into the art of tea making and visit a Tea Museum and participate in an engaging cooking demonstration showcasing local flowers.	Munnar (Nature Zone Jungle Resort)
11	Thursday January 29	B,L	Journey to Thekkady's Wildlife Haven: Travel from Munnar to Thekkady via the scenic Gap Road, stopping at viewpoints to capture the beauty of the region, including glimpses of dams and plantations.	Thekkady (Green Woods)
12	Friday January 30	B,L	Wildlife Encounters in Thekkady: Experience the renowned Periyar National Park with a boat safari (subject to availability). Enjoy an opportunity to witness elephants in their natural habitat (if available), followed by a visit to a spice plantation and a captivating Kalarippayattu (traditional martial art performance).	Thekkady (Green Woods)
13	Saturday January 31	B,L	Transition to Kanyakumari via Madurai: Begin your journey towards Kanyakumari, with a stop in Madurai to meet local Rotarians and visit the magnificent Meenakshi Temple, a vibrant example of Dravidian architecture.	Kanyakumari (Sparsa)

14	Sunday February 1	B,L	Witnessing the Confluence in Kanyakumari Experience the breathtaking sunrise at Kanyakumari Beach, visit the Vivekananda Rock Memorial and the Thiruvalluvar Statue by boat, reflect at the Our Lady of Ransom Church, enjoy a leisurely beach walk, and witness the mesmerizing sunset at the confluence of three seas.	Kanyakumari (Sparsa)
15	Monday February 2	B,L,D	Cultural Exchange and Farewell in Kovalam: Travel back towards Trivandrum, with a meaningful interaction with students at the NVKS School at Atttoor. Enjoy a traditional lunch served on banana leaves, followed by a relaxing evening and a farewell dinner at the exquisite Taj Green Cove Resort	Trivandrum (Taj Green Cove Resort, Kovalam)
16	Tuesday February 3	B	Departure: After breakfast, you will be transferred to Trivandrum International Airport for your onward journey, filled with cherished memories of your Kerala and Kanyakumari exploration.	

Tour Package Rate:

USD 2,997 per participant sharing a double room.

USD 3,988 per person, based on single occupancy.

Notes:

1.Meals:B- Breakfast, L,-Lunch, D-Dinner

2 Incusions:

2.1 Accommodation for 15 nights

2.2 Daily Breakfasts on Day 02 to Day 16

2.3 Lunch on Day 02 to 15(Lunch on Day 06 will be in the Houseboat).

2.4 Dinner on Day 02 and Day 09. Farewell Dinner on day 15 at Taj Green Cove Resort, Kovalam

2.5 An enchanting Day Cruise with Lunch aboard a traditional Houseboat in Alleppey.

2.6 Services of a professional English-speaking Escort throughout your journey, from arrival to departure.

2.7 All transportation and sightseeing as per this itinerary in a comfortable AC 35-seater Coach.

2.8 All applicable toll charges, parking fees, driver's allowance (bata), fuel costs etc..

3 Exclusions:

3.1 Any meals not explicitly mentioned in the inclusions.

3.2 International or domestic airfare.

3.3 Any items or services not specifically listed under "Inclusions."

3.4 Porterage at hotels and airports, personal tips, insurance, laundry services, alcoholic beverages..

3.5 All expenses of a personal nature.

3.6 Any additional costs incurred due to unforeseen natural calamities or events beyond our control.

3.7 Any increase in government taxes/fuel costs that may lead to a rise in surface transportation costs.

4. Other guidelines

4.1 Airport pick-up and drop-off services during non-standard hours may attract additional charges.

4.2 Sightseeing schedules are subject to adjustments based on time constraints and weather conditions.

4.3 The content of this plan is subject to change. if unforeseen circumstances demand adjustments



Steve and Noko Yoshida's 10 Day Hiroshima Peace Tours May 11-21, 2026
THIS TOUR IS NOT YET FULL AND A FEMALE ROOM-MATE IS BEING SOUGHT BY A
FEMALE ITHF MEMBER WHO WANTS TO GO.

Please view this lovely video about the forthcoming tour https://youtube/ErR_XTLVLDO



“OHO” ITHF Japan tour, 11-21 May 2026 with Noko and Steve Yoshida.

The tour is open to Rotarians, their adult family members and friends.

We call this our “OHO” (pleasant surprise) tour, ie., Oishi (delicious), Heiwa (peace) and Onsen (Japanese hot springs). In other words, you will delight in Japanese cuisine, relax at Japanese hot springs, and be inspired by the message of peace in Hiroshima and sustainable living on Osakikamijima Island. And there is more.

Hiroshima is the home of my ancestors. So it was natural that I would visit. But what I found changed my life. Such a beautiful city, lots of trees and greenery, the inspiring peace museum, 7 rivers flowing through it, friendly and kind people, we decided to spend time in Hiroshima every year. Then we made a discovery. An island called Osakikamijima nearby in Japan's Inland Sea. It is one the most beautiful spots in Japan.

We met many interesting people on the island, who taught us about sustainable living from the land and sea. About working and sharing together in harmony with nature.

We want to share what we learned with our ITHF friends. So this is not just a sightseeing tour, although we will visit temples, historical sights and stay at Japanese inns with onsen (spa). It is engaging a peaceful, happy way of life that is unique and inspiring.

Tour dates: 11-21 May 2026

1. 11-15 May 2026. Four nights. Hiroshima City. Visit Peace Museum. Be inspired by A-bomb survivor. Tour the Miyajima Shrine. Bus and ferry to Osakikamijima.
2. 15-20 May. Five nights Seifukan Onsen. Culture and people tours of Osakikamijima.
3. 20-21 May. One night. Hiroshima Airport Hotel. Beautiful Japanese garden and Koi fish lake. Farewell dinner.

Price: US\$4,450 per person, double occupancy. Single supplement, add \$1,000. US\$500 per person to reserve your space. \$500 refund deadline and full price due February 1, 2026. Space priority in order of deposit received. Group limited to 12 persons.

Included: Accommodations, breakfast and dinner, transportation, English speaking guide, all taxes and fees.

For more information and to reserve your space contact: Carol Cartier, cartierca@hotmail.com

DO YOU HAVE A TALE TO TELL ABOUT MAKING A CONNECTION

Please share your tales with Sheila Hart, Editor of Connections at email: sheilahart@shaw.ca.
Articles should be no more than 250 words. Include a photo or two.
If your article is used in Connections, you will receive a one year membership in ITHF.

REQUEST FOR MEMBERS TO UPDATE INFORMATION IN THEIR PROFILE

Hello Members,

We kindly request you to take a moment to review your profile information for accuracy.

You can view and edit your profile by selecting **Profile → My Profile** from the menu.

Also, please upload your photograph.

Should you need any assistance with using the portal, feel free to reach out to me directly at ithfzoom@gmail.com OR my WhatsApp number +91 96330 69336

Wishing you joyful and meaningful connections! **Warm regards, Sivaprasad Pillai, ITHF Administrator**

MEMBER SUGGESTED TRIPS THAT MIGHT BE OF INTEREST TO ITHFers

Post Taipei convention cruise to Japan on Celebrity Millenium—June 19-July 1, 2026

This cruise was recommended by Cliff Brock. Mid and he are doing this cruise along with 2 other Rotarian couples from their club. Cliff wanted to expand this to our ITHF members. There is no group rate option available but if there are a number of bookings a special Rotarian get together will be hosted on the ship. Rotarian Mark Tuttle, (800) 647-2251 or m.tuttle@dreamvacations.com, can help with the arrangements. Prices change daily so consult Mark if you are interested.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5	Day 6
19-Jun	20-Jun	21-Jun	23-Jun	24-Jun	25-Jun
Tokyo, Japan Departs	Day at Sea	Kyoto (Osaka), Japan	Kochi, Japan	Day at Sea	Busan, South Korea

Day 7	Day 8	Day 9	Day 10	Day 11	Day 12
26-Jun	27-Jun	28-Jun	29-Jun	30-Jun	1-Jul
Nagasaki, Japan	Kagoshima, Japan	Day at Sea	Mt Fuji (Shimizu), Japan	Tokyo, Japan	Tokyo, Japan

Celebrity Millennium Prices Taxes included - No Perks Travel Protection and Gratuities are extra

	Category	Cost	Deposit	Onboard Credit
Veranda	V2	\$6,158.58	\$900.00	\$ 200.00
	V1	\$6,262.58	\$900.00	\$ 200.00
Oceanview	O1	\$5,762.58	\$900.00	\$ 100.00
	O2	\$5,654.58	\$900.00	\$ 100.00
Interior	I1	\$4,826.58	\$900.00	\$ 100.00
	I2	\$4,714.58	\$900.00	\$ 100.00

ITHF AT THE TAIPEI CONVENTION

Post-Convention ITHF Tour June 18-22, 2026: Taiwan Cultural Discovery

Explore the beauty, culture, and traditions of Taiwan with fellow ITHF members .

This tour promises to be a once-in-a-lifetime journey through the heart of Taiwan. There are still spaces available on this tour. Visit the ITHF website for the tour itinerary and details at

<https://www.ithf.org/events/taiwan-cultural-discovery-tour>

Contact: ITHF IPP Madu Bishnu - m_bishnu@yahoo.com +91 98313 93103; ITHF VP Michael Chen : michael.fh.chen@gmail.com

HOTEL BOOKINGS

We are pleased to announce that a **block booking of 20 rooms** has been secured for ITHF members attending the Taipei Convention at the United Hotel, Taipei **from June 11, 2026 to June 18, 2026**. We have negotiated favorable rates for your convenience:

- Small Room: NTD 6,000 (approx. USD 200)
- Big Room: NTD 7,500 (approx. USD 250)

Rates include breakfast, 10% service charge and 5% government tax.

Hotel Overview:

Located on Guangfu South Road, United Hotel offers a prime location in the heart of Taipei. It is adjacent to major landmarks including the Taipei Dome and Sun Yat-sen Memorial Hall, and within walking distance of Taipei 101 and the Xinyi Shopping District. Whether you're interested in cultural exploration, shopping, or simply relaxing, the hotel provides an ideal base.

Reservations will be handled on a **first come, first served basis**. To request a room, please send an email to our administrator Sivaprasad Pillai at pillai.sivaprasad@gmail.com with a cc to Simmy Ahluwalia simmyithf@gmail.com with the following details:

- Your full name and Email address
- Type of room requested (Small or Big) and type of beds twin, double, etc.

Once we have the booking and payment link from the hotel, we will send it to finalize payment and confirm your booking.

The ITHF DINNER WILL BE HELD AT THE SAME HOTEL ON JUNE 12, 2026

Celebrating Global Connections: ITHF Members Visit Iceland's North

As our unforgettable Rotary Friendship Exchange to Iceland came to a close, seven of us —6 also proud members of the International Travel and Hosting Fellowship (ITHF)—made one final, meaningful stop that turned out to be very memorable.

On our return to Reykjavík, we took a scenic detour to the northern town of Ólafsfjörður, where we had the pleasure of meeting Lara Steffansdóttir, the only ITHF member in Iceland. Lara is not only an active Rotarian but also the principal of Menntaskólinn á Tröllaskaga, a pioneering upper secondary school serving remote communities across North Iceland.

Even before we arrived, we heard from almost every Rotarian we met in Garðabær and Akureyri that she was not just as a forward-thinking educator, but also as a local hero, admired for her recent involvement in efforts to rescue a stranded whale near her town. By the time we arrived, we were excited to meet this passionate and dynamic leader in person.

Lara welcomed us with warmth and enthusiasm, giving us a personal tour of Menntaskólinn's cutting-edge facilities. We were absolutely blown away by the school's futuristic, student-centered approach to learning.

One of the most remarkable innovations we witnessed was the use of robotic telepresence devices—mobile robots that allow remote teachers or guest experts to “enter” the classroom virtually, move around, and interact with students in real-time. These devices are helping to bridge distances and bring specialized knowledge to even the most rural parts of Iceland.



From left to right – Michael Preis, Rotarian; ITHF members John and Cora Beking, Carol Cartier, Pete Burrell, Lara Steffansdóttir, Simmy and Pardeep Ahluwalia

Inside the school's collaborative learning spaces—no desks in rows here!”



The school environment itself is designed to break away from traditional norms. With open, collaborative spaces and project-based learning, students are encouraged to work in teams on real-world problems. The focus is not just on passing exams but on developing the skills and mindsets needed for the 21st century.

Perhaps most impressive is the school's forward-thinking curriculum, which includes subjects like:

Gaming as a learning tool, where students design and analyze games as part of broader lessons in storytelling, logic, ethics, and strategy.

Artificial Intelligence, not just as a concept but as a practical tool—students are taught how to use AI ethically and effectively in academic and professional settings.

This future-focused education model is preparing students not just for university, but for life in a rapidly evolving global society. Technology at Menntaskólinn is not a gimmick—it's a bridge to opportunity.

It's no wonder Lara is widely regarded as one of Iceland's most visionary educators, leading a school that's truly on the cutting edge.

This inspiring visit was a perfect reflection of what ITHF is all about—building global friendships through travel, service, and shared values. Our time with Lara reminded us that wherever we go in the world, we are never far from a fellow Rotarian—and never far from inspiration.

Simmy Ahluwalia, ITHF, President Elect 2025-2027

New members List (Up to 24 Sep2025)

<u>Name</u>	<u>Country</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Club</u>
Arun Vaddi	India	Karnataka	Bangalore Urban	Rotary Club of Bangalore
Katarzyna Bednarek Rajewska	Poland	Greater Poland Voivodeship	Poznań	Poznań Rotary Club
Ratnam Kajendrakumar	Sri Lanka	Northern Province	Kilinochchi	Rotary Club of Kilinochchi Town
Bill Falk	United States	Minnesota	Eden Prairie	E-club of Global Travelers
Eswar Kumar Reddy	United States	California	San Jose	E-Connect
Deborah Johnson	United States	United States Virgin Islands	Christiansted	Rotary Club of St. Croix
Michelle Benning	Canada	Alberta	Lloydminster	Rotary Club of Lloydminster
Jaroslav Lipinski	Poland	Masovian Voivodeship	Warsaw	Rotary Club Bi- alystok
Colleen Knight	United States	California	Brentwood	Concord-Diablo
Kurt Kowalchuk	Canada	Alberta	Calgary	Calgary
CAROL MACKEY	United States	Washington	Vancouver	Three Creeks Vancouver

This is not an ITHF Tour but might be of interest to some members.

Dwayne is an ITHF member.

“Return to the D-Day Beaches of Normandy”



Booking now for 2026! Beat any price increases!

July 12 – 18, 2026

September 21 - 27, 2026

Who can attend?

People of all walks of life and ages who have a desire to visit one of the most iconic World War II invasion sites. These Adventures are limited to 10-12 people. The itinerary is jam-packed with lots of exploring around the entire northern Normandy invasion area.

Look what all is included in this Adventure!

- **All GROUND transportation.** From Paris to Normandy, throughout the week, and return to Paris, we will all travel together comfortably and in style in a luxurious 16-passenger Mercedes motor coach with a professional driver.
- **4-STAR ACCOMMODATIONS** in classic 4-star hotel with each bedroom having a private bathroom.
- **Full BREAKFAST every morning** – a full range of breakfast options await you every morning.
- **EVENING MEALS** are also included to accommodate a wide range of tastes and variety.
- **D-Day History lessons** – tons of videos, articles, and photos sent to you via email for several months prior to your departure to better prepare you for your visit.
- **An expertly prepared, jam-packed itinerary** for all seven days to maximize your D-Day experience.
- **Professionally guided tours** throughout the entire D-Day invasion area of Normandy.
- **All entry fees are taken care of** at historic sites, museums, and cinemas.
- **Jam packed days of touring and exploring the entire area**, including several museums, all five Beaches and Point du Hoc, Bayeux, Pegasus Bridge, several German Gun Batteries, the Mulberry “B” Harbor, St. Mere Eglise, the American Cemetery, and much, much more
- **Concierge services** by Dwayne Lee. Assistance in booking flights, hotel arrangements, and sight-seeing options in the Paris area.

What does this Adventure cost?

Pricing for this Overlord Adventure has been reduced!

Pricing for this Adventure is now only \$4,450 pp.

Please note: Because there are so many options for air travel, airfare is not included in the Adventure price. To reserve your spot, a deposit of \$750 pp is due at registration.

To reserve your D-Day Adventure spots, contact:

Dwayne Lee, Historian/Author/Guide/Professional Photographer

www.OverlordAdventures.net

Email: OverlordAdventures@att.net

Phone/Text: 817.300.4477

Overlord Adventures is a private enterprise designed by Dwayne Lee. The “Return to the D-Day Beaches” Adventure is the flagship tour of Overlord Adventures. We provide a fantastic week-long travel Adventure for groups of up to twelve guests touring the entire D-Day invasion site in the Normandy, France area.

Discounts available to all U.S Military Veterans.