



International Travel and
Hosting Fellowship



Connections December 2025 ITHF now has 1103 members

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

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

Tour to Kerela-Kanyakumari in Southern India in January 2026 Cancelled

We regret that the ITHF Tour to Southern India has been cancelled due to insufficient registrants.

Do you want to join an ITHF trip but need a room-mate. Don't be shy.

Let the trip organizer know and arrangements can be made to publish the request in Connections. Great friendships have developed by sharing a room.

Message from President Ligia Corredor

Six months into our 2025–26 Rotary year, our ITHF Fellowship continues to flourish.

Membership continues to grow, opening even more opportunities for meaningful friendships and global connections. Our Membership Committee has been actively engaging both new and longtime members across Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America, strengthening our worldwide network.

Our Travel Committee remains vibrant, organizing enriching group travel experiences inspired by destinations recommended by our members. In addition, our Virtual Travel Committee continues to offer exciting Zoom sessions that allow us to share stories, explore cultures, and stay connected no matter where we live.

As President, I extend my warmest wishes for a joyful Holiday Season and a peaceful, prosperous New Year.

We encourage you to stay engaged with ITHF—connect with members locally and abroad, share your travel stories, join our virtual experiences, and consider hosting or proposing ideas for future group adventures. Your involvement fuels the spirit of friendship and cultural exchange that defines our fellowship.

Travel with purpose. Connect with heart.

ITHF President's Celebration Dinner United Hotel, Taipei - Friday June 12, 2026, 6 PM

We are so thrilled to have been able to book United Hotel B1-Ball room Pei-Full Restaurant(No 200, Guangfu S.Rd, Taipei) for this event. Welcome to United Hotel where family tradition meets culinary excellence! Indulge in our carefully curated menu, featuring Shanghai food banquet with wine which is sure to delight your palate.

We take pride in organizing Fellowship with local Rotarians. Our welcoming ambiance radiates elegance and warmth, creating unforgettable dining experiences for our guests.

Join us at United Hotel for a culinary journey that embraces tradition, taste, and the spirit of family. Discover why our guests keep coming back for more, as we blend sophistication with heartfelt hospitality to create cherished dining memories.

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The delicious meal has vegetarian & gluten-free options. Please use this link to review all the information and register :<https://www.ithf.org/ithf-dinner>

Wishing you an amazing and memorable experience at United Hotel!
Sivaprasad S Pillai, Administrator, ITHF

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE MAKES STRIDES IN PROMOTING FELLOWSHIP

The ITHF Membership Committee held a productive meeting on November 1st, 2025, reviewing progress on key initiatives aimed at promoting international travel and hosting fellowship. The committee's promotional PowerPoint presentation received positive feedback, paving the way for upcoming presentations at District and Zone meetings.

Plans are underway to showcase ITHF at the International Convention in Taipei, with a breakout session in the works. The committee is also finalizing the "Intro to ITHF" guidebook, which will be enhanced with visuals and translated into multiple languages.



The meeting highlighted the committee's commitment to fostering global connections and cultural exchange. With several initiatives in the pipeline, the ITHF Membership Committee is poised to make a significant impact in the Rotary community.

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by Olurotimi Adeleye, Omole-Golden, Nigeria

HOTEL BOOKING AT UNITED HOTEL IN TAIPEI

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.

NEW INFORMATION FROM UNITED HOTEL IN NOVEMBER 2025

"United Hotel informed us that they can release 10 king-bed rooms for us for June 11–18. Reservation details are as follows:

Deluxe King Bed

Rates:

- 6/11: NTD 4,320 per room
- 6/12–6/17: NTD 7,200 per room, per night

Deluxe Twin Bed

- 6/22: NTD 4,320 per room

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

Steve and Noko Yoshida's 10 Day Hiroshima Peace Tour
May 11- 21, 2026 IS NOW FULL
THERE WILL BE A 2026 TOUR FROM OCTOBER 8-18, 2026

The itinerary and pricing will be the same as the 2025 tour



Japan: An “OHO” Journey of Peace, Culture, and Connection for Carol Cartier & Pete Burell

Our recent trip to Japan was described as an “OHO” — *a pleasant surprise tour*—and it truly lived up to its name. From *Oishi* (delicious food) to *Heiwa* (peace) to relaxing *Onsen* hot springs, the experience was unforgettable.

A heartfelt thank-you goes to Steve and Noko Yoshida for making this journey possible. Japan’s mountain scenery, inland seas, temples, and culture of order, politeness, and cleanliness made a deep impression on us. Even the high-tech toilets became part of the adventure once we learned the symbols for big flush, small flush, and all the clever wash functions!

In Hiroshima, Ray Matsumiya and his team guided us through the Oleander Peace Program. We toured the city, learned about ongoing peace initiatives, and were profoundly moved by meeting Mrs. Sadae Kasaoka, a *Hibakusha*, an *A-Bomb survivor*, who shared her powerful story. Survivor trees and their seeds reminded us that peace, once planted, can grow around the world.

We also visited Miyajima, home to the iconic floating torii gate and one of Japan’s most breathtaking views.

The second part of our journey took us to Osakikamijima Island. We visited schools, took part in Sports Day, tried Zen meditation, explored a soy sauce brewery, and learned tie-dyeing. We enjoyed lunch at Mr. Stumo’s home that we purchased at Fresta, listened to local speakers each evening, and even had a beach potluck picnic organized by Rotarian Jason Lawrence, and his wife Miki to which the whole Island community was invited. Grocery store meals quickly became a delicious and amusing favourite.

A traditional tea ceremony taught us to slow down and savour mindfulness, while the hotel’s Onsen hot springs bookended our days with relaxation.

We wrapped up our trip with island-hopping toward Fukuyama, visiting the ancient Oyamazumi Shrine and its 2,600-year-old tree, exploring the historic streets of Takehara, and enjoying lunch overlooking the Seto Inland Sea. Our final walk through the Sankeien gardens—with koi ponds, bamboo, and waterfalls—was the perfect moment to reflect on everything we had learned.

This was more than a sightseeing trip—it was an inspiring reminder that peace is active, participatory, and rooted in human dignity. **Together, we can build peace. Every small action brings us closer.**

If you are interested in the October 8-18, 2026 tour, please contact Carol Cartier – carolcartier333@gmail.com for more information.

Virtual Tour Committee Update-BECOME A MEMBER

Become an active volunteer member of this Virtual Travel Committee and help us bring the pleasure of visiting and learning about other countries from the comfort of your home, as well as informing our ITHF members about the opportunities for in-person travel that ITHF provides. Any ITHF member who would like to be an active volunteer on this Committee should contact Chair Alicia Ruiz-Orbin by e-mail at:

rorbina@ptd.net.

The last Virtual Tour presentation for 2025:

December 12-13 - Holiday Coffee and Connections, where you will have the opportunity to meet the participating ITHF members, hear about the December's celebrations in their hometown and/or country, and the opportunity to share yours. And all from the comfort of your home!

An e-mail with the time details about this Holiday and Connections Virtual Tour has been sent to all ITHF members. We look forward to meeting you and to enjoy the pleasure of your company.

The starting schedule for 2026 Virtual Tour presentations is as follows:

January 30-31 – Normandy.

February 27-28 – Poland.

March 27-28 – Preparing for your in-person Travel with ITHF Tours.

May 29-30 – Cambodia.

For any questions about the Virtual Tours, contact Committee Chair Alicia Ruiz-Orbin at: rorbina@ptd.net. Phone # 610-392-5134

A Special Time with ITHF Members in Chesterfield, Missouri



During a recent visit to St. Louis for Family Weekend at Washington University (WASHU), I had the wonderful opportunity to spend time with fellow ITHF members Rick and Diane Tinucci in Chesterfield, Missouri. I was visiting my granddaughter and reached out in hopes of finding accommodation with ITHF friends in the area.

Rick and Diane opened their home and their hearts to us, making our stay truly memorable. After two full and joy-filled days on campus at WASHU, it was such a delight to return each evening to the warmth and hospitality of our hosts. Their welcoming spirit instantly made us feel at home.

One of the highlights of our time together was when Rick and Diane shared with us some of their treasured old musical instruments. Exploring their collection and hearing the stories behind each piece was a fascinating and enriching experience—it added a very special note (quite literally!) to our visit.

ITHF connections are always meaningful, but this visit reminded me again of the unique gift our fellowship provides. It is more than just a network of travelers; it is a family of friends around the world who open their doors and share their lives. My heartfelt thanks to Rick and Diane for turning a simple visit into an unforgettable memory.

Ingrid Bolding, Memphis, Tennessee, USA

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.

FIRST ITHF “CONNECTION” IN MONGOLIA

On a recent trip to Mongolia, I had a lovely visit with Erdenebileg “Bileg” Tseveendorj, president of the Rotary Club of Ulaanbaatar Central and an ITHF member. His fellow club member, Altan, accompanied Bileg as he took my sister, cousin and me about an hour’s drive east of the city to Gorkhi Terelj National Park to see the 130-foot-tall metal Chinggis Khaan (Genghis Khan) on a horse, the world’s largest equestrian statue. On the drive to and from the park, we had time to discuss their club’s impressive projects. “Ger for Life” is a ger (yurt) town built for 50 unhoused women and their children whom their club supports. Another of their club’s projects is working with the deaf community to provide them skills to earn a livelihood. Altan is an

economist, but her hobby is cake-making and from the photos she showed us, she is quite skilled. Altan, naturally, teaches the deaf the art of cake-making!

We went to Modern Nomads, a popular chain in this country, for lunch. Several dishes of typical Mongolian food were shared by all including a pasta dish called “tsuivan,” dumplings filled with chopped lamb called “buuz” and “khuushuur,” a fried flour pastry filled with ground meat, onions, and seasonings.

We then headed to Sükhbaatar Square, the



main plaza in the city. At the entrance to the Parliament House, there is a large, seated bronze statue of Chinggis Khaan completed for the 800th anniversary of his coronation, where we took photos. Next, we visited the Gandan Tecchenling Monastery, the center for Mongolian Buddhists, and finally we went to the Narantuul Open-Air Market for a bit of shopping.

I had hoped to join one of their meetings on my return to Ulaanbaatar, but unfortunately, a schedule delay cancelled that opportunity. Bileg said I was the first visitor he’s hosted through ITHF. I strongly encourage you to contact him if you find yourself in the “Land of the Eternal Blue Sky.”

Tam Agosti-Gisler, Rotary Club of Anchorage East

ITHF member, Anchorage, Alaska

tamag5@me.com



Travel Insurance Guide from PDG Alonso Campoi

1. Why Travel Insurance Matters

Travel insurance is essential to ensure that travelers remain protected in unforeseen situations. Adequate coverage provides peace of mind and financial security when dealing with medical emergencies, trip interruptions, loss of belongings, and other unexpected events.

This guide outlines the main coverage types a traveler should consider to ensure safe and well-protected travel.

2. Essential Coverage Categories

2.1 Medical Coverage (Health)

- **Emergency medical treatment** for accidents or sudden illness.
- **Hospitalization**, surgeries, and diagnostic exams.
- **Emergency dental care**.
- **Telemedicine** or remote medical guidance.
- **Coverage for pre-existing conditions** (optional, must be requested).
- **Medication expenses** prescribed during treatment.

2.2 Life & Personal Accident Coverage

- **Accidental death** during the trip.
- **Permanent disability** due to accident.
- **Compensation to beneficiaries**.

2.3 Repatriation

- **Repatriation for medical reasons** (transport back to country of residence).
- **Repatriation of mortal remains**.
- **Repatriation of accompanying family members**.

2.4 Emergency Evacuation

- **Air or ground medical evacuation** to the nearest facility capable of providing adequate treatment.
- Evacuation in cases of **natural disaster**, **civil unrest**, or **unsafe conditions**.

2.5 Trip Cancellation & Interruption

- **Cancellation before departure** for covered reasons (illness, death in family, jury duty, home emergency, etc.).
- **Trip interruption** for unexpected events.

Refund of prepaid and non-refundable expenses such as accommodation, tours, and tickets.

2.6 Baggage Coverage

- **Lost, stolen, or damaged luggage**.
- Compensation for **delayed luggage**.

2.7 Additional Protections

- **Flight delay or missed connection**.
 - **Lost travel documents or passport**.
- 24/7 travel assistance hotline.

3. Requirements & Considerations When Choosing Insurance

Travelers should ensure that the insurance includes:

3.1 Coverage Limit Adequacy

- International destinations often require **minimum coverage**, such as €30,000 for medical emergencies in the Schengen Area. For destinations with expensive medical systems (USA, Canada, UK, Japan), recommended limits are **USD 100,000 to 500,000**.

3.2 Coverage for Pre-existing Medical Conditions

- Must be **explicitly purchased**.

Important for travelers with chronic diseases or ongoing treatments.

Check whether the policy covers **global travel**, specific regions, or excludes certain countries.

3.3 Geographic Validity

Check whether the policy covers **global travel**, specific regions, or excludes certain countries.

3.4 Adventure & Sports Coverage

Optional for skiing, diving, trekking, and adventure activities.

3.5 COVID-19 Coverage

- Many policies still require **explicit confirmation** of pandemic-related coverage.

4. Additional Coverage Needs for Senior Travelers

Travelers above certain age thresholds—often **60, 70, or 80 years old** depending on the insurer—may require expanded or specific coverage. Agents must ensure:

4.1 Age-Specific Policy Options

- Some insurers offer **senior-focused plans** with expanded medical limits. Verify **maximum age allowed** (some policies limit coverage at 75, 80, or 85+).

4.2 Expanded Medical Coverage Limits

Due to higher medical risk, seniors should consider:

- **Higher medical expense limits** (USD 200,000 to 500,000).
- **Broader coverage for pre-existing conditions**, including cardiac and pulmonary issues.

Greater coverage for hospitalization and ICU.

4.3 Mandatory Medical Questionnaire

Some insurers require a **health questionnaire** or doctor's clearance.

4.4 Additional Assistance Services

- **Companion assistance** if the traveler needs hospitalization.
- **Home return assistance** after long hospital stays.

Emergency medication delivery.

4.5 Reduced Waiting Periods

Senior travelers benefit from plans with **no or minimal waiting periods** for pre-existing conditions.

4.6 Evacuation & Repatriation Priority

Seniors should always have:

- **Priority medical evacuation.**

Full repatriation coverage, without partial reimbursement.

4.7 Trip Cancellation for Health Reasons

- Seniors are more likely to cancel trips due to health fluctuations.
- Recommend cancellation coverage for:
 - sudden illness,
 - medical procedures,
 - hospitalizations,
 - complications of chronic diseases.

4.8 Covers for Mobility Devices

- Wheelchairs, walkers, and mobility aids should be covered for **damage, loss, or delay**.

5. Final Recommendations for Travel Agents

When advising clients, especially seniors, always:

- Request detailed information about **health conditions**, medications, and past hospitalizations.
- Offer **different plan levels** and explain the benefits.
- Emphasize that **cheaper plans may not provide adequate protection**.
- Highlight the importance of buying insurance **before** the trip begins.
- Document all explanations to ensure transparency.

6. Conclusion

Proper travel insurance ensures that every traveler—especially seniors—can enjoy their trip with confidence and security. By understanding the essential coverage types and age-specific needs, agents can ensure that clients are truly protected against all major risks.

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.

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

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

March 2026 Trips on Polio Immunization with Rotary Projects at Agra, India

We Rotarians of Agra, looking forward welcoming you all in March 2026 making End Polio Now and Keeping India Polio Free Campaign a great success.

List of New Members - November 2025

<u>Name</u>	<u>Coun-try</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>City</u>	<u>Club</u>
Matteo Domenichetti	Italy	Lom-bardy	Citta metropoli-tana di Milano	Città dei laghi
Gizem BASTAS	Turkey	Ankara	Cankaya	Ankara Beysukent

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.