



Item: Fast Lane News #22nd in 2023 (#169 since 2020) on Saturday, May 27th 2023

From: Peter in our office in Oldsmar, FL

To: Our Fast Lane Travel Family and Friends at home in Australia, Canada, Europe, Iceland, New Zealand, Japan, Singapore, South Africa and in the USA!

Subject: My Reflections on Customer Service; 2023 Bucket List Trips; **2024 is the 50th Anniversary of Fast Lane Travel;** 2024 Plans; My Final Thoughts: The Stages of Life & Last Week's Surgery.

I. My Reflections on Customer Service: Summers on Semmering or How Did My 12 Principles of Quality Customer Service Evolve:

Starting as an 8-year-old kid I spent every July and August with my mother at the resort **Grand Hotel Panhans** on a mountain pass in Austria called Semmering. The little town, Mürzzuschlag, where my grandparents lived, was only about 15 kilometers southwest of the Semmering Pass. The Grand Hotel Panhans was a resort hotel with a magnificent view. On a clear day, you could almost see Vienna, about 100 kms to the east. The hotel had a huge, Olympic-size, pool with diving boards and about a good 20 acres of meadow where people could spread a blanket on the grass or rent one of the "Liegebetten" (chaise lounges). My mother was employed at the pool spa facility during the summers as a gymnastics teacher and massage therapist. In front of the hotel was a terrace and every afternoon a big band played for "4 O'clock Tea." My Uncle Charlie came up from Mürzzuschlag and played in the big band for the summer. Wealthy people came to the Panhans to escape the summer heat in Vienna. The mountains were cool, the air smelled of pine needles and the forests teemed with mushrooms, berries and wildlife.



While my mother taught gymnastics classes (aerobics in today's world), I needed something to do. The recreational area by the pool was a gently sloping meadow with a stand of pine trees on the west side along with a couple of sand volley ball courts. People either spread blankets or used one of the many "Liegebetten" (chaise lounges). At the start of the "saison" my mother met the general manager of the hotel with me in tow to work out the details of her summer employment along with room and board for the two of us. The latter, in post-war Europe was crucial. I suggested, at eight years old, that I would be the ideal person to manage that process of renting the Liegebetten (plural). Thus, I got the job. It was fabulous. I wore swimming trunks all summer, sandals, something that looked like a train conductor's cap with the word: "LIEGEBETTEN" on it, and a leather satchel with tickets and change in it. It all looked very official. If you wanted a Liegebett then you had to come see me. The Liegebetten consisted of a 2-meter metal frame with a flat hammock-type canvas cloth center that had a wooden pole sewn into each end. I stacked them in a pile each evening when the pool closed. When a customer wanted one then I lifted a frame off the pile and attached the poles to each side and, voila, now you had a moveable hammock. The price was 2 Schillinge (plural) for a day-long rental (Austria's currency at that time - roughly 8 Cents). I learned very quickly to recognize my customers, greet them cheerfully by name, drag their Liegebett, groaning for effect, to their favorite spot on the grounds and position it perfectly facing the sun resulting in some nice tips. "Grüß Gott Frau Kommerzialrat ich hab' heute a spezielles Platzerl für Sie ausgesucht!" At the end of the day, I dragged the Liegebetten back from their various locations, removed the hammocks, cleaned them when necessary and stacked them for the next day.

At the end of the summer my mother took me to the general manager of the hotel for a debriefing, review and farewell meeting. I remember I stood in front of his desk with my mother behind me. He praised me for the outstanding job I did; told me of the favorable customer comments he got about the Liegebettenbua (Bua – Austrian colloquialism for boy); and wanted to be sure I could come back the following summer. He then stood up and gave me a crisp brand-new 100 Schilling note!! It was about \$4.00 in those days but a fortune to an 8-year-old boy in Austria in 1951. I was rich.



On the road in front of the hotel there was a small fruit stand. Every day I walked past it and salivated at the huge sweet peaches from Südsteiermark (southern Styria in Austria). They were unbelievably expensive – they cost about 8 Schillinge for a kilo (roughly 35 cents for a pound). I surprised my mother by treating her with my summer's earnings and my unexpected windfall from the hotel manager. I bought four peaches that came to 8 Schillinge. I gave two to my mother and we sat on a bench enjoying the view of the mountains on the Semmering while leaning way forward to eat the juicy peaches. Their skin was soft, the aroma was intense, the flesh was sweet and juicy. We both ate two peaches and I felt accomplished, successful and happy. For the first time in my life, I felt like a man who had the ability to take care of someone whom he loves and was able to treat with this delicious present. I, for the first time experienced the joy of giving. I never forgot that wonderful feeling it was to make someone else happy.

Thus, subsequently I absolved three years in the vocational hotel business school in Vienna and then over the years have developed:

Peter's 12 Principles of Quality Customer Service

1. Don't ever assign homework to a customer.
2. Spoon feed the customer so the customer doesn't have to think.
3. Put yourself in the customer's shoes - how does s/he feel at that moment?
4. Be sure to remember what's important personally to a customer.
5. Don't ever say "NO" to a customer – let the customer say "NO" to you.
6. The customers financial values are not the same as yours.
7. Remember, attractive packaging is about 80% of the cost in cosmetics.
8. Don't assume anything = ass/u/me.
9. Whenever you send an invoice or e-mail include some "candy."
10. Always acknowledge that you received an e-mail or message.
11. Always admit fault and apologize for any real or perceived transgression.
12. Remember, it's the customer who pays your salary.

They are pasted on our office bulletin boards and are reminders at every meeting.

II. Balance of the FALL PORSCHE Trips 2023: Check one off your bucket list!

Don't Miss the Balance of the Fall 2023 Fast Lane PORSCHE Trips!						
From	Date	To	Date	Fast Lane PORSCHE Tour	Highlights	PP Dble
Wed	31-May	Fri	9-Jun	Twelve Alpine Passes PORSCHE Fest	Starting in a Couple Days	closed
Sun	4-Jun	Mon	12-Jun	The 100th 24-Hours of Le Mans Luxury Tour	SOLD OUT	closed
Wed	20-Sep	Mon	25-Sep	PCA Fall PORSCHE TREFFEN Stuttgart Traditional	Autobahn, Factory & Museum . . .	\$ 5,998
Wed	20-Sep	Fri	29-Sep	PCA Fall PORSCHE TREFFEN Stuttgart PLUS	plus Lakes Constance & Lake Como	\$ 10,998
Wed	4-Oct	Sun	15-Oct	NEW: Interlpen, Zell am See, Gmünd, Salzburg	You'll be luxuriously spoiled	\$ 12,998
Mon	16-Oct	Sat	28-Oct	Tuscany, Alps, Florence, Siena, Pienza, Montalcino	Private Estate, Cooking Class	\$ 13,998
Sat	2-Dec	Sun	10-Dec	Christmas Markets in Stuttgart, Salzburg and Vienna	Wonderful Glühwein & Shopping	t.b.d.



Next week the folks on the **12 Alpine Passes PORSCHE Trip** will be crossing from Austria to Italy on this fabulous road with amazing views.

We have also included a new resort hotel on the south side of the Alps. The cuisine is truly delightful and paired with local wines in a beautiful setting. The cars will be parked securely under the hotel. The key element: you don't have to think.

III. 2024 Outlook - Next Year Will Be HUGE; It Will Be the 50th Anniversary of Fast Lane Travel, Inc. In last weeks Petergram I described in detail my very special 80th birthday, including the compelling recognition by Dr. Wolfgang Porsche. I'll be 81 in 2024. My goal has been to reach that 50th Anniversary milestone and stay on as an advisor. I'll have someone or another entity with the same passion for intense customer-service take over. We will continue to create THE most amazing Automotive Tours in the world; taking you to places you'd never find on your own; doing things you would not be permitted to do and enjoy the friendship and camaraderie of like-minded fun seekers while making life-long friends.

IV. My Plans for 2024 Include the Following:

- The crowning achievement in 2024 will be our very **special 50th Anniversary PORSCHE Fest** to **Unknown** Austria around the end of May, beginning of June. It will include Stuttgart, Salzburg, Vienna, Castles, Mürzzuschlag, the Alpi Road, Steiermark, Zell am See, Grossglockner, Gmünd – plus some very special surprises like lunch at the renowned Steirereck on top of the Pogusch Mountain



Pass. The initial invitations will go out first to Alumni in a couple months. **It'll be THE best ever.**

- Of course, we'll conduct the traditional **PCA Spring TREFFEN** to Stuttgart, Autobahn & Alps.
- We will include the more popular and exciting **TREFFEN PLUS** to Austria, Switzerland and the Italian Lake District, like Como and Maggiore – providing we get enough demand – we need at least 12 couples per trip to make it feasible. I'm hopeful that next year the **PCA** steps up with some intense **TREFFEN** promotion, regional contests and PCA ads.
- Yes, we'll do the **101st Race at Le Mans**, in La Sarthe, France.
- I will also conduct the traditional **Tuscany PORSCHE** Fest. There are no cars allowed in pedestrians-only Montepulciano on Piazza Grande in front of the Cathedral. Guess who parks a dozen PORSCHEs with a **police escort** on Piazza Grande?!



- Yes, we're planning to do something in **Croatia**, Serbia and even Montenegro.
- We have some other requests in the US. I'd like to reinstate the Milwaukee, Door County, Midwest trip to **Mt. Rushmore**, ending in Denver. COVID killed the last one – let's do it this time.
- **NOTE:** I get multiple well-meaning suggestions for trip destinations. Thus, we have conducted some truly awesome tours to **Holland, Greece, Hungary, Cuba**, and the amazing PORSCHE Trip in **China** in 2015. FYI, just to create a new trip from scratch with the service level, amenities, 5-star accommodations and fun routes, is a \$20 to \$25,000 investment on our part. A new photo rally alone costs about \$12,000. Along these lines – get a group together.
- **NOTE #2:** What you need to do: please go to the president of your PCA Region, and float the idea of a TREFFEN to Stuttgart PORSCHE trip, or something else exciting in Europe for your Region. Then give me a call and we'll work out something that will be beneficial to you and your region. The larger the group the lower the cost to the participants.

V. My Final Thoughts: The Stages of Life

THE MALE STAGES OF LIFE:

AGE FAVORITE DRINK

17	beer
25	bourbon
35	vodka
48	double vodka
66	Maalox

AGE FAVORITE SPORT

17	sex
25	sex
35	sex
48	sex
66	napping

AGE DEFINITION OF A SUCCESSFUL DATE

17	"tongue"
25	"breakfast"
35	"I didn't have to meet her kids."
48	"She didn't set back my therapy."
66	"Got home alive."

AGE FAVORITE FANTASY

17	getting to third
25	airplane sex
35	menage a trois
48	taking the company public
66	French maid love slaves

AGE WHAT'S THE IDEAL AGE TO GET MARRIED?

17	25
25	35
35	48
48	66
66	17

THE FEMALE STAGES OF LIFE:

AGE FAVORITE DRINK

17	Wine coolers
25	White wine
35	Red wine
48	Champagne
66	Shot of Jack with an Ensure chaser

AGE FAVORITE SPORT

17 shopping
25 shopping
35 shopping
48 shopping
66 shopping

AGE DEFINITION OF A SUCCESSFUL DATE

17 "Burger King "
25 "Free meal "
35 "A diamond "
48 "A bigger diamond "
66 "Home Alone "

AGE FAVORITE FANTASY

17 tall, dark and handsome
25 tall, dark and handsome with money
35 tall, dark and handsome with money and a brain.
48 a man with hair
66 a man.

AGE WHAT'S THE IDEAL AGE TO GET MARRIED?

17 17
25 25
35 35
48 48
66 66

AGE IDEAL DATE

17 He offers to pay
25 He pays
35 He cooks breakfast the next morning
48 He cooks breakfast the next morning for the kids
66 He can chew

While everyone has different aspirations, it appears we all have some common **benchmarks for what success is**. Really, it all depends on your age consider the following:

At age 4, success is not peeing in your pants

At age 17, success is "getting a little"

At age 25, success is graduation and a wedding

At age 35, success is about career and family

At age 55, success is about graduations and weddings

At age 65, success is "getting a little"

At age 75, success is not peeing in your pants

Now at age 80, I forgot where I was going with this?

Probably because three days ago, on Tuesday, May 23, 2023, I had a pretty nasty surgery on my forehead – my head feels like the #3 piston in a 356. My staff admonished me not to include the graphic picture of the scar – so I removed it from this e-mail. The next day, both my eyes looked like I was in bar fight. It's the Florida skin cancer thing. Despite sun block, a Fast Lane travel cap and staying in the shade, it'll get you. One of my neighbors, commented when he saw me, "You must love pain, otherwise you wouldn't be in the travel business." Ha, ha . . . I told him that I love what I do for our customers – see the accolades we get after our trips. All the best, Peter



Please stay healthy and stay young; be happy and take good care of yourself...Let's look forward to the great times we will have together again on one of our fabulous PORSCHE tours this year and help look forward to 2024. **I hope to see y'all soon.**
Peter

The first Twelve Alpine Passes lunch stop on the way to Austria:



He'll greet you and is friendly!

