



Item: Fast Lane News #53 in 2023 (#200 since 2020) on Sat. Dec. 30th I'm writing from our Office in Oldsmar, Florida.

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

Subjects: Rückblick; Ausblick Part Two; Stuttgart is an amazing place; and My Final Thoughts: What makes our nation culturally different.



I. **Rückblick Part Two** – The first PCA Porsche trip in **1958** was organized for **PCA members** who ordered a 356 for pick up in Stuttgart. This was also the era before airline deregulation, which started 20 years later. There were only two air fares F and Y and the pricing was set by a US Government agency, the Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) for all airlines. Thus, in order to get the PCA Members



to Germany at a reasonable ticket price, it was decided by the PCA to charter an entire **Lufthansa Lockheed Super Constellation Star Liner**. Of course, that price reduction concept only worked if the PCA was able to sell every seat. The plane took

off in Los Angeles with a West Coast PCA Group and flew to Idlewild Airport (renamed, on December 24th 1963, to JFK) and there the plane filled up with an East Coast PCA group. After a couple years of successful flights, the PCA chartered one plane from Los Angeles to Germany and a second one from Baltimore. Neither plane sold out. When you charter a plane, the airline doesn't care if you have one person or the 95 passengers the Super Constellation could carry. But the PCA was obligated to pay for both planes. and the Club faced dire financial straits. The trips, then named PCA Treffen (after the German Porsche Präsidenten Treffen), ceased. No more "Amerikaner" came to the Porsche HQ in Stuttgart, Zuffenhausen.

Twelve years later, at our Thanksgiving dinner in Syracuse in 1974, my late brother-in-law Dr. Steven K. Alexander, a PCA Member of the Upstate New York Region, asked me to organize a Porsche trip for him and his friends. It seemed like a logical request since I was born in a bomb shelter in Austria, speak German, and three Austrian dialects, fluently and frequently travelled to Europe on business.

On my next business trip to Europe, I included Stuttgart in my schedule. I went to the Porsche Factory, Werk Eins, where I had made an appointment with Frau Mall who then was the secretary to Prof. Dr.h.c. Ferry Porsche. I explained to her that I wanted to bring some PCA members to Stuttgart to tour the Factory and the then small Museum. She told me that there used to be groups of “Amerikaner” who came ten or so years ago, but then the trips stopped.

Frau Mall and I then proceeded to plan a program which included the Factory visit, the small Museum, some sightseeing, a lunch and dinner hosted by Porsche, plus a side trip to Munich by train. She then said “Bitte warten Sie einen Augenblick” and disappeared behind an adjoining office door. She returned and bid me to come with her. I did not expect that. I shook hands with Prof. Dr.h.c. Ferry Porsche himself! He said “Es freut mich Sie kennenzulernen. Fr. Mall hat mir von Ihren Pläne erzählt, die Amerikaner wieder zu uns zu bringen. Das würde uns sehr freuen.” The die was cast, and I commenced with the “new and improved” Porsche trips with the encouragement of the man himself. Frau Mall helped organize the first trip. Twenty-four members of the PCA Upstate New York Region arrived in Stuttgart and experienced Porsche’s hospitality after a long hiatus.

After the first trip for Dr. Alexander and his Porsche friends, the folks at the national PCA heard about what a great time they enjoyed and asked me to create trips for the whole PCA. I gladly complied, we went to work and, thus, Fast Lane, 50 years ago, re-vitalized the opportunity to visit the Porsche Factory and Museum AND innovated driving a Porsche in Europe without having to buy one. There is a lot more to the story which I’ll convey in the next few Petergrams. FYI this October I came back from our 232nd Porsche Trip! Experience matters!



II. Ausblick to 2024, Part Two – yes, it’s the opposite of Rückblick.

Translated it also means “view” as in amazing vistas. But in the context of our Porsche Tours and Fast Lane’s plans – we are looking ahead to the future. Of course, the **BIG story** is that it is our **50th Anniversary!**

Thus, in 2024 we are offering a palette of Porsche Tours to meet all budgets and driving tastes. Of course, on a Fast Lane Porsche trip driving the **German Autobahn**, traversing the breathtaking **Swiss** Mountains and graciously experiencing the magnificence of the hospitality and **Porsche History in Austria**, where it all started, are key elements of how we spoil you. But over the last fifty years I have also learned that perhaps THE most compelling element of our tours is the fact that you are making lifelong friends with whom you shared the Fast Lane Travel experience.

III. My Final Thoughts: We are far from perfect, so please let me share some thoughts of what makes our nation culturally different, even weird in some cases, vis-a-vis other countries and their cultures. I am not being judgmental of any other cultures, on the contrary, I am merely sharing with you my observations and understanding why folks from other countries may not understand our behavior, our sense of humor, or our value system. Some of our actions are unthinkable in other countries. In some future Petergrams I will share my observations from various other countries. It may come in handy if you ever travel to . . . wherever.

1. **In the US people kid each other . . . reverse compliments:** the other day I'm in an elevator. A couple gets in with a stroller – adorable kid. I smile and say: "Cute baby, thank God the kid takes after the mom!" Big chuckle, agreement, fist bump with the dad and we bonded.
2. **There are no fences . . . yards flow from one into another:** The only fences people have, in the average American neighborhood, are in the backyard to prevent their dog from running away or the neighbors' kids drowning in their pool.
3. **Mailboxes have no locks on them:** unimaginable in most other countries.
4. **You know your neighbors' first names:** I have friends in Europe who, after 16 years, still only know their neighbors' last names. In my recent visits though I have noticed that formality is loosening up.
5. **Strangers greet each other or wave when walking:** Every morning I pedal my bike up to the lake and probably greet strangers and especially "regulars" at least a dozen times with a "good morning" or "great day today." etc.
6. **We assume responsibility:** "I'm sorry, it's my fault" is readily heard in the US. We quickly assume responsibility. We are not a blame society.
7. **Schadenfreude vs. Good for You:** We share the joy of good things happening to others like getting a good deal, a raise, or winning a prize.

8. **America operates under the presumption of innocence:** There should be no assumption or pre-judgment of guilt. The Latin phrase "Ei incumbit, probatio qui dicit, non qui negat" is an important principle in Roman law. It means "the burden of proof is on he who declares, not on he who denies" Source: Google AI
9. **Americans (still in most States) have the protection of the 2nd Amendment:** Let's keep it that way, but please let's weed out the nut cases.
10. **America has laws against discrimination:** Compare our ads to the classifieds in this famous newspaper **Правда** (Pravda, meaning "truth"), like the ads for apartment rentals (specific ethnics excluded) or employment (sex and/or age specifications required).
11. **Americans are THE most generous people.** We give back. I know of no other country with the pervasive eleemosynary and voluntary concept of giving back, like the US. I wouldn't be here without the generosity of caring, supportive and generous Americans.
12. Perhaps I am THE epitome of the **American Dream**. Thank you so very much America for allowing grateful me to be one of you!



Please take care of yourself and stay young; be happy and remember those who love you...Let's look forward to the great times we will have together again on one of our fabulous PORSCHE Tours in 2024. **I will be there with you and I can't wait to see you. Yours truly, Peter**

