



Item: Fast Lane News #06 in 2024 (#206 since 2020) on Feb. 10th 2024, I'm writing from our Office in historic Oldsmar, Florida.

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



Subjects: Happy New Year; Airline Pricing; Brand Ambassador Program; Trip of the week . . . ONE MORE TIME: Twelve Alpine Passes; Weissach, Valentine's Day.

I. **GONG HAY FAT CHOY: Welcome to the year of the dragon:** In Chinese culture, the Dragon hold a significant place as an auspicious and extraordinary creature, unparalleled in talent and excellence. It symbolizes power, nobility, honor, luck, and success. 2024 is forecasted to bring about opportunities, changes, and challenges. If you're seeking a shift in your current lives, this year might offer a favorable chance. Source: China Highlights. My Comments: This, our 50th year of staying true to our motto: "It's our business to do pleasure" will be specially celebrated on our 50th anniversary trips in September. **DON'T MISS IT.**

II. **The Puzzle of Airline Pricing:** Two Members of our Fast Lane Family, Bill and Marla McAllister, are returning on the 50th Anniversary PORSCHE Fest for their 8th Fast Lane PORSCHE Tour. Bill called Susan Sheridan, manager, of our **Fast Lane Luxury Division** a week ago to book their flights for the trip in September. Bill then e-mailed me and pointed out that airfares had substantially increased from last year. He wanted to know if I could shed some light on the airlines' rationale for this. Here is my reply:

Dear Bill: In response to your question about airline pricing: My resume includes 14 years of experience as a Member of the Board of Directors of a then listed airline company: World Air Ways. I learned a lot about the airline business and gained an understanding of its dynamics. We sold the airline in 2007. While I am no longer part of that

transportation business, I can give you a good guess as to why the airlines have had to raise their prices:

1. Airlines need to make up for the huge losses from 2020, 2021 and 2022.
2. The ALPA and Teamsters Unions are holding the airlines' feet to the contract fire. Some of the work rules for crews are onerous and financially debilitating.
3. The airlines' drive to automate their product distribution has backfired, to some degree, because now unionized employees in their call centers cost more than the 5% to 10% commissions, they used to pay travel agencies. No more airline commissions to Travel Agencies, so now Travel Agencies have to charge fees to cover their overhead. Most are now focusing on cruises and tours rather than commercial air travel. The good news is that the majority of customers appreciate the service and security of our travel agency services.
4. Airlines employ a variable price algorithm based on predicted demand on specific days and times. Studies have shown that a plane holding 148 customers might have 280 different airfares at various times.
5. While lately fuel prices have been high but relatively stable – the importing oil vs. drilling-in-the-US policies of the Biden Administration has raised airline fuel costs exponentially – just like you've witnessed yourself at the gas pump.

You are in good hands with **Susan** in our travel office: **813 475 5989**, she'll get you the best pricing and routings and has access to several "airline consolidators" that will do a better job than calling airlines directly.

One of the key advantages of using Susan is our **24/7 emergency support desk** when an airline changes or cancels flights we can help you because we have direct access to your PNR (Passenger Name Record). If we don't book it for you, we can't help you in an emergency.

Bill, my 50th anniversary trip this September will be very special. We'll spend time in Salzburg, Vienna, Steiermark, Kärnten and Tirol. You'll get an unparalleled perspective and some amazing WW II history. I don't remember



much about my birth in a bomb shelter 3 stories underground in 1943, but I do remember the Russian occupation; the abuse by the French and the wonderfully generous and kind Americans.

All the best to you and Marla . . . Sincerely yours, Peter

III. 2nd UPDATE: The NEW Fast Lane Brand Ambassador Program. More details: Next week because we are currently programming the "sign up" form and are completing terms & conditions on the website. Suffice it to say that it'll be exciting, fun and rewarding. If the program unfolds as I anticipate, then I will organize a special Brand Ambassadors Porsche trip for the top performers crowned by special appreciation and recognition by Porsche.

IV. Recommendation of the Week: *The Perfect VALENTINE'S Day Gift.* DON'T MISS OUT ON THE Twelve Alpine Passes! It's THE very best driving experience anywhere. Call now to secure your spot . . . space for ONLY 3 more couples is left.

This has been THE most sought-after trip each spring. Germany, Austria and Switzerland have THE most amazing mountain roads and passes, vistas, and scenery in the world. Combine this experience with 5-star hotels, superb cuisine and new Porsches . . . you'll remember this event for the rest of your life.

Names like

Hahntennjoch,
Timmelsjoch,
Stelvio,
Foscagno,
Livigno,
Bernina, Julier,
Oberalb . . .
lunch at Piz



Calmot . . . Fuka, Grimsel, Jaufen, to name a few. Go to our website and join this awesome trip **Monday, June 17th to Wednesday, June 26th 2024.** Adding the elevations of all of these magnificent Alpine Roads exceeds the height of **Mt. Everest.** Yes, you'll drive the German Autobahn to get there, but the mountain passes we have selected for you are the main attraction. Be sure to bring your camera.

V. Weissach . . .

. . . is a little village of about 8,000 inhabitants near Stuttgart. It is a very important part of the Porsche Company because it houses the renowned Porsche Research and Development Center. Cars that we will be driving in five years are being developed there now. But not only Porsche cars benefit from this amazing technology center but other industries, and even governments, benefit from the knowledge, skills and dedication of the 6,500 employees in Weissach. For example, the cockpits of the Airbus Airplanes are designed and developed in Weissach. Or, for example, the Harley Davidson V-Rod was developed in Weissach – the V-Rod is a Porsche. Plus, military vehicles for various allies have been developed there. All new race technology emanates from there.

Back in the 70's and 80's, on our PCA PORSCHE Treffen trips, we had the opportunity to get a tour of Weissach. We got to see the "sound room" which was this hall with thousands of foam rubber cube baffles completely eliminating all sound. When you were in that room you could actually hear your own heartbeat. We also saw the giant 30 ft. high wheel for tire testing. We saw the crash test facility. But, perhaps, the most exciting part for most was to be driven around the spectacular test track in a 935, mit Dampfrad, the Langheck 917 and the 4wdr Paris to Dakar Porsche on the Weissach "tank track" and enjoy lunch with the workers.



Picture Source: PORSCHE Newsroom

Our visits were a huge privilege for us, but an enormous imposition on the facility. They had to cover half the area with tarps because so no one could see some of the new developments they are working on. The word in Stuttgart is that it is easier to get out of North Korea than to get into Weissach. No pictures were allowed anywhere, except at the test track. Our Weissach privilege ended when in 1985 a woman from Houston had a mini spy camera that she used to sneak some pictures.



This week I received an **e-mail** from **Joe Hartman**: Hi Peter, I was on your **Porsche Treffen in 1979**. The Highlight of the trip was the ride around the Weissach track with one of the Porsche drivers in a 935. Can you help me with the name of this driver?

Peter, please note that you are also in the pictures.

p.s. The driver's name was Herr Mimmmler.

Joe Hartman's e-mail triggered my memory of a famous quote by James Wellman:

"Stop accumulating stuff, and start accumulating experiences."

VI. Happy Valentine's Day:

When you are in the mood for romance or you just want to be spoiled with a luxurious spa treatment or an easy bike ride through the Alps, there is no better place to share that experience with the person you love, than the renowned **Interalpen Hotel** in the magnificent Tirolian Alps of Austria. Whether you are on one of our **European Porsche Delivery** trips, a **custom designed Porsche tour** or on one of our exciting scheduled spring or fall tours – you'll fall in love with Austria and retain fond lifetime memories.

VII. My Final Thoughts: Speaking of romance. One day, a man came home and was greeted by his wife dressed in a very sexy nightie, thigh highs, heels – the works. 'Tie me up,' she purred, 'and you can do anything you want.' So, he tied her up and went golfing.



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**

