

Tips for Two

Tales of a Globetrotting Couple

by John and JoAnn Girard

About our Travelogues: Interspersed amongst the tips are ten travelogues about some of our favorite adventures. The purpose of these tales is twofold. First, and foremost, they remind us that some ventures make all of the hassles of travel worthwhile. The second purpose of our travel vignettes is to spark your interest and remind you that the destinations are certainly possible for *regular* folks like us. A few years ago we would have never imagined that we would have visited many of the destinations that are now crossed off our bucket list. With some planning, saving, and a little good luck almost anything is possible. Below is an example.

Travelogue: Petra



Photo 1 - John and JoAnn at the Monastery, Petra Jordan

Petra, Jordan was an easy choice for our first travelogue. The spectacular archeological site, which was created about 1700 years ago, was unknown to westerners until about 200 years ago. For many baby boomers it has probably remained unknown until Indiana

Jones *discovered* the Holy Grail in Petra's Treasury in the movie *Indian Jones and the Last Crusade* (1989). Truthfully, one of us (John), had no idea of its existence until the movie premiered. For us, seeing such a magnificent site sparks a quest for knowledge. Often we find it difficult to become interested in a particular place until we plan a trip there. Then suddenly we are transformed into amateur detectives who need to find all the facts. Travel provides tremendous opportunities to learn.

Petra, like too many places, is often subjected to a drive by tourism. Many visitors are there as part of an organized day excursion from cruise ships berthed in Aqaba, Jordan. Unfortunately, their time, energy or both is limited, as many only see the most famous of the rock-cut structures, The Treasury. As amazing as it is, there is much more to this World Heritage Site than a single photo op. If at all possible, make sure to take the time to hike to the Monastery (see the picture). The hike from the Treasury to the Monastery is dotted with amazing sites and people ... not to mention more than 800 steps up a breathtaking rock staircase to the apex where the Monastery sits.

Tip for Two 8: Don't be a drive-by tourist

Throughout the book we will stress the value of research. Do yourselves a favor and invest some time to learn as much as possible about your planned journeys. This will ensure you avoid missing key elements of a destination. We did exactly that many years ago when we visited Ypres, Belgium. We had not done any serious research before our arrival. From our history classes, we knew Ypres had become famous during the First World War but we really did not know very much about the battles that had taken place. We enjoyed a very enjoyable meal in a lovely little restaurant but we completely missed one of the most important memorials to the brave soldiers of the war to end all wars. Literally a five-minute drive from the restaurant we *discovered* was the [Menin Gate Memorial to the Missing](#). Despite an excellent meal and an enjoyable visit, we regret our time in Ypres as our lack of research resulted in a huge missed opportunity. We seldom make that kind of error now.

Tip for Two 9: Research the sights BEFORE you arrive to avoid major misses

To learn more about Petra, visit Wikipedia's [Petra page](#).

To learn more visit: www.tipsfortwo.com