



## CUCRA/CUCEA Meeting, April 24 & 25, 2024

### Introduction

As of April 24, we will have completed trips to six destinations since the October 2023 CUCRA/CUCEA meeting—Cuba, America's Music Cities Holiday, Costa Rica, Australia/New Zealand, Japan, Sicily, Morocco, and Turkey.

### Publicity

- Continued the monthly *Travel Talk* e-newsletter. Our email list started in May 2019 with 689 subscribers. Since October, the list has grown from 3,102 subscribers to 3,680 subscribers. Friends and family are participating in good numbers and several non-UC travelers on previous trips have joined our mailing list.
- Continued sending publicity to retiree center directors, CUCRA reps, and *New Dimensions* editor.
- Worked with Bob Daly and staff at UCSD to create the new UC Retirees Travel website.
- Offered three trip preview webinars: one by Collette, one by OAT, and one by our volunteers, hosted by UC Davis. We continue to have success with partnering with specific campuses to host webinars. The host campus publicizes the event to its retirees, and we invite retirees from all UC locations to register. Attendance has reached as many as 90 people. We add new travelers to our email list with each webinar.

### Traveler Support

Most of our work involves pre-trip preparation. We provided the following support to travelers prior to departure:

- Answered questions and provided information to those considering trips and those who have registered.
- Sent welcome email messages and regular updates to trip registrants, including preparatory book and movie suggestions, packing tips, safety information, and more.
- Sent tchotchkes (UC Retirees Travel luggage handle wraps and nylon shopping bags) to registrants.
- Scheduled pre-trip meetings via Zoom about two weeks prior to departure for each trip.

During the trips, the escorts provided support to the trip leaders and helped to mediate any issues that arose.

### Management

- Continued working with Dolores Dyer, assistant coordinator, on trip planning and publicity.
- Conducted volunteer recruitment (facilitated an informational session via Zoom with 46 attendees, reviewed 18 applications, conducted interviews, added two new escorts to the team, and planned for our Collette representative, who is a former trip leader, to provide some custom training for our escorts).
- Held monthly Zoom meetings with UC Retirees Travel volunteers (Sue Barnes, UCD/UCLA; Dolores Dyer, UCLA; Frank Trueba, UCSC; Sandra Norberg, UCSF; Vickie Leow, UCSF; and new escorts Sabina White, UCSB; and Elise Woods, UCB) to share successes and brainstorm solutions to challenges.

### Tour Operator Additional Incentives

Both Collette and Overseas Adventure Travel (OAT)/Grand Circle Travel (GCT) have begun offering us additional incentives because of the number of travelers we are bringing to them.

- Collette offers us additional commission in the form of credits to be used in the year following a year in which we reach at least 30 travelers. For 2024, we have two \$3,000 credits which will be applied to different trips, resulting in an additional \$6,000 in commission for CUCRA.
- OAT/GCT will increase our commission from 10% to 12% for every traveler beyond 50 each year. We will reach 50 travelers in May of this year.
- Collette and OAT/GCT will now both pay CUCRA a commission for individual travelers who mention CUCRA's group number when they register for any trip. We earned \$4,000+ from eight individual travelers in the first quarter of 2024. This has the potential to provide significant additional revenue to CUCRA. As an added incentive for travelers who mention our group code, OAT will offer a \$100 per person discount and Collette will offer a \$50 per person discount.

## Lessons Learned

- **Registration timelines**-We continue to have travelers who are disappointed to be placed on a waiting list, so we are emphasizing even more the importance of early registration. Many trips fill a year or more prior to departure and single spaces fill especially early. Our partner tour operators hold space for us until about seven months prior to departure. If we have not filled our spaces, the held seats are opened to the public. At that point, trips often fill immediately.

## Trip Participation

We continue to have increased participation. In 2022, we took 130 travelers on nine trips. In 2023, we took 189 travelers on thirteen trips. Thus far for 2024, we have 260 registrants on 18 trips. We began publicizing our 2025 trips in January, and thus far we have 82 registrants. We have reached the maximum number of trips each year that are manageable by volunteers, so we will not be seeking additional growth. We may need to back off on marketing efforts in the future so that we don't have too many travelers who are disappointed with long waiting lists.

UC Retirees Travel Trip Counts 2024 (excluding escorts)

Trip	Ret. Staff	Ret Fac	Curr Staff	Curr Fac	Guests	Non UC	Total	LANL	LBNL	LLNL	UCB	UCD	UCI	UCLA	UCOP	UCR	UCS B	UCSC	UCSD	UCSF	Total
Costa Rica (Collette)	11	3			8		22		2	2	2		2	5		2		1	2	4	22
Australia/NZ (Collette)	5	2			4		11				1	2		4				1	2	1	11
Japan A (OAT)	6	1			5		12				2	2		3			1		2	2	12
Sicily (OAT)	4	2			5		11			1	1			1			3		3	2	11
Morocco (Collette)	5	4			6		15					3	2		2				5	3	15
Turkey (OAT)	5	2			3		10					2		3			2			3	10
Great Rivers Cruise (GCT)	12				7		19	1		4	2	6				2			3	1	19
Croatia (Collette)	4				2		6	2										2	2		6
Memorials of WWII (Collette)							15														0
Iceland (OAT)							9														0
Japan B (OAT)							15														0
Scotland A (OAT)							14														0
Scotland B (OAT)							16														0
Alpine Lakes (Collette)							12														0
Tuscany (Premier)							26														0
SE Asia A (Collette)							9														0
SE Asia B (Collette)							20														0
Montreal/Quebec (Premier)							18														0
<b>Total</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>260</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>106</b>

**Total number of trips: 18**      Collette (8 trips): **110**      OAT/GCT (8 trips): **106**      Premier (2 trips): **44**

Trips with totals listed in red have not yet occurred. The numbers listed are the current number of registrants and may change if we add more registrants or have cancellations.

*Submitted by Sue Barnes, UC Retirees Travel coordinator, and Dolores Dyer, assistant coordinator*