



## CUCRA/CUCEA Meeting, October 29 & 30, 2025

### Introduction

The travel program is operated by a team of seven volunteers (Sue Barnes, UCD/UCLA; Dolores Dyer, UCLA, assistant coordinator; and liaisons Frank Trueba, UCSC; Vickie Leow, UCSF; Sabina White, UCSB; Elise Woods, UCB; and Judi Franz, UCI).

As of October 29, we will have completed 11 trips since the April CUCRA/CUCEA meeting: Cowboy Country (Montana/Wyoming/South Dakota), Africa (two departures), Canadian Maritimes, Scandinavia, Azores, England/Scotland, France, northern Spain/Portugal, Niagara Falls, and Cuba.

We continue to see a softening of demand, with our average number of travelers dropping from 14.2 to 11.7 travelers per trip. While our total number of 2025 travelers slightly exceeded our 2024 totals, anticipated growth did not materialize. Several trips recently did not attract the minimum number of 12 travelers required to send a volunteer liaison to accompany the trip and several 2026 trips have lower registration numbers than we expected by this point in time. Retirees continue to voice their uncertainty with traveling and making major purchases due to concerns over the uncertain economy and political situation. We continue to do what we can to market the trips.

### Publicity

- We continued the monthly *Travel Talk* e-newsletter. Our email list started in May 2019 with 689 subscribers. Since April, the list has grown from 4,634 subscribers to 5,107 subscribers.
- We continued sending publicity to retiree center directors, CUCRA reps, and *New Dimensions* editor.
- Liaisons set up display tables and/or give presentations at in-person events at their locations.
- We offered two trip preview webinars by our volunteers, hosted by UCLA and UCR. The host campus publicizes the event to its retirees, and we invite retirees from all UC locations to register. We typically attract 80-100 retirees to these webinars.

### Traveler Support

- **Pre-trip:** Most of our work continues to be pre-trip preparation and traveler support:
  - We answer questions from and provide information to those considering registering for trips and those who have registered.
  - We send welcome email messages each month to those who registered during the previous month.
  - Beginning three months before departure, the liaison begins sharing information with registrants, including packing tips, safety information, book/movie recommendations, and more.
  - We collect information from travelers to prepare a profile sheet to share with travelers on each trip.
  - We send tchotchkes (previously UC Retirees Travel headlamps) to registrants.
  - We schedule pre-trip traveler meetings via Zoom about two weeks prior to departure for each trip.
- **During trips:** For trips with at least 12 travelers, a UC Retirees Travel liaison accompanies the group to:
  - Provide back-up support to the trip leaders.
  - Facilitate communication among travelers using apps such as WhatsApp and PhotoCircle.
  - Organize free time activities and meals.
  - Pay special attention to single travelers to make sure they are included in activities.
  - Help to mediate any challenging issues.
  - And anything else that needs doing.
- **After trips:**
  - We send evaluations to all travelers and discuss any issues with the tour operators as well as at our team meetings.
  - We offer past travelers a two- to three-week priority registration period, as some trips fill very quickly, especially for single spaces.

## Management

- We held monthly team meetings via Zoom.
- Sue and Dolores connected several times per week to coordinate plans and address issues.
- We held our first in-person team meeting in Davis May 18-19. We met for two ½-days to provide training and discuss challenging situations so that we can provide the best service to our travelers.

## Tour Operator Additional Incentives

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

- Collette offers us an additional \$3,000 commission for every 30 travelers, in the form of credits to be used in the following year. We earned an extra \$9,000 in 2024 which was added to our 2025 trip commissions.
- OAT/GCT increases our commission from 10% to 12% for every traveler, beyond 50 each year. We reached 50 travelers in April of this year, so we earned 12% for the remainder of the year.
- Collette and OAT/GCT pay CUCRA a commission for individual travelers who mention CUCRA's group number when they register for any of their trips. As an added incentive for travelers who mention our group code, OAT offers the travelers a \$100 per person discount. Collette offers travelers a \$50 per person discount.

## Trip Participation

- 2022: 9 trips, 130 travelers (avg. 14.4)
- 2023: 13 trips, 189 travelers (avg. 14.5)
- 2024: 18 trips, 256 travelers (avg. 14.2)
- 2025: 22 trips, 259 projected (avg. 11.8)

## 2025 Travelers

These figures show the decline in our registration numbers for the second half of the year. From January through April, our average was 15 registrants per trip. From April through December, our average dropped to 9.5 per trip.

UC Retirees Travel Trip Counts 2025 (excluding liaisons)

Trip	Ret. Staff	Ret Fac	Curr Staff	Curr Fac	Guests	Non UC	Total	LANL	LBNL	LLNL	UCB	UCD	UCI	UCLA	UCOP	UCR	UCSB	UCSC	UCSD	UCSF	Total	
Galapagos A (OAT)	8				5		13				1	2		2		2		4	2		13	
Galapagos B (OAT)	5	2			4		11			1				2	1		2		4	1	11	
Costa Rica (Collette)	7	1			5		13			2		3			2				2	4	13	
Finland (Collette)	11	1			9		21		2		2	4	3	2			2	1	2	3	21	
Italian Vistas (Collette)	8				10		18				1	4	2	2		2		6	1		18	
Japan (OAT)	7	2			6		15	2			2		2	2						7	15	
N. Spain/Portugal (OAT)	8				7		15		2	4				4						1	4	15
Danube River Cruise (GCT)	11	1			3		15				2	2	1	2	2	2	4				15	
Northern Italy (OAT)	8	1			5		14		4					2				1	2	5	14	
Cowboy Country (Collette)	4				3		7						2	3						2	7	
Africa A (OAT)	4	1			5		10					1		2						7	10	
Africa B (OAT)	6	2	1		4		13					2	2	4			3			2	13	
Canadian Maritimes (Coll.)	2	2			2		6					6									6	
Scandinavia (Collette)	4	1			4		9					2	2	3						2	9	
Azores (Collette)	5	1	1		3		10		2		1	2	2		2					1	10	
England/Scotland (Collette)	2						2			2											2	
France (OAT)	4	3			1		8				1	1	1	2		1				2	8	
N. Spain/Portugal (OAT)	6	1			4		11					1	1				4	3		2	11	
Niagara Falls (Collette)	5				3		8	1		2		4								1	8	
Cuba (Premier)	12	1			5		18				2	5	1	2	2		2		4		18	
India (OAT)	7	1			6		14		2		2	3		2		2		3			14	
Victoria/Vancouver (Premier)	4	2			2		8			1		3					1		3		8	
<b>Total</b>	<b>138</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>259</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>259</b>	

**Total number of trips:** 22      Collette Travelers (9 trips): 94      OAT/GCT Travelers (11 trips): 139      Premier Travelers (2 trips): 26  
**Average travelers/trip:** 11.8      Avg. Collette/trip: 10.4      Avg. OAT/GCT/trip: 12.6      Avg. Premier/trip: 13

## 2026 Trips

Three 2026 trips have already filled or are almost full. Trips with limited availability are noted below. The year-to-date numbers of 2026 travelers, as of October 20, 2025, excluding liaisons, are:

Trip	Dates	Regist.	Avail.	Trip	Dates	Regist.	Avail.
Galapagos A (OAT)	1/18-2/3, 2026	13	FULL	Java/Bali (OAT)	6/13-29, 2026	4	
Galapagos B (OAT)	1/25-2/11, 2026	12	FULL	Canadian Rockies (Collette)	6/28-7/6, 2026	13	
Patagonia (OAT)	2/17-3/4, 2026	15	FULL	Greece (Collette)	9/19-10/2, 2026	4	
Japan/S. Korea (Collette)	3/7-22, 2026	20	1 dbl, 1 sngle	Peru/Lake Titicaca (Collette)	10.8-17, 2026	3	
Flavors Port/Spain (Collette)	4/7-22, 2026	17		Colors New England (Collette)	10/14-21, 2026	4	
Amalfi/Tuscany (GCT)	4/19-5/4, 2026	16	2 dbl, 1 sngl	New Zealand A (OAT)	10/29-11/14, 2026	5	
Namibia/S. Africa (Collette)	4/24-5/10, 2026	8		Egypt/Nile Cruise A (OAT)	10/31-11/15, 2026	15	FULL
Ireland (Collette)	5/7-17, 2026	6		New Zealand B (OAT)	11/5-21, 2026	12	1 sngl. 1 dbl.
Sicily/Malta (Collette)	5/10-21, 2026	8		Egypt/Nile Cruise B (OAT)	12/3-18, 2026	7	
American Heritage (Collette)	5/15-22, 2026	2		Danube Xmas cruise (Collette)	12/7-15, 2026	4	
Finland/Sweden/Norway (OAT)	6/9-25, 2026	6					
	<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>					

## 2027 Trips

We have chosen our 2027 trips and have begun accepting registrations for the first few (Costa Rica, Antarctica, Canadian Aurora, and “Belgium & Holland in the Spring” river cruise).

### Individual Travelers

As mentioned earlier in this report, OAT and Collette both pay commissions to CUCRA when travelers mention CUCRA’s group number when registering for any of their trips outside of the escorted trips that we include on our scheduled. We project a total of 26 OAT individual travelers and one Collette individual traveler for 2025.

*Submitted 10/26/2026 by Sue Barnes, UC Retirees Travel coordinator, and Dolores Dyer, assistant coordinator*