

Croatia DELUXE Cruise



Join the Atlanta Botanical Garden! Discover Slovenia & Croatia! ~The International Wild Flower Festival~ May 27 – June 9, 2025

Join me, **Atlanta Botanical Garden President Mary Pat Matheson**, on a first-class journey to Slovenia and Croatia! Our adventure begins on the shores of gorgeous Lake Bled, Slovenia. Amazingly, Slovenia is home to just two million people, but has over 4,000 unique species of wildflowers that can be found during the spring in its meadows and mountainsides. Together, we will attend the **International Wildflower Festival** which takes place in the Julian Alps.

We then make our way to Opatija, Croatia and the Adriatic Coast, famous for its wines, truffles and wild honey. Our journey continues as we head south to the ancient Roman city of Split, where we board our first-class, dazzling yacht, the **M/V Rhapsody**! With our garden-loving Atlanta Botanical Garden friends, we cruise through the sunny Dalmatian Islands where we will spend a full day discovering the walled city of Dubrovnik. Your journey culminates in a day-long outing to Croatia's famous waterfall park, Plitvice! **Space is limited.**

TRIP AT A GLANCE

3 Nights Lake Bled, Slovenia ****Rikli Balance Hotel
1 Night in the romantic seaside town of Opatija, Croatia *****Ambassador Hotel
7 Nights aboard the privately-chartered, deluxe M/V Rhapsody yacht
2 Nights Zagreb, Croatia *****Esplanade Zagreb Hotel



**EARTHBOUND
EXPEDITIONS**

Earthbound Expeditions Inc.

P.O. Box 11305, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110 USA

T. 800.723.8454 / T. 206.842.9775 / F. 206.238.8480

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JOURNEY HIGHLIGHTS

International Wildflower Festival ✳ Wild honey experience and tasting ✳ The UNESCO World Heritage site of medieval Dubrovnik ✳ Stunning Lake Bled in Slovenia ✳ The ancient Roman palace of Split ✳ Cruising the islands of Croatia on board the luxurious M/V Rhapsody ✳ Excursions to wineries and farms ✳ Seaside dining ✳ Waterfalls of Plitvice National Park ✳ Traveling with nature-loving friends ✳ Five pre- and post- cruise nights ✳ Gardens and National Parks!

IT'S INCLUDED

- ✳ Fully guided by an expert Earthbound Expeditions guide
- ✳ With Atlanta Botanical Gardens host & President Mary Pat Matheson
- ✳ Three pre-cruise days in Slovenia including a night in historic Opatija, Croatia!
- ✳ Two post-cruise nights in charming Zagreb
- ✳ Seven nights cruising on board the luxurious M/V Rhapsody yacht
With complimentary wifi, beer, wine, coffee and tea.
- ✳ Transport by private air conditioned motor coach
- ✳ All breakfasts plus 17 additional meals plus complimentary wine, beer and coffee
- ✳ Special outings to national parks and gardens
- ✳ All shore and special land excursions with knowledgeable local guides
- ✳ All gratuities for your Earthbound Expeditions guide, drivers and ship staff
- ✳ Alumni discounts applied towards future adventures

TRIP FACTS

14 Days / 13 Nights (not including air travel)

Depart the USA by May 26, 2023

Trip begins: May 27, 2025 in Lake Bled, Slovenia

Trip ends: June 9, 2025 in Zagreb, Croatia

*See last page for ship layout and pricing details

NOT INCLUDED: International Airline tickets, airline luggage fees, any meals not mentioned, room/mini-bar service, gratuities for hotel staff or ship crew, port fees, travel insurance, items of a personal nature and anything not listed in the “It’s Included” section above.



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Spend a Day Exploring Lake Bled, Slovenia

Your ATLANTA BOTANICAL GARDEN Adventure Begins!

Day 0: May 26 - Depart home city for quaint Slovenia!

Remember, you will need to depart the US for Slovenia no later than today. Getting to Lake Bled from the Ljubljana airport is easy, inexpensive and just 30 minutes away. You will absolutely fall in love with this region of Europe. **The International Wild Flower Festival** takes place in Slovenia each year. May is the perfect time to see a blanket of wildflowers in the Bohinj region of the Alps, which is located just 30 minutes away from Lake Bled. Nearly everyone in Slovenia speaks excellent English, so getting around is a cinch.



Day 1: May 27 - Arrive in Ljubljana, Slovenia

Welcome to the quaint and mountainous country of Slovenia! After flying into Ljubljana, plan to meet your guide and fellow travelers in Lake Bled, a 30-minute taxi ride northwest of the airport. Enjoy a welcome feast together this evening.

Breathe in the sub-Alpine air and luxuriate in the gorgeous surroundings! You're at the foot of the towering Julian Alps. Lake Bled offers stunning scenery and a perfect location to explore the mountains, lakes and meadows of this magnificent region. *Sleep near Lake Bled (D)*

Travelers arriving on May 27 will be offered a complimentary shuttle transfer to Lake Bled.



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International Wild Flower Festival in Bohinj

Day 2: May 28 - Villages, Castles and Stunning Mountain Vistas

There's a local saying, whereby one hasn't really visited Bled without taking a ride in one of its traditional *Pletna* boats. So, in honor of this Slovene tradition, our day will begin with a relaxing paddle out to a medieval monastery which rests on top of a little island in the middle of the lake.

Enjoy an included multi-course lunch. After exploring the lake by boat, and enjoying lunch together, you are free to stroll along the shores of Lake Bled, or walk up to the well-preserved ruins of the 11th century castle. Some may wish to relax and visit the nearby thermal springs.
Sleep near Lake Bled (B, L)

Day 3: May 29 - International Wild Flower Festival in Bohinj

Slovenia may be a tiny country but it packs a punch, not only in terms of its varied landscape of lakes, mountains, forests and coastline, but also in its flora. Home to 4,000 wildflower species, it has long been a favorite with flower lovers and botanists and the country is justifiably proud of its green tourism.

In late May and early June, the area erupts into a haze of wildflowers – many of them familiar, but rarely seen in such abundance. The whole area is a botanist and nature lover's dream, and the floral richness of the area is celebrated each year in the form of the **International Wild Flower Festival in Bohinj**. This charming celebration attracts plant lovers from all over the world but has a distinctly local feel – most of the events are put on by local people.

Spend the entire day exploring the mountains and meadows of this vibrant wonderland. Return to Lake Bled in the late afternoon. *Sleep near Lake Bled (B, L)*



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Croatia & Slovenia



Explore the town of Korcula, birthplace of Marco Polo!

Day 3: May 30 - South to Opatija, the Romantic 19th Century Resort of the Hapsburgs!

Enjoy an outing to a bee farm where an experienced beekeeper will introduce you to his apiary, beekeeping and the importance of bees and bee products. Visit a beehive with a plantation of nectar producing plants, a presentation of an escaped swarm and a tasting of honey products.

We then drive south to the elegant seaside town of Opatija. Before World War I, this was Austria-Hungary's most fashionable seaside resort and the place to "see and be seen" for the czars of Russia and luminaries such as Isadora Duncan and Gustav Mahler. The grand residences of the wealthy and noble are now elegant hotels that offer the grandeur and sophistication of a bygone age. Take a dip in the sea, sip a glass of wine in a café and stroll the regal waterfront promenade this afternoon—it stretches nearly nine miles. Or, visit the **American Gardens** – a historical garden in Opatija, which was reopened to the public after decades of closure. A monumental gate with stone pillars guards the entrance to the park with its well-manicured vegetation, which has been thoughtfully designed for rest of body and mind. Then join your happy comrades for a dinner. *Sleep in Opatija (B, D)*

Day 4: May 31 - South to the Roman city of Split: Our expedition continues south to Split. As a UNESCO World Heritage site, Split has an abundance of Roman architecture including the magnificent Palace of Diocletian, once inhabited by the Roman emperor. Enjoy a guided tour of the city with a local expert. Afterwards, we board our private yacht, the M/V Rhapsody, for a welcome drink, followed by our first delicious dinner. on board.

Sleep on board near Split (B, D)



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Enjoy lunch overlooking Dubrovnik

Day 5: June 1 - Split to Korcula, Home of Marco Polo

This morning we depart Split and continue our cruise towards the Island of Korcula, best known as the birthplace of Marco Polo. We'll stop for lunch in one of the secluded bays en route to Korcula. Upon arrival, we'll have a guided walking tour of this enchanting town with fortified walls and unique herringbone-patterned streets. Korcula also has an abundance of restaurants where you can opt for a gourmet or casual dinner experience. There are many bars and clubs for those looking for evening entertainment. *Sleep on board near Korcula (B, L)*

Day 6: June 2 - Korcula to Mljet to Dubrovnik

Today, we continue cruising to the island of Mljet. The national park of Mljet covers a third of the island, including the oldest protected marine park in the Mediterranean. It is also home to an abundance of rich flora and fauna.

Enjoy a moderate hike to visit the salt lakes in Mljet National Park and enjoy a boat ride to St Mary Isle where we visit the 12th century church and Benedictine monastery of St Mary. Following lunch aboard, we'll depart for Dubrovnik. We'll have a beautiful sunset cruise alongside the old city walls before docking near Dubrovnik.

Sleep on board in Lapad harbor, near Dubrovnik (B, L, D)

Day 7: June 3 - The Walled City of Dubrovnik

This morning we'll have a guided walk of the old town of Dubrovnik including a cable car ride to Srđ Mountain for scenic views of the walls and Elaphiti Islands. Don't forget to bring your camera! The afternoon is at your leisure. For those of you with more energy, we highly recommend walking the famous walls. This 1.2-mile-long walk is actually on top of the surrounding city walls and provides a unique perspective to the city. Let's meet up again for an included evening dinner together. *Sleep on board in Lapad harbor, near Dubrovnik (B,D)*



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Discover the historic towns and villages of the Dalmatian Islands

Day 8: June 4 - Dubrovnik to Piljesac Peninsula

Our destination today is the Peljesac Peninsula, best known for its excellent wines. We'll travel inland to explore the rural areas, visit a local farm, and enjoy wine tasting and dinner featuring traditional Croatian dishes made from local produce.

Sleep on board near the Peljesac peninsula (B, L, D)

Day 9: June 5 - Peljesac Peninsula to Hvar

Today, we'll enjoy lunch and a swim in the Pakleni Islands as we sail up to Hvar. The longest island in the Adriatic, Hvar is renowned for its sunny weather, lavish lavender fields and breathtaking beauty. The island is also home to many historical landmarks, including a Renaissance cathedral with its original tower and the oldest community theatre in Europe, founded in 1612. Those wanting to stretch their legs can hike up to the town fort overlooking the harbor for lovely scenic views of the ship and the Pakleni Islands. In the evening, Hvar offers an abundance of entertainment - many restaurants, bars and cafés are open long into the night. *Sleep on board near Hvar (B, L)*

Day 10: June 6 - Hvar to Stari Grad and an outing to Lavender Fields

On Hvar, lavender is used not only for its scent, but also as a flavoring in cooking. Lavender plants flower from May to about mid-June. In the past, Hvar lavender was produced in large quantities, amounting to 10% of total world production. Large-scale cultivation of lavender in Dalmatia started after World War I. Of the whole of today's Croatian coastal area, Hvar Island was the most important producer of lavender. This morning we'll enjoy an outing to lavender farm, olive grove and vineyard.



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Discover Plitvice National Waterfall Park! A World Heritage Site!

We then meet up with our yacht in Stari Grad. The narrow streets and lanes of Stari Grad's old town, some dating back 384 BC, are picture perfect: white-stone streets, marble pathways, bougainvillea growing on street corners, and the ubiquitous smell of lavender wafting through the air. Walk along the promenade, enjoy a coffee or some retail therapy. After lunch on board, enjoy an afternoon swim stop. In the evening, cruise in the direction of Split.

Sleep on board in Split (B, L, D)

Day 11: June 7 - North to Zagreb via Plitvice National Park

We disembark the M/V Rhapsody after breakfast today. Our drive north across Croatia will take us through rocky mountains to the world-renowned waterfall park of Plitvice. In terms of the richness and diversity the park represents a unique phenomenon. On a relatively small area of the park, there are 1,267 plant species grouped in 112 families. Explore the wonders of this gorgeous park by foot, with a hearty lunch after, before journeying on to colorful Zagreb, Croatia's capital. We'll check in to the hotel and enjoy a traditional dinner together tonight.

Sleep in Zagreb (B, L, D)



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Day 12: June 8 - Explore Historic Zagreb - A Natural Green Oasis

Unlike most bigger cities, especially capitals, Zagreb is full of trees and meadows, lakes and streams, green squares, and serene parks. In fact, Zagreb is the second capital city in Europe in terms of the percentage of total green infrastructure (74%). And it's widely known that the people of Zagreb adore the open green spaces the city gives them. The town's charming botanical garden is located right behind our five-star hotel.

This morning enjoy a "Highlights of Zagreb" walk with an informative local guide. After, enjoy a farewell lunch with your hosts and guides. Let us toast to our grand adventure!

The late afternoon is yours to relax in a café or stroll through the city parks. **Historic note:** You'll be staying in the Five Star Hotel Esplanade, which was also built for guests, such as Agatha Christie, who traveled from Paris to Zagreb on the famous Orient Express.

Sleep in Zagreb (B, L)

Day 13: June 9 - Your Journey Concludes

Your adventure concludes after breakfast today. Return home with a lifetime of memories!

Questions & Reservations

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The Gorgeous M/V Rhapsody

Your Luxury Small Yacht Home in Croatia

The M/V Rhapsody is an extravagant and leading-edge yacht designed for cruising along the Croatian coastline. Cruising for the first time in 2020, this opulent yacht features modern equipment and lavish amenities. The M/V Rhapsody invites every guest to enjoy her comfortable atmosphere.

Social areas aboard the M/V Rhapsody include the contemporary indoor restaurant and bar and gorgeous outdoor terrace, ideal for enjoying the sea breeze and taking in the surrounding views. The top deck is home to the sun deck with plenty of comfortable loungers and hot tub. Highlights of the journey include a spectacular evening cruise along the old town city walls of Dubrovnik, swimming in the turquoise waters, and sampling local gastronomical delights in quaint villages along the way. A full buffet breakfast is included every morning and lunch or dinner as per the itinerary.

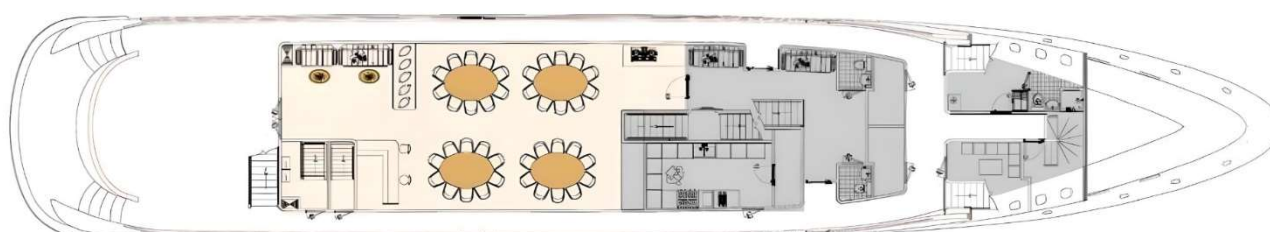


M/V Rhapsody

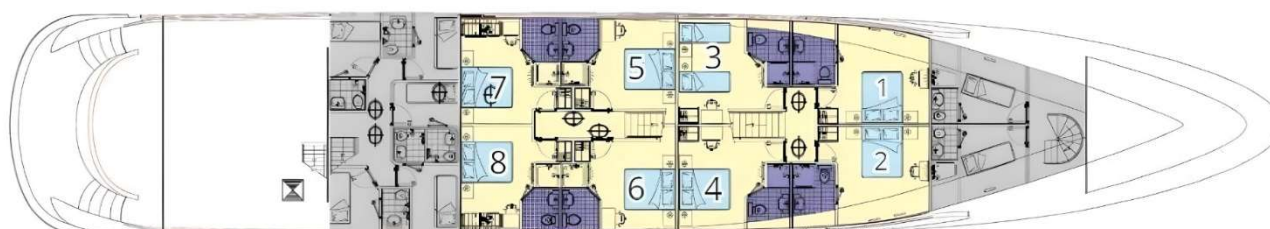
Deck Plan & Pricing



Upper deck



Main deck



Lower deck

DOUBLE CABIN CATEGORY PRICE PER PERSON TWIN & DOUBLE CABINS

Upper Deck \$10,495

Lower Deck \$8,395

Single Supplement: Add 50% (limited space available for single cabins)

Port taxes, charges & fees are currently \$195 per person and are not included in cabin price

Cabins: 19 cabins for up to 38 passengers

Upper (Balcony) Deck: 11 Cabins

- 11 double/twin flex-bed* cabins with private balconies

Lower (Porthole) Deck: 8 Cabins

- 8 double/twin flex-bed* cabins with portholes

All cabins on Upper Balcony Deck have a private balcony and windows. All cabins on Lower Deck have 3 oval windows size 40cmx25cm, which cannot be opened (porthole windows).



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M/V Rhapsody Photos



Cabin 19 Upper

Cabin #2 Lower



Private Bath



Mid Deck



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Meet Your Atlanta Botanical Garden Host, Mary Pat Matheson



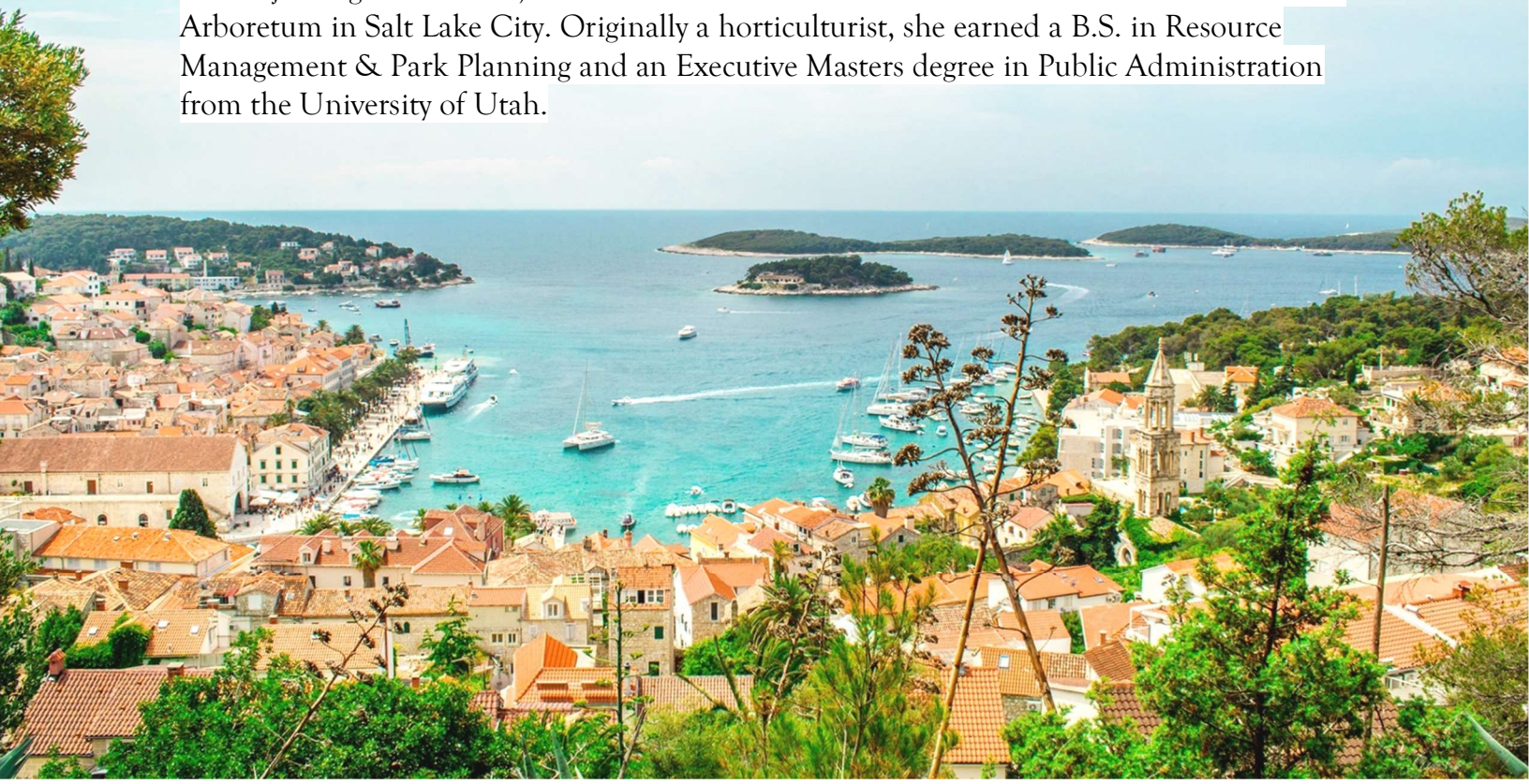
Since 2002, Mary Pat Matheson has directed all operations for the 30-acre public garden, and under her leadership, the nonprofit organization has actively expanded fund-raising, education, marketing, business administration, horticulture and conservation efforts with a rapidly growing membership base of more than 42,000. Additionally, she is responsible for the development of the Atlanta Botanical Garden, Gainesville, a 185-acre public garden in Gainesville, Georgia.

She also was the driving force behind two \$50 million-plus capital campaigns that enabled the Garden to expand, doubling its size to 30 acres with new gardens and facilities.

The meteoric growth in Garden attendance over 19 years has enabled it to reach larger and broader audiences for its mission in educating the public about its plant and animal conservation efforts.

Matheson is a past president of the American Public Gardens Association, serves as board chair for Midtown Alliance and is on the board of the Food Well Alliance. She is a graduate of Leadership Atlanta and a member of the Rotary Club of Atlanta.

Before joining the Garden, Matheson was Executive Director of the Red Butte Garden and Arboretum in Salt Lake City. Originally a horticulturist, she earned a B.S. in Resource Management & Park Planning and an Executive Masters degree in Public Administration from the University of Utah.



Know Before You Go!

Reservations and Deposits: A \$1000 per person deposit is needed to confirm your space on this journey. You can make a credit card deposit online or by phone. Once the deposit is processed, a deposit packet is emailed with pertinent journey details. Deposits are refundable, minus a \$250 per person cancellation fee, for 14 days from the processing date or 90 days prior to departure, whichever comes first. Deposits made 120 days prior to a trip departing are not refundable. Final and progress payments are non-refundable. We strongly urge guests to purchase travel insurance. Questions? Call our helpful travel staff at 800-723-8454.

Not Included: International airline tickets, service and gratuities for hotel staff, travel insurance, meals not listed in brochure, and any activities or items not listed in your itinerary.

Physical Requirements: It is the responsibility of each guest to be aware of their physical abilities or limitations and to be in sufficient good health to undertake the trip. [Click here](#) to read “Is an Earthbound trip right for you?” or call the Earthbound office for more details. Please note: This journey includes walking over cobblestones, up stairs and walking up to 2 miles over 2 hours.

Travel Insurance: Earthbound Expeditions strongly encourages the purchase of travel insurance coverage. We include information on trip insurance in your deposit information.

Events and Hosted Journeys: If a planned event is cancelled for any reason, another event will be included in its place. This is not cause for refund. Events are subject to change. Also, if a host or special guest is unable to attend as planned, Earthbound Expeditions will do its utmost to find another host who has similar interests, talents, and expertise. The inability of a host to participate in a tour is not grounds for a full or partial refund.

Terms & Conditions: Click [here](#) to read the full terms and conditions.

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