



ITMB PUBLISHING LTD.

- **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MAPS AND BOOKS**
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**12300 Bridgeport Road
Richmond, BC
CANADA V6V 1J5
TEL: (604) 273-1400
FAX: (604) 273-1488
E-mail: Jack@itmb.com**

AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #5 OF 2018 – End of May – New Titles: see below for details

INTRODUCTION

It seems that every month brings its challenges. Normally, our inventory levels for each of our 500+ maps decline gradually, in a steady way, and we can predict far in advance which titles will need updating and when we need to print in order to ensure not being out of important titles for too long a time period. Reality being something that doesn't follow our rules, we sometimes find individual titles unexpectedly surge in sales and we run out of inventory without having any advance notice. This happened to us in February, with our popular Yucatan map, which we're pleased to see back in print after a brief hiatus. We are now experiencing a greatly enhanced interest in our North Korea map, no doubt as a result of potential peace meetings and improved prospects for travel. We are, as a result, almost out of copies of a map that was selling slowly but steadily and are having to rush through updating to ensure that a new edition will be available ASAP. This is our daily reality. We have to keep abreast of daily news events, sort through Trump's insane tweets to see if anything might change with US policies towards Iran, Cuba, Venezuela, or half a dozen other crisis focal points, and pore through business commentary magazines to try and discover new developments. For example, a new tunnel joining Denmark and Germany is about to start construction. This may be common knowledge in Europe, but is news to us! A new motorway has opened in Ukraine, joining the capital of Kiev to the western border and providing an export corridor linking the country more closely with EU member states. That development needs to be added to our map of the country. China is building a new military base in the Maldive Islands (Indian Ocean area). This is big news! We need to add this new development to various maps. This is how we spend our time, constantly seeking out new information to keep our product line of 500+ maps current. We recently discovered, for instance, that Moraine Lake is a major tourist attraction! Today's news noted a new fishing resort being proposed for the Haida Gwaii/Queen Charlotte Islands area. If it is built, we will need to add it to all of our maps that include the islands. This is what we do, day after day. Maps change constantly, so we never complete a map!

BLACK HOLE PROJECTS

Governments love grandiose building projects; after all, they have the bottomless pit of tax revenues to indulge in expensive, and often foolish, ventures. What are the worst examples in the world today? Number One has to be the Ryungyong Hotel project started many years ago by the then-leader of North Korea, Kim Il-sung. This 105-storey luxury resort-like edifice, resembling a rocket ship poised to take off, began in 1987, before the current leader was born! Financing collapsed with the sudden demise of the not-much-loved Soviet Union, leaving a hulking monstrosity looming over Pyongyang City for the past 30 years. The Arab oil sheikdoms of the Middle East contain several overly-extravagant projects that have been completed, only to fall into disuse through lack of any need for them, but the current boondoggle bar none has to be Saudi Arabia's Jeddah Economic City, with its proposed tallest building in the world fiasco. This 170-storey office block, in a desert town closed to non-Muslims, reached the 66-storey mark before someone realized that most of the money for the continued building was missing, never to be found. After much ranting and raving about corruption, the government has now abandoned this \$1.23 billion dollar monstrosity. The Pan-Arabian Rail line linking the useless sheikdoms in the oil-rich Gulf area has also come unstuck. This 2,100 km mega-rail line was designed to link Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Bahrain, Qatar, and Oman, but no one asked why several countries that didn't even like each other needed a rail line. After all, none of them produce anything or need a rail line to move goods to a port. The UAE actually completed 264 kms of trackage to nowhere before anyone wondered where it was going or why it was being built. America is also the locale for some spectacular black holes, most notably the Second Avenue Subway line in New York City. First proposed in 1929, the first few stations finally opened in 2017, having cost \$17 billion. The system will require three more phases and an astounding \$30 billion to complete. How can Shanghai build 16 complete subway lines affordably in a short ten years while NYC takes a century to build a small fraction of one line?

CHINA IS A PUSHME-PULL ME COUNTRY

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China is a fascinating country to visit, if only to experience crowds such as don't exist anywhere else and cities expanding so dramatically that the construction crane is now regarded jokingly as the national bird. Everything in China has to be multiplied by a factor of ten to compare it to anything in the USA. The country has 1.4 billion people and defines a mega-city as anything over 15 million people. Guess what? China has four such gargantuan cities. The United States has none. China has 50 cities over ten million in population; the USA has two. Governing such a country is extremely challenging, and the Communist Party's ham-handed history of ineptness and corruption doesn't help instill confidence in locals or outsiders. The leader of the government, Xi Jinping, has just declared himself President for Life. This is interesting in that no word of this has been released inside China, who are unaware that there has been a coup d'etat and a dictator installed. This move does not bode well for China or for the rest of the world. It is an axiom of politics that absolute power corrupts absolutely. Absolute dictatorships have never been successful except in negative ways, because unfettered power invariably results in oppressive behaviour, repression of rights, and general discontent. Now, to be fair, Xi does not appear to be a madman like Chairman Mao, or an egomaniac like Hitler, or a paranormal butcher like Stalin. However, he does appear to be fixated on expanding China's physical borders, as evidenced by his insistence that the entire China Sea area belongs to China alone, up to twenty kilometers away from Manila, in the Philippines, as well as all of northern India. China is now busily dredging the ocean bed somewhere in the Maldivian Islands and creating new land areas which, to no one's surprise, are now claimed by China as part of mainland China. It is only a matter of time before such activities bring China into military conflict with another country. In another alarming heavy-handed move, China recently moved 10,000 troops into western China to quell yet another Muslim rebellion, and dictated that all men had to shave off their beards. Think of that for a moment – thousands of troops and a smooth-shaven visage at the same time. Interesting coincidence, I think! A week ago (i.e. mid-April) Beijing announced that all religions inside China must (note Must) support the Communist Party and its agenda. Religions must 'Sinosize' and throw off foreign influence, as determined by the political agenda of the Communist Party. I'm not making this up. China actually released a white paper titled China's Policies and Practices on Protecting Freedom of Religious Belief that states that all religions must be guided by the Party in adopting socialist beliefs and serve the overall interests of the nation, embracing core socialist values (i.e. Communism). China only recognizes five religions as being valid – Buddhism, Taoism, Catholicism, Protestantism, and Islam. Keep in mind that this is the same country that is trying very hard to 'Westernize' economically and bring its own population to a middle class society. This is a perfect example of a country in a 'push me-pull me' contradiction. Will China be pushed backward into a repressive regime, or pulled forward by a world that is advancing economically? Only time will tell.

MUSEUMS OF THE WORLD UNITE!

We all love museums, even if we rarely visit them. Vancouver's Ethnography Museum is among the best in the world, and museums extolling art, scientific discoveries, and preserving cultural artifacts exist in most cities. Here are four museums of a different category. The first is in Logan, Ohio. It shows off 3,400 pencil sharpeners in a wide variety of shapes and themes, from sharpeners looking like miniature cars to ones resembling fish. This collection was started by a local minister and, while not exactly the Louvre or the Met, shows that the mania for collecting remains strong. I remember seeing a display of Mickey Mouse dolls in one airport waiting area that kept me occupied for an hour, wondering how so many different mechanical versions of a cartoon creation could possibly exist! The second museum is itself a building – a prison. Cell Block 7 is actually a museum located within an active prison. Visitors can learn about life behind bars in what was, at one time, the world's largest prison, in Jackson, Michigan. I think I'll pass on that tour! The third quirky museum is one in Washington, DC, dedicated to spying. Then there is the Coca Cola Museum in Atlanta, Georgia, where one can sample over 100 versions of the world's most popular drink. Finally, if you happen to visit Lubeck, Germany, you can visit Niederegger, the candy manufacturer specializing in making Marzipan, and see life-like figurines carved out of almond and sweet sugar. Sounds yummy!

WHICH COUNTRY SELLS THE MOST CARS?

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Car sales are booming, worldwide! Despite growing concerns about pollution, climate change and over-dependence on fossil fuels, the car industry remains robust. This affects travel, so is a worthwhile topic for Axis to discuss. Not surprisingly, China is, by far, the most active car-producing and car selling country in the world. There is a HUGE pent-up demand for car ownership in China. This is creating major problems in large cities such as Beijing or Shanghai, as parking garages don't generally exist and parking is becoming an increasing problem. Beijing has six million cars, three times the number it had five years previously. The car population in the city will probably double over the next five years, leading to enormous congestion problems. Shanghai is trying to control vehicular purchases by limiting the issuance of licenses to operate a vehicle, selling licenses in a lottery-like format to the highest bidders on a monthly basis (the current cost of a license being reported as being \$34,000). In the first two months of 2018, an astounding 3,930,000 cars sold inside China – more than for the rest of the world put together! In the same short two-month time period, barely 818,000 cars sold in the USA – a quarter the number, and the American car assembly and importing businesses are barely able to keep ahead of local demand.

On an annualized basis, sales of cars inside China should exceed 25,000,000 units in 2018 alone. By European or North American standards, this is an incredibly large number, but more astounding still is that demand is increasing in China, not decreasing, as it is in North America. Furthermore, although demand for new cars seems robust in America, relatively small Japan is the Number 3 market for cars (although demand is shrinking) and India is Number 4 and rising rapidly, with growth in 2018 expected to be 10%. What this means for travel is two-fold. First, increasing congestion will make travelling by road more expensive and more difficult and second, all these extra vehicles will add carbon dioxide pollution to the atmosphere, thereby accelerating climate change. Delhi and Beijing are already notorious for their high levels of pollution. I'm afraid that pollution levels are going to get much worse in many parts of the world. On the upbeat side, China is also the world's largest sales area for electric cars, although Norway holds the record for the highest percentage of electric cars sold.

MORE CANADIAN JOKES

Since we're focused on cars this month, here's a good one out of Newfoundland. A police officer stops a vehicle in St. John's and asks to see the driver's license. The Newfie replies in a huff "I wish you guys would get your act together. Just yesterday, you take away my license and then today you expect me to show it to you!"

Here's another one. A Newfie pushes his new BMW into the dealer's lot, claiming that the vehicle had died. After the mechanic worked on the engine for a few minutes, the motor was idling smoothly. Impressed, the Newfie asked what the problem had been and the mechanic shrugged and replied "Just crap in the carburetor." The baffled Newfie then asked "How often do I have to do that?"

Let's stop riding the Newfoundlanders for a minute. Two Yukoners were sitting on a bench in the dead of winter, which will tell you right away that this is an unlikely tale, talking and watching the moon during the annual season of near-perpetual darkness. One geezer says to the other "Which do you think is farther away, Florida or the moon?" His drinking companion doesn't even have to think before replying "Jeez, man, that's easy. You can see the moon. Can you see Florida from here?"

Then there's the Sasketonian (figure it out) who bought two dogs and named them Rolex and Timex because they were watch dogs.

WORK IN PROGRESS ON CURRENT PROJECTS

Cook Islands is out of print indefinitely.

Georgia & Armenia suddenly had a surge in sales and is now out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Indonesia is now out of print. A new edition is at press; expected in Aug.

The brand new ITMB title, Japan Railway Atlas, is coming soon; No ETA at the moment.

Lesotho is now out of print. We are working on a new map, combining Lesotho and Swaziland into a double-sided map; Swaziland is also getting low on inventory (see below).

Manhattan is out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA is yet available.

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Morocco is now out of print. The artwork is at press and expected in June.

Quito/Central Ecuador is out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA. Please order Galapagos Islands, Quito and Guayaquil instead.

Samoa/American Samoa is out of print indefinitely.

Singapore is out of print indefinitely.

Swaziland is close to depletion. Later this year, we hope to release a combined map of the country, along with Lesotho on the reverse side; no ETA.

Tahiti is almost out of print. A new edition of this interesting travel area is being prepared; no ETA.

USA Southwest is out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA is yet available.

Vancouver Northshore Hiking Trails is getting low on inventory. A new combined map that will include the Fraser Valley on the reverse side is being prepared, but no ETA is yet available.

NEW RELEASES IN MAY, 2018

Kuala Lumpur & Malay Peninsula Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2018 1:10,000/1:730,000 9781771294102 UPC 817712941022 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Technically, this could be considered a first edition map, as it represents the first time that we have published a map of the Malay Peninsula, but our recent research trip to Malaysia convinced us that the rural mainland of the countryside surrounding spread-out Kuala Lumpur (known locally as KL, of course) is more an extension of KL's influence than something someone could visit without including KL. Therefore, we are pleased to release our newly-updated second edition city map of Kuala Lumpur and combine it with a separate map on the reverse side that should meet anyone's needs for travel covering the entire mainland portion of Malaysia. The city side covers four essential components of KL: the Railway Station (which was moved to the southern area of KL to reduce congestion and provide easy access to the airport), the traditional commercial district known as Little India, the main commercial district (known as Chow Kit) and the new City Centre area, where the twin Petronas Towers (see cover picture) dominate the skyline and Malaysia's booming economy. KL is far too spread out to include the entire urban area on one map, so we have included an inset map covering Klang, Batu, Kajang, and the airport, which is south of Putrajaya. The peninsula side of the map includes a detailed inset map of Singapore, to the south, and a portion of Thailand to the north. Formerly the British possession of Malaya, the peninsula can now be divided into three portions – those areas west of the central mountain chain, those east of the mountains, and Penang. All three portions have their own charm; for the sake of brevity, I will mention only Georgetown, on the island of Penang, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a very interesting cultural blending of Malay and Chinese ethnicities. The map itself is easy to read, accurate, up-to-date and typically ITMB quality. We feel that this map re-introduces and enhances our former KL Map. **AVAILABLE**

Reykjavik & SW Iceland Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2018 1:10,000/1:330,000 ISBN 9781553413851 UPC 815534138576 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – We are pleased to announce a brand new title for ITMB. Reykjavik is the capital of Iceland and is an interesting city in its own right. We have placed it on one side of the sheet and it looks very good. It includes the international airport (the port of entry for almost everyone visiting Iceland) and includes a good range of hotels, which is very necessary, due to the country's booming tourism industry. The central core of the city is well-portrayed and the scale is such as to allow us to impose 'footprints' of all the buildings in the city (one of the wonders now available thanks to satellite imagery). We have also added a listing of the top 10 attractions within the city area, such as the largest church in Iceland, the Jonnsson Sculpture Garden, and the historic Old Harbour. The reverse side of the map covers essentially the southwestern quarter of Iceland, from Keflavik in the far west to partway across the vast Vatnajokull Icefield and north to the town of Stykkisholmur. The map shows all known places of accommodation, including youth hostels, and touristic attractions such as the famous Geysir, the volcanic water eruption that occurs every six minutes and is a 'must see' for everyone visiting the country. The map also shows the ten most popular attractions on the island, including the Golden Circle Route of 300 kms through Pingvellir National Park and the Gullfoss waterfall area. This is an excellent map for those concentrating on this portion of Iceland. We have visited all of these attractions and can guarantee that Iceland is a marvelous travel destination. **AVAILABLE**

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Sao Paulo & Brasil South Coast 2nd Ed. 2018 – Due in June, 2018

Southern BC/Alberta Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2018 1:1,000,000 ISBN 9781771297059 UPC 817712970596 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - ITMB, being based in Vancouver, BC, understandably has a local/regional market for our map line. We have a map of Western Canada, as well as an atlas, a very nice map of BC itself, a map of the south half of BC, and a map of part of BC combined with Washington State. What we did not have, until now, was a map covering the most touristically-visited part of all of Canada – namely, the southern halves of both British Columbia and its neighbour, Alberta, with a small amount of Washington State, Idaho, and Montana (to assist those heading north and needing to know about border crossings). Therefore, ITMB is pleased to announce the release of Southern BC and Alberta. Side One covers BC from the US border (with a carry-on to Seattle) north to Prince George and east to the Alberta border, with a carry-on to Calgary. All of Vancouver Island, the Okanagan Valley, and the Rocky Mountain National Parks of Banff and Jasper, are included. The map is rich with wilderness campsite (almost 1,000 are shown, ski areas, fishing areas, even gas stations in more remote parts of the vast province. Side Two covers Alberta from somewhat north of Edmonton (the provincial capital) to the American border and a bit beyond, and from the Rocky Mountains east to a bit beyond the Saskatchewan border. This side focusses on the movement from the high Rockies to the foothills and plains of the enormous Canadian Prairies. The highlights of this side of the map are showcased in our Top Attractions guide and include such world-class features as the Drumheller Dinosaur Museum, the world's best pre-historic museum, to the Columbia Icefield, one of the few in the world easily accessible to walk on. Naturally, the road network, train lines, urban areas, parks, and numerous attractions (who could pass up visiting Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump?) are all clearly shown. **AVAILABLE**

NEW RELEASES IN April, 2018

Morocco Travel Reference Map 4th Ed. 2018 1:1,100,000/1:1,150,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771294638 UPC 817712946386 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Morocco is a haven of peace in a world beset by religious strife. The country has close ties to Europe, with the Strait of Gibraltar allowing easy ferry access, and the country is interesting, well-developed, and safe. The fabled cities of Casablanca, Marrakesh, Rabat, Sale, and Tangier are all included as insets, and the road and rail networks are clearly shown. Please note that it is still not possible to travel to neighbouring Algeria due to long-standing political differences, but the road to the south is well maintained and travellers can access Mauritania via the coastal road. Most visitors limit themselves to Fez and Meknes, but the far side of the Atlas Mountains is a fascinating landscape of desert-like oases. This is a country well worth visiting. Printed on waterproof paper. **AVAILABLE**

World Wall Map (large size) Political Version 59x35" (blue ocean) 1:27,000,000 ISBN 9781771298957

World Wall Map (large size) Antique Version 59x35" brown ocean) 1:27,000,000 ISBN 9781771298964

There isn't much one can say about a map of the world that is innovative or different. Obviously, these two maps, printed on paper, are worthwhile wall hangings. They are accurate, up-to-date, detailed, informative, and hopefully attractive. They are provided flat or rolled individually in plastic sleeves. We can bundle together ten or more into a roll to reduce shipping costs, but the bottom line is that the cost of shipping is very high for small quantities. The suggested retail price for each is \$26.95cdn/us E19.95 18.95GBP. ITMB also released two smaller-sized world maps last month. They would fit into most commercial laminating machines, and lamination would increase their value.

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Yucatan Travel Reference Map 12th Ed. 2018 1:500,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781553410638 UPC 815534106384 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.96GBP – The Yucatan Peninsula remains one of Mexico's most popular travel destinations. This edition was rushed into production to meet a pressing need for copies during the busy travel season. As such, we have made basic updates to the artwork, but the cover picture, ISBN, and price remain the same. We will be researching the Yucatan this coming July and hope to both confirm the integrity of the artwork and update our mapping information. This will also introduce young Kenzie (age 4) to a mapping expedition, so maybe the next version will include some sketches of cars! Although the Yucatan area is best known for its coastal resorts and uncovered Aztec cities in the interior, it should be noted that this double-sided map details ALL of the peninsula, from Campeche in the west to Cancun in the east and from Merida in the north to the Tikal Ruins in Guatemala in the south. All of Belize and a fair portion of Guatemala are included, as well as detailed inset maps of Cancun and Merida.

NEW RELEASES IN MARCH, 2018

Ontario Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 2018 1:1M (South)/1:1.5M (North) ISBN 9781771295901 UPC 81771299010 \$9.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

Uruguay & Montevideo Travel Reference Map 5th Ed. 2018 1:800,000/1:10,000 ISBN 9781553412809 UPC 815534128096 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - AVAILABLE

Warsaw & Eastern Poland Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2018 1:9,000/1:650,000 ISBN 9781771298995 UPC 817712989956 \$10.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP - AVAILABLE

World Wall Map (smaller size) Antique (brown ocean) Political Version (comes flat only) 2nd Ed. 2018 1:50,000,000 (33x20") ISBN9781771298940 (No UPC code) \$14.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

World Wall Map (smaller size) Modern (blue ocean) Political Version (comes flat only) 2nd Ed. 2018 1:50,000,000 (33x20") ISBN 9781771298933 (No UPC code) \$14.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE

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