



## **ITMB PUBLISHING LTD.**

- **INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MAPS AND BOOKS**
- **ITM DISTRIBUTION**

**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 #3 OF 2019 – March – New Titles: see below for details**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Lan and I spent much of March in Asia, specifically, in Sri Lanka, Vietnam, and Korea. As a result, this edition of the newsletter might be a tad short. A number of titles ran out of copies during our time out of Canada, as was expected, and a few more arrived from the printer. Business as usual, it seems. Linh and Phuong and the two grandchildren are still in Hanoi until early next month, so I'm back to answering the phone and running the cash register for the next ten days. We're well into planning our next four trips, which is normal for us.

### **SRI LANKA**

We spent a week in Sri Lanka during early March; not enough time to see everything, but sufficient to hit the highlights. The good news for the travel industry is that Sri Lanka is enjoying one of those rare time periods where travel to the island is increasing, but has not reached saturation. This means that one can enjoy seeing the attractions of the island country without drowning in tourists. We found that there are really four Sri Lankas. The best known would be the western coastline. This would include the international airport and Colombo, and the beaches that are touristically developed. No 'big name' resort operators seem to have arrived as of now, but there are dozens of attractive beach resorts all along the coast. The second Sri Lanka would be the interior highlands. This contains tea plantations and hill station resorts. We stayed in a pleasant hotel at 6,000 feet elevation. The third is the flat northern portion of the island, which has some archaeological remains, and the fourth would be the largely undeveloped eastern coast. Road conditions are pretty good, and renting a car was easy, although one needs an International Driver's Licence as well as one's own driving licence. Driving is only recommended for experienced drivers, though. Most visitors seem to take local buses or organized tours. We were anxious to drive as much as possible, in order to update the data of our country map, as a new edition will be coming out later this year. Sri Lanka is a popular and safe travel destination, and becoming more popular as its infrastructure improves.

### **HANOI**

After warm and sunny Sri Lanka, we spent a week in cold and smoggy Hanoi, partly on business, and partly on family activities. This is a city of almost six million people, which makes it larger than anything in North America except NYC and LA. This is also a city trying to re-brand itself as HANOI: CITY OF PEACE. Peace?

Traffic in Hanoi moves at a snail's pace. The speed limit is 20 km/hr, and there must be a million motorbikes on the road at any given point in time. Hanoi has opted for an elevated 'skytrain' form of rapid transit. The first line, from near the central railway station to the south, is due to open April 1<sup>st</sup>. hopefully, it will alleviate traffic congestion. A second east-west line is already under construction. Both lines will be on our next edition of our ITMB map of Hanoi. Give them credit for trying; they are doing better at mass transit than any city in America! Congratulations to Hanoi! Apart from that, the city appears to be booming and becoming more modern with each visit we make.

### **SEOUL, SOUTH KOREA**

We found ourselves in Seoul, transferring planes, on the way back to Canada. There was a twelve-hour waiting period, which anyone flying knows all too well is very boring, as well as tiring. Not long enough to get a hotel, but long enough to be exhausting, sitting around the transit area. What to do?

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Well, at Incheon Airport outside of Seoul, the tourism board offers tours of different lengths and for different purposes. These tours are free, but the one we chose included the entry fee to one of the historic royal palaces and lunch at a local restaurant. We happily paid the \$10US each and were soon on a nice bus, heading for the palace. It took more than an hour to reach our destination, so most of the 24 passengers napped during the drive. After all, we had all just arrived from long flights from somewhere and were in the same boat – waiting for our next flight. The palace, once we reached it, was interesting, if rather similar to Chinese palaces we have seen. This one was enhanced by young Korean girls dressed in colourful traditional costumes. We then drove to a shopping area, where the restaurant was located, and enjoyed an excellent beef stew meal. There was enough time left over to browse through local shops or take pictures, then we were herded back on to the bus for the return trip to the airport. Total time elapsed = 5 hours; total cost = \$10.00; a bargain! Korea is one of the few countries in the world that has moved from being a developing country to a developed economy. It is modern, clean, and an attractive place to visit. Next time, we will make sure we have more than a few hours. This is a great travel destination and ITMB has just released its new map of the Korean Peninsula. Our map of Seoul and South Korea is a best-seller.

### **NEWS ONE DOESN'T TEND TO GET IN NORTH AMERICA**

American news media is so fixated on Trump and his bizarre behaviour that important news items of world importance tend to be poorly reported. It was pleasant, therefore, to be in Asia for three weeks, where the goings-on in Washington seem to be largely ignored. Instead, Brexit and its ramifications took centre stage, and I must confess, I find Britain's current conundrum hard to understand. The false election in Thailand returned the military to power in the guise of being 'democratic'. China is running out of money fast, and needs to borrow money – a lot of money. That certainly isn't being reported in the USA! 20,000 Afghans went to Syria to fight for the Taliban. Many have now returned home, which doesn't bode well for the Americans. Indonesian out-islands tend to obtain fewer benefits than the more developed island of Java and are discontented. The erratic President of the Philippines wants to change the name of the country because it is named after King Philip of Spain (16<sup>th</sup> Cent.) and is therefore 'colonial'. NATO is celebrating its 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary, making it one of the longest-lasting military alliances in world history. The Ukraine is holding national elections, and a comedian who portrays a buffoon President on national TV seems poised to be elected. Switzerland is resisting EU attempts to tighten gun laws throughout Europe. Apparently, Swiss men normally keep guns at home in case the country is invaded and the citizen army has to be called out. Really? Who is about to invade tiny Switzerland? The American economy is slowing despite what Trump broadcasts. Growth has dropped to 1.4% in the last quarter and is scheduled to drop even further in 2020. Really! I don't recall that little tid-bit being noted on American news! Turkey's economy is in the doldrums and has fallen into a recession. Scientists are on the verge of agreeing on a 'curtain' of particles being dispersed in the upper atmosphere to act as a sun shield to lower the effect of the sun – global cooling in effect. I'm not at all certain that tinkering with Mother Nature is a good idea. And then, there is Brexit. My point is that there are several major events unfolding in the world and American news media ignores them. We might bewail American indifference to the world as it is, but the fact of the matter is that the news media covers very little of what goes on in the world.

### **WORK IN PROGRESS ON CURRENT PROJECTS**

**We have 30 titles at the moment that have fewer than 100 copies left in stock or are completely out of stock. Most of these are being updated by Lan and her team of dedicated cartographers; others are being run down a bit further before we decide what to do. Please note the following:**

Auckland/North Island is now out of copies. A new edition is at press; no ETA.

Brisbane is out of stock. It will be out of print indefinitely as we re-work the artwork into a new format.

Chile South & Patagonia is out of inventory. An update is underway for release this summer.

Hue and Central Vietnam is close to being out of stock. This title is being re-worked into a new title; no ETA.

Israel/Palestine is almost out of print. A new edition is at press; no ETA.

Laos/Cambodia is almost out of print. This is being discontinued.

Madagascar is out of stock. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

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Malta/Goza is almost out of print. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

New Zealand is close to running out of inventory. A new edition is at press; no ETA.

Norway is now out of print. A new edition is at press; no ETA.

Paraguay is out of stock. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Santiago de Chile is now out of print. A new edition is in preparation; no ETA.

Slovakia/Hungary is almost out of inventory. We are preparing a new edition; no ETA.

Somalia is almost out of print. We are preparing a new title called Somalia and the Horn of Africa for release in the spring of 2019; no ETA.

South Africa is out of inventory. A new edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Surinam and Guyana is out of print. This is being discontinued.

### NEW RELEASES IN MARCH, 2019

**British Columbia Wall Map 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. 2019 1:1,250,000 on paper, available flat only ISBN 9781553410157 UPC 815534101570 \$35.00cdn/us Euro price on demand** – Years ago, the BC government published the one and only wall map of the province, known as 1A. This map was discontinued in 1996, when ITMB purchased all the remaining inventory of Maps BC. 1A ran out of copies in 2000. For a while, flattened road maps of BC had to do, but they were too small and too lacking in detail for what was needed. ITMB re-worked our BC map into a large-size wall map format and published a large, proper, wall map. This ran out of copies last year. Now, we launch the 2<sup>nd</sup> edition of this map. It is quite large, being 28"x80" (sorry, I don't know the metric equivalent). While theoretically being available for worldwide distribution, the market for this particular map is almost always within BC. We can ship it to distributors/retailers in a shipping tube. The information on the map is the same as for our BC travel map but formatted as something suitable to hang on a wall. It is very good and is the largest and most detailed wall map of the province in print. We can also laminate it on demand and frame it for customers. However, in a practical sense, it would be difficult to market internationally, although we would welcome orders. **AVAILABLE**

**Korea North and South Travel Reference Map 1<sup>st</sup> Ed. 2019 1:830,000/1:550,000 on stone paper ISBN 9781771294119 UPC 817712941190 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** – This is a brand new title for ITMB, combining North and South Korea into one double-sided map focusing on the entire Korean Peninsula rather than its political components. The peninsula is undergoing a lot of change at the moment, and no one knows the ultimate outcome. North Korea seems interested in opening itself somewhat to South Koreans, and even if steps to date seem like baby ones, tensions between north and south seem cordial at the moment. For the time being, this map replaces our separate map of North Korea, as changing conditions makes it too risky for us to re-do our North Korea title until its future path is clearer. However, although this map also shows South Korea in good detail, we will continue marketing our Seoul and South Korea map as well as this one. It is still quite difficult to enter North Korea, but we have included an inset map of central Pyongyang and another of its metro system just in case one makes it to the city. South Korea has emerged as one of the most economically developed countries in Asia and is well worth visiting. **AVAILABLE**

**Philippines Travel Reference Map 5<sup>th</sup> Ed. 2019 on stone paper 1:1,000,000 ISBN 9781771296205 UPC 817712962058 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** – Coming in May

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**Rio de Janeiro & Brasil East Coast Travel Reference Map 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. 2019 on waterproof paper 1:12,900/1:2,200,000 ISBN 9781771296663 UPC 817712966636 S11.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** - We are pleased to re-introduce our popular map of Rio for its third edition, and to include with it a detailed map of the south and east coasts of Brasil. Rio is a fascinating, if troubled, city. It recently hosted the Olympics and promised much in the way of infrastructural improvements. We delayed re-issuing this title for nine months while we evaluated what had opened, what was likely to open, and what was not likely to be completed. The core of the map is the Carioca region, close to the lower end of the tram line to the favelas. However, arriving visitors can now take the new subway from the airport to the city centre or south to the beach communities of Copacabana, Ipanema, and Leblon. The other side of the map covers much of developed Brasil, stretching from Sao Paulo in the lower left corner to Natal in the upper right of the sheet. It goes inland to Belo Horizonte and north along ordinary roads to Teresina on the Parnaiba River. The coastal highway through Salvador and Recife passes innumerable beaches and historic towns. Natal is a very popular beach area, with direct flights from Portugal. Altogether, an interesting map. **AVAILABLE**

### **NEW RELEASES IN FEBRUARY, 2019**

**India Travel Reference Map 7<sup>th</sup> Ed. 2018 1:2,400,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771293631 UPC 817712936318 \$12.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95 GBP** – India is a vast country, and one of increasing touristic importance. We visited part of the country in 2018 and have a better understanding of the nature of the country as a result. India is modernizing, like China, but is considerably behind in the provision of modern services. However, the air network is excellent, as is the train service, and the road network is extensive and constantly being improved. Western-style hotels are commonplace, and it is a safe country for travel as long as one doesn't drink the local water. The attractions are too numerous to mention, but include enormous temple complexes, historic sites, beautiful architecture, protected game preserves, beach resorts, and lots and lots of people. India's popularity with visitors is growing rapidly, and we are pleased that our new map will assist that growth. ITMB also publishes maps of sections of India, along with detailed maps of Delhi, Kolkata, and Mumbai. **AVAILABLE**

**Lesotho and Swaziland Travel Reference Map 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. 2019 1:3350,000/1:200,000 ISBN 9781771294386 UPC 817712943866 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP** – We are pleased to re-introduce our coverage of two countries of Africa that are fairly unique. Both were well-established entities when settlers arrived, and both were able to maintain their identities throughout the colonial era, as Protectorates. Lesotho is quite mountainous, with a poorly developed road network, so is a travel adventure destination. It occupies side 1, along with an inset of Maseru, the capital. Swaziland, which has recently changed its name for local purposes to Eswatini, occupies side 2, with an inset of Mbabane, its capital. Both countries are easy to access from South Africa, and are well worth visiting. We have also added two lists showing the Top Attractions of both countries. Both are land-locked countries either adjacent to or surrounded by South Africa; both are essentially agricultural countries, although Lesotho's mountainous terrain offers considerable touristic appeal, particularly the Sani Pass. **AVAILABLE**

**Russia's 'Golden Ring' Heritage Cities 1:500,000 ISBN 9781553415558** – I wish to remind customers that we still have a limited number of copies of this travel map of the heart of Mother Russia. One side is a regional map of the area surrounding Moscow, and the other is a series of urban maps of historic cities full of touristic value – Suzdal, Yaroslavl etc. We discontinued the title at the end of its print run due to lack of demand, but a few copies of this interesting title are still **AVAILABLE**.

**Swaziland, see Lesotho and Swaziland, above.**

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