



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 #05 OF 2022

INTRODUCTION

News coverage this month is dominated by events in Ukraine, as it should be. This conflict has a detrimental effect on travel as well as being a tragedy for all concerned, and as such, cannot be minimized. This is a mapping newsletter, not a current affairs bulletin, but lost in the detail being presented on nightly news media broadcasts is the longer term perspective, so I have included a brief segment below to present some facts not usually mentioned. Apart from the war, May will also bring an opportunity for Lan to enjoy a cruise to Alaska with a friend, and for Linh and Phuong to take a long-delayed visit to Europe, leaving two rambunctious boys. It will be an interesting month!

NEW TITLES RELEASED!

Please note our first-ever map of Austria, which has finally arrived in our warehouse, and our updated map of Ukraine, which we rushed into print due to the war affecting that country. This is not a 'war' map per se, but a country map as matters stand as of today. Our approach to mapping is that borders are as they are. In Ukraine's case, Crimea is still the legal authority for Ukraine, Russian takeover notwithstanding, as is the Donbas region, but the shifting fortunes of war could change borders as events unfold. For the moment, Ukraine is as it was, cartographically, before Russia's brutal invasion. We are also announcing new editions of Arizona. Details are provided in the New Releases section, below.

UKRAINE, CRIMEA, RUSSIA, AND CONTROL OF THE BLACK SEA

Ukraine has existed as an inhabited area for pretty well all of recorded history. The current political entity we all see on maps is pretty much as it has been for centuries. It is today an independent nation state fighting for its (and our) existence. As such, it is critically important to the future of the world as we know it in 2022 for it to survive. A victory by Russia would fundamentally change geopolitical reality. Why?

1. Russia, through its despotic leader, Vladimir Putin, claims that Ukraine, and Ukrainians, do not exist. He contends that they are Russians who improperly broke away from the motherland during the collapse of the USSR and formed an increasingly anti-Russian government threatening all of Russia. This is rather absurd, but Russia today is a nation of absurdities, so Russia's unilateral invasion of Ukraine is completely invalid. Even under Soviet rule, Ukraine was a semi-independent self-governing 'Republic', as was Byelorussia (now Belarus), the three Baltic areas (now Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania), Kazakhstan etc., all of which are now accepted as being fully independent nation states. Why then is Ukraine being invaded, but not other areas?
2. Ukraine has only been associated with Russia since the 1770s, and then only because the descendants of the Mongol hordes who settled in the Crimea repeatedly raided Russian territory to obtain slaves by crossing their vassal state of Ukraine and capturing tens of thousands of Russians to sell to the Ottoman Empire, having depopulated Ukraine to the extent that that territory could no longer meet their needs for slaves. The Russian Czar, Peter the Great, tried unsuccessfully to defeat the Tatars, as the Crimeans were called, but he did focus Russia on a long-term goal of moving south, defeating the Ottoman Empire, and controlling the Dardanelles, the strait exiting the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. After repeated attacks southward over the next century, Russia finally weakened the Ottomans to the point that, under Catherine the Great's rule, Crimea was annexed to Russia in 1783. Russia then began its push to control all of the Black Sea.
3. Ukraine survived various purges and disruptions under Czarist rule, German invasion, and Soviet repression, becoming one of the three Soviet 'Republics' to meet in Minsk in late November, 1990 (I think it was then, my memory is failing me) where the three 'presidents' agreed to dissolve the Soviet Empire and form what these three idiots called a 'confederation of independent states', or a somewhat revised Russian empire completely under Russian control – just not calling itself communist.

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4. Ukraine was ceded the Crimea by Nikita Khrushchev, the successor to Stalin, in 1954. That was done openly, co-operatively, and by mutual agreement. Thus, Crimea has been Ukrainian for the past 68 years, which is a longer time period than most of today's countries have existed. Furthermore, this ceding of the Crimean peninsula to Ukraine was re-affirmed by Russia after 1991, when Ukraine, like Hungary, Poland, Czechoslovakia and several other oppressed parts of the former USSR opted for complete independence. Putin, of course, refuted all such agreements in 2014 and invaded Ukraine, seizing Crimea by force and converting it into a gigantic military base to both threaten Ukraine and to dominate the Black Sea. Russia has been under UN-approved sanctions and at war with Ukraine ever since. This recent upsurge is merely the latest stage of a centuries-long Russian desire to control all of the Black Sea region, including Turkey, Romania, Moldova, and Bulgaria. Such power would allow it bring the Dardanelles under its influence and thereby allow it to move its fleet into the eastern Mediterranean. This, in turn, would place Egypt and the Suez Canal under its control, as well as dominate Israel through its puppet state of Syria. Russia, in short, is not just trying to take over Ukraine, it needs to move south to obtain guaranteed passage from the Black Sea into the Mediterranean. To do this, Ukraine must first be firmly under Moscow's thumb.

In the short term, things have not gone according to plan for Putin; in fact, to date, the invasion has been a tragedy for Ukraine and a devastating disaster for Russia, militarily, economically, and diplomatically. As I write this, the future is very much in doubt, but the ultimate outcome can only be either a defeat for Russia or a complete victory. In either scenario, our world has changed forever.

DUMB CROOKS OF THE MONTH

Two guys in Vancouver held up a high-end retail accessory store, grabbing about \$20,000 worth of bags and scarves before running out of the emergency exit to a back laneway. They then removed their face coverings – right in front of a security camera that caught their facial images on film. Dumb, dumb, dumb.

KAPPA MAPS IS GONE

I have heard informally that Kappa Maps, the second-largest map publisher in the USA, has closed its doors for good. The Managing Director has apparently left for another position elsewhere and no 'white knight' appears to have come in to rescue the company.

TRAVEL INDUSTRY CONTINUES TO RECOVER

As we move further into 2022, weary governments are doing their utmost to ignore rising Covid infections and relax health restrictions that have proved to be annoying, vexing, and even political minefields. With the exception of China, pretty much every country accepts that Covid is a reality we have to learn to live with. China still insists that it can keep Covid at bay by using repressive authoritarian mechanisms, but its economy is in freefall due to lockdowns that accomplish little more than distress for those affected. As a result, travel to China is minimal. For the rest of the world, we are seeing a return to reasonable normalcy. Australia now welcomes visitors, cruise ships once again frequent Canadian ports, those fully vaccinated can travel with fewer restrictions than were in place three months ago to many parts of the world, and sales of travel maps continues to climb as more and more people feel comfortable with the feeling that international travel is safe.

International travel won't fully recover until 2024, but the desire for travel is rebounding, leading to some glitches. Travel guide book publishers are having to ramp up production. Map publishers are finding inventory disappearing faster than new editions can be printed, and airlines are still gearing up to handle many more passengers. Europe is, by far, the most popular travel destination for North Americans.

For Europeans, I'll leave preferred destinations to market demand there, but I'm pleased at the number of requests for maps that ITMB is receiving. Travel to Asia still seems to be weak, but travel to the Caribbean and Mexico seems strong. Interest in Africa is growing, leaving only South America in an area of lesser activity. The Pacific islands region seems to be attracting a lot of attention, especially Tahiti. Sales of maps are still much lower than in 2019, but increasing month by month as countries like Vietnam open up..

WORK IN PROGRESS - all sellers/librarians please note

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ITMB, as of late April, 2022, has ample inventory of almost all of the titles traditionally carried as part of our publishing line. We ask for your understanding if a particular title happens to be unavailable in the short term.

Abu Dhabi – We are re-introducing our map of this popular country due to an easing of restrictions on travel. The map is already at press, but I have no ETA at the moment.

Antigua & Barbuda – This title is now sold out, thanks to an unexpectedly large order. A fresh edition is in preparation, but at this stage, I have no ETA.

Aruba, Bonaire, and Curacao – This is yet another first-time map for ITMB, expanding our coverage of the Caribbean just as Covid restrictions are lifted. The map is at press, no ETA at the moment.

China – This title is now out of print. The updating of a fresh edition has been completed and the map is at press; no ETA at the moment. Please continue to order, using the 'old' ISBN.

Cook Islands/ Eastern Pacific Cruising – This is yet another brand new title for ITMB, being released as cruising the Pacific returns to popularity. The map is at press; no ETA.

Florence and Northeastern Italy – One of the most-visited cities in Europe is Florence. This second edition map is being developed as a double-sided city and regional map covering all of Tuscany and surrounding provinces. The city itself needs no introduction to map sellers, so all I'll say is that it covers the urban area in excellent detail at an incredible 1:5,000 scale, showing all attractions. This map was ground-truthed during December and dozens of improvements noted. The artwork is being modified as a result. The regional side is completed, covering from Venice to Milan to below Sienna. No ETA

France Riviera/Mediterranean Coast – The south of France is very popular touristically, but it is traditionally divided into two parts – western Languedoc and eastern Provence (or Riviera). The distances involved are not great, so we are developing a double-sided map to show the entire coastal area. The line work has been completed, but the final touches will probably take another three months. No ETA.

Galapagos Islands – This title is now out of print. A fresh edition is already at press and expected in July.

Honolulu/Waikiki – Most visitors to Hawaii stay in Honolulu, usually in close proximity to Waikiki Beach, so a detailed map of the area seems called for. The map is at press and expected in July.

Indian Ocean – There has never been a travel map of the Indian Ocean. Ian thinks that the world needs such a map; therefore, ITMB is generating yet another first-of-its-kind maps, focusing on the touristic islands of this part of the great Pacific. It will be a double-sided map, with the Seychelles on the other side. Line work is advancing quickly, but it will take a few more months of effort to complete the artwork; no ETA.

Mediterranean Cruising – We have wanted to prepare a map of the Mediterranean for several years and finally have found time to complete the artwork and send it to press. No ETA at the moment.

Mexico – This title is now out of print. A fresh edition is already at press and expected in July. Please continue to order using the previous ISBN for now.

New Caledonia – This exotic South Pacific island is about to be added to our range of Pacific island maps. The artwork is at press and expected this summer.

North and South Dakota, plus Nebraska – ITMB is gradually extending its coverage of the USA via a series of state maps. The Dakotas form a natural entity for one side, and Nebraska for the reverse side. The line work is complete, and we are working on the final details. No ETA.

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Richmond, British Columbia – That's right folks, something we do receive a constant stream of requests for is a map of our own city which, as we discovered, has never been properly mapped. As a result, the proof checking is taking longer than usual due to inaccurate info on various web sites. We have driven over 1,000 kms. Up to now, checking place names, landmark buildings, parks, bike trails, and newly-opened streets. We are also updating our Vancouver map at the same time to serve as a bike map for the reverse side of our Richmond map. Richmond will be the third segment of the Greater Vancouver region in our product line; ready, as always, when it is finished.

Russia's Heritage Cities – Due to the war in the Ukraine, this title is suspended indefinitely.

San Diego – We are soon to run out of copies of this popular title. A fresh edition is being prepared; no ETA.

Seychelles Islands – This will be another brand new title for ITMB. The artwork is progressing well, but there is still a lot to do before this map can go to press. No ETA. (See Indian Ocean, above).

Strathcona Park is now out of print and discontinued.

Uganda – Someone knows something that I don't! Suddenly, demand for Uganda has surged dramatically, and we have run out of inventory much sooner than expected. This forces us to adjust priorities and prepare a new edition, which is underway; no ETA at the moment.

NEW RELEASES: APRIL, 2022

Arizona – See Grand Canyon, below

Austria Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2022 on waterproof stone paper 1:380,000 ISBN 9781771290210 UPC 817712902108 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – At long last, our map of Austria has arrived! The map was originally printed and sent to us last November, when we discovered that one side was badly out of register. We tried negotiating with the printer, but finally had to send the artwork to a different printer, so now the artwork is properly printed. Austria is both an ancient country and a modern country. It was a powerful empire prior to the French Revolution (Marie Antoinette was an Austrian princess prior to her marriage to the king of France), and WW1 was strongly influenced by the Austro-Hungarian empire. The aftermath of that war resulted in Austria becoming much diminished in power, but despite WW2, its borders remain much as they were in 1918. That said, today's Austria is a lovely and safe place to visit. 75 years of peaceful neutrality has restored the country to prosperity and the country is loaded with picturesque villages, lovely mountain scenes, historic castles and palaces, wonderful churches, and museums galore. This map emphasizes the rail network that is the best way to travel around the country, but also shows motorways and ordinary highways, parks, scenic attractions, and connections to surrounding countries. **AVAILABLE**

NEW RELEASES: MARCH, 2022

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Africa Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 1:4,800,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771290173 UPC 817712901736 \$15.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Africa has been a severe Covid casualty area for the past two years. So has travel to Africa and sales of maps related to Africa. ITMB ran out of copies of the previous edition in the fall of 2021. We then began providing copies of this updated version to distributors and retailers, intending to provide a press release and write-up in the New Releases section of the newsletter. We forgot to do so until now. Mea culpa. Africa is a huge continent. No one apart from us has successfully prepared a digital data base for the entire continent and this edition includes numerous updates to road information and shifting political realities. As a continental map, this title is a bit different than most that we do. It needs to be printed on a larger press, for example, than is available in Canada. Fortunately, we were able to get it printed in the USA and shipped to us despite lockdowns and border restrictions at the height of Covid. Interest in, and travel to, Africa is now resuming. This map has actually been in circulation for the past six months, so this is not so much a press release of a newly-arrived title so much as it is an accounting of a very important title in the ITMB repertoire that we wished to bring to the attention of all of our contacts. When considering a continent as diverse as Africa is, the normal comments about updates doesn't apply. Yes, we have updated roads whenever reliable data indicates improvements, such as connections between the southern tip of Morocco and the road leading to Nouakchott, in Mauritania. Politically, we all know of things that do not affect maps – the closed border between Algeria and Morocco, the coup in Guinea, the continued instability of Libya, the generally better degree of stability in Somalia, the on-going troubles in South Sudan – but generally, the continent of 54 nation states and a few colonial enclaves has survived two years of destabilizing Covid ravages rather well. Tourism is gradually recovering, and map sales improving. This is a very important map in that it brings all of the countries and islands relative to the African continent into perspective. We are pleased to bring to your attention an updated version of a part of the world that is crucially important.
AVAILABLE

Guam & West Pacific Cruising Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2022 1:55,000/1:12,000,000 ISBN 9781771293198 UPC 817712931086 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – For years now, I've been trying to persuade Lan to prepare a map of the US Pacific Territory of Guam. At first, she refused, because she mistook the name of the territory for the USS Guam, whose fighter planes had bombed Hanoi incessantly during the American/Vietnam War when she was growing up. Once she realized the difference, it took a few years for technology to catch up with reality and provide a good base map for us to use (thank you, American government!). We are very pleased to be (finally) able to publish the first travel map of the island of Guam. Certainly, this is the only map of Guam by any major cartographic publishing house. Here are some details: Guam is a north-south island considerably north of New Guinea, and forms part of the American-held group of islands known as the Northern Marianas. Its capital is Hagatna, and the main town is called Tamuning. The island has a well-developed international airport in the middle portion of the island, with a large US military airbase in the northeast corner. The vast majority of the island is touristic, and well worth a visit. The island was 'discovered' by Ferdinand Magellan in 1521, and Hagatna is the oldest 'European' city in the Pacific, dating from 1686. The town of Inarajan retains a decidedly Spanish appearance to this day. Other attractions include Tumon Beach and its many resorts, the Piti Underwater Observatory, and the famous Cocos Island dive wall. This is a double-sided map, with the Western Pacific Cruising map gracing the second side of the page. This side covers several island entities, and stretches from Australia in the south to Japan in the north and as far to the east as Hawaii and the Cook Islands, so includes such popular cruise destinations as Fiji, Tonga, New Caledonia, the Solomons, Papua, Samoa, Kiribati, and the Marshall Islands. It makes a lovely wall map! **AVAILABLE**

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Mexico: Chihuahua & Coahuila States Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2022 1:750,000 9781771294768 UPC 817712947680 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – Northern Mexico is a vast desert-like plateau deeply steeped in Spanish colonial heritage. The very first settlement inside what is now the USA was the town of Presidio (long before the English thought of settling Jamestown) and is still one of the few crossings of the Rio Grande into Texas (itself a former Mexican province). There are two major cities in the region, Chihuahua, 300 kms south of El Paso, and Monterrey, the largest city in northern Mexico. There are major touristic attractions at Monclova, Saltillo, Parras, Torreon, and Cuauhtemoc, the end of the famous Copper Canyon rail line. The map extends a bit into Sinaloa, to include Los Mochis on the Pacific coastline. The entire rail line is also shown. This is an important part of North American history. It may not be as well-known to Europeans who favour the beaches of the Yucatan, but it is a fascinating part of Mexico on the American border. Ciudad Juarez, for example, is larger than its partner on the Rio Grande, El Paso. An inset map of the old colonial city of Saltillo is included, as well as our Top Attractions list.
AVAILABLE

Mississippi River Basin Nap, see New Orleans, below

New Orleans & Mississippi River Basin Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2022 1:15,000/1:1,800,000 ISBN 9781771295758 UPC 817712957580 \$11.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – ITMB is pleased to continue its detailed coverage of the USA with its first-ever map of the historic City of New Orleans. The urban area was settled by the French, and was the capital of the vast Louisiana Territory for many years. Napoleon, needing money to fight his many wars, sold the colony to the USA, in 1803, doubling the size of the new American nation overnight. The French Quarter, with buildings dating back 300 years, is the heart of the city and home to dozens of jazz emporiums. The British expulsion of the Acadians from what is now the Canadian provinces of Nova Scotia and New Brunswick, added a vibrant component to the city, creating the concept of the Cajuns. The oldest cathedral in the USA, St Louis, has dominated the city's skyline since 1794, opened just as the French Revolution was at its height. The city offers much more than just music, however. The Louisiana State Museum is where the agreement to Purchase the colony was made. The National WW2 Museum is a great repository of artifacts from the war. The residential Garden District is loaded with historic mansions – but face it, we all go to Big Ol to enjoy jazz and eat seafood, don't we? The reverse side of the sheet is one of those unique maps ITMB enjoys preparing. The Louisiana Territory was essentially the river basin of the Mississippi River. On this side, we have portrayed the heartland of America. It has many names: The Mid-West, the Great Plains, the vast interior of America. Our map goes as far north as Milwaukee, Minnesota and as far west as Omaha, Nebraska, but is essentially a map of the great Mississippi River as it moves south through Dubuque to St. Louis, to Memphis, Vicksburg, and Natchez, to flow into the Gulf of Mexico; truly a magnificent map! **AVAILABLE**

Western Pacific Cruising Map, see Guam, above

NEW RELEASES: FEBRUARY, 2022

Arizona/New Mexico Travel Reference Map 2nd Ed. 2022 1:900,000 ISBN 9781771290227 UPC 817712902276 \$11.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – **AVAILABLE**

Burkina Faso & West Africa Travel Reference Map 3rd Ed. 2021 1:950,000/1:4,800,000 ISBN 9781771290920 UPC 817712909206 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – **AVAILABLE**

Kilimanjaro/ Tanzania North Travel Reference Map 6th Ed. 2022 1:63,000/1:3,000,000 ISBN 9781771294140 UPC 817712941404 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – **AVAILABLE**

New Mexico, see Arizona, above

Tanzania, Northern Half, see Kilimanjaro, above

NEW RELEASES: JANUARY, 2022

Amazon & Brasil North Travel Reference Map 6th Ed. 2021 1:3,000,000 on waterproof stone paper ISBN 9781771290203 UPC 817712902030 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – **AVAILABLE**

Brasil North Travel Reference Map, see Amazon, above

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**France Atlantic Coast Rail and Bike Map 1st Ed. 2022 1:600,000 ISBN 9781771292887 UPC 817712928870
\$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE**

North and West Vancouver Cities Street Maps, see Vancouver, below

**Queensland (Australia) Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2022 1:900,000 ISBN 9781771296334 UPC
817712964342 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.96GBP – AVAILABLE**

**Spain South Half Road and Rail Travel Reference Map 1st Ed. 2022 1:700,000 ISBN 9781771297264 UPC
817712972644 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE**

**Vancouver North and West Biking and Hiking Map 1:20,000/1:55,000 1st Ed. 2021 ISBN 9781771298735 UPC
817712987358 \$13.95cdn/us E9.50 8.95GBP – AVAILABLE**

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