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AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #11 OF 2025 - NOVEMBER

INTRODUCTION

We had to slow down during October, as both Linh and Phuong were in Europe, attending the Frankfurt Book Fair, and visiting Edinburgh, Glasgow, Warsaw, and Krakow. This meant that production slowed down, and orders were processed more slowly. Also, Canada experienced another postal strike, which inconvenienced everyone and delayed many small shipments of maps, particularly to individuals. Fortunately, the unionized workers have returned to delivering mail, but the overall issues besetting postal services remain unresolved. In the last week of October, Lan had to make a fast trip to Hanoi, further disrupting our production department, but what can one do except accept reality? Now we have an uncertain trip to the USA pending – during a shutdown!

NEW TITLES TO THE END OF OCTOBER

Those of you who met with Linh and Phuong at our stand at the Frankfurt received a copy of our new releases thus far in 2025, with guidelines for further titles expected in the not-too-distant future. I hasten to add that these guidelines are just that, not deadlines engraved in stone. We generally send three to five maps at a time to our printer, and this means that printed copies arrive in our warehouse several titles at a time. At any given point in time, we probably have 10 to 15 titles at press, and we have little advance warning as to what is to arrive at our back door. This month, we are very pleased to see five new titles, all of which are updated editions of good-selling titles. First, we have our popular **Europe Railway and Road** map, showing several rapid-rail line extensions that have become operational since our last edition. In the USA, we have a new edition of a map that has proven to be surprisingly popular – **Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming**. We also have a new edition from Japan to announce; our very popular **Osaka and Western Japan** map. Then we move back to the USA for our updated **San Francisco & Central California** map, and our exceptionally popular **USA Pacific Coast** map. These titles are noted, with ordering data, in our **NEW RELEASES** section later in this newsletter.

MAPPING CHANGES

The world is always changing, which is why ITMB brings out so many new editions of so many maps. Here are a few recently-noted changes:

1. The Queen Charlotte Islands lie off the coast of British Columbia. A number of years ago, the provincial government approved a new name for these islands, Haida Gwaii. This name has not yet been approved by the Canadian Geographical Place Names Committee, which is notoriously slow to acknowledge anything, so the two names co-exist. The city council of Queen Charlotte City, the regional capital of the islands, also has changed its name to Daajing Giids (or DG for short), a Haida name. This name change does not need to be approved by the place names committee, as it is local. We plan to change the city name on our next edition of our map of the islands.
2. Although this won't change any map, the Emperor's Walkway in Rome's famous Coliseum, will soon open to the public for the first time in almost 2,000 years. It used to be reserved for the Roman Emperor, for both prestige and security reasons, and I have no idea why it has been closed for so many centuries, nor why it is being opened just now. Visit Rome and find out for yourself!
3. Japan has opened a new road/rail bridge joining Kochi, Matsumoto, and Tokushima to Okayama on the main shinkansen rail line between Hiroshima and Osaka. This is now reflected on our newly-issued map of Osaka and Western Japan.
4. China has opened the longest bridge in the world, a monstrous 168.4km/102.4 miles in length. I have seen images of it on TV (one of our cable channels is a Chinese government one). It is in Jiangsu Province and

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supports the Beijing-Shanghai high-speed rail line. China continues to amaze with the speed at which their transportation infrastructure improves. At the moment, China is gradually easing restrictions on travel to that country, but politics being politics, it is still somewhat more hazardous to travel to China for certain nationalities, so take note. I suspect that 2026 will see a big upsurge in travel to China.

5. Air Canada has just initiated non-stop flights between Vancouver and Bangkok, enhancing that city's focus on being a North American gateway to Asia. This is all part of Canada's trade efforts to diversify away from undue reliance on the USA and will create \$13.9 million to Canada annually in GDP, as well as improving tourism to Asia. Bangkok is a major hub for airlines serving much of Asia. ITMB has a map of Bangkok.
6. China has recently signaled that it wishes to re-set relations with Canada, which have been strained in recent years as Canada has slavishly followed American policies. Now that Canada is less likely to follow Trump's convoluted policy shifts, trade with Canada's second-largest partner may improve. This all depends upon PM Carney's diplomatic skills, but if it happens, travel to China will improve dramatically. ITMB publishes an excellent travel map of China, plus various regional maps, and city maps of Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou; also of Tibet. Diplomatic discussions are at an early stage, but look promising.
7. Vietnam is in the final stages of building a new international airport near Ho Chi Minh City (Saigon), about an hour's travel time northeast of the urban area. The current airport is expected to close in 2026 with all facilities moving to the much larger new airport. A new motorway and a rapid transit line are also under construction. These new features will be added to our Vietnam maps, as applicable, after they are opened.
8. British Columbia Ferries has just signed a contract to build four very large new coastal ferries to replace its aging fleet carrying passengers and vehicles between Vancouver and various ports on Vancouver Island. Each ferry will be large enough to carry 400 vehicles and 1,500 passengers. The contract was awarded to a Chinese firm. Why? It seems that no shipyard in North America is large enough or skilled enough to meet the requirements of this contract. Think of that for a second. China is the largest ship-building country in the world, by far, producing more than 50% of all the ships afloat today. The USA produces 1% and Canada less than that. BC Ferries operates the largest fleet of ferries in North America.
9. India has agreed to re-set diplomatic and trade relations with Canada after several years of political sparring and accusations about election interfering. India is the second-largest economy in the world, after China (the USA is a distant third) and is crucial to Canada diversifying away from reliance on the USA, as much of the world is doing. Relations are warming quickly between India and Canada, with a resultant increase in tourism. Needless to say, India is a fascinating country, with enormous travel opportunity. ITMB publishes an excellent map of India, plus several regional maps and city maps of Delhi and Mumbai.
10. Madagascar/Malagasy Republic has just undergone a military coup, becoming the most recent country to adopt an authoritarian regime. Tourism is not expected to be affected.

FREYTAG & BERNDT SOLD TO THE MAIRS GROUP

Not a word was said at the Frankfurt Book Fair, but the renowned Austrian firm of Freytag & Berndt Verlag has sold its cartographic division to Mair Dumont, the German conglomerate that has swallowed up several other mapping firms, at the beginning of October. Details are sparse, but the newly-acquired entity will be managed by the Kompass division of the Mair empire, headquartered in Innsbruck, Austria. Kompass specializes in recreational hiking maps of both Germany and Austria, so it will be interesting to see what happens to FB's competing map line of Austrian and Italian hiking maps. Also, Kompass has no experience with international mapping titles or city titles, so I have no idea what will happen to the many FB titles of an international interest.

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Trying to wear my 'I'm neutral' hat, this acquisition puzzles me. Assuming that Mairs wishes to perpetuate the FB line, which largely duplicates its own Marco Polo, Hallwag, and Kummerley & Frey lines, not to mention Kompass, the artwork design used by FB seems incompatible with what Mair traditionally markets. The way I see it, Mair becomes the dominant map publisher in Europe with this purchase, leaving only Michelin and Reise Know-how as significant competitors, but I have a bit of difficulty seeing FB being retained in the longer term as a major publishing entity by Mair, as the two lines overlap. FB has an experienced team of cartographers working in Vienna, and this unit will have to be amalgamated somehow with the Kompass team working out of Innsbruck. European and international titles will have to be updated somewhere, and those that closely duplicate what Mairs already publish will presumably be discontinued as inventory runs out. The FB retail map store in Vienna was NOT included in the sale, which doesn't surprise me. Rother Travel Guides remains with the book division of Freytag & Berndt, which will carry on with book publishing. I hope for the best for this amalgamation.

THEY BROUGHT THE GOOD NEWS FROM GHENT

There is an English expression that wistfully says "Yes, and they brought the good news from Ghent...". Why Ghent? What good news? The answer is travel trivia, but also of importance to travel. In 1815, Napoleon escaped from Elba and triumphantly re-entered Paris 19 days later, deposing the Bourbon king. The British army, under Arthur, Lord Wellesley (better known as the Duke of Wellington), had his forces organized around Brussels. He moved south and Napoleon moved north, and Blucher moved his Prussian forces westward. Three battles ensued; one at Ligny, where the French routed the Prussians, the next at Quatre Bras, which was indecisive but bloody, forcing Wellington to retreat to a large open space south of the small Belgian town of Waterloo. There was fought one of the most notable battles of modern history, which has been well-documented elsewhere.

This story concerns what happened next. The battle took place on Sunday, June 18, 1815, and resulted in the defeat of the French forces. Wellington despatched an officer to carry word back to King Louis XVIII in Ghent, Belgium, where he lived in exile, but didn't think of informing London of his victory until the next day, after he returned to Brussels. He then wrote out a comprehensive despatch on the course of the battle, which then had to be copied by hand several times to ensure that all parties were 'properly' informed, and as a result, it was only late on Monday when his aide, Major Henry Percy, started towards the coast.

The roads were packed with fleeing Belgian townsmen, who had not been informed as to the results of the battle, and were fleeing what they feared was a French victory. As a result, Percy only reached the coast a day later, even though it was only a distance of a few miles, met up with a British brig-sloop, and set off across the English Channel. The ship became becalmed partway through the crossing and it was not until late Wednesday that the ship approached close enough to England for Percy to be transferred to a rowboat and be oared ashore over the course of several hours. In the meantime, no one in London knew what was going on, although rumours were rife.

Percy landed near a small fishing village called Broadstairs and rented a carriage to carry him to London, finally pitching up at the Prime Minister's residence at Number 10, Downing Street, only to be advised that Minister Bathurst was enjoying dinner at a house in Grosvenor Square, so off he went to meet the PM and most of the Cabinet. The King Regent was attending a party at a private residence in St. James Square, so Bathurst's party, with Percy, finally arrived late in the evening to announce the great victory, some five days after it actually happened. And that's how the good news was brought from Ghent!

Nowadays, the battlefield south of Waterloo is a major touristic destination and a preserved battlefield that seems to me to glorify Napoleon and diminish the accomplishments of the British and Prussian forces. It is located just south of the RO Motorway east and south of the now-city of Waterloo, with a large museum. The Wellington Museum is located in the city itself. Brussels is only about 15 kms to the north, so the battle was crucially important. The site is shown clearly on our ITMB map of Flanders in square E-5. Ghent, or Gent in Flemish, is on the same map at C-4, as well as a detailed map of the touristically important medieval city.

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As an afterthought to the battle, Napoleon fled, tried to board a ship departing for the USA, and declared his young son as emperor in place – none of which made a bit of difference. He was captured by the British and shipped to England, but not allowed to disembark. He was eventually transferred to a ship heading south and spent the rest of his days brooding over the ocean from Saint Helena Island in the isolated South Atlantic. The house he lived in is now a museum on that island. The Bourbons were re-instated as the French monarchy, and Napoleon's son became a non-entity. Most of the generals who sided with Napoleon were mercilessly hunted down and murdered during the White Terror unleashed by the restored monarchy. The very unpopular monarchy was again overthrown by rioting French mobs in 1830 during the second, or is it the third, French Revolution.

WORLD OF MAPS

Many years ago, ITMB decided to establish its own retail operations in major Canadian cities. Yes, at one time there were retail ITMB stores in Toronto and Ottawa, as well as Vancouver. In hindsight, the attempt was disastrous. The manager of the store in Toronto sold all the inventory to a rival firm and disappeared forever with the proceeds. The manager of the Ottawa firm stole the rent money and disappeared. I couldn't do anything about the Toronto fiasco, but flew to Ottawa to recover what I could from that unfortunate investment. I planned to ship all the inventory back to Vancouver and settle with the landlord, but while in the city, I visited a rival map store and met with an employee, Brad Green. He expressed an interest in buying ITM Ottawa, so we quickly worked out a plan for Brad and his wife to acquire the business over time.

Fast forward to 2025 and World of Maps is a successful and prosperous firm located in central Ottawa, thanks to the hard work of Brad and Petra. It is, arguably, one of the best-run map stores in Canada (no disrespect intended for all the other map stores), but (there is ALWAYS a but, isn't there) Brad and Petra reached retirement age and put the business up for sale. I am very pleased to report that one of their staff took over World of Maps at the beginning of November and will be carrying on the business. In an era where numerous map retailers have shut down without finding a buyer, it is very encouraging to see an important retail presence continuing. By the way, ITMB's map store in Vancouver is the largest map store in North America.

NORDISK KORHANDEL

The World of Maps saga is not the only good news story for the map trade this month. In Copenhagen, Denmark, a long-established retail travel map and book store, called Nordisk, also known as Scanmaps, was forced to close its location due to rising rental costs. I recently learned that they have re-opened at Meldahlsgrade 5, a few steps away from their former location near the Vesterport station in central Copenhagen. Kirsten Ludvig, the owner, expressed heartfelt gratitude at the strong response from her customers in making the decision to carry on instead of folding. As one loyal customer said, "Where will we buy our maps and guidebooks if you close?" Another said, "We want to see the map before we buy it, not just order something on-line." Face to face interaction with real people is the essence of a map store. We see this on a daily basis in our store in Vancouver, and I'm sure that I speak for all other maps stores in saying that our loyal customer base keeps us going. Maps are also being re-discovered by a younger generation, fed up with being mis-led by electronic maps. For the same reason that paper books remain popular in the era of Kindle electronic books, paper maps remain incredibly popular.

TRAVEL TIDBITS

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For the eighth straight month in a row, travel to the USA from Canada continues to decline significantly year over year. The average decline is about 25% each month since January, year over year, with the decline in air travel declining by 36%. This amounts to millions of lost visitors but is not directly as a result of Trump's illegal tariffs. It is a conscious reality determined by the never-ending attacks by Trumpite Americans on Canada. The most recent such stupidity is a Canadian who has lived in the USA almost all of his life being denied entry into the USA without a US passport, although he is not an American citizen and is ineligible for such a passport. They are also refusing to accept his Canadian passport, which is illegal.

Liquor sales from the USA to Canada have declined by 85% during 2025 as a result of the USA imposing illegal tariffs on Canada. Canadians have reacted by boycotting all American beer, wine, and alcoholic beverages. As Canada is the largest market in the world for such products, this move has detrimentally affected breweries and distilleries throughout the USA. By the way, there are no tariffs on such products entering Canada, so Canadians are not boycotting due to higher prices being imposed. This is a nation-wide decision by individuals and liquor outlets NOT to buy any alcoholic products made in the USA to protest the animus emanating from the USA. Imports of such beverages from Europe, Australia, Chile, and Mexico are, however, booming.

THE 3.5% FACTOR

The USA today is undergoing a revolution. It isn't just Trump or tariffs, the USA is going through an attempt to re-format American life profoundly. It has its adherents, mostly concentrated in the MAGA movement, and it has its detractors, who are increasingly centred on the non-partisan grouping known as Indivisible.

These activists, mostly young people outside of traditional political party lines, have organized countless small-group get-togethers, town hall meetings, and protest demonstrations to promote democracy and to decry Trump's rush to authoritarianism. Thus far in 2025, they have organized three mass rallies in cities and towns all over the USA to protest against Trump and his wealthy supporters re-shaping America in their image.

The first one brought about three million concerned Americans to peaceful protests from coast to coast. The second one, three months later, attracted a greatly improved turnout. Some five million Americans marched in protest against Trump's increasingly authoritarian dictates.

Most recently, in mid-October, a third day of protest was organized. This one attracted in excess of seven million individuals, all of whom were protesting against Trump. This is an incredible increase over a relatively short time period and shows growing discontent by more and more Americans as to what is happening to their country. It is not at critical mass levels yet, but it is getting there, and certainly would be if blacks and Latinos joined in the marches. History has shown repeatedly that when 3.5% of a country's population peacefully protests, success almost always follows. For the USA, this would mean 11.9 million Americans taking to the streets to demand change. It's coming. Trump is deeply unpopular outside of the Maga movement and 'ordinary' Americans are increasingly vocal in opposition.

NATIONAL BOOK NETWORK

For many years, the owners of Globe Pequot Publishing have operated a distribution division marketing a wide range of publishing houses. Globe Pequot was recently sold to Simon & Schuster, a very large publishing venture, leaving National Book Network somewhat of an orphan. The owners of the former empire have made arrangements for all of their customer base to be taken over by Simon & Schuster, and most of the dozens of publishing lines that NBN marketed. This is a very complicated transformation taking place, hopefully without any glitches. Hopefully, any glitches that retailers experience will be sorted out quickly, and as most already have S&S accounts, will experience only the reality of even more selection, essentially, from one supplier instead of two.

105 YEAR-OLD MURDER SOLVED

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This story has nothing to do with travel, but I'm adding it simply because it shows perseverance and dedicated police work. 105 years ago, in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan (that would make it in 1920), a woman's body was recovered from a well, murdered. No one knew who she was, and as the body was partly decomposed, she was never identified, nor did anyone report a missing person, which was not all that surprising in those pioneer days, nor was a murderer ever caught. As a result, the case joined a growing list of unsolvable murders, and should have been forgotten. Well, in police terminology, no murder is ever forgotten, just set aside until further evidence leads somewhere. In this case, technology eventually advanced to the point of DNA testing and her remains were tested and this identified the mystery lady. The DNA closely matched another person's DNA that was on file and this piqued the curiosity of a police forensic inspector. Naturally, after a century, the victim's immediate relatives had all died, as had the entire next generation, and the one after that. Police contacted the lady's great-granddaughter, who agreed to provide a sample for DNA testing. Sure enough, a match was made and a mystery solved that had been in police unsolved crimes file for over one hundred years.

NEW TITLES AND NEW RELEASE AS OF THE END OF OCTOBER, 2025

Europe Railway & Road Travel Reference Map 6th Edition 2026 1:3,350,000 ISBN 9781771292733 UPC 817712927330 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 10.90 – Europe is the most popular travel destination in the world. While many visitors are only going to one or two countries or even cities, many more are exploring the continent via train, using discounted rail passes, so a map covering all the countries is very popular. In this newest edition, we have included newly-opened stretches of rapid-rail lines that are gradually transforming how people travel in Europe. One such line is too short to show up on the map. That is the new east-west line under London that now paves the way for extending high-speed trains to Manchester in the future. Side 1 covers western Europe as far east as Berlin/Rome, while side 2 covers points as far east as Moscow and Greece. A small inset map of Iceland is included, although that country has no railroads. Another inset covers northern Scandinavia, which does. Unusually, two panels are dedicated to flags and basic information for all 48 nations that constitute Europe. **AVAILABLE**

Idaho, Montana, & Wyoming Travel Reference Map 3rd Edition 2026 1:1,000,000 ISBN 9781771293730 UPC 817712937308 \$11.95cdn/us E/GBP 9.95 – The three northern Rocky Mountain states of Idaho, Montana, and Wyoming form a distinct regional unity within the USA, scenically very attractive, relatively lightly populated, and economically agriculturally positioned. Going from west to east, Side 1 concentrates on Idaho, with a little bit of Washington State, Montana, and Utah, showing dozens of wilderness campsites, Yellowstone and Glacier National Parks, the Buffalo Bill Center, and the site of the Battle of Little Big Horn, where native Americans thoroughly defeated the US Cavalry. Side 2 focuses on Montana and Wyoming and the eastern side of the Rocky Mountain chain. This is 'Big Sky' country, with well-known historical places to visit, such as Cheyenne, Laramie, Grand Teton, Billings, and Bozeman; wide-open country, where one can easily imagine the buffalo roaming. **AVAILABLE**

Osaka & Western Japan Travel Reference Map 4th Edition 2026 1:12,500/1:600,000 ISBN 9781771295956 UPC 817712959560 \$13.95cdn/us E/GBP 9.95 – Osaka is one of the most-visited cities in Japan. Its castle, first built in 1586, is the largest in Japan. Universal Studios has created a theme park in the city that attracts ten million visitors per year. Osaka is the second largest urban area in Japan and, as such, has several railway stations in addition to the mainline shinkansen. It also has Japan's second international airport, Kansai, located on a man-made island in the bay. It is also close to Kobe, where most cruise ships dock, and is included on this map with an inset of the town centre. Side 2 covers western Japan, from Nagoya to Shimonoseki, so all of the western portion of Honshu Island, including Kyoto, Nara, Okayama, Hiroshima, and Matsui. The shinkansen lines are shown prominently, as well as regular train lines, motorways, and main roads. This map covers all the areas most visited by tourists exploring Japan. **AVAILABLE**

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San Francisco & Central California Travel Reference Map 3rd Edition 2025 on waterproof paper 1:12,500/1:800,000 ISBN 9781771297417 UPC 817712974174 \$13.95cdn/us E/GBP 9.95 - You may leave your heart in San Francisco, but you need this map to find your way around the city in the meantime! Although the urban area is very large, San Fran itself is relatively compact, with most of its attractions located close to either the city centre (center in American) or to a tram line. Chinatown is, of course, a major attraction and well-worth a visit. Japantown is less known, but occupies seven blocks along Geary Street. Pier 39, perhaps better known as Fisherman's Wharf, is also home to a large colony of sea lions. The cruise ship terminal is nearby. Of course, the two major parks, Golden Gate and Presidio, are worth visiting, and Haight Street is still hippie heaven. The other side of the map shows central California and western Nevada in great detail, from Red Bluff south to Fresno and from the coast to the huge Nellis air base occupying much of desert-like Nevada. **AVAILABLE**

USA Pacific Coast Travel Reference Map 6th Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:1,000,000 ISBN 9781771298605 UPC 817712986054 \$13.95cdn/us E/GBP 9.95 – One of our most popular maps is this one. It starts in Vancouver and ends in Tijuana, but its strength is its detailed coverage of the three Pacific Coast states. Side 1 concentrates on Washington and Oregon, with a bit of northern California. Coverage of California continues on Side 2 to the Mexican border. All motorways and major highways are shown, as well as the increasingly-popular rail lines going north-south as well as east-west. As much of the interior of California is arid, it is lightly populated, but home to Death Valley, the Mojave Desert, Joshua Tree NP, and Yosemite NP, as well as dozens of smaller recreational areas. This map is home to fifty million Americans and a powerful industrial/agricultural base that generates half of America's wealth, so this map covers a very important part of America. **AVAILABLE**

NEW TITLES AND NEW RELEASES AS OF THE END OF SEPTEMBER, 2025

Cayman Islands Travel Reference Map 4th Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:37,000 ISBN 9781771293969

- See Jamaica & Cayman Islands for description, below

Eastern India Travel Reference Map 3rd Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:1,400,000 ISBN 9781772297431

See Sikkim & Eastern India for description, below

Jamaica & Cayman Islands Travel Reference Map 4th Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:125,000/1:37,500 ISBN 9781771293969 UPC 817712939692 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 10.90 – By the nature of how things are in the Caribbean, this map combines independent Jamaica with nearby colonial Cayman Islands. Both are lovely vacation spots and popular with resort lovers and cruise ship devotees. Jamaica is a largish island, with most of its touristic attractions concentrated on the north coast. The capital, Kingston, is on the south coast and is the island's major commercial centre. Most visitors confine themselves to Montego Bay and Ocho Rios on the north coast. Side 1 shows the entire island, with inset maps of Kingston, Mandeville, Montego Bay, Ocho Rios, Port Antonio, and Spanish Town. Side 2 is devoted to the lovely British colony of Cayman, which consist of Grand Cayman Island and the offshore smaller islands of Little Cayman and Cayman Brac. Most visitors concentrate on Georgetown, the capital, and the many resort hotels north of the town. Much of the main island is a gigantic mangrove swamp, but the island has several notable touristic sites, the most memorable of which is probably Hell, a 24 million year-old salt & limestone formation that is a must-see! The two smaller islands are best accessed by commuter flights from the main island. The map has two covers, so can be displayed in both countries names. **AVAILABLE**

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Java Travel Reference Map 2nd Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:600,000 ISBN 9781771293976 UPC 817712939760 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 10.90 – The Asian country of Indonesia is the fourth most populous country on earth. The island of Java is so long that it fills both sides of this map. The national capital, Jakarta, is also on this island, but it is the experience of travelling on the island that leads to the most memories. The island's road network is excellent, and passenger rail service is very good. The island is the site of several volcanoes, and the famous island of Krakatoa is now a national park, just west of Java. Naturally, being a nation of islands, excellent ferry services join Java to Bali and other islands. The map also includes several inset maps of major cities, such as central Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang, and Surabaya. This island needs at least a week to see properly. Cruise ships also visit various ports of call on a regular basis. Indonesia is rapidly becoming an economic powerhouse, so it is very nice that it is also tourist-friendly. ITMB also publishes a separate map of the entire country and sectional maps of Bali, Lombok, Kalimantan/Borneo, and Sumatra. Java is a prime travel experience waiting to happen! **AVAILABLE**

Sikkim & Eastern India Travel Reference Map 3rd Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:135,000/1:1,400,000 ISBN 9781771297431 UPC 817712974310 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 10.90 – Sikkim is a self-governing mountainous principality in the Himalayas just north of Bengal State of India. Side 1 shows the entire country, with its capital of Gangtok. Most of the country's development is concentrated in the south. While theoretically, one could enter neighbouring Nepal or Tibet, both physical and political realities dictate that access to Sikkim depends on one road crossing from north of Darjeeling and a single train line that terminates just inside the border. Thus, Sikkim is a rather isolated, but lovely, travel destination, but is well-worth the effort to explore. Numerous religious complexes celebrate Buddhism, Hinduism, and Sikhism. The country also has one of the highest-elevation roads on earth, being the Nathu La, rising to 14,450 feet above sea level. It is located on the ancient Gangtok-Lhasa trade route. While it might not be a practical access point to Tibet for political reasons, the drive from Gangtok to the peak is enervating, with an alternative downside route via Kupup providing a real travel experience back to Gangtok. Most of the temples are in the vicinity of Gangtok. This is what we like to call a 'developing' country, which really means that it leads a differing approach to happiness; definitely a travel adventure! The second side of the map is a detailed rendering of the east coast of India, from Nepal/Sikkim in the north to Visakhapatnam in the south and as far west as Varanasi/Benares. The western portion of Bangladesh is also shown, but the focus of this side is Kolkata/Calcutta and the Grand Trunk highway westward towards New Delhi, the massive Ganges River complex, and the temples of Orissa State. India ends to be a bit overwhelming as a country, so we have tried to make it a little easier to fathom by noting major Top Attractions, such as Shillong, Tawang, and Bodhgaya. **AVAILABLE**

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Trinidad & Tobago & Eastern Caribbean Cruising Map 2nd Edition 2026 1:150,000/1:2,400,000 ISBN 9781771298124 UPC 817712981240 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 10.90 – Located just north of Venezuela, Trinidad is the most southerly of the Caribbean islands and has a history very different from the rest of the Caribbean. It was first settled by the Spanish, after displacing the native residents, and became a British possession only in 1797. More northerly Tobago has a more interesting history, changing hands 30 times in various wars to determine which European power would dominate the region. Nowadays, both islands look to tourism as a major source of revenue, but neither island has seriously developed its resort potential. Most visitors arrive via cruise ship, and this largely means spending a day in Port-of-Spain, the capital. One of the unique attractions of Trinidad is a pool of hot asphalt, first discovered by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1595, and has been caulking ships ever since. Tobago, once a major tobacco-growing island, is now a quiet, respectable community based in Scarborough, the capital, and Plymouth. The two islands were annexed to each other by Britain in 1889. The country has been independent since 1962. Side 2 of the map is a very interesting rendering of the entire Eastern Caribbean region, and is particularly noteworthy for showing the boundaries of various island nations. Some are still colonies or 'overseas territories' and others are very well-known touristic havens. One is apparently contested between Haiti and the USA (tiny, uninhabited Navassa Island). St. Croix's boundaries are apparently completely separate from the US Virgin Islands, to which it is attached. Anguilla is little visited, whereas neighbouring St. Maarten is one of the region's most popular cruise destinations. There are two islands called Bonaire, one in little-visited St. Eustatius, and the other off the coast of Venezuela in the Dutch Antilles. Martinique and Guadeloupe, both French to the core, are separated by English-speaking Dominica. Antigua is joined to distant Barbuda, whereas nearby Montserrat remains a British colony. The Turks and Caicos Islands remains an orphan to the north of Haiti, and who is responsible for Isla Mona? Quite the mish-mash! **AVAILABLE**

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