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- INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL MAPS AND BOOKS
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AXIS OF EVIL MAPPING NEWSLETTER #4 OF 2026 – Early April

INTRODUCTION

If there is anyone left who doesn't feel that Trump is the most inept and deranged leader the USA has ever had, his badly miscalculated and unprovoked attack on Iran certainly proves it. Enough already!!! Isn't his insane unlawful tariffs on the entire world enough? Now, he has in essence declared war on the entire world, with all of us paying higher fuel prices as a result of Trump's War. Grrrr! Regardless, life goes on. Lan and I, together with our immediate family and associated Vietnamese relatives (13 of us), spent 9 days during March on a very nice and relaxing Caribbean cruise, visiting Aruba and Curaçao, two island nations I haven't previously had the pleasure of seeing, as well as the north coast of Jamaica and the British colony of Cayman Islands. Very relaxing, very enjoyable, and nothing disastrous happened to ITMB during our time away. Fortunately, we were spared the madness at airports that so many Americans have been subjected to for the past month, but travel will still be disrupted for the foreseeable future. Unfortunately, the entire world is convulsed by war and travel has become even more restrictive than it was in March. All we can do is hope for more peaceful times ahead.

NEW TITLES TO THE END OF MARCH, 2026

During March, shipping was dramatically affected by Trump's War. Why should a war halfway around the world affect ITMB? Well, shipping has been completely disrupted, and maps are now taking longer to reach us (at a higher cost) than a month ago. This seriously impacts our business, as expected maps did not arrive. However, we do have some new titles to introduce and more will no doubt arrive during April. We are pleased to announce a new edition of **British Columbia & Alberta Rockies**. This is always a popular title. Our newest version of **Indonesia** is also being introduced this month, on waterproof paper. The proposed new capital of the country is not shown, as it is largely a visional concept at this stage. However, it will gradually take shape and be included as time passes. I hope that several more titles will be available by the end of April. Ordering details are below.

IRAN AND WAR IN THE MIDDLE EAST

Well, the Americans have really stepped into the cow patty this time! History will document this travesty of developments, but no good will come of it. The Americans, like the Russians, never seem to learn from history. All the technology in the world is useless against a determined nation fighting for its existence. Did Vietnam teach us nothing? Or Afghanistan? Or Iraq? Apparently not, because the Americans are making the exact same mistakes that occurred in those brutal 'forever' wars. Their arrogance in assuming that the Iranians would simply roll over and play dead as the first shots erupted astounds me. Whatever political divisions existed within Iran before the massive bombing campaign began disappeared as soon as the Americans murdered 150 children by bombing their school. Instantly, everyone rallied around the flag, as should have been expected, and the country resolved to fight back for as long as it takes to expel the foreign infidels afflicting them. A popular uprising to change the government?!? Regime change? Are you kidding? That's the last thing on Iranian minds right now. Survival is their Number One priority, and retribution, and no amount of bombing is going to change that reality. For them, this is a holy war against Satan, and nothing the Americans do will change that.

For the same reason that the Russian invasion of Ukraine four years ago united Ukrainians in opposition, America has united Iranians. The Russians have learned, to their dismay, that defeating a united country is impossible, and 1.4 million casualties later would love to find an exit strategy that would free them from this quagmire. Now, Trump, egged on by a much smarter Israeli politician, is trapped in yet another useless 'forever' war. No matter what he does now, he loses, and America loses. America has lost credibility, respect, and influence, and the world suffers severe economic hardships, which are rightly blamed on America. Travel is disrupted. Fares increase. Gasoline prices double. It's disgusting.

This is a perfect example of America First, which means America Alone. No allies. No friends. No coalition. No NATO. Nada. Nothing. Just America shooting itself in the foot once again. I'm obviously too angry to feel any sense of compassion with the monsters who created this war, because it undoes so much good that travel represents. It will take decades to rebuild Gaza, Lebanon, Iran, Ukraine, and the travel potential of the entire Middle East. All wars are stupid, by definition, but Trump's War beggars belief.

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A LITTLE BIT OF GOOD NEWS

With wars seemingly erupting all over the place and inflation killing the travel industry, we all need a bit of cheering up. This story happened in Vancouver in early March. A junior employee was throwing broken down cardboard boxes into one of those large metal bins that commercial firms use, when he heard a sound inside the bin. Curious, he moved around some of the cardboard slabs and noticed a couple of ears. With a little bit of effort, he uncovered two young kittens, recovered them, and took them to an animal shelter after work. That didn't make him a hero; he was only doing what just about any of us would do. What made him a hero was that he was left with a niggling question that wouldn't go away. Why were there only two kittens? Litters are usually larger. So, the next morning, he returned to the bin and started removing layers of cardboard. Sure enough, after a while, he heard mewing and uncovered a further kitten, then another one. This necessitated a second trip to the animal shelter. He was still bothered that there may be more kittens, so the next day he returned to the bin and laboriously began the gargantuan task of off-loading all the cardboard from the bin, which was about five feet high. Sure enough, as he ended his task, he unearthed a fifth kitten, this one badly dehydrated and close to death, but he rushed it to the animal shelter and now all five kittens are recovering nicely and are being prepared for adoption. No one knows what happened to the mother. She probably was happy to find a relatively warm nest to give birth and nurse her offspring. Full credit is due to the young man who went just one step further and saved five creatures from almost certain death. There is still hope for mankind.

TRAVEL TO EUROPE AND UK: ELEANOR OF AQUITAINE

One of the most remarkable women of all time was Queen Eleanor of Aquitaine, first the wife of the King of France 1137-1152, then, after he had their marriage annulled, the wife of King Henry II 1154-1189, until he died, after which she ruled as regent over all of present-day England and Wales, and also over most of what is now France, for more than a decade. With Henry, she had five children, three of whom became kings. Henry the Younger was crowned while his father was still alive, so for many years, England had two kings, but Henry the Elder held all the power. Henry the Younger died at age 28, probably of dysentery, during a jousting tournament being held at Martel, in what was then English-controlled Aquitaine. When Henry II died in 1189, while campaigning in France, the throne was contested by his two remaining sons, Richard, Duke of Poitou, and John. Eleanor backed Richard, who was crowned Richard I, but is better known as Richard the Lionhearted. Eleanor had been made Regent of Henry's possessions, and she continued in that role for the next decade, while Richard undertook the Third Crusade (1189-1191) in what is now Israel. John acted as king in his brother's absence, under Eleanor.

Richard was captured by one of the Germanic kings while returning from the Crusade and held for ransom. Eleanor travelled to Hagenau, in what would be Germany many centuries later, and negotiated his release for an amount high enough to bankrupt England. John, sensing power, tried to stop her, but was defeated by the barons Eleanor had set in place during her absence. He then fled to the Ile de France and sought refuge with the French king. Richard returned to England in 1194, reconciled with John, and set off on another Crusade. He was killed in Normandy during his return, while attacking one of his own castles that had been seized by the French king, who was attempting to conquer the English fiefdom of Normandy. At this point, John was crowned king, and history shows that he wasn't a very successful monarch, what with Robin Hood and the Magna Carta and all that. Eleanor, worn out by managing French and English fiefdoms for half a century, tried to retire to Fontevraud Abbey, in Aquitaine, but first had to lead an army to lift the siege of a castle named Mirabeau, while going to Castile to arrange a wife for John, and stopping a war along the way. She died in 1204 at age 80, which was quite an elderly age for that era. Her stoned coffin cover and tomb can be seen in the abbey to this day and can be visited.

It hasn't been easy to compress a lifetime of adventure into two paragraphs, and much has been left out, but she was truly a remarkable woman in an era when females were considered to be mere ornaments and child-bearers, not statespersons and military leaders. One last tidbit of information – she never learned English, speaking Aquitanian French or Latin throughout her life. And it's all true!

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SOME LITTLE KNOWN FACTS ABOUT MARILYN MONROE

Marilyn Monroe died in 1962, more than 60 years ago, but lives on through her reputation for beauty and her films. She was born Norma Jeane Baker in 1926 and spent most of her life in foster homes and orphanages before marrying at age 16. As a girl, she loved baseball and animals. She broke into movies using the stage name of Carol Lind, but soon changed it to Marilyn Monroe. Her most successful movie was *Some Like It Hot*. She was also the inspiration for Disney's Tinker Bell. She was only 36 when she died, but she is still one of the best-known Hollywood actresses.

OUT OF STOCK TITLES DURING MARCH, 2026

ITMB regrets that the following titles are unavailable at the moment:

British Columbia South 5th Ed. Is out of print. An updated version has been printed and should be available sometime in May. Please keep ordering, using the existing ISBN.

Colombia 5th Ed. Is out of print. An updated edition has been printed and should be available in late May.

Philippines has also run out of copies, but a fresh edition should become available very shortly.

Rwanda & Burundi has run out of copies. A fresh edition is expected shortly. Please keep ordering, using the existing ISBN.

Tokyo and Region has run out of inventory. A fresh update has been printed and should be available in late May.

For all of these titles, please keep ordering using the former ISBN. We will fill orders as soon as inventory arrives. While we endeavour to have a fresh edition arrive shortly after the previous one sells out, this is not an exact science. We have 24 titles at the printer as I write, with Lan and her team working on updating another five. We hate disappointing anyone by not being able to provide every titles every time, but we have to live in the world, not in one where everything magically happens.

NEW RELEASES DURING MARCH, 2026

British Columbia & Alberta Rockies Travel Reference Map 2nd Edition 2026 1:750,000 ISBN 9781771291194 UPC 817712911940 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – The two westernmost provinces of Canada share an unusual boundary, in that part of it follows the height of land dividing the continent into those rivers flowing to the Pacific Ocean from those flowing into Hudson's Bay. The Rockies are one of the world's younger mountain chain, and were formed when two tectonic plates collided, sending one plate high upwards, while the other one dipped underneath it. Hence, Mount Rundle, at Banff, a perfect example of a slab tilted on edge. It also created Lake Louise, Emerald Lake, and other exceptionally scenic natural wonders. The Canadian Rockies are one of the most-visited natural wonders in North America, with Banff and Jasper National Parks on the eastern side of the continental divide, and Yoho, Kootenay, and Glacier on the west side. This entire region was set aside at a wilderness preservation area in the 1880s, when the concept of protected parks first began. Now, Banff, the second oldest such park in the world is over-touristed and needs special protection that our forefathers could not have imagined. The map includes detailed insets of central Calgary, Banff townsite, Lake Louise, and Jasper. ITMB also publishes more detailed maps of Banff and Jasper National Parks as well, but this map covers everything on one double-sided sheet. **AVAILABLE**

Indonesia Travel Reference Map 6th Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:2,400,000 ISBN 9781771293761 UPC 817712937612 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – Indonesia is a vast country of hundreds of inhabited islands that emerged out of the colonial Dutch East Indies. This map shows the entire country, with portions of nearby countries such as Singapore and Malaysia. Being a series of islands, sea communications are as important as air routes, and the islands are linked by numerous ferries, which are shown on our map. We also show the growing network of motorways joining land destinations, primarily on Java, but increasingly on Sumatra. Indonesia has such touristic treasures as Bali, Lombok, and Java, as well as more adventuresome off-the-beaten-path destinations such as Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and West Irian. Indonesia is the fourth most populated nation on earth and has a treasure trove of wonders to explore. **AVAILABLE**

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NEW RELEASES DURING FEBRUARY, 2026

Egypt & Cairo Travel Reference Map 3rd edition 2026, on waterproof paper 1:1,000,000/1:12,000 ISBN 9781771292764 UPC 817712927644 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – Egypt has been attracting visitors for many centuries. For modern-day tourists, the appeal of the pyramids, the temples of Luxor, and the massive museum in Cairo is overwhelming. Side 1 covers all of Egypt as far as Aswan, with a very large inset showing the entire country in relation to its neighbours. Side 2 covers Cairo, with insets of the Giza pyramids and the immediate hinterland of the city, showing a wide range of hotels, museums, shopping areas, and public buildings. Although Egypt itself is an attractive place to visit, it needs to be noted that it's borders with Libya, Sudan, and Israel are closed, so one must fly in and out of the country. **AVAILABLE**

England South Travel Reference Map 1st Edition 2026 1:270,000 ISBN 9781771292757 UPC 817712927576 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – The United Kingdom of England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales is so densely covered with castles, manor houses, battlefields, and touristic attractions that it needs to be divided into parts in order to provide enough space on a map sheet to show its attractions. ITMB has a map covering the entire country, and separate maps for Ireland, Scotland and Wales. England, by its shape, divides naturally into north and south. This map covers England from Bristol/Colchester south to the English Channel, with Cornwall, Devon, and Somerset on Side 1 and the Southampton/London/Kent portion occupying Side 2. The scale is detailed enough to show all rail lines, motorways, primary highways, secondary roads, and most tertiary-level roadways in the area of the map, with sufficient space to include road names/numbers for all the A and M roads. It also shows most castles, abbeys, cathedrals, and National Trust properties (apologies for any left out). A new addition is the inclusion of long-distance Euro bike routes that are becoming increasingly popular. This is an incredibly detailed map at an excellent scale, covering the most-visited part of England. **AVAILABLE**

Lima & Peru Pacific Coast Travel Reference Map 2nd Edition 2026 1:11,500/1:300,000 ISBN 9781771294539 UPC 817712945396 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – Peru is one of the most-visited countries in South America. Lima is an ancient city that was the capital of an empire long before the Spanish arrived. This map covers most of Peru, from Chiclayo in the north to Mollendo in the south, and goes as far inland as Cuzco and Manchu Picchu in the east, so is perfect for most usage in the country. Side 2 concentrates on Lima itself, with an emphasis on the historical centre, but covering a much wider area to the east. Today's Lima dates from the Spanish conquest, with straight streets in a grid pattern. The main sites are noted in our Top Attractions listing. **AVAILABLE**

Marrakesh & Northern Morocco Travel Reference Map 2nd Edition 2026 1:7,000/1:1,100,000 ISBN 9781771295024 UPC 817712950246 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – Morocco is one of the safest and most-visited countries in Africa. It has several cities of renown, and the most attractive is Marrakesh, just north of the Atlas Mountains. Side 1 shows the old city, or Medina, and the new, or French, city that Europeans created outside of the ancient city walls. Most of the old city walls still exist, and are noted on the map. Hotels tend to be located in the New Town, for convenience, and are noted. The Medina can be confusing to walk through, so we have included an inset showing the main walking areas, as well as a Top Attractions listing. Side 2 covers all of the northern half of Morocco, including Tiznet, Agadir, Casablanca, Rabat, Tangier, Fez, and Meknes, all the way to the Algerian border, which is unfortunately closed. This is the portion of the country that most visitors want to see. We show the Atlas Mountains and the western edge of the great Sahara (I'd add Desert, but the word Sahara means desert, so it would be akin to saying desert desert). **AVAILABLE**

South East Asia Travel Reference Map 8th Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:4,000,000 ISBN 9781771297448 UPC 817712974488 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – Asia is too vast a land mass to fit on to a mapping sheet, although one day I hope Lan will do so (if anyone can, it's her!) South East Asia consists of the portion of Asia south of China and east of India – essentially Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Myanmar/Burma, Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, and the Philippines. This, in itself, is a vast and densely populated part of the world. As a regional map, we are attempting to provide travel assistance to those seeing several countries on one trip, usually a tour, or increasingly a cruise. For example, Lan and myself are taking a cruise from Hong Kong to Singapore via Vietnam, the Philippines, and Malaysia. This map will be ideal for our purposes. Cruising Asia is the fastest-growing area of travel, so this newly-updated map is very useful. **AVAILABLE**

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Tibet Xizang Travel Reference Map 3rd Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:1,680,000 ISBN 9781771298148 UPC 817712981486 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – Tibet, until recently, has been rather difficult to reach. However, China is relaxing its grip on travel, and it is now practical to consider visiting Tibet. One can fly there from various locations in China, or go by train from Chengdu to Lhasa, the capital. Side 1 covers the western half of the country, with an inset of central Lhasa showing the Potala Palace and the walking areas of the historic centre. The ability to travel to other centres is limited at the moment, but improving. Side 2 shows the eastern half of the country and improving road access to the region. Again, travel is still limited by wary Chinese officialdom, but is gradually relaxing. Border crossings to Nepal, Sikkim, Bhutan, India, and Myanmar, are all closed. Tibet is a political minefield for the Chinese. ITMB has been able to source this map with the co-operation of Chinese authorities, but much of the detail has been provided by the Chinese government and is not independently verifiable. The name on the cover, for example includes the Chinese name for Tibet equally with the name known traditionally for this part of the world. Xizang may not be well-known outside of China itself, but it is necessary to show on maps from now on if one hopes to encourage tourism. China is in the early stages of re-opening the entire country to tourism after years of self-imposed semi-isolation. This map is a tribute to better relations with China. **AVAILABLE**

Vietnam Travel Reference Map 9th Edition 2026 on waterproof paper 1:920,000 ISBN 9781771298780 UPC 817712987808 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – Although Vietnam is extremely popular as a travel destination, it is also a society caught between two worlds. On the one hand, visitors want to enjoy the traditional culture of the country, but on the other hand want modern hotels, clean streets, improved roads, and all the mod-cons of modern civilization. This is placing an enormous strain on Vietnam, whose citizens also want all the benefits of modern life, which is very destructive of traditional life. KFC is now quite popular in Vietnamese cities, as are, increasingly, McDonalds, Pizza Hut, Holiday Inns, and other aspects of 'normal' life outside of Vietnam that have never existed in their society. Nonetheless, as Vietnam modernizes, it does its best to keep traditions and heritage sites alive, within reason. As a result, the country is extremely popular with visitors and this is the most detailed map of the country in existence. The motorway development is nothing short of astounding. We have included two new routes under construction leading to China from Hanoi, and show the growing ring road around Ho Chi Minh City. The motorway joining Hanoi to cities in the south is showing definite signs of progress side 1 includes an inset map showing the many administrative districts of Vietnam as well as an inset of central Hanoi. Side 2 concentrates on the more populous south, with insets of the Saigon section of HCM City, another of the increasingly resort area of modern Danang, and a third of historic Hue, the former royal capital. Phu Quoc Island, a rapidly-growing touristic destination of resort hotels, now has its own inset map. **AVAILABLE**

NEW RELEASES DURING JANUARY, 2026

Canada Travel Reference Map 2026 Edition Scale 1:6,000,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771291958 UPC 817712919588 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – AVAILABLE

Canary Islands Travel Reference Map 26 1:130,000 ISBN 9781771291965 UPC 817712919656 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – AVAILABLE

Faroe Islands & Denmark Travel Reference Map 1st Edition 2026 1:115,000/1:450,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771292931 UPC 817712929310 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – AVAILABLE

France Railway & Road Travel Reference Map 4th Edition 2026 1:1,000,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771292948 UPC 817712929488 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – AVAILABLE

Madeira & Southern Portugal Travel Reference Map 1st Edition 2026 1:60,000/1:450,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771295017 UPC 817712950178 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90- AVAILABLE

Muscat & Oman Travel Reference Map 2nd Edition 2026 1:25,000/1:300,000 ISBN 9781771295000 UPC 817712950000 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – AVAILABLE

Oslo/Bergen & Southern Norway Travel Reference Map 4th Edition 2025 1:8,000/1:800,000 on waterproof paper ISBN 9781771295932 UPC 817712959324 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – AVAILABLE

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Romania & Moldova Travel Reference Map 2nd Edition 2026 1:850,000/1:445,000 ISBN 9781771296755 UPC 817712967558 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – AVAILABLE, with a double-sided cover.

Uzbekistan Travel Reference Map 2026 5th Edition 1:1,500,000 ISBN 9781771298643 UPC 817712986436 \$14.95cdn/us E/GBP 11.90 – AVAILABLE

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