

Los Angeles Times

TOURS & CRUISES

ENGLAND

"Downton" detour

Fans of the TV series "Downton Abbey" will have an opportunity to experience the life of their favorite characters during a July cruise excursion. The White Sea Exploration probes the Arctic Circle from Reykjavik, Iceland, to London on an 18-day luxury Crystal Cruises itinerary. Cruisers may then visit the English countryside and the film locations of "Downton Abbey" on a two-night post-cruise land program extension. During the excursion, guests will visit Highclere Castle in Hampshire, stand-in for the fictional Downton Abbey, where they will arrive in vintage 1920s automobiles, attend a private Champagne reception and tour the estate.

Dates: July 8

Price: All-inclusive cruise fares start at \$8,435 per person, double occupancy. Rates for the "English Countryside & Highclere Castle" land program start at \$4,600 per person, double occupancy, including meals, accommodations and transportation to and from London/Dover.

Info: Crystal Cruises, (888) 799-4625, www.crystalcruises.com

— ROSEMARY McCLURE

CUBA

Highlights tour

Here's a nine-day tour that provides travelers with a broad introduction to life in Cuba. Highlights include architectural tours of both modern and old Havana, a visit to a synagogue to meet with Jewish members of the community, a lunchtime discussion with baseball player Rodolfo Puentes to learn about life as an athlete in Cuba, and a meeting with workers at a cigar factory. Cultural highlights include visits to an artist's home studio; the Cuban Literacy Museum; Ernest Hemingway's farm home, Finca Vigia; and the National Art Museum. A city tour of Cienfuegos and a day trip to the agricultural region of Vinales are



NICK BRIGGS PBS/Masterpiece

CRYSTAL CRUISES lets you imagine a life like Lady Mary's on a "Downton Abbey" tour.

included in the itinerary.

Dates: Feb.1-9

Price: \$3,580 per person, double occupancy; \$400 single supplement. Includes Cuban visa, round-trip airfare from Miami to Cuba; accommodations for eight nights, 19 meals, transportation by private motor coach, sightseeing and entrance fees.

Info: Geoffrey's Tours & Cruises, (310) 266-9879, geoffevans@earthlink.net

— ANNE HARNAGEL

CROATIA

Coastal walk

Country Walkers' 10-day tour of Croatia digs into the natural and cultural history of the Dalmatian Coast with the addition of pre- and post-excursion extensions. Pre-tour, participants will spend one night in Split, where they will have a chance to visit the city's ancient Roman ruins. Highlights of the walking tour include the palace of Emperor Dio-

cletian, the olive groves and 16th century Pustinja Blaca monastery on the island of Brac and the ancient Spanjola Fortress and lavender fields of Hvar. Post-tour, the excursion concludes with a one-night stay in the walled city of Dubrovnik. The walks are considered easy to moderate, with an average of four to six miles a day on terrain that varies from paved streets to uneven single-track trails.

Dates: May 14-24, May 22-June 1, June 11-21, Sept. 3-13, Sept. 17-27 and Oct. 1-11.

Price: From \$6,088, double occupancy, for the tour and extensions; single supplement \$910. Includes international round-trip airfare from LAX, all accommodations, all overseas transfers, guided walking tours, breakfasts and tour-only inclusions.

Info: Country Walkers, (800) 234-6900, www.bit.ly/1vDhSRW

— ANNE HARNAGEL

IDAHO

Whitewater and wilderness

Adventure seekers can journey down the Middle Fork of the Salmon River next summer on a new camping and rafting trip created by Mountain Travel Sobek. The Middle Fork, the centerpiece of the 2.2-million-acre River of No Return Wilderness, has 60 Class III to IV rapids, but the trip is considered easy because campers can choose to ride in an oar boat. More adventurous campers can paddle with a team or captain in their own inflatable kayak. Other highlights include fly-fishing and wildlife spotting. Most tours are six days.

Dates: June 14, July 9, July 17, July 25, Aug. 10, Sept. 16

Price: \$1,895 (June 14 departure only, five-day trip). \$2,195 for all other departures. Includes most meals, lodging and local guide. Airfare not included.

Info: Mountain Travel Sobek, (888) 831-7526, www.bit.ly/1IGdSNv

— ROSEMARY McCLURE