

Perillo Tours Expands Quietly into New Destinations

11/19/2013

0

[Tweet](#)

[Like](#) 0

[Like](#)

0

[g+1](#)

PHOTO: India is just one of the new destinations that Perillo Tours is making available to travellers. (Courtesy: David Cogswell)

Perillo Tours has spent three generations making its name synonymous with "Italy."

For many people in the Northeast U.S., the company successfully fused the two words together. Joseph Perillo, who founded the company in the Bronx in 1945, promoted the brand on the radio in the 1950s and 1960s. Joseph's son Mario expanded the media coverage into TV in the 1970s and became known as "Mr. Italy" to many within the range of that media.

Today, Steve Perillo, the son of Mario, continues on the same path, trying to navigate the expanding range of new media. Though Perillo has offered other destinations over the years, it was always careful to keep the brand focus sharply on Italy.

"I remind myself of my father," says Steve Perillo. "He never wanted 50 destinations. I want to keep our supremacy to Italy. I feel if go too far afield it might harm that."

ALWAYS TRYING NEW IDEAS

At one point Perillo offered Israel. The company has been offering a Hawaii tour for 25 years, and it continues to sell. "We like to give the clientele something fresh," says Perillo. "They're a ready audience after they've seen Italy with us. We've done everything, Ireland, Spain, Australia. We've sold cruise cabins. We had a successful Caribbean product from '88 to '98 with a hotel package.

"But hotel packages are not as profitable, and there's not a strong place for us. In Costa Rica you need to be escorted. That's what gives tour operators their meaning. They have a function there, instead of in a hotel package in the Caribbean or the Bahamas."

Costa Rica, says Perillo, is selling better than expected.

"We came up with a Costa Rica tour and that's turned out to be a big hit," says Perillo. "I wasn't expecting it. We sold out our inventory in two months. We were surprised. It's an exciting destination for people and it's a great value."

Costa Rica is so popular, in fact, that Perillo plans to expand capacity, that is, if there is additional capacity available. "We're fighting for space in 2015," says Perillo. "We hope to have double the space or more."

"Costa Rica is bringing us a different demographic," said Perillo's executive vice president, Carol Dimopoulos. "We have some repeat clients but we also have some new clients who are booking with us for the first time because of Costa Rica. So it's a great brand transition."

Expansion to many destinations, however, is not on the agenda.

"Perillo will never be a global brand," says Dimopoulos. "What we do look to offer our repeat customers and our new customers some new destinations on a select basis that we feel is a good product to include in the line. Greece is very comparable with the Mediterranean, so we feel it's a good product to include in the line."

But this year Perillo is also expanding into Greece.

"We're doing a new escorted tour of Athens and the Greek Islands, a brand new escorted tour for 2014," says Perillo. "It's a traditional Perillo Tour in the sense that it's on the land, but Athens and the Greek Islands. It's the Venice-Florence-Rome equivalent for Greece. These are signature programs, built in the same way, the Perillo style, superior first class deluxe. That's our positioning now, affordable luxury."

Recent Promotions



[Holiday Inn Fisherman's Wharf](#)



[Sonaisali Island Resort/Blue Lagoon Cruises](#)



[Free Single Upgrade](#)

[View All Promotions](#)

Featured Cruises



[26 NIGHT TRANSATLANTIC CRUISE](#)



[28-day Iberian Kiel Canal & Baltic Explorer](#)



[14-day Passage To Italy](#)

[View All Cruises](#)

Featured Tours

EDUCATIONAL AND FAMILY TOURS GROW

Perillo's list of destinations is now mushrooming through a new venture called Learning Journeys Powered by Perillo. Led by Dimopoulos as president of the division, Learning Journeys is a new group travel venture that is offering educationally focused tours to ... just about anywhere.

The concept behind Learning Journeys is to provide interactive touring experiences with classes and lessons within the context of FITs, families or affinity group tours.

One of the family tours now being offered is India: Culture and Cubs, a 10-day/nine-night program that combines an overview of the historical background of India with personal meetings with local residents and encounters with wildlife.

The itinerary includes such activities as a visit to the Bear Rescue Center near Agra; an elephant ride at Dera Amber; a lesson in kitemaking; visits to temples, palaces, forts and villages; shopping in local markets; cooking instruction; a visit to the City Palace Museum in Jaipur; and of course the Taj Mahal.

Learning Journeys is also offering an Arabian Family Adventure to the UAE, visiting Dubai and Abu Dhabi, and offers educational tours in Spain, France, Greece, Central Europe, Israel, Costa Rica, Vietnam and Cambodia.

All those destinations are available upon order, but Perillo is being careful not to say too many words besides "Italy" in its branding messages.

"We've tried a lot of things," says Perillo. "Some have worked better than others. But I'm determined to make sure we are leader to Italy. It's hard to predict the market. The Internet changed things. If you want to be king of the hill, you can't be in too many places. If you search "Italy" we're always one two or three on Google."



THE GRAND EUROPEAN



Classic Mid-Atlantic (Summer 2014)



Mayan Sun—Northbound

[View All Tours](#)

Related Destinations



Greece



Italy



Contact Us

Jsmgonline@gmail.com
1-917-816-3577

JS Marketing Group, LLC
780 Dumont Ave
Brooklyn, New York 11207