

sort of mini Marfa, Texas, here. When our boat pulls up to the crescent-shaped harbor lined with old stone houses and kids splashing around in the sea, Miro, a recent art history grad who runs Von Habsburg's office in Dubrovnik, points to the biggest hill. "Can you see it?" he asks, referring to the rectangular pavilion with a membrane of wooden slats that Von Habsburg commissioned the English architect David Adjaye to build for artist Olafur Eliasson's light installation. Miro, motioning toward the tip of the island, points to a rather Gothic-looking abandoned monastery and fortress tucked strategically into the pines. There Von Habsburg is planning an arts center, with a pricey renovation of the old halls and passageways already under way. Ashore, her small guest-house, La Villa, is simple and refined, with only the generous proportions of the building and its sea view as extras. We visit Von Habsburg's Renaissance garden, with its new tomato plants and orange trees; architect François Roche has plans to convert it one day soon into a "toxic garden" of poisonous plants. A golf cart taxi skillfully navigates a palm- and flower-shaded lane to take us to the other side of the island for a swim. I can see why Von Habsburg set up here.

MONTENEGRO HAS THE FEELING of an old family estate being sold off by cash-strapped relatives who are waiting patiently—slightly hopeful, slightly scared—for the suits to show up with their surveyors and bulldozers. A small country of 650,000 that declared independence from Serbia two years ago, it has steep green mountains with ancient fortresses and charming old cities built into the rocks that sit regally above the sun-glimmering Adriatic. You couldn't dream up a more vacation-perfect setting. Freshly paved roads lead past roadside graves and by signs for turnoffs to monasteries and looming Russian-language billboards advertising Sunset Village and other villa developments. In the night sky, a number of cranes are outlined in blinking lights as if they were an attraction in themselves. During the day, busloads of Chinese tourists in oversized sun visors clog lookout points across the highway from campgrounds where locals stay in 1960s-era campers.

With the euro as the national currency and fairly relaxed visa requirements and tax laws, the government seems to be fast-tracking the country into the next Malta or Monaco. "In ten years, Montenegro will be one of the richest countries in Europe. They get it," says Mike Shore, the brand manager of Porto Montenegro, Canadian billionaire Peter Munk's \$650 million luxury marina devel-

opment with a Four Seasons hotel in the Bay of Kotor. On my tour of the place, it still looks like the old Communist-era navy yard it once was, with a few submarines beached on the sun-cracked pavement next to piles of old filing cabinets and computers. Down the coast is the swank red-roofed resort isle of Sveti Stephan, a 1950s playground for movie stars and the super rich that Amanresorts took over two years ago. After an ultraluxe face-lift, it is scheduled to open this spring.

The new buyers are mainly Russian—President Putin recently valued Russian investments in Montenegro at about two billion dollars. In the seaside resort of Becici, just south of the historic town of Budva, a Russian company last year unveiled its gleaming Splendid Hotel, the country's first five-star property. The exterior resembles a shopping mall, with big beige wedding-cake tiers. Inside, everything is high glossed and overdesigned, with marble floors, crystal snowflake chandeliers dangling four stories, and gold-painted walls as if Philippe Starck had come through on steroids. After dinner at the hotel's Japanese restaurant, I leave the property for a stroll on the boardwalk by the sea. There are fast-food stands, divey open-air nightclubs with live bands, and a waterslide next to a vacant lot where Russian developers hope to erect a Kempinski hotel. I find a beach club with worn yellow umbrellas and rows of sun chairs empty for the night. I pick one to lounge in under the stars so I can take in the view and set a landmark on the mountains, knowing that in a few years this will be an entirely different world.

Connecticut

(Continued from page 84)

entrance, Barbara Farnsworth Bookseller is full of nooks and comfy corners, with books more or less everywhere. We lingered there, doing nothing special, until our group started feeling peckish. The sun had come out, so we trundled a few steps down the road to sit outside at the Wandering Moose Cafe and eat waffles and watch the river and various people running by.

The Minx and I are not particularly athletic. Left to our own devices, we might wander back to the bookstore via the farmers' market. But our better halves on this trip were our adolescent sons, whose appetites needed more than waffles. In summer, the river accommodates canoeing, an activity that seemed both dignified and diverting. The Minx, who loves nothing more than a party, suggested making a day of it: We'd invite another friend along and her teens, and we'd all go have a lovely lunch

The Romance of a River Cruise through Europe



A river cruise is an enchanting and unique way to let Europe unfold before you. See quaint villages, bustling cities, castles and vineyards on a unique Peter Deilmann river cruise.

- Cruises in France, Germany, Austria, Hungary, Belgium, Holland, Poland, Czech Republic and more
- 4- and 5-star cruising
- 7-14 night cruises and cruise-tours
- Best passenger-to-staff ratios and doctor on every cruise
- Smoke-free interiors



PETER DEILMANN CRUISES 
Europe's Premier River Cruise Line

Call for more information or
free brochures, or visit our website.

1-800-308-3715

www.deilmann-cruises.com

Ship's Registry, Germany

CRUISE SPECIALISTS
Dedicated to Luxury Travel

CENTURION CLUB
Top Producing Agency
in North America



Holland America Line
A Signature of Excellence

2009 GRAND AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND & SOUTH PACIFIC VOYAGE

Departs September 26, 2009
Seattle to Los Angeles
ms Amsterdam | 67 Days

Dreamy Polynesian Islands, sophisticated, sporty cities and spectacular deep water bays and fjords – no international flights!

Cruise Specialists Adds:

- Special Savings!
- Pre-cruise Hotel and Gala Dinner
- Professional Escorts
- Exclusive Tour Program
- \$250 pp Tour Credit
- Onboard Parties & Gifts



Full cruise from
\$10,399
Assumes Grand Mariner Status

(800) 544-2469

www.CruiseSpecialists.com or
e-mail us at mail@CruiseSpecialists.com

Lead-in fares shown are pp based on dbl occupancy, assume Grand Mariner status, and in US dollars. Government fees & taxes of \$406.23 are addtl. All offers are capacity controlled, and subject to availability. We reserve the right to correct errors. Ship's Registry: The Netherlands UBI 601123743 ProQuest Travel Group, Inc. dba Cruise Specialists AD151 BS/1/09