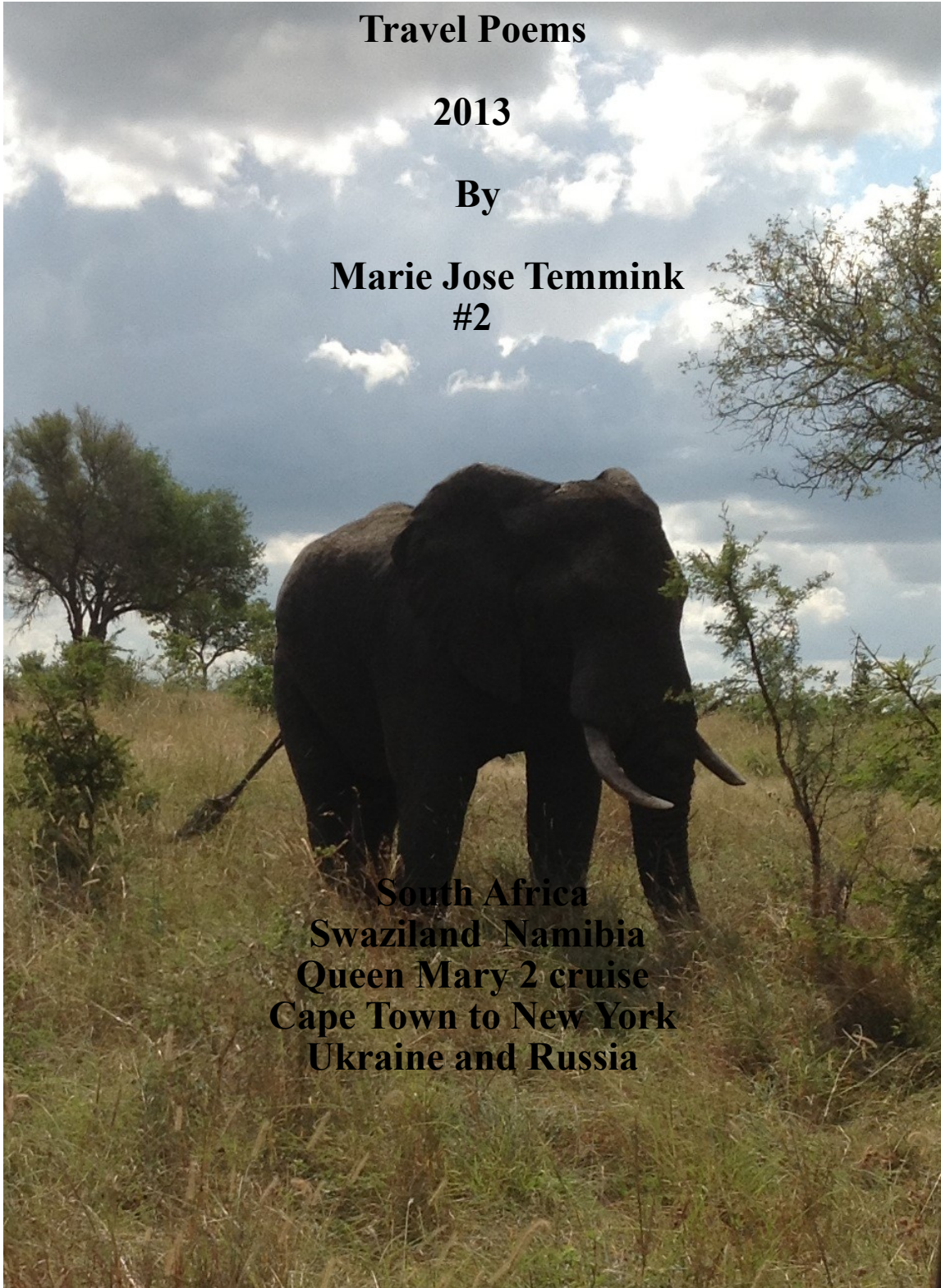


Travel Poems

2013

By

**Marie Jose Temmink
#2**



**South Africa
Swaziland Namibia
Queen Mary 2 cruise
Cape Town to New York
Ukraine and Russia**

I flew from Los Angeles to Amsterdam on 03-17-2013

After spending one day with family in the Netherlands I continued on to Johannesburg in South Africa.

There I met my friend Margaret and we joined a land tour via Swaziland and along the Garden route to Cape Town.

We boarded the Queen Mary in Cape Town and cruised via Southampton to New York

I flew from New York back to Los Angeles on May 4

On June 9 I flew with my Sister in Law Anna from Los Angeles via Chicago and Dusseldorf to Kiev in the Ukraine

From there flew to Moscow in Russia on June 14 and boarded a riverboat and cruised to St Petersburg in Russia

From St Petersburg we flew to Frankfurt Germany and spend a week in the Netherlands with family.

We returned via Frankfurt to Los Angeles on Jul 5

My poems are based on the experiences during this time,

Marie Jose Temmink

Dedication

To all home bound patients that can no longer physically travel .

I hope to give you travel experience through my poems, while you relax in a recliner,

Marie Jose Temmink RN PHN

Acknowledgement

I'd like to thank my daughter, Daphne, who has been my always available computer expert.

I like to thank my long time friend Mary L. Brendel for editing,

And last, but not least, I'd like to thank Mark Royston for his help in getting this book published.

INDEX

1	March	17	Leaving for Africa
2	March	18	Flight to Amsterdam
3	March	19	Flying
4	March	19	A visit with family
5	March	20	Amsterdam to Johannesburg
6	March	21	Johannesburg day 1
7	March	22	Johannesburg day 2
8	March	23	Soweto Township
9	March	25	Kruger Park
10	March	27	Swaziland
11	March	28	Day in Mbabane
12	March	29	Zulu visit
13	March	30	Game viewing
14	March	31	Easter Sunday flight
15	April	01	Port Elisabeth
16	April	02	Meeting friends in Knysna
17	April	03	Knysna day 1
18	April	04	Knysna day 2
19	April	05	Swellendam
20	April	06	Cape Town
21	April	07	Drive to Cape Point
22	April	08	Stellenbosch
23	April	09	End of Land Tour
24	April	10	Boarding the Queen May 2
25	April	11	Cape Town to South Hampton
26	April	13	Namibia
27	April	14	Contentment
28	April	15	Lectures on board
29	April	16	Remembering the Titanic
30	April	17	Relaxed
31	April	18	Wilma in the hospital!
32	April	19	News about Boston Bomber
33	April	20	More lectures
35	April	21	Las Palmas
36	April	22	Madeira
37			

37	April	23	Life on Board the Queen Mary 2
38	April	24	Vigo
39	April	25	News from England
40	April	25	Midriff bulge
41	April	26	Remembering this day 21 years ago
42	April	27	Transatlantic crossing
43	April	29	Approaching the last day
44	April	30	Thank you fellow cruisers
45	May	01	Smooth sailing
46	May	02	Travel companion
47	May	02	Benefits of travel
48	May	03	Arrival in New York
49	May	03	Flying home
50	June	09	Leaving for Russia
51	June	10	Flight from Dusseldorf to Kiev, Ukraine
52	June	11	Kiev Day 1
35	June	12	Kiev Day 2
36	June	13	Kiev Day 3
37	June	14	Start of River Cruise
38	June	15	Moscow Day 1
39	June	16	Moscow Day 3
40	June	17	Moscow Day 3
41	June	18	Moscow Day 4
42	June	19	Uglich
43	June	20	Goritsy
44	June	21	Kizhi
45	June	22	Petrozavodsk
46	June	23	Svir Stroi
47	June	24	St Petersburg Day 1
48.	June	25	St Petersburg Day 2
49.	June	26	St Petersburg Day 3,
50.	June	27	St Petersburg Day 4
51.	June	28	Leaving Russia
52	July	5	Going home
53	Aug	29	Conclusion of my third book

03-17-2013

LEAVING FOR AFRICA

I am about to leave my Long Beach home base
For another foreign place.

The next few weeks I will spend
In what is for me a new continent.

In a country I have not seen,
And in cities I have not been.

I look forward to rhyme,
About South Africa this time.

I will spend the next 21 days
In this country with ancient customs, practices and ways.

I hope we will not experience disruption,
As this country has a history of conflict, slavery and corruption.

I look forward to the scenery in this land,
Which I am told is grand.

And most of all I look forward to see
Big game walking free,

While trying to escape the area,
Where one can get malaria.

I will take Malarone and at night cover my bed
With a big net.

Because I want to prevent a mosquito bite...
Day or night.

My bags are packed, I am ready to go...
I will take it all in, and go with the flow.

Marie Jose Temmink

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03-18-2013

FLIGHT TO AMSTERDAM

**Daphne drove me to LAX in the a.m.
To fly to Amsterdam via KLM.**

**Where with family I will spend a night
After this 10 and-a-half-hour flight.**

**In a promotional upgrade to business class I invested,
So I hope to arrive well rested.**

**The security man stated in a voice very loud
That my hairspray was not allowed.**

**Then he asked "Do you like this can?"
As he handed it to a security woman!**

**He also told me more news...
In two years I no longer have to remove my shoes!**

**Apparently over 75, one can walk thru security being very calm,
Even if in your shoes you're hiding a bomb?**

**I had thought that most rules I had already heard.
But they seem to get more and more absurd.**

**I spend two hours in the business lounge before boarding...
A perk of business class that is very rewarding.**

**Impeccable service is very nice,
But at full fare it is not worth the price.**

**I sit in a comfortable lounge chair
In the air.**

**I selected a real Dutch dish called "huts pot,"
That reminded me of growing up in Holland a lot.**

**It was a treat,
This Dutch hotchpotch of potato, onion, carrots and meat.**

**My next rhyme,
Will be written in Dutch time.**

Marie Jose Temmink

03-19-2013

FLYING

**The snow capped mountains below are breathtaking to see,
I feel content, happy and free.**

**Fran's remains spiritually in sight
During this most comfortable flight.**

**It is amazing how after a loss one can adjust
When you tell yourself you must.**

**The purser came by
To introduce herself and say hi.**

**Bringing a small pocket knife on board is forbidden,
Yet the big stainless knives served with food are not hidden.**

**It shows that all these safety rules
Are made by a bunch of fools.**

**After delicious dessert of white chocolate cheesecake,
It was difficult to stay awake.**

**The desire to sleep I did not fight,
And I turned off the overhead light,**

**When I awoke I was not ready for another meal,
The omelet I had ordered did not appeal.**

**It was 8 a.m. in Holland on this new day,
But still midnight in LA.**

Marie Jose Temmink

03-19-2013

A VISIT WITH FAMILY

Above the clouds the sun was bright,
But on landing there was minimal sun light.

It was strange to arrive alone
And not be able to use the phone.

I would call my family I had said,
But the battery in my phone was dead.

To use the public phone I elected,
But found out that it was not connected.

Then, as a last resort,
I had their names called over the intercom at the *Schiphol Airport*.

That also they did not hear,
But then they saw me standing near.

The coat they had brought was old,
But I was happy to wear it in this bitter cold.

Their home above the Dutch norm,
Was inviting, pleasant and warm.

Most of the afternoon was spent
Watching the discs of family history that Daphne had sent.

Dinner with more family was great.
The evening with wine and talk ended late.

Marie Jose Temmink

03-20-2013

AMSTERDAM TO JOHANNESBURG

**After a short night,
Early breakfast and a taxi ride**

**We tried not to cry,
When saying good bye.**

**Soon they were out of sight,
And I started another 11-hour flight.**

**All seats had been sold,
And the air was too cold.**

**The service was pleasant and fast,
And I caught up on sleep at last.**

**Johannesburg airport was the most elegant I have seen,
The custom clearance more efficient than in any other country I have been.**

**To check all passports took only a short while,
By a line of 45 agents with a smile.**

**My taxi driver was holding up my name in clear view,
My apprehension was lifted and I knew....**

**Without holding this big black hand,
For now I was safe being driven by Lux Express in this land.**

**It was a thirty minute ride,
Very smooth but on the left side.**

**The hotel check-in was close to midnight,
With no other guest in sight.**

**A quick call to the family that I had arrived,
And I was ready to turn off the light.**

Marie Jose Temmink

03-21-2013

JOHANNESBURG DAY 1

I woke up a few times but then slept late,
And got up at half past eight.

I opened the drapes and saw people dressed in red and white
Rolling a big ball on a lawn in the early morning light.

They apparently had time to play
On this "freedom" holiday.

I had no idea what was the name
Of this seemingly relaxed and elegant game.

Breakfast in a beautiful room,
No signs here of doom and gloom.

A group of women came in and took a seat,
And I wondered if they would remove their burka to eat.

Maybe they must have had no appetite...
Because they left without a bite.

I waited in the lobby and did not have to guess,
That it was Margaret who got out of the taxi from Lux Express.

It was great to see a familiar face,
In this foreign place.

We walked to the *Wanderers* "old Colonial style" *Club*
And caught up with a glass of wine in the outdoor pub.

Due to our jet leg the wine had the effect of a night cap,
And before dinner we took a long nap.

Dinner was an African chicken creation
With more wine and good conversation.

With long distance help from Evelyn I was able to post on Facebook,
So all my family and friends can have a look...

And know they are on my mind,
While in this new continent I unwind.

Marie Jose Temmink

03-22-2013

JOHANNESBURG DAY 2

On this leisurely day,
I was able to replace my confiscated can of hairspray!

But the price was over the top,
In the *Mandela Mall* shop.

But with pleasure,
We shopped in this upscale mall with leisure.

We had an Oriental lunch that was served with care,
While having a pleasant view of the *Mandela Square*.

Mandela's oversized statue was a big draw,
As everyone stopped and looked in awe.

The locals looked happy and content,
A colorful, all age and all size, blend.

We returned to the hotel in time,
Without having seen beggars, homeless, or signs of crime.

Inside for dinner was rather cool,
So we ate outside by the pool.

The songs of the many birds,
Sounded like pleasing words.

This evening 21 people checked in that will travel with us
Starting tomorrow, in the "*Highlights of South Africa*" tour bus.

Marie Jose Temmink

03-23-2013

SOWETO TOWNSHIP

**Soweto Township of 3 million people that have no space to live or hide,
An unimaginable mix of the rich and poorest poor, living side by side.**

**Mandela and Archbishop Tutu have their retreat,
In this town on the same street,**

**Of which the locals are very proud,
And are willing to endure the daily tourist crowd.**

**The existence of African people I had only seen on the news and in a book,
But it is unbelievable 'til one has a personal look.**

**And today it was a BIG revelation,
To visit the somber museum of apartheid or segregation.**

**Displayed were conditions not befitting human life on this earth,
Hard to imagine these people's existence was diminished to no worth.**

**The most profound human experience 'til now for me,
Was to visualize the history of 80% that for centuries were not free.**

**And for all the suffering and tears,
There was no end until recent years.**

**And even under the new constitutional democracy,
They are a long way from living like you and me.**

**No one knows how many souls were lost,
In this apparent century-long African holocaust.**

**I am thankful to be in the position,
To see the world's population living condition.**

**And I hope the money I spend,
Will improve the under-privileged conditions in the end.**

Marie Jose Temmink

03-25-26-2013

KRUGER PARK

For two days the big bam
Was the wake up call at 4 a.m.

For a game run
In the rising sun

By bus to *Kruger Park*,
While it was still dark.

Then I had to take a leap...
To get into the safari jeep.

We were able to see walking and alive,
Four of the big five.

Giraffe, elephant, rhinoceros, and water buffalo close up,
And many others, including impalas, kudus, and a baboon with her cub.

Also the lion is in existence,
Because we saw two into the distance.

The expanded views are impressive,
And the animals are not aggressive.

I did not know what to expect,
But the best pictures do not reflect,

The awe you feel
When you see them for real.

Marie Jose Temmink

03-27-2013

SWAZILAND

We crossed the border to Swaziland,
And saw vistas that are absolutely grand.

A country very unique,
Surrounded by South Africa and Mozambique.

A million people without a right or left political wing,
Because everything is decided by their king...

Who's lifestyle seems obscene,
Having 13 wives, the youngest a teen.

Life expectancy at 32 is no coincidence,
But due to the out of control Aids incidence

Many still ignore the causation,
And have limited access to medication.

People demand and swear...
"Muti" or witchcraft is better than medical care.

And since this is their belief,
They will continue to suffer and grieve.

Half the population is under eighteen,
And towards starvation they often lean.

With 40% unemployed they sit and wait,
And depend on foreign aid.

Luxuries they cannot afford to pay
As 60% live on less than a dollar a day.

The future here remains very grim,
As the treatment for Aids or getting old is very slim.

The distant views are great in this land,
But having a prosperous life...the people can't.

Marie Jose Temmink

03-28 2013

DAY IN MBABANE

The malaria pill today I will neglect,
As I awake with an abdominal pain side effect.

The tour goes on...I cannot be sick today,
So I decide to stow the medication away.

Our first stop is a glass factory and store,
Where they sell their glass and much more.

Then we visited a wax factory,
Where we could see...

How the locals with ease and speed,
Squeeze and knead

The wax 'til it looks like the figurines are real,
Then sell them, for what they call "a good deal."

The late King Sobusa was crowned at less than one year old
And ruled for more than 60 years we are told.

The people want to remember this king,
And built a beautiful memorial for him.

In the evening we finally took
time to catch up on e-mail and Facebook.

Marie Jose Temmink

03-29-2013

ZULU VILLAGE

**The border buildings and area leaving Swaziland were old and depressive,
The agents attitude not impressive.**

**And all of us...
We're glad to be back on the bus**

**To enjoy the views up close and afar,
That are spectacular.**

**To give us a glance or an image,
We visited a recreation of a Zulu village.**

**They showed us their living routine,
As only in books I had seen.**

**And they told us why,
A BBQ has a Dutch name "Braai."**

**Our lunch was cooked in black pots on an open fire pit,
And it tasted well...every bit.**

**When we arrived in Hluluwe we could tell,
This was another nice Protea hotel.**

**After dinner an authentic African dance show by the pool,
In the evening breeze that was comfortably cool.**

Marie Jose Temmink

03-30-2013

GAME VIEWING

After breakfast another game run,
To Hluhluwe *Umfolazi Game Reserve* under the bright sun.

This is Africa's oldest reservation,
Where they have the largest concentration,

Of rhinos that are white,
But today not too many were in sight,

But we saw other wildlife,
Zebras and giraffe but not the big five.

Then a boat ride
To a UNESCO world heritage site.

St. Lucia Estuary is a tropical paradise,
Where hippopotamus live in disguise.

But up and down popped many herds,
We saw pelicans, storks, herons and a variety of other birds.

The day ended again with a lovely dinner at the hotel,
And again we slept very well.

Marie Jose Temmink

03-31-2013

EASTER SUNDAY FLIGHT

**Wake up call early, at 3:45 out of bed,
To fly from Durban to Port Elizabeth.**

**The hassle of check-in at the airport was not the way,
We had planned to spend this Easter Sunday.**

**Once close to Port Elizabeth we were told that we could not...
Land, as in the fog there was no clear spot.**

**So we all understood why,
The pilot was told to fly to East London nearby.**

**We sat in the plane and wondered if and when...
Today we would fly again.**

**After an hour we were back in the air,
Hoping visibility would be fair.**

**And we never expected,
Again to be redirected.**

**This time Oh Lord,
All the way back again to Durban airport.**

**The one-hour flight today,
Turned out to be a day of delay.**

**But John our guide took our troubles away,
And booked the Hilton for us to stay.**

**Then a surprise dinner with Margaret's friend,
The evening could not have been better spend.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-01-2013

PORT ELIZABETH

We arrived early by plane in Port Elizabeth.
And for the first time on this trip the streets were wet.

That is why during the city tour there was no rush,
Getting off the bus.

Luckily the sky was no longer dark,
When we walked the *Mandela and Elizabeth Park*

The town was named after the founder's wife we were told,
Elizabeth had died when she was just 28 years old.

A once splendor city...unfortunately today,
Shows much decay.

After lunch we toured *Addo Elephant Park*,
'Til it was almost dark.

And again we were in awe,
Of all the animals we saw.

The evening we spend,
with Clayton, Margaret's friend.

We really admired,
His new home recently acquired.

Dinner in "De Kelder" was a delicious creation,
Combined with both...good wine...and conversation.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-02-2013

MEETING FRIENDS IN KNYSNA

**Stopped in Jeffrey's Bay where surfers come to this turf,
To enjoy the world's best surf.**

**We walked along the beach in sunny weather,
And picked up a beautiful feather.**

**I could clearly see,
It was meant to be found by me.**

**Cees and Aty met us at the hotel,
And both looked very well.**

**We enjoyed wine at their custom built estate,
That needs to be entered through a private gate.**

**But what I liked above all...
Was a pastel from Frans on their wall.**

**One can understand why,
It brought a tear to my eye.**

**And I wished,
He could have been here while we reminisced.**

**But there was no reason for me to feel alone,
Being with such good friends far from home.**

**The evening ended in a good mood,
Because of good local wine and food.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-03-2023

KNYSNA DAY 1

We will spend the day in a different way,
And not join our travel companions today.

Cees and Aty have planned to do their best,
To treat us as their special guest.

They drove us in their jeep,
To places that were very high and steep.

Coffee at *The Head* with a magnificent distant view,
Of beautiful homes, most of them new.

A drive thru a jungle with no traffic around,
Only Cees car was making a sound.

Then round the bend,
Lunch at a *Riverside Cafe* that looked like a Lawrence of Arabia tent.

In the evening wine and dinner in the pub,
At the local historical *Knysna Yacht Club*.

It is all very clear,
Why they like living here.

They have been very wise,
To plan their retirement in this paradise.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-04-2023

KNYSNA DAY 2

Not enough can be said,
For the other side of *The Head*.

We explored an area called featherbed,
Of which is said...

That sailors named the area this way,
Because it was the calmest water in the bay.

We arrived there by boat and climbed into a trolley,
Which steep ride up the hill was not jolly.

Then a 2-mile nature walk down for a fabulous meal,
During which all my leg muscles I could feel.

This evening we ate,
With Cees and Aty in their country estate.

Their home is very chique,
And has a view that is very unique.

The stars were crystal clear,
And seemed very near.

After an evening that was swell...
They drove us back to the hotel.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-05-2013

SWELLENDAM

After breakfast all of us,
Left Knysna this morning by bus.

On this long way,
We passed the quaint town called Mossel Bay.

The temperature in the bus at times was freezing,
But the scenery very pleasing.

Miles and miles of unmanned,
Green farmland.

We toured the *Drostdy Museum* in Swellendam a town like heaven,
Built as an outpost by the Dutch East India Company in 1747.

They had planned not to hide,
To look like the Dutch country side.

Lunch under big trees by a stream of local wine and food,
Put everyone in a good mood.

I would have never guessed,
That with this country I would be so impressed.

I had a different expectation,
But so far it has been a pleasant revelation.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-06-2023

CAPE TOWN

The morning at *Vitoria and Alfred Waterfront Mall*,
So far the biggest of them all.

So much unique and fine ware,
That I had not seen anywhere.

An afternoon visit to Langa Township where people voice...
That living there is their choice.

When economically a better place they can rent,
They prefer to stay in the Township where they are content.

They have cars, cellphones, TVs, are well dressed and have plenty of food,
And the many discarded booze bottles are evidence of their good mood.

A lifestyle not for me or you,
But they are not interested in what we have to do.

They seem to want to keep their life status quo,
Because to work they prefer not to go.

As long as they get foreign aid...
They think they have it made.

This evening was supposed to be another winner,
We were treated to an African home hosted dinner.

But it did not seem...
To be an African theme.

A cross-cultural exchange we did not gain,
The food was very Western and plain.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-07-2013

DRIVE TO CAPE POINT

**Much knowledge we gained
As the tour guide explained,**

**How and when the Dutch came here,
While we were driving along these steep cliffs in fear.**

**The early settlers must have used a rope,
To reach *The Cape of Good Hope*.**

**We stopped to view penguins at *Boulders Beach*,
That were almost within reach.**

**We saw baboons running along the street...
To the place we were going to eat.**

**After we ate...
We were told there often was a baboon raid!**

**Lunch was a usual dish,
Bacon wrapped around fish!**

**There was a lot of waste,
As it had a very strange taste.**

**I was invited per e-mail,
To have dinner with my nephew's friend Abigail**

**She came in a rush...
As she was eager to meet us.**

**Who knows someday it will be a chapter in the family history...
That she became a member of the Temmink family.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-08-2013

STELLENBOSCH

We visited this town that is very posh,
Called Stellenbosch.

A town that looks like a fairy tale,
At the end of a pioneer trail.

The architecture reminded me very much,
Of buildings that are Colonial Dutch.

This trip has helped to understand,
A lot about the early settlement in this land.

It was a pity,
That we had no more time to spend in this elegant city.

The stores were very upscale,
And many beautiful items were on sale.

People here have good taste,
And move about without haste.

But the driver needed to follow the signs,
To the *Neetligshof Estate* to arrive in time and taste their wines.

Early evening we strolled along the beach for a few blocks,
And watched high waves crash on the big rocks.

A farewell dinner at *The Ritz* on the 22nd floor with a revolving view,
Before saying adieu.

More time, I wish I could spend,
But this African land tour has come to an end.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-09-2013

END OF LAND TOUR

Twenty-nine travelers left for the airport by bus.
While we waved to them and they to us.

They all will fly back home,
And for a moment it felt as if we were left alone.

Then for the time being,
We took a taxi for more sightseeing.

Robben Island was on our today's list,
We wanted to see where Mandela for seventeen years did exist.

But when we arrived for the boat trip across the bay,
We were informed the tour was cancelled for today.

Even though we had no notion,
Of the apparent high waves in the ocean.

We were able to visit the museum to learn about the Island's history,
And viewed the seventeen years Mandela spent here in misery.

We then walked to this big construction of steel,
And rode the biggest enclosed ferris wheel.

A lovely lunch, a bus ride back to the hotel,
Again we had spent this day very well.

Of all the cities that exist,
Cape Town belongs on top of the list.

It has been worth,
To visit this gem on earth.

In all my travels this South Africa creation,
Has been far above my expectation.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-10-2013

BOARDING THE QUEEN MARY 2

Breakfast we ate,
Leisurely late

In the dining room there was a lot of noise
Due to a well known team of soccer boys.

And the black suited security guards are still everywhere...
And look impressive in what they wear.

Prosperity here is not hidden,
And blacks are nowhere forbidden.

In this world I have seen other places of despair,
That from foreign aid deserve a bigger share.

To South Africa foreign aid seems guaranteed,
Even though there is no evidence of a dire need.

We boarded the *Queen Mary 2* in the afternoon,
Unpacked, ate and had to be ready again soon.

We were excited to start the rest of our trip.
And relax on this beautiful ship.

But first we had to rush...
To get on time to the bus.

To see Cape Town by night.
It was too cold and windy to enjoy the sight.

A decision that had not been very wise,
As it was not worth the price.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-11-12-2013

CAPE TOWN TO SOUTHAMPTON

**This ship is a floating city with all amenities,
Of singles, couples but no big families.**

**We settled in, did laundry and explored,
And had no time to be bored.**

**This ship is big and we walk a lot,
As the elevator we try to use not.**

**All day one can be eating.
Dinner for us is the six o'clock seating.**

**We are seated at a table of six,
Our table companions a pleasant mix.**

**Like we...
not new to traveling at sea.**

**The dining room....Oh my,
is four stories high.**

**Dinner was served to perfection,
After we attended Captain Kevin Oprey's reception.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-13-2013

NAMIBIA

Namibia was the next place we stepped on land,
And there was nothing to see but sea and sand.

Then to Swakupmund we went...
An 1800's German establishment.

One wonders why they settled here,
When there was, and still is nothing near.

Now many German tourists come and see,
Where their ancestors settled, here in the desert, by the sea.

The tour guide had much to tell,
But the intercom did not work too well.

We understood this place to her is very dear,
As she is fourth generation German, born here.

Wool weaving and gem polishing is how their days are spent,
While more than 50% has no employment.

They look forward to more cruise ships that soon will be docking,
And bring many tourists interested in shopping.

We toured a weaving factory
And a crystal cutlery.

We sensed they wanted us to feel,
They would give us their best deal.

Their climate is different, only 2 mm rainfall a year comes this way,
And for 280 days the sun is not visible in this bay.

It reminds me of the *Atacama Desert* in Chili,
Hot, dry, and seldom chilly.

Back on the bus I realized this had been the last stop in this land,
And I wished I had spent my last rand.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-14-2013

CONTENTMENT

I do not feel blue,
This Sunday morning in a deck chair on the *Queen Mary 2*.

I do not experience being bored,
And my life feels as being restored.

I have accepted at last...
That I will never again experience the past.

I am content to continue my life,
Without being someone's wife.

I am at ease.
With only myself to please.

I realize life could not be better,
Than to be sailing on this magnificent ship in perfect weather.

This ship is like a floating upscale town,
With a chance to wear an elegant evening gown.

I met Lila last year on the *Golden Princess* during the world cruise,
Who at 83 has no one left in her family to lose.

She has been on this ship since December 22
And already booked the next cruise too.

She does not want to be old
In Canada's bitter cold.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-15-2013 !

LECTURES ON BOARD

**A lecture about the Boer War from 1899-1902,
Much of the details for me were new.**

**Especially that the Rhodes Scholarship's name...
Was from the same man that during this war gained fame.**

**He seemed a forerunner of Hitler's believe...
A racist that caused much griever.**

**He controlled the world diamonds and gold,
And financed the entire war we are being told.**

**It almost seems insane,
To have allowed a scholarship in his name.**

**I just hope the philosophy is not the same,
As for which this man got his fame.**

**But then money speaks...
No matter how bad it reeks.**

**A second lecture today was about game reserve maintenance and life,
By a wildlife conservation expert who lived there with his kids and wife.**

**His advice was to never trust any animal that is wild,
Because their unexpected attack is more often fatal than mild.**

**Early evening a chair with a view over the bow of the ship during sunset.
No waves, no sound, any better it could not get.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-16-2013

REMEMBERING THE TITANIC

The sun comes out...
From behind a cloud.

One of the many that glide by,
High up in the sky.

And we hope not to burn,
Sitting on *Queen Mary 2* stern.

The horizon remains as straight as can be,
Without a ripple in this sea.

And as far as I can see out there...
There is no sign of life at sea or in the air.

We memorized the people that perished 101 years ago on the *Titanic*,
But we were assured today there is no need for panic.

As a shipwreck we do not need to expect,
Because on board is this ships architect.

Who this morning gave a rendition,
That this vessel will withstand any weather condition.

He told about the *Q.E. 2*, that burned in Hong Kong harbor in 1972,
And I remember Gerard and I in the same year had a close up view.

But on this majestic ship I wont worry...I can't,
Even if it takes four more days before again we see land.

Right now for me...
I cannot think of a place I would rather be.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-17-2013

RELAXED

**Again the horizon is as straight as can be,
And again no other ship is visible in this sea.**

**Minimal noise is heard,
It feels as if we have left the earth.**

**Today a King Neptune party on deck when we crossed the equator,
And a Neptune Gala Ball when it was later.**

**And as part of our daily routine,
Again walking the deck we were seen.**

**Because the only enemies...
Are the extra calories.**

**It is also groovy...
To watch the daily movie.**

**The evening shows are full of zest,
As all performers do their best.**

**Dress is formal most nights,
And outside the only thing visible are the ships lights.**

**Life could not be finer,
Than on this ocean liner.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-18-2013

WILMA IS IN THE HOSPITAL!

**It amazes me...
That this is the fourth continuous day at sea.**

**And without any notion,
That I am sailing the Atlantic Ocean.**

**We saw the first ship pass,
In this enormous water mass.**

**It was good to see...
We're not alone in this sea.**

**In an e-mail I saw...
A notification about the illness of Wilma, my sister in law.**

**I called my brother in law and hoped to hear,
That Wilma's death was not near.**

**It is critical at best,
And he will keep me abreast.**

**Their future had been looking bright,
But it all changed again overnight.**

**I think about her at length,
While wishing them strength.**

**And hope she can endure,
'til they find a cure.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-19-2013

NEWS ABOUT BOSTON BOMBER

**Another day of rest,
At its best.**

**Time to do as we please...
And enjoy this lifestyle with ease.**

**Then the Boston bombing news release,
Shatters our peace.**

**One wonders what goes on in a mind,
Before one performs an act of this kind.**

**My thought is with all the victims pain,
And wonder what the bomber tried to gain.**

**For dinner all the ladies again wore a beautiful gown,
And we all enjoyed the show by the talented Mr. Brown,**

**The rest of the evening we spent,
Watching the *Dancing with the Stars* competition event.**

**It was a chance,
For single old ladies to dance.**

**And across the dance floor to be guided,
By dance hosts that are provided.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-20-2023

MORE LECTURES

**Another perfect day, A little windy but no rain,
We attended a lecture about Vigo in Spain.**

**Then a lecture about Margaret Thatcher's existence,
And her dealings with labor parties resistance.**

**A lecture about elephants given by a ranger,
Who is dedicated to keeping them from harm and danger.**

**This ship is not only about recreation,
But provides a lot of education.**

**Quality lectures are given on board,
In subjects of any sort.**

**Two table companions were sick and not able,
To join us at the dinner table.**

**A variety show or a Detroit detective movie was this evening's choice,
We choose the latter but it was a bloody mess with a lot of noise.**

**We walked not to far...
And finished the day after a drink in the champagne bar.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-21-2013

LAS PALMAS

We were anxious to see...
How straight we would walk after being seven days at sea.

But it was...
Very easy setting foot on Las Palmas.

The capital and third largest of the *Canary Islands* belonging to Spain,
A tourist attraction for all of Europe because of little rain.

The ship brought nearly 4,000 people into this city to shop...
But since it was Sunday that turned out to be a flop.

All the shop doors were locked
Because the locals had flocked

To spend the day at the beach
And for visitors remain out of reach.

Their unemployment is 32%,
But they do not appear eager to earn an extra cent.

Maybe their share,
From the European Union is more than fair.

But some immigrant vendors in the church squares,
We're eager to sell their wares.

The landscape is beautiful , the weather terrific.
The *Bandana Crater* a "must see" to be specific.

The villages of *Arucas*, *Teror* and *Brigida* are absolute treasures,
By any measures.

We had a chance,
To have lunch at a local banana ranch.

Soon after the evening show,
We ended the evening, as tomorrow we again will be on the go.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-22-2012

MADEIRA

When I see something beautiful, that I have not seen before...
It stirs my core.

Not from any bay,
Have I seen an island as today.

Madeira, a Portuguese island with its scenic splendors,
Shows many natural wonders.

It seems a place that could only appear in a dream,
The prettiest island of all the ones so far...I have seen.

The capital city of Funchal
Seems to have it all.

But mostly flowers, pleasing architecture, and more flowers,
Drawing thousands of tourist with its magical powers.

The village of *Camacho*, was our first stop,
And we visited a wicker workshop.

Our Lady of Monte in a village with the same name,
Was the source of many miracles and has gained much fame.

A walk on *Pico do Arieiro* the highest point at 5,937 feet here,
Along the edge was not without fear.

A lunch at *Casa do Abrigo* of their specialty espetada food,
Combined with the local Madeira wine put everyone in a good mood.

The toboggan ride in a wicker sledge back to Funchal down the hill,
Was a screaming thrill.

It was a two-mile ten minute blast,
That came down very fast.

We finished the tour at *Old Blandy's Wine Lodge* to drink and taste,
The Madeira wine without haste.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-23-2023

LIFE ON BOARD THE QUEEN MARY 2

The weather is cooler, the ocean sways,
But we hear it won't last longer than today.

In the morning, in full glory,
We listened to the Titanic story.

One wonders why they do this on a cruise,
Since potential customers they could lose,

If Cunard wants their cruisers to come back,
They better not talk to much about a possible shipwreck.

A lecture about Tony Blair,
Who was England's prime minister with flair.

Historians will be eager to tell,
If he did his job well.

Then we went to see...
My first movie in 3D.

But *Cirque du Soleil* on screen ,
Did not compare to the real show I have seen.

The Britannia, England's royal yacht interior was shared,
And we were told how the staff cared,

For the Queen and her guest,
While she thought on this ship her privacy was the best.

The formal night with lobster and steak,
Ended with baked Alaska made from ice cream and cake.

Tonight was the ships singers and dancers last show,
On Friday after 6 years...their own way, they will go.

Tomorrow we will gain
More knowledge about Spain.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-24-2013

VIGO

Awoke in Vigo, Spain in a peaceful bay,
With the sun rising from behind mountains, far away.

It is as if the city is still asleep,
Because we do not hear a beep.

I feel privileged to see different sights,
Reachable by ship or on flights.

Cruising is the most comfortable way,
To see a country, city or bay.

We drove 70 miles to see *Santiago de Compostela Cathedral*,
In a town that looks older then medieval.

We observed a holy mass held by more then 10 priest,
But we did not know the occasion or feast.

A nun sang in a lovely voice,
And encouraged the congregation to rejoice.

Along with Rome and Jerusalem Santiago was conferred by the pope,
As being a holy city where pilgrims come to regain hope.

Entombed here since the 9th Century are the remains
Of the apostle St James.

An old monastery, now *Parodor Hostal de Los Reyes Catholicos*, was a worthwhile visit,
To have coffee and local cake while experiencing old fashioned catholic spirit.

We watched on deck as we sailed away
From this very pretty bay.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-25-2013

NEWS FROM ENGLAND

The first day I can log,
That we have heavy fog.

The foghorns blasted often and long,
And sounded like a repetitious song.

The highlight of today,
Was to hear David McArthur play,

During his piano concert,
Which we had not yet heard.

We enjoyed the classical sounds very much,
As he massaged the keys with a soft touch.

Then another session about conflicts
In England's politics.

A lesson in their history
About their escalating misery.

Because their politicians
Endorsed the wrong economic conditions.

I am getting bored,
With English dooms day stories on board.

Tomorrow new speakers will come on board
Hopefully with stories of a different sort.

The evening ended late,
Dinner and show again were great.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-25-2013

MIDRIFF BULGE

**My midriff bulge I had hoped would stay away
But all at once I noticed it today.**

**I was never slim
But for my size felt fit and trim.**

**Everything was always uplifted
But now my fat cells seem to have shifted.**

**A dilemma many endure
And for which there is no real cure.**

**Everyone is amazed
Seeing fat cells settle around their waist.**

**No longer necessary to exercise in vain
Because even if you do not gain**

**Your fat cells stick together
In the middle forever.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-26-2023

REMEMBERING THIS DAY 22 YEARS AGO

21 years ago today...
My dear Gerard /John passed away.

At the time I did not believe...
I would ever overcome the grief.

But I experienced how one can heal,
And again can deal .

Gerard/John was always, and remains, a loving part
of my life and heart.

The world cruise ends today,
Here in Southampton's Bay.

The activity of passengers leaving and coming seemed frantic,
To get ready for the westbound transatlantic.

We had planned to get out of the way...
And took a trip to prehistoric *Stonehenge* today.

Someone is looking after us...
As again the sun was shining when we got off the bus.

How *Stonehenge* was created remains a mystery,
In the 4,000 year history.

When back on board there was a short heavy rain,
The sail away party was inside with champagne.

A table by the window again for the early seating dinner,
With all this wonderful food it is tempting to be a sinner,

But seeing passengers with many more than one bulge,
Reminded me, not to indulge.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-27-2013

TRANSATLANTIC CROSSING

**First full day at sea...of the Transatlantic crossing,
Where we probably will experience more up and down tossing.**

**But so far, clear sky and a smooth sea,
As far as we can see.**

**It is a bit different with a new group of cruisers,
This crowd is younger but some look like boozers.**

**Was not ready yet,
We selected a fresh salad that was as good as it can get.**

**Afterwards we watched the *Infiniti Express* show in the planetarium,
The chairs reclined and we were lying down as in a solarium.**

**It felt as if we traveled up high,
To view everything that exists in the sky.**

**Then attended a concert by guitarist Sam Piha,
Playing classical tunes from Europe and America.**

**Afternoon tea was busy, with this new crowd,
Difficult to hear the harpist, because everyone talked too loud.**

**Dinner again was tasty and fine,
Even though I am drinking water instead of wine.**

**John Joseph's comedy and music show,
Focused on ridiculing the people in the first row.**

**Then with a drink and talk about the past,
The evening was over fast.**

Marie Jose Temmink

04-29-2013

APPROACHING THE LAST DAY OF THIS TRIP

People say the Atlantic is always rough,
And crossing it, is only for the tough.

But I am here to tell...
'Til now I have not felt a swell.

These last few days the sea,
Has been as smooth, as a sea can be.

The speakers today were not the best,
And their programs, for right now, do not have my interest.

To hear about Hillary Clinton's political ambitions,
Or Ben Laden's explicit capture renditions,

Does not strike my fancy,
But makes me antsy.

There were many reasons,
To enjoy the presentation about *Central Park* shown in all seasons.

It was like a reality walk,
While hearing the presenter talk.

Three more days and I will be home,
And it will be strange to again be alone.

Marie Jose Temmink

04-30-2013

THANK YOU FELLOW CRUISERS

Today we experienced something new,
Aboard the *Queen Mary 2*.

Seasoned, world cruisers, Bud and Sally,
Invited us to lunch in a restaurant that has its own galley.

The food in the *Todd English Restaurant*, on this majestic liner,
Could not have been finer.

It was a delicious fare,
That was prepared and served with care.

This afternoon was much to our liking,
But...what was most striking...

Was the fact, that this lovely pair,
Invited us to experience this special food fare,

To present us with a dining room picture...
Showing an international compatible mixture

Of table mates at sea,
Harold, Joy, Bud, Sally, Margaret and me.

Sally and Bud, Margaret and I welcome you as a guest
Whenever you consider traveling west.

Marie- Jose Temmink

05-01-2013

SMOOTH SAILING

**We seem to just float in the Atlantic Ocean,
Without feeling any motion.**

**The fog is thick with zero visibility,
The horn blows to prevent a disability.**

**It seems we are alone at sea,
Not even water we can see.**

**But I hear this soft rolling melody,
That is calming and soothing to me.**

**And I feel in my heart,
Living on board, would not be too hard.**

**Cruising around the world in slow motion,
Would give me time to document my experiences and emotion.**

**While not having the responsibility of keeping up a home,
feeling bored or being alone!**

**What limits me so far,
Is the internet not being up to par.**

**Today a documentary about the British composer Benjamin Britten,
About how 80 years ago he was smitten.**

**His relationship with another man had been exclusive,
Until his move to America changed his life and music.**

**Then Jane Corbin, International TV, reported the status in the Middle East...
And the Arab Spring being a very dangerous beast.**

**It seems that for a long while,
That area will remain volatile.**

**Reading, writing, lunch, and walking the deck in the afternoon,
But because it was 44 degrees, we came in soon.**

**The afternoon session by Theodore Scull,
About ocean liners was very dull.**

**We dressed or the last formal,
Before soon again returning to normal.**

**Champagne in a friends stateroom was chic,
The dinner delicious, and the dancing show at the end of the day, very unique.**

Marie Jose Temmink

05-02-2013

TRAVEL COMPANION

We had a kick...
Planning this trip very quick.

We wanted to travel but not alone,
And made the arrangements one morning by phone.

Soon my friend would be out of reach,
Because she was leaving for Africa to teach.

We decided for sure,
Our best deal was to take a *Grand Circle Tour*.

And trying to be frugal and wise,
We would share a room to lower the price.

We each were living alone,
And knew that it could compromise our comfort zone,

But it would also INCREASE our comfort zone,
As we would NOT travel alone.

We met in Johannesburg on that first day,
And by bus went a long way.

We traveled thru South Africa and Swaziland, flying part of the way,
Had good weather, but it was very foggy one day.

An extra night in Durban we had to spend,
But that gave us a chance to have dinner with Clair, Margaret's friend.

We got to Port Elizabeth a day late,
Where with Clayton, another of Margaret's local friends, we then ate.

After we arrived in Knysna by bus,
My friends Cees and Aty we're waiting for us.

They showed us lots,
Of their favorite spots.

In Cape Town our three week land tour came to an end,
The next three weeks on a cruise ship we will spend.

Here one last evening we spend,
Having dinner to meet Abbey, my nephews new girlfriend.

The multiple experiences till now kept us content,
we got along well without any argument.

The cabin on the ship was smaller then the room in a any hotel,
But also there we managed very well.

This vacation has been non taxing,
But educational and relaxing.

We maintained our comfort zone,
Without ever feeling or being alone.

These 6 weeks traveling in good weather and sun,
Have indeed been exiting and fun .

To share a room, for an if or when, future travel date,
I would not hesitate.

Marie Jose Temmink

05-02-2013

BENEFITS OF TRAVEL

**Time to pack,
As tomorrow we fly back.**

**Margaret to Toronto in Canada,
I to Los Angeles in California.**

**Six weeks have past,
They went by too fast.**

**We gained a wealth of information,
In more than one situation.**

**We visited many countries and places,
And saw many different faces.**

**Traveling is food for one's mind,
And helps one to unwind.**

**Frivolous things are soon removed from the brain,
As new and exiting experiences we gain.**

**It is not always easy to see the struggles,
Of others.**

**But it makes one realize,
That we cannot always improve someone's demise.**

**But through tourism we can share,
Our dollars everywhere.**

**And for the ones that must remain home,
I share my experiences in the form of a poem.**

Marie Jose Temmink

05-03-2013

ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK

The alarm went off at 4 a.m.,
To see land again.

It was dark and bitter cold,
But soon we would see New York we were told.

The sun came up, it was very clear,
The lights of the city came near.

It was thrilling to see,
The Statue of Liberty.

A magnificent sight,
In the early morning light,

The new tower on *Ground Zero*,
Stood tall and erect as a hero.

The air was still, and all around,
There was no sound.

I tried to imagine what the immigrants had felt,
Who arrived here to find freedom and wealth.

Long before...
John and I arrived here as immigrants in 1964.

The opportunities we had, we took.
They are explained in my day to day book.

This country has been good to me and my family,
And I live here very happily.

Time for breakfast, disembarkation and saying goodbye,
Then in different directions we will fly.

I was able to book an earlier flight
To get home while it is still light.

Marie Jose Temmink

05-03-2013

FLYING HOME

Today I will arrive home,
And this for now is my last travel poem.

On the cruise I have had a lot of time,
To rhyme.

Even though I write a poem in a wink,
I do need time to think...

About the subject matter,
Before I start to chatter.

Cruising provides serenity,
And always inspires me.

Again I have found peace
And again I feel at ease.

I feel I am in good physical condition,
And my breast cancer, it seems, is in remission.

I look forward to the next trip
On a river cruise aboard a much smaller ship.

Cruising down the Volga,
In Russia.

Soon I will be back at L.A.X. and I will be happy to see...
Daphne, in the distance who will be looking for me!

Marie Jose Temmink

06-09-2013

LEAVING FOR RUSSIA

**The alarm went off at 4:30 in the morning,
And I knew this day was not going to be boring.**

**Daphne arrived to take me to LA,
And there was no traffic all the way.**

**But we had not expected...
That the United Terminal would be severely congested.**

**When we checked in...my name...
Was not listed to fly on this plane!**

**It was not surprising...
That my stress level was rising.**

**A lot of time evolved,
But the problem did get resolved!**

**My sister in law was as red as a flame,
Because she stood there experiencing the same.**

**We said goodbye to Eric her son and Daphne my daughter,
Who had kept us calm during this bother!**

**At the gate we wrote and read in a somewhat comfortable seat.
And then wished I had the cheese roll to eat.**

**For lack of space I had left it in Daphne's car,
But Ans had packed us a granola bar!**

**Four and a half hours to Chicago O'Hare,
And after a four-hour wait...to Dusseldorf from there.**

**We walked and walked the busy terminal and...ate,
Before we walked to the gate.**

**The plane left late p.m.
And after the long flight, the time in California will be Monday a.m.!**

Marie Jose Temmink

06-10-2013

FLIGHT FROM DUSSELDORF TO KIEV

**We landed local time at 9 a.m.,
To change planes was a hassle again!**

**Also here...
Instructions were not clear.**

**At boarding we endured another blow!
The required "blue stamp"...we could not show!**

**Only the Custom Officers upstairs...
Could resolve our state of affairs.**

**And just in time...
The "official stamper" rescued us of this "crime."**

**Next we were cramped in a mini plane,
And after two-and-a-half hours crawled out in pain!**

**Because there was no room for my feet...
My luggage had to be under the front seat,**

**I was ready again to unravel.
Or do I get too old to travel?**

**Too many people everywhere,
To get comfortable from here to there.**

**We were transported by bus, standing room only, away from the plane,
To the Customs building in Kiev, Capital of the Ukraine.**

**Soon we felt no more grief,
Seeing our tour director was a relief.**

**We traveled by comfortable bus to the *President Hotel*,
And everything again was swell.**

**After a short rest,
We underwent an endurance test....**

**A city tour on foot for an hour...
Then ended the day with a Ukraine dinner and a long hot shower.**

Marie Jose Temmink

06-11-2013

KIEV DAY 1

After a fabulous breakfast with a nice view,
We felt again like new.

Then a group briefing, on the written material contents,
And a review of all upcoming events.

We started a city tour of Kiev, called the City of Golden Domes,
It looks as if they have more Orthodox churches than single homes.

Most people seem to live and be content and at ease,
In high rise apartments surrounded by trees.

We toured *St. Sophia Cathedral* built in 1037 by Prince Yaraslav de Wise,
And the ancient building is very pleasing to one's eyes.

It is a humble feeling to stand here, admiring this well preserved beauty,
And for tourists visiting Kiev, it should be a duty!

A walking tour ended with experiencing delicious local food and drink,
That kept us on this hot day in a good mood.

But upon return that euphoria was gone fast,
Because my I-Pad backup...I found did not last!

My writings of this trip, I know, I had not banished...
They had just vanished!

In the evening by bus to a local restaurant for ethnic food, music and song,
Luckily did not last too long!

The food was not to write home about,
And the music and song a bit too loud.

On the way we experienced the reason why this city is so green,
It rained harder than seldom I have seen.

Back at the hotel, I started to recreate my lost essay's
Of the last few days.

But soon I was too tired to write!
I went to bed at almost midnight!

Marie Jose Temmink

06-12-2013

KIEV DAY 2

I tried everything but flunked,
To retrieve the poems on my I-Pad that appears defunct.

And my computer skills are such...
That it does not seem to help very much.

I can understand why people curse,
When things get worse!

The poems of the first two days are lost...
And not retrievable at any cost!

I remembered way back when,
It was easier using paper and pen.

But lately I have not used that mode very much,
Because with my I-Pad it is easier to stay in touch.

We started the day with a breakfast to please,
That put my nerves again at ease.

The experiences of today's excursions,
Triggered many conversations...with different versions.

A tour of Kiev *Percherska Lavra Monastery* built in 1037 above ground and in a cave,
Where the remains of two monks that founded and built it still lay in their grave.

The *Chernobyl Museum* depicted very well...
That an atomic catastrophe remains a living hell.

We stopped at the *Babi Yar* ravine
Where in September 1941..33,000 Jews had not foreseen....

06-12-2013

**That they entered the spot,
Where they all would be shot.**

**On the worst one day Holocaust event of the entire war,
An atrocity, we can never forget...or ignore....**

**With help of the locals, this crime was committed by the Nazi's we are told,
Who murdered these men, women and children, young and old.**

**It was chilling...
To think about how evil leaders justify such killing!**

**And recognize that such an unimaginable hour,
Could be repeated again by the wrong humans in power.**

**In this country alone...more then 100,000 Jews died,
Because from their enemy they cold not hide!**

**The worry that the food today,
Could not be called gourmet...**

**And dinner that was not appetizing to consume,
In a restaurant with no running water in the bathroom...**

**Seemed foolish, when recognizing, what others in this town had to endure...
And it put our problems in perspective for sure!**

Marie Jose Temmink

06-13-2013

KIEV DAY 3

At breakfast we discussed the experiences of yesterday,
And about how Hitler had led everyone astray.

Memories of WWII that flooded my mind...
We're also less than kind.

I shared my memories of the German occupation,
And my village evacuation.

Not pleasant how these years were spent,
But lucky I am able to recall each event.

We attended a lecture about "Present Day Ukraine"
And heard about their corrupted government reign.

Also here, there is more than one sign...
Quality of life is on the decline.

We are told the middle class has eroded, which,
Has left 92% poor and only 8% rich.

The handwriting is on the wall,
There is no more money to pay for it all!

The few rich often flee,
From a country where the masses want everything for free.

Governments that take it all from a few,
Should have a clue

That it is only a matter of time,
Before seeing an increase in crime.

Idealism of equal distribution,
Has not proven to be the solution.

We enjoyed a tour of the enlightening *Cossacks Museum* in open air,
With Ukrainian culture and architecture everywhere.

The food at lunch was the best chow,
'til now.

We arrived back at the hotel
With more stories to tell.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-14-2013

START OF RIVER CRUISE

**I had time to write,
Because I did not sleep most of the night.**

**We took a 6 o'clock morning stroll,
Around the hotel that sits on a knoll.**

**From the bus the last glances of the golden domes in the sun,
Their sparkle in the morning light was comparable to none.**

**We flew from Kiev in the Ukraine
To Moscow in a Russian plane.**

**A short 1.5 hour flight by Aeroflot,
But a smooth landing it was not!**

**This country was once known by this name...
"The Bread Basket of Europe," because it grew the most golden grain.**

**But they do not meet the EU's qualifications to participate
And risk their name, fame, and income will dissipate.**

**It was my first and maybe my last visit here,
As I run out of time to visit other places far and near.**

**A better life for the people here I do not expect,
Because it does not seem to matter who they elect.**

**We arrived at the ship, *M/S Tiki Don* by the hour of four
And were welcomed with bread, dipped in salt, at the door.**

**A mini cabin...with very small beds,
This for two weeks, will be as good as it gets.**

**We unpacked and surprisingly found a space,
To stow everything we brought...in this tiny space.**

**A short rest on deck, then a ship safety briefing, followed by dinner.
Little change on this trip to become thinner!**

Marie Jose Temmink

06-15-2013

MOSCOW DAY 1

I cannot not say,
That their coffee I consider gourmet.

And everywhere I turn,
I see people looking serious and stern

And it was not wise to assume,
That there would be internet in the stateroom.

But my e-mails I could check,
In the library or on the sun deck.

But then I must not forget that now,
I am not home but in Moscow.

The *Red Square* gleamed in its glory
With a history of more than one horrible story.

In and out *St. Basil Cathedral* with its domes of gold,
Everything was tightly controlled.

The *Gum Department Store*
Had higher prices then I ever saw before.

The prices in this luxury zone
Are said to be comparable to the numbers on one's phone.

Changing of the guards at the unknown soldiers grave,
Can be observed every hour year 'round in a hot or cold wave.

Lenin's Tomb of marble in red and black,
We are told will be moved back

To St. Petersburg to be buried next to no other
But his Mother.

The people believe from all the noise of the festivities on this square,
He could wake up again to create another scare.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-16-2013

MOSCOW DAY 2

Rain was predicted for all day,
But luckily stayed away,

We had a scenic tour of Moscow,
And it is thrilling to be here now!

Cathedral of Christ Our Savior is only 25 years old,
But built of white marble and gold.

One wonders if the God to whom they pray,
Wanted his disciples to pay

This enormous amount on his behalf
When a decent home themselves they do not have .

A tour of the *Cemetery Novodevichy's* beautiful tombs
Of Yeltsin, Gorbachev, Mrs. Stalin and many others including unknown's.

Veterans of WWII shared their story,
But we sensed they embellished their story.

We never heard before
That the Russians ended this war.

We had an explanation
Of the state symbols of the Russian Federation...

Peter de Great recognized Russia needed a flag of its own,
After in 1699 he saw the one in Holland being flown.

The *Moscow Circus* was a treat,
Where in the lobby all kind of animals we got to greet.

With the acrobatics we were very impressed.
Of all the ones seen they were truly the best.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-17-2013

MOSCOW DAY 3

I would have never guessed,
That with the Kremlin I would be this impressed.

The most famous Icon in Russian history,
That created lasting memories of misery.

And today between showers,
We walk the seat of political and religious powers.

As a child hearing “The Kremlin” instilled fear
Because the meaning was not clear.

But I remember the people’s tone,
And I understood it to be a fearful zone.

But as I walk the Kremlin now
in Moscow

I wonder how decisions made here that were so awful
And to most of the world unlawful

Could have entered evil minds
On behalf of all mankind’s

In this surrounding of peace and beauty
And how leaders ignored their duty.

But instead accumulated this wealth,
At the cost of human life and health.

We ate lunch in the *Hard Rock Café*,
Which is a symbol of freedom for the locals they say.

But I believe the people are still not free
Because too many are trying to flee,

We enjoyed this evening the choir of Zlatoust
Of which performance they are entitled to boast.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-18-2013

MOSCOW DAY 4

Today we did the state *Tretyakov Gallery* tour,
That was once owned by an entrepreneur.

Only Russian painters' art is shown,
Not even others on loan

But many bygones
Of ancient art icons.

We sailed away with Russian music,
To the town of Uglich.

The scenery along the river,
Gave me a slight shiver.

The river here is not very wide,
In case of an emergency one can swim to the side.

It reminded me of the river Maas behind our Dutch home,
Where as I child I used to swim and roam.

We listened to the emergency drill via intercom.
And spent the afternoon on aol.com.

A Captain's welcome party before dinner,
And his dinner was a real winner.

The classical music concert in the *Presidents Bar*,
Was fit for a Tsar.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-19-2013

UGLICH

We entered the Volga river called Matushka or Little Mother,
But it is the greatest river in Europe, longer than any other.

The river banks have a European look,
With quaint villages out of a fairy book.

No evidence of devastation due to a siege, fire or war,
That this area was exposed to many times before.

We walked the town Uglich, established in the year 937,
And it appears the people think they already live in heaven.

Beautiful trees, country homes, and sunny weather,
It does not seem life could be better.

We attended a lecture about the workings of this ship,
And we're told about interesting places to see on this trip.

It was explained that from when we started at the top,
We will pass 16 locks for a total of a 468-foot drop.

We were introduced to local Russian art,
And shown amber jewelry that looks very smart.

The Russian language class was tough,
But for now we learned enough.

Nyet means, "no"
And when, "its ok" you say, "Nichiv'o."

And it was a different sight...
Going to bed at 11 pm in bright...daylight!

Marie Jose Temmink

06-20 2013

GORITSY

Internet was available and I was able to have a look,
At the family news on FaceBook.

We learned about the life of Russian people through the centuries,
And how they coped with all leaders they saw as enemies.

Each leader promised them the moon,
But after election forgot their promises very soon.

Since the beginning the people have been trying to cope,
While they had false hope.

They have lost hope and are almost sure,
No leader has...or ever will find a cure.

We arrived in the town of Goritsy,
That did not look very glitzy.

We walked the *Monastery on White Lake* that was built in 1397,
Where the last six monks live 'til they go to heaven.

In their museum they display icons and the local made Vologda lace.
And they tell you that you can leave here with a ten-year younger face.

But only if you do not think it to be a bother,
To bathe in the White Lake water.

Only 600 people live in this town or near,
And the parents of Ivan the Terrible often came to pray here.

And they believed...
Their prayers were answered when he was conceived.

But since that daypeople have sworn,
Life would have been better...had he not been born.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-21-2013

KIZHI

**Our daily walk on the promenade deck again...
While we wondered when**

**We would hear the first beep,
That the rest are no longer asleep.**

**But we were lucky for our sake,
That no one else was yet awake.**

**The rest of the morning I spend writing,
Because water was the only sighting.**

**I get my inspiration,
Anywhere in God's creation.**

**And I am thankful day after day,
That I can live my life this way.**

**Introduction to the town of Kizhi where later today we will be,
And an open air museum we get to see.**

**No internet...it is not just our imagination,
We are told we are just too far from civilization.**

**One wonders how people here survive,
All their life.**

**It must not be nice,
To be buried for 6 months in ice.**

**But then they do not know better,
As they have not traveled to experience year 'round good weather.**

**We visited the bridge and learned first hand,
About transportation in the water instead of on land.**

**I was interested
To learn how caviar was prepared after being harvested.**

**We learned about the instruments balalaika and Domra
Introduced in Russia by Mongols from Asia**

**The Russian way of life they say is improving,
Although many young people if they can are moving.**

**I bought a local black Shungit pyramid stone,
That has power to keep every thing living in a healthy zone! Marie Jose Temmink**

06-22-2023 -

PETROZAVODSCK

This night was called "White Night"
Because all night it was light.

We have arrived in Petrozavodsk in the republic of Karelia,
In the northwestern part of Russia.

I wondered how long it would take,
To see each river and lake.

They tell us there are 2,700 rivers and 6,000 lakes in Karelia republic to see,
But seeing them all would be too much for me!

On the city tour we viewed structures built during the era of the Soviet,
But the newer people's apartments are not up to par...yet.

To live here does not look like a feast,
It appears depressing to say the least.

Today they memorialized the Nazi invasion because it is the 22nd of June,
There have been many changes since, but it still looks like gloom.

And we observed the ceremony at the eternal flame,
where today the Governor and his delegation came,

To remember the heroes who died on this land,
They are together in this grave but listing their names they can't.

Much I did not know,
About a Karelian folk show.

But I was glad I went,
Because the evening could not have been better spent.

06-22-2013

**Never before had I even had a glance,
Of these foreign instruments and dance.**

**We were able to observe a traditional Russian wedding ceremony,
Which according to our guide includes a lot of baloney.**

**Couples think tying the knot in summer is wise,
Because winter is too cold with snow and ice.**

**The guide tells us all the guests get drunk on this day
And the groom also may.**

**After dinner an interactive Russian fairy tale show,
That showed us what we did not know...**

**That Russians like to laugh, have fun and believe in tales...
No matter how often their government fails.**

Marie Jose Temmink

06-23-2012

SVIR STROI

The cruise is coming to an end,
The last four days in St. Petersburg we will spend.

Today we did the last town Svir Stroi on foot,
Over dirt roads that were not too good.

The home visit was hosted to solicit sympathy,
But some people in America live with more misery.

Money on rent they do not have to spend,
Because the home they live in was given to them by the Government.

One can hear and see,
They are still used to getting things for free.

In their mind probably not enough,
But taking care of themselves they now realize is maybe more tough.

They talk about the effects of WWII,
But do not understand others suffered too.

Rain is predicted and we know why,
One can tell by looking at the sky.

But so far on this trip the weather
Could not have been better.

Captains farewell cocktails, and dinner,
Made everyone again a sinner.

The passengers talent show was a blast,
That created memories to last.

Another night that the sun did not set
Is an experience I will also not forget.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-24-2023

ST. PETERSBURG DAY 1

We experienced gridlock on the St. Petersburg roads,
We saw many big muddy trucks with oversized loads.

Cars have doubled in the last 10 years we are told,
But many cars on the road are over 20 years old.

We drove 15 miles outside the city and arrived late
At one of the ornate palaces of Peter the Great.

It was built for his wife Catherine the First, to have her own
"Little Country" palace when she was alone.

She had 11 children with Peter the Great,
Who traveled much and often came home late.

Elisabeth a daughter was the only one who did survive,
And she rebuilt the palace during her life.

Its grandiose facade stretches nearly 1,000 feet,
With more rooms than anyone would ever use or need.

She spent all the money on glitter and gold,
And the state coffers were empty when she was old.

Thirteen thousand dresses she left when she died,
an obscene lifestyle paid for by money on which others relied.

The palace was destroyed during WWII but the restoration goes on,
And one wonders if all this money is spent right or wrong.

Millions of locals call a dilapidated high rise their home,
Of which many buildings look like a danger zone.

In the evening we again sat in traffic for a long way
To see a Russian ballet.

But it was worth the inconvenience
To have this theater experience.

Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake" was a treat
While reclined in a comfortable seat.

Traffic on the way back was just as bad,
When we arrived late at the ship everyone was glad.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-25-2013

ST. PETERSBURG DAY 2

Tour of private *Yusopov Castle* where we felt chilled,
To see how they believe Rasputin was killed.

But there is no proof,
If the body was moved thru the cellar or via the roof.

Many people were involved
But the mystery remains unresolved.

People involved remained silent
Like in all other atrocities that were violent.

St Isaac's Cathedral with *Colom's of Lapis Lazuli*
Was breathtaking to see.

Lunch in a local crowded place,
That could barely accommodate us due to lack of space.

We visited the *Red October Gift Shop*,
Where on our visit in 2005 we also had made a stop.

Prices were not cheap,
But I bought a few trinkets to give and keep.

Traffic again was stop and go,
And more than one car was behind another in tow.

The bus driver made a U-turn in the middle of the stree.,
While we all hoped to again get out of this seat.

But it seemed the norm,
For every driver to move in free form.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-26- 2013

ST. PETERSBURG DAY 3

**St. Petersburg city tour in the morning by bus,
In the midst of a traffic rush.**

**The traffic is horrendous, many drive like fools,
No police around so everyone ignores the rules.**

**Then to *Petershof*, the summer residence of Russian royalty,
Founded by Tsar Peter the Great for his personal loyalty.**

**In his travels to France...Peter had seen
Versailles... and he built his own palace here by the sea in 1714.**

**One-hundred fifty fountains, many statues and sculptures and trees,
Maintained by gardeners with expertise.**

**St. Petersburg became the new capital of Russia 300 years ago,
But the power is back in Moscow we know.**

**A beautiful showcase of a city,
But its decay is a pity.**

**European and Russian styles,
Built like Venice on isles**

**But the wear and tear
From bad weather is visible everywhere.**

Marie Jose Temmink

06-27-20-3

ST. PETERSBURG DAY 4

The *Church of Peter and Paul* we toured,
While another busy morning we endured.

All the Tsars are buried here in this place,
In their own marble covered space.

Lunch was served in the *Palace of Nikolaevsky*,
Soup, salad, dessert and coffee or tea.

The *Hermitage* visit was my second time,
But the art condition was not as fine.

Rembrandt's 26 paintings are exposed to humidity and sun,
Eventually the damage cannot be undone.

Through an open window the sun was shining direct
On the paintings without provision to protect.

One of the most splendid museums in the world I hear,
But without proper care it will all disappear.

In their eagerness to collect every dime,
They let in too many visitors at one time.

There is no time to stand and reflect,
Because with the next group the halls are decked.

I just hope they focus on conservation,
To save some for the next generation.

Marie Jose Temmink

06-28 -2013

LEAVING RUSSIA

Still in a dreamer's zone,
I was awakened by the alarm on my phone.

The river cruise that started in Moscow
Has come to an end now.

We have sailed down the Volga river on the *Tiki Don*
And too fast these days have gone.

We crossed the *Ladoga and Onega Lakes* in perfect weather,
I had not expected this trip to be better.

In the morning we had time to say...
Goodbye...to the many people we had met on the way.

A three-hour flight to Frankfurt Germany,
With a week layover to visit our Dutch family.

Ukraine and Russia have been a revelation,
As I had no specific expectation.

The more I travel and see,
I know that in California I want to be.

When we touched land,
Nico was there as planned.

Marie Jose Temmink

07-05-2013

GOING HOME

**I was not able to sleep,
And was up before the alarm gave a beep.**

**It is hard to believe,
But the day has come that we must leave.**

**After the Ukraine, Russia and the Netherlands,
I am ready to wave farewell with both hands.**

**It has been nice to see the family thrive,
And observe they have a good life.**

**About the future here I am not so sure,
Unless the government comes up with a cure.**

**Too much money is drained from the coffers by the greedy,
Leaving no money to care for the needy.**

**It is becoming more evident,
The government is spending their last cent.**

**It worries the wise,
While the takers come up with more lies.**

**There are many disputes,
And in most families they have multiple feuds.**

**It appears to be fashion,
To pursue disputes with passion.**

**I am glad to return home,
And again be alone.**

**To clear my head,
Of what everyone said.**

07-05-2013

**Breakfast did not appeal,
I first want my indigestion to heal.**

**It is the result of the dinner last night,
As dessert did not settle right.**

**Anneke had wrapped very neat,
Buns with cheese to eat.**

**The autobahn to Frankfort was clear,
And Nico drove safe and without fear.**

**At a speed we are not used to in the USA,
but he was able to keep up all the way.**

**After check in, a long wait and long flight,
I will be glad to have Long Beach again in sight.**

Marie Jose Temmink

08-29-2013

CONCLUSION OF MY THIRD BOOK

**Writing in this fashion
Has become my passion.**

**I feel privileged to be on the go
And visit places I did not know.**

**My interpretation of what I see
I like to share with thee.**

**As long as my health will endure
You can read about my travels for sure.**

**My next trip is to Whistler, Canada
And early next year I cruise to South America.**

Marie Jose Temmink

About the author:

Marie Jose Temmink, aka Verschoor, was born in the Netherlands and came to the USA in 1964.



She is a retired public health nurse with a long history in nursing management and who was owner and CEO for seventeen years of Associated Home Health Nurses of America, in Long Beach, CA, a home health staffing agency, and its sub-divisions (Neighborhood Home Health Services, a licensed home health agency, and Neighborhood Senior Care, an in-home supportive services company).

She now spends her time traveling and writing poetry about multiple subjects as well as documenting her life experiences

Want to relax and enjoy travel experiences and not leave your recliner?
Marie Jose Temmink captures her travel experiences and observations with poetry at its best.



