



CETA
TOURS

READY, SET... GO!

New Travel Advisory System

In January 2018, the U.S. Department of State revised their travel advisory system to be more transparent and easier to understand. Instead of the old “Travel Advisory” or “Travel Warning”, the new system includes four levels of advisories that better highlight actions travelers should take when traveling to a specific country.



Level 1 “Exercise normal precautions”
Level 2 “Exercise increased caution”
Level 3 “Reconsider travel”
Level 4 “Do not travel”



In addition to assigning each country an advisory level, the specific information for that country on the State Department’s website details the reasons why the advisory level has been assigned. It advises travelers of known problems (i.e. ongoing volcanic activity has forced the Costa Rican government to close Poás National Park until further notice) and possible problems (i.e. increased pickpocketing noticed near certain train stations, etc.) that travelers should be aware of. Occasionally, a specific region of a country will be designated at a higher level due to specific issues endemic to that region.

CETA Tours has modified our *Contingency Plan* to reflect these changes. For destinations listed as a Level 1 or 2 advisory, CETA will operate tours as normal, with teachers, chaperones and students following the safety guidelines CETA Tours has outlined in our *Tour Leader/Chaperone Manual* and *Traveler’s Handbook*.

continued on next page

★ IN THIS ISSUE ★

Travel Advisory System

2018 Scholarship Winners

Updates

Spring Conferences

The Bucket List

The App Recap

Tour Planning

The Travel Book Nook

Social Media

2018 Photo Contest

CONGRATULATIONS!

Ashley Boyer – Burnsville, MN

Dylan Buddy – Willmar, MN

Taylor Knapp – Brook Park, MN

Victoria Krouse – New Prague, MN

Isaiah Terveen – Apple Valley, MN

2018 Scholarship Winners

CETA received applications from many qualified candidates for our \$500 scholarship program again this year. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to apply. It was certainly a challenge for our scholarship committee to select the final recipients. We are delighted to announce the winners of CETA's scholarship program for 2018.

Congratulations and happy travels to all!

State Dept., con't.

For destinations with a Level 3 designation, CETA Tours will monitor the situation/event that called for the increased alert level. Where appropriate and possible, itineraries and or activities may be modified or substituted for the safety and security of the group.

For destinations with a Level 4 designation, CETA Tours will cancel trips to that country and will make every attempt to recover and refund committed funds from suppliers.

We think that these advisory levels are an improvement over the former system of advisories and warnings, which were sometimes misunderstood and/or misreported. You can read more about the levels [here](#).

Update: Version 2.0 of www.cetatours.com

We are making progress with updates to our website, but it isn't going to launch as soon as we had hoped.

We are just starting the testing phase and are excited that travelers will be able to register online once it is ready. Those who enrolled with a paper application will be able to make payments online if they like.

We will send an announcement to teachers when the updated website launches, including details about how students who have already registered can pay online. Information about registering online will be provided for groups that register after the updated website is up and running.

Updated Contingency Plan

CETA Tours has updated our Contingency Plan to reflect the new U.S. Department of State's Travel Advisory System. Teachers traveling in 2018 may download the document labeled *Updated CETA Contingency Plan* from your tour's page on CETA's website.

SEE YOU THIS SPRING!

Please stop by our booth in the Exhibit Hall of the following conferences and say hello. While there, don't forget to sign up for our scholarship raffle, grab a CETA lanyard, and pick up some sample itineraries to help you plan for your next tour with CETA.

Central States Conference
Milwaukee, WI
March 8-10

OFLA Conference
Cleveland, OH
April 6 & 7



We're passionate about travel too! But we don't always get the chance to share our excitement for all things travel-related with our clients. In this column you can read about destinations that have been on our mind.

Festivals of Europe

When I was studying German in school, the "Landshuter Hochzeit" was highlighted in at least two textbooks. As a translation of its name implies, it's a recreation of a medieval wedding festival held every 4 years in the Bavarian town of Landshut. The pictures of knights and damsels, jousting and a grand parade stuck in my mind long before I knew what a bucket list was.

Over the years, I have been able to experience other German festivals: Oktoberfest in Munich, Narrensprung in Ravensburg, Passion Play in Oberammergau and Karneval in Köln (Cologne), just to name a few. Each time, I have to pinch myself, realizing that I am witnessing (and sometimes participating in) traditions that have been around for hundreds of years.

While my list includes large, well-known festivals such as Las Fallas in Valencia and the Landshuter Hochzeit in Germany, I know that often the best festivals are those that you just happen to stumble upon: towns honoring their patron saint's feast day, villages celebrating the recent harvest, or the annual cattle drive from their winter barns to their summer home on meadows in the Alps.

- Ellie Verdon

- Jean Denesen

The App Recap

fun travel apps to try on your mobile device

Waze (iOS and Android - free)

On a recent trip to Costa Rica, I found that most drivers were using the app Waze to navigate. It's a nice alternative to Google Maps in areas where Google hasn't mapped out roads very well yet, like rural Costa Rica. The app is community based, so drivers share real-time traffic and road data, including pictures of current conditions. That way, you can find the quickest and clearest routes on roads that otherwise might be difficult to navigate. As a bonus, the app shows you the cheapest gas station along your route.

2019 & Beyond Tour Planning

Looking for make changes to your “tried and true” itinerary? Never traveled before and need an itinerary that has been popular with students and teachers? Visit our [website](#) for inspiration!

Like what you see or have your own ideas? Contact **Kristen** for your customized and complimentary tour proposal, based on what **you** would like to offer your students:

- Airfare out of your departure city
- Domestic airport transfers
- Chaperone to student ratio based on your needs or district requirements
- Funds for spontaneous activities (i.e slush fund)
- Family stay arrangements (your contact or CETA’s)
- Group travel insurance
- Tour leader & bus driver gratuities

Socialize with CETA!



All 2018 Photo Contest entries will be posted here.
Don't forget to vote for the Social Media Star!
www.facebook.com/cetatours

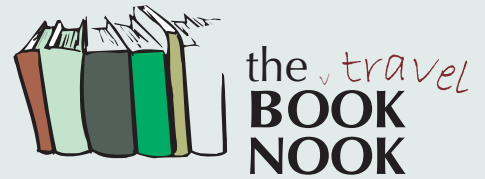


If your tour has an Instagram feed, let us know - we'd love to follow along!
Follow us: [@cetatours](#)



If your tour has a Twitter account, we'd love to follow you and your students' observations and experiences.
Follow us: [@ceta_tours](#)

#CETATours



book recommendations for the armchair traveler

The Cuba Diaries

-by Isadora Tattlin

My interest in Cuba has been piqued since December when Ellie and I traveled there on a FAM trip, so I was excited to come across The Cuba Diaries. It is what its title suggests, a diary the author kept during the 4 years she and her family spent in Cuba during the periodo especial – the short period in Cuban History in the early '90s when Cuba lost aid from the Soviet Union and Cubans were asked to endure shortages and inconveniences for the sake of the survival of the socialist revolution.

The book is an up-close look at the sacrifices and suffering Cubans endured during this difficult period in their history. It also paints a picture of the beautiful scenery, architecture and culture of the country. The introduction provides a good background of that time period, a glossary of the Spanish terms used throughout the book, and a list of all the characters and their roles for reference. If you're looking to learn more about Cuban history in an easy and interesting read, this is a great way to do so.

- Kristen Billingsely

2018 Photo Contest Announced

CETA is sponsoring a photo contest again this year. Please pass this information on to your students and encourage them to enter. All those traveling with CETA in 2018 are invited to submit their photos. Teachers are eligible too! One winner in each of the following three categories will be awarded a \$100 Amazon gift card. Two honorable mentions in each category will receive \$50 Amazon gift cards.

Contest entrants must include their name, school name and category when submitting photos. Entries must be submitted in jpeg format (.jpg) to photos@cetatours.com by August 1, 2018 for consideration. You may submit up to ten (10) entries. E-mail reminders will be sent a week or so prior to your group's departure and a few weeks prior to the contest deadline.

Highlights of the contest entries will be featured on CETA's Facebook page, as well as used in brochures and other promotional materials. Winners will be notified in mid-August and announced on our Facebook page.



view 2017
entries

(even if you don't
have facebook)



• 1 •

"WE WERE HERE"

Photos that capture you, your friends or your entire group at an area of interest, landmark or other cool place on tour.



• 2 •

CULTURAL EXPERIENCES

Photos that showcase cultural experiences encountered on tour. Food, markets, art, interesting locals or anything you see on tour that probably would not be found in the US applies.



• 3 •

LANDSCAPE OR CITYSCAPE

This category is just as it says – scenic photos of landscapes in the city or country.



SOCIAL MEDIA STAR

The photo in each category with the most likes on Facebook as of August 15, 2018 will win a \$50 Amazon gift card.