

## North Sky Press

phone: (780) 932-6385 email: [orders@asavvyguide.com](mailto:orders@asavvyguide.com)

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April 15, 2007

Dear Sir or Madame,

I am pleased to enclose information about an exciting new book release. This spring North Sky Press is publishing *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide*, a travel guide targeting the thousands of young North American women who adventure overseas each summer. Priced at \$24.95, *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* will be available from April 15, 2007 in trade paperback format. Written in a fresh, accessible style, this 254-page book's informative and timely approach to European travel will definitely be of interest to your audience.

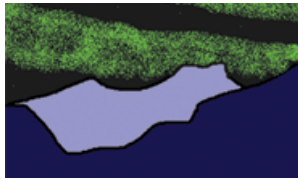
*Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* was written by Alberta authors Melanie and Wendy Gall. Melanie is a professional classical musician who has traveled the world to both to perform and explore. Melanie has over 11 years of experience with budget European travel, and has become an expert in her field. Wendy is a 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary with the Canadian Foreign Service and has lived overseas for 5 years. In this book, Melanie and Wendy share their unique perspective to travel. They offer specific advice for both Canadian and American travelers, and detailed, easy-to-follow strategies relating to trip preparation and touring Europe.

Melanie and Wendy Gall are currently available for interviews, and can be contacted through our office, or directly at [europa@melaniegall.com](mailto:europa@melaniegall.com). Review copies of *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* are now available upon request. If you have any questions about the enclosed information, wish to receive a review copy or would like to set up an interview, please contact us at (780)932-6385 or email your request to [media@asavvyguide.com](mailto:media@asavvyguide.com). I also invite you to visit the book's website, at [www.asavvyguide.com](http://www.asavvyguide.com).

Thank you in advance for your interest.

Sincerely,

Karen Young, North Sky Press



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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Edmonton, Alberta, April 15, 2007 – North Sky Press is excited to announce the release of *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* by local authors Melanie and Wendy Gall. This fresh, funny 254-page book is a mix of traditional travel guide and travel literature. *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* helps the reader to plan and implement a safe and fabulous European adventure.

With frequent flights and affordable airlines, Thousands of young women travel to Europe every year. Although most of these trips are not utter disasters, most of these young women gain their travel skills through trial-and-error. Almost every traveler has horror stories about their forays overseas. With *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide*, a trip to Europe can be wonderful and memorable, not stressful and scary.

Each Chapter of *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* focuses on a different aspect of overseas travel. Topics covered include:

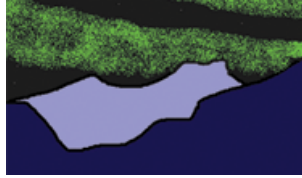
- Buying an airline ticket
- Packing
- Finding lodgings
- Bargaining
- Surviving overseas peril.

*Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* is illustrated with 40 humorous sketches. It includes a detailed packing list as well as a script for market bartering. *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* is written in an accessible, “chick-lit” style, and can be enjoyed by both aspiring world adventurers and armchair travelers.

Melanie Gall is a professional classical singer who travels the world for her career. She has conducted numerous television, radio and newspaper interviews in North America, Europe, the Middle East, Africa and the West Indies. Wendy Gall is a 1<sup>st</sup> Secretary with the Canadian Diplomatic Service, and is currently posted in Pretoria, South Africa. For more information or to schedule an interview, please call North Sky Press or contact Melanie or Wendy directly at [authors@asavvyguide.com](mailto:authors@asavvyguide.com).

Review copies are available to the media upon request. For more information about *Europe: A Savvy Girl's Guide* visit the official web site at [www.asavvyguide.com](http://www.asavvyguide.com).

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### **Author Q&A - Melanie Gall**

#### **So, by day you are a classical singer. What made you choose this unconventional career path?**

I have always wanted to be a singer. I mean, who wouldn't? As a musician I have the noble task of keeping alive the historic traditions of a grand musical art form, to communicate emotions and stories to an attentive audience. *And* I get to wear ball gowns. And sparkly tiaras.

#### **How long did it take you to write this book?**

Only three weeks to write the initial draft, but ten really long months to research and revise. I had not originally planned to spend all last spring (and a good chunk of the summer, fall and winter) writing a book, but when my best friend flew off to Paris last May my social life was severely curtailed. I was *\*not\** used to being the one left behind, and after two weeks of moping I decided to do something constructive with my thwarted *wanderlust* and began to write.

#### **What made you write a travel guide?**

Again, blame my Paris-bound friend. The day that she reserved her ticket she practically bought out the travel section at the local bookstore. She found a book about local food and one with maps and photographs of monuments. A book rating hotels and one discussing the nightlife. Travel literature and tourbooks. However, there was not one book with specific instructions about how to make a budget or what to pack, and the books only gave specific details for the American traveler. I realized that a new kind of guide was needed, a detailed planning guide that would be directly helpful for a Canadian or an American adventurer.

#### **Why a guide specifically for women?**

Well, guys are allowed to read it! But, as equal as North American society is nowadays, there are still many travel concerns specific to women. Safety at night, how to repel amorous locals, how to stuff dozens of bags of shopping into one little suitcase. And remember, when a girl travels, she will not be in North America. In many countries a woman traveling alone or without a man is still considered unusual, and one does not want to stand out too much or inadvertently land in a dangerous situation.

### **What countries or cities would you recommend for a novice traveller?**

London, England because everyone speaks English and pub food is sinfully delicious.  
Rome, Italy because the sights are amazing and practically every street has a *gelateria*.  
Paris, France for the presumptuous lingerie stores and the Louvre. And Budapest, Hungary, for the art-deco bathhouses and the markets.

### **How do you manage to have so many misadventures? What is the scariest situation you have ever experienced?**

I don't know! Strange things just seem to happen when I am around. Usually I simply get out of bed and set out for an uneventful day of sightseeing. Adventures find me. The scariest situation? Probably when my sister Wendy and I were snorkeling far from shore and a lightning storm blew in. Directly above us were sheets of electricity, the waters were teeming with angry purple jellyfish, and the shallow sea floor was carpeted with spiky sea urchins. I was *certain* we would drown, get electrocuted or be stung, and would never see our warm beds again.

### **Are all of the crazy stories true?**

Every one of them is true. I could *not* make this stuff up.

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## **Author Q&A - Wendy Gall**

### **Currently you are an Expat, based in Pretoria. What is it like being a Canadian actually living overseas?**

I am torn between my two life realities. I have my life back in Canada and I have my life wherever else I am living (currently in South Africa). The people in each location are so different, and so are my priorities, my routine, my work and my hobbies. Even my personality changes when I am overseas! I feel like I belong and, at the same time, I feel like an outsider - no matter where I am. When I am in South Africa, I talk about going 'home' to Edmonton. When I am in Canada, I talk about my 'home' in South Africa. I have yet to decide if this means have two homes or if it means that I have none!

### **What is the strangest thing that has happened to you in your travels?**

Perhaps it was during the Independence Day celebrations in Dominica when I punched some guy for grabbing my sister's butt. Maybe not the smartest thing to do, but he was too drunk to notice. Or maybe it was when I got up on stage in front of 10,000 people during a foreign concert to show off my (not-so-great) dancing abilities. I WAS amused when I was on an all-day wilderness hike and I drank too much water - I had to keep sneaking away from the guide to pee in the forest, and he kept trying to wait for me

because he thought I was just falling behind. I have had so many out-of-the-ordinary experiences from my travels! Perhaps that is why travel is so appealing.

**The sections of the book that you penned included a Guide to Bargaining.  
What are the most important things to remember when looking for a deal?**

Before you decide what to buy, ask taxi drivers, other travellers or the hotel staff which items are considered to be the local specialty. If you are in a city known for fine metal work, then it is not time to start looking for that basket you've always wanted. Also ask where you should go to get a good deal. And, without exception, the hotel gift shop is *never* your best bet.

When you are browsing in a market or a gift shop and you find something you like, ask yourself if the item will fit in your home. Do you already own too many five-inch statuettes? Do you have enough floor space for a five-foot statue of the Eiffel tower? Will a leopard print bedspread *really* fit with your pastel decor? If you saw the same item for the same price being sold in Canada, would you feel like you were getting a good deal? If you wouldn't pay that price of buy that item in Canada, then don't purchase it when overseas.



*MELANIE GALL is a professional singer who has travelled the world to perform concerts and recitals. Melanie received her B.A. from the University of Alberta and went on to complete two Artist Diploma programs in voice (University of Western Ontario, Glenn Gould Professional School) and an M.Mus at Brooklyn College in New York. Melanie has been to over 20 countries including Israel, Hungary, Poland, Italy, France, Belgium and Mozambique. Melanie's favourite European treasures include a felt Gandalf-style hat from Germany, a chocolate penguin from Switzerland that is probably no longer edible, and her Hungarian Art Deco Powder Set. Melanie assures the reader that she has learned from all of her unfortunate travel experiences and that she will never lose her passport or almost miss an airplane again. Hopefully.*



*WENDY GALL has made a career out of her wanderlust. She completed an honours B.A. at the University of Alberta and then bid Canada adieu, moving overseas to work for the federal government. Wendy has lived in India, Trinidad and South Africa, and has travelled to over 15 countries including The Netherlands, Israel, Grenada, Barbados, Dominica, Zimbabwe, Zambia, Malawi, Swaziland and England. Aside from her keen fashion sense and professional impartiality, Wendy is known as an extremely talented bargainer and has amassed a houseful of treasures. Her greatest finds include a set of steel pan drums from Trinidad, an original oil portrait from India and a feisty little South African dog named Kefira.*