

## RUSS VARA

Russ is co-owner and Vice-President of Maestro Travel. He's been with the company from the time it was nothing more than an idea, nearly 18 years ago and has been a part of the travel industry for nearly 26 years. He has an extensive background in leisure travel but has also handled corporate and incentive, and group travel. Russ is an Accredited Cruise Counselor and holds a Master's Degree in the College of Disney Knowledge. He especially enjoys working on trips to Europe and more specifically those to France & Italy, and Mediterranean Cruises.

Over the years Russ has been to many magnificent destinations including such foreign countries as: Canada, Mexico, Honduras, Colombia, Costa Rica, Panama, most of the Caribbean Islands, Great Britain, Ireland, France, Spain, Portugal, Gibraltar, Italy, Corsica, Austria, Germany, Czech Republic, Croatia, Hungary, Greece and Turkey. To narrow it down to one that is his favorite would be nearly impossible. "I love the excitement of cities like Istanbul and London, and the architectural beauty of Paris, Rome and Prague. For the wonderful beaches, I head to Cancun or Waikiki. I enjoy the peaceful beauty of Sorrento and Portofino, Italy. The storybook charm of Salzburg, Germany is hard to beat! If I had to pick an overall favorite, it would have to be France for the amazing food!"

Cruising is one of his favorite ways to travel. He enjoys big ship cruising as well as River Cruises. "I love the tranquility of the days at sea when I can curl up in a chair on my own balcony and read a good book. I'm a huge Dan Brown fan! River cruising is an excellent way to travel because there's so much sightseeing already included. You tour in small groups so it's very intimate and you get a real immersion in the culture. I've been on cruises along the Main, Rhine and Moselle Rivers from Prague to Paris and my latest one along the Danube from Prague to Budapest. Both were amazing and I could go back to Prague over and over!"

In his spare time Russ loves to cook! He gets the biggest high out of shopping for the perfect ingredients and creating something wonderful. Russ also enjoys going to the movies and spending time with friends and family. "I have wonderful parents, two distinctly different sisters, two brothers-in-law, two nieces and two nephews. I'm originally from Buffalo, NY but have called Charlotte home since 1997."

Russ' dream vacation is the World Cruise. A complete circumnavigation of the globe visiting one amazing place after another.

Get out there! There's so much world to see!

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