

Ports Of Call

By Edward H. Sims

London - Those who made plans to visit Europe late this year—either in late summer or early fall—made the wise decision. In many parts of northern Europe May was the coldest in over fifty years and crops in these countries are weeks behind their normal growth.

The expectation in most northern European resorts, especially those on the ocean, is that swimming won't be pleasant until July. The cold water isn't being given much publicity but if one plans to visit northern France, Belgium, Holland, England, Ireland, or Scandinavia, little hope for enjoyable swimming is held for June. In the more northerly areas it may be mid-July before the water is warm enough for swimming. (In some beach areas the temperature at the beginning of June was only 12 or 13 degrees centigrade, which shows a long warming trend will be needed.)

If you don't mind cool weather, the early summer in Europe may not be unpleasant but most Americans are likely to be surprised by London's cool damp weather this June—and less damp but even cooler weather in much of the rest of northern Europe.

Thus it seems that those still making plans for travel before mid-July would do well to stress southern Europe in their itinerary. It might be that some would prefer to wait until next year—since July and August are always the most crowded months in Europe, schools ending here generally late in June and the summer holiday extending into September.

Today's Europe, of course, is a far cry from the Europe immediately following World War II. The various countries are relatively prosperous and the U. S. dollar doesn't go so far. Paris and London are expensive, as is Rome, and especially for American suckers.

While London food has improved in recent years it is still expensive and not the best. Paris prices take full advantage of the French reputation for excellent cuisine and while many restaurants are excellent the price-level in the best is designed to separate snobs and the wealthy from as much cash as possible. The once-in-a-life-time American tourist also contributes a major part of the take.

In general, food in European restaurants is still good, and in some ways better prepared than in the United States but it is often expensive, and good food is only one of the three prerequisites in the minds of most American travelers—good weather and good lodging being two others.

This summer chances of finding all three seem to be limited to July and August and these months are likely to be more crowded than usual—which is overly crowded. If one can delay his European jaunt, or schedule it for fall, or more southerly climes, it is worth serious consideration.

And though the weather has also been unseasonably cold on many parts of the United States this spring, warm weather is more of a certainty at U. S. resorts than in Europe.

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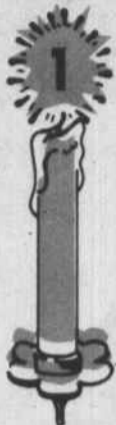
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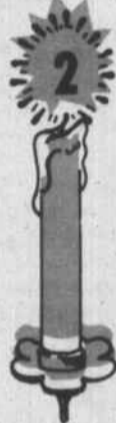
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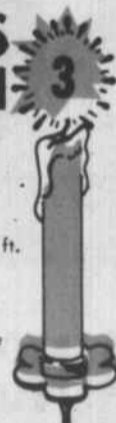
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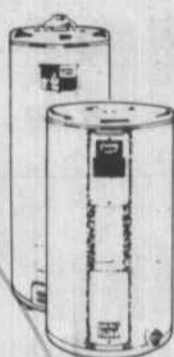
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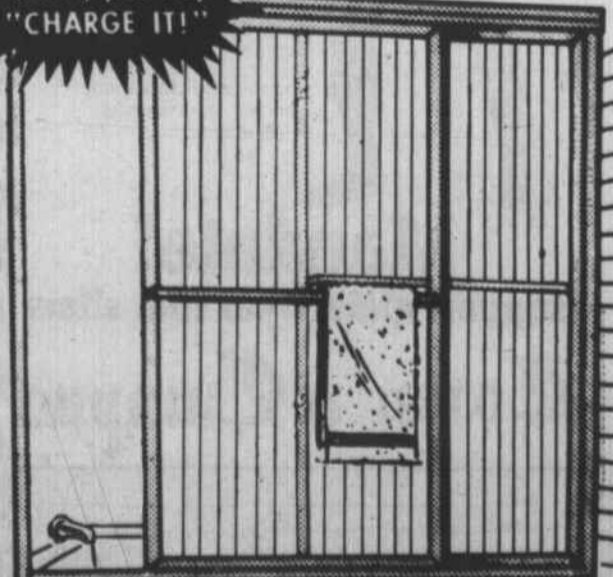
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