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A Circle of Girlfriends...One Memorable Journey at a Time

Thelma & Louise, Divine Secrets of the Ya-Ya Sisterhood, The First Wives Club and the latest movie, *Bridesmaids* – all blockbusters that bolster the unique role of female friendship and companionship. Sure, men can be friends, but there are certain needs men can't meet that girlfriends do.

Multiple studies support the notion that intimacy, connection and bonding between women plays an important role in a woman's physical, mental, emotional and spiritual well-being. A landmark UCLA study suggests that female friendships are essential to reduce stress, bolster health and wellness, contribute to personal growth, live successful lives – and even pro-long marriages! But how can women stay connected with other women in an increasingly disconnected and distracted world? How and where do women find opportunities to forge these invaluable bonds, and nurture the unique female intimacy that significantly support a woman's body, mind and spirit through life's different stages?

"Scheduling and planning female-centric time is a lifesaver," said April Merenda, founder of Gutsy Women Travel, a company that for a decade has specialized in fostering strong female relationships and community with an array of domestic and international travel tours designed specifically by women for women and their unique interests.

"Connecting and traveling in small groups with other women allows women to temporarily step out of their roles as worker, wife, mother and remember themselves as individuals with their own interests and needs," said Merenda. "Women are able to connect differently when traveling with other women. An instant support system develops that allows women to detach from their daily life, relax and fully enjoy each new experience."

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The quality “girlfriend time” garnered during travel can create a general feeling of well being as women from all over the world come together, bond and share. This unique shared experience allows each participant the luxury of not having to do anything for anyone else but to become part of a like-minded group.

The company's goal is to offer signature tours and experiences that include best in class accommodations, a relaxed and leisurely pace, small intimate groups and a safe and secure environment with itineraries that appeal to a woman’s distinct lifestyle and interests. From spa excursions to cooking classes, garden tours to chocolate tastings, shopping to celebrating, Gutsy Women Travel assists women in broadening their horizons, while feeding an inner desire for travel and new adventure, setting the stage for women to foster new and often life-long friendships.

“When women travel together, whether they know each other or are flying solo and meeting each other for the first time, Gutsy Women Travel's female Tour Directors ensure activities and travel destinations that promote easy bonding, shared experiences and the opportunity to forge friendships,” said Merenda. “We have a ten-year strong community of 'gutsy' female travelers who take the time regularly to nurture their 'girlfriend' side, returning to their lives happier and more fulfilled, and excited to be better partners in their professional and personal relationships.”

Since women continue to live longer than men and romantic relationships can come and go, meaningful female friendships made now can sustain women as they thrive into their golden years. Planning a trip to a desired destination with an old friend or to meet a new one is positive for, not only overall health and well being, but the soul.

Visit www.gutsywomentravel.com to view the upcoming 2012 travel experiences!

For media inquires, additional information or to set up an interview for your exclusive stories, call or email Carol lentile, cilentile@civisions.com, or Angela Petersen, apetersen@civision.com, at C.I. Visions Inc, 212-477-4755

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About Gutsy Women Travel: Gutsy Women Travel offers an array of domestic and international tours spanning four continents designed specifically by women for women and their unique interests. From the Amalfi Coast to the Great Wall of China, Provence to Peru, women from all walks of life come together to enjoy incredibly and distinctive worldwide travel with other like-minded women. All Gutsy Women Travel signature tours include best in class accommodations, a relaxed and leisurely pace and are designed to appeal to a woman’s distinct lifestyle. From spa excursions to cooking classes, garden tours to chocolate tastings, shopping to celebrating...Gutsy Women Travel is about broadening horizons, feeding an inner desire to travel, creating new friendships, being bold, adventurous, spontaneous and being well, gutsy! The Company’s motto is *It's Your Life...Live IT!*™