

## **Hot trips for 2006: Whether you join an organized group tour or travel independently, you can savor**

By TOM UHLENRBOCK St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Cruise the Rhine, hang out with great white sharks and spy on bald eagles during the coming year. Here are four suggestions for the person who enjoys a little adventure. They are geared to a variety of budgets. We've also made sure you've got the right stuff to take along.

### **Swim with the sharks**

**What:** A shark-diving experience on a five-day boat expedition.

**How:** You and 15 others will travel by chartered bus to Mexico, then take a luxury yacht to explore Isla de Guadalupe, which has one of the largest populations of great white sharks on the planet. It's also a perfect spot for sport fishing. You'll be invited to don diving gear, enter a cage and descend up to 100 feet into the 70-degree water for an up-close visit with the sharks. Night dives also are available.

**When:** The 2006 expeditions are scheduled for July 23 and 29, and Aug. 3, 8 and 13.

**How much:** \$12,200 for groups of four.

**Who:** The trip is available through WallBounce.com, which bills itself as the premier provider of "discerning learning" experiences. The site connects clients with operators of trips that create "an indelible memory, many of which are not readily available to the public."

**Gear to take:** An underwater camera will come in handy because your friends won't believe where you went. Scuba.com has a Suprema Super Sport 35-millimeter waterproof camera that has an underwater viewfinder and is said to be good to 125 feet deep. You get free batteries, film and lanyard, so you don't drop the camera when a great white sneaks up on you. \$49.95

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